

**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

For NPS use only

received JAN 13 1987
date entered

FFR 27

1. Name

historic Wittwer, Dr. William Frederick House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number NM Route 6 just west of U.S. Route 85

N/A not for publication

city, town Los Lunas N/A vicinity of

state New Mexico code 35 county Valencia code 061

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
district	public	occupied	agriculture
XX building(s)	XX private	unoccupied	museum
structure	both	XX work in progress	park
site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	private residence
object	N/A in process	XX yes: restricted	religious
	N/A being considered	yes: unrestricted	scientific
		no	transportation
			XX other: restaurant

4. Owner of Property

name Pete T. and Hortencia Torres

street & number Route 4, Box 166-J

city, town Belen vicinity of state New Mexico 87002

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of County Clerk of Valencia County, NM

street & number Route 4, Box 166-J

city, town Belen state New Mexico 87002

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

New Mexico State Register of
title Cultural Properties, SR #1128 has this property been determined eligible? yes XX no

date March 8, 1985

federal XX state county local

depository for survey records New Mexico Historic Preservation Division

city, town Santa Fe

state New Mexico 87002

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Wittwer house is a vernacular residential structure that combines two distinct styling traditions with unique southwestern materials.

The south facing part of the structure is an approximate square 25' X 25'. It is of adobe construction with stucco plaster. Walls are approximately 16" thick. There are two enclosed porches (off set) on the south and east facades. No foundation is visible. The roof is hipped with two gabled roof dormers, one on the south and one on the north. Each dormer has a single fixed pane window. Roof surfacing is corrugated metal. Window framing is of box construction and windows are fixed, double-hung sash (with single or double lights) or casement. Decorative details are limited to stained, leaded and etched glass on some doors and windows and carved paneling on doors.

The center section is a rectangle approximately 20' X 9' of adobe and wood construction. This was originally open space and was enclosed (date not known) to connect the south and the north structure. Its west facade features 2 double hung wood-sash windows that replace double-leaf French doors.

The north section is a rectangular structure approximately 25' X 14'. It is of adobe construction with plaster surfacing and single gabled roof covered with corrugated metal. The east end wall has single double-hung sash windows with single lights. The west end wall has a single French door and a slit window. Door and windows (with one exception) are deep set into the thick walls.

A 1985 rectangular adobe addition extends north of the north section. It has a hipped roof covered in corrugated metal. Its similar materials and styling make it compatible with the rest of the house.

Changes to the structure (besides the 1985 addition) include enclosing with fixed paned windows the two screened porches, moving of a north entry of the north structure to the east side of the east porch, adding wood siding under the porch windows, changing double leaf doors to double hung sash windows, adding a single leaf door-both to the west facade and repainting all the exterior wood trim. The house is now being used as a restaurant.

Landscaping changes have been made. Trees and shrubs have been trimmed, overgrown cedars removed, weeds and debris removed from the yard and a chainlink fence removed. (see photos 1 and 3).

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/				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian				
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation				
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) medicine				

Specific dates 1904 – 1917 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The William Frederick Wittwer house is significant for its association with Wittwer whose medical practice spanned over 60 years in Los Lunas. It is also significant because it is one of the few remaining vernacular residences of the early 1900s in Los Lunas that is an example of the mingling of the building traditions of two cultures.

Wittwer received his medical degree from Valparaiso University in Indiana in 1897. He practiced in Indiana for about two years but economic hard times in the state led him to move to Colorado and then to New Mexico. Albuquerque had more doctors than it needed so he moved to Los Lunas just south of Albuquerque. He felt the small community could not support a full time physician, however, and he moved onto El Paso, Texas but returned to Los Lunas in 1899 and practiced medicine from the nominated house until his death in 1965. Wittwer was the most prominent physician in the Los Lunas area for over sixty years, many of which he was the only physician in the area.

