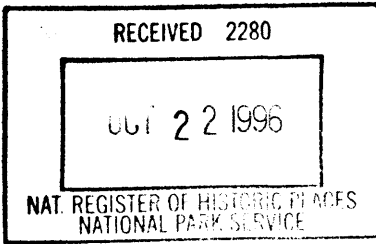


1762



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 How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name: **Tuba Trading Post**

other names/site number: **N/A**

2. Location

street & number: **No #: NW corner of Main and Moenave Streets** not for publication: **\_N/A\_**  
city or town: **Tuba City** vicinity: **\_N/A\_**  
state: **Arizona** code: **AZ** county: **Coconino** code: **005** zip code: **86045**

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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   nationally  X  statewide   locally. (   See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

James W. Sanner: AZSHPO  
Signature of certifying official

17 OCTOBER 1996  
Date

ARIZONA STATE PARKS  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

*Edson H. Beall*

11-29-96

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain):

*beall*  
Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

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
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>  1  </u>	<u>  1  </u> buildings
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> sites
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> structures
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> objects
<u>  1  </u>	<u>  1  </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register   0  

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

=====

**6. Function or Use**

=====

**Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Category: COMMERCE/TRADE Subcategory: Department store (trading post)

**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)

Category: COMMERCE/TRADE Subcategory: Department store (trading post; grocery store)  
Business (offices)

=====

**7. Description**

=====

**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions)

MIXED

**Materials** (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: STONE/Limestone  
roof: METAL/Embossed metal shingles; also ASPHALT  
walls: STONE/Limestone  
other: OTHER: small cinder block addition toward NE corner

**Narrative Description** (*SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS*)

=====

**8. Statement of Significance**

=====

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

**X** 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.

**X** 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.)

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

---

**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE  
ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION (Tourism)  
ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1891-1946

**Significant Dates**

1891  
1905  
1927  
1930s

**Significant Person**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Algert, Charles H. (1891)  
Preston, Samuel S. (1905)  
Dietzman, Oscar (1905)

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (*SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS*)

=====  
**9. Major Bibliographical References**  
=====

**Bibliography** (*SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS*)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS)**

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

**Primary Location of Additional Data**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of Repository:           N/A

=====

**10. Geographical Data**

=====

**Acreage of Property** 2.41

**UTM References** (See accompanying USGS map for point references)  
Zone 12      478460E      3998230N

**Verbal Boundary Description**

Center of SE1/4, NE1/4, NW1/4; Section 29, T32N, R11E; "Tuba City, Ariz." 7.5' quadrangle. The specific designation for the nominated property is approximately 300 ft west on Moenave from the intersection of Main and Moenave streets and approximately 350 ft north on Main from the intersection of Main and Moenave streets. These boundaries encompass approximately 2.41 acres.

**Boundary Justification**

Although the entire Babbitt inholding in Tuba City historically contained 82.50 acres, only the 2.41 acres immediately associated with Tuba Trading Post is included in this nomination, as much of the surrounding acreage has been developed in modern times.

=====

**11. Form Prepared By**

=====

name/title: **Pat H. Stein**  
organization: **Arizona Preservation Consultants**      date: **August 1996**  
street/number: **2124 N. Izabel St., Suite 100**      telephone: **(520) 214-0375**  
city or town: **Flagstaff**      state: **AZ**      zip code: **86004**

Based in part on draft nominations prepared by James E. Babbitt in 1988 and Mary-Jayne Engel in 1993.

=====

**Additional Documentation**

=====

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

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

=====

**Property Owner**

=====

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

name: **Babbitt Brothers Trading Company**  
street & number: **1515 E. Cedar Ave.**      telephone: **(520) 774-8711**  
city or town: **Flagstaff**      state: **Arizona**      zip code: **86004**

=====

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section  7  Page  1  Tuba Trading Post  
Coconino County, Arizona

=====

**DESCRIPTION**

**SUMMARY**

Tuba Trading Post is a predominantly stone building of mixed architectural styles representing several building episodes. The earliest part of the trading post was a vernacular building constructed in 1891 as a two-room shed. In 1905, an imposing two-story octagon patterned after a Navajo hogan was built east of the shed, and the shed and octagon were joined by a stone corridor. A two-room living quarters in the Spanish Colonial Revival style was added west of the shed in 1927. Northwest of the octagon, a Spanish Colonial Revival style room was added in the 1930s, and, to the east of this, a small cement-block room was added in 1955. Restoration and rehabilitation work undertaken in 1985 substantially reversed the negative impacts of a 1955 remodeling. The property now strongly conveys the historic character of the trading post and retains a high degree of architectural integrity.

