

Historic Resources Report 7620 Telephone Road Ventura, CA

11 August 2015 (Rev 29 October 2015)

Prepared for:

**R.H. Smith Family Properties, LLC
63 N. Ash Street
Ventura, CA 93001**

Prepared by:



County of Ventura
August 25, 2025
Cultural Heritage Board Meeting
Item 6a
Exhibit 1 – Day Ranch Historic
Resources Report 10-29-15

Executive Summary

This report was prepared for the purpose of determining the eligibility of potential historic resources located on a ranch at 7620 Telephone Road, Ventura. [Figure 1]

This report assesses the historical and architectural significance of potentially significant historic properties in accordance with the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) Criteria for Evaluation, and County of Ventura criteria.

This report was prepared by San Buenaventura Research Associates of Santa Paula, California, Judy Triem, Historian; and Mitch Stone, Preservation Planner, for R.H. Smith Family Properties, LLC, and is based on a field investigation and research conducted in July and August 2015. The conclusions contained herein represent the professional opinions of San Buenaventura Research Associates, and are based on the factual data available at the time of its preparation, the application of the appropriate local, state and federal regulations, and best professional practices.

Summary of Findings

The property evaluated in this report was found to be ineligible for listing on the NRHP and CRHR, but potentially eligible for designation as a Ventura County landmark.

Report Contents

1.	Administrative Setting	1
	Ventura County Landmark Criteria	
	Ventura County Site of Merit Criteria	
2.	Historical Setting	3
	General Historical Context	
	Site-Specific Context	
3.	Potential Historic Resources	8
4.	Eligibility of Historic Resources	10
	National and California Registers: Significance, Eligibility and Integrity	
	Integrity Discussion	
	Summary Conclusion	
	Local Significance and Eligibility	
	Summary Conclusion	
5.	Selected Sources	13

