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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 National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Owen Homesite

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 1415 E Prince Road

not for publication

city or town Tucson

vicinity

state Arizona code AZ county Pima code 019 zip code 85719

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 at the following level(s) of significance: national statewide local. Signature of certifying official: James W. Gorman, SHPO. Date: 13 NOVEMBER 2012. State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government: AZ STATE PARKS / SHPO.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. Signature of commenting official, Date, Title, State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government.

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: entered in the National Register, determined eligible for the National Register, determined not eligible for the National Register, removed from the National Register, other (explain). Signature of the Keeper: Don DeLore. Date of Action: 1/9/13.

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

|                                     |                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | private          |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | public - Local   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | public - State   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | public - Federal |

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

|                                     |             |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | district    |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | site        |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | structure   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | object      |

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

| Contributing | Noncontributing |              |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 4            | 1               | buildings    |
|              |                 | district     |
| 4*           |                 | site         |
|              | 5               | structure    |
|              |                 | object       |
| 8            | 6               | <b>Total</b> |

\* count refers to archaeological features

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

Tucson Health Seekers

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

No Style (Vernacular)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Adobe, Fired Brick, Wood, Metal

roof: Metal, Prepared Roll

other:

**Narrative Description**

**Summary Paragraph**

In 1927, David W Owen established a small homesite on a 1.61-acre lot on the outskirts of Tucson along the Rillito River. David Owen was a retired railroad worker and consumptive from Pennsylvania who had come west for his health. He arrived in advance of his wife and daughter, establishing his homesite near the banks of the Rillito River. Like many homesteaders during the late 1920s and through the 1930s, David Owens original residence was a rustic two-room wood shed manufactured from salvaged materials. Over the next 20 years he built (or salvaged) various buildings and structures, among which was an adobe home, a garage, and a guest house relocated from the former Tucson Airport (now Davis Monthan Air Force Base). Today, all four historic buildings encompassing the former Owen Homesite continue to be used for their original historic function, and despite residential and commercial development surrounding the property, the former Owen Homesite continues to retain a uniquely rural feel.

## Narrative Description

Established in 1927, the former Owen Homesite is located at 1415 East Prince Road, east of the intersection of Vine Avenue and East Prince Road in Tucson, Arizona. Between 1927 and 1970, this property served as the homesite of David Owen and his family. During the Owens occupation of the homesite, in addition to other improvements made on the property (e.g. water pump, fencing), three buildings and one structure were established on the parcel.

**1. Location:** The former Owen Homesite is located along the north side of East Prince Road, immediately east of the intersection of Vine Avenue and East Prince Road. The property is part of the Vine-King Neighborhood, a once rural area populated by small farms. The former Owen Homesite is situated within a narrow, 1.61-acre parcel and is depicted on the Tucson North 7.5' topographic quadrangle within Township 13 South, Range 14 West, Section 30.

**2. Design:** The buildings and structures located at 1415 E Prince Road are representative of vernacular architecture, whereby they do not exhibit a particular academic architectural style. Instead, these buildings and structures represent an architectural response to the local environment, particularly the adobe house which is reminiscent of local sonoran architecture, but more so, reflect the availability of inexpensive construction materials. Most of the buildings and structures within the Owen Homesite were built by David Owen. One of the key features of these buildings and structures is the use of recycled materials in their construction. For example, the original dwelling includes roofing materials made from street and business signs and the bricks for the adobe home were manufactured from the soil onsite.

### Contributing Resources:

Original House/chicken coop: The first building (ca 1927) to be constructed on the property was a single-story, 9x18-foot corrugated tin and wood-frame shed that was subdivided into living quarters for David Owen (south half) and a shelter for his goats and (later) chickens (north half). This dwelling was largely constructed using recycled materials, including metal signs for portions of the roofing, salvaged wood 2x4s for the walls and framing, and recycled 3/3-light casement windows (non-operable). The building exhibits narrow rectangular massing, a low-pitched or nearly flat roof with exposed eaves, a small metal shed roof (ca 1980) adjacent to the south entry, and wood barn-style doors along the east elevation. A covered porch area abuts the southwest corner of the building. In 2002, the door along the south elevation was replaced with a plexi-glass aluminum-framed storm door. Today, the south half of the building serves as guest quarters and a studio. The north half of the building now serves as a coop for the property owner's chickens.

Adobe house: The second building to be constructed at the Owen Homesite was a single-story, four-room adobe home (ca 1937). The earliest portion of the building exhibits a square plan with adobe walls sheathed in stucco, resting on a concrete slab. The roof is low-pitched and surrounded by a low parapet with rounded corners. On the north elevation there are exposed eaves. Windows are a mix of wood double-hung and operable metal casements resting on concrete sills, and doors are three-panel doors with one fixed glass light. In the 1950s, and again at an unknown date, an addition was added to the west elevation. The addition was constructed of fired brick, capped by a shed-style pitched roof surrounded by wood fascia board, and punctuated with metal casement windows topped by wood lintels and supported by concrete sills. Today, the home serves as a residential rental unit.

Garage: At an unknown date during the Owens occupation of the homesite, a garage was built north of the adobe home. Similar to the original shed-style dwelling, the garage is a rectangular wood-frame structure clad with corrugated metal sheeting and capped with a metal shed-style roof. The east elevation is composed of two large wood, barn-style doors with fixed glass lights.

Wood-frame house: Sometime in the 1930s, David Owen purchased a small single-story, wood-frame temporary building from the former Tucson Airport facility (now David Monthan Air Force Base) and had it transported to his property. The building stands near the entrance of the homesite, south of the adobe home. The building is a wood-frame house with horizontal wood siding, and the main axis of the building is topped by a gable roof covered in prepared roll and capped by wood fascia board. The building has wood floors, wood-framed windows, and wood three-paneled doors with a single fixed light. A porch abuts the east elevation and a hopper window is located below the gable. Recently, a small one-room addition abutting the north elevation of the building was added to provide additional living space. This additional room has vertical wood siding and is capped by an integrated shed style roof. Adjacent (northwest) to the addition is a partially enclosed storage area. Today, the building serves as a residential rental unit. Although this building was moved from its original location, temporary aviation-related buildings of this period were constructed in such a way that they could be easily moved to a new location. Further, the building continues to be used for a residential purpose and all of its original features are intact.

