Form No. 10-306 (Rev. 10-74)

PH 0503525

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED AUG 31 1977
DATE ENTERED JUL 20 1978

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Death Valley Scotty Historic District (Preferred)

AND/OR COMMON
Scotty's Castle and Ranch, Death Valley Ranch

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Highway 72 on CA 72 N E of Furnace Creek Ranch in DVNM
__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Death Valley National Monument X VICINITY OF Beatty, Nevada
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Eighteenth

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
California	06	Inyo	027

2 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
X DISTRICT	X PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	X MUSEUM
__BUILDING(S)	__PRIVATE	X UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	X PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: *(If applicable)*
National Park Service, Western Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER
450 Golden Gate Avenue, Box 36063

CITY, TOWN
San Francisco __ VICINITY OF
STATE
California

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Inyo County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER
168 North Edwards Street

CITY, TOWN
Independence,
STATE
California

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Cultural Resources Survey, Death Valley National Monument

DATE
1976
X FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
National Park Service WRO

CITY, TOWN
San Francisco
STATE
California

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
_EXCELLENT	X DETERIORATED	X UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
X GOOD	_RUINS	X ALTERED	X MOVED DATE_____
X FAIR	_UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Death Valley Scotty Historic District includes two separate building complexes, Scotty's Castle and Scotty's Ranch, and is located on the western slope of the Grapevine Mountains of Death Valley National Monument, California.

Scotty's Castle

Scotty's Castle stands on the north side of Grapevine Canyon at an elevation of approximately 3,000 feet. At least three different complexes of buildings have stood since 1900 on the present site of the Castle. A 1909 photograph of the Steininger (or Stainninger) Ranch as the site was known, showed the Castle area utilized as an irrigated pasture for grazing horses. A grove of cottonwood trees stood near the base of the hill, and within the grove stood several buildings which formed the ranch headquarters. The Steininger Ranch had been developed in the 1880s as a grape, vegetable and fig farm. About the time of World War I, Albert Johnson, a Chicago millionaire, bought the property and other land in the surrounding area. Three wooden tent frames were erected for camp use, and from 1922-25, Johnson initiated the building program which eventually resulted in the present complex known as Scotty's Castle.

Starting in 1922, three wood frame, concrete and stucco buildings were constructed. These buildings--a residence, a cookhouse and a garage/workshop--were built in a simple, rectangular style. In 1925, a series of people, including construction engineer Matt Roy Thompson, designer Charles Alexander MacNeilledge and architect Martin Dubovay were hired to modify and embellish the design of the existing structures and to enlarge the complex. The resulting buildings are constructed in a style which is a conglomerate of Mediterranean influences, called "old Provincial Spanish" by Bessie Johnson. Work halted on the Castle in 1931 when funds ran out, and the complex has been modified only slightly since that time. The following structures are included in the Scotty's Castle area.

Main House and Annex SC-2

The Main House and adjacent Annex form the heart of the Castle complex. The buildings are typical of a particularly Californian style of the 1920's and 1930's, which combines Mexican, Spanish, and Mediterranean influences with their rambling floor plans, open air patios and porches, and outdoor living spaces. The style includes architectual detailing of turrets and balconies, gently pitched gable roofs finished with red mission tile, and an off-white stucco finish. The style is romantic and very suitable for its environment.

The Main House, one of the three original structures built in 1922 by Johnson, included housing for the Johnsons, Scotty and guests, and cooking storage areas. Major modification began in 1926 with the construction of a reinforced concrete basement under the existing structure, other major additions to the rectangular building and the construction of the Annex. Because of Johnson's construction technique using hollow building tile and a foam insulator called "Insulex," the frame walls were increased in thickness. The gable roofs were finished with red tile.

The Main House and Annex are connected by a second story bridge. Wood and hand-wrought iron entrance gates are located to the east and west. A tiled courtyard between the two structures was originally covered with eucalyptus logs to provide a sun screen and grape arbor. These have been removed. However, there are plans to replace them in the near future. A wishing well, constructed of concrete, decorative tile and hand-wrought iron work, is located in front of the east side entrance gates. The structure is in good condition.

