NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

493

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

RECEIVED 2280
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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name LAROE FAMILY HOMESTEAD HISTORIC DISTRICT

other names/site number FMSF#LA33548

2. Location

street & number 3430 West County Road 44 & 2891 East Orange Avenue N/A ☐ not for publication

city or town Eustis ☒ vicinity

state Florida code FL county Lake code 069 zip code 32726

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Barbara C. Mattick /DSHPO 5/15/2009
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

☒ entered in the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ removed from the National Register.
☐ other, (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper

James Gabbert for

Date of Action

6/29/2009

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 09000493 Date Listed: 06/29/2009

Property Name: Laroe Family Homestead Historic District

County: Lake State: FL

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Signature of the Keeper

6/29/2009
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 5: Classification

The classification of this property is hereby changed to "District."

The property is best classified as a district (as the name indicates). The resources are disparate in function, but related in their historic association.

The Florida State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:
National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☐ private
- ☒ public-local
- ☐ public-State
- ☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- ☒ buildings
- ☐ district
- ☐ site
- ☐ structure
- ☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
9	2	buildings
0	0	sites
0	2	structures
0	0	objects
9	4	total

Name of related multiple property listings
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

"N/A"

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling
INDUSTRY: manufacturing facility
AGRICULTURE: animal facility, storage

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling
INDUSTRY: manufacturing facility
VACANT

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th & 20th Century Revival/ Colonial Revival
Other: Industrial
Other: Agricultural

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
walls CONCRETE
roof METAL
other

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL HISTORY
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1931
1941-1945
1949

Significant Dates

1931
1949

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Builder: Brown, Albert
Builder: Madison, Fred

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
  #
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record
  #

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State Agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of Repository

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. 5 acres

UTM References
(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	436200	3191800
2			
3			
4			

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Laurie, Murray/Robert O. Jones, Historic Preservationist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date May 2009

street & number 500 South Bronough Street telephone 850-245-6333

city or town Tallahassee state FL zip code 32399-0250

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items
(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Kenneth LaRoe and Earl Eugene and Cordella LaRoe

street & number 22449 Lake Seneca Road telephone 352-357-5377

city or town Eustis state FL zip code 32736

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

SUMMARY

The LaRoe Family Homestead Historic District is a complex of buildings located at the northwest corner of East Orange Avenue and West County Road 44 in Lake County, Florida. The nine buildings on the approximately five-acre parcel include a home built prior to the LaRoe's occupation (1880/1929), two buildings associated with poultry raising, a barn, three outbuildings, a residence and machine shop built in 1931, and a machine shop built in 1949. Noncontributing buildings and structures within the district include a pole barn, open carport, a swimming pool, and a barn built after the period of significance.

SETTING

The LaRoe Family Homestead Historic District is located on an approximately five-acre site owned by the LaRoe family on the eastern outskirts of Eustis, in Lake County. The area has essentially been rural until recently, but is undergoing development to the north and east. The house and machine shop constructed in 1931 face east and are set back from County Road 44 (sometimes called the DeLand Road) about 85 feet. The 1929 residence and 1949 machine shop face East Orange Avenue. The additional buildings are located in an informal arrangement to the north and west of these buildings. The property is level and is heavily wooded, with unpaved driveways and parking areas.

Buildings Contributing to the LaRoe Homestead Historic District

Clarence LaRoe House (Albert Brown house ca 1880/1929)
Poultry Brooder Building (ca1920)
Barn/Garage (ca 1900)
Stable (ca1900)
Shed (construction date unknown)
Small Chicken House (ca1937)
Earl and Fern LaRoe House (1931)
Original LaRoe Machine Shop (1931)
Second LaRoe Machine Shop (1949)

The **Clarence LaRoe House** (Albert Brown House) is a two-story wood frame, American Foursquare house located at 2891 East Orange Avenue (Photo #1). It was initially built by Albert L. Brown ca1880 but a second story and wrap-around porch was added in 1929. In 1929 Brown also added a continuous in-filled foundation of rock-faced concrete blocks fabricated on site. Clarence LaRoe and his family occupied the house in 1941.

Four large gables of equal size intersect with the brick chimney in the center of the metal roof. The front door is on the southwest façade. The local pine weatherboard exterior has been covered with vinyl siding. Fenestration on the second floor consists of evenly spaced six-over-six double-hung sash windows on each elevation. The one-story porch that wraps around three sides of the house was enclosed in 1970.

The interior walls and twelve-foot-high ceilings of the original rooms on the first floor still have the unpainted, bead-board pine paneling from ca1880. On the second floor the massive brick chimney that rises to the center of the roof is exposed on one wall of the master bedroom. The unfinished attic reveals the complex structure of the roof, which has four gables of equal size arranged around the central chimney. The basement, located below grade at the southwest section of the house, has a concrete floor and unfinished ceiling.

Albert Brown died in 1938 at the age of 68, and his wife, Hila, died in 1941.[1] The house was acquired by Clarence, the oldest son of Earl and Fern LaRoe, in 1941. Clarence LaRoe, a machinist like his father, raised his family in the house during World War II and participated in the family's involvement with 4-H Club and Youth Agricultural Programs. The home is now owned by Earl Eugene LaRoe, the son of Clarence and Cordella LaRoe.

The **Poultry Brooder Building** is rectangular and built by Albert Brown ca1920 to raise poultry (Photo #2). It is located to the west of the Clarence LaRoe House. The lower section of the walls is of rock-faced concrete blocks similar to that of the adjacent residence. Weatherboard siding covers the upper portion of the walls. The metal roof has a monitor that extends the length of it. Originally a simple frame structure, Brown added rock-faced stone to the lower part of the exterior around 1929 when he used the same material as a base for his home. The building is in a state of disrepair with the metal roof rusted and the windows boarded up. Some of the original equipment is still inside of the

[1] Interviews: Elta LaRoe Busby and Glen LaRoe, daughter and son of Earl and Fern LaRoe, June, 2007.

building which was not available for inspection. Brown's brooder building was primarily for hatching fancy show chickens. He also manufactured animal feed in this structure, a practice continued by the LaRoes, who used the building for a time to raise chickens.

A frame **Barn/Garage** is to the west of the Clarence LaRoe House, and was built ca1900 by Albert Brown (Photo #3). He used it as a carriage house and barn. Later the LaRoes used it as a garage, storage of chicken feed and other agricultural materials. The roof, which has intersecting gables, is of metal, and the walls are clad in weatherboard siding. Three sets of double doors are on the east side, and a loading platform and two single doors are on the west side of the building, which is in a dilapidated condition.

A **Stable,** located north/west of the Barn/Garage is a narrow, rectangular frame building (Photo #4). Albert Brown built it around 1900. The LaRoe children stabled their horses in the building. It is in dilapidated condition and used for storage.

A **Shed** built by Brown at an unknown date is located to the west of the Earl and Fern LaRoe House (Photo #5). The LaRoes, who raised cattle and other livestock on pastures on adjacent land, used it for storage of feed and equipment. The frame building with a rusted metal roof is in dilapidated condition.

A **Small Chicken House** built in 1937 by the LaRoes is a square, brick building with partially open sides and a metal surfaced gable roof (Photo #6). Elta LaRoe, the daughter of Earl and Fern LaRoe, and some of the family's grandchildren raised poultry, rabbits, and other livestock as part of their 4-H Club activities. The building is in a dilapidated condition.