Archaeological Features: There are a number of archaeological features within the confines of the Owen's 1.61-acre parcel. These features include (but are not limited to) historic refuse pits and resource procurement pits. At least two



refuse pits have been identified northeast and west of the adobe home, and a resource procurement pit for collecting soil to manufacture adobe bricks is located north and west of the adobe house. The refuse pits consist of discrete areas of loose, ashy soil punctuated with historical glass, metal, and ceramic. A possible resource procurement area was identified as a large depression near the west-central portion of the property. The remains of collapsed cesspools are near this same area and due north of the wood-frame house. Because these archaeological features are below the modern ground surface, they have not been fully investigated. Although archaeological features have been identified, the full extent or number of additional archaeological features is not currently known. One refuse pit adjacent to the adobe building was partially excavated by the property owner, but the feature has not been entirely excavated. The two other archaeological features have not been excavated.

**Non-contributing Resources:** In addition to historical buildings, structures, and archaeological features, there are a handful of modern-age resources that are not associated with the historical occupation of the Owen Homesite. These resources include the current property owner's adobe home and free-standing bath buildings (north end of parcel), and a wood shed near the southwestern corner of the wood-frame house. Other non-contributing resources include structures either moved to the property but altered significantly or moved to the property after the Owens sold their. These resources include, a small wood-framed bandshell for neighborhood meetings and performances (formerly a run-in shed for horses [attached corral has since been dismantled]), and a metal ramada (portions of which were salvaged from the estate of artist, Ted DeGrazia). A small storage shed near the southwestern edge of the property represents a former chicken coop built during the 1930s, that was salvaged from a neighbor and moved to the property in 2006. The non-contributing buildings and structures do not detract from the historic setting as the modern buildings are constructed of adobe, and the salvaged buildings and ramada are a fitting compliment to the historic use of salvaged and recycled materials during the early occupation of the Owen Homesite.

**3. Setting:** The former Owen Homesite is located within the Vine-King Neighborhood, a once rural area populated by small farms that utilized the nearby Rillito River. Decades before David Owen purchased his small homesite; the land was part of a much larger 160-acre land patent established by Martin Samuels in 1911. The homesite was located outside of and north of Tucson City limits. Until 1964, the area continued to be populated with small homesteads and farm sites, but the rural landscape was quickly incorporated into the City of Tucson to accommodate a rapidly expanding population—an expanding population that was due in large part to the influx of consumptives moving to Tucson. While many of the homes built in the 1930s along Vine Avenue and King Road (the namesake of the current neighborhood) remain, they are bordered by multi-residential dwellings. Presently, the Owen Homesite is partially sandwiched between apartment complexes and suburban tract housing. Despite this intrusive development surrounding the Owen property, it retains a unique and rural appearance, reinforced by its historical architecture and mature vegetation. The large tamarisk trees that line the boundaries of the property for instance, are present in similar clusters throughout the neighborhood, and many heritage plants dating to the Owen occupation of the homesite, including Chinese Jujube trees and Texas Rangers, are still present on the property.

**4. Materials:** The primary building material used in the construction of buildings and structures at the Owen Homesite is wood. With the exception of the adobe house, the remaining historic-age buildings and structures are wood-frame with wood and/or metal siding and roofing. In addition, most of the wood used in the construction of these buildings was salvaged or recycled. The adobe was also manufactured onsite from the surrounding soil.

**5. Workmanship:** Each of the historic-age buildings and structures on this parcel exhibits the ingenuity of its builder, David Owen. Further, each resource reflects the use of recycled or salvaged materials. Additionally, repairs that were made to these resources over time are also reflected in the continued use of recycled materials. For example, window screens were repaired with patches from other window screens that Owen had salvaged. Other recycled objects include, door hardware manufactured from salvaged wood and metal.

**6. Feeling:** Despite suburban development around the Owen property, upon stepping onto the parcel however, one is instantly met with the feeling of a rural homesite. The narrow parcel is surrounded by mature vegetation, and is peppered with historic buildings and structures, and even chickens. The parcel retains its rural feel and creates a sense of walking back into time.

**7. Association:** The Owen Homesite is associated with the influx of consumptives that moved to Tucson during the late 1920s-to-early 1930s in an effort to find a cure for their respiratory ailments. Moreover, the property is being evaluated under the Homestead Property Type as outlined in the Tucson Health Seekers Multiple Properties Documentation Form, as the property was established during and shares an association with the second wave of homesteading in the United States that occurred immediately before and during the Great Depression.

**8. Statement of Significance**

**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.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Healthcare/Medicine

Archaeology/Historic-Non-Aboriginal

**Period of Significance**

1927-1945

**Significant Dates**

1927 (establishment of homesite)

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

David Owen (builder)

**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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Period of Significance (justification)** 1927-1945: The period of significance begins with the establishment of the Owen Homesite by David Owen in 1927. As outlined in the Tucson Health Seekers Multiple Properties Documentation Form, the period of significance ends in 1945 when tuberculosis was no longer considered a major health threat and antibiotics were widely used to treat the disease.

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

Between 1920 and 1930, Tucson witnessed its greatest influx of individuals seeking treatment for tuberculosis. Despite over 40 sanatoria established during this time, the number of individuals seeking relief from tuberculosis outnumbered the facilities created to treat the disease. For many consumptives without the financial resources to secure residence at one of the local sanatoriums, they instead sought refuge in the open desert surrounding the City of Tucson.

During the turn of the century, Arizona's genial climate, and in particular Tucson's climate, became a haven for individuals suffering from respiratory ailments. Tucson's low population density, coupled with its availability of inexpensive land was appealing for consumptives in search of a cure. Moreover, these features meant that consumptives could recuperate in—as prescribed by their doctor—an isolated setting. For many, the U.S. Homestead Act was the answer, for others, smaller homesites were equally suitable. This was especially evident following World War I, when many veterans suffering from tuberculosis (or had been mustard gassed) came to Tucson to recover in the dry, warm air. Many veterans homesteaded, often subdividing and selling off portions of their homesteads to other consumptives. Homesteading propaganda often targeted consumptives, and during Arizona's second homesteading boom during the Great Depression, homesteading offered an avenue towards advancement (Stein 1990). David W Owen was one of these individuals who sought advancement through land ownership and a path towards better health by settling near the banks of Tucson's Rillito River. By the 1930s, Owen had constructed a habitable dwelling, and while crude by today's standards, was not an uncommon dwelling type for many homesteaders of the same time period. Remarkably, the Owen Homesite remains to the present day, appearing very much as it did when David Owen and his family resided there.

