

State of California - The Resources Agency
 DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

Primary #
 HRI #

Page 2 of 4

*NRHP/CRHR Status Code 3CS

Resource Name (Assigned by recorder) Paul Masson Lodge

B1. Historic Name: Paul Masson Mountain Hunting Lodge

B2. Common Name: 14574 Pierce Rd.

B3. Original Use: Single family residential

B4. Present Use: Single family residential

*B5. Architectural Style: French Chateau

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

Constructed 1936.

*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: n/a

Original Location: n/a

*B8. Related Features:

Brick carriage house.

B9a. Architect: Henry Clay Smith

b. Builder: Unknown

*B10. Significance: Theme Architecture

Area: Congress Springs / Pierce Road

Period of Significance: 1936 - 1940

Property Type: Residential

Applicable Criteria: C (2), (3)

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

Paul Masson Lodge is listed on the Saratoga Heritage Resources Inventory, included as a part of HP-88-01. It qualified under Criteria a, b, and c:

- a) the property exemplifies and reflects special elements of the cultural, social, economic, aesthetic, and architectural history of Saratoga;
- b) the property is identified with persons significant in local history;
- c) the property embodies distinctive characteristics of the French Chateau style, type and period;

Paul Masson Lodge appears eligible for the California Register of Historical Resources under Criterion (2) and (3), as the house embodies the distinctive characteristics of the French Chateau house-type within Saratoga's *City of Homes* period, and is associated with a person important to Saratoga's past.

(Continued on page 4, DPR523L)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (list attributes and codes) None

*B12. References:

Saratoga Heritage Preservation Commission, Historic Resources Inventory form, 1988.