The **Earl and Fern LaRoe House** is a two story Colonial Revival Style home constructed in 1931 (Photo #7). It has a symmetrical façade, and the main block of the house is almost square, measuring 30 feet by 28 feet. On the façade a balanced fenestration consists of two paired windows on either side of the entrance at the first story, and two paired windows above them on the second story. The main entrance door is arched to match the curved wooden hood with brackets over the porch. It has a one-story solarium measuring 16 feet by 20 feet on the south side, set back four feet from the front and rear house walls (Photo #8). The side-gabled roof of the house is covered in metal, and a single brick chimney is placed near the center, slightly to the rear of the roofline. The roof of the solarium is also

gabled. The exterior of the building is of stuccoed concrete block with rock-faced concrete block quoins. Most of the original four-over-one wood-frame, double-hung sash windows remain. Fenestration on the other elevations is irregular. The house has a full basement and an attic. The basement is not evident from the east of the house as sand was built-up after the house was constructed to create the effect of the house being set on a rise. A door to the basement on the north side of the house opens to a stairway to the basement. The west elevation reveals a single door and two garage-style doors that also provide access to the area under the solarium (Photo #9). The exterior walls of the basement on the west are of rock-faced concrete blocks like the quoins. The concrete blocks were fabricated on site using fine washed sand from Lake Eustis.[2]

On the interior the original oak floors, plaster walls and ceilings remain. The living room extends across the entire east side of the house (Photo #10). An arched opening leads from the living room to the dining room in the southwest (Photo #11). The kitchen has the original wood cabinets and built-in storage units (Photo #12). The stairs at the north end of the living room lead to the four bedrooms and the bathroom on the second floor. The bathroom has the original tile floor. The stairs to the second floor continue up to the partially finished attic, used occasionally as an extra bedroom. The LaRoe family installed an unusual heating system in the house. A coal-burning furnace was installed in the basement, which has a concrete floor, and pipes were integrated into the interior spaces leading up to the attic, where they were vented into the brick chimney built into the attic. There are no fireplaces in the LaRoe House; heat was distributed to each room through vents from the furnace in the basement. In addition to this integrated heating system, the LaRoes also installed a solar water heating system. A large water tank placed on the originally flat roofed solarium supplied hot water to the kitchen and upstairs bathroom. A leak eventually developed in this system and it has been removed.

[2] The contractor/builder specified fine, washed Lake Eustis sand for the fabrication of the blocks and the stucco used in the house. LaRoe Family papers.

The solarium was enlarged to the south in 1960 and the original flat roof of the solarium has been replaced with a low-pitched gable roof. The original furnace has been replaced. The house has recently been restored to its original historic appearance and is in good condition.

The original **LaRoe Machine Shop**, built in 1931, is a one-story masonry building that measures 28' x 30' and has a side gabled metal roof (Photo #13). The exterior walls are of smooth concrete block with rock-faced concrete block quoins on the corners. Three wooden doors (two are folding) are fitted between concrete piers on the east façade. These resemble the doors in the west elevation of the 1931 house. There is a single door on the south elevation and a matching one on the north side of the building (Photo #14). Two large wooden doors that slide in flush with the building are placed at the west to open the building. One-over-one double hung sash windows are arranged on the sides and rear walls and under the gables on the sides. The unfinished interior has exposed beams and a concrete floor. The shop is presently used for storage and no longer functions as a machine shop. A metal standing seam roof has replaced the original asphalt shingled roof.

The second **LaRoe Machine Shop** was built in 1949, and is a large masonry vernacular industrial shop measuring 106 feet by 85 feet. It is built of concrete blocks and faces South Orange Avenue (Photo #15). A standing seam metal gable roof covers the higher two-story central section, and one-story shed roofed side sections that extend to the east and west. The south elevation of the building is reinforced with flat concrete pilasters on either side of the doors that extend from the ground to the roof. Beneath the eaves of the gable roof is a clerestory section filled with metal-framed windows. The same windows are installed along all sides of the shed-roofed sections (Photo #16). Large sliding metal doors at both gable ends open fully (Photo #17). There is one large door and three small doors in the south elevation, two in the north, and single doors on the east and west sides.

The shop floor is of poured concrete. The open steel truss framework and reused train track rails support the roof. A steel "I" beam running north/south along the east half of the work area provides a chain hoist for lifting heavy objects (Photo #18). An enclosed office with a small bathroom is located in the southeast corner of the shop, and a tool and parts storage area is located in the southwest corner. Another bathroom with an adjacent shower room is located north of the office to serve the main shop area. The rest of the shop is

open (Photo #19). At present, a large number of metalworking machines used by the LaRoe family from the 1930s to the present are still in place.

The building was damaged several years ago during a hurricane and the roof has been replaced. Thorough repairs on the interior and exterior have been recently accomplished.

NONCONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

A 1948 open pole barn is north of the 1949 LaRoe Machine Shop (Photo #20). It has a metal roof and is divided into sections with shelving for storage. Corrugated metal encloses the west and east ends of the structure. Although the building is over fifty years old, it is unrelated to the significant historic activities.

A non-historic swimming pool surrounded by a chain link fence is located northwest of the Clarence LaRoe House (Photo #21).

A non-historic open carport is south of the Clarence LaRoe House (Photo #22).

An open pole barn with a metal roof is located on the north end of the LaRoe property, near County Road 44. It was constructed in the 1980s, and is used for storage (Photo #23).

SUMMARY

The LaRoe Family Homestead Historic District is nominated to the National Register for its local significance under Criteria A and C in the areas of Social History for the family's activities during World War II and association with the Office of War Information, and Architecture for the 1931 house, and 1949 machine shop. During World War II, the LaRoes, including the women of the family, operated a machine shop on the property that made parts for military aviation. Photographs of their small shop appeared in national media as part of the Office of War Information publicity program and help document their contribution to the war effort. The family's Youth Agricultural Extension activities taught children animal husbandry skills and greater self reliance during the war years. Included in the LaRoe Homestead district is their 1931 machine shop, the Earl and Fern LaRoe House, Clarence LaRoe House, four farm buildings, and a shed. The 1931 house is an excellent example of a Colonial Revival Style house. Built after World War II, the 1949 machine shop is nominated for its industrial architecture. The period of significance is 1931; 1942 – 1945; and 1949.

