

**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*.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: El Dorado Lodge

Other names/site number: Stone Ashley; Mountain Oyster Club

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 6400 E. El Dorado Circle

City or town: Tucson State: AZ County: Pima

Not For Publication: Vicinity: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 ___ 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 X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B X C ___ D

<p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title: <u>State Historic Preservation Office, Arizona State Parks and Trails</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
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<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____ Signature of commenting official:</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
<p>_____ Title:</p>	<p>_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>

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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

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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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1 (landscaping)</u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u>2 (sculpture, monument)</u>	objects
<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling
DOMESTIC: Hotel
COMMERCE: Restaurant
SOCIAL: Clubhouse

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL: Clubhouse
COMMERCE: Restaurant
COMMERCE: Business
RECREATION/CULTURE: Works of Art
RECREATION/CULTURE: Monument/Marker
LANDSCAPE: Gardens/Plaza

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

19th and 20th Century Revivals

Other: Italian Renaissance (includes Landscape Design)

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: Concrete

Walls: Custom Brick

Native Stone

Roof: Flat Roof on Wood Framing

Other:

Windows: Wood and Steel Sash; Glass

Doors: Wood (Includes Custom Design Front Door-1932)

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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Figure. 1. Main Entrance of Mountain Oyster Club (current name) / Stone Ashley (1936-1947) / El Dorado Lodge (1948-1972). Statue “The Cowboy” in front.
AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0001

SUMMARY PARAGRAPH

El Dorado Lodge is the preferred historic name for the residence originally known as Stone Ashley and the social club now known as the Mountain Oyster Club, that name being used for the majority of the property’s period of significance and reflecting its primary historic association. El Dorado Lodge is a large, 3-story building located on nearly four landscaped acres. The original 2-story residence was designed by architect Grosvenor Atterbury and constructed between 1934 and 1936 by M.M. Sundt Construction Company. The architectural style is Italian Renaissance Revival style with complementary landscaping such as the entry drive lined by Italian Cypress trees. It was constructed of local native fieldstone and hand-hewn brick (Figure 1). A partial third story was added when the property became a social club, El Dorado Lodge, in 1949. The property includes two additional contributing buildings: the original Bathhouse and the B Building also added during the conversion to the lodge. In addition to the main building, there are 5,928 square feet of terraced patios on the southern and western sides with views of the Rincon and Santa Catalina Mountain ranges to the north and east. The property retains a high level of integrity conveying both the significance of its original architectural character and its function as an important social venue in Tucson (see Section 8, Statement of Significance).

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Location and Setting

The El Dorado Lodge, now the Mountain Oyster Club, is sited on 3.9834 acres on the eastern edge of midtown Tucson, Arizona (Figure 2). It is located at 6400 East El Dorado Circle, one block northeast of the major intersection of Speedway Boulevard and Wilmot Road. Originally set in open desert in the 1930s, the surrounding area has since urbanized. Neighboring midtown properties consist of one-story commercial businesses, two-story residential complexes and several three-story office buildings, including the El Dorado Health Complex, a small community-based medical facility, all of which are on what was originally part of the historic Stone Ashley parcel (Figure 3). The National Register-listed Harold Bell Wright Estates Historic District, a residential neighborhood developed after 1950, is located to the south of Speedway Blvd.

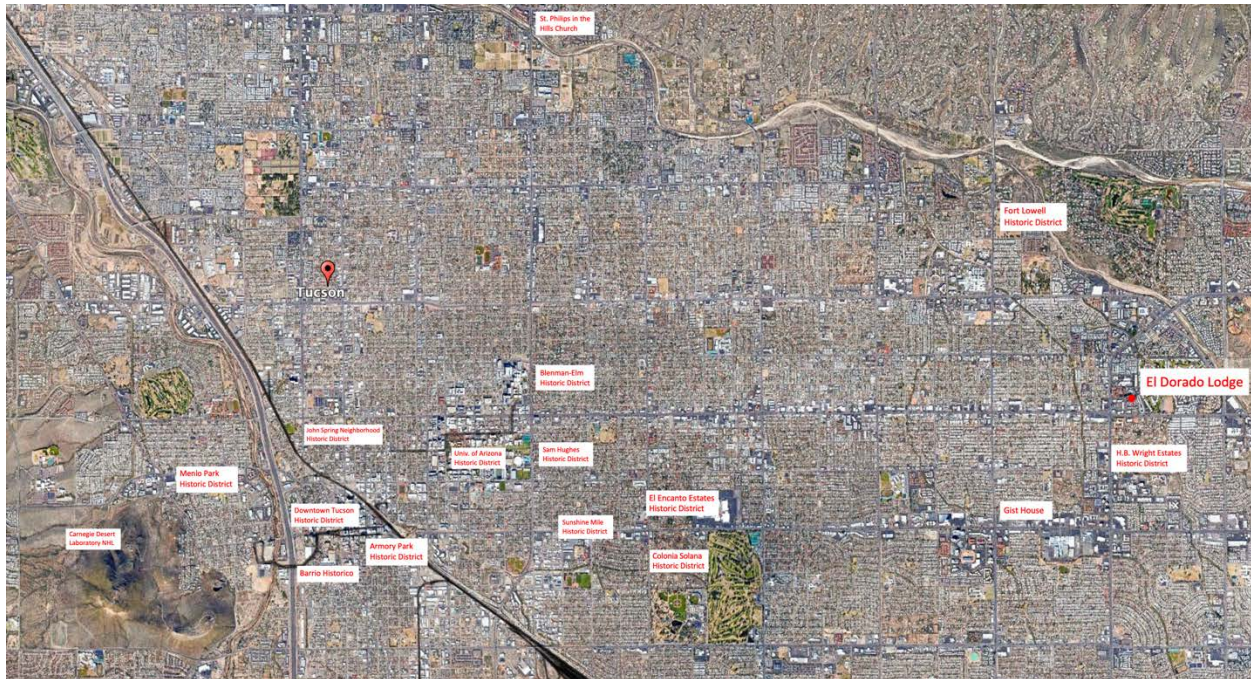


Figure 2. El Dorado Lodge in relation to notable National Register-listed properties in Tucson. Source: Google Earth, 2023.

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Figure 3. Aerial perspective overlaid with outline of Mountain Oyster Club property and nominated area. Source: Google Earth, 2023.

Materials and Exterior Form

El Dorado Lodge is designed in the Italian Renaissance Revival Style, one of the historically-inspired motifs of the late 19th and early 20th Century Period Revival movement. The two-story front façade features a three-arched loggia and covered second-story porch facing the historic landscaped entry drive. It is constructed of native fieldstone and hand-hewn brick arranged in horizontal bands of alternating stone and brick with concrete grout which creates a rectilinear exterior definition. The bands are finished at each intersection of the doors, windows and walls with caps of brick trim and large decorative pieces of fieldstone. The masonry arrangement appears from a distance as if the walls were formed in full story “blocks.” Both arched picture windows and iron casement windows with heavy wooden lintels are featured throughout the structure’s eastern exterior walls while both rectangular and arched picture windows enhance the southern and western exterior walls, providing tremendous visual access to the surrounding landscape and the Rincon and Santa Catalina Mountain ranges in the distance. The flat roof, present over all three stories of the building, creates a simple but imposing appearance of the residence as it rises from the desert. Significant features include the handmade heavy wooden door with colored glass panels at the Main Entry, the second story porch above the entrance on

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the eastern face of the building, and the decorative iron gates and grilles that complement the ironwork in the terrace walls.

The distinctive architectural attributes of El Dorado Lodge have been well preserved. The primary building, a former residence, is in its original condition as are the two contributing buildings, the Bathhouse and the B Building. The original floor plans of the mansion, designed in the style of the Early 20th Century Revival of Italian Renaissance, have been largely unaltered. The exteriors of both of the contributing buildings exist in their original condition except where raised by a third story in 1949.

The Main Entry is within a portico containing three arches, the middle of which is the location of the heavy, hand-crafted wood entry door with decorative leaded glass (Figure 4). The portico runs the length of the building's eastern exposure. The portico and arches offer a dramatic entry and shady respite from the Southwestern sun.



Figure 4. Hand-hewn Main Entry door of wood, iron and colored glass.

AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0005

A circular planter at the center of the main circle drive contains a life-size bronze statue by Tucson sculptor Buck McCain. In addition to the original decorative wrought iron light fixtures on the exterior of the mansion, ironwork creates the super structures for the fountains and fills the arches in the terraced garden walls of a desert playground created to enhance the southern and western exposures. This feature does not date to the period of significance and is classified as noncontributing.

South of the Main Entrance, access is given to the southern face of the mansion and a small parking lot where the Bathhouse is located (Figure 5). The original masonry walls and remainders of the grove of citrus and Italian Cypress trees surround the Bathhouse and perimeter of the parking lot's western wall.

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A wrought iron gate at the western end of the southern façade provides access to the Back Patio Entrance and the terraced western exposure of the mansion. The Back Patio Entrance is located directly east of the Arizona Room and offers handicap accessibility into the mansion.

From the Main Entry Circle, just twenty feet to the north on the driveway, a circle head wrought iron gate opens into a small courtyard that contains a fountain, a staircase to the Second-Floor offices and doors providing access to the office suites and the vacant dining area.

The entire building is set on a site that slopes down from the ground level at the western front to the back eastern face almost an entire story. There is a partial basement with the stairwell halfway through the building (as shown in the First Floor plan between the Main Dining Room (Rm. #4) and the Slate (Lower) Dining Room (Rm. #1)). There are two exterior doors from the back parking lot into the space. There are two adjoining partial basement spaces that have separate entrances to their spaces, now used for storage, but dating to the original Stone Ashley construction period.



