

PH0674478

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NR	E ONLY
RECEIVED	MAY 8 1979
DATE ENTERED	JUN 26 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

CLIFTON CASA GRANDE BUILDING

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

No. 8 Park Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

clifton

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

4/2

STATE

Arizona

VICINITY OF

CODE

04

COUNTY

Greenlee

CODE

011

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Greenlee County Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 787

CITY, TOWN

Clifton

VICINITY OF

STATE

Arizona

85533

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Greenlee County Recorders Office

STREET & NUMBER

Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

clifton

STATE

Arizona

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Casa Grande Building is a rectangular structure measuring about 45 feet by 55 feet, built of rock and adobe and covered with white stucco. The basically flat roof has a center crown running east and west, thereby sloping the roof north and south to open eaves. The east and west walls extend upward to form parapets finished in fired brick. Portions of two early chimneys remain in the east wall.

The main entrance is centrally located on the west facade and has two four-panel doors which open outward and a small 2-light transom. The west facade has two windows placed symmetrically on either side of the entrance. The north window is a 2 over 2 light doublehung window and the south is a 2 over 4 light casement window. The north facade has two openings situated toward the rear, with 2 over 2 light doublehung windows. The south facade has two openings, also situated near the rear, which have been boarded up. Several other earlier openings in both the north and the south facades have been filled in and stuccoed over.

The interior is composed of a large "L" shaped room on the south and west, and two smaller rooms (about 12 feet by 15 feet each) in the northeast corner. The interior walls are also adobe and the large room has 3 posts midway north and south, running east and west. The posts support the roof structure, apparently replacing an earlier load bearing adobe wall. The interior walls are plastered, the ceilings are covered with wallboard, and the flooring is made of wood planking. In the northeast corner of the small room on the west side is an original fireplace.

Attached to the rear of the building are several additions. Under a shed roof sloping to the east are two adobe additions separated by a breezeway. The gables are infilled with brick, and include vent windows. The north room of this addition includes the beam structure of an earlier flat mud roof. Attached to these additions are three early brick additions located to the east and south, and a later bathroom/toilet.

The original building was a classic Sonoran structure and was symmetrical in plan with an east-west axis. On each side of a central hall were three rooms divided by adobe walls. Each room had a chimney and at least the center rooms had corner fireplaces. The two adobe additions were added very early, and the brick additions were built prior to 1904. The parapet was stabilized in the 1880's with fired brick. Much of the north and south parapet was destroyed when the roof was reworked to provide for eaves. The west facade or front facade once had a hipped 6-post porch covered with wood shingles. Around 1908, a shed porch was added to the north facade and covered with corrugated metal. Both porches have been removed.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1874

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Casa Grande Building is the oldest building in Clifton, and was built at a time when Clifton was virtually a tent city. The rock and adobe structure was built near the confluence of Chase Creek and the San Francisco River, by Henry Lesinsky, who helped establish the copper mining industry in the area, and is considered to be the co-founder of Clifton, along with his brother, Charles.

Henry Lesinsky, a Jewish immigrant from Australia, came to this country in 1858, seeking his fortune in the gold fields of California. After working the panned-out gold placers for several years, he went to the New Mexico Territory to join his uncle, Julius Freudenthal, in a venture which would fulfill his dream of finding a bonanza. The rumors of gold in New Mexico soon were proved fruitless, and Henry and his uncle established a mercantile business in Las Cruces. During the War Between the States, they prospered by selling their wares to Federal troops stationed there. Around 1870, silver was discovered west of Las Cruces, and a town, called Silver City, started up. Henry went to the new mining town and set up a store. He prospered, as the town grew to 5,000 inhabitants in a very short time.

By 1872, Henry was again feeling some wanderlust and set off with a man named Robert Metcalf to search out copper ore, which Metcalf had discovered in an area northwest of Silver City near a tributary of the Gila River in Arizona territory. After avoiding Apache Indians and inspecting the ore body of Metcalf's Longfellow Mine, Henry bought into the mine. Henry's brother Charles, who had been running a successful mercantile business in Tucson, closed up his store to join his brother.

The mine turned out to be quite successful, after an initial period of uncertainty. By 1874, a tent city had sprouted and Henry had established a store at the smelter on Chase Creek, and another store at the Longfellow Mine, 4 miles away. A post office was established at one of the stores, and Charles became Clifton's first postmaster.

