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 (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

Historic name Barrio El Membrillo Historic District

Other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Roughly bounded by W. Granada St. on the north, W. Simpson St. on the south, the right-of-way of the former EP&SW Railroad on the east, and the Interstate 10 frontage road on the west. ☐ not for publication

city or town Tucson ☐ vicinity

state Arizona code AZ county Pima code 019 zip code 85701

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 ___ statewide ____ local

Signature of certifying official — Date

State Historic Preservation Officer — Arizona State Parks
Title — State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official — Date

Title — State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

___ 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:)

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

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

	building(s)
x	district
	site
	structure
	object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
11	2	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
11	2	**Total**

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling, multiple dwelling
COMMERCE/TRADE: department store

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Sonoran Tradition

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: stone, concrete
walls: adobe, stucco
roof: asphalt
other: wood

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

Barrio El Membrillo Historic District is a small residential neighborhood southwest of Tucson's downtown. The district contains 13 dwellings, of which 11 are contributing resources that are good examples of the survival of the Sonoran Tradition (the regional Hispanic vernacular building tradition) into the early twentieth century. The two noncontributors have been altered inappropriately. The neighborhood retains a considerable degree of historic integrity in terms of setting and a high degree of integrity with regard to location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. As one of Tucson's historic barrios, it is still a closely knit, traditionally Hispanic neighborhood.

Narrative Description

See Continuation Sheets, Section 7

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)

- [x] 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.
- [x] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- [ ] A owed 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)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1920-1950

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N.A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance was chosen to reflect the barrio's development from its inception to the time it was almost entirely built up.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

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

Barrio El Membrillo is a historic district significant under Criteria A and C in the areas of community planning and development and architecture. The district's period of significance is from 1920, when the plat for the Cottonwood Addition was filed, to 1950, when the neighborhood was almost entirely built up and the distinctive vernacular building tradition of the barrios came to an end. As such, in terms of community planning and development, El Membrillo represents the confluence of different concepts of public and private space—the Hispanic urban and rural models and the Anglo-American suburban model. In Tucson, barrios like El Membrillo developed as a response to the increasing social, economic, and political marginalization of Hispanics in what was, after all, their own land; in this respect, the barrio functioned as a support system. In terms of architecture, these late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century barrios are distinguished by the Hispanic vernacular building tradition, based on Hispanic precedents and modified by the selective adoption of materials and construction techniques imported by Anglo-Americans. The characteristic property type is the vernacular single or multiple dwelling built in the Sonoran tradition with bearing walls of adobe brick masonry and flat or pitched roofs.

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

See Continuation Sheets, Section 8

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

See Continuation Sheets, Section 8

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested
____ previously listed in the National Register
____ previously determined eligible by the National Register
____ designated a National Historic Landmark
____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately 4 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	12	502040	3564385	3			
2				4			

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The boundary is delineated on the accompanying district map.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundary encloses all of the surviving remnant of the neighborhood known historically as Barrio El Membrillo, omitting peripheral vacant lots.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Morgan Rieder, Historical Architect
organization N/A date May 14, 2009
street & number 420 S. Samaniego Ave. telephone (520) 670-0053
city or town Tucson state AZ zip code 85701
e-mail mrieder@msn.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 black and white 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: Barrio El Membrillo Historic District

City or Vicinity: Tucson

County: Pima **State:** Arizona

Photographer: Morgan Rieder

Date Photographed: September 2008

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of 4. S. Sentinel Ave. at W. Peak St.; view north-northwest.

2 of 4. 331 S. Sentinel Ave.; view east.

3 of 4. 410 S. Sentinel Ave.; view northwest.

4 of 4. 435 S. Sentinel Ave.; view east-southeast.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Barrio El Membrillo is located within walking distance of downtown Tucson. The neighborhood is bounded on the north by W. Granada St. and the facilities of the Tucson Convention Center, on the east by the right-of-way of the former El Paso and Southwestern Railroad (EP&SW), on the south by W. Simpson St., and on the west by the Interstate 10 frontage road. Other barrios nearby are Barrio El Hoyo (listed in the National Register in 2008) and Barrio Libre (listed in 1978) to the east across the railroad tracks, and Barrio Kroeger Lane to the southwest, along the river. Until the late nineteenth century, this area was cultivated land on the floodplain of the Santa Cruz River. However, subsequent downcutting of the Santa Cruz made river-irrigated agriculture no longer possible, and the land was bought up for residential development. One of the resulting subdivisions was the Cottonwood Addition, platted it in 1920, which contained five blocks with a total of 85 lots. These were distributed along a single north-south street, Sentinel Ave., and three east-west streets: Clark, Mesa, and Peak. Most of the lots are 50 feet wide and 113 to 130 feet deep. Historically, El Membrillo consisted of this subdivision as well as dwellings and orchards on unplatted land by the river (the prevalence of quince trees gave the barrio its name).

