

# “Casa Adaire”

The Walter Kirschner Residence

417 Hermosa Place

Palm Springs, CA 92262

Nomination Application For

City of Palm Springs

Class I Historic Site



Prepared by

Steven Keylon

For the

Palm Springs Preservation Foundation

# Acknowledgements

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*Front cover: 1940s Kodachrome of Casa Adaire  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)*

# “CASA ADAIRE”

## THE WALTER KIRSCHNER RESIDENCE

### CLASS 1 HISTORIC SITE NOMINATION

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## INTRODUCTION

The Palm Springs Preservation Foundation (PSPF) is a non-profit organization whose mission is “to educate and promote public awareness of the importance of preserving the historical resources and architecture of the city of Palm Springs and the Coachella Valley area.”

On April 4, 2018, the PSPF board of directors assigned the task of writing the Casa Adaire Class 1 Historic Site nomination to board member Steven Keylon.

The Owner’s Letter of Support is at Appendix I.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**SIGNIFICANCE:** “Casa Adaire,” The Walter Kirschner Residence (hereinafter referred to as “Casa Adaire”) located at 417 Hermosa Place in Palm Springs, was built in 1937. Designed by the architectural firm of Brewster & Benedict, Casa Adaire is an important example of a custom Spanish-Colonial Revival structure, and the home exhibits numerous stylistic features that place it within the historic context of the period “Palm Springs between the Wars (1919-1941)” as defined in the *Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings* created by Historic Resources Group. This is a period when wealthy and influential people were building second homes in the growing and increasingly well-known resort Village. Though contemporary in function, most of these homes were typically built in Mediterranean-Revival styles meant to evoke a feeling of Old California.

**DESIGNATION CRITERIA:** Casa Adaire has not previously been evaluated for Class 1 Historic Site eligibility, but it is included on the draft 2015 Citywide Historic Resources Inventory.

A summary of the evaluation contained in this nomination is as follows:

**8.05.020 (a) paragraph 2 - *People*:** This criterion recognizes properties associated with lives of persons who made meaningful contribution to national, state or local history. In this nomination, Casa Adaire was built for the wealthy owner of a national chain of ladies’ apparel shops, Grayson’s. Casa Adaire was meant to serve as a desert retreat for members of President Roosevelt’s family. Kirschner was a friend and advisor to Presidents Roosevelt, Truman and Eisenhower, and Casa Adaire was the first of at least four large estates he built in the Coachella Valley that were designed for the use of the Presidents and their families. Kirschner was an early advocate of the documentation of the atrocities of the Holocaust and travelled to Europe with Generals Eisenhower and Marshall to ensure that these crimes wouldn’t fade into history. *Casa Adaire is associated with Walter Kirschner, a person who had influence in national history. Therefore, the residence qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site under Criterion 2.*

**8.05.020 (a) paragraphs 3, 4 & 5 - *Design/Construction*:** Casa Adaire is eligible under the theme of Spanish-Colonial Revival architecture because it possesses numerous distinctive characteristics that make up the Spanish-Colonial Revival style including white stucco walls, clay tile roof, broad loggias enclosing an inner court, and decorative hand-painted tile. As a custom residence skillfully designed by architects Brewster & Benedict, it rises to the level of work by master architects with high artistic values. *Therefore, for its distinctive characteristics, as the work of Master architects, and for its high artistic values, the residence qualifies as a Class 1 Historic Site under Criteria 3, 4 and 5.*

**SUMMARY:** This evaluation finds Casa Adaire eligible for listing as a Palm Springs Historic Site under 8.05.020 (a) paragraphs 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the local ordinance’s seven criteria. Additionally, Casa Adaire retains a “high degree” of integrity (see Section 7, “Integrity Analysis”).



*An undated photo of the living room of Casa Adaire, ca. 1948. Brewster & Benedict's design featured open beamed ceilings, with Hispano-Moorish inspired door openings. Note masonry spiral staircase to the lookout tower beyond. Photo courtesy Stephen and Nancie Cooper*



# CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

## Department of Planning Services

3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm  
Springs, CA 92262  
Telephone: 760-323-8245  
Fax: 760-322-8360

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## HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION

The City of Palm Springs allows for the local designation of historic buildings, sites or districts within the City (Section 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code.) This application packet is to be completed in order to request a historic designation. For additional information, please contact the Department of Planning Services at 760-323-8245 or [planning@palmspringsca.gov](mailto:planning@palmspringsca.gov).

