

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Registration FormRECEIVED  
MAY 16 1990NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Ah Toy Garden

other names/site number 10IH1876

## 2. Location

street &amp; number Payette National Forest

☐ not for publication

city, town Warren

☒ vicinity

state Idaho

code

ID

county Idaho

code

049

zip code

83671

## 3. Classification

## Ownership of Property

- ☐ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☒ public-Federal

## Category of Property

- ☐ building(s)  
☐ district  
☒ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

## Number of Resources within Property

## Contributing

0  
3  
5  
1  
9

## Noncontributing

0 buildings  
0 sites  
0 structures  
0 objects  
0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

Chinese sites in the Warren Mining District

Number of contributing resources previously  
listed in the National Register 0

## 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  
☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the  
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.  
In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official  
*William J. DeBlois*Date  
4-12-90State or Federal agency and bureau  
USDA Forest Service

In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official  
*Ronald J. ...*Date  
11/30/89State or Federal agency and bureau  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

## 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- ☒ entered in the National Register.  
☐ See continuation sheet.  
☐ determined eligible for the National  
Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.  
☐ determined not eligible for the  
National Register.  
☐ removed from the National Register.  
☐ other, (explain):

*Antwille Lee*

6/27/90

for Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/Agricultural Field  
Agricultural/Irrigation Facility  
Domestic/Single Dwelling  
Extraction/Processing Site

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Landscape/Forest

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other/Dugout

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Earth

walls Stone/Quartz

roof Wood, Sod

other \_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Ah Toy Garden is one of three Chinese terraced gardens on China Mountain in the Warren Mining District of central Idaho. The site covers an area of approximately 3 acres, and consists of several garden terraces, one semi-subterranean habitation, three rock cairns, one trash midden, portions of an irrigation ditch, a tree with wooden dowels embedded in it, and remnants of a Chinese trail. The dugout has been excavated, stabilized, and reconstructed as part of an interpretive program planned by the Payette National Forest. The Ah Toy Garden possesses the qualities of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, feeling, and association required to achieve National Register listing. The reconstructed dugout qualifies under Criteria Consideration E for National Register status.

The Ah Toy Garden site is the most complex of the three Chinese terraced gardens on China Mountain. It is also the most remote and many of its historical attributes are intact. The Ah Toy Garden is located on a southeast facing slope north of China Creek and above the South Fork of the Salmon River. It is situated approximately 10.5 miles from the mining town of Warren, where a large Chinese population flourished in the latter half of the 19th century. Contemporary sources place the last Chinese occupant on the Ah Toy site in 1910. Excavation of the dugout recovered datable artifacts which place the period of occupation between the late 1880's and 1920. This corresponds with the chronological period determined significant for properties eligible in this National Register Multiple Property Documentation submission.

The Ah Toy Garden is located in a setting of Ponderosa pine and Douglas fir. The tilled garden terraces have encouraged new forest growth. Ponderosa pines are encroaching onto the cultivated terraces. Increment bores were taken from several trees and date the pines as 60-70 years old. A natural spring is located below the dugout habitation and the site looks southeast toward the South Fork of the Salmon River. Grapevines grow over a rock cairn, and rhubarb still grows near the dugout, remnants of fruit that was once cultivated on the site. Historic sources say the Ah Toy Garden produced vegetables, strawberries, grapes and rhubarb for commercial sale as late as 1910.

The Ah Toy garden site contains over 21 discernable earth terraces on a 30% slope. Portions of an irrigation ditch are visible within the

☒ See continuation sheet

## 8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☐ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☒ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Ethnic Heritage/Asian

Agriculture

Commerce

Period of Significance

1870-1920

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Overseas Chinese

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Ah Toy Garden is significant under Criterion A, as part of the history of overseas Chinese on the Idaho mining frontier. This site is also significant under Criterion D, as a partially excavated site which has yielded information about the historic occupation of the Ah Toy dugout. The reconstructed dugout meets eligibility requirements under Criteria Consideration E. The Ah Toy Garden is part of a complex of Chinese sites on the Warren Mining District from 1870 to 1920. The Ah Toy Garden represents the successful adaptation of traditional Chinese agricultural technology to the terrain of the Salmon River Mountains of Idaho. This site also represents efforts of the 19th century Chinese immigrants to maintain their ethnic identity and lifeways while engaging in a commercially profitable enterprise. The Ah Toy Garden possesses qualities of location, design, setting, workmanship, materials, feeling, and association necessary for properties of this type to meet National Register standards.

The Ah Toy Garden is significant to the history of Chinese immigrant communities in Idaho and the American west. The Ah Toy Garden site is significant for its location, landscape, and association with the Chinese community of the Warren Mining District. The Ah Toy Garden reflects significant elements of design, setting, and workmanship that are evidenced in the spatial relationship of the dugout to the physical features of the site. The central placement of the dugout, the siting of the dugout above the spring, the location of placer equipment near the irrigation ditches, and the midden immediately outside the dugout entrance contribute to the integrity of location, setting and design. These elements may also yield information about the relationship between Chinese occupants and their physical environment.