HISTORIC CONTEXTS

Lake County and Eustis

The original homesteaders in Eustis staked their claims in 1875. By 1880, railroads were extended into the region, further stimulating growth and development.[1] Lake County evolved from the subdivision of larger counties, and was created as a separate county in 1887 by combining former sections of Orange County and Sumter County. Tavares was named the county seat the following year. Drawn by the healthful climate and natural attractions of the Lake Region, affluent northerners moved to Eustis and the town expanded and prospered. Sawmills and millworks were kept busy supplying materials for construction and many citrus groves were established. Eustis was first incorporated in 1883 and re-incorporated in 1887 when it became part of Lake County. The city continued to flourish, despite the devastating freezes of the late 19th century that decimated the orange industry. The local paper, *The Semi-Tropical*, recorded the thriving commercial life of the city in 1885 along Bay Street and Magnolia Avenue. Many of the early buildings

[1] William T. Kennedy,, Ed. *History of Lake County, Florida: Narrative and Biographical.* (Tavares, FL: Lake County Historical Society, 1988) 51-52

still stand and contribute to the Downtown Eustis Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2002.[2] Docks and boathouses were built on the shores of Lake Eustis and as many as fifty yachts called Eustis homeport. *The Semi-Tropical* covered regattas, golfing, theatricals, and other sports and entertainment.[3] In the early 20th century Ferran Park (NR 1994) was created on the east shore of Lake Eustis, adjacent to the business district, and a band shell was erected. This became the center of social and recreational activities and events such as the annual George Washington Day festival in February, at the height of the tourist season. The citrus industry revived and packing houses shipped millions of boxes of oranges to northern markets. In 1923, The Fountain Inn opened a luxurious Mediterranean Revival Style hotel built Frank D. Waterman, who was head of the Waterman Fountain Pen Company.[4] The Depression had an adverse effect on the tourist sector in the 1930s, and little new building was seen in the older residential and business districts of Eustis during the next few decades. During World War II, an Army Signal Corps base was established at the Lake County Fairgrounds in Eustis, and occupied buildings built in 1938-1939 by the WPA.[5]

The citrus growing industry grew in Central Florida after the railroad system expanded into the interior of the state in the late nineteenth century and it became possible to efficiently ship citrus to northern markets.[6] In the 1880s, early settlers in Lake County planted orange trees as soon as their land was cleared, shipping crates of citrus from the depot built in downtown Eustis.[7] Despite freezes in the 1890s that destroyed some groves, trees were replanted and citrus production remained one of the mainstays of the Lake Region economy, until severe freezes in the 1950s again killed orange trees by the thousands.

World War II in Florida

World War II directly affected Floridians in many ways. More than a quarter of a million Floridians served in the military and Florida farms and groves contributed their agricultural

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[2] City of Eustis Downtown Historic District, National Register of Historic Places nomination, 2002.
[3] *The Semi-Tropical.* Eustis, Florida. Various issues between 1880-1890 in the collection of the Eustis Public Library.
[4] Kennedy, 56.
[5] "Lake County Fair, Eustis". Brochure, Eustis Historical Society Collection.
[6] http://dhr.dos.state.fl.us/facts/history/summary/
[7] Frank W. Savage. "Pioneering in Florida." And "Lake County Citrus Breeding." *Lake County Then and Now.*, July, 1958.

products to the war effort. Civilians found employment in the military bases, shipyards and other industries that expanded during the war. The population observed rationing, supported war-bond drives, and gathered materials for supply packages for troops. Florida's good flying weather and flat terrain made it ideal for pilot training schools, and by the end of the war forty airfields were in operation. Military training programs also took over many facilities originally built for the tourism and education, such as resort hotels and college campuses. The civilians observed blackouts, and learned that enemy submarines were detected offshore and that coastal patrols guarded the Florida beaches. Following the war, many of the servicemen who had spent time in Florida during their military training settled permanently with their families, creating a building boom in the state.[8]

The Office of War Information was a United States government agency during the war from June 1942 until September 1945. The office coordinated the release of domestic war news using radio, posters, and coordinating with newspapers, magazines, and motion pictures. They aimed to promote patriotism, and to recruit women into war related work. During 1942 and 1943, the office contained two photographic units whose photographers documented the country's mobilization during the early years of the war, concentrating on such topics as aircraft factories and women in the workforce. The Office of War Information photography branch, formed in 1942, evolved from the Farm Service Administration established by President Franklin Roosevelt in 1937 to document domestic life in America during the Depression.[9] Congressional opposition to some of the office's domestic operations resulted in curtailed funds and some restrictions placed on their work for the remainder of the war.

The LaRoe Family Homestead

Earl and Fern LaRoe were married in Texas in 1914. They moved to Eustis, Florida, in the 1920s because Fern LaRoe's parents had settled there and Earl LaRoe found work as an automobile mechanic. They had four sons and a daughter, and after renting a house from Albert L. Brown east of Eustis, they purchased a large lot just north of the house built by Brown ca1880. Fern Crooks LaRoe, who had grown up in Cleveland, Ohio, planned the

[8] Charlton W. Tebeau. "A History of Florida." (Miami: Univeristy of Miami, 1980), 416-421.
[9] Carl Fleischhauer and Beverly W. Brannan. *Documenting America, 1935-1943*. (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1988) 1-6.

new house the family built on the property in 1931 based on the design of one in Cleveland. According to the LaRoe family, the total construction cost was $4,000.[10] In addition to the two-story house, the LaRoes also built a one-story shop to the north of the house in 1931. It was used as a machine and repair shop for Earl LaRoe's business. Earl LaRoe, like his father before him, was a skilled blacksmith. He specialized in auto repair, but would take on almost any machining task and taught his four sons his trade. The LaRoes lived a semi-rural life on the outskirts of Eustis, raising a variety of livestock (chickens, rabbits, horses, and cattle) and taking an active part in 4-H and other programs sponsored by the Florida Farm Bureau. Clarence LaRoe dedicated more than thirty years of his life to working with the Lake County Fair and Livestock Show and to 4-H youth activities, beginning in the 1930s. Members of the LaRoe family still live in the two houses and have been honored over the years for their continued support of agriculture in Florida.[11]

ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

Colonial Revival

After the celebration of the nation's centennial in 1876, passion for early American culture, particularly for the architectural legacy of the colonial period, swept the country. This resulted in the revival of interest in the style of 18th century Georgian and Federal Style homes with their three-bay symmetrical facades and classical decorative elements.[12] The Colonial Revival house, which was popular throughout the United States until the 1940s (and has never really gone out of favor), had distinctive identifying features: a symmetrical façade, a centered front door accentuated with a decorative crown or pediment, and windows with double-hung sashes with multi-pane glazing. This house type was rarely a historically correct copy of an early American dwelling, but lent itself well to free interpretation and vernacular variations. The two-story adaptation with a side-gabled roof with a chimney placed at the center was particularly popular as it easily accommodated side wings and additions. The Colonial Revival Style lent itself equally well to wooden and masonry homes.

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[10] The contractor/builder was Fred Madison. His typed, but undated and unsigned, specifications are part of the LaRoe Family Papers.

[11] Margie LaRoe. "LaRoe Family Agragrian and Animal Husbandry Uses for LaRoe Historic District Buildings." Manuscript in LaRoe Family collection, January, 2009.

[12] Herbert Gottfried and Jan Jennings. *American Vernacular Design, 1870-1940.* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1985) 190.

