

# **Historic Significance and Integrity Assessment Report for Listing Johnny Rose's Pool Hall on the Scottsdale Historic Register**

## **Johnny Rose's Pool Hall**

3933 N. Brown Avenue, Scottsdale, Arizona  
Scottsdale Historic Register No. SHR-00-06  
Resolution No. 5550

### **Background**

With the adoption of the Historic Preservation Ordinance in July of 1999, the Scottsdale Historic Register (SHR) was established as the City's official list of historic and archaeological resources that have special significance in United States, Arizona or Scottsdale history, architecture, archaeology, engineering or culture. To determine the properties to recommend for nomination to the Scottsdale Historic Register, the City Preservation staff and the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) have utilized the approaches and standards that guide the professional work of the field nationwide. The building historically known as Johnny Rose's Pool Hall, 3933 North Brown Avenue, was one of the properties recognized by the City as historically significant under an earlier City Historic Preservation program. It has been a commercial establishment owned by the Song Family for many decades. The building currently houses the "Mexican Imports" store.

### **Historic Context: Early Town Building, 1908-1933**

Scottsdale's historic development followed a pattern typically found in Western communities. Like other Arizona cities and towns, the provision of a reliable water supply was critical to sustaining the community's viability after its initial settlement in the late 1800s. With the construction of Granite Reef Dam in 1908, followed by Roosevelt Dam in 1911, Scottsdale shared in the population boom that transformed the Salt River Valley. A main line rail connection to the national railway system completed into the Valley in 1924 provided further impetus for growth and development. During this period Scottsdale grew slowly, but steadily, as a small market town principally providing services for families involved in agricultural pursuits.

Within the core of the original Scottsdale town site are several extant buildings that represent this early period of the community's development. The dates of their construction, the types of buildings, their uses as well as their locations illustrate the traditional pattern of community development that occurred in Scottsdale, Arizona and throughout the nation in the early twentieth century.

### **Description**

This building is a two-story structure with a basement. It is laid out in a rectangular plan with a flat roof and stepped parapet walls. The building is constructed of masonry with distinctive glazed white brick walls and concrete base flush along the main façade and projecting along the south elevation. Typical of historic vernacular commercial buildings, the building has a central double door entry flanked by large display windows with wood surrounds. A large signboard is installed above the entrance on the front facade. A wooden porch, added at a later period also spans the building's front. Two sliding metal windows, horizontal in proportion,

but with original brick sills are located along the south facade with two other large openings that are enclosed. A two-story apartment is attached to the rear of the structure. Constructed of red brick with a hipped roof, the addition was built after the building's original construction. The south elevation of first floor of the addition contains a single leaf door with horizontal wood windows on each side that have been boarded. A wooden balcony with simple square support piers and a tongue and groove porch ceiling wraps around the south and east facades of the second floor level. Large wood casement windows along side single leaf doors are found on both the south and east walls of the addition.

### **History**

The building was constructed in 1923 as part of the initial development of the downtown. Initially, an early settler, Johnny Rose, operated an emporium on the site that offered a variety of products and services ranging from ice cream to shoe repair. As other businesses sprang up in the downtown area, the establishments became more specialized in the products and/or services they offered. To better compete, Rose razed his original frame store and built the existing structure for billiard, pool and silent movies. To set his building apart from the other commercial buildings in the downtown, Johnny Rose imported a distinctive white glazed brick for its construction.

In 1929 the structure was sold to Jew Chew Song and converted to a grocery store. Typical of the practices of that era, the Song family lived behind the shop, first in a small house. Then to meet the needs of their growing family, the Songs demolished the rear house in the 1930s and constructed a two-story addition to the commercial establishment. In homage to the architectural traditions of his homeland, Mr. Song had the addition constructed with a hipped roof, instead of a flat roof like the main building. Although he was unable to find a builder who could flare the eaves, creating the bell cast roof form found in Chinese architecture, the hipped roof was an attempt, on his part, to bring a bit of "Chinatown" to Scottsdale. The family continues to own the building and operate the retail business it houses.

### **Significance**

Johnny Rose's Pool Hall is historically significant as one of the early commercial buildings dating from Scottsdale's earliest period of development. The location of the building and the evolution of the uses on the site and within the building provides a good illustration of the pattern of commercial development that typically occurs as towns grow. The intact design, materials and workmanship found on the building makes it an excellent example of historic commercial architecture.