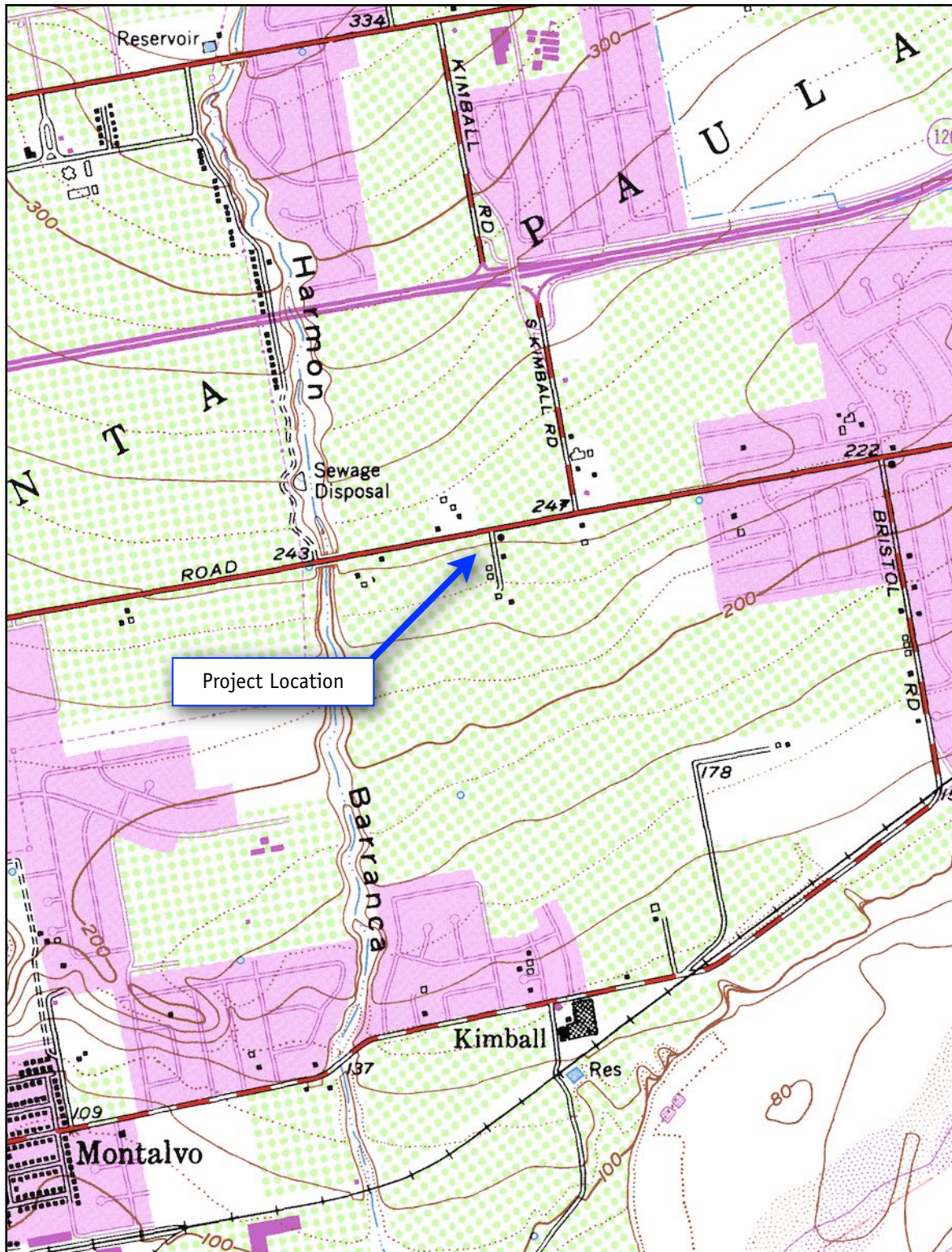


Figure 1. Project Location [Source: USGS 7.5' Quadrangle, Saticoy CA, 1951 rev 1967]

1. Administrative Setting

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires evaluation of project impacts on historic resources, including properties “listed in, or determined eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources [or] included in a local register of historical resources.” A resource is eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources if it meets any of the criteria for listing, which are:

1. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;
2. Associated with the lives of persons important to local, California or national history;
3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values; or
4. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history. (PRC §5024.1(c))

By definition, the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) also includes all “properties formally determined eligible for, or listed in, the National Register of Historic Places,” and certain specified State Historical Landmarks. The majority of formal determinations of NRHP eligibility occur when properties are evaluated by the Office of Historic Preservation in connection with federal environmental review procedures (Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966). Formal determinations of eligibility also occur when properties are nominated to the NRHP, but are not listed due to a lack of owner consent.

The criteria for determining eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) have been developed by the National Park Service. Eligible properties include districts, sites, buildings and structures,

- A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

According to the NRHP standards, in order for a property that is found to be significant under one or more of the criteria to be considered eligible for listing, the “essential physical features” that define the property’s significance must be present. The standard for determining if a property’s essential physical features exist is known as *integrity*, which is defined for the NRHP as “the ability of a property to convey its significance.” The CRHR defines integrity as “the authenticity of a historical resource’s physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource’s period of significance. Historical resources eligible for listing in the California Register must meet one of the criteria of significance described above and retain enough of their historic character or appearance to be recognizable as historical resources and to convey the reasons for their significance.” (National Register Bulletin 15; California OHP Technical Assistance Bulletin 6)

For purposes of both the NRHP and CRHR, an integrity evaluation is broken down into seven “aspects.” The seven aspects of integrity are: *Location* (the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred); *Design* (the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property); *Setting* (the physical environment of a historic property); *Materials* (the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pat-

tern or configuration to form a historic property); *Workmanship* (the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period of history or prehistory); *Feeling* (a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time), and; *Association* (the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property).

It is not required that significant property possess all aspects of integrity to be eligible; depending upon the NRHP and CRHR criteria under which the property derives its significance, some aspects of integrity might be more relevant than others. For example, a property nominated under NRHP Criterion A and CRHR Criterion 1 (events), would be likely to convey its significance primarily through integrity of location, setting and association. A property nominated solely under NRHP Criterion C and CRHR Criterion 3 (design), would usually rely primarily upon integrity of design, materials and workmanship.

While the NRHP guidelines and the CRHR regulations include similar language with respect to the aspects of integrity, the latter guidelines also state "it is possible that historical resources may not retain sufficient integrity to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register, but they may still be eligible for listing in the California Register." Further, according to the NRHP guidelines, the integrity of a property must be evaluated at the time the evaluation of eligibility is conducted. Integrity assessments cannot be based on speculation with respect to historic fabric and architectural elements that may exist but are not visible to the evaluator, or on restorations that are theoretically possible but which have not occurred. (National Register Bulletin 15; CCR §4852 (c); California OHP Technical Assistance Bulletin 6)

The minimum age criterion for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) is 50 years. Properties less than 50 years old may be eligible for listing on the NRHP if they can be regarded as "exceptional," as defined by the NRHP procedures, or in terms of the CRHR, "if it can be demonstrated that sufficient time has passed to understand its historical importance" (Chapter 11, Title 14, §4842(d)(2))

Historic resources as defined by CEQA also includes properties listed in "local registers" of historic properties. A "local register of historic resources" is broadly defined in §5020.1 (k) of the Public Resources Code, as "a list of properties officially designated or recognized as historically significant by a local government pursuant to a local ordinance or resolution." Local registers of historic properties come essentially in two forms: (1) surveys of historic resources conducted by a local agency in accordance with Office of Historic Preservation procedures and standards, adopted by the local agency and maintained as current, and (2) landmarks designated under local ordinances or resolutions. These properties are "presumed to be historically or culturally significant... unless the preponderance of the evidence demonstrates that the resource is not historically or culturally significant." (PRC §§ 5024.1, 21804.1, 15064.5)

Ventura County Landmark Criteria

An improvement, natural feature, or site may become a designated landmark if it meets one the following criteria:

1. It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the County's social, aesthetic, engineering, architectural or natural history;

2. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Ventura County or its cities, regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;
3. It is associated with the lives of persons important to Ventura County or its cities, California, or national history;
4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of Ventura County or its cities, California or the nation;
5. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values;
6. Integrity: Establish the authenticity of the resource's physical identity by evidence of lack of deterioration and significant survival of the characteristics that existed during its period of importance. This shall be evaluated with regard to the retention of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship.

