



4749

Circle G Ranch  
Name of Property

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: "Circle G Ranch"  
Other names/site number: "The Elvis Presley Ranch"  
"The Flying Circle G Ranch" (copyright name)  
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

### 2. Location

Street & number: 5921 Goodman Road West (Highway 302 at intersection with Highway 301)  
City or town: Horn Lake State: MS County: DeSoto  
Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

X national \_\_\_ statewide \_\_\_ local  
Applicable National Register Criteria:

\_\_\_ A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D

		<u>10-28-19</u>
<b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b> SHPO		<b>Date</b>
<u>Mississippi Department of Archives and History</u>		
<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>		
In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.		
<b>Signature of commenting official:</b>		<b>Date</b>

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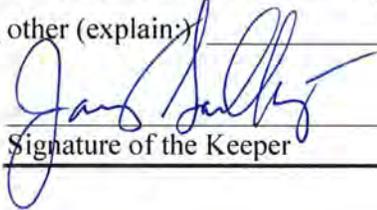
DeSoto County, MS  
County and State

<b>Title :</b>	<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>
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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

  
Signature of the Keeper

12.9.2019  
Date of Action

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### 5. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

Public – Local

Public – State

Public – Federal

#### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)

District

Site

Structure

Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>9</u>	<u>2</u>	buildings
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	sites
<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>	structures
<u>1</u>	<u>      </u>	objects
<u>20</u>	<u>7</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Domestic: single family dwelling
- Domestic: camp
- Domestic: secondary structure
- Recreation and Culture: outdoor recreation
- Recreation and Culture: monument marker
- Agriculture: agricultural outbuildings
- Agriculture: animal facility
- Agriculture: fishing facility
- Landscape: natural feature
- Landscape: object
- Transportation: pedestrian-related

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Vacant/Not in Use
- Recreation and Culture: monument marker
- Landscape: natural feature
- Landscape: object
- Transportation: pedestrian-related

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: Folk Victorian

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: CONCRETE, BRICK

Walls: METAL (aluminum), BRICK, WOOD (weatherboard, log)

Roof: WOOD (shingle) METAL (tin), ASPHALT

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

Circle G Ranch, famously owned by music icon Elvis Presley during a pivotal period in his career, encompasses 154<sup>1</sup> acres of rolling hills in a pastoral setting near the western limits of Horn Lake, a rural, but developing town in DeSoto County, Mississippi. Highway 301 parallels the western edge of the property and on the north, the Ranch fronts onto Highway 302, an east-west corridor also known as Goodman Road. Today, Highway 302 is a five-lane thoroughfare bustling with commercial growth, but in the late 1960s, it was a little-trafficked two-lane country road (Figure 1) The Ranch was where Elvis rediscovered his musical roots, reprioritized his life, and—with the Comeback Special of 1968—repositioned himself as the undisputed “King of Rock and Roll.” Although Highway 302 has changed because of emerging development and road widening, the property retains good integrity of location, feeling, and association with the 1967-1969 period of significance.

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<sup>1</sup>The exact figure is 154.02 acres rounded down. Elvis had a total of 163 acres, but a privately held outparcel is excluded from the current boundaries of the Circle G Ranch.

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## Narrative Description

Circle G Ranch is being nominated as a district. The district includes 10 contributing resources (C) and three noncontributing resources (NC) (Figure 2). For historic reference, contributing and noncontributing resources are also identified on an aerial photograph taken during a 1973 flyover (Figure 3), less than a year after Elvis sold the property for the second time.<sup>2</sup>

### 1. Residential Complex

This complex features the primary residential building known as Elvis' Honeymoon Cottage (1a), a shed/well house (1b), and 4-rail fencing surrounding the house and yard (1c). The 1973 aerial photograph depicts a guardhouse Elvis installed at the gated driveway entrance north of the house and fronting Highway 302.

#### 1a. Honeymoon Cottage (C)

c.1900, remodeled c.1965

*Original Construction:* The residence is a single-story building, with cross gable roof, gable front, and wing-shaped construction plan. Based on archival documents and several physical observations, the structure is believed to have been constructed originally at the end of the nineteenth or in the first decade of the twentieth century. The age of the structure was a topic upon which several members of Elvis' inner circle commented. Charlie Hodge, a close friend of Elvis, was one of those, who in an interview observed there was "a hundred-year-old house there [at the ranch]...had been restored and was beautiful."<sup>3</sup> Another friend, Joe Esposito, made a similar reference, stating the "ranch house was about one hundred years old, but it had been completely renovated to look like a home featured in a decorating magazine."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> He owned the property from 1967 to 1969, but reacquired it in 1972 by auction and sold it again that same year.

<sup>3</sup> David Adams, "Interview with Charlie Hodge." *Elvis Australia*. Published March 25, 2016, [http://www.elvis.com.au/presley/interview\\_charlie\\_hodge.shtml](http://www.elvis.com.au/presley/interview_charlie_hodge.shtml). Accessed December 5, 2015.

<sup>4</sup> Jerry Schilling and Chuck Crisafull, *Me and a Guy Named Elvis: My Lifelong Friendship with Elvis Presley* (Los Angeles: Gotham Press, 2006), 130.

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While the Honeymoon Cottage had not reached the 100-year age mark when Elvis purchased the Ranch, it exceeds it now. Genealogical information points to a date of around 1897 to 1898 for original construction, attributed to nineteenth century landowner Edson R. Hart, a pioneer steamboat captain, and owner of a hardware store in Memphis.<sup>5</sup> Architecturally, the structure originally exhibited Folk Victorian elements popular in America from about 1880 to 1910.<sup>6</sup> Circa 1965, the building was given a more Minimal Traditional appearance after the owner previous to Elvis, Jack Adams renovated the cottage.

A 1953 photograph shows the historic appearance of the structure, which had clapboard siding and was elevated above grade, supported by masonry piers with 5-in square wooden beams on top (Figure 4). Steps led to a raised porch with three wood posts or columns clearly visible; there may have been a fourth obscured by vegetation. There were seven windows on the front, four large and two smaller two-over-two sash windows—the smaller two flanking the front door—and a small circular window under the front gable.

The original structure featured two chimneys; one on the west end of the roof was probably for a fireplace in the original bedroom(s) and the one east likely serving a parlor or living room. A large, centrally-placed masonry pier that supported the latter is still visible today in the crawl space under the house. Burned bricks associated with the bedroom fireplace are still present in the attic.

No plan drawings or any descriptive information on the original interior design were found during the review of historic sources. If consistent with similar Queen Anne designs, the house probably featured a central hallway, reflected by the door and its flanking windows, leading from the front to the rear with rooms to either side. The living area was on the east side of the hallway, and bedroom on the west side. Interior walls were beaded board, with wood tongue and groove flooring, and the rooms had 10-ft ceilings.<sup>7</sup>

*Current Physical Appearance:* Sometime after 1953 and prior to Elvis' 1967 purchase, the exterior underwent modifications, including removal of both chimneys and addition of the brick veneer on the front (Figure 5). A concrete walkway rests at grade, replacing the raised porch, and brick steps now lead up to the front door.

The original clapboard siding has been covered by a brick veneer on the façade, which also obscures the two small two-over-two sash windows formerly flanking the front door. The structure still features the two large, two-over-two sash windows to the left of the front door,

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<sup>5</sup> Ancestry.com, "Edson R. Hart Family Tree," <http://trees.ancestry.com/tree/63103293/family>. Accessed December 5, 2015. Hart achieved a degree of celebrity for having captained one of the first steam engines between New Orleans and Cincinnati. [Graham, 2015]

<sup>6</sup> Virginia Savage McAlester and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses (Revised), The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture* (Alfred A. Knopf, New York 1984), 26, 93, 295.

<sup>7</sup> Beaded board was observed under paneling during an architectural assessment conducted by PTA in 2015.

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both with full-length black wooden shutters and the two large windows on the front gabled wall, each with one black shutter (Photo 1). The circular window originally below the front gable has been replaced by a demi-lune window, remodeling for which is evident on the attic interior. One of the four columns is now missing, and the windows are presently shuttered.

An attached carport on the east end of the house features a brick half wall with central walkway (Photo 2). Four demi-columns, two on each side of the open walkway, support the gable roof and a fifth demi-column supports the southeast corner. Two square posts provide additional roof support.

On the sides and rear, white weatherboard siding with white trim covers the original clapboard siding, and a brick skirt extends around the east, rear, and west sides of the house. The east side has one window to the right of a side entrance opening onto brick steps with an iron railing painted black (Figure 6).

The rear (south) elevation features a shed-type covered porch supported by three white-painted columns on a masonry knee wall, and brick steps. Two large, multi-pane windows of uncertain age flank a rear door. The western end of the porch roof is partially collapsed, with a single white column (Photo 3).

The west side of the house has two two-over-two sash windows, each flanked by full-length black wood shutters like those on the front (Figure 7).

Figure 8 presents a plan drawing of the current interior layout. Paneling now covers the original beaded board walls. A partition wall post-dating the period of significance reduced the original entrance way to a shallow foyer oriented east-west, with interior doors at either end (Photo 4). The partition is believed to be among several modular changes made to accommodate a florist, Debbie Henson, who operated a flower shop out of the Honeymoon Cottage in the early 2000s. However, the interior doors dating to Elvis' ownership have similar framing with decorative corner blocks at the upper right and left corners.

The door at the east end of the foyer leads into the Original Livingroom (Figure 8), featuring paneled walls, a lowered ceiling (about 8 ft, 6 in), and decorative wooden beams (Photo 5). Much of the red carpeting that once covered the floor in the Original Livingroom is gone, salvaged by souvenir seekers. In an interview with the *Independent* in 2000, Mrs. Henson noted that most "of the things are the same as when Elvis was here... The floor and the woodwork are the original. Everything really – except for the bathroom,"<sup>8</sup> a reference to what is labeled "Bath 2" on Figure 8.

The door to the Bath 2 lacks the typical framing and decorative medallions of Elvis-era door construction, suggesting a remodeling job that post-dates the period of significance. The bathtub,

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<sup>8</sup> Andrew Buncombe, "The Elvis Wars." *The Independent*. Published May 18, 2002, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/the-elvis-wars-188273.html>. Accessed on September 16, 2016.

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shower walls, and vanity top were cultured marble, which along with other fixtures and cabinetry were more common in the 1980s or later. A small opening above the toilet in Bath 2 exposes a void with beaded board behind the hutch depicted in Figure 8.

The Original Living Room opens to the Current Living Area facing the multi-pane windows to the south and the door to the carport on the east wall (Photo 6). The wooden hutch occupies a recessed space on the north wall of the Current Living Area (Photo 7), abutting the beaded board in the void exposed in Bath 2 (see above). To the left of the hutch (facing north) is a walk-in flower cooler (refer to Photo 7) installed by Debbie Henson. A toilet drain exposed under the ceramic floor in the walk-in cooler corresponds to piping observed in the crawl space under the house, representing the original location of the toilet in Bath 2 when Elvis owned the property.

On the west end, the Current Living Area (Figure 8) opens into the Kitchen (refer to Photo 7), which features linoleum flooring and cabinets on the north and south walls, and a pantry on the west that has an opening to the attic. The cabinets on the latter are part of a late twentieth century remodeling effort that added a new counter and dishwasher to the south wall as well. The rows of French country style cabinets on the north wall (Photo 8) are part of the pre-1967 remodeling and were in place when Elvis owned the house (Figure 9). The only difference is that the segment of under-counter cabinets was removed and rehung on the south wall as part of the remodeling by Jack Adams, a former Delta pilot and the first private airplane salesman in the country<sup>9</sup> from whom Elvis bought the Ranch in 1967.

With reference to the interior plan in Figure 8, the Laundry Room exhibits evidence of modification in two ways. One, the ceiling has been lowered as can be seen by reduced space above the original window on the west wall (Photo 9). Two, the closet on the west end of the south wall differs from the other three on that wall, the latter being modern additions that reduced the width of the room.

An interior door on the north wall of the Laundry Room leads into Bath 1, which features a cast-iron tub and cabinetry believed to have been in place when Elvis owned the Ranch. Bath 1 opens through the south wall of Bedroom 1, where an original closet is to the immediate left. Bedroom 1 retains the 10-ft high ceilings, although sheetrock now covers the original beaded board (Photo 10). The interior door at the northeastern corner of Bedroom 1 leads back into the foyer.