Industrial Architecture
The need for large spaces to manufacture, assemble, and store modern industrial products in the eighteenth and twentieth centuries led designers of industrial buildings to adopt a rectangular plan that provided the generous interior dimensions needed for machine shops, train stations, and warehouses, with a high central section extending along the entire roofline and forming a clerestory set with windows that provided additional lighting and ventilation. Examples of similar buildings in Florida can be viewed in photographs of the Daytona Beach Boat Works, the machine shop built by the US Navy in Green Cove Springs in the 1940s, and the Gibbs Gas Engine Company machine shop in Jacksonville.[13]

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

The LaRoe Machine Shop became an active part of the war effort in 1942, when Earl LaRoe secured a contract from the DeLand Pool. The Pool was a complex of small manufacturing and fabricating shops in Central Florida organized by Vearne C. Babcock, head of Babcock Aircraft Corporation of DeLand. Babcock's first contract was for assembly-stands on which airplane motors could be assembled. The plans called for worm gears and drives, which Babcock could not produce. They turned the job over to Earl LaRoe whose first small contract was accomplished on time to the exact specifications. LaRoe took on more and more orders. This involved acquiring specialized machinery, which was added to the equipment already installed in the shop.[14] [Figures 11-15]

Three of the LaRoe sons enlisted in the Army Air Corps and were stationed in the Pacific for most of the war, so Earl LaRoe depended on his oldest son, Clarence, a family man not subject to the draft, and his wife Fern; his sister Ruby LaRoe Laurence; and a few older men with machining experience. The activities of the LaRoe Machine Shop, particularly the role played by the women of the family, caught the attention of the Office of War Information who coordinated the media to present material that reflected American values

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[13] The Florida Photographic Collection revealed numerous examples of early to mid-twentieth century buildings of similar configuration in Florida. Major national manufacturers also used this type of building for machine shops, which the LaRoe family would also have known about.

[14] "Babcock Aircraft Corporation Puts DeLand on Industrial Map." *The Miami Citizen*, April 15, 1943. 19. (LaRoe Papers) Interview with Elta LaRoe Busby, June 20, 2007; Interview with Glen LaRoe, June 29, 2007.

and domestic support of defense mobilization.[15] A professional photographer, Howard R. Hollem, was sent to Central Florida to take photographs that could be distributed to the media to show different aspects of the nation's hometown defense production. In 1942, Hollem took a number of black and white photographs of the shop, the family working in the shop, and of the LaRoe's home life [Figures 1&2]. He also took pictures of the family matriarch, Mrs. Katy LaRoe, who moved from Texas to Florida, to take over the role of cooking and caring for the family [Figure 3]. "Four Generations for Defense" was one photo heading, and "Grandmothers, U. S. A." (image of Ruby Laurence and Fern LaRoe at the lathe) appeared in the *New York Herald Tribune*[16] [Figure 4]. Photographs of Fern LaRoe; her sister-in-law, Ruby; her daughter-in-law, Edna LaRoe; and "Granny" Katy LaRoe appeared in a number of national publications.[17] These photographs are now a part of the collection of the Library of Congress in the Print and Photograph Collection.

Mrs. LaRoe and her family were active in Youth Agricultural Extension activities and raised rabbits, chickens, pigs, horses, and cattle on their property during the war years in addition to their industrial activities.[18] The program was intended to teach greater self-reliance for children and citizens during the war years when resources were scarce. The LaRoe family's continued activities in these areas and support agricultural facilities were a natural advantage.

Mrs. Fern LaRoe received a commendation FOR PATRIOTIC SERVICE from the Florida Agricultural Extension Service, signed by Governor Spessard Holland, September 15,

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[15] Allan M. Winkler. *The Politics of Propaganda: The Office of War Information, 1942-1945.* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), 1, 31, 34, 71. The Office of War Information (OWI) was established by an Executive order of June 13, 1942, "in recognition of the right of the American people and of all other peoples opposing the Axis oppressors to be truthfully informed about the common war effort." Records of the Office of War Information are held in the National Archives

[16] "Four Generations for Defense: *Sunday Sentinal-Star*, Orlando, May 3, 1942. "Grandmothers U. S. A. *New York Herald Tribune*, Picture News, September 6, 1942 and in *The Florida Times Union*, June 22, 1942. The photo also appeared on the front page of the *Columbus* (Ohio) *Evening Dispatch*, September 4, 1942. (LaRoe Papers).

[17] Photographs of the LaRoe shop appeared in *The Ladies Home Journal*, June, 1943; *World at War*, October, 1942; *Look*, October 1943; *Women in War Work*,, 1943; and *Popular Science*, May, 1943 (Clippings in the LaRoe Papers).

[18] Elta LaRoe Busby interview, June 20, 2007. In 1978 a new pavilion was named for Clarence LaRoe at the fairgrounds in Eustis, and in 2007, Earl Eugene and Cordella LaRoe were named to the 4-H Hall of Fame for their work helping young people in the 4-H programs over the years.

1942, that read "by assisting rural families to participate more effectively in war emergency work." While members of the LaRoe family in Eustis were carrying out their wartime activities, the three younger sons, Jim, Forest, and Glen were serving in the Air Force in the Pacific. Joseph Busby, the husband of Elta, their only daughter, also served in the Pacific. Near the end of the war, the LaRoes received notice that their son, Jim, who had been captured by the Japanese, had died. After being forced to work as a mechanic in the Philippines, Jim LaRoe and other prisoners being transported to Japan were lost at sea when the ship sank on October 24, 1944.[19]

After World War II the LaRoe's business activities returned to local services. In 1949, Earl LaRoe and his three remaining sons, Clarence, Forest and Glen, and grandson Earl Eugene, with the help of Fern LaRoe as the bookkeeper and office manager, built a large new machine shop on their property facing East Orange Avenue, and moved their equipment and operation to the new location [Figures 5&6]. They designed and installed irrigation systems for citrus groves, built specialized grove trucks, parts for packing houses, and docks for the growing recreational fishing interests in the Lake Region. In 1939, Earl LaRoe had designed and built a farm chopper that was displayed by the Florida Agricultural Extension Service at the Citrus Exposition. Subsequently, this equipment was fabricated in the shop for area citrus growers.[20]

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The 1949 LaRoe Machine Shop is architecturally significant at the local level. This building plan utilizing a central two-story high open space with gable roof and one-story side wings with shed roofs is found historically in industrial shops and barns throughout the country. The flexible interior space lent itself to various industrial work and storage arrangements. The form is often referred to as a monitor barn type that historically was used for housing horses and cattle, and storage of hay or machinery. The high central area maximized interior light and ventilation. The LaRoes' machine shop with concrete floor, block perimeter walls, steel trusses supported by tall round steel posts provided a wide central work space. The LaRoes' design with its continuous banks of clearstory windows lit their central work space, and office, storage, and restrooms were located within the side wings. The LaRoes utilized early twentieth century railroad rails for some of the beams

[19] Etta-LaRoe Busby Interview
[20] Eugene LaRoe, interview, October 30, 2007.

within the shop. An overhead crane rail runs across one side of the central space. The integrity of the machine shop is high, and the building was thoroughly refurbished recently after withstanding a hurricane. The LaRoes continued to operate an active business from the building for the next few decades and still have an active occupational license.

The 1931 Earl and Fern LaRoe House is an excellent example of the Colonial Revival Style with Bungalow elements. The tasteful and quality craftsmanship of the LaRoes is exhibited in the concrete block home with smooth plastered exterior walls contrasted to the rusticated block quoins and foundation. The porch hoods with thick brackets and the multi-light arched front door adds a gravity to the symmetrical façade, a hallmark of the style. The 3/1 wooden sash windows and exposed rafter ends, the stairway's large square newel and square stock balusters, and natural wood kitchen cabinets show a bungalow influence. The level of integrity of the house is quite high.

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Busby, Elta LaRoe Interviewed by Murray D. Laurie, June 20, 2007.

LaRoe, Glen, Margie LaRoe, Gene LaRoe. Interviewed by Murray D. Laurie, June 29, 2007, Eustis, Florida.