Approximately three-quarters of the barrio had been built by 1931, before the effects of the Great Depression; the remaining quarter was built during recovery from the Depression up to World War II and in the immediate postwar years. Little or no home building took place during the Depression years (for lack of funds) nor during wartime (for lack of materials). By 1950, the barrio had been almost entirely built up; very little infill was constructed thereafter. Construction of the Tucson Freeway (later Interstate 10) in the early 1950s reduced the Cottonwood Addition by more than half. At the same time, on the west side of the freeway, the groves of quince and other trees along the river were replaced by commercial development. Later, the portion of the addition north of W. Granada St. was demolished for Tucson Convention Center facilities Today, El Membrillo is a small remnant of the original neighborhood but it is still a visually coherent entity and is still considered a distinct barrio by its residents. Photograph 1 shows S. Sentinel Ave., which contains 9 of the district's 11 contributing dwellings; the other two are on W. Mesa St.

The buildings constructed in El Membrillo during its period of significance are a continuation of the Hispanic vernacular building tradition known regionally as Sonoran. (Until the United States' invasion of Mexico and the subsequent treaties of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848 and La Mesilla in 1854, what is now southern Arizona was northern Sonora.) The one-story dwellings are modest in size and scale, with simple massing. Flat roofs with parapets alternate with gabled roofs; windows are wood double-hung sash. Photograph 2 (331 N. Sentinel Ave.), Photograph 3 (410 N. Sentinel Ave.), and Photograph 4 (435 N. Sentinel Ave.) show typical examples. The dwellings were built by their owners, usually with help from members of the extended family. Adobe brick continued to be the primary material for bearing walls until after World War II. The early twentieth-century architectural movements and revivals—principally Craftsman/Bungalow and Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival (or Spanish Eclectic, as used by McAlester

and McAlester [1997])—that characterized contemporaneous Anglo-American subdivisions in Tucson are not in overt evidence here. At most, a muted Craftsman influence can be seen in the low-pitched gables with slatted vents.

The City of Tucson never bothered to install sidewalks in this neighborhood; people walk in the streets (for many years unpaved but now fairly well-maintained asphalt), where there is little vehicular traffic. Unlike Anglo-American suburbs, there are no garages; historically, very few people owned automobiles and most walked to work (Gourley 1992). Vegetation consists of local species—mesquite, desert willow, cactus—as well as a few imports, principally palm and mountain juniper. Building placement is variable, within the constraints of the subdivision's parallelogram-shaped lots, but most of the dwellings have a minimal front setback, with a low chain-link fence enclosing a small front yard that typically has chairs and benches, creating an outdoor living space. The yard is usually swept dirt; flowers are often present, but in pots rather than planted beds. This "housescape" (Arreola 1988) contrasts with the conventional Anglo-American suburb, where the setbacks are uniformly deeper, the front yard is an unfenced, largely symbolic lawn (or, increasingly in Tucson, xeric landscaping), and outdoor living occurs in the back yard. (In the back yards of El Membrillo, several families keep chickens and one family has a horse.)

Although today El Membrillo is surrounded by urban development, the barrio still has some of the rural atmosphere noted by Sheridan (1986:240) in his description of El Membrillo and El Hoyo in the 1920s and 1930s:

> because of the proximity of the Río Santa Cruz, the ground was moister and more fertile than in most other parts of town. Vegetation flourished…The impression of still living in the country was particularly strong on winter mornings, when mesquite smoke drifting from the chimneys of wood stoves created a haze that mingled with the mist rising from the floodplain of the river. On those mornings, Anglo Tucson must have seemed very far away indeed.

Assessment of District Integrity

Location

Barrio El Membrillo today consists of a remnant of the Cottonwood Addition to the original Tucson townsite. Much of the neighborhood was destroyed by the construction of Interstate 10 and the development of the Tucson Convention Center, but a significant portion remains and it is still considered a distinct barrio. As a result, El Membrillo retains integrity of location.

Design

The surviving portion of the barrio still possesses its distinctive architecture, streetscape, and housescapes. The neighborhood has not been "discovered" by outsiders and thus has escaped gentrification. None of its dwellings postdates the barrio's period of significance and only two have lost their historic integrity, because of inappropriate additions. As a result, El Membrillo retains integrity of design.

Setting

The neighborhood's surroundings have undergone major transformations since 1950, but within the neighborhood no new dwellings have been built and physical environment has seen little change except for several vacant lots, where dwellings were demolished. As a result, El Membrillo retains integrity of setting.