The original configuration of the Laundry Room is unclear, but besides the structural modifications, there is one line of evidence to suggest it might have been a second bedroom. The location of burned bricks in the attic generally corresponds to Bath 1 and the western chimney visible in Figure 4 and might represent a former shared fireplace between the present Laundry Room and Bedroom 1.

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<sup>9</sup> Airline Pilot Central Forum. "In Memory of Jack Adam [sic] Sr Memphis, TN," under "Pilot Lounge In Memory Of." Published January 25, 2011, <https://www.airlinepilotforums.com/memory/56406-jack-adam-sr-memphis-tn.html>. Accessed August 20, 2019.

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**1b. Shed/Well House (C)**

**c.1965**

Southwest of the cottage within the residential complex is a rectangular outbuilding, a combination shed and well house. The shed occupies the north half and features exterior wooden clapboard siding, while the south half is a cinderblock well house with a foundation about two inches lower than its northern counterpart. Interior walls of the structure are covered with wood paneling, and there are doors on both the north and south ends. The only remains of the wellhouse is a threaded metal pipe protruding from the concrete pad in the approximate center of the cinderblock portion. Though still standing, the shed/well house is in a state of deterioration (Photo 11).

**1c. 4-Rail Fencing and Guardhouse (C)**

**c.1968**

In the late 1960s, Highways 301 and 302 were little-trafficked country roads through a sparsely populated corner of Mississippi. Elvis installed a small wooden guardhouse at the gated entrance fronting Highway 302 and may have been responsible for enclosing the Honeymoon Cottage complex within 4-rail wood fencing (Figure 10). Both the guardhouse and fencing were painted white. The former was constructed as a single occupant structure with a flat wood roof, side door, and small opening for the guard to greet anyone pulling into the driveway. The guardhouse remains on the property but is now housed at the pink stucco complex (10). Although deteriorated segments of the fencing are still spottily present around the cottage complex, the segment on the front (north) side of the house and the gate became casualties of road expansion when the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) increased Highway 302 (Goodman Road) from two to five lanes.

**2. Stable Complex**

The Stable Complex is in the northern part of the Ranch about 500 ft southeast of the residential complex and includes north (2a) and east (2b) wings, a detached shed (2c), an arena (2d), and the ruins of a former round pen (2e). This complex held great appeal for Elvis because his and Priscilla's shared passion for horses had already outgrown the stables at Graceland. After buying the Ranch, Elvis moved the horses and equipment to Circle G, painted the stable white (Figure 11), and put a plaque on each stall with the name of the horse it housed.

**2a and 2 b. Stables (C)**

**c.1955, c.1965**

The stables are wood-frame construction, consisting of two buildings, an east-west oriented north wing and north-south oriented east wing that converge at the northeast corner, but were not built at the same time. The north wing appears on the property as early as a 1958 aerial, predating not only the east wing, but also the other features associated with the stable complex. Four years later, the north wing still constituted the only stable present in a 1962 aerial photograph (Figure 12). Construction of the east wing occurred sometime between the 1962 aerial flyover and 1967. There is no historic documentation on whether the east wing was built by Elvis or an earlier owner.

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The stable wings are wood frame with metal and/or wood siding, a cross-gabled roof made of corrugated metal painted red (Photos 13 and 14). The north wing differs from the east wing in having more metal siding and larger, unmilled wooden support posts—up to nearly a foot in diameter. Two bathrooms and an office still occupy the western end of the north wing, but cow pens replaced the horse stalls sometime after the period of significance. Besides less metal siding and smaller wooden support posts. The east wing contains two interior stalls at the southern end.

### **2c. Detached Shed (C)**

A detached shed (Photo 15) is located at the southern end of the east wing. The building features clapboard siding and a gabled roof with black tar shingles.

### **2d Arena (C) *c.1965***

Located a short distance north of the stables, the arena has an oval configuration measuring about 280 ft by 110 ft. Originally the structure was enclosed by a white wooden fence (refer to Figure 10), but currently features a metal fence and gate in disrepair (Photo 16).

### **2e. Round Pen (C) *c.1965***

The site of the round pen was immediately southeast of the arena. Now a ruin physical evidence of this improvement is discernible above ground today;<sup>10</sup> however, limited excavation conducted in 2016 encountered soil discoloration believed to be associated with the round pen. It measured about 60 ft in diameter.

### **3. Feed Structures (C) *c.1965***

#### **3a. and 3b.**

Two isolated animal feed structures are in the northeastern part of the property (Photo 17). One (3a) is located just under 500 ft east and the other (3b) about 360 ft east/southeast of the east wing of the stables. The structures measure about 20 feet by 14 ft, with wood pole frames, corrugated metal roofs, and earthen floors. These structures open on the east and feature plywood feed shelves on the west.

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<sup>10</sup> Some round pens are portable and could be moved, leaving little trace.

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#### **4. Lake and Bridge Complex**

##### **4a. Lake (C) c.1965**

This site is a large 14-ac freshwater lake. The landscape feature was constructed sometime between 1963 and 1967.<sup>11</sup> The lake is equipped with a well pipe and stocked with fish, mostly trout, when Elvis owned the property. The lake and bridge (see below) were enjoyed by newlyweds Elvis and Priscilla (Figure 13) as well as an entourage of family and friends.

##### **4b. Bridge (C) c.1965**

The bridge is a concrete-beam pedestrian bridge structure, measuring 350 ft long and 5 ft, 10 in wide, with white-painted metal railings measuring 42.5 in high, and supported by eight concrete piers. The bridge retains the same structural appearance (Photo 18).

#### **5. Free Standing Cross (C) c.1965**

Anecdotal accounts credit Elvis' initial discovery of the Ranch to a 55-ft tall Cross. The object is located near the southeast shore of the lake and visible from Highway 301, the white-painted concrete Cross is in excellent condition. By the way it towers over the surrounding landscape (Photo 19), it is easy to see how it might have grabbed Elvis' attention.

#### **6. Garage/Equipment Building (C) 1963**

Elvis kept tractors and other farm-related equipment/gear in this building at the southern end of the property. Constructed in 1963, it is a metal beam structure open on the east side, with concrete and corrugated metal walls on the north, west, and south sides (Photo 20). Its current condition is poor.

#### **7. Barn Complex**

East of the garage/equipment building are two barns that open onto pens of approximately equal size (7a and 7b) and cattle run (7c). Both buildings have experienced some deterioration, but the cattle run is in good condition.

##### **7a. Barn 1 (C) c.1965**

Barn 1 occupies 120 ft by 24 ft on a poured concrete foundation and features corrugated metal walls and a metal roof (Photo 21). The building opens east onto a pen measuring 107 ft by 120 ft, with a rectangular metal rail around the cattle pen on the east side.

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<sup>11</sup> The lake does not appear on the 1958 or 1962 imagery, but was present when Elvis purchased the property in 1967.

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**7b. Barn 2 (C)**

*c.1965*

Barn 2 also has dimensions of 120 ft by 24 ft, a metal roof, and a poured concrete foundation, but features cinderblock instead of metal walls (Photo 22). Barn 2 has a wall toward the north end creating a room that measures 24 feet by 24 feet 6 inches, and opens to the north with a window into the rest of the barn. Like Barn 1, Barn 2 opens to the east onto a pen that measures measuring 107 ft by 120 ft, but lacks the metal rail.

**7c. Cattle Run (C)**

*c.1965*

A metal structure, the cattle run with a north-south orientation (Photo 23) lies immediately east of the Barn 2 pen.

**8. Trailer Pads (C)**

*c.1967*

To accommodate the company of his close friends and their families. Elvis bought eight house trailers and constructed a foundation structure south of the lake.<sup>12</sup> The foundations were identical: two narrow lines of poured concrete, each measuring 42 ft long, with 30 ft by 7 ft patio slabs. The eight pads aligned in a single east-west row flanking a brick barbecue pit (C 9): three trailers east of the barbecue pit and five to the west. The trailers are gone (Figure 14), but the foundations and patios, though overgrown in places, are still present and in reasonably good condition (Photos 24 and 25).

**9. Barbecue Pit (C)**

*c.1967*

The structure, a brick barbecue pit, was a custom-built gift to Elvis from his best friends. The structure sits on a concrete foundation measuring 4 ft, 10 in by 6 ft, 10 in. It features a small space for wood storage on either side of the central fire box, a 5-foot tall chimney stack, and base measuring 4 ft wide by 2.5 ft deep. It was constructed with four types of bricks: red exterior bricks, yellow furnace bricks stamped "Kimberly," cinderblocks inside the wooden storage areas, and curved terra cotta chimney bricks. Red exterior bricks were also used to form the letters E and P above the wood storage slots.

Souvenir seekers have seriously damaged the barbecue pit (Photo 26), even removing the custom initial P, but the custom initial E remains intact (Photo 27). Informants imply the whereabouts of the "P" are known and it might be retrievable.

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<sup>12</sup> At least one more poured concrete pad, presumably of similar size, was for a trailer set up behind the Honeymoon Cottage. Elvis and Priscilla used that trailer as well as the residence, but partial remains of concrete steps constitute the only physical evidence of this pad today.

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**10. Perimeter Property Fencing (C)**

**c.1967**

The property lines fronting Highways 301 and 302 were enclosed with a fence structure of chain link supported by 1 ft by 9 in-square masonry pillars (Photo 28) standing six feet high and set at approximate 100-ft intervals.<sup>13</sup> Four of these pillars remain in place today along Highway 301; those on the north side were taken out by the widening of Highway 302. At the northwest corner, the chain linked fence was attached to a large property marker visible on the 1971 (Figure 10) and 1973 aerial photographs (Figure 3). The marker, a white-painted masonry fixture with a curved, 90-degree configuration, was a casualty of road work at the intersection of Highways 302 and 301.

**11. North Mississippi Gun Club Complex (NC)**

**c.1970**

North Mississippi Gun Club, the entity that purchased the property from Elvis on May 20, 1969, constructed a pink stucco entertainment complex in the southern part of the Ranch. The entertainment complex featured a restaurant/clubhouse (11a), pool and bathhouse (structure) (11b), and 18-hole miniature golf course (site, landscape) (11c).<sup>14</sup>

When the club defaulted on the mortgage, Elvis bought the property at public auction on May 15, 1972, and held it until December 1, 1972; however, there is no evidence to suggest he made use of any element of this complex during that brief period of reacquisition.

**12. Silo Complex (NC)**

**c.1975**

Three silos (12a, 12b and 12c) in the southern part of the Ranch were constructed after 1973. These structures are unassociated with either Elvis or the period of historic significance.

**13. Bank Building (NC)**

**c.1980**

Finally, there is a one-story, former bank building in the northwest corner of the property. Construction of the bank building and parking area post-dates the period of significance.

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<sup>13</sup> Elvis also installed a 10-ft high wooden privacy fence along a portion of the southern property line because they spent so much time cooking out on the barbecue and enjoying the camaraderie of family and friends around the trailers there. That wooden fence afforded privacy, but it was removed by the time the 1971 oblique aerial was taken (Figure 15).

<sup>14</sup> They also constructed a pistol range, which appears labeled on Figure 3, but is overgrown and in disrepair today.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Performing Arts  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Period of Significance**

1967-1969

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Presley, Elvis Aaron

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

\_\_\_\_\_  
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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Circle G Ranch is nominated to the National Register under Criterion B for its association with Elvis Presley. The district is being nominated at the national level of significance as it is associated with the productive life of Elvis, an icon of American culture hailed by millions around the world as the undisputed “King of Rock and Roll.”<sup>15</sup> Elvis exploded onto the national music stage in 1956, a televised package of smoldering good looks, southern charm, soulful pipes, and seductive moves.

<sup>15</sup>Elvis deferred, once at a press conference in 1969 pointing to Fats Domino and calling him “the real King of rock and roll.” Peter Guralnick, *Careless Love: The Unmaking of Elvis Presley* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1999), 53.

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Elvis was the first entertainment personality whose private life became a fan obsession, his “dizzying highs and staggering lows”<sup>16</sup> playing out in a very public arena. His fame created the modern cult of celebrity<sup>17</sup> and Elvis continues to display an unparalleled ability to galvanize his fan base 40+ years after his death. His enduring legacy owes a debt to seminal moments in the late 1960s and the Circle G Ranch best embodies that career-defining period from 1967 to 1969 when, on the verge of becoming musically irrelevant, Elvis seized control over his professional life and in doing so, went on to stage the greatest comeback in rock and roll history.