**Location and Setting**

The trading post is located on the only private land inholding within Tuba City, a spring-fed oasis on the western Navajo Indian Reservation (Figure 1). Lying at an elevation of approximately 4900 ft, Tuba City has a climate characterized by mild winters, warm summers, gentle winter precipitation, and torrential summer thunderstorms (Gregory 1915). The trading post occupies the northwest corner of Moenave and Main Streets, a locality that was part of a Mormon townsite from 1878 to 1903. Shade trees (mostly Lombardy poplars and cottonwoods) planted by the Mormons dot the landscape of the old townsite. Beyond the townsite are the rolling sandy hills of the Kaibito Plateau.

Tuba City changed in the twentieth century from a rural Mormon settlement to an administrative center for the Navajo Indian Reservation. The construction of facilities to serve Navajos, Hopis, and tourists altered the setting of the trading post. Fast-food restaurants, trailers, and other modern buildings today border the property in each direction. Despite the loss of its historic setting, the property still retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

**Description**

**Original Building** (1891; "A" on Figure 2): Trader Charles Algert built the original trading post on this site in 1891 (Algert 1917). Seen today in the central portion of the trading post, the structure measures 70 by 30 ft and has a shed roof. The blue limestone of its walls came from Moenkopi Wash, approximately a mile south. The structure's two rooms originally served as a trading post and a storage area. The building currently functions as a small grocery store. It is now sandwiched between later construction, including the 1905 octagon and living quarters built in 1927 and the 1930s.

**Octagon** (1905; "B" on Figure 2): In partnership with the Babbitt brothers, trader Samuel S. Preston constructed the octagonal portion of the trading post in 1905 (McNitt 1962). The builder was Oscar Dietzman of Flagstaff (Runke 1971), whose previous works included the Coconino County Courthouse (1894), the Arizona Lumber and Timber Company Office (1900) and the Riordan Mansion at Kinlitchi Knoll (1903-1904) (Northern Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society/NAPHS nd). Dietzman used native blue limestone from Moenkopi Wash in constructing the foundation and walls. Cement mortar was mixed on-site in a circular vat powered by horses.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section  7  Page  2  Tuba Trading Post  
Coconino County, Arizona

=====

The octagon is two stories high. The second story consists of an eight-sided wooden clerestory (Photos 1 through 4). Three wooden sash windows are set in each of seven sides of the clerestory. The center window on four sides of the clerestory can be opened for ventilation by a metal lever controlled from the first floor. The eighth side of the clerestory lacks windows because it connects to an entry wing. The entry wing, located on the east side of the octagon, is two-storied and has a gabled roof with boxed cornice returns. The octagon and its entry wing are roofed with embossed metal shingles. The shingles also extend up the walls of the clerestory, surrounding and accenting its windows.

Originally there was one window each on the north and south first-story walls of the entry wing. These windows, and those of its second story (on the east side, above the door), were wooden sash one-over-one windows with concrete sills and lintels. Early in the building's history, the north and south windows of the entry wing were infilled with stone, probably to provide better security for two vault areas located immediately inside the entrance; the second-story windows remain intact. The south infilled window was plastered on the exterior and painted with a Navajo rug design (Photo 5). At the same time, the symbol of a Hopi eagle was painted on the left side of the entrance (Photo 6) and the symbol of a Hopi butterfly was painted on the right side (Photo 7). Signs reading "Tuba Trading Post" were painted on the south and the southeast walls of the building. These historic signs and designs have been repainted and grace the exterior today.

The interior of the octagon has plastered walls, a concrete floor, and a tongue-and-groove fir ceiling. The clerestory is supported by nine massive, peeled ponderosa pine logs, one at its center and eight spaced around its periphery. Wooden counters and glass showcases originally extended between the supporting poles on seven of the eight sides, and the area behind the showcases had a raised floor. This arrangement created a "bullpen" floor plan in which customers stood in the lower, central part of the octagon while clerks tended and watched them from the raised periphery. The eighth side of the octagon was the entry corridor, flanked on both sides by poured concrete vaults.

Territorial Historian Sharlot Hall visited Tuba City in the summer of 1911 and described how the trading post looked and functioned:

It is built of gray stone in the octagonal shape of a Navajo hogan; there are no windows in the sides, but on top where the opening in a hogan would be there are a great many windows set in an octagonal skylight. The entrance door carries out the hogan idea and the stock of goods is all disposed on shelves along the walls in plain sight, but behind a high counter which runs all around the room. The Indians can see anything they want to buy but they cannot handle it, and as the clerk is behind the counter and his customers out in the octagonal court in the center of the room, with no chance to come back of the counter except through a locked gate too high to climb over, he and the goods would be safe in case of dispute. In fact, the trading post would make a fine fort and with a machine gun mounted in the skylight one or two white men could hold off the whole tribe [Hall 1975:39].

