OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
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PLEASE NOTE

National Register of Historic Places (National Register) nominations are considered **drafts** until listed by the Keeper of the National Register (Keeper). Nominations can be changed at the State Historical Resources Commission meeting based on comments received by, but not limited to:

- Local governments;
- Owners;
- State Historic Preservation Officer;
- Office of Historic Preservation Staff;
- State Historical Resources Commission; and
- General public.

National Register nominations may also be changed by the Keeper prior to listing. Nominations needing substantive changes may require recirculation to all interested parties for additional review and comment.

California Register of Historical Resources nominations are considered **drafts** until approved for listing or formally determined eligible for listing by the State Historical Resources Commission. Nominations can be changed at the State Historical Resources Commission meeting based on comments received by, but not limited to:

- Local governments;
- Owners;
- State Historic Preservation Officer;
- Office of Historic Preservation Staff;
- State Historical Resources Commission; and
- General public.

California Points of Historical Interest nominations are considered **drafts** until approved for listing by the State Historical Resources Commission and the Director of California State Parks. Nominations can be changed at the State Historical Resources Commission meeting based on comments received by, but not limited to:

- Local governments;
- Owners;
- State Historic Preservation Officer;
- Office of Historic Preservation Staff;
- State Historical Resources Commission;
- General public.

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State of California — The Resources Agency DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION **PRIMARY RECORD**	Primary # HRI # Trinomial NRHP Status Code	
Other Listings Review Code	Reviewer	Date

 *Resource Name or #: Driftyland Dairy-Port

P1. Other Identifier:

*P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☑ Unrestricted *a. County: Los Angeles

and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad: El Monte Date: 1994 T ; R ; ¼ of ¼ of Sec ; M.D. B.M.

c. Address: 10724 E. Lower Azusa Road City: El Monte Zip: 91731

d. UTM: Zone: 11 ; mE/ 404547 mN 3772904 (G.P.S.)

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Elevation:
APN # 8575-001-006

*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)
The Driftwood Dairy is located at the northwest corner of Lower Azuza Road and El Monte Avenue. The dairy operation is situated on the same legal lot to the south and east. The drive-thru consists of three features: two store buildings, a canopy structure, and a pole sign.

The two store buildings are identical in design, one-story in height, rectangular in shape, and have a north-south orientation. Entering the property off Lower Azuza Road, customers can enter one of four driveways: one on each side of the two buildings. Today only the two middle driveways between the buildings are used. Customers exit on to El Monte Avenue. The buildings are simple in design with three sets of glazed storefronts along the north ends and two on the side. One of the bays on each side contains a door for the attendants. Signs, also divided into three panels are mounted on top of the north end of each building. The side and rear elevations are sheathed with sheet metal panels.

A parabolic arching canopy structure covers the buildings. The shell consists of wood boards covered by a common rolled composite roofing material. The five glu-lam wood trusses are spaced approximately twenty feet apart, dividing the length into four sections. The outer curbs of the driveway along the canopy structure are trimmed with custom made ceramic tiles featuring the face of "Drifty" the cow and a milk bottle. They are loose and missing in a few locations.

*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP6 1-3 story commercial building

*P4. Resources Present: ☑Building ☑Structure ☑Object ☐Site ☐District ☐Element of District ☐Other (Isolates, etc.)

P5a. Photo or Drawing (Photo required for buildings, structures, and objects.)

P5b. Description of Photo: (View, date, accession #)
View of north elevation
11/17/07

*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources: ☑Historic ☐Prehistoric ☐Both
1961, Los Angeles Times

*P7. Owner and Address:
Driftwood Dairy
10724 E. Lower Azusa Road
El Monte, CA 91731

*P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, and address)
Teresa Grimes
Christopher A. Joseph & Associates
523 W. 6th Street, Suite 1134
Los Angeles, CA 90014

*P9. Date Recorded: 12/20/07

*P10. Survey Type: (Describe) California Register Nomination

*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.")

