United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic   Acadia Ranch

and/or common

2. Location

street & number   ~~Highway~~ AZ 77   N/A not for publication

city, town   Oracle   N/A vicinity of

state   Arizona   code   04   county   Pinal   code 021

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	X occupied	___ agriculture	X museum
X building(s)	X private	___ unoccupied	X commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	X yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	N/A being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
		___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name   Oracle Historical Society/Monkey Wrench Association, Inc.

OMSR
street & number   P.O. Box A   P.O. Box 4000, Oracle, AZ 85623

city, town   Oracle   N/A vicinity of   state Arizona

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.   Pinal County Recorder's Office

street & number   Pinal County Courthouse

city, town   Florence   state Arizona 85232

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title   Oracle Historic Architectural   has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes X no
        Resource Survey

date 1980   ___ federal ___ state ___ county X local

depository for survey records   State Historic Preservation Office

city, town   Phoenix   state Arizona

7. Description

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY

The Acadia Ranch Complex, constructed between 1885 and 1930, is comprised of the Acadia Ranch House, one outbuilding, and a water tower. The property is built on a slope facing north on Highway 77 in Oracle, a sparsely settled, unincorporated ranching and mining community located in the foothills of the Santa Catalina Mountains north of Tucson, Arizona. From its late 19th century origins, Oracle was the center of a region known for its ranching and mining activities. Secondary economic activities evolved at the turn of the century in the form of guest ranches and tuberculosis "sanatoriums" which catered to many well-to-do Easterners. Although the resident population has grown moderately since World War II, the core of this unincorporated town is little changed from its historic appearance.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Main House - Exterior

The Acadia Ranch House is a vernacular, one story, "L"-shaped building composed of adobe, frame, and stone additions extending east and south from a 29'x40' five room adobe core. The major exterior feature is a wooden, shed roofed porch supported by chamfered wood posts extending across the north facade and most of the west. The porch serves to unify the north elevation which is comprised of the adobe and stucco core (built in two phases ca. 1880's), a breezeway, and a one room adobe structure (ca. 1915) located to the east.

Fenestration on the north facade includes a central entry door with paired, round arched windows providing access to the core and one paneled door in each of the two additions. The doors are interspaced with wood frame, two-over-two window units. The adobe structure includes a wood door off the porch, a north window, and a fireplace on the south. All openings are framed with simple trim.

A randomly coursed stone retaining wall divides the property and the roadway on the north. The wall includes south projections on each end with the longer, to the west, framing the driveway. A stairway is built into the north wall and leads up to the porch.

A one story frame and shiplap addition constructed as a dining room (ca. 1915) extends south of the core. This segment is punctuated on the west with a wood door and a wood frame, two-over-two window. Positioned above is a louvered ventilator below the ridge line and an awning ventilator on each side. The south wall features four wood frame two-over-two window units extending to the south.

Attached to the southeast corner of this addition is an "L"-shaped projection comprised of a stone and adobe smoke house and a wood frame and metal garage (ca. 1915). Three small restrooms are located at the rear juncture of the core and the 1890 east addition. These were added between 1920 and 1935. During this same period, the kitchen area off the 1915 addition was doubled in size with an extension to the east, and the small rear entry room between the kitchen and smokehouse was added.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
___ prehistoric	___ 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	___ social/
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	humanitarian
_X_ 1800–1899	___ commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ theater
_X_ 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ transportation
		___ invention		_X_ other (specify) health/tourist

Specific dates 1885, 1930   **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

SUMMARY

The Acadia Ranch complex is historically significant for its association with a regional industry oriented towards health and tourism. Also, the Ranch is architecturally significant, within a local context, for its use of adobe as the primary building material. The main house is also important for its evolutionary additive character which reflects its increased use as both a guest ranch and a health resort.

HISTORIC BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

The small community of Oracle, nestled in the northwestern foothills of the Santa Catalina Mountains 35 miles north of Tucson, Arizona, evolved as the center of a mining and cattle ranching area in the early 1880's. The late 1880's also saw the genesis of the southwest's reputation as a dry climate haven for tuberculosis suffers ("lungers") and other health seekers. In southern Arizona, Tucson evolved as a major center of this industry. Oracle, located at a cooler, 4,500 feet elevation, quickly capitalized upon its proximity to the "Old Pueblo". From the early 1880's until World War II, the small town catered not only to Tucsonians and other Arizona residents, but also to well-to-do easterners and Europeans.