OTHER
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http://www.floridamemory.com/OnlineClassroom/FloridaWWII/history.cfm

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

According to the Lake County Property Appraiser the LaRoe properties are described as:

NW 1/4 OF SE 1/4 OF NW 1/4 W OF HWY 44A--LESS S 300 FT OF E 570 FT NW 1/4 OF SE 1/4 OF NW 1/4-- ORB 3067 PG 9 ORB 3211 PG 1185
and
S 300 FT OF E 570 FT OF NW 1/4 OF SE 1/4 OF NW 1/4 W OF HWY 44-A--LESS R/W HWY 44-- ORB 420 PG 663

Parcel numbers 07-19-27-0002000002902 and 07-19-27-000200003500 1443202

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The property is historically associated with the LaRoe Family Homestead Historic District.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

PHOTOGRAPHIC LIST

1. LaRoe Family Homestead Historic District, 3430 County Road 44A and 2755 and 2891 East Orange Avenue, Eustis
2. Lake County, Florida
3. Murray D. Laurie
4. January, 2009
5. Murray D. Laurie, Gainesville
6. Clarence LaRoe House, south façade, facing east
7. Photo 1 of 23

Information for items 1-5 is the same for all photographs.

6. Poultry Brooder Building, east elevation, facing northwest
7. Photo 2 of 23

6. Barn/Garage, southeast elevation, facing northwest
7. Photo 3 of 23

6. Stable, northwest elevation, facing south
7. Photo 4 of 23

6. Shed, east elevation, facing west
7. Photo 5 of 23

6. Small Chicken House, east elevation, facing northwest
7. Photo 6 of 23

6. Earl & Fern LaRoe House, northeast corner, facing southwest
7. Photo 7 of 23

6. Earl & Fern LaRoe House, southeast corner, facing northwest
7. Photo 8 of 23

6. Earl & Fern LaRoe House, west elevation, facing southeast
7. Photo 9 of 23

6. Earl & Fern LaRoe House, living room, facing west
7. Photo 10 of 23

6. Earl & Fern LaRoe House, living room, facing east
7. Photo 11 of 23

6. Earl & Fern LaRoe House, kitchen, facing south
7. Photo 12 of 23

6. 1931 Machine Shop, east elevation, facing northwest
7. Photo 13 of 23

6. 1931 Machine Shop, south elevation, facing north
7. Photo 14 of 23

6. 1949 Machine Shop, south elevation, facing north
7. Photo 15 of 23

6. 1949 Machine Shop, east elevation, facing southwest
7. Photo 16 of 23

6. 1949 Machine Shop, north elevation, facing southeast
7. Photo 17 of 23

6. 1949 Machine Shop interior, facing north
7. Photo 18 of 23

6. 1949 Machine Shop interior, facing north
7. Photo 19 of 23

6. 1948 Pole Barn (non-contributing), south elevation, facing east
7. Photo 20 of 23

6. Swimming Pool (non-contributing), facing northeast
7. Photo 21 of 23

6. Carport (non-contributing), facing southeast
7. Photo 22 of 23

6. Storage Barn (non-contributing), facing east
7. Photo 23 of 23

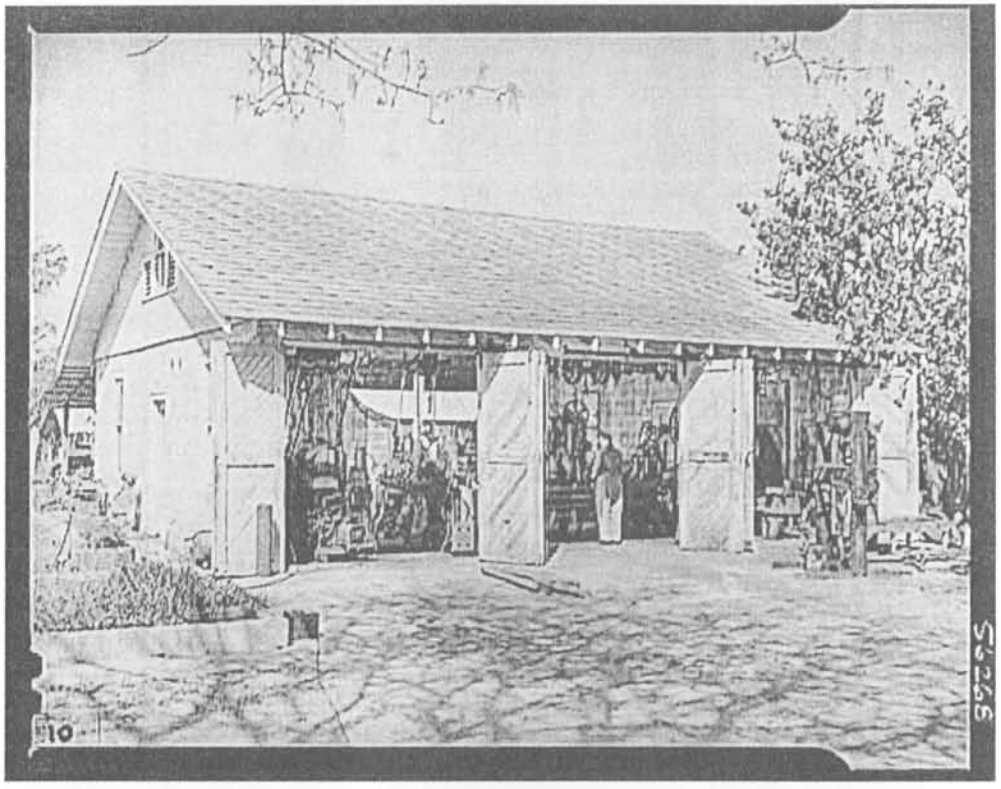


Figure 1 : TITLE: De Land, Florida. De Land pool of small machine shops forming a sub-contracting group for war production. April 1942, by Howard R. Hollem. **CALL NUMBER:** LC-USW3- 056268-C [P&P]