The Main Castle building contains 10 rooms, 4 bathrooms, and 3 covered porches. The Annex is similar in style and construction to the Main House, although it lacks a basement. The Annex contains 13 rooms and 3 bathrooms. Both structures retain the original appearance as built prior to 1931, except for the partitioned area in the Annex first floor porch (a U. S. Post Office in the 1950's), and the offices and storage rooms on the first floor of the Annex which have undergone minor interior changes.

Common to both structures, in addition to the exterior styling, is the craftsmanship of the interior furnishings and architectural fittings and details. The buildings abound with tilework completed by master craftsmen, hand-wrought iron hinges, handles and latches on all doors and windows, massive redwood beams which were hand-finished with an alcohol torch, enormous hand-built chandeliers, and a tile and jasper fountain. The tables, chairs, curtains, tilework, and even dinner china were either designed or specifically chosen for Death Valley Ranch. Most of the furnishings were constructed in a workshop which Johnson organized in Los Angeles for the purpose of carrying out the furniture designs of Charles MacNeilledge and others. The other furnishings include many antiques bought by the MacNeilledges on a Johnson-sponsored buying trip to Europe. The artwork throughout the Castle includes originals and copies, among them a masterful copy of Raphael's "Madonna della Sedia." The choice of artwork reflects Bessie Johnson's tastes, but is of quality craftsmanship. The furnishings and objects have been documented. However, a comprehensive study has yet to be undertaken.

The Main House and Annex are in need of extensive repairs, although the buildings seem to be structurally sound, and all environmental control systems need to be completely replaced or substantially overhauled. The National Park Service conducts tours through most areas of the Castle and Annex. The first floor rooms of the Annex are used for storage, offices, and a caretaker's apartment.

Motel-Garage Unit SC-7

Another of the three original buildings, enlarged over the years, is the Motel-Garage Unit, which comprises approximately 15 rooms in an L-shaped structure. The one story unit was constructed in 1922 and substantially remodeled to its present state by

1930. The concrete foundation of the structure supports frame and stucco walls. The hip roof over the garage section is finished with mission tile. The flat roof over the motel section cantilevers over the porch area which extends the length of the building. The structure was used in its earliest period as drafting rooms for Matt Roy Thompson, and as a bunkhouse, chicken coop, and garage. The building was subsequently remodeled and enlarged to match the "Provincial Spanish" style of the complex, and later served as a motel unit. Today, the fifteen rooms are used for employee housing, and the attached storerooms for maintenance. The exterior of the structure remains nearly as it appeared in 1931.

Cookhouse SC-6

The Cookhouse, the third original structure from the 1922 building complex is a concrete, frame, and stucco structure, consisting of four rooms and bath. The building has been modified several times since its construction resulting in a rather confused appearance. The exact dates and extent of each modification are not known, and should be determined by the Historic Structure Report. As it exists now, the structure is in the "Provincial Spanish" style, and is multi-roofed, with shed and gable roofs finished in red mission tile. Non-structural log vigas extend from the exterior walls. Stained wood lintels are located above all the doors and windows. The interior woodwork is redwood. Exposed ceiling beams are located throughout the structure. The building is in fair condition, although some repair work is necessary. The building is still in use as a storage area for the Scotty's Castle concessioner.

Hacienda-Great House SC-1

The Hacienda is a frame, hollow tile and stucco building. The structure has a concrete foundation with a full basement which was never completed. The basement, divided into rooms by wooden partitions, is in use today as a storage area and employee recreation room. The Hacienda is being used as employee quarters. The first floor is divided at the center in two apartments, with lofts at the east and west ends. The floors are finished with red quarry tile, with a decorative tile baseboard edging throughout most of the structure. The interior woodwork, including shutters and exposed beams, is hand-finished redwood, with decorative hand-wrought iron fittings made specifically for this building. On the exterior, the red mission tile gable roof parallels the main axis of the structure and is flanked by several tile-covered shed roofs over smaller sections of the building. The structure is in good condition, and seems to be structurally sound, although major work needs to be done on the environmental control systems.