At the end of 1966, Elvis was at a professional crossroads, having not performed before a live audience in five years. Thanks to the greed-driven<sup>18</sup> control exerted by manager Colonel Tom Parker, Elvis’ singing career had taken a back seat to mediocre sound tracks and formulaic movies that fattened his bank account, but starved his creativity. Tired of seeing his credibility drained and popularity eclipsed by the “British Invasion,” Elvis was searching for more than somewhere to stable his horses when he spotted the Ranch for sale in February 1967. Without haggling, he bought it on the spot, paid for by a loan secured by his beloved Graceland as collateral.

The decision to buy the Ranch was headstrong, ill-advised, and fiscally irresponsible but proved to be a transformative experience. The Ranch gave Elvis much-needed shelter from the constant demands of celebrity, a special place where, in the company of family and close friends, he rediscovered his musical roots and jammed his way back to the top of the billboard.

His untimely death in 1977 set off an emotional tsunami at home and abroad. The tragedy overshadowed national and global political events as the media and fans converged on west Tennessee where Elvis lay in state at Graceland for three days. His funeral procession through the streets of Memphis was befitting a “king” adored the world over. But Elvis was so much more than a three-point resume: recording artist, international movie star, and live stage performer. His sound and style “combined diverse musical influences and blurred and challenged the social and racial barriers of the time.”<sup>19</sup> Writing for *Rolling Stone* magazine in 1977, Dave Marsh stated:

...if any individual of our time can be said to have changed the world, Elvis Presley is the one. In his wake more than music is different. Nothing and no one looks or sounds the same. His music was the most liberating event of our era because it taught us new possibilities of feeling and perception, new modes of action and appearance and because it reminded us not only of his greatness but of our own potential.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Shawn Amos, “Remembering Elvis Presley’s Career Highs and Lows,” Fox News. Published January 8, 2010, <https://www.foxnews.com/entertainment/remembering-elvis-presleys-career-highs-and-lows>. Accessed October 15, 2015.

<sup>17</sup> Michael Hann, “Elvis Presley: 60 years since the start of rock’s great revolution,” The Guardian. Published July 18, 2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/music/musicblog/2014/jul/18/elvis-presley-60-years-since-the-start-of-rocks-great-revolution>. Accessed September 15, 2015.

<sup>18</sup> Parker had negotiated a staggering 25 percent commission to manage Elvis in 1955.

<sup>19</sup> Elvis Australia, “Elvis Presley Biography/A Comprehensive history of Elvis Presley’s dynamic life,” Elvis Australia: The Official Elvis Presley Fan Club. Last modified January 1, 2016, <https://biography.elvis.com.au/>. Accessed November 6, 2018.

<sup>20</sup> David Marsh, “How Great Thou Art, Elvis in the Promised Land,” *Rolling Stone* 248 (September 22, 1977), 58.

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Elvis recaptured his own potential at the Ranch, resurrecting the twenty-one year old prodigy that stormed the music world back in 1956. Most scholars of the American music scene agree that were it not for the 1967 to 1969 period dubbed his “Comeback Phase,” Elvis might never have been recognized for the American treasure he was and continues to be long after his death. The “1967-1969 Comeback Phase” dates coincide with the period of significance for this district nomination.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

***Backstory - Elvis and the Culture of Celebrity:*** One of Mississippi’s most famous native sons, Elvis Aaron Presley was born in 1934 to Vernon and Gladys Presley, parents struggling to stay about the poverty line. His twin brother Jesse Garon was stillborn. Elvis spent his early childhood in Tupelo, and moved to Memphis, Tennessee as a teen. Influenced early on by gospel and country music, he soaked up R&B on Beale Street, and later blended all three sounds into his own distinctive style. In 1954, renowned producer Sam Phillips signed 19-year-old Elvis to the Sun Record label, launching his career as a southern performer.

It was not long before a former carnival worker turned music promoter, Colonel Tom Parker,<sup>21</sup> set his sights on Elvis. He struck a deal with RCA to buy out Elvis’ contract with Sun Records for \$40,000, an absurdly high price for a virtual unknown talent at the time. In March 1956, Elvis signed a management contract with the Colonel. From a historical perspective, the move was both good and bad for Elvis: good because Parker knew how to strike a lucrative deal and bad because the man wielded iron-fisted control over his client. The latter ultimately contributed to the disillusionment Elvis felt with his career that ushered in the start of the “Comeback Phase” in 1967.

There was no disillusionment in 1956, a year for the record books as the RCA deal launched Elvis’ career into high gear. Prime time television appearances arranged by Parker catapulted him to national and international fame. Teenage female fans swooned over him, male fans emulated him, and their parents had no idea what to make of him.

His telegenic appeal was not lost on high rollers in other parts of the entertainment industry and later the same year, Hollywood came calling. Producer Hal Wallis arranged for Elvis to come out to California for a screen test. While Elvis harbored dreams of becoming a serious actor, screenwriter Allan Weiss expressed what was on everyone’s mind at the time. “We had all seen him [Elvis] on television, the swiveling hips below the bottom of the screen, unseen. But it wasn’t just sex; it was an indefinable energy that transcended that. The question was, would it show on film?”<sup>22</sup> The answer was yes and no. After the screen test, Weiss observed, “In viewing

<sup>21</sup> “Colonel” was an honorary title bestowed on Parker by Louisiana Governor Jimmie Davis in 1948.

<sup>22</sup> Danny Peary, *Close-Ups: Intimate Profiles Of Movie Stars By Their Co-Stars, Directors, Screenwriters, And Friends* (New York City: Galahad Books, 1978), 83.

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the test, one thing was clear. It would be a mistake to try to force this personality into a preconceived role. His parts must be tailored for him, designed to exploit the thing he did best—sing.”<sup>23</sup> Hal Wallis agreed, and in 1957, Elvis decided to keep Colonel Tom Parker on as his manager, with exclusive rights to represent him in all deals. At only 23 years of age, Elvis could not foresee how much control he would surrender to Parker, not just of his movie career, but also the direction of his entire professional life.

Elvis was the hottest commodity on the market, a brand before the concept really existed in the entertainment industry. So great was the public fascination with Elvis, inoculation rates increased from two to 83 percent in the country after TV networks broadcast Elvis receiving a polio vaccination.<sup>24</sup> Nothing could slow his shooting star, not even a stint overseas after the Army drafted him in 1958.

It was during his post in Germany that Private Presley met and quietly began a storybook romance with future wife, Priscilla Beaulieu. Unaware of the romance, paparazzi focused their lenses on the fan mania that swirled around Elvis the entire time he was in uniform. And, when Elvis returned home in 1960, more popular than ever, Hollywood was waiting, with Colonel Tom Parker making the deals.

Throughout the early and mid-1960s, MGM put out a string of light-hearted romantic films in which Elvis not only starred but also performed the soundtracks. The heart-throb movies enriched his already phenomenal fame as well as his bank accounts, but there were downsides. The public preoccupation with all-things-Elvis, first blurred, and then trampled the line between his private life and public persona. By the end of 1966, fans and paparazzi swarmed his Memphis home, Graceland, so much that Elvis often felt trapped inside like a prisoner. For Elvis, fame was a double-edged sword, something to revel in and to retreat from at the same time.

***Elvis at a Crossroads:*** Elvis came to a crossroads in life at the end of 1966. On the personal side, Elvis was about to take his relationship with longtime girlfriend Priscilla Beaulieu to the next level. Six years after meeting her in Germany, he proposed on December 24.

On the professional front, the artistic direction of Elvis’ “recording career had fallen into the hands of the movie companies.”<sup>25</sup> The singing sensation had become a singing actor frustrated by soundtracks increasingly written by men who never understood Elvis or rock and roll.<sup>26</sup>

According to Jerry Leiber, Elvis songwriter and co-writer of *Hound Dog*, the soundtracks Elvis was recording had been the same for all his films since he came out of the Army and were just as formulaic as his movies: three ballads, one medium-tempo number, one up-temp number, and

<sup>23</sup> Paul Simpson, *Elvis Films FAQ: All That's Left to know About the King of Rock-n-Roll in Hollywood* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Applause Theatre and Cinema Books 2013), 5-6.

<sup>24</sup> History.com Editors, “Elvis Presley is drafted.” History, A&E Television Networks, Published December 20, 2018, <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/elvis-presley-is-drafted>. Accessed January 17, 2019.

<sup>25</sup> Ernst Jorgensen, *Elvis Presley: A Life in Music* (St. Martin's Griffin 1998), 201.

<sup>26</sup> Jerry Hopkins. *Elvis, the Biography* (Plexeus Publishing, New Jersey 2007), 100.

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one break blues boogie number.<sup>27</sup> The quality of the songs grew worse over the years to the point Julie Parrish, who co-starred with Elvis in the 1966 movie *Paradise Hawaiian Style*, said he hated many of the songs he had to sing in that film.<sup>28</sup> Gordon Stoker of the group, *The Jordonaires* said, “The material was so bad that he [Elvis] felt like he couldn’t sing it.”<sup>29</sup>

Although some said Elvis sang the songs generally well and with commitment, Dave Marsh expressed the opinion of most, saying, “Elvis isn’t trying, probably the wisest course in the face of material like *No Room to Rumba in a Sports Car* and *Rock-a-Hula Baby*.”<sup>30</sup>

By the mid-1960s, Elvis was tired of being type-cast in formulaic movies, panned by critic, and increasingly frustrated that his career as a singer had taken a back seat to acting. He had not performed live since 1961 and his chart-topping status was in a downward slide, taken over by British groups led by the Beatles. Something had to change. Although what that change would be was not clear at the time, Elvis was at this critical juncture in life when the Ranch caught his eye.

Priscilla recalled that moment in the early morning hours of February of 1967 in her memoir *Elvis and Me*.

We were driving near Horn Lake, Mississippi, when we spotted a beautiful ranch...A herd of Santa Gertrudis cattle was grazing. There was a bridge across a little lake, a barn with stalls for horses, and a charming house situated in a prime location. It was for sale. [Presley 1986]<sup>31</sup>

Only 10 short miles from Graceland, the property was a world apart, set along narrow roads in the undeveloped and sparsely populated Mississippi countryside. Elvis and Priscilla envisioned an escape from the limelight of celebrity, and despite an inflated asking price,<sup>32</sup> he bought it all—land, house, cattle, everything—through bank financing, with Graceland put up as collateral.

According to longtime friend and foreman Marty Lacker, the ranch was a “natural evolution...of other things that were going on at Graceland in ’66,” starting when Elvis bought Priscilla a four-year-old black quarter horse named Domino. She did not want to ride alone, so Elvis bought himself a palomino he called Rising Sun, and then began buying horses for everyone. It was not long before the stable population outgrew Graceland.<sup>33</sup> Elvis couldn’t get enough Ranch time. Lacker remembered being practically “down there every day after that when Elvis was home.”<sup>34</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Songhits.us, “Elvis Presley’s Biography,” Go Back in Time and Feel the Music with Songhits.us 2002-2010, <http://songhits.us/Elvis-Presley-Biography.htm>. Accessed November 1, 2018.

<sup>28</sup> Eren San, *Elvis Presley: American Singer and Actor* (NoktaE-Book Publishing 2016), 34.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Priscilla Beaulieu Presley, with Sandra Harmon, *Elvis and Me* (Putnam Press, New York, 1985), 224.

<sup>32</sup> From a review of various sources, the owner, Jack Adams, had an asking price over double what he paid for the property in 1963, and then came down a little to close the deal with Vernon Presley, acting for Elvis.

<sup>33</sup> Allana Nash, *Elvis and the Memphis Mafia* (Aurum Press, London, 2005), 396.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 400.

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Another close friend Lamar Fike observed that “Elvis was so funny when he bought that ranch. He said, ‘Good God, I’ve moved back to Mississippi.’”<sup>35</sup>

Elvis called it Circle G Ranch and moved his horses and equestrian equipment from Graceland to the stable in northern Mississippi (Figure 16).<sup>36</sup> He added to the equine inventory with purchases of horses for some of his friends. According to Elvis friend Charlie Hodge, the Ranch ended up with “20 or so” horses stabled there.<sup>37</sup>

The Ranch introduced an element of serenity into Elvis’ life. He appeared less stressed and more content.<sup>38</sup> Close friend Ray Walker of the Jordanaires said the happiest he ever saw Elvis was when he first bought the ranch.<sup>39</sup>

He had some horses down there, and he was exercising, and he looked great, and he felt great. As I remember, he even let his hair go back to its natural color for a while. He walked in one day, and he had a tan, and we couldn’t get over how good he looked. We just stood there and stared at him. Finally, he broke into a smile and said, ‘Shall we dance?’ [Nash 2005:396]

Elvis and Priscilla wed in Las Vegas on the first of May 1967 and honeymooned at his new house in Palm Springs. But, as his friend Jerry Schilling recounted, “After a day or two, when the beautiful couple headed off for their real honeymoon getaway, we were all right there with them at the Circle G Ranch.”<sup>40</sup>

When talking about the Ranch, Priscilla brought the perspective of a new bride, refreshingly down-to-earth for the wife of Elvis Presley, recalling “my perfect dream house... a wonderful way for us to get away from Graceland.”<sup>41</sup> In her memoir, *Elvis and Me*, Priscilla says, “I loved playing house... Here was an opportunity to take care of him myself. No maids or housekeepers to pamper us.”<sup>42</sup> they returned to the Circle G Ranch and spent the remainder of their honeymoon there.