Materials

In the barrio's dwellings, the original building fabric is still extant: stone and concrete foundations, stuccoed adobe walls, wood double-hung sash, and composition or asphalt roofing. The chain-link fencing came into popular use in the 1940s, during the district's period of significance. Elements added later—security grilles over windows (on two dwellings) and rooftop evaporative coolers (visible on three dwellings)—are not a major problem. As a result, El Membrillo retains integrity of materials.

Workmanship

The dwellings were built by the people of the barrio using traditional adobe construction combined with framing and finishing techniques adopted from Anglo-American practice. Because this still evident in the barrio's dwellings, El Membrillo retains integrity of workmanship.

Feeling

El Membrillo still feels like a self-contained entity. Walking down Sentinel Ave., the authenticity of the dwellings, together with their housescapes and streetscapes, give the sense of being in a semi-rural pocket, rather than in the middle of Tucson's contemporary urban fabric. As a result, El Membrillo retains integrity of feeling.

Association

The neighborhood has retained the essential physical features that convey its historic identity as one of Tucson's historic barrios, significant under Criteria A and C. In the area of community planning and development, the distinctive environment created by its inhabitants is still evident. In the area of architecture, its contributing dwellings are relatively unaltered characteristic examples of the survival of the Sonoran Tradition into the twentieth century. As a result, El Membrillo retains integrity of association.

Contributing and Noncontributing Resources

The following list provides the status of the resources within Barrio El Membrillo. Of the 13 dwellings in the district, 11 (84.6 percent) are contributing. For each entry, the initial date of construction is also given. Dates are based primarily on data from the Pima County Assessor's property record files, as well as from conversations with long-time residents.

Street Address	*Survey Site No.*	*Date Constructed*	*National Register Status*

W. Mesa St.			
608	001	1926	contributing
609	002	1924	contributing
S. Sentinel Ave.			
331	003	1925	contributing
337	004	1936	contributing
406	005	1927	noncontributing (inappropriate additions resulting in loss of historic integrity)
410	006	1925	contributing
418	007	1922	contributing
421	008	1937	contributing
425	009	1928	noncontributing (inappropriate additions resulting in loss of historic integrity)
435	010	1929	contributing
440	011	1922	contributing
443	012	1936	contributing
473	013	1941	contributing

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Historic Context

In 1775, the Royal Presidio of San Agustín del Tucsón was founded on the east bank of the Río Santa Cruz as one of the presidios of the line, or *cordón*, along the northern frontier of New Spain. Across the river, the pueblito of San Agustín, consisting of a Pima village with a *visita* (outlying mission) of San Xavier del Bac, was already established. The presido garrison arrived early in the following year and eventually the settlement took form. Sheridan (1986:14) describes the way of life:

> By the beginning of the nineteenth century, Tucson had evolved into a typical agrarian community of northern Sonora, a self-sufficient settlement of rancher-farmers supporting a garrison of soldiers, no different in most respects from many other such pueblos scattered across New Spain's northern frontier. Tucsonenses...relied upon a mixed economy of both agriculture and stock raising to make a living. They ran their livestock on the semiarid plains and uplands, and raised food for their families and forage for their animals on floodplain fields. It was a way of life geared towards subsistence rather than commercial exploitation or expansion.

Over the following half century, during which Sonora became a state of the Republic of Mexico, Tucson maintained trade and communication with the rest of Sonora by regular pack trains, but daily life remained the same. Because of the threat of Apache raids, dwellings remained concentrated within the walls of the presidio, although some were built just outside the walls on the south and southwest (Officer 1987:288) and "a scattering of individual [fortified] *ranchos* stretched [along the Santa Cruz] as far south as Punta de Agua" (Sheridan 1986:78).

Tucson's Barrios

The U.S. acquired this portion of northern Sonora in 1854 with the Gadsden Purchase, but U.S. troops did not relieve Tucson's Mexican garrison until 1856; the U.S. Territory of Arizona was created in 1863. With the gradual subsidence of the Apache threat, Tucson began to expand. As Anglo-Americans bought or claimed lots within the area of the presidio, Tucsonenses "continued to hold the fields and some of the lots within the walls but they claimed much more property to the south of the fort, where some had lived when not under fire from the Apaches" (Officer 1987:288). Prior to 1880, when the Southern Pacific Railroad arrived, Tucson was developing as a bicultural, bilingual frontier community (Officer 1981). As the railroad initiated the wholesale transplantation of Anglo-Americans and their culture, Hispanic and Anglo relations deteriorated (Luckingham 1982). As Sheridan (1986:42) puts it, "the railroad destroyed the frontier and drove a deep wedge between the Anglo and Mexican communities in town." Anglo-Americans settled in subdivisions north and east of the Southern Pacific tracks, which formed a de facto boundary, dividing Tucson into ethnic enclaves: Hispanic on the southwest, Anglo-American on the northeast (Gourley 1992). In a study of interethnic relationships in Tucson, one

informant (born in Tucson in 1870) recalled that Anglo-Americans settled in the northeast "partly to get away from the Mexicans, and partly because there was higher ground out that way…You see, most of the easterners resented mixing with the Mexicans" (Getty 1950:99).