Gas House SC-5

The building now used as the curio shop by a park concessioner was designed originally as a gas station and rock gas storage area. The building--a rectangular section with a gable roof connected to a square section with a hip roof--is flanked on either side of the main gable by two additions whose age and significance should be determined by the Historic Structure Report. The walls are wood frame, with cement stucco or redwood siding. The predominant roofing finish is red mission tile. The building, which matches the "Provincial Spanish" styling of the Castle area with its stucco and tile finish, is in good condition. The building was used as the storage area for four 350 LP gas tanks which held the fuel supply used in the kitchens of Death Valley Ranch, and also served as the filling station for the ranch.

Chimes Tower SC-3

The five story Chimes Tower was under construction from 1926 to 1930. The concrete foundations support two lower stories of reinforced concrete, and three upper wood frame stories, all covered with stucco. The octagonal steeple roof is connected to the four octagonal corner cupolas by flying buttresses. The building houses the Degan tubular bell carillon and associated machinery. In addition to the chimes, the tower has a 6-inch hand-painted glazed tile clock on each elevation directly below the upper observation deck. Under each clock are paired wood louvers, approximately 20 feet high. A partially cantilevered staircase winds from the base of the structure to a second story exterior observation deck, supported by an arcade. On the first floor of the structure is a small apartment, which has been used as temporary quarters for overnight guests. The Degan chimes housed in the building are in working order, although some minor restoration work and proper, consistent maintenance should be undertaken on this expensive mechanism.

Powerhouse and Pavilion SC-4

Constructed in the late 1920's, the Powerhouse and Pavilion are built of reinforced concrete coated with a cement stucco finish which is scored in imitation of ashlar masonry. The rectangular building is constructed into a hillside, with an exterior staircase that passes under reinforced concrete flying buttresses and winds around the south side up to a hexagonal pavilion. The staircase continues up to the roof and a higher grade. The powerhouse consists of a tiled entrance portico and a power room. Access to the powerhouse is through an equilaterally arched doorway with a large wood double gate. Fortress-like slit windows with exterior metal grates are located along the front and sides of the structure. The parapet roofline along three sides of the structure is crenelated, as is the roofline of the pavilion. At the northeast corner of the structure is an overhanging tower raised approximately two feet above the roofline. The flat roof area,

which has two skylights into the main room of the powerhouse, is covered with soil and gravel. The equipment in the powerhouse consists of three gasoline-powered generators and a Pelton water wheel for hydro-electric generating. These should be overhauled into working condition when the environmental control systems are reworked for the entire Castle complex. The corner tower was never completed. The structure remains unfinished and in good condition.

Scotty's "Original Castle" SC-9

The "Original Castle" is a single story wood frame building in deteriorated condition. Presently there is no roof finish, although there are indications that original roofing material was tar paper held down with wooden slats. The building is a simple, gable-roofed shack, resting on an uncertain foundation. The siding is a combination of vertical and horizontal planks, most of which are warping. The small area excavated for the structure has been filled in by wash deposits to such an extent that the build-up of earth on one side of the structure is causing it to lean. The history of the construction of this building is hazy, with sources listing it as being left over from the Steininger Ranch days, constructed in 1916, or even as late as 1935. Further research is necessary. Available evidence indicates that the building was moved up from the canyon to its present site between 1925 and 1934.

Stable SC-11

The Stable is a frame and concrete building, sheathed with a stucco finish. The U-shaped structure has predominately gable roofs with parapet edges, finished with red mission tile. The unpaved interior courtyard area is entered through a pair of 18-foot wide redwood gates from the west and less massive gates from the east, all with hand-wrought iron fittings. Several feet of soil and gravel debris from flash floods has been deposited at the north wall, and possibly could cause future structural damage unless it is excavated. The structure is in good condition and appears to be unaltered from its appearance in the early 1930's. The building is utilized for storage of modern construction equipment, materials, furniture, tack, and other historic and non-historic articles.