Figure 5. The Bathhouse, Eastern Perimeter of South Parking Lot. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0006



Figure 6: South Façade of the Mountain Oyster Club. Parking Lot. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0007

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Interior Features

The building has 11,048 square feet of interior space on the First Floor. Throughout the First Floor's public use areas, the surface appearance of the interior walls is that of the hand-hewn masonry, which was created by the building's exterior construction materials. One wall in most rooms is smooth plastered, providing contrast to the stone and serving as display space for art. Referring to illustrations of Current Floor Plans for Mountain Oyster Club (Appendix), the interior public spaces within the Mountain Oyster Club are:

- 1 Lower Dining Room
- 2 Foyer with Accessible Bathroom
- 3 Card Room
- 4 Main Dining Room/Adjoining Restrooms
- 5 Board Room
- 6 Bar
- 8 Arizona Room
- 9 Catalina Room
- 11 Covered Patio
- 13 Suite

Heavy wood beam ceilings are exposed throughout the large rooms: the Main Dining Room, the Lower Dining Room, the Catalina Room, and the Bar, and two smaller spaces which are the Inner Lobby and the Boardroom. A dropped ceiling exists in the Front Entrance and the Card Room; a wood ceiling warms the Arizona Room ceiling. The flooring is green Italian slate throughout the First Floor except in the carpeted Main Dining Room, Card Room and Board Room and the mesquite flooring in the Bar and Catalina Room. Three walls of the Catalina Room are dedicated to expansive arched picture windows and two walls of the Arizona Room are largely committed to floor to ceiling rectangular windows. Oversized fireplaces are prominent in the Main Dining Room, Lower Dining Room and Card Room.

All areas of the First Floor are open to the members who belong to the Mountain Oyster Club, their guests and members of the public that have reserved event space within the building. Only the staff are allowed in the three rooms designated as Service space.

Service space on the First Floor includes:

- 7 Kitchen and Staff Quarters
- 15 Staff Office
- 16 Dining Service Station

The Second Floor contains 2,008 square feet and the Third Floor 2,460 square feet of interior space. The interior space on those two floors is dedicated to leased private offices and restrooms serving those offices. The offices have been carpeted and painted to the specifications of each tenant.

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The Ground Floor is accessed from three exterior doors in the back of the building which are not for public use. As the mansion was built on a site that has a slight slope, the three areas created by the concrete foundation of the building are accessed by the staff down a flight of stairs inside the mansion. The spaces are used for administrative offices, art storage and art workshop and general storage.

Used primarily for dining, dancing, social events and art exhibits, the First Floor interior is comprised of two large dining areas running parallel to each other through the mansion from the eastern lobby entrance west to the rear of the building. The smaller of the two dining rooms, the Slate (Lower Dining) Room, is south of the larger and sunken two steps below the north Main Dining Room. Masonry fireplaces are placed back-to-back in the two dining rooms. (Figures 7 and 8)

Adjoining the dining rooms on the southern and the western exposure of the mansion are two great Arizona Rooms, long narrow dining and meeting spaces with floor to ceiling windows through which the immediate desert and distant mountains are seen.

The flooring of the First Floor Lobby, Lower Dining Room and southern Arizona Room, is green Italian slate. The Main Dining Room, Card Room and Board Room are carpeted in red and gold, with the logo of the Mountain Oyster Club. The largest of the two Arizona Rooms, the Catalina Room on the western exposure, and the Bar have flooring of mesquite wood.



Fig. 7: Main Dining Room with Arch Entrance to Slate (Lower) Dining Room.
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Fig. 8: Slate (Lower) Dining Room with Original Italian Green Slate Floor.
AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0011

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Smaller adjoining rooms stretch across the eastern perimeter of the mansion adjoining the main entrance: a small square Card Room with an additional fireplace, the adjoining Lobby for both the main and rear patio entrances and a long Board Room which provides access to the kitchen from the dining rooms.

The kitchen and bar/lounge on the northern perimeter of the building are adjacent to the Main Dining Room and Kitchen.

The Bar's current location adjacent to the kitchen space was established to accommodate a restaurant tenant in the 1970s after the sale of the Lodge. It was re-located from the space currently occupied by the Board Room. (Figure 14)

The kitchen is located in the northwestern quadrant of the mansion. The culinary area expansion in 1949 allowed the Lodge to serve 150 guests at each sitting.

The Catalina Room is the second of the "Arizona Rooms" which runs the length of the back of the mansion from the northern perimeter of the bar/lounge to the southern edge of the Main Dining Room. It joins the other Arizona Room as it steps down after passing an arch entrance to a small beverage station. (Figure 15)



Figure 13. Front Lobby with Arch Doorways into Lower Dining Room.

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Figure 14. Northern Wall of Bar/Lounge with Mesquite Floor.

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Off the kitchen complex on the northwest corner of the mansion, stands the B Building which was attached to the original structure when Stone Ashley was converted to the El Dorado Lodge in the late 1940s. (Figure 16) Entry is through the arched wrought iron gates. The inner paved courtyard offers entry to two distinct spaces: the largest known as the Regency Room (B-120) with adjoining spaces (B-150 and B-350) attached to serve as offices, and another small office space on the opposite side of the entry patio (B-400). Only Suite B-400 is in current use as a commercial office.



Figure 15. Southern Half of the Catalina Room with Mesquite Floor.

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Figure 16. B Building of Mountain Oyster Club – Front façade with arched gate.

AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0015

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Figure 17. Cypress-lined Entry Drive to Mountain Oyster Club.
AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0002

Landscaping and Site Features

The property, exhibiting characteristics of landscape design in the style of the 19th and 20th Century Italian Renaissance Revival, maintains its original garden walls, terraces, steps, and fountains composed of the stone and brick materials used in constructing the residence. The primary site planning of the mansion employs a strong north-south axis to arrange the original building. The front of the building (eastern face) features a covered porch accessed by a stone set of steps and defined by three arches. The center arch leads up to the Main Entry.

The southern and western exterior faces of the mansion are wrapped with 5,928 square feet of terraced patios that open the interior spaces to the precisely organized site. The wrought iron ornamentation at the building's windows and within the outer walls provides an exotic air to the streamlined exterior walls and windows.

The primary site planning of the mansion employs a strong north-south axis to arrange the original building. The property is approached via a long driveway west from El Dorado Circle and Speedway Blvd. that is outlined by 50 Italian Cypress trees and ends in a circle drive, directly in front of the Main Entry (Figure 17). The circular planter at the end of the drive

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contains a life-size bronze sculpture of “The Cowboy” by Tucson resident and Mountain Oyster Club member Buck McCain. The statue placed in the raised bed at the Main Entry replaced flowers and an 85-year-old irrigation system that required constant attention and wasted water. The statue complements the Mountain Oyster Club’s renowned collection of western art and artifacts.

A wealth of existing old trees (tamarack, cottonwood, mesquite and eucalyptus) and flowering desert vegetation including multiple varieties of cactus, is augmented by a landscape design in keeping with the Italian Renaissance structure. Filled with old-world plantings that include cypress, citrus, and olive, Atterbury’s design and tree plantings of olive and eucalyptus trees still accent the desert plantings surrounding the mansion as well as the two contributing buildings adjacent to it – the original Bathhouse and the B Building attached on the western wall of the mansion’s kitchen.

The Bathhouse sits on the eastern perimeter of the parking lot south of the entry circle, surrounded by the vestiges of one of several groves of citrus trees on the site. The rejuvenation of the citrus trees has occurred at least once due to a severe winter freeze in 1948 but never disturbed the mansion’s landscape design.

On the Northeast corner of the residence, the B Building is attached to the original mansion and heavily landscaped with flowering desert vines and olive trees. Entrance into the B Building is only available through the semi-circular wrought iron gate, centered in the B Building’s south facing fieldstone and masonry wall. Inside the iron gate, a set of stone steps allows visitors access to the offices on the eastern half of the B Building.

The original Italianate landscaping design of the mansion’s eastern exposure, behind the building, features two patios, upper and lower, with two fountains bubbling up against the upper back patio and east in the middle of the lower patio. A second level of patios and terraced walls of hand-hewn brick and native field stone step down from the western exposure’s upper patio to the lower patio and desert floor. The tall, multi-tiered upper fountain remains a focal point of both patios and continues to wear its wrought iron crown. The lower fountain is at the center of a large brick circular pool which used to house the water-cooling tower. The garden walls surrounding the entire area are, once again, constructed of the original masonry materials of the mansion with iron decorative inserts, as Atterbury originally placed them, and a wrought iron gate leading to the east parking lot.

Historic Development of Stone Ashley/El Dorado Lodge

Stone Ashley served as a second residence for Detroit native Florence Ponds from 1936 to 1947. When the mansion was sold in 1948, three new owners from New York—Arthur Bittker, Jack Taub and David Kluger—had the intention of converting the property and mansion into a luxury Western guest lodge which would serve Jewish tourists.

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The design of forty guest cottages to be built on the eastern perimeter of the property by Tucson architect Bernard J. Friedman was in keeping with the original exterior construction materials with rustic Southwestern interior features. Friedman was also charged to enhance the mansion itself with a Third Story and to convert the Second Story into an apartment for the partners, the Bittkers. Further modifications to the residence were the enclosure of a covered patio that ran across the entire back of the mansion, now known as the Catalina Room, to serve as the primary dining room for guests. In addition, six bedrooms dedicated to the Stone Ashley mansion staff were refurbished for use as El Dorado Lodge guest rooms and 16 new rooms, created in the Ground Floor under the Catalina Room, became the Staff Quarters.

The El Dorado Lodge owners directed the development of several leisure recreational attractions on the property for guest use: a solarium, horse stables, tennis and badminton courts, a putting green, walking paths and bridle paths throughout the property which eventually provided access to the El Dorado Community golf course.

In 1968, the El Dorado Lodge was sold to three new owners—Tilton and Edna Newell and Rex Nicholson. The new owners did not change any exterior features of the mansion and continued to operate the El Dorado Lodge as its previous owners had. They did add a movie theater for El Dorado Lodge guests located adjacent to the staff quarters on the Ground Floor, under the dining room. In 1972, the Lodge owners sold a parcel of the property for the construction of 40 homes to a Tucson-based developer, Marvin Volk of Marved Company.

Integrity of the Property

In 1973, following the end of the period of significance, Marved developed a tract of 40 homes and several commercial enterprises on the property that no longer was a part of the El Dorado Lodge parcel. No account has been published detailing the demise of the recreational attractions related to the Lodge but surely the stables, walking paths and other attractions were removed by Marved along with the string of 40 casitas.

