
National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory
2011



Ship on the Desert
Guadalupe Mountains National Park

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Inventory Unit Summary & Site Plan

Inventory Summary

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory Overview:

CLI General Information:

Purpose and Goals of the CLI

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI), a comprehensive inventory of all cultural landscapes in the national park system, is one of the most ambitious initiatives of the National Park Service (NPS) Park Cultural Landscapes Program. The CLI is an evaluated inventory of all landscapes having historical significance that are listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or are otherwise managed as cultural resources through a public planning process and in which the NPS has or plans to acquire any legal interest. The CLI identifies and documents each landscape's location, size, physical development, condition, landscape characteristics, character-defining features, as well as other valuable information useful to park management. Cultural landscapes become approved CLIs when concurrence with the findings is obtained from the park superintendent and all required data fields are entered into a national database. In addition, for landscapes that are not currently listed on the National Register and/or do not have adequate documentation, concurrence is required from the State Historic Preservation Officer or the Keeper of the National Register.

The CLI, like the List of Classified Structures, assists the NPS in its efforts to fulfill the identification and management requirements associated with Section 110(a) of the National Historic Preservation Act, National Park Service Management Policies (2006), and Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management. Since launching the CLI nationwide, the NPS, in response to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), is required to report information that respond to NPS strategic plan accomplishments. Two GPRA goals are associated with the CLI: bringing certified cultural landscapes into good condition (Goal 1a7) and increasing the number of CLI records that have complete, accurate, and reliable information (Goal 1b2B).

Scope of the CLI

The information contained within the CLI is gathered from existing secondary sources found in park libraries and archives and at NPS regional offices and centers, as well as through on-site reconnaissance of the existing landscape. The baseline information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape, placing it in context of the site's overall significance. Documentation and analysis of the existing landscape identifies character-defining characteristics and features, and allows for an evaluation of the landscape's overall integrity and an assessment of the landscape's overall condition. The CLI also provides an illustrative site plan that indicates major features within the inventory unit. Unlike cultural landscape reports, the CLI does not provide management recommendations or

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treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape.

Inventory Unit Description:

The Wallace E. Pratt Residence, also known as Ship on the Desert, was designed in 1941 by the New York City architecture firm of Milliken & Bevin and construction was supervised by Newton P. Bevin and his wife, Elizabeth Hopkins Bevin, between 1941 and 1943. The building is a rectangular structure, the long axis of which is oriented south-southeast to provide each room with east-west exposures for the best air, light, and view. The single-story residence is 16 feet wide and 110 feet long, and is constructed of 6 transverse walls of locally-quarried stone, tied together with steel trusses, and filled in with walls of stucco on metal lath and large expanses of glass. Each stone bearing wall is 16 feet long, 22 inches thick, and rises 9 feet above grade. The Pratt Residence has a low, flat deck roof with iron railings on each side. The first story roof was originally a 20-year built-up type covered with local stone paving to form usable decks. In the middle of the structure is a very small second story--a glassed in room not unlike a ship captain's bridge, accessible from the ground floor by a circular staircase of metal with maple wood treads. This room provides access to the roof decks. On the north end of the building is a 2-car garage with an attached, one bedroom apartment.

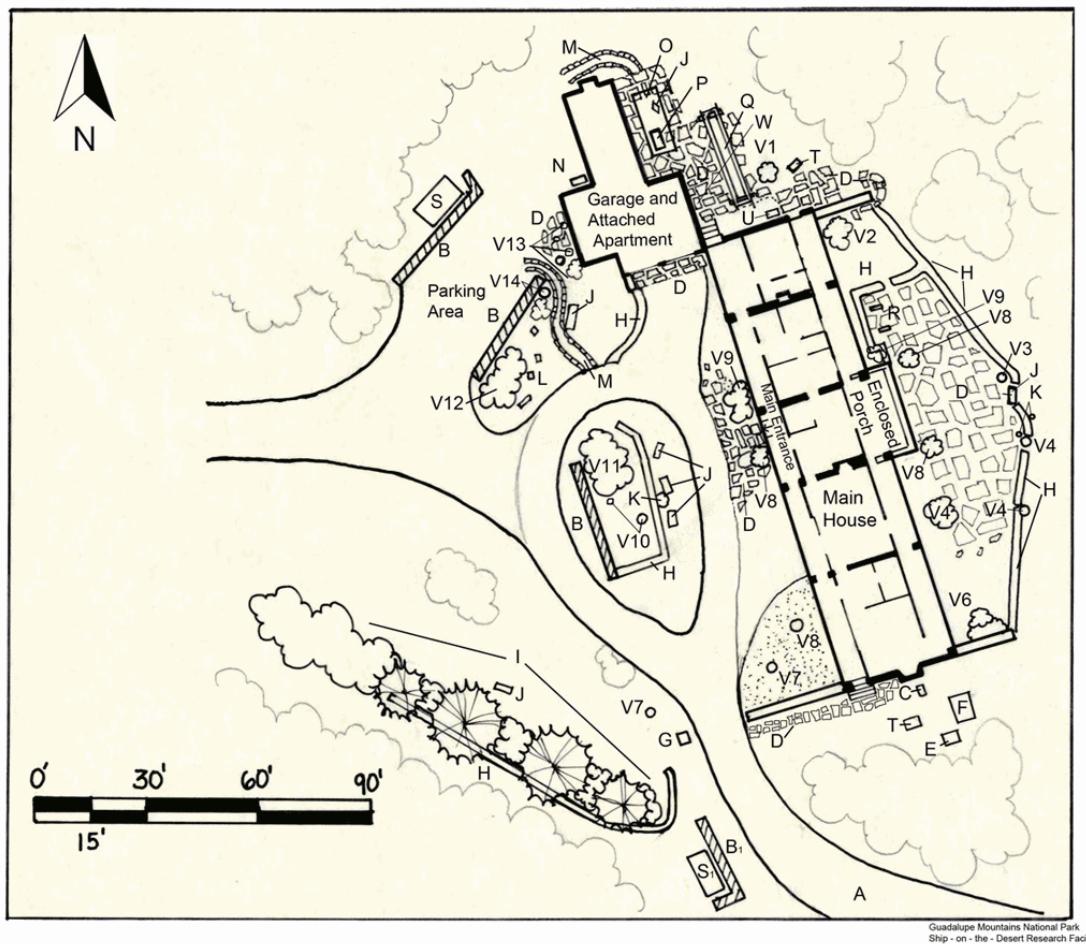
In addition to the residence, a number of landscape features were also constructed during the Pratt era. These include the entrance drive, stone entry gate, access drive to an airstrip, horse corral and tack room, greenhouse, powerhouse, garden areas, stone garbage incinerator, irrigation system, water tanks, underground cistern, metal clothesline, and numerous small-scale stone features. Together with the main residence, these features characterized the property throughout Pratt's tenure until 1959. At that time, Pratt donated his property to the National Park Service, forming the core of what would eventually become Guadalupe Mountains National Park. Since then, the Ship on the Desert has continued in its residential function, housing park researchers.

The Ship on the Desert is significant as an early modernist house in an astonishingly dramatic and remote high desert landscape. As an outstanding example of early 20th-century high-style modernism in the Trans-Pecos region, the house is eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion C in the area of Architecture at the state level. It is also eligible under Criterion B at the state level for its association with Wallace E. Pratt, a petroleum geologist who pioneered in the techniques of scientific oil exploration and who subsequently became vice president of the Humble Oil & Refining Company and later of the Standard Oil Company. The period of significance begins in 1941 with the design of the house and ends in 1959 when Pratt sold the property to the National Park Service.

Today, the property remains relatively unchanged and retains a number of original residential and landscape features constructed by the Pratts. Overall, very little integrity has been lost or compromised. The only notable change has been the decline of both naturally-occurring and planted vegetation due to drought, disease, crowding, and improper maintenance practices. Despite this, the landscape is in good condition.

Ship on the Desert
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Site Plan



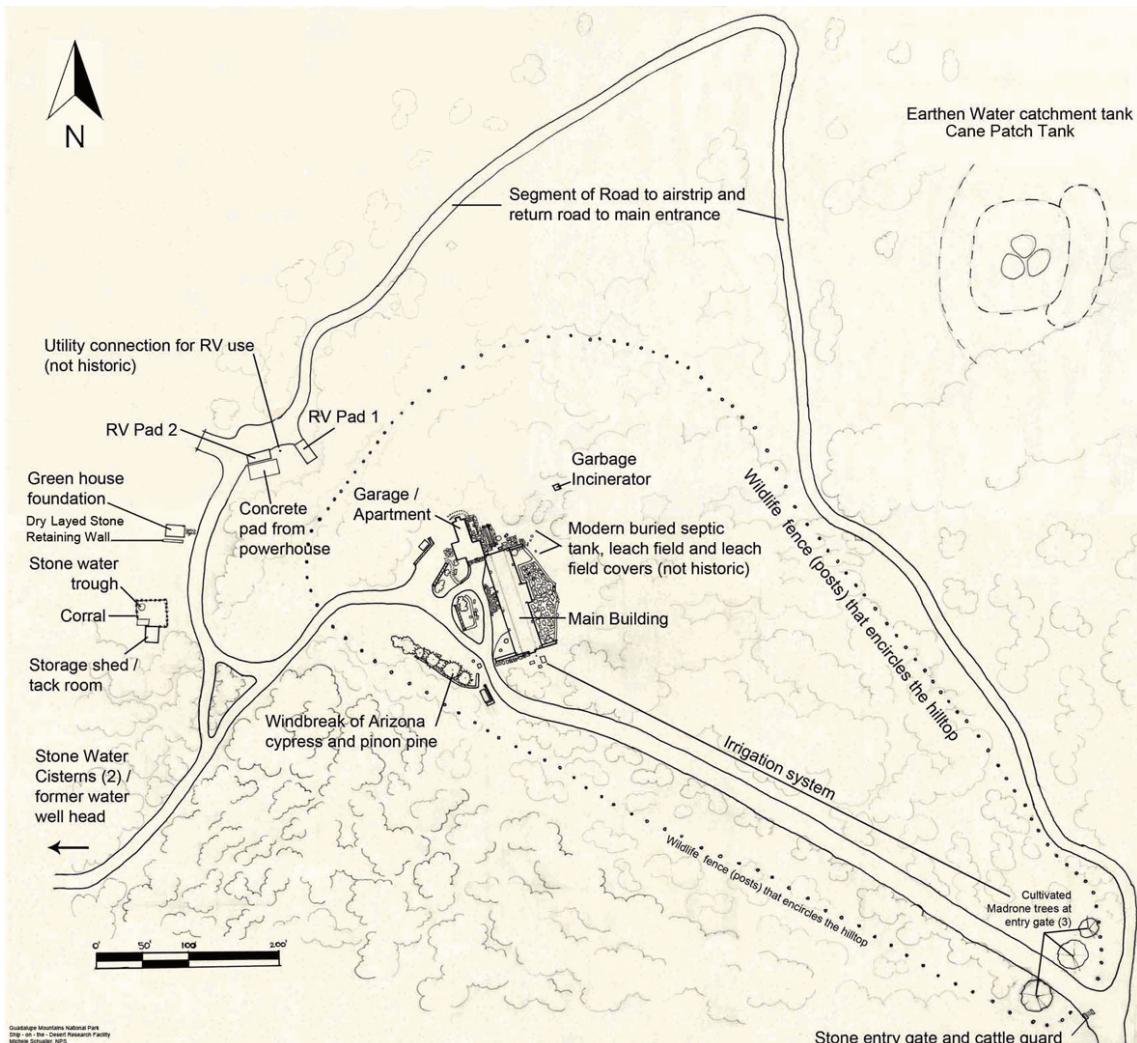
Wallace E. Pratt Residence / Ship on the Desert detailed site plan showing contributing features, 2011. (Key on following page). Drawn by Michele Schuster, CLI intern, NPS.