The Owen Homesite is being submitted as an individual property under the Tucson Health Seekers Multiple Properties Documentation Form (MPDF). As per the MPDF's registration requirements, the Owen Homesite is eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance, and is being evaluated under the Homestead Property Type and under Criterion A, for its association with sanatoria development and community planning and Criterion D, for its potential to yield information important in history.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance)

**Criterion A: Sanatoria Development and Community Planning**

The definition of a homestead is rather broad. In the most general sense, a homestead includes the home and adjacent grounds occupied by a family. Through this definition, the key feature of a homestead is that it includes a more substantial amount of land than a typical residence within a subdivision. Further, homesteads are typically found or were originally established in a rural setting. A narrower definition of a homestead refers to land acquired from the United States government by filing a claim, living on, and cultivating a portion of the land. The Owen property meets this general definition of a homestead.

In the context of tuberculosis, homesteading is often overlooked as a form of treatment, but was nonetheless an important part of sanatoria and later residential development in Tucson. Homesteads were very similar to sanatoria in that they were established in rural areas, often marked by a basic habitation that resembled many of the temporary and "well-ventilated" qualities of Tucson's early tubercular tent cities. Similarly, properties like the Owen Homesite, once situated well-outside the city limits were later subsumed by densely packed residential development. The combination of tuberculosis and the U.S. Homestead Act had a profound impact on Tucson's population growth and urban development. Like Tucson's tuberculosis tent camps, the continued development of local homesteads and homesites in rural areas in close proximity to the city center helped further and pull residential development away from the urban core.

**Criterion D: Potential to Provide Information Important in History.**

While much of the built environment of the Owen Homesite remains to the present day, there are a number of archaeological features present on the property that have the potential to yield additional information about Tucson's historic homesteading experience, especially as it relates to the history of tuberculosis, as well as, a unique opportunity to study archaeological remains side-by-side with their extant and contemporaneous built environment. Moreover, the artifactual remains present at the Owen Homesite can provide additional material evidence about those living with respiratory illness. Continued documentation and excavation of these property types has the potential to provide quantitative geographical and demographic data about the relationship between tuberculosis and homesteading.



In 1990, when Pat Stein wrote her historic context study of homesteading in Arizona, only two homesteads were identified in Pima County (Stein 1990). Since that time, the number of identified homestead properties has increased through the efforts of cultural resource surveys, however, most of these properties represent archaeological sites. The Owen Homestead on the other hand, represents a rare extant example of this property type.

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**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

*Brief History of Tuberculosis and Sanatoria Development in Tucson, Arizona*

Historically, the southwestern United States has been a popular destination for both Easterners and war veterans suffering from pulmonary and respiratory diseases. With the arrival of the railroad in the 1880s, hordes of sick people known as "health-seekers, lungers, and consumptives" flocked to the western United States in search of healing. Every western state hosted their share of these health-seekers, many of whom were looking for relief from tuberculosis symptoms. Prior to 1890 Denver Colorado served as the "tuberculosis capital" of the United States, but as other western states followed suit, Arizona became the state of choice for consumptive patients (Sonnichsen 1987). Although more populated eastern and southern states were reluctant to accommodate such patients, western states and territories welcomed the new arrivals despite the fact that they were suffering from contagious illnesses. From the perspective of territorial officials, every new arrival signaled a step closer to statehood.

As more and more doctors prescribed Arizona's dry climate and plentiful sunshine to their patients as curative for respiratory illnesses, some medical personnel began publishing their recommendations regarding the region's curative powers. One former army doctor, C. L. G. Anderson, presented a paper at a medical meeting in Hagerstown, Maryland on April 9, 1890, entitled "Arizona as a Health Resort." He declared that every part of Arizona would provide a "haven for a sick man," but he particularly recommended the southern deserts around Tucson. In support of his recommendations, Anderson argued that he had met few sick people in Arizona and that illnesses like tuberculosis were rare among American Indians and Mexicans (Sonnichsen 148:1987). The local Tucson newspapers also encouraged the theory that its climate, air, and sunshine would cure whatever ailed you, even going so far as to announce that Tucson would "soon be known as the sanatorium of the southwest" (2 March 1888, *Star*).

True to the newspaper's prediction, Tucson became a Mecca for health-seekers. Because of the abundance of available space, small towns sprang up around Tucson to accommodate the invalids and capitalize on the money-making potential in the throngs of frightened and sick people that immigrated to the city. By 1892 however, the demand for accommodations outpaced the supply and area doctors remarked to the Tucson Board of Trade that very few good accommodations, let alone an adequate hotel were available to the newly arriving sick. By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Tucson only had one formal public sanatorium, St. Mary's Hospital and Sanatorium, and a sprawling squatter's camp known as Tentville. For those who could not find housing at one of these locations but who had cash in hand, other arrangements with hotels and enterprising residents could be made. Others looked to the Homestead Act of 1862 to acquire inexpensive land where they could recuperate (Stein 1990). Few people who came to the city, however, had the financial resources to secure appropriate lodging. Temporary squatter camps and shacks outside Tentville and in the foothills of surrounding mountains soon dotted the desert landscape along the edges of Tucson (Sonnichsen 1987).

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the poorest invalids were concentrated into several tent cities, the largest of which was located on vacant land north of the University of Arizona on Park Avenue (Sonnichsen 1987). Their habitations typically included a canvas tent resting on a wooden platform while "better" accommodations meant a canvas tent with wooden sides and a wood floor covered by a steel roofed ramada-like structure to provide shade from the sun. Regardless of the structure, life inside the tent cities was bleak, and "the nights were heartbreaking, as one walked along the dark streets, [one] heard coughing from every tent. It was truly a place of lost souls and lingering death" (Sonnichsen 150:1987). In addition to the housing shortage, medical care was hard to come by for those without money. Only the Adams Street Mission opened by Reverend Oliver E. Comstock in 1909 would take patients at no charge (Hall 1978). And, it wasn't until 1917 that an Episcopal Minister, Reverend J. W. Atwood, opened St. Lukes-in-the-Desert to help young men who could not afford medical care (Sheridan 1995).