Shortly after Sharlot Hall's visit, the interior of the trading post sustained a small fire. Arson was believed to be the cause. The suspected arsonist was a man whom Sam Preston had hired to run the post while Preston was tending to a lucrative contract involving construction of the Cameron bridge, about 25 miles southwest of Tuba. Upon completion of the bridge in late 1911, Preston returned to Tuba and restored the damaged post (Richardson 1986).

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section  7  Page  3  Tuba Trading Post  
Coconino County, Arizona

=====

The octagon still functions as the trading post portion of the property. The second story of the entry wing serves as the trader's office.

**Living Quarters:** A two-room living quarters, built of the same native limestone as the octagon and shed, was added west of the latter in 1927 ("C" on Figure 2). A one-room living quarters, also of limestone, was added northwest of the octagon and east of the shed in the 1930s ("D" on Figure 2). The flat roofs, non-projecting vigas, and ceramic canales of these three rooms reflect a Spanish Colonial Revival influence. The 1927 addition currently serves for storage, while the 1930s room is a lawyer's office.

**Outbuildings:** Historical photos indicate that a small, gabled stone building stood south of the octagon in the early twentieth century ("E" on Figure 2; also see Photo 8). Built circa 1891, it was part of Charles Algert's homestead, although its exact function is unknown. This building was razed in the late 1920s or 1930s. Circa 1912-1920, Sam Preston built three rooms a short distance northwest of the trading post to provide overnight accommodations for travelers ("F" on Figure 2; also see Photo 8). These rooms were demolished in the late 1970s to enlarge the parking lot. Since there is no trace of these outbuildings, they are not counted as contributors or noncontributors in this nomination. In 1985, a traditional Navajo-style hogan with peeled logs and an earthen roof was erected as a tourist attraction in the small yard northeast of the octagon ("G" on Figure 2). The hogan is in good condition, but is counted as a noncontributor because of its modern date of construction.

**Remodeling, Restoration/Rehabilitation Work, and Integrity**

In 1955 the trading post sustained an unfortunate remodeling. The doorway in the entrance wing of the octagon was sealed. A door, two windows, and a porch were added to the southeast side of the octagon to create a new entrance. Another window was punched through the northeast side of the octagon. A small cinder block room was added east of the 1930s living quarters. On the interior, sales counters dating to 1905 were removed. A false ceiling of plywood was suspended in the octagon, blocking its clerestory and obscuring its tongue-and-groove ceiling. A balcony supported by glue-lams was also erected along the north half of the octagon's interior.

In 1985, James Babbitt of Babbitt Brothers Trading Company sensitively restored and rehabilitated the property. The 1955 porch was removed, restoring the southeast facade to view. The 1955 windows and door were filled with masonry matching the original fabric. The east wing entrance was reopened to its original width and new double doors (each with one light and three panels) were installed. The dropped ceiling as well as balcony and glue-lam supports were removed, opening to full view the clerestory and the tongue-and-groove ceiling. A new concrete floor was poured, replacing a cracked floor that had received numerous citations from the Coconino County Health Department. Historic signage and designs were carefully repainted. To counteract the effects of the remodeling of the bullpen area, a new elevated sales area with period balustrade was constructed in the center of the octagon.

The restored exterior of the trading post now accurately reflects the historic appearance of the building circa the 1930s. The 1955 cinder block room still remains along the north side of the building, but the room is small and does not detract from the overall integrity of the property. The rehabilitated interior retains the character-defining elements of the building, with the exception of the original, *sunken* bullpen (the bullpen is now raised). The building is still used mainly as a trading post and is still owned by Babbitt Brothers Trading Company. The property possesses good integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.



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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section  8  Page  1  Tuba Trading Post  
Coconino County, Arizona

**SIGNIFICANCE**

**SUMMARY**

Tuba Trading Post is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A for the important role it played in the development of commerce between Native Americans and Euroamericans in northeastern Arizona from 1891 to 1946. It is also eligible under "A" for its significant association with the development of tourism on that region's Indian reservations in the twentieth century. The trading post is eligible under Criterion C as a significant example of mixed architectural styles incorporating design elements creatively chosen to appeal to Navajo and Hopi Indians as well as Anglo tourists. The period of significance begins with the construction of its earliest section in 1891 and ends in 1946, reflecting the post's continuing importance through the end of the historic period as defined by the National Register.

