

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section _____ Page _____

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 07000079

Date Listed: 2/14/2007

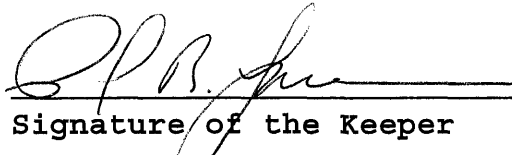
Verde Homestead
Property Name

Carbon
County

UT
State

N/A
Multiple Name

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


Signature of the Keeper

2/14/2007
Date of Action

=====

Amended Items in Nomination:

Classification:

The correct category of property is: *buildings*.
[Only one category should be selected, reflecting the most dominant resource.]

Description:

Architectural Classification is amended to read: *Other--Vernacular/Side-Passage* and *Other--Vernacular/Forno (Oven)*

Significance:

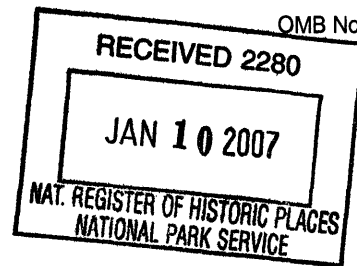
The Areas of Significance are amended to read: *Ethnic Heritage: European (Italian)*

These clarifications were confirmed with the UT SHPO office.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places 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 an 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 Verde Homestead

other name/site number Antonio Verde Homestead

2. Location

street name 233 200 East not for publication

city or town Helper vicinity

state Utah code UT county Carbon code 7 zip code _____

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] Date 1/4/2007

Utah Division of State History, Office of Historic Preservation
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 certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper [Signature] Date of Action 2/14/2007

Verde Homestead
Name of Property

Helper Carbon, County, Utah
City, County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(check only one box)

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

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
8		buildings
		sites
2		structures
		objects
10	0	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: processing, storage, animal facility, agricultural outbuilding

Current Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: processing, storage, animal facility, agricultural outbuilding

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: sandstone

walls BRICK

 WOOD shingle

roof ASPHALT shingle

other _____

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 1

Verde Homestead, Helper, Carbon County, UT

Narrative Description

The Verde Homestead in Helper, Utah, consists of a dwelling and associated outbuildings and other structures that represent a typical Italian-immigrant homestead arrangement in the region during the early part of the twentieth century. The house, constructed in 1907, is a single-story, brick, gable-end side-passage type with Victorian stylistic elements, resting on a raised stone foundation. The gabled roof runs perpendicular to the street and is situated near the front of the lot, which rises a few feet above street level. To the east and south of the house are several outbuildings and a couple of structures—nine total contributing resources—situated in clusters around the lot, which is slightly less than one acre. These were constructed several years after the house. The setting is semi rural on a lot outside of the main core of Helper, with garden on north side of house, an empty lot on the south side, and a fruit orchard behind the outbuildings (because it is now under separate ownership, the orchard is not included in the nomination boundaries, nor is the empty parcel south of house). Helper is a small rural city in Carbon County in east-central Utah. Historically a mining and railroad settlement, the town is surrounded on three sides by rugged and barren sandstone mountains and bluffs that contain seams of coal. The Price River runs through the town as do several rail lines and US Highway 6, which divides the city in half. The city consists of tightly packed lots and small houses, most of which were constructed before World War II, that rise up the hillsides on both sides of town. Small farm lots and fields are located sporadically throughout the city and open land surrounds the outskirts.

The Verde house is a side-passage house, with its long, rectangular form recessing back into the lot. The buff-colored brick was manufactured in Provo, Utah, and laid in a staggered bond pattern by a mason whose name was Leute (his name is on a copy of the original contract and is also written in large letters on a brick on the south wall). The brick walls rest on a raised foundation of coursed rubble sandstone. The somewhat asymmetrical primary (west) façade consists of a recessed porch/entryway and a projecting semi-octagonal bay window below a fully pedimented gable. The entryway is on a raised porch in a corner notch on the left side of the façade. The original entryway was on the west wall, and was later moved to the south wall of the porch area. The original doorway was bricked in at an early unknown date but the stone lintel still remains. This was probably done in order to utilize the side passage area as an additional bedroom putting the new entryway into the parlor/living room. To the left of the original doorway is a single one-over-one double-hung wood sash window (typical of all the windows on the house). The right side of the façade is dominated by a projecting octagonal bay window with a hipped roof and cornice that engages with the pediment cornice. Below the windows of the bay is the sandstone foundation wall on top of which are a few courses of brick. Inset above each of the three double-hung, one-over-one wood sash windows are wood panels above which is the cornice. The gable is adorned with square-butt wood shingle siding, and a single central window provides light to the attic of the house on this façade.

The long south façade also features a projecting bay window as the primary design element. This bay is similar in design to that on the front, and is located slightly to the left of center, centered between two window openings which are approximately six feet from either side of the bay. Approximately eight feet in from the right side of the façade is another window which provides light to the kitchen area in the back southeast corner of the house.