Los Lunas, located on the southern rim of the Isleta Indian Reservation in the Rio Grande corridor was primarily an agricultural area with a large Hispanic and Indian constituency. The diet of inhabitants was limited and pellagra, a disease caused by lack of niacin, was a major health hazard. Over the years Wittwer worked to educate local residents to improve their diet and is credited with eradicating pellagra from the area. He also worked to inoculate against smallpox, also a major health hazard among the population. Concerned with having current information in his field he periodically attended the Universities of California and Colorado and Baylor University to update his skills. Believing in community involvement Wittwer served as county health officer from 1904-1921 and donated his services to the Los Lunas Hospital and Training School, was active in the New Mexico Medical Society and instrumental in founding the mid-Rio Grande Medical Society. In 1961 he was named "General Practitioner of the year by the New Mexico State Medical Society. Physician to five generations of families Wittwer remained an active practitioner of medicine until shortly before his death at age 93.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(see continuation sheet)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Los Lunas, NM

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

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D																											
F																											
H																											

Verbal boundary description and justification

(see continuation sheet)

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

state	N/A	code	county	code
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state	N/A	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Bettina C. Van Dyke, Historical Architect New Mexico Historic Preservation
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organization	Division	date	4/29/85
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street & number	228 East Palace Avenue	telephone	(505) 827-8320
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city or town	Santa Fe	state	New Mexico
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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

title	State Historic Preservation Officer	date	1-7-87
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For NPS use only

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

date 2/27/87

Keeper of the National Register

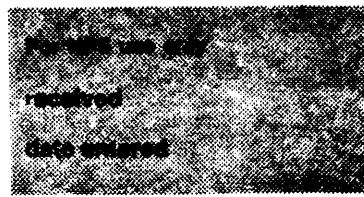
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation sheet

Item number 8

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Because of Los Lunas' proximity to metropolitan Albuquerque many buildings from the pre-statehood and early statehood (1912) period have been razed to make way for contemporary development. The Wittwer house is one of the few remaining. The house combines the hipped box prairie related style of the early 1900s with the older, more local, rural tradition of the adobe rectangle with gabled roof. Both styles utilize corrugated metal, a traditional folk roof covering. Also incorporated are details influenced by the influx of Anglo styles from the east with the advent of the railroad (ca. 1884-86). These include leaded and stained glass windows set in traditionally styled southwestern frames (see photos 9 and 11) and doors with etched glass with carved panels. (See photos 8 and 10). Roof dormers have beveled wood siding and gabled roofs. The hipped box is typical of the late Territorial Period (1880-1912) while the rectangular adobe is more typical of early and middle Territorial Periods. The combination results in a mingling of immigrant and indigenous cultural values of the late 19th Century and early 20th Century as manifested in a vernacular domestic structure. The house is a strong example of adaptation of form and materials to New Mexico vernacular trends in order to accommodate the changing needs of a locally prominent physician. The Wittwer house retains the highly visible location on Main Street which would have complemented Wittwer's station and profession. The regional style, structural stability, compatible alterations and advantageous location just west of two major intersections make the Wittwer House a prime candidate for adaptive use. That use would safeguard the dual role of the house as a local architectural landmark and its historical association with an owner whose medical practice was a landmark contribution to the health and welfare of the Los Lunas community for more than sixty years.

Warranty Deed records show that Wittwer owned the property and resided in a house on the property from 1904. Newspaper articles and accounts of local residents date the hipped box structure about 1917. It is probable that the three original sections of the house evolved into a single structure between 1904 and 1917.