Ventura County Site of Merit Criteria

Sites of Merit satisfy the following criteria:

1. Sites of historical, architectural, community or aesthetic merit which have not been designated as landmarks or points of interest, but which are deserving of special recognition; and
2. County approved surveyed sites with a National Register status code of 5 or above.

2. Historical Setting

General Historical Context

The western Santa Clara Valley was originally part of two land grants, Rancho Santa Paula y Saticoy and Rancho Ex-Mission San Buenaventura. The portion of the valley running east and west, essentially all of the part located to the south of the present Foothill Road, was located in Rancho Santa Paula y Saticoy, granted to Manuel Jimeno Casarin in 1843. The rancho contained some 17,773 acres and was granted to Casarin as reward for his services to the Mexican government as Secretary of State under Governor Micheltorena. He apparently never lived on the rancho and died in Mexico in 1853. Rancho Ex-Mission was owned by the San Buenaventura Mission and extended east from Ventura across the foothills of Sulphur Mountain to Santa Paula Creek, where the missionaries established a granary and cattle raising outpost, with labor supplied from the Chumash villages of Sisa and Mupu. This area included all of the north-south running canyons. (Bancroft, 1884: Vol. 4, 692)

Thomas Wallace More and his brothers, Andrew and Henry, purchased Rancho Santa Paula y Saticoy during the 1850s. More had also acquired the neighboring Rancho Sespe in 1854 from the estate of Josefa Carrillo. The California Agriculture Census indicates that by 1860 More had become the largest single landowner in Santa Barbara County, which at the time included all of contemporary Ventura County. T.W. More raised sheep and cattle on the ranchos until the disastrous droughts of the late 1850s and early 1860s forced the brothers to dissolve their partnership and subdivide the rancho lands. (Cleland, 1953: 84, 89)

George G. Briggs purchased approximately 15,000 acres of Rancho Santa Paula y Saticoy from More in 1861. Earlier that year Briggs, together with his nephew Jefferson Crane, had visited T.W. More at his adobe residence. All three men had known each other in Ohio where they had lived previously. After purchasing the land from More, Briggs used the two-story adobe built for More by W.D. Hobson as the center of his ranching operations. Briggs, formerly a horticulturist in Marysville, believed he could successfully raise fruit on the land, and planted a 160 acre orchard near the adobe. Discouraged by the continuing drought conditions, and disheartened by the death of his wife, Briggs in 1867 authorized land agent E.B. Higgins to begin subdividing the rancho into 150 acre parcels. These parcels were sold primarily to farmers emigrating from the Northern California gold fields, and the East and Midwest. The survey was prepared by W.H. Norway in 1867. (Sheridan, 1955: 2-7)

