

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

4185

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*.



1. Name of Property

Historic name: O'Connor, Sandra Day, House

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing: _____

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

2. Location

Street & number: 1230 North College Avenue

City or town: Tempe State: AZ County: Maricopa

Not for Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national X statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 A X B C D

<u>Katherine Leeceal SAPO</u>	<u>24 May 2019</u>
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>Arizona State Parks and Trails</u>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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

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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

7/18/2019
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The Sandra Day O'Connor House (Figure 1) is a single-family residence constructed in 1958. The house was designed by architect Donald Keith Taylor and constructed of adobe blocks supplied by George Ellis. The single-story house is constructed primarily of adobe, wood, and glass and reflects the collaboration between the young, modernist architect Taylor and client O'Connor, who wanted a home that was both modern in design and nostalgic in its materials. Its distinctive features include exposed adobe walls, intersecting prow roofs, and extensive areas of glass wall that provide the indoor-outdoor connection typical of modern architecture. Originally located in Paradise Valley, northeast of Phoenix, the house was relocated in 2009 to a site in Tempe's Papago Park, a locale sympathetic to the house's original scenic desert setting. The relocation was necessary to preserve the building and accomplished with great care and attention to details, accurately reproducing its original desert setting and directional orientation. The house has been repurposed for use as a meeting space for the Sandra Day O'Connor Institute. Apart from the relocation, the house retains a high degree of integrity of design, materials, workmanship (an important quality), association, and feeling.



Figure 1. The O'Connor House. View facing southwest into the living room illustrating the transparency between indoors and outdoors. Source: Sandra Day O'Connor Institute, <http://oconnorinstitute.org/programs/oconnor-history/>, accessed June 20, 2018.

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Figure 2. Panoramic view of the O'Connor House (center right) in the desert setting of Tempe Papago Park looking north from Curry Road. Source: Google, 2017.

SETTING

The Sandra Day O'Connor House (O'Connor House) is located on a parcel of desert land north of the Salt River in Tempe Papago Park (T1N, R4E, SE ¼ of Section 10). Papago Park is a hilly desert park divided between the cities of Phoenix (1200 acres) and Tempe (296 acres). The park is composed of a variety of natural and human-made features used or constructed for recreational purposes. Its most distinctive physical attributes are a number of red sandstone buttes and Sonoran Desert vegetation such as the giant saguaro cactus (Figure 2). Recreational and cultural facilities in the park include the Rolling Hills Golf Course to the west, which is not visible from the O'Connor House, and, to the southeast, a baseball field and basketball court set in a grassy landscaped corner of the park, which is visible from the house. Immediately to the north of the house is the Arizona Heritage Center and Museum, operated by the Arizona Historical Society, and to the east is a parking lot serving all of the facilities in the vicinity (Figure 3).

There are two properties within Tempe Papago Park listed in the National Register of Historic Places. To the west, not visible from the house, is Moeur Park, a light recreational park developed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) between 1936 and 1938. The Eisendrath House is located approximately 1000 ft. to the northwest of the O'Connor House but is not visible due to the intervening Arizona Heritage Center. To the west, just outside of the park is the campus for the Salt River Project, which includes the National Register-listed Crosscut Hydroelectric Plant.

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Figure 3. The O'Connor House in relation to natural and cultural facilities in Tempe Papago Park. Key: Tempe Papago Park (1), O'Connor House (2), Arizona Heritage Center and Museum (3), Eisendrath House (4), Moeur Park (5), Rolling Hills Golf Course (6), Tempe Town Lake (7), Crosscut Hydroelectric Plant (8). Source: Google, 2018.

The O'Connor House is approached from the parking area via a reddish decomposed granite driveway / walkway. New 5' high concrete and stone formed entry walls flank the entry, hiding the rolling gates in this desert vegetated location.

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DESIGN AND MATERIALS

The house sits on a northwest / southeast axis with the front door facing southwest. The floorplan is rectangular in shape with diamond shaped ends and a gabled wood-shake roof. A large cross gable facing northeast meets the ridge and enlarges the floorplan at the east end. A smaller cross gable accents the southwest entry. The ridge beam at the main gable and the ridge beams at the cross gables all extend outward to form in plan 45-degree angles back to the roof overhang. These prow roofs elongate the overall rectangular plan of the building and the cross gables.



Figure 4. View of O'Connor House facing north. Source: E. Vondy, 2018.

The building was moved from its original location in 2007 and placement at the current site was completed in 2009. The careful moving process included: numbering each adobe block for correct reinstallation and removal the roof and structural framing in large assemblies (12) and reinstalling with heavy equipment. The reinstalled roof was structurally stabilized with diagonal roof strapping and tie-rods into the adobe walls; these are not visible. The exterior walls were reconstructed from the original adobe blocks in the same configuration with the same mortar mix and mortar wash. New tube steel posts 3"x3" were imbedded in the rebuilt adobe walls; these are not visible. The building as reconstructed is 1,819 sf, which was its original size and configuration. A 1964 addition, which was not included in the relocation, was removed. The moved building retains its orientation with a desert landscape similar to the original location. The NW-SE directional alignment was a key factor in the original design controlling solar heat intake from the southwest while opening a broad view to the northeast.

The building is (and was) constructed on a concrete pad and foundation. The walls are of structural adobe blocks and the roof supported by posts. Rafters span from the main ridge beam sloping down to the exterior walls and extending to form the overhangs. The adobe blocks are 4" high x 16" long x 8" thick. All exterior adobe building walls are 19 courses high laid in a running bond pattern with a finished top plate, except at the northwest end where the walls are full height to form a heat barrier for



Figure 5. View of O'Connor House facing east towards sheltered entry. Source: E. Vondy, 2018.

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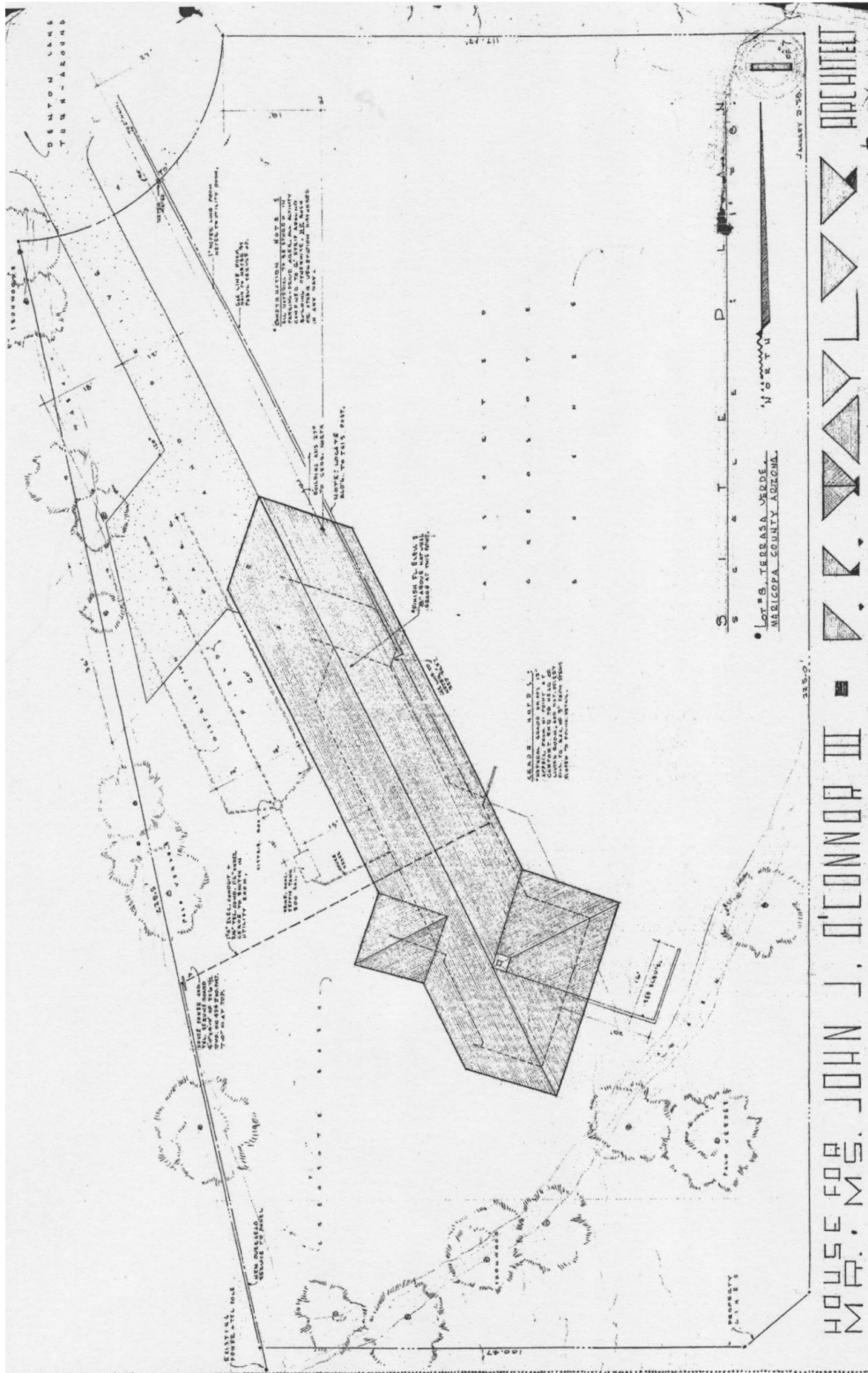


Figure 6. D.K. Taylor's 1958 Drawing for the O'Connor House. Reproduced from Stein (2008). Original citation states courtesy of Caroline Ryan).

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the master bedroom, which has a glass door and side light on the northeast side to allow additional light into the room.

The front entry approach is diagonal to the building under the smaller cross gable that cantilevers past an entry separation wall. The entry separation wall forms a portion of the 24" high indoor / outdoor planter. The front door is tucked in the corner. Also, in the front entry area a small triangular pond and a bench have been added; they are non-contributors.



Figure 7. View of O'Connor House facing northwest. Source: E. Vondy, 2018.

The southwest elevation consists of adobe walls designed to dissipate the heat, however there are five 8" wide vertical slot windows full height from foundation to roof framing that create a rhythm and light pattern in the interior hallway. The roof has an approximate 4:12 pitch with a 5'-3" overhang. A post and beam structure is located to the northwest end of the building to provide additional shade and, in its original location, serve as a carport. The main roof ridge beam cantilevers into this shaded area to enhance the soaring roof image (Fig. 8). A small accessory building for public restrooms located just beyond the northwest end of the house is a non-contributing building to the property.

The northeast elevation contains a floor to ceiling window and glass door combination unit for each of the bedrooms. Under the deep overhang is magnificent desert vegetation to be enjoyed from these bedrooms. Tall glass dedication panels have been added on this side of the building, they do not detract from the building. At the four roof valleys, Paolo Soleri-cast bronze rain chains provide a unique, though not historic detail. There is also a deep copper roof flashing atop the wood fascia surrounding the building.

At the northeast roof cross gable, the enlarged area has floor to ceiling windows. This design is intended to be responsive to the environment as it opens up to the sun on the sheltered north side of the building. On the east end of the building, the adobe walls wrap around to the west and then turn to form the southwest elevation. This section of adobe wall has two vertical



Figure 8. View of O'Connor House facing southeast of the northwest prow roof. Source: E. Vondy, 2018.

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slot windows, placed at 90 degrees to the interior walls to wash those interior walls with softened light. These slot windows can be opened for ventilation and are visually obstructed from anyone approaching the building by the entry separation wall.

At the southeast end of the building, the adobe walls approach the corner with consistent horizontal height of 76" with clerestory windows atop. The adobe wall tops are battered back vertically at the corner and form triangular windows in plan and in elevation. The window glass seamlessly abuts at the intersecting point and visually disappears in elevation. This portion of the flexible open plan space was formerly used by Sandra Day O'Connor as an office and is currently used as a living room.

INTERIOR CHARACTERISTICS

At the center of the living space is a square adobe fireplace that aligns with the northeast cross gable and the main ridge gable. The firebox is open on two sides, facing north and east. The new HVAC system for this portion of the building has been carefully incorporated into the chimney area with four ductless air handlers. The adobe chimney is the vertical character defining element of the building; on aerial views of the building, the chimney anchors the strong geometric layout of the building. Even in aerial view the building is visually pleasing.

Upon entering through the front door, to the left is the dining room and kitchen. There are three skylights over this space. The ceiling is stained wood planking that spans the stained finished rafters. A fire sprinkler system has been carefully installed along the ridge beam. The floors throughout the house are integrally-colored, red concrete. The walls are washed with an adobe slurry coated with two coats of skim milk and left with a natural finish. The interior materials are very true and natural materials, native to the southwest. By strategically placing operable windows, most spaces are naturally lit and have natural ventilation.



Figure 9. Living room of the O'Connor House illustrating its characteristic exposed adobe walls and ceiling structure. Source: E. Vondy, 2018.



Figure 10. Kitchen/dining area of the O'Connor House. Source: E. Vondy, 2018.

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The public area of the home is on the southeast end and the private bedroom area is on the northwest end. Again, being very responsive to the environment and to thermal comfort in the home, the public area has expanses of glass promoting the broad view of the desert and the bedrooms are more privately focused on smaller planting areas.

The hallway to the bedrooms has four wall-height slot windows that create a rhythm of natural light (Fig. 11). The hallway is on the entry side of the house and the bedrooms are on the northeast side of the building with private windows. The bedrooms, which are now used as meeting spaces, are heated and cooled by individual ductless air handlers.

The building is low and linearly designed to be sensitive to nature and the interiors and the exteriors convey the same sense of responsiveness. The overall selection of natural building materials creates a very southwest rustic response to building in a desert environment. The building completely responds to its environment through use of indirect light, natural ventilation, creation of shade overhangs and the use of adobe materials.



Figure 11. Hallway of the O'Connor House from the kitchen/dining area to the bedrooms (now meeting spaces). This view emphasizes the linear character of the architecture. Source: E. Vondy, 2018.

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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.

Criteria Considerations

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

- 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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Politics/Government

Period of Significance

1958-1981

Significant Dates

1958

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Sandra Day O'Connor

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Donald Keith Taylor (architect)

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Sandra Day O'Connor House is recommended eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B in the area of significance of Politics/Government for its association with Sandra Day O'Connor, prominent Arizona legislative and judicial figure, and the first woman appointed as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. The period of significance begins in 1958, the year the house was constructed and occupied by O'Connor and her lawyer husband John Jay O'Connor. The period of significance ends in 1981 when the O'Connors sold the house following her confirmation to the United States Supreme Court. The overlap of the period of significance past the National Register's fifty-year age criterion is justified by the property's exceptionally significant association with the rise of one of Arizona's most important political figures in the later twentieth century as well as the body of scholarly work evaluating the impact of her career. The house is the property most significantly associated with the early phase of O'Connor's career during which she transitioned from a young lawyer to leadership of the Arizona State Senate and then to judicial positions with the Maricopa County Superior Court and the Arizona State Court of Appeals. More than a residence, O'Connor used the house as a place where Arizona's powerbrokers on both sides of the political aisle could meet informally and discuss issues without the rancor of partisanship. In these gatherings, where she served as both social hostess and political participant, O'Connor emerged as one of the leading figures in state government during the 1970s. O'Connor later gave credit to the house as a venue for these informal meetings as critical to the career trajectory that led ultimately to her nomination to the Supreme Court by President Reagan in 1981. Though preservation required removal from its historic location in Paradise Valley to its new location in Tempe's Papago Park, the property meets Criteria Consideration B because, first, the house was sensitively placed with an orientation, view shed, and landscaping replicating critical aspects of the house's original setting. Also, the association between the house and O'Connor is not only clearly evident but has been renewed with its dedication as the focal facility for the Sandra Day O'Connor Institute, the former justice's legacy endeavor to encourage civil discourse in contemporary politics. O'Connor's personal involvement in the preservation and reuse of her former home to address the critical needs of our government today was complemented by one of the broadest based historic preservation efforts in Arizona history. The extraordinary level of community support for the preservation of the O'Connor House testifies to her unparalleled historical accomplishments in the areas of politics and government and to the exceptional esteem in which the people of Arizona hold Justice O'Connor.