For those with moderate financial resources, the outlook slightly improved with the opening of the Whitwell Hospital by Dr. Jeremiah Metzger. The hospital was located on North First Avenue at the edges of the Park Avenue tent city and began operations in 1906. Over the next few years, more clinics, hospitals, sanatoriums, and boarding houses opened to accommodate the masses of consumptives residing in Tucson. Options continued to improve following World War I (WWI) when veterans who had contracted tuberculosis during the war flocked to Arizona. In 1920, over 7,000 health seekers, many of whom were WWI veterans, were residing in Tucson. One group of veterans who had come to Tucson in

1917 established a small tent city on the grounds of Pastime Park, four miles north of downtown Tucson along the road to Oracle Junction (Kimmelman 1990). Upon discharge, many of the veterans who had previously resided at Pastime Park began homesteading vacant land around the park and throughout Tucson. Homesteading became a popular option for consumptives in Tucson, as it provided another option for consumptives who were without financial resources to secure lodging at a formal sanatorium, but wanted to remain in Tucson because of the purported healing powers of the local climate.

Two years later, Lieutenant Neill MacArtan of the Army Medical Corp, a WWI veteran and consumptive himself, was sent to Tucson to establish a government sanatorium for military veterans. Pastime Park Hospital opened its doors on March 15, 1920, but it was only able to accommodate 38 patients. Over 1,000 more veterans requested admittance. With support from Mayor O.C. Parker as well as local fundraising efforts, the hospital expanded by January of the following year to include accommodations for 275 patients. The need was so great that the hospital quickly filled to maximum capacity (Kimmelman 1990).

By the end of the 1920s, Tucson had over 40 permitted sanatoriums, a staggering number for a city with a population hovering around 30,000 people. Even though many sanatoria appeared to have emerged over night, by 1930, many disappeared just as quickly as they have appeared. The first wave of sanatorium closures corresponded with the Great Depression. All, but the larger institutions like San Xavier Sanatorium, Veteran's Administration Hospital, and Desert Sanatorium for example, were hit hard by the economic depression. By-in-large, smaller private institutions, particularly boarding-house style facilities closed their doors. The Desert Sanatorium, although a private institution at the time, was able to keep its doors open because of the generous patronage of the Erickson family. It did however, expand its patient's services to general care and arthritis when it was found that they could not cure tuberculosis (Grubb 1984, Barrow 1987).

St Mary's Sanatorium and Veteran's Administration Hospital too, converted to general medicine and no longer focused on tubercular care. In addition, some of the larger institutions were able to stay open because they were funded by the government, as was the case for San Xavier Sanatorium. Interestingly, other facilities opened their doors during the economic turmoil, such as the Southern Pacific Sanatorium and the Arizona State Elk's Association Hospital. Despite the closure of many facilities and the lower rate of tuberculosis nationwide, tuberculosis still continued to be major health crisis in Arizona.

Tucson's economic picture brightened at the start of and following World War II, largely related to the establishment of military aviation facilities that brought increased revenue into the state (Sheridan 1995). The increasing economic prosperity however did not bring back the sanatoria of the previous decade. This was in part related to the discovery of the antibiotic, *streptomycin* by microbiologist Selman Waksman, the realization that previous tuberculosis treatment was ineffective, and the lower incidence of the disease (Rosen 1993). While the rate of tuberculosis continued to drop rapidly across the U.S., it continued to be the number one cause of death in Arizona, particularly among Arizona's native population. By the 1940s, Tucson had become the antithesis of what it had proclaimed itself to be only a decade earlier—the native population once advertised as the exemplar of healthy living exhibited staggering rates of tuberculosis, residential development encroached on the desert landscape, and congested networks of streets connected new suburbs with the city. Tucson no longer offered the same sense of refuge to ailing health-seekers and sanatoria reflected this change.

After World War II, the only known sanatorium established in Tucson was the Oshrin Hospital located at the former site of Barfield Sanatorium. Rather than attempting to lure ailing outsiders to Tucson, Oshrin was a government contract hospital created to deal with the exorbitant rate of tuberculosis among Arizona's Indian populations. The San Xavier Sanatorium too, continued to offer tubercular care to Tucson's American Indian and Mexican population into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Thus the people, whose lives were mythologized to promote migration to Tucson and the desert southwest, fell victim to the very mythology that they unwittingly came to represent.

### Homesteading and Homesites in Arizona

Homesteading was another option for consumptives who came west in search of better health. Homesteading in Arizona peaked shortly after WWI, when many veterans who had been exposed to mustard gas or contracted tuberculosis came to Arizona for their health. Many veterans who resided at Pastime Park Hospital and Veteran's Administration Hospital No. 51 filed homestead claims upon discharge. Interestingly, the second greatest boon to homesteading in Arizona occurred between 1930 and 1936—the worst years of the Great Depression. Even during troubling economic times, homesteading still offered the hope of personal advancement through the acquisition of land and in the case of consumptives, a means of combating illness. Moreover, Tucson homesteads and homesites occupied by individuals with



tuberculosis were located in isolated settings, in keeping with common medical practices of the day that advised (and in some cases required) the sick to isolate themselves. Moreover, Tucson homesteads and homesites fulfilled many of the requirements sought by consumptives—open land in an isolated setting, proper ventilation away from polluted city centers, and genial climate. These were especially appealing features for consumptives without the financial resources to afford an extended stay at a sanatorium and those facilities they could afford were often overpopulated with throngs of coughing and dying patients.

Homesteading played a significant role in the settlement and development of Arizona. In 1987, a study by the Arizona State Land Commission noted that over 12 million acres of land in Arizona was privately owned, and of the number, 25 percent was acquired through homesteading (Stein 1990). The majority of homesteads in Arizona were patented between 1910 and 1920 with a second boom during the Great Depression (Stein 1990). The first National Homestead Act was passed in 1862 and it entitled heads of households and persons over the age of 21 to file claim to 160 acres of government-owned land. In addition to the moderate filing fees, claimants were also required to reside on the land continuously for a period of five years and have cultivated a portion of the property for at least four of those years. Further, "proving up" meant that claimants also needed to construct a habitable dwelling, sink a well, and have a least a portion of the land fenced. The definition of habitable dwelling was often subjective, as most claimants were poor and their living quarters frequently amounted to framed tents, shacks, and dug-outs (Stein 1990). Despite the over 4 million acres of Arizona land that passed from public to private ownership through the Homestead Act, more homesteads failed than succeeded. Further, despite Arizona's genial climate that encouraged homesteading, most land offered by the government was marginal, and most claimants did not have the financial resources to maintain land that had little water, vegetation, and dusty soil. In response to the growing number of homestead failures, the U.S. government made successive changes to the Homestead Act, allowing for fewer restrictions on claimants to prove up, expanding land ownership to 320 acres, and reducing the residency requirements.