**Criterion A: The Development of Commerce with the Navajo and Hopi in Northeastern Arizona**

Tuba City is a spring-fed oasis offering one of the only reliable sources of water over a vast expanse of desert in northeastern Arizona. Intensive use of the oasis by Native Americans in prehistoric and historic times has been well documented (Reagan 1920; Brugge 1972; Anderson and Gilpin 1983). When Mormons established a farming community there in the 1870s, they encountered Hopis, Navajos, and Utes living in or frequenting the oasis. The Mormons named their townsite Tuba, in honor of their friend and supporter Tivi, the Hopi leader of nearby Moenkopi (Barnes 1960; McClintock 1985). The Mormon townsite occupied Musha Springs, approximately a mile north of the Hopi village.

Charles H. Algert was one of the first Euroamericans to realize the commercial possibilities of an area so heavily populated by Native Americans. Perhaps as early as 1886 (Richardson nd), Algert, who was then station agent, postmaster, and telegraph operator at Canyon Diablo (*Coconino Sun* 12/4/1886 and 6/15/1889; Theobald and Theobald 1961), established a small store and trading post at Tuba and hired Junius "June" Foutz to operate it. Algert rented for this purpose a large hogan from Musha, the Navajo for whom Musha Springs was named. Musha's hogan stood approximately 1/4 mile east of the site of the future Tuba Trading Post (General Land Office/GLO 1905), near a towering sand hill. As prevailing winds began to cover the hogan with sand, Algert scouted for a new location (Richardson nd). He acquired acreage from a Mormon settler approximately 1/4 mile to the west and moved to this location in March of 1891 (Algert 1917). He built a shed-roofed store and trading post at the new location, which became Tuba Trading Post.

At first Algert's business did a lively trade with Mormons and Native Americans. However, a government decree ended the Mormon occupation. An Executive Order of January 8, 1900, extended the Navajo Reservation westward to include the Tuba City area (Kelly 1968; Bailey and Bailey 1986). The federal government paid the colonists for their improvements to the land, and they departed in early 1903 (Judd 1965).

A significant exception was made in the case of Algert. Quitclaiming some of his improvements to the government, the trader received permission to keep his trading post and to acquire title to the acreage surrounding it (McLaughlin 1902). The government granted Algert's request to stay in Tuba because he was known to be an ardent supporter of the government and because his work as trader was considered helpful to the government's efforts to acculturate the local native populations (Tuba City Letterbooks 1902).

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section  8  Page  2  Tuba Trading Post  
Coconino County, Arizona

=====

Algert thus remained at Tuba City, keeping his trading post and a homestead claim to its associated acreage. In 1905, he sold the business to the Babbitt Brothers Trading Company, a Flagstaff firm founded in 1889 by Charles ("C.J."), David, George, and William Babbitt. The Babbitts had entered the Indian trading business in 1891 when they acquired the Red Lake Trading Post. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they would come to own an empire of posts that included: the Apache Trading Post at Cibecue; the Antelope Springs Trading Post at Jeddito; the Conley, Favella, and Sharp trading posts, all at Keams Canyon; the Volz Trading Post at Canyon Diablo; the Sunrise Trading Post at Leupp; the Babbitt and Steckel Trading Post at Tolchaco; Willow Springs Trading Post above Cameron; Warren Trading Post at Kayenta; Cedar Ridge Trading Post, north of the Gap; and trading posts at Oraibi and Indian Wells (McNitt 1962).

The Babbitts recruited Samuel S. Preston, an experienced trader who had helped the brothers achieve profitability at Red Lake, to be their partner and manager at Tuba City (Smith 1989). Under Preston's capable management, Tuba Trading Post became the flagship of the Babbitts' trading empire. Even in hard times, and under other managers (including John P. Kerley, Jot B. Stiles, H. H. Metzger, John P. O'Farrell, and Earl Boyer), the trading post most always posted profits; in large part because of this, Tuba Trading Post remains in Babbitt company ownership today.

More importantly, Tuba Trading Post became a highly successful and effective link between Native American and Euroamerican cultures. The post played an important role in the changing economies of the Navajo and the Hopi. Through the post, Navajo and Hopi customers acquired coveted goods of the twentieth century. The post began to link them to the economy and material culture of the outside world. Not only manufactured items could be acquired at the trading post; news and gossip could be exchanged, government regulations could be learned, and medical help could be received. In essence, Tuba Trading Post and its traders acted as culture brokers between Native American and Euroamerican communities (McNitt 1962).