Ship on the Desert
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	Wallace E. Pratt Residence " Ship on the Desert"
	Guadalupe Mountains National Park, Culberson County, Texas
Historic Features Within the Site:	
A	Paved Entrance Road
B	Dry Stacked Stone Walls, 5' High
C	Valve at Southeast end of house for irrigation system
D	Irregular Flagstone Paving
E	Cistern Cover
F	Underground rainwater cistern
G	Stone Gate Post
H	Low Stone Retaining Wall, Dry Stacked
I	Windbreak of Arizona Cypress (decadent) and pinon pine
J	Stone Bench
K	Natural Stone Bird Bath Feature
L	Decorative Upright Stone Garden
M	Cobble lined path
N	Utility Box
O	Metal Pole and Canopy Shade Structure
P	Stone Table
Q	Clothesline
R	Stone Table (top damaged and missing)
S	LPG Tank (year stamped 1957)
U	Utility crawlway access door
W	LPG Tank Valve Box
Non-historic Features within the site:	
B1	Stone block and mortar wall
S1	Propane Tank
T	Fire hose connections and boxes in the yard at each end of the house
Incorporated or Cultivated Vegetation List	
V1	Gray Oak
V2	Flameleaf Sumac tree with Texas Laurel shrubs beneath
V3	Stump of deceased apricot tree
V4	Gray Oak
V6	Mexican Buckeye hedge against wall, Evergreen Sumac shrub in front
V7	Siberian Elm; western-most deceased, eastern-most decadent
V8	Pyracantha
V9	Pyracantha and Texas Laurel
V10	Desert Willows
V11	Vegetation cluster of Gray Oak (deceased specimen tree), sotol, and prickly pear
V12	Vegetation cluster of Gray Oak, Banana Yucca, Prickly Pear
V13	Texas Madrone, Gray Oak, Redberry Juniper, Skunkbush Sumac, and Prickly Pear
V14	Ocotillo and Banana Yucca

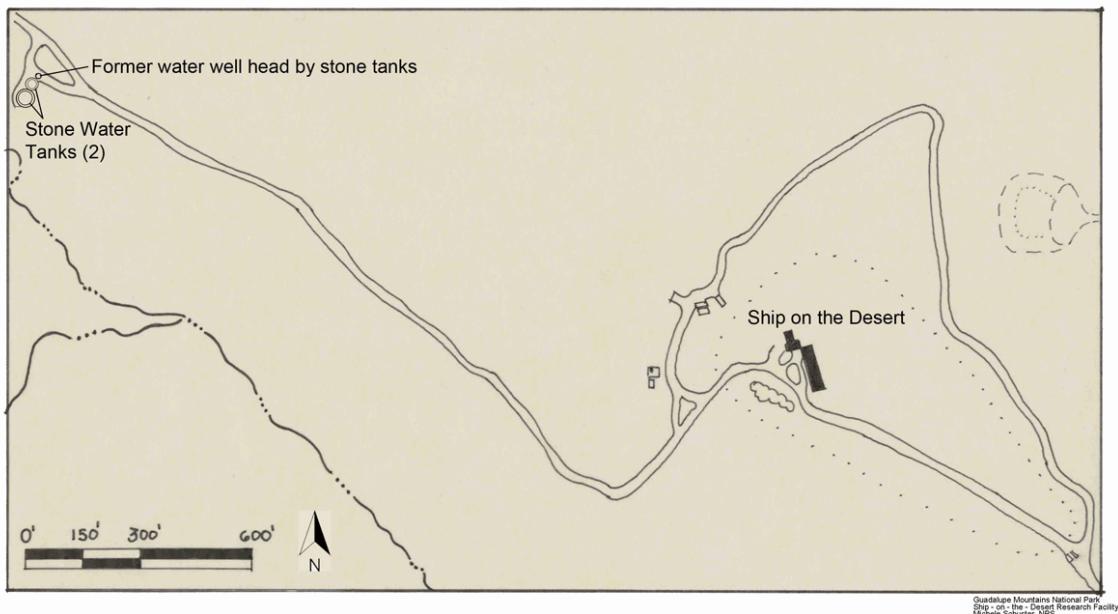
Key to detailed site plan of Wallace E. Pratt Residence / Ship on the Desert (site plan on previous page), 2011.

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Wallace E. Pratt Residence / Ship on the Desert site plan showing contributing resources, 2011.
Drawn by Michele Schuster, CLI intern, NPS.

Ship on the Desert
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Wallace E. Pratt Residence / Ship on the Desert site plan showing contributing resources within the entire CLI area, 2011. Drawn by Michele Schuster, CLI intern, NPS.



Boundary of Wallace E. Pratt Residence / Ship on the Desert. Source: GUMO GIS files, May 5, 2011.

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name: Ship on the Desert

Property Level: Component Landscape

CLI Identification Number: 850077

Parent Landscape: 850063

Park Information

Park Name and Alpha Code: Guadalupe Mountains National Park -GUMO

Park Organization Code: 7180

Park Administrative Unit: Guadalupe Mountains National Park

CLI Hierarchy Description

Ship on the Desert is one of several component landscapes within Guadalupe Mountains National Park.

Concurrence Status

Inventory Status: Complete

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

A draft National Register nomination was completed for Ship on the Desert by Fred Armstrong, Chief of Natural and Cultural Resources at Guadalupe Mountains NP with assistance from Rachel Leibowitz, Ph.D., Historian at the Texas Historical Commission in 2008. The nomination was based upon a 1977 nomination prepared by Dwight T. Pitcaithley, Historian, National Park Service, which was rejected by the Texas Historical Commission at that time for not meeting the 50-year requirement. Although the draft nomination was prepared, it was never sent forward for SHPO or Keeper concurrence.

Using the information from the 2008 draft NR nomination, Carrie Mardorf, Regional CLI Coordinator, and CLI intern Michele Schuster drafted this CLI in 2011. Additional information was added about landscape features, the property type was changed to a site, the boundary of the site was expanded, and the period of significance was extended. As a result, the draft NR nomination was updated and revised. Following the completion of the CLI, the NR nomination was submitted to the Keeper and the property was officially listed on the National Register on 12/15/2011.

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence: Yes

Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence: 10/17/2011

National Register Concurrence: Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination

Date of Concurrence Determination: 10/06/2011

National Register Concurrence Narrative:

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) concurred with the findings of the CLI on 10/6/2011. The National Register nomination for Ship on the Desert was also reviewed and approved at the same time.

Concurrence Graphic Information:

Ship on the Desert
Guadalupe Mountains National Park

MEMORANDUM

To: NPS-IMR CLI Coordinator
P.O. Box 728
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504-0728

From: Superintendent
Guadalupe Mountains National Park
400 Pine Canyon
Salt Flat, TX 79847

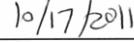
Subject: Ship on the Desert Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI)

I hereby concur with the content and the assessment of the cultural landscape for Ship on the Desert.

1. *The Ship on the Desert component landscape is a historic designed landscape (pg 22).*
2. *The condition of the Ship on the Desert cultural landscape is "Good" (pg. 54) and the management category is listed as "Should be Preserved and Maintained" (pg.15).*
3. *The period of significance for Ship on the Desert is 1941 to 1959 (pg. 21), and the statement of significance states the landscape is significant under Criterion B and C (pg. 16-20).*
4. *The contributing features for Ship on the Desert are listed in the "Analysis and Evaluation" (pg. 33-53) and represent landscape features that are integral to the character and integrity of the site.*



Superintendent, Guadalupe Mountains National Park



Date

Superintendent concurrence on the findings of the CLI, 10/17/2011.

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United States Department of the Interior
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
GUADALUPE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK
400 PINE CANYON DRIVE
SALT FLAT, TEXAS 79847-4755
915/828-3251



IN REPLY REFER TO:
H32 (GUMO)

September 28, 2011

Tiffany Osburn
Texas Historical Commission
Division of Archeology
108 W 16th St
Austin, TX 78701

R E C E I V E D
SEP 29 2011
TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Re: Ship on the Desert Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI), Consensus Determination of Eligibility (DOE), Guadalupe Mountains National Park

Dear Ms. Osburn:

On behalf of Guadalupe Mountains National Park, I am pleased to submit the Ship on the Desert Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) for Texas Historical Commission review and concurrence by Executive Director Mark Wolfe. The Ship on the Desert, also known as the Wallace E. Pratt Residence, is an outstanding example of a modernist house in the Trans-Pecos region. Home to Wallace E. Pratt, a noted petroleum geologist and later vice president of the Standard Oil Company, the residence is the focal point of a 20-acre tract with a number of surrounding landscape features. The residence, guest quarters, stone water tanks, tack building and corral were determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places on August 14, 2006. However, the existing DOE for the property omits key landscape features, as identified in the CLI, that are significant to understanding the property and should be included on the National Register.

The park is asking for a DOE on the CLI, in particular, the contributing and non-contributing features as determined by the analysis of the cultural landscape. Please see the listing and identification of these features in the "Analysis and Evaluation" section of the CLI on pages 33-53. Also included within this section is a full discussion of the seven aspects of integrity on page 30-32. Overall, the CLI finds the Ship on the Desert significant under National Register Criteria B and C, and the period of significance for the site spans from 1941 to 1959.

The completion of CLIs is required by the National Historic Preservation Act, As Amended, Section 110. The National Park Service Cultural Landscapes Program requires SHPO review and a determination of eligibility on the CLI in order for it to be complete. Your concurrence on the findings of the CLI will help the park meet its Section 110 requirements and will provide the

Texas Historical Commission (THC) concurrence on the findings of the CLI, page 1, 10/6/2011.

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park with information important to future Section 106 project evaluations. If you agree with the findings of the CLI, we have included a concurrence signature line below for your convenience.

We appreciate your ongoing technical assistance in our efforts to continuously update our historic resources inventory within national parks in the State of Texas. Please feel free to contact Carrie Mardorf, CLI Coordinator at 505-988-6730 or Fred Armstrong, Chief of Natural and Cultural Resources at 915-828-3251, extension 2400, if you have any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

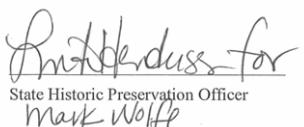

Dennis A. Vasquez
Superintendent, Guadalupe Mountains National Park

Encl: Ship on the Desert CLI

cc: Carrie A. Mardorf, CLI Coordinator, IMR-SF

SHIP ON THE DESERT CULTURAL LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

I hereby concur with the content and findings of the assessment of the cultural landscape for the Ship on the Desert, as noted in the respective Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI).


State Historic Preservation Officer
Mark Wolfe


Date

Texas Historical Commission (THC) concurrence on the findings of the CLI, page 2, 10/6/2011.

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Guadalupe Mountains National Park



DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

PARK NAME, STATE: Guadalupe Mountains National Park

STRUCTURE NAME(S): Ship on the Desert Stone Water Tanks & Tack Building and Corral
PROPERTY/DISTRICT NAME:

LOCATION Street Address:
Municipality: Town/City:
County: Culberson

DATE BUILT: 1940-1945 IDLCS: 64407 & 64408 Park #: B-142 & W-23

SIGNIFICANCE National _____ State & Regional _____ Local

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA: A B C _____ D _____

The significance of the Ship on the Desert Stone Water Tanks and Tack Building & Corral lies in their association, under NR Criterion B, with Wallace Pratt, prominent geologist & conservationist; and Criterion A, proponent and contributor to establishment of Guadalupe Mountains NP. Period of significance is 1940-1956.

DESCRIPTION

Stone masonry tack room, pipe rail corral & river-rock masonry tanks. See attached LCS forms for individual physical descriptions.

National Park Service	State Historic Preservation Office	Comments
Individually Eligible	_____	_____
Contributes to: Property District Potential District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concur _____ _____	_____
Not Eligible & Does Not Contribute to Property/District	_____	Do Not Concur _____
Insufficiently Documented, Treat as Eligible	_____	_____

Park Superintendent *[Signature]* Date *8/14/06* State Historic Preservation Officer *[Signature]* Date *8/14/06*

See attachments: 1997-8 LCS forms, previous DOE form, and current photographs

Texas Historical Commission concurrence on the Determination of Eligibility for the stone water tanks and tack building and corral, 2006.

Ship on the Desert
Guadalupe Mountains National Park

RECEIVED
AUG 08 2006
Texas Historical Commission

DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

PARK NAME, STATE: Guadalupe Mountains National Park
STRUCTURE NAME(S): Ship on the Desert and Ship on the Desert Guest Quarters
PROPERTY/DISTRICT NAME:
LOCATION Street Address: Municipality: Town/City: County: Culberson
DATE BUILT: 1940-1945 IDLCS: 012080 & 012081 Park #: B-341 & B-343

SIGNIFICANCE National State & Regional Local
NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA: A B C D

The significance of the Ship on the Desert and its Guest Quarters lies in their association, under NR Criterion B, with Wallace Pratt, prominent geologist & conservationist; A, proponent and contributor to establishment of Guadalupe Mountains NP; and C, outstanding examples of modern architecture. Period of significance is 1940-1956.

DESCRIPTION
Six room house arranged in a linear fashion with six massive transverse walls build of native stone with structural steel providing the framework for the building. A two-car garage and guest quarters form an ell on the northwest end of the house. Although basically a one-story, the International Style structure was designed to resemble an oil tanker, with the roof of one portion twice the height of the rest of the building and a rooftop room surrounded by a steel railing surmounting the lower section.

National Park Service	State Historic Preservation Office	Comments
Individually Eligible <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Contributes to: Property <input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Potential District <input type="checkbox"/>	Concur <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Not Eligible & Does Not Contribute to Property/District <input type="checkbox"/>	Do Not Concur <input type="checkbox"/>	
Insufficiently Documented, Treat as Eligible <input type="checkbox"/>		

[Handwritten signatures and initials over the table]

Park Superintendent Date: 8/4/06 State Historic Preservation Officer Date: 8/14/06

See attachments: 1995 LCS form, 1978 NR form, and photographs.

Texas Historical Commission concurrence on the Determination of Eligibility for the Ship on the Desert residence and guest quarters, 2006.

Revisions Impacting Change in Concurrence:

Other

Revision Narrative:

Uploaded signed National Register nomination for Ship on the Desert to the Landscape Documents section. Also clarified source information for images, May 2012.

Geographic Information & Location Map

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Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

Located within the Guadalupe Mountains National Park, 55 miles south of Carlsbad, New Mexico, the Ship on the Desert property sits near the center of a 20-acre tract of land. This CLI addresses approximately 20 acres surrounding the building, and includes historic plantings, windbreaks and stone walls, outbuildings, fencing, access drives and other structures historically associated with the ownership and occupation of the property by Wallace E. Pratt.