Solar Heater SC-10

The Solar Water Heater, built in 1929-30, is an eight panel solar collector with two storage tanks. The wood frame structure with black painted panels and copper tubing is angled toward maximum sun exposure. Connected to the north edge of the panel structure are insulated metal storage tanks that stand on a concrete slab. Restoration of the plumbing elements is necessary for the solar heater to be used for interpretive purposes. The solar heater heated water for the Castle complex for a relatively short period of time after its construction. The pipes were allowed to freeze one winter, which caused

extensive damage which was never repaired. The exterior decoration of the solar heater was not completed.

Entrance Gates SC-12

Construction of the Entrance Gates stopped in 1931. The unfinished structure, built of reinforced concrete, is two stories high. Two crenelated towers, square in plan, are connected by an arch spanning the main roadway into the Castle complex. A pair of massive wooden gates with hand-wrought iron fittings serves to close the entrance. The entranceway is further defined by curving walls approximately three feet high on the edges of the roadway at the gate and across the bridge constructed over the stream. The lower story, built in the abutment below road level, supports the towers and contains a small apartment. The structure is in good condition.

Swimming Pool SC-18

The reinforced concrete swimming pool, approximately 240 feet in length, remains unfinished since construction halted in 1931. Two pear-shaped sections of the pool are crossed in the center by a bridge with steps, walkway and platform. The bottom of the pool is earth, and as much as 15 feet deep. A concrete tunnel extends approximately 120 feet from the basement of the main house of Scotty's Castle and passes under the bridge and under the road south of the swimming pool. Windows below the proposed water line look out from the basement portion of the Castle which houses an area intended for use as a dressing room. The pool structure is in excellent condition. The tiles which were to have lined the pool are in storage in the basement and tunnels of the Castle.

Gravel Separator SC-16

The Gravel Separator is constructed of 8 x 8 railroad ties and timbers of various sizes. The ties, held together with steel reinforcing bars in an interlocking crib system, form a U-shaped retaining wall 18 feet above the surrounding grade at its highest point. The fourth side is graded down for vehicle access. On the southeast wall is located the gravel separating machinery for sifting, washing and separating the aggregate according to size. Stabilization is required for the structure which has not been used in years. The gravel separator supplied aggregate for the Castle's construction.

Miscellaneous Structures, Scotty's Castle Area

The Powder Storage Structure (SC-17), built of railroad ties salvaged from the Bullfrog Goldfield Railroad, sits in several feet of soil and gravel flash-flood deposits next to the gravel separator. The structure has a roof of railroad ties laid side by side, covered with a layer of corrugated metal which is held down with soil and gravel. It is not known

if the structure was built freestanding, or as a partial dugout. The date of construction is unknown. Further research is necessary to determine the building's age, significance and original appearance.

West of the Castle complex is Tie Canyon, so named for the thousands of railroad ties stacked here, bought by Albert Johnson as firewood for the fourteen fireplaces of the Castle. The ties were bought from the Bullfrog Goldfield Railroad when it was abandoned and scrapped in 1928. Tie Canyon is a south-flowing tributary of Grapevine Wash, joining the wash a few hundred yards west of the Castle. The area was used as a dumping area for trash from 1922-70.

On a small hill directly above the Castle is the gravesite of Death Valley Scotty. The grave is marked by a redwood cross, and a plaque reading: "Death Valley Scotty 1872-1954."

Surrounding the Castle proper and Scotty's Ranch is a fence constructed of reinforced concrete posts and barbed wire. The posts, approximately seven feet high, are inscribed with "S" and "J", signifying the partnership between Death Valley Scotty and Albert Johnson. The fencelines enclose approximately 1,500 acres, and are in need of general repair. The original molds for the two types of concrete fenceposts are extant.

Approximately one quarter mile southeast of the Castle and Annex is the site of the construction camp occupied by the Native American workers hired to build the complex. There are no structural remains there.

The watercourse, as it exists now, has been altered by man and nature since the 1930's. The extent of these alterations, however, are not known. This information should be included in the Historic Structure Report for the Castle area. Until that time, the status quo should be maintained.

