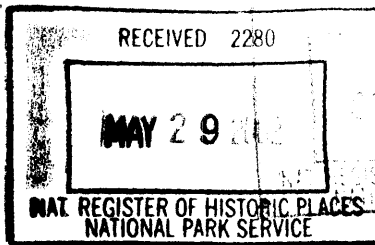


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

748



National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being nominated, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name S.S. Blinky Jr.

other name/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number: 511 West Second Street N/A not for publication
city/town: Casa Grande N/A vicinity
state: Arizona code: AZ county: Pinal code: 021 zip code: 85222

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments).

James W. Dawson, ASST. DIR. 23 MAY 2002
Signature of certifying official Date

ARIZONA STATE PARKS
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments).

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Anne D. Pope 11/20/02

S.S. Blinky Jr.

Name of Property

Pinal County, Arizona

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property Category of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

(Check only one box)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building (s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>one</u>	<u>one</u>	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>one</u>	<u>one</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing).

Historic and Architectural Resources of Casa Grande, Arizona

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/ specialty store

COMMERCE/ business

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/ business

COMMERCE/ warehouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Commercial

Moderne

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls STUCCO

roof ASPHALT

other METAL : Steel

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

1946-1951

Significant Dates

1946

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of Repository: _____

S.S. Blinky Jr.
Name of Property

Pinal County, Arizona
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>12</u>	<u>429040</u>	<u>3638010</u>	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Gabrielle Harlan

organization Metropolis Design Group date August 30, 2001

street & number 2601 North Third Street, Suite 308 telephone (602) 274-9777

city or town Phoenix state: AZ zip code 85004

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **Black and White photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name N/A

street & number N/A telephone N/A

city or town N/A state NA zip code N/A

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instruction, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 7 Page 1

S.S. Blinky Jr.
Pinal County, AZ

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The S.S. Blinky Building is located on a wedge-shaped lot with Highway 84 running directly in front of the property on the north side. It is also located just west of a major intersection with Pinal Avenue. A building designed for commerce, this auto showroom and dealership employs the Moderne style. The method of construction is concrete block with stucco. Significant features are the smooth white stucco wall finish, round windows, large horizontal band of display windows with steel frames, flat roof, and stainless steel railings. Also significant is its use of a mimetic form to express the reference to its architectural vocabulary, specifically Streamline Moderne. The building does this through the use of ship imagery in form and is further emphasized with details such as an anchor and the verbiage "S.S. Blinky" on its "bow." The current condition of property is good, as the building is both well maintained and occupied. The historic integrity in terms of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association is strong; despite additions at the rear of the building, the original building appears to be unaltered from its original design. Originally designed to catch the attention, and therefore the business, of the passing motorist on the busy highway in front of it, the original feeling and association is successfully conveyed even today.

This commercial building is located on the major arterial route, Highway 84, which becomes Florence Boulevard. This route became a focus around which development in Casa Grande centered after the first twenty five years of its development, as development shifted away from the railroad the had defined development prior to this time. The setting is that of a major commercial strip, with the wide highway fronting properties, and buildings set back significantly from the road. This property is on a corner lot with the high density Pinal Avenue bordering the other side. On a wedge-shaped lot, the building is oriented to be seen most dramatically from the east, where the intersection of Highway 84 and Pinal Avenue occurs. From this vantage point the "bow" protrudes to highlight the ship-like form of the building as an enticement to the curious passerby. From the vantage point of Highway 84 itself, the front façade of the building "ship" floats in a sea of asphalt, as it is set back significantly from the front property line with the rear of the building set against the rear property line.

The overall shape of the plan is long and linear; it is in the shape of a boat with a curving "bow" shape at the end of its mostly rectangular plan. Two stories in height, the second story is not a full story. It is small and centered above the first floor, so that its mass protrudes through the massing of the first floor with the roof of the first floor creating an exterior terrace around it. The front façade is broken into four vertical bays through the use of window fenestration patterns and door placement. The building is constructed of concrete block, concrete, stucco, wood, metal, and asphalt. The roof shape is flat with parapets. The structural system is comprised of load bearing concrete block walls and wood framing on a concrete foundation.

Specific features of this building are its exterior second-story deck, windows and doors. The second story exterior deck has two doors opening onto it from the second story, which projects as a mass in the middle of the first story. It has parapet walls encompassing parts of the deck that curve down to deck level in places to reveal metal pipe railing. The building has large fixed single panes steel store display windows that rise from kick plate height to the height of the first floor interior ceiling. These display windows are arranged so that they seem to curve around the curved wall surface in a horizontal bank. They also have roll-down metal shutters attached to the wall above them. Five round, fixed windows at the other end of the front façade are arranged in two groupings of two and three to suggest interior cabins. There is also one round false window as a niche in the façade that continues this porthole theme to the left of these window groupings. There is a single glass and steel frame entry door to the right of the display windows. On the front façade, there is also a large freight door, and two wood plain five-panel doors with a fixed window forming the fifth panel. At the west end of the first floor façade is a metal roll down garage door. There are also two plain wood doors on the front façade of the second floor that open onto the deck.

