

942

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum

other names/site number Cabot's Pueblo Museum

2. Location

street & number 67-616 East Desert View Avenue

n/a

not for publication

city or town Desert Hot Springs

n/a

vicinity

state California code CA county Riverside code 065 zip code 92240

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

[Signature] State Historic Preservation Officer 4 NOV 2011
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

California Office of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum
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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property
 (Check only one box.)

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

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	7	buildings
		sites
	2	structures
	1	objects
2	10	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: Mixed Use Residence / General Store / Art
Gallery / Museum

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Mixed Use: Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals / Pueblo

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Conventional wood frame with metal lath and cement plaster; adobe-style blocks (augmented with concrete) on the first floor.

roof: New elastomeric roof

other: Vigas: wood

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

SUMMARY PARAGRAPH

The 4.77 acre site of "Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum" compound contains two Pueblo Revival buildings for their association with Desert Hot Springs pioneer Cabot Abram Yerxa. The two buildings are the "Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum Building and the so-called "Nellie's House." Both buildings reflect the distinctive characteristics of the Pueblo Revival style in their form, plan, and style, and possess high artistic values as they articulate the concepts of the Pueblo Revival design. Several outbuildings and related structures on the site are considered non-contributors due to lack of historic integrity or construction after the period of significance.

SETTING

The Legend posted on the attached Survey of "Miracle Hill" (as Yerxa named the property) lists 20 distinct elements including buildings, structures, objects and site elements; this legend is used to identify the location of the elements found on the property. The compound is located on a steeply sloping site at the foot of a small canyon. In siting the main buildings, Yerxa undertook a large cut-and-fill project. The soil he excavated from the mountain was used to create the flat area where the Courtyard exists today. Water runoff from the Canyon was routed through the property and is expressed in a system of walkways and small bridges that carried the water through the site. A seventy-foot long retaining wall was built under what is now the eastern wall of the Museum Building to hold back the mountain and provide a flat building site; some portions of the first floor utilize this retaining wall and consequently are below grade. Undisturbed natural vegetation is found throughout the undeveloped parts of the site.

BUILDINGS

This property is a 4.77 acre portion of Yerxa's original 160 acre homestead and contains two contributing buildings (Nos. 1 & 2 on the site plan). Seven outbuildings originally constructed by Yerxa (Nos. 3-9), two structures (Nos. 10 & 11) and one object (No. 13) are non-contributors. In addition a contemporary Public Restroom facility (No. 19) has been added to the compound. The restroom is a non-contributor. [See Site Plan].

The most significant buildings on the property are the iconic "Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum" (No. 1) and the house Yerxa built for his mother called "Nellie's House" (No. 2); both buildings reflect the Pueblo Revival style. The Well House (No. 3), Barn / 14-Mile shed (No. 4), Tool Shed (No. 5), Trading Post & Gallery (No. 6), Guild (No. 7), Storage Sheds (No. 8), and Outhouse (No. 9) were used to support the construction of the main Pueblo, but do not reflect the Pueblo style and are not otherwise significant on their own. They are vernacular buildings and some have been significantly altered. The two Ramada-like structures (Nos. 10 & 11) are not original to the compound and are of a fairly recent vintage. The *Waokiye* sculpture (No. 13) is an object that was installed in 1976; the Public Restroom Building (Building No. 9) was built in 2009.

"Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum"

Construction started on Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum ("the Museum") main building in 1941; it was completed and opened to the public as a Trading Post, Museum / Art Gallery and personal residence in 1944. Yerxa continued to build on the property,¹ but the original Museum is essentially unchanged since 1944. A later phase of construction included the addition of a west wing that tied the Museum into what is now the Trading Post. These two elements lack the overt Pueblo-style massing and detailing that characterizes the main building. This addition does not seriously compromise the original building's integrity.

The Museum and "Nellie's House" are both contributing buildings that draw from aspects of the historic Pueblos of the Southwestern United States including the 14th Century Cliff Dwellings of Mesa Verde and the 16th century Taos

¹ Yerxa built his original home on his homestead in 1913 which he called "Eagle's Nest;" it is no longer extant. In 1960 Yerxa began constructing a second compound called "Eagle's Nest 2", located north of the Museum. While never completed, it occupied Yerxa's time so that no other changes occurred to the Museum building and compound.

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Pueblo. Their massing simulates the multi-tier, flat-roofed, baked-clay dwellings with series of rising dwelling units or terraces assembled one atop another. The design emphasizes the massing of earthen-like walls covered with unpainted cement plaster irregularly textured over adobe bricks. The final appearance suggests hand execution with a "time-battered" patina in homage to the weathered deterioration of the extant historic Pueblo dwellings. The massing simulates the pyramidal forms and volumes of historic models. Other details include blunted and rounded corners and edges of walls utilizing hand construction techniques. In profile, the buildings are stepped upward with setback terraces; heights are staggered so that the building appears to have grown organically over time as demand increased, rather than being built to a preconceived architectural plan. Upper volumes are placed asymmetrically above a low-lying ground floor to appear as a series of individual pods that emphasize the corners of the building. The first floor incorporates garden plots contained within free-standing walls beyond the Museum building, integrating the nearby landscape into the overall composition and giving the impression of an agricultural occupation.

Both buildings were designed and built by Cabot Yerxa using new materials and conventional wood frame construction methods, as evidenced by historic photographs. Aged materials salvaged from earlier buildings on the site and abandoned buildings elsewhere in the area give the Museum an impression of age that belies its actual vintage. Throughout his life, Yerxa had a strong interest in Native American culture. He collected images of Native American dwellings that informed the architecture and design of his buildings. It is not clear if he visited the Hopi Reservation prior to embarking on the building project, but a visit in 1959 has been confirmed. Yerxa built the compound from his own sketches; no licensed architects or architectural drawings were used in the Museum's construction.

01 Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum

The four-level Museum is oriented on a north-south axis with a floor plan of approximately 70' in length by a maximum of 30' in width, expressed as a series of small interlocking rectangles, mostly one room deep; it contains approximately 5000 sq. ft. Interior corridors are non-existent, requiring a number of exterior doors, all of which were handmade from wooden planks. Early photographs reveal the building's conventional wood-frame construction covered with building paper, metal lath and cement plaster. Hand-made adobe-style blocks (augmented with concrete) form portions of the first floor walls, most of which were then partially covered with cement plaster for a picturesquely aged effect. The adobe blocks appear only on the principal facade of the building. False parapets, some utilizing the adobe blocks were also introduced in some instances on the upper levels give the building a more substantial appearance.

Each room is unique in shape and size, and no door, window, floor, or wall is the same. Yerxa salvaged, stored and recycled materials on site for use in the construction of the Museum from abandoned homesteads, businesses, and canal and aqueduct construction around the desert. The facades are typically punctuated by from the inside out with regularly-spaced, projecting, undressed rafters known as "vigas" which suggest a pre-colonial post-and-lintel vernacular construction method. The vigas at the first floor utilize recycled telephone poles, while the upper level vigas use smaller lumber. Rough-surfaced wooden lintels above the windows at the ground floor speak of a pre-industrial age. The upper level windows rely on sheet metal flashing in lieu of lintels and are therefore less accurate in their stylistic interpretation.

The buildings utilize both custom-built and recycled windows that range from a few inches in dimension to several feet. All are wood frame, and paint residue suggests that they were originally painted blue, mimicking the painted trim at the Taos Pueblo. The building contains 150 windows of which the predominant window style makes use of pieces of salvaged glass stitched together into wooden frames of recycled lumber. The building's sixty-five doors are as unique as the windows, no two exactly the same size and many cobbled together from scraps of wood and metal. Nearly all of the original doors and windows remain intact with a few new doors strategically replaced for administrative or safety purposes.

The First Floor served as the original trading post and living quarters. The living room floor is packed earth. A massive stone fireplace was the only source of heat. The dining room, Yerxa's "Kiva room," is important because it symbolized the Native American concept of a prayer room. It housed a simple table, benches, and some Native American artifacts. The rest of the first floor housed the foyer, office, kitchen, workroom, storage rooms and a second well head. All of these remain intact. Some of the personal living areas have been converted into administrative offices.

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The Second Floor interior was decorated for Mrs. Yerxa's use. It contains a kitchen, bedroom, bath, and sitting room. Attached to this area, via a staircase to the third story, is a meditation room. The rest of the second floor was used as exhibition space to house the art work and relics Yerxa collected on his travels. The two areas are connected by a small passageway. The Third Floor, located above the art gallery, is a large room with open windows running its length. It offers views of the surrounding mountains and was used by Mrs. Yerxa as a classroom. Access is by roof and/ or ladder, as there is no interior access to these rooms. Additionally on this level there are three artist's live/work rooms that were used by visiting artists. The Fourth Floor consists of only a single room with its own outdoor terrace, accessible only by a ladder.

The original roofs and terraces were a patchwork of wood and tar that have been replaced starting in the mid-1908s and again in 2005, the last time with an elastomeric waterproof membrane.

02 Nellie's House / Guest House

Built after the Museum building, as a free-standing three-story adjunct to the Museum to which it is connected by a short pathway; this is the only other building in the compound built in the Pueblo style. The flat roofed building has an ell-shaped floor plan (approximately 12' x 20') at the first floor, and a rectangular plan above. It was built of conventional wood framing faced with building paper, metal lath and cement plaster, and is unpainted. Unlike the Museum building, it has no "adobe" blocks. Doors and windows are wood framed and no two are alike. Like the Museum, this building has Vigas at each level, as well as some timbers that extend a few feet beyond the building face that were used as shade structures.

The lowest level contained the Living Room, Kitchen and Bathroom, while the second level was for sleeping. The third level has a single room and an outdoor terrace. In retrospect, the building was not really an appropriate design as the home for an elderly person, although it was built for Yerxa's aged mother Nellie who was invited by Yerxa to live at the compound with her son in 1939. Having died in 1942, it is unlikely that Nellie Yerxa ever occupied the building. It is currently vacant.

OUTBUILDINGS (Non-Contributors)

03 Well House

The 5' x 15' rectangular, split-level, flat-roofed well house was built in 1949 and houses the second well head on the property. It is a conventional cement plaster faced wood-frame structure with a two-level flat roof and is a vernacular structure with no stylist markers. Soil erosion has resulted in the need for additional structural support for the foundation in the form of a retaining wall of concrete masonry units. This is not the location of the original wells Yerxa discovered when he homesteaded the property. It was built above the Museum site - its location was intended to maximize the effect of gravity when bringing water to the building. The piping was divided into solid and perforated sections.

04 14-Mile Shed / Barn

This 10' x 12' flat-roofed wood-sided building bears a strong resemblance to the original barn Yerxa built on the property in the homesteading years, and for good reason. Yerxa wrote about disassembling the original barn and reusing the lumber to build a new barn at the new location. The barn was used to house burros and had a slightly elevated hay loft. It is now used for storage.

05 Tool Shed

The 9' x 12' gable-roofed tool shed is a wood-framed windowless structure with rough board siding. The building has no finished interior walls but much of the interior framing is faced with discarded tin newspaper plates, as well as other miscellany. The original roof of the tool shed has been replaced with a new roof of corrugated plastic topped with rough boards have been placed above the plastic but not attached to the structure. A jerry-rigged structure composed of unfinished flat boards with a wooden support structure shades the entrance.

06 Yerxa Residence / Trading Post

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Early photographs show this building, originally built in 1939, as two sheds used by Yerxa as a sleeping room and garage until construction of the main building was complete. Today, it is a one-story flat-roofed building expanded to approximately 16' deep and 26' long. It lacks any overt stylistic references and appears to have been built from salvaged materials. It bears no resemblance to the original. The roof was resurfaced in 2009 with an elastomeric coating. The use of the building was changed in 2008 when it was converted to "Cabot's Trading Post & Gallery and The Desert Hot Springs Visitor's Center."

07 Guild

The 12' x 16' shed-roofed Guild is a wood frame structure with cement plaster exterior finish and a one-story rectangular plan. Originally conceived as a classroom and artist studio; today it is used for storage. It has an unusual assortment of mismatched windows that appear to have been salvaged from several other buildings. A series of rough-hewn projecting rafters may have originally supported a shade structure along the building's south façade, but today only the badly deteriorated projecting rafters have survived. A hand-made door composed of diagonal boards provides entrance to the building.

08 Metal Sheds

Two 10' x 12' utility sheds with galvanized sheet metal walls and roof are connected to each other with a rustic flat-roofed shade structure that has no walls. The sheds have no stylistic markers. The gable roofs have a slight overhang, and the buildings each have a single-lite window in a wood frame on each wall. Originally thought to be used to house livestock, today the sheds are used to store salvaged building materials.

09 Outhouse

This small (3' x 5') flat-roofed, cement plaster sided, wood-framed structure with a single door is no longer in use. It has the same aged and deteriorated projecting rafters that may have supported a shade structure

10 Ramada

This 7' x 8' structure is made of four recycled telephone poles used as columns that support a roof system of wooden beams and rafters that carry a reclaimed board roof. Traditional Ramadas used Palm fronds for roofs.

11 Lean-to

This lean-to is an 8' x 16' shade structure used as an open air room made of six 6 x 6 posts and wooden beams and rafters that support a reclaimed board roof.

13 Waokiye

"Waokiye" is a 43 foot tall Lakota Sioux Indian totem carved from a 750 year-old Sequoia Redwood created by sculptor Peter Toth. It is the 27th of 70 of the "Whispering Giants" series created by Toth from 1971 to the present. Installed and dedicated in 1978, it is a non-contributing object.

LANDSCAPE FEATURES

There are some original fences, outdoor concrete seating, concrete framed planters, a wooden bridge, and walkways made of concrete and railroad ties between and around the buildings, some of which were created by Cabot Yerxa. There have also been a number of new landscape additions.

INTEGRITY ANALYSIS: With the exception of the previously cited roof resurfacing, new interior doors in the administrative area, and the new Public Restroom facility, no character-defining changes have been made to the contributing buildings since they were built.

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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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

B: Persons

C: Architecture

Period of Significance

1941-1944

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Yerxa, Cabot Abram

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Yerxa, Cabot Abram

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 grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance (justification)

The years 1941 to 1944 encompass the construction of Cabot's Old Pueblo Museum and Nellie's House in 1944.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

Cabot's Indian Pueblo Museum is eligible for National Register listing under Criterion B (Persons) based upon the significance of Cabot Abram Yerxa to the development of Desert Hot Springs and Criterion C (Design / Construction) because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Pueblo Revival architectural style, and period and possesses high artistic values. Level of significance is local under both criteria. The period of significance is from 1941-1944, the construction period of both contributing buildings on the site.