### **APPLICATION**

The completed application and required materials may be submitted to the Department of Planning Services. The submittal will be given a cursory check and will be accepted for filing only if the basic requirements have been met. A case planner will be assigned to the project and will be responsible for a detailed review of the application and all exhibits to ensure that all required information is adequate and accurate. Incomplete applications due to missing or inadequate information will not be accepted for filing. Applicants may be asked to attend scheduled meetings pertaining to their project. These will include the Historic Site Preservation Board (HSPB) and the City Council.

### **HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD (HSPB)**

Once the application has been determined to be complete, the HSPB will review the application to determine whether the site meets the minimum qualifications for designation pursuant to Chapter 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code. If such determination is made, a public hearing will be scheduled for a future meeting.

A public hearing will be held by the HSPB to receive testimony from all interested persons concerning the Historic Site Designation. The public hearing may be continued from time to time, and upon complete consideration, the HSPB will make a recommendation to the City Council. Notice will be provided as indicated below.

### **CITY COUNCIL**

After receiving the recommendation of the Historic Site Preservation Board, a public hearing will be held by the City Council to receive testimony from all interested persons concerning the requested Historic Site Designation. The public hearing may be continued from time to time, and upon complete consideration, the City Council will then conditionally approve, deny, or approve the application as submitted. The City Council's decision on the application is final.

### **NOTIFICATION**

Prior to consideration of the application by the HSPB and the City Council, a notice of public hearing for an Historic Site Designation request will be mailed to all property owners within 400 feet of the subject property a minimum of ten (10) days prior to the hearing dates.



**Office Use Only**

**CITY OF PALM SPRINGS  
Department of Planning Services**

Date:
Case No.
HSPB No.
Planner:

**HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION APPLICATION**

**TO THE APPLICANT:**

Your cooperation in completing this application and supplying the information requested will expedite City review of your application. Application submitted will not be considered until all submittal requirements are met. Staff may require additional information depending upon the specific project. Please submit this completed application and any subsequent material to the Department of Planning Services.

This form is to be used to nominate individual properties for Class 1 or 2 historic designations, or to nominate the formation of historic districts. Applicants are encouraged to review two bulletins from the US Department of Interior for additional information:

- "How to Complete National Register of Historic Places Registration Form" (National Register Bulletin 16A / <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb16a/>); and
- "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation" (National Register Bulletin 15; <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/>).

Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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 in the Bulletins.

**1. Property Information**

Historic name: Casa Adaire  
 Other names: Not applicable  
 Address: 417 Hermosa Place, Palm Springs, CA 92262  
 Assessor Parcel Number: 505273002-6  
 Owner Name: Stephen and Nancie Cooper  
 Owner's Address: 55 Thompson St, Apt 8B  
 City: New York State: NY Zip: 10012  
 Telephone: 917-539-5486  
 Fax number: Not applicable  
 E-mail address: nhcooper123@gmail.com

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## 2. Classifications

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Ownership of Property. Fill as many boxes as apply.

- Private
- Public - Local
- Public - State
- Public - Federal

Category of Property. Fill only one box.

- Building (Note can include site)
- District
- Site (Exclusive of Structures)
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property. TOTAL must include at least One (1) in Contributing Column.

Contributing	Non-contributing	
2	3	<b>Buildings</b> (Contributing: original house and guest house; non-contributing: later additions to east wing, garage and later guest house)
		<b>Sites</b> (n/a)
4	2	<b>Structures</b> (Contributing: swimming pool, reflecting pool, rock wall surrounding estate, octagonal covered gazebo; non-contributing: octagonal barbeque shelter, playhouse)
		<b>Objects</b> (n/a)
6	5	<b>Total</b>

If the building or site is part of a larger group of properties, enter the name of the multiple-property group; otherwise enter "N/A".

N/A.