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

Introduction

The Sandra Day O'Connor House is named for the retired Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court (1981-2006), who participated in its planning and construction and who resided in it with her husband, John Jay O'Connor, and their three sons from 1958 to 1981. The house was saved from threatened demolition by its relocation from Paradise Valley, near Camelback Mountain northeast of Phoenix, to a scenic desert setting near the Salt River Buttes of Papago Park in north Tempe. The house is now maintained by the Sandra Day O'Connor Institute, the organization founded in 2009 by former Justice O'Connor to advance civics education, civic engagement, and civil discourse. Justice O'Connor participated in the building's relocation, including working by hand on its adobe restoration, as she had when it was constructed in 1958. Until her withdrawal from public life in October 2018 due to declining health, Justice O'Connor attended Institute events at the house and shared stories of her residence there when she was a rising lawyer and politician and her home was a meeting place for Arizona's legislators and other powerbrokers, and where she had been vetted for her selection to the Supreme Court.

The Politics/Government area of significance starts in 1958 when the O'Connor's occupied the house to 1981 when they sold it following her confirmation to the Court. Though this period overlaps the fifty-year age criterion, the property meets Criteria Consideration G because the significance of the house has been established by extensive scholarly research on O'Connor's career. The house is also recommended to meet Criteria Consideration B for moved properties because it was placed at its current location with careful consideration of the original orientation and desert setting. As will be described below, Justice O'Connor herself participated in the relocation and preservation of her former home to facilitate its adaptive reuse as a meeting center for the Sandra Day O'Connor Institute.

Sandra Day O'Connor's notoriety as the first woman on the Supreme Court ("FWOTSC," as she would refer to herself in writing) has inspired greater interest from biographers and legal analysts than the typical associate justice. Biographers have emphasized how she broke successive barriers against women in a number of formerly male domains, from being the sole girl to intrude upon the cowboys during cattle round ups on her family's Lazy B Ranch, through selection by her Republican colleagues to be the first woman majority leader in a state legislature, and finally to her remarkable rise from obscurity to fame when President Reagan nominated her to the Court in 1981. Legal analysts have examined the pattern of her decisions on the Court and have characterized her as generally reliable member of the Court's conservative membership whose decisions tended to eschew sweeping generalizations in favor of a narrow focus on the issues of each particular case. These studies make it possible to evaluate important aspects of her career even though much of it falls within the last fifty years. The statement of significance below focuses on the years when O'Connor faced the challenges of a young lawyer

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in an era when women were not yet accepted in major law firms. The house represents the intersection of her identities as a woman, lawyer, wife, and eventually, mother, politician, and judge. Every study of O'Connor covering these years observes how she leveraged the domestic responsibilities commonly expected of women in the 1950s through the 1970s into opportunities to become a part of the Arizona's political, business, and social leadership. Through this body of scholarly work, we have the historical perspective to evaluate this property within a less than fifty-year time period. For this reason, the property meets National Register Criteria Consideration G for properties that have achieved significance within the last fifty years (1958-1981). The O'Connor House meets Criteria Consideration B as a moved property because it is the surviving property most significantly associated with Justice O'Connor.¹

The historic association between the house and the O'Connors ended, temporarily, in 1981 when the couple sold it following her appointment to the Supreme Court. Following her retirement from the court in 2006, O'Connor returned to Phoenix. While she continued for a time to serve as a visiting judge on federal district courts and courts of appeal and to write and teach, her activities gradually focused on two issues. O'Connor is concerned that young people do not have an adequate understanding of how their government works and in 2009 started the website Our Courts, now iCivics, to provide interactive lessons in American civics to teachers and students. She has also worked with the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools and the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia to expand opportunities for youth engagement in American civics. O'Connor's second concern is the decline in the level of civil discourse in government and the deepening division and lack of communications between political contenders. To address these issues, O'Connor in 2009 founded the Sandra Day O'Connor Institute whose mission is to advance civics education, civic engagement and civil discourse. The work of the O'Connor Institute, which manages the house, is the retired justice's chief legacy project.

Soon after retiring from the Supreme Court, O'Connor became aware that her former home in Paradise Valley was endangered, its owner wishing to replace the relatively small building with a larger house. Recalling how her home had once served as a place where Republicans and Democrats could meet and discuss issues, O'Connor was inspired by the idea of saving the house and rehabilitating it as a public venue for the O'Connor Institute. The relocation of the house to a site in Papago Park in north Tempe was one of the most public preservation efforts ever conducted in Arizona, covered extensively by the media and involving an unprecedented partnership of public and private entities and individuals, which will be described in detail below. Here it suffices to note that the relocation of the house was accomplished with careful attention to view shed, site placement, orientation, decoration, and landscaping. O'Connor herself inspired, advised, and participated in the restoration of the property. Now a decade in its new location, the O'Connor House has a renewed connection with the former justice as a public meeting and event space for the O'Connor Institute. It is the property most significantly associated with O'Connor's career, the place she herself testifies was crucial to her rise in politics and around which the local community has committed to preserving to continue her

¹ Because of alterations, surviving buildings and structures at the Lazy B Ranch lack integrity to convey O'Connor's childhood residence.

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legacy of service to Arizona and the nation. It possesses clear association with Justice O'Connor's durable legacy in U.S. law and politics.

The historic context below begins with a concise summary of Sandra Day O'Connor's career, emphasizing her rise in Arizona politics prior to joining the Supreme Court. This narrative will establish O'Connor as a person significant in Arizona history. Furthermore, because of the exceptional significance of the gender-restricting precedents she broke during her political progress, culminating in her becoming the first woman to serve on the Supreme Court, the period of significance related to this stage of her life extends to 1981, the year of her appointment when the O'Connors sold the house and moved to Washington, D.C. The context then focuses on the design and construction of the house, itself a notable work by architect Donald Keith Taylor, which combines Mid-Century Modernist principles with O'Connor's affinity for adobe, a nostalgic reference to the rural ranch in eastern Arizona where she grew up. The context concludes with a description of the outpouring of public support that saved the house by relocating it to a compatible public site in Tempe and its present use by the O'Connor Institute to carry on Justice O'Connor's legacy.

The Career of Sandra Day O'Connor

Sandra Day was born on March 26, 1930 in El Paso, Texas. She was the eldest child of Harry and Ada Mae Day who operated a cattle ranch overlapping southeastern Arizona and southwestern New Mexico. In the memoir written with her brother Alan Day, *Lazy B: Growing Up on a Cattle Ranch in the American Southwest* (2002), O'Connor described the rugged rural conditions in which she was raised and that remained a vital aspect of her identity throughout her life. Her father was an influential figure in her youth, helping to instill a sense of self-reliance and individual responsibility. He directed her to Stanford University to attain the education to which he had once aspired.² Her mother was a ranch wife who had graduated from the University of Arizona and provided Sandra with her earliest education. Ada Mae provided a role model for how a woman could combine the responsibilities of a ranch wife, which included caring for both family and ranch hands, with the pride of place she exhibited from her care for the flower garden that decorated their stark desert homestead to the gourmet dinners she served to guests. Both parents exemplified the ethics of hard work and self-reliance, which became core features of O'Connor's personality. Harry Day was also conservative and a Republican so as a child she absorbed his disapproval of President Roosevelt



Figure 12. Iconic image of young Sandra Day who grew up in the 1930s on the Lazy B Ranch in southeastern Arizona. Source: National Cowgirl Hall of Fame.

² Biskupic, 7-8, 13, 22; Hirshman, 4.

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and the New Deal. When her interests turned to politics in the 1960s, these sentiments led her towards the Republican Party, dominated by the spirited figure of Arizona senator and 1964 presidential candidate Barry Goldwater.

Day attended Stanford University in California, receiving a bachelor's degree in economics in 1950 and a law degree in 1952 where she had been one of only four women students in her law school class. She was a junior editor of Stanford's law review at the same time future Chief Justice William Rehnquist served as its editor-in-chief, an experience that developed her skills at legal analysis and writing. It was also at Stanford that she met John O'Connor, a fellow law student, whom she married on December 20, 1952.³

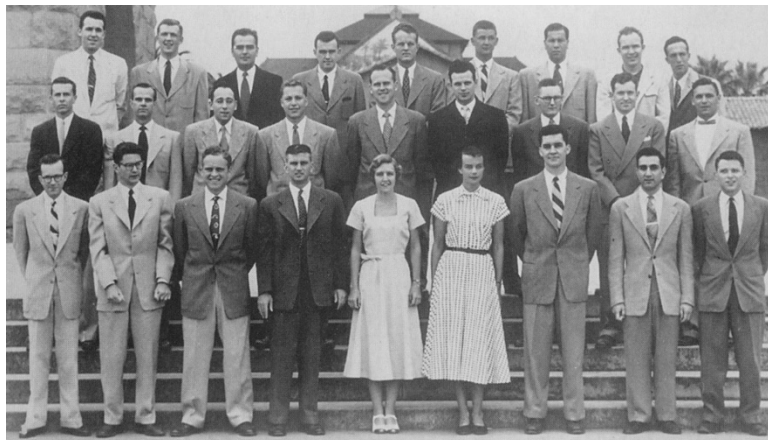


Figure 13. Sandra Day (*front row, fourth from right*) stands with the 1952 staff of the *Stanford Law Review*. Reproduced from Biskupic, n.p. Original citation Collection of the Supreme Court of the United States, courtesy of Stanford University.

Entering the job market after receiving her law degree, O'Connor quickly realized the handicap that being female placed on her career prospects. Law firms were explicit in excluding women as lawyers and she would not accept a more traditional role like legal secretary.⁴ She had to relocate to San Mateo County, California to find an office willing to hire a woman, and then only after she initially worked without pay or an office.⁵ Shortly after graduating, John O'Connor was drafted into the Army where he served as a military lawyer. O'Connor left San Mateo County to be with her husband in Germany, where she was able to find employment as a civilian lawyer for the Army Quartermaster Corps in Frankfurt. After three years in Germany, the O'Connors returned to settle in Phoenix, residing for a time in an apartment at 1642 W. Hazelwood St.⁶ John O'Connor found work at the firm of Fennemore, Craig, Allen & McClennen and the couple began to establish roots in their new community, including commissioning a local architect to design a home for them in Paradise Valley northeast of Phoenix. On September 27, 1957, *The*

³ Biskupic, 23, 25; Hirshman, 12-13. O'Connor briefly dated Rehnquist before meeting her future husband. Rehnquist and O'Connor's paths to the Supreme Court would be intertwined and illuminate the barriers facing a woman in the field of law at that time. Compared to O'Connor's struggles with gender discrimination, Rehnquist followed Stanford with a Supreme Court clerkship, work at a prestigious law firm in Phoenix, and a position as Assistant Attorney General when President Nixon nominated him to the Court.

⁴ Biskupic, 28; Hirshman, 13-14.

⁵ Biskupic, 28; Hirshman, 18.

⁶ Biskupic, 28-29; Hirshman, 18-19; *Phoenix Arizona Con Survey City Directory 1958*, Mullin-Kille Company, 1958, p. 1539. Sources vary in their reference to the law firm where John O'Connor worked and whose name changed several times over the years. Hirshman calls the firm Fennemore, Craig, von Ammon, McClennen & Udall, its name after the mid-1960s. Biskupic refers to it as Fennemore Craig, the name the firm currently uses.

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Arizona Republic, the state's leading newspaper, carried its first story featuring Sandra Day O'Connor who, along with John, was about to be admitted to the bar in Arizona. Noting O'Connor's former work in San Mateo County, the reporter speculated "She probably was the youngest and, undoubtedly, the prettiest assistant DA to be found anywhere."⁷ It was not the last time O'Connor's appearance would be an object of comment. At the time, O'Connor was pregnant with the couple's first son, Scott, born in 1958. He would be followed by two other sons, Brian in 1960 and Jay in 1962.

The 1950s were a period of partisan transformation in Arizona politics. The Democratic Party had dominated state politics since statehood in 1912 but was divided into conservative and progressive factions. Republicans, who held few state offices during the New Deal era of the 1930s surged in the post-war era as the state's population grew rapidly from a half million in 1940 to 1.3 million in 1960. When Barry Goldwater, a Phoenix city councilman, defeated U.S. Senate Majority Leader Ernest McFarland in 1952, it marked the beginning of Republican dominance of state governance that has continued to this day.⁸

The O'Connors became active in local civic organizations and the Republican Party, and established links to local power brokers, an early example being the Driggs family, whose Western Savings and Loan was an important financial institution in Arizona. John Driggs, who would become Phoenix's mayor in 1970, had a sister who was an old friend of the O'Connors. John O'Connor joined the Rotary and the Young Republicans.⁹ Still unable to find a law firm willing to hire a woman, O'Connor established her own practice, but when her babysitter quit in 1960 following the birth of her second son, she shuttered her practice to be a stay-at-home mother for five years.¹⁰ Far from withdrawing into the domestic sphere, O'Connor volunteered with the Republican Party, rising to Maricopa County vice chairman, and with the Phoenix Junior League, one of the most active women's civic organizations. O'Connor would become the Junior League's president. In the early 1960s, the O'Connors were active in the movement to incorporate Paradise Valley as its



Figure 14. O'Connor (bottom center) was a notable person in the Phoenix social scene and used the connections she established to advance her career. Here she is among members celebrating the 75th anniversary of the historic Iron Springs Resort. Source: *The Arizona Republic*, August 12, 1975.

⁷ Biskupic, 29.

⁸ Biskupic, 32-33.

⁹ Hirshman, 19.

¹⁰ Biskupic, 30-31; McFeatters, 46. O'Connor's short-lived law firm included partner Tom Tobin. Tobin later recalled that both he and O'Connor joined as many civic clubs as possible to expand their range of contacts.