Criterion B: Cabot Abram Yerxa was an itinerant adventurer whose actual life as a Postmaster and merchant was far overshadowed by his avocations as an artist and a Native American advocate. He was born on the Lakota Sioux Reservation in the Dakota Territories and grew up working in his father's general store. In 1900, at the age of 16, encouraged by his father, Yerxa left his parents' home to establish a cigar store in Nome, Alaska. Later travels included Europe, Cuba, and Central and South America. He homesteaded in California, becoming one of the nine earliest families to settle the Desert Hot Springs area. His discovery of the first hot spring led to the founding of the city of Desert Hot Springs. He built two iconic Pueblo-style buildings, "Cabot's Old Pueblo Museum" and "Nellie's House" remarkable buildings that survive today largely with a high level of architectural integrity.

Criterion C: Both the Museum and "Nellie's House" embody the distinctive characteristics of the Pueblo Revival style in their form, plan, and style, and both also possess high artistic values because they fully articulate the concepts of the Pueblo Revival design. So convincing are these buildings as examples of the style that they are often mistaken for their historic counterparts. In this way, they express the aesthetic ideal of the ancient Pueblos.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

B: Cabot Yerxa.

Cabot Yerxa (1883-1965) was the first of two sons born to Frederick² and Nellie Yerxa, in the Dakota Territories. A second son Harry was born in 1885. The family lived at the parents' trading post on the Sioux Indian Reservation. Growing up on the reservation led Yerxa to a lifelong appreciation of Native American culture. In 1900, at the age of 16, encouraged by his father, Yerxa left his parents' home to establish a cigar store in Nome, Alaska. He stayed on in Nome and developed a friendship with the Inpiack Indians who taught him to communicate in their native language. He was able to act as an interpreter for them. It was here that he began his collection of Native America artifacts. He returned to his family in 1901. By 1906 the Yerxa family had relocated to Minneapolis / St. Paul where Frederick Yerxa owned general stores in Fargo and Minneapolis / Saint Paul. While in Minneapolis, Cabot Yerxa met and married Mamie Katherine Carstenson (1885-1956) the daughter of a German immigrant. A subsequent move brought the entire family to southern California where they became prosperous citrus ranchers. By 1910 Yerxa and Mamie (along with his brother Harry) were living in Sierra Madre where he was employed as the Postmaster, a position he held from 1906 until 1914. In 1914, Yerxa's only son Rodney (1914-1985) was born at Queen of Angels Hospital in Los Angeles. A disastrous freeze in 1913 ended the citrus venture and left the family destitute; Cabot's parents moved to northern California, where Frederick Yerxa died in 1914, a broken man.

Having lost everything, Cabot Yerxa set out reestablish himself by homesteading in a remote corner of Riverside County, an optimistic choice for a penniless married man. He made his way inland to the present site of Desert Hot Springs where he homesteaded a 160-acre parcel of land, along with nine other families who were among the first settlers in the then unnamed area. The Homestead Act / Desert Lands Act required a claimant to live on the land for at least seven months out of the year and undertake an active search for water. During this period, a chance meeting with early Palm Springs artist Carl Eytel (1862-1925) stimulated Yerxa's artistic leanings, but more importantly, it helped him address the

² Frederick Robinson Yerxa (1861- 1913) was born in New Brunswick, Canada, but moved to Boston as a youngster. He met and married a bookkeeper, Nellie Cabot (1859-1942) of Cambridge and together they moved to the Dakota Territories to operate an Indian Trading Post. He owned mercantile stores (groceries and sundries) in Fargo and Minneapolis / Saint Paul, and made some daring investments including bankrolling his son Cabot's cigar store in Nome, Alaska, real estate investment in Cuba after the Spanish-American War and buying orange groves in California. The citrus freeze of 1913 was his financial undoing. He moved to Northern California "for his health," then died shortly after in Oakland at age 51. The official cause of death was cirrhosis of the liver. He was survived by his wife, Nellie, two sons, Cabot and Harry, and a granddaughter, Jeanetta, Harry's daughter.

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homesteading water requirement. The two became fast friends and occasionally went on "sketching trips" together, hiking the desert and creating drawings and paintings of the sparse landscape. Traveling and creating art became an avocation³ for Yerxa, who continued to travel, draw and paint for the rest of his life. It was during one of these forays that Yerxa met an older Native American man who told him of the location of a well used by his ancestors that was located on Yerxa's property. Digging by hand, at 36 feet, he found water with a temperature that registered a surprising 132 degrees; Yerxa had rediscovered the Native American hot spring that would give the town its name. Fears of arsenic in the hot water well prompted Yerxa to excavate another well 600 feet away from the first. This time he discovered a cold water spring. To commemorate the two wells, in 1914, he named the area "Miracle Hill" for the miracle of hot and cold springs in close proximity to one another. The wells were on either side of a spur of the San Andreas Fault, which had produced the phenomenon.

When not in residence at his homestead, Yerxa found work in Seattle as a machinist's helper to finance life in the desert for the rest of the year. To provide for his family, Yerxa undertook the construction of a family home which he named "Eagle's Nest." It lay just south of the present Museum location on a parcel that is no longer part of the Museum property. It was a one-room partial dugout with a fireplace and a door built of concrete, wood, and stone. Yerxa and his family lived here for four years. The building no longer exists, but photographic documentation of it survives including an image in the Museum archive of young Rodney Yerxa, age 1, being bathed in a small tub in front of the home.

On April 6, 1917, only four years after Yerxa established his homestead, the United States declared war on Germany. In 1918 Yerxa, who was by then working as a machinist's helper in Seattle, essentially abandoned his marriage and at age 36, (too old to be drafted, but not too old to enlist) registered for service in the US Army on September 12. Fortunately, the United States' part of the War and Yerxa's tour of duty were brief. Hostilities ceased on November 11, 1918 and he was released in 1919. Returning to California, he settled at a crossroad near Blythe, 120 miles east of his homestead, where he once again served as Postmaster and operated a general store until 1924. However, his wartime travels had stimulated his wanderlust and by July 1919 Yerxa obtained a passport for a 3 month trip to Cuba, the West Indies and South & Latin America.

After five years near Blythe, Yerxa returned to "Eagles Nest" for about one year and in May 1925 (at age 42), he boarded up his desert home and embarked upon a year-long solo tour of Europe. The itinerary included Europe (England, Ireland, Scotland & Wales and France via the Channel Islands), Central America (Guatemala), Cuba, Panama and other unnamed places. Equipped with a backpack, \$700 and press credentials from four magazine and three newspapers, he secured journalistic discounts for World's Fairs in both Paris and London where he also found time to attend art schools. This trip encouraged his passion for art, a passion that would continue for the rest of his life.

Returning from his European tour, Yerxa relocated to Moorpark, California, in the Simi Valley, about 150 miles west of Desert Hot Springs, once again operating a general store. It was here in November 1932 that Yerxa first encountered L. W. Coffee, a Danish emigrant who had been a successful land developer throughout California. Yerxa's stories about his desert homestead provided the inspiration for Coffee's first visit to the area, although Yerxa had not been there in several years. Coffee made his way to the area and found only two original homesteaders remaining on their property. Coffee visited Cabot's property and was disappointed to discover it in a neglected state; the well had collapsed, the windmill had blown down and there was no sign of water. However, he was convinced of the existence of the hot springs and recognized their therapeutic value. For almost twenty years Yerxa's hot spring discovery had been ignored until Coffee realized its value. He soon formed a land trust and opened the first residential subdivisions in the area. Inasmuch as Coffee is not the subject of this nomination, it is sufficient to say that in time he became the founder of the town of Desert Hot Springs. His story is told in *The Waters of Comfort* by John J. Hunt.

Encouraged by Coffee's progress in the area, in 1937 Yerxa returned to the desert and invited his mother to stay part of the year there with him. After completing the Museum building, he built her a separate house (referred to as "Nellie's

³Yerxa never had a career as a professional artist, although he writes of selling an occasional painting to buy building supplies. He was essentially self-taught although, according to Edan Milton Hughes' *Artists in California (1786-1946)*, he is known to have taken classes at the Academies Julian and Colarossi in Paris; he is not listed as a "Notable Graduate" of either institution. He has no exhibition record and his works are not found in museums or important private collections.

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House") behind the Museum. After her death, Yerxa used the building as a guest house. With this move, he returned to the desert for good, thus beginning the final phase of his life and the creation of his best-known work. Yerxa began construction on a building for use as his temporary residence before he began building the Museum circa 1939; today that original building has been replaced by the Trading Post.

On September 1, 1939, with the invasion of Poland by Germany, WWII began. Attacked by the Japanese in 1941, the United States joined the war effort. This time it was Yerxa's son Rodney who went to war, but Yerxa contributed to this war effort while funding the construction of his Museum by obtaining a position as Post (Maintenance) Engineer at the Torney Army Hospital. The government's need for an army hospital for war casualties was satisfied when the army purchased Palm Springs' El Mirador Hotel, converting it into a hospital, named for a brigadier general.

The same year the U.S. entered the war, Yerxa, then nearly 60 years old, began his greatest achievement. He conceived of a rambling four-story structure he originally called the "Cliff Dweller's Pueblo" to be patterned after those built by the Hopi Indians of the Southwest⁴. Of the construction of the Museum Building Yerxa wrote: "About 1941, I started construction of the Old Indian Pueblo. Alone, and single-handed because there was no money for a man or a machine, I took a pick and shovel, cut down a side of the mountain, put the earth in a wheelbarrow, and filled up a gulch to make a front yard. That took me nearly a year. Then I put the building in the hole that I had made, because I wanted the Pueblo to fit into the mountainside."⁵ The building program was for a multi-use facility that included a residence, museum, art gallery, and trading post which would combine aspects of Yerxa's lifelong interests. The Museum houses an unusual collection of objects Yerxa acquired in his world travels, working as a merchant, seaman, stagecoach driver, newspaper man, cook, dog-sled driver, prospector and other things. Sealskin boots, Indian buffalo shields, and even a Chinese fly-chaser hung among the many curios on the walls. His goal was to build a Hopi-style structure that displayed Native American pieces made for use and for decoration, which would also be a tourist destination, shelter and income. The Museum building was almost entirely hand built by Yerxa, with some help from his son Rodney and occasional help from day laborers.

Designed and built without the use of any formal architectural documents - for all his skills, Yerxa had no formal architectural training - the building is a successful interpretation of the Pueblo Revival style. In an attempt to give the building a patina of age, many of the "adobe" bricks are left exposed on the primary façade, although this conceit does not occur on the secondary elevations. He even emphasized his attempt at creating an aged appearance for the building by naming the newly completed building "Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo." Completed in 1944, Cabot continued to add other buildings to the compound, including minor additions to the Museum itself as time, health and funds permitted. Yerxa wrote about salvaging and recycling materials from his earlier buildings, as well as from other abandoned homesteads. Near the back of the property he built small warehouses to store the accumulation of recycled materials. He continued to work sporadically on the compound's buildings including the "Eagles' Nest 2" property until his death in 1965.

In 1945 Cabot married his second wife, Portia Graham (1884-1969), a lecturer and teacher of metaphysics and Theosophy at a school she founded in Morongo Valley. She was a member of a well-to-do Texas family, but had spent most of her adult life in California studying and teaching culture, religion, and philosophy. A stabilizing force in Yerxa's life, their home became a destination for metaphysical visitors; Portia became well-integrated into Yerxa's desert life and he into her philosophical life. For the next twenty years their compound attracted thousands of everyday tourists, artists and important visitors, to whom Yerxa would lecture about Native American culture. In 1964 Cabot was Grand Marshall in the Desert Hot Springs Memorial Day Parade. Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum is commemorated by historical markers from the City of Desert Hot Springs and Riverside County where it is listed as a Point of Historical Interest. In 1980 the Museum was designated a State of California Point of Historical Interest.

When Yerxa died in 1965, at the age of 81, the city flags were flown at half-mast and the offices were closed to attend his funeral. His love for the town of Desert Hot Springs was expressed through his civic activities as a founder the American Legion Post and the DHS Improvement Association. He was an authority on the early days of the community and was

⁴ Prior to the construction of the Pueblo, there exists no documentation regarding any Yerxa visits to Hopi Reservations. He did however have a collection of photographs which served as inspiration / information for the design of the Pueblo.

⁵ Cabot Abram Yerxa, *On the Desert Since 1913*, p 176.

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frequently called upon to relate his experiences of the birth of Desert Hot Springs to clubs and organizations. He wrote a column called "On the Desert", in the now defunct newspaper, the *Desert Sentinel*. A collection of these columns has recently been published in book form as *Cabot Abram Yerxa, On the Desert Since 1913*.

C: Pueblo Revival Style.

The Pueblo Revival Style of architecture originated with architect A. C. Schweinfurth's unbuilt design for a hotel in Montalvo, California in 1894; in the next few years he followed up with designs for the Hearst Ranch in Pleasanton and a number of other buildings in the style. Pueblo Revival is considered to be the only architectural style consciously developed to attract tourists. Derived from 18th and 19th Century Spanish Colonial architecture, combined with native Pueblo vernacular and aspects of the Mission Revival, Pueblo style buildings are instantly recognizable and unmistakable. They are generally massive and archless and their single-most character-defining feature is the projecting roof beam or viga, or at least a log professing to be such. The presence of the viga alone is enough to identify the building as Pueblo Style. When not actually built of adobe, Pueblo Revival buildings try to give the appearance of adobe. Some have battered walls, most with blunt angles and irregularly rounded parapets; walls are always faced with cement plaster when they are not of adobe. Roofs are always flat, and if the building is multi-story, the levels are stair-stepped to recall the traditional Indian community house. In the Coachella Valley there were numerous examples of the style, including Harry William's design for the Desert Magazine Building and successful resorts like Ranch Club and the Cahuilla Hotel. Even L. W. Coffee's Bath House in Desert Hot Springs was a simplified Pueblo style building. However, none of these early examples survives.

Distinctive characteristics are the physical features or traits that commonly recur in individual types, periods, or methods of construction. To be eligible, a property must contain enough of those characteristics to be considered a true representative of a particular type or period. Both the Museum and "Nellie's House" embody the distinctive characteristics of the Pueblo Revival style in their form, plan, and style, and both also possesses high artistic values because they fully articulate the concepts of the Pueblo Revival design. They are often mistaken for their historic counterparts, a circumstance that rarely happens with less convincing examples of the style. In this way, they express the aesthetic ideal of the ancient Pueblos.