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Verde Homestead, Helper, Carbon County, UT

Originally similar to the other windows, tall and narrow, a portion of the opening was bricked in at both the top and bottom to allow for a kitchen counter and cupboards. Below this window in the foundation is a smaller cellar window; and on the left side of the façade, toward the front of the house, is an opening in the foundation for the coal bin. Also in this area projecting out from the side of the foundation is concrete curbing that historically enclosed a small space for an herb garden. Located at the apex of the roof are the two corbelled-brick chimneys set equidistantly between the front and rear of the house. Another chimney is located lower down on the roof toward the rear of the house where the kitchen is situated. This chimney does not have corbelling. A concrete sidewalk was placed along this side of the house, from the bay window to the east, wrapping around the rear of the building.

The rear (east) façade has seen probably the most alteration over the years. This elevation originally had a corner notch on the right similar to that of the front. However, this was soon enclosed with wood frame and wood and flat metal siding to create a usable storage space in the house. An entryway was placed in the enclosure as was a small window to the right of the door. An entrance to the cellar was located on the left side of this façade. This originally had a gable-roofed enclosure over the stairwell. However, the enclosure was removed (possibly in the 1950s?) and the doorway bricked in. A large single-pane window was placed above the original cellar entrance, providing more light for the kitchen. There are two cellar windows in the foundation on this elevation. In the fully pedimented, shingled gable is a doorway with the original wood panel door. This provides entrance to the attic and is accessed by a ladder.

The north façade has the least amount of detailing. This elevation features three window openings. The farthest left window is in the rear porch enclosure and is a small square opening. The other two windows are spaced equidistantly on the brick wall of the house and are both tall narrow double-hung, one-over-one windows. Also visible on this elevation is the main entrance at the front porch. The roof over the porch is supported on Victorian-era turned columns with a Victorian-style balustrade connecting the columns.

The interior has been slightly updated over the years but retains the original floor plan. The front door, however, now enters into what was once the parlor and now is a living room with the front bay window area. The living room flows into another living area which is only slightly separated by an arched opening that used to have a pair of doors to separate the two rooms—the doors have since been removed. This section of the room has the bay window, which adds to the space. These rooms run along the south half of the interior and continue toward the rear with a narrow hallway, off which is located the only bathroom. And behind this is the kitchen area that appears to have been updated and rearranged c. 1940s with new cabinets and cupboards. Running along the north half of the interior is a series of bedrooms (three in all); the front one of which seems to have been the original entry hall but was changed to a bedroom early on because of the large family. The bedrooms terminate at the rear (northeast) corner of the house where the porch was enclosed for a storage/entry hall. The floors have been carpeted and the plaster on the walls throughout the house was updated with an heavy impasto coat only a few years ago, although all the original Eastlake-style wood trim around the fenestration has been retained.

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Verde Homestead, Helper, Carbon County, UT

The property retains the original appearance of the yard, garden, and outbuildings and structures that were required to keep the homestead running. There are seven buildings and two structures lined around the rear perimeter of the yard directly associated with the house. These were constructed at various times after the house, primarily in the late 1930s, and retain their historical integrity. Directly to the north of the house is a gravel driveway that accesses the rear of the property where the majority of outbuildings and structures are located. To the north of the driveway, running from the front (west) of the property to about half-way back is a long, narrow garden area. Historic photos show a large grape arbor toward the front of the garden area near the street. The garden is lined with a low hedge on the south and various berry bushes at the rear and is now fallow.

Directly behind the garden, in the northeast corner of the property, is a small chicken coop constructed of railroad ties with a sloped shed roof. The main elevation faces south and, except for a doorway on the right side, is all windows. Abutting this to the right is a small wood-frame rabbit hutch which also faces south, and in front of the hutch is a wood frame gallows used for slaughtering pigs. Abutting the right side of the coop is a sandstone retaining wall of coursed rubble construction which runs a short distance south along the rear of the yard. The retaining wall connects to a cold cellar/smokehouse to the south. The cellar is constructed of a raised foundation of coursed rubble stone and stone and concrete walls and sloped concrete shed roof. Inside the front entry which is on the right side of the west elevation is a stairwell that accesses the subterranean storage area. A small window on this façade provides light to the stairwell.

Abutting the cold cellar/smokehouse to the south is a railroad-tie and wood-plank constructed two-car garage with a shed roof. The garage has two swinging doors separated by a central panel and two pedestrian doors, one on each end of the facade. This building abuts a larger building of railroad-tie construction with a shed roof. The primary (west) façade is comprised of a centrally placed entryway with a large, fixed twelve-light window to the left of the door. This at one time was a coop, but then later housed a kitchen and food preparation area. Sausage was the primary food prepared in the building and the work area, sink stands, and stove still remain. This building, along with the garage, is now primarily used for storage. This group of three abutting buildings is built into a shallow rising slope behind rear (east) elevations are either short or nonexistent. The kitchen building has a single small, six-light window toward the right side of the rear façade. Also the chimney stack for the stove is visible on this side. A portion of the original fruit orchard is located behind this group of buildings, although this section of land is not included in the nomination because it is separately owned.