Site-Specific Context

James Allen Day: 1874 to 1883

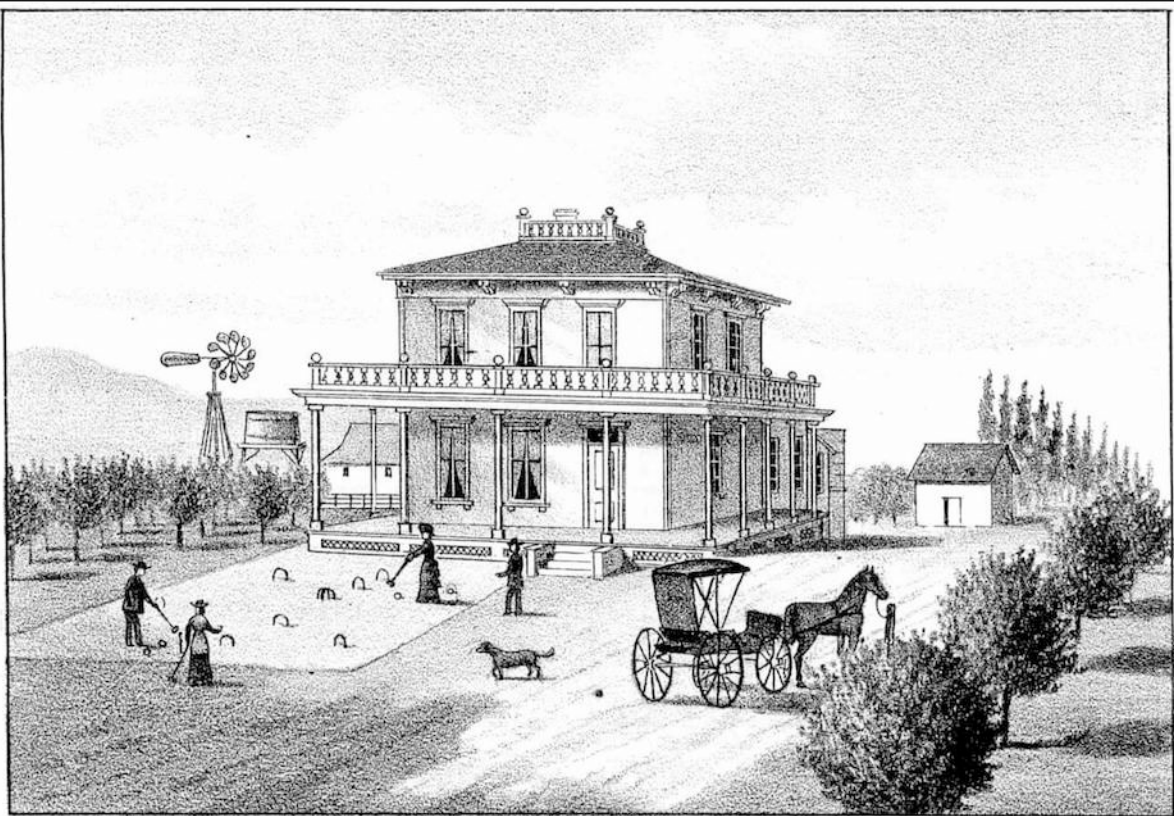
The project site, located at 7620 Telephone Road, contains 77.28 acres, originally 80 acres when purchased by James Allen Day in 1874. Grant deeds are vague as to parcel description, but it appears that Day purchased 40 acres in Block 91 of Rancho Santa Paula y Saticoy from Sherlock Bristol on July 26, 1874 and 40 acres in Block 91 from Thomas Witherage on April 3, 1874. These parcels were contiguous and apparently combined into a single holding. Apparently a small cottage either existed on the property when he bought it, or Day built one himself. By 1882, he built the larger two-story residence that exists today. (Deed Book 2, page 382; Book 1, page 722; Ventura County Assessment Roll books, 1881-82, 1883)

By 1882 a large new two-story house has been built on the 80-acre farm of J.A. Day. A lithograph of the property and description of James A. Day's place follows:

While traveling from San Buenaventura to Saticoy, one is forcibly struck with the appearance of a fruit farm, about six miles from the former and two miles from the latter place. No garden was ever more carefully tilled, no nursery ever presented to the sight clearer, brighter of thriftier fruit trees. The dark, sandy loam forms an extensive bed, as level as a floor, upon which the trim and tidy foliage casts its beautiful silhouettes of stem, branches, twigs and leaves. . . .

Undaunted by the disaster that overcame Brigg's orchard venture, Mr. Day has eighty acres set with 8,000 fruit trees of various kinds. Amongst these are 2,000 apricot trees, 1,500 apple trees, 500 lemon trees, 500 lime trees, 500 orange trees and 1,000 walnut trees. Many of these are seven years old, some but two. The orchard is a complete success except as to oranges, which, although sweet, are small. Many of the apricot trees three years from the bud are bearing heavily, while those of six and seven years are yielding sometimes 200 and 300 pounds to the tree. There are also a number of loquats, guavas and Japanese persimmons, all of which reach full maturity. Mr. Day sends but little fresh fruit to market, but has the most perfect apparatus to be found for converting it into other marketable products. He has three Plummer dryers - two of medium and one of large size. he has a distillery that produces fruit brandy which rivals the far famed Otard and cognac of France. Mr. Day was one of the first to demonstrate not only the ability of the country to raise fruit, but also the possibility of making the business profitable. . .

He has recently planted to fruit trees another tract a mile or two from his home, which bids fair to rival the older orchard. Mr. Day has also a town residence for the benefit of his family when attending school or church. (Mason, 1883: 372, 401) [Historic Photo 1]



RESIDENCE OF J. A. DAY, NEAR SATICOY, VENTURA CO. CAL.

Historic Photo 1. [Source: Mason, 1883]

James Allen Day was born in Franklin County, New York, on July 3, 1828. He was the son of Orrada Day, a native of Springfield, Massachusetts, and his grandfather, Robert E. Day, was a pioneer settler of Welsh descent in Hartford, Connecticut, prior to 1776. James Day attended schools in the state of New York and then went into lime and brick manufacturing. He married Sarah Jane Warren, a native of Connecticut, in 1856. By 1860 the couple is living in Oshkosh, Wisconsin and Day is the owner of a lime and brick manufacturing company. Their daughters Alice and Bera and son Mark were born there. Achieving success in the manufacturing business, the family moved to Ventura in 1874 where Day invested in land and took up horticulture among other businesses. Their daughter Lilia was born in California in 1875.

