

KENT SPRINGS CENTER

The Kent Springs Center has also been referred to as the Richardson Cabin and also by some people as the Roosevelt House. Indications are the cabin was built in 1903 by Ben Daniels, a member of Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders and a friend of Roosevelt's. Rumor has it that Roosevelt stayed there (hence the name "Roosevelt House") but there is no proof that he did. The current layout of the house indicates that it was subsequently expanded, probably in the 1930s, to its current configuration. The house was sold to the Richardson's in the 1940's and then purchased by the US Forest Service in 1970. This purchase involved a land swap with 103 acres involved. The purchase also included a provision that Mrs. Richardson could occupy the house for as long as she wished. Mrs. Richardson died in 1987 and the place was left to deteriorate.

The Friends of Madera Canyon got the idea to fix up the house if they could collect enough money and come up with enough volunteers to do the work. They were successful on both issues. They received \$45,000 in donations for the renovation project and the work started in February, 1995. The building renovation also included electrical wiring, plumbing and a disposal area. The renovations were completed in the fall of 1995. Patsy Proctor had a dream of adding a deck to the house. She drew up the plans and \$15,500 was spent to complete it. The interior furnishings (carpet, furniture, etc.) were provided as gifts by the Proctors and the Holisters who used to run the Santa Rita Lodge.



Kent Springs Center – March 2015

There is a tree that goes through the house. It was inspected during the renovation and since it was found to be healthy, it was allowed to remain. The tree has since died but its trunk can still be found occupying a small room of the cabin. After Mrs. Richardson died and before the renovation started, bats had moved into and occupied the house. A Forest Service employee who was knowledgeable about bats made the bats some houses and mounted them in the tree in hopes of convincing the bats that it was a much better place to live. The bats agreed and readily moved into their new home. Subsequently, the bat houses were relocated to another portion of the property.



One of the Living Rooms

The Kent Springs Center is available to rent for meetings, retreats, parties and other functions, etc. Reservations for the use of the Kent Springs Center can be made through the following Web

Site: www.recreation.gov. When that web site appears, enter Kent Springs Cabin into the search block and go from there. The cabin has two bedrooms, one bathroom, two living rooms, a fully equipped kitchen and can accommodate up to eight people for overnight stays.

Following are additional photographs of the Kent Springs Center



Kitchen and Dining Area



Bedroom with Bunk Beds



The Tree Growing Through the House



The Outside Deck

The ruins of an old cabin are located a few yards away from the Kent Springs Center along the foot trail leading toward the Boggs Springs Trail. This cabin was the original cabin built and occupied by Ben Daniels before the current cabin was built. Ben Daniels was considered to be one of the most “colorful” characters in southern Arizona history. For a summary of his life click [here](#).

To view a YouTube video of the present-day Kent House, click [here](#).

Summarized from various Sources. Updated in 2015 and again in February 2024. All photographs were taken by Bud Boysen in March 2015