These two buildings are massive and archless and their single-most character-defining feature is the projecting roof beam or viga, or at least wooden members professing to be such. The presence of the viga alone is enough to identify the buildings as Pueblo Style. While not actually built of adobe, these Pueblo Revival buildings give the appearance of adobe. They have battered walls with blunt angles and irregularly rounded parapets that are faced with cement plaster. Roofs are always flat, and both buildings are multi-story with levels that are stair-stepped to recall the traditional Indian community house. Access to the uppermost floors was provided by exterior ladders in the traditional Pueblo style.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

After his death in 1965, Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum was left vacant for four years during which it was abandoned and unmaintained. Cole Eyraud, a member of the DHS City Council and an admirer of Yerxa's, saved the Pueblo from demolition. He purchased the property and restored it to its original state. He continued to offer tours and run the trading post. After Eyraud's untimely death, his family donated the property to the City of Desert Hot Springs to be used as an historic museum and art gallery. Four years after Eyraud's untimely death it was donated to the city. The museum and the collection is owned and maintained by the city. The non-profit "Foundation" operates the gift store, raises funds, and hosts special events. Guided tours are held daily and the museum is staffed with volunteers. Artists are welcome in the courtyard to pursue work in pottery, needle arts, photography, papermaking, wood carving, flint knapping, basketry, *Plein Air*, and other artistic endeavors. For decades the City of Desert Hot Springs has recognized Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum as the hub of the community and the site of its most celebrated pioneer.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Brown, Richard, H., *Cabot Abram Yerxa, On the Desert Since 1913*. Desert Hot Springs, Cabot Museum Foundation: 2011.

Hughes, Edan Milton, *Artists in California (1786-1946)*. Sacramento, Crocker Art Museum: 2002.

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Hunt, John J., *The Waters of Comfort: The Story of Desert Hot Springs, California*. Desert Hot Springs: Little Morongo Press. 1997.

Maron, Barbara. *City of Dreams, Desert Hot Springs*. Cabot Foundation, Desert Hot Springs: 2008.

----- *Cabot Yerxa, A Life In Art*. Cabot Museum Foundation, Desert Hot Springs: 2008.

----- *Cabot Yerxa, A Life of Compassion*. Cabot Museum Foundation, Desert Hot Springs: 2009.

Wampler, Jan, *All Their Own: People and the Places They Built*. Cambridge: Schenkman Co.: 1977.

Wiffen, Marcus, *American Architecture Since 1780, A Guide to the Styles, Revised*. Cambridge, MIT Press: 1992.

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4.77 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>11</u>	<u>547860</u>	<u>3757480</u>	3	<u>11</u>	<u>548060</u>	<u>3757400</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>11</u>	<u>548060</u>	<u>3757400</u>	4	<u>11</u>	<u>547860</u>	<u>3757400</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Rectangular plot 330' X 660', 30' less an offset on East Desert View Avenue (see Site Plan).

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Riverside County APN: 6420613-0

This 4.77 Acre property is all that survives of the 160 acres that originally comprised the Yerxa Homestead of 1913.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Patrick McGrew

organization McGrew / Architecture date August 2011

street & number 674 South Grenfall Road telephone 760 / 416 7819

city or town Palm Springs state CA zip code 92264

e-mail patrickmcgrew2@gmail.com

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum

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Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum

City or Vicinity: Desert Hot Springs

County: Riverside

State: CA

Photographer: Jane Pojawa

Date Photographed: June 5, 2008

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0001.tif: Main courtyard, front of building, left view
- CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0002.tif: Main courtyard, front of building, right view, showing entrance
- CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0003.tif: Southeast corner front of main building with tower
- CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0004.tif: Southeast view of main building
- CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0005.tif: Eastern elevation of main building
- CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0006.tif: "Altar in the Wilderness" garden
- CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0007.tif: Outbuilding: Well House
- CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0008.tif: Northeast elevation of main building
- CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0009.tif: Outbuilding: "Nellie's House"
- CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0010.tif: Northwest view of main building
- CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0011.tif: Western elevation of main building
- CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0012.tif: Detail view of Western elevation
- CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0013.tif: Outbuilding: Barn
- CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0014.tif: Outbuildings: Tool Shed and outdoor room
- CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0015.tif: Southwestern elevation

Property Owner:

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

name City of Desert Hot Springs Contact: Jason Simpson. Email: jsimpson@cityofdhs.org

street & number 65-950 Pierson Boulevard telephone 760-329-6411 ext 234

city or town Desert Hot Springs state CA zip code 92240

MAILING ADDRESS:

City Of Desert Hot Springs

65-950 Pierson Blvd.

Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240-0104

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. 460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: CALIFORNIA, Riverside

DATE RECEIVED: 11/10/11 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 12/02/11
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/19/11 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/26/11
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 11000942

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: Y NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

 ACCEPT RETURN REJECT DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RETURN

SEE ATTACHED COMMENTS

RECOM./CRITERIA RETURN
REVIEWER PAUL R. LUSIGNAU DISCIPLINE HISTORIAN
TELEPHONE 202-354-2229 DATE 12/19/11
DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

CABOT'S OLD INDIAN PUEBLO MUSEUM

Riverside County, CA

National Register of Historic Places - Return Comments:

The current documentation is being returned for substantive and technical revisions. The basic documentation meets the requirements for National Register listing and approval will be completed upon correction of the items noted below and resubmission of the nomination to the National Register.

Category and Resource Count:

A nomination containing so many individual resources may be categorized as either *Buildings* or *District*. In cases where there are large numbers of non-contributing resources over a large area, *district*, is probably preferred.

The Resource Count should be revised to add the modern Public Restroom Building #19 as a noncontributing building. (Please note, the narrative refers to this building as both #19 and #9 on page 3).

See discussion under Description (below) for additional concerns regarding the resource count and the justification for non-contributing status for the Yerxa-era outbuildings. Any changes made to the contributing status of the outbuildings should be noted in the corresponding resource count.

Why is there no #12 in the resource inventory? The current inventory includes Structures #10 and #11, and Object #13, but no #12. (If the numbering is maintained a footnote should be used to clarify the omission.)

Historic /Current Function

The Historic Functions need to be selected from the list of standardized terms found in the NR guidance.

Recommend-

Historic Function: *Domestic/Single Dwelling*
 Commerce/Specialty Store
 Recreation/Entertainment/Museum
Current Function: *Recreation/Entertainment/Museum*

Description

It is unclear from the narrative why several of the outbuildings are characterized as non-contributing resources. Resources such as the barn, tool shed, Guild, and outhouse contain no references to date of construction. Nor is there evidence of significant alterations to these buildings. While the Ramada, lean-to shelter and Waokiye sculpture are all noted as modern additions outside the era of Yerxa's involvement in the property, the other resources clearly reflect his continuing development of the museum/trading post complex. While the Museum and Nellie's House represent the high-point of Yerxa's efforts at creating a unique desert resource, the vernacular outbuildings were never-the-less contributing components to his enterprise and its ongoing operation during his lifetime. Unless unnoted alterations or deterioration have significantly reduced the historic character of the resources (in which case this should be clearly described), reconsideration should be given to the status of these buildings. (See the Significance discussion below.)

Significance

The Areas of Significance should be listed as: Exploration/Settlement, Architecture and Entertainment/Recreation.

[All selections need to be taken from the list of standardized terms provided in the National Register guidance. Exploration/Settlement refers to Yerxa's early homesteading activities (Criterion B) that led to the later development of the community of Desert Hot Springs, while Entertainment/Recreation reflects his later development and use of the Cabot's Pueblo Museum complex as a focal point for local tourism/art activities.

The current period of significance encompasses only the initial construction period for the Museum complex from 1941 to 1944. Such a narrow focus on the two, "high-style" Pueblo-Revival style resources does a disservice to the remaining resources associated with Yerxa's long term (20-year) operation of the property. While they may not reflect unique architectural works, these other buildings clearly illustrate the vernacular construction forms and materials he used in the development of his distinctive desert complex. More importantly, an expanded period of significance would acknowledge the significant use of the site by Yerxa and his wife from the early 1940s up to his death in 1965, as a destination for visiting artists, tourists, museum visitors, and his important contributions as a local author. These themes are certainly more directly connected to and conveyed by the extant resources than his earlier 1913 homesteading activities, which largely occurred off site. Reconsideration should be given to expanding the period of significance to incorporate the full extent of the historic associations of the complex as well as the full extent of standing resources associated with Yerxa's efforts.

Maps

The nomination and verbal boundary description make note of a Site Plan, but none was provided with the nomination. The sketch map that was enclosed with the nomination provides information on current site usage, but does not provide any correlation between the resources and site numbers described in the narrative and the corresponding map features. It is impossible to identify which outbuildings are which on the current map. It would also be useful for the map to include information related to the photographic coverage of the site, including photo # and vantage point. The somewhat confusing nature of the vernacular resources and overall property layout could be made clearer with the inclusion of such information. The map also provides no information regarding the boundaries of the site (see below).

Verbal Boundary Description/Justification:


The current verbal boundary description makes reference to an enclosed Site Plan, which was not provided with the nomination. Without the scaled map showing the proposed bounds it is unclear how the 330' x 660' plot is configured around the nominated resources.

Photographs

The current photographs date from 2008. When submitting older prints, it is preferable that they be accompanied by a note or letter attesting to their reflection of the current conditions of the property.

Photo #13 is labeled as "Outbuilding-barn," but does not appear to show a "wood-sided building," as noted in the narrative.

If you have questions regarding these comments, please contact me directly at the number listed below.



Paul R. Lusignan, Historian
(for) Keeper of the National Register
(202) 354-2229

12/19/2011
Date

s:\nr\cabots.rtn

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum

other names/site number Cabot's Pueblo Museum

2. Location

street & number 67-616 East Desert View Avenue

n/a

not for publication

city or town Desert Hot Springs

n/a

vicinity

state California code CA county Riverside code 065 zip code 92240

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide x local

[Signature]
Signature of certifying official/Title

State Historic Preservation Officer

30 JAN 2012
Date

California Office of Historic Preservation

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

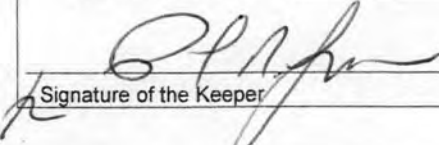
Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum
 Name of Property

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 County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
 other (explain:)


 Signature of the Keeper

3/2/2012
 Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
 (Check only one box.)

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
 public - Local
 public - State
 public - Federal

- building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	7	buildings
		sites
	2	structures
	1	objects
2	10	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

- Domestic / Single Dwelling
Commerce / Specialty Store
Recreation / Entertainment / Museum

- Recreation / Entertainment / Museum

Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum
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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals / Pueblo

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Conventional wood frame with
metal lath and cement plaster; adobe-style
blocks (augmented with concrete) on the
first floor.

roof: New elastomeric roof

other: Vigas: wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

SUMMARY PARAGRAPH

The 4.77 acre site of "Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum" compound contains several buildings, two of which qualify as historic resources for their association with Desert Hot Springs pioneer Cabot Abram Yerxa. The two buildings are the "Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum Building and the so-called "Nellie's House." Both buildings also qualify as historic resources because they reflect the distinctive characteristics of the Pueblo Revival style in their form, plan, and style, and possess high artistic values as they articulate the concepts of the Pueblo Revival design.

SETTING

The Legend posted on the attached Survey of "Miracle Hill" (as Yerxa named the property) lists 20 distinct elements including buildings, structures, objects and site elements; this legend is used to identify the location of the elements found on the property. The compound is located on a steeply sloping site at the foot of a small canyon. In siting the main buildings, Yerxa undertook a large cut-and-fill project. The soil he excavated from the mountain was used to create the flat area where the Courtyard exists today. Water runoff from the Canyon was routed through the property and is expressed in a system of walkways and small bridges that carried the water through the site. A seventy-foot long retaining wall was built under what is now the eastern wall of the Museum Building to hold back the mountain and provide a flat building site; some portions of the first floor utilize this retaining wall and consequently are below grade. Undisturbed natural vegetation is found throughout the undeveloped parts of the site.

BUILDINGS

This property is a 4.77 acre portion of Yerxa's original 160 acre homestead and contains two buildings (Nos. 1 & 2 on the site plan) which are contributors. Seven outbuildings (Nos. 3-9), two structures (Nos. 10 & 11) and one object (No. 13) are non-contributors due to lack of integrity of materials and design, or construction outside the period of significance. In addition a contemporary Public Restroom facility (No. 19) has been added to the compound that does not qualify as a contributor. [See Site Plan.]

The most significant buildings on the property are the iconic "Cabot's Old Pueblo Museum" (No. 1) and the house Yerxa built for his mother called "Nellie's House" (No. 2); both buildings reflect the Pueblo Revival style. The Well House (No. 3), Barn / 14-Mile shed (No. 4), Tool Shed (No. 5), Trading Post & Gallery (No. 6), Guild (No. 7), Storage Sheds (No. 8), and

Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum

Riverside, CA

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Outhouse (No. 9) were used to support the construction of the main Pueblo, but do not reflect the Pueblo style. They are vernacular buildings and have been significantly altered or are badly deteriorated, often with missing elements, since the death of Cabot Yerxa. The two Ramada-like structures (Nos. 10 & 11) are not original to the compound and were recently constructed; exact date is unspecified, but was well after Yerxa's death and the end of the period of significance. An unpaved open space referred to as the "Courtyard." (#12) The *Waakiye* sculpture (No. 13) is an object that was installed in 1976; the Public Restroom Building (Building No. 19) was built in 2009. Items 14-18 are contemporary parking lots and gates. Item 20 is an open space called the "Meditation Garden" that is used for wedding rentals.

Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum (Summary)

Construction started on Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum ("the Museum") main building in 1941; it was completed and opened to the public as a Trading Post, Museum / Art Gallery and personal residence in 1944. Yerxa continued to build on the property,¹ but the original Museum is essentially unchanged since 1944. A later phase of construction included the addition of a west wing that tied the Museum into what is now the Trading Post. These two elements lack the overt Pueblo-style massing and detailing that characterizes the main building. This addition does not seriously compromise the original building's integrity.