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## 3. Use or Function

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Historic Use or Function: Private residence

Current Use or Function: Private residence

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## 4. Description

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Architect: Brewster & Benedict

Construction Date and Source: 1937 (*Desert Sun* newspaper archives)

Architectural Classification: Spanish-Colonial Revival



Construction Materials:

Foundation: Concrete slab  
Walls: Frame wood construction  
covered with stucco

Roof: Tile  
N/A

Other:

*Building Description: Attach a description of the Building/Site/District, including all character defining features, on one or more additional sheets. A thumb drive, containing detailed photographic information about Casa Adaire's exterior, etc., is provided with this nomination.*

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**5. Criteria (Fill all boxes that apply for the criteria qualifying the property for listing.)**

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**Events**

(1) Fill this box if the property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

**Persons**

(2) Fill this box if the property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

**Architecture**

(3) Fill this box if the property reflects or exemplifies a particular period of national, State or local history, or

(4) Fill this box if the property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or

(5) Fill this box if the property represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or

(6) Fill this box if the property represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

**Archeology**

(7) Fill this box if the property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Other Criteria Considerations (Check all the boxes that apply.)

- the property is owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- the property has been removed from its original location
- the property is a birthplace
- the property is a grave or cemetery
- the property is a reconstructed building, object, or structure
- the property is commemorative
- the property is less than 50 years of age or has achieved significance within the past 50 years

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## 6. Statement of Significance

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### Summary

Casa Adaire, located at 417 Hermosa Place, was constructed on Lots 35, 36, and 37, of Merito Vista Tract, in 1937 (see the grant deed in Appendix III).

### First Owner, Walter Kirschner

On November 2, 1936, Richard Haden Hood sold Lots 35, 36, and 37 to Walter Kirschner.

Walter Kirschner (1893-1974) was the wealthy co-owner of the nationwide Grayson's chain of ladies' apparel shops, and was a friend and advisor to Presidents Roosevelt, Truman, and Eisenhower. Intended to be a retreat for the Roosevelt family, Casa Adaire was named for Kirschner's daughter Adaire (see full biography in Appendix VII).

### Subsequent Owners

Primary sources show the chain of ownership for Lots 35, 36, and 37, of Merito Vista Tract (which eventually became known as 417 Hermosa Place in what is commonly known as Old Las Palmas) as follows:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Owner(s)</u>
December 27, 1938	Earl E. Gibbs and Charlotte Gibbs
February 26, 1945	Anna K. Rives
March 20, 1951	Oak Spring Farm (Mr. & Mrs. Fred Crockett)
December 7, 1952	Leo Spitz
December 31, 1959	Joseph M. and Ednah Root Shapiro
November 22, 1967	Norman K. Winston
November 7, 1980	Cornet Creek Corporation
February 7, 1984	Scott D. Cameron
June 14, 1989	Scott D. Cameron, Trustee of Scott D. Cameron Family Trust
September 2, 1993	Bank of California, N.A.
March 7, 1994	Kenneth B. Shellan
January 26, 2007	Hermosa Mission, LLC
April 28, 2010	Cobblewood Partners, LP

### The Architects

The architects of Casa Adaire were Floyd E. Brewster and Hiram Hudson Benedict (see Appendix VIII and IX for full biography and project list). Working in partnership from late 1935 through early 1938, Brewster & Benedict created a very large portfolio of some of Palm Springs' most iconic buildings of the period, though most have never been credited

to them. Floyd E. Brewster was highly educated and very talented, and his partnership with the dynamic Benedict succeeded in the creation of some of the finest architecture in Palm Springs of the 1930s. Because of this, Brewster & Benedict should be credited as master architects working in the Coachella Valley during this period. Casa Adaire is one of their most successful projects.

## **The Architecture**

Today, according to property records, Casa Adaire is a single-family home, though zoned for multi-family because of the two guest houses. It currently has seven bedrooms, eight and a half baths, and is a 9,532 square foot stucco structure with a gently pitched red tile roof.

As designed by architects Brewster & Benedict in late 1936, Casa Adaire was built on three parcels which when combined total 1.51 acres. The site plan exhibits masterfully designed Beaux Arts symmetry and formality, with a series of primary and secondary axes around which the elements of the site are organized. The primary north/south axis bisects the parcel into two equal rectangles; this axis begins at the center the house's dining room (which itself was the center of the primary wing), continuing out through the center of the reflecting pond and swimming pool beyond, and terminating at a wall adorned with a decorative Claycraft tile panel depicting a peacock. A series of secondary axes, combined with the primary axis, divide the property into eight equal octants, which was used as a device to organize the site plan and placement of the house.