Scotty's Ranch Area

Scotty's Ranch, also known as the Lower Vine Ranch or Lower Grapevine Ranch, is located five miles below Scotty's Castle at the end of Grapevine Canyon at an elevation of 2,150 feet. Constructed in the late 1920's and early 1930's at the same time as the Castle, the ranch originally consisted of a small redwood bungalow and several outbuildings, including an auto garage, a grain shed surrounded by a corral and a blacksmith shed. Several other structures are located on the ranch property. The ranch complex was constructed by Albert Johnson as a home for Death Valley Scotty. The house, garage and grain shed were constructed with the fine craftsmanship and master carpentry of the Castle. However, unlike the Castle, those buildings were designed and built with a consistent quality which renders them a far more harmonious design unit. All of the buildings

are presently vacant.

Scotty's Ranch House SC-23

Constructed circa 1930, the Ranch House is a single story wood frame structure. The symmetrical, cross-shaped bungalow is built with a concrete foundation and has two intersecting gable roofs covered with cedar shingles. Floors are concrete slab. The building consists of an enclosed porch, kitchen/living room, two bedrooms and bath. The structure is sheathed with decorative horizontal siding and wood shingles at the gable ends. Decorative details on the interior include exposed beams, built-in cabinets and diagonal wood panelling. The windows are shuttered with ornamented wood panels. The structure is in fair condition, although currently occupied by pack rats. The wood craftsmanship and carpentry are excellent work and give this building, as well as the two others constructed in the same manner, an honest structural and architectural integrity.

Garage SC-24

The garage is a wood frame single story structure with a concrete foundation and dirt floor. The decorative, well-crafted horizontal siding is continued in the panels used to shutter the windows. The roof is finished with wood shingles, as are the gable ends. The building is in fair condition, although some restoration work is necessary. The structure still houses a panel truck (late 1930's vintage?) used by Death Valley Scotty.

Grain Shed and Corral SC-25

Constructed around 1930, the grain shed is a single story frame structure with a gable roof. The building is sheathed with the decorative horizontal siding which also continues into the panels which shutter the windows on three sides of the structure. Wood double doors at the front of the structure provide access. The building is in fair condition. The structure is enclosed on three sides by a wood corral which surrounds approximately one quarter acre. The corral fencing is in need of repair.

Blacksmith Shed SC-26

A shed consisting of four peeled log posts supporting a corrugated metal roof is located within 100 feet of the garage. The structure has a dirt floor and no foundation. Housed under the roof are a workbench and blacksmith equipment. The structure is in deteriorated condition.

Other Structures

A wooden bridge (SC-27), built during the construction of the fencelines on the property,

is located approximately one mile northeast of the ranch area. The bridge is eighteen feet above a dry wash and spans thirty-six feet between natural rock outcrops. The simple structure has running tracks suitably spaced for auto or wagon, located on the deck.

A corrugated metal building, with a dirt floor, is located approximately 300 yards from the ranch house across a dry wash. The age and significance of the building is not known. The contents of the building includes an old iron bed frame. Since Johnson and Scott were essentially the only people to use the ranch, it is assumed that the building was used by them.

A reservoir of dirt embankments is located approximately one-half mile northwest of the ranch house building area. The reservoir held runoff from nearby springs, and was used as a swimming pool for a period of time. The remains of a diving board are extant. The reservoir was not holding water in December, 1975, and probably has not for some time. Considerable erosion has taken place.

Located near the reservoir are several structures. A cabin frame, which probably had a cloth roof, could have been used as a changing house by people swimming in the reservoir, however, further research is necessary to determine the building's age and purpose. A wooden tent platform, of unknown purpose and age, is located nearby. Also, located in the area are the ashes left from the fire of another building which seems to have been a tent platform judging from the lack of debris. Only the ashes of the floor joists are visible. The dates, history and significance of the structures are unknown, necessitating further research in an Historic Structure Report.

Directly outside the fenceline on the road leading into the property is a concrete and stone water trough, which Johnson and Scott had constructed there to provide water to visitors, tourists and other travellers, since the ranch was usually closed to the public.