Hispanics still constituted a majority of the city's population—54.7 percent in 1900—but as more Anglo-Americans arrived the percentage steadily dropped (to 36.8 percent by 1920) (Sheridan 1986:3). Anglo-Americans had acquired most of the agricultural fields—simply more land for development—and were in the process of acquiring most of the grazing land. As the traditional agropastoral economy disappeared, most Tucsonenses—with the exception of the relatively small Hispanic upper and middle classes—adapted to an Anglo commercial economy by working as an ever-increasing proportion of a low-paid labor force. As marginalization in the economic sphere was accompanied by similar marginalization in the social and political, the barrios "offered [Tucsonenses] both identity and security, protecting them against some of the most overt manifestations of subordination or discrimination" (Sheridan 1986:225).

In the early 1880s, most of Tucson's urban core conformed to the traditional Hispanic urban model; the predominant property type was the Sonoran row house. This was the original "Barrio Viejo" that later succumbed to urban renewal. Beginning in the in the late 1880s and early 1890s and continuing into the first decades of the next century, distinct Hispanic neighborhoods developed outside this urban core. They were generally located in the southwest part of Tucson, continuing the pattern of ethnic separation. These were closely knit neighborhoods, with large extended families. The classic urban property type—the Sonoran row house—appears in the earlier barrios, but the detached single-family house, owner-built in the Sonoran Tradition, gradually became the predominant type. The resulting streetscapes reflect a partial adoption of Anglo-American suburban spatial conventions, but the variable placement of dwellings and their distinctive housescapes are unique to the barrios. The semi-rural atmosphere of the barrios near the river—El Membrillo, El Hoyo, Kroeger Lane, and Barrio Anita—recalls the farming and ranching heritage of the Tucsonenses (and also of the Mexican immigrants who settled in the barrios). Today these neighborhoods retain a strong identity and members of the younger generation regard the heritage of the barrio—communal, familial, spiritual—with a sense of cultural pride (Encinas 1998).

Community Planning and Development

At the beginning of the Territorial period, the land that would become the Cottonwood Addition was a 16-acre parcel farmed by the Pachecos, a family long associated with the Tucson presidio (McCarty 1997; Sheridan 1986). Like several other parcels, it was eventually acquired by an Anglo-American real estate entrepreneur, in this case Michael Hayhurst, who platted it in 1920. (Hayhurst was also associated with the company that platted the subdivision of Elysian Grove, which is part of El Hoyo, and later gave his name to the Hayhurst Addition, where Barrio Kroeger Lane developed.) Families bought lots and built their own homes, usually with the assistance of kinfolk. As Officer (1964:111) notes, "[m]any of the homes in the barrios had been built through the cooperative efforts of extended families." Other than thefact that the neighborhood was platted in blocks and lots as a subdivision, El Membrillo was essentially self-created; this was generally true of all such barrios. The plat filed with the City shows precise lot measurements, as required, but on the ground these are only approximate. Boundaries were agreed upon by mutual consent, rather than paying for verification by civil surveyors; as a result, many dwellings impinge on lot lines. The

conventions (and, eventually, codes) that governed Anglo-American neighborhoods within Tucson did not apply. On S. Sentinel Ave., as can be seen on the district map, even the house numbers are not sequential. Originally, the residents depended on wells; City water and sewer lines, utilities, and paved streets came much later.

During the 1920s, the inhabitants of El Membrillo got by with a relatively slim margin of economic security and within the following decade even this was imperiled. The Depression of the 1930s was called in Spanish *la crisis*, and with good reason: on many jobs, Hispanics were the first workers to be laid off and "the slight [economic] gains of the first two decades of the century were reversed by poverty and unemployment during the third" (Sheridan 1986:235). Yet Tucson's Hispanic community rallied and relief efforts were organized, among them the *Comité Pro-Infantil* formed by the *Alianza Hispano-Americana* and other groups. The committee provided food for children at barrio schools; for El Membrillo, this meant Carrillo School, over by El Hoyo. Federal relief efforts, primarily jobs with the Civilian Conservation Corps, helped also.