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own township, an effort she recalled being organized largely in her living room. In 1963, the O'Connors and the Driggses organized a gala party for the opening of Legend City, a local western-themed amusement park. Bringing together the important local movers and shakers with elaborate parties and entertainment would become the O'Connors' signature mode of connecting with the local power structure.¹¹

After five years raising her young boys, leading the Junior League, and volunteering for Republican campaigns such as Goldwater's failed 1964 presidential run, O'Connor decided to return to law. In 1965, the state's attorney general, Republican Bob Pickrell, hired her as the first female assistant attorney general. "They didn't have a place for me," she remembered. "I persisted, however, and got a temporary job and quickly rose all the way to the bottom of the totem pole in that office. As was normal for a beginner, I got the least desirable assignments. But that was all right because I managed to take away from those rather humble professional beginnings some valuable lessons. I learned, for example, the habit of always doing the best I could with every task no matter how unimportant it might seem at the time. Such habits can breed future success."¹² O'Connor later commented, "since I had been active in Republican activities, that no doubt helped." She was soon inviting colleagues to the O'Connors' home, where the hospitality and cooking became legendary.¹³



Figure 15. O'Connor as a senator in the Arizona legislature. Source: Arizona Historymakers Biography, Historical League, Inc. <https://www.historicalleague.org/historymaker-inside.aspx?historymakerid=39>

The fortuitous resignation in 1969 of the Republican state senator from her Paradise Valley legislative district was a transitional event in O'Connor's career. She was well known to the Republicans on the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors for her party volunteerism and she successfully lobbied for the appointment to fill the vacant seat. This era

¹¹ Biskupic, 31; Hirshman, 20. McFeatters (p. 47) provides a list of civic organizations to which O'Connor belonged based on her official biography: National Board of the Smithsonian, the Board of Trustees of the Heard Museum, the Advisory Board of the Salvation Army, vice president of the Soroptimist Club of Phoenix, the Board of Visitors of ASU Law School, Vice president of the National Conference of Christians and Jews of Maricopa County, the Board of Trustees of Stanford, secretary of the Arizona Academy, the board of Junior Achievement, the Board of Directors of the Phoenix Historical Society, the Anglo-American Exchange, the Maricopa County Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service, various committees of the state bar, chairman of the Maricopa County Juvenile Detention Home Visiting Board, the National Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, vice chairman of the Arizona Select Law Enforcement Review Committee, a member of the county board of adjustments and appeals, the Arizona Criminal Code Commission, and an unspecified number of groups for the bar, judges, and women lawyers.

¹² McFeatters, 47.

¹³ Biskupic, 34; Hirshman, 23. Hospitality is a recurring theme in O'Connor's biography, a key to how she engaged others in civil conversation about controversial issues. Her cooking skills, with Mexican cuisine especially, were regularly commented on and appreciated, even after she moved to Washington where she cooked not only for important people but even occasionally for her own law clerks, with whom she established warm relationships.

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was the beginning of a new phase of feminism in which women began attacking the legal structure of gender discrimination. As O'Connor later recalled, "Many women around the nation were claiming more in terms of their desire to be treated equally and to have equal opportunities at work and I was the beneficiary, really, of a lot of that sentiment in that people were more than willing to give me responsibility."¹⁴ She was named chair of the State, County and Municipal Affairs Committee, a post of prominence unprecedented for a new state senator. In 1970, voters returned O'Connor to a full term in the state senate.

When a vacancy on the Supreme Court occurred in 1971, O'Connor, though only an obscure state senator, wrote to President Nixon encouraging him to nominate a woman. Instead, Nixon nominated her Stanford classmate and Phoenix friend William Rehnquist. O'Connor was enough of a realist to understand that at that time women lawyers of her generation occupied the lower rungs of the judicial system and, as such, were not going to make the presidential short list of potential Supreme Court candidates. She strongly supported Rehnquist's nomination not just because he was a friend, but because they shared an affinity for the conservative federalism Rehnquist advocated. After she joined the Court, particularly in her early years, O'Connor typically voted with Rehnquist.¹⁵

As a state legislator, O'Connor supported the broad platform of Republican policies and did not allow herself to become stereotyped as an advocate for women's issues. She played a lead role in the redistricting process that tilted districts towards Republican candidates.¹⁶ Other issues on which she worked included mental health reform, merit selection of Superior Court judges, and a sunshine law making open public meetings mandatory.¹⁷ In 1972, she was selected by her party caucus as the first woman majority leader in a legislature of any state. This occurred at a time of renewed activism in the women's rights movement. An Equal Rights Amendment had been proposed and women were entering fields of employment previously perceived as the domain of men. O'Connor had proven her party loyalty and political acumen and was positioned to take advantage of her male colleagues' realization that they needed to make room for a women. "Once I got in," she said, "I never had a further problem."¹⁸ O'Connor recalled her time as majority leader as one of bipartisan cooperation. On issues such as taxes, gun control, school busing, and the death penalty, she stood with her Republican colleagues. She found opportunities for compromise with Democrats on issues like the environment, bilingual education, and welfare.¹⁹ An important part of this bipartisanship involved social gatherings at her home where O'Connor served Mexican dinners to legislators of both parties while they discussed affairs of state.

Having herself overcome prejudicial barriers hindering the breakthrough of women into the male-dominated political world, O'Connor as a state senator identified statutes that continued to

¹⁴ Biskupic, 35; Hirshman, 24.

¹⁵ Biskupic, 38-40; Hirshman, 117-19.

¹⁶ Hirshman, 120.

¹⁷ McFeatters, 49.

¹⁸ Hirshman, 24-25.

¹⁹ Hirshman, 122-23; McFeatters, 109.

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restrain the advance of others. One such was the Progressive Era law limiting women's work day to eight hours. Passed to protect women from industrial exploitation, the law consequentially restricted women's employment opportunities since men's work hours were not regulated. As a believer in the free market, O'Connor was not sympathetic to the old protectionism, still argued for by unionists and many Democrats, and succeeded in having the law changed.²⁰

In 1972, Congress approved the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution and submitted it to the states for ratification. Though she herself supported the amendment, O'Connor would be criticized for not using the power of her position as majority leader to push it through. To a group of Arizona State University students, she had expressed doubts about the amendment, stating, "I'm not sure the equal rights amendment is necessary. I am inclined to believe that a few well-chosen cases brought before the federal courts would establish the equality of women under the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, and the civil rights act, in a meaningful way."²¹ Though this view proved presciently correct, when the chairman of the senate committee reviewing the ERA decided to stall its hearings, O'Connor did not challenge the chairman's prerogative. The delay allowed opponents time to rally opposition and the amendment failed in the legislature. O'Connor was accused of placing her own political prospects above the needs of women in general. Whether she was self-consciously protecting her political prospects cannot be discerned, but her actions were within the traditional bounds of the majority leader's authority, which respected the autonomy of committee chairs. O'Connor was not a crusader for women's rights under the law in the way of future Associate Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who at that time was arguing just such a "well-chosen" case to the Supreme Court.²² As a political leader, O'Connor believed she had to balance all the issues facing her state. Her success propelled her upwards until she broke the glass ceiling of the Supreme Court and demonstrated that women could attain and succeed in any position in the land.²³

Nixon's 1972 reelection campaign encouraged state committees to include women and O'Connor was a natural choice for the Arizona Republican organization. She approached the work with energy, organizing events and encouraging Republican voter turnout. One of her accomplishments was to organize the party's strategy around identity groups, including blacks, Spanish-speakers, and the elderly, but notably omitting women as a category. Her prominence

²⁰ Biskupic, 52; Hirshman, 47.

²¹ Hirshman, 47.

²² Prior to Justice Ginsburg's appointment to the Supreme Court by President Clinton in 1993, she had served since 1980 as a judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. Born in 1933, she graduated at the top of her class from Columbia Law School after which she taught law at Rutgers Law School and Columbia. Ginsburg was a strong advocate for women's rights and argued several cases successfully before the Supreme Court during the 1970s when she was a volunteer lawyer for the American Civil Liberties Union. Like O'Connor, Ginsburg was also a wife and mother, but her relatively straight-forward career path through her legal practice towards her appointment as a federal judge in 1980 differed considerably from O'Connor's career. Stymied initially by gender discrimination, O'Connor had advanced through civic and political activism, including elected office. Rather than confront gender discrimination in the courts as did Ginsburg, O'Connor worked for change through civil engagement across party lines. Hospitality, cooking, convivial conversation—these were tools O'Connor used to break through personal barriers raised by political differences.

²³ Hirshman, 48-50.

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with the campaign brought inquiries about whether she might be willing to join the administration in Washington, but she chose to remain in Phoenix.²⁴

After her reelection to the state senate in 1972, O'Connor was chosen by her Republican colleagues as the party's majority leader for the 1973 and 1974 sessions. Of her time as majority leader, Leo Corbet, one-time President of the Arizona Senate, remembered,

Through the years that I served with Sandra, I used to marvel at her ability to go from Senate Majority Leader to gracious hostess with such ease. She would have the full Senate over for dinner within hours of debating legislation and never miss a beat. We wrote the Grand Jury bill on her kitchen table while she was baking cookies for one of her son's school events. She was always able to master both roles and do justice to both.²⁵

In 1974, one of O'Connor's last major project as a legislator was to refer to the voters a referendum that would have capped state expenditures to a fixed percentage of the state's total personal income. Though the measure failed at the ballot, in retrospect it could be seen as a precursor to the success such proposals would have later in the 1970s following passage of Proposition 13 in California, which limited that state's property taxes. Significantly, while visiting Arizona, California Governor Ronald Reagan praised O'Connor and her tax proposal, the positive impression of which may have played a role in his selection of her for the Supreme Court.²⁶

Despite her success in the state legislature, O'Connor admitted that, "I was never one of the boys." In an anecdote about an argument with a fellow legislator who said, "If you were a man, I'd punch you in the mouth," she let her guard down enough to respond, "If you were a man, you could."²⁷ O'Connor chose not to run for reelection in 1974, saying people should not stay in the legislature too long. Though she had no immediate plans, opportunity again presented itself when a Superior Court judgeship became vacant for which she ran and won election. From then until 1979, O'Connor served in the relative obscurity of the Arizona judiciary presiding over ordinary criminal trials. Though encouraged to challenge Governor Bruce Babbitt during the gubernatorial election of 1978, she declined to reenter the political fray. In 1979, Babbitt elevated O'Connor to the state appeals court.²⁸

²⁴ Biskupic, 53; Hirshman, 122.

²⁵ Norman, 40.

²⁶ Hirshman, 123.

²⁷ Biskupic, 62-63; Hirshman, 124.

²⁸ Biskupic, 67-68; Hirshman, 124, 129. Hirshman relates that the vacancy on the state appellate court was created by the elevation of Judge Mary Schroeder to the Federal Court of Appeals by President Carter. Schroeder, who was the first woman partner in a major Phoenix law firm, was on the short list of potential Democratic nominees to the Supreme Court and had an opening occurred prior to Reagan's election, she rather than O'Connor might have been the Arizonan to be the first woman on the Supreme Court (Hirshman, 129).

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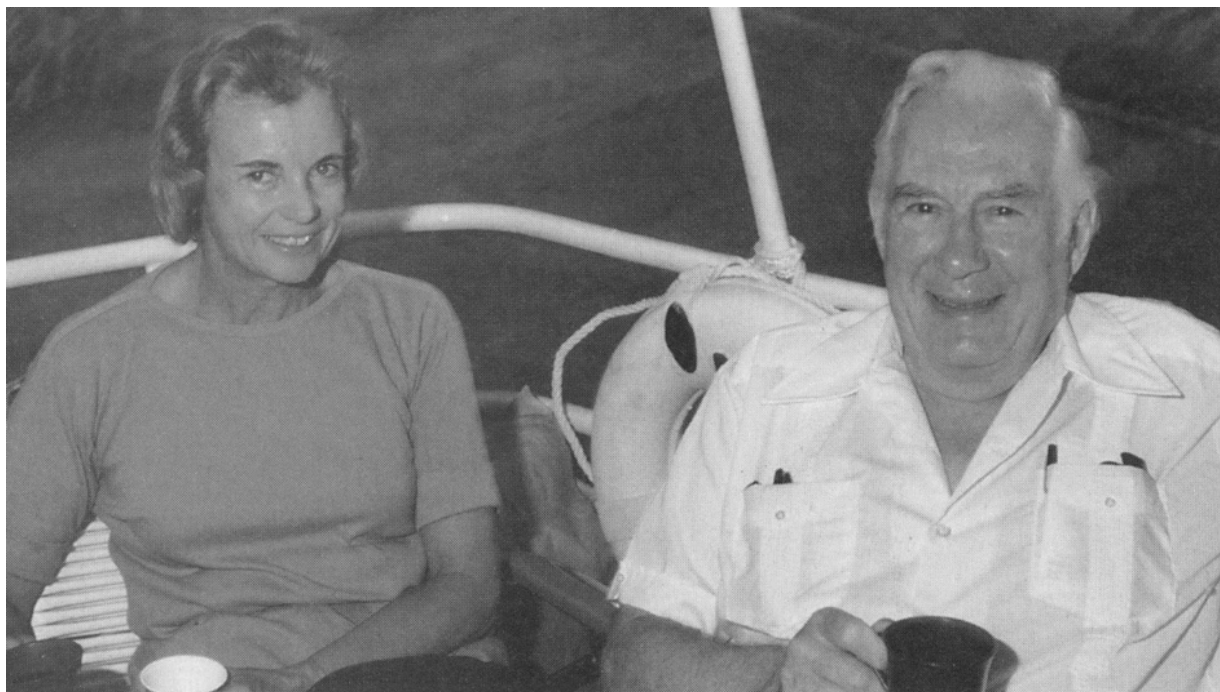


Figure 16. Arizona Trial Judge Sandra O'Connor and Chief Justice Warren Burger vacation on a houseboat at Lake Powell, August 1979. Reproduced from Biskupic, n.p. Original citation Collection of the Supreme Court of the United States, photograph by John Driggs.

Fortune favored O'Connor again in 1979 when her friend, former Phoenix Mayor John Driggs, organized a three-day houseboat party at Lake Powell in northern Arizona. In a social coup that would have profound implications for O'Connor two years later, Driggs, through a distant relative, Mark Cannon—who was the administrative assistant to Chief Justice Warren Burger—managed to get Burger to come to Lake Powell for a short vacation. Needing the help of a more experienced host and hostess, Driggs invited the O'Connors to join the houseboat gathering. The Driggses later recalled that Burger and O'Connor immediately discovered a close affinity and the two talked together “like old friends.” Soon after this meeting, at the same time as she was elevated to the state appellate court, Burger invited her to be part of an American delegation to a legal conference in London where she impressed all with her perspective as a former state legislator.²⁹

²⁹ Biskupic, 67-69; Hirshman, 129-30.

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Ronald Reagan's nomination as Republican candidate for president in 1980 coincided with the party's turning away from its former support for the ERA and its stronger stance against abortion. Fearing the loss of women's votes, Reagan promised that if elected, he would nominate a woman to the first Court opening that might occur during his presidency. Reagan's victory and inauguration in 1981 was followed shortly after by the resignation of Justice Potter Stewart. This fortuitous resignation opened an opportunity for O'Connor, and the contacts she had built over the previous decade came together to push her name forward as a potential nominee. Her new friend, the Chief Justice let it be known that he favored the Arizonan as did Arizona's two senators, Republican Barry Goldwater and Democrat Dennis DeConcini. Reagan's brief acquaintance with O'Connor's tax cutting measure in 1974 perhaps formed a positive impression, for it was recalled by Attorney General Smith³⁰ that the President had given him a short list of nominees with O'Connor's name written in Reagan's own hand. The White House sent a team led by Kenneth Starr to Arizona to vet Judge O'Connor, meeting with her in her Paradise Valley home. At her meeting with the President, the two discussed her Arizona ranch background, which appealed to Reagan's folksy sentimentality. That she was an obscure state appellate court judge who had never heard a federal case was, if anything, advantageous in his view. Reagan made his choice and no other candidates were interviewed. O'Connor prepared diligently for her Senate confirmation hearings and impressed all with her knowledge and Western charm. Though her nomination was opposed by some who thought her insufficiently pro-life, for the most part women of all political persuasions set aside their differences to ensure O'Connor's confirmation, which she received without opposition.³¹ She was sworn in as an Associate Justice on September 25, 1981.