During the same period in 1973, following the end of the period of significance, Allan and Midge Elias purchased the remaining piece of the El Dorado property, including the Stone Ashley mansion, making some exterior modifications to accommodate their intention to create several intimate dining environments. The Eliases:

- Removed the swimming pool on the south side of the El Dorado Lodge,
- Replaced the pool with a parking lot,
- Removed the iron cool tower in the back patio,
- Filled in and paved over the canal that carried water to and from the building, and
- Installed a modern HVAC in the mansion.

The El Dorado Lodge property that the Eliases purchased still included several restaurants, one of which was the Regency Room, when it changed ownership in 1975. Under their ownership,

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the Golden Bee and the Regency Room were refurbished, as well as the Palm Court Restaurant in the mansion.

Jerome Shull and Associates, a Tucson firm, purchased the parcel from the Eliases in 1975. In 1978, a fire destroyed the Regency Room in the B Building. The rest of the building continued to serve as offices leased to a variety of tenants.

In 1979, the mansion was leased to a Tucson restaurateur of note and became the site of four dining rooms as well as the Camelot Lounge. Upgrades to refresh the new spaces included the removal of paint from the ceiling beams as well the acoustic ceiling tile. Restoration of the fireplaces and green slate floor returned those spaces to their original condition. The restaurant became a modern French restaurant in 1998, continuing to do business as such until 2002.

The Mountain Oyster Club purchased the property in 2003. No modifications to the mansion's exterior were made except for the installation of outdoor lighting and a handicap-accessible ramp in the back garden.

Interior alterations to the building under the Mountain Oyster ownership include a handicap-accessible bathroom in the front hall, plumbing upgrades, kitchen reorganization and a current remodel in the Suite on the back patio. The Regency Room has never been renovated or used as a public space under the Mountain Oyster Club's ownership. All but one of the rental offices is occupied by outside entities.

Two statues were placed on the grounds by the Mountain Oyster Club—the Buck McCain bronze sculpture, “The Cowboy” in the island adjacent the Main Entry and a historic monument on the back lawn, outside of the back wall on the northwest corner of the lawn. These are classified as noncontributing objects.

Impact of Building Alterations

The alterations made by the Eliases in 1973, removal of the pool and installation of a modern HVAC system for the mansion, were in line with a property that would no longer be a residential entity but rather commercial restaurant(s). With the absence of the casitas to house guests, as they were sold to Marved, there was no longer a need for a swimming pool. It would be a hazard and a liability unattended and unfenced. As it adjoined the mansion, it would provide needed parking for the commercial eateries and offices on the property, some of which has become dedicated to crucial handicap parking.

The installation of a modern (at that time) heating and cooling system in the mansion was absolutely necessary to prepare the building for dining clientele and office workers. As the water-cooling system had become obsolete, a central HVAC was warranted. The fountains remained operational and a vital part of the site. The canal connecting the two fountains was filled in and covered with pavers to create a safe outside patio for outdoor events.

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Both of these alterations to the original Stone Ashley/El Dorado Lodge were necessary to modernize the building and to remove a hazard that resulted from the change of its future as a restaurant and social club. All of these improvements to the building enhanced the functionality of the property.

In 2003, as the Mountain Oyster Club assumed ownership of the mansion and the nearly four acres on which it was sited, no exterior modifications were made except to convert an outdoor staircase that existed on the southern border of the anterior gardens between the upper patio and lower patio to a handicap-accessible ramp with a hand railing. (A handicap-accessible bathroom was added inside at the same time, per local building requirements.) As a good percentage of the Mountain Oyster Club's membership and guests are age 65 and older, the club could not have operated without either of them.

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Narrative Description

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.)

Architecture
Ethnic Heritage – Jewish Community

Period of Significance

1936-1972

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Atterbury, Grosvenor; New York, NY. Architect/Stone Ashley
M. M. Sundt; Tucson, AZ. Builder/Stone Ashley
Friedman, Bernard J.; Tucson, AZ. Architect/El Dorado Lodge
M.I. Poze Construction; Tucson, AZ; Builder/El Dorado Lodge

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Summary Paragraph

El Dorado Lodge (a.k.a. Stone Ashley/Mountain Oyster Club) is eligible under Criteria A in the area of significance of Ethnic Heritage. With its opening in 1949, the Lodge was one of two of the earliest guest lodges/hotels to play a critical and unique role in the development of the resort experience for Jewish tourists and, later, Jewish residents in Tucson, Arizona. The level of significance is high, due to its early intention to attract and cater to Jewish tourists exclusively, providing one of the finest Southwestern venues for three decades, and contributing to the founding of one of the strongest Jewish communities in the West. El Dorado Lodge is eligible under Criteria C in the area of Architecture. The period of substantial local and national significance was from 1936 to 1972, spanning the years from its original design and opening as Stone Ashley, a private residence, through its conversion to a guest lodge/hotel in 1949, renamed and repurposed as the El Dorado Lodge which closed in 1972. The level of significance is high, due to its outstanding Italian Renaissance architectural and complementary landscape design by renowned New York architect Grosvenor Atterbury.

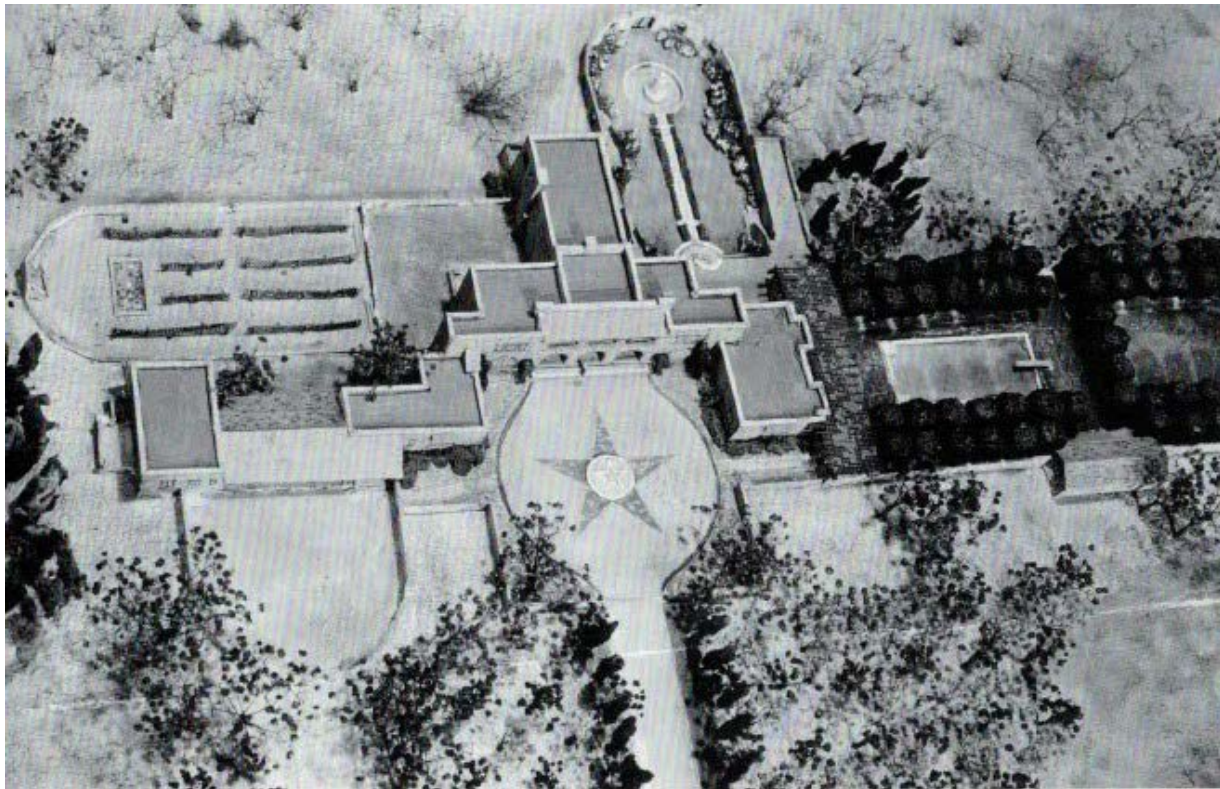


Figure 18. Aerial View of Stone Ashley; Atterbury's Stone Ashley Plan, Circa 1936

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

Criteria A: Ethnic Heritage: El Dorado Lodge 1949-1972

During the same historical period as the establishment of the Lodge in 1949, the tracts of desert land on the outskirts of Tucson were not included in any widespread development which attracted visitors from across the United States. With the end of World War II and the expansion of rail and air travel in the United States, Southwestern destinations became recognized for the availability of alternative health solutions for respiratory and other chronic diseases. As a result of several factors, families migrating to healthier environs were attracted to the desert to vacation and live. Tucson became a popular alternative to the Eastern and Midwestern industrial cities for middle class families with children as well as older health seekers. The properties in Tucson that welcomed visitors and new residents were also less expensive than those in other parts of the country. Unfortunately, prior to the El Dorado Lodge's establishment in 1949, Jews were only accepted as guests in a couple of Tucson establishments on the outskirts of the city. The El Dorado Lodge initiated activities that introduced travelers to the Tucson Jewish community which was gradually carving out a welcome place in the desert.

Southern Arizona Jewish Settlement History Notes

According to 1917 United States population figures, 75% of all Jewish Americans at that time lived in the fifteen largest U. S. cities, not one of which were located in Arizona. At that time, approximately 40 Tucson residents, transplants from Eastern states, declared themselves as having Jewish origins. By the mid 1930s, the number of Jewish residents of Tucson was approximated to be slightly more than 100 of 40,000 inhabitants. This population included few young Jewish families; primarily older "health seekers" had migrated to Arizona. Following World War II, increased numbers of Jewish soldiers who had served in or were returned from overseas to the three military bases located in Phoenix and Davis Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson. Many decided to remain in Arizona, take up residency and raise families as it was a healthy and an affordable environment but the intense summer heat was a deterrent.