The Museum and "Nellie's House" are both contributing buildings that draw from aspects of the historic Pueblos of the Southwestern United States including the 14th Century Cliff Dwellings of Mesa Verde and the 16th century Taos Pueblo. Their massing simulates the multi-tier, flat-roofed, baked-clay dwellings with series of rising dwelling units or terraces assembled one atop another. The design emphasizes the massing of earthen-like walls covered with unpainted cement plaster irregularly textured over adobe bricks. The final appearance suggests hand execution with a "time-battered" patina in homage to the weathered deterioration of the extant historic Pueblo dwellings. The massing simulates the pyramidal forms and volumes of historic models. Other details include blunted and rounded corners and edges of walls utilizing hand construction techniques. In profile, the buildings are stepped upward with setback terraces; heights are staggered so that the building appears to have grown organically over time as demand increased, rather than being built to a preconceived architectural plan. Upper volumes are placed asymmetrically above a low-lying ground floor to appear as a series of individual pods that emphasize the corners of the building. The first floor incorporates garden plots contained within free-standing walls beyond the Museum building, integrating the nearby landscape into the overall composition and giving the impression of an agricultural occupation.

Both buildings were designed and built by Cabot Yerxa using new materials and conventional wood frame construction methods, as evidenced by historic photographs. Aged materials salvaged from earlier buildings on the site and abandoned buildings elsewhere in the area give the Museum an impression of age that belies its actual vintage. Throughout his life, Yerxa had a strong interest in Native American culture. He collected images of Native America dwellings that informed the architecture and design of his buildings. It is not clear if he visited the Hopi Reservation prior to embarking on the building project, but a visit in 1959 has been confirmed. Yerxa built the compound from his own sketches; no licensed architects or architectural drawings were used in the Museum's construction.

01 Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum (Completed circa 1941.) Contributing.

The four-level Museum is oriented on a north-south axis with a floor plan of approximately 70' in length by a maximum of 30' in width, expressed as a series of small interlocking rectangles, mostly one room deep; it contains approximately 5000 sq. ft. Interior corridors are non-existent, requiring a number of exterior doors, all of which were handmade from wooden planks. Early photographs reveal the building's conventional wood-frame construction covered with building paper, metal lath and cement plaster. Hand-made adobe-style blocks (augmented with concrete) form portions of the first floor walls, most of which were then partially covered with cement plaster for a picturesquely aged effect. The adobe blocks appear only on the principal facade of the building. False parapets, some utilizing the adobe blocks were also introduced in some instances on the upper levels give the building a more substantial appearance.

¹ Yerxa built his original home on his homestead in 1913 which he called "Eagle's Nest;" it is no longer extant. In 1960 Yerxa began constructing a second compound called "Eagle's Nest 2", located north of the Museum. While never completed, it occupied Yerxa's time so that no other changes occurred to the Museum building and compound.

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Each room is unique in shape and size, and no two doors, windows, floors, or walls are the same. Yerxa salvaged, stored and recycled materials on site for use in the construction of the Museum from abandoned homesteads, businesses, and canal and aqueduct construction around the desert. The facades are typically punctuated by from the inside out with regularly-spaced, projecting, undressed rafters known as "vigas" which suggest a pre-colonial post-and-lintel vernacular construction method. The vigas at the first floor utilize recycled telephone poles, while the upper level vigas use smaller lumber. Rough-surfaced wooden lintels above the windows at the ground floor speak of a pre-industrial age. The upper level windows rely on sheet metal flashing in lieu of lintels and are therefore less accurate in their stylistic interpretation.

The buildings utilize both custom-built and recycled windows that range from a few inches in dimension to several feet. All are wood frame, and paint residue suggests that they were originally painted blue, mimicking the painted trim at the Taos Pueblo. The building contains 150 windows of which the predominant window style makes use of pieces of salvaged glass stitched together into wooden frames of recycled lumber. The building's sixty-five doors are as unique as the windows, no two exactly the same size and many cobbled together from scraps of wood and metal. Nearly all of the original doors and windows remain intact with a few new doors strategically replaced for administrative or safety purposes.

The First Floor served as the original trading post and living quarters. The living room floor is packed earth. A massive stone fireplace was the only source of heat. The dining room, Yerxa's "Kiva room," is important because it symbolized the Native American concept of a prayer room. It housed a simple table, benches, and some Native American artifacts. The rest of the first floor housed the foyer, office, kitchen, workroom, storage rooms and a second well head. All of these remain intact with exception of a former guest apartment where Cole Eyraud lived as caretaker from 1968-1994, which has been converted into administrative offices.

The Second Floor interior was decorated for Mrs. Yerxa's use. It contains a kitchen, bedroom, bath, and sitting room. Attached to this area, via a staircase to the third story, is a meditation room. The rest of the second floor was used as exhibition space to house the art work and relics Yerxa collected on his travels. The two areas are connected by a small passageway.

The Third Floor, located above the art gallery, is a large room with open windows running its length. It offers views of the surrounding mountains and was used by Mrs. Yerxa as a classroom. Access is by the interior stairs at the back of the Indian gallery. Additionally on this level there are three artist's live/work rooms that were used by visiting artists.

The Fourth Floor consists of only a single room with its own outdoor terrace, accessible only by a ladder.

The original roofs and terraces were a patchwork of wood and tar that have been covered with an elastomeric waterproof membrane.

02 Nellie's House / Guest House (Completed circa 1939.) Contributing.

Built after the Museum building, as a free-standing three-story adjunct to the Museum to which it is connected by a short pathway; this is the only other building in the compound built in the Pueblo style. The flat roofed building has an ell-shaped floor plan (approximately 12' x 20') at the first floor, and a rectangular plan above. It was built of conventional wood framing faced with building paper, metal lath and cement plaster, and is unpainted. Unlike the Museum building, it has no "adobe" blocks. Doors and windows are wood framed and no two are alike. Like the Museum, this building has vigas at each level, as well as some timbers that extend a few feet beyond the building face that were used as shade structures.

The lowest level contained the Living Room, Kitchen and Bathroom, while the second level was for sleeping. The third level has a single room and an outdoor terrace. In retrospect, the building was not really an appropriate design as the home for an elderly person, although it was built for Yerxa's aged mother Nellie who was invited by Yerxa to live at the compound with her son in 1939. Nellie briefly lived in the building before her death in May, 1942. It is currently vacant pending restoration.

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OUTBUILDINGS

03 Well House (Originally completed 1949; later alterations undocumented.) Non-contributing due to loss of integrity.

The 5' x 15' rectangular, split-level, flat-roofed well house was built in 1949 and houses the second well head on the property. It is a conventional cement plaster faced wood-frame structure with a two-level flat roof and is a vernacular structure with no stylistic markers. Soil erosion has resulted in the need for additional structural support for the foundation in the form of a retaining wall of concrete masonry units. This is not the location of the original wells Yerxa discovered when he homesteaded the property. It was built above the Museum site - its location was intended to maximize the effect of gravity when bringing water to the building. The piping was divided into solid and perforated sections. Integrity Analysis: The structure has undergone numerous undocumented and inconsistent alterations.

04 14-Mile Shed / Barn (Original construction date unknown; relocated property). Non-contributing due to relocation and loss of original materials.

This 10' x 12' flat-roofed wood-sided building bears a strong resemblance to the original barn Yerxa built on the property in the homesteading years, and for good reason. Yerxa wrote about disassembling the original barn and reusing the lumber to build a new barn at the new location. The barn was used to house burros and had a slightly elevated hay loft. It is now used for storage. Integrity Analysis: The structure has been relocated and recently resurfaced with fresh lumber. It therefore lacks integrity of location and materials.

05 Tool Shed (Construction date unknown). Non-contributing due to loss of integrity.

The 9' x 12' gable-roofed tool shed is a wood-framed windowless structure with rough board siding. The building has no finished interior walls but much of the interior framing is faced with discarded tin newspaper plates, as well as other miscellany. The original roof of the tool shed has been replaced with a new roof of corrugated plastic topped with rough boards have been placed above the plastic but not attached to the structure. A rustic structure composed of unfinished flat boards with a wooden support structure shades the entrance. Integrity Analysis: Building has been altered and is badly deteriorated.

06 Yerxa Residence / Trading Post (Completed 1939). Non-contributing due to loss of integrity. Altered beyond recognition

Early photographs show this building, originally built in 1939, as two sheds used by Yerxa as a sleeping room and garage until construction of the main building was complete. Integrity Analysis: Today, the building is a one-story flat-roofed structure expanded to approximately 16' deep and 26' long. It lacks any overt stylistic references and appears to have been built from materials gathered from a salvage yard on site. It bears no resemblance to the original. The roof was resurfaced in 2009 with an elastomeric coating. The use of the building was changed in 2008 when it was converted to "Cabot's Trading Post & Gallery and The Desert Hot Springs Visitor's Center."

07 Guild (Construction date unknown). Non-contributing due to loss of integrity.

The 12' x 16' shed-roofed Guild is a wood frame structure with cement plaster exterior finish and a one-story rectangular plan. Originally conceived as a classroom and artist studio, today it is used for storage. Integrity Analysis: the building has an unusual assortment of mismatched windows that appear to have been salvaged from several other buildings. A series of rough-hewn projecting rafters may have originally supported a shade structure along the building's south façade, but today only the badly deteriorated projecting rafters have survived. A hand-made door composed of diagonal boards provides entrance to the building.

08 Metal Sheds (Construction date unknown, but appear to be of relatively recent vintage.) Non-contributing.

Two 10' x 12' utility sheds with galvanized sheet metal walls and roof are connected to each other with a rustic flat-roofed shade structure that has no walls. The sheds have no overt stylistic markers but appear to have been built by a shed manufacturing company such as "Butler Buildings," and trucked to the site. The gable roofs have a slight

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overhang, and the buildings each have a single-lite window in a wood frame on each wall. Originally thought to be used to house livestock, today the sheds are used to store salvaged building materials.

09 Outhouse (Construction date unknown) Non-contributing due to loss of integrity.

This small (3' x 5') flat-roofed, cement plaster-sided, wood-framed structure with a single door is no longer in use. Integrity Analysis: The structure has the same aged and deteriorated projecting rafters that may have supported a shade structure, but there is no documentation to support this possibility,

10 Ramada (Construction date unknown, but appears to be of relatively recent construction) Non-contributing.

This 7' x 8' structure is made of four recycled telephone poles used as columns that support a roof system of wooden beams and rafters that carry a reclaimed board roof. Traditional Ramadas used Palm fronds for roofs.

11 Lean-to (Construction date unknown, but appears to be of relatively recent vintage) Non-contributing.

This lean-to is an 8' x 16' shade structure used as an open air room made of six 6 x 6 posts and wooden beams and rafters that support a reclaimed board roof.

12. Courtyard (Construction date unknown) Non-contributing.

The triangularly-shaped Courtyard is open on the south, but enclosed by the Pueblo on the east and the Trading Post on the west. It is unpaved and features rustic planter borders framed by heavy timbers.

13 Waokiye (Installed in 1978). Non-contributing.

"Waokiye" is a 43 foot tall Lakota Sioux Indian sculpture carved from a 750 year-old Sequoia Redwood created by sculptor Peter Toth. It is the 27th of 70 of the "Whispering Giants" series created by Toth from 1971 to the present. Installed and dedicated in 1978, it is a non-contributing object due to installation after the period of significance.

14 - 18 Parking Lots and Gates (Recent construction) Finding: Non-contributing.

19 Public Restrooms (Construction date: 2009) Finding: Non-contributing.

20 Meditation Garden (Construction date unknown) Finding: Non-contributing.

The designation "Meditation Garden" is something of a misnomer today because there is no actual garden, and the space is not used for meditation, which requires solitude. Instead, the area is used for weddings and other large gatherings. Various references to Cabot's "Meditation Tower", "Meditation Canyon" and "Meditation Garden" are found in the archives of the Museum. The "Garden" was an outdoor area from which the "Tower" could be viewed from the east window. Once described as "rock gardens with many healthy varieties of desert plant life" today the area appears neglected and forlorn. A historic gateway to the area bore the lettering "Altar in the Wilderness". Today, a gate structure of undetermined vintage features manufactured trellis sections and a warning sign that says "Watch for Rattlesnakes." Due to the lack of documentation, and the contemporary nature of the built objects, the area is non-contributing.

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LANDSCAPE FEATURES

There are some original fences, outdoor concrete seating, concrete framed planters, a wooden bridge, and walkways made of concrete and railroad ties between and around the buildings, some of which were created by Cabot Yerxa. There have also been a number of new landscape additions.

INTEGRITY ANALYSIS: With the exception of the previously cited roof resurfacing, new interior doors in the administrative area, and the new Public Restroom facility, no character-defining changes have been made to the two contributing buildings since they were built. The architectural integrity of the remaining structures has been severely compromised by their deteriorated condition that includes missing elements, due to a lack of maintenance. Additionally, visual inspection indicates a number of undocumented alterations have taken place.

S SOUTHWORTH

COLLECTION

100% Cotton Fiber

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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 grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Exploration / Settlement (Criterion B)

Entertainment / Recreation

Architecture (Criterion C)

Period of Significance

1913-1965

Significant Dates

1913-1965

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Yerxa, Cabot

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Yerxa, Cabot

Period of Significance (justification)

The years 1913 to 1944 encompass the homesteading of the property by Yerxa beginning in 1913 and ending with the completion of Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum in 1944. Later construction on the site is considered non-contributing.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Museum and "Nellie's House" appear to qualify for National Register listing at the local level under Criterion B (Persons) based upon the significance of Cabot Abram Yerxa to the development of the community and Criterion C (Design / Construction) because they embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, and period and possess high artistic values.

Criterion B: Cabot Abram Yerxa was an itinerant adventurer whose actual life as a Postmaster and merchant was far overshadowed by his avocations as an artist and a Native American advocate. He was born on the Lakota Sioux Reservation in the Dakota Territories and grew up working in his father's general store. In 1900, at the age of 16, encouraged by his father, Yerxa left his parents' home to establish a cigar store in Nome, Alaska. Later travels included Europe, Cuba, and Central and South America. He homesteaded in California, becoming one of the nine earliest families to settle the Desert Hot Springs area. His discovery of the first hot spring led to the founding of the city of Desert Hot Springs. He built two iconic Pueblo-style buildings, "Cabot's Old Pueblo Museum" and "Nellie's House" remarkable buildings that survive today largely with a high level of architectural integrity.