Figure 17. President Reagan talks with Supreme Court nominee Sandra Day O'Connor at the White House, July 15, 1981. Source: White House Photographic Office, National Archives and Records Administration ARC Identifier 198517, Ronald Reagan Presidential Library: Source URL: <http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/photographs/large/c3015-7.jpg>.

³⁰ Ironically, Attorney General William French Smith had been a senior partner in the law firm that had offered O'Connor a position as a legal secretary rather than lawyer following her Stanford graduation. McFeatters, 45.

³¹ Biskupic, 70-98; Hirshman, 131-34.

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Figure 18. Chief Justice Burger swears in Sandra Day O'Connor while husband John looks on, September 25, 1981. Source: National Archives and Records Administration Identifier 1696015.

While the significance of the O'Connor House is associated with the contributions she made during the years leading to her appointment to the Supreme Court, a brief characterization of her term on the Supreme Court is appropriate. O'Connor is the last justice who served in an elected office prior to joining the Court. She is rare among modern justices in not having previously served in the federal court system.³² Her upbringing on a cattle ranch only solidified the uniqueness of her path to the Court. Analysts have noted all of these factors at work in her approach to the work of the Court. She was a "pragmatist."³³

O'Connor, more often than her friend Rehnquist, was on the winning side of a number of 5-4 decisions. Though she shared Rehnquist's conservative temperament, she was not driven by the kind of idealism for which former Associate Justice Scalia was most notable. At the time she was majority leader, Republicans held only a narrow majority in the Arizona state senate. Similarly, conservative justices have held a slender majority on the Court. O'Connor became known as a

³² Current Associate Justice Elena Kagan is the only current justice not to have previously served on a federal court.

³³ McFeatters, 161; Kleiner, Samuel, and Julius Taranto, "The Pragmatist on the Bench: The Western Political Roots of Justice Sandra Day O'Connor," n.d. (orig. *Arizona Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, revised for O'Connor Institute: <http://oconnorinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/article-the-pragmatist-on-the-bench.pdf>).

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swing vote because she was willing to narrow her focus to the specific facts of a case without concern over whether she was establishing a sweeping precedent. O'Connor preferred judges at the lower rungs of the judicial ladder, where she herself had served, to have room to interpret the law in the best interest of justice in each individual case.

O'Connor's deference to state's rights and the principle of federalism was perhaps her most important ideological guide. Her legal perspective reflected the broad influences she had known throughout her life—her father's rugged individualism, her struggles to find employment in the traditionally male field of law, her friendship with important conservative figures like Rehnquist and Goldwater. On important issues like the death penalty, she ruled consistently that it remained a prerogative of the states, even as she allowed for broad federal oversight. On the issue that most dogged her during her confirmation hearings in 1981—abortion—she disappointed pro-life advocates by refusing to cast the decisive vote to overturn *Roe v. Wade*; yet, she found room for compromise by supporting the federalist principle that states had the authority to regulate the practice. O'Connor believed, and still believes, that it is preferable for the people and their legislative representative to find the solution to such great issues and that the Supreme Court generally should try to avoid imposing rules on issues where the people remain divided.

Perhaps the most controversial case decided during O'Connor's tenure was *Gore v. Bush* (2001) where the Court intervened to end the recount of ballots in Florida, effectively deciding the presidential election in favor of George W. Bush. The Court's vote was a narrow 5-4, with the justices divided along partisan lines. Many have perceived O'Connor as the swing vote that decided the election and questions, with their implication of credit or blame, have followed her since. "It was a difficult case," she said. "We don't enjoy being thrust into the middle of political controversy. We don't always have a choice about what comes [to the Court]." Though such expressions of reticence were typical of her defensiveness about her role in *Gore v. Bush*, she acknowledged "the fascination of seeing up close the power to help decide big social challenges in the United States. Who would have thought that I would end up deciding the election in a presidential election year? How strange is that?"³⁴

Outside the formal work of hearing cases and making decisions, O'Connor played another role within the Court that was the subject of comment by her colleagues. O'Connor "has a special talent, perhaps a gene, for lighting up the room," said Justice Breyer. It was a variation on an important part of O'Connor's character that had been noted since the first 1957 article in *The Arizona Republic*: she was likable. She encouraged collegiality among the other justices and helped maintain a spirit of collaboration when so many forces were encouraging conflict.³⁵

In addition to her colleagues on the Court, O'Connor worked closely with her law clerks. She considered her law clerks to be the future of the profession and she encouraged a close relationship based on a shared professionalism and work ethic. Although discussions between justices and their clerks are strictly confidential, one clerk recalled in an interview that O'Connor's workday, "starts early and it ends late. And we [the clerks] are there simply to

³⁴ McFeatters, 189.

³⁵ Kleiner and Taranto, n.p.

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provide her the research and the sounding board for her decisions. Quite often we would meet on Saturday mornings in a chamber with the four law clerks and Justice O'Connor and she would bring in lunch. She's a great gourmet cook and would bring in lunch and we would have meetings all morning, talking about the cases."³⁶ O'Connor's appreciation of how a shared meal can break down social barriers has been a consistent motif in her life. This motif is embodied in the design of the O'Connor House where cooking and dining areas were integral to the public space.

The spirit of collaboration and civil engagement, O'Connor believes, remains critical to the future success of our society. She, in her post-Court years, remains concerned that the trajectory of modern politics is becoming uncivil to the point that collaboration between competing idealists might become impossible. To encourage civil discourse and political engagement, O'Connor founded the Sandra Day O'Connor Institute to carry on the legacy of her work. When her former home was threatened with demolition soon after her retirement from the Court, O'Connor realized that it would make the perfect symbolic venue for what she was trying to achieve, for in that house she had demonstrated that informality and sociability were critical tools in breaking through the ideological shells political figures sometimes cast for themselves and to associate in a friendly way with those they may disagree with politically. Collegiality and sociability, especially if served along with a well-cooked dinner, was a powerful tool, a tool powerful enough to help leverage a hard-working woman once shunned by her profession to the highest position in the American legal system.

³⁶ McFeatters, 164.

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Design and Construction of the Sandra Day O'Connor House

Raised on a ranch in southeastern Arizona, Sandra Day developed a life-long affinity for Arizona and its rural, western character. Returning to the United States after three years in Germany during John O'Connor's service in the Army, the O'Connors moved to Phoenix, the state capital, where she struggled to find work as a lawyer. The couple moved initially into an apartment at 1642 W. Hazelwood St. The O'Connors had no children when they arrived in Arizona but purchased land in Paradise Valley to build a home for the family they planned.³⁷



Figure 19. A view eastward along East Denton Lane, Paradise Valley, towards the original location of the O'Connor House, illustrating the desert landscaping and vista of Camelback Mountain, which is similar to the setting of its current location. Source: Google, 2014.

Before they selected an architect, the couple made two critical design decisions about the home they wanted. The first, reflecting O'Connor's affinity for the rustic and her Arizona heritage, was to build the house of adobe, a material widely used in Arizona's early days as at her parent's Lazy B Ranch. Following arrival of the railroad to Arizona in the 1880s, frame and brick became the most widely used building materials, relegating use of adobe to the less affluent. Adobe experienced a revival in the 1920s and 1930s, which included works by important local architects. After World War II, however, concrete block and brick-veneered frame dominated construction in the emerging Phoenix metropolitan area. The O'Connor's choice of building material was symbolically nostalgic.³⁸ The O'Connor's second design decision involved incorporating this rustic material into a design that was thoroughly modern. In Arizona, modern

³⁷ The O'Connor's first son, Scott, was born in 1958, the same year as construction of their house. Brian and Jay O'Connor were born in 1960 and 1962, respectively, and all grew up in the house.

³⁸ In Tucson, burnt adobe, as opposed to the more traditional sun-dried adobe, retained a niche popularity among custom-built homes.

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architecture was inextricably linked to Frank Lloyd Wright, whose Taliesin West studio north of Scottsdale made the great architect a prominent local presence. The young O'Connors, though, could not afford to hire Wright and so looked for an architect whose designs reflected Wright's influence.

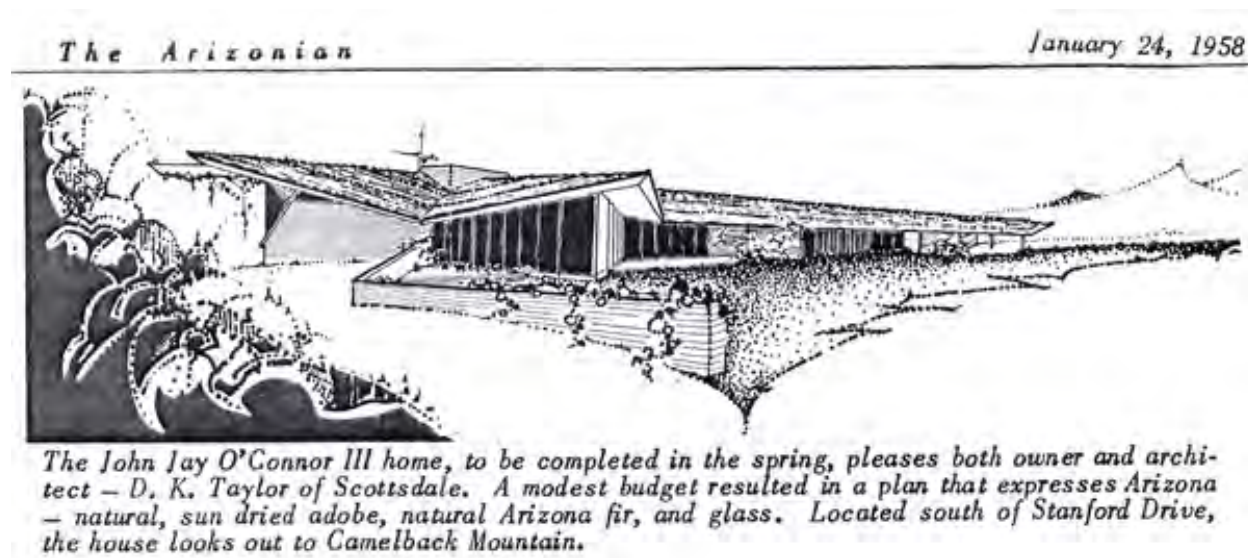


Figure 20. Original rendering of the O'Connor House, *The Arizona*, January 24, 1958.

Constructing with adobe presented a challenge, as finding craftsmen skilled in working with this material was becoming more difficult. They found one in George Ellis, a Scottsdale-based craftsman and homebuilder. Ellis had worked as contractor for Frank Lloyd Wright's Pauson House in 1940-41.³⁹ The chronology of the house's history, based largely on O'Connor's recollections, indicates they set Ellis to work in 1957 forming sun-dried adobe blocks before they had found an architect.⁴⁰ It is unknown how the O'Connors became acquainted with D.K. Taylor, who they would hire to design their house. Taylor also worked in Scottsdale and was perhaps known to Ellis, who was an important figure in Scottsdale's growing arts and crafts community. O'Connor's recollection is that she and John believed Taylor to be Taliesin-trained, though records at Wright's studios indicate he was not. He was affordable and capable of

³⁹ Pat Haigh Stein, Residential Properties Designed by George Ellis, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, (Flagstaff: Arizona Preservation Consultants, 1998.), Section E, p. 5.

⁴⁰ Norman, 36.

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designing a contemporary home applying modernist principles, while paying homage to the local environment by constructing in the O'Connor's preferred material.

Taylor's career is not well documented. He was born in either 1925 or 1926 in Flint, Michigan. According to his obituary, Taylor served in the Army in Europe during World War II, though in what capacity is not described. He graduated from the University of Michigan in 1950 with a degree in architecture then served in the Army



Figure 21. Original model of O'Connor House by architect Taylor's draftsman, Lamont Langworthy.

again during the Korean War. By 1956, he was living in Scottsdale, Arizona, and listed in the Scottsdale City Directory as an architect working at Studio 8 at the new Kiva Crafts Center, also known as Craftsmans Court. This was a set of shops located on 5th Avenue just west of Scottsdale Road. Established in the mid-1950s, these shops were occupied primarily by artists and craftsmen who helped establish Scottsdale as a cultural center in the Valley. Customers could watch these artists at work on jewelry, clothes, furnishings and other hand-made crafts. Taylor employed a draftsman, Lamont Langworthy, who prepared a model of the house (Figure 21).⁴¹

While George Ellis provided the adobe blocks and Taylor the design, the contractor proved not fully capable of working with adobe. Adobe must be protected from inclement weather with an exterior coating and since the O'Connors wanted the blocks to be visibly expressed, they could not be sheathed with stucco, the usual protection. The couple assisted in stacking adobe blocks and mortaring them in place with mud, followed by an application of skim milk to the surface. Justice O'Connor recalled in a 2010 interview at the relocated house, "I really like that they [the adobe bricks] were made from the very earth on which the house stands. The surface is just beautiful. I love it."⁴² Referring to this work, O'Connor recalled, "John and I hand-scraped every

⁴¹ By 1960, Taylor had relocated from the Kiva Crafts Center to a studio at 4533 N. Scottsdale Road (no longer extant) and working under the firm name Phoenix Associates Architects. After finishing the O'Connor House, Taylor designed a home for himself and his wife in the Clearwater Hills development in Paradise Valley. Constructed of concrete block, this house was more modernistic in appearance than the O'Connor House. Like the O'Connor House, Taylor used the pitch of the roof to open the living room space and frame the windows overlooking a scenic vista. Unable to pay his contractor, Taylor lost ownership of the property before it was finished. No other architectural designs in Arizona by Taylor are known. His name does not appear in the directories of the American Institute of Architects, so he may not have been a member. He no longer appeared in either Scottsdale or Phoenix city directories after 1962. His obituary states he moved to St. Petersburg, Florida in the late 1960s and was in Largo at the time of his death on April 20, 2008. He is referred to as an "architect," but the obituary cites no works. Donald Keith Taylor Obituary, *Tampa Bay Times*, April 22, 2008.

⁴² Kara G. Morrison, *The Arizona Republic*, March 28, 2010, <http://archive.azcentral.com/style/hfe/decor/articles/20100324sandra-day-oconnor-historic-house-rebuilt-papago.html>.

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one of these [mortar] indentations in the adobe ourselves with an electric conduit, because the builder wasn't prepared to do that." Of the completed design melding adobe and Wrightian influence, O'Connor said, "the home represents the best of Arizona."⁴³

An important aspect of the house's interior design was its open floor plan. While the bedrooms were set off as private space at one end, the kitchen merged with the great room separated only by an island stove. O'Connor enjoyed cooking and baking for her young family, but more significantly, as the house became the scene of political discussions between local power brokers, O'Connor could participate in the discussions in the living room while attending to her still-expected role of hostess and cook.