As noted previously, the definition of a homestead is rather broad. In the most general sense, a homestead includes the home and adjacent grounds occupied by a family. Through this definition, the key feature of a homestead is that it includes a more substantial amount of land than a typical residence within a subdivision. Further, homesteads are typically found in rural, isolated settings. A narrower definition of homestead refers to land acquired from the United States government by filing a claim, living on and cultivating a portion of the land. The Owen Homesite meets a more general description of a homestead and for the purposes of this nomination, the term Homesite is more appropriate to describe the Owen property. Although, David Owen purchased a smaller portion of Martin Samuels Homestead, the Owen Homesite shares most of the defining characteristics (as outlined in the Homestead Property Type registration requirements of the Tucson Health Seekers MPDF) of homesteads acquired through the U.S. Homestead Act.

### The Owen Homesite

Today, the Owen Homesite is surrounded by residential development, but during its historical occupation, the homesite was situated in a rural farming community adjacent to the Rillito River. According to land records housed at the Bureau of Land Management and the National Archives, the Owen Homesite was once part of a 160-acre homestead patented by Martin Samuels on June 1, 1911 (Bureau of Land Management Serial Patent No. AZPHX 0003013, accessed 26 August 2010). In 1927, 1.61 acres of the Samuels Homestead was sold to David Owen, a consumptive from Pennsylvania who came west for his health. Born in 1882, David Owen grew up in Pennsylvania and worked as a fireman for the local railroad company. He married his first wife Anna in 1903 and they had one child, a daughter named Ruth (Thirteenth Census of the United States 1910). Through the 1920s, David Owen continued working for the railroad, achieving the rank of engineer before retiring early due to poor health (Fourteenth Census of the United States 1920). Around 1927, David Owen packed his bags and leaving his wife and child in Pennsylvania, moved to Tucson to start a new life for himself and his family (Polk's Tucson City Directory 1927-1950).

During the first three years that he lived on the property, Mr. Owen built a 9x18-foot corrugated tin and wood-frame shed that was subdivided into living quarters for himself and a shelter for his goats and chickens. Like many who homesteaded, Mr. Owen had limited resources, so he made do with what he had and what could be reused and recycled. This meant that his first dwelling, again like many who homesteaded during the same period, was little more than shelter from the weather, and constructed using recycled metal signs and wood 2x4s (Lobo 2008). Further, he kept goats for milk and later chickens for eggs. It was during his first few years on the property that he began excavating and manufacturing adobe bricks to construct a more substantial house so that his wife and daughter could join him. According to the Pima County Assessor's records, the "first" house, the adobe house, was constructed in 1937 and consisted of four rooms, a flat roof with parapet, and casement windows (Pima County Assessor's Parcel No. 11301114A, accessed 26 August 2010 [given the inaccuracies of assessor's construction dates, it is likely that the adobe house was constructed earlier than

1937]). Through the years, David Owen and his family made additional improvements to the property including a brick-constructed addition to the west elevation of the house with shed roof, the purchase of a 1930s-era gable-roofed wood-framed cottage from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, and a wood and corrugated-tin garage (Lobo 2008). In 1946, David's wife Anna passed away and two years later he remarried. Although little historical documentation could be found about David Owen and his family, it appears that during his life, he retained his connection to and relationship with the railroad and other railroad employees. This relationship is evidenced by a 1953 newspaper notice in the *Tucson Daily Citizen*, announcing a potluck dinner at 1415 E Prince Road, the home of Mr and Mrs David Owen, for the National Association of Retired and Veteran Railroad employees (14 October 1953). David and his second wife, Ina, remained at the homestead until 1970, when old age and fading health forced them into a retirement home. On May 19, 1973, David Owen passed away, survived by his wife Ina, his daughter Ruth, his granddaughter Margaret, his brother Milton, and his sister Grace (*Tucson Daily Citizen* 19 May 1973).

In 1970, the former Owen Homesite was purchased by Jack and Arlane Hastings. Jack Hastings was an artist who specialized in concrete sculptures, using the original Owen habitation as his art studio. His local work included the El Presidio Plaza fountain located north of Tucson City Hall. Many of his sculptural pieces are present at the former Owen Homesite. Two years later, Susan and Frank Lobo purchased the property. Ms. Lobo continues to occupy the property to the present day.

Although scant historical documentation could be found about David Owen and his family, recent archaeological excavations around the property provide a detailed glimpse into what daily life was like for the Owens. A general review of materials excavated from a refuse pit confirms that someone in the household was ill, as evidenced by numerous medicine bottles, vials, and eye-droppers. Further, the majority of discarded materials were disposable and inexpensive, including food cans, condiment jars, and soda bottles. Very little crockery and dishware was discarded and those that were, were inexpensive dishware. Few personal effects were found in the refuse pit, but suspender slides, garter clips, perfume bottles, and marbles were recovered indicating that at least one man, woman, and child lived at this location. Interestingly, few alcohol bottles were identified in the recovered archaeological materials which that may reflect the personal preferences of the Owens or reflect adherence to Federal Prohibition enforced between 1920 and 1933. Overall, the lack of expensive or heirloom specimens, the higher density of food and medicine-related items support the archival record; the Owens were typical of depression-era homesteaders and someone in the household was ill.