*Attachments: ☐NONE ☐Location Map ☐Sketch Map ■Continuation Sheet ■Building, Structure, and Object Record ☐Archaeological Record ☐District Record ☐Linear Feature Record ☐Milling Station Record ☐Rock Art Record ☐Artifact Record ☐Photograph Record ☐ Other (List):

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State of California The Resources Agency Primary#
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION HRI#

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

***NRHP Status Code**

 ***Resource Name or #** (Assigned by recorder) Driftyland Dairy-Port

B1. Historic Name: Driftyland Dairy-Port
B2. Common Name: Driftwood Drive Drive-thru Dairy
B3. Original Use: Drive-thru Dairy
B4. Present Use: Drive-thru Dairy
***B5. Architectural Style:** Space Age
***B6. Construction History:** (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)
The two buildings, canopy structure, and sign were constructed in 1961. There are no apparent alterations.

***B7. Moved?** ☑ **No** ☐**Yes** ☐**Unknown Date:** **Original Location:**
***B8. Related Features:**

B9a. Architect: Unknown b. Builder: Theodore Masterson
***B10. Significance: Theme** Architecture **Area** El Monte
Period of Significance 1961 **Property Type** Drive-thru Dairy **Applicable Criteria** 3
(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)
The Driftyland Dairy-Port is eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion 3 in the context of roadside architecture and the Space Age style. The property includes two rectangular buildings, a canopy structure, and a large pole sign. It is significant at the local level as an outstanding example of a Space Age style drive-thru dairy.

Roadside architecture developed during the twentieth century in response to the introduction and proliferation of the automobile. The automobile had a profound impact on American culture and the spatial organization of its cities. The automobile required major changes in the infrastructure such as the improvement of roads, the construction of bridges, and the development of the highway network. This new, improved, and automobile-oriented infrastructure transformed the landscape and facilitated the decentralization of cities. Mass automobile ownership also reshaped the built environment by requiring modifications to existing structures and necessitating the development of new building types such as gas stations and car washes.
B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes)
***B12. References:**
See Continuation Sheet

B13. Remarks:

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)

***B14. Evaluator:** Teresa Grimes

***Date of Evaluation:** 12/20/07

(This space reserved for official comments.)

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P3a. Description Continued:

The pole sign is situated to the northeast of the two store buildings and canopy structure for maximum visibility. It is complex in design, with primary colors, and internally illuminated elements. The main portion of the sign has distinct features stacked on top of each other. The base consists of two tapered pylons placed on the diagonal to form an arrow, which pierces a flattened hexagon. There are two similarly shaped elements on top of it of different size, one that reads "milk" and the other that reads "fresh." Above that is the largest element, a misshapen rectangle with the two sides being hyperbolic curves. It reads "Driftwood Dairy" in script. At the top of the entire assemblage is a needle piercing a sphere. Attached to the main portion of the sign is a marquee sign surmounted by an oval sign with the company logo and another smaller needle piercing a sphere. Bushes are planted at the base of the sign. The planter area is trimmed with the same tiles used along the driveway.

The area around the sign at the very corner of the intersection of the two roads is landscaped. It features mature clumps of bird of paradise along the sidewalk where there is a grade change, giant bird of paradise along the driveway as it exits onto El Monte Avenue, and tree philodendron along the base of the canopy. A concrete block wall covered with ivy along the south of the driveway shields it from the dairy operation.

B10. Significance Continued:

The automobile also transformed existing businesses. The service sector rapidly transformed from a more formal delivery system to one of a cash and carry system. Customers arriving by car, instead of on foot, necessitated the creation of on-site parking. The emergence of drive-in markets, restaurants, theaters, and other businesses after World War II reflected the popularity of the automobile as the primary form of transportation. The more extreme form of the drive-in business was the drive-thru business. These businesses usually involved small purchases such as a quart of milk or short transactions such as depositing a check or picking up laundry.