By 1964, the household had grown to include three children and the O'Connor's hired architect Calvin C. Straub, assisted by Denis Kutch, to plan an addition. Straub designed a wood and glass modernist addition with lath-shaded patios along its long axes. The project increased the

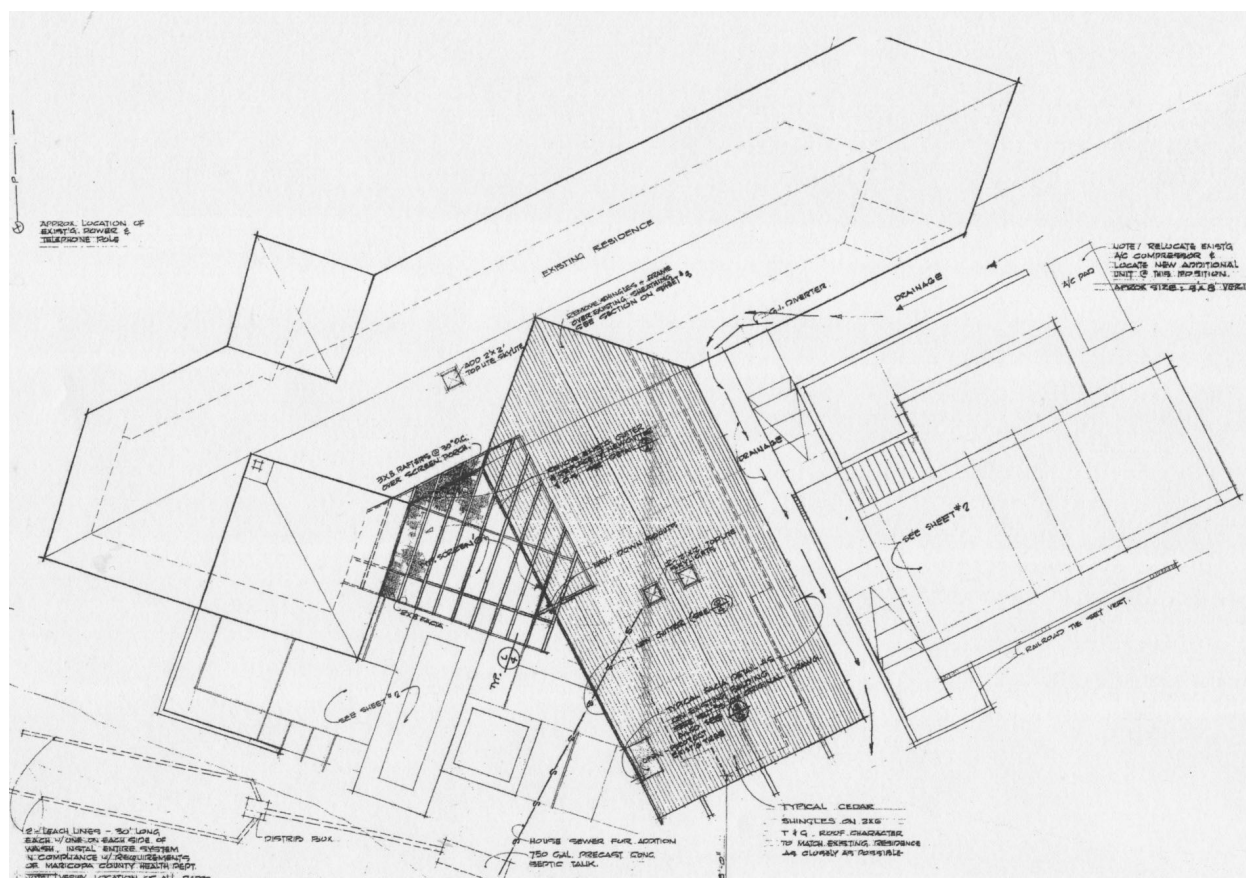


Figure 22. Calvin Straub's 1964 Drawing for the O'Connor House Addition. Reproduced in Stein (2008). Original citation courtesy of Arizona State University.

⁴³ Andrea Norman, "From the Mud of the Salt," *Arizona Attorney*, September 2008, 36.

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footprint of the house to over 3,300 sq. ft. It also created extensive outdoor living spaces for the family. According to consultant Pat Stein, certain features of the house were recalled by the O'Connors with particular pleasure. The patios of the expanded house were cherished spots for entertaining family and friends (Figure 23). A small bridge leading from the house to a dance floor in the north patio was called "the Bridge Assize," a name referring to a legal term (meaning a session, or sitting, of a court of justice) and a play of words from the song "Bridge of Sighs."⁴⁴

Within the house, the O'Connors kept an office-like area including a large desk, filing cabinets, shelving, and a smaller desk in the master bedroom. At these desks both husband and wife wrote legislation during O'Connor's state legislative tenure, with each editing the other's work. O'Connor used the home to hold meeting of the various boards and committees on which she served. It was also where she held the meeting where she determined not to run for the governorship in 1978 and where she was interviewed by Kenneth Starr during her initial vetting for her nomination to the Supreme Court.⁴⁵



Figure 23. Undated photo the O'Connor House at its original location at 3651 E. Denton Ln. showing the patio formed by the original house (left) and the 1964 addition (right, rear). Source: Courtesy of Hugh Hallman.

⁴⁴ Pat H. Stein, *A Strategic Plan for Obtaining National Register Designation for the O'Connor House, Maricopa County, Arizona*, (Flagstaff: Arizona Preservation Consultants, 2008), 5-6.

⁴⁵ Stein, 6.

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The O'Connor House Historic Preservation Project

The threat of demolition came just as newly-retired Justice O'Connor was returning to Arizona. Former Arizona State University President Lattie Coor and his wife Alva spearheaded creation of a friends group to save the house. Its owners, Mr. and Mrs. Bob Robson, donated the house to the Rio Salado Foundation, which promotes, preserves, and enhances the cultural, historical, recreational and natural resources of the Salt River and Papago Park region. Janie Ellis, daughter of George Ellis who has saved several adobe buildings from demolition, oversaw the relocation. They made contact with Hugh Hallman, then mayor of Tempe, who suggested a site in Tempe's Papago Park near the Arizona Historical Society's Arizona Heritage Center. The Rio Salado Foundation spearheaded the fundraising effort and raised \$3.2 million to save the house.⁴⁶ Beginning in late 2007, house was carefully moved, with each adobe block numbered, stacked on pallets, and covered with tarps. Roof sections and structural framing were trucked in large assemblies and reinstalled using heavy equipment.⁴⁷



Figure 24. Former Tempe Mayor Hugh Hallman joined volunteers coating the exterior of the relocated O'Connor House, April 28, 2017. Source: Cheryl Evans, *The Arizona Republic*. <https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/tempe/2017/04/28/sandra-day-oconnors-former-house-center-civility-tempe-gets-flung-mud-adobe/100905274/>.

The house was reassembled in 2009 at its new site near the Salt River from whose mud the bricks had been formed. Its broad windows open now to the scenic Salt River Buttes.⁴⁸ The house is now located within the area known as the Carl Hayden Campus for Sustainability, sharing a "green" theme with its neighbors, the Xeriscape Garden of the Tempe Women's Club; Evelyn Hallman Park; and the Eisendrath Center for Water Conservation. The house continues to enjoy a setting of Sonoran Desert habitat, much as it did in its original location. Moved from a residential neighborhood of one-acre lots to an area of just less than one acre, architect Taylor's design has been preserved in the directional alignment, which has been precisely retained. As the west wall takes the brunt of the sun, floor-to-ceiling windows are located on the east and large overhangs shade exterior walls. The house is adjacent to a riparian area called the Green Line Overlook so the natural environment remains integral to its setting, which is home to cottonwoods, African sumacs, California fan palms, as well as varied wildlife. The house blends

⁴⁶ "O'Connor House," Rio Salado Foundation, <http://www.riosaladofoundation.org/projects/oconnor-house/>.

⁴⁷ Sandra Day O'Connor House, Tempe Historic Property Register. <https://www.tempe.gov/city-hall/community-development/historic-preservation/tempe-historic-property-register/sandra-day-o-connor-house>.

⁴⁸ Sandra Day O'Connor Institute, "O'Connor House: A Brief History," <http://oconnorinstitute.org/programs/oconnor-history/oconnor-house/>.

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into the trees and is appropriate to the environment.⁴⁹ Justice O'Connor said in 2010 of the move, "It is absolutely astonishing to me that they could move it. When I first saw it [here], I just burst into tears... It's just a gorgeous place for it."⁵⁰

Of the house and how it functioned for the O'Connors, the former justice said, "It worked perfectly to get people together."⁵¹ One of the leaders of the effort to save the O'Connor House, Lattie Coor, head of the Center for the Future of Arizona and former president of Arizona State University, conveyed the motivation behind the preservation project:

The restoration of the O'Connor House offers the opportunity to recreate a magic era in Arizona when contending parties, in the heat of battle, were gathered by Sandra and John O'Connor for fellowship and conversation. The result was compromise and consensus in solving the great challenges at hand.⁵²

O'Connor today credits her modern, adobe home with providing the social setting at which partisan differences could be overcome and compromises for the public good worked out between opposing parties. For this reason, when the house was threatened with demolition by an owner wishing to build a larger home on its scenic lot, the recently retired justice and friends assisting in the creation of her legacy institute saw it as an opportunity to build a new venue for the promotion of her work through the O'Connor Institute. The Institute's goals—to foster consensus, form collaborations and to help craft solutions to the public issues of the day by encouraging civil discourse—are carried out, in part, in the same living room environment that O'Connor found so useful to overcoming political differences. Preservation of the O'Connor House in its present location has given it not so much a new significance, as much as it has reestablished the association for which it is best known. It is the place where Sandra Day O'Connor continues her life of service to the local community through civil engagement.



Figure 25. Retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor visits her 1958 adobe home following its relocation and restoration. Source: David Wallace, The Associated Press, Reproduced in The Daily Courier, Prescott, Arizona, <https://www.dcourier.com/news/2010/mar/28/historic-connor-house-rebuilt-in-papago-park/?templates=desktop>.

⁴⁹ Sandra Day O'Connor House, Tempe Historic Property Register.

⁵⁰ Morrison. March 28, 2010.

⁵¹ Morrison.

⁵² Norman, 40.

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EPILOGUE

On October 23, 2018, Justice O'Connor (age 88) released a public letter sharing the medical diagnosis that she was at the beginning stages of dementia, "probably Alzheimer's disease."⁵³ As a result, she will no longer be able to participate in public life. The following are excerpts from her letter expressing her personal thoughts at this transition and again expressing her aspirations for future generations.

Not long after I retired from the Supreme Court twelve years ago, I made a commitment to myself, my family, and my country that I would use whatever years I had left to advance civic learning and engagement.

I feel so strongly about the topic because I've seen first-hand how vital it is for all citizens to understand our Constitution and unique system of government, and participate actively in their communities. It is through this shared understanding of who we are that we can follow the approaches that have served us best over time — working collaboratively together in communities and in government to solve problems, putting country and the common good above party and self-interest, and holding our key governmental institutions accountable....

I can no longer help lead this cause, due to my physical condition. It is time for new leaders to make civic learning and civic engagement a reality for all. It is my great hope that our nation will commit to educating our youth about civics, and to helping young people understand their crucial role as informed, active citizens in our nation. To achieve this, I hope that private citizens, counties, states, and the federal government will work together to create and fund a nationwide civics education initiative. Many wonderful people already are working towards this goal, but they need real help and public commitment. I look forward to watching from the sidelines as others continue the hard work ahead....

How fortunate I feel to be an American and to have been presented with the remarkable opportunities available to the citizens of our country. As a young cowgirl from the Arizona desert, I never could have imagined that one day I would become the first woman justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.

I hope that I have inspired young people about civic engagement and helped pave the pathway for women who may have faced obstacles pursuing their careers....

God bless you all.

Sandra Day O'Connor

⁵³ "Sandra Day O'Connor Says She Has Dementia, Withdraws From Public Life, National Public Radio, <https://www.npr.org/2018/10/23/659816933/sandra-day-oconnor-says-she-has-dementia-withdraws-from-public-life>.

O'Connor, Sandra Day, House
Name of Property

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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<http://saltriverstories.org/files/show/58>.

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Morrison, Kara G. "Historic O'Connor House Rebuilt in Papago Park." *The Arizona Republic*. March 28, 2010. <http://archive.azcentral.com/style/hfe/decor/articles/20100324sandra-day-oconnor-historic-house-rebuilt-papago.html>. [Also reproduced in *The Daily Courier* (Prescott), with photograph of Justice O'Connor reproduced as Figure.
<https://www.dcourier.com/news/2010/mar/28/historic-oconnor-house-rebuilt-in-papago-park/?templates=desktop>]

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Mullin-Kille Scottsdale Arizona Con Survey City Directories, 1956 and 1960.

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Proceedings of the Board of Regents (1948-1951). University of Michigan. Ann Arbor.
September, 1950, p. 1025.

Sandra Day O'Connor Institute, "O'Connor House: A Brief History,"
<http://oconnorinstitute.org/programs/oconnor-history/oconnor-house/>.

Taylor, Donald Keith. Obituary. *Tampa Bay Times*. April 22, 2008.
<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/tampabaytimes/obituary.aspx?page=lifestory&pid=108143159>.

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government: City of Tempe
- University
- Other
Name of repository: Sandra Day O'Connor Institute

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 33.441830 Longitude: -111.933220

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The formal legal description of the parcel is as follows:

A parcel of land being a portion of the South East Quarter of Section 10, Township 1 North, Range 4 East of the Gila and Salt River Base and Meridian, Maricopa County, Arizona, more particularly described as follows: Commencing at the Center of said Section 10, said point being marked by a 5/8" rebar with tag number 8081 attached;

Thence along the North-South midsection line of Section 10, South 00 degrees 55 minutes 35 seconds East, 811.84 feet (eight hundred eleven and eighty four hundredths feet);

Thence departing said North-South midsection line East, 608.26 feet (six hundred eight and twenty six hundredths feet) to a point being the true point of beginning;

Thence South 24 degrees 53 minutes 46 seconds West, 47.27 feet (forty seven and twenty seven hundredths feet);

Thence North 87 degrees 02 minutes 35 seconds West, 31.61 feet (thirty one and sixty one hundredths feet);

Thence North 70 degrees 32 minutes 01 seconds West, 30.25 feet (thirty and twenty five hundredths feet);

Thence North 55 degrees 33 minutes 41 seconds West, 78.46 feet (seventy eight and forty six hundredths feet);

Thence North 11 degrees 07 minutes 11 seconds West, 42.20 feet (forty two and twenty hundredths feet);

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Thence North 32 degrees 26 minutes 33 seconds West, 44.89 feet (forty four and eighty nine hundredths feet);

Thence North 03 degrees 00 minutes 37 seconds East, 78.11 feet (seventy eight and eleven hundredths feet);

Thence North 27 degrees 38 minutes 09 seconds East, 17.25 feet (seventeen and twenty five hundredths feet);

Thence North 82 degrees 56 minutes 42 seconds East, 42.33 feet (forty two and thirty three hundredths feet);

Thence South 87 degrees 35 minutes 31 seconds East, 36.43 feet (thirty six and forty three hundredths feet);

Thence South 50 degrees 53 minutes 54 seconds East, 59.71 feet (fifty nine and seventy one hundredths feet);

Thence South 83 degrees 22 minutes 42 seconds East, 23.94 feet (twenty three and ninety four hundredths feet);

Thence South 54 degrees 45 minutes 26 seconds East, 14.85 feet (fourteen and eighty five hundredths feet);

Thence South 19 degrees 49 minutes 16 seconds East, 35.92 feet (thirty five and ninety two hundredths feet);

Thence South 08 degrees 06 minutes 15 seconds East, 69.08 feet (sixty nine and eight hundredths feet);

Thence South 24 degrees 53 minutes 46 seconds West, 42.19 feet (forty two and nineteen hundredths feet) to the true point of beginning.