The Owen Homesite was once part of a larger 160-acre homestead patent that was later subdivided and sold off to individuals such as David Owen. Although Owen did not cultivate his land as was the case with traditional homestead claims, his homesite does consist of many key features associated with homesteading. These key features include, a "habitable house", features for collecting and storing water (remains of a turbine water pump [inoperable], buildings and structures associated with livestock, and artifactual remains. Today, the former Owen property still includes the original habitation, a wood-framed shed that served as David Owens home until he built a permanent adobe home for himself and his family, water pumps, shelter for goats and chickens, fencing, earthen depressions representing trash pits, cesspools, and resource procurement areas (excavations for adobe brick manufacturing) and an extensive amount of artifactual remains such as medicine bottles, dishware, personal items, food cans, and soda bottles. Further, one of the most salient features of the Owen Homesite and one of the most salient features of many homesteads occupied during the Great Depression is the use of salvaged and recycled materials. Remarkably, the Owen Homesite remains to the present day, appearing very much as it did when David Owen and his family resided there and despite his respiratory illness, he lived a long and full life—a testament to the purported therapeutic benefits of Tucson's environment.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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### **Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form)

- Barrow, William C. "The Desert Sanatorium of Southern Arizona". *The Saguaro*, March 1987.
- Bureau of Land Management*. Serial Patent No. AZPHX 0003013, accessed 26 August 2010.
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- Hall, Dick. "Ointment of Love: Oliver E. Comstock and Tucson's Tent City". *The Journal of Arizona History* 19(2), 1978.
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- Polk's Tucson City Directory*. Tucson: R.L. Polk & Co., 1927-1950.
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- Sheridan, Thomas E. *Arizona, a History*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1995.
- Sonnichsen, C. L. *Tucson, the Life and Times of an American City*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982.
- Star* [Tucson, Arizona]. No Title. 2 March 1888.
- Stein, Pat. *Homesteading in Arizona, 1870-1942*. Phoenix: Arizona State Historic Preservation Office, 1990.
- Thirteenth Census of the United States*, Pennsylvania, District 4, 1910. Available at: [www.Ancestry.com](http://www.Ancestry.com)
- Tucson Daily Citizen*. Funeral Notice for David W Owen. 19 May 1973.
- Tucson Daily Citizen*. No Title. 24 October 1953.



Owen Homestead  
Name of Property

Pima County, Arizona  
County and State

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 1.61  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

Township 13 South, Range 14 East, Section 30

**UTM References 1. NW 2.NE 3.SW 4. SE**

|   |                   |                           |                            |   |                   |                           |                            |
|---|-------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|---|-------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | <u>12</u><br>Zone | <u>0504720</u><br>Easting | <u>3570813</u><br>Northing | 3 | <u>12</u><br>Zone | <u>0504721</u><br>Easting | <u>3570624</u><br>Northing |
| 2 | <u>12</u><br>Zone | <u>0504753</u><br>Easting | <u>3570813</u><br>Northing | 4 | <u>12</u><br>Zone | <u>0504754</u><br>Easting | <u>3570624</u><br>Northing |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (describe the boundaries of the property)

The former Owen Homesite is situated within a narrow, north-south oriented, 1.61-acre parcel, bounded by East Prince Road to the south and surrounded by residential development to the east, west, and north. The Owen Homesite is depicted on the Tucson North 7.5' topographic quadrangle within Township 13 East, Range 14 West, Section 30.

**Boundary Justification** (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The property boundaries of the Owen Homesite were selected based on the original acreage of the former homesite.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Jennifer Levstik  
organization Consulting Histórico date October 10, 2011 (Revised)  
street & number 4041 E Camino de la Colina telephone 520-398-4933  
city or town Tucson state Arizona zip code 85711  
e-mail jenlevstik@yahoo.com

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**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:**  
Two USGS maps (7.5 minute series) indicating the property's location (see attached files).  
Figure 1: Aerial photograph depicting the Owen Homesite (page 13).
- **Arizona State Historic Property Inventory Forms** (see attached CD)

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**Photographs:**

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Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

**Name of Property:** Owen Homesite

**City or Vicinity:** Tucson

**County:** Pima

**State:** Arizona

**Photographer:** Jennifer Levstik

**Date Photographed:** August 2010

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** See pages 14- 17(photographic log available on attached CD)

2. AZ\_PimaCounty\_OwenHomesite.2
3. AZ\_PimaCounty\_OwenHomesite.3
4. AZ\_PimaCounty\_OwenHomesite.4
5. AZ\_PimaCounty\_OwenHomesite.5
6. AZ\_PimaCounty\_OwenHomesite.6
7. AZ\_PimaCounty\_OwenHomesite.7
8. AZ\_PimaCounty\_OwenHomesite.8
9. AZ\_PimaCounty\_OwenHomesite.9

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**Property Owner:**

---

name Susan Lobo  
street & number 1415 E Prince Road telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Tucson state Arizona zip code 85719