After the honeymoon, Elvis and Priscilla split their time between the Ranch and Graceland, and invited family and friends to join them. Elvis made sure everyone was comfortable, bringing in

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 401.

<sup>36</sup> Circle G Ranch is what Elvis called the property, but that name was already copyrighted, so the official name of his ranch is Flying Circle G. Elvis’ logo, however, was for “Circle G.”

<sup>37</sup> Shara Clark, “Home on the Circle G Ranch: for a moment in time, Elvis Presley’s retreat from superstardom was the Circle G Ranch in Mississippi.” *Memphis Magazine*. Published August 8, 2016, <https://memphismagazine.com/features/elvis-circle-g-ranch-home/>. Accessed 6, 2017.

<sup>38</sup> Kimberely Gatto and Victoria Racimo, *All The King’s Horses: The Equestrian Life of Elvis Presley* (Regnery History, Washington, 2017), 82.

<sup>39</sup> Nash, 2005, 396.

<sup>40</sup> Schilling and Crisafull, 2006, 173

<sup>41</sup> Presley, with Harmon 1986, 244.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

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trailers and installing electricity, gas, and running water. He purchased vehicles, some emblazoned on the side with the Circle G logo,<sup>43</sup> and/or an image of his favorite horse, Rising Sun (Figure 17). On occasion they stayed at the Ranch for weeks at a time.

Surrounded by family and friends, Elvis embraced his passion for horses. It is even rumored Elvis lost his original wedding ring at the Ranch while riding his horse Rising Sun over the rolling hills. (Parenthetically, fans with metal detectors have tried to confirm the rumor with no success.)

Elvis relished the change of pace, being away from the limelight and able to enjoy life on his own terms (Figures 18 and 19). He expressed his feelings to his father Vernon, with a simple confession. "I'm having fun, Daddy, for the first time in ages. I've got a hobby, something I look forward to getting' up in the mornin' for."<sup>44</sup>

The Ranch indeed renewed his overall zest for living. A common scene in the morning according to Priscilla was for Elvis to be up early, walking the property, knocking on doors, waking people up, or checking on the horses. "He was having a ball, and there were days he didn't even want to take time out to eat."<sup>45</sup> Priscilla said he loved shopping in Sears's basement, "buying power tools, knives, flashlights, and other equipment that he would come bearing proudly back to the ranch."<sup>46</sup>

Friend Jerry Schilling remembered his time there nostalgically. "When we all went back to the ranch again, it was a really magical time...Elvis's dream of a cowboy commune seemed to be working perfectly."<sup>47</sup> Another friend with Ranch memories was Joe Esposito, who said, "For a year and a half after the marriage, between making movies we headed straight for the Circle G."<sup>48</sup>

Sherri Lacker, one of Marty Lacker's daughters, remembers the Ranch as a fun-filled getaway for everyone, especially Elvis.<sup>49</sup> It was a place where adult masks came off and the kid in everyone came out to play.

Priscilla fondly echoed the good time sentiments. "Sundays we had picnics... We rode horses, held skeet-shooting contests, and combed the lake for turtles and snakes. There was fun, laughter, and a lot of camaraderie."<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Elvis designed the Circle G Ranch logo himself.

<sup>44</sup> Presley, with Harmon 1986, 226.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Schilling and Crisafull, 2006, 174.

<sup>48</sup> Joe Esposito and Ellen Oumano, "*Good Rockin' Tonight: Twenty Years on the Road and on the Town with Elvis*" (Simon & Schuster 1994), 131.

<sup>49</sup> Sherri Lacker personal communication June 2018

<sup>50</sup> Presley, with Harmon 1986, 227.

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The atmosphere at the Ranch gave Elvis the sanctuary needed to embrace not only the cowboy dream, but also his passion for making music. Out from under the stress of Hollywood, Elvis reclaimed his musical roots. According to Priscilla, there “was always a lot of jamming. Elvis, Lamar Fike, and Charlie Hodge would get together in the middle of the room, harmonizing a favorite song.”<sup>51</sup> When they were really good, Elvis would yell, “Whew! Hot damn! One more time!” He’d sometimes spend an hour just on the ending because it had “the feel – the ingredients of a masterpiece.”<sup>52</sup>

The “cowboy dream,” however, did not mean living simply. Elvis’ penchant for spending and his natural generosity began to diminish his bank account. Colonel Parker responded with arrangements for a new movie, *Clambake*, another beach-and-bikini script Elvis read and hated. Although he needed the money, when it came time to leave the Ranch to film *Clambake*, Elvis pleaded with Priscilla. “I don’t want to leave here, Cilla. I don’t want to leave you, the ranch, Sun [his horse]. Ain’t no son of a bitch gonna keep me away long.”<sup>53</sup>

So averse had he become to leaving his newfound comfort zone, Elvis managed to delay his departure. But only for so long, and he needed the movie for two reasons. One, the contract Elvis had with the studio not only bound him to make *Clambake*, but also still guaranteed him star salary. Two, his penchant for extravagant spending at the Ranch left Elvis cash-strapped, so he needed the money. So, after exhausting his stall tactics, with great reluctance, Elvis left the Ranch to make yet another beach-and-bikini romp.

*Clambake* turned out to be one of Elvis’ lowest grossing movies, as completely out of touch with the generation coming-of-age in the late 1960s as Elvis himself had become. At only 33 years old, Elvis faced the harsh reality of a career in free-fall, himself an entertainer becoming irrelevant in the entertainment industry. His time at the Ranch gave him the perspective he needed to emerge from the stagnation of his “Movie Phase” to reignite his singing career in his “Comeback Phase.”<sup>54</sup>

***Elvis and the Great Comeback of 1968:*** While 1968 marked the official year of Elvis’ spectacular comeback, the stage was set in 1967 when he strode into RCA studios in Nashville to record *Big Boss Man* and *The Guitar Man*. *Big Boss Man* was originally recorded by Jerry Reed. Reed agreed to come into the studio to play the propulsive lead for Elvis, with Chip Young on acoustic guitar. Those recordings were musical affirmations of the young, dynamic Elvis.<sup>55</sup> Elvis had turned a proverbial corner in 1967, asserting artistic control and taking charge. He became his own “boss man” again. It was that Elvis who walked into a meeting in June 1968 to

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<sup>51</sup> Presley, with Harmon 1986, 227

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 228

<sup>54</sup> Steven G. Adkinson, Steven G., “Phases of Elvis,” Published on January 8, 2005, <https://6thingstoconsider.wordpress.com/2008/01/08/the-phases-of-elvis/>. Accessed March 5, 2017.

<sup>55</sup> Jorgensen, *Elvis Presley: A Life in Music*, 1998, 235-238.

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discuss a Christmas Special his manager Tom Parker set up. It was set to air on NBC in December that year and Park imagined a Perry Como-like format.

Fate collided at that meeting, a musically reinvigorated Elvis met Steve Binder, a twenty-something director and co-producer, whose vision of the “special” departed just about as far from that of Parker’s as could be possible. Binder was not a big Elvis fan, being young and into newer sounds of the late 1960s. And, he was just inexperienced enough not to be intimidated, recalling they greeted each other by first names when Elvis walked into his office on Sunset Blvd.<sup>56</sup> When Elvis asked Binder what he thought of his career, the young director laughingly told him it was in the toilet, an original assessment of what Elvis already thought himself.

Knowing his future hung on that performance, and over vigorous objections from Tom Parker, Elvis let Binder set a mixed format for the “special” that included jamming on stage with friends and interacting with the audience. The image of Elvis slimmed down, dressed in tight black leather, curled lip, piercing blue eyes, full-on energy, and oozing sexuality resonated across a broad audience then and today.

The '68 *Comeback Special* would be one of the greatest performances in pop history, but in the context of Elvis’s career, it is something even bigger, a cultural signpost along the lines of Dylan at Newport or the Band’s “Last Waltz.” Just when Elvis seemed to have been relegated to the dustbin of history, he created this portrait of an artist seeking relevance and finding it—capable of mocking his own legacy, all the while reclaiming his role as the creator of an entirely new cultural language. [Brown 2004]<sup>57</sup>

To paraphrase another review, when the special aired, Elvis needed a home run and delivered a grand slam.<sup>58</sup> In December 1968, he was not just back, Elvis was back on top.

Life continued to revolve around music in early 1969 when Elvis made another legacy-making decision. On January 9, one day after his 34<sup>th</sup> birthday, Elvis gave in to well-intentioned prodding from Marty Lacker and decided to record at American Studios, an African-American studio in Memphis owned by Chips Moman.<sup>59</sup> At the time, Moman, considered in the industry to be one of the hottest producers in the country, also had one of the hottest house bands and rhythmic section to back Elvis up.<sup>60</sup> The result was the landmark album *From Elvis in Memphis*, that featured songs like *In the Ghetto* and *Gentle on my Mind*. The tracks on the album represented only part of what came from the recording sessions at American Studios that

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<sup>56</sup> Men in attendance with more experience meeting with Elvis let Binder know they never called him by his first name.

<sup>57</sup> Ethan Brown. “Elvis '68 Comeback Special DVD - New York Magazine Music Review - Nymag.” *New York Magazine*, New York Magazine, Published 30 June 2004, [nymag.com/nymetro/arts/music/pop/reviews/9440](http://nymag.com/nymetro/arts/music/pop/reviews/9440). Accessed September 16, 2017.

<sup>58</sup> Aurora, “Elvis '68 Comeback,” Published January 7, 2016, <https://aurorasginjoint.com/2016/01/07/elvis-68-comeback>. Accessed September 16, 2017.

<sup>59</sup> By this time, Lacker was working for Moman.

<sup>60</sup> Elvis Australia, “Elvis Presley: The American Sound Studios Session 1969.” Published January 1, 2016, <https://www.elvis.com.au/presley/reinventing-elvis-memphis-1969.shtml>. Accessed October 1, 2018.

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January. Others released later included timeless hits like *Kentucky Rain* and *Suspicious Minds*.

On the eve of his return to Las Vegas for a live performance the year after the Comeback Special, Elvis greeted reporters, saying, "I lost my musical direction in Hollywood... My songs were the same conveyer-belt mass production, just like most of my movies. Now I'm back and on the right road."<sup>61</sup>

By the end of 1968, visits to the Ranch were less frequent. A rejuvenated and inspired Elvis was too busy with his music to have much time for playing cowboy. Moreover, between costs to purchase and run a cattle ranch, and buy trailers, horses, and vehicles for family and friends, it had drained Elvis' finances. Elvis' father began selling off the herd of cattle and other assets. The entire property was eventually sold to the North Mississippi Gun Club in May 1969, but it was that cowboy dream and its "magical" experience that gave Elvis a *cesura*, the much-needed timely pause to adjust his priorities and set a course that would distinguish him in ways he could not have imagined at the time.

To his legion of followers, the property will always be "Elvis' Ranch," and perhaps he shared that sentiment as well. The comeback special propelled Elvis back into the spotlight, and over the next few years, he seemed to have it all—wealth, fame, and fan frenzy—from a career he orchestrated. However, the public persona belied his private struggles as his marriage to Priscilla crumbled, and by late February 1972, they were living apart.<sup>62</sup> The gun club under McClellan defaulted on the mortgage, and Elvis bought the Ranch back at auction in May 1972, a move speculatively motivated by hopes of winning Priscilla back. It was too late. The couple signed a division of property agreement in August 1972, and Elvis sold the property again in December 1972, and filed for divorce in January 1973.

***Circle G Ranch and the King of Rock and Roll Forever:*** The Ranch's significance rests as much on its significance to Elvis when he was alive, as to its role in the comeback that secured his legacy. Circle G Ranch was a place in the middle of nowhere that Elvis seized upon for reasons he probably didn't understand at the time and may never have. But in hindsight, the impact upon his life has the clarity of 20/20 vision.