Said Parcel is subject to easements of record. Said Parcel contains 0.763 Acres, more or less.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary of the nominated property is the parcel described above, which contains the historic O'Connor House, a noncontributing modern restroom building, surrounding landscaping, and a driveway circle that allows automobile access and limited parking.

O'Connor, Sandra Day, House
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Maricopa, AZ
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: William Collins (historian); Margy Parisella, (architect); Deborah Edge Abele, Akros, Inc. (first draft, 2011)

organization: State Historic Preservation Office

street & number: 1100 W. Washington St.

city or town: Phoenix state: AZ zip code: 85007

e-mail: wcollins@azstateparks.gov

telephone: (602) 542-7159

date: December 7, 2018

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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O'Connor, Sandra Day, House
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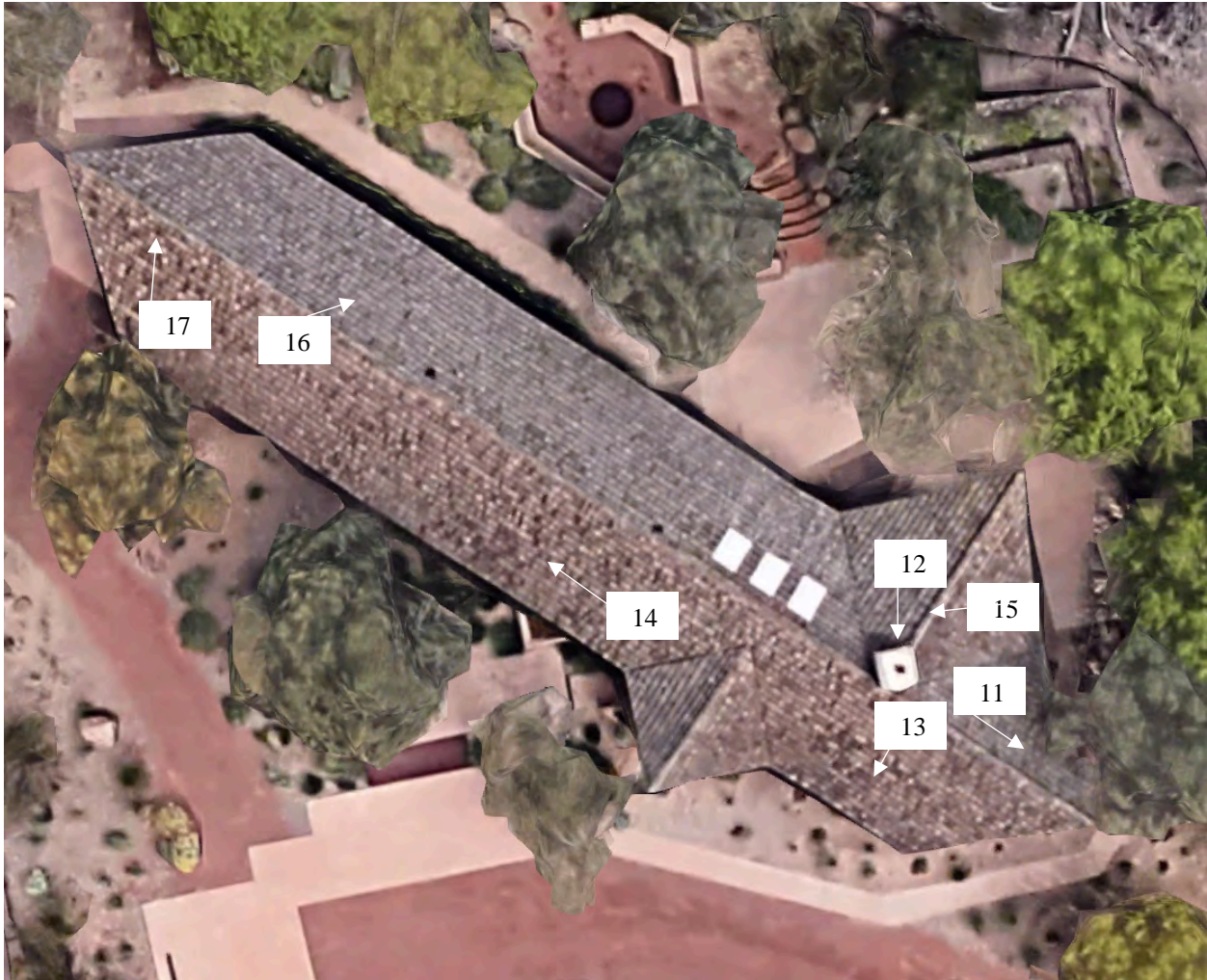
Maricopa, AZ
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Photograph Key: Exterior Photos

O'Connor, Sandra Day, House
Name of Property

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County and State



Photograph Key: Interior Photos

O'Connor, Sandra Day, House
Name of Property

Maricopa, AZ
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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Sandra Day O'Connor House

City or Vicinity: Tempe

County: Maricopa State: Arizona

Photographer: Eric Vondy, Arizona State Historic Preservation Office

Date Photographed: May 17, 2018

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photograph 1 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0001. View looking north.

Photograph 2 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0002. View looking northwest.

Photograph 3 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0003. View looking south.

Photograph 4 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0004. View looking northwest.

Photograph 5 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0005. View looking southwest.

Photograph 6 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0006. View looking southeast.

Photograph 7 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0007. View facing southeast.

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Photograph 8 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0008. View looking northeast.

Photograph 9 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0008. View looking east-southeast.

Photograph 10 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0010. View looking northeast.

Photograph 11 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0011. Interior photograph of main living room. View looking southeast.

Photograph 12 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0012. Interior photograph of fireplace between living room and dining room. View facing south.

Photograph 13 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0013. Interior photograph of living room showing desk, which is the surviving original piece of furniture in the house. View facing southwest.

Photograph 14 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0014. Interior photograph showing hallway from kitchen area. View facing northwest.

Photograph 15 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0015. Interior photograph showing dining room/kitchen. View facing northwest.

Photograph 16 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0015. Interior photograph showing former bedroom now used as meeting room. View facing northeast.

Photograph 17 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0016. Interior photograph showing former bedroom now used as meeting space. View facing north.

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 100 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.

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Photograph 1 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0001. View looking north.

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Photograph 2 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0002. View looking northwest.

O'Connor, Sandra Day, House
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Photograph 3 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0003. View looking south.

O'Connor, Sandra Day, House
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County and State



Photograph 4 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0004. View looking northwest.

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County and State



Photograph 5 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0005. View looking southwest.

O'Connor, Sandra Day, House
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Maricopa, AZ
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Photograph 6 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0006. View looking southeast.

O'Connor, Sandra Day, House
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Photograph 7 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0007. View facing southeast.

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Photograph 9 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0008. View looking east-southeast.

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Maricopa, AZ
County and State



Photograph 10 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0010. View looking northeast.

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Photograph 14 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0014. Interior photograph showing hallway from kitchen area. View facing northwest.

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Maricopa, AZ
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Photograph 15 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0015. Interior photograph showing dining room/kitchen. View facing northwest.

O'Connor, Sandra Day, House
Name of Property

Maricopa, AZ
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Photograph 16 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0016. Interior photograph showing former bedroom now used as meeting room. View facing northeast.

O'Connor, Sandra Day, House
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Photograph 17 of 17. AZ_MaricopaCounty_SandraDayOConnorHouse_0017. Interior photograph showing former bedroom now used as meeting space. View facing north.









O'CONNOR HOUSE
CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

SAGUARO \$200,000 and above

The Henninger Builders and Dr. Craig Jones
Sands Construction

PALO VERDE \$100,000 and above

DAB Associates
Rio Salado Foundation
Shepard Foundation, Jerry Dugone
Sundt Construction
Thunderbird Chapter
The Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust

IRONWOOD \$50,000 and above

APS, Mr. Bill Ford
Mr. Adreene Aight
The Flinn Foundation
Globe Foundation, Bar Gale
Ms. Betty Kitchel
Rogers and Victoria Sant
US Airways

MESQUITE \$25,000 and above

Arizona Cardinals, Mr. Michael Salski
Bryant Co., Mr. Robert Salski
Cottonwood Foundation
Dorothy and George Salski
Arizona State University
The University of Arizona
The University of Phoenix
The University of Texas at Phoenix
The University of Texas at Dallas
The University of Texas at San Antonio
The University of Texas at Tyler
The University of Texas at El Paso
The University of Texas at Austin
The University of Texas at San Marcos

OCOTILLO \$10,000 and above

Arizona Cardinals, Mr. Michael Salski
Bryant Co., Mr. Robert Salski
Cottonwood Foundation
Dorothy and George Salski
Arizona State University
The University of Arizona
The University of Phoenix
The University of Texas at Phoenix
The University of Texas at Dallas
The University of Texas at San Antonio
The University of Texas at Tyler
The University of Texas at El Paso
The University of Texas at Austin
The University of Texas at San Marcos

COTTONWOOD

Arizona Cardinals, Mr. Michael Salski
Bryant Co., Mr. Robert Salski
Cottonwood Foundation
Dorothy and George Salski
Arizona State University
The University of Arizona
The University of Phoenix
The University of Texas at Phoenix
The University of Texas at Dallas
The University of Texas at San Antonio
The University of Texas at Tyler
The University of Texas at El Paso
The University of Texas at Austin
The University of Texas at San Marcos







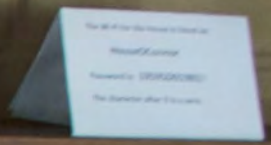




















National Register of Historic Places
Memo to File

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.



Evaluation/Return Sheet For Single/Multi Nomination

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination
Property Name: O'Connor, Sandra Day, House
Multiple Name:
State & County: ARIZONA, Maricopa

Date Received: 6/3/2019 Date of Pending List: 6/25/2019 Date of 16th Day: 7/10/2019 Date of 45th Day: 7/18/2019 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100004185

Nominator: SHPO

Reason For Review:

- Appeal
- SHPO Request
- Waiver
- Resubmission
- Other
- PDIL
- Landscape
- National
- Mobile Resource
- TCP
- CLG
- Text/Data Issue
- Photo
- Map/Boundary
- Period
- Less than 50 years

Accept Return Reject 7/18/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Roger Reed  Discipline Historian
Telephone (202)354-2278 Date 

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



National Register of Historic Places

Note to the record

Preliminary Review

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 Sandra Day O'Connor House
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 1230 N. College Avenue
city or town Tempe
state Arizona code AZ county Maricopa code 013 zip code 85281

<input type="checkbox"/>	not for
<input type="checkbox"/>	publication
	vicinity

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/Title _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

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

Date of Action

5. Classification

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

- Private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box.)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
	1	structures
		objects
1	1	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic – single family dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Recreation and Culture: Meeting Space

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Modern

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Adobe

Wood Siding

roof: Wood Shingle

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Sandra O'Connor House is one story, 2000+ square foot adobe dwelling originally constructed in Paradise Valley, a high end bedroom community in metropolitan Phoenix, Arizona. Designed by architect D.K. Taylor as the first home for Sandra Day O'Connor's family, the house is a distinctive combination of modernism and the southwestern building traditions that was popular in the post WWII era in the Valley. It was moved to Papago Park, a desert setting like its original location, to save it from demolition.

Narrative Description

Currently, the home is situated on a hilly site surrounded by desert trees and a natural landscape with the same directional orientation as in its original location. Moved from a neighborhood of one acre lots to sit on a similar sized parcel, the house blends unobtrusively with the natural environment of its surroundings. The narrow, elongated house has a strong north-south axis with a single low-pitched wooden shake gable roof with deep overhanging eaves that creates distinctive "prows" on each end of the house. The roof has an extended horizontal line that flares upward at two locations: over the house entrance and on the south to capture mountain views in the surroundings. Designed by local Modernist architect, D.K. Taylor, the simple, yet graceful, design incorporates the influences of Frank Lloyd Wright and the Taliesin West School of architecture as well as California architect, Cliff May, an early contributor to the Ranch House design. Taylor used a minimal palette of materials: traditional hand-crafted adobe bricks and extensive glazing to give the home both a modernist and Southwestern sensibility. Sandra and John O'Connor participated in the construction of the house, hand-scraping the joints between the adobe bricks and applying a thin coat of mud, and then skim milk to the adobe walls to give it a smooth surface. Throughout the house the adobe brick is exposed. The ceiling is constructed of stained Douglas fir wood planks as are the exposed roof structure and its support columns; the wood trim around the home's windows and doors and the home's exterior paneling on the east façade. The floors are polished red concrete. The use of these materials give the house a rugged feel and achieve the goal of recreating a dwelling reminiscent of Sandra's childhood adobe home on a working ranch near Duncan, Arizona. Large floor-to-ceiling glass panels bring the outside inside the house, an important tenet of both Modern architecture and Western Ranch styling. Throughout the house, the windows are simple geometric shapes: rectangles, squares and triangles with no internal divisions. The openings are inset in the wall with deep sills and surrounding wood members to provide shading. Most of the glass panels are fixed. However, several windows crank out to provide ventilation. In the living room an unusual diamond-shaped window arrangement with three-dimensional qualities creates an architectural abstraction of Native American Indian art

forms. Custom designed windows, like these, were a feature which frequently distinguished architect-designed homes of the period.

The floor plan is laid out a simple rectangular plan. There is an open living room, dining room and kitchen area at one end of the house which was specifically designed to facilitate entertaining and hosting of the many guests to the O'Connor home. This lay out was quite progressive for the time as most houses built then had the kitchen out of sight from the living areas. The O'Connor House's floor plan allowed Sandra to be part of everything, even while in the kitchen. Leo Corbet, former President of the Arizona State Senate, recalled: "Through the years that I served with Sandra, I used to marvel at her ability to go from Senate Majority Leader to gracious hostess with such ease. She would have the full Senate over for dinner within hours of debating legislation and never miss a beat. We wrote the Grand Jury bill on the kitchen table while she was baking cookies for one of her son's school events. She was always able to master both roles and do justice to them both." The focal point of the open plan living room is the free-standing fireplace. Its location and form is modern in design, but the use of adobe bricks in its construction gives it a look of a traditional hearth. Tucked in one corner of the living room is a small spare wooden desk initially used by Sandra Day O'Connor in her home and then moved to her Washington D.C. Supreme Court Justice office. It has now been returned to its original location in the house. A long narrow hall leads from the "great room" living area to the master bedroom and two bedrooms at the other end of the house. Light is provided in the hall by a series of tall narrow fixed glass panels. Glass doors also lead outside to the patio area. The entrance and interior doors are solid core wood doors.