Important decorative elements are elements associated with both the its Moderne style as well as ship imagery.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Section Number 7 Page 2

S.S. Blinky Jr.
Pinal County, AZ

Indicative of its Moderne style are its long linear massing, rounded corners, round windows, stucco finish and steel railing. Indicative of its mimetic imagery as a ship are features such as a rooftop deck with a steel railing, a second floor cabin with a rooftop deck and crow's nest, a bow with attached anchor, an aerial on deck, the verbiage "S.S. Blinky Jr." painted on the two side facades that resemble the bow of a ship, and the fenestration pattern which utilizes the round windows to evoke portholes. The public area of the interior corresponds with the location of the large display windows at the front of the building and is a low-ceilinged showroom; information about the rest of interior is unavailable. There is one outbuilding on the property, a freestanding car shelter located to the front side of the building with metal posts, a concrete pad, and metal canopy. The first addition to the building was at a date approximated to be 1972; at this time an L-shaped addition was wrapped around the west side and rear of the building. A second addition to the rear was added at a later date. Both of these additions are non-descript, utilitarian additions of concrete block that disappear in contrast to the highly articulated form of the original building. A former carport to the rear, southwest end of the building was enclosed in 1996. There have also been some minor alterations to the original property. Some of the imagery associated with the streamlined Moderne imagery of a ship has been removed such as an element on the second floor roof designed to look like a smokestack. Also removed were some of the other manmade elements associated with the building's original function as an auto showroom and dealership; gas pumps and an overhead cover on the north side were removed. Additions to the west facing and rear side of the building have altered the appearance of the building from one approaching direction on the highway; however, this approach is the secondary approach and not the primary approach from which the building was intended to be viewed. One very minor alteration is the addition of modern metal security doors in front of each of the ground floor doors.

This commercial building is one contributing element to the nomination; the freestanding car shelter to the front side of the property is non-contributing.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 8 Page 3

S.S. Blinky Jr.
Pinal County, AZ

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SUMMARY

S. S. Blinky Jr. is eligible under Criterion A as an intact example of the Roadside Commercial Building property type related to the context of Planning and Development of Casa Grande, 1879-1951, and under Criterion C as an example of Commercial Style (1940-1950) related to the context of Architecture in Casa Grande 1900-1950. The period of the building's significance begins with its date of construction in 1946 and ends with the date of 1951, which coincides with the fifty-year cutoff date for eligibility. Its construction date coincides with the postwar building boom during which Casa Grande's growth was renewed with an emphasis on modern transportation systems. The building is an excellent example of the Commercial Style (1940- 1951) as rendered in Casa Grande at the end of the first half of the 20th Century. This is the only building of the Roadside Commercial property type in the area considered by the Historic Resource Survey- Casa Grande, Arizona (Pry 1998). Its unique architecture makes it a landmark in Casa Grande. The property is in its original location and has good integrity with an unaltered primary façade and compatibly designed additions to the rear of one side. The building possesses the characteristics of the Roadside Commercial Building property type in a setting that retains its historic commercial character and its relationship to a main automotive thoroughfare. The whimsical theme of the building's design is typical of the property type. The building was used for the delivery of goods and services to local residents, and contributes to the general understanding of development patterns in downtown Casa Grande in the early part of the 20th Century.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

From 1946 to 1981, this was the site of Wilson Motors, Inc., owned by C.J. "Blinky" Wilson. Wilson got his start in the automobile business at the Casa Grande Garage, on Sacaton Street, which was started by his father Hugh in 1912. After working with his father during the late 1920's and early 1930's, Wilson formed Pate and Wilson Motors in partnership with Irvin Pate, still at the Sacaton location. In 1935, they moved to a new building somewhere near Five Points. Later in the 1940's Wilson set out on his own to establish Wilson Motors at this location. Wilson served on the Casa Grande city council in 1933-35. According to two informants, an inmate at the Arizona State Prison in Florence designed the building, the arrangements for the work having been made by Art Brooks, a local businessman who also served as warden at the prison.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Number 9, 10 Page 4

S.S. Blinky Jr.
Pinal County, AZ

BIBLIOGRAPHY

See *Section I: Major Bibliographical References* of the Multiple Property Nomination form for Historic and Architectural Resources of Casa Grande, Arizona.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the S.S. Blinky Jr. property is lot - of Block - in the - Plat of Casa Grande, Arizona.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary of the nominated property corresponds with the current ownership of the property.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section Number PHOTOS Page 5

S.S. Blinky Jr.
Pinal County, AZ

Photo # 1 View: Southwest

Photographer: Bob Graham
Date: September 4, 2001
Location of Original Negatives: Metropolis Design Group
2601 N. Third Street, Suite 308
Phoenix, Arizona 85004

Photo # 2 View: West

Photographer: Gabrielle Harlan
Date: December 7, 2000
Location of Original Negatives: Metropolis Design Group
2601 N. Third Street, Suite 308
Phoenix, Arizona 85004

Photo # 3 View: Northeast

Photographer: Gabrielle Harlan
Date: December 7, 2000
Location of Original Negatives: Metropolis Design Group
2601 N. Third Street, Suite 308
Phoenix, Arizona 85004