The site boundary follows the looping perimeter road around the structures, swelling to include the water tanks and access road to the northwestern corner, elk fence poles and windbreak vegetation to the southwest of the loop road, down around the cattle guard and access gate in the southeast corner, on the eastern most edge it includes the cane patch tank and then swells again to the west around the loop road to include the tack room, corral, and greenhouse foundation, and a buffer. The loop road serves as the site's northeast and southeast boundaries. The east boundary follows the perimeter road and connects back into the main access road at the stone entry gate, while the northwest boundary continues up canyon to include the stone water tanks and trough.

State and County:

State: TX

County: Culberson County

Size (Acres): 20.00

Boundary UTMS:

Source:	GPS-Differentially Corrected
Boundary Source Narrative:	Upper NW corner – moving counterclockwise
Type of Point:	Point
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	522,186
UTM Northing:	3,536,068
Boundary Datum Other:	GUMO GIS files
 Source:	GPS-Differentially Corrected
Boundary Source Narrative:	Lower NW Corner by water tanks
Type of Point:	Point
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	522,168
UTM Northing:	3,535,998
Boundary Datum Other:	GUMO GIS files
 Source:	GPS-Differentially Corrected
Boundary Source Narrative:	S Point along access road
Type of Point:	Point
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	522,630
UTM Northing:	3,535,713
Boundary Datum Other:	GUMO GIS files

Source: GPS-Differentially Corrected

Boundary Source Narrative: Point along access road

Type of Point: Point

Datum: NAD 83

UTM Zone: 13

UTM Easting: 522,722

UTM Northing: 3,535,806

Boundary Datum Other: GUMO GIS files

Source: GPS-Differentially Corrected

Boundary Source Narrative: SE corner by entrance to access road

Type of Point: Point

Datum: NAD 83

UTM Zone: 13

UTM Easting: 523,000

UTM Northing: 3,535,703

Boundary Datum Other: GUMO GIS files

Source: GPS-Differentially Corrected

Boundary Source Narrative: Point along access road

Type of Point: Point

Datum: NAD 83

UTM Zone: 13

UTM Easting: 522,890

UTM Northing: 3,535,865

Boundary Datum Other: GUMO GIS files

Source: GPS-Differentially Corrected

Boundary Source Narrative: Eastern point behind Cane Patch Tank

Ship on the Desert
Guadalupe Mountains National Park

Type of Point:	Point
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	523,003
UTM Northing:	3,535,948
Boundary Datum Other:	GUMO GIS files
 Source:	GPS-Differentially Corrected
Boundary Source Narrative:	N point at northern most part of access road
 Type of Point:	Point
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	522,872
UTM Northing:	3,536,030
Boundary Datum Other:	GUMO GIS files
 Source:	GPS-Differentially Corrected
Boundary Source Narrative:	W point beyond loop road and tack house
 Type of Point:	Point
Datum:	NAD 83
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	522,645
UTM Northing:	3,535,839
Boundary Datum Other:	GUMO GIS files
 Source:	GPS-Differentially Corrected
Boundary Source Narrative:	Point along access road leading back to water tanks
 Type of Point:	Point
Datum:	NAD 83

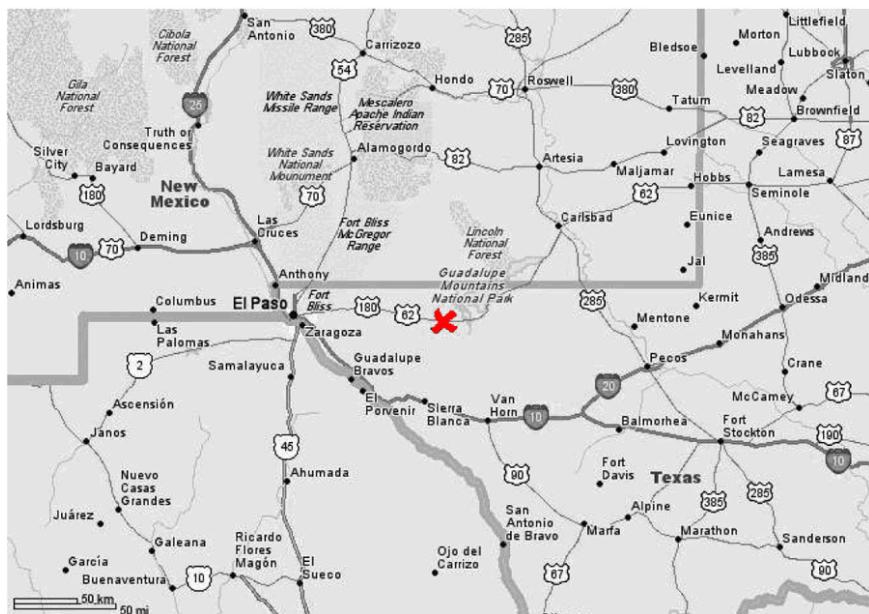
Ship on the Desert
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UTM Zone: 13
UTM Easting: 522,635
UTM Northing: 3,535,732
Boundary Datum Other: GUMO GIS files

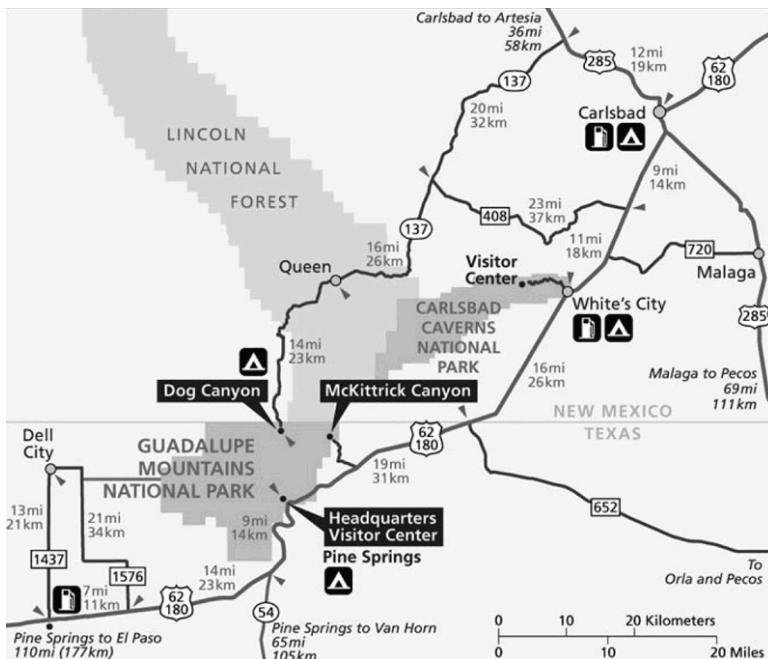
Ship on the Desert

Guadalupe Mountains National Park

Location Map:

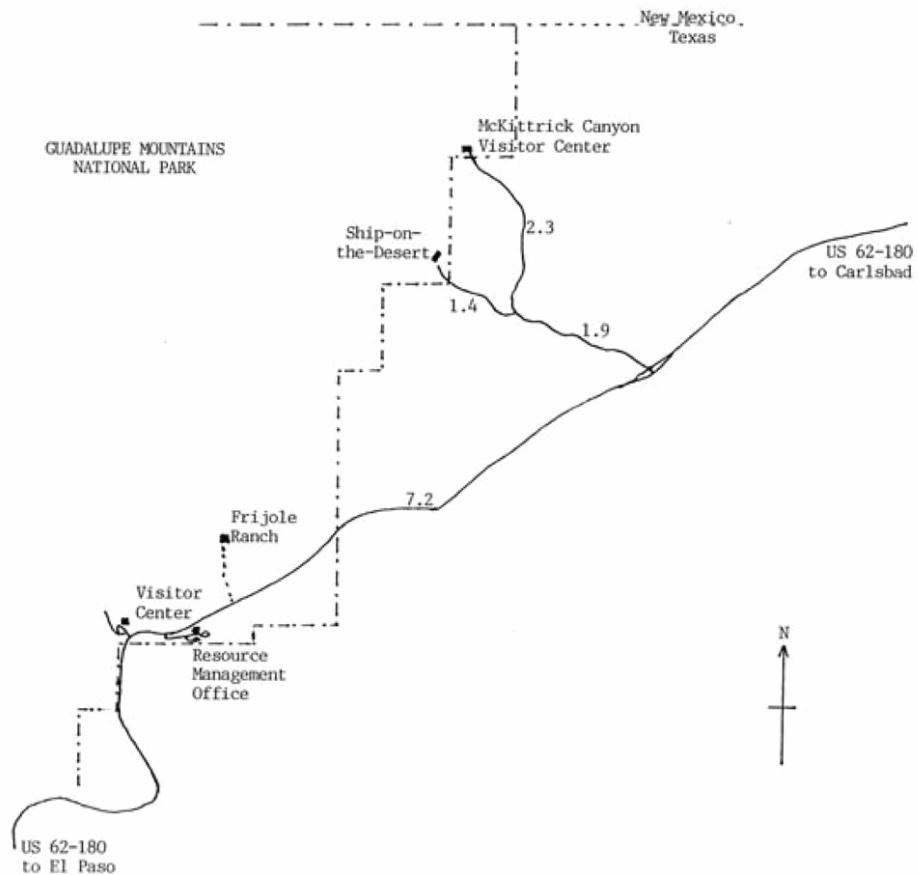


Area map of West Texas showing Guadalupe Mountains National Park, relative to El Paso, TX and Carlsbad, NM. Source: Draft National Register nomination, 2008.



Location of Guadalupe Mountains National Park, relative to Carlsbad Caverns National Park and the Lincoln National Forest in New Mexico. Source: Draft National Register nomination, 2008.

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Location of the Wallace E. Pratt Residence ("Ship on the Desert") within the park. Source: Draft National Register nomination, 2008.

Regional Context:

Type of Context: Cultural

Description:

At the time of its initial settlement and even through the early 20th century the Guadalupe Mountains area was very isolated and challenging for those few homesteaders, settlers, and ranchers who determined to remain. Both prehistoric and historic Indian peoples had used the area. The Mescalero Apache occupied the mountains, springs and canyons of the Guadalupe Mountains. It is highly probable that areas within the park continue to be used and deemed sacred places by the Mescalero tribe.

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

Ship on the Desert is situated on the eastern foothills of the Guadalupe Mountains, to the northwest of Lamar Canyon and to the southwest of McKittrick Canyon. The surrounding vegetation is comprised of cholla, agave, juniper, scrub oak, opuntia, grasses, sotol, typical Chihuahuan Desert vegetation except for the protected and moist canyons where vegetation includes bigtooth maple and maidenhair fern.

Ship on the Desert is located within Guadalupe Mountains National park, which is home to Guadalupe Peak, the highest point in Texas, and to El Capitan, a massive, distinctively-shaped rock face that is the eighth highest peak in the state and the "signature peak" of West Texas. Rising abruptly from the desert floor of the Chihuahuan Desert, El Capitan has been a signal to travelers for many centuries. The Guadalupe Mountains National Park preserves one of the world's best examples of an ancient marine fossil reef and is geographically complex, possessing not only a rugged mountain range, but also deep, sheer-sided canyons, steep slopes, high ridges, and dependable, but limited, seeps and springs. Thousands of species of plants and animals thrive in the Guadalupe Mountains.

Type of Context: Political

Description:

The Guadalupe Mountains National Park straddles the county line between Hudspeth and Culberson counties in far west Texas, approximately 55 miles southwest of Carlsbad, New Mexico and 100 miles east of El Paso, Texas; the park's northern boundary is the New Mexico state line.

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Should be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 08/14/2006

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

A Determination of Eligibility was prepared in 2006 for the residence, guest quarters, stone water tanks, tack building and corral. The Texas Historical Commission concurred that these features were eligible for listing on the National Register on 8/14/2006, and thus, should be preserved and maintained.

Agreements, Legal Interest, and Access

Management Agreement:

Type of Agreement:

Management Agreement Explanatory Narrative:

There are no management agreements associated with Ship on the Desert.

NPS Legal Interest:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Explanatory Narrative:

The NPS owns Ship on the Desert outright in fee simple, no encumbrances.

Public Access:

Type of Access: No Access Currently

Explanatory Narrative:

There is no public access to the site except by park staff escort.

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? No

Adjacent Lands Description:

N/A

National Register Information

Existing National Register Status

National Register Landscape Documentation:

SHPO Inadequately Documented

National Register Explanatory Narrative:

Dwight T. Pitcaithley, NPS Historian, first prepared a draft National Register nomination for the Ship on the Desert in 1977. However, the Texas Historical Commission rejected the nomination at that time for not meeting the 50-year requirement.

In 2006, a Determination of Eligibility was prepared for the Ship on the Desert residence, guest quarters, stone water tanks, tack building and corral. The Texas Historical Commission concurred that these buildings and structures were eligible for listing on the National Register on 8/14/2006.