With her appointment as Supreme Court Justice, the O'Connor's sold their home in May 1983 after residing there for twenty-five years. The house changed hands several time and in 2007 plans began for the relocation of the O'Connor house when it was learned that the present owner intended to demolish it to build a larger dwelling. The building was carefully moved with each adobe brick numbered, stacked on pallets and protected with tarps until the reconstruction. Sections of the roof and the house's structural framing were trucked to the site in large assemblies and then reinstalled. Not all portions of the house were moved. A later addition, built in 1964-65 to accommodate the growing family sons, was not relocated. Directed by the private, non-profit Rio Salado Foundation, the community-based effort to move and preserve the home raised more than \$2 million dollars to fund the relocation and faithful reconstruction of the structure and its setting. Plans to reuse the home as the "Sandra Day O'Connor House and Center for Civic Discourse" has necessitated only minor changes to the floor plan. A bath and pantry area has been removed to convert one of the small bedrooms into a meeting room. One wall segment, which divided the kitchen from the hall, also has been removed. On the rear of the lot, a new free-standing structure has been constructed. Similar in appearance to a garage, which would typically be found next to a home, the new structure houses ADA accessible bathrooms for the complex. Although the form and materials of this outbuilding are similar to the main house, it is listed as a non-contributing structure as it was not part of the original home's construction. Overall, the integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association of the historic remains quite high despite its relocation, It still superbly conveys its association with Sandra Day O'Connor's life of distinguished public service and serves as a personification of the spirit of the best known, "Daughter of Arizona."

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.)

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

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.

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Law

Politics/Government

Period of Significance

1958-1983

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Sandra Day O'Connor

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Donald K. Taylor

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance coincides with the date of construction of the house until 1983 when it was sold to another owner.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

As the house was moved from its original location, Criteria Consideration B must be addresses in a discussion of its significance. The Paradise Valley house is the only surviving property associated with Sandra Day O'Connor when she served in Arizona court system and legislature. It was the first home owned by the O'Connor family in metropolitan Phoenix. It was specifically designed to facilitate the work for which she became most well known: fostering discussions, consensus building and bipartisan cooperation. Her success in advancing many important public policy issues, which led to the Supreme Court appointment, also has made the O'Connor family home an important part of Arizona's history.

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

The Sandra O'Connor House is nationally significant under Criterion "B" for its association with Sandra Day O'Connor, the first woman and the 102nd person to sit on the U.S. Supreme Court. The residential structure was the primary dwelling of O'Connor during the ascension of her political and legal career. It also was the setting in which her skills as a statesman were honed that ultimately led to her appointment to the Supreme Court.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

Sandra Day O'Connor is one of the most influential woman politician and public servant in Arizona's history with contributions at the local, state and national level. Arizona was the venue for her meteoric rise to Chief Justice of America's highest court. There she fostered bipartisan cooperation and promulgated innumerable important pieces of legislation that shaped Arizona in its most important period of development. Sandra Day was born on March 26, 1930 in El Paso, Texas. Her mother and father were Harry Alfred Day and Ada Mae Wilkey who owned a cattle ranch between Lord New Mexico and Duncan, Arizona. As there was no school near the ranch Sandra stayed with her maternal grandparents in El Paso during her early school years. She attended Stanford University in California and earned her bachelor's degree in economics and a law degree in 1952. She married John Jay O'Connor III, a law school classmate in December of 1952. The O'Connors moved to Phoenix in 1957 where John joined the law firm of Fennemore, Craig, Van Arnworth and Udall. As law firms in the area would not hire a woman lawyer at that time, O'Connor opened a law office in Maryvale, Arizona with a partner. She had two sons and then, with the arrival of a third son, she left her law practice to become an active community volunteer and stay-at-home mother. When her children reached school age she returned to the workplace, accepting a position as Assistant Attorney General. In 1969 she was appointed by the Maricopa Board of Supervisors to fill a vacancy in the Arizona State Senate. She ran and was re-elected to that position twice. In 1973 she became the first women in the United States to serve in a leadership position in the state legislature as the Senate Majority Leader. While in the legislature, she used her home as a gathering place for the members to meet and get to know each other over informal suppers on the patio. The legislature served effectively in those years, passing a number of significant laws. As O'Connor describes it in her 2005 biography: "I regularly invited Republican and Democratic legislators over to my house to talk about issues facing Arizona. Over dinner, we would discuss ideas and options in a collegial, civil manner. We did not worry about party politics because we focused on working together to reach solutions to the problems facing us."

In 1975 she was elected to serve as a judge on the Maricopa County Superior Court. Governor Bruce Babbitt appointed her to the Arizona Court of Appeals in 1979. By the time she was appointed to serve as the first-ever female Supreme Court justice in 1981, O'Connor had held office in all three branches of Arizona's government, making her the only person in the state's history to do so. President Ronald Reagan's appointment of O'Connor to the United States Supreme Court represents a clear transition in her career from the local and state level to national prominence. Her home remains as the only surviving property singly associated with her two and half decades of public service in Arizona and the development of the skills, abilities and reputation that led to her subsequent achievements.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Biskupic, Joan. Sandra Day O'Connor: *How the First Woman on the Supreme Court became its most influential Justice.* (Place: Harper/Collins, 2005.)

City of Tempe, Research and Staff reports to the Historic Preservation Commission, Development Review Commission and City Council.(Tempe, AZ, 2010-2011.)

Maricopa County Recorder. "Terraza Verde Plat." 1953

Tazmine Looman. D.K. Taylor: "Scottsdale's Mysterious Modern Master." ModernPhoenix website, April, 2011.

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

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

Acreeage of Property .763

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>12</u>	<u>413251</u>	<u>3700674</u>	3	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

A parcel of land being a portion of the South East Quarter of Section 10, Township 1 North, Range 4 East of Gila and Salt River Base and Meridian, Maricopa County, Arizona, more particularly described as follows: Commencing at the Center of said Section 10, said point being marked by a 5/8" rebar with tag number 8081 attached; Thence along the North-South midsection line of Section 10, South 00° 55' 35" East, 811.84 feet; Thence departing said North-South

midsection line East, 608.26 feet to a point being the true point of beginning: Thence South 24° 53' 46" West, 47.27'; Thence North 87° 02' 35" West 31.61'; Thence North 72° 32' 01" West, 30.25"; Thence north 55° 33' 41" West, 78.46'; Thence North 11° 07' 11" West, 42.20'; Thence North 32° 26' 33" West; 4489'; Thence North 03° 00' 37" East, 78.11'; Thence North 27° 38' 09" East; 17.25'; thence North 82° 56' 42" East; 42.33"; Thence South 87° 35' 31" East; 36.43; Thence South 50° 53' 54" East; 59.71'; Thence South 83° 22' 42" East, 23.94'; Thence South 54° 45' 26" East, 14.85'; Thence South 19° 49' 16" East; Thence South 08° 06' 15" East, 69.08; Thence South 24° 53' 46" West, 42.19' to the true point of beginning.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries coincide with a defined parcel on which the O'Connor house was relocated within the City of Tempe Papago Park that has been leased to the Rio Salado Foundation which will manage the property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Deborah Edge Abele

organization Akros, Inc.

date September 1, 2011

street & number 4324 E. Piccadilly Rd

telephone 480 774-2907

city or town Phoenix

state AZ

zip code 85018

e-mail Debbie.abele@gmail.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

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: Sandra Day O'Connor House

City or Vicinity: Tempe

County: Maricopa

State: Arizona

Photographer: Janie Ellis

Date Photographed: November, 2009

Location of Original Digital Files: 105 N. Cattle Track Road, Scottsdale AZ

Description of Photograph(s) and number: (See Continuation Sheet)

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Name City of Tempe

street & number 31 East Fifth Street

telephone 480 350-8367(City Architect)

city or town Tempe

state AZ

zip code 85281

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.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Sandra Day O'Connor House
Name of Property Maricopa County, AZ
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number 11 Page 1

PHOTOGRAPHS

Name of Property: Sandra Day O'Connor House

City: Tempe

County: Maricopa

State: AZ

Name of Photographer: Janie Ellis

Date of Photograph: November 2009

Location of Original Digital Files: 105 N. Cattle Track Road, Scottsdale AZ

Photo #1: (AZ_Maricopa County_Sandra Day O'Connor House_0001)
Primary façade and house entrance, SW elevation, camera viewing north northwest

Photo #2: (AZ_Maricopa County_Sandra Day O'Connor House_0002)
NW elevation, camera viewing east southeast

Photo #3: (AZ_Maricopa County_Sandra Day O'Connor House_0003)
SE elevation, camera viewing northwest

Photo #4: (AZ_Maricopa County_Sandra Day O'Connor House_0004)
East elevation, camera viewing southwest

Photo #5: (AZ_Maricopa County_Sandra Day O'Connor House_0005)
East elevation with interior illuminated, camera viewing south southwest

Photo #6: (AZ_Maricopa County_Sandra Day O'Connor House_0006)
Interior view of dining room and kitchen, camera viewing west southwest

Photo #7: (AZ_Maricopa County_Sandra Day O'Connor House_0007)
Interior view of fireplace, camera southeast

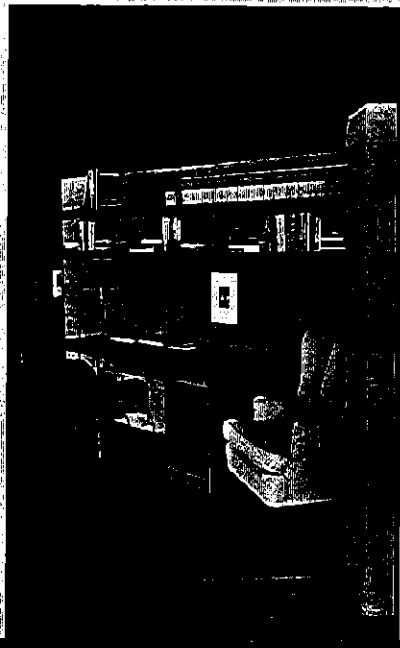
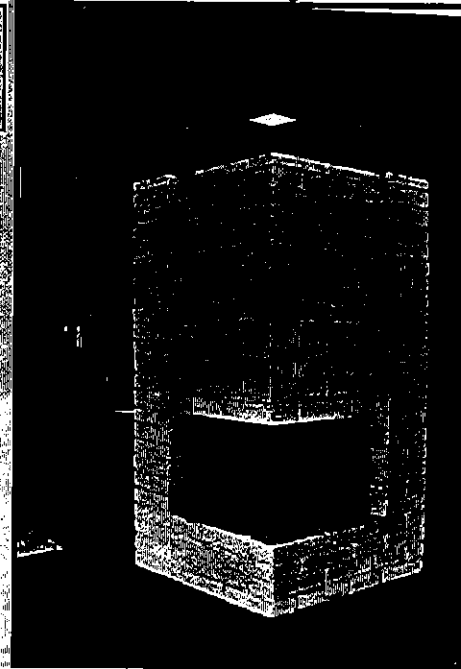
Photo #8: (AZ_Maricopa County_Sandra Day O'Connor House_0008)
Interior view of O'Connor's desk, camera viewing east southeast

O'Connor, Sandra Day House, Tempe



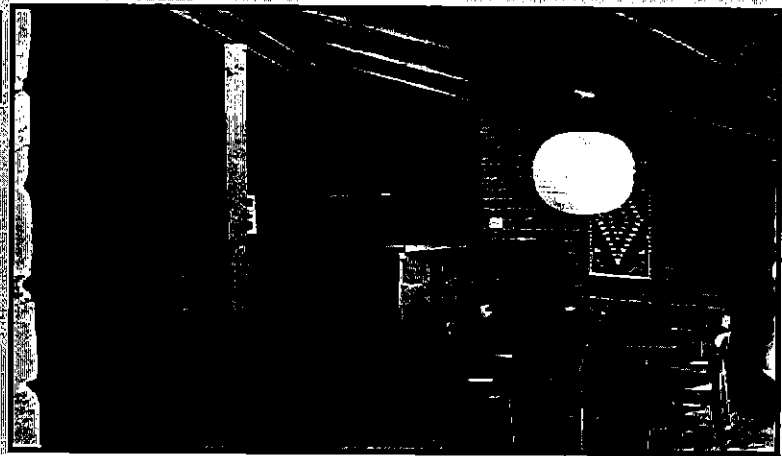
E Elevation, Interior Illuminated, Camera Viewing S' SE

Interior
View of
Fireplace



Interior View of
O'Connor's Desk

Interior View of
Dining Area



Sandra Day O'Connor House

Maricopa County, Arizona

Preliminary Review

Recommendation: This property does not meet Criterion B nor does it meet the special requirements for moved buildings under Criterion Consideration B due to loss of integrity. The associative significance of the house has been compromised as a result of being moved in part to a new location which differs considerably in setting or general environment from its original suburban location. The nomination could be revised to reflect significance under Criterion C for its architectural value; with a narrowly defined period of significance based on the date of original construction, the property would not have to meet the rigid requirements for a moved property with significant historical associations tied to the life and career of an important individual.

Discussion

In addition to having historical significance and integrity, a moved property must meet two additional tests to be eligible for National Register listing under Criterion A or B: it must be the sole surviving property associated with the important person or event, and the new location must be comparable to the original location and compatible with the property's significance. Please refer to the discussion for evaluating historically significant properties (Criteria A & B) under Criterion Consideration B for moved buildings on page 30 of *How to Apply the National Register Criteria*. The National Register criterion consideration specifically states that for eligibility under Criterion A or B a property must be "the surviving property most importantly associated with a historic person or event." This means the property "must be the single surviving property that is most closely associated with ...the part of the person's life for which he or she is significant." In addition the moved property must "still have an orientation, setting and general environment that are comparable to those of the historic location and are compatible with the property's significance."

Does the property meet the requirement that it be the sole surviving property? The current nomination has not considered the existence or integrity of other properties that were associated

with O'Connor during her years in the state legislature and judiciary. While it does appear that the moved building was the only residence associated with her during her rise to prominence in Arizona, one wonders what other properties were associated with this period of her life, such as her various offices or the courthouses where she presided?

Does the property in its new location have an orientation, setting, and general environment comparable to the original location and compatible with the property's significance? The authenticity and accuracy of representation are being evaluated here. The house in its current setting and configuration no longer accurately represents the home where O'Connor lived and entertained during the time she made important contributions to state history. The house as now exhibited reflects only a part of the house that functioned as the O'Connor home during the period that the judge gained prominence in State government. The house is not an accurate representation of the house during O'Connor's residency because 1) the new location differs substantially from the original one, 2) the floor plan has been altered as a result of moving the house without the 196 addition and accommodating the new use as a conference center, and 3) little effort has been made to research and reestablish a setting and landscape design for the property that is comparable to the original lot and is compatible with O'Connor's life and career in the years before being appointed a Supreme Court justice.