A large deciduous tree is growing to the west of the kitchen building and located against the trunk of the tree is a wood frame out house with a shed roof. Abutting this to the north is another animal pen/bird coop of wood frame construction. This has a shed roof covered in flattened metal cans. Next to the pen is a small garden area and wood scrap pile. West of the pen and about twenty five feet south of the house is perhaps the most interesting structure on the property, a domed outdoor bake oven, or *forno*. This is constructed of a square rubble-stone base upon which sits a stucco-covered brick dome approximately six feet in diameter and five feet in height. The oven opening is on the north side and has a flat-faced brick surround behind which the opening is recessed. This is the only known surviving historic *forno* in Helper, where there used to be many.¹ A

¹ According to information from a late 1970s reconnaissance level survey, there was a non-historic bake oven built by an Hispanic family in Helper, and an historic example in nearby Carbonville built by Greek immigrants.

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Verde Homestead, Helper, Carbon County, UT

corrugated-metal shed roof supported on four corner posts was constructed over the oven several years ago to protect it from the weather. This is not historic but does not detract from its eligibility.

The house along with the outbuildings and structures and yard all convey the original homestead and how the various parts of the homestead would have functioned and how their arrangement was influenced by customs of the Verde's homeland of Italy. Although the house is still in use the other buildings have not been used in a long time and therefore have not been altered and retain their historical appearance. The Verde Homestead is a contributing historic resource in Helper and is perhaps the best exemplification in the city of a cultural use of a property as it was utilized by immigrants (in this case Italian) in a new country.

8. Description

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more 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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

ETHNIC HERITAGE _____

SOCIAL HISTORY _____

ARCHITECTURE _____

Period of Significance

1907 - 1957 _____

Significant Dates

1907, 1916, c. 1939 _____

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A _____

Architect/Builder

Mr. Leute, builder _____

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

Primary location of additional data:

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

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 1

Verde Homestead, Helper, Carbon County, UT

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Verde Homestead, with house and outbuildings constructed 1907-late 1930s in Helper, Utah, is locally significant under Criterion A and C with a period of significance from 1907-1957. Under Criterion A the homestead is significant as a largely unaltered depiction of how an Italian immigrant family in the early twentieth century would have adapted to a new country and sustained itself in a region that in many ways resembled their southern Italian homeland. Helper and the surrounding region was one of the last areas of Utah to be settled because of the barren and unforgiving terrain. However, the geology of the region, a portion of the Colorado Plateau, holds abundant energy resources, primarily coal and natural gas, and it was the coal mining companies and railroads that hauled the coal that attracted immigrants mostly from Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean region to the area in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These immigrants brought with them the folklore, traditions, and settlement patterns of their homelands that were quite a contrast to the strict village pattern of the Mormon-settled areas of Utah. No exception was the Verde family, who moved to the region in the 1890s. Interestingly, it was the Verde children--who had never been to Italy--who had to carry on these traditions, for their father, Antonio, died shortly after the house was constructed, and their mother, Maria, died less than a decade later leaving the children to continue the traditions. Although the Verde house, a Victorian-styled side passage, is typical of American residences of the era, the collection of outbuildings and structures and their arrangement on the landscape associated with the house reveal the Verde's influence by the traditional lifeways of their native Italy. Along with the outbuildings, the Verde Homestead also retains the only extant historical outdoor bake oven, or *forno*, in Helper. Domed brick and stucco ovens, which are still used extensively in southern Italy, were at one time found on many of the properties in the region owned by immigrant families. But as traditions were lost with subsequent generations, most of them deteriorated and were removed. The Verde *forno* has been maintained and a roofed shelter built over it to protect it as an important cultural artifact. The oven, along with the residence and other outbuildings on the property--including those used for sausage making and cold storage--are probably the most intact representational group of buildings in Helper, and are significant under Criterion C. They reflect how immigrants adapted to a new land and retained their cultural traditions, and are significant contributing historical resources in the city of Helper.

When coal mining companies entered the Carbon and Emery County region in east-central Utah, Mormon settlers had been living there for decades, albeit in small numbers and in what were mostly subsistence settlements. Once coal was discovered in the early 1880s and the infrastructure developed to mine and haul the coal to other markets, thousands of immigrant men and families settled in the region looking for a new life away from their home countries where declining economies were forcing people to leave desperate living conditions. Most of the immigrants came from Eastern and Southern Europe: the Slavic countries, Greece, Crete, and Italy. Some Chinese also settled here, mostly remnants of those who had come to America to help construct the transcontinental rail line. Because of the coal, Helper, for a long time, had the most diverse ethnic population in Utah.

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Verde Homestead, Helper, Carbon County, UT

One of these immigrants was Antonio (Tony)² Verde, who was born in 1873 in the Calabria region of southern Italy, in the village of Pedivigliano. In 1888, at the young age of 15, Antonio decided to leave his homeland for the United States to become a plumber/pipe fitter apprentice to Louie Burza. Antonio lived in Helper, where a large percentage of the population were Italian immigrants, but worked at the mining town of Sunnyside many miles away where he was the company plumber for the Sunnyside Mine. On February 2, 1897, he married Maria Di Angelis in Salt Lake City. Maria³ was also an Italian immigrant, born in 1881 in the village of Figline, in the same region as Antonio. Antonio met Maria through her brother who was a protégé of Burza. She was still in Italy at the time, but came to Salt Lake City, where the two met and married. She was only 16 at the time.

