

## Heritage Resource Designation Form

### Lutheria Way Entrance Post, 14221 Lutheria Way, Saratoga, CA 95070

#### Designation Criteria

a, b, c, e and g

#### Historic Significance and Ownership History of the Property

In 1925 developer and inventor Luther Cunningham, along with his wife Eleanor, purchased a tract of land that was part of the Quito Rancho. This tract was bordered by La Paloma Avenue, Saratoga Avenue, a property owned by Goodrich and another property owned by E.M. Cunningham. The development would be known as Cunningham Acres.

Cunningham named the street after his daughter, Lutheria (1907-1964). In the 1930s Lutheria played the role of the Red Queen in the play *Alice in Wonderland*. The play was produced by Dorothea Johnston and presented in the Theatre of the Glade. Other cast members included Olivia de Havilland and Willis Peck. From 1935 to 1943 Lutheria served as the city's postmistress. Beginning in 1947 she became the editor of a new local newspaper, the *Saratoga Observer*. The paper was started by George Kane who acted as general manager for the *Sunnyvale Standard*.

Her father, Luther Cunningham (1869-1945), while growing up in a large family of orchard owners, pursued more mechanical and engineering interests. He invented a dipping machine for prunes as well as other farm implements and devices that eventually were manufactured by the Food Machinery Company (FMC). "...his patents supported a major new industry: food processing." He was the uncle of Florence Cunningham, who started the Saratoga Historical Foundation and Museum. Luther resided in the historic Luther Cunningham Stone House at 14280 Saratoga Avenue. He built the distinctive home between 1924 to 1926. The Period Revival home is on the Heritage Inventory.

At the entrance to the Cunningham Acres two sandstone block entry posts were installed at Lutheria Way off Saratoga Avenue sometime during the building of the development in the mid-1920s. Each post has a sandstone block etched with the street name "LUTHERIA WAY". Sandstone was widely used in the San Francisco Bay area because of its availability from local quarries, its variety in color and its ability to be shaped or chiseled with a variety of finishes.

#### Location of the post on the property:

The stone post is situated on the left side of the entrance to Lutheria Way. This entrance post is set back at the outside corner of the owner's property at approximately four feet from the street and 22 feet from Saratoga Avenue. Lutheria Way is a gentle curving road that continues to increase in elevation until it ends at La Paloma Avenue. The street has an ambiance of privacy and much greenery. Many unique homes designed in revival and other historical architectural styles can be found along this charming road.

#### Location on the property:

This post is set back at the outside corner of the owner's property at approximately four feet from the street at Lutheria Way and 22 feet from Saratoga Avenue. The post sits on the right side of the entrance to Lutheria Way.

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Coordinates - 37° 15' 42" N 122° 1' 37" W  
Elevation - 420 feet

### Description of the entry post:

The entrance post at 14200 Lutheria Way is made from sandstone blocks. It is set at an angle (approximately 45 degrees) to Lutheria Way. The color has weathered to a natural, medium grey with some sandy hued overtones. It has not been altered since the 1920s and appears in very good condition. The post consists of three standard elements: a base, flat cap and finial or newel. The overall height from the current ground level is approximately 8.2 feet to the highest curve of the finial. It is highly likely that the core of the post is hollow. The post elements have been treated using tools or chisels that achieved three different pitched finishes.

Five rows of blocks make up the base. Each row of blocks varies in height to the others while the width and length of all the blocks is approximately 7 inches by 34 inches. These blocks have been treated with a tool to create a very deeply pitched finish. The block at the very bottom of the base is a solid slab of sandstone part of which is buried several inches below ground level. This block is 36 inches square. At the second row down from the cap there is a center block of stone with a deeply, but evenly, etched "LUTHERIA WAY". The etched area is recessed into a flat, smoothed rectangular surface that nicely frames the address and gives it distinction.

The flat cap on top of the base of blocks is 4.5 inches high, 3 feet wide by 3 feet deep and has a slight slope to allow for rain runoff. The cap finish, more uniform and evenly rendered than the base or finial, has a texture that may have been achieved using a frosting tool, or bush chisel i.e. a chisel with teeth.

The rounded oval finial is 10 inches in height, 25 inches deep and 25 inches wide. The pitched work of this finial shows a stipple or orange peel like finish. At the four corner areas of the finial there is a slightly different chiseled detail that copies that of the post cap below. The finial is mortared onto a 1/2-inch base that sits on the cap. This thin base under the finial is slightly flared for water runoff.

The mortar seams, or pointing, are 1/2 inch in thickness. It appears sandstone dust could have been incorporated in the mortar mix to provide a more cohesive finish with the pitched blocks. The mortar seams are slightly lighter in color than the sandstone materials. It is also possible that the appearance of this mortar finish may have evolved due to age and weathering.

The attractive condition of the post, its angled position and scale, the variety and uniqueness of the pitched stone finishes, all enhance and illustrate the craftsmanship of the mason, along with the its quality and appeal.