It seems apparent that an antisemitic atmosphere existed in Arizona following World War II in both Phoenix and Tucson. Jobs were difficult to find in the under-developed state, or "Baby State" as it was known. Businesses that were created prior to WWII did not readily accept their new Jewish residents nor did they welcome competition for employment or in business. Although Tucson was not a prime Jewish community before and during the war, it experienced a growth spurt in the early 1950s as young Jewish former military members settled in Arizona. Expansion of the railroad and new aviation enterprise in the 1940s also spurred growth in Southern Arizona, creating greater access to the Western United States. Although there was a deficit of Jews residing in Tucson that were providing basic services to the Jewish community (barbers, butchers, doctors, dentists, rabbis, and kosher purveyors), an infrastructure of Jewish

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professionals, houses of worship and educational resources began to develop in Tucson. Not only was there a dearth of Jewish community resources to support the growing migrant population, but there were also some prohibitions on owning residential property through deed restrictions, and certainly on membership in social and recreational groups that excluded Jews. Entities such as Tucson's renowned Arizona Inn banned Jews, along with most of the Tucson golf clubs, including the Tucson Country Club, except the less popular desert courses. Even the University of Arizona had a "New York" quota for applicants applying from the East who had Jewish-sounding names. The same antisemitic policies applied to the Arizona Biltmore and the Camelback Inn among other hotels of renown in Phoenix which were closed to Jewish tourists and prohibited Jews from being employed there—the San Marcos in Chandler being another prominent example.

Arizona "pioneer" Jewish families had been drawn from California, the Midwest and East and engaged in merchandising, medicine, law and service professions. Oral histories of prominent Jews from that era describe challenges and rewards of this period of growth in Southern Arizona. Some of those early Jewish residents of Tucson whose family members became community leaders included: David Bloom, Retailer/Tucson; Samuel Capin, Retailer/Nogales and President of Congregation Anshei Israel (formerly Stone Avenue Temple)/Tucson; Stanley G. Feldman, Chief Justice/Member of Arizona Supreme Court, and members of the Drachman, Goldwater, Mansfeld, and Steinfeld families/Tucson. David Bloom was not only a Jewish community leader, he and his wife personally created the Bloom Southwest Jewish Archives (now held in the University of Arizona Special Collections), comprised of secondary source material that he and his family collected and compiled, regarding the period of 1870-1970 in Tucson.

El Dorado Lodge History

The partnership of three New York businessmen—Arthur Bittker, David Kluger and John Taub—and their wives purchased the Stone Ashley mansion and 20-acre property in 1947 after a visit to Tucson. They opened it as the El Dorado Lodge in 1949, creating a new ethnic heritage for the property. The Lodge not only encouraged Jewish travelers to enjoy the Western way of life, it recruited them. Mrs. Bittker was employed in one of the largest resorts in the Catskills for many years and reached out to all of her contacts to travel to Tucson and sample the wonders of the El Dorado Lodge. The Lodge offered the finest food in town and a range of recreational opportunities on the grounds as well as Western trail rides, barbecues in local State parks, nature walks in desert environs, and educational experiences/lectures headlined by prominent nationally known Jews on current events. When interviewed in 1985 by Blainey Korff, Business Manager and eventual co-owner Edna Newell reported that 100 percent of their business during that period was Jewish tourists. The Lodge developed educational interactions for Jewish travelers that drove social interaction with members of their own faith in the recreational and leisure realm as well.

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El Dorado thus became the most popular Jewish resort in Arizona. Many introduced to the Southwestern desert through the Lodge between the 1940s and the 1960s were instrumental in founding the robust Jewish community in Tucson and in smaller rural communities, including Nogales and other Mexican border towns adjoining Arizona. For twenty-four years under the management of the Bittkers, Jewish tourists coveted family vacations that were focused on wellness, were long on leisure and rich in ethnically profound associations.

In 1968, the Bittkers sold the property to a syndicate of six Tucson businessmen. Edna and Tilton Newell took over the management, residing in the mansion's third floor apartment. They opened the dining rooms and event space to the local Jewish population, creating a Jewish Country Club of sorts. Local members of Arizona's Jewish communities were welcome to dine and participate in educational lectures and social events. El Dorado Lodge was renowned for its excellent food prepared by chefs trained in Europe and its classic entertainment. The Lodge flourished until 1972 when Marvin Volk, a member of the Tucson Jewish community, purchased the property and began subdividing it. The restaurants were sold off separately and the El Dorado Hospital, El Dorado Country Club Estates, and other commercial enterprises were developed on the remainder of the property. The Stone Ashley mansion remained intact in the 1947 expansion to become El Dorado Lodge, retaining the basic structure of the mansion as it was built in the mid-1930s.

As the Lodge became more renowned nationally and popular with local members of the Jewish community, its existence served to stimulate the migration of Jewish families from other parts of the country. Proud of their Jewish heritage and an opportunity to live in newly developing environs where they could share health and wellness priorities, Jewish associations multiplied and opportunities for community action were amplified.

In accepting guests of the Jewish faith and creating an environment which cultivated and enriched their Jewish identity, the Lodge became not only a coveted leisure venue it also became an early Jewish community center of sorts. The Lodge hosted political meetings, charitable groups and social occasions for Tucsonans that fostered organizations and political strategies to advance issues that were of concern to them. During its period of operation



Figure 19. Publicity poster for 1952 Israel Bond Celebrity Gala hosted at El Dorado Lodge; circa 1952.

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from 1949 to 1972 El Dorado Lodge served to highlight and nurture the need for the Tucson Jewish Community Center and Jewish Foundation of Southern Arizona which were both founded following its opening and still thrive today.

The Lodge earned a sterling reputation and, as was noted by Bonnie Henry in an article in the *Arizona Daily Star* in 2010, was unique in Tucson at the time as the Lodge catered to Jewish guests.



Figure 20. El Dorado Lodge Aerial View, 1950.

Criteria C: Architecture: Stone Ashley/El Dorado Lodge/The Mountain Oyster Club

Stone Ashley/El Dorado Lodge is an outstanding example of the Late 19th and 20th Century Revival of Italian Renaissance Architecture, designed by renowned New York Architect Grosvenor Atterbury during the mid 1930s. Constructed on the rural fringe of the eastern city limits of Tucson, Arizona, eight miles from the city center, Stone Ashley was built between 1934 and 1936 to serve as a personal residence, a country estate for Florence M. Pond, the daughter of a prominent Detroit attorney. Having never been commissioned to build west of the Mississippi River, Atterbury was taken by the strong desert light when he visited Tucson. Arriving by train

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in the small desert town to view the property and meet Miss Pond for the first time, Atterbury chose a sloping site of approximately 20 acres of a 319-acre parcel of virgin desert that Ashley Pond, Sr. had purchased. The architect was respected for the agility with which he moved between the two worlds of providing tasteful, appropriate, and artistic design to the moneyed set and utilizing low-cost materials, making an indelible imprint on American architecture of the period. The mansion was destined to be a two-story, eventually a three-story, rectilinear building, of Italian Renaissance influence with adjoining pool and Bathhouse. (Figure 21)

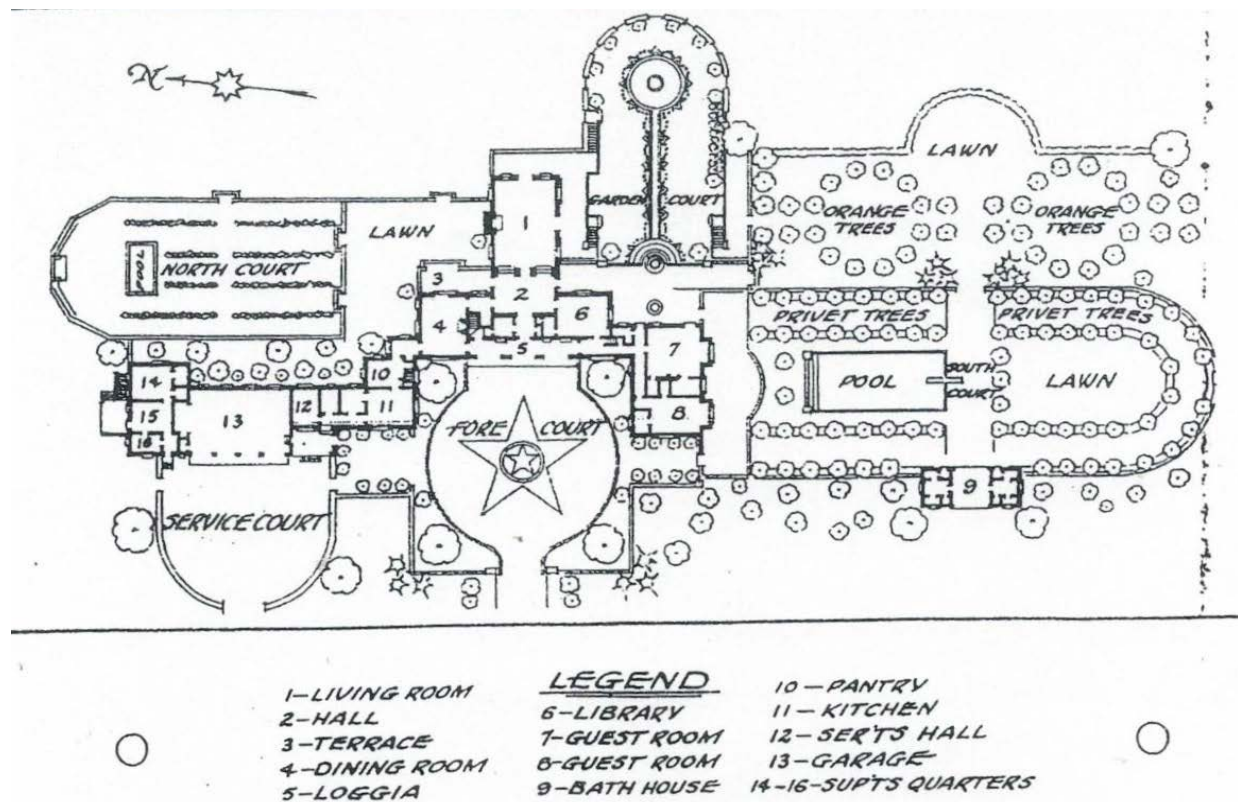


Figure 21. Grosvenor Atterbury's original floor plan/site plan for Stone Ashley, circa 1934.