Drive-thru dairies were once commonplace in Southern California, but are now mostly gone. Los Angeles County once had more dairy cows, greater total production, and a larger dairy income than any other county in the United States.[1] As pastureland gave way to shopping centers and housing tracts in the 1920s, dairies moved to the communities of El Monte, Artesia, Ontario, and Paramount, and then further still to neighboring San Bernardino County. Many of these dairies bottled their own milk and delivered it directly to their customers. As home delivery service was phased out, dairies opened drive-thru stores. One of the first dairies to open a drive-thru store was the Alta Dena Dairy[2] in 1951. They developed a proto-type store that consisted of a rectangular-shaped building covered by an arched roof with overhangs. Customers were serviced from either side of the building by large openings. When the store closed at the end of the day, the sliding doors covered the openings. This format was fairly typical of drive-thru dairies across the county. The concept took off in the early 1960s when state regulations allowed stores located on a processing site to sell milk at four cents less than regular retailers. Producers like the Driftwood Dairy in El Monte took advantage of this by building small drive-thru stores on the edge of their properties. Drive-thru dairies were such a success that dairy producers started building stores off the plant site, realizing that customers would come even if there was no discount.[3]

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[1] J.L. Albright, "Herd Management in Los Angeles County Commercial Dairies, *Journal of Dairy Science*, vol. 43, No. 11, p. 1696-1705, 1960.
[2] The Alta Dena Dairy originated in Monrovia, not Alta Dena. In the 1960s they moved to the City of Industry.
[3] No Author, "Southern California Car Culture Landmarks, Roadside Treasures Born of the Automobile," *Greatest Hits Maps*. Los Angeles: Automobile Club of Southern California, 2000.

B10. Significance Continued:

The Driftwood Dairy was purchased by Mike Dolan in 1946. He inherited his interest in the dairy business from his father, an Irish immigrant. While employed in the laundry room of a hospital in Los Angeles, the elder Dolan met his future wife and started a family. Eventually he decided to use the experience he had with cattle on his father's farm in Ireland and bought a few cows in 1918, the year Mike was born, and began his own dairy. He produced and distributed milk throughout Los Angeles for several years and in 1928 decided to move the growing operation to north El Monte. But in the late 1930s a milk price war broke out, and in 1942 he sold the business. Four years later his son Mike, who had been working as a field man for Carnation, resolved to get back into the dairy business on his own. He assumed the operations at Driftwood Dairy in El Monte on April 1, 1946, consisting of one cash-and-carry store and one home delivery route. In it's first month Driftwood grossed $6,800, a fair beginning but a far cry from the over $100 million annual sales of the dairy today. Driftwood prospered over the years, expanding it's milk production and distribution to the point where it's market now includes schools, hospitals, convalescent hospitals, independent markets, restaurants, bakeries, coffee houses, cafeterias and even other creameries.[5] In July 2006, chief executive officer Kelly Olds and chief operating officer Bill Steiner led a group of investors to purchase Driftwood Dairy from the Dolans. Members of the Dolan family continue in management, including president Jim Dolan (Mike's nephew), and Jim's sons John and Jeff.[6]

Driftwood Dairy opened a drive-thru store next to the dairy in 1961.[7] It is an exceptional example of roadside architecture, which was all about attracting passing motorists. While roadside businesses such as gas stations, motels, drive-in restaurants, and drive-thru dairies were often designed in the popular styles of the period, they shared characteristics in their orientation, form, and signage. Visibility from the roadway was critical to roadside businesses. As such, their buildings were typically located as close to the roadway as possible, and often at key intersections. Simple forms such as rectangles or circles were used so that cars could be accommodated on all sides. Canopies to shelter vehicles and customers were usually arranged around the buildings. Signage was a particularly important element of roadside architecture. All surface areas were used for signage including rooftops, to attract passing motorists. Jim Heimann summed up the phenomenon of the style in his book, *California Crazy: Roadside Vernacular Architecture*:

> *Throughout California, the main roads leading into metropolitan areas were the obvious place for refreshment stands, eateries, and other businesses to solicit the auto trade with unusual imagery. Enticing motorists who were driving by at thirty-five miles per hour required eye-catching and flashy solutions. While many commercial ventures warranted locations that would provide a financial return in relation to their investments, these simple roadside businesses could afford to be placed in less desirable and out-of-the-way locations. Hence many of these roadside vernacular buildings could be found scattered in both more out-of-the-way urban and rural settings. The only mandate was that they be situated near or on a highly traveled street or thoroughfare.*[8]