The Acadia Ranch complex has its origins in the early 1880's when Mr. and Mrs. Edwin S. Dodge, owners/operators of the Dodge Lodging House in Tucson, moved to Oracle to open a lodging house for travelers. A Jack Aldwinkle is known to have been in partnership with them. Their intentions were advertised in various newspapers. One paper in Tombstone, located some 110 miles distant, announced:

> Mr. E. S. Dodge is in from Oracle for a few days. He is preparing to erect a fine house at the camp for the entertainment of summer visitors, as Oracle presents strong claims as the most popular resort in the vicinity of Tucson. [1]

By the end of the decade, advertisements enticing customers to Acadia Ranch were appearing regularly in regional newspapers.

It is believed that Dodge constructed the adobe core of the main house in two phases, resulting in the foursquare plan with a flat roof. During Dodge's ownership (early 1880's to 1905), the east wing, porch, smokehouse, outbuilding, and water tower were constructed. Also, the main house and east wing were covered with a hipped roof. Indicative of the local importance of Acadia Ranch at this time is the fact that one room in the main house served as Oracle's United States Post Office from 1885 until 1901.

(See Continuation Sheet)

[1] Tombstone Epitaph, March 20, 1882.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet 4

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property ___less/acre___

Quadrangle name __Oracle, Arizona__   **Quadrangle scale** _1:24,000_

UTM References

A |1,2| |5,2,2,2,0,0| |3,6,0,7,7,7,5| B |__| |__,__,__| |__,__,__|
  Zone Easting   Northing   Zone Easting   Northing

C |__| |__,__,__| |__,__,__| D |__| |__,__,__| |__,__,__|

E |__| |__,__,__| |__,__,__| F |__| |__,__,__| |__,__,__|

G |__| |__,__,__| |__,__,__| H |__| |__,__,__| |__,__,__|

Verbal boundary description and justification

Oracle Townsite, all of lots 12 through 22, Block 31. See boundary delineated on accompanying site map.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
state		code	county		code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bill Perreault, Historian/Registrar

organization Historic Preservation Section, Arizona State Parks   **date** December 1983

street & number 1688 West Adams   **telephone** (602) 255-4174

city or town Phoenix   **state** Arizona

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national   ____ state   _X_ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89–665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Dennis G. Schober*

title *State Historic Preservation Officer*   **date** *Dec. 30, 1983*

For NPS use only
   I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Keeper of the National Register   **date** 2/22/84

Attest: **date**

Chief of Registration

NPS Form 10-900-a
(3-82)

OMB No. 1024-0018
Exp. 10-31-84

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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date entered

Continuation sheet   1   Item number   7   Page   2

The core of the main house is topped with a hipped roof which extends eastward to cover the ca. 1890 addition. To the south, the 1915 addition is surmounted by a shallow gable roof. All roof surfaces are corrugated or "V"-crimp, galvanized steel panels painted with an aluminum top coat.

Main House - Interior

Typical of adobe dwellings of the period, the core is a four square plan with a central hallway. Noteworthy interior features in this section and throughout the building include original window and door trim, doors, baseboards, wainscoting, and tongue-in-groove ceilings and floors. Also, there are eight chimney locations in the house -- five in the adobe core, one in the east wing, and two in the south wing.

Main House - Integrity

Overall, the main house is in very sound structural condition but is in need of maintenance. A small fire in 1982 damaged a portion of the upper walls and roof of the east wing, but repairs were made immediately. The owners, the Oracle Historical Society, contracted for the preparation of a Historic Structure Report, and a phased maintenance/restoration program has been initiated.

Outbuilding

The outbuilding is sited west of the main house and was constructed ca. 1900 to serve as guest quarters. The stuccoed adobe core is rectangular in form and measures approximately 20'x60'. A later shed addition to the east enclosed a wood frame porch and is finished with horizontal wood sheathing. The windows in the core are wood frame, two-over-two units, and those in the enclosed porch are one-over-one. The exterior exhibits simple detailing with exposed rafter ends as the only decorative element. The roof is finished with corrugated metal sheeting on the core and rolled roofing on the addition. On the interior, the original floor plan defining three rooms is intact. Original elements include floors, windows, simple wood trim, and plastered wall surfaces.