Returning to his New York office to commence the design project, Atterbury exercised great care in selecting two basic building blocks for the entire building and its terrace walls: local stone, quarried and hewn to his project specifications, and custom handmade bricks generated from the desert foothill sands. He had previously worked with native fieldstone on several similar projects in the East, researching their qualities and frailties extensively. Working on a vast palette of sand, Atterbury purposefully designed walls for Stone Ashley that are striations of the two materials, creating a decorative quality with the coursed brick and stone. The striated walls emphasize the home's boxy silhouette and serve as a welcoming backdrop for the exterior gardens and fountains. In a nod to the Sonoran climate and tradition, the residence was fitted with flat roofs with parapets to present a simple line against the blue sky. The natural field stone,

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custom made bricks and ornate wrought ironwork strengthen the Atterbury's artistic and ambitious design of Stone Ashley.

Both the residence and garden walls were designed to be notably striking due to the architect's choice of desert materials from the region for construction of the dwelling, which complemented the natural environment of the Sonoran Desert. Atterbury had worked on several Eastern country homes employing popular ideas from the Italian Renaissance movement and exercised the use of classical orders (such as arches), mathematically precise ratios of height and width, symmetry, proportion and harmony in designing this striking Italian Renaissance home. The unique Renaissance characteristics of the design, constructed in desert masonry was embellished with wrought iron gates and window grilles, decorative "crowns and cages" over the fountains and iron exterior light fixtures. Note: Desert masonry, in this case, can be defined as concrete and stone mixture later used to build the structures of Taliesin West north of Phoenix by Frank Lloyd Wright in the next decade.

Atterbury was a purist and an inventor. His ability to communicate his design initiative to the residence's craftsmen was stellar. Amazingly, in an era when travel from New York was a three-day train trip and documents traveled by mail, Atterbury counted on the craftsmanship of the men on-site to see that his design was not only reflected in the final construction but enhanced in many details. Noteworthy examples that still exist in the Lodge, due to excellent workmanship, include the:

- Elegant wood entry door, constructed of complex wood joinery,
- Wrought iron decorative features and iron casement windows which provided security and ventilation,
- Water-cooling system, including an iron cool tower, that served as air conditioning, and
- General care taken in the layout and composition of natural stone and brick.

Atterbury's pattern of fenestration was varied depending on the degree of privacy each of the mansion's exposures required. Large arched picture windows were placed behind the cover of trees on the eastern face and opened onto a vast expanse of the Sonoran Desert and the Santa Catalina Mountain range on the western faces of the residence. Iron casement windows featuring 8" x 10" panes were placed in the smaller rooms on the east and south sides of the mansion to provide for natural lighting, views of the site and security. Hand-hewn hardwood lintels were placed over the square exterior windows to function both structurally and decoratively. A hand-hewn hardwood Main Entry door with colored glass panels set in iron work clearly defined the home's entrance and welcomed all who entered.

Interior Design Features

Atterbury's reliance upon the texture and color of desert materials creates attractive interior spaces with the walls of native field stone and handmade brick. Carefully planned windows set in every room offer spectacular views of the surrounding Sonoran Desert, the Santa Catalina and

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Rincon Mountains. Flooring of green Italian slate throughout both interior and exterior spaces, was chosen to contrast and soften the masonry walls.

Entrance into the mansion, through the Garden Court, is the Loggia/Front Lobby, complete with beamed ceiling and fireplace. The First Floor currently features two large rooms parallel to each other that were originally designed as the Living Room, Dining Room and Library in the private residence of Florence Pond. They were combined during the El Dorado Lodge era, intended for dining, indoor leisure and events. In the north wing, the kitchen, pantry, and servants' hall were originally housed leading into the garage and Superintendent's Quarters. Post-era of significance, amplification of the food service areas occurred, expanding into the garage and administrative quarters and allowing the bar/lounge to be re-located closer to the dining room for commercial restaurant use. In the south wing, the library and guest rooms were located off the Loggia originally and were later converted to a Card Room and suite of offices. The suite is currently being remodeled to provide further entertainment space.

On the Second Floor, the original Master Suite of a bedroom with fireplace, porch and three maids' room with bathrooms are in use as offices.

The Third Floor, constructed to be identical with the Italian Renaissance Revival original Stone Ashley, was added in 1948 to serve as the Lodge's administrative residential and office spaces. Like the Second Floor, it has been employed as leased office space since 1973. The Third Floor, has been vacant during the Mountain Oyster Club's ownership.

Due to the sloping property on which the building is built, two partial basement areas exist in the building. The space under the southwest side of the structure was used for staff housing and laundry during the era of significance. That space, known as the Dungeon by the staff, is Club storage. The larger space under the northwest side of the building was used for staff housing during the Stone Ashley era, a movie theater during the Lodge era and now serves as administrative offices and a workroom for the annual Western Art Show.

Other features for which Atterbury was responsible are the Otis automatic electric elevator from the First to Second Floor, a 30,000-gallon water storage tank, septic tanks, a water softening plant, intercommunicating telephones as well as oil unit heating and innovative evaporative air cooling systems.

Note on the Cooling System:

Miss Pond's intention to live in Stone Ashley year-round required Atterbury to explore methods for effective air conditioning. Ultimately, he employed an age-old device, the water-cooling tower, in an innovative fashion as a part of a circulatory system of radiators and ducts to cool the house and water the lush gardens. Upon discovering that air conditioning the building would require circulation of 150 gallons of water per minute, Atterbury designed a system that would use outdoor fountains to drive water to the cool tower and ducts to transport it to the mansion. The architect located the decorative iron cool tower in one of the sunken gardens on the east,

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declaring that “it seemed a shame not to get some fun out of it all.” The system, comprised of a set of semi-circular steps down which water flowed to the wrought iron tower embellished with flowers and suns, was to pay homage to the desert. A picturesque and practical solution to several problems also created attractive features in the gardens and probably cooled the outdoor spaces as well. Today, the water-cooling tower has been removed and conventional heating and air conditioning exists throughout the mansion. The fountains still exist but the wrought iron cooling tower has been removed.

Conversion to El Dorado Lodge

In 1949, when the Stone Ashley mansion was purchased by New York investors with the intention of expanding the significance of the property by creating a Western Winter Retreat for world travelers, they hired Tucson architect Bernard J. Friedman to design the additions required for the opening of El Dorado Lodge in 1949. Friedman’s team had the vision to build upon the architectural vocabulary in place, strictly in line with Atterbury’s Italian Renaissance-influenced design and building materials of Stone Ashley.

Friedman’s design work included:

- Addition of Third Floor to the mansion,
- Addition of B Building to the mansion for offices and restaurant,
- Addition of 40 new guest cabins to accommodate 80 guests,
- Alterations to interior of the mansion for a lounge/bar, commercial kitchen, dining room, and
- Addition of public restrooms in the mansion.

The interior wall surfaces of the original Stone Ashley—natural fieldstone and handmade brick – were not altered, as only the rooms were repurposed where necessary to serve the building’s new commercial clientele. The original appearance and architectural design of the building were not altered. The site design was preserved as terraced gardens, fountains and landscaping remained intact, as well. Some outdoor recreational attractions such as picnic grounds and walking paths were adjoined to the back of the property. The built structures remained the same; their architectural integrity was never compromised. The mansion’s beauty and charm reflect a modern sensibility in a vernacular vocabulary that has stood the test of time while many of the original adjoining properties of that era have been destroyed and the parcels redeveloped.

Site Design

Stone Ashley’s Italian Renaissance Architecture was embellished with wrought iron ornament, terraced gardens, lush lawns and water features that were unusual for a Southwestern desert locale. Sited on property originally covered with tamarisk, cottonwood, and mesquite trees and cactus, the landscaping imposed on this site and Atterbury’s use of sightlines and more controlled geometrical forms was in keeping with the Italianate building design and complemented the native vegetation. To set the stage for the reveal of the Italian Renaissance building, Atterbury lined the driveway with 50 Italian Cypress trees imported from California nurseries and shipped to Tucson by rail. He surrounded the entire 20 acres where the residence

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was sited with high terrace walls, steps, pools, and fountains of the stone and brick materials used in building Stone Ashley.

Within the terrace walls surrounding the mansion's southern exposure, the Southwest Court, a rectangular swimming pool and Bath house with an adjacent U-shaped lawn were placed. The lawn was lined with double rows of Japanese Privet trees to create a secluded, green space on more than one third of the property. To the east of the pool and lawn, Atterbury planted an orchard of nearly 40 citrus trees and a small semi-circular lawn.

On the opposite side of the residence, the Northwest corner, Atterbury concealed the service court, garage and staff quarters behind large trees on the front face of the building. To further the symmetry of the gardens, he created another U-shaped lawn, small pool and garden within the North Court, facing east into the desert and the Rincon and Santa Rita mountains. In the Tuscan tradition, water movement was an important design tool. A Garden Court with the water-cooling tower was created behind the mansion, with fountains at each end of the lawn. A canal carried the water between an iron cool tower and the Stone Ashley mansion for air conditioning.

The original wrought iron cooling tower has been removed from the lower fountain but the water display in the center of the pool is still a feature for guests on the patio. The two main fountains remain as do a significant number of ornamental cypress and fruit trees.

Through the conversion of the Stone Ashley residence to the El Dorado Lodge, preservation of the architectural elements of the Italian Renaissance Revival period were a major focus of the accommodations made to the interior spaces. Not only were the large common areas of the first floor adapted for commercial use, but also the smaller rooms such as guest bedrooms and staff quarters were repurposed to meet commercial dining and meeting needs of the Lodge. The original decorative wrought iron ornamentation and light fixtures were preserved and are still in use today. The elevator still functions between the First Floor and the Second Floor.

Not only were the original design features and floor plan maintained during the conversion to El Dorado Lodge in the late 1940s, the mansion survived the sale of the Lodge in 1972 and its post-significance transition to serve as a restaurant with adjoining office spaces until the present. As a brief overview of the modifications made to Stone Ashley in 1948-1949, historical photographs show that where the new spaces were created, they were in keeping with the original architectural style and of Stone Ashley's existing materials.