Criterion C: Both the Museum and "Nellie's House" embody the distinctive characteristics of the Pueblo Revival style in their form, plan, and style, and both also possess high artistic values because they fully articulate the concepts of the Pueblo Revival design. So convincing are these buildings as examples of the style that they are often mistaken for their historic counterparts. In this way, they express the aesthetic ideal of the ancient Pueblos.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

B: Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

Cabot Yerxa (1883-1965) was the first of two sons born to Frederick² and Nellie Yerxa, in the Dakota Territories. A second son Harry was born in 1885. The family lived at the parents' trading post on the Sioux Indian Reservation. Growing up on the reservation led Yerxa to a lifelong appreciation of Native American culture. In 1900, at the age of 16, funded by his father, Yerxa left his parents' home to establish a cigar store in Nome, Alaska. He stayed on in Nome and developed a friendship with the Inupiak³ Indians who taught him to communicate in their native language. He was able to act as an interpreter for them. It was here that he began his collection of Native American artifacts. He returned to his family in 1901. By 1906 the Yerxa family had relocated to Minneapolis / St. Paul where Frederick Yerxa owned general stores in Fargo and Minneapolis / Saint Paul. While in Minneapolis, Cabot Yerxa met and married Mamie Katherine Carstenson (1885-1956) the daughter of a German immigrant. A subsequent move brought the entire family to southern California where they became prosperous citrus ranchers. By 1910 Yerxa and Mamie (along with his brother Harry) were living in Sierra Madre where he was employed as the Postmaster, a position he held from 1906 until 1912. Cabot homesteaded on his claim in October 1913. In 1914, Yerxa's only son Rodney (1914-1985) was born at Queen of Angels Hospital in Los Angeles. A disastrous freeze in 1913 ended the citrus venture and left the family destitute; Cabot's parents moved to northern California, where Frederick Yerxa died in 1914, a broken man.

² Frederick Robinson Yerxa (1861- 1913) was born in New Brunswick, Canada, but moved to Boston as a youngster. He met and married a bookkeeper, Nellie Cabot (1859-1942) of Cambridge and together they moved to the Dakota Territories to operate an Indian Trading Post. He owned mercantile stores (groceries and sundries) in Fargo and Minneapolis / Saint Paul, and made some daring investments including bankrolling his son Cabot's cigar store in Nome, Alaska, real estate investment in Cuba after the Spanish-American War and buying orange groves in California. The citrus freeze of 1913 was his financial undoing. He moved to Northern California "for his health," then died shortly after in Oakland at age 51. The official cause of death was cirrhosis of the liver. He was survived by his wife, Nellie, two sons, Cabot and Harry, and a granddaughter, Jeanetta, Harry's daughter.

³ The Iñupiat (plural) or Iñupiaq (singular) and Iñupiak (dual) (from iñuk 'person' - and -piaq 'real', i.e., 'real people') or formerly Inupik.

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Having lost everything, Cabot Yerxa set out reestablish himself by homesteading in a remote corner of Riverside County, an optimistic choice for a penniless married man. He made his way inland to the present site of Desert Hot Springs where he homesteaded a 160-acre parcel of land, along with nine other families who were among the first settlers in the then unnamed area. The Homestead Act / Desert Lands Act required a claimant to live on the land for at least seven months out of the year and undertake an active search for water. During this period, a chance meeting with early Palm Springs artist Carl Eytel (1862-1925) stimulated Yerxa's artistic leanings, but more importantly, it helped him address the homesteading water requirement. The two became fast friends and occasionally went on "sketching trips" together, hiking the desert and creating drawings and paintings of the sparse landscape. Traveling and creating art became an avocation⁴ for Yerxa, who continued to travel, draw and paint for the rest of his life. It was during one of these forays that Yerxa met an older Native American man who told him of the location of a well that was used by his ancestors that was located on Yerxa's property. Digging by hand, at 36 feet, he found water with a temperature that registered a surprising 132 degrees; Yerxa had rediscovered the Native American hot spring that would give the town its name. Fears of arsenic in the hot water well prompted Yerxa to excavate another well 600 feet away from the first. This time he discovered a cold water spring. To commemorate the two wells, in 1914, he named the area "Miracle Hill" for the miracle of hot and cold springs in close proximity to one another. The wells were on either side of a spur of the San Andreas Fault, which had produced the phenomenon.

When not in residence at his homestead, Yerxa found work in Seattle as a machinist's helper to finance life in the desert for the rest of the year. To provide for his family, Yerxa undertook the construction of a family home which he named "Eagle's Nest." It lay just south of the present Museum location on a parcel that is no longer part of the Museum property. It was a one-room partial dugout with a fireplace and a door built of concrete, wood, and stone. Yerxa and his family lived here for four years. The building no longer exists, but photographic documentation of it survives including an image in the Museum archive of young Rodney Yerxa, age 1, being bathed in a small tub in front of the home.

On April 6, 1917, only four years after Yerxa established his homestead, the United States declared war on Germany. In 1918 the Yerxa family had relocated to Seattle where his wife's family was living. He found work there as a machinist's helper in Seattle, but the marriage had deteriorated and the Yerxa's separated. Yerxa, (at age 36, too old to be drafted, but not too old to enlist) registered for service in the US Army on September 12 of that year. Fortunately, the United States' part of the War and Yerxa's tour of duty were brief. Hostilities ceased on November 11, 1918 and he was released in 1919. Returning to California, he settled at a crossroad near Blythe, about 120 miles east of his homestead, where he once again served as Postmaster and operated a general store until 1924. However, his wartime travels had stimulated his wanderlust and by July 1919 Yerxa obtained a passport for a 3 month trip to Cuba, the West Indies and South & Latin America.

After five years near Blythe, Yerxa returned to "Eagles Nest" for about one year and in May 1925 (at age 42), he boarded up his desert home and embarked upon a year-long solo tour of Europe. The itinerary included Europe (England, Ireland, Scotland & Wales and France via the Channel Islands), Central America (Guatemala), Cuba, Panama and other unnamed places. Equipped with a backpack, \$700 and press credentials from four magazine and three newspapers, he secured journalistic discounts for World's Fairs in both Paris and London where he also found time to attend art schools. This trip encouraged his passion for art, a passion that would continue for the rest of his life.

Returning from his European tour, Yerxa relocated to Moorpark, California, in the Simi Valley, about 150 miles west of Desert Hot Springs, once again operating a general store. It was here in November 1932 that Yerxa first encountered L. W. Coffee, a Danish emigrant who had been a successful land developer throughout California. Yerxa's stories about his desert homestead provided the inspiration for Coffee's first visit to the area, although Yerxa had not been there in several years. Coffee made his way to the area and found only two original homesteaders remaining on their property. Coffee visited Cabot's property and was disappointed to discover it in a neglected state; the well had collapsed, the

⁴Yerxa never had a career as a professional artist, although he writes of selling an occasional painting to buy building supplies. He was essentially self-taught although, according to Edan Milton Hughes' *Artists in California (1786-1946)*, he is known to have taken classes at the Academies Julian and Colarossi in Paris; he is not listed as a "Notable Graduate" of either institution. He has no exhibition record and his works are not found in museums or important private collections.

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windmill had blown down and there was no sign of water. However, he was convinced of the existence of the hot springs and recognized their therapeutic value. For almost twenty years Yerxa's hot spring discovery had been ignored until Coffee realized its value. He soon formed a land trust and opened the first residential subdivisions in the area. Inasmuch as Coffee is not the subject of this nomination, it is sufficient to say that in time he became the founder of the town of Desert Hot Springs. His story is told in *The Waters of Comfort* by John J. Hunt.

Encouraged by Coffee's progress in the area, in 1937 Yerxa returned to the desert and invited his mother to stay part of the year there with him. After completing the Museum building, he built her a separate house (referred to as "Nellie's House") behind the Museum. After her death, Yerxa used the building as a guest house. With this move, he returned to the desert for good, thus beginning the final phase of his life and the creation of his best-known work. Yerxa began construction on a building for use as his temporary residence before he began building the Museum circa 1939; today that original building has been replaced by the Trading Post.

On September 1, 1939, with the invasion of Poland by Germany, WWII began. Attacked by the Japanese in 1941, the United States joined the war effort. This time it was Yerxa's son Rodney who went to war, but Yerxa contributed to this war effort while funding the construction of his Museum by obtaining a position as Post (Maintenance) Engineer at the Torney Army Hospital. The government's need for an army hospital for war casualties was satisfied when the army purchased Palm Springs' El Mirador Hotel, converting it into a hospital, named for a brigadier general.

The same year the U.S. entered the war, Yerxa, then nearly 60 years old, began his greatest achievement. He conceived of a rambling four-story structure he originally called the "Cliff Dweller's Pueblo" to be patterned after those built by the Hopi Indians of the Southwest⁵. Of the construction of the Museum Building Yerxa wrote: "About 1941, I started construction of the Old Indian Pueblo. Alone, and single-handed because there was no money for a man or a machine, I took a pick and shovel, cut down a side of the mountain, put the earth in a wheelbarrow, and filled up a gulch to make a front yard. That took me nearly a year. Then I put the building in the hole that I had made, because I wanted the Pueblo to fit into the mountainside."⁶ The building program was for a multi-use facility that included a residence, museum, art gallery, and trading post which would combine aspects of Yerxa's lifelong interests. The Museum houses an unusual collection of objects Yerxa acquired in his world travels, working as a merchant, seaman, stagecoach driver, newspaper man, cook, dog-sled driver, prospector and other things. Sealskin boots, Indian buffalo shields, and even a taxidermy armadillo was displayed and a Chinese fly-chaser hung among the many curios on the walls. His goal was to build a Hopi-style structure that displayed Native American pieces made for use and for decoration that would also be a tourist destination, shelter and income. The Museum building was almost entirely hand built by Yerxa, with some help from his son Rodney and occasional help from day laborers.

Designed and built without the use of any formal architectural documents (for all his skills, Yerxa had no formal architectural training) the building is a successful interpretation of the Pueblo Revival style. To give the building a patina of age, many of the "adobe" bricks are left exposed on the primary façade, although this illusion does not occur on the secondary elevations. He even emphasized his attempt at creating an aged appearance for the building by naming the newly completed building "Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo." Completed in 1944, Cabot continued to add other buildings to the compound, including minor additions to the Museum itself as time, health and funds permitted. Yerxa wrote about salvaging and recycling materials from his earlier buildings, as well as from other abandoned homesteads. Near the back of the property he built small warehouses to store the accumulation of recycled materials. He continued to work sporadically on the compound's buildings including the "Eagles' Nest 2" property until his death in 1965.

⁵ Prior to the construction of the Pueblo, there exists no documentation regarding any Yerxa visits to Hopi Reservations. He was however a contributor to "the Desert Magazine" which regularly published photographs of Native American dwellings which served as inspiration / information for the design of his Pueblo.

⁶ Cabot Abram Yerxa, *On the Desert Since 1913*, p 176.

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In 1945 Cabot married his second wife, Portia Graham (1884-1969), a lecturer and teacher of metaphysics and Theosophy at a school she founded in Morongo Valley. She was a member of a well-to-do Texas family, but had spent most of her adult life in California studying and teaching culture, religion, and philosophy. A stabilizing force in Yerxa's life, their home became a destination for metaphysical visitors; Portia became well-integrated into Yerxa's desert life and he into her philosophical life. For the next twenty years their compound attracted thousands of everyday tourists, artists and important visitors, to whom Yerxa would lecture about Native American culture. In 1964 Cabot was Grand Marshall in the Desert Hot Springs Memorial Day Parade. Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum is commemorated by historical markers from the City of Desert Hot Springs and Riverside County where it is listed as Point of Historical Interest No. 54. In 1980 the Museum was designated State of California Point of Historical Interest No. 560.

When Yerxa died in 1965, at the age of 81, the city flags were flown at half-mast and the offices were closed to attend his funeral. His love for the town of Desert Hot Springs was expressed through his civic activities as a founder the American Legion Post and the DHS Improvement Association. He was an authority on the early days of the community and was frequently called upon to relate his experiences of the birth of Desert Hot Springs to clubs and organizations. He wrote a column called "On the Desert", in the now defunct newspaper, the *Desert Sentinel*. A collection of these 280 columns has recently been published in book form as *Cabot Abram Yerxa, On the Desert Since 1913*.

C: Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type and period, and possesses high artistic values.

The Pueblo Revival Style of architecture originated with architect A. C. Schweinfurth's unbuilt design for a hotel in Montalvo, California in 1894; in the next few years he followed up with designs for the Hearst Ranch in Pleasanton and a number of other buildings in the style. Pueblo Revival is considered to be the only architectural style consciously developed to attract tourists. Derived from 18th and 19th Century Spanish Colonial architecture, combined with native Pueblo vernacular and aspects of the Mission Revival, Pueblo style buildings are instantly recognizable and unmistakable. They are generally massive and archless and their single-most character-defining feature is the projecting roof beam or viga, or at least a log professing to be such. The presence of the viga alone is enough to identify the building as Pueblo Style. When not actually built of adobe, Pueblo Revival buildings try to give the appearance of adobe. Some have battered walls, most with blunt angles and irregularly rounded parapets; walls are always faced with cement plaster when they are not of adobe. Roofs are always flat, and if the building is multi-story, the levels are stair-stepped to recall the traditional Indian community house. In the Coachella Valley there were numerous examples of the style, including Harry William's design for the Desert Magazine Building and successful resorts like Ranch Club and the Cahuilla Hotel. Even L. W. Coffee's Bath House in Desert Hot Springs was a simplified Pueblo style building. However, none of these early examples survives.

Distinctive characteristics are the physical features or traits that commonly recur in individual types, periods, or methods of construction. To be eligible, a property must contain enough of those characteristics to be considered a true representative of a particular type or period. Both the Museum and "Nellie's House" embody the distinctive characteristics of the Pueblo Revival style in their form, plan, and style, and both also possesses high artistic values because they fully articulate the concepts of the Pueblo Revival design. They are often mistaken for their historic counterparts, a circumstance that rarely happens with less convincing examples of the style. In this way, they express the aesthetic ideal of the ancient Pueblos.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

After his death in 1965, Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum was left vacant for four years during which it was abandoned and unmaintained. Cole Eyraud, a member of the DHS City Council purchased the property and saved the Pueblo from demolition. He continued to offer tours and run the trading post. After Eyraud's death, his family donated the property to the City of Desert Hot Springs to be used as an historic museum and art gallery. The museum and the collection is owned and maintained by the city. The non-profit "Foundation" operates the gift store, raises funds, and hosts special events. Guided tours are held during museum hours, and tours are hosted by staff and volunteers. Artists are welcome in the courtyard to pursue work in pottery, needle arts, photography, papermaking, wood carving, flint knapping, basketry, *Plein*

Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum
Name of Property

Riverside, CA
County and State

Air, and other artistic endeavors. For decades the City of Desert Hot Springs has recognized Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum as the hub of the community and the site of its most celebrated pioneer.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Brown, Richard, H., *Cabot Abram Yerxa, On the Desert Since 1913*. Desert Hot Springs, Cabot Museum Foundation: 2011.