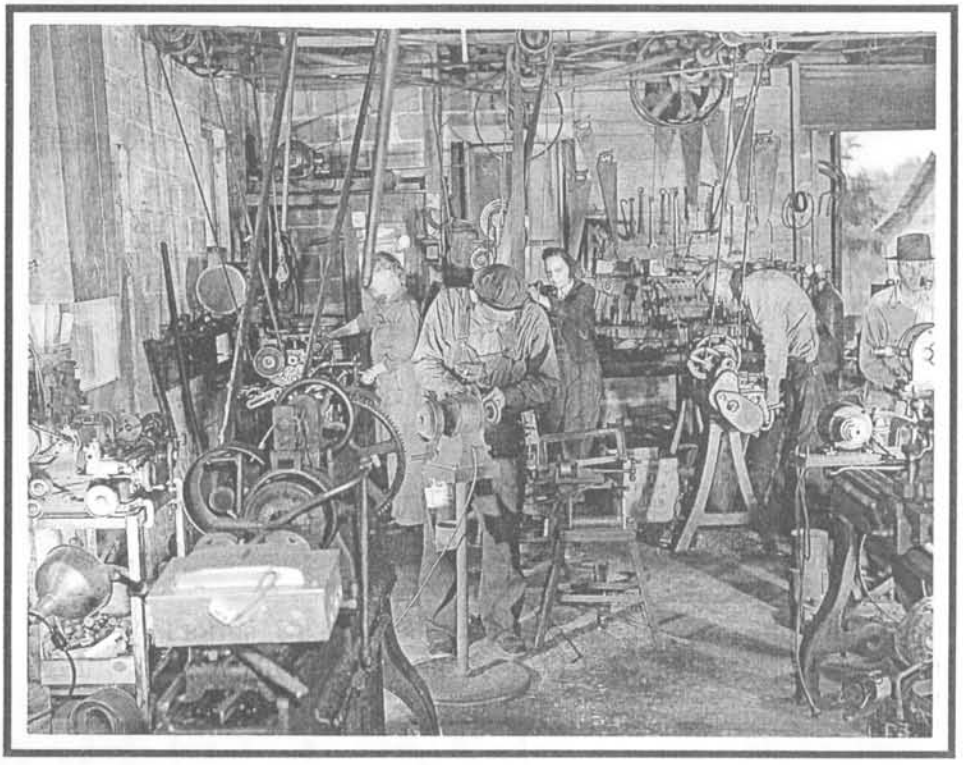


Figure 2 : TITLE: De Land pool. La Roe shop. Interior of the La Roe garage shop at Eustis, Florida, showing the precision machines on which the La Roe family is turning out vital parts for a million dollar pool war contract centering at De Land, Florida. April 1942, by Howard R. Hollem . **ALL NUMBER:** LC-USE6- D-005420 [P&P]

Figure 3: TITLE: De Land pool. La Roe shop. Seventy-five-year-old Mrs. Katie La Roe, great-grandmother of the family, does the cooking for the La Roe production group at Eustis, Florida to give other members of the family more time for war work in their garage machine shop. The La Roe family forms an important unit in the De Land, Florida industrial. April 1942, photograph by Howard R. Hollem. **CALL NUMBER:** LC-USE6- D-005422 [P&P]

(Mrs. Katie LaRoe is posed in the northwest corner of the kitchen. The cabinets are still in place.)

Figure 4 : TITLE: De Land pool. La Roe shop. Two grandmothers who are keeping up the production schedule of the La Roe's family shop at Eustis, Florida in processing vital parts for the De Land pool. At the left is Mrs. Ruby Laurence, Mr. La Roe's sister who came down from the north for a visit and stayed south to work on war production. At right is Mrs. LaRoe. April 1942, by Howard R. Hollem **CALL NUMBER:** LC-USE6-D-005425 [P&P] See also same image used in Picture News, *New York Herald Tribune*

New York Herald Tribune
TRIBUNE, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1942
Picture News
Grandmothers, U. S. A.
Mrs. Ruby Lawrence (left) and Mrs. Earl La
believe they were too old to do something for war
They went to work at the La Roe shop in Eustis, Fla.
vital war parts with workers not one-third

