

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only  
received **JUL 29 1983**  
date entered

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

**1. Name**

historic THE SCHWERTNER HOUSE

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number 124 East Stewart Street N/A not for publication

city, town Willcox N/A vicinity of

state Arizona code 04 county Cochise code 003

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: <u>Vacant</u>

**4. Owner of Property**

name Albert Schwertner

street & number 124 East Stewart Street

city, town Willcox N/A vicinity of state Arizona

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Cochise County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Bisbee state Arizona

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

Railroad Avenue Preview, Willcox, Arizona i<sup>2</sup> Environmental Consultants, Tempe, Arizona  
title A Definition of Historic Restoration has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no  
Potentials

date May 1974  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Arizona State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Phoenix state Arizona

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

## Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

### SUMMARY/CONTEXT:

The Schwertner House is a vernacular wood-frame, Stick Style cottage located in Willcox, a small railroad city in southeastern Arizona. The house is located on Stewart Street, one-half block northwest of Railroad Avenue, the historic commercial street of Willcox, and is visually related to the local Railroad Avenue Historic District. Presently in deteriorated condition, the house retains its original Victorian wooden detailing and conveys a high level of stylistic integrity. Planned restoration is feasible due to its relative structural stability and the presence of the original ornamentation. The interior features are also in place.

### DESCRIPTION (EXTERIOR):

The Schwertner House was constructed as a three room, T-plan residence measuring 35'-7" E to W by 36'-6" N to S. The building faces north to East Stewart Street. An ell measuring approximately 39' (N-S) x 10'-6" (E-W) was added very early to the south (rear), extending from the SE corner of the building. This ell has a 6' deep open veranda on its west side. A second early addition is a wing measuring approximately 16' (E-W) x 38' (N-S) situated to the west of the main house.

The original section of the house has a gable roof over the main north-south portion with its ridge parallel to the building mass. The gable end faces the street. A second gable intersects the main roof near the center of the east shed. The ridges are of equal height. Roofing material is of sawn redwood shingles laid on redwood shingle lath.

The west wing has a hip roof with the ridge parallel to the ridge of the main portion. This roof is also sheathed with sawn redwood shingles. The SE addition has a corrugated metal gable roof with its ridge running N-S. Where this wing abuts the main portion of the house, there are other roof forms juxtaposed. One shed roof has a standing seam metal sheathing. There is also a small redwood-shingled gable roof at the east end. This gable replaced an earlier shed roof. The veranda of the SE addition has a low sloping shed roof of corrugated metal. There is a small redwood shingled hip roof porch in the NE corner of the house. This porch has wood posts with sawn fretwork. There is evidence that early entrances had bracketed door hoods similar to those existing at the north end of the rear ell on the SE corner.

The gable ends of the house have projecting eaves approximately 1' deep with flat board fascias. Within the main, north gable is a king post truss with finial and sawn board fretwork, a common Stick Style motif.

The exterior walls of the original portion of the house were finished with redwood shiplap measuring 9". The exterior surface of the west wall, now an interior wall surface, has this shiplap exposed, as do the walls where the SE addition comes in contact with the house. With the exception of a portion of the west wall of the west addition, the shiplap measures 7". In that portion of the building the shiplap is similar to the early building. The corners of the house are trimmed by simple corner boards.

The windows of the original house are 6/6 light and double-hung sash. They have flat board architraves and simple wood sills. The windows to the additions vary in size and design. Some windows are similar to those of the original house, others are smaller double-hung windows, and there are casement windows in the additions. All windows have wood sash.

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The main entry is centered on the eastern wing of the original structure and is articulated only by a plain board surround. Sheltering the entry is a 2x1 bay tile-roofed porch featuring square posts which rise from wood paneled pedestals. Portions of a latticed spindle screen remain. (The original design appears in historic photographs.)

There are three corbelled chimneys on the house. The original building has two chimneys. An end wall chimney is situated at the east end, centered on that gable. This chimney is 1½ brick square and has a corbelled cap. The second chimney on the original house is situated at the intersection of the two ridges. This chimney is two brick square and also has a corbelled cap. The third chimney is situated just to the west of the ridge of the west addition and has similar corbelling.

There is no foundation for the building. The building is supported on redwood posts. Where the structural system is visible under the floor of the original portion of the house, there are redwood slabs approximately 2x8 x 16" with 6x6 redwood posts set atop. Spanning the 6x6 posts are 2x8 boards laid flat. They then support the 2x6 joists which in turn carry the flooring. The walls have 2x4 redwood studs. There is no insulation.