In 2008, a second draft National Register nomination was completed for Ship on the Desert by Fred Armstrong, Chief of Natural and Cultural Resources at Guadalupe Mountains NP with assistance from Rachel Leibowitz, Ph.D., Historian at the Texas Historical Commission. The nomination was based upon the previous 1977 nomination drafted by Pitcaithley. Although the draft nomination was prepared, it was never sent forward for SHPO or Keeper concurrence.

Using the information from the 2008 draft NR nomination, Carrie Mardorf, Regional CLI Coordinator, and CLI intern Michele Schuster drafted this CLI in 2011. Additional information was added about landscape features, the property type was changed to a site, the boundary of the site was expanded, and the period of significance was extended. As a result, the draft NR nomination was updated and revised in 2011 and sent to the Texas Historical Commission (THC) for final concurrence.

National Register Eligibility

National Register Concurrence:	Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination
Contributing/Individual:	Individual
National Register Classification:	Site
Significance Level:	State
Significance Criteria:	B - Associated with lives of persons significant in our past
Significance Criteria:	C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values

Ship on the Desert
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Period of Significance:

Time Period:	AD 1941 - 1959
Historic Context Theme:	Creating Social Institutions and Movements
Subtheme:	Ways of Life
Facet:	Consumer Society Of The 20th Century
Time Period:	AD 1941 - 1959
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Architecture
Facet:	International (1915-1945)
Time Period:	AD 1941 - 1959
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Landscape Architecture
Facet:	Modern Landscape Design And Site Planning
Time Period:	AD 1941 - 1959
Historic Context Theme:	Developing the American Economy
Subtheme:	Extraction or Mining Industries
Facet:	Petroleum And Related Resources

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category:	Architecture
Area of Significance Category Explanatory Narrative:	(Criterion C; 1941-1959)
Area of Significance Category:	Other
Area of Significance Category Explanatory Narrative:	Eminent Figure Association (Cr 1941-1959)

Statement of Significance:

Overview of Significance

The Wallace E. Pratt Residence, also called the “Ship on the Desert,” is an early modernist house in an astonishingly dramatic and remote high desert landscape. The New York-based architecture firm of Milliken & Bevin designed the long, low, stone-and-glass house in 1941, and it was completed by Newton P. Bevin and his wife, Elizabeth Hopkins Bevin, between 1941 and 1943. The house

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incorporates locally-quarried stone and wide expanses of glass to blend into the surrounding landscape, and it is tied together with steel trusses that allow for a flat roof. As an outstanding example of early 20th-century high-style modernism in the Trans-Pecos region, the house is nominated to the National Register under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture, at the state level; and under Criterion B, at the state level, for its association with Wallace E. Pratt, a petroleum geologist who pioneered in the techniques of scientific oil exploration and who subsequently became vice president of the Humble Oil & Refining Company and later of the Standard Oil Company.

Wallace E. Pratt (1885 to 1981)

Wallace Everette Pratt was born on March 15, 1885, in Phillipsburg, Kansas. After graduating in 1908 with a bachelor's degree in geology from the University of Kansas, the 22-year-old Pratt began his career as an assistant with the Kansas Geological Survey. From 1909 to 1916, he worked in the Philippines--then a territory of the United States--becoming chief of its Division of Mines in 1912. In 1916 Pratt returned to the U.S., first moving to Houston to work for the Texas Company (Texaco), and in 1918 he joined the Humble Oil & Refining Company as its first staff geologist.

Before that time, Humble Oil approached the search for oil using a "hit or miss" methodology that lacked scientific basis. In the year after Pratt joined the company, it added 10 more geologists who demonstrated that successful oil exploration was dependent upon a strong understanding of geologic science. Early in his career with Humble Oil, Pratt and his team of geologists correctly interpreted the structure of the enormous Mexia field in East Texas, which was discovered in October 1920. Based upon information collected in Pratt's studies of the region, the company bought leases on the structure and developed its production, claiming substantial oil reserves. This work on the Mexia field and at another large, productive leased site in Powell, Texas, in 1923 established the success of the Humble Oil & Refining Company.

Pratt was interested in the progress of the scientific field of geology and was always pushing for Humble Oil to incorporate the latest technologies in its explorations. In 1922, when he studied the results obtained by the use of geophysical instruments to locate salt domes on the Texas Gulf Coast, Pratt introduced these methods to Humble Oil's practice. Following Pratt's recommendations, in 1924 Humble Oil set up a research group for geophysics and established a Houston location for geophysics research and development, and the manufacture of a refraction seismograph recording in the field. He also persuaded Humble Oil to lease oil and gas rights on the King Ranch at a time when South Texas was thought to have little or no oil; by 1972 the King Ranch had nearly 600 producing oil and gas wells, and it was the site of the largest natural gas processing plant in the world.

Pratt served as Humble Oil & Refining Company's chief geologist and later director, eventually becoming its vice president. In 1937 he joined the staff of Humble's parent company, the Standard Oil Company, in New Jersey, quickly rising through the ranks to become its director, then a member of its executive committee, and, finally, its vice president. Pratt retired from Standard Oil in 1945 and embarked on a long career as a consulting geologist in private practice. During his retirement he served for two years on the National Security Resources Board and one year as a consultant to the Atomic

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Energy Commission. He returned to Texas permanently in 1949.

Pratt was widely recognized among geologists for his publications, including more than one hundred papers and the book *Oil in the Earth*. He was a founder of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists and in 1920 was elected its fourth president. The association awarded Pratt its first Sidney Powers Medal in 1945, and a 1972 Human Needs Award. He was the director of the American Petroleum Institute for several years and was awarded its Gold Medal for Distinguished Achievement in 1954. The American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers awarded Pratt the Anthony F. Lucas Medal in 1948. The Permian Basin Petroleum Museum inducted Pratt into its Hall of Fame in 1969, and the directors of the International Petroleum Exposition named Pratt the "Grand Old Man of Exploration" in 1976. Wallace E. Pratt died at his home in Tucson, Arizona, at the age of 96 on December 25, 1981.

Pratt and the Guadalupe Mountains National Park

In 1921 Wallace E. Pratt traveled with two West Texas oil-lease brokers to Pecos, Texas, in order to purchase leases for the Humble Oil and Refining Company. While waiting for a meeting with local landowners, a Pecos attorney, J.A. Drane, offered Pratt an opportunity to visit what he called "the most beautiful spot in Texas." The attorney took Pratt through arid scrub desert and high mountains in West Texas until they reached the hidden woodland deep within McKittrick Canyon. The canyon sheltered a free-flowing stream that ran its entire length. A succession of miniature waterfalls formed when travertine deposits created dams along the watercourse. Maple, walnut, oak, and madrone trees grew near desert plants like cactus and agave, all enclosed by steep walls formed when the creek cut through the limestone of the Capitan Reef. On the return trip to Pecos, Drane told Pratt that the McCombs Ranch--containing part of McKittrick Canyon--was for sale.

With two partners, Pratt purchased the ranch for a summer vacation spot; the partners had wanted a place to entertain clients with deer hunts and quiet relaxation, but Pratt appreciated the canyon for its unique geology. After the stock market crash of 1929, Pratt bought out his partners and owned a major portion of the canyon by 1930. Pratt engaged Houston architect John Staub to design a home for him in McKittrick Canyon, and construction began during the winter of 1931-1932. The "Stone Cabin," as it came to be called, or "Manzanita," as Pratt had named it, was only 4 rooms and made of locally-quarried stone selected by Pratt himself; always a geologist, he looked for "silty limestones, thin-bedded and closely jointed by clean, vertical fractures." The Pratts lived in the stone cabin during the summer months, but a flood in the canyon led them to rethink their plans to live there full-time. Pratt decided to build another house on higher ground. He hired the New York-based architecture firm of Milliken & Bevin in 1941 to design a rather modernist, more contemporary house as compared to the "park rustic" style of the Staub cabin.

Constructed shortly thereafter, Pratt and his wife lived in the house for nearly 15 years. The retired geologist, still actively involved with various consulting projects, would often fly a small plane between this relatively isolated house and an office in Carlsbad, New Mexico. The couple enjoyed the quiet of this desert home without a telephone, but as they grew older their health concerns required that they

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give up the solitude of this retreat, and so they moved permanently to Arizona in 1963. Pratt's concern for this West Texas property prompted his decision to donate the land to the National Park Service in 1959. The initial acquisition was 4,942 acres which formed the nucleus of what was to become the Guadalupe Mountains National Park, and an additional 690 acres were acquired from Pratt, his wife and children between 1960 and 1961. Although Congress authorized the purchase of additional lands in 1966, the Guadalupe Mountains National Park was not officially established until 1972. The Pratt cabin designed by Staub was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1975.

The Architectural Significance of the Wallace E. Pratt Residence

The architects Henry O. Milliken and Newton P. Bevin were known for their lavish residences for New York's elite, and much of their work followed the École des Beaux Arts tradition of symmetry and classically-inspired ornamentation. Bevin graduated from Princeton University in 1917 and earned his architectural degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1922. By this time, Milliken already had established his architectural practice among New York City's elite patrons; in 1920 he designed a 5-story home in the Georgian style for Dr. Foster Kennedy at 14 Sutton Square, in an enclave of large urban estates sharing a private walled garden along East 57th Street; that house contributes to the Sutton Place Historic District listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1985.

In 1927 Bevin joined in partnership with Milliken, and their firm Milliken & Bevin was dissolved in 1944, one year prior to Milliken's death. In 1930-1931, the firm designed an enormous teak trellis for the formal terraced gardens of "Clayton," the Roslyn, Long Island estate owned by Childs Frick, son of the industrialist Henry Clay Frick. The firm of Milliken & Bevin also rehabilitated an 18-story building at 359-375 Madison Avenue, turning it into a hotel and shops in 1933. It is not clear how Wallace Pratt came to know the architects or their work, but as an important member of both the Humble Oil and Standard Oil companies, it is likely that the connection was established through the social networks of New York and Washington, D.C.

Letters from Wallace Pratt in the archives of the park reveal that the house was begun in 1941, but that construction had to be stopped due to material shortages during World War II. Construction resumed in 1945, according to Pratt's memory, but the May 1943 issue of *The New Pencil Points*--showing photographs of the completed building--suggest that Pratt's recollections of the building's completion is faulty. The journal article credits the design of the Pratt Residence to the firm of Milliken & Bevin, yet Pratt's letters to Mr. and Mrs. Newton P. Bevin and to the park's superintendent both state that it was the Bevins who designed this house together. According to Pratt's letters, Elizabeth and Newton Bevin came to live the Staub-designed cabin in the canyon during the construction of the Ship on the Desert, which was directed by building contractor Edward Birdsall of Carlsbad, New Mexico. As Pratt wrote in 1974: "Being on the ground, they could guide the contractor and closely supervise the operation. Equally important to us, they could personally direct the selection of the 'natural building blocks' being gathered up along the base of the adjacent mountain front."

In May 1943, the Pratt Residence was featured in the architectural trade journal *The New Pencil Points*. During these years the publication was known for its lively musings on the definition of

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“modern” and “modernism.” The article provided photographs of the house under construction, as well as plans of both floors and a fascinating description of the architects’ design. While on the one hand the article lauded the technology necessary to create the building and even to inhabit it, it also focused on the beauty of the natural setting and the building’s supposed ability to fit integrally with the site:

“About a mile west of the house the Guadalupe Mountains rise nearly 10,000 feet. To the east is the open Texas plain. Wherever water runs there is dark green foliage; the hills are gray gypsum; and the masonry walls of the house are of local limestone of a tawny color, in a wide range of shades varying from almost white to almost black. The stone cleaves nicely, with one edge naturally almost as perfectly square and true as though dressed. The stucco used on the steel walls is adobe color, the sash and doors warm white, and the principle door prune color.”

The Pratt Residence, very forward-thinking for its time--especially in far west Texas--has its precedent in the work of the French architectural theorist LeCorbusier, who stated in his 1923 manifesto *Vers une Architecture* (“Towards an Architecture”), “A house is a machine for living.” He also had a wide appreciation for the design of automobiles and large ocean liners, and his buildings were often likened to ships or other mechanical marvels. LeCorbusier’s minimalist, industrially-inspired residential machines usually stood in stark contrast to their surroundings, which were often large, pastoral estates. His houses perched on delicate columns, barely touching the ground, hovering over the landscape like viewing pavilions, yet they provided more than a passive interaction with nature. At the Villa Savoye, which Le Corbusier designed and constructed in suburban Paris between 1928 and 1931, the garden flows under the house, and a roof garden allows the landscape to cover it, as well. Large expanses of glass allow views of the pastoral surroundings to flow throughout the house, and the Wallace E. Pratt Residence, though low and ground-hugging, follows this example.

The New Pencil Points described the contrast between site and structure, the garden and the machine, without fully embracing the nautical theme: “A long, low house seemed to fit the terrain best, and afforded the opportunity of designing a structure consisting of transverse masonry bearing walls with light steel joists and steel studs between. The result is rather ship-like; but the problem stopped short of complete analogy, and, the architects being honest, so did the solution. For the best air, light, and view each room has east-west exposure. Winds come from the southwest.”

