UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME
HISTORIC
Mariposa Grove Museum
AND/OR COMMON
Grove Museum

2 LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER
Mariposa Grove of Big Trees
CITY, TOWN Yosemite National Park
STATE California

VICTORY OF
06

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT Fifteenth

06

COUNTY
Mariposa

043

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC
PRIVATE

 Both

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

IN PROCESS

BEING CONSIDERED

OBJECT

PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE
COMMERCIAL
EDUCATIONAL
ENTERTAINMENT
GOVERNMENT
INDUSTRIAL
MILITARY
OTHER:

STATUS

X OCCUPIED
UNOCCUPIED
WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE

YES: RESTRICTED
YES: UNRESTRICTED
NO

FEDERAL
STATE
COUNTY
LOCAL:

DATE 1961

DEPOSITORY FOR
Survey Records
CITY, TOWN Yosemite National Park

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED SEP 7 1978
DATE ENTERED DEC 1 1978

agency

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)
National Park Service, Western Regional Office
450 Golden Gate Avenue, Box 36063
San Francisco California

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Administration Building/National Park Service
Box 577
Yosemite National Park California

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE
Historic Buildings Inventory
DATE 1961
DEPOSITORY FOR
Survey Records
CITY, TOWN Yosemite National Park
STATE California
The Mariposa Grove Museum is a one-story log structure measuring 20' x 45' and is divided into two rooms. It has a low pitched gable roof covered with wood shingles and lapped with a 24" exposure. The cabin is built of peeled sugar pine logs laid in alternating tiers and interlocked at the corners, and at the point where the partition wall intersects with the exterior walls, with a "V" notch joint. The horizontal spaces between the logs are chinked with tight fitting split log wedges. A plank deck, 45' x 12', extends along the southwest side of the building. An exterior chimney is located on the southeast end of the cabin; it is made of granite in a coursed rubble pattern. The southwest side of the cabin has three windows, the northeast side has two, they are double hung, 6 x 6. There are three doors on the building, two on the southwest, one on the northeast, these are made of vertical boards, decorated with large false strap hinges of unpainted iron.

The interior is dominated by the fireplace of rough dressed granite in the form of a segmented arch. It has doweled, random width oak flooring. The primary decorative element of the design of the cabin is the hand crafted furniture. There are massive sequoia wood tables and benches, hand-planed and polished, with carved Indian motifs which are stylized and two-dimensional. The carving is a very simple expression of the Art Deco style.
The Mariposa Grove Museum is of regional significance in the areas of exploration/settlement and social/humanitarian. Although less than 50 years old, the museum maintains the historic integrity of a "shelter in the grove" extant since the earliest designation of the area as a public park. The log cabin building in The Mariposa Grove of Big Trees was built in 1930 yet had its genesis almost as long ago as when Galen Clark first sighted the giant sequoias in 1857. In succession, three cabins were erected on approximately the same site, and the present one is the third materialization of Clark's idea of a "guardians hospice" in the upper grove. The museum possesses architectural significance at the local level. The present museum building continues the tradition established by Clark and the State of California. In a very limited sense, the building is a reconstruction, because it is a replacement for an earlier building. While it is roughly the same size and form as the preceding building, there was no attempt to accurately duplicate the structure. The museum possesses architectural integrity which satisfies the criteria as an expression of the Rustic style, combined with several minor elements of the Art Deco style. The building's importance lies in its simplicity of design and materials and in the high degree of hand-craftsmanship exhibited in its construction. Integral with the building in design and significance is the fine, hand-crafted furniture.

Galen Clark built the first shelter—a rough one room cabin—in the Upper Grove in May, 1864. He had recently been appointed the first guardian of the "Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Big Tree Grant", and erected the cabin as an office/information center to assist visitors. Dr. Henry Bellows attached the name "Galen's Hospice" to the cabin in June, 1864, after his party gained shelter there from a storm. In 1881, the State of California replaced the ramshackle, though well known hospice, with a new one room cabin "for the comfort and convenience of the visitor." Another room was added in 1902 to serve as the office for the current guardian. In the Yosemite Superintendents Reports of the 1920's, the deteriorating condition of the State building is noted, as well as its international fame achieved through photographs, postcards, and remembrances of Yosemite tourists that recorded the impression made by the small structure amidst the giant trees. By 1930, a decision was reached to replace the unstable log cabin with a new structure to serve as the Mariposa Grove Museum. The exhibits are devoted exclusively to the story of the Big Trees, hence the cabin and its furnishings were designed to harmonize with the surrounding sequoias. The massive furniture was hewed by hand from a Big Tree that had fallen in the lower grove.

Today the Grove Museum continues to function as an interpretive center as well as a rest area for visitors arriving by tram or on foot.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES
Sargent, Shirley Galen Clark: Yosemite Guardian. San Francisco, Sierra Club, 1964
Yosemite Nature Notes V. 7, June 1932 p. 4-5
Report of the Commissioners to Manage Yosemite Valley & the Mariposa Grove of Big Trees (1885-1886) p. 10, Yosemite Research Library
Superintendent Annual Reports, Yosemite National Park, 1928 & 1930, Yosemite Research Library

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA
ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

UTM REFERENCES
A 1 1 2 7 1 3 1 4 1 4 1 5 4 8 6
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
B 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1
C 1 1 1 1 1 1
D 1 1 1 1 1 1

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION
see plan attached

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

FORM PREPARED BY
NAME / TITLE
Leslie Starr Hart, Cultural Resources Specialist
ORGANIZATION
National Park Service, Denver Service Center
DATE
9/75
STREET & NUMBER
655 Parfet, Box 25287
TELEPHONE
(303) 234-4509
CITY OR TOWN
Denver
STATE
Colorado

CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES
NO
NONE

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE
DATE
8/7/98

FOR NPS USE ONLY
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
ATTEST:
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
Mariposa Grove Museum Photo #2

DEC 1 1978
Mariposa Grove Museum Photo #1. Dec 1 1978