The Post's importance derived in large part from its location. From 1903 on, Tuba City was headquarters of the Western Navajo Agency (Kelly 1968). Furthermore, Moenkopi, just one mile from Tuba, received an influx of Hopis following the Oraibi Split of 1906 (Whiteley 1988). The construction of an Indian school and hospital in Tuba in the early twentieth century further enhanced Tuba's status as a major reservation center. Tuba Trading Post was an integral part of the Tuba City/Moenkopi area and an important component of the acculturative processes taking place there.

Tuba Trading Post conducted business in the following manner. It posted a liability bond, operated under a government license, and accepted raw materials (such as wool), crafts (such as silverwork, Navajo rugs, and Hopi pottery), and even live animals (most commonly sheep) in exchange for a wide range of goods: tinned foods, bolts of cloth, medicine for both humans and livestock, tobacco, tools, tack, kerosene, and so forth. Most merchandise was exchanged without the use of legal tender; it was not until the 1950s that currency came into general use on the Navajo and Hopi reservations (Engel 1993). Commodities acquired from the Native Americans were sold by the Babbitts or their agents in markets as far away as St. Louis, Detroit, and Chicago (Akbarzadeh 1992).

Tuba Trading Post participated in the pawn system, a system unique to the Navajo that drew them closer to the Euroamerican economy. In time of need, Navajos could pawn their worldly possessions -- most commonly concho belts, silver bridles and bracelets, turquoise necklaces, and guns -- to the trader for food and other necessities (McNitt 1962).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section   8   Page   3   Tuba Trading Post  
Coconino County, Arizona

Traders assigned a value to each pawned article and held it until redeemed. Two vaults built inside the east door of Tuba Trading Post stored particularly valuable pawn for safekeeping. Articles not redeemed within a year became "dead" pawn and were possessed and sold by the trader (Brundige-Baker 1986; Akbarzadeh 1992).

The post's traders and their Native American clients became mutually dependent. The Navajo and Hopi needed the Anglo trader to deal with the outside world. In turn, the trader learned their languages, acquired some understanding of their cultures, and strove to attain some measure of their respect in order to live among them and obtain their business. A 1928 incident at the post illustrates the extent to which its traders sought to maintain cultural acceptance. Jot B. Stiles was then the trader; a visitor, Elizabeth Compton Hegemann, reported the event:

[The Navajo] at that time were still very superstitious about touching the dead or having anything to do with burials, old or new. So when a [Navajo] had an epileptic fit in the bull pen of Tuba Trading Post, it called for quick action on the part of the trader. Jot was behind the counter at the time and as he watched the rest of the [Navajo] almost tear the front door apart in their scramble to get out, he vaulted the counter, grabbed the fellow's legs and pulled him outside. If he had died inside, the whole trading post and contents would have become *chindi* in Navaho eyes, a terrible thing to happen to a large stone building with thousands of dollars worth of merchandise on the shelves. No [Navajo] would knowingly come near a *chindi* location nor touch anything later that might have come from there [Hegemann 1963:59].

Stiles' first-aid technique left much to be desired, but his quick action averted a possible calamity that could have had disastrous consequences for the post.

Tuba Trading Post continued to play an important role in the economy and acculturation of the Navajo and Hopi through the end of the historic period. After World War II, the influence of trading posts such as this one began to decline. Indian veterans returned from the war with a greater knowledge of the outside world. On-reservation industries (particularly in oil, gas, and uranium) provided new sources of income to the Native Americans. The pickup truck replaced the horse and wagon, enabling Native Americans to drive to nearby towns to department stores offering a wider variety of goods than the trading post. In 1955, Tuba Trading Post was remodeled so that it would more closely resemble the modern off-reservation department stores. Extensive restoration and rehabilitation work undertaken in 1985 reversed the "remuddling" and restored the post to its circa 1930s appearance.

**Criterion A: The Development of Tourism on the Navajo and Hopi Reservations**

In the years between the turn of the century and the First World War, the Southwest became the tamed wilderness in which upper-class Americans and Europeans sought adventurous excursions and leisurely vacations. Tourism became a major industry as travelers searched for the Old West popularized by writers such as Charles Lummis (1892; 1893) and George Wharton James (1900; 1903). Moreover, the age of a national appreciation of Indian life, past and present, had arrived: archaeologists and anthropologists were discovering the importance and beauty of Indian cultures in numerous Southwestern ruins and pueblos. National public interest in Indian art and artifacts was primed in part by a display of

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section  8  Page  4  Tuba Trading Post  
Coconino County, Arizona

=====

Mesa Verde artifacts at Chicago's 1892 Columbian Exposition. Interest in Indian arts and crafts was further fueled by the Fred Harvey Company and the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway, which incorporated Indian motifs into their joint advertising campaigns (Poling-Kempes 1989).

