FHR-8-300 (11-78)

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 Wheeler No. 1 Oil Well

and/or common

2. Location

street & number ~~not~~ OK 99 NA not for publication

city, town Drumright vic, x vicinity of congressional district No. 2

state Oklahoma code 40 county Creek code 037

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	_x_ occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
___ building(s)	_x_ private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
_x_ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	NA in process	___ yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	NA being considered	_x_ yes: unrestricted	_x_ industrial	___ transportation
		___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name General American Oil Company (own both surface and mineral rights)

street & number North of city

city, town Drumright x vicinity of state Oklahoma

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of County Clerk

street & number Creek County Courthouse

city, town Sapulpa state Oklahoma

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Cushing Historic Oil Field Survey has this property been determined elegible? ___ yes X no

date 1980 ___ federal _x_ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Oklahoma Historical Society - State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Oklahoma City state Oklahoma

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
_x_ excellent	___ deteriorated	_x_ unaltered	_x_ original site
___ good	___ ruins	___ altered	___ moved date _____
___ fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Wheeler No. 1 was originally drilled to a depth of 2,319 to 2,347 feet. The well was sunk on the west slope of the Drumright Dome (syncline). The west slope of the syncline is gentle as compared to the northern, eastern, and southern slopes being about 75 feet to the mile. Original production for Wheeler No. 1 well came from the sand layer which became known as the Wheeler zone because most of the petroleum during the first two years of production in the Cushing field came from that 75' layer.

The original engine for the pumper on Wheeler No. 1 was a two-cylinder gas powered model. The engine drove a pulley which was connected to a shaft in the gear box which in turn rotated a second shaft which forced the pumper arms to move, or simply an indirect drive process. The pumper arms drove the rods into the well. The oil was then brought to the surface by putting a suction, done by the pumping action, on the vacuum formed in the well. The electric engine now used on the well functions in the same manner except that electrical impulse is used to drive the shaft instead of internal combustion.

Wheeler No. 1 presently pumps about four hours a day and produces one barrel in that time period. It produces from three different zones--Wheeler, the original layer, Layton, and Bartlesville. The Layton layer is approximately 1,700 feet below the surface, the Wheeler is about 2,300 feet deep, and the Bartlesville layer is 2,700 feet down.

Today, a secondary recovery method is used at Wheeler No. 1 well. The process is known as "cracking the well" where some substance such as sulpheric acid or sand is used to break down the mineral deposits that have developed which ruin the porosity of the sand through which the oil flows. Wheeler No. 1 has been sand-fractured. The sand is forced under high pressure to "crack" the mineral buildup.

Wheeler No. 1 is currently connected to a separating unit (one-half mile east) by a 2" pipeline. The separating unit separates the oil from the water and then the oil is piped to storage tanks where Kerr-McGee purchases the oil from General American Company which presently owns Wheeler No. 1 well.

Wheeler No. 1 well is located on a winding dirt road approximately 1,060 feet west-southwest of North Smather Street, Drumright, Oklahoma. It is situated in a clearing approximately 100' x 100' surrounded by trees and brush.

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	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture	
___ 1600–1699	___ architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian	
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music		
___ 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ theater	
x 1900–	___ communications	x industry	___ politics/government	___ transportation	
		___ invention		___ other (specify)	

Specific dates 1912 - present **Builder/Architect** Charles B. Shaffer

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Wheeler No. 1 oil well is significant because it was the first well drilled in the Cushing oil field of Oklahoma. Because of the total output of the Cushing field, Oklahoma led the nation in total production of crude oil from 1915 through 1917. In 1915, the Cushing field produced more than two-thirds of the high grade refinable crude oil then being produced in all of North and South America.

In 1911, Charles B. Shaffer, a Chicago Financier, sent Thomas B. Slick, a young associate, to Oklahoma to acquire oil leases in the old Creek Indian Nation. After three unsuccessful drilling attempts, Slick drilled a fourth well on the Frank Wheeler farm, one mile north of present-day Drumright. After much secrecy, Slick and his drilling crew made public their well log which indicated Wheeler No. 1 was producing 400 barrels daily of high grade crude oil, a statistic which classified the well as a "gusher" in oil field vocabulary. Wheeler No. 1 continued to yield crude oil in a natural flow, without undue gas pressure, which had to be channeled to open earth storage pits because there were no pipelines or storage tank facilities.

The discovery of the new well stimulated lease buyers and oil speculators from throughout the United States to rush to the Wheeler farm site and the Cushing oil field was opened.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Lloyd, Heather M., "Oklahoma's Cushing Field," M.A. thesis, Oklahoma State University, 1976.

Tulsa World, March 24, 28, 29, April 2, 3, 4, 1912.

(continued)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Oilton, OK.

Quadrangle scale 7.5"

UMT References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	14	716518 10	3 19 8 16 3 16 10
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
G			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

Beginning at a point approximately 530' south of the center of Oklahoma Highway No. 99 Bypass and approximately 1,060' west of the center of North Smather Street, Drumright, Oklahoma, proceed east approximately 100' to the edge of timber, then proceed north (con

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county		code
state		code	county		code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dr. George O. Carney, Associate Professor of Geography

organization Cushing Historic Oil Field Survey date 7/1980

street & number Oklahoma State University telephone 405-624-6248 6250

city or town Stillwater state Oklahoma

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

X 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 C E Metcalf 2-8-82

title date

For HCRS use only

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

for Keeper of the National Register date 3/14/83

Attest: Chief date 3/14/83

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Interview with Tom Spradlin, Oilton, Oklahoma, Jan., 1980.

Forbes, Charles, G., "The Origin and Early Development of the Oil Industry in Oklahoma, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1939.

OMB No. 10[illegible]
Exp. [illegible]

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received
date entered

Additional map documentation source is:

Phillips Petroleum Company Map
Bartlesville, Oklahoma
Map Date is October 8, 1931
Oilton District of Cushing Oil Field

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DATE ENTERED

Verbal Description continued:

approximately 100' to the northwest corner of the nominated property. Turn west and proceed approximately 100', then south approximately 100' to point of origin.