Antonio and Maria then started a family that would eventually grow to eleven children. Shortly after their first child, John, was born in 1898 Maria decided to return to Italy to visit her family. Unfortunately, while en route John became ill and died aboard the ship on which they were passengers; his body was buried at sea. Three years later Maria gave birth to their second child (whom they also named John). The first four children were born while the Verdes lived in Helper in a small house that was on fourteen acres of land Antonio purchased in 1900 from Sarah and Orvell Pratt.⁴ Although we do not know what the original house looked like, we do know that it was quite small and expediently built, as most early miners' residences were in the region. The house somehow caught fire and burned to the ground along with most of the family's belongings and records sometime around 1906.⁵ Following this tragedy, with no place to live, the Verdes and their four children decided to move to Sunnyside, which would have been closer to where Antonio worked.

Not long after their move to Sunnyside, Antonio began planning a new home to be built on the family's property in Helper. He contracted with Reuben Richardson to build a more permanent and substantial house. The contract for the sum of \$1,850 was signed on the July 13, 1907, and construction commenced.⁶ According to the contract, the house was to be completed by September 15 of the same year. The new house with three bedrooms, a parlor, dining are, kitchen, and a bathroom, offered a major enhancement in living for the large family, and was one of the larger and better-equipped houses in Helper at the time it was built.⁷ However, the house would not be inhabited by the Verde family for nearly another decade. Perhaps because of Antonio's work in Sunnyside, according to an interview with a family member, the Verde's did not move to the new house

² At various times his name is spelled Antone or Antonio, and Verde is also at times shown as Verdi.

³ Maria is also at times known as Marie, or Mary.

⁴ This was the same property on which the current house sits; however, the original house was situated on a different area of the property—possibly behind the current outbuildings.

⁵ Tomsic, Madge. Video taped personal interview with Lowell and Edith Verde Pitts. October 2005.

⁶ A photocopy of the original contract was obtained from Lowell and Edith Verde Pitts

⁷ Hubka and Kenny offer the descriptive term "Progressive Era Plan" for houses of this type built between the years 1900 and 1940. The exterior may have had various stylistic treatments, but the plan typically consists of six rooms and a bathroom, and was a major improvement for working-class housing in that it offered private bedrooms, a dining area, and most importantly, indoor plumbing and bathroom—a step up from the former two-room workers cottages. The plan was found in single detached houses as well as multi-level housing. Thomas C. Hubka and Judith T. Kenny. "Examining the American Dream: Housing Standards and the Emergence of a National Housing Culture, 1900-1930." *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture Journal*. Volume 13, Number 1, 2006. Pp. 55-62.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Verde Homestead, Helper, Carbon County, UT

in Helper once it was completed. Apparently, Louie Burza lived in it for awhile, although it is uncertain for how long. The Verde's eventually moved into the house in late 1916.⁸

Unfortunately, Antonio would reside in his new house for about two months, for tragedy struck the family. On December 7, 1916, a train on which Antonio was a passenger was involved in a collision with another train, resulting in his death. After several years of litigation, negligence on behalf of Denver and Rio Grande Railroad was found to be the cause of the accident: because of inattention of the railroad attendants a slow moving train collided with the stationary train on which Antonio was a passenger.⁹ Unfortunately, it was not until 1923 that Maria and the Verde children finally received a settlement in \$50 monthly increments with which Maria had to raise ten children.

Because of the loss of Antonio, the Verde family was in dire financial circumstances; the older children took work where they could. The eldest son, John, worked in the mines; Tony worked cleaning pool halls and bars; Catherine cleaned houses in the mining camps; and the other sisters cleaned houses for local residents. From the money the children earned they were able to survive and retain their house and property. Maria continued to take care of the house and children, but unfortunately she also suffered an untimely death, passing away on June 6, 1924 in a hospital in Salt Lake City, leaving the children parentless. However, because some of the Verde children were adults by this time they were able to keep the house; but to do so, some of the younger children also had to go to work. In spite of losing both their parents the children tried to maintain family traditions as much as possible, maybe even more so. In an interview, the youngest daughter, Edith, said that the family never really celebrated Christmas until after their mother had died. Also, as one of the children would marry they would bring that family into their family and hold celebrations and family activities at their house.¹⁰

Italian Influence on the Homestead

Historian Philip Notarianni has done comparative analysis of Helper and other towns in Carbon County with villages in Italy, particularly the southern region of Calabria. He found that the land use patterns and establishment of homesteads by Italian immigrants in Utah was quite similar to those of their native country. There are even similarities in the geography and landscape. Carbon County is quite arid and the landscape is hilly with barren sandstone cliffs, hills, and plateaus—similar to the deforested, rocky and hilly terrain of southern Italy.

The settlement pattern of early Utah was established through Mormon theology and influence. The majority of settlements in the Intermountain region up into the twentieth century were based on the Plat of the City of Zion, originally introduced by Joseph Smith and brought to the region by his successor, Brigham Young. This plan established a central public/religious block in the center of town that was surrounded by a grid of wide streets and square blocks on which houses were constructed on lots in a certain pattern. Each lot had room for a yard,

⁸ Madge Tomsic, video taped personal interview with Lowell and Edith Verde Pitts, October 2005.