Hughes, Edan Milton, *Artists in California (1786-1946)*. Sacramento, Crocker Art Museum: 2002.

Hunt, John J., *The Waters of Comfort: The Story of Desert Hot Springs, California*. Desert Hot Springs: Little Morongo Press. 1997.

Maron, Barbara. *City of Dreams, Desert Hot Springs*. Cabot Foundation, Desert Hot Springs: 2008.

----- *Cabot Yerxa, A Life In Art*. Cabot Museum Foundation, Desert Hot Springs: 2008.

----- *Cabot Yerxa, A Life of Compassion*. Cabot Museum Foundation, Desert Hot Springs: 2009.

Wampler, Jan, *All Their Own: People and the Places They Built*. Cambridge: Schenkman Co.: 1977.

Wiffen, Marcus, *American Architecture Since 1780, A Guide to the Styles*, Revised. Cambridge, MIT Press: 1992.

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4.77 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>11</u>	<u>54738E</u>	<u>3757627</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Rectangular plot 330' X 660', 30' less an offset on East Desert View Avenue (see Site Plan).

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Riverside County APN: 6420613-0

This 4.77 Acre property is all that survives of the 160 acres that originally comprised the Yerxa Homestead of 1913.

Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum
Name of Property

Riverside, CA
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Patrick McGrew
organization McGrew / Architecture date August 2011
street & number 674 South Grenfall Road telephone 760 / 416 7819
city or town Palm Springs state CA zip code 92264
e-mail patrickmcgrew2@gmail.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum
City or Vicinity: Desert Hot Springs
County: Riverside State: CA
Photographer: Jane Pojawa
Date Photographed: June 5, 2008
Description of Photograph(s) and number:

CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0001.tif: Main courtyard, front of building, left view
CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0002.tif: Mian courtyard, front of building, right view, showing entrance
CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0003.tif: Southeast corner front of main building with tower
CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0004.tif: Southwest view of main building
CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0005.tif: Eastern elevation of main building
CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0006.tif: "Altar in the Wilderness" garden
CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0007.tif: Outbuilding: Well House
CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0008.tif: Northeast elevation of main building
CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0009.tif: Outbuilding: "Nellie's House"
CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0010.tif: Northwest view of main building
CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0011.tif: Western elevation of main building
CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0012.tif: Detail view of Western elevation
CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0013.tif: Outbuilding: Barn
CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0014.tif: Outbuildings: Tool Shed and outdoor room
CA_Riverside_Cabots Old Indian Pueblo Museum_0015.tif: Southwestern elevation

Photographs were taken in 2008 but still reflect the current conditions of the property, with the exception of the addition of a restroom in 2009, indicated on the site plan.

Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum
Name of Property

Riverside, CA
County and State

Property Owner:

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

name City of Desert Hot Springs Contact: Jason Simpson. Email: jsimpson@cityofdhs.org
street & number 65-950 Pierson Boulevard telephone 760-329-6411 ext 234
city or town Desert Hot Springs state CA zip code 92240

MAILING ADDRESS:

City Of Desert Hot Springs
65-950 Pierson Blvd.
Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240-0104

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum
 Name of Property

Riverside, CA
 County and State

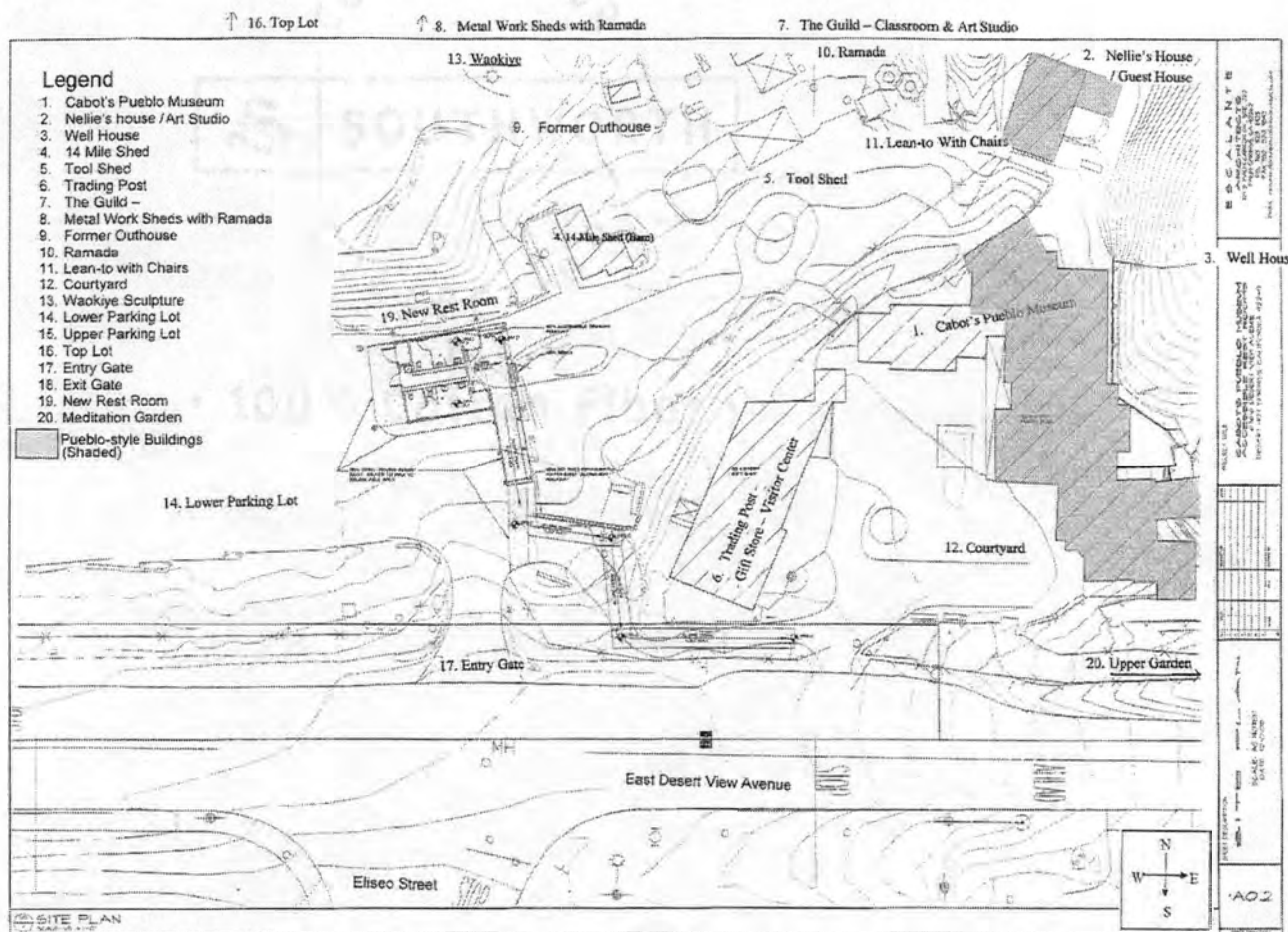


Figure 1: Site Plan

Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum
Name of Property

Riverside, CA
County and State



92240



200ft

CityGIS

Copyright © 2006 All Rights Reserved. The information contained herein is the proprietary property of the contributor supplied under license and may not be approved except as licensed by Digital Map Products.

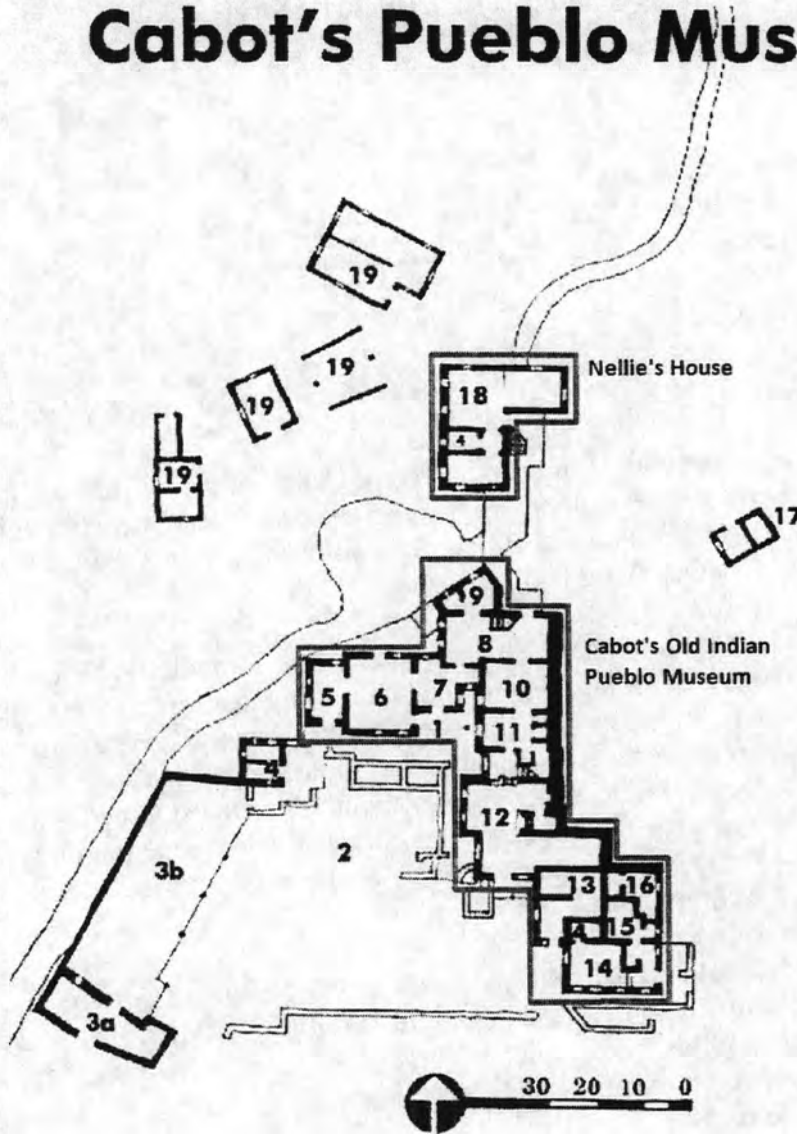
Figure 3. GIS/satellite image of site boundary

Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum
Name of Property

Riverside, CA
County and State

Sketch Map

Cabot's Pueblo Museum



- 1. Entrance
- 2. Courtyard
- 3a - 3b. Trading Post and Gallery
- 4. Bathrooms
- 5. Administrative Area
- 6 - 12 Exhibit Areas
- 13. Storage
- 14 - 16. Administrative Areas
- 17. Reservoir / Well House
- 18. Administrative Area
- 19. Storage Areas



JERRY LEWIS
41ST DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE:
APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEES:
DEFENSE
(VICE-CHAIRMAN)
ENERGY AND WATER
FOREIGN OPERATIONS
INTERIOR
LABOR - HHS - EDUCATION

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0541

September 27, 2011

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
ROOM 2112
RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0541
202-225-5861
DISTRICT OFFICE:
1150 BROOKSIDE AVENUE
SUITE J-5
REDLANDS, CA 92373-6314
909-862-6030
1-800-233-1700
(WITHIN CALIFORNIA)
www.house.gov/jerrylewis
www.facebook.com/RepJerryLewis

Mr. Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
State Historic Preservation Officer
California State Parks, Office of Historic Preservation
PO Box 942896
Sacramento, California 94296

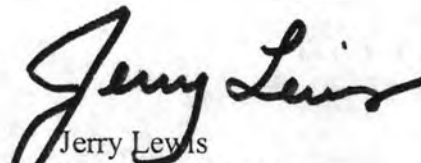
Dear Mr. Donaldson:

I am writing in support of the nomination of Cabot's Pueblo Museum in Desert Hot Springs, California to the National Register of Historic Places, which will be considered during the State Historical Resources Commission's quarterly meeting in Redlands, California on October 28, 2011.

Cabot's Pueblo Museum has been the center of the community of the City of Desert Hot Springs since 1940 and has provided education, inspiration, training, volunteerism, and employment to the City as well as the greater Riverside County area. The guided Museum tours focus on national and regional history and trends, arts, conservation, and recycling and educate visitors about "The Oldest Green Museum in America". The displays show the impact of this cornerstone of the community and have inspired visitors to recycle, re-use, and enjoy the beauty of the desert and to play a role in the arts and the community.

The Museum is also recognized since 1980 by the Riverside County Historical Commission as Historic Site No. 54 and as a State of California Point of Historical Interest No. 560. Listing this treasure in the National Register of Historic Places will help continue the conservation efforts and ensure that Cabot's Pueblo Museum remains a treasure for years to come.

Sincerely,


Jerry Lewis
Member of Congress

SEP 29 2011

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section _____ Page _____

=====

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 11000942

Date Listed: 03/02/2012

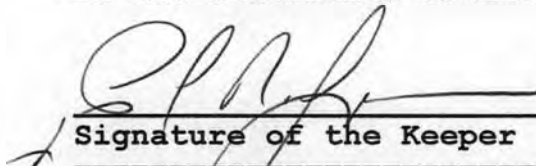
Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum
Property Name

Riverside
County

CA
State

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



Signature of the Keeper

3/2/12

Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Resource Count:
The Resource Count is revised to add: *One (1) non-contributing building.*
[The 2009 modern Public Restroom Building (#19) was not included in the original resource count.]

Significance:
The Period of Significance is revised to read: *1941—1965.*
[This corresponds to the period directly associated with the construction and operation of Cabot Museum buildings by Cabot Abram Yerxa and his wife Portia. While Yerxa's early homesteading activities represent a significant aspect of his contributions to local history, the extant resources have little direct connection to those events, nor are they able to convey significant aspects of that early (c.1913), pioneer settlement period. At their best, the standing buildings reflect the actions and contributions of an important long-term resident to bring a unique cultural and commercial amenity to his community. The expanded period of significance acknowledges the significant use of the site by Yerxa and his wife from the early 1940s up to his death in 1965, as a destination for visiting artists, tourists, museum visitors, and his important contributions as a local author.]

Geographic Data:
The U. T. M. Coordinates should read: 11 547906 3757627 (per GoogleEarth)

These clarifications were confirmed with the CA SHPO office.