For associative significance under Criterion A or B, historic location and setting are highly important aspects of integrity. So much that conveys historical association under B relates to the setting in which a person's achievements were made. The nomination makes a case for the importance of O'Connor's house as a meeting place for social gatherings as well as politically important discussions. When the property was moved much of this associative value was lost. First of all, only a portion of the house was moved, so that the current house no longer accurately reflects the floor plan, functional use, or size of the house during the time when her career in state government got underway and she achieved prominence on a state level. The house in its original location was on a suburban lot of approximately one-acre in a subdivision in another part of the greater Phoenix metropolitan area and included a substantial addition built in 1964-65 to accommodate O'Connor's expanding family; entertaining took place outdoors as well as inside. Google earth images of the original address, which remains vacant, indicate the footprint

of a much larger building and retain elements of a landscape design that included a driveway, entrance plantings, lawns, and an area specially designed with a fireplace for outdoor cook-outs.¹ Not only is the sense of suburban life, which is an essential part of the Sandra Day O'Connor story, lost in the relocation of the house, but the house as it now appears on a large oversized lot at the edge of Papago Park does not accurately portray the character of O'Connor's daily life and household during the years she was involved in State government. Relocation resulted in a loss of historic setting (including designed landscape features – shrubbery, fireplace and patio, entrance sequence, etc.). No effort was made in the property's adaptive reuse to reestablish the interior floor plan or to create an external landscape setting that resembled that of the O'Connor family's residence. The cumulative effect of these factors has resulted in a misleading and inaccurate representation of O'Connor's home and the place where notable lawmakers and public figures gathered for social discourse and exchanged ideas.

During our review several other issues were raised:

- Documentation is weak lacking substantial information about O'Connor's legislative and judicial career in Arizona state government. Most noticeably missing from the current nomination is a discussion of 1) O'Connor's achievements while in public service at the state level, 2) the cases she was notably involved in, and 3) the issues on which her reputation for brokering consensus and demonstrating impartiality was built. The nomination emphasizes her skill at entertaining and bringing together officials with differing points of view and states that much of this activity took place in the O'Connor home. The emphasis on her private life and entertaining skills, while directly tying her public role to her private life, seems to trivialize the unnamed achievements that led to her appointment as a Supreme Court justice.

¹ See Googleearth for East Denton Lane, Paradise Valley, which indicates the historic footprint of house and its grounds with a driveway, garden wall, outdoor patio and fireplace, and plantings. This demonstrates that the current location and setting are very different from the residential neighborhood where the house was originally built and where the O'Connor family lived during the time O'Connor gained her reputation in the State's court system. The nomination indicates that outdoor entertaining was common in the O'Connor household, and one wonders whether the abandoned landscape in Paradise Valley reflects outdoor features and vegetation that date to the years the O'Connors resided there.

- Under Criterion B, Criterion Consideration G would need to be checked to correspond with the period of significance, 1958-1983, and a statement made explaining that much of O'Connor's significant activity took place less than fifty years ago and that the property qualifies as exceptional given her illustrious appointment and later service to the nation.
- Level of Significance-- State level of significance is appropriate but not national level. Even though O'Connor is now a nationally recognized figure, this property as currently documented relates to her activities and achievements at the state level before she reached national prominence. As a general rule, the level of significance of a property should be commensurate with the level of achievement attained during the period of association.
- Living Person Issue—This property represents the domestic side of her life while a public figure in Arizona state government and court system. This stage of her life ended in 1983 when she was appointed Supreme Court Justice. NR review staff did not have any problem with the living person issue but agreed there was a need for greater emphasis in the documentation on her public life and achievements during the time she rose to prominence at the state level.

Recommendation: Given the building's representation of the work of a prominent local architect D. K. Taylor, we recommend the nomination be revised and the property be nominated under Criterion C, for its representation of mid-century modern residential design in the greater Phoenix area. While focused on the architectural character of the original building (before the addition was built), the argument for significance would not need to address the requirements for moved buildings associated with a specific individual's life and achievements or specific historical events, nor would it have to accurately reflect the physical character, setting, and evolution of the house over the longer period of time and in the specific way it was associated with Sandra Day O'Connor. Because the period of significance would be limited to the date of construction, the loss of the 1964-65 addition and the differences between the original and new setting and environment would not have as great effect on the property's ability to convey its historic importance. Revising the nomination to address C would, of course, require the development of a relevant architectural context and an evaluation of the architectural methods,

materials, and stylistic characteristics that make the property distinctive architecturally. The specific aspects of the property's history relating to the O'Connor family could remain in the nomination and be placed in the section of the nomination form for Additional History. The property could still be named for the Supreme Court justice.

Linda McClelland
Historian



STATE OF ARIZONA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

DOUGLAS A. DUCEY
GOVERNOR

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

May 2, 2019

Ms. Joy Beasley, Acting Associate Director
Cultural Resources, Partnerships and Science
National Park Service
1849 C Street NW, Mail Stop 3318
Washington D.C. 20240



Dear Ms. Beasley:

It is with great enthusiasm that I offer this letter of support for the placement of the **Sandra Day O'Connor House** in Tempe, Arizona in the National Register of Historic Places. The people of Arizona hold Justice Sandra Day O'Connor in the highest esteem, not only because she was the first woman on the Supreme Court of the United States, but also because she embodies the pioneering spirit of Arizona. From a cattle ranch in Southeastern Arizona with no running water or electricity, to the highest court in the land, Justice O'Connor broke barriers at every turn and Arizona is very proud to call her one of our own.

In the 1970's, Justice O'Connor and her husband, John, became legendary for their hospitality, not just because they knew how to host a great dinner party, but because they did so with a purpose: inviting leaders with differing points of view to their adobe-style home to share a meal and bridge divides. In 2006, when the O'Connor House was at risk of demolition, one of the largest historic preservation efforts in recent Arizona history was undertaken to save the home. Thanks to these painstaking efforts, and the ongoing work of The O'Connor Institute, the Sandra Day O'Connor House is once again a place where Arizonans can come together to find solutions to the challenges of our time.

Although preservation of this historic property required its relocation, the historical importance of the house transcends the land it sits on. National Register designation would provide recognition of what Justice O'Connor considers her life's work – work which is now carried on in the same space by the organization dedicated to her legacy of civics education and engagement.

For all of these reasons, I strongly support the listing of the Sandra Day O'Connor House in the National Register of Historic Places. Please feel free to contact State Historic Preservation Officer, Kathryn Leonard at (602) 542-7135 or by email at KLeonard@azstateparks.gov if you have questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

Douglas A. Ducey
Governor
State of Arizona

1700 WEST WASHINGTON STREET, PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007
602-542-4331 • www.azgovernor.gov



May 9, 2019



City of Tempe
P.O. Box 5002
31 East Fifth Street
Tempe, AZ 85280
480-350-8225

Joy Beasley
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, NW (7228)
Washington, DC 20240

Mark W. Mitchell
Mayor

Dear Ms. Beasley:

I am pleased to learn that the Arizona Historic Sites Review Committee voted to recommend listing the Sandra Day O'Connor House in the Places and am happy to provide this letter of support for the nomination. Justice O'Connor, a quintessential Arizonan, partnered with the City of Tempe and others to move her home, a quintessentially Arizona mid-century Wrightian adobe abode, from Paradise Valley to Tempe. It was in this home, which has been carefully relocated to a site that provides an overall setting consistent with its original location, that O'Connor raised her family and honed the legal and political skills that allowed her rise to a seat on the highest court in the land.

While serving in the state legislature, O'Connor invited colleagues to her home to discuss complex and controversial issues while enjoying homemade chalupas. These bipartisan get-togethers, now recognized as exemplars of collegiality and civil dialogue, often resulted in legislative compromise and consensus on solutions to some of the most contentious questions of the day. The home, identified by the Sandra Day O'Connor Institute as "an icon for civil discourse and civic engagement," was O'Connor's residence for the entirety of her pre-Supreme Court judicial career, and is where O'Connor took President Reagan's phone call notifying her of his intent to appoint her to the Supreme Court of the United States. O'Connor's renewed connection to the home began with her efforts to relocate it to Tempe in order to save it from demolition and continue through the present with her hands-on adobe maintenance work and the home's affiliation with the Sandra Day O'Connor Institute.



Mark W. Mitchell
Mayor

Tempe is proud to be the home of this magnificent resource that is so intimately connected to Justice O'Connor's life and career, as demonstrated by this letter and the home's inclusion in the Tempe Historic Property Register. Given Justice O'Connor's historic significance, her lengthy and ongoing association with the property, and its close association with her productive life during the period in which she achieved significance, the home appears to be an exceptional Criterion B candidate for National Register listing. I fully support the nomination and look forward to the home being listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Mark W. Mitchell'.

Mark W. Mitchell
Mayor

KYRSTEN SINEMA
ARIZONA

COMMITTEES

BANKING, HOUSING, AND
URBAN AFFAIRS

COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION

HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

United States Senate

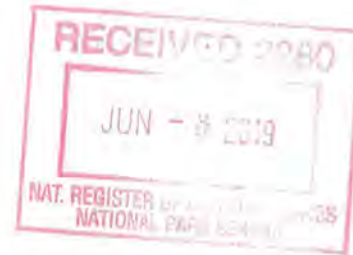
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HART BUILDING
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ARIZONA
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(602) 598-7327

<http://sinema.senate.gov>

May 21, 2019

Ms. Joy Beasley
Acting Associate Director
Cultural Resources, Partnerships and Science
National Park Service
1849 C Street NW, Mail Stop 3318
Washington D.C. 20240



Dear Ms. Beasley:

I write concerning designation of the Sandra Day O'Connor House in Tempe, Arizona for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Sandra Day O'Connor House honors Justice O'Connor's legacy and stands as a symbol for civil discussion in the Southwest. During her time in the Arizona State Senate, Justice O'Connor turned her home into a collaborative space for political leaders to identify and thoughtfully address challenges facing Arizonans. Her reputation as a pragmatic consensus builder aided in her selection for the Maricopa County Superior Court, the Arizona Court of Appeals, and her confirmation as the first woman on the United States Supreme Court. Justice O'Connor's philosophy towards civil discourse and the role it played in her journey to the Supreme Court is symbolized in her home.

Designation of the O'Connor House on the National Registry of Historic Places (NRHP) formally recognizes Justice O'Connor's accomplishments and cements the importance of preserving a collaborative space for civil discussion in Arizona. In 2006, when the house was set to be demolished, Arizonans came together to carefully disassemble the property and rebuild it brick by brick in Papago Park, where it stands today. The O'Connor House supports the work of the Sandra Day O'Connor Institute to further policy discourse in ways that are non-partisan, objective, and inclusive.

Justice O'Connor's legacy continues to promote mindful policymaking and civic engagement in Arizona. In accordance with all existing agency rules, regulations, and ethical guidelines, I urge you to give this proposal full and fair consideration as you make this important decision.

Sincerely,

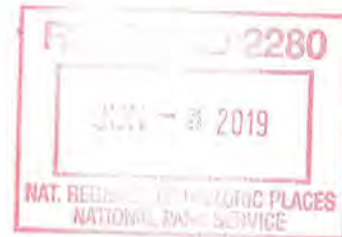
Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator

United States Senate

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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

May 21, 2019

Ms. Joy Beasley, Acting Associate Director
Cultural Resources, Partnerships and Science
National Park Service
1849 C Street NW, Mail Stop 3318
Washington D.C. 20240



Dear Ms. Beasley:

I write to support the nomination of the Sandra Day O'Connor House in Tempe, Arizona for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. While Justice Sandra Day O'Connor is an esteemed Arizonan, Justice O'Connor holds a special place in American history as the first woman on the Supreme Court of the United States. The home in which she lived for much of her life as an Arizona political leader and policy maker deserves to be included in the National Register because of her association with the home and also because of the role it served in bringing Justice O'Connor to the position to become President Reagan's nominee to the Court.

The adobe brick home Justice O'Connor and her husband, John helped to construct became a centerpiece in Justice O'Connor's career in Arizona. Simply, Justice O'Connor used her home as the venue to bring other political leaders together to create solutions that solved Arizona's policy challenges. It was Justice O'Connor's success in creating a cooperative environment for policy-making that enabled her to rise to become the Majority Leader in the State Senate, the first woman to do so in Arizona and the nation. Justice O'Connor's groundbreaking successes were, as she credits, due in part because of the home where "civil talk leads to civic action." Its history and role in elevating Sandra Day O'Connor to the Supreme Court made the O'Connor House "the" site most associated with Justice O'Connor and her historic career path.

Accordingly, when the O'Connor House was at risk of demolition, Arizonans of all stripes worked to preserve it, in one of the largest Arizona historic preservation efforts in recent years. Justice O'Connor herself was involved in this preservation effort. Fittingly, the O'Connor House now serves to support the work of the O'Connor Institute, which means that the home is once again a place where Arizonans come together to find common solutions to the problems of our time. Although preservation of this historic property required its relocation, the association of this building with Justice O'Connor's contribution to civic education, engagement and discourse is durable, and so National Register designation would provide recognition of what Justice O'Connor considers her life's work – work, now carried on in the very same space by an organization dedicated to her legacy.

In recognition of the significant association between Justice O'Connor, one of the most important American women of the 20th Century, and the home that was so critical to her path past gender discrimination to the Supreme Court, I emphatically support the Sandra Day O'Connor House for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Please feel free to contact my office if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Martha McSally". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Martha McSally
United States Senator



Doug Ducey
Governor

ARIZONA STATE PARKS & TRAILS

Robert Broscheid
Executive Director



May 24, 2019

Joy Beasley
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1849 C Street NW, Mail Stop 7228
Washington, D.C. 20240



**RE: Sandra Day O'Connor House
1230 North College Avenue
Tempe, Maricopa County, Arizona**

Dear Ms. Beasley:

It is with great pleasure that I submit for your review a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Sandra Day O'Connor House. The house is nominated to the National Register under Criterion B for its association with former Associate Justice of the Supreme Court Sandra Day O'Connor. The significance of this property to the people of Arizona is attested to by the attached letters of support from Douglas Ducey, Governor of Arizona; Senator Kyrsten Sinema; Senator Martha McSalley; and Mark Mitchell, Mayor of the City of Tempe.

If you have any questions or requests, you may contact William Collins by email at wcollins@azstateparks.gov.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Leonard
State Historic Preservation Officer
Arizona State Parks & Trails

encl.



Reed, Roger <roger_reed@nps.gov>

[EXTERNAL] O'Connor House revision

2 messages

William Collins <wcollins@azstateparks.gov>

Wed, Jul 17, 2019 at 4:09 PM

To: "Reed, Roger" <roger_reed@nps.gov>

Roger,

Following up from our phone conversation, I have attached a PDF of the revised registration form for the Sandra Day O'Connor House. I have changed the wording on p. 7 to refer to the 1964 as having been removed and not included in the relocation and omitted any reference to whether it might have been "noncontributing." I also changed the area of significance from Law to Politics/Government on the pages where that is referred to.

Thank you for your attention to this. We realize this is a challenging property for the strictest interpretation of the NRHP criteria, but this is definitely a property people here have rallied behind and deemed through their efforts as something worth preserving.

Bill Collins



O'CONNOR HSE_NRHP FORM_FINAL.pdf

20557K

Reed, Roger <roger_reed@nps.gov>

Wed, Jul 17, 2019 at 4:24 PM

To: William Collins <wcollins@azstateparks.gov>

Many thanks Bill.

Roger G. Reed, Historian
National Register and National Historic Landmarks Programs
1849 C St. NW
Mail Stop 7228
Washington, D.C. 20240
202-354-2278

[Quoted text hidden]