

Brief Project Descriptions to Accompany:
Map of Downtown Tucson Showing Archaeological Projects
and National Register Districts

Tucson Urban Renewal Project

The City of Tucson joined nation-wide efforts by communities to redevelop their aging city centers in the 1960s. Plans called for the demolition of dozens of blocks of homes and businesses to construct a convention center, police and fire headquarters, and large commercial and government complexes. Arizona State Museum archaeologists, led by James Ayres, excavated many sites, locating Spanish, Mexican, and American Territorial period artifacts. Standing buildings yielded large quantities of Chinese artifacts left behind as elderly immigrant men died and their rooms were boarded up.

Lister, Florence C., and Robert H. Lister

1989 *The Chinese of Early Tucson: Historic Archaeology from the Tucson Urban Renewal Project*. Anthropological Papers No. 52. University of Arizona Press, Tucson.

Block 172: Court and Meyer

Excavations on Block 172 uncovered the foundations of the William and Annie Osborn home, occupied by the family from the late 1880s to 1919. Backyard features yielded artifacts that provided insights into their lives. Although William Osborn was a prominent lawyer and politician, the family used inexpensive dishes. A variety of healthcare products were found, mirroring newspaper accounts of Mr. Osborn's poor health.

Thiel, J. Homer

2003 *Archaeological Investigations of the Osborn and Hazzard Family Homes, Block 172, Tucson, Arizona*. Technical Report No. 2002-04. Desert Archaeology, Inc., Tucson.

Leon Farmstead

Francisco Solano Leon and his wife Ramona Elías occupied a walled compound west of the Tucson Presidio in the 1840s to the mid-1860s, when a Santa Cruz River flood destroyed their home. They returned in the mid-1870s, building a three-room home that featured corner fireplaces and, after 1880, wooden floors. Artifacts discarded by the family included brightly colored dishes and expensive buttons, reflecting the high socio-economic status of the family.

Thiel, J. Homer

2005 *Down by the River: Archaeological and Historical Studies of the León Family Farmstead*. Anthropological Papers No. 38. Center for Desert Archaeology, Tucson.

Block 185

Located on the floodplain next to the terrace where the Presidio was built, Block 185 contained prehistoric and historic period canals, soil mining pits filled with Presidio-era trash, and refuse discarded by Chinese men who lived in nearby shanties.

Thiel, J. Homer

2008 *Archaeological Investigations at AZ BB:13:756 (ASM) and AZ BB:13:757 (ASM), Historic Block 185, Tucson, Pima County, Arizona*. Technical Report No. 2006-09. Desert Archaeology, Inc., Tucson.

Presidio San Agustín del Tucson

Established in 1775 and completed in 1783, the adobe-walled military fortress was the home of 400 to 500 residents until the American arrival in 1856. The area remained the seat of government afterwards, with three successive Pima County Courthouses and three City Halls, as well as a library, jail, firehouse, and dwellings of prominent residents, including the first mayor of Tucson. Despite the construction of many buildings in the 1960s and 1970s, remnants of structures, the Presidio cemetery, artifacts, and food remains lie hidden throughout the central downtown area.

Thiel, J. Homer

1996 *A Summary of Archaeological Investigations in Sunset Park, Tucson, Arizona*. Technical Report No. 96-10. Center for Desert Archaeology, Tucson.

2004 *Uncovering Tucson's Past: Test Excavations in Search of the Presidio Wall*. Technical Report No. 2002-05. Desert Archaeology, Inc., Tucson.

2008 Presidio Archaeology. In *Additional Archaeological and Historical Research in the Tucson Presidio, Historic Block 181, Tucson, Pima County, Arizona*. Technical Report No. 2006-10, Desert Archaeology, Inc., Tucson.

Thiel, J. Homer, Michael K. Faught, and James M. Bayman

1995 *Beneath the Streets: Prehistoric, Spanish, and American Period Archaeology in Downtown Tucson*. Technical Report No. 94-11. Center for Desert Archaeology, Tucson.