**Shed:**

An L-shaped shed is located at the south rear property line. The building has exterior walls of redwood board and battens (12" board; 2½" battens). The roof is of corrugated metal.

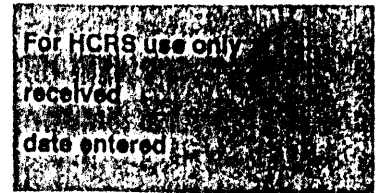
**Interior:**

The original house had three rooms plus an entry hall. Entrance was at the east side of the north front into a hall extending south into the building. The entry door was later changed to the east side under the porch. Physical evidence indicates that the door and window were simply switched in their openings. Immediately to the west of the entrance hall was a room and to the east was a parlor. A third room was located to the south. The third room contained two shallow closets situated between the NE and rear rooms. The parlor occupied the base of the T in the T-plan. There is an exterior entrance to the parlor on the north side.

A bedroom wing was built to the west of the original house, connected to it by two doorways. The entire west side of the original house was covered by this addition. The new portion contained a corridor paralleling the house and three bedrooms. This addition probably first contained only two rooms, the third being added to the rear shortly after. There are two closets between the bedrooms, one serving each of the bedrooms. The third bedroom is at the south rear and assumes the full width of the addition. There is a small closet built into the SE corner of this room. There are two exterior entrances to this wing. One entrance on the north facade provides access to the hall; the other entrance is on the east wall of the rear extension and gives access to the south rear bedroom.

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Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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The SE addition contains a dining room and appears to be a former porch or a very early addition. Extending south from this room, with its east wall flush with the dining room, is a long wing with a kitchen and a pantry/storage room. There are three entrances to this wing. The doorway to the dining room is in the short north-facing wall resulting from the room's projecting to the east of the main house. A second doorway into the dining room gives access from the rear veranda. An entry into the pantry/storage room is located at the far south end of the west wall under the veranda.

The interior walls of the original house have sawn wood lath with lime plaster. There is a 36" high wainscot of 3¼" match bead redwood boards and a molded dado. There is a molded picture rail approximately 18" below the ceiling level. The walls were covered with wall paper.

The ceilings are 12' high. They are of 4" tongue-and-groove boards.

The original floors are of 5½" maple and were covered with 2½" light oak tongue-and-groove floor boards in the parlor. The floors were laid directly on 2x6 redwood joists supported by redwood posts.

The doors and windows have 4¼" flat board trim of redwood. The windows are 6/6 wood double-hung sash with pin jamb stops in the lower sash. The doors are 4 panel (2 tall over 2 short) with molded panel trim. They have butt hinges and black cast iron rim locks with white porcelain knobs.

The additions have similar materials in some areas and different details in others. The floors are generally of 5½" maple; the walls are of plaster on lath or of plywood or pressed paper board panels. There is wainscoting in some areas. The ceilings are generally of match bead boards.

The only bathroom in the house is situated in the west addition.

There are hanging electric light fixtures in most rooms and switches are wall mounted. Several rooms have a single bulb suspended from a ceiling receptacle in the middle of the room.

The house was heated with wood burning stoves which have been removed for storage. One stove was located at the east end of the parlor. A second was in the north front room of the original house. The third was situated in the north front bedroom of the west addition. Sheet metal stove pipes connected the stoves to the chimneys. The brick chimneys are probably supported by the ceiling structure.

The Schwertner House has suffered from a lack of consistent maintenance and is in need of major repairs. Nevertheless, it is relatively sound structurally, and the owner is planning a restoration with the support and assistance of private citizens and civic leaders. Adaptive use as a museum and/or community facility is being considered.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** ca. 1880 **Builder/Architect** Delos H. Smith

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

#### SUMMARY/CONTEXT:

The Schwertner House, built ca. 1880, is significant historically for its initial role as a hostelry for Army personnel en route to Fort Grant and as one of the oldest residences in Willcox. Architecturally, the house is a unique local example of Stick Style architecture which testifies to the introduction of imported architectural ornament and materials into Arizona following the arrival of the railroad in 1880.

#### HISTORICAL CONTEXT/SIGNIFICANCE:

The Schwertner House was built ca. 1880 as an overnight rooming facility for Army personnel en route through Willcox to Fort Grant, located 35 miles to the north. This was one of a chain of military installations constructed throughout the Arizona Territory during the United States government's campaign against the Apache. The house was built by Delos Hutchins Smith, a former Quartermaster agent at either Fort Grant or Fort Lowell. Smith purchased the land for the house in 1879 and settled in Willcox in 1880. It is unknown whether there was a formal contract with the Quartermaster Department or simply an informal contract between Smith and Army personnel.

