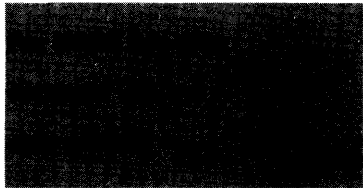


United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

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 Saturno-Breen Truck Garden

and/or common Breen Truck Garden

2. Location

E of College Place

street & number Route 5, Box 10

not for publication

city, town Walla Walla

vic. College Place

congressional district

state Washington

code 053

county Walla Walla

code

3. Classification

Category

___ district

XXX building(s)

___ structure

___ site

___ object

Ownership

___ public

XXX private

___ both

Public Acquisition

___ in process

___ being considered

Status

XX occupied

___ unoccupied

___ work in progress

Accessible

___ yes: restricted

XX yes: unrestricted

___ no

Present Use

XX agriculture

___ commercial

___ educational

___ entertainment

___ government

___ industrial

___ military

___ museum

___ park

XX private residence

___ religious

___ scientific

___ transportation

___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name Eugene Breen

street & number Route 5, Box 10

city, town Walla Walla

vicinity of

state Washington 99362

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Assessor's Office, Walla Walla County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Walla Walla

state Washington

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Washington State Inventory of Cultural
title Resources: Walla Walla County

has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes X no

date 1980

___ federal XX state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

city, town Olympia

state Washington 98504

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed | | |

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Saturno-Breen Truck Garden is situated on the outskirts of College Place, a small community just outside Walla Walla in southeastern Washington. The surrounding countryside is characterized by undulating wheat fields and prosperous truck gardens. The area between the two towns and around the Breen property has undergone increasing residential development in recent years. The Saturno family originally owned 88 acres on this site, but today the farm includes slightly less than eight acres. Still owned and operated by the grandson of Pasquale Saturno, the truck garden's principal crop is Walla Walla onions.

The nominated property includes one residence and seven outbuildings. A chicken coop, later used as a machine shop and garage, was torn down some years ago. All of the remaining structures, but one, were built at approximately the same time, ca. 1892.

The main house was originally a duplex with two entrances and identical interior layouts. However, it was used only briefly as a two-family dwelling. Eventually, the separating wall was removed and it became, in theory and practice, a single family residence. The house is a two-story frame structure with a hipped roof and a full-width front porch. Clad with lapped siding, the house is detailed with turned porch posts, etched glass in the front door window, and some fancy-butt shinglework. The original family residence, built by Pasquale ca. 1880, still stands on the property. It has been moved to the opposite corner of a field from its earlier location, and now stands vacant and unused. It is a modest frame cabin, in a state of some disrepair.

The summerhouse a small frame building with a hipped roof, is behind the main house. It served two functions. One half was used as a summer kitchen and the other was a washroom, again utilized chiefly during the warm months. The summerhouse is now used as storage. The Saturnos had the first telephone in the area. As a result, the phone was in a constant use by neighbors and passersby. Because Pasquale Saturno was irritated by this abuse of his hospitality, he had the phone moved to the summerhouse where he could avoid being involuntarily interrupted.

Nestled behind the summerhouse is the well house. Originally, all the water used on the farm was supplied by a hand dug well sheltered under this structure. On the opposite side of the back lawn is the water tower. It is tall enough so that the 5,000 gallons of water stored there once provided pressurized water in the main house. Neither the well house nor the water tower are being used at present.

At the bottom of the slight rise where these buildings stand and close to the onion field is the root cellar. Unlike the other frame buildings on the farm, this one is constructed of brick. A rectangular, one and one-half story, gable-roof structure, it is also the most aesthetically pleasing of the outbuildings. For many years, grain was stored on the top level. The vegetables, particularly asparagus, were also prepared for sale and shipping there. The Saturno-Breen family grew some grapes along with their vegetables, and supplemented their own with two tons of grapes purchased annually from California. With these grapes, the family made wine on the ground floor of the root cellar. Wine vats, the grape press, and some barrels still remain in the cellar from this facet of their work. The wine was mostly used by the family (especially during Prohibition), but some was sold to the soldiers at Fort Walla Walla. This structure is also currently used for storage.