Miscellaneous

The Death Valley Scotty Historic District contains within its boundaries two other known cultural resources, unrelated to the Johnson-Scott days. A petroglyph located near the mouth of Tie Canyon has been recorded as site INY-2800 in Heizer's and Clewlos' Prehistoric Rock Art of California. Another site, containing historic and prehistoric artifacts and lithic materials, is located 700 feet east of the spring house near the eastern boundary of the district. The Historic District probably contains other cultural resources within the boundaries, but this has not been adequately studied.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
X PREHISTORIC	X ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	X SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	X ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
__1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
X 1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	X OTHER (SPECIFY) (folklore)
		X INVENTION (technology)		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT ~~Matt Roy Thompson, Constr. Engineer~~ Charles MacNeilledge, Designer Martin Dubovay, Architect

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Death Valley Scotty Historic District is an area of Regional significance in the fields of 20th century architecture, folklore and social history, and of local significance in the fields of archeology, art and invention. (Individually, the Main castle and Annex are of Regional significance in those fields, and all other structures are of local significance.) The Scotty's Castle complex serves as a reminder of the excesses of mining promotion during the early 20th century, the frontier romanticism connected with it, and the conspicuous consumption practiced by the wealthy during the 1920's. The architecture typifies their values. The district as a whole is closely associated with one of the best known and most colorful figures produced by the American mining frontier--Death Valley Scotty (Walter Scott).

The two tracts of private lands which now form the heart of the Death Valley Scotty Historic District were first settled during the 1880's. They did not assume importance, however, until about 1916, when they were purchased by a mid-western insurance magnate named Albert Johnson. Johnson had developed a friendship with a swindling, pseudo-prospector and publicity hound named Walter Scott. Scott had made himself a legendary character by his constant publicity-seeking tactics, including the "Scott Special", or "Coyote Special"--a Santa Fe train which, under his direction, set a record in 1905 for the fastest run between Los Angeles and Chicago. The train was financed by one of Scott's "grubstakers." He attained notoriety for the 1906 "Battle of Wingate Pass", a fake skirmish staged to frighten other "grubstakers" from pursuing the location of his alleged gold mines. The "Battle" went awry and resulted in Scott's brother being seriously wounded. Several participants were arrested, but later escaped prosecution. These stories and various tall tales involving Scott made national headlines. Thus, Scott created his own myth. Albert Johnson later perpetuated and subsidized that myth.

By 1916, Scott had lived in the Death Valley region for over a decade and had devoted most of his time to publicizing one or more mysterious, but actually non-existent gold mines. For a time, he had been "grubstaked" by several persons who hoped to reap a share of the mining profits. Scott and Johnson met in 1904 when Scott tried to swindle the insurance man as he had several other easterners. Out of this dubious encounter developed a friendship which lasted several decades. Johnson visited Scott at Death Valley and discovered that the climate dramatically improved his health. In 1916, he purchased the Grapevine tracts for use as a campsite during his visits to the region.

For several years, Johnson utilized the Grapevine site as his camp, residing during his visits in several canvas tent platforms he had erected. In 1922, Johnson built three frame

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Johnson, Hank. Death Valley Scotty. Corona del Mar, California: Trans-Books, 1974.

Shally, Dorothy, and William Bolton. Scotty's Castle. Yosemite: Flying Spur Press, 1973.

Correspondence between Matt Roy Thompson and Albert Johnson, 1926-1930. Located in Records at Scotty's Castle, Death Valley National Monument, California.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 719.57 hectares (1778.0574 acres)

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A				B			
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Because it was not necessary to include all original fencelines in the Historic District, the boundaries are marked as follows:

Castle	(east.)	(north.)	Ranch	(east.)	(north.)
EA	11 469000	4099000	EA	11 464550	4098000
AB	11 471395	4099000	150 AB	11 467~~000~~	4098000
BC	11 471395	4098250	150 BC	11 467~~000~~	4097~~960~~ 150
CD	11 469700	4097230	CD	11 466205	4096350
DE	11 469000	4097230	DE	11 464550	4096300

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Laura E. Soulliere, Architectural Historian (Revision of form by Ross Holland)