During the 1950s and 60s, a unique form of roadside architecture developed that made dynamic use of a variety of building materials, structural forms, and spectacular signage. Such innovative architecture was utilized in cities throughout the nation, but the style gained a particular dominance in Los Angeles and Southern California. Referred to today as Googie, a term coined from the boldly-designed *Googie's* coffee shop that once graced the Sunset Strip, the style is characterized by contrasting building materials, bold angles, distinctive roof lines, expansive glass windows, and oversized signage. The term "Space Age" has also been applied to examples of Googie architecture in which futuristic shapes and forms utilized for buildings and signage were inspired by the optimism engendered by the popularity of the Space Age itself and the proximity of the aerospace industry in the Los Angeles area. Among other prominent employers in the area, the NASA Industrial Plant, which served as the creative center of a large number of space programs during the 1950s, was located in the city of Downey approximately fifteen miles away from El Monte.

[5] No Author, "The Story of Driftwood Dairy," www.driftwooddairy.com, 2007.
[6] No Author, "Driftwood Dairy History," www.dairyfield.com, 2007.
[7] No Author, "New Dairy Drive-in in El Monte," *Los Angeles Times*, January 29, 1961, p. SGA1.
[8] Jim Heimann, *California Crazy: Roadside Vernacular Architecture*, p.40.

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B10. Significance:

With space travel so much a part of the national conscious, architects decided to give the people a taste of the future. The Space Age style was characterized by designs that depicted motion, such as boomerangs, flying saucers, atoms, starbursts, atoms, and parabolas. These shapes were boldly applied to over-scaled roofs and signs. Materials typically included glass, steel, and neon. The style was particularly popular in Southern California where Tomorrowland at Disneyland exemplified it. Other notable examples of the style, in Southern California include the Theme Restaurant at LAX (1961), the Tramway Gas Station in Palm Springs (1963), the Union 76 Gas Station in Beverly Hills (1965), the Astro Motels in Glendale (1962) and Pasadena (1962), the Bowlium Lanes (1958) in Montclair, and the Cinerama Dome (1963) in Hollywood. These examples are few and far between.

Architectural historian and author Alan Hess includes a reference to the Driftyland Dairy-Port in his book *Googie Redux: Ultramodern Roadside Architecture*, in which he states "many of these dairy drive-throughs originally sat on the edge of the dairy itself, showing the close relationship of roadside and agricultural functions in the early days of suburbs."[9] The dynamic design of the Driftyland Dairy-Port also served as an advertising function, expressing modernity and attracting traveling motorists with the eye-catching arrangement of signage.

At the Driftyland Dairy-Port, a variety of character-defining features were utilized by contractor Theodore Masterson to create a space-age style drive-thru dairy. In previous models, such as those used by Alta Dena Dairy, small rectangular buildings served to house the retail operations. These buildings were often covered by a canopy structure to provide shelter for drive-thru patrons, in much the same way as canopies at gas stations. The Driftyland Dairy-Port makes use of two rectangular buildings for retail operations, but uses a more inventive approach in providing shelter. Serving for a canopy is a large parabolic arched structure that spans approximately fifty feet to extend over both retail buildings. Providing support for this structure are a series of five glu-lam arches, enabling the canopy to span its entire length without any obstruction beneath for supporting posts. This was an important consideration for the site; no obstructions surrounding the retail structures allowed for maximum maneuverability for patrons who would be arriving in their automobiles. In addition to the functionality provided by this type of engineering, the canopy expressed a futuristic image with its seeming lightness and openness. Further adding to the dynamic design, the canopy shell that is formed by a continuous series of wood members does not extend to the ground level, but terminates several feet above to create a sense of anti-gravity or floating that is a hallmark of the Googie style and its Space Age forms. Equally important to the Googie style is the dramatic signage, which in this case matches the Space Age theme with a rocket-base like pylon and space related shapes of star points and the sphere pierced by a needle. In the evolution of the drive thru dairy in Southern California, few examples matched the futurist vision that was achieved at the Driftyland Dairy-Port.

The Driftyland Dairy-Port is emblematic of Southern California car culture from the early 1960s. It is the only example of a drive-thru dairy in El Monte and one of the very few in Los Angeles County. Several of the Alta Dena drive-thru dairies survive, but do not retain their physical integrity. The Driftyland Dairy-Port embodies the distinguishing features of the Space Age style as applied to roadside architecture. The eye-catching pole sign and parabolic arch-shaped canopy are its most distinctive and unique features. The integrity of all three elements: the two stores, the canopy, and the pole sign are retained with no significant alterations apparent.