The excavated area was limited to a very small portion of the site, and clarified the sites' eligibility for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. The dugout habitation has been stabilized

☒ See continuation sheet

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Kingsbury, Lawrence A.

- 1989 Data Recovered at Ah Toy's Occupation. 10IH1876. A Chinese Terraced Garden Occupation on the South Fork of the Salmon River, Idaho. Unpublished manuscript on file at Payette National Forest offices. McCall, Idaho.

### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

☐ See continuation sheet

### Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☒ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

### Specify repository:

Payette National Forest S.O.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Approximately 3 acres

### UTM References

A 

|      |   |         |   |   |   |          |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|------|---|---------|---|---|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1    | 1 | 6       | 1 | 3 | 4 | 0        | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 7 | 2 | 0 |
| Zone |   | Easting |   |   |   | Northing |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

C 

|      |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|------|--|---------|--|--|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|      |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Zone |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

B 

|      |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|------|--|---------|--|--|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|      |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Zone |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

D 

|      |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|------|--|---------|--|--|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|      |  |         |  |  |  |          |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Zone |  | Easting |  |  |  | Northing |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

☐ See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the Ah Toy Garden is illustrated on the accompanying USGS 7.5 minute series map titled "Pilot Peak 1969".

☐ See continuation sheet

### Boundary Justification

The boundary for the Ah Toy Garden includes all terraces, structures, features, and objects that contribute to the historic integrity of the site. The site boundaries are also based on a difference in vegetation. Larger stands of older Ponderosa pine surround the site area. The southern boundary of the site includes the spring which is a major natural feature.

☐ See continuation sheet

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kate O'Brien Reed, Consultant

organization \_\_\_\_\_

street & number 1010 S. Owyhee

city or town Boise

date April 20, 1989

telephone (208) 336-9340

state Idaho

zip code 83705

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terraced areas. Remnants of a Chinese pack trail known as the Old China Trail are evident within the site boundaries. Three rock cairns exist which are composed of quartz native to the site. These cairns may represent clearing rocks for terrace construction, or may reflect placer mining activities on the site. The irrigation system may have served a dual purpose - to irrigate terraces and provide water to mine surface deposits of placer gold. Gold panning equipment was located on the site.

A large Ponderosa pine up slope from the dugout habitation has four wooden dowels placed horizontally in the base of the tree, two feet above the ground. These dowels may have formed part of a water gate for the irrigation system.

The earthen and rock habitation of Ah Toy was excavated in 1988 as part of a long range cultural resource management plan by the Payette National Forest. The dugout is a semi-subterranean dwelling located near the center of the site. It is a slightly uneven, square structure situated in a slope. The south wall of the dugout is built against one of the large rock cairns. The partially intact walls were uncoursed quartz cobbles mortared with mud. These walls may have been constructed using rocks from the cairns. The doorway of the dugout faces southeast, overlooking terraces downslope and a large linear cairn. A milled lumber threshold was found in situ with hinge and latch hardware nearby. No evidence of a hearth, window, or chimney was located. Remnants of wood indicate a log superstructure covered with sod formed the roof. Artifacts recovered from inside the dugout include metal hoe blades, opium pipe fragments, a modified opium tin, Chinese ceramic fragments, and metal utensils. A local collector removed many complete Chinese ceramic vessels during the 1940's. These artifacts are in a private collection.

A trash midden was located immediately outside the door of the dugout and extends on to a linear cairn to the south. Many artifacts of domestic and Chinese association were noted on the surface near this cairn.

The dugout habitation of Ah Toy was reconstructed in 1988 after excavation and evaluation. The reconstruction involved rebuilding the uncoursed rock walls to reach the surrounding ground surface. Mud was used to mortar the quartz cobbles and was placed behind the walls to support them, without detracting from visual integrity.

A roof was built using ax felled Ponderosa pine from the immediate area outside the site boundary. A layer of pine boughs and forest duff was laid atop these logs and the whole was covered with earth from on site. These construction techniques were determined appropriate and consistent with original construction. The reconstruction was undertaken after consultation with the Idaho State Preservation Office.

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and partially reconstructed in its exact historic location and is consistent with original design, workmanship and materials. The reconstruction of the dugout was undertaken to preserve and stabilize the remaining structure, and to enhance the sites' potential for interpretive purposes. The carefully researched and implemented reconstruction adds considerably to qualities of feeling, setting and location. The reconstruction has added appreciable visual impact and focus to the property.

The excavation and reconstruction of the Ah Toy dugout is part of a broad long range plan to preserve and develop significant sites on the Payette National Forest for academic research and interpretive exhibit. This site and other Chinese sites in the Warren Mining District from 1870 to 1920 serve to show elements of material culture and lifeways from a distinct ethnic group who contributed to the development of the area.

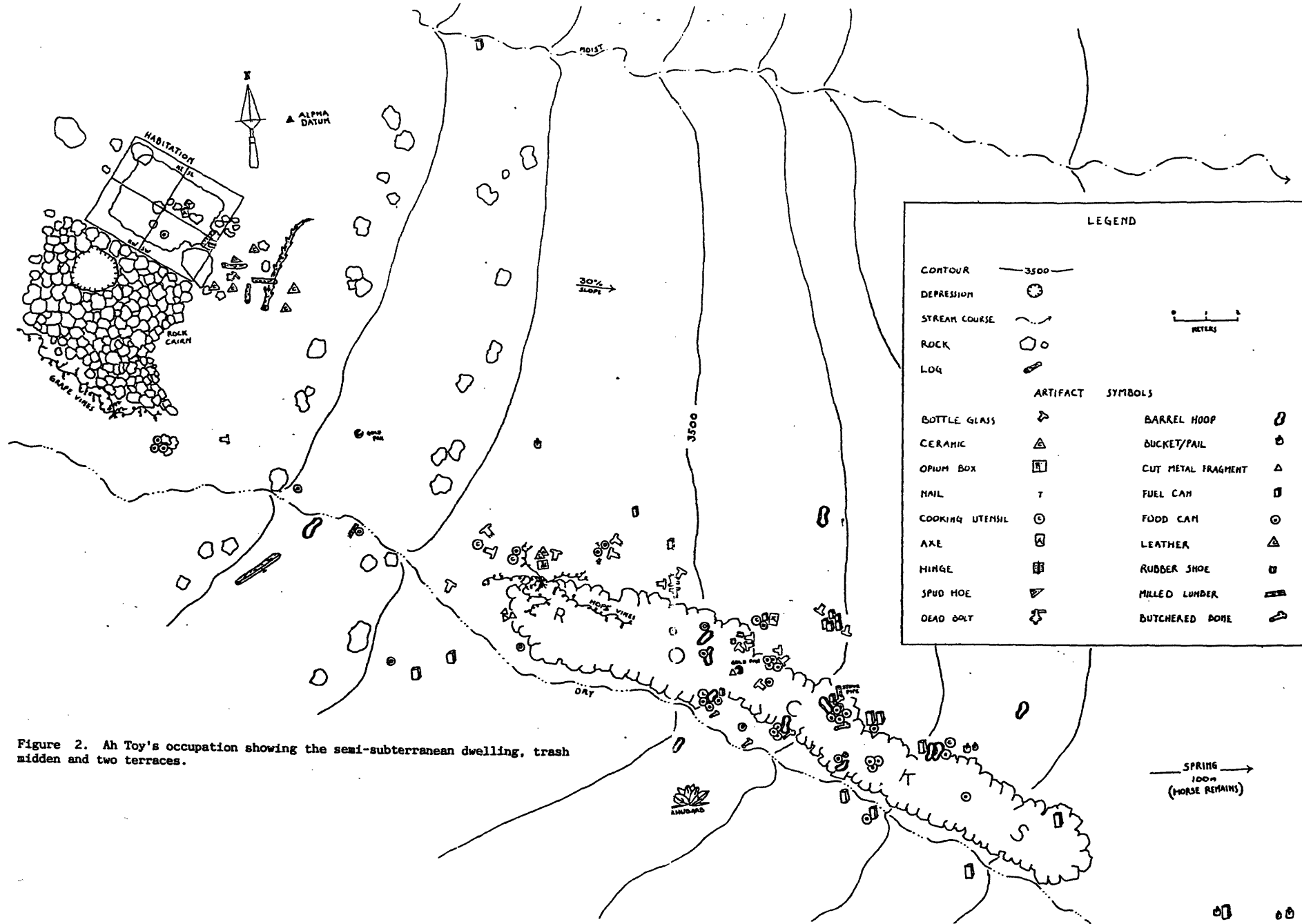


Figure 2. Ah Toy's occupation showing the semi-subterranean dwelling, trash midden and two terraces.

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 900000893

Date Listed: 6/27/90

Ah Toy Garden  
Property Name

Idaho  
County

ID  
State

Chinese Sites in the Warren Mining District  
Multiple Name

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Antoinette Lee  
for Signature of the Keeper

8/8/90  
Date of Action

=====

Amended Items in Nomination:

Statement of Significance: Under "Cultural Affiliation," Overseas Chinese is deleted.

This information was confirmed with Evan J. DeBloois of the USDA Forest Service and Elizabeth Eggleston of the Idaho SHPO.

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DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file  
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)



Antoys Dwelling  
Warren IDAHO

Summer 1989

Neg at Payette Nat'l Forest S.O.

FACING NORTH

Photo 4 by Tom Dureka



AH TOYS GARDEN

WARREN IDAHO

SUMMER 1989

NLG at PAYETTE NAT'L Forest S.O

FACING West

PHOTO 5

Photo by Tom Dureka

Jduka