The entire property is enclosed by a rock wall, typical of walls built during this period in the Tennis Club and Old Las Palmas developments. Originally, a stone arched entry with gate pierced the wall at the northeast corner of the stone wall, a pathway leading to a heavy wooden paneled door on the faceted south east corner of the home.

Casa Adaire was designed to be a contemporary house in function, but the elements of the design were loosely based on the haciendas of the Andalusian region of southern Spain, with their Hispano-Moorish influence. Floyd Brewster described the house as "of the hacienda type in Spanish desert design" in the *Desert Sun* in 1936. The house is wood-framed, with creamy white stucco walls and a gently sloped red tiled roof (these tiles were originally whitewashed). Windows and trim are painted a blue-green characteristic of the Spanish-Colonial Revival style of George Washington Smith and others of the period. The main house is a "U" shape, which encloses a panel of lawn inset with a tiled reflecting pool. On the primary (north) façade facing Hermosa Place, two asymmetrical bay windows with carved wood vertical supports and elegantly thin window fenestration, animate the otherwise simple elevation. The tiled roof has several staggered heights, typical of the Andalusian hacienda; exposed, curved rafter tails support the whitewashed, red tile roof. A second story open air lookout tower is topped with a hipped tile roof. Mismatched yet distinctive Andalusian-inspired chimneys and colorfully tiled pyramidal towers added to the rambling hacienda feeling.

Inside, the large rooms were originally never more than one room deep, which provided an abundance of natural light from at least two exposures. The primary wing facing Hermosa Place features a large 30x17 foot living room, with fireplace and open beamed

12' ceilings. Originally, pointed arched doorways harkened back to the Hispano-Moorish influence of the Andalusian region of southern Spain (these arched doorways have been modified). Double French doors open out onto the covered loggias, while a large bay picture window faces the garden in front. The formal dining room is 20x13 feet, again with French doors and a large picture window facing Hermosa. A large kitchen and garage, and an entry hall, complete the primary north wing.

The east wing has a hallway with masonry spiral staircase to the open-air lookout tower (now glazed) and which continues to the large private suite of rooms for Walter Kirschner. Off the master bathroom was an outdoor area enclosed by high stucco walls, and completely tiled in light blue-green hand-painted tile. This presumably had a much smaller pool for Kirschner's use, which he kept heated to 90 degrees while he was in residence. This enclosure had access to the rear garden by a tall arched door in an arched opening. This area has since been modified (see Appendix VI).

The west wing, in addition to the garage, has an attached guest suite with sitting room and bathroom. Like the rest of the house, all the rooms in these two east and west wings have open beamed ceilings, ample windows and French doors leading out to the covered loggias.

On the west side of the property, separate from but close to the main house, was a guest cottage meant for the use of the Roosevelt family. Inside, a large open-beamed combination sitting room/bedroom is adjacent to one of the most spectacular rooms in the entire house, a large bathroom completely tiled in a dizzying array of hand painted decorative tile, recalled the lavish Moorish-inspired bathrooms of southern Spain. Kirschner had bought the inventory of a Southern California decorative tile distributor who went bankrupt during the Depression. That inventory included a large quantity of Claycraft tile, examples of which can be seen in this bathroom.

As is typical of the Mediterranean Revival inspired Californian architecture of the 1930s, there is an easy relationship between indoors and out, and this is enhanced by beautifully designed gardens. All rooms at the rear of the house open onto the covered loggia, providing easy access to the landscaped spaces. The landscape design at Casa Adaire showed the sure hand of a highly trained landscape architect, but the project cannot be positively attributed to any known practitioner. It does not show up on the project lists of most of the prominent Southern California practitioners of the day who were known to have worked in the Coachella Valley (no licensed landscape architects were living and working in Palm Springs until 1958), but the landscape could possibly have been planned by legendary Santa Barbara landscape architect Lockwood de Forest. Brewster had worked with de Forest on many projects before and during his years with architect George Washington Smith (see Appendix VIII – Brewster & Benedict). Some of de Forest's signatures are present, such as the emphasis on the borrowed vista of San Jacinto, and the contrast between a strong axial design with a more informal landscape at the front of the property. In an email from his son Kellam, he believes that while the project may not appear on his father's project list, it doesn't rule out that de Forest may have designed it. "My father did make trips to Palm Springs in the 1930s. I have always assumed that he had a client or clients in Palm Springs. Sometimes my father would just sketch his ideas on a piece of paper and leave the paper with the client" (email from Kellam de Forest,