Less than a decade after his Comeback Special in 1968, Elvis Presley was gone, a man of enormous talent and charisma taken before his time. Fans gathered at the Ranch in August 1977 to mourn his death, and the faithful from around the world still make Circle G Ranch part of their Elvis pilgrimage. Among those who came during Elvis Week in August 2017 were Angelo Santiago Sr. and his wife Janiana Santigao from Carvaru, Brazil, accompanied by Deborah Williams, who lives just outside Hernando, Mississippi. Williams shared the experience, saying,

<sup>61</sup> Lydia Hutchinson, *Stories from Elvis Presley's Band*. Published January 8, 2016. <http://performingsongwriter.com/stories-from-elvis-presleys-band/>. Accessed August 1, 2019.

<sup>62</sup> Graham Smith, "There goes my everything: The Elvis divorce papers that handed Priscilla \$100,000... plus his beloved Cadillac, Mercedes and Harley Davidson." Published December 13, 2011, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2073646/Elvis-Presley-divorce-papers-handed-Priscilla-100k-Cadillac-more.html>. Accessed October 15, 2015.

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“The gate was open...like they were expecting us. They had bush-hogged and cleaned up. We drove right in. There were three other vehicles and a tour bus besides us. It was a special moment.”<sup>63</sup>

Elvis fan Deena Dietrich blogged about her trip to the ranch during Elvis Week, 2018, excited that the new developers invited everyone for a free open house, Day at the Ranch.

For the first time, we were legally allowed on the grounds of the ranch Elvis owned and spent time at between 1967 and 1969. I have driven by the ranch several times, but never walked onto it...It was cool to be there and walk the ranch and see the cross and bridge up close....On the way out, I drove right by (and I mean within feet of) the ranch house where Elvis and Priscilla stayed during part of their honeymoon. [Dietrich 2018]<sup>64</sup>

Much to the delight of fans around the globe, Circle G Ranch remains a destination where the presence of Elvis is everywhere. CNN reporter David Alsup called the Ranch “one of the largest pieces of Elvis Presley memorabilia ever.”<sup>65</sup> In 2013, it was number four on the Society for Commercial Archaeology’s (SCA) “falling by the wayside” list. SCA had the following to say about the importance of Circle G Ranch.

The Circle G Ranch is historically significant to the local community of Horn Lake, MS, and metropolitan area of Memphis, TN, the state of Mississippi and the United States as having been intimately associated with American singer and actor Elvis Presley, “perhaps the single most influential figure of the 20th century,” (Smithsonian Institute). His career lasted over 20 years (1953-1977) and pioneered a cultural revolution in the U.S. and abroad. In the late 1960s the Circle G Ranch played an important role in Elvis Presley’s history as it was a place that was important to him at a time in his life that was full of change – a newly married man, expectant father and world-famous entertainer at a vital crossroads in his career. On the 160-acre property Elvis could escape from being “Elvis Presley” for a short while and spend quality time with friends and family, enjoying his love of horses and the outdoors. Also known as the “honeymoon cottage,” the little ranch house is where he and new wife Priscilla Presley spent the greatest portion of their time together as newlyweds. Elvis’ time at the ranch afforded peace and quiet, allowing him to give careful consideration to his future both regarding his career and his private life. The site is currently endangered due to both neglect and development pressure. Extreme winter weather and overgrowth have elicited the complex’s deterioration and continued neglect will result in further decay.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Robert Lee Long, “Elvis fans visit DeSoto County ‘all shook up.’” Desoto Times-Tribune. Published August 16, 2017, [http://www.desototimes.com/news/elvis-fans-visit-desoto-county-all-shook-up/article\\_07382a64-82da-11e7-a311-0b47689496a4.html](http://www.desototimes.com/news/elvis-fans-visit-desoto-county-all-shook-up/article_07382a64-82da-11e7-a311-0b47689496a4.html). Accessed September 6, 2017.

<sup>64</sup> Dietrich, Deena, “Elvis Week 2018,” Published August 31, 2018, <https://deenasdays.com/2018/08/31/elvis-week-2018>. Accessed August 1, 2019.

<sup>65</sup> David Alsup, “Love me (legal) tender: Elvis ranch on market for \$6.5 million.” CNN Entertainment. Published October 12, 2009, <http://www.cnn.com/2009/SHOWBIZ/10/12/elvis.ranch.for.sale/index.html>. Accessed August 17, 2017.

<sup>66</sup> Society for Commercial Archaeology, “Falling by the Wayside: 2013.” Last modified January 5, 2015, <https://sca-roadside.org/falling-by-the-wayside-2013/>. Accessed December 5, 2015.

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***Circle G Ranch and Other Elvis Places:*** Even as a child, Elvis called many places home, moving from one house to another, first in northern Mississippi and then after his family relocated to Memphis. The circumstances of Elvis's childhood, growing up in poverty and living in whatever rentals his family could afford at the time, must have contributed at least in part to Elvis the man and his penchant for establishing personal physical space. The distinction between those that "have" versus those that "have not," the latter including his family, seems to have come across to Elvis at a young age and marked him throughout adulthood and stardom.

In her article *Elvis Presley: The Early Years*, Wilson (2007) recounts how when four-year old Elvis overheard "his parents fret about paying the bills, revealed his specific plans for looking after his family — in style. He announced for the first time (there were many similar announcements to come) that he was going to buy two Cadillacs, one for his mother and father and one for him."<sup>67</sup> Cadillac, a symbol of what money could buy at the time, reflected the seeds of Elvis' unsparing generosity and the promise of a young Elvis to care for his parents.

After signing his big record deal with RCA in April 1956, Elvis bought his first house, a three-bedroom ranch at 1034 Audubon Drive in one of the more well-heeled neighborhoods in Memphis. It was a home he made for himself and his parents, the young man making good on the little boy's promise. Elvis put in an outdoor pool, a vegetable garden for his mother, added a game room, and paid for many other renovations.

The constancy of attention proved too much for Elvis, and less than a year later, he moved out of Audubon Drive and into another house he purchased, this time in the working-class neighborhood of Whitehaven. With a purchase price of over \$100,000 in 1957, Graceland was hardly a working class residence.

Throughout his career, Elvis established personal physical spaces not only in the South, but in places like Las Vegas, Belair, Palm Springs, and Hawaii. They were posh places, but of all his many properties, only four have substantial recognition as significant to his life: his birthplace in Tupelo, the Audubon house, Graceland, and Circle G Ranch.

The Audubon house and Graceland are both listed on the NRHP. The former is also significant under criterion B for its association with Elvis Presley, specifically the pivotal 1956 to 1957 period when his career took off with the release of his first record for RCA, *Heartbreak Hotel* on one side and *I was the One* on the flipside.

Graceland, which is on the NRHP and a National Historic Landmark (2006), was and remains the primary residence associated with Elvis, in life and death. He owned the mansion from 1957 to his death in 1977, and Graceland has achieved iconic status on its own. Open to the paying public, Graceland is second only to the White House in terms of annual visitors. It is not only the

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<sup>67</sup> Christine Wilson, "Elvis Presley: The Early Years." *Mississippi History Now*. Published January 2007, <http://www.mshistorynow.mdah.ms.gov/articles/32/elvis-presley-the-early-years>. Accessed February 24, 2018.

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best known property associated with Elvis Presley, Graceland is an economic boon to the local economy, with an estimated 21.6 million in revenue in 2012. The historic house and museum, with its new expansion to create a multiplex entertainment center that opened in 2017, will generate even more this year and in the future. The NRHP nomination form for Graceland claims visitation statistics put the Memphis residence in the same league with Hearst Castle in California, Biltmore Estate in North Carolina, and Monticello and Mount Vernon in Virginia.

The house on Audubon Drive and Graceland only tell part of the story of Elvis's life and career. The house on Audubon represents his early rise to fame. His Memphis mansion Graceland was where he lived for 20 years of his entertainment career and tragically died before his time. But Circle G Ranch is where he "enjoyed just being a human being"<sup>68</sup> and that let him rediscover his way forward.

Online journalist Shara Clark observed that stories of Elvis riding horses, having barbecues, and staying in a modest farmhouse imbue Circle G Ranch with a "sense of mysticism."<sup>69</sup> Elvis' friend Jerry Schilling agreed, saying, "You brought up a wonderful word: mystical...I think that was the first impression Elvis had about that ranch" and experiences on the Ranch gave Elvis something he could not find elsewhere. It wasn't about Elvis, the star. It was about sharing friendships "on a more realistic, simple, loving basis—being off the road, being away from Hollywood, just getting down to the bare essentials."<sup>70</sup>

Circle G was a refuge where Elvis went to escape the limelight and step into the sunlight and breathe. It was a place where Elvis lived by his own rules, a guitar-playing singer who loved the outdoors, his family, his horse Rising Sun, and the company of close friends, indulging cowboy fantasies and boyish fun. Although Elvis resided at Graceland, the Ranch is where, for a brief, but pivotal couple of years, he really lived life to the fullest, and emerged from irrelevance in 1968, taking back the kingdom of rock and roll over which only Elvis Presley can reign.

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<sup>68</sup> Wilson, 2007.

<sup>69</sup> Clark 2016.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

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**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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** 033-HNL-6002

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 154.02 ac

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 34.961846 Longitude: -90.094109
2. Latitude: 34.961725 Longitude: -90.088695
3. Latitude: 34.956611 Longitude: -90.094010
4. Latitude: 34.958467 Longitude: -90.094268

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Circle G Ranch is located at the southeast corner of Goodman Road (Mississippi State Highway 302) and Mississippi State Highway 301 within the corporate limits of Horn Lake, Mississippi.

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The Circle G Ranch boundary is part of the same property conveyed to Elvis A Presley by Jack Adams on February 22, 1967 in Deed Records of DeSoto County, Mississippi (Book 68, Page 323), and conveyed by Elvis A. Presley to North Mississippi Gun Club, Inc. on May 20, 1969 (Book 78, Page 619). The property was later bought by Elvis A. Presley at public auction, and conveyed to him by Charles H. Davis, Trustee, as shown by Trustee's Deed dated May 15, 1972 (Book 95, Page 606), and also being the same property conveyed to Boyle Development Company by Elvis A. Presley on December 1, 1972 (Book 101, Page 33).

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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Janice Campbell (President) and Prentice M. Thomas (CEO)  
organization: Prentice Thomas & Associates, Inc.  
street & number: 425 East Hollywood Blvd. Suite D  
city or town: Mary Esther state: FL zip code: 32569  
e-mail: jan@pta-crm.com  
telephone: 850.243.5992  
date: January 30, 2018

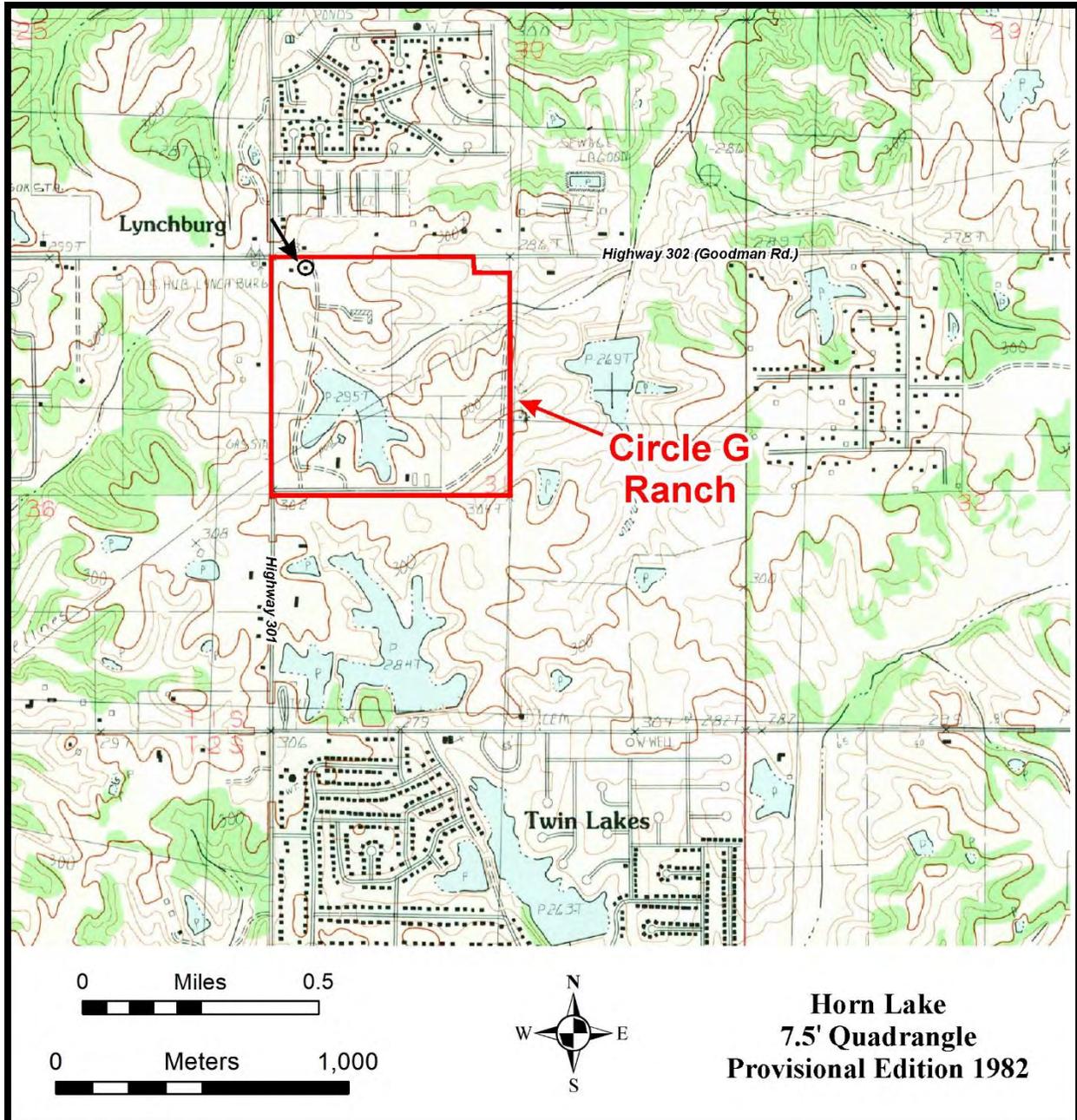
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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.