Completed in 1961, the property is just shy of achieving 50 years of age, the requisite age normally required for landmark listing. In this case, however, sufficient time has passed to understand the property's historical importance because of the growing body of scholarly information on the evolution, impact and influence of the Googie and Space Age style. During their period in which they were actively designed and built, roughly 1949-1965, Googie and Space Age style buildings became an established identity on roadsides throughout Los Angeles County and Southern California; their flamboyant architecture helped define the character and optimism of the postwar era. With fewer examples of these flamboyant works of architecture remaining intact, the surviving

[9] Hess, Alan, *Googie Redux: Ultramodern Roadside Architecture,* p. 208.

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B10. Significance:

examples increasingly serve as the representatives for this architectural movement that was deeply influenced by the culture of Southern California. The Driftyland Dairy-Port is one of the last of its type as a building form designed to serve as a drive-thru dairy. Among the remaining examples of that building form in Los Angeles County, no other structure approaches the dynamic design achieved by the Driftyland Dairy-Port, either through structural design or in signage.

B12. References:

Albright, J.L., "Herd Management in Los Angeles County Commercial Dairies, *Journal of Dairy Science*, vol. 43, No. 11, p. 1696-1705, 1960.

Heimann, Jim, *California Crazy: Roadside Vernacular Architecture*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2001.

Hirsh, Jerry, "Dairies Moving Out of Inland Empire," *Los Angeles Times*, January 9, 2006.

Hess, Alan, *Googie Redux: Ultramodern Roadside Architecture*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2004.

Jakle, John, *Fast Food: Roadside Restaurants in the Automobile Age*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1999.

Liebs, Chester, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture*. Boston: Little Brown, 1985.

Santschi, Darrell, "Drive-through Dairies Hang on in the Inland Region," *The Press-Enterprise*, April 7, 2007.

No Author, "Southern California Car Culture Landmarks, Roadside Treasures Born of the Automobile," *Greatest Hits Maps*. Los Angeles: Automobile Club of Southern California, 2000.

No Author, "New Dairy Drive-in in El Monte," *Los Angeles Times*, January 29, 1961, p. SGA1.

No Author, "Driftwood Dairy History," www.dairyfield.com, 2007.

No Author, "The Story of Driftwood Dairy," www.driftwooddairy.com, 2007.

No Author, "Alta Dena & You," www.altadenadairy.com, 2007.

No Author, "Decline of the Drive-Thru Dairy," http://latimesblogs:latimes.com

www.groceteria.com.

www.roadsidepeek.com.

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State of California — The Resources Agency DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION **LOCATION MAP**	Primary # HRI# Trinomial

Page 7 **of** 7 ***Resource Name or #:** Driftyland Dairy-Port

***Map Name:** ***Scale:** ***Date of Map:**

DPR 523J (1/95) ***Required information**

Display Ad 324 -- No Title
Los Angeles Times (1886-Current File); Jan 29, 1961; ProQuest Historical Newspapers Los Angeles Times (1881 - 1986)
pg. SGA5