Upon his arrival in Ventura in 1874, Day invested in both town lots and farmland and continued investing through the 1900s. By 1891 he owned over 880 acres primarily of farmland and other lots in the City of Ventura. In addition to the farm house he built on Telephone Road, he also built a house in town on Poli and Ash streets around the same time. His family stayed in town when attending church and school. [Historic Photo 2]

In addition to farming, Day entered into real estate investment during this same time period. He and three partners built the Masonic Block on Main Street that included the building where the Masonic Hall was lo-

cated. Day was himself a Mason. The Masonic Hall was on the top floor with commercial space on the first floor. Day opened a grocery business in one of the stores. Day joined a Mr. Collins and together they built the Collins Block, a grouping of buildings on Main Street that included the Collins Bank.

Shortly after he completed the house on Telephone Road, he sold the 80 acre property in 1883 to Amelia W. Truesdell, according to grant deeds from the period. The family then moved permanently to the Poli Street residence. It is uncertain why he sold this property after so recently completing the house. He eventually sold his other agricultural properties as well and spent his time with his Ventura businesses.

Sarah Day died in 1904. In 1908, while celebrating James Day's 80th birthday, the *Ventura Free Press* acknowledged the event and looked back on his accomplishments stating:

Mr. Day came to Ventura in 1874 and from the beginning showed his faith in the county by investing in many industries. He was the first to plant apricots extensively in the valley and the first man to go into fruit-drying on a large scale. In building a large fruit dryer he backed his faith in the soil with his work and money." (*Ventura Free Press*, July 10, 1908)

James Allen Day ended his own life at his Ventura home on January 2, 1915 at the age of 85. A Ventura newspaper article about his death stated that "he had been in pain for many months and discomfort brought on by his advancing years." (un-sourced newspaper clipping dated January 8, 1915)



Historic Photo 2. J.C. Brewster photo circa 1882 [Source: Museum of Ventura County, as reproduced in the Ventura County *Star Free Press* 10-26-1986]

Amelia Woodworth Truesdell: 1883 to 1908

In 1883, Amelia Truesdell purchased the 80 acre Day Ranch property from James Allen Day. (Grant Deeds, Book 13, pg. 317)

Amelia Truesdell was born in Lowell, Massachusetts on October 20, 1839 to Deliverance and Hannah Woodward. She graduated from Mt. Holyoke College in 1858. She came to San Francisco in 1864 and married Orran P. Truesdell, a book printer and proprietor of the Oakland *Transcript*, a daily newspaper. He died in 1869. The couple had two sons, the first died in 1873 and the second ten years later. Prior to the San Francisco earthquake, she was the manager of the Berkshire, a fashionable hotel in San Francisco. It is uncertain when she first began writing, but by 1884 her first book of poetry was published entitled *California Pilgrimage*, a book of poems about the California missions. Another collection of her poems followed in 1900, *La Parra Grande, a Legend of Santa Barbara's Big Grape Vine*; in 1908, *Francisca Reina* illustrated by Maynard Dixon; in 1911, *The Souls Rubaiyat*; and in 1913, *All the Way: Being the Collected Poems of Amelia Woodward Truesdell*. Her individual poems were published in magazines such as *Out West* and the *Overland Monthly* in the early 1900s. (*Oakland Tribune*, December 20, 1912)

After her second son's death in 1883, she branched out into new directions. Her collection of poetry published in 1913 after her death states:

Ten years later she was left alone by the death of her other son. With unusual courage and initiative she then turned to many things, and by sheer force of will created for herself interests and responsibilities. As a business manager, a member of clubs, an occasional lecturer and writer, she was always at once vital and very kind. (Truesdell, 1913: ix)

It is unknown why she purchased ranch land in Ventura County in 1883. It may have been the death of her son in 1883 that brought an interest in a change of location. Perhaps her book on the California missions brought her to Ventura and she decided to experience ranch life. A copy of her first book, *California Pilgrimage*, published in 1884, and found in the Museum of Ventura County collection is inscribed to Mr. And Mrs. Finney, who lived near her on Telephone Road. The Day and Finney families had both come to Ventura County in 1874 and purchased land in what was known as the Mound District. In the book's pocket is a copy of an article from the *Ventura Signal* for September 6, 1884 that states: "Mrs. A.C.W. Truesdell, who recently purchased Mr. Day's place in Mound District is author of a beautiful little book. . . Mrs. Truesdell has kindly presented our library with a copy."

Truesdell apparently lived on her ranch but traveled back and forth to the San Francisco Bay area where she retained a residence. Her poetry books were published in San Francisco. Continuing her life of letters well into middle age, in 1903 she became the oldest graduate at Stanford University when she obtained a degree in English at the age of 64. Truesdell was a charter member of the Pacific Coast Woman's Press Association, a member of the California Club of San Francisco and the Daughters of the American Revolution. (*Oakland Tribune*, 12/20/1912)

Amelia Truesdell became ill and was eventually hospitalized. This may have been why she sold her ranch property in 1909. She died in 1912 at the age of 73.