The railroad provided the means by which many travelers saw the Southwest. In collaboration with Fred Harvey, the railroad offered excursion trains with stopovers at hotels within sightseeing distance of major attractions, such as the Grand Canyon and Petrified Forest. Still, much of Indian country lay distant from these hotels and could be glanced only fleetingly from train windows. The automobile offered the possibility of access to these remote points. However, even by the 1920s, all but the most adventurous tourists needed assurance before they would step off the train and journey into Indian country. The Fred Harvey Company developed a solution: guided car- and coach-tours of the Southwest (Thomas 1978; Poling-Kempes 1989).

Fred Harvey began to offer its "Indian Detours" in the spring of 1926. The (de)tours were organized so that a rail passenger could stop at Santa Fe, Albuquerque, or Winslow, step onto a motorized "Harveycar" or "Harveycoach," and take a one- two- or three-day sidetrip into Indian country. All details of the sidetrips were arranged by Fred Harvey - meals, lodging, itineraries, guides (called couriers), and drivers. Travelers, called "detourists," were taken to Indian settlements and archaeological sites, a form of travel today called cultural tourism.

Tuba Trading Post became an important layover on Indian Detours conducted into Navajo and Hopi country. Detourists would arrive in late afternoon, chat with the post trader (at that time, Jot Stiles), shop for crafts in his splendidly stocked trading post, be treated to a fine meal by Mrs. Stiles, sleep comfortably in the post's guest rooms, and then depart the next morning with a box lunch packed by the trader's wife (Thomas 1978). The hospitality and amenities provided by Tuba Trading Post contributed to the popularity of the Harvey tours and thus helped to establish tourism on the Navajo and Hopi reservations.

The Indian Detours, operating on these two reservations from 1926 into the 1930s, firmly established Tuba Trading Post's fine reputation in the travel industry. Other factors also contributed to its rising popularity among tourists. From the early twentieth century, the post played host to famous people whose writings and travels were keenly followed by the American public. Among the most notable of visitors were Theodore Roosevelt and Zane Grey. Fresh from a mountain lion hunt on the north rim of the Grand Canyon, Roosevelt stayed with the Prestons in August of 1913 on his way to see Rainbow Bridge and to witness the Hopi snake dance at Walpi; he published an account of his travels in *The Outlook* magazine (Roosevelt 1913). Grey visited the trading post on many occasions from 1911 to 1923, becoming a good friend of the Prestons. His 1922 novel, *The Vanishing American*, referred to the trading post and its trader. During the 1920s, several of Zane Grey's novels were made into films; movie crews for the 1928 film, "Sunset Pass," shot several scenes inside the trading post (Babbitt 1988).

Through the events and processes described above, Tuba Trading Post came to be regarded as a gracious outpost in the heart of Indian country. It exposed travelers to Native American crafts and cultures while surrounding them with the comforts and conveniences of home. Tuba Trading Post thus played a significant role in the development of the tourist industry on the Navajo and Hopi reservations.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section  8  Page  5  Tuba Trading Post  
Coconino County, Arizona

=====

**Criterion C: Trading Post Architecture**

The architecture of Tuba Trading Post, particularly the octagon, impresses most people who view the building. Historian Earle R. Forrest, who visited the post while on an Indian Detour in 1926, described it as "the most substantially built trading post on the Navajo Reservation" (Forrest 1926). Frank McNitt, author of *The Indian Traders*, called it "a curious and somehow pleasingly uncopied landmark in the Southwest" (McNitt 1962:268).

McNitt states that Tuba Trading Post was fashioned after "a design borrowed from the post-Civil War architects of New York's Hudson River school" (McNitt 1962:268), referring to octagonal housing promoted in the East during the second half of the nineteenth century. Chief proponent of this school was New York writer and phrenologist Orson S. Fowler. Fowler touted the virtues of eight-sided living in his book entitled *The Octagon House, A Home for All*, published in 1849. Only a few thousand octagon houses were built, mostly during the 1850s and 1860s, the majority being constructed in New York, Massachusetts, and the Midwest. Today, only a few hundred examples still exist (McAlester and McAlester 1991). In Arizona, only the Dr. Warren D. Day House (1877) in Prescott is definitely known to have been influenced by the octagonal architecture of the East.