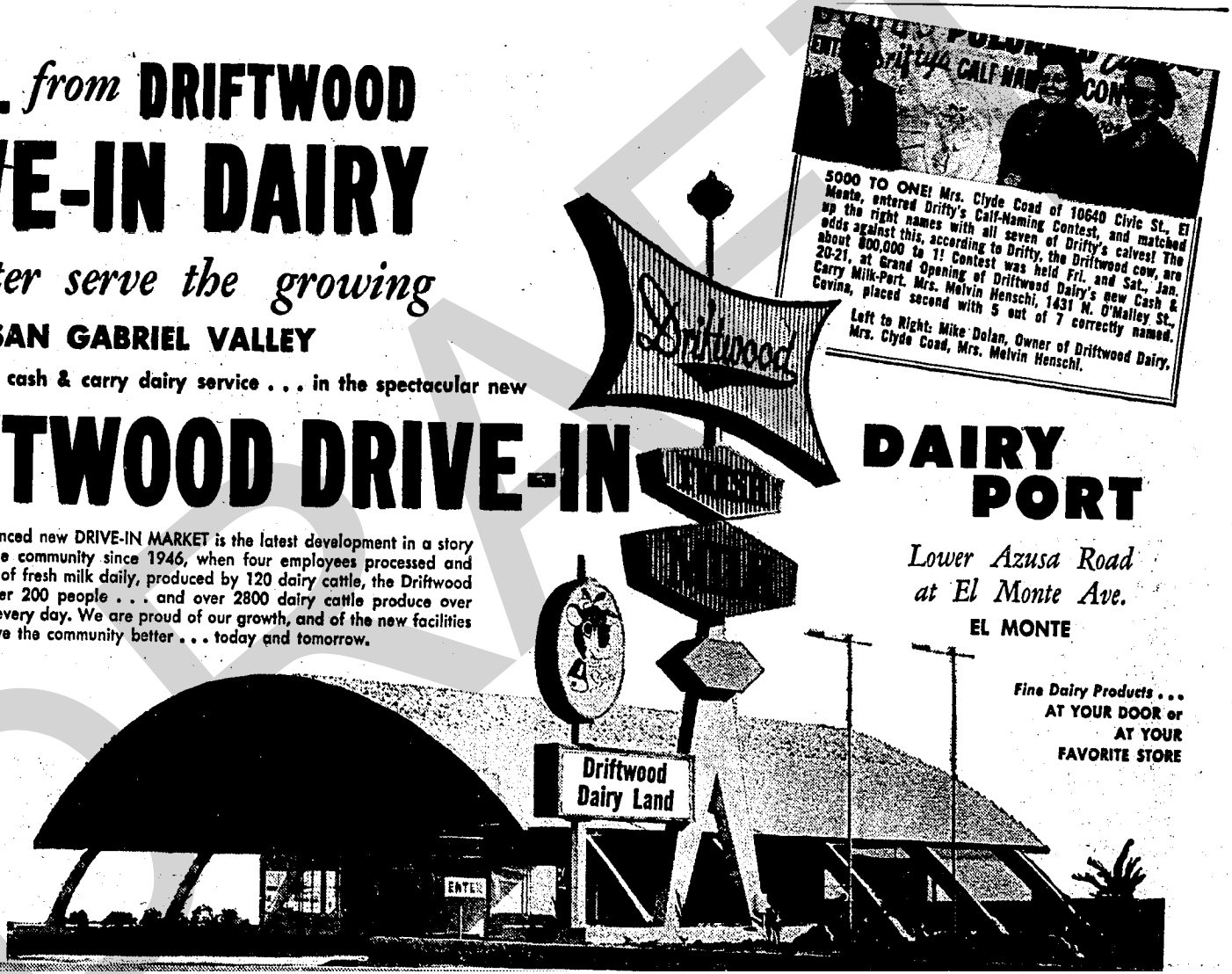
NEW... *from* DRIFTWOOD
DRIVE-IN DAIRY

to better serve the growing

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY

quick, convenient, cash & carry dairy service . . . in the spectacular new

DRIFTWOOD DRIVE-IN DAIRY PORT



5000 TO ONE! Mrs. Clyde Coad of 10640 Civic St., El Monte, entered Drifty's Calf-Naming Contest, and matched up the right names with all seven of Drifty's calves! The odds against this, according to Drifty, the Driftwood cow, are about 800,000 to 1! Contest was held Fri. and Sat., Jan. 20-21, at Grand Opening of Driftwood Dairy's new Cash & Carry Milk-Port. Mrs. Melvin Henschi, 1431 N. O'Malley St., Covina, placed second with 5 out of 7 correctly named.

Left to Right: Mike Dolan, Owner of Driftwood Dairy, Mrs. Clyde Coad, Mrs. Melvin Henschi.

Driftwood Drive-In Dairy Port is the latest development in a story of progress. Serving the community since 1946, when four employees processed and distributed 460 gallons of fresh milk daily, produced by 120 dairy cattle, the Driftwood Dairy now employs over 200 people . . . and over 2800 dairy cattle produce over 13,000 gallons of milk every day. We are proud of our growth, and of the new facilities which enable us to serve the community better . . . today and tomorrow.

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at El Monte Ave.
EL MONTE

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