April 20, 2018). If this is the case, it can be assumed the landscape was installed according to de Forest's sketch by a local nursery, probably Millard Wright, who often installed the landscapes designed by Los Angeles landscape architects at the time.

The circulation at the front of the house has a driveway leading to the garage, and originally had a pathway to the front door from the northeast corner of the rock wall enclosure, but was primarily dominated by a large grass panel, which Kirschner turned into an exotic cactus specimen garden, with three large beds of a variety of mature cacti. The cactus garden was created by the C.D. Young Cactus Nursery and installed by J.A. Wakeland of Cabazon (*Desert Sun* newspaper, October 29, 1937). The landscape at the front of the house was informal and asymmetrical, following the asymmetrical design of the primary façade. A single Queen palm was planted next to the front door, around which grew a large flowering vine. A single Mexican fan palm was placed near the entry to the garage.

At the rear of the house, the landscape is more formal, anchored by a pair of large *Washingtonia filifera* specimens at each junction of the "U" shaped loggia, the square columns of which were originally adorned with trellised grids to support flowering vines, while another pair of sago palms flanked the reflecting pool. A pair of date palms originally directed the view towards the covered gazebo. Looking north towards the swimming pool, two symmetrical groves of stately Italian cypress flanked the low wall featuring the tiled peacock panel, emphasizing the primary north/south axis. (These Italian cypresses no longer exist). Along the east/west secondary axis which runs through the tiled swimming pool, a pair of mature *Washingtonia filifera* flanked the path running west, while a pair of deciduous trees flanked the path leading east on the opposite side. A hexagonal, white stucco open-air gazebo adjacent to the west wing overlooks the pool and is topped by a hipped tile roof, the floor and wainscot inside tiled with more of Kirschner's collection of hand-painted decorative tile.

The highlight of the rear garden is the enormous swimming pool completely tiled in a variety of Hispano-Moorish inspired patterns, as well as solid colored field tile, all of which came from Kirschner's stash of tile. The pool measures 68' 7" x 25' 5" with a deep end of 9 feet. The perimeter of the pool originally featured a raised lip tiled in deep blue or terra cotta colored hexagonal hand-painted field tile, bordered by yellow, and banded with vertical green tiles. The pool was surrounded by ten light standards -- short tiled square columns, which were originally topped by round white glass globe shades. Only two of these remain.

In summary, Casa Adaire exhibits many features which place it solidly within the Spanish-Colonial Revival canon including light stucco walls, tiled roof, loggias enclosing a patio with water feature, and decorative hand-painted tile. Photographs of selected architectural details can be found in Appendix VI.

### **Changes and Additions to Casa Adaire**

No blueprints have turned up to determine the original design of Casa Adaire, but through photographs and building permits, a good sense of what changes took place and when

can be established. The following additions and modifications have been made to the residence since Walter Kirschner sold it in 1938, most of which happened in 1985:

- In March 1946, an addition was made valued at \$1,000, and the building permit mentions wood frame and stucco. This is probably a bathroom addition on the south side of the west wing, near the open-air octagonal gazebo.
- In January 1953, a permit for work valued at \$3,000 describes the addition of a bedroom and bath, with covered patio. The addition would be wood-framed and stucco, with a tile roof. This appears to be the addition of a second guest cottage near the original guest cottage on the western part of the site. Another permit mentions the addition of a bathtub, wall heater, sink and toilet. A 1972 aerial photo shows this second guest house already built. A further addition to this guest house was built in 1985.
- By 1967, when the TV show “Mayberry RFD” filmed three episodes at Casa Adaire, Kirschner’s cactus garden had been replaced by a long circular driveway, and a new large opening was cut into the northeast section of the stone wall at the perimeter to provide access to the driveway.
- In 1968, a “small therapy pool” and associated furnace were installed.
- The most extensive changes to the house came under the ownership of Scott D. Cameron, who owned the house from 1984 to 1993. Under Cameron’s ownership, the following changes took place:
  - Cameron added 720 square feet to the garage, making it a larger tandem garage.
  - The later guest house got a 598 square foot addition, and a 640 square foot octagonal covered patio was built adjacent to the peacock tiled mural near the pool.
  - The major change took place adjacent to the east wing, where a large addition was built adjacent to the east boundary of the dwelling, adding a long hallway with two new guest suites with adjacent bathrooms; a bedroom/office; to complement the existing master bedroom, a private living room, a large dressing room and a large octagonal master bathroom, keeping with the theme of octagonal buildings on the site, were added.
  - The foyer and front door configuration were modified, and a grand arched entrance with double glass paned doors was built, flanked by barley twist columns and stained-glass windows with the initial “C” for Cameron incorporated. The columns supported an arched pediment, also monogrammed with the initial “C,” adorned on top by a pair of marble urns, and a pointed marble urn-shaped finial in the center. The tile roof above the foyer was raised, which dwarfed the second story lookout somewhat.
  - This new addition reduced the size of the adjacent citrus grove, but materials and architectural vocabulary remained consistent with that established by Brewster & Benedict in 1936.
  - In 1986, Cameron had a long block wall built along the west side of the property.

These changes and additions were done sensitively and are nearly all within secondary or tertiary portions of the site and do not diminish the historic or architectural significance

of the primary elevations of the residence, especially when viewed from the street.

Other changes that can't be attributed to an owner or year include:

- The removal of eight of the ten tiled light standards surrounding the pool; only the pair flanking the steps leading into the pool remain.
- The raised tiled lip surrounding the pool has been removed, the paving around the pool is today brick laid in a herringbone pattern.
- In the rear garden, the groupings of Italian cypress, sago palms, and some other plant material has been removed or replaced, with the introduction of some other species which are not incompatible. Also, the pathways leading from the swimming pool designed to emphasize the secondary east/west axis are now missing.
- The front of the house has been landscaped with a formal parterre garden featuring beds of white roses, enclosed by low boxwood hedges; a mature multi-trunk olive tree underplanted with lavender; small panels of turf; magenta bougainvillea espaliered against the rock walls; a large fountain; and groupings of mature palm trees. These changes, while not original to the house, still reflect landscape design from the period of significance, and don't detract from the overall feeling.

### **Local Architectural Context**

Casa Adaire should be viewed within the context of the period between World Wars I and II, when Palm Springs was becoming established as a fashionable winter resort for wealthy and/or famous people. According to Historic Resource Group's draft [Palm Springs] *Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings*, "In the 1920s and 1930s a number of architects and designers from Los Angeles and elsewhere worked in Palm Springs, designing Spanish and Mediterranean Revival-style residences primarily as winter homes for seasonal residents. As the focus on regional expression through architecture evolved, period and exotic revival styles took hold throughout California. Mediterranean Revival and Spanish Colonial Revival examples prevailed, in large measure due to the Panama-California Exposition, held in San Diego in 1915. Well suited to the region's warm, dry climate, the Spanish Colonial and Mediterranean Revival styles in particular appealed to many Southern California residents for their exotic appearance and sense of history."

### **Site Description**

Location. Casa Adaire is located on a prominent corner in the Merito Vista tract in what is now commonly known as Old Las Palmas. The residence is bounded on the north by Hermosa Place, by the enormous de Laitre Residence to the west, by two residential parcels to the south, and by North Mission Road to the east. The topography of the lot is relatively flat. The site includes mature palm trees, boxwood hedges, roses, sago palms, etc. A legal description of the property is provided at Appendix III.

## Permit History

March 19, 1946	Building	Remodel existing building per plan, frame and stucco; \$1,000 value of work
May 12, 1949	Electrical	8 outlets, 2 fixtures
May 20, 1951	Building	Metal canopy alongside swimming pool
September 13, 1951	Building	Sprinkler system
January 12, 1953	Plumbing	1 bathtub, 1 wall heater, 1 lavatory, 1 toilet
January 21, 1953	Building	Add bedroom and bath; also covered patio; frame and stucco, tile roof as per plan (\$3,000 value of work)
February 13, 1953	Electrical	11 outlets, 4 fixtures
September 2, 1955	Plumbing	1 cesspool
April 27, 1967	Building	Install Furnace and 7 ½ ton a.c. unit
January 10, 1968	Swimming Pool	Underground wiring; install furnace
January 10, 1968	Swimming Pool	Install Small Therapy Pool
September 25, 1984	Building	Hookup to City Sewer
May 22, 1985	Building	Multiple additions to single family dwelling: added square footage to dwelling 3,096; garage 720; guest 598; patio 640
November 7, 1985	Building	Construct gunite 6x10 spa under permitted patio
June 19, 1986	Building	Masonry Wall – 25' of 4 1/2' block wall and 275' of 6' high block wall along west side yard
November 3, 1987	Building	Construct new stairway access to existing pool equipment pit. Include changeout or direction of pool heater

## BACKGROUND / HISTORIC CONTEXT

The relatively short history of Palm Springs can be organized into several distinct periods, as defined by the Historic Resources Group's *Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings*. These include the following:

- Native American Settlement to 1969
- Early Development (1884-1918)
- Palm Springs between the Wars (1919-1941)
- Palm Springs During World War II (1939-1945)
- Post-World War II Palm Springs (1945-1969)

It is within the context of the period "Palm Springs between the Wars" that Casa Adaire will be evaluated. The following context statement is edited from Historic Resource Group's *Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings*:

**Palm Springs Between the Wars (1919-1941):** This context explores the transformation of Palm Springs from a modest spa town into a luxury winter resort in the years between the First and Second World Wars. By 1918 Nellie Coffman and her sons, George Roberson and Earl Coffman, understood the town's potential, not as a health spa for asthmatics and consumptives, but as an exclusive winter resort for the well-to-do, and set about transforming their sanatorium into the luxurious Desert Inn, one of the most renowned hostelrys in the country. Their success inspired the development of two equally spectacular hotels in the 1920s and cemented the town's growing reputation as one of the country's premier luxury winter resorts. The Oasis Hotel, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, Jr. (known as Lloyd Wright) opened in 1925 by Pearl McCallum McManus; and the grand Hotel El Mirador, designed by Walker and Eisen in a sumptuous Spanish Colonial Revival style and opened in 1927.

Automobile tourism played an early and important part of the success and growth of Palm Springs as a destination. In 1914, highway bonds were passed in Riverside County for extensive road improvements and construction of new routes. As part of these efforts, the highway connecting Los Angeles and Palm Springs was completed in October 1916. Pavement of the highway through to Indio was completed in 1924, allowing travelers to drive all the way from Los Angeles to Palm Springs in less than 4 hours, all on paved roads.

The first residential subdivisions were recorded in the early 1920s on tracts largely concentrated on land immediately surrounding the existing village and the resorts. Several tracts were subdivided by Prescott T. Stevens, along with other prominent early Palm Springs settlers including Pearl McManus, Raymond Cree, and Harriet Cody.

In the 1920s, business tycoons, industrialists, and other wealthy businessmen, along with the Hollywood elite discovered the desert and began to transform Palm Springs into an international resort. While the movie stars primarily stayed at the resort hotels when visiting Palm Springs, other wealthy residents and seasonal visitors started building architect-designed estates and drawing increased attention to the growing resort town.



The 1930s saw Palm Springs blossom, as more and more celebrities made it their winter weekend getaway, and more development sprang up to house and entertain them. By the start of World War II, Palm Springs had so long been thought of as a movie star's playground that some of the neighborhoods were described as "Beverly Hills in the desert." One section was so filled with film notables, the neighborhood was ultimately dubbed the "Movie Colony."

In the 1930s important figures in finance and business continued to flock to the desert in the winter, helping to cement the village's reputation as one of the nation's top winter resort destinations.

Architecturally, the Spanish and Mediterranean Revival styles were the town's dominant architectural expression during this period. In addition, there are examples of simplified Ranch houses featuring rustic details and board-and-batten exterior walls. Beginning in the 1930s, prominent Modernist architects began making significant contributions to the architectural landscape in Palm Springs.