Thiel, J. Homer, and Jonathan B. Mabry (editors)

2006 *Rio Nuevo Archaeology, 2000-2003: Investigations at the San Agustín Mission and Mission Gardens, Tucson Presidio, Tucson Pressed Brick Company, and Clearwater Site*. Technical Report No. 2004-11. Desert Archaeology, Inc., Tucson.

On-line report: <http://www.cdarc.org/rio-nuevo-archaeology>.

Block 181: Siqueiros-Jácome House

Constructed in the 1860s and 1870s, this adobe Sonoran Row House was in poor condition until its recent restoration. Visitors can see how Juan Siqueiros used local materials to build his house (adobe, lime plaster, saguaro ribs, and mesquite lintels). He drove a freight wagon and used lumber from packing crates for the ceilings of two of the rooms.

2008 Presidio Archaeology. In *Additional Archaeological and Historical Research in the Tucson Presidio, Historic Block 181, Tucson, Pima County, Arizona*. Technical Report No. 2006-10, Desert Archaeology, Inc., Tucson.

Block 180

A planned YMCA, parking garage, and local government offices led Pima County to fund excavations on the block. Prehistoric pithouses, a pair of Mexican-era burials, and many Territorial-era features were located. Among the latter were huge soil mining pits, where dirt was mined to make adobe bricks. Afterward, they were used for trash disposal and archaeologists found large quantities of trash.

Ciolek-Torrello, Richard S., and Mark Swanson (editors)

1997 *Pit House, Presidio, and Privy: 1,400 Years of Archaeology and History on Block 180, City of Tucson, Arizona*. Technical Series No. 63. Statistical Research, Inc., Tucson.

Alameda-Stone Cemetery

Tucson's second cemetery was located to the northeast of the old Presidio. The first of several thousand burials was probably made in the early 1860s. Military burials took place there from 1862 to 1881, while civilians were buried there until 1875. Afterward the location was used for residential housing and in the 20th century for businesses.

O'Mack, Scott

2005 *A Cemetery and What Followed*. Technical Report 05-22. Statistical Research, Inc., Tucson.

On-line report: <http://www.pima.gov/JointCourts/>

Wieland Bottling Works

Residents of Tucson were notorious for alcohol consumption. The first brewery opened in the 1870s. The arrival of the railroad allowed large quantities of liquor, wine, and beer to be imported into the community. The Wieland Bottling Works bottled beer that was sold in restaurants, saloons, and stores in Tucson and southeastern Arizona. The sale of alcohol was suspended on January 1, 1915, with the start of Prohibition. [Report in preparation by Jeffrey Jones, Tierra Right-of-Way Services, Ltd., Tucson]

Block 83: Ronstadt Transit Center

Excavations prior to the construction of a downtown transportation hub located numerous outhouse features associated with prominent middle and upper class residents of Tucson from the 1880s to 1910s. More affluent households used expensive European china and glassware, while eating meals featuring high quality meat cuts.

Mabry, Jonathan B., James E. Ayres, and Regina L. Chapin-Pyritz

1994 *Tucson at the Turn of the Century: The Archaeology of Block 83*. Technical Report No. 92-10. Center for Desert Archaeology, Tucson.

Block 83: Cactus Saloon, Depot Park Beer Garden, Ramona Hotel, and XXX Laundry

Excavations on the east side of Block 83 located numerous features associated with commercial businesses in operation from 1880 to the 1910s. Restaurants and saloons served meals on thick, plain whiteware plates, difficult to break but easy to replace when broken. A saloon privy yielded evidence for a variety of alcoholic beverages, matching a contemporary interior photograph showing beer on tap and liquor bottles. Items discarded by Chinese laundry workers included several opium pipes. Use of the drug was banned in 1907, but some residents continued to smoke the substance.

Thiel, J. Homer

2009 *Archaeological Investigations and Data Recovery at Historic Block 83, Tucson, Pima County, Arizona*. Technical Report No. 2006-11, Desert Archaeology, Inc., Tucson.