For the author of this Pencil Points article, it was the technology of the airplane, more than that of a ship, that influenced the home’s design: “Here are forcibly demonstrated the possible effects of travel by air on some homes of the future; the owner, a scientist, works in a far distant metropolis and commuted to this desert home by private plane. This example is obviously a solution for the man who is at least well-to-do.... The house is 50 miles from the nearest town, though a state highway is close by; it is most accessible by air and has its own landing field and hangar. The property is a cattle ranch, with a ranch house a mile or more distant; little human help--to say nothing of machines or the conventional amenities--is available.”

The Machine in the Garden, a 1964 book by cultural historian Leo Marx, analyzes an acutely American phenomenon of the industrial age: the longing for the lush, unexplored “garden” or “wilderness,” and the

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anxiety over its loss due to technological advancements. In Marx's thesis, the "machine" necessarily overwhelms the "garden" as it works to transform raw "nature" into products for consumer consumption. The railroad--its distant sound an unnerving disturbance in Henry Thoreau's Walden idyll--unified the vast garden of North America, and was instrumental in transporting resources from coast to coast. Other technologies and machines worked to harness the power of nature, moving tons of rock in search of oil, coal, gold and other metals, or transforming trees into lumber, and turning water into steam or electricity. While the machine might seem to some, like the transcendentalist Thoreau, to be out of place in the garden, in the eyes of others the machine makes wild nature into something familiar, understandable, comfortable, and even profitable. For Wallace Pratt, the geologist turned oil magnate, this was especially true.

The house is mostly glass on its east and west sides, allowing for wide views of the surrounding landscape, and the second story room, which Pratt used as a "music room," was the perfect, sheltered perch or observation deck from which to keep a safe distance from "wild" nature. The "Ship on the Desert" incorporates local stone and a flat roof in order to maintain an unobtrusive presence, and it functions as a viewing pavilion for the dramatic show of the Guadalupe Mountains. The Pratt Residence illustrates the geologist's interest in and concern for the aesthetic qualities of the area and in the preservation of this environment. Although designed in a modernist style, the house reveals Pratt's conservationist leanings in its long, low profile and its careful arrangement of stone colors and shapes to blend harmoniously with its surroundings.

Today the Pratt Residence is utilized by the National Park Service to house researchers visiting the park for extended periods, and it is not generally open to the public. The house and its cultural landscape retain a good degree of its physical integrity, and its setting and feeling have not been compromised. Designed before U.S. involvement in World War II and initially completed before the war's end, the house is an unusually early example of modernist architecture within the rural Trans-Pecos region of Texas, therefore the Wallace E. Pratt Residence is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture at the state level of significance. It is also eligible under Criterion B, at the state level of significance, for its association with the pioneering geologist and oil explorer Wallace E. Pratt, as his last home in the state of Texas.

Chronology & Physical History

Cultural Landscape Type and Use

Cultural Landscape Type: Designed

Current and Historic Use/Function:

Primary Historic Function: Single Family House

Primary Current Use: Government-Other

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Other Use/Function	Other Type of Use or Function
Secondary Structure (Garage)	Both Current And Historic
Small Residential Landscape	Both Current And Historic
Outdoor Recreation-Other	Current

Current and Historic Names:

Name	Type of Name
Wallace E. Pratt Residence	Both Current And Historic
Ship on the Desert (also Ship-on-the-Desert)	Both Current And Historic
Headquarters House	Historic
Headquarters El Manzanita	Historic

Ethnographic Study Conducted: Yes-Restricted Information

Ethnographic Significance Description:

An Ethnographic Overview and Assessment was completed in early 1997 which focused on two tribes of close proximity and ties to the park; the Mescalero Apache Tribe in New Mexico and the Pueblo of Ysleta del Sur (Tigua) near El Paso, Texas. The park conducts government-to-government relations with both of these tribes, as well as eleven more tribes with traditional affiliation with the Guadalupe Mountains National Park. These tribes include the following: Apache Tribe of Oklahoma; Comanche Tribe, Oklahoma; Fort Sill Apache Tribe of Oklahoma; Hopi Tribe of Arizona; Jicarilla Apache Tribe of the Jicarilla Apache Indian Reservation, New Mexico; Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma; Pueblo of Isleta, New Mexico; Pueblo of Zia, New Mexico; San Carlos Apache Tribe of the San Carlos Reservation, Arizona; White Mountain Apache Tribe of the Fort Apache Reservation, Arizona; and Zuni Tribe of the Zuni Reservation, New Mexico.

Chronology:

Year	Event	Annotation
AD 1885	Established	March 15. Wallace Everette Pratt was born.
AD 1908	Established	Pratt graduated with a bachelor's degree in geology from the University of Kansas.
AD 1918 - 1945	Established	Pratt joined the Humble Oil & Refining Company as its first staff geologist, later moved up in the company to later become chief geologist, director, and vice-president.
AD 1921	Ranched/Grazed	The future site of the Ship on the Desert was owned by Green McCombs, a cattle rancher. The McCombs ranch included a ranch house and about 7600 acres.

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	Purchased/Sold	Wallace E. Pratt traveled with two West Texas oil-lease brokers to Pecos, Texas, in order to purchase leases for the Humble Oil and Refining Company. While waiting for a meeting, a Pecos attorney, J.A. Drane, took Pratt through arid scrub desert and high mountains in West Texas until they reached McKittrick Canyon. Drane informed Pratt that the McCombs Ranch, containing part of McKittrick Canyon, was for sale.
	Purchased/Sold	Pratt purchased the 11 section, 7600-acre McCombs Ranch for a summer vacation spot with two partners; the partners had wanted a place to entertain clients with deer hunts and quiet relaxation, but Pratt appreciated the canyon for its unique geology.
AD 1929 - 1930	Purchased/Sold	After the stock market crash of 1929, Pratt bought out his partners interest at \$3 an acre, owning a major portion of the McKittrick Canyon by the early 1930s.
AD 1930 - 1959	Land Transfer	Sometime between 1930 and 1959, Pratt exchanged some of his low-lying land for mountainous sections owned by the T& P Land Trust.
AD 1930	Designed	Pratt engaged Houston architect John Staub to design a home for him in McKittrick Canyon.
AD 1931 - 1932	Built	Winter of 1931-1932. Construction of building known as the "Stone Cabin" (now the Pratt Lodge) began. It was built by local labor using local stone selected by Pratt and yellow pine from East Texas. Located at the upper terrace of the flood plain of North McKittrick Canyon at its junction with South McKittrick, it only contained 4 rooms. A stone garage and stone benches were also constructed nearby. Note: This complex of buildings and structures is outside of the CLI boundary.
AD 1932 - 1941	Maintained	The Pratts lived in the stone cabin during the summer months.
AD 1934 - 1937	Purchased/Sold	Pratt expanded his land holdings to 10,000 acres and grazed cattle on the ranch. The property was fenced on three sides against the mountain front, and was subdivided into ten 1000-acre pastures, each with its own well and windmill for water. Ten cows and one bull were placed in each pasture (Pratt 1973: Oral History Interview).

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AD 1941	Damaged	Sometime prior to 1941, the road access to the stone cabin was damaged by a flood in the canyon trapping the Pratts in the cabin, which led the Pratts to rethink their plans to live there full-time. Pratt decided to build another house on higher ground.
	Designed	Pratt hired New York-based architecture firm, Milliken & Bevin to design a modernist, more contemporary house for his permanent residence.
	Planned	March. The Pratts determined the elevation for the site of Headquarters (Ship on the Desert).
	Built	Construction of the modernist Ship on the Desert residence was begun, but stopped shortly thereafter due to material shortages during World War II.
AD 1941 - 1945	Established	A series of photographs were taken documenting the construction and completion of Ship on the Desert.
AD 1941 - 1943	Built	Construction was supervised by Newton P. Bevin and his wife, Elizabeth Hopkins Bevin, who lived in the Staub-designed cabin. General Contractor, Ed Birdsall of Carlsbad was also hired for the job.
AD 1942	Planted	In a letter to Iris, vegetation planted around the house is noted.
AD 1943 - 1945	Built	1943 or 1945, dates vary. The construction of Ship on the Desert was completed. Most likely the residence was finished in 1943.
AD 1943	Maintained	May 1943. The Pratt Residence was featured in the architectural trade journal, The New Pencil Points, which was known for articles on “modern” and “modernism.”
AD 1945	Altered	Pratt retired from the Standard Oil Company (parent company to Humble Oil & Refining).

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AD 1951 - 1957	Maintained	Summers. Grandson Ed Reid spent summers at Ship on the Desert with the Pratts. He recalled living in the Servants Quarters, while the Pratts lived in the south wing of the main residence. He also recalled an extensive cactus garden south of the driveway and garage, where he thought the upright stones were decorative pieces. The backyard was sort of a Japanese style garden with camel bells in the trees and efficient use of water.
AD 1959	Land Transfer	Pratt donated the property to the National Park Service. The federal government initially acquired 4,942 acres, which would later form the nucleus of what was to become the Guadalupe Mountains National Park. The land is administered as a separate unit of Carlsbad Caverns National Park.
AD 1960 - 1961	Land Transfer	An additional 690 acres were acquired from Pratt, his wife and children.
AD 1963	Altered	The Pratts moved to Tucson, Arizona.
AD 1966	Established	Congress authorized the establishment of Guadalupe Mountains National Park.
AD 1970 - 1985	Land Transfer	1970s to mid-1980s. After the Wallace Pratt residence was acquired by the National Park Service, it was used as staff housing.
AD 1972	Established	Guadalupe Mountains National Park was formally established.
AD 1975	Established	The Pratt cabin designed by Staub was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
AD 1977	Established	A National Register nomination was prepared for Ship on the Desert by Dwight T. Pitcaithley, Historian, National Park Service. The nomination was rejected by the Texas Historical Commission for not meeting the 50-year requirement.
AD 1985	Established	A National Register nomination was drafted for Ship on the Desert by John P. White of White Associates AIA Architects. It is again rejected by the Texas Historical Commission for not meeting the 50-year mark.

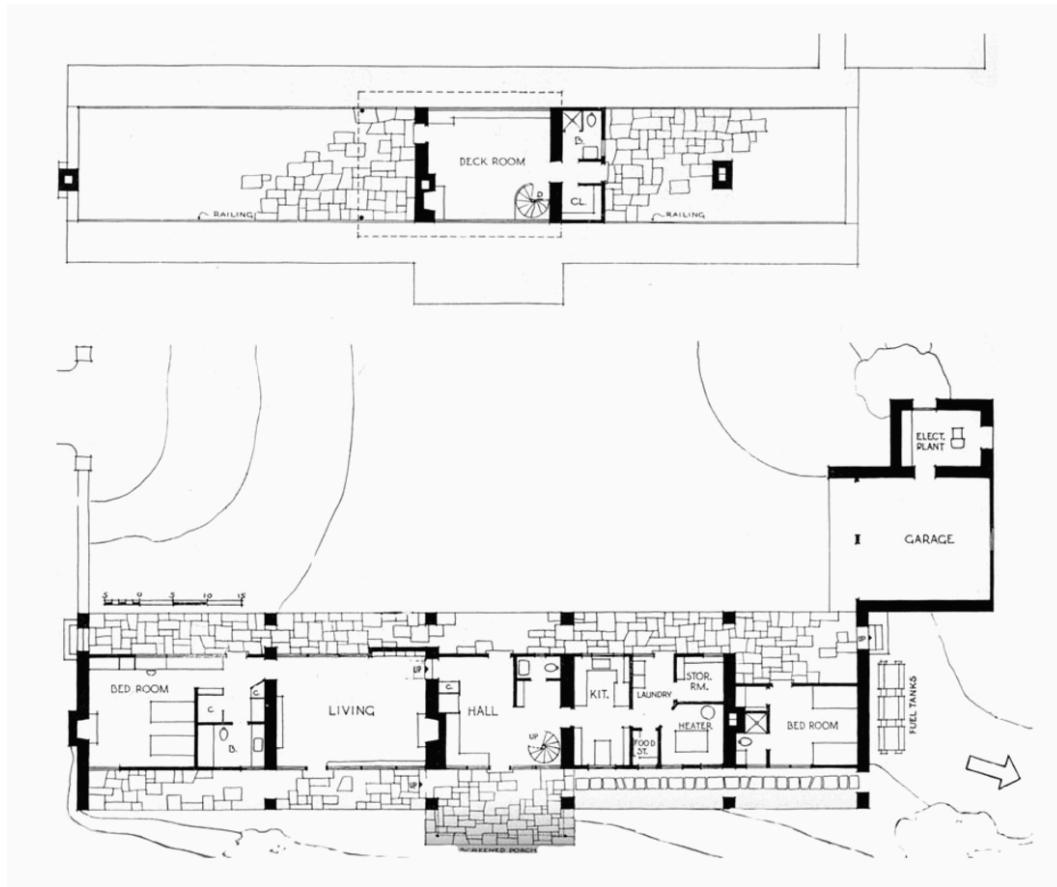
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AD 1985 - 2011	Altered	The Pratt Residence is used as living space for short-term visiting researchers.
AD 1989	Rehabilitated	The former Pratt residence and stone cabin were rehabilitated (LCS records).
AD 1995	Established	Oral histories were conducted with the grandchildren of Wallace Pratt, particularly Ed Reid (grandson).
AD 2001	Established	Cultural Landscapes of McKittrick Canyon, Guadalupe Mountains National Park, Texas is written by Kimberly A. Sawyer as a thesis.
AD 2006	Planned	A project to Replace Landscape Elements at Ship on the Desert proposes removing dead historic vegetation and replacing it in-kind.
	Established	Determinations of Eligibility are made for the main house and guest quarters, stone water tanks, tack building, and corral at Ship on the Desert.
AD 2008 - 2009	Established	A National Register nomination was completed for Ship on the Desert by Fred Armstrong, Chief of Natural and Cultural Resources at Guadalupe Mountains NP with assistance from Rachel Leibowitz, Ph.D., Historian at the Texas Historical Commission in 2008. The nomination was based upon a 1977 nomination.
AD 2008 - 2011	Maintained	The Pratt Residence continues to be utilized by the National Park Service to house researchers visiting the park for extended periods.
AD 2011	Established	A CLI for the property was completed by CLI Coordinator, Carrie Mardorf with assistance from Michele Schuster, CLI intern and GUMO park staff Fred Armstrong and Jonena Hearst.