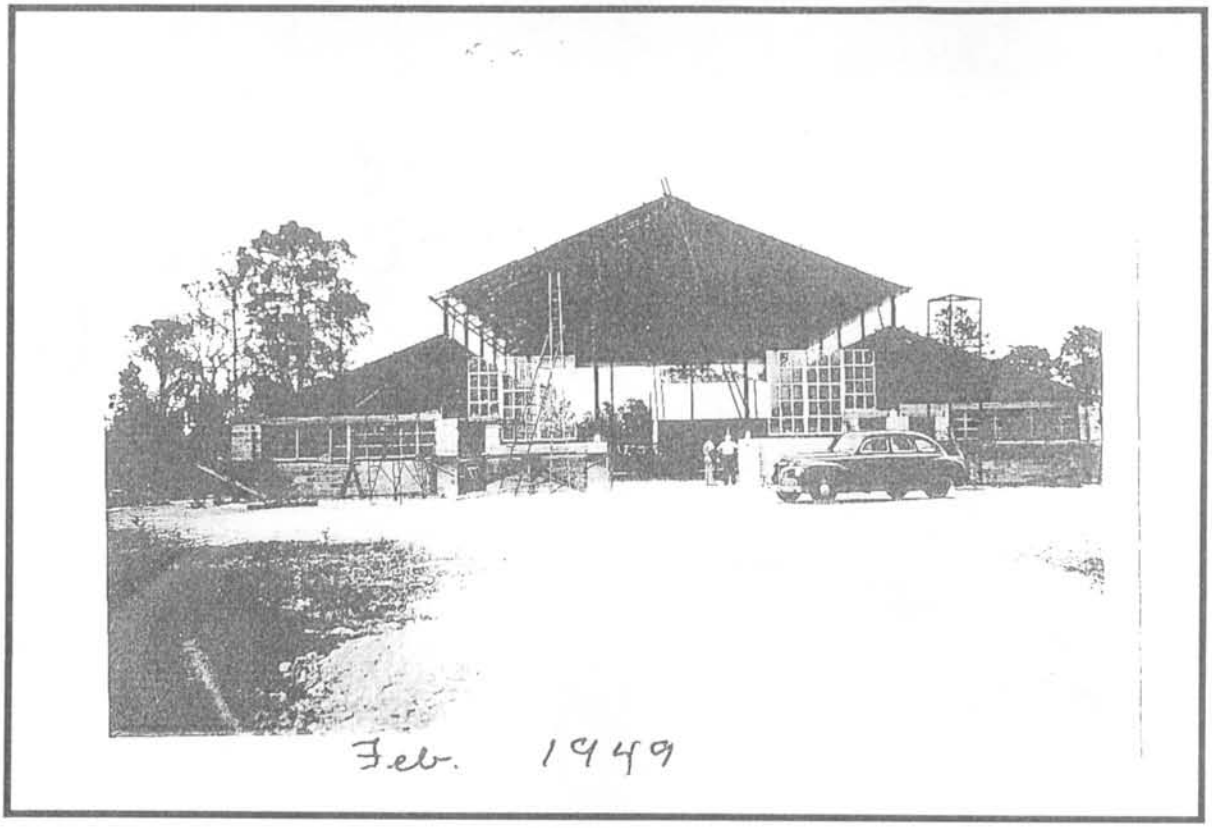


Figure 5 : 1949 Shop under construction

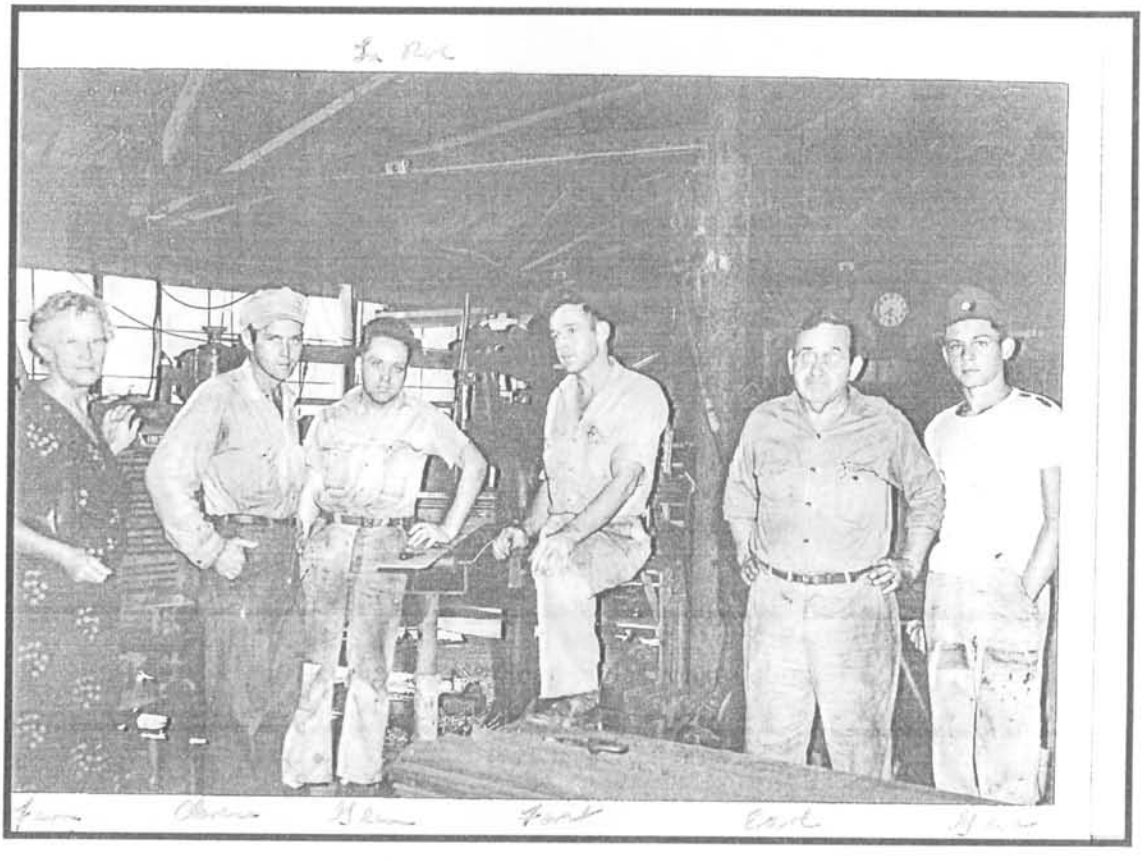
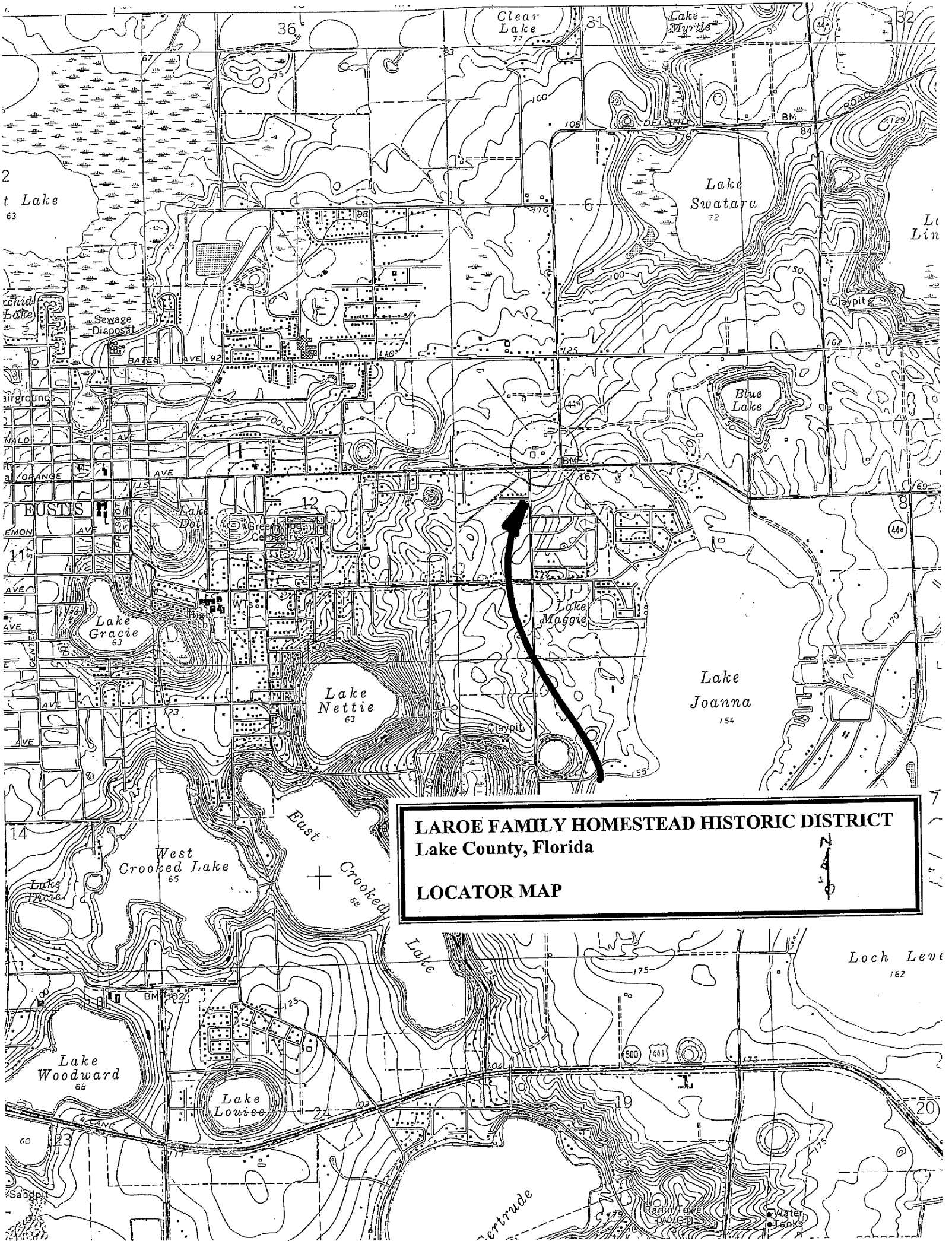
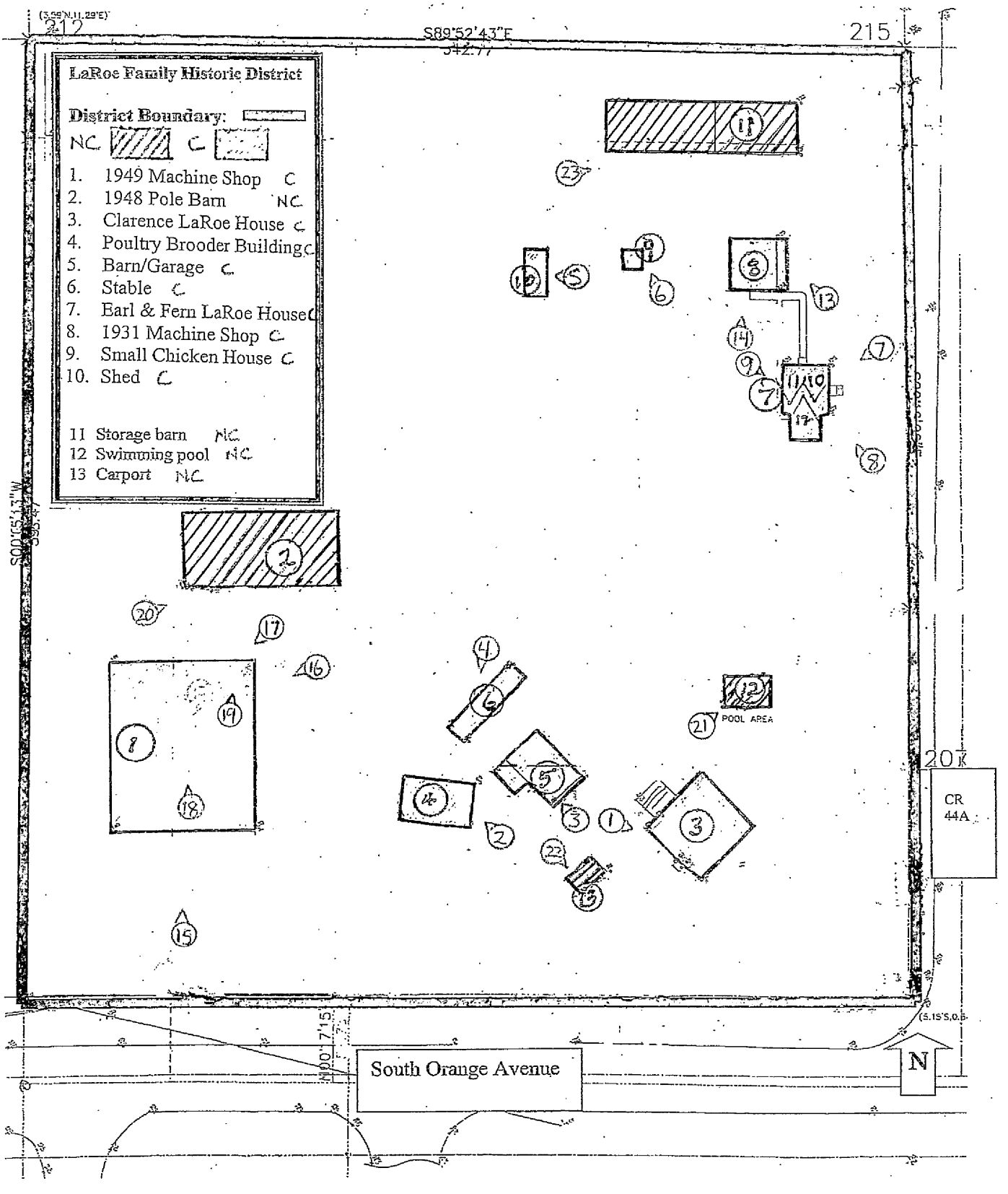