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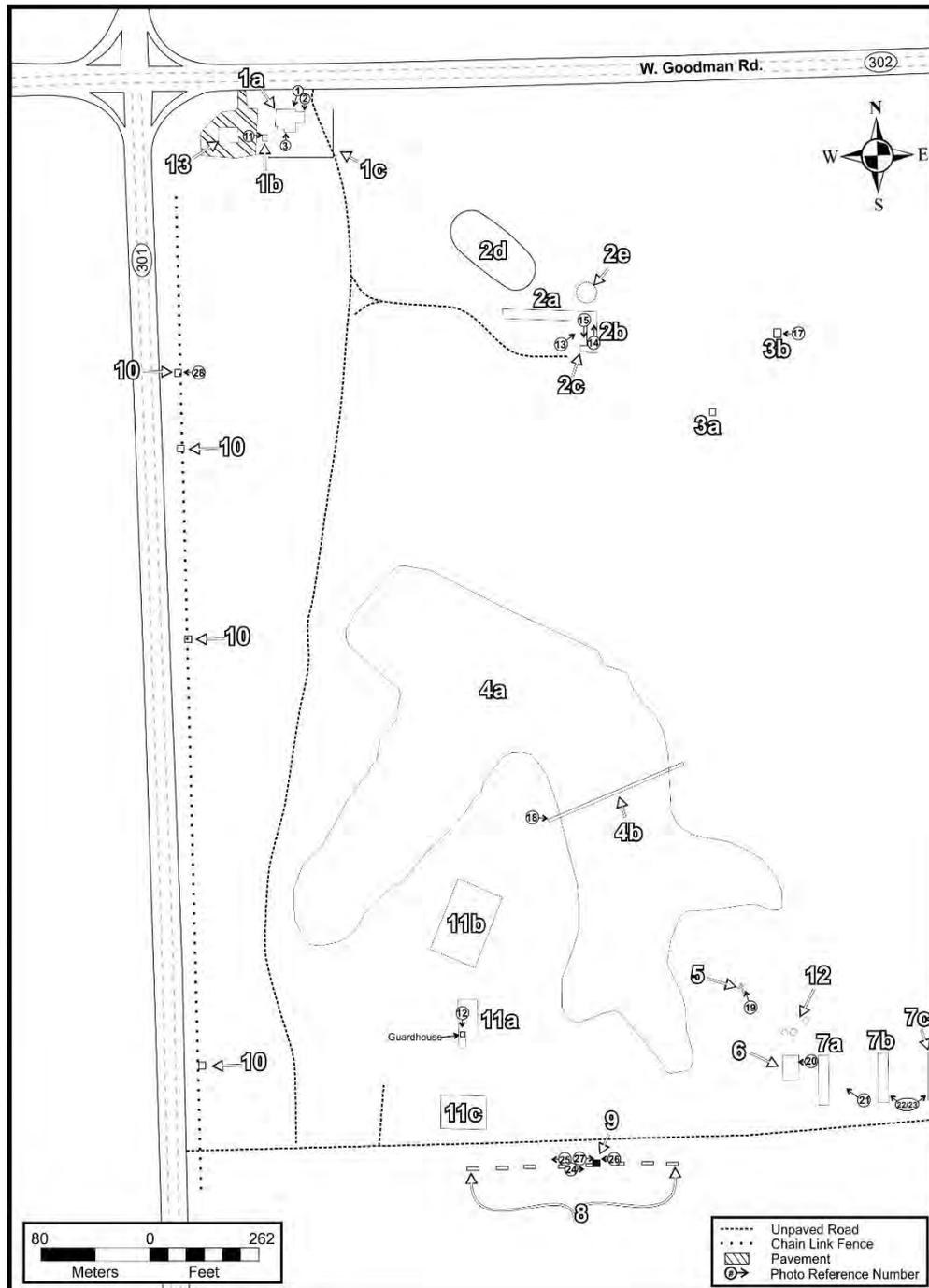
DeSoto County, MS  
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- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.



All contributing and noncontributing resources at Circle G Ranch are in the western portion of the property (refer to key on Section 7 page 36)

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### Key to Sketch Map of Circle G Ranch

1. Residential Complex
  - 1a. Honeymoon Cottage c. 1900, remodeled c. 1965 and early 2000s
  - 1b. Shed/Well House
  - 1c. 4-Rail Fencing and Guardhouse c. 1967
2. Stable Complex
  - 2a/b. North and East Wings, respectively c. 1955, c. after 1962
  - 2c. Detached Shed
  - 2d. Arena c. 1965
  - 2e. Round Pen c. 1965
3. Feed Structures c. 1965
- 4a. Lake c. 1965
- 4b. Bridge c. 1965
5. Free Standing Cross c. 1965
6. Garage/Equipment Building c. 1963
7. Barn Complex
  - 7a. Barn 1 c. 1965
  - 7b. Barn 2 c. 1965
  - 7c. Cattle Run c. 1965
8. Trailer Pads c. 1967
9. Barbecue Pit c. 1967
10. Perimeter Property Fencing c. 1965 or 1967
11. North Mississippi Gun Club c. 1970
12. Silo Complex c. 1975
13. Bank Building c. 1980

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### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Circle G Ranch  
City or Vicinity: Horn Lake  
County: DeSoto State: MS  
Photographer: Shannon Brannon  
Date Photographed: February 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- Photo 1 of 28 View of the front elevation of Honeymoon Cottage, camera facing southwest
- Photo 2 of 28 View of the front elevation of Honeymoon Cottage carport, camera facing south
- Photo 3 of 28 View of rear elevation of Honeymoon Cottage after windows shuttered, camera facing north
- Photo 4 of 28 View of the foyer, towards the door to the Original Living Room; front door is to left and partition wall to right, camera facing east
- Photo 5 of 28 View of Original Living Room; note paneling, ceiling beams, remnant red carpet, and interior door leading to the Current Living Area at right, camera facing east
- Photo 6 of 28 View of Current Living Area; note large window at right and half wall partition, with L-shaped counter, camera facing east
- Photo 7 of 28 View of Kitchen at west end of Current Living Area, camera facing west
- Photo 8 of 28 View of cabinets and counters in the same area of the kitchen as Figure 9, camera facing northwest
- Photo 9 of 28 View of Laundry Room with lowered ceiling; closets line the south wall, with original closet at west end, camera facing west
- Photo 10 of 28 View of Bedroom 1, showing, the two windows seen on the exterior front gable, camera facing north
- Photo 11 of 28 View of shed/well house; note rear porch of Honeymoon Cottage at left in photo, camera facing east
- Photo 12 of 28 View of former guard house at pink stucco complex, camera facing south
- Photo 13 of 28 View of east stable, camera facing northeast
- Photo 14 of 28 View of interior east stable, camera facing north
- Photo 15 of 28 View of detached shed at south end of east stable wing, camera facing south

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Photo 16 of 28 View of north stable, showing arena metal enclosure, camera facing southwest

Photo 17 of 28 View of northern most animal feed structure, camera facing west

Photo 18 of 28 View of footbridge over the lake at Circle G Ranch, camera facing east

Photo 19 of 28 View of the free-standing Cross, camera facing north-northwest

Photo 20 of 28 View of garage/equipment building, camera facing west

Photo 21 of 28 View of Barn-1, camera facing northwest

Photo 22 of 28 View of Barn-2, camera facing northwest

Photo 23 of 28 View of Cattle Run, camera facing northeast

Photo 24 of 28 View taken in 2015, showing barbecue pit and concrete patio, and parallel lines of poured concrete for a trailer, camera facing east

Photo 25 of 28 View of poured concrete for one trailer pad, camera facing west

Photo 26 of 28 View of the barbecue pit, camera facing west

Photo 27 of 28 View of the barbecue pit with closeup of initial E, facing east

Photo 28 of 28 View of one of the four remaining masonry pillars along the perimeter chain link fence on Highway 301, camera facing east

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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### Figure Log

Name of Property: Circle G Ranch

City or Vicinity: Horn Lake County: DeSoto State: MS

Figure 1 of 19 Oblique aerial photograph c. 1967, facing south, showing the primary residence (the Honeymoon Cottage) fronting Highway 302 (Goodman Road) in foreground, Highway 301 in upper right, and the 14-ac lake and bridge in the background

Figure 2 of 19 Sketch map of contributing and noncontributing resources at Circle G Ranch keyed to text discussions in NRHP form

Figure 3 of 19 Portion of 1973 aerial photo with contributing and noncontributing resources keyed to text discussions in NRHP form; features discussed in the text, but no longer present are labeled (e.g., privacy fence)

Figure 4 of 19 Ca. 1953 photo showing original exterior of the primary residence front elevation (Courtesy, Brian Hicks, DeSoto County Museum)

Figure 5 of 19 Undated photo (c. post-1969) showing view of the front (north) elevation of the primary residence—Honeymoon Cottage as fans of Elvis call it—as it appeared when Elvis owned the property, facing southwest

Figure 6 of 19 Angled view of east side and rear (south) elevations of the Honeymoon Cottage, facing northwest

Figure 7 of 19 View of west elevation of the Honeymoon Cottage, facing east-northeast

Figure 8 of 19 Plan drawing of current interior layout of the Honeymoon Cottage

Figure 9 of 19 View of Kitchen as it appeared c. 1967 (photo date unknown), facing northwest

Figure 10 of 19 Portion of 1971 oblique aerial photo, showing Honeymoon Cottage and shed surrounded by the white 4-rail with the guardhouse set at the gated entrance left of the house, northwest corner concrete marker at intersection, and white fenced arena in the upper right, facing east

Figure 11 of 19 View of north and east wings of stable as they generally appeared when Elvis owned the property, facing east

Figure 12 of 19 Portion of the 1962 aerial photo, with the north wing of the stable visible, but no evidence of the east wing

Figure 13 of 19 Photo c. 1967 of Elvis and Priscilla by the footbridge over the lake, facing east

Figure 14 of 19 Portion of oblique 1971 aerial, showing trailers still on pads by road at south end of the ranch, facing southeast

Figure 15 of 19 Photo (date unknown) of original barbecue pit construction, facing east

Figure 16 of 19

Elvis' father, Vernon Presley at the stable c. 1967, photo showing part of the north wing interior, facing east

Figure 17 of 19 Elvis at the wheel of one of his trucks showcasing his horse and Circle G logo, latter only partially captured at right in photo, facing east

Figure 18 of 19 Elvis on horseback c. 1967 behind the north wing of the stable, facing east

Figure 19 of 19 Elvis and friends at Circle G Ranch, names added by Elvis' cousins Danny Smith and Jo Smith, facing northeast (Note that this photograph is a still captured from a video belonging to Danny Smith, who provided it to PTA to scan.)