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Physical History:

For History Summary, see the Statement of Significance.



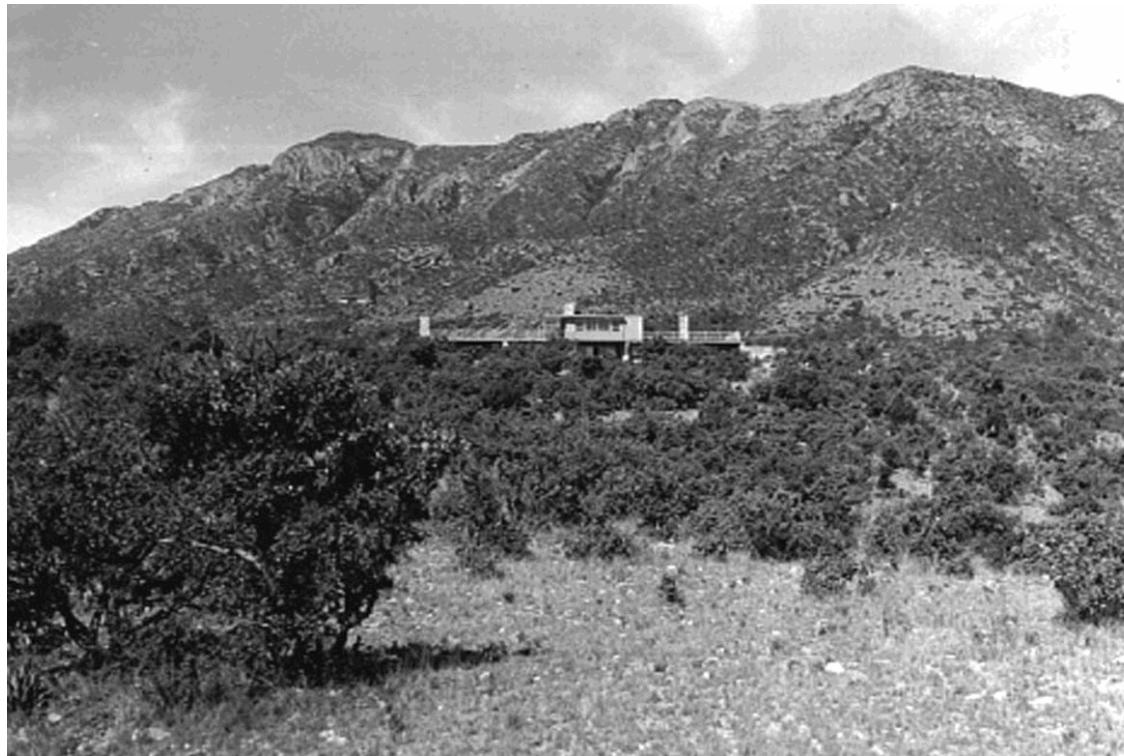
Plan of the Wallace E. Pratt Residence as it appeared in The New Pencil Points, May 1943. Source: Draft National Register nomination, 2008.

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Construction photo of Ship on the Desert showing stone piers, spiral staircase, and steel structure. Source: GUMO CRM files, IMR Santa Fe.

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The east façade of the Ship on the Desert, August 13, 1942, looking west. Source: GUMO CRM files, IMR Santa Fe.

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View of the Wallace E. Pratt Residence with covered porch not yet enclosed, August 13, 1942, looking south-southeast. Source: GUMO CRM files, IMR Santa Fe.

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View of the back of the Ship on the Desert, February 15, 1943, looking north – northwest. Source: GUMO CRM files, IMR Santa Fe.

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View to residence from “Cane Patch Bowl” or “Cane Patch Tank” looking south-southwest. Source: GUMO CRM files, IMR Santa Fe.

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View of front of the Ship on the Desert, looking north-northeast. Source: GUMO CRM files, IMR Santa Fe.

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

The landscape of Ship on the Desert contains a multitude of landscape features that were added and built during the period of significance. Other landscape features were important in determining the location of the residence. While exact details about landscape features are somewhat limited due to limited historic documentation that focuses mainly on the construction of the building, analysis and evaluation of integrity reflects the degree of change in the character of the landscape over time. The historic integrity of the Ship on the Desert may be analyzed under seven categories: integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

LOCATION

Location is the physical place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred. The location of a property is an important factor in determining why the property was created. If a property is separated from its location, the recapture of a sense of historic meaning and character is fragmented.

Designed in 1941 and constructed shortly thereafter, the Ship on the Desert has remained in its original location, set on a high point projecting from the front of the Guadalupe Mountains. Other landscape features, such as the entrance road, gardens, stone walls, and outlying service buildings have also remained in their original locations with minimal alterations. As a result, the property retains integrity of location.

DESIGN

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. It results from conscious decisions made during the original conception and planning of a property or its significant alteration. The design of a historic property reflects the functions, technologies, and aesthetics of its period of significance, and can include elements such as massing, spatial arrangement, site layout, texture and color of materials, style of ornamental detailing, and type of vegetation.

The Ship on the Desert was designed by Milliken & Bevin, an architecture firm based out of New York City, while the construction was carried out by local labor supervised by Newton P. Bevin and his wife, Elizabeth Hopkins Bevin. Design significance is evident in the spatial organization of the area, building form, and use local stone materials. The main residence is the focus of the designed plan with simple rectilinear and horizontal forms of stone, glass, and steel. Clustered around the main house are outdoor living spaces, gardens, circulation features, and outbuildings that are arranged functionally and aesthetically. Landscape features reflect the style of the main residence through the use of stone and simple forms. Native and planted vegetation complements the form and design of the site.

Since the end of the period of significance, few changes have been made to the design of the Ship on

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the Desert landscape. The most notable change in design has been the decline and removal of some historic vegetation, which has somewhat altered the character of the site. Nevertheless, the design of the building and landscape remain true to the original site plan. Overall, integrity of design is retained.

SETTING

Setting is the physical environment of a historic property. Whereas location refers to the physical place where a property was built or an event occurred, setting refers to the character of the site. Setting includes the physical elements of a site, such as spatial organization, land use, vegetation, topography, circulation, and small-scale features. Setting also includes the character of the contextual lands that surround a historic property.

Overall, the setting surrounding the Ship on the Desert appears much as it did during the historic period. The district is set on the eastern edge of the Guadalupe Mountains overlooking desert in nearly all directions. Topographic features and the positioning and arrangement of buildings and structures in relation to the neighboring landforms has remained unchanged, and are significant in terms of the setting of the property. Views from the area to the mountains and desert remain distinct and unchanged from the period of historic development. The surrounding vegetation has also remained relatively unchanged, though the density of species has likely increased since grazing ended in the mid 20th century. Neighboring lands within view are still used for cattle ranching.

Within the property, setting has also been retained. Very few features have been added since the end of the period of significance. Those that have been added include utilitarian features, such as stone wall screening around the propane tanks and RV pads for park volunteers. Planted vegetation within the Ship on the Desert landscape remains, though it has declined since the end of the period of significance, leaving dead and dying trees throughout the landscape. However, the park plans to replace these trees in-kind in the near term. Native shrubs tend to re-colonize portions of the maintained landscape and are periodically removed for fire protection and to maintain the setting. Overall the physical elements and character of the property have remained the same as the major spaces have not dramatically changed; thus, integrity of setting is retained.

MATERIALS

Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. The choice and combination of materials reveal the preferences of those who created the property and indicate the availability of particular types of materials and technologies.

Overall, historic and natural materials of the Ship on the Desert landscape remain. The use of native, local stone materials in the construction of the main residence, outbuildings, and landscape features is a distinguishing characteristic of the area. Use of the stone, McCombs and Radar limestone, reflects Wallace Pratt's passion for geology and also creates a modern residence that blends with the indigenous landscape. Stone placed in thin, horizontal lines continues to serve as an identifiable design

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element within the Ship on the Desert landscape.

Materials associated with the landscape include the asphalt/gravel entrance drive, stone pavers and paths, stone water tanks, stone walls, stone outbuildings, and wood and metal fences. All retain integrity of materials. Additionally, some vegetation from the period of significance has survived, and also retains integrity.

WORKMANSHIP

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. It is the evidence of artisans' labor and skill in constructing or altering a building, structure, object, or site. Workmanship can apply to the property as a whole or to its individual components.

Expressions of workmanship during the period of significance for the Ship on the Desert are limited to built features—the main residence, outbuildings, walls, garden areas, etc. Nearly all buildings and landscape features from the period of significance remain, though the greenhouse and powerhouse were removed at an unknown date. The features that remain have withstood decades of use and more recently, limited maintenance, which indicates a level of high quality craftsmanship. Integrity of workmanship is retained.

FEELING

Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. It results from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey the property's historic character. In conjunction with location and setting, feeling describes what the property feels like or the senses it evokes to a person on the property.

The integrity of feeling is retained throughout the Ship on the Desert. Throughout the entire area, the physical features that comprise the site, including the main residence, structures, vegetation patterns, views, and circulation features create a feeling of a modern, mid 20th century residence. Additionally, the use of stone throughout the area gives the landscape a unique character and identity that unifies the individual elements into a residential site. Overall, integrity of feeling is retained.

ASSOCIATION

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. A property retains association if it is the place where the event or activity occurred and is sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to an observer. A property with high integrity of association portrays its historic character through physical elements and their relationships to each other. Like feeling, association is based on individual and/or community perceptions.

The site retains integrity to the Wallace Pratt period in specific elements and in overall character.

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Pratt's knowledge and passion for geology greatly contributed to the design and construction of the main residence and several stone features throughout the landscape. The retention of the stone features within the residential complex greatly enhances the site's association with Pratt. Integrity of association is retained.

Landscape Characteristic:

Archeological Sites

The location of Ship on the Desert is on the top of a broad knoll typical of area sites that could display cultural artifacts. Surface archeological materials were probably scavenged in the early to mid-20th century when the property was speculated for a building site. Additionally, ground-disturbing activities associated with the construction of the residence likely buried or destroyed any prehistoric archeological features. However, it is likely that historic archeological sites, such as trash pits (middens) from the Pratt family, remain from the period of significance.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Potential archeological sites dating to the period of significance

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES: None.

Buildings and Structures

The main buildings constructed during the period of significance include the main residence, garage, and attached apartment at Ship on the Desert. The main residence was designed in 1941 by the New York City architecture firm of Milliken & Bevin and completed by Newton P. Bevin and his wife, Elizabeth Hopkins Bevin, between 1941 and 1943. The single-story residence is 16 feet wide and 110 feet long, and it faces into the prevailing winds from the southwest. The house is constructed of 6 transverse walls of locally-quarried stone, tied together with steel trusses, and filled in with walls of stucco on metal lath and large expanses of glass. Each stone bearing wall is 16 feet long, 22 inches thick, and rises 9 feet above grade. The Pratt Residence has a low, flat deck roof with iron railings on each side. In the middle of the structure is a very small second story--a glassed in room not unlike a ship captain's bridge, accessible from the ground floor by a circular staircase of metal with wood treads.

One enters the long, low building through a covered porch that extends the entire length of the house on its western side. Originally this porch was left open to the elements, with a concrete floor and 6 stone columns. The harsh winds quickly proved to be too much for the Pratt family, however, and they enclosed the porch by filling the spaces between the columns with matching stone to a height of approximately 4 feet, and then installing storm windows from the top of the stone infill to the roof. This enclosed porch is covered by the same flat, built-up roof as the house, with metal flashing, gutters, and downspouts.

Once inside the porch, visitors enter the house through a flush-panel door, which is centrally-located on the western façade and painted a visually arresting purple or "prune" color;

the door has a whimsical door knocker that looks like a rock hammer--a very important tool for a geologist. The door provides passage to an entrance hall, with built-in cabinets with zebra-wood counters to the right and the metal circular staircase to the left, against a wall of glass that allows expansive views of the landscape to the east. Immediately to the left of the front door is a wall, behind which are a coat area and a small half-bathroom.

Moving to the right, or to the southeast, the visitor descends 2 short steps through the arched portal and enters a large living room, with a fireplace on the northern wall, and vast built-in maple bookshelves and cabinets along the other walls and under the large windows that face to both the east and west. The floors are covered with a neutral-tone linoleum tile and the walls are stucco painted white. In historic photographs the original linoleum tile appeared to be laid throughout the house in contrasting shades that created various basketweave patterns on the floor; according to a 1943 journal article, "the choice of patterned tile layouts for the floors seems curiously out of harmony."