The late 1930s brought a slight recovery before the war, and data from the city directory for 1940 provide a glimpse of the socioeconomic status of El Membrillo's inhabitants at this point. In terms of employment, well over a third of the men (37 percent) were listed simply as "laborer," which meant they counted as unskilled labor at the lowest wages. As Sheridan (1986) points out, many of these workers had multiple skills, but this was the only work they could find. Twenty-three percent were working in the construction trades as bricklayers, carpenters, plasterers, and painters. Almost an equal amount (22 percent) worked at local companies: Pacific Fruit Express, O'Malley's Lumber, Tucson Ice, and Tucson Pressed Brick. The remaining 18 percent worked for the Southern Pacific (known as *el traque*), the largest single employer in Tucson at that time (Sheridan 1986). These data can be compared to the results of the Arizona Historical Society's Mexican Heritage Project study of Tucson's occupational structure (Sheridan 1986:Appendix B). That study, also based on city directories, classified 74.1 percent of Tucson's Hispanic workers as blue collar in 1940. Of these blue-collar workers, 23.5 percent were classified as skilled labor, 20.9 percent as semiskilled, and 55.7 percent as unskilled. These numbers correspond fairly closely to those for El Membrillo, which was 100 percent blue collar. Using the same categories as the Mexican Heritage Project study, the neighborhood's work force was 22.0 percent skilled labor, 19.5 percent semiskilled, and 58.5 percent unskilled.

At this time (the beginning of the 1940s) most of the families in El Membrillo owned their homes (Segoe and Faure 1942:Table 1). The barrio was part of the cathedral parish, St. Augustine's; residents also attended the chapel of San Cosme, close by in El Hoyo. El Membrillo had its own store, the Lee Wing Market on Sentinel Ave.; Chinese groceries like Lee's were common throughout Tucson's barrios (Lister and Lister 1989). In short, although still lacking infrastructure such as water and sewer lines, El Membrillo was a stable, viable neighborhood. However, it did not fit with the City's plans for the area, based on the recommendations of an outside consulting firm (based in Cincinnati) hired in 1940 to prepare a study of Tucson's housing as part of a comprehensive regional plan (Bufkin 1981). The consultants considered the area between the former EP&SW tracks and the river to be inappropriate for residential purposes (i.e., it should not have been subdivided for such purposes in the first place). The existing housing was classified as "substandard," primarily because of the lack of indoor plumbing and an occupancy ratio of more than

one person to a room, although, as Gourley (1992) points out, such conditions were neither unusual nor necessarily unacceptable at the time. The study recommended that the area be zoned for "future industrial and business development" (Segoe and Faure 1942:26-27). Soon thereafter, the Tucson Freeway was cut through the area and businesses moved in. These eventually included an asphalt plant and a trucking company, both immediately south of El Membrillo; the trucking company's rigs were usually parked on vacant lots within the neighborhood.

In the postwar era, many Hispanics who had served in World War II and the Korean conflict moved out of the barrios to new subdivisions, leaving the older generation behind. Beginning in 1965, the City embarked upon a urban renewal program that, as noted above, demolished most of the old Hispanic urban core as well as the north half of El Hoyo (Gómez-Novy and Polyzoides 2003; Gourley 1992). The destruction was traumatic for many barrio residents and is still remembered with bitterness, but it also proved to be a turning point. In the early 1970s, when the State Department of Transportation proposed to build an east-west expressway that would have effectively wiped out Barrio Libre, El Hoyo, and El Membrillo, the barrios rallied and public opposition forced them to abandon the scheme. The City officially recognized the significance of Barrio Libre and El Hoyo in 1975, when these two neighborhoods were designated a City historic district, "Barrio Histórico." The district, however, did not include El Membrillo, which was still slated for commercial development. This issue came to a head at the end of the decade, when the City presented the Old Pueblo South Plan, which called for improvements to El Hoyo and other neighborhoods but proposed razing El Membrillo and building a 20-acre "industrial park" between the interstate and the former EP&SW tracks (which would be converted to a north-south arterial). The OPS plan was met with a storm of protest. Bertha Santa Cruz, who had been born in 1925 on Mesa St. and who had lost her son in Vietnam, put it this way: "The people in El Membrillo have lived there all their lives. Uprooting them at this time in their lives, after they've given their sons to the country, their best years…Just to come in and throw people away is wrong" (Kay 1978).

