

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

| | |
|------------------|-------------|
| FOR NPS USE ONLY | |
| RECEIVED | MAR 6 1979 |
| DATE ENTERED | JUN 20 1979 |

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC American Flag Post Office and Ranch Headquarters

AND/OR COMMON American Flag Ranch Forest Service Site No. AR-03-05-05-01

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Coronado National Forest

CITY, TOWN Oracle - 5 miles SE VICINITY OF NOT FOR PUBLICATION CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 02

STATE Arizona CODE 04 COUNTY Pinal CODE 021

2 CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | PRESENT USE | |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE | <input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL | <input type="checkbox"/> PARK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> BOTH | <input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SITE | PUBLIC ACQUISITION | ACCESSIBLE | <input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT | <input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED | <input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> NO | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: |

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable) Coronado National Forest

STREET & NUMBER 301 West Congress

CITY, TOWN Tucson, Arizona 85701 STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Pinal County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER None

CITY, TOWN Florence STATE Arizona

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Arizona State Register of Historic Places

DATE January 1972 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Arizona State Parks 1688 W. Adams

CITY, TOWN Phoenix STATE Arizona

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The American Flag Ranch House is a one-story adobe building consisting of four original rooms. The adobe portion of the building is approximately thirty feet by thirty feet square. A later addition has been added to the rear or west side and a screen porch has been added to the front or east side making the overall dimensions approximately 30 x 52 feet. The adobe has been plastered and painted white. The original adobe structure was flat-roofed but it is now topped by a gable roof sloping east and west which is covered by recent asphalt shingles in good condition. Shed roofs of the same material extend the roof over the west addition and the east porch. Among the original features of the house are a fireplace in the north wall along with early 4 by 4 casement and 6 over 6 double hung windows.

Included on the site is a one and one-half story barn of rough wood construction. An open shed is attached to the rear of the barn. The barn is covered by a gabled roof of corrugated metal which has begun to rust in several areas. To the north and east of the barn are log corrals composed of pairs of vertical posts supporting horizontally stacked logs and tied together with wire. The corral gates are recent and made of metal.

Additional features of the site include a well and water tanks, a woven wire fence around the house and a portion of the Oracle to Mt. Lemmon road, which crosses the site north to south separating the house and well from the barn and corrals.

The 2.5 acre site, which is leased to the Arizona Historical Society by Special Use Permit from the Forest Service, retains much of its original setting surrounded by natural vegetation including several scrub oak trees.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599 | <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| <input checked="" 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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Around 1877, Isaac Lorraine, a Frenchman from Martinique, discovered and founded the American Flag Mine, a short distance from several claims held by William Cody, better known as Buffalo Bill, and built his adobe house nearby. As the Apache and Campo Bonito mining groups swelled in population to several hundred, the need for a post office was determined, and on December 20, 1880, a post office was established with Peter F. Loss as the first postmaster, at the house which served as the American Flag Mine's headquarters and residence of Lorraine. Lorraine sold his mining interest to the Richardson Mining Company in 1881. A year later, Lorraine established a cattle ranch and became the postmaster until September, 1885, when Joseph L. Clark, who was to be the last postmaster took over. At that time, Lorraine moved to Phoenix to enter the real estate business. He was reported to be quite successful in his new venture.

By the late 1880s, the town of Oracle, which was established in 1873 as a halfway point between Tucson and the copper mining districts to the north, had grown significantly and needed a post office. The post office at the American Flag Ranch closed down on July 16, 1890, to begin operating in Oracle, five miles to the north.

Since 1910 the Forest Service has owned the land, but the ranch house itself has been owned by the various ranchers who held grazing leases from the Forest Service. The house remained in service throughout the years as a residence for ranch workers. The Mammoth Land and Cattle Company held the first grazing lease, running between 350 and 500 head of cattle from 1914 to 1925 when they sold the lease to William Huggett. In 1945, Mary West obtained the lease, and kept it until 1958, at which time Theodore and Elizabeth Vaitses controlled it. The VY73C Ranch Corporation, owned by Thelma Rowe, took the grazing lease in 1965. On September 23, 1976, Thelma Rowe deeded the ranch house to the Arizona Historical Society.

Evidence indicates this structure to be the oldest surviving territorial post office in the state. Its importance is as a multi-use building relating to the mining industry, ranching, and to postal history.

This building represents a combination of historical uses believed not to be found anywhere else in the state. Considering in addition its age, architecture, and location in the state, as well as its potential use as a small branch museum of the Arizona Historical Society, it appears to warrant National Register status.

8 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Barnes, Will C
 1953 Arizona Place Names, University of Arizona Press 1960
 No author
 1961 Arizona Territorial Post Offices and Postmasters. William Perry Collection, Arizona Historical Society Weson
 Arizona Historical Society
 N.D. Unpublished documents, Tucson, Arizona

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2.5 A

UTM REFERENCES

| | | | | | | | |
|---|------|-------------|------------------|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | 1, 2 | 5 2 6 2 8 0 | 3 6 0, 4 5, 8, 0 | B | | | |
| | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
| C | | | | D | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning at 1/4 rock corner Sec. 8 and 9, T10S, R16E; thence S 80°E, 325' to a power pole, thence N45°E, 376' to a power pole and true point of beginning; thence due north 340 feet to a corner; thence due east 270' to a corner; thence due south 390' to corner; thence due west 270' to corner; thence due north 50' to true point of beginning. This site of 2.5 acres includes main adobe building, barn and rail corrals.

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

Donald G. Wood, Cultural Resource Specialist

1-4-79

ORGANIZATION

U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Coronado National Forest

DATE

792-6869

STREET & NUMBER

301 West Congress

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Tucson

STATE

Arizona 85701

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

Dorothy H. Hall 1-8-78
 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

Dr. Sam R. Fisher

DATE

June 8, 1979

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

| | |
|---|---|
| DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION ATTEST: <i>[Signature]</i> | DATE <i>6-20-79</i> KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER DATE <i>6-19-79</i> |
| KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER <i>[Signature]</i> | |

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 4

State Historic Preservation Officer

N.D. State of Arizona. Unpublished records. Phoenix, Arizona

Pinal County Historical Society

N.D. Unpublished records. Florence, Arizona.