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**Figure 1. Oblique aerial photograph c. 1967, facing south, showing the primary residence (the Honeymoon Cottage) fronting Highway 302 (Goodman Road) in foreground, Highway 301 in upper right, and the 14-ac lake and bridge in the background**

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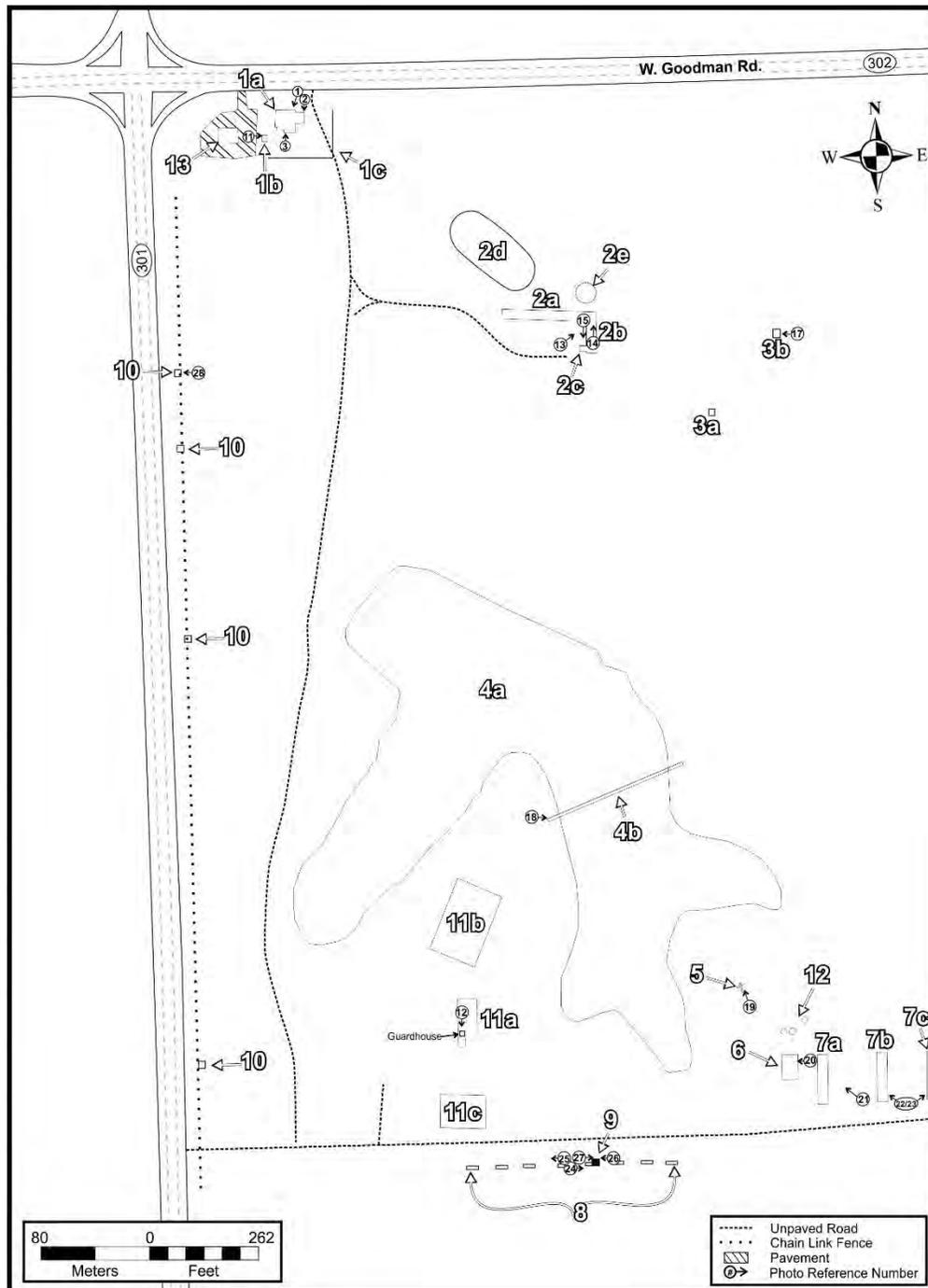


Figure 2. Sketch map of contributing and noncontributing resources at Circle G Ranch keyed to text discussions in NRHP form (refer to key Section 7 page 36)

Circle G Ranch  
Name of Property

DeSoto County, MS  
County and State



Figure 3. Portion of 1973 aerial photo with contributing and noncontributing resources keyed to text discussions in NRHP form; features discussed in the text, but no longer present are labeled (e.g., privacy fence) (refer to key Section 7 page 36)

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County and State



**Figure 4. Ca. 1953 photo showing original exterior of the primary residence front elevation (Courtesy, Brian Hicks, DeSoto County Museum)**



**Figure 5. Undated photo (c. post-1969) showing view of the front (north) elevation of the primary residence—Honeymoon Cottage as fans of Elvis call it—as it appeared when Elvis owned the property, facing southwest**

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**Figure 6. Angled view of east side and rear (south) elevations of the Honeymoon Cottage, facing northwest**



**Figure 7. View of west elevation of the Honeymoon Cottage, facing east-northeast**

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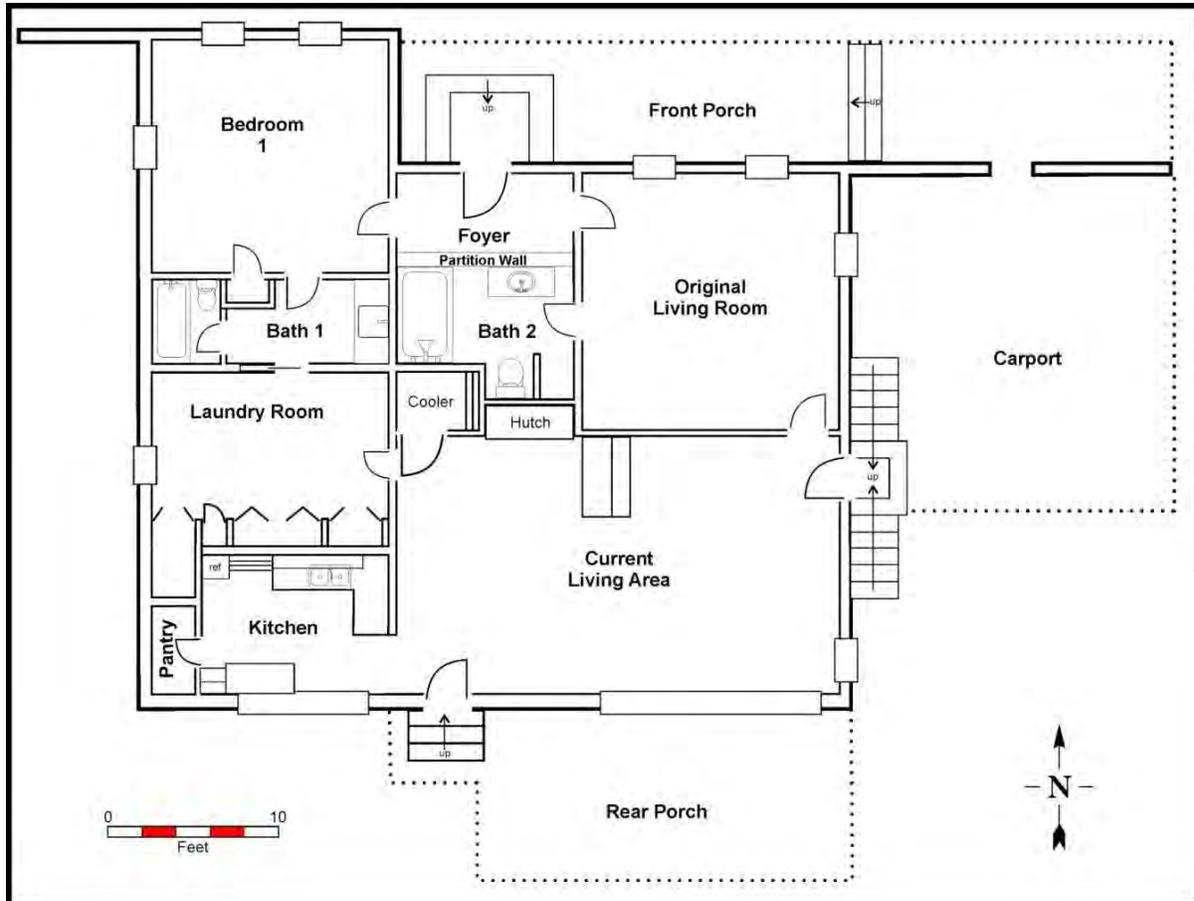


Figure 8. Plan drawing of current interior layout of the Honeymoon Cottage

Circle G Ranch  
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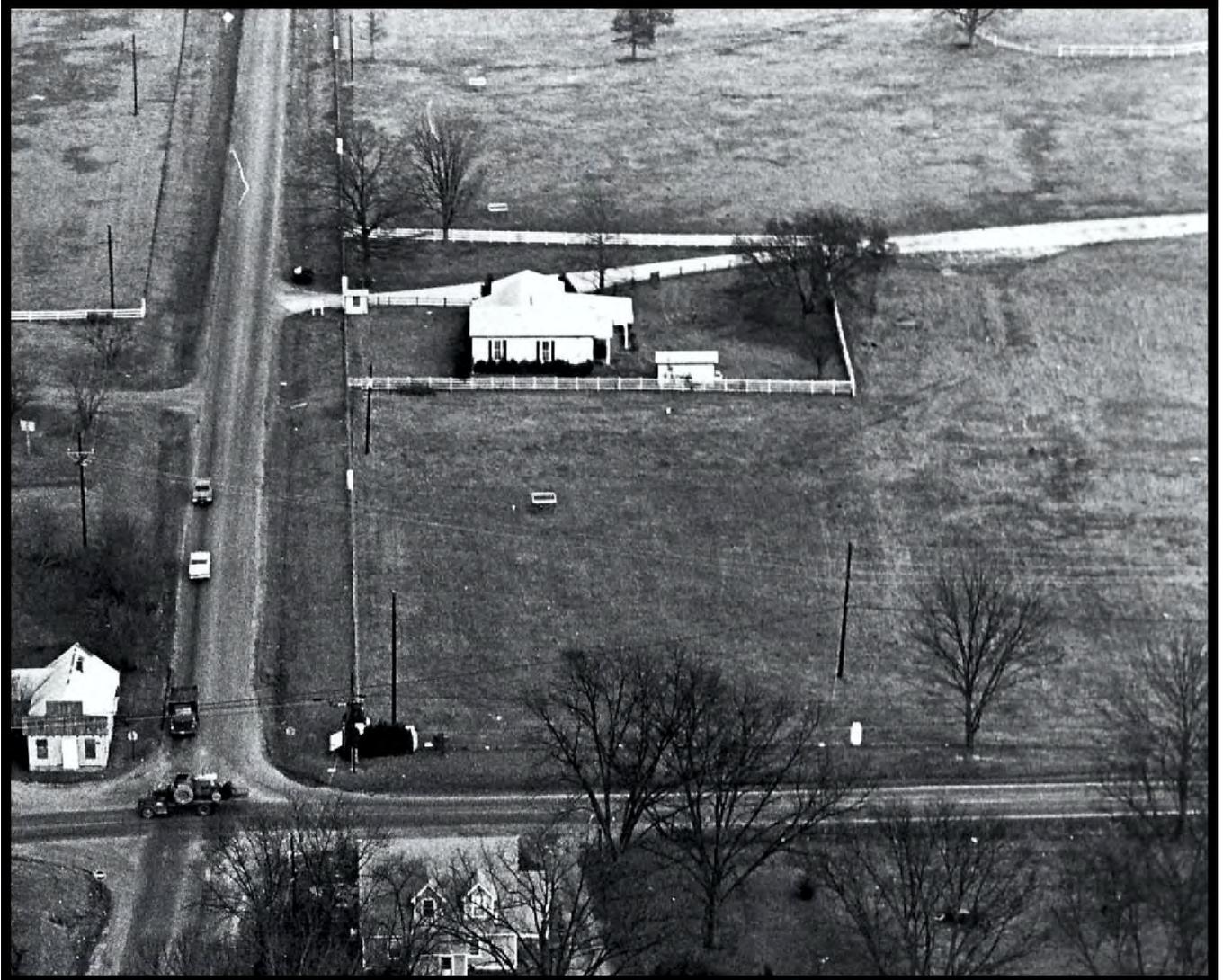
DeSoto County, MS  
County and State