⁹ "Investigations of Railroad Accidents 1911-1966." <http://specialcollections.tasc.dot.gov/scripts/ws.dll?browse&rn=397>. File No. 397, Denver and Rio Grande Railroad, 12/07/1916.

¹⁰ Tomsic, interview.

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Verde Homestead, Helper, Carbon County, UT

garden, and some outbuildings; however, all major agriculture was based outside of town on set-aside land. This maintained a village-like pattern similar to New England settlements.

Partially because of the terrain in and around Helper, but primarily because of the cultural influence of the immigrants, the settlement pattern of the region was quite in contrast to the typical Mormon village. Where neatness and order were the hallmarks of settlement emphasized by Mormon Church leaders, the homesteads in Helper and other Carbon County towns were more organic in their design. Rather than an imposed settlement pattern upon the landscape, quite the opposite occurred. The streets of Helper follow the hills at the mouth of Price Canyon and the undulations of the Price River, which runs through the middle of the elongated town. The yards also tend to follow this natural pattern. Most of the historic homes are typical of the types and styles of the era; consisting mostly of small, single-story foursquare and bungalow workers' cottages with minimal Victorian-influenced architectural adornment.

From the street the public face of the houses and yards appear quite neat and organized, but behind the homes, particularly with those that have small agricultural holdings, there is somewhat of an ordered chaos. The Verde Homestead is a good example of this dichotomy. Situated on small rise overlooking the rail yards and commercial area, the house sits on a larger tract of land than most of the other cramped lots in town. The hills rise not too far behind, but there was room on the original fourteen acres to plant several fruit trees.¹¹

The Verde property from the front might appear like most rural homesteads from the era. However, the arrangement of the buildings on the landscape reveals a cultural influence from the Verde's homeland. None of the Verde children had visited Italy, and both their parents were deceased by the time the outbuildings were added to the property. However, there was a strong influence from the many other Italian-American immigrants in Helper who had carried on their family traditions and the Verde children perpetuated these traditions in their own way.

After Antonio and Maria were gone, the Verde children subsisted as best they could. Raising vegetables, fruit, animals and herbs and preparing their own food and wine was very much a part of their heritage. The middle son, Tony, was considered the "pillar" of the family and tried to maintain and develop the family property in a traditional way. He constructed all the outbuildings on the property, mostly in the late 1930s, and planted the fruit orchard behind the buildings.¹² The outbuildings housed poultry and rabbits. The Verdes later converted the large coop to a kitchen/food prep building where they prepared sausage. They would also make their own wine and, of course, bake their own bread.

The outdoor bake oven, or *forno*, is perhaps the most significant cultural identifier of all the buildings and structures on the property and establishes the architectural significance for the homestead. These ovens were

¹¹ For more comparisons between Helper and the southern Italian landscape and folkway see Philip F. Notarianni and Richard Raspa, "The Italian Community of Helper, Utah: Its Historic and Folkloric Past and Present," *Family and Community Life of Italian Americans*. Proceedings of the Thirteenth Annual Italian American Historical Association, Staten Island, New York, 1983.

¹² Tomsic, interview.

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Verde Homestead, Helper, Carbon County, UT

actually common in the region as most Italian and other immigrants from the Mediterranean countries prepared their own bread. The Verde oven is the only known extant southern European-influenced historic *forno* in Helper and is in very good condition due to a protective roof supported on wood posts, which was constructed many years ago to protect it.

Built of the same brick that was used on the house, the *forno* has a domed roof, which is covered with stucco, and a square rubble-stone platform. Baking bread in the oven was a process. First, wood, typically juniper, was gathered and placed inside the oven, and then a fire was started. A piece of bread dough would then be thrown into the oven to test if it was hot enough (usually after a couple of hours). Once the oven was hot the fire was put out and the coals and ashes were swept from the oven.¹³ Typically the Verdes would use a fifty pound sack of flour to prepare their bread. After the dough was kneaded it was placed in the flour sack and left to rise. Once properly risen the loaves were formed and then a few at a time were placed on a wood paddle and placed in the oven to bake. Several loaves were baked at a time and could be stored for months in wooden barrels.¹⁴

The Verde property including the outbuildings and structures is an important cultural assemblage that reflects the living circumstances of the majority of immigrants who moved to the region at the turn of the twentieth century. The house is in very good condition and has only seen non-historic alteration in interior updates more recently. The outbuildings have seen little use in the past several decades except for storage. The *forno* is in very good condition, although apparently it has not been used since Maria died in 1924.¹⁵ All the Verde children eventually left the household, some eventually passed away, but the property and buildings are still held and maintained by surviving family members. The house, outbuildings and property appear much as they did in the 1930s and still depict the usage of property by immigrants to America who wished to retain cultural ties to their homelands.

¹³ See c. 1987 photograph of a working *forno* in southern Italy taken by Philip Notarianni.

¹⁴ Tomsic, interview. According to Notarianni, in Italy a large stone was kept in the oven while heating and once the stone turned white that meant the proper temperature had been reached and the fire was extinguished.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* Apparently the children tried to use the oven but could not make it work as their mother had.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 9 Page 1

Verde Homestead, Helper, Carbon County, UT

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Building contract for Verde House, July 1907. A copy of this is still retained by the family.