The designer of the Tuba Trading Post octagon was trader Sam Preston. Preston was a native Kentuckian who came West with a government pack train in the mid 1880s to first operate a small trading post of his own at Black Falls (McNitt 1962). Although it is conceivable that Preston was exposed to octagon houses in the East or even Prescott, the source of his inspiration for the Tuba City building was clearly Southwestern (Hall 1975). The octagonal portion of Tuba Trading Post was purposely constructed to resemble a hogan, a traditional Navajo house form usually having a polygonal plan, eastern entry, and central roof opening (Jett and Spencer 1981). Preston's design was meant to appeal to Navajos, his main customers.

So strongly was Preston's polygon viewed as "Navajo" that the trader soon found it necessary to temper the design with Hopi motifs to appeal to his other important customers. Butterfly and eagle shield designs were painted outside the east-facing door to welcome and encourage Hopi customers to enter the building (Sweitzer 1990).

Later (1927 and 1930s) additions to the trading post reflected a Spanish Colonial Revival influence. This style was selected to appeal to the increasing numbers of travelers who were then visiting the post during grand tours of the Southwest, with its Hispanic towns and Indian villages.

Architecturally, Tuba Trading Post is significant as a unique building that evolved in response to the tastes of Native Americans and tourists attracted to Southwestern cultures. The trader needed to appeal to both worlds to further his livelihood. The mixed architectural style of Tuba Trading Post helped him accomplish this, as evidenced by the commercial success and longevity of the post.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section   9   Page  1  Tuba Trading Post  
Coconino County, Arizona

=====

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Akbarzadeh, Abdorrahim

- 1992 The House of Babbitt: A Business History of the Babbitt Brothers Trading Company, 1886-1926. Ph.D. dissertation, Department of History, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff.

Algert, Charles, H.

- 1917 Testimony of Claimant, Final Proof, Homestead Entry Serial No. 031146 for the Charles H. Algert Homestead. Suitland Reference Branch, National Archives, Washington, DC.

Anderson, Joseph K., and Dennis Gilpin

- 1983 Cultural Resources Located in an Archaeological Survey of the BIA Headquarters Compound, Tuba City, Coconino County, Arizona. Navajo National Cultural Resource Management Program Report 82-144, Window Rock.

Babbitt, James E.

- 1988 (Draft) National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Tuba Trading Post. Copy on file, State Historic Preservation Office, Phoenix.

Bailey, Garrick, and Roberta Glenn Bailey

- 1986 *A History of the Navajos: The Reservation Years*. School of American Research Press, Santa Fe.

Barnes, Will C.

- 1960 *Will C. Barnes' Arizona Place Names*. Revised and enlarged by Byrd H. Granger (facsimile edition). University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Brugge, David M.

- 1972 Historic Use and Occupancy of the Tuba City - Moencopi Area. Copy on file, Harold S. Colton Library, Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff.

Brundige-Baker, Joan

- 1986 Restoration and Preservation of Historic Trading Posts. *Plateau* 57(3):26-31.

- 1989 Tuba Trading Post. *Arizona Capitol Times* 90(6):1.

(The) *Coconino Sun*

- var *The Coconino Sun* 12/4/1886 and 6/15/1889. Microfilm copy on file, Special Collections and Archives, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff.

Engel, Mary-Jayne

- 1993 (Draft) National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Tuba Trading Post. Copy on file, State Historic Preservation Office, Phoenix.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   9   Page   2   Tuba Trading Post  
Coconino County, Arizona

=====

Forrest, Earle R.

1926 Caption on a 1926 photograph in the Earle R. Forrest Collection. Harold S. Colton Library, Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff.

Fowler, Orson S.

1849 *The Octagon House: A Home for All*. Reprinted in 1973 by Dover Press, New York.

General Land Office (GLO)

1905 Plat of Township 32 North, Range 11 East, Gila and Salt River Meridian, Arizona. On file, State Office, Bureau of Land Management, Phoenix.

Gregory, Herbert E.

1915 The Oasis of Tuba, Arizona. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 5:107-119.

Hall, Sharlot M.

1975 *Sharlot Hall on the Arizona Strip: A Diary of a Journey through Northern Arizona in 1911*. Edited by C. Gregory Crampton. Northland Press, Flagstaff.

Hegemann, Elizabeth Compton

1963 *Navaho Trading Days*. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

James, George Wharton

1900 *In and Around the Grand Canyon: The Grand Canyon of the Colorado River in Arizona*. Little, Brown, and Company, Boston.

1903 *The Indians of the Painted Desert Region*. Little, Brown, and Company, Boston.