All other exterior features and landscaping have been preserved to this day, including the terracing and iconic planting of cypress, citrus and mesquite trees. The masonry walls that marked the boundaries of Stone Ashley and the long cypress-lined entryway currently remain.

With very few alterations, during the past fifty years, the integrity of the building itself can be witnessed in many photographic examples of the "original" and "existing" structures and landscaping. Some prime examples are illustrated in Figures 22 – 26.

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Figure 22. Original Wrought Iron Water-Cooling Tower, Circa 1946.

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Figure 23. Existing site of Water-Cooling Tower on the Lower Back Patio of Mountain Oyster Club. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0017.

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Figure 24. Original Water-Cooling Tower Behind the El Dorado Lodge.



Figure 25. Lower Back Patio and Anterior of Mountain Oyster Club with Upper Water Fountain. Facing West. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0004

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Figure 26. Anterior of El Dorado Lodge with Cooling Canal and Upper Fountain.

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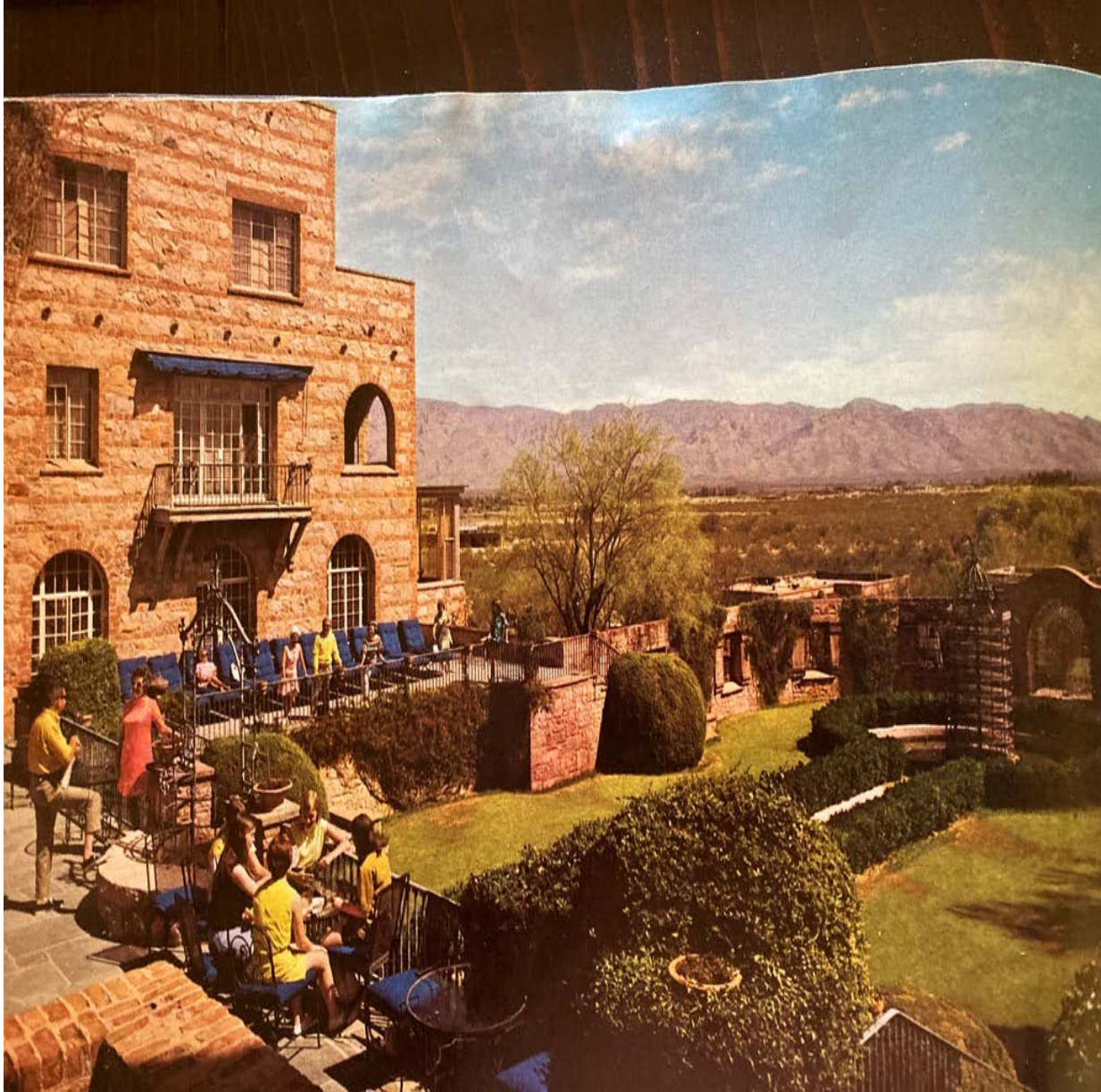


Figure 27. Terraces and Gardens on the Southeastern Quadrant of the El Dorado Lodge 1960.

Atterbury created a spectacularly refreshing structure and site for a country estate in the Sonoran Desert. Although the use of both has transitioned from their original purpose as a residence to a guest lodge and now a social club, the structural integrity of both the buildings and the landscaping have remained undisturbed. For 85 years, thousands of visitors—private guests of Miss Pond, members of the military and their families, dignitaries, Jewish Tucsonans and tourists from all over the world or members and guests of the Mountain Oyster Club have thrilled to the Italian Renaissance mansion and its gardens. Through a half dozen owners of the property, the

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architecture has been cherished and preserved for our continued pleasure today. Much thought and care were given to the development of this estate, with fine materials and workmanship employed.

ABOUT THE ARCHITECT/Grosvenor Atterbury for Stone Ashley

Grosvenor Atterbury was educated at Yale University, Columbia University and the Ecole des Beaux Art in Paris, where he completed his education in 1895. His contemporaries at Columbia were Charles Platt and James Greenleaf, both of whom were designers of elegant residences. Following graduation, he maintained a successful practice in New York City where his clients included both Yale and Cornell Universities. He worked with Greenleaf on several Long Island residential designs as well as taking responsibility for planning and design of the sophisticated residential development, Forest Hill Gardens in Queens with the Olmsted Brothers, renowned landscape architects. Atterbury designed numerous estates for, among others, the Rockefeller and Whitney families. Those estates and grounds almost always employed planning practices, materials and layouts influenced by the Italian Renaissance. Atterbury was personally and stylistically conservative but loved creating ingenious solutions to architectural problems. He often worked with natural fieldstone, approaching the scientific aspects of building materials with great relish. His primary passion, professionally, was to create housing for the less advantaged in the Eastern United States. He authored several papers about the use of poured concrete in low-cost residential construction.

Atterbury came to Tucson via train in 1933 to meet Florence Pond for the first time. Stone Ashley was apparently his first and only project in the West. Atterbury was, in his words, enchanted by the desert site, the vistas and quality of desert light. The Stone Ashley mansion represented a departure for him as he sought to develop a simple silhouette against the stark, Sonoran sky. The decorative quality of the walls, bands of native rock and a custom brick coursing, added interest while making the architecture a backdrop for the grounds and view beyond. Atterbury was intrigued by the dry climate and embraced the challenges it presented. Since Miss Pond intended to reside in Tucson year-round, his design for cooling in 1935 uniquely made use of the radiators and ducts to circulate water that was cooled by an evaporative “cooling” tower.

Grosvenor Atterbury was one of the most prolific architects and town planners of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, designing more than 100 residences. His friend and client John D. Rockefeller, Jr., for whom he designed a half dozen estates, was entranced by the manner “in which the house and grounds were tied in with their desert mountain surroundings,” when he visited the mansion in 1947. The *New York Times* pronounced it “one of the most beautiful homes in the region.”

THE ARCHITECT/Bernard J. Friedman for El Dorado Lodge

Tucsonan Bernard J. Friedman was the architect, at an early point in his career, for the additions and alterations necessary for the conversion of Stone Ashley to the El Dorado Lodge. It was an important commission for him. While his firm went on to do numerous significant works in

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Tucson, including several distinctive synagogues, the Music Hall at the Tucson Community Center, the University of Arizona Main Library, and the new Pima County (now Kino) Community Hospital, El Dorado Lodge was his own design work. In the most public areas, including the new administrative areas on the north edge of the circular drive, Friedman hewed closely to the stone/brick striated block pattern, fenestration and landscaping employed by Atterbury.

None of Friedman's architectural drawings or correspondence concerning the Lodge's metamorphosis from Stone Ashley to El Dorado Lodge were preserved. He was identified in numerous local newspaper articles as the architect of record, however. His considerable effort to maintain the property's architectural excellence while not disturbing its complementary Italianate site and landscape is widely recognized as one of his early successes.

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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 – University of Arizona, University of Cincinnati, Cornell University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.9834 acres

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84: _____

1. Latitude: 32.238460 Longitude: -110.854500

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
Pima County Parcel ID 133-14-459C. Part of the Southwest quarter of Section 6, Township 14 South, Range 15 East, Fila and Salt River Baseline and Meridian

Boundary Justification:
The nominated property is the remaining segment of the formerly 20-acre site of the El Dorado Lodge containing the three significant contributing buildings on the remaining contributing site/landscaping, while omitting modern parking areas and a modern Mountain Oyster Club-owned building immediately to the north of the historic property.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: John Lacy/Mountain Oyster Club Board Vice President;
Karen Young/Member (w additional editing by William Collins, SHPO)
organization: Mountain Oyster Club
street & number: 6400 N. El Dorado Circle
city or town: Tucson state: AZ zip code: 85711
e-mail: jlacy@dmyl.com / zeker04@yahoo.com
telephone: (520) 322-5000/(520) 906-0895
date: March 15, 2023

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.)

Appendix: Mountain Oyster Club floorplans. Floor Plans First LLC, 2011.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations 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.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
Tier 2 – 120 hours
Tier 3 – 230 hours
Tier 4 – 280 hours

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Photographs

Photo Log

Name of Property: El Dorado Lodge/Stone Ashley/Mountain Oyster Club

City or Vicinity: Tucson

County: Pima

State: Arizona

All photos by Karen Young and Courtesy of Mountain Oyster Club

1 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0001

Date Photographed: May 2022

Main entrance of the Mountain Oyster Club; Eastern face and portico of Mountain Oyster Club at head of Circle Entry Drive. Facing East.