### **Research Information, Materials & Sources**

Map of Cunningham Acres, Surveyed 1925, City staff

Biographical article on *Lutheria F. Cunningham Hubback* (Lutheria Way is named after her), Saratoga Historical Foundation & Museum

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Cunningham, Florence R., *Saratoga's First Hundred Years*

Halberstadt, April & Alexander, Katie, *Images of America: Saratoga*

*Elements of Stone Masonry*, [www.stone.poplarheightsfarm.org](http://www.stone.poplarheightsfarm.org)

Norman Koepernik, Historic Renovator and Consultant

Current Assessor's map

### Attachments

Photographs (3), front, side

Taken by Alexandra Nugent, HPC Commissioner, 2018

Map of Cunningham Acres, Surveyed December 1925

Current Assessor's Map

### Recommendation to owner:

Keep ivy and other growth on or near the entrance post cleared to protect and preserve its integrity and historic appearance.



**LUTHERIA WAY ENTRANCE POST AT 14221 LUTHERIA WAY; FRONT VIEW**



LUTHERIA WAY ENTRY POST AT 14221 LUTHERIA WAY, SIDE VIEW



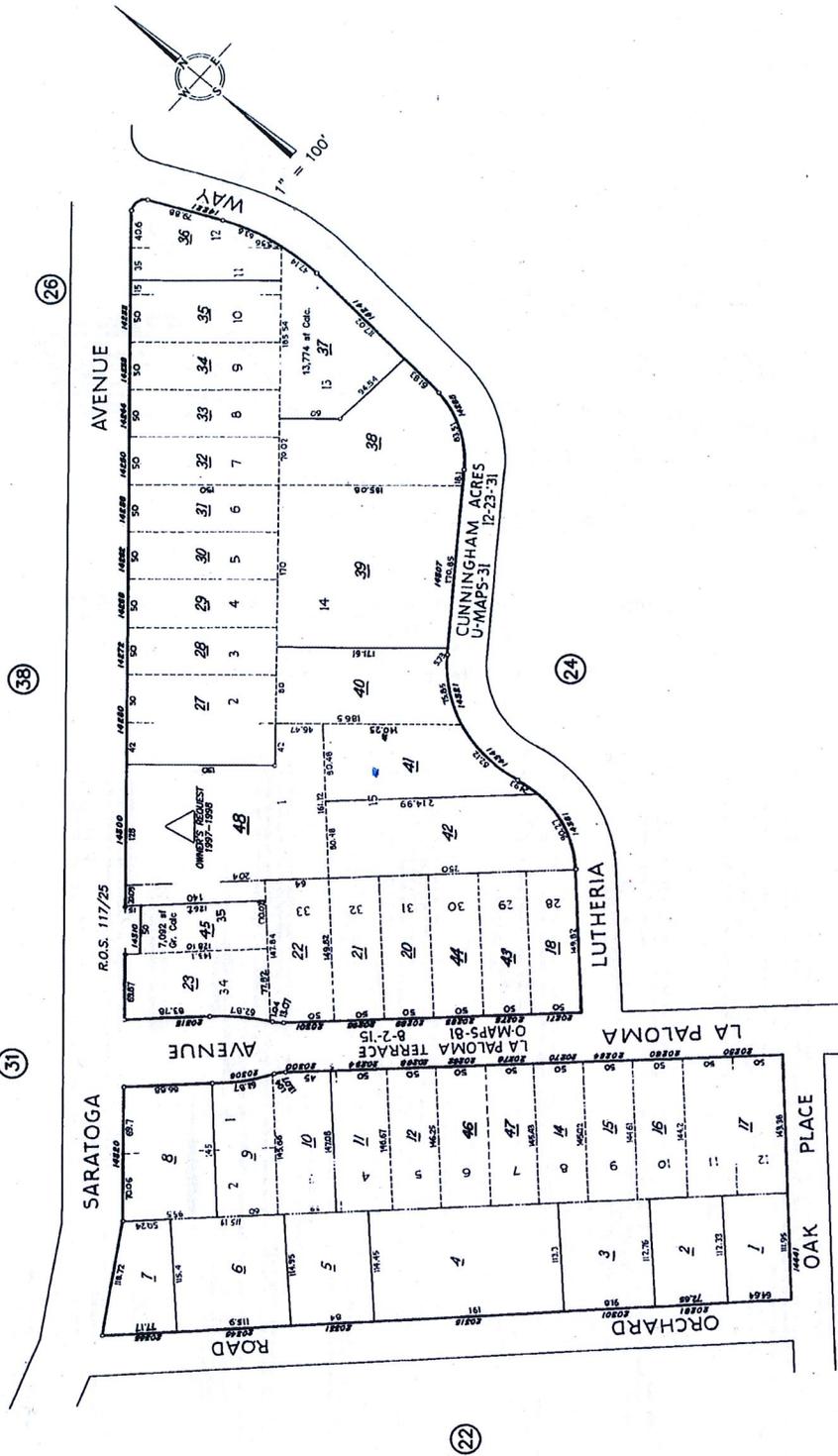
**LUTHERIA WAY ENTRANCE POST - DETAIL OF DIFFERENT FINISHES TO CAP AND FINIAL**



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OFFICE OF COUNTY ASSESSOR — SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA



THE SET MAP BY  
LAWRENCE E. STONE - ASSESSOR  
Cadastral map for assessment purposes only.  
Compiled under R. & T. Code, Sec. 327.  
Effective 1st Year 2018-2019

CURRENT ASSESSOR MAP