Jett, Stephen C., and Virginia E. Spencer

1981 *Navajo Architecture: Forms, History, Distributions*. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Judd, B. Ira

1965 Tuba City, Mormon Settlement. *Journal of Arizona History* 6(1):37-42.

Kelly, Lawrence C.

1968 *The Navajo Indians and Federal Indian Policy, 1900-1935*. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Lummis, Charles F.

1892 *Some Strange Corners of Our Country: The Wonderland of the Southwest*. The Century Company, New York.

1893 *The Land of Poco Tiempo*. The Century Company, New York.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   9   Page   3   Tuba Trading Post  
Coconino County, Arizona

=====

McAlester, Virginia, and Lee McAlester

1991 *A Field Guide to American Houses*. Alfred A. Knopf, New York.

McClintock, James H.

1985 *Mormon Settlement in Arizona*. Facsimile of 1921 edition. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

McLaughlin, James

1902 Report dated November 19, 1902, to the Secretary of the Interior. Copy on file, "Tuba City, AZ" File (Miscellaneous Small Manuscript Collection 272), Arizona Historical Foundation, Hayden Library, Arizona State University, Tempe.

McNitt, Frank

1962 *The Indian Traders*. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman.

Northern Arizona Pioneers' Historical Society (NAPHS)

nd Biographical Sketch of Oscar Dietzman. NAPHS Biographical Files, Special Collections and Archives, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff.

Poling-Kempes, Lesley

1989 *The Harvey Girls: Women Who Opened the West*. Paragon House, New York.

Reagan, Albert B.

1920 Tuba, Arizona and Vicinity together with Included Ruins. *The Coconino Sun* 2/13/1920.

Richardson, Gladwell

1986 *Navajo Trader*. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

nd Navajo Indian Trading Posts at Tuba City. "Tuba City" File, Gladwell Richardson Collection (NAPHS Collection 666), Special Collections and Archives, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff.

Roosevelt, Theodore

1913 Across the Navajo Desert. *The Outlook*, October 11, 1913.

Runke, Laura Preston

1971 Writer Protests Historical Error. *Arizona Daily Sun*, 6/30/1971.

Smith, Dean

1989 *Brothers Five: The Babbitts of Arizona*. Arizona Historical Foundation, Tempe.

Sweitzer, Paul

1990 Tuba Trading Post: General Store of the Old West. *Arizona Daily Sun*, May 20, 1990.



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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section   9   Page   4   Tuba Trading Post  
Coconino County, Arizona

=====

Theobald, John, and Lillian Theobald  
1961 *Arizona Territory: Post Offices & Postmasters*. Arizona Historical Foundation, Tempe.

Thomas, Diane H.  
1978 *The Southwestern Indian Detours: The Story of the Fred Harvey/Santa Fe Railway Experiment in "Detourism."*  
Hunter Publishing Company, Phoenix.

Tuba City Letterbooks  
1902 Tuba City Letterbooks, I.1, 11/12/1902. Copy on file, Shuichi Nagata Collection (Manuscript Collection 36),  
Harold S. Colton Library, Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff.

Whiteley, Peter M.  
1988 *Deliberate Acts: Changing Hopi Culture through the Oraibi Split*. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section Photos Page 1 Tuba Trading Post  
Coconino County, Arizona

=====

**Photographic Information**

The following information applies to Photos 1 through 7 only:

- 1) Tuba Trading Post
  - 2) Coconino County, Arizona
  - 3) Pat Stein
  - 4) August 1996
  - 5) Arizona State Historic Preservation Office, Phoenix
- 
- 6) View west, showing main elevation of trading post
  - 7) Photo 1
  
  - 6) View southwest, showing octagon, clerestory, and entry wing
  - 7) Photo 2
  
  - 6) View northwest, showing octagon, clerestory, and entry wing
  - 7) Photo 3
  
  - 6) View northeast, showing octagon, clerestory, and original, shed-roofed trading post
  - 7) Photo 4
  
  - 6) View north, showing Navajo rug design painted on exterior of entry wing
  - 7) Photo 5
  
  - 6) View west, showing Hopi eagle design painted near front entrance
  - 7) Photo 6
  
  - 6) View west, showing Hopi butterfly design painted near front entrance
  - 7) Photo 7

- 
- 1) Tuba Trading Post
  - 2) Coconino County, Arizona
  - 3) Photographer unknown
  - 4) 1920
  - 5) Special Collections and Archives, Cline Library, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, Arizona.
  - 6) View southwest, showing trading post, tourist rooms, and small building south of entry wing
  - 7) Photo 8

FIGURE 2.  
TUBA TRADING POST  
FLOOR PLAN