ORGANIZATION: National Park Service, WRO

DATE: August, 1976

STREET & NUMBER: 450 Golden Gate Avenue, Box 36063

TELEPHONE: 556-4165

CITY OR TOWN: San Francisco,

STATE: California

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES X NO ___ NONE ___

JUN 23 1977

Hugh M. Rodes

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is ___ National ✓ State ___ Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE Deputy Assistant Secretary

DATE AUG 19 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE 7·20·78

~~DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION~~ KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: Catherine Cole

DATE 6·5·78

~~KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER~~

and stucco structures, the largest of which was two stories high and 96 feet long. Albert Johnson preferred this unadorned style of architecture, symbolic of his straightforwardness. His wife, Bessie Johnson, preferred the Mission Revival buildings of Stanford University, and proceeded to convince her husband to remodel the buildings in "Provincial Spanish" as she called it, with an old Stanford friend engineer Matt Roy Thompson as head of the construction. For the next five years, construction continued in Upper Grapevine Canyon and a complex of buildings took shape, not dissimilar in idea to W. R. Hearst's San Simeon--at least in Bessie Johnson's mind. Before construction ended in 1931 due to the large financial losses which Johnson suffered during the Great Depression, the ornate complex developed, featuring the Main Castle building with its Annex, Hacienda, Chimes Tower, Powerhouse, Stable, Garage and Gas House. A swimming pool and a gate house were under construction in 1931 when work halted. While all this construction was underway in Grapevine Canyon, Johnson had a small, finely crafted bungalow, garage and shed built on the Lower Grapevine tract. The bungalow, with associated out-building and reservoir, served as a residence for Death Valley Scotty, and sometimes a retreat for Albert Johnson--a place to escape the attention naturally drawn to the increasingly fantastic desert castle. The ranch served as the principal dwelling place for Scotty, who officially moved into the Castle when he became old and infirm.

Johnson halted construction in 1931 because of his financial losses from the Depression. He considered commencing building again several years later, but never did. Bessie Johnson died in an automobile accident in 1943. When Albert Johnson died in 1948, the property had already been deeded to the Gospel Foundation of California, an evangelistic corporation founded by Johnson in 1947 to "carry on the work of the Lord." The Gospel Foundation gave tours through the Castle and provided accomodations for guests. Death Valley Scotty was allowed to live at the ranch and later at the Castle until his death in 1954. The National Park Service acquired the property from the Gospel Foundation in 1970 for $850,000.

The Death Valley Scotty Historic District is of Regional architectural significance for several reasons. The choice of style for the Castle and Annex area is not unusual in California architecture. The particularly unique aspect of that choice, however, lies with its location. Because of the use of stucco and red mission tile on wood frame and concrete buildings, enormous amounts of building materials had to be hauled in to the isolated site at great expense. Construction with local, available material would have been a far more economic choice. However, concern with economy was not a major factor in the design. As has been stated so often, the structure would not have been out of the ordinary in Beverly Hills, but it certainly seems extraordinary at its site on the outskirts of Death Valley.

Significance in terms of art and architecture can be found in the interior furnishings and structural details. The emphasis of the buildings of the Castle complex is on the fine,

hand-crafted details. The furnishings, except for the European antiques, were designed and built in a workshop in Los Angeles which Johnson created for the sole purpose of outfitting the Castle. Charles Alexander MacNeilledge, the designer perhaps most responsible for the design stipulations of the Castle, took great pains in specifying every detail of the furnishings and fittings, down to the last hand-wrought iron door hinge. The tile work in the Main House and Annex is considered by experts at the Tile Institute of America to be some of the better examples of their craft on the west coast. The Tile Industry News calls the work at the castle: ". . . a monument in itself to the tile industry." The overall architectural importance of th Castle area is in its 1920's upper middle class approach to architecture. At that time, much of the contemporary idea of quality rested in details such as the carved beams and tile work, rather than with structural integrity and an honesty of materials in relation to the building. For example, the powerhouse is a reinforced concrete structure, but it is finished on the exterior with stucco scored in imitation of ashlar masonry. The wood frame walls of the Main House and Annex are finished with stucco, which gives the buildings the illusion of being constructed of adobe. Thus, the image-evoking details were emphasized rather than the structural integrity.