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 1

Up the hill from the root cellar is the barn with the stables on the far side. There are no animals on the farm now. In one corner of the barn (but with a separate entrance) is the small room where newly emigrated Italians, who had been sponsored by Pasquale Saturno, stayed until they worked off the cost of their passage and/or became accustomed to a new land and way of life. The barn is now used for a garage. The last building in the complex is a small garage located to the north of the main house. Over the years it has housed a long series of interesting vehicles, and still serves as a garage.

All the buildings, including the main house, remain essentially as they were when built. Miscellaneous features on the farm include an old dinner bell close to the summerhouse and several beautiful evergreen trees planted the year the house was built.

Now that the Breen property falls within the corporate limits of College Place, the City wishes to construct a street along the Breen's lane to connect pre-existing Larch and Lambert Streets to the north and south. Because the new street would cut close to the garage and force the removal of various large old trees along the lane, the Breen family opposes the plan.

8. Significance

| Period | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below | | | |
|-----------------|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ___ prehistoric | ___ archeology-prehistoric | ___ community planning | ___ landscape architecture | ___ religion |
| ___ 1400-1499 | ___ archeology-historic | ___ conservation | ___ law | ___ science |
| ___ 1500-1599 | XX agriculture | ___ economics | ___ literature | ___ sculpture |
| ___ 1600-1699 | ___ architecture | ___ education | ___ military | ___ social/ |
| ___ 1700-1799 | ___ art | ___ engineering | ___ music | ___ humanitarian |
| XXX 1800-1899 | ___ commerce | ___ exploration/settlement | ___ philosophy | ___ theater |
| ___ 1900- | ___ communications | ___ industry | ___ politics/government | ___ transportation |
| | | ___ invention | | XXX other (specify) Ethnic history |

Specific dates ca. 1892

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Saturno-Breen Truck garden in Walla Walla is believed to be the first successful commercial truck garden in southeastern Washington. Still owned and operated by its original family, the farm includes eight buildings dating from ca. 1892 and slightly less than eight of its original 88 acres. Pasquale Saturno, later known as Frank Breen, and his partner Joseph Tachi were the first Italians to settle in Walla Walla County, and established the area's first commercial garden in the late 1870's. Saturno and Tachi sponsored the immigration of dozens more Italian families, thus influencing the continued growth of the truck garden industry. The industry remains today a major element of Walla Walla's agriculturally based economy, and the Italians a strong and lively segment of the population.

Italians first arrived in the area now known as Washington State in the 1860's. As a group they apparently shunned agriculture. Farming conditions were very different in this new land--different crops were cultivated, the climate tended to be extreme and unfamiliar, and higher wages were paid by developing business and industry. However, the few Italians who did grow crops became truck farmers, usually on the Pacific slope. The rapid growth of that area created a profitable market for the produce, milk, and poultry grown by the truck farmers. Nearly all were successful. (Nicandri, p. 57)

The Italians who became truck farmers saw their work as a tremendous opportunity. Whole families worked from dawn to dusk on their land. Other immigrant groups also used truck gardens to achieve success--most notably the Japanese, with whom the Italians competed fiercely. Saturno and Tachi helped make Walla Walla an exception to the rule that proximity to a large urban area was a necessary condition for the success of a truck garden.

These first two Italians in Walla Walla were followed by dozens more, many of them sponsored by Pasquale Saturno and Joseph Tachi. In fact, one author asserts that the Italians were (and are) the "backbone and main body of our Walla Walla area garden industry." (Locati, p. 34). In 1901 the historian W. D. Lyman remarked on the "prodigious quantity of all the common vegetables, both supplying the town and shipping in all directions, the vegetables of the 'garden city' being renowned for excellence as well as quality." (quoted in Locati, p. 48) Although most kinds of vegetables were grown here, the "bread and butter" crop then, and now, was onions.