**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

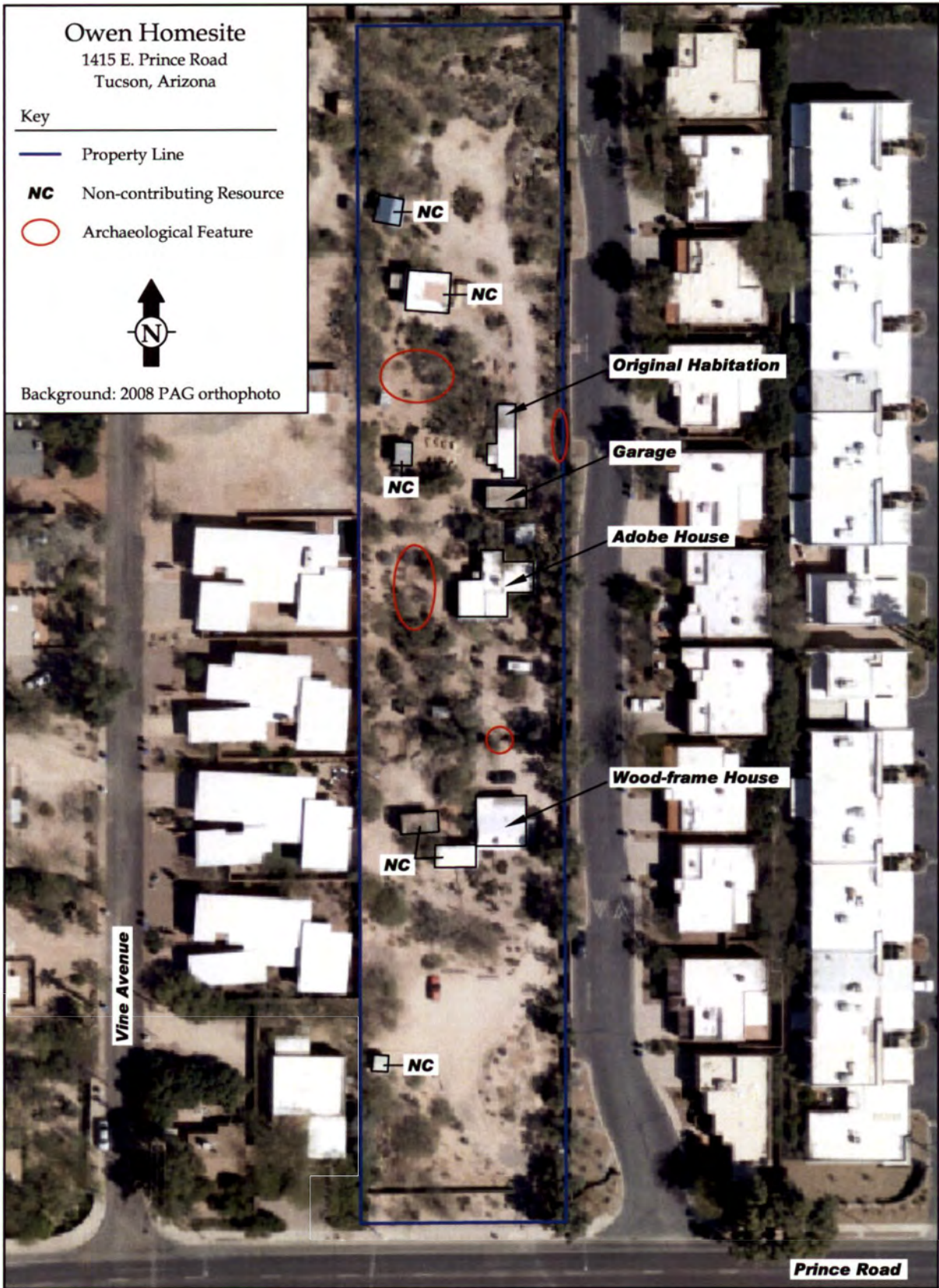


Figure 1: Aerial photograph depicting the Owen Homesite.





Figure 2. Eastern perimeter of the Owen Homesite, view facing south (2010).



Figure 3. Entrance to Owen Homesite, view facing northwest (adobe house in background)(2010).



Figure 4. Original habitation at Owen Homesite, view facing southwest (2010).



Figure 5. Original habitation at Owen Homesite, view facing northwest (2010).





Figure 6. Adobe house at Owen Homesite, view facing southwest (2010).



Figure 7. Wood-frame house salvaged from former Tucson Airport, view facing southwest (2010).





Figure 8. Wood-frame garage at Owen Homesite, view facing southwest (2010).



Figure 9. Artifacts from historical refuse pit at Owen Homesite (2010).

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Owen Homesite  
NAME:

MULTIPLE Tucson Health Seekers MPS  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARIZONA, Pima

DATE RECEIVED: 11/23/12 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 12/21/12  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/05/13 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/09/13  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 12001142

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 1/9/13 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*example of TB Homesteaders Property.*

RECOM./CRITERIA AdD

REVIEWER Enka Sauter

DISCIPLINE Archaeologist

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE 1/9/13

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.





AZ - Pima County - Owen Homestead. 2

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AZ - Pima County - Owen Homestead. 3

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AZ - Pima County. Owen Homestead. 4

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AZ - Pima County - Owen Homestead. 6

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HIPPIES  
—USE—  
SIDE DOOR



AZ - Pima County - Owen Homestead. 7

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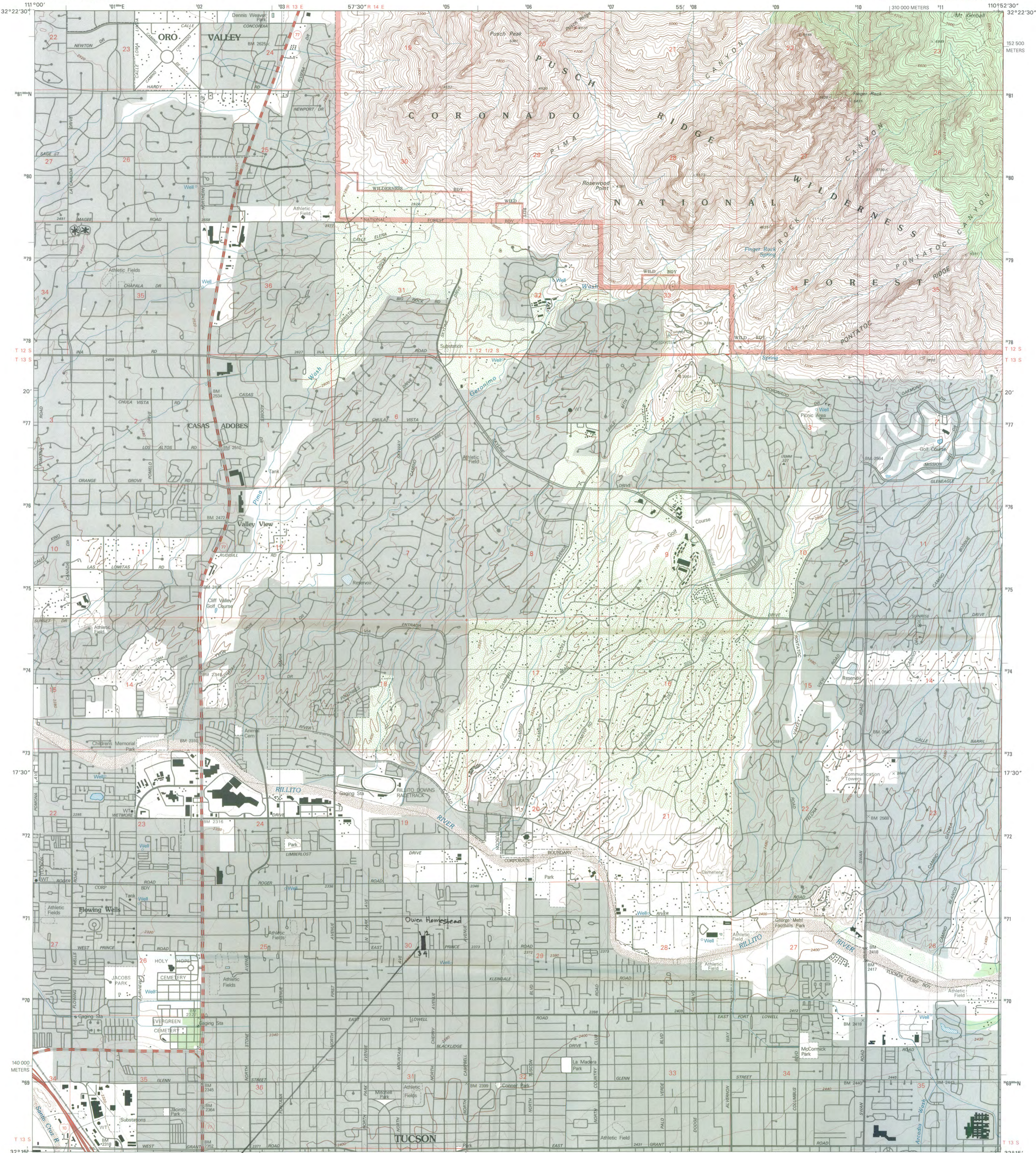
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Fujicolor Crystal Archive  
Paper