To the south beyond the living room is the master bedroom suite. Immediately to the left, in the northeastern corner of the suite, are a dressing area with large closets and a bathroom featuring its original yellow ceramic tile and white porcelain fixtures. Built-in cabinets with zebra-wood counters and shelves line the west wall under the windows, and there is a door that leads to the enclosed porch on the west side of the house. Unlike the living room, the bedroom's east wall is not entirely glass, but is instead mostly stucco on metal lath, with a single window at the southern end. The window is currently fitted with an evaporative cooler. On the south wall of the bedroom is the house's second stone fireplace, marking one end of the building. Outside the south end of the building is an underground rainwater cistern fed by a series of roof downspouts.

From the central entrance hall, as visitors move to the left (toward the northwest), they pass the sculptural, curving staircase and enter the kitchen and its related utility spaces. The kitchen's cooking area is to the left, along the west wall, and is comprised of both wood and metal base cabinets partially covered with a custom-built stainless steel countertop with backsplash; the other countertop surface is a wood butcher-block. The integral stainless steel sink faces west, and the entire western wall above the sink is of glass, with only 2 operable windows--a hopper surmounted by an awning--centered between larger fixed metal sashes, and a large fixed sash on top. Wood wall cabinets are hung on the northern and southern walls on either side of the sink area. On the eastern side of the kitchen is a small dining area, where the Pratts ate their meals at a built in dinette for four under a stack of fixed windows with a metal hopper window at its base. As on the western side of the kitchen, this eastern dining area also has upper and lower cabinets of wood on its southern wall, and upper metal cabinets with sliding glass doors on the northern wall making the seating area feel small.

Partition walls screen the utility areas to the north of the kitchen and dining room, and they include a pantry, a laundry area, a storage room, and closet for the heating system and water heater. The kitchen pantry is on the east side of the house and has a window in it. The room for

the heating system is to the north of the pantry, with its entry door on the room's chamfered southwest corner, and a window on the east wall at the southeast corner. The mechanical room and the storage room are separated by a partition wall, and the storage room has a window on the west wall at its northwestern corner. The laundry area is open and bright, with windows on the west wall at the southwest corner, and a door on the west wall that leads out to the enclosed porch. This door to the porch is the only way to access the final room of the house on the ground floor, a small bedroom with private bath.

The placement of this bedroom at the northern end of the house, without any access from inside the residence, suggests that the Pratt family used this bedroom either for visitors or for a servant. The room is large enough for two twin beds or a full-size bed and small side tables. Entering from the enclosed porch on the west side of the house, a closet is immediately to the right. In the southeast corner of the bedroom is the bathroom, which includes its original fixtures and a shower stall; a window is on the east wall of the bathroom and two more windows are on the east wall of the bedroom, allowing for views of the landscape to the southeast of the house.

To the northwest of the bedroom and connected to its northernmost stone bearing wall is a two-car garage of stone, with another small mechanical room to its west, which contains electrical equipment and a one bedroom apartment attached to the north wall. Underground fuel tanks are on the north side of the main building, outside the bedroom and east of the garage.

The second floor of the house, accessible by the metal circular staircase, is what the architects imagined as a "deck room" to a ship. After climbing the narrow, twisting stair in the northeast corner, visitors find themselves in a glassy room with expansive views of the spectacular setting on both the west and east sides; the north and south walls are of stone. In the southeast corner of the room, opposite the staircase, is a fireplace. Bookshelves line east and west walls below the windows. To the south of the room is a door that leads to the roof deck, which is partially covered by a projecting flat roof supported by two steel columns. At the very south end of the roof, the chimney of the master bedroom fireplace rises up from the first floor. To the north of the deck room is a hallway that leads to the northern roof deck, which is uncovered. On the east side of the hallway is a closet, and on the west side of the hallway is a small bathroom with a shower stall; a small window is on the northern wall at the sink area.

The roof was originally covered with thin, irregularly shaped stone pavers to create the floor of the roof deck, but these stones were removed to repair roof leaks and the roof is now covered with a built-up, asphalt material. The original stone from the roof deck is believed to have been hauled away from the site by the contractor who made the roof repairs. Of course Pratt, as a geologist, was very interested in rocks, and some he prized for their interesting forms, colors, and textures. He placed rocks as sculptural forms throughout the area immediately surrounding the house, and these rocks, as located by Pratt, are part of the cultural landscape.

In addition to the main residence, a number of smaller structures were built throughout the period of significance, including a variety of fencing materials, the stone entry gate and

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cattleguard, dry-laid stone windbreaks and retaining walls, horse corral and tack/storage room, greenhouse, powerhouse, stone garbage incinerator, and metal pole shade ramada and clothesline. Today, the majority of these structures remain, although the greenhouse and powerhouse have been removed, leaving only the foundations.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Ship on the Desert (Wallace Pratt Residence, LCS 012080; B-341)
Guest Quarters (Garage, LCS 012081; B-343)
Tack Building and Corral (LCS 064408; B-142)
Stone entry gate and cattleguard
Dry-laid stone windbreaks and retaining walls
Greenhouse foundation
Concrete pad from powerhouse
Stone garbage incinerator
Metal pole shade ramada and clothesline

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Contemporary stone wall surrounding propane tanks

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



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West (entrance) façade, with enclosed porch and stone windbreak wall (foreground), October 2008. Source: NPS.



East façade of Ship on the Desert, October 2008. Source: NPS.

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View of horse corral and tack/storage room north-northwest of the Ship on the Desert, May 2007. Source: NPS.



Stone garbage incinerator; located northeast of the main house, May 2007. Source: NPS.

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View of windbreak, dry-laid stone wall, and fence-posts at Ship on the Desert, January 2009. Source: NPS.



Clothesline adjacent to main residence, May 2007. Source: NPS.



Foundation of the greenhouse north of the main residence, February 2008. Source: NPS.

Circulation

Historic circulation features within the Ship on the Desert landscape mainly include a number of roads. The site is accessed from Highway 62 and 180 by McKittrick Canyon Road, which leads on a northwest angle from the main highway. The driveway to Ship on the Desert intersects with McKittrick Canyon Road at a right angle at approximately the 2-mile mark. From there the drive leads to the southwest and then turns northwest to the house. The entrance road is 1.2 miles in length from the intersection with McKittrick Road to a stone entrance gate with cattleguard. At the entrance gate, the current road bypasses the stone entrance, allowing vehicular traffic to go around the gate, which cannot accommodate the width of larger, contemporary vehicles.

From the entrance gate, a .6-mile triangular loop road connects to the former airstrip and encompasses the house and grounds leading to the corral and tack room, the greenhouse and powerhouse foundations, and the non-contributing elements of RV pads for housing park volunteers. An additional .8-mile spur road leads to two stone tanks, a former water well. Though the primary use of these roads is for vehicular access, they are also used for walking, jogging, and wildlife watching. With the exception of the widened drive at the entrance gate, all of these road segments date to the period of significance.

Other circulation features within the area include stepping stones, pavers, and stone paths around the house, several gravel parking areas, a loop turnaround south of the house, and spur drives to the garage and service buildings.

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CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Entrance drive to Ship on the Desert
Stone entry gate with cattleguard
Triangular loop road to the former airstrip (.6 miles)
Spur road to stone tanks, water well and RV pads (.8 miles)
Loop turnaround south of Ship on the Desert
Spur drives to the garage and service buildings
Gravel parking areas
Stepping stones, pavers, and stone paths around the house

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Widened drive at entrance gate
RV pads

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Historic view of the entrance drive to Ship on the Desert, no date. Source: GUMO CRM files, IMR Santa Fe.

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Intersection of the entrance drive and loop drive to former airstrip near the stone entry gate, May 2007. Also note line of fence posts as part of former wildlife fence that encircles the hilltop. Source: NPS.

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Stone entry gate with cattleguard and asphalt entrance drive, February 2008. Note the widened drive to the left of the gate. Source: NPS.



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*View of the loop road leading to former airstrip from the Ship on the Desert, May 2007.
Source: NPS.*



View of the gravel two-track road spur road to the stone water tanks, and well head, May 2007. Source: NPS.

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The loop turnaround south of the main residence provides access to the house and garage, January 2009. Source: NPS.



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Pedestrian circulation consists mostly of stone paths, pavers, and stepping stones, May 2007. Source: NPS.

Cluster Arrangement

Not used; See Spatial Organization.

Constructed Water Features

Many water features were constructed during the period of significance, including an irrigation system to water the ornamental vegetation on the property, two stone water tanks, a stone water trough, water wellhead adjacent to the stone tanks, water trough at the horse corral, and underground rainwater cistern. All of these features remain today.

The underground cistern collects rainwater from the roof and channels it into a cistern on the southeast edge of the house. This system is still operative but currently not being utilized for the water supply.

Additionally, an earthen water catchment tank, referred to by the Pratts as the “cane patch tank,” was also present during the period of significance, probably acquired as an existing feature of the Green McCombs Ranch. However, there is no indication that this tank was used as a water supply for livestock by the Pratts.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Irrigation system
Stone water tanks (LCS 064407, W-023)
Stone water trough
Water wellhead adjacent to the stone tanks
Water trough at the horse corral
Underground rainwater cistern
Earthen water catchment tank (Cane Patch Tank)

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

None

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

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The intact irrigation system remains throughout the Ship on the Desert landscape, February 2008. Source: NPS.



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Metal pipe irrigation line, restored to use along a windbreak, April 2006. Source: NPS.



View of the two stone water tanks and water well head located northwest of the house along a gravel spur road, May 2007. Source: NPS.

Cultural Traditions

Not used.

Land Use

Not used: See Spatial Organization.

Natural Systems and Features

Not used: See Topography and Vegetation.

Small Scale Features

Historically, a number of small-scale features were present throughout the Ship on the Desert landscape and many of those remain today. Small-scale features dating to the period of significance include a wildlife fence that encircled the hilltop, stone walls, stone benches, stone table in backyard, stone bird bath and feeder, stone features and collected specimens in rock garden, retaining wall in backyard, flagstones in backyard, and a series of valves and pipes related to the irrigation system. These features remain today; however, the stone table in the backyard is damaged, and only the wood posts of the wildlife fence remain.

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Other small-scale features have been added to the landscape over time, mostly related to utility upgrades. Today, the site also includes modern, buried septic tank, leach field and leach field covers in backyard, utility connections near powerhouse slab for RV use, upgraded propane tanks, and fire hose connections/boxes in the yard at each end of the house and near the corral.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

- Wildlife fence (posts only)
- Stone walls
- Stone benches
- Stone table in backyard (damaged)
- Stone bird bath and feeder
- Stone features and collected specimens in rock garden
- Retaining wall in backyard
- Flagstones in backyard
- Series of valves and pipes related to the irrigation system.

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

- Modern, buried septic tank, leach field and leach field covers in backyard
- Utility connections near powerhouse slab for RV use
- Upgraded propane tanks
- Fire hose connections/boxes at each end of the house and near the corral

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Small-scale stone features, such as stone benches are prevalent throughout the Ship on the Desert landscape, May 2007. Source: NPS.

Spatial Organization

The spatial organization of the site is mainly clustered around the Ship on the Desert residence. The house is the primary focus on the area, sited on a prominent high point that affords views in all directions. Around the house are a number of small-scale features and vegetation groupings. To the south, a loop turnaround drive provides access to the house and garage. Farther afield, a former wildlife fence that encompassed the property is marked with fence posts, and a dirt road loops around the house, providing access to the former airstrip and modern RV pads. To the northwest, a spur road links to stone water tanks, a well head, and to the southeast, the entrance drive links to McKittrick Canyon Road.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Clustered spatial arrangement focused on Ship on the Desert
Small-scale residential features arrayed around the main house
Service areas located farther away from the main house

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES: None.

Topography

The Ship on the Desert stands on a prominent, high spur jutting out from the base of the mountain front. The top of the landform where the house is sited is fairly level with gently to steeply slopes in all directions. The loop drive to the former airstrip and portions of the

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entrance drive are at lower elevations. Although construction of the Pratt residence aimed for little disturbance to the site to preserve the existing native vegetation, the topography changed somewhat through the construction of retaining walls to provide level yard and garden areas.

Other major topographic features include the Guadalupe Mountains and McKittrick Canyon, both outside of the CLI boundary, but provide a topographic context for Ship on the Desert.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

House sited on prominent, high spur jutting out from the base of the mountain front
Fairly level topography surrounding house with gentle to steep slopes beyond
Level areas for yards and gardens
Access roads sited at lower elevations
Guadalupe Mountains(outside CLI boundary)
McKittrick Canyon (outside CLI boundary)

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES: None.

Vegetation

In addition to the use of stone, the vegetation of the Ship on the Desert was equally important to the character of the site during the period of significance. Although no planting plans or site plans have been found to date regarding the landscape design for Ship on the Desert, the design intent can be pieced together through historic correspondence, historic images, and vegetation remaining on-site today.