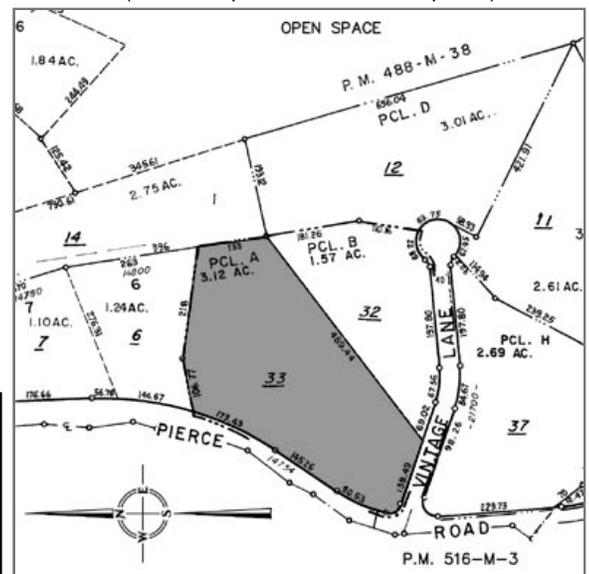
B13. Remarks: Listed Heritage Resource

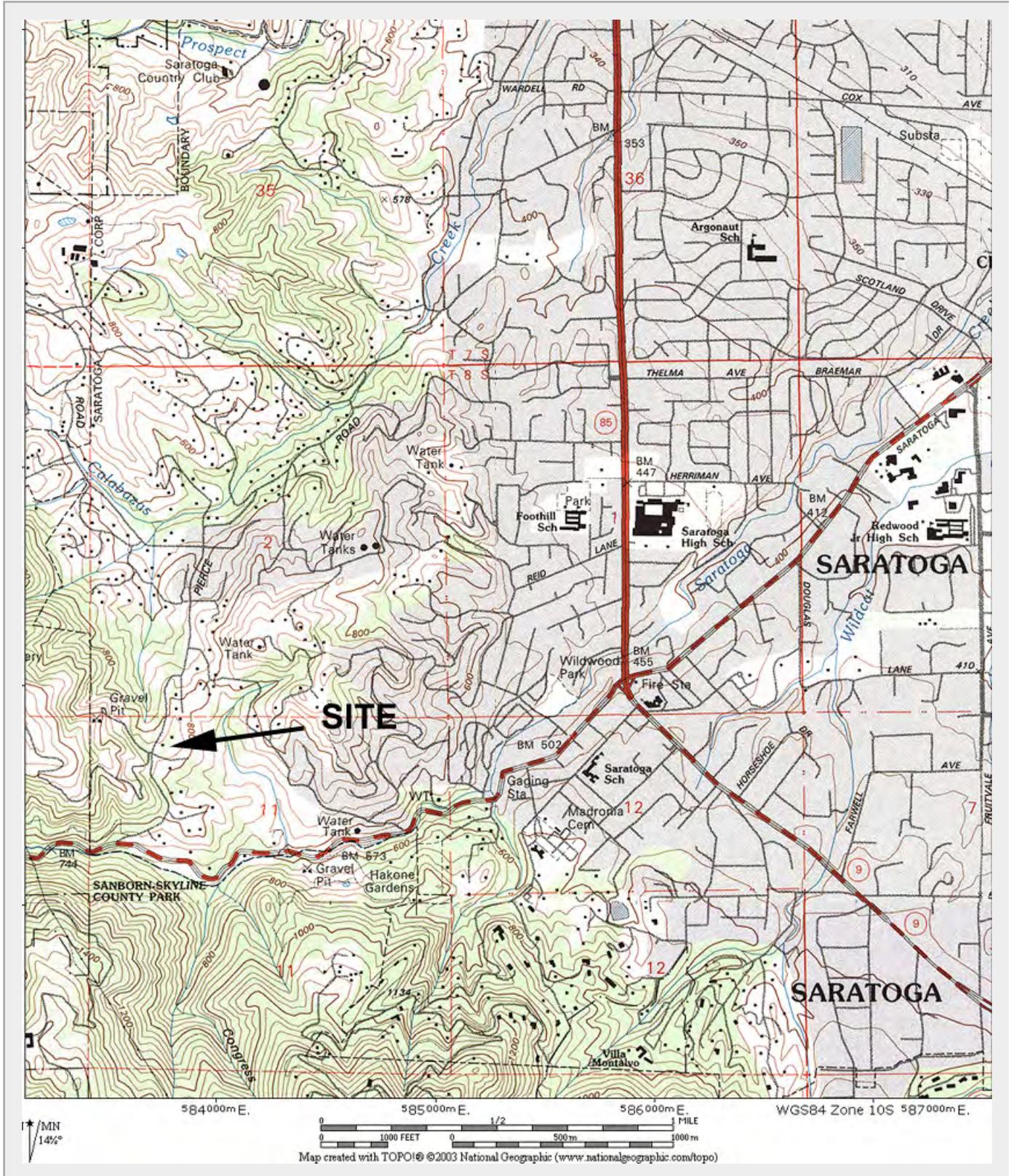
*B14. Evaluator: Franklin Maggi

*Date of Evaluation: October 26, 2009

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)





Page 4 of 4 *Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Paul Masson Lodge

* Recorded By F. Maggi, L. Dill, & J. Kusz * Date 10/26/2009 Continuation Update

(Continued from page 2, DPR523b, B10)

Historical Background

Paul Masson first visited California from Burgandy, France as a young man between 1878 and 1880. Masson studied business in San Jose, and met Charles LeFranc, A French immigrant who had established an early winery in the South Bay area. Masson returned to France for a time, but in the 1880s he moved permanently to the South Bay where he went to work for LeFranc. In 1887, Charles LeFranc was killed trying to stop a runaway team of horses. The estate passed to LeFranc's three children: Henry, Louise, and Marie. Masson married Louise shortly after her father's death. After a working honeymoon in France, Masson formed a partnership with his brother-in-law Henry to manage the winemaking business, with the LeFranc properties remaining in the hands of the three LeFranc children. While Masson apparently initially focused on local champagne production from his New Almaden base, releasing a champagne in 1892, he was investigating different areas in the Bay Area optimum for the growing of premium grapes.

Meanwhile, grapes were being cultivated above Saratoga as early as the early 1880s by Alexander Rodoni, who lost the land in a bank foreclosure in 1892. The *Saratoga News* reported on November 20, 1896, that Masson had gone up to inspect the property he had acquired from Rodoni. At this new site Masson planted better grape varieties, yielding in 1905 a particularly successful and acclaimed champagne that he marketed aggressively at expositions.

By the 1920s, Masson's champagnes had achieved worldwide recognition. In part this was due to their quality, but also due to his marketing skills. During Prohibition, the company was allowed to continue production of wines with "special dispensation." They are described as the only American champagnes allowed to do so.

In 1936, Masson sold the property and business to Martin Ray, a local businessman, who continued local ownership and management along with his first wife, Elsie. After retiring in 1936 he built his new French Chateau on 14 acres across Pierce Road from the entrance on Pierce Road to his Mountain Winery. Although he apparently never actually lived at this property, it is said that he lunched here as his health permitted. His primary home was in downtown San Jose in the Naglee Park neighborhood. According to a later informant, Mr. Masson was laid in state in the living room of his chateau prior to his burial. He died in 1940 at the age of 81 years.

Architectural Context

This house is said to have been designed by Henry Clay Smith. Smith (1874-1945) was born in Santa Clara, and studied at the University of Pennsylvania. After working for James Hamilton Windrim, he returned to the San Francisco Bay Area where he went into partnership with Louis S. Stone in 1900 until 1909. Smith's later signature buildings involved the siting of houses in hilly terrain, and he became known as "The Hillside Architect." Smith was adept at many architectural styles; with many Spanish, Mission and Tudor Revival, Italian Renaissance and Neo-Classicism buildings to his credit. He was awarded the Jury Prize "for schoolhouse architecture" at the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition.

Integrity

The integrity of this property cannot be determined for this survey.