2 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0002

Date Photographed: May 2022

Cypress-lined Entry Drive from Mountain Oyster Club front steps. Facing East

3 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0003

Date Photographed: June 2022

Wrought iron crown at Upper Fountain on Back Patio of Mountain Oyster Club. Facing Northwest

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Date Photographed: May 2022

Lower Back Patio and Anterior of Mountain Oyster Club. Facing West

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Date Photographed: May 2022

Hand-hewn Main Entry door of wood, iron and colored glass, Mountain Oyster Club. Facing East

6 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0006

Date Photographed: June 2022

Bathhouse on eastern perimeter of South Parking Lot, Mountain Oyster Club. Facing Southwest

7 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0007

Date Photographed: May 2022

South façade of the Mountain Oyster Club from parking lot. Facing North

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8 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0008

Date Photographed: July 2022

Back Patio entrance into Mountain Oyster Club Lobby. Facing North

9 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0009

Date Photographed: May 2022

B Building. Arched wrought iron entrance to Inner Courtyard at Mountain Oyster Club.
Facing Northwest

10 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0010

Date Photographed: May 2022

Main Dining Room of Mountain Oyster Club with arched entrance to Slate (Lower) Dining
Room. Facing West

11 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0011

Date Photographed: May 2022

Slate (Lower) Dining Room of Mountain Oyster Club with Italian green slate floor. Facing
West

12 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0013

Date Photographed: August 2022

Front Lobby of Mountain Oyster Club with arch doorways into Lower Dining Room. Facing
Northwest

13 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0014

Date Photographed: July 2022

Northern wall of Bar/Lounge of Mountain Oyster Club. Facing Northwest

14 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0015

Date Photographed: July 2022

Southern half of the Catalina Room of the Mountain Oyster Club. Facing Southwest

15 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0016

Date Photographed: June 2022

B Building of Mountain Oyster Club. Front façade with arched entry. Facing Northwest

16 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0017

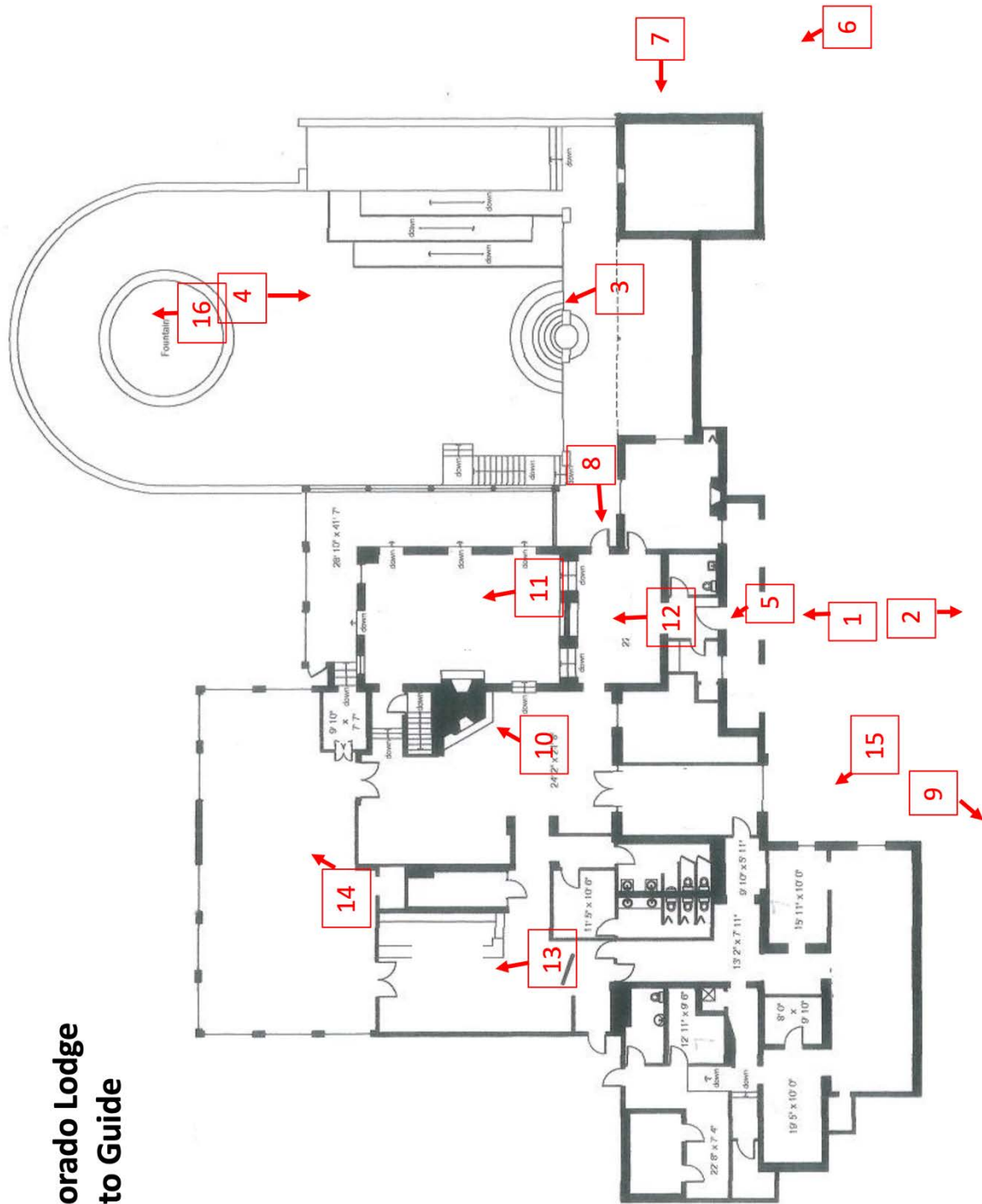
Date Photographed: May 2022

Existing site of Water-Cooling Tower on the Lower Back Patio of Mountain Oyster Club.
Facing West

El Dorado Lodge
Name of Property

Pima, AZ
County and State

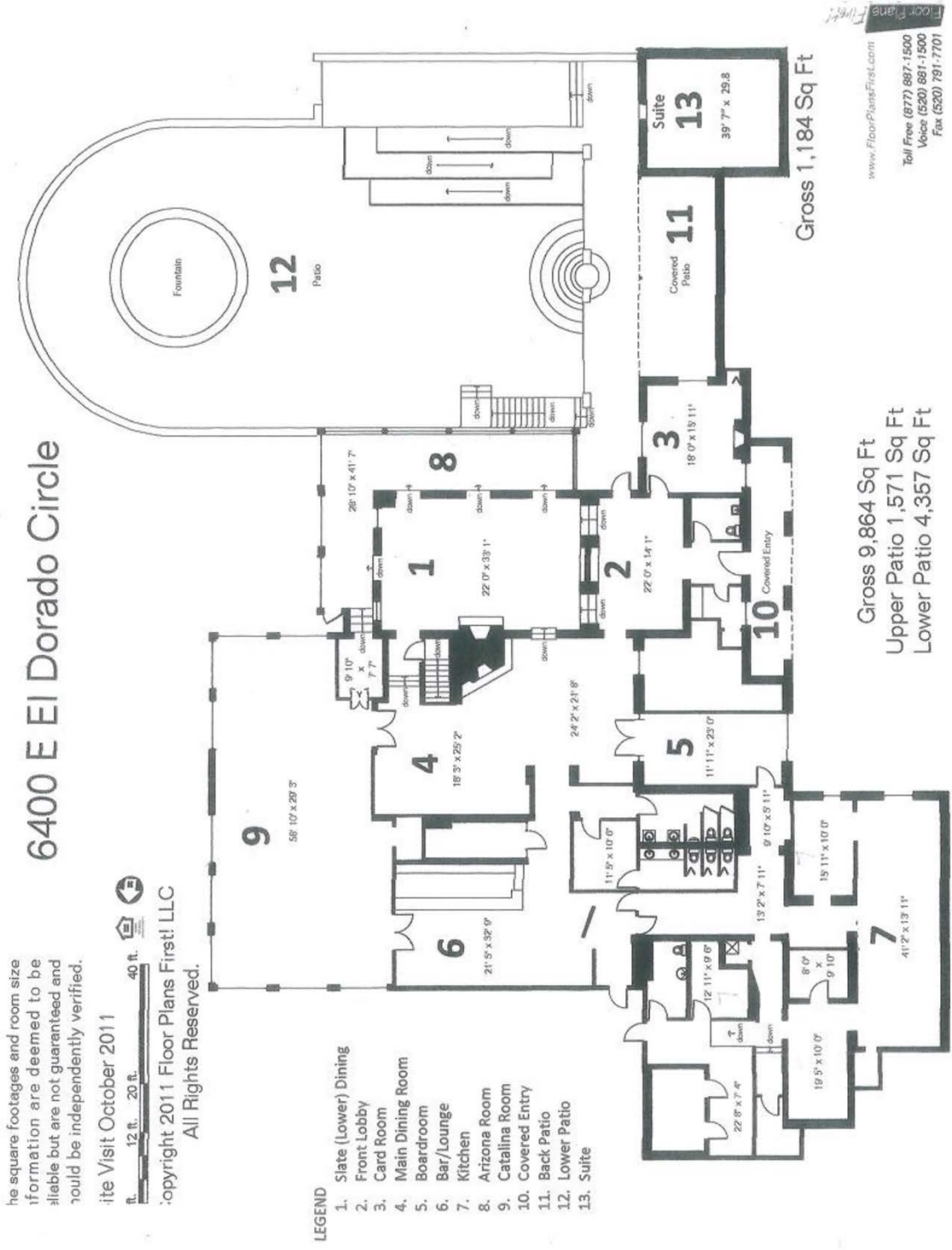
**El Dorado Lodge
Photo Guide**



El Dorado Lodge
Name of Property

Pima, AZ
County and State

Appendix: Mountain Oyster Club Floor plans

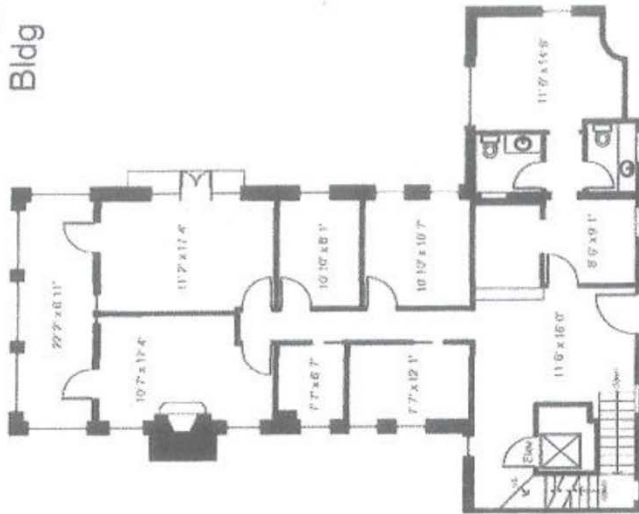


El Dorado Lodge
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6400 E El Dorado Circle
 Bldg 2nd Floor

The square footages and room size information are deemed to be reliable but are not guaranteed and should be independently verified.