The City then revised the OPS plan to "allow the El Membrillo community to assess their situation with consultants of their own choosing" (City of Tucson 1979:2). The resulting *Plan for El Membrillo Neighborhood* called for rezoning to promote residential rather than commercial use, rehabilitation of existing dwellings, and the installation of sidewalks, street trees, noise abatement walls along the interstate, and other amenities (Rogers and Gladwin 1981). Almost none of these proposals were implemented, although the asphalt plant and trucking company eventually moved out. The City subsequently demolished the portion of El Membrillo north of Clark (now Granada) St. to provide more parking for the Tucson Convention Center, and the State Department of Transportation demolished more properties on the west to widen the interstate frontage road (Devine 2001). Of the 27 dwellings extant in 1981, only 13 are left, but the plans for industrial development have been scrapped and El Membrillo has survived. In contrast to the rootlessness of so much of Tucson, the residents of barrios like El Membrillo feel grounded. As one resident commented, "Just walk down the street and here is someone you've known all your life. My family lives here, my wife's family lives here. I'm a lot more comfortable here in my own environment, in my own atmosphere. I don't have to look over my back like I would in some strange neighborhood." Another, who had recently moved back to El Membrillo, said he found the east side of the city "very cold…You never see anyone walking down the street or in their front yard. You just see them

looking through windows…It's a matter of relationships, wanting to stay here [in El Membrillo]. It's a harmonious thing to live with the people you grew up with" (Block 1979).

Architecture

The building tradition of the Sonoran frontier was characterized by adaptation and expediency. Tucsonenses survived "largely because they understood the limitations imposed by a harsh environment, and learned to live within them" (Sheridan 1986:14). Their architecture during the Spanish Viceregal and Mexican Republic periods was composed, quite literally, of earth and timber (Bunting 1976). Bearing walls were built of adobe brick and mud mortar with (or, often, without) foundations of stone rubble masonry; brick dimensions varied, but tended to be larger than those of adobe bricks used today. Walls were typically of bonded two-wythe construction, with a one-to-ten ratio of thickness to height. Dwellings were limited to a single story, but with high walls; thus a typical 15-foot wall would have a thickness of 18 inches or more. Openings were spanned with pairs of roughly hewn mesquite lintels. On the exterior, walls were plastered with mud or (commonly) left exposed.

Roofs were built of logs with diameters of 9 to 12 inches, stripped of bark, laid on 20- to 40-inch centers, and covered with a decking of saguaro ribs, followed by multiple layers of brush or other organic material and earth, ranging in depth from 8 to 24 inches. The roof surface was graded to channel rainwater to drains that pierced the parapet. In this building tradition, the essential unit, or module was a rectangular room 12 to 15 feet wide, depending on the span of the roof beams, and not much longer. At the most basic level, the room was a self-sufficient multipurpose living space (Wilson 1991). The traditional floor plan was linear, formed incrementally of these modular units, each with its own exterior door. The households of presidial Tucson lived in a contiguous series of such rooms built along the interior of the presidio walls (Gallegos 1935).

As Tucson, the largest settlement in the U.S. Territory of Arizona, grew from the 1860s through the 1880s, this frontier model was expanded into the traditional Hispanic urban model: blocks formed of contiguous rooms built up to the street. The model was oriented inward to the family space of the courtyard, and street facades were accented only by the rhythm of apertures along the uniform continuous adobe walls. Passage from the street to the courtyard was through a *zaguán*, or entryway, which mediated between public and private space. Functions other than domestic, such as stores or offices, were distinguished only by the occasional sign. In Tucson, the largest surviving concentration of these Sonoran row houses is in Barrio Libre, the only remaining poertion of the old Hispanic urban core (Giebner and Sobin 1972, 1973). As the city became a distribution node within the U.S. market economy, particularly after 1880 when the Southern Pacific Railroad arrived, manufactured building products and materials became increasingly available. For walls, adobe brick remained the principal structural material; when fired common brick became available, it was used primarily to cap adobe brick parapets. Cylindrical metal roof drains replaced wood troughs. Glazing and ready-made window sash and paneled wood doors became available, as well as milled lumber for door and window frames. Yet the basic form remained and initially, at least, Anglo-American influence did not alter the essential Hispanic nature of Tucson's architecture.

However, as Anglo-American building techniques and concepts of architectural space were gradually introduced, basic changes occurred. The first was manifested in the introduction of wood frame technology: earth roofs were covered with (and, in new construction, eventually displaced by) lightweight gabled or hipped roofs framed of milled lumber, and clad in wood shingles, terne plate, or corrugated iron. The second and more fundamental introduction was the Anglo-American idea of the house subdivided into rooms as the basic building unit, as contrasted with the traditional Hispanic idea of the self-sufficient room as the basic unit; furthermore, Anglo-Americans introduced the concept of the residential suburb with its uniform lots and setbacks (Veregge 1993). Hispanic builders selectively borrowed these ideas and concepts, just as they borrowed new materials and building techniques, while at the same time retaining key elements of their regional tradition. This architecture of cultural convergence would characterize Hispanic vernacular in the region until the middle of the next century.