Oscar Perry Cook: 1909 to 1948

Born in Indiana in 1860, Oscar P. Cook came to Ventura County around 1889. Voter Registration documents for 1889 list him as a nurseryman living in the Saticoy precinct. In 1890 he married Maude L. White, born in 1865 in Missouri. The couple had no children according to census records.

Ventura County Grant deeds show that Cook purchased several properties between 1891 and 1909. Census records in 1900 and 1910 show he lived on a ranch but no addresses are provided. In 1909 he purchased the 80 acre property from Amelia Truesdell. It is unknown if he ever lived on the Telephone Road ranch as he also owned a residence at 795 Main Street as early as 1921 and probably earlier. His occupation was farmer according to census records. The 1930 and 1940 census show the Cooks as living in Ventura. Oscar Perry Cook died on February 3, 1948 and his wife Maude L. Cook died on October 16, 1956. (Deed book 110; pg. 427)

Fred W. Smith and Grace Hobson Smith: 1948 to present

In 1948 Fred and Grace Smith purchased the 80 acre ranch from the estate of Oscar P. Cook. The ranch was purchased as an agricultural investment along with other agricultural lands the couple owned. The Smiths lived in Ojai. (Deed book 840, pg. 127)

Fred W. Smith was born on May 22, 1892 in Alamosa, Colorado. He attended the University of California, Berkeley. By 1917 he is living in Ventura and is a stock feed buyer for the Hobson Brothers Packing Company, eventually becoming president in 1929. He married Grace Hobson Smith shortly after moving to Ventura. Grace Hobson Smith, born February 29, 1892, was the daughter of Abram L. Hobson and Helen Barnard Hobson. Hobson joined his father William Dewey Hobson in the meat packing business. William D. Hobson was known as the "Father of Ventura County" for his work in separating Ventura County from Santa Barbara County. Abram together with his brother William A. organized the Hobson Brothers Packing Company and accumulated large real estate holdings along with being one of the largest dealers of livestock in Southern California. (McGroarty, 1933: 574-576)

Fred Smith also served as Vice-President of the Board of Trustees of Pomona College in Claremont and was a member of the California State Board of Education for seven years, serving three years as President. As a charter member of the Ventura Lions Club, he served as International President in 1947-48. Grace Smith also attended the University of California, Berkeley and after her marriage, she became active in philanthropic work and the education of her three children. She established a scholarship fund at Berkeley and donated a new school building to the Upper Campus of the Ojai Valley School in 1966. The family are known for their generous charitable contributions to many Ventura County organizations, and establishing the Smith-Hobson Foundation Fund that focuses on educational and cultural projects in 1964. Grace Smith died in 1968 and Fred Smith in 1982. (*The Lion*, February 1982)

Today the property is owned by R.H. Smith Family Properties, LLC., descendants of the Smith family.

3. Potential Historic Resources

The 78.28 acre site at 7620 Telephone Road in Ventura contains a main residence, a barn, two garages, fruit stand, small storage buildings and greenhouses. Surrounding the buildings are strawberry fields that are fallow at present.

Main Residence. Built in 1881 or 1882, this two-story Italianate style residence features a square plan with a low truncated hipped roof, punctuated with a brick chimney. Under the overhanging closed eaves are decorative carved brackets. A porch extends across the front (northern elevation) and wraps around the entire western elevation and half of the eastern elevation. The porch is supported by narrow square capped posts and a wooden balustrade. At the rear south elevation is a one-story wing with a low hipped roof and porch. [Photos 1-4]

Symmetrically placed wood sash windows are tall and narrow one-over-one with shelf mouldings. The house is covered with wide horizontal drop siding and rests on a raised foundation covered with wooden lattice.

The interior of the house features a curved wooden staircase railing with decorative spindles in the entrance hall and a fireplace in the living room. Ceilings are tall and the living room has wood wainscoting. The interior has retained a large number of original features including the paneled doors, door casings, hardware, and baseboard mouldings. [Photos 5, 6]

There have been relatively few alterations to the exterior of the house over its 134 year history. Historic photos prior to 1900 show that the house did not have a porch railing, as it does today. The porch railing was added sometime after 1950. A wooden balcony railing on the second story above the porch was repeated as cresting on the roof. These were removed by the 1950s according to the photo in the Assessor building records. The back porch was probably added around 1920 or later. The house is in poor condition on the interior as a result of pigeon infestation. The exterior is in fair condition.