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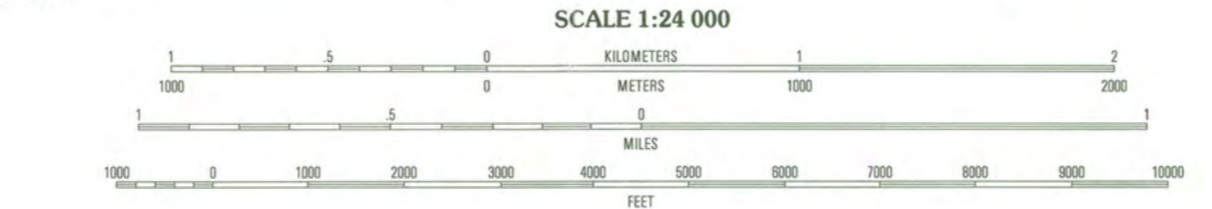
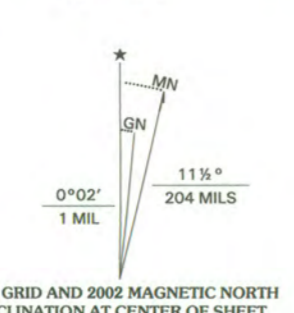




Produced by the United States Geological Survey  
Topography compiled 1966. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1996 and other sources. Public Land Survey System and survey control current as of 1981. Boundaries current as of 2000 North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83). Projection and 1 000-meter grid: Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 12 2 500-meter ticks: Arizona Coordinate System of 1983 (central zone)  
North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 83 and NAD 27 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software  
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map  
Houses of worship, schools, and other labeled buildings verified 1966

**Owen Homestead**

1. E 0504720  
N 3570213  
2. E 0504753  
N 3570813  
3. E 0504721  
N 3570624  
4. E 0504754  
N 3570624



CONTOUR INTERVAL 40 FEET  
SUPPLEMENTARY CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
NATIONAL GEODETIC DATUM OF 1929  
TO CONVERT FROM FEET TO METERS, MULTIPLY BY 0.3048

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 |

**ROAD CLASSIFICATION**

Primary highway hard surface ..... Light-duty road, hard or improved surface .....

Secondary highway hard surface ..... Unimproved road .....

Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route

1 Ruelas Canyon  
2 Oro Valley  
3 Mount Lemmon  
4 Jaynes  
5 Sabino Canyon  
6 Cat Mountain  
7 Tucson  
8 Tucson East

**TUCSON NORTH, AZ**  
1996

NIMA 3848 IV SW-SERIES V898





Janice K. Brewer  
Governor

Bryan Martyn  
Executive Director

November 15, 2012

Carol Shull  
Keeper of the National Register  
National Park Service  
1201 Eye Street, NW 8<sup>th</sup> Floor (MS2280)  
Washington, D.C. 2005-5905



Board Members

Walter D. Armer, Jr., Vail, *Chair*  
Maria Baier, State Land Commissioner, *Vice Chair*  
Kay Daggett, Sierra Vista  
Alan Everett, Sedona  
Larry Landry, Phoenix  
William C. Scalzo, Phoenix  
Tracey Westerhausen, Phoenix



**RE: TUCSON HEALTH SEEKERS: DESIGN, PLANNING, AND ARCHITECTURE IN  
TUCSON FOR THE TREATMENT OF TUBERCULOSIS, PIMA COUNTY, ARIZONA  
MPDF**

- OWEN HOMESITE
- TUCSON MEDICAL CENTER

Dear Ms. Shull:

I am pleased to submit the National Register of Historic Places Registration Forms for the properties referenced above.

Accompanying documentation is enclosed, as required. Should you have any questions or concerns please contact me at [vstrang@azstateparks.gov](mailto:vstrang@azstateparks.gov) or at 602.542.4662.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Vivia Strang".

Vivia Strang, CPM  
National Register Coordinator  
State Historic Preservation Office  
Arizona State Parks

Enclosures

VS:vs



Beall, Edson <edson\_beall@nps.gov>

---

## add to the weekly list Owen Homesite and Tucson Health Seekers MPS cover

1 message

---

**Deline, Lisa** <lisa\_deline@nps.gov>  
To: Edson Beall <edson\_beall@nps.gov>  
Cc: Erika Martin Seibert <erika\_seibert@nps.gov>

Thu, Jan 24, 2013 at 3:26 PM

Hi Edson: Please add to your weekly list the Tucson Health Seekers Cover #64501169 and the Owen Homesite #12001142 (Pima County, AZ). These were due 1/9/13.

The Tucson Medical Center nomination will be a return.

thanks.

Lisa

Hi Lisa,  
Please put these stickies on  
their respective E/R sheets.  
Thanks!

Done





## **OWEN HOMESITE**

### **NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES NOMINATION**

**IN ASSOCIATION WITH TUCSON HEALTH SEEKERS MULTIPLE  
PROPERTIES DOCUMENTATION FORM**

**OCTOBER 2012**