Primary access to Fort Grant was via the Southern Pacific Railroad which reached Willcox in 1880. Army personnel would come to Willcox by train and then continue on to Fort Grant by stage or horseback. The Schwertner house, located a short two-block distance from the depot, provided a convenient overnight stopover. The rooming house function may be attested to by the two ell's added to the Schwertner house very early in its evolution.

Delos Smith moved to Willcox and became a partner of the Norton-Stewart Commercial Company, which distributed supplies to the Army installations in southeastern Arizona. Smith's former position as Quartermaster agent may have prompted his partnership in the Norton Company. Also, because Willcox was a railroad stop strategically located in the midst of military installations and prime stock grazing territory, it offered many economic opportunities.

In 1890 Smith moved to Washington, D.C., selling the house to Charles W. Pugh, who used it as his residence. It is not known whether the house continued in use as a hostel. Charles W. Pugh served on the board of directors of the North American Savings, Loan and Building Company formed in 1890. Their objective was to provide building loans and opportunities for investment. Pugh also purchased the local newspaper, Southwestern Stockman, in 1891 and also began the Sulphur Valley News in 1891. Pugh sold the house to Josef Schwertner in 1897. Schwertner, an Austrian immigrant, had come to the United States in the 1890's. He settled in Willcox and operated a grocery store and saloon on Railroad Avenue, Willcox's initial commercial district which developed between 1880 and the early twentieth century following the arrival of the railroad.

Schwertner's wife came to Willcox in 1897 with their infant daughter. In 1900 Albert Schwertner was born in the house which has remained in the family ever since.

(see Continuation Sheet)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Arizona Daily Star, February 25, 1982.

Shultz, Vernon B., Southwestern Town, The Story of Willcox, Arizona, The Board of Regents of the Universities and State College of Arizona, Tucson, 1964.

Oral interview with Albert Schwertner, March 19, 1982; July 22, 1982.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less/acre

Quadrangle name Willcox, Arizona

Quadrangle scale 1:62,500

### UTM References

A 

1	2	6	1	0	2	5	0	3	5	6	8	9	0	0
Zone		Easting					Northing							

B 

Zone		Easting					Northing							

C 

Zone		Easting					Northing							

D 

Zone		Easting					Northing							

E 

Zone		Easting					Northing							

F 

Zone		Easting					Northing							

G 

Zone		Easting					Northing							

H 

Zone		Easting					Northing							

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Willcox Township, easterly half of lots 1 and 2, Block 31.

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert C. Giebner; edited by Arizona SHPO staff

organization College of Architecture date September 1982

street & number University of Arizona telephone (602) 850-3134

city or town Tucson state Arizona

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  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 *Donna Schroder*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date June 29, 1983

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

date 8/25/83

*for Albert Byers*  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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The presence of the Schwertner House provides a direct visual link with major economic themes in the origin and settlement of Willcox. It was constructed shortly after the railroad reached the community in 1880 and was built of materials delivered by the railroad. Furthermore, its historic use as a hostel for military personnel is indicative of the role the military played in the development of Willcox and the surrounding region.

**ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:**

One of the oldest residences in Willcox, the Schwertner House is architecturally significant for its use of California redwood for its construction. The availability of imported redwood is a direct consequence of the arrival of the railroad in Willcox and provides a clear indication of the influence of the railroad on Arizona architecture in the late 19th century.

The railroad crossed Arizona during the 1870's, making imported materials and supplies readily accessible to Arizona locations, and fostered a shift from the use of locally available materials (e.g., adobe) to the use of imported materials, such as redwood.

The railroad also introduced prevailing architectural trends and stylistic components evidenced by the appearance of Victorian-era ornamentation often imported from the west coast. This is also documented by the Stick Style ornamentation on the Schwertner House. It is not known whether the decorative kingposts and porch details are original or additions by one of the later owners. In either case, the introduction of these features is attributable to the western influences brought by the railroad and the corresponding availability of ornamentation.

The local architectural and stylistic significance of the house is enhanced by the fact that there are few (if any) other examples of 1880's period architecture in Willcox. The presence of the architectural details conveys a high sense of integrity and will enable the planned restoration to replicate the original appearance.