Sobin (1975, 1977) developed an evolutionary model to describe these developments. In his study of the historic architecture of Florence, Arizona, Sobin discerned a sequential pattern consisting of acculturation (the Sonoran style), fusion (Early and Late Transitional styles), and importation (American Victorian styles). The Sonoran style is defined as the original Hispanic building tradition. Early Transitional is the first hybrid phase combining the Sonoran adobe brick form, linear plan, and lot placement with Anglo-American features (gabled roof, window sash); original Sonoran dwellings with a pitched roof added over the earth roof are termed "Transformed" Sonoran. Late Transitional is the succeeding hybrid phase, distinguished by adobe brick walls, square plan, broad porch, hipped roof, and setbacks. The sequence ends with American Victorian styles that represent a complete break with the regional building tradition; a typical example would be a Queen Anne built of fired brick.

This model has since become standard for explaining architectural developments in Tucson, and has been used in guidebooks for the general public, such as the *Tucson Preservation Primer* (Giebner 1981) and, most recently, *A Guide to Tucson Architecture* (Nequette and Jeffery 2002). Sobin's model does effectively describe the development of Tucson's Anglo-American architecture during the Territorial period, wherein cultural hybrids are simply a brief intermediate phase prior to the wholesale importation of late-nineteenth century architectural fashion from the Eastern U.S. But, as Husband (1988) points out in her study of row houses in Tucson's barrios, this late nineteenth-century sequence is inadequate for describing the early twentieth-century architecture of Tucson's barrios. To document the survival of the Sonoran Tradition into this period, Husband (1988:17-30) uses a simplified typology of the basic forms: parapeted Sonoran and pitched-roof (gabled or hipped) Sonoran. These were influenced to varying degrees by contemporaneous Anglo-American styles, principally Craftsman and Mission/Spanish Eclectic after World War I. In some cases, like El Membrillo, the influences are minimal; in other barrios, there are more overt examples.

El Membrillo's contributing dwellings are about evenly divided between parapeted and gabled Sonoran forms. Of the six parapeted Sonorans, 331 (Photograph 2) and 421 N. Sentinel Ave. have brick coping; the others—337, 443, and 473 N. Sentinel Ave. and 609 W. Mesa St.—have plain parapets. Of the gabled Sonorans 418, 410 (Photograph 3), and 440 N. Sentinel Ave. have gables on the sides, while 435 N. Sentinel Ave. (Photograph 4) and 608 W. Mesa St. have broad gables facing the street. The dwelling at

331 N. Sentinel Ave., now single-family but originally built with two units, represents a last vestige of the Sonoran row house as a duplex.

Each of El Membrillo's dwellings and its immediate surroundings form a "housescape," a term first used by Arreola (1988) in a study of barrios in Tucson and elsewhere in the U.S. Southwest; it has since come into general use, within that context (e.g., Manger 2000; Vinson 1991). A key element of the barrio housescape is the small front yard enclosed with a low fence, as is the norm in El Membrillo; the fences were made of wood pickets or wire early on and of chain-link since the 1940s. As summarized by Arreola (1981:99), "the fence fulfilled two roles at once: it defined property lines and it symbolized the enclosure of space that characterized the traditional Hispanic urban model. With homes no longer built flush to the street in the early Sonoran style, there was a need to define and control the open space in front of the house that resulted from its setback." Manger (2000:27) develops this further:

> By shifting the courtyard to the front of the house and extending it to the street with chain-link fences barrio residents created individualized spaces that give life to the streets and community. Because the threshold has been moved to the street, the front yard enclosure, like the zaguán before it, acts to control social interaction. Yet because it creates a frame around the house that allows visual access, it acts as an informal space that provides a comfortable point where people can congregate.

In summary, Barrio El Membrillo today is a living barrio that has retained its distinctive built environment and has maintained its connections with the traditions that created it.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Plats, Pima County Recorder's Office, Old Pima County Courthouse, Tucson.

Property Record Files, Pima County Assessor's Office, Old Pima County Courthouse, Tucson.

Tucson City Directory, 1940. On file, Arizona Historical Society, Tucson.

Secondary Sources

Arreola, David D.
1981 Fences as Landscape Taste: Tucson's Barrios. *Journal of Cultural Geography* 2(1):96-105.

1988 Mexican-American Housescapes. *Geographical Revie*w 78:299-315.

Block, Deborah
1979 El Membrillo is Home. *Tucson Citizen* 12 July. Tucson.

Bufkin, Don
1981 From Mud Village to Modern Metropolis: The Urbanization of Tucson. *Journal of Arizona History* 22:63-98.