**Figure 9. View of Kitchen as it appeared c. 1967 (photo date unknown), facing northwest**

Circle G Ranch  
Name of Property

DeSoto County, MS  
County and State



**Figure 10. Portion of 1971 oblique aerial photo, showing Honeymoon Cottage and shed surrounded by the white 4-rail with the guardhouse set at the gated entrance left of the house, northwest corner concrete marker at intersection, and white fenced arena in the upper right, facing east**

Circle G Ranch  
Name of Property

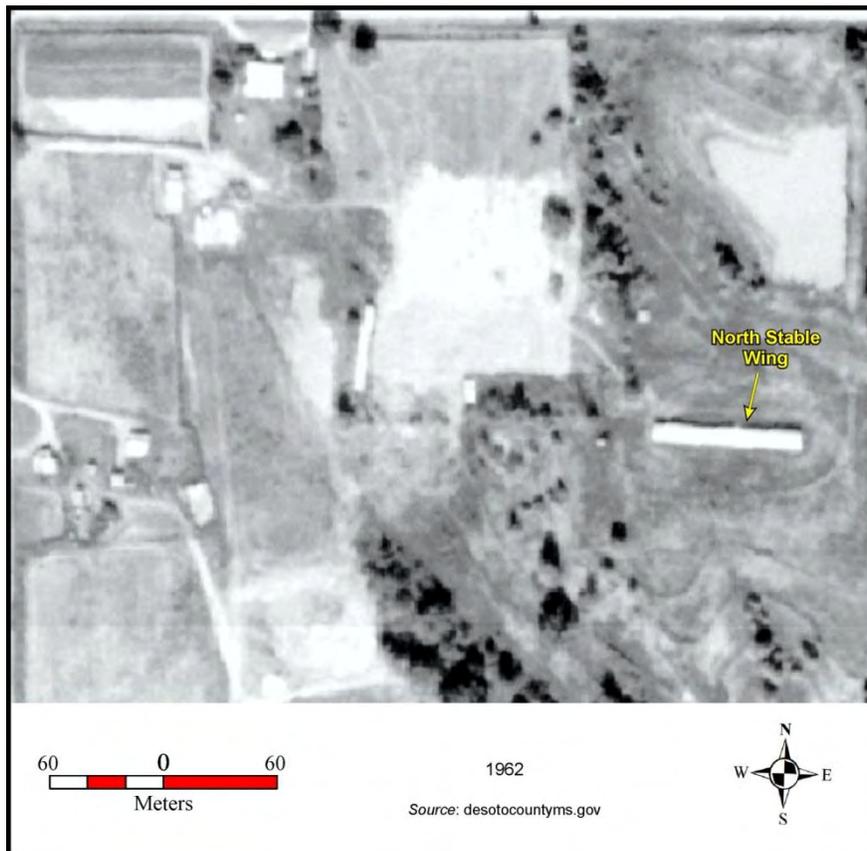
DeSoto County, MS  
County and State



**Figure 11. View of north and east wings of stable as they generally appeared when Elvis owned the property, facing east**

Circle G Ranch  
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County and State



**Figure 12. Portion of the 1962 aerial photo, with the north wing of the stable visible, but no evidence of the east wing**



**Figure 13. Photo c. 1967 of Elvis and Priscilla by the footbridge over the lake, facing east**

Circle G Ranch  
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County and State



**Figure 14. Portion of oblique 1971 aerial, showing trailers still on pads by road at south end of the ranch, facing southeast**

Circle G Ranch  
Name of Property

DeSoto County, MS  
County and State



Figure 15. Photo (date unknown) of original barbecue pit construction, facing east

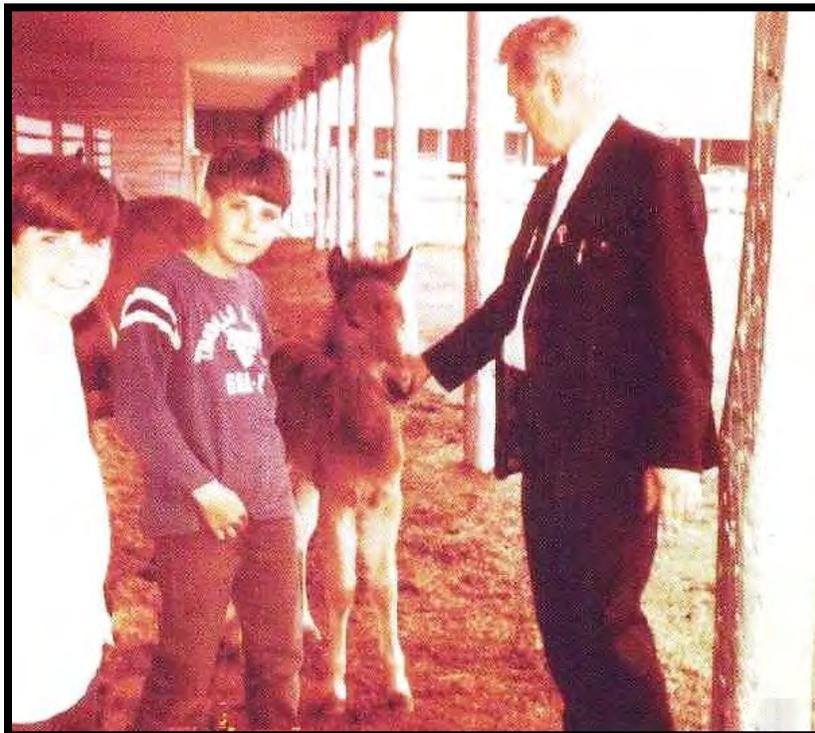
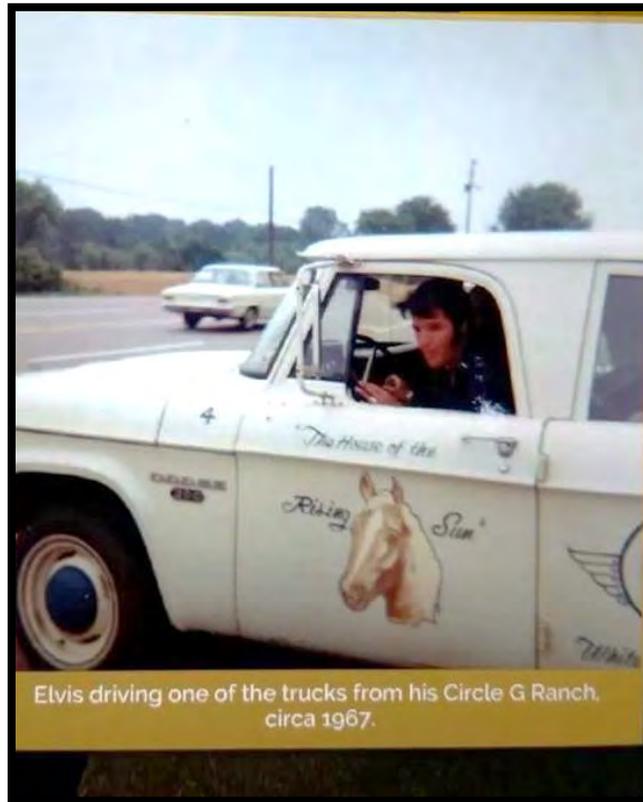


Figure 16. Elvis' father, Vernon Presley at the stable c. 1967, photo showing part of the north wing interior, facing east

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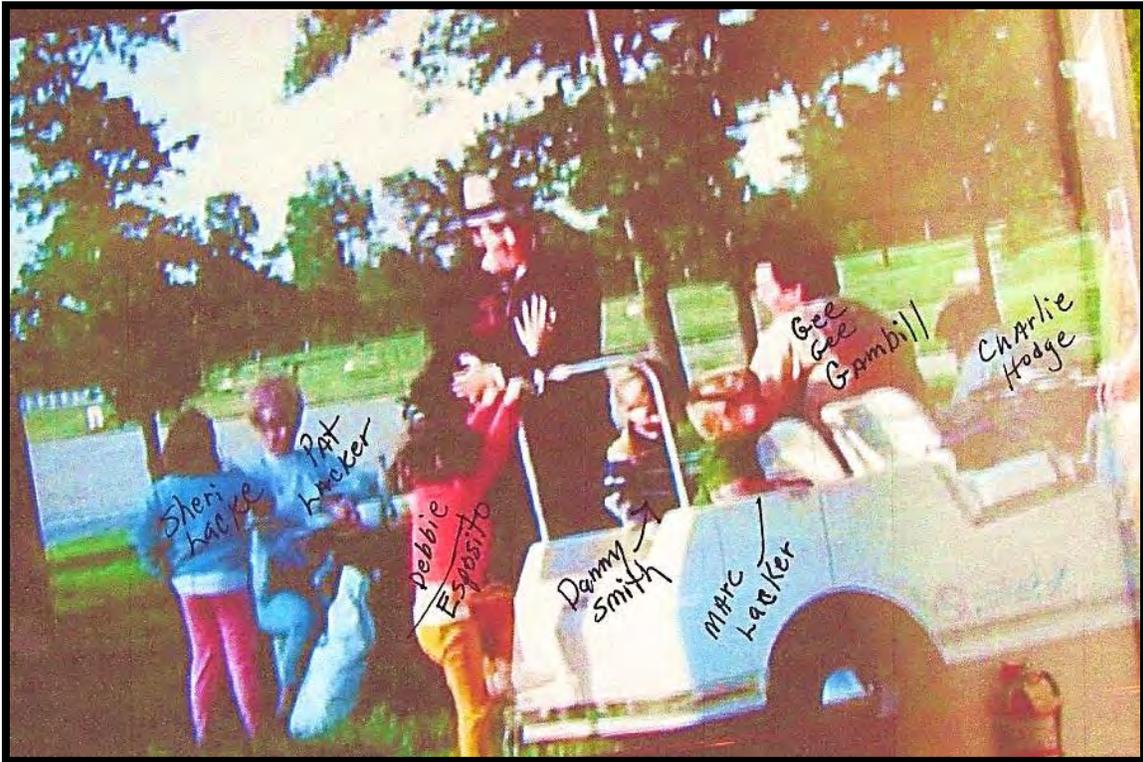
**Figure 17. Elvis at the wheel of one of his trucks showcasing his horse and Circle G logo, latter only partially captured at right in photo, facing east**



**Figure 18. Elvis on horseback c. 1967 behind the north wing of the stable, facing east**

Circle G Ranch  
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County and State



**Figure 19. Elvis and friends at Circle G Ranch, names added by Elvis' cousins  
Danny Smith and Jo Smith, facing northeast  
(Note that this photograph is a still captured from a video belonging to Danny Smith, who  
provided it to PTA to scan.)**

























































UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Circle G Ranch

Multiple Name: \_\_\_\_\_

State & County: MISSISSIPPI, De Soto

Date Received: 10/29/2019      Date of Pending List: 11/18/2019      Date of 16th Day: 12/3/2019      Date of 45th Day: 12/13/2019      Date of Weekly List: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference number: SG100004749

Nominator: SHPO

Reason For Review:

- |                                       |  |   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal       | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL                | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape           | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource     | <input type="checkbox"/> Period             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other        | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
|                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG                 |   |

Accept       Return       Reject      12/9/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: Purchased by Elvis Presley at a turning point in his career, the Circle G was a retreat from the hoopla surrounding his life at Graceland. Elvis reconnected with his music, reconnected with his friends and family, and rejuvenated his career. the nomination provides good documentation and justification for the importance of the ranch on Elvis' psyche and the new direction he took professionally, known as "the comeback."

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept / B

Reviewer Jim Gabbert      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275      Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
Marlin King Jr., director  
PO Box 571, Jackson, MS 39205-0571  
601-576-6850 • Fax 601-576-6955  
mdah.ms.gov



October 28, 2019

Joy Beasley  
Keeper of the National Register  
National Park Service  
Mail Stop 7228  
1849 C St, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Keeper Beasley:

We are pleased to enclose the nomination form and supporting documents to nominate the following property to the National Register of Historic Places:

**Circle G Ranch, Horn Lake, DeSoto County**

The property nomination was approved by the Mississippi National Register Review Board at its meeting on March 15, 2018, on the condition that certain changes be made. The necessary changes our office requested have been made. We trust you will find the enclosed materials in order.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James Bridgforth".

Katie Blount  
State Historic Preservation Officer

By: James Bridgforth  
Architectural Historian