Gross 2,008 Sq Ft

LEGEND

Second Floor rooms are designated for commercial office space and restrooms serving the offices. All offices are occupied.

Site Visit July 2011
 0 ft. 5 ft. 10 ft. 20 ft.
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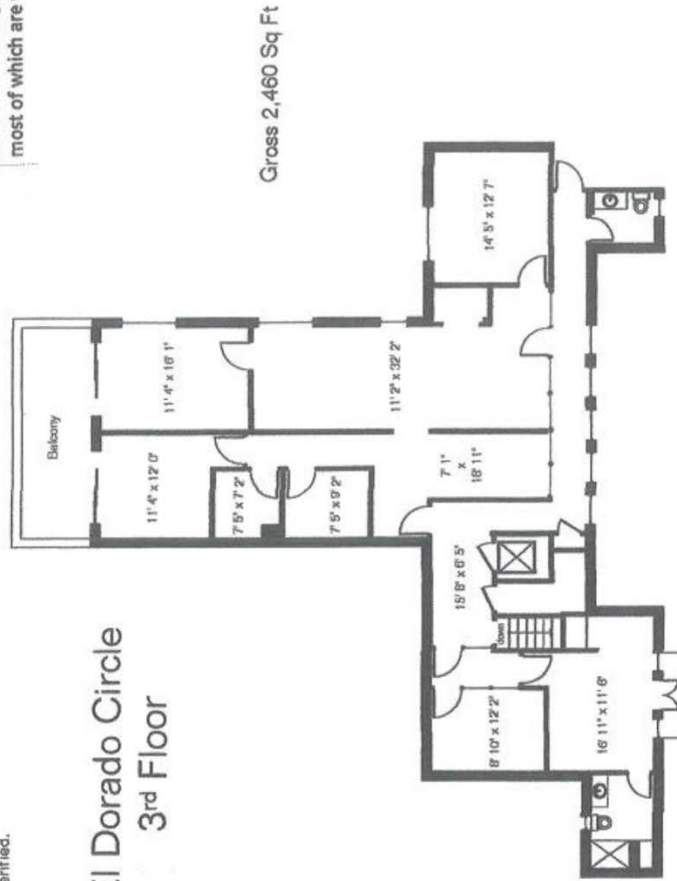
For more information
 Call Free (877) 827-1300
 Voice (520) 991-1500
 Fax (520) 791-7721

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LEGEND
 Third Floor rooms are designated for commercial office space and restrooms serving the offices, most of which are vacant.

The square footages and room size information are deemed to be reliable but are not guaranteed and should be independently verified.



6400 E El Dorado Circle
 3rd Floor

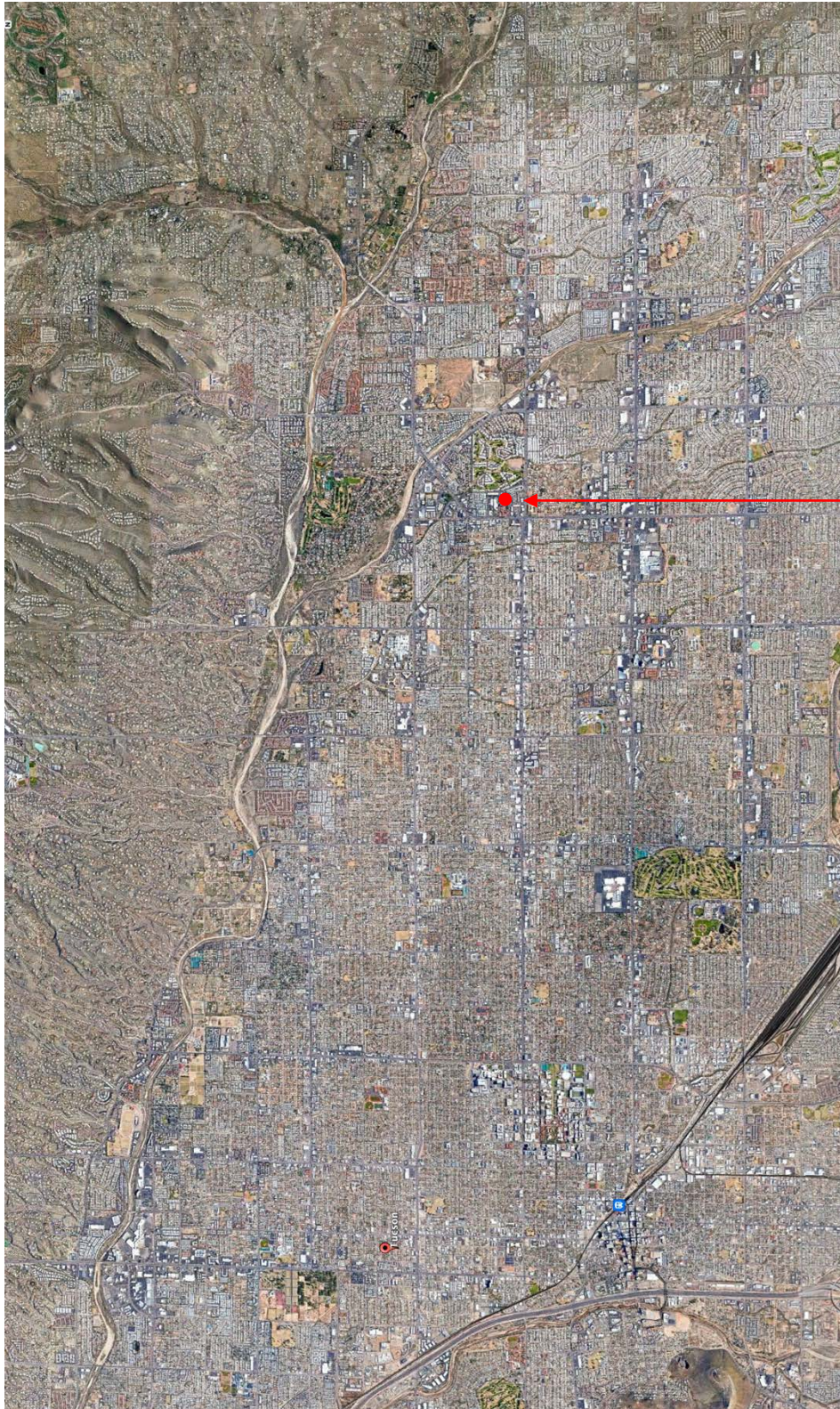
Gross 2,460 Sq Ft

Site Visit July 2011
 0 ft. 8 ft. 10 ft. 20 ft.
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El Dorado Lodge

6400 E. El Dorado Cir.,
Tucson, AZ

Latitude: 32.238460

Longitude: -110.854500

Google Earth imagery
12/18/2020



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PHOTOGRAPHS



1 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0001

Main entrance of the Mountain Oyster Club; Eastern face and portico of Mountain Oyster Club at head of Circle Entry Drive. Facing East.

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2 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0002
Cypress-lined Entry Drive from Mountain Oyster Club front steps. Facing East

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3 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0003
Wrought iron crown at Upper Fountain on Back Patio of Mountain Oyster Club. Facing Northwest

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4 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0004

Lower Back Patio and Anterior of Mountain Oyster Club with Upper Water Fountain. Facing West

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5 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0005
Hand-hewn Main Entry door of wood, iron and colored glass, Mountain Oyster Club. Facing East

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6 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0006
Bathhouse on eastern perimeter of South Parking Lot, Mountain Oyster Club. Facing Southwest

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7 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0007
South façade of the Mountain Oyster Club from parking lot. Facing North

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8 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0008
Back Patio entrance into Mountain Oyster Club Lobby. Facing North

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9 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0009
B Building. Arched wrought iron entrance to Inner Courtyard at Mountain Oyster Club.
Facing Northwest

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10 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0010
Main Dining Room of Mountain Oyster Club with arched entrance to Slate (Lower) Dining Room. Facing West

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11 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0011
Slate (Lower) Dining Room of Mountain Oyster Clube with Italian green slate floor. Facing West

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12 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0012
Front Lobby of Mountain Oyster Club with arch doorways into Lower Dining Room. Facing Northwest

El Dorado Lodge
Name of Property

Pima, AZ
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13 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0013
Northern wall of Bar/Lounge of Mountain Oyster Club. Facing Northwest

El Dorado Lodge

Name of Property

Pima, AZ

County and State



14 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0015
Southern half of the Catalina Room of the Mountain Oyster Club. Facing Southwest

El Dorado Lodge

Name of Property

Pima, AZ

County and State



15 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0015
B Building of Mountain Oyster Club. Front façade with arched entry. Facing Northwest

El Dorado Lodge

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County and State



16 of 16. AZ_PimaCounty_ElDoradoLodge_0016
Existing site of Water-Cooling Tower on the Lower Back Patio of Mountain Oyster Club.
Facing West