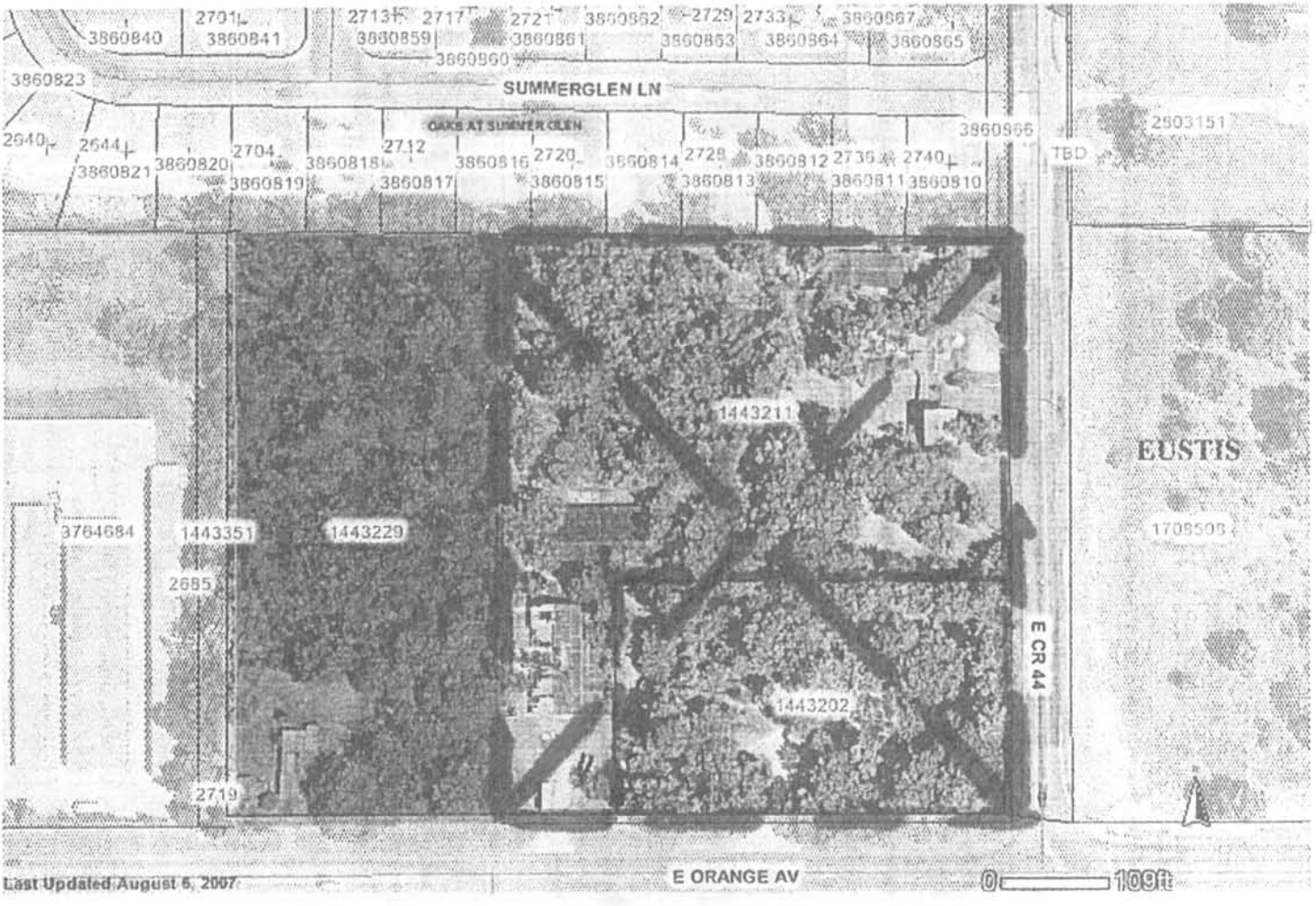
Figure 6 : Circa 1950 photo of interior of 1949 machine shop with Mr. and Mrs. LaRoe, three sons and one grandson. (*Grandson Gene, far right, and his sons are the present owners)*


Clear Lake
Lake Myrtle
DELAND
Lake Swatara
Sewage Disposal
BATES AVE
Blue Lake
EUSTIS
Lake Dot
Greenhouse Cemetery
Lake Gracie
Lake Maggie
Lake Nettie
Lake Joanna
Claypit
West Crooked Lake
East Crooked Lake
Lake Woodward
Lake Louise
Loch Leve
Sandpit
Radio Tower WWCD
Water Tanks
LAROE FAMILY HOMESTEAD HISTORIC DISTRICT
Lake County, Florida
LOCATOR MAP



LAROE FAMILY HOMESTEAD HISTORIC DISTRICT
Lake County, Florida

NATIONAL REGISTER SITE BOUNDARY AND PHOTO DIAGRAM



Site Map #2

LaRoe Family Homestead Historic District

(The two LaRoe parcels (1443202 and 1443211) are marked by the broken lines.)

CLARK
Genie