Bunting, Bainbridge
1976 *Early Architecture in New Mexico.* University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

City of Tucson
1979 *Old Pueblo South Community Plan*. City of Tucson Planning Department, Tucson.

Devine, David
2001 Down by the River Side. *Tucson Weekly* 22 February. Tucson.

Encinas, Steven (editor)
1998 *Looking into the Westside: Untold Stories of the People, 1900-1997.* Tucson-Pima Arts Council, Tucson.

Gallegos, Hilario
1935 Reminiscences of an Arizona Pioneer. *Arizona Historical Review* 6(1):75-81.

Getty, Harry T.
1950 *Interethnic Relationships in the Community of Tucson.* Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago. University Microfilms, Ann Arbor.

Giebner, Robert (editor)

1981 *Tucson Preservation Primer: A Guide for the Property Owner.* College of Architecture, University of Arizona, Tucson.

Giebner, Robert C., and Harris J. Sobin
1973 Tucson's Barrio Histórico. *Arizona Architect* 16:8-13.

Giebner, Robert C., and Harris J. Sobin (editors)
1972 *Barrio Histórico, Tucson*. College of Architecture, University of Arizona, Tucson.

Gomez-Novy, Juan, and Stefanos Polyzoides
2003 A Tale of Two Cities: The Failed Urban Renewal of Downtown Tucson in the Twentieth Century. *Journal of the Southwest* 45:87-119.

Gourley, John
1992 *The Pueblo and the Public: Urban Realities in Counterpoint.* Ph.D. dissertation, University of Arizona, Tucson. University Microfilms, Ann Arbor.

Husband, Eliza
1988 *Tucson's Suburban Adobe Row Houses.* Tucson-Pima County Historical Commission, Tucson.

Kay, Jane
1978 El Membrillo: Plan Will Bury Barrio. *Arizona Daily Star* 16 July. Tucson.

Lister, Florence, and Robert Lister
1989 *The Chinese of Early Tucson: Historical Archaeology from the Tucson Urban Renewal Project.* University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Luckingham, Bradford
1982 *The Urban Southwest.* University of Texas Press, El Paso.

McAlester, Virginia, and Lee McAlester
1997 *A Field Guide to American Houses.* Alfred A. Knopf, New York.

McCarty, Kieran
1997 *A Frontier Documentary: Sonora and Tucson, 1821-1848.* University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Manger, William F.
2000 The "Idealized" Mexican American Housescape. *Material Culture* 32(1):1-36

Nequette, Anne M., and R. Brooks Jeffery
2002 *A Guide to Tucson Architecture*. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Officer, James E.

1964 *Sodalities and Systemic Linkage: The Joining Habits of Urban Mexican-Americans.* Ph.D. dissertation, University of Arizona, Tucson. University Microfilms, Ann Arbor.

1981 *Arizona's Hispanic Perspective: A Research Report.* Arizona Academy, Phoenix.

1987 *Hispanic Arizona, 1536-1856.* University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Rogers, Walter, and Robert Gladwin
1981 *Plan for El Membrillo Neighborhood.* Prepared for the City of Tucson Department of Human and Community Development and El Membrillo Neighborhood. Rogers and Gladwin Associates, Tucson.

Segoe, Ladislas, and Andre M. Faure
1942 *Rehabilitation of Blighted Areas, Conservation of Sound Neighborhoods.* Prepared for the Tucson Regional Plan. Ladislas Segoe and Associates, Cincinnati.

Sheridan, Thomas
1986 *Los Tucsonenses: The Mexican Community in Tucson, 1854-1941.* University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Sobin, Harris J.
1975 From *Vigas* to Rafters: Architectural Evolution in Florence, Arizona. *Journal of Arizona History* 16:357-382.

Sobin, Harris J. (editor)
1977 *Florence Townsite, A.T.: Final Report of Florence Townsite Historic District Study.* Harris Sobin and Associates, Tucson.

Veregge, Nina
1993 Transformations of Spanish Urban Landscapes in the American Southwest, 1821-1900. *Journal of the Southwest* 35:371-459.

Vinson, Mark C.
1991 Cultural Continuity and Change in a Mexican-American Vernacular Landscape. Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of Geography, Arizona State University, Tempe.

Wilson, Chris
1991 Pitched Roofs Over Flat. *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* 4:87-97.

Maps and Figures

1. USGS 7.5-Minute Quadrangle: Tucson, Arizona 1996.
2. Barrio El Membrillo Historic District.
3. Plat of Cottonwood Addition, 1920; boundary of Barrio El Membrillo Historic District shown with dashed line.
4. Recent aerial photograph showing changes to Barrio El Membrillo.
5. Tucson Barrios, 1940 (Sheridan 1986:Figure 14.2)