DISTRIBUTION:
National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: RESUBMISSION

PROPERTY Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: CALIFORNIA, Riverside

DATE RECEIVED: 2/03/12 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/20/12
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 11000942

DETAILED EVALUATION:

 ACCEPT RETURN REJECT DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

The Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum is locally significant under National Register Criteria B and C in the areas of Architecture, Exploration/Settlement, and Entertainment/Recreation. The self-designed and built Cabot's Museum complex is a unique, vernacular interpretation of mid-twentieth century Pueblo Revival design. Built and augmented over a period of years beginning in 1941, the main buildings and outbuildings incorporated modern building materials and technologies in order to create an exotic, playful design based on traditional Southwestern and Native American forms. The buildings are associated with adventurer Cabot Abram Yerxa, one of the earliest (non-native) settlers to the remote Desert Hot Springs area of Riverside County. Yerxa early on identified the hot springs potential of the region, which would one day serve as the basis for the large scale development of the area and draw him back to the area to capitalize on the growth of local tourism with the creation of his whimsical pueblo museum, trading post and arts center.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept Criteria B & C

REVIEWER Paul R. Lusignan DISCIPLINE HISTORIAN

TELEPHONE _____ DATE 3/2/12

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR (Y)/N

The Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum is locally significant under National Register Criteria B and C in the areas of Architecture, Exploration/Settlement, and Entertainment/Recreation. The self-designed and built Cabot's Museum complex is a unique, vernacular interpretation of mid-twentieth century Pueblo Revival design. Built and augmented over a period of years beginning in 1941, the main buildings and outbuildings incorporated modern building materials and technologies in order to create an exotic, playful design based on traditional Southwestern and Native American forms. The buildings are associated with adventurer Cabot Abram Yerxa, one of the earliest (non-native) settlers to the remote Desert Hot Springs area of Riverside County. Yerxa early on identified the hot springs potential of the region, which would one day serve as the basis for the large scale development of the area and draw him back to the area to capitalize on the growth of local tourism with the creation of his whimsical pueblo museum, trading post and arts center.

Captivated by the imagery of the historic pueblos of the American Southwest, Yerxa designed the museum complex to incorporate asymmetrically-stacked, flat-roofed blocks rendered in concrete and stucco to resemble the rustic pueblos, with randomly placed, deep set openings, rounded corners, and projecting vigas. Utilizing scrap materials where possible, Yerxa's efforts resulted in an eclectic mix of forms and fanciful motifs. A self-taught artist and architect, Yerxa found in the construction of the museum fulfillment of a dream to recognize and appreciate the historic culture of the American Southwest and its earliest occupants.























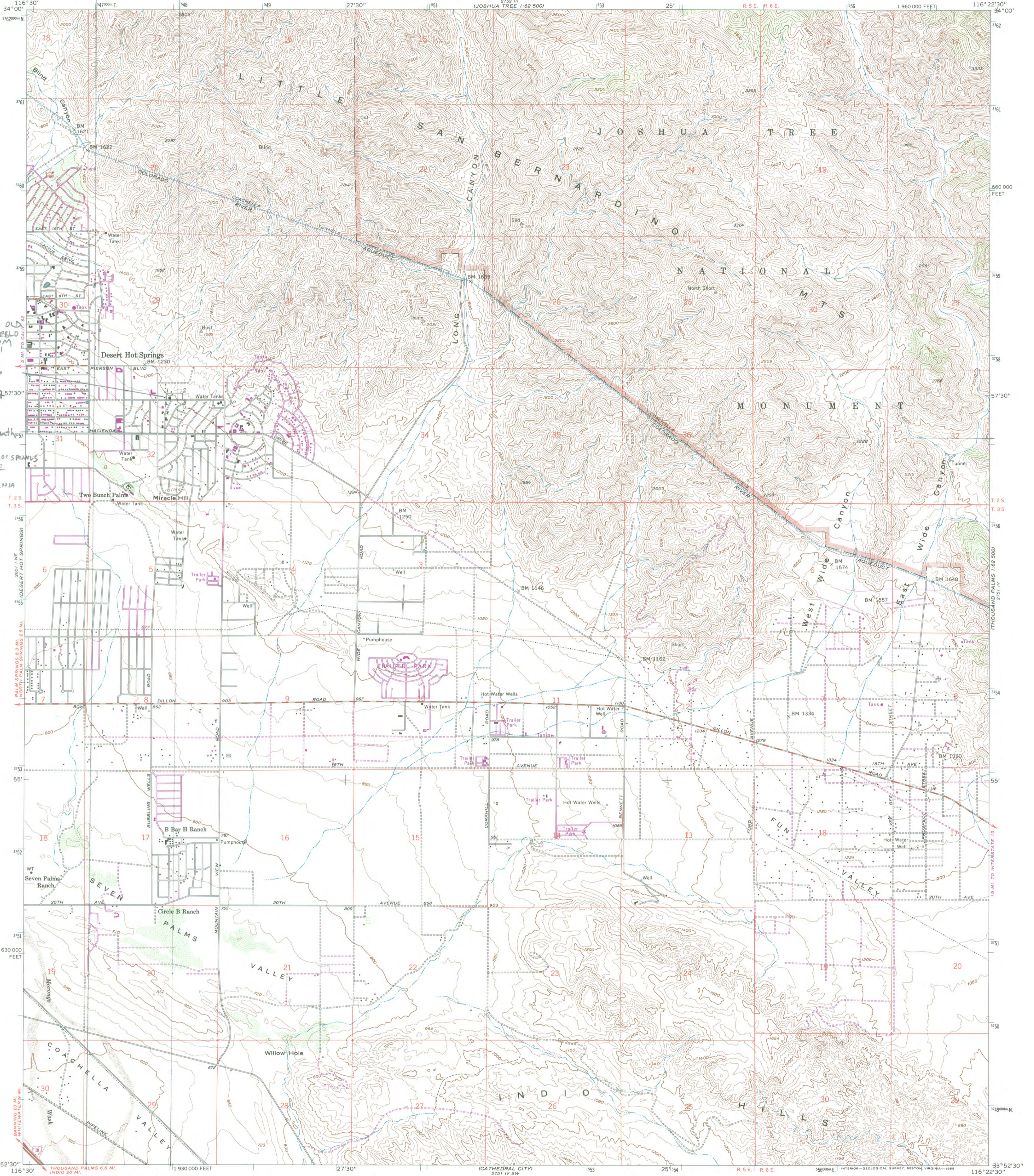




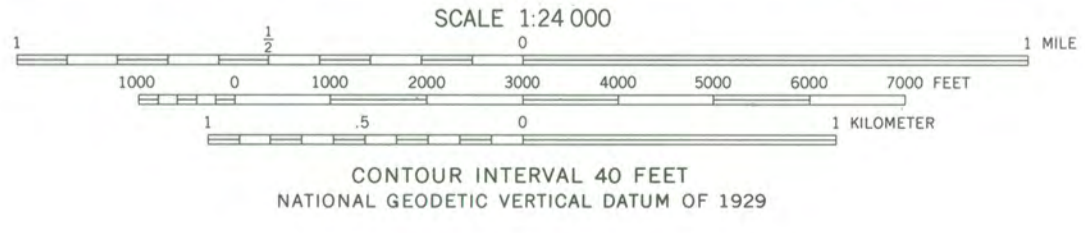
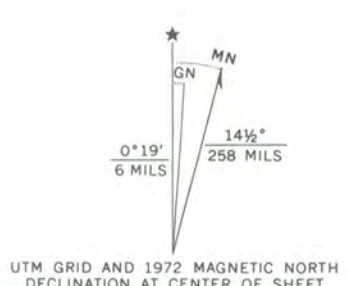




CABOT'S OLD
INDIAN PUEBLO
MUSEUM
ZONE II
547906
375767
Aspen
Cragg/Fanth
DESERT HOT SPRINGS
RIVERSIDE
COUNTY,
CALIFORNIA



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, USCE, and Metropolitan Water District
Topography from aerial photographs by ER-55 plotter
Aerial photographs taken 1956. Field check 1958
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on California coordinate system,
zone 6
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 11, shown in blue
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 0 meters north and
90 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks
Dashed land lines indicate approximate locations
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
Interstate Route	

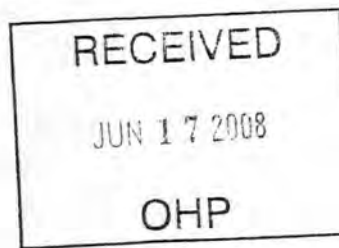
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs
taken 1972. This information not field checked
Map photoinspected 1978
No major culture or drainage changes observed

SEVEN PALMS VALLEY, CALIF.
NW/4 THOUSAND PALMS 15' QUADRANGLE
N3352.5-W11622.5/7.5
PHOTOREVISED 1972
1958
PHOTOINSPECTED 1978
DMA 2751 IV NW-SERIES V895



Milford Wayne Donaldson, State Historic Preservation Officer
c/o Office of Historic Preservation
Department of Parks and Recreation
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001



Dear Mr. Donaldson,

My name is Jane Pojawa and I am the Archivist/Historian for the Cabot's Pueblo Museum Foundation in Desert Hot Springs. We are seeking inclusion in the National Register to ensure that the property will be protected long into the future. The current administration of the city of Desert Hot Springs is proud of its only museum, and supportive of the Foundation Board's operations. Yet at several critical junctures in the past, we almost lost this historic adobe structure.

Cabot's Pueblo Museum was built by one man, Cabot Yerxa, who had nothing but some ideas, some land, and intermittent cement purchases. He had no architectural training, but neither did the Hopi Indians, whose building style he sought to emulate. Most of the materials for this structure consisted of refuse collected on the desert. The finished "castle," as he called it, is wonderful to behold.

Yerxa had a long and interesting history in the area; originally as a homesteader, later as a city father. When he died in 1965, the building lay open to vandals and was threatened with demolition. Four years later, it was purchased by a conservancy group headed by Cole Eyraud, who saw the opportunity to expand it as a tourist attraction. Eyraud did little to "improve" the property, and so it was preserved almost exactly as it was at the time of Yerxa's death. Eyraud was unexpectedly killed in 1996 and for several years, his family tried to maintain the property. Eventually it was simply too much, and they gave it to the city of Desert Hot Springs, which they hoped would cherish Yerxa's monument as they had. The city installed a caretaker, but repeated budget shortfalls terminated that position, and now a group of dedicated volunteers is charged with keeping up the property.

In many ways, attrition has worked in favor of the pueblo. It has weathered the last 43 years with its structural integrity intact. It looks almost identical to the photographs taken in the late 1940s and early 50s without the "improvements" that have ruined so many historic buildings. Indeed, the parts of the building that date from 1937 give a feeling almost like time travel. Wandering in the courtyard, it is easy to imagine what Rex Harrison or Louis Sobol might have felt after riding over from the B-Bar-H Ranch, a popular retreat for celebrities who wanted to experience the "real" old Western lifestyle.

Cabot's Pueblo Museum is grand, but also humorous, quirky and charming. Some aspects; the passive cooling system and the creative use of recycled materials, are more "2008" than "1938."

There is a story that in 1969, the city government of Desert Hot Springs was going to tear the pueblo down and Cole Eyraud met the bulldozer with a shotgun and forced the retreat of the developers. It isn't true; he met them with a pen and a checkbook, but in a less literal sense, there *is* truth to the story. All of Desert Hot Springs' significant buildings have been paved for "progress," and inclusion in the NRHP would turn the bulldozer around.

We believe that Cabot's meets all of the criteria for a historic place; there is no building like it anywhere, it is central to the history of the development of the Seven Palms Valley, it is associated with the lives of Desert Hot Springs leading citizens from pioneer days to the present, and it has a collection of priceless artifacts. But this will not protect it from the vagaries of city government, budget shortfalls and urban sprawl. We don't need a shotgun, but we do need to protect our historic sites before they disappear.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jane Pojawa". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and date.

Jane Pojawa
June 2, 2008

Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum
Desert Hot Springs, Riverside County, California
Staff Report

Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum is a compound of buildings on a 4.77 acre site in Desert Hot Springs, California, associated with Cabot Abram Yerxa, an early pioneer of the Desert Hot Springs community. The two contributing buildings on the site are Pueblo Revival style, constructed by Yerxa between 1941 and 1944.

The property is eligible under National Register Criterion B for its association with Cabot Yerxa, an early settler of the Desert Hot Springs community, and Criterion C as an example of Pueblo Revival architectural style. Cabot Yerxa was an itinerant adventurer, born on the Lakota Sioux reservation in the Dakota Territories in 1883. His 1914 discovery of a hot spring and nearby cold spring in a remote corner of Riverside County, which he named "Miracle Hill," was the first settlement in the community that became the city of Desert Hot Springs. Yerxa's homesteading was interspersed with journeys across the country and trips to Europe, including military service during World War I. Between 1941 and 1944, Yerxa constructed the two buildings now known as "Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum," Yerxa's residence, art studio, workshop and trading post, and "Nellie's House," a home for his mother.

Yerxa, a self-taught artist with no formal training in architecture, single-handedly constructed the Pueblo primarily from salvaged and recycled materials from earlier buildings he constructed on the site and nearby abandoned homesteads. The two contributing buildings are wood frame construction covered with building paper, metal lath and cement plaster to simulate an adobe building, including simulated adobe blocks and parapets, wooden *vigas*, rough-surfaced wooden lintels above windows, and battered walls to create a picturesque effect. No two windows or doors are identical in size or shape. Yerxa's creation expresses the aesthetic ideal of the Pueblo style via his skill as a folk artist and craftsman. Yerxa maintained the buildings until his death in 1965, and the property retains a high degree of integrity in all aspects thanks to maintenance of the site as a city museum and art gallery. The other small structures and buildings on the site do not share the two contributors' distinct architectural style, and are much smaller in scale compared to the two major buildings.

The property is nominated on behalf of the building owner, the City of Desert Hot Springs. This nomination has received four letters of support.

Staff supports the nomination as written and recommends that the State Historical Resources Commission determine that Cabot's Indian Pueblo Museum meets National Register Criteria B and C at the local level of significance, with a period of significance of 1941-1944. Staff further recommends that the State Historic Preservation Officer approve the nomination for forwarding to the National Park Service for listing in the National Register.

William Burg
Historian I
September 23, 2011



July 12, 2008

Mr. Milford Wayne Donaldson
State Historic Preservation Officer
Office of Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

RECEIVED

JUL 17 2008

OHP

Yvonne Parks

Mayor

Scott Matas

Mayor Pro Tem

Karl Baker, Jr.

Councilmember

Russell Betts

Councilmember

Al Schmidt

Councilmember

Rick Daniels

City Manager

Dear Mr. Donaldson:

I wish to express my support for the placement of Cabot's Pueblo Museum to the National Register of Historic Places. This unique facility and its story are assets that are vital to the history and cultural significance of this community, region and the State. In my position as City Manager of the City of Desert Hot Springs, I see the value of this designation to community enrichment and the history of the City of Desert Hot Springs and the Coachella Valley.