The outbuilding is well maintained and, other than a minor structural problem in the southwest corner, appears to be in sound condition.

Water Tower

The Acadia Ranch water tower is built into a low hill to the southeast of the main house. Constructed ca. 1900, it is a symmetrical cast concrete structure with a square plan measuring approximately 12'x12'. Small conical buttresses are incorporated into each corner. The walls are topped by a hipped roof finished with rolled roofing material. The structure is out of service but is in sound condition.

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Continuation sheet   2   Item number   8   Page   2

Ownership of the Acadia Ranch changed frequently until 1914 when it was purchased by
Mrs. Annie Neal, wife of the proprietor of the nearby Mountain View Hotel. By this
time the facility included additional cottages, now moved, but known to have been
sited across the street from the main house. The south addition was added ca. 1915
to house a kitchen and large dining room.

A newspaper advertisement of the period revealed the clientele being sought:

> Acadia Ranch ... under entirely new management. For the re-
> ception of people afflicted with tuberculosis ... daily automobile
> service, trained nursing ... fresh eggs, milk (plenty of it), green
> vegetables, meat in abundance. No canned goods. Patients allowed
> their special nurses if desired. Visiting physician, Dr. Jeremiah
> Metzger of Tucson. [2]

Oracle continued to attract wealthy Easterners seeking the salubrious climate, as
evidenced by the purchase of Acadia Ranch in 1923 by William B. Trowbridge. Trowbridge
was the son of the senior member of the Vermilge Company, one of Wall Street's oldest
banking houses, and grandson of the president of the Second National Bank of New York.
He owned the property until 1943 and continued its function as a hotel and guest ranch.

In 1943 the property was purchased by Reginald and Agnes Ramsay. With the onset of
World War II, Oracle's status as a health resort declined, but local mining activities
increased to support the war effort. The Ramsays catered to local miners, oftentimes
accommodating 40-50 people at a time.

In 1978, the main house and watertower were purchased by the newly formed Oracle His-
torical Society. It presently houses a museum and office space.✓ In 1982 the Society
funded the preparation of a Historic Structure Report as a major step towards the
preservation of the main house.

The outbuilding was purchased at the same time by a private corporation founded by
members of the Historical Society. It has recently functioned as a gift shop.

HEALTH/TOURISM

The Acadia Ranch complex possesses historical significance for its direct association
with a major local and regional industry. Within the immediate context of Oracle,
Acadia Ranch and the nearby Mountian View Hotel, both sited on the community's main
street, are the primary historic lodging facilities associated with the theme of health
and tourism. The Mountain View Hotel, contemporaneous with Acadia Ranch, has suffered
from a loss of integrity of its main building. Acadia Ranch, associated with Oracle's
health/tourism industry for 60 years and possessing high integrity, best represents
this theme.

2 Arizona Daily Star, August 30, 1914.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

Continuation sheet   3   Item number   8   Page   3

ARCHITECTURE

Oracle, like Tucson and many other southern Arizona communities, inherited a Sonoran building tradition in which readily available soil was transformed into sun-dried adobe bricks for construction. Most of Oracle's early residential structures and its few commercial buildings were constructed of this material. Typical structures had one or two rooms and were utilitarian in nature.

The Acadia Ranch, with its adobe core, "bath house", smoke house, and outbuilding, is a major local representative of the historic use of this building material.

The property's architectural significance is enhanced by the evolutionary character of the main house. This quality is a direct result of its increased use, over time, as both a guest ranch and a health resort. Enriched by several building materials, including adobe, wood, stone, and metal, the house is unified through the juxtaposition of the added elements, combining rare architectural features such as the front door and early adobe walls with common details used in countless variation.

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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Tombstone Epitaph, March 20, 1882

Arizona Daily Citizen, May 8, 1889

Arizona Daily Star, April 22, 1891

Arizona Daily Star, July 24, 1895

Arizona Daily Citizen, August 5, 1896

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Arizona Daily Star, August 30, 1914

Arizona Daily Star, February 24, 1939

Arizona Daily Star, February 24, 1969

Arizona Daily Star, April 24, 1978

Old State Highway 77

ACADIA RANCH
SITE MAP

BOUNDARY

MAIN HOUSE

OUTBUILDING

WATERTOWER

Mount Lemon Road

APPROX. SCALE

NORTH

0   250'   500'