**DATA SHEET**

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

**FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS

TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

---

**NAME**

Smithsonian Institution Shelter

**LOCATIONS**

Mount Whitney Scout Shelter, Mount Whitney Shelter

**STATE:** California

**CLASSIFICATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>OWNERSHIP</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>PRESENT USE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DISTRICT</td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Occupied</td>
<td>Agricultural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUILDING-</td>
<td>PRIVATE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRUCTURE</td>
<td>OWNED</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SITE</td>
<td>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</td>
<td>ACCESSIBLE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBJECT</td>
<td>RESTRICTED</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**AGENCY**

Regional Headquarters of Archeology and History, National Park Service, Western Regional Office

450 Golden Gate Avenue, Box 36063

San Francisco, CA 94123

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

Tulare County Courthouse

Mineral King and Meadow Blvd.

**STATE:** California

**REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

Title: Data Sheet

Date: 9/20/77

DEP - 362832

9/75
### SIGNIFICANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERIOD</th>
<th>AMEND.</th>
<th>SIGNIFICANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900-1939</td>
<td>ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY</td>
<td>CONSERVATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900-1793</td>
<td>ARCHITECTURE</td>
<td>CONSERVATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900-1793</td>
<td>ART</td>
<td>CONSERVATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900-1793</td>
<td>CONSERVATION</td>
<td>INDUSTRY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIFICATES</th>
<th>Built 1909</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE</td>
<td>Built to house visiting scientists as site for the study of solar radio; is a monument to the difficulty of prolonged human flight over the field of science.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The construction of the Mount Whitney cabin is a collaboration between Dr. H. Lick Observatory, and Dr. C. G. Campbell was interested in solar radio, and who contracted with the architect for the design and construction of the cabin. The cabin was originally built to serve as a shelter for climbers and tourists. The cabin received an emergency repair in 1909, but soon fell into disrepair and was eventually acquired by the National Park Service in 1962 to serve as a shelter for climbers and tourists.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### DESCRIPTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONDITION</th>
<th>CHECK ONE</th>
<th>CHECK ONE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOOD</td>
<td>ALTERED</td>
<td>ORIGINAL LOCATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DETERIORATED</td>
<td>ALTERED</td>
<td>MOVED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEGRADED</td>
<td>ALTERED</td>
<td>MOVED DATE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Describe the present and original state of known physical appearance**

The Mount Whitney Shelter stands on the summit plateau of the highest mountain in the contiguous states. Being at an elevation of over 14,000 feet above sea level, the structure was built to withstand extreme weather conditions. The basic building was made of native granite with concrete mortar and includes three rooms. The outside length of the structure is 30 feet, 11 inches while the outside width is 11 feet. The interior consists of three rooms. The south room is the largest measuring approximately 9 by 10 feet. The middle room is 9 feet by 8 feet, 4 inches. Outdoors doors open to the east from the north and south rooms; each door is 2 feet, 6 inches wide and 6 feet, 6 inches tall. An interior door connects the north and middle rooms; this door is the same size as the exterior doors. The middle room has a small window opening to the east. There is also a window on each end of the building. The partition between the middle and north rooms has no opening. The north and south rooms include stone benches as a part of the interior design. The roof is of corrugated iron riveted to a steel truss frame. The roof is of | 1909 | |

The north wall has a small opening for a stovepipe. The cabin was originally built with iron shutters over the windows and doors. These were removed in 1931, but were detached again by the summer of 1972. This cabin has undergone only minor alterations since its construction.
SIGNIFICANCE

Built to house visiting scientists using the summit of Mount Whitney as a site for the study of high altitude research in the period before prolonged human flight was possible. It is of regional significance in the field of science.

The construction of the Mount Whitney summit shelter arose from a collaboration between Dr. E. C. Abbot of the Smithsonian Institution and Dr. C. G. Campbell of the University of California's Lick Observatory, Dr. C. G. Campbell was interested in observing the spectrum of stars from the summit of the mountain during the favorable period for observation in August and September, 1909. In 1908, he visited the summit of the peak with Dr. Abbot. Abbot contracted with the architectural firm of Spalden and Spalden who designed the simple structure out of stone, metal and glass. In the early summer of 1909 the trail to the summit was sufficiently improved to allow the passage of stock animals and the shelter was erected during the latter part of the summer. The cabin received temporary use for a time as a scientific observation shelter, but soon fell into disuse. Since the completion of the modern trail to the summit of Mount Whitney in 1930, hikers have used the cabin as a shelter.

The National Park Service acquired title to the shelter when Sequoia Park was enlarged to include Mount Whitney in 1926.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA
Acreage of Nominated Property 0.11

BEGINNING AT A POINT THIRTY-EIGHT (38) FEET SOUTH THIRTY DEGREES WEST OF THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE SULLIVAN INSTITUTE SHELTER PROCEED NORTHEAST SIXTY (60) FEET; THENCE EAST EIGHTY (80) FEET; THENCE SOUTH SIXTY (60) FEET; THENCE WEST EIGHTY (80) FEET TO POINT OF BEGINNING.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION
YES

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

FEDERAL AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION

FEDERAL AGENCY SIGNATURE

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 11/21/76

ATTACHMENT OF ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 11/21/76

FORM PREPARED BY
(Revision of form submitted by
William C. Tread, Historian of the National Park Service, National Park Service, Western Regional Office, September 17, 1975)

FORM PREPARED BY
F. Ross Holland, January 14, 1972

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

DATE NOV 11 1976
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

1 NAME
HISTORIC
Smithsonian Institution Shelter

AND/OR COMMON
Mount Whitney Summit Shelter, Mount Whitney Shelter

2 LOCATION
CITY, TOWN Not applicable (Sequoia National Park) Lone Pine
VICINITY OF X Lone Pine
COUNTY Tulare
STATE CA

3 PHOTO REFERENCE
PHOTO CREDIT Sequoia National Park
DATE OF PHOTO August 1970
NEGATIVE FILED AT Sequoia National Park, Three Rivers, CA 93271

4 IDENTIFICATION
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET
PHOTO NO

View from east showing front of cabin