Barn. The barn dates from about 1940 according to the Assessor building records. It was used as a dehydrator building, probably for the walnuts that once grew on this property and were removed in 1974. The building was thereafter used as a barn. It is a long narrow building measuring 42 by 72 feet. The one-story barn has a medium high front facing gable roof with a gabled addition on the north side built circa 1947. Sliding track doors open on the eastern elevation. The building is wood frame with corrugated metal siding and roof and rests on a concrete foundation. The building is in fair condition. [Photos 7, 8]

Garage 1. The garage was built around 1935 and has a rectangular plan with a gable roof. It is located adjacent to the barn on the south. The building measures 16 by 20 feet and is wood frame with board and batten siding and corrugated metal roof. A sliding track door is located on the eastern elevation and a horizontal vent above it under the gable peak. Changes appear to have been made to some of the siding and the track door. It is difficult to see all of the building because it is surrounded on three sides. The building is in fair condition. [Photo 9]

Garage 2. This garage was built around 1935 and is rectangular in plan with a gable roof. The building measures 12 by 20 feet and is clad with board and batten siding and a corrugated metal roof and a dirt floor. The base of the building had severe dry rot that eventually led to its collapse during a recent wind and rainstorm. [Photo 10]

Several modern temporary buildings and structures were built on the property after 1990, including a fruit stand, storage units and green houses.

Landscape Elements. A few remaining walnut trees are found near the house where a walnut orchard once existed. Today the 78 acres are used for growing strawberries.

4. Eligibility of Historic Resources

National and California Registers: Significance, Eligibility and Integrity

In terms of individual eligibility for the NRHP and CRHR, this property does not appear to be eligible under NRHP Criterion A or CRHR Criterion 1. While it is historically associated with the agricultural development of Ventura County, it is only generally associated with this theme, and has made no, known individual contribution to this development.

The property does not appear to be individually eligible under NRHP Criterion B or CRHR 2 for its association with significant persons. James Day was an early Ventura pioneer and noted for being the first to dry his fruit before sending it to market. He was also known for building the Masonic block and Collins block of buildings in Ventura. His Ventura house on Poli Street where he lived from 1883 to 1915 is a designated Ventura landmark. Although he lived on the Telephone Road property beginning in 1874 he apparently lived in the existing house for only one year.

Amelia W. Truesdell, a well known figure in the poetry world during late 1800s and early 1900s, owned the property from 1883 to 1909. During this time period she wrote her first book of poetry (1884) about the California missions. Other books followed in 1900 and 1908. She lost her son in 1883, the last of her immediate family, her first son having died in 1873 and her husband in 1869. It is known that she lived in Ventura County and wanted to make changes in her life and surroundings following her second son's death. It is possible that she bought this property as a place for seclusion and writing her poetry. No information, however, could be found to confirm if she lived on the property the entire time she owned it or if she actually wrote her poetry during her stays there. During this time she continued to maintain a residence in the San Francisco area and obtained a degree in 1903 from Stanford. When she sold the property and returned to the San Francisco area in 1909, she published three more books of poetry.

The third owner of the property, Oscar Perry Cook, was a farmer and owned several properties including a town house in Ventura. No notable contributions to the development of the county could be found for Oscar P. and Maude Cook.

The last owners, Fred Smith and Grace Hobson Smith, were members of a prominent Ventura County family who lived first in Ventura and then in Ojai and owned a large number of agricultural properties. This property was just one of their investments and they never lived on the site. Their Ojai home was donated to the City of Ojai and is now Ojai City Hall.

Although several owners of the property made important contributions to the Ventura County community in the field of agriculture, philanthropy and the wider field of literature, this property cannot be substantiated to have been their main residences.

This property appears to be individually eligible under NRHP Criterion C and CRHR 3 as a distinctive and scarce example of the Italianate informal farm house in Ventura County. Its distinctive characteristics include its square box shape with a truncated hipped roof and decorative bracketed cornice. The narrow tall double hung wood windows feature simple shelf mouldings and the house features wide horizontal drop siding. A hipped roof porch wraps around three sides of the house and is supported by narrow wood capped columns.

Integrity Discussion

The integrity of *location* for this property is intact. None of the extant buildings have been moved. The integrity of *design* is partially intact for the main residence since the balcony above the porch and the roof cresting was removed and a wood railing added to the porch. The integrity of design is intact for the barn, but somewhat reduced for the property as a whole since several earlier buildings have been removed over time. The barn from the 1880s was probably removed in the 1940s when the present barn/dehydrator building was constructed. A farm labor residence from 1935 was removed in 1975. An implement shed from 1935 was removed by 1991. The integrity of *setting* for the property is intact since the 77.28 acre parcel remains in use for farming. Modern housing subdivisions built after 1960 are located to the west of the property, across Ramelli Avenue. The *materials and workmanship* are intact for the residence and barn. The integrity of *feeling and association* are intact since the site is still used for agriculture.

On a whole, this property does not appear to retain the integrity required to be individually eligible for listing on the NRHP or CRHR because the main residence has lost some of its distinctive architectural design features with the removal of the balcony railing and cresting. The barn has retained its integrity. The remaining buildings (Garages 1 and 2 and modern buildings and structures are non-contributors because Garage 1 has lost its integrity and Garage 2 has collapsed. The remaining buildings are not fifty years of age.)