The three major buildings at Scotty's Ranch have a separate and distinct architectural integrity. The wood structures do not purport to be of any material other than wood. The complex has an architectural unity and harmony with the material chosen and the way in which that material is used. The material is appropriate to the style and scale of the buildings. The structures were executed with a clarity and relative simplicity of design which is a refreshing change from the Castle architecture.

Coupled with and inseparable from the architectural significance of the District is the local invention/technology significance. Johnson used several types of construction techniques and some innovative materials, the combination of which has caused certain structural problems. The major materials and construction types include reinforced concrete, wood frame, hollow building tile, "Insulex" foam insulation and stucco. The problems are spalling concrete, cracked stucco, stucco and mesh backing separating from the structure, broken tiles, and advanced deterioration in the environmental control systems. Essentially all the environmental control systems for the Castle will have to be renovated. The concern with experimentation is demonstrated in the new building techniques, materials and systems. While Bessie Johnson was allowed her freedom in choice of design and style, Albert Johnson pursued his interest in engineering and construction with the solar water heater, the Pelton hydro-electric wheel, the use of "Insulex" and the hundreds of feet of utility tunnels connected with the Castle. Undoubtedly Matt Roy Thompson, head of construction, aided and abetted Albert Johnson, and took the details of his work very seriously.

Johnson's motives for the construction of the Castle and Ranch remain imperfectly

understood. Apparantly, the strictly religious Johnson took strong pleasure in the publicity-demanding antics of the untrustworthy Scott, with his tall tales and "western frontier miner" image, to such an extent that he was Scott's financial support for the better portion of his life. Scott took credit for building the Castle complex. Johnson encouraged this misconception, and once identified himseslf only as Scott's banker.

Regardless of exact motives, the end result of Johnson's construction program was a truly fantastic desert palace, presided over by one of the most colorful characters of the southwestern deserts. The buildings deserve preservation because of their historical and architectural interest, and because of their strong hold on the collective imagination of America.

The critical elements needing protection here that are essential to the historic district are those dealing with the architecture, the technological concerns, the historic scene and the historic interior decoration and furnishing. The exteriors of all the structures should be returned to their appearances at the time of the halt of construction in 1931. This would include the removal of all non-historic additions as described in Section 7 and as specified in the Historic Structure Reports (additions to the curio shop and cookhouse). The interiors of the buildings which have been altered, such as the Hacienda and cookhouse, should retain as much of their original character as possible. This would include protection of the obvious architectural and dfecorative elements of the original design, or built during the period of historic significance (1922-1931). The architectural and decorative elements protected here are those such as beams and ceiling work, wrought-iron work, tilework, built-in lamps and other applicances. This does not preclude development of interiors which are not of architectural significance (the basement of the Hacienda, the kitchen area of the cookhouse, the interior of the motel-garage unit), nor does it preclude interior adaptive restoration in the lesser important but nonetheless architecturally or historically significant areas, as long as those features are preserved. This does preclude changes other than restoration to the Main House and second story of the Annex, the Powerhouse, and the Chimes Tower.

The interior decoration and furnishing in the buildings are an integral part of the significance, since every piece was specifically made for or chosen for the Castle. A detailed study of the furnishing, decorative art and fine art should be undertaken to identify and record what is there, to determine preservation needs, and follow through with preservation.

Johnson's fascination with technology took many forms. The solar heater, although used only for a short period of time, exemplifies his concerns. The Pelton Wheel, the chimes mechanism and the complex theatre organ are other features which should be protected, and are prime interpretive material. Non-significant and intrusive structures included within the boundaries of the district are the transformer station, the modern gas station,

the park fee collectors' structure, the motel restroom, the spring house, the reservoir house, the modern restroom (trailer) and the modern concessions building (trailer). It is recommended that all non-significant and intrusive structures be removed following the completion of the Historic Structure Report and a historic landscape study.