In 1916 the Italian gardeners and fruit growers organized the Walla Walla Gardeners Association to combat corrupt shipping houses and to regulate and standardize the quantity and quality of produce. Another factor which may have encouraged the organization of the Association was the possibility of some anti-Italian feeling and treatment in the area. The Association is now the oldest grower-marketing cooperative in the state still under its original name and charter, (Locati, p. 104)

Pasquale Saturno was born March 3, 1850 on Ischia, an island off the coast of Naples. He immigrated to the United States in 1875. He paused briefly in New York. But after hearing stories of the rich farmland in the west, Saturno came to Walla Walla in 1876. He bought farm land fairly quickly. (In this area he was not typical of the majority of Italian truck farmers who were more likely to lease, rather than purchase, their land [Nicandri, p. 56.]

FORM NOT RECORDED
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

9. Major Bibliographical References

Breen, Douglas and Eugene. Personal interviews. November 1, 1980
Locati, Joe J.: The Horticultural Heritage of Walla Walla County 1818-1977. College Place, WA: Color Press, 1978.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 7.8 acres

Quadrangle name College Place, Washington

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|---------|---|---|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 0 |
| Zone | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | | |

B

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|---------|--|--|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Zone | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | | | | |

C

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

D

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

E

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

F

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

G

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

H

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

Verbal boundary description and justification

Beginning at a point 210 feet North of the Southeast corner of the Southwest quarter of Section 25 in Township 7 North of Range 35, E.W.M., and running thence North on the center

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 Ann H. Costello

Edited by: F. K. Lentz, OA&HP
Olympia, WA

organization private researcher

date November, 1980

street & number 531 Lincoln

telephone (509) 529-8569

city or town Walla Walla

state Washington, 99362

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title *Janet E. Stone*

date 1/4/82

For HCPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date 3/1/82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: *Emmajuene Saxe*

date 2-23-82

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 1

Saturno had married in Italy and, in 1888, brought his wife and three children to Walla Walla. Throughout his life, Saturno sponsored Italians in their desire to leave Italy and settle as gardeners in Walla Walla County. Usually these immigrants were young men who worked as laborers on the Saturno farm. Later, they often returned to Italy momentarily to find a wife. Joseph Tachi was also an active sponsor. Thus it was largely due to the efforts of these two men that a large and lively Italian colony grew up in Walla Walla.

In 1892 his citizenship papers record the name Pasquale Saturno. But at some point over the next few years, Saturno became known as Frank Breen. Although several stories exist to explain this transformation, most center on his difficulty with English and the relative difficulty, for English speakers at least, of his Italian name. His death certificate in February, 1919, lists him as Frank Breen and Breen has since become the family name. At present, Pasquale Saturno's grandson Eugene Breen owns and operates the family truck farm.

In the newspaper notice of his death, Frank Breen was eulogized as the "first man to peddle garden truck in Walla Walla from door to door." But Pasquale Saturno was more than that. He created a new industry in southeastern Washington and influenced the growth of a dynamic ethnic group.

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 1

Lyman, W. D. History of Walla Walla County 2 vols. Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing co., 1918

Nicandri, David L. Italians in Washington State: Emigration 1853-1924. Washington State American Revolution Bicentennial Commission, 1978.

#10 Verbal boundary description continued

line of said Section a distance of 408 feet; thence South $73^{\circ} 26'$ West 1521 feet to a point 1196 feet East of the West line of Section 25; thence South parallel with the West line of Sections 25 and 36 in said Township 7 North of Range 35, 624 feet; thence North 60° East 1392 feet; thence North $76^{\circ} 45'$ East 214 feet to the point of beginning; EXCEPTING THEREFROM HOWEVER, beginning at the Southeast corner of the Southwest quarter of Section 25 in Township 7 North of Range 35, E.W.M. and running thence North along the East line of said Southwest quarter a distance of 618.00 feet; thence South $73^{\circ} 49'$ West 938.00 feet to a point which is the true point of beginning for the lands to be described. From the true point of beginning so ascertained run South 624.00 feet; thence North $60^{\circ} 30'$ East 643.30 feet; thence North 469.90 feet to the point of beginning.