Summary Conclusion

The Day Ranch does not appear eligible for listing on the NRHP under Criterion C or for the CRHR under Criterion 3 due to insufficient integrity.

Local Significance and Eligibility

The Day Ranch appears to be eligible for local landmark designation under the Ventura County Cultural Heritage ordinance. The Day Ranch reflects the county's agricultural history due its over one hundred year association with agriculture, the county's leading industry (Criterion 2). The main two-story residence embodies distinctive characteristics of the Italianate style and appears to be eligible under Criterion 5.

Integrity Discussion

Under Criterion 6, the Day Ranch main residence and barn appear to possess sufficient integrity to be eligible for listing as a Ventura County Landmark. Garage 1 has had changes to the main door and Garage 2 has collapsed as a result of a rain and wind storm and its poor condition. These two buildings should be considered non-contributors.

The above integrity discussion for the NRHP and CRHR pertains to the local designation as well. By comparison with the NRHP criteria for distinctive characteristics under Criterion C, it states "a property must clearly contain enough of those characteristics to be considered a true representative of a particular type, period, or method of construction." The Ventura County Criterion 5 states that it only needs to "embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction." The removal of the balcony and cresting from the main residence is not as critical for the local designation. Enough distinctive features remain for the residence to be eligible for a local designation. These characteristics include the form of the building, the roof shape, decorative eave brackets, tall narrow windows with shelf mouldings and horizontal drop wood siding.

Summary Conclusion

The main residence and barn retain sufficient integrity to qualify for a Ventura County landmark designation. The remaining buildings, including Garage 1 and Garage 2, are non-contributors.

5. Selected Sources

Bancroft, Hubert Howe. *History of California*. 152-1870. Vol. IV. San Francisco: The History Company, 1884, 1890.

California State Library, Ancestry, Author Biography Card for Amelia Truesdell located on Ancestry.com

Daily Alta California, 8/20, 1869.

Mason, Jesse. *History of Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties*. Oakland, CA: Thompson & West, 1883.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.

McGroarty, John Steven. *California of the South*, Vol. V. Chicago, Los Angeles & Indianapolis: Clarke Publishing Co., 1933.

Oakland Tribune, 12/20/1912.

Sheridan, E.M. "The Narrative of Jefferson Crane." *Ventura County Historical Society Quarterly*. 1, November, 1955)2-8.

Sheridan, Sol N. *History of Ventura County, California*. 2 vols. Chicago: S.J. Clarke, 1926.

Storke, Ada. *A Memorial and Biographical History of the Counties of Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo and Ventura, CA*. Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1891.

The Lion, February 1982. Lion's Club newsletter.

Triem, Judith. *Ventura County: Land of Good Fortune*. Northridge: Windsor Publications, 1985.

Triem, Judith. *The Santa Clara Valley of Ventura County*. Santa Barbara: The Easton Gallery, 2002.

U.S. Census Records, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930, 1940.

Ventura County Assessor Roll Books, 1881-82; 1883. Located at Ventura County Museum Library.

Ventura County Assessor Records, Residential Building Record

Ventura County Biographies, Ancestry.com "Mrs. Grace Hobson Smith."

Ventura County Directories, 1884 through 1940.

Ventura County Grant Deeds

Ventura County Historical Society Quarterly, Vol. 32, "The Poinsettia Club of Saticoy." No. 1. 1986: 11-12.

Ventura County Historical Society Quarterly, Vol. 46, "Ventura County Garden of the World." Nos. 1-4, 2002: 111-112.

Ventura County Residential Building Record.

Historic Resources Report

7620 Telephone Road, Ventura

Ventura Free Press, 7/10/1908; Unknown newspaper clipping, 1/8/1915. (located in Ventura County Museum Library)

Maps

USGS Maps: Saticoy Quadrangle, 1903, 1951

Plat Map of the Rancho Santa Paula y Saticoy, 1860.

Plat Map of the Rancho Santa Paula y Saticoy, 1867, W.H. Norway



Photo 1. Main residence, front (northern) elevation. [23 July 2015]



Photo 2. Main residence, side (western) elevation. [23 July 2015]



Photo 3. Main residence, side (eastern) elevation. [23 July 2015]



Photo 4. Main residence, rear (southern) elevation. [23 July 2015]



Photo 5. Main residence, interior living room. [23 July 2015]



Photo 6. Main residence, front entrance hall showing curved staircase railing. [23 July 2015]



Photo 7. Metal barn, eastern and northern elevations. [23 July 2015]



Photo 8. Metal barn, western and southern elevations. [23 July 2015]



Photo 9. Garage 1, eastern elevation. [23 July 2015]



Photo 10. Garage 2, western and southern elevations. [23 July 2015]