

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JUL 3 1978
DATE ENTERED NOV 16 1978

**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 Pearce General Store
AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER SW corner of Ghost Town Trail & Pearce Road
CITY, TOWN Pearce VICINITY OF
STATE Arizona CODE 04 COUNTY Cochise CODE 003
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 2

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" 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 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:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Virginia L. Thurman
STREET & NUMBER Ghost Town Trail
CITY, TOWN Pearce VICINITY OF STATE Arizona 85625

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Cochise County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
CITY, TOWN Bisbee STATE Arizona

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
DATE
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN STATE
_FEDERAL _STATE _COUNTY _LOCAL

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 Pearce General Store stands on the West side of the wide Sulphur Springs Valley near the foot of Pearce Hill and 5 miles East of Dragoon Mountains. The building is on the SW corner of Ghost Town Trail (Main Street) and Pearce Road (Cedar Street). The lumber yard and wagon yard are south of the store, which faces East.

The rectangular, single-story commercial building has a 3 bay facade. The walls are of sun-dried, unfinished adobe 20" - 22" thick. The 180' x 45' building has a gabled roof with a boomtown facade on the East end in pressed metal with finials. A shed roof porch runs the width of the building and the double door entry is flanked by large arched windows and pressed metal pilasters. Windows on the side of the building are also arched, but more narrow.

The store has a 20' x 20' basement with a trap door. The interior of the store is virtually unaltered. The 14' ceiling is covered with embossed metal. Ten foot shelves along the side walls are reached by rolling ladders. Original fixtures remain and also such original items as the pot-bellied stove, safe, roll top desk, 5 drawer cash register, glass showcases, typewriters, meat cutters, and scales. In front of the store is an old gravity feed gas pump. The rear of the store has been recently converted to an apartment and the walls have been reinforced and plastered in desert tan.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input 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

1896

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The former mining camp of Pearce is an almost ghost town with a handful of buildings and a dozen inhabitants. The General Store is the only business in continuous operation since the town's beginning and the only building which is virtually unchanged in over 80 years.

In 1893, John James Pearce of Tombstone started ranching in the Sulphur Springs Valley. He also prospected and in 1894, he staked 5 claims (one for each member of his family) on Pearce Hill. The samples he brought in assayed at \$22000/ton in silver and \$5000/ton in gold. This discovery caused a rush to the area and by January of 1896 a town had started, tentatively named Pearceville.

Building in the new tent town began immediately and among the first merchants were representatives of the firm of P.B. Soto & Brother. Apparently the C.M. Renaud family was also associated with the store, which missed by a few days of being the first one in the town. The first Soto Brothers store was of lumber but 2 months after it was completed the firm was planning a more substantial building. The frame store would be used as a post office. The rest of the town was also growing rapidly. The townsite was laid out by longtime county resident Thomas Fulghum with streets 100' wide and 40' alleys. Several of the smaller buildings were constructed in near-by Tombstone and transported to Pearce.

In 1896, Pearce sold the Commonwealth Mine, as he called the family claim, for about a quarter of a million dollars. Mrs. Pearce, with an eye to the future, secured a guarantee from the new owners (a Philadelphia corporation) that she could run the miners boardinghouse as long as she wished.

By this time the town was at its peak of about 3500 people and the buildings included hotels, a number of commercial establishments, and 2-story community hall. The Soto Brothers store was the most important store and the manager, Tom Chatman, also served as postmaster. Chatman had served in the Kentucky Mounted Infantry during the Civil War. The store served as the mercantile and banking center of the town and employed 3 bookkeepers and 8 clerks to handle the needs of the miners, who were making \$3.00/day.

The mining district was small but the ore was rich and the SP soon built a

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Thurman, Virginia. Correspondence

Zipf, Walter. "Country Store With a History". Sun Valley Spur-Shopper,
Sept. 8, 1977

Tempe Daily News, Sept. 3, 1977

ASLA. Clipping file

Schweikart, Herman. 99 General Stores in Arizona. 1971

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .38

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,2	61,14,7,5	3,5 3,0 2,7,5
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C			

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 22 through 27
Block 4
Pearce townsite

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

Marjorie H. Wilson

National Register Contract Historian

ORGANIZATION

Arizona State Parks

Natural and Cultural Resource
Conservation Section

DATE

11/22/77

STREET & NUMBER

1688 West Adams

TELEPHONE

(602) 271-4174

CITY OR TOWN

Phoenix

STATE

Arizona

85007

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Dorothy H. Hall

TITLE

DATE 6-27-78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Charles A. ...
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

11/16/78

ATTEST:

W. Ray ...
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

11/16/78

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branch line from nearby Cochise to handle the output of the 100-stamp mill. However, by 1904 it was necessary to pump over 4 million gallons of water a day. A cave-in the same year added to the problems and within months the town was nearly deserted. A new company acquired the property in 1909 and, under a succession of owners, the mine was worked sporadically until WWII. Total production for the district, most of which came from the Commonwealth Mine in the years from 1896-1904, was valued at \$10.6 million in copper, lead, silver, and gold.

The town faded, but the General Store continued to serve local ranchers and an increasing number of nostalgic tourists. The business was purchased by K. Albert Roth in 1936 and 3 years later by Irvine Cornish. Cornish sold it in 1942 to Dr. Raymond Dooley, president of Lincoln College in Illinois. In 1968 it was acquired by Mr. and Mrs. John Thurman of Chicago. Thurman died in 1976 and his wife now runs the store. Since his death she has converted the rear storage space of the building into an apartment. Each of the 5 owners has insisted on retaining the 1890s fixtures and appearance of the building and it is an outstanding example of private efforts at preservation.

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