By the mid-1870's Henry was attending the mercantile business, while Charles was in charge of the mining operation, after buying out Metcalf. One problem that was encountered was that due to the porphyritic qualities of the copper ore, very high smelting temperatures were required. The existing furnace technology brought up by skilled Mexican furnace men could not handle the high heat. Traditional Mexican furnaces were made of adobe block, which melted down too quickly. After several costly failures, Charles had devised a copper-clad water jacket for the furnaces, eliminating the problem.

In 1874, Henry Lesinsky built a large adobe building as his residence, and to house some of his staff. It was called La Casa Grande, because it was built at a time when

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .178 AC

QUADRANGLE NAME Clifton, Ariz.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:62,500

UTM REFERENCES

A 12 658925 3658700
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See Continuation Sheet

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

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Thomas S. Rothweiler, Registrar

March, 1979

ORGANIZATION

Arizona State Parks Board, Heritage Conservation Section - (602) 255-4174

STREET & NUMBER

1688 West Adams

TELEPHONE

(602) 255-4174

CITY OR TOWN

Phoenix,

STATE

Arizona

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Stowartz H Hall

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

5-3-79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Charles...
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

6-26-79

ATTEST:

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE

6-25-79

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Clifton was composed of mainly tents and small adobe structures, and La Casa Grande, or Big House, was the most imposing structure in town. It was a well-built house, and its thick adobe walls would afford protection against Apache raiders in time of emergency, although no evidence exists to indicate that it was ever needed for this purpose. In the years after Lesinsky left, several brick additions were added to the rear, and to the side of the building. One addition, added prior to 1901, created four sleeping rooms. Between 1901 and 1904, another room was added to the side, and a kitchen was enlarged at the rear of the house.

In 1878, Lesinsky had a jail built, because with the town increasing in size the way it was, it was attracting more ruffians. This jail was unusual, because it utilized one of the numerous caves in the cliffs overlooking the San Francisco River.

In 1882, the Lesinskys sold their holdings in the Longfellow mine group and their smelter to Frank L. Underwood, an investment broker from Kansas City, for 1.5 million dollars. This sale included the Lesinskys' house and their stores. From an original \$10,000 investment 10 years earlier, Henry and his brother had found their bonanza. Henry Lesinsky eventually went to New York City and became an executive officer with the Columbia Bar Lock Typewriter Company. He died in 1924 in New York.

Underwood sold the Longfellow group 6 months later to the Arizona Copper Company, Ltd., of Edinburgh, Scotland. This company worked the mine and smelter for many years, and eventually sold out to Phelps Dodge Corporation, who currently is operating the mine.

After the Lesinskys sold out, the Casa Grande Building continued to serve many useful purposes. It remained as a rooming house exclusively until the turn of the century, when the front portion was converted into offices. M. J. "Judge" Egan, a prominent Clifton attorney, had his offices located there, while he lived in a house built on the cliff at the rear of the Casa Grande Building. In 1917, the Arizona Copper Company donated the Casa Grande Building to the town for use as the YMCA, and the town library. At that time the building was equipped with showers, a game room, and a reading room. From the time it became the YMCA, it served as a public building, particularly as a meeting hall.

In 1932, the American Legion formed a local Post and occupied the building by consent of its new owners, Phelps Dodge. During the tenure of the Harold E. Wilson Post 21, Phelps Dodge donated the electricity for the building. In 1974, the Greenlee County Historical Society was formed, and Phelps Dodge deeded the building and its land to the Society.

The Greenlee County Historical Society has made the Casa Grande Building into a museum and expects to restore the building.

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January 17, 1913

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Francis S. Powers, Correspondence, 1978

Harriet Sweeting, Interview, 1979

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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Verbal Boundary Description:

The Casa Grande Building is situated in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$, NW $\frac{1}{4}$, Sect. 30, Twp. 4S, R 30E, G&SRB&M, Greenlee County, Arizona,

Beginning at a point AC #13, a Clifton survey monument, thence North 18 $^{\circ}$ 34' West 186.81 feet; thence North 34 $^{\circ}$ 21' West 80.23 feet to the true point of beginning; thence North 55 $^{\circ}$ 27' East 96.14 feet; thence North 34 $^{\circ}$ 33' West 10.43 feet; thence North 55 $^{\circ}$ 27' East 12 feet; thence North 37 $^{\circ}$ 27' West 63.57 feet; thence South 55 $^{\circ}$ 27' West 104.93 feet; thence South 34 $^{\circ}$ 33' East 73.83 feet to the point of beginning.