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Continuation sheet

Item number 9 & 10

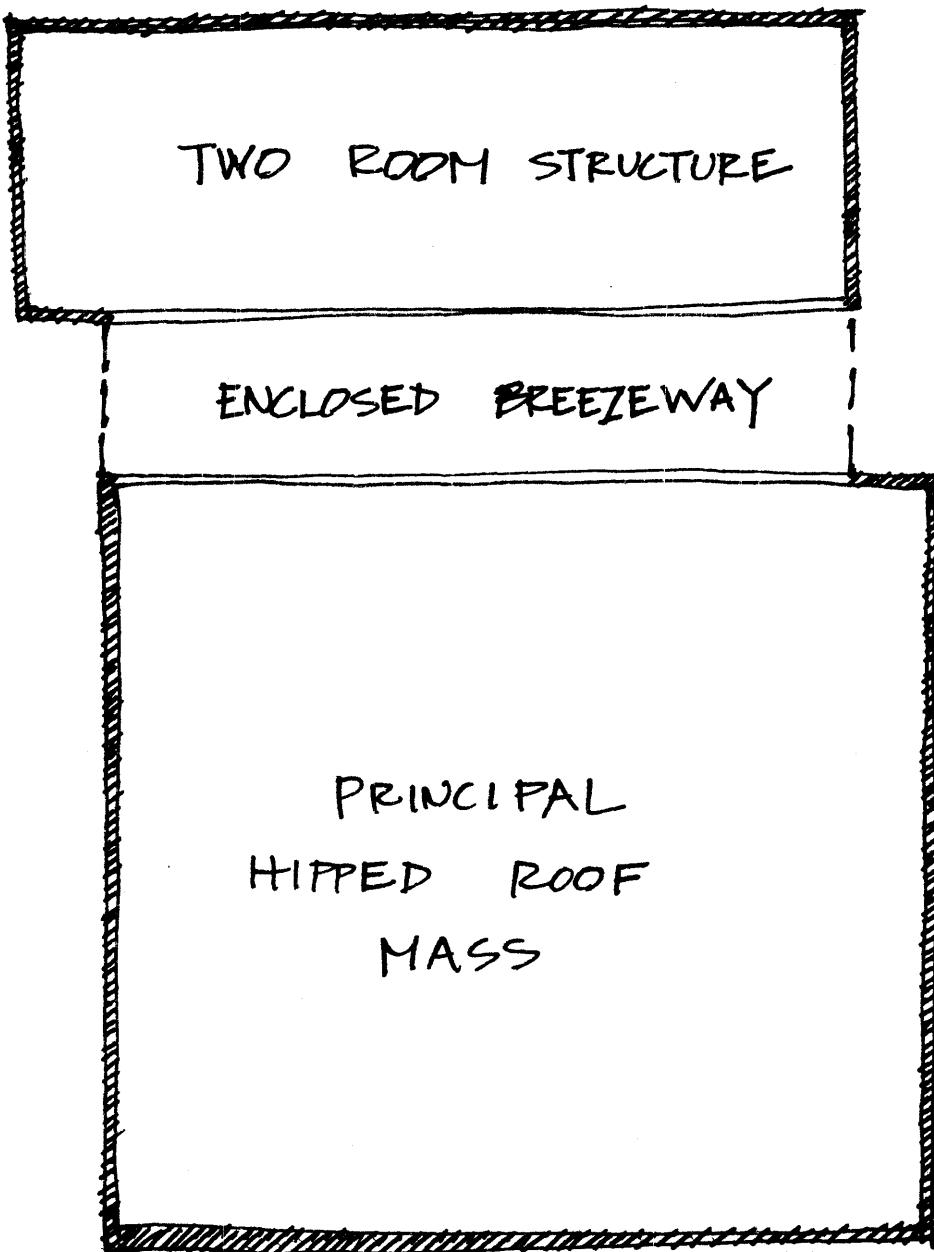
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Item 9.

1. Sittler, Carolyn "Wittwer was once the only doctor around". Belen News-Bulletin, May 12, 1980.
2. "William F. Wittwer" (Obituary), p. 260.
3. Golden, Julius. "Los Lunas doctor still going strong after fifty years of practice there". Belen News-Bulletin, Friday, May 9, 1952.
4. "Wittwer, Pioneer Physician ... and New Mexico, dead at 93" (Obituary).

Item 10. Verbal boundary

Beginning at the Southeast corner of the tract, whence the point of intersection of the centerline of New Mexico State Road No. 6 with the center-line of U.S. Highway No. 85, bears S 61 deg. 54' 25" E, 178.24 feet distant and running as follows: Thence N 70 deg. 59' W, 80.72 feet to a point; Thence N 53 deg. 02' 27" W, 58.05 feet to the Southwest Corner; Thence N 27 deg. 37' 54" E, 178.06 feet to the Northwest Corner; Thence S 67 deg. 18' 00" E, 128.00 feet to the Northwest Corner; Thence S 17 deg. 00' 00" W, 85.50 feet to a point; Thence N 73 deg. 45' 13" W, 25.00 feet to a point; Thence S 16 deg. 59' 34" W, 99.10 feet to the Southeast Corner of the point of Beginning.



↑
N

← MAIN STREET →