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United States Census, Helper, Utah, Precinct, 1910.

Tomsick, Madge. Video taped personal interview with Lowell and Edith Verde Pitts. October 2005.

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<http://specialcollections.tasc.dot.gov/scripts/ws.dll?browse&rn=397>. File No. 397, Denver and Rio Grande Railroad, 12/07/1916.

Verde Homestead
Name of Property

Helper, Carbon County, Utah
City, County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .37 acre(s)

UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 1/2 5/1/2/8/2/0 4/3/9/2/5/8/0
Zone Easting Northing

2 / / / / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing

3 / / / / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing

4 / / / / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

BEG 1270 FT S & 630 FT E OF NW CORNER OF SEC 19, T13S, R10E, SLM; TH E 170 FT; S 0 DEG 45' W 94 FT; W 170 FT; TH N 94 FT TO BEG.

Property Tax No. 1A-1277-0003

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries are the current legal description and only a portion of the boundaries associated with the house, outbuildings, and orchard historically. The orchard land and a side lot were parcelled off later in the twentieth century and are not included in this nomination.

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

11. Form Prepared By

name/title J. Cory Jensen, Utah SHPO

organization _____ date November 30, 2006

street & number 300 Rio Grande telephone 801/533-3559

city or town Salt Lake City state UT zip code 84097

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

name/title Lowell & Edith Pitts

street & number 380 Madison Avenue telephone 435-637-0102

city or town Price state UT zip code 84501

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. PHOTOS Page 1

Verde Homestead, Helper, Carbon County, UT

Common Label Information:

1. Verde Homestead
2. Helper, Carbon County, Utah
3. Photographer: J. Cory Jensen
4. Date: September 2006
5. Negative on file at Utah SHPO.

Archival Photographs (Printed using archival paper and ink at the Utah SHPO)

Photo No. 2:

6. North & west elevations of residence. Camera facing southeast.

Photo No. 4:

6. North & east elevations of residence. Camera facing southwest.

Photo No. 5:

6. South & west elevations of coop. Camera facing northeast.

Photo No. 6:

6. South elevation of rabbit hutch and pig gallows (to left). Camera facing north.

Photo No. 7:

6. North & west elevations of cold cellar/smokehouse. Camera facing southeast.

Photo No. 8:

6. West elevation of garage. Camera facing east.

Photo No. 9:

6. West elevation of kitchen building. Camera facing southeast.

Photo No. 12:

6. North & east elevations of outhouse (to left) & shed (to right). Camera facing southwest.

Photo No. 14:

6. North & west elevation of *forno* (oven). Camera facing southeast.

Photo No. 17:

6. Photo of working *forno* in southern Italy. Taken by Philip Notarianni, c.1987.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. PHOTOS Page 2

Verde Homestead, Helper, Carbon County, UT

Supplemental Photographs

Photo No. 1:

6. Overview of property. Camera facing northeast.

Photo No. 3:

6. South & east elevations of residence. Camera facing northwest.

Photo No. 10:

6. West facing elevations of outbuilding row. Camera facing southeast.

Photo No. 11:

6. Close-up of outbuilding roofs. Camera facing southwest.

Photo No. 13:

6. North & east elevations of *forno* (oven). Camera facing southwest.

Photo No. 15:

6. South elevation of *forno* (oven). Camera facing north.

Photo No. 16:

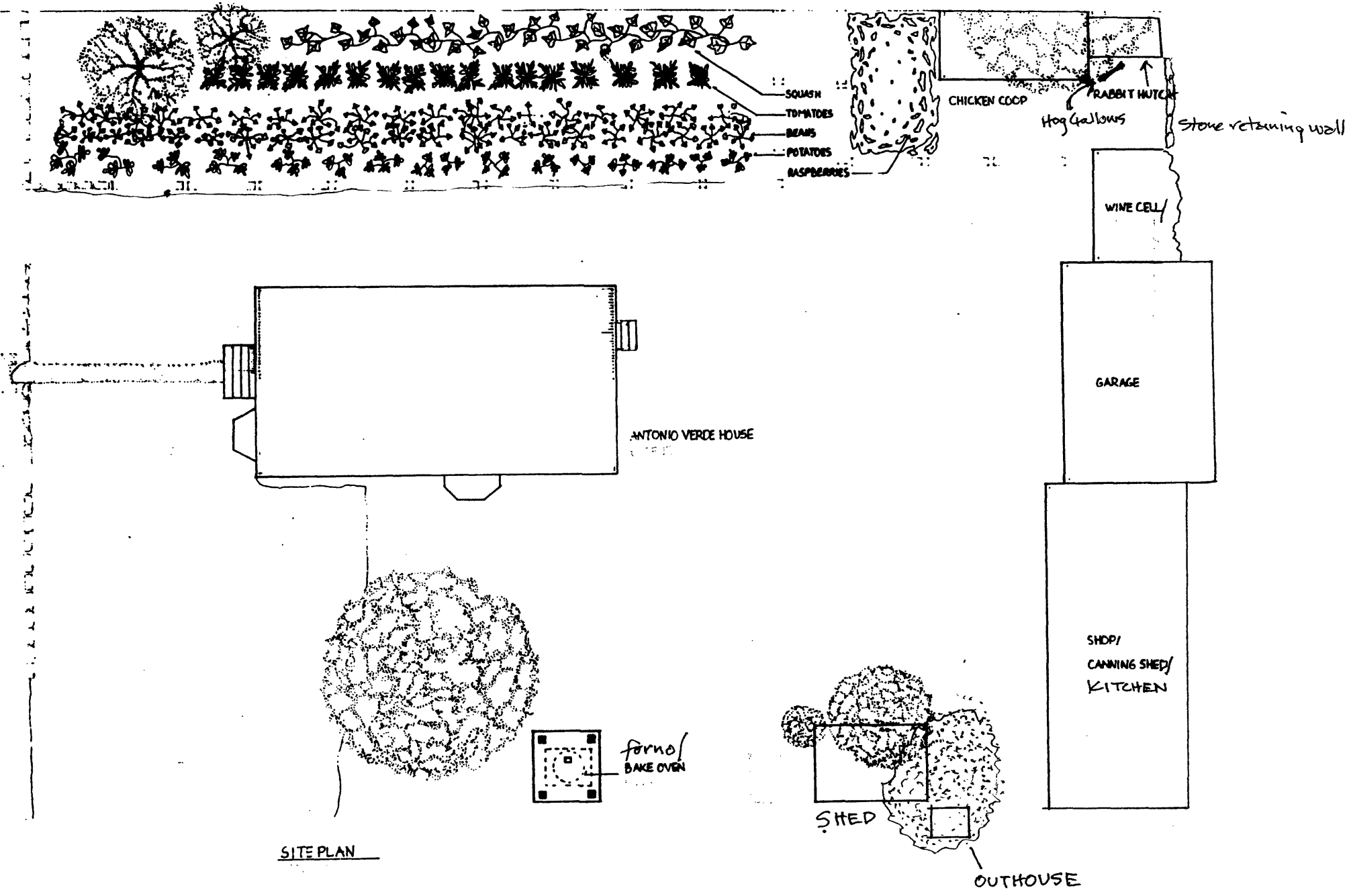
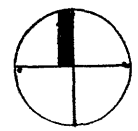
6. Interior of *forno* (oven). Camera facing south.