As a stakeholder in this community, I am impressed with what the Cabot's Pueblo Museum facility adds to the area, and what the historic preservation means to this region. The local population is exploding; sustaining a quality lifestyle requires a positive cultural environment. Additionally, it is important to develop a long-term plan that preserves the Museum amidst encroaching construction. Cabot's Pueblo Museum preserves an important legacy of American culture while offering an excellent venue to audiences to enjoy world-class art in our own backyard. It is a cache that welcomes world-wide visitors to the mysteries of this unusual area.

I am pleased to lend my name in support of this worthwhile program and the proposal to list the Museum on the National Register of Historic Preservation. Designation will extend the benefits of the fine groundwork that has been laid in the conservation of the unique arts collection and buildings. At Cabot's Pueblo Museum, tour guides and volunteers do more than educate, they share their love of the history and the art with their visitors. The City of Desert Hot Springs has committed resources to the security and maintenance of the Museum property.

Thank you for your consideration of this project. If I can provide any further information please contact me at (760) 329-6411 x101.

Sincerely,

Rick Daniels
City Manager

65950 Pierson Blvd.
Desert Hot Springs
California 92240

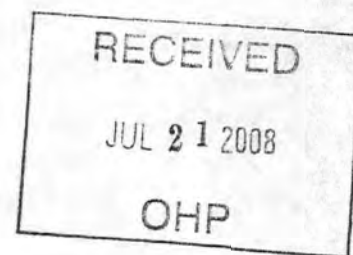
(760) 329-6411

www.cityofdhs.org



July 16, 2008

Mr. Milford Wayne Donaldson
State Historic Preservation Officer
Office of Historic Preservation
P.O. Box 942896
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001



Yvonne Parks
Mayor

Scott Matas
Mayor Pro Tem

Karl Baker, Jr.
Councilmember

Russell Betts
Councilmember

Al Schmidt
Councilmember

Rick Daniels
City Manager

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I wish to express my support for the placement of Cabot's Pueblo Museum to the National Register of Historic Places. This unique facility and its story are assets that are vital to the history and cultural significance of this community, region and the State. In my position as City Manager of the City of Desert Hot Springs, I see the value of this designation to community enrichment and the history of the City of Desert Hot Springs and the Coachella Valley.

As a stakeholder in this community, I am impressed with what the Cabot's Pueblo Museum facility adds to the area, and what the historic preservation means to this region. The local population is exploding; sustaining a quality lifestyle requires a positive cultural environment. Additionally, it is important to develop a long-term plan that preserves the Museum amidst encroaching construction. Cabot's Pueblo Museum preserves an important legacy of American culture while offering an excellent venue to audiences to enjoy world-class art in our own backyard. It is a cache that welcomes world-wide visitors to the mysteries of this unusual area.

I am pleased to lend my name in support of this worthwhile program and the proposal to list the Museum on the National Register of Historic Preservation. Designation will extend the benefits of the fine groundwork that has been laid in the conservation of the unique arts collection and buildings. At Cabot's Pueblo Museum, tour guides and volunteers do more than educate, they share their love of the history and the art with their visitors. The City of Desert Hot Springs has committed resources to the security and maintenance of the Museum property.

Thank you for your consideration of this project. If I can provide any further information please contact me at (760) 902-6655.

Sincerely,

Yvonne Parks
Mayor

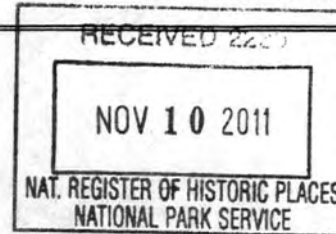
65950 Pierson Blvd.
Desert Hot Springs
California 92240

(760) 329-6411

www.cityofdhs.org

**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

P.O. BOX 942896
SACRAMENTO, CA 94296-0001
(916) 653-6624 Fax: (916) 653-9824
calshpo@ohp.parks.ca.gov



November 4, 2011

Ms. Carol Shull, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service 2280
1201 I (Eye) Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

Subject: **Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum
Desert Hot Springs, Riverside County, California
National Register of Historic Places**

Dear Ms. Shull: *Carol*

Enclosed please find the **Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum** nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. This property is located in Desert Hot Springs, Riverside County, California. On October 28, 2011, the State Historical Resources Commission unanimously found the property eligible for the National Register under Criteria B and C at the local level of significance.

The property is nominated on behalf of the City of Desert Hot Springs. The nomination has received four letters of support.

If you have any questions regarding this nomination, please contact William Burg of my staff at (916) 445-7004.

Sincerely,

Wayne

Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures



City of Desert Hot Springs

65-950 Pierson Blvd. • Desert Hot Springs • CA • 92240
(760) 329-6411
www.cityofdhs.org

November 14, 2011



The Honorable Senator Barbara Boxer
3403 Tenth Street, Suite 704
Riverside, CA 92501

RE: CABOT'S PUEBLO MUSEUM

Dear Senator Boxer:

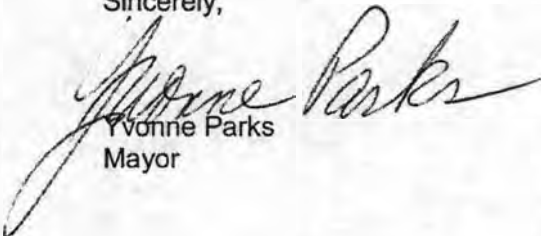
I am writing to request your support of the inclusion of the Cabot's Pueblo Museum, located in the City of Desert Hot Springs, on the National Register of Historic Places. As you may know, the State Historical Resources Commission voted on October 28th to nominate the Museum for inclusion on the Register. It is now up to the National Park Services (NPS) to issue a decision. A letter of support from you to the NPS would be very helpful.

Cabot's Pueblo Museum has been the center of the community of the City of Desert Hot Springs since 1940 and has provided education, inspiration, training, volunteerism, and employment to the City as well as the greater Riverside County area. The guided Museum tours focus on national and regional history and trends, arts, conservation, and recycling and educate visitors about "The Oldest Green Museum in America". The displays show the impact of this cornerstone of the community and have inspired visitors to recycle, re-use, and enjoy the beauty of the desert and to play a role in the arts and the community.

The Museum has also been recognized since 1980 by the Riverside County Historical Commission as Historic Site No. 54 and as a State of California Point of Historical Interest No. 560. Listing this treasure in the National Register of Historic Places will help continue the conservation efforts and ensure that Cabot's Pueblo Museum remains a treasure for years to come.

Thank you for all your help on the City's behalf.

Sincerely,


Yvonne Parks
Mayor

JERRY LEWIS
41ST DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

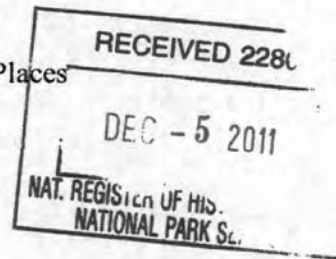
COMMITTEE:
APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEES:
DEFENSE
(VICE-CHAIRMAN)
ENERGY AND WATER
FOREIGN OPERATIONS
INTERIOR
LABOR · HHS · EDUCATION

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0541

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
ROOM 2112
RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0541
202-225-5861
DISTRICT OFFICE:
1150 BROOKSIDE AVENUE
SUITE J-5
REDLANDS, CA 92373-6314
909-862-8030
1-800-233-1700
(WITHIN CALIFORNIA)
www.house.gov/jerrylewis
www.facebook.com/RepJerryLewis

November 14, 2011

Carol Shaw
Acting Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
National Parks Service
1201 I St NW
Washington, D.C. 20005



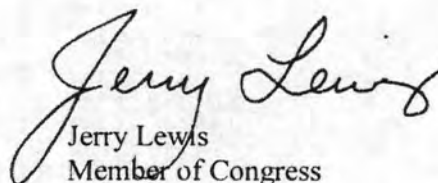
Dear Carol:

I am writing in support of the inclusion of Cabot's Pueblo Museum in Desert Hot Springs, California, in the National Register of Historic Places. The State Historical Resources Commission has nominated Cabot's Pueblo Museum for inclusion in its quarterly meeting on October 28, 2011 and sent the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

Cabot's Pueblo Museum has been the center of the community of the City of Desert Hot Springs since 1940 and has provided education, inspiration, training, volunteerism, and employment to the City as well as the greater Riverside County area. The guided Museum tours focus on national and regional history and trends, arts, conservation, and recycling and educate visitors about "The Oldest Green Museum in America". The displays show the impact of this cornerstone of the community and have inspired visitors to recycle, re-use, and enjoy the beauty of the desert and to play a role in the arts and the community.

The Museum is also recognized since 1980 by the Riverside County Historical Commission as Historic Site No. 54 and as a State of California Point of Historical Interest No. 560. Listing this treasure in the National Register of Historic Places will help continue the conservation efforts and ensure that Cabot's Pueblo Museum remains a treasure for years to come.

Sincerely,


Jerry Lewis
Member of Congress

United States Senate

HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
SUITE 112
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0505
(202) 224-3553
<http://boxer.senate.gov/contact>

November 21, 2011



Carol Shaw
Acting Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
National Parks Service
1201 "I" Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Shaw:

I am writing to express my support for the inclusion of Cabot's Pueblo Museum in the National Register of Historic Places. The State Historical Resources Commission has nominated Cabot's Pueblo Museum for inclusion.

Cabot's Pueblo Museum, located in the City of Desert Hot Springs, has been at the center of the community since 1940, providing education, training, volunteerism, and employment to the City as well as the greater Riverside County area. The museum's guided tours focus on national and regional history, as well as trends, arts, conservation, and recycling.

In 1980, the museum was recognized by the Riverside County Historical Commission as Historic Site No. 54 and as a State of California Point of Historical Interest No. 560. Listing this treasure in the National Register of Historic Places will help ensure that Cabot's Pueblo Museum remains a treasure to the community for years to come.

Congressman Jerry Lewis and Desert Hot Springs Mayor, Yvonne Parks, have provided letters supporting this inclusion and the letters are attached.

In advance, thank you for your consideration of this nomination. Should you or your staff have questions regarding this letter, please contact my Senior Advisor, Alton Garrett at (951) 684-4849.

Sincerely,

Barbara Boxer
United States Senator

11000942

PKC
12/4/11
OK
12/7/11

H32(2280)

DEC - 7 2011

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
United States Senator
Washington, DC 20510-0505

Dear Senator Boxer:

Thank you for your letter of November 21, 2011, supporting the nomination of Cabot's Pueblo Museum, in Desert Hot Springs, California, to the National Register of Historic Places.

The National Park Service, which administers the National Register of Historic Places, received the nomination for the Pueblo Museum on November 10, 2011. Our regulations require that a decision be made on the eligibility of a property for listing in the National Register within 45 days of receipt of a complete and fully documented nomination. The National Park Service sends notices of newly listed properties to Members of Congress, so you will be notified if the Cabot's Pueblo Museum is listed in the National Register.

If we can provide further information or assistance, please feel free to contact Paul R. Lusignan of the National Register staff at 202-354-2229 or paul_lusignan@nps.gov. We appreciate your interest in the historic preservation programs of the National Park Service.

Sincerely,

(Sgd) Carol D. Shull

Carol D. Shull, Interim Keeper
National Register of Historic Places

cc: California SHPO

bcc: 2285
2280 Loether, Shull
Basic File Retained In 2280

FNP:PLusignan:OP:12-06-2011:S:/nr/cabotpueblo.ltr



United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0504

<http://feinstein.senate.gov>

December 16, 2011



Ms. Carol D. Shull
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
and Chief of the National Historic Landmarks Survey
National Park Service
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Ms. Shull:

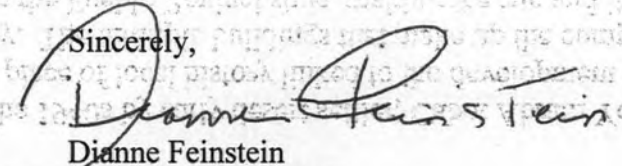
I am writing in support of the California State Historical Resources Commission's nomination of Cabot's Pueblo Museum in Desert Hot Springs, California for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Constructed by hand in the 1940s by early desert settler, Cabot Abram Yerxa, Cabot's Pueblo Museum is an important piece of local history linked to the development of Desert Hot Springs and the Coachella Valley. The multiple buildings that make up the complex on this nearly five-acre site were built in the Pueblo Revival style, making the site and its buildings eligible for listing on the National Register. The Pueblo's buildings were constructed by Yerxa, primarily from salvaged and recycled materials, which reflects early conservation efforts, as well as the resourceful nature of desert inhabitants of the past.

Today, visitors to Cabot's Pueblo Museum are able to learn not only about early pioneer life in California desert communities but also about preservation and recycling practices. The historic legacy of this site coupled with its significance as an education center for sustainable living make Cabot's Pueblo Museum an appropriate candidate for recognition on the National Register of Historic Places.

Thank you for your consideration of Cabot's Pueblo Museum for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. This listing will ensure the preservation of this unique piece of California history for generations to come.

Sincerely,


Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

DF/ln

RECEIVED 2280

Arnold Schwarzenegger,

FEB - 3 2012

NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

P.O. BOX 942896
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(916) 653-6624 Fax: (916) 653-9824
calshpo@ohp.parks.ca.gov

January 30, 2012

Ms. Carol Shull, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service 2280
1201 I (Eye) Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

Subject: **Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum
Desert Hot Springs, Riverside County, California
National Register of Historic Places**

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find the revised **Cabot's Old Indian Pueblo Museum** nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. This property is located in Desert Hot Springs, Riverside County, California. On October 28, 2011, the State Historical Resources Commission unanimously found the property eligible for the National Register under Criteria B and C at the local level of significance. This revision includes new documentation requested by NPS staff in their return letter of January 9, 2012.

The property is nominated on behalf of the City of Desert Hot Springs. The nomination has received four letters of support.

If you have any questions regarding this nomination, please contact William Burg of my staff at (916) 445-7004.

Sincerely,

Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures

Recommendation: SLR Return

Action: SLR Return None

Documentation Issues-Discussion Sheet

State Name: CA County Name Riverside Resource Name Cabot's Old Indian Museum

Reference No. 11000942 Multiple Name _____

Solution:

Return -

See comments PNL 12/19/11

Problem:

Functions did not come from Bulletin 16

Coded as it should be. EB

"PERSON" not Assoc of Significance. Coded Explor/Settlement

Resolution:

SLR: Yes No

Database Change: