

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

349



**FROM:** Parks Department

**SUBMITTAL DATE:**  
3/5/08

**SUBJECT:** County Historic Landmark Designation – District IV

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:** that the Board:

1. Approves the designation of the Rancho Dos Palmas, Headquarters Compound, as a Riverside County Historical Landmark; and
2. Authorizes the Parks Director of the Riverside County Parks Department and the Chair of the Riverside County Historical Commission to cite the application for the registration of the above named site as a State of California Point of Interest.

**BACKGROUND:** At its regular meeting on January 17, 2008, the Riverside County Historical Commission recommended that your Honorable Board approve the designation of the Rancho Dos Palmas, Headquarters Compound, as a Riverside County Historical Landmark. The nomination was sponsored by the Friends of Dos Palmas.

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:** The site is an early example of a Coachella Valley resort. Built ca. 1927, the adobe headquarters building was part of a resort compound with several guest cabins, or casitas. The casitas are now gone. Hollywood executive, Raymond Morgan, owned the property for a number of years and it hosted many celebrities. Many significant desert school painters lived and worked here over the years, most notably, John Hilton, Norman Yeckley, Carl Eyer, and Barry Atwater. General George S. Patton also is said to have used the house for staff meetings as it was near his Desert Training Center. Attached is the Historical Site Nomination Form, which details the nomination.

638-Dos Palmas Landmark  
KH/mg

*Paul Frandsen*  
Paul Frandsen, Parks Director

<b>FINANCIAL DATA</b> n/a	Current F.Y. Total Cost:	\$	In Current Year Budget:
	Current F.Y. Net County Cost:	\$	Budget Adjustment:
	Annual Net County Cost:	\$	For Fiscal Year:

<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS:</b>	Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Requires 4/5 Vote	<input type="checkbox"/>

**C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:**

APPROVE

BY: *Alex Gann*  
Alex Gann

**County Executive Office Signature**

Dep't Recomm.:  Consent  Policy  Policy  
Per Exec. Ofc.:  Consent  Policy

**Prev. Agn. Ref.:**

**District:** IV

**Agenda Number:**

**3.29**

FORM APPROVED COUNTY COUNSEL BY: NEAL R. KIPNIS DATE: 3/1/08 Departmental Concurrence

RIVERSIDE COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
HISTORICAL SITE NOMINATION FORM:  
RIVERSIDE COUNTY/STATE HISTORICAL SITE

*For Historical Commission Use Only*

Date Reviewed: 1-17-08

Commission Recommendation:

County Landmark     State Point Historic Interest     California State  
Landmark

This form must be used to nominate any historical site in Riverside County for designation as a County Historical Site or a State Point of Historical Interest. Information provided will serve as the basis for Historical Commission evaluation and recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. All nominations for this designation must be approved by the Board and, subsequently, the California State Historic Resources Commission.

*Please fill out and send to:*

Riverside County Historical Commission, c/o Historic Preservation Officer,  
Riverside County Parks District, 4600 Crestmore Road, Riverside, CA 92509.

*Please type your answers. An e-mail version of this form is available upon request. (951) 955-4310.*

1. SITE NAME:

Rancho Dos Paimas, Headquarters Compound

Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management has recorded this site as Riv-4315

2. LOCATION:

(a) Address: Exit Hwy. 111 on Parkside Dr. City/Town: North Shore

(b) Vicinity of: Township 8 S Range 11 E NW ¼ of NW ¼ of NW ¼ of Section 10

3. PRESENT OWNER:

(a) Name: BLM--Palm Springs South Coast Field Office

(b) Address: PO Box 581260, 690 West Garnet City/Town: North Palm Springs

Zip 92258-

(c) Contact Number(s) if known: John Kalish, Field Manager 760-251-4800

4. PRESENT USE: Unoccupied. Former on-site manager occupied house until he passed away 12-06. The bunkhouse sporadically occupied by visiting scientists.

5. ORIGINAL USE: Guest Resort

6. OTHER PAST USES: Randall Henderson described it as "built originally as a desert guest resort". First by German-born businesswoman Gertrude Voss Schulte Tenderich. Later, owner Raymond Morgan, head of a very successful advertising concern in Hollywood, continued to use it as a guest resort. However, he was not interested in its commercial possibilities. He maintained the ranch as a desert retreat for his staff and Hollywood pals including many popular actors of the day. Many prominent desert painters frequently stayed at the ranch where they were inspired by the natural beauty of the surrounding desert landscapes. Famous painter, Barry Atwater, had a little cabin at the ranch where he painted some "exquisite landscapes" of the area. Ranch handyman and noted desert landscape artist John Hilton lived and worked at the ranch for a time. While there, he also briefly served as a guide to General George S. Patton who is said to have used the main ranch house for staff meetings (per BLM Assessment 1991-page 15). The casita's have been demolished by government agencies post BLM Assessment in 1991.

7. YEAR OF CONSTRUCTION: Main house 1920s, Bunkhouse 1938

(a) Builder: John Deidle

(b) Architect: Unknown

8. CLASSIFICATION (Check appropriate spaces):

Category:  Site (Historic)  Site (Archaeological)  Building(s)  
 Structure(s)  Object  
Ownership:  Public  Private  Both  
Status:  Occupied  Unoccupied  
Accessibility:  Yes: Restricted  Yes: Unrestricted  No  
Condition:  Good  Fair  Deteriorated  Unexposed  No longer exists

9. IF ALTERED, PLEASE DESCRIBE: Two interior walls in the North wing were removed creating two large rooms instead of four small guest rooms. This larger area was used as a kitchen/dining area. Additionally the wall separating the office and breakfast room was removed. A small nursery/bedroom was added to the northwest corner. The two interior rooms in the bunkhouse were converted to a kitchen and bath. (See attached floor plans, 1938 & 1991)

10. APPROXIMATE PROPERTY SIZE IN FEET: The ranch house is approx. 2475 sq. ft. Bunkhouse is approx. 432 sq. ft. Total site area identified as Riv. 4315 is approx. 8.15 acres.

11. PHYSICAL APPEARANCE OF SITE/STRUCTURE: The Rancho Dos Palmas main house is seven rooms plus two baths and butlers pantry It is a one-story with gabled roof. The lodge or great room is 21' by 30' and is constructed of adobe. There is a 4" raised dais with a rock fireplace. The remainder of the building is wood frame. The exterior of the adobe room has been plastered over. The interior adobe walls have been painted, but clearly show the adobe blocks. Two entrances from the south are from a stoop with hood, two doors from the north are from a raised porch, and the single entrance from the west is a plain door as are the east facing doors to the north wing and central patio section. "French" doors enter the main great room from the east. The building layout is an elongated C around a central patio. A second patio is located on the south side of the building. A second fireplace in the northwest quarter of the building is brick. The building is painted beige/eggshell with dark brown trim.

12. PRIMARY STRUCTURAL MATERIALS:

Stone  Adobe  Wood  Stucco  Brick  Other:

13. DESCRIPTION OF SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY: Rancho Dos Palmas, designated by BLM as historical site Riv-4315, was unique in that it was an early example of the Coachella Valley desert resorts dating back to its construction in 1927. The lodge or great room walls consist of hand formed adobe bricks made from raw materials located on or near the ranch. In her brochure for the guest ranch in 1938, Gertrude V. S. Tenderich describes one of the amenities as "Mud Baths from the clay pits, centuries old." Early owner Gertrude Voss Schulte Tenderich introduced tampons to America's women. This remarkable immigrant woman learned English, built a company, then sold it and started a new venture; the Rancho Dos Palmas guest ranch. The local residents weren't prepared for a female pilot flying German-speaking guests into her ranch from 1938 to 1943. Locally, there were tall tales of the German spy lady at Dos Palmas.

Raymond Morgan, Hollywood executive, purchased the Rancho and continued to use it as a retreat from 1943 to 1980. However, he was not interested in a commercial venture. Instead, he played host to his staff and friends, many of whom were well-known actors of the day.

Over the years, many now-famous desert artists stayed at the ranch to paint including Carl Eytel, Barry Atwater who had a cabin there, Norman Yeckley, and John Hilton to name a few. Gen. George S. Patton also is said to have used the house for staff meetings as it was near his Desert Training Center.

14. REFERENCES/BIBLIOGRAPHY: Bibliography Attached

15. THREATS TO SITE (if any):  None Known  (Separate page attached)

16. PHOTOGRAPHS ENCLOSED:  Yes  No

17. LOCATION SKETCH MAP: (Separate pages attached)

18. FORM PREPARED BY: Name: Jennie Kelly

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ADDRESS: 101760 Sea Breeze Drive CITY: North Shore Zip: 92254

TELEPHONE(S): 760-393-1312 (HM) 760-774-5843 (CELL)

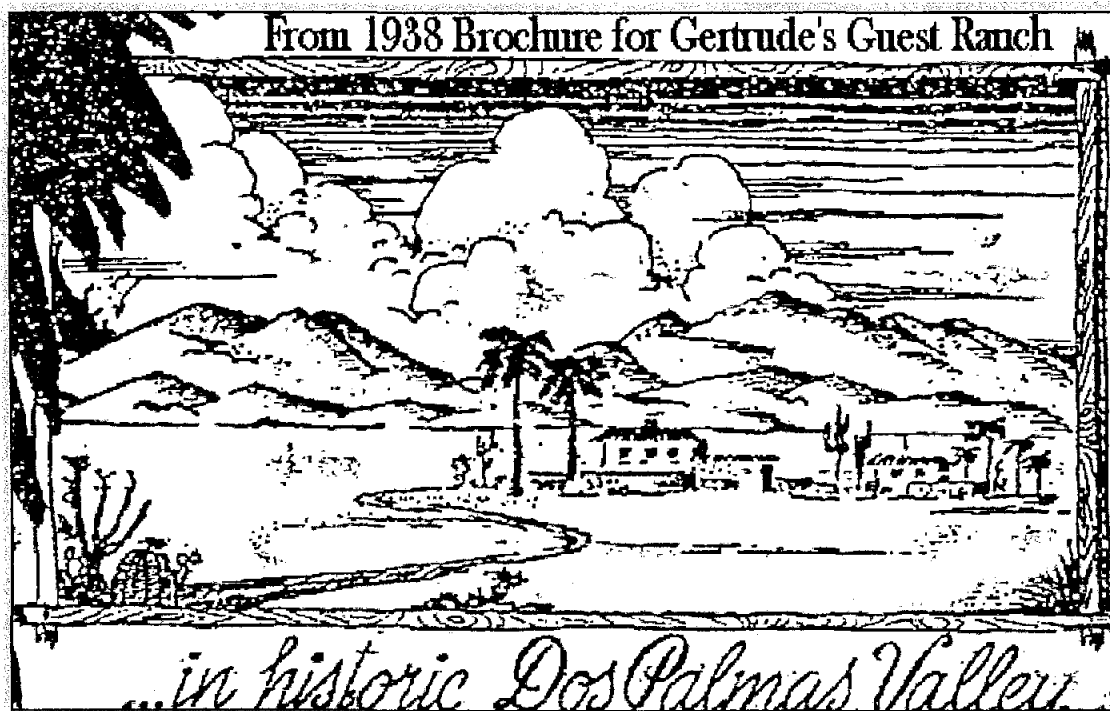
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19. ORGANIZATION: Friends of Dos Palmas

Signature of Authorizing Official (s):

Jennie Kelly

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Rancho Dos Palmas headquarters is approximately 8.15 acres and is located within the boundaries of the 2000± acre Dos Palmas Preserve. The property was deeded to Frank M. Campbell in March of 1927 by Charles F. Derby (See Rancho Rehabilitation Assessment). The adobe great room was built prior to this transfer (oral history: Gale Broeker). The wood framed portion of the house was built in 1927.

A visit to Dos Palmas by Randall Henderson in 1947 furnishes some information on the later history of the site;

"Last October [of 1946] Arles Adams and I revisited Dos Palmas – and met Raymond Morgan who three years ago purchased the Rancho Dos Palmas, a mile from the springs. The ranch house was built originally as a desert guest resort. But Morgan, head of a very successful advertising concern in Hollywood, is not interested in its commercial possibilities. He maintains the ranch as a desert retreat for his staff and friends. Barry Atwater, the painter, has a little cabin there and has done some exquisite landscapes in the area. Morgan has increased his ranch to 2000 acres, including the Dos Palmas oasis".

## ITEM 4

# HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Dos Palmas Oasis has provided an essential life-blood for men and animals since prehistoric times. It was that life-blood that drew early prospectors and settlers to the area, and later was greatly valued by early artists and authors for its remote desert beauty and rich history. Many of them spent time at the Rancho including Barry Atwater who had a small cabin at the ranch, desert landscape artist John Hilton who lived at the ranch and served as the ranch handyman for a time. A desert landscape painted by Norman Yeckley hangs in the adobe great room at the ranch, though so far we've found no written records of his time at the ranch.

The Rancho is situated near the original Oasis, which continues to thrive due to the reliable water source. Early travelers following the Bradshaw Trail made stops at Dos Palmas. It is known that several of those travelers met their demise at Dos Palmas, among them Herman Ehrenberg, namesake of the town on the Colorado River. It is well documented that a family from Texas passed through Dos Palmas and while there, their baby died and was buried next to the grave of Hermann Ehrenberg. The "Baby White" headstone was carved in 1906 and placed on the grave by 30-year resident, Frank Coffee who died while still living at the ranch in 1936. The headstone survived at the Rancho until sometime after 1987. It had been moved to the compound headquarters area of the Rancho for safekeeping after someone had taken a shot at it. Sadly, it disappeared sometime over the next several years following the sale of the ranch by its last private owners.

In 1938, German born Gertrude Voss Schulte Tenderich purchased the ranch on the recommendation of her brother, John Voss who had been living at the ranch and prospecting in the Orocochia Mountains since 1931. Prior to her arrival at Dos Palmas, she lived in Denver. During that time Gertrude purchased the patent for feminine hygiene tampons. Her brother Joseph invented a machine to manufacture the tampons, and together they owned the Tenderich Corporation. Patents were later sold to a New York firm, which is known today as Tambrands Corp.

After her initial visit to Rancho Dos Palmas, Gertrude fell in love with the desert property. Following her purchase of the Rancho, Gertrude commissioned the building of several casita's which would later accommodate her guests, and various outbuildings. In a 1938 brochure for her guest ranch, she listed "Outdoor Diversions" as "Swimming in a beautiful open air plunge fed by a constant flow of warm mineral water, Mud baths from the famous clay pits, centuries old, sun-bathing and being lazy is a major sport here—sunshine may be absorbed from comfortable lounging chairs, or by relaxing in private cabañas, Mountain climbing and hiking along unique desert trails. Tennis, badminton and riding. Duck quail and dove hunting, of course in season. Boating and bathing at renowned Date Palm Beach on the Salton Sea eight miles distant." Here is an illustration from her brochure;