VERDE HOMESTEAD, Helper, UT

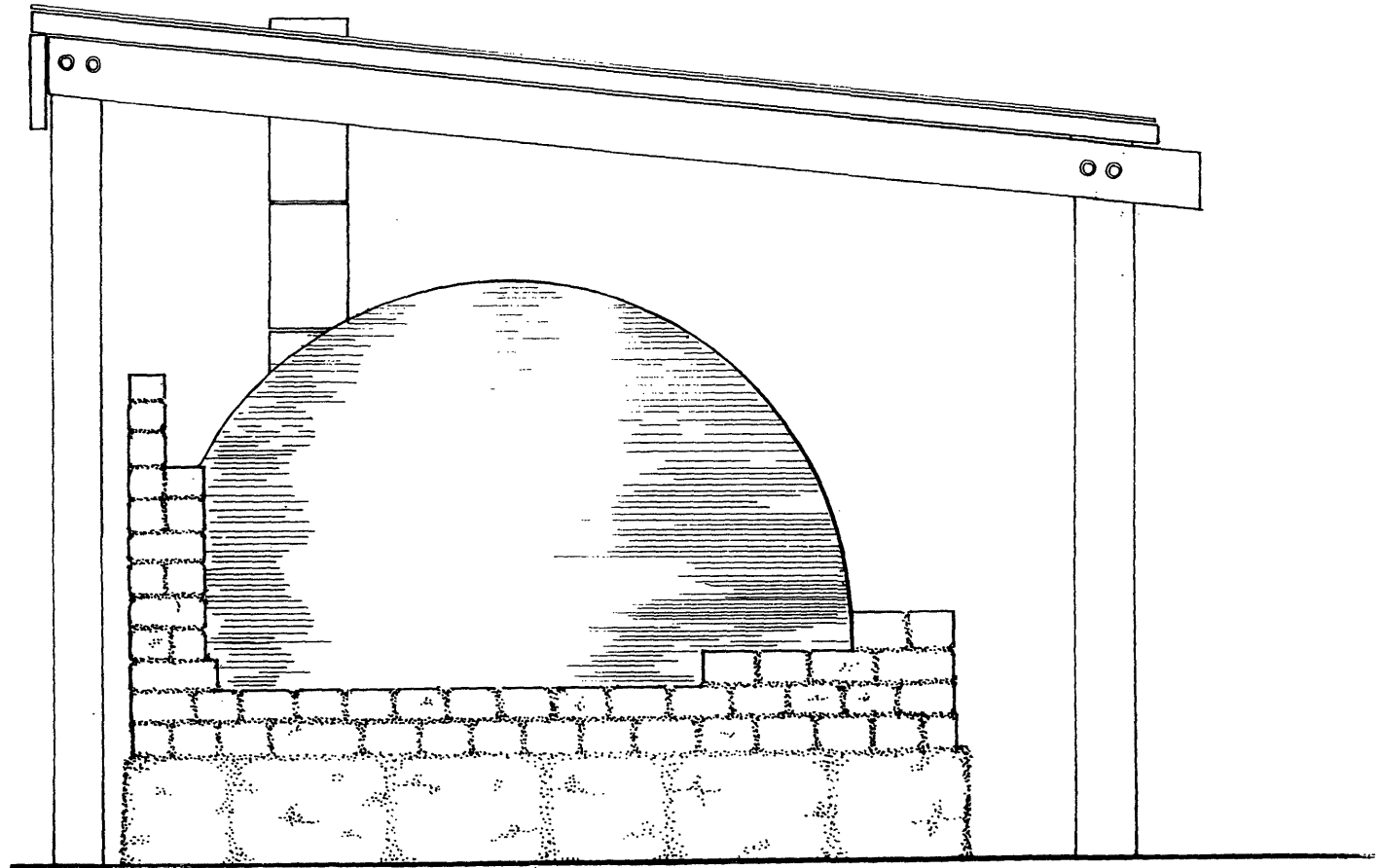
SITE PLAN
NOT TO SCALE

11/2006

redrawn from c. 1990 HABS Level drawing by Susan Anderson

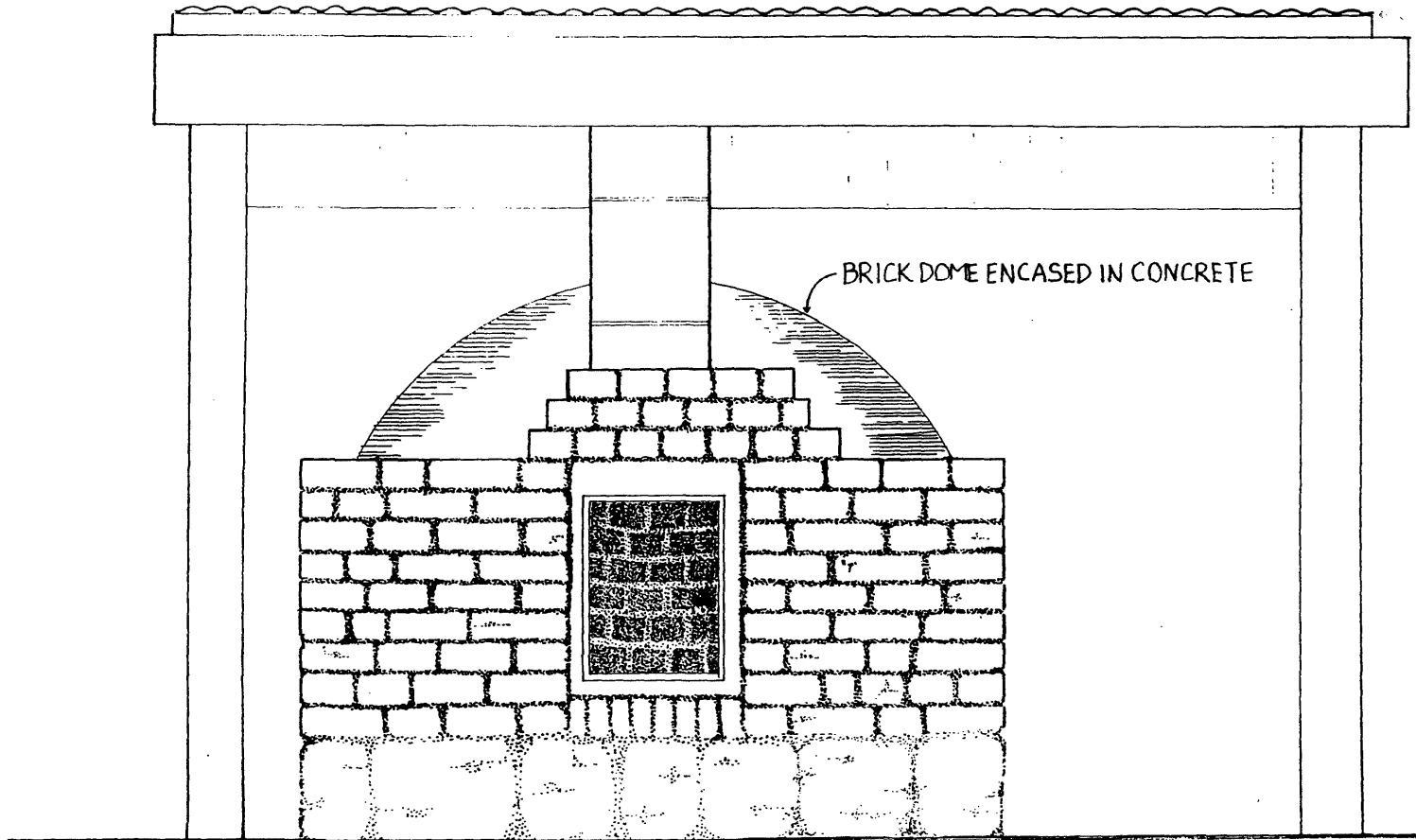


SITE PLAN



WEST ELEVATION

VERDE BAKEOVEN (forno)
from c.1990 drawing
by Susan Anderson



NORTH ELEVATION

VERDE BAKE OVEN (forno)
from c. 1990 drawing
by Susan Anderson