Block 94: Tucson Sampling Works and Southern Pacific Clubhouse

The arrival of the railroad led to the construction of warehouses and an ice house on Block 94, just to the south of the new train depot. The William B. Hooper warehouse was converted to an ore assaying business by 1887. In operation until 1901, Charles Wores identified the content of various ores and shipped raw ore off to smelters. In 1906 the block was redeveloped for the Southern Pacific Clubhouse, where railroad employees could read books and attend lectures and classes. [Report in preparation by J. Homer Thiel, Desert Archaeology, Inc., Tucson.]

Block 94: Hotel Catalina

Excavations on Block 94 uncovered features associated with railroad workers and low income families who lived on the block between the 1880s and the 1920s. These people ate low quality meats from inexpensive ceramics. The Hotel Catalina was constructed in 1929, serving lower income people. A replica was rebuilt in 1992 after the original building was demolished for road construction.

Thiel, J. Homer

1993 *Archaeological Investigations of Tucson Block 94: The Boarding House Residents of the Hotel Catalina Site*. Technical Report No. 93-5. Center for Desert Archaeology, Tucson.

Block 221

Block 221, located between Interstate 10 and Granada Avenue, south of Congress Street, was farmed prior to the early 1900s. The 1862 Fergusson field map reveals that local Mexican families owned the fields. They were developed for residential and commercial purposes beginning in the 1910s. Very few archaeological features were located in the area, large portions of which had been mined for fill dirt during the construction of Interstate 10 in the 1950s.

Cook, Patricia

2006 *Archaeological Testing at the Proposed Temporary Greyhound Bus Station Location, Tucson, Pima County, Arizona*. Technical Report No. 2005-14. Desert Archaeology, Inc., Tucson.

Thiel, J. Homer

2008 *Archaeological Testing at the Proposed Arena, Historic Block 221, Tucson, Pima County, Arizona*. Technical Report No. 2008-05. Desert Archaeology, Inc., Tucson.

Block 221: Federal Courthouse

Archaeological testing prior to the construction of the Evo A. DeConcini United States Federal Courthouse took place in 1995. The site had been agricultural fields before the City of Tucson built stables there to house the city's horses in the early 1900s. By the mid-1910s the El Paso and Southwestern Railroad constructed its freight depot on the property. This was later converted into a hospital for railroad employees and local residents until 1976. Only a few foundations were located during the project.

Thiel, J. Homer

1996 *Archaeological Testing of the Proposed Evo A. DeConcini Federal Building and United States Courthouse Property*. Technical Report No. 95-12. Center for Desert Archaeology, Tucson.

Standing Buildings Highlighted on the Map

Center for Desert Archaeology (CDA) Office (Bates House)

The C.T.R. Bates house is a contributing property within the El Presidio National Register District. It was the Bates family residence and served as the office for C.T.R. Bates's accounting business. It was the location of the Mountain Oyster Club between 1975 and 2005. In 2009, the Center for Desert Archaeology and Tucsonans Seth Schindler and Diane Dittmore formed Prudent Preservation Partners, LLC and purchased the former Bates House. The Center for Desert Archaeology now occupies 4,500 square feet of office space located at 300 Ash Alley.

Southern Pacific Railroad Depot

These buildings were purchased by the City of Tucson in 1998 and have been rehabilitated to their 1941 architectural style. They serve as the home of the Southern Arizona Transportation Museum. In addition, there is an Amtrak office and Maynards Market & Kitchen. Enjoy lunch, dinner, or a drink either inside or outside alongside the active railroad tracks.

Charles O. Brown House

Originally constructed in the late 1840s when Arizona was still part of Mexico. This was the residence of Charles O. Brown, proprietor of the Congress Hall saloon, between 1868 to the early 1900s.

Marist College

Built in 1915 as Tucson's first parochial school for boys, this adobe building operated as a school until 1968. It is considered the tallest extant adobe building in Arizona. It is seriously deteriorated and threatened due to water damage that has compromised the structural integrity of the roof and eroded two of the building's corners.