According to oral history, Pratt first named the property “Manzanita” under the mistaken impression that the madrone trees which intrigued him were manzanita trees (The Worlds of Wallace Pratt, W.L. Copithorne, The Land, Vol. 53, No. 3, Fall 1971). Regardless, construction efforts aimed for as little ground disturbance as possible, which aided on the retention of much native vegetation. Some existing trees were pruned, as seen in historic photographs. Others may have been transplanted to different areas, although direct evidence in support of this has not been located.

Several letters between Newton Bevin, Wallace Pratt, and Iris Pratt note various types of vegetation, both native and planted around the site. Mescal trees, also known as Texas laurel, and “Manzanitos” are noted in undated correspondence. In a letter to Iris, dated June 2, 1942, the unknown writer states,

“The red berries on long stems which you admired so, continued with a shrub which apparently had gone to seed forming little putty colored powder puffs of soft paint brushes all along the stems. These pod things have opened since I put them in water, and I’m sure if Walt Disney was here, he’d have ballet dancers dropping out of each piece of fluff right on my blotter. Your barrel cactus which you potted has flowered furiously. Three gorgeous yellow blooms – more beautiful than the ones we saw that the “café” on the way from Carlsbad. The little cluster of four grayish cactus, also in a pot – has flowered, a most vivid magenta, not my favorite color.

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The pink oleanders are nearly out and shows promise of many blooms.”

Shortly thereafter, in a letter to Iris dated June 14, 1942 the writer continues, “About glass gardens – I don’t know of any publications really but I rather think that, as in Bermuda and lower California, a slat garden would be preferable here; to reduce sun and evaporation.”

Vegetation discussions between Bevin and the Pratts continued into early 1943 when Newton Bevin planned for “the gallery boxes” in January 12, 1943, “...The holly-like shrub is called Agarita and to quote from “Texas Wild Flowers” “Agarita mixed with amoor privet makes an excellent and artistic combination hedge. Small agarita plants are easily obtained from underneath the older plants.”

Other references have been found in historic photographs to a “hanging garden of cactus at Horseshoe Spring” (likely outside of the CLI boundary) and an extensive cactus garden south of the driveway and garage, as noted by Pratt’s grandson, Ed Reid. Reid also noted upright stones in the cactus garden and a Japanese-style garden with camel bells in the trees in the backyard.

Today, a number of trees and vegetated areas remain from the period of significance. As one enters the stone entry gate with cattle guard, three irrigated madrones (*Arbutus texana*) flank the driveway. Continuing toward the house, two Siberian elms (*Ulmus pumila*) mark the entry to the loop turnaround and a windbreak of 24 Arizona cypress (*Cupressus arizonica*) and pinyon pine lines the south side of the loop turnaround. Within the island of the loop turnaround is a gray oak (*Quercus grisea*)—a native specimen that was incorporated into the design of the residential complex. Adjacent to the garage is a mandrone (*Arbutus texana*), while firethorn (*Pyracantha coccinea*) and Texas laurel (also known as mescal bean, *Sophora secundiflora*) mark the main entrance to the house. In the backyard to the east of the house, two gray oaks, sumac, more firethorn and Texas laurel, Mexican buckeye and an apricot stump remain.

The majority of these trees are in good health; however, some decline has been noted in particular specimens—Siberian elms, the Arizona cypress and pinyon pine windbreak, some gray oak, and the apricot. Of the Siberian elms flanking driveway, one of the trees has died and the other is disfigured and weakly branched. These trees were widely planted in west Texas because of their rapid growth and their drought tolerance; however, trees at Ship on the Desert were severely pruned in the past (prior to 1989), likely to remove limbs overhanging the driveway that limited park maintenance truck access. Similarly, the windbreak of Arizona cypress and pinyon pine shows decline presumably due to the lack of routine irrigation. Planted by Pratt, these trees were closely spaced in an alternating pattern of pinyons between every two Arizona cypress, presumably to provide the most rapid wind and sun protection. Seven of the Arizona cypress at the southern end of the row have died, leaving dead trees between the surviving pines.

At the center of the loop turnaround south of the house, the gray oak has also died. The combination of a compacted root zone, lack of supplemental water in drought years, and

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mistletoe infestation contributed to the demise of the tree. The tree now shows signs of rot and weakened limbs. Similarly, in the backyard the apricot tree (now a stump) died and has been removed. The apricot tree was planted at the far northeast edge of the cultivated yard at the edge of the flagstone pavers. The tree survived into the early 1990s, and likely declined from lack of water shortly thereafter. Since that time, the dead tree was removed at some unknown point in time, leaving only a stump to mark its location. In the near term, the park plans to replace the dead and declining vegetation in-kind.

Other vegetation noted on site during a 2007 inventory included prickly pear (*Opuntia phaeacantha*), sotol (*Dasylinion leiophyllum*), Siberian elm (*Ulmus pumila*), firethorn (*Pyracantha coccinea*), mescal bean (*Sophora secundiflora*), gray oak (*Quercus grisea*), aromatic sumac (*Rhus aromatic*), ocotillo (*Fouguieria splendens*), banana yucca (*Yucca baccata*), redberry juniper (*Juniperus pinchotii*), desert willow (*Chilopsis linearis*), netleaf Hackberry (*Celtis laevigata* var. *reticulate*), catclaw acacia (*Acacia greggi*), Texas madrone (*Arbutus texana*), soaptree yucca (*Yucca elata*), Mexican buckeye (*Ungnadia speciosa*), Evergreen sumac (*Rhus virens*), apricot stump (*Prunus armeniaca*), prarie sumac (*Rhus lanceolata*), and bear grass (*Nolina micrantha*).

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Madrone trees at entry gate (3)
Windbreak of Arizona cypress and pinyon pine (24)
Siberian elms at entry to loop turnaround drive (2)
Gray oak in center of loop turnaround drive (1)
Madrone by garage (1)
firethorn and mescal bean at house entrance and in the backyard
Gray oaks in backyard (2)
Sumac in back yard
Apricot tree in backyard (1, stump)
Upright stone and cactus garden
Native vegetation, species, and patterns

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Self-sown, volunteer vegetation established after the period of significance

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

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View of windbreak from north to south; the windbreak contains dead Arizona cypress and surviving pinon pine, April 2006. Source: NPS.



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The deceased gray oak tree in the southern turnaround loop was alive until 2003-2004, but was heavily infested with mistletoe. The tree was proposed for replacement in April 2006.
Source: NPS.



View from the east yard to the east with stone bench, gray oak to the right and apricot stump to the left. The apricot was alive until the mid 1990s; it was proposed to be replaced in-kind in April 2006. Source: NPS.

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Siberian elms, badly pruned during the post-Pratt residency, flank the entrance drive. The tree to the right by the gate post is dead; tree to the left by the stone wall is heavily suckered, April 2006. Source: NPS.



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View of west garden with upright stones enclosed by a stone wall, January 2009. Source: NPS.

Views and Vistas

The Ship on the Desert is sited on a landform, which affords great panoramic views in all directions. From the residence, views extend for more than 100 miles to the east, south, and southwest across a desert sea. Views to the north are more restricted and foreshortened by the Guadalupe Mountains. The house was purposefully positioned for these outward views; its location on a prominent rise also created purposeful views of the residence from the entrance drive.

Additionally, the materials and form of the house were carefully chosen to allow views to and from the house. The use of large glass windows brings the outdoors to the interior of the residence—an important concept in blurring the lines between indoors and outdoors.

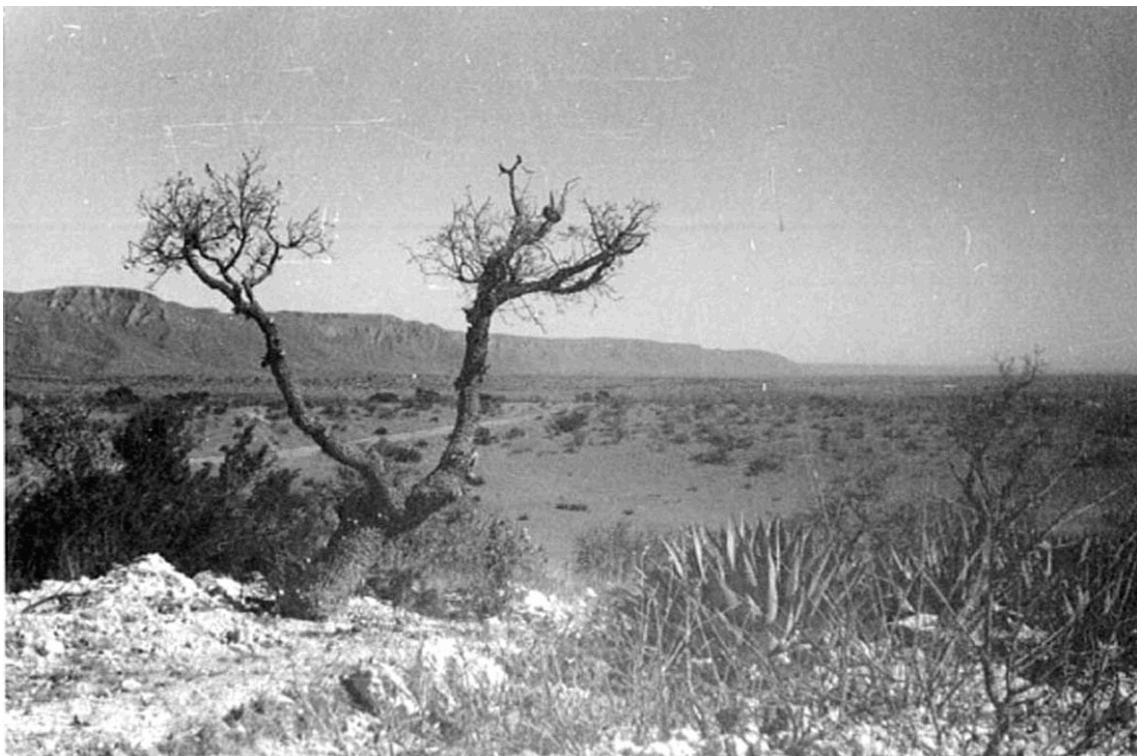
CONTRIBUTING FEATURES:

Panoramic views in all directions from house
Expansive views from the house to the east, south, and southwest across the desert
Foreshortened views from the house to the north to the Guadalupe Mountains
Views from the entrance drive to the house

NON-CONTRIBUTING FEATURES: None.

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:

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View from the house site during construction in early 1940s, showing pruned vegetation, looking east. Source: GUMO CRM files, IMR Santa Fe.



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Historic view of Ship on the Desert with Guadalupe Mountains as a scenic backdrop, February 15, 1943. Source: GUMO CRM files, IMR Santa Fe.



View from roof deck, facing north toward garage and Guadalupe Mountains, October 2008. Source: NPS.

Condition

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Good
Assessment Date: 10/17/2011

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

Key elements of the designed landscape still exist, however, some have become decadent or have died due to neglect or inappropriate maintenance. Most landscape elements were native plants and are well-suited to survive with minimal care. However, when considering all the elements within the landscape, the condition of the landscape is good. Very little integrity has been lost or compromised. Superintendent concurred on 10/17/2011.

Impacts

Type of Impact:	Fire
External or Internal:	External
Impact Description:	The potential for wildfire starting outside the unit and moving to the cultural landscape is the greatest threat.
 Type of Impact:	Neglect
External or Internal:	Internal
Impact Description:	Sporadic landscape maintenance has resulted in loss of some specimen trees, such as loss of gray oak due to lack of routine mistletoe management, loss of Arizona cypress trees and apricot tree due to sporadic watering schedule since the house is not consistently occupied.
 Type of Impact:	Operations On Site
External or Internal:	Internal
Impact Description:	Although visiting resident researchers are oriented to this historic structure and landscape, potential for damage to historic fabric or landscape elements exists from those who don't understand the management of a national register property.

Treatment

Treatment

Approved Treatment: Rehabilitation
Approved Treatment Document: General Management Plan
Document Date: 04/01/2011

Approved Treatment Document Explanatory Narrative:

The park General Management Plan (GMP) was completed in final draft (April 2011). The preferred alternative for Ship on the Desert is to rehabilitate the structure for continued use by researchers and for park operational needs. The plan also calls to install an administrative use campground and vault toilet outside the perimeter road which would be outside the CLI boundary. Through the NHPA Section 106 process, the park would restore elements of the cultural landscape such as replacing the dead trees in-kind.

Approved Treatment Completed: No

Approved Treatment Costs

Cost Date: 04/01/2011

Bibliography and Supplemental Information

Bibliography

Citation Author: Fred Armstrong and Rachel Leibowitz
Citation Title: National Register Nomination form for Wallace E. Pratt Residence (Ship on the Desert), Draft 2008; Final 2011.
Year of Publication: 2008
Citation Publisher: NPS
Citation Type: Both Graphic and Narrative
Citation Location: On file at GUMO and IMR-Santa Fe CLI office.

Supplemental Information

Title: Additional Source Information from Guadalupe Mountains National Park archives (GUMO):

Description: Wallace E. Pratt interview with William C. Griggs, Texas Tech University, 1974.

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Title: Other Additional Source Information from National Register Nomination, Draft 2008

Description: "Architects: Milliken and Bevin," The New Pencil Points v. 24 (May 1943), 60-63.

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