## **EVALUATION:**

**Criterion 2: Significant Persons.** Criterion 2 recognizes properties associated with the lives of persons who made meaningful contributions to the national, state or local history. Walter Kirschner was a prominent owner of a national chain of ladies' apparel shops Grayson-Robinson and S. Klein. More importantly, Kirschner was a friend and advisor to Presidents Roosevelt, Truman and Eisenhower. He was an early proponent of the documentation of the atrocities of the Holocaust, ensuring that future generations would not forget this horrific period; Kirschner encouraged President Roosevelt and General Eisenhower towards that end. Casa Adaire was built as the first in a series of desert retreats for members of the Roosevelt, Truman and Eisenhower families. Hence, the residence qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site on the local registry under Criterion 2.

## **ARCHITECTURE** (Criteria 3 – 6)

**Criterion 3:** *(That reflects or exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history).* Casa Adaire, completed in 1937, exhibits many stylistic markers which place it directly in the historic context of Palm Springs' Period between World Wars I and II. The private residence represents a prime and largely intact example of the significant Spanish Colonial Revival architecture for which Palm Springs is widely known. As such, the residence may be viewed as an important component of the historic trends that have come to define Palm Springs' image as a center of important Spanish Colonial Revival architecture, i.e., an historic trend that exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history. The residence qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site on the local registry under Criterion 3.

**Criterion 4:** *(That embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or) Type, Period, and Method of Construction:* "Type, period, or method of construction" refers to the way certain properties are related to one another by cultural tradition or function, by dates of construction or style, or by choice or availability of

materials and technology. To be eligible under this Criterion, a property must clearly illustrate, through "distinctive characteristics" a pattern of features common to a particular class of resources. "Distinctive characteristics" are the physical features or traits that commonly recur in individual types, periods, or methods of construction. To be eligible, a property must clearly contain enough of those characteristics to be considered a true representative of a particular type, period, or method of construction. Characteristics can be expressed in terms such as form, proportion, structure, plan, style, or materials.

Casa Adaire is eligible under the theme of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture because it possesses distinctive characteristics that make up the many qualities of the style, such as white stucco walls, a red-tiled roof, wide covered loggias enclosing a patio with water feature, hand painted decorative tile with a Hispano-Moorish influence, open beamed ceilings, stone wall enclosing the property, classic landscape using plant materials typical of the 1930s in Palm Springs, and an architectural design that strives to create an easy open relationship between indoors and outdoors. As such, the residence is eligible under this criterion because it represents an important example of building practices in Palm Springs in the 1930s. The residence qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site on the local registry under Criterion 4.

**Criterion 5:** *(That (a): represents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age; or (b): that possesses high artistic value).*

**5a: Work of a Master:** In the case of Casa Adaire, the work of Brewster & Benedict can certainly be described as the "work of a master" in view of their individual and joint histories of architectural excellence (see Appendix VIII & IX).

**5b: Properties possessing high artistic values:** High artistic values may be expressed in many ways, including areas as diverse as community design or planning, engineering, and sculpture. As an example of the Spanish Colonial Revival, the residence certainly articulates the best of Mediterranean inspired Californian architecture to a level of excellence and confidence that, in total, could easily be considered an aesthetic ideal. For its high artistic values, the residence qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site on the local registry under Criterion 5.

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## 7. Integrity Analysis (using U.S. Secretary of Interior Standards)

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### INTEGRITY

Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. To be listed in the local registry, a property must not only be shown to be significant under the criteria, but it also must have integrity. The evaluation of integrity is sometimes a subjective judgment, but it must always be grounded in an understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance. Historic properties either retain integrity (that is, convey their significance) or they do not. The definition of integrity includes seven aspects or qualities. To retain historic integrity a property will always possess several, and usually most, of the aspects. The retention of specific aspects of integrity is paramount for a

property to convey its significance. Determining which of these aspects are most important to a particular property requires knowing why, where, and when the property is significant. The following sections define the seven aspects and explain how they combine to produce integrity.

## LOCATION

Location is the place where an historic property was constructed or the place where an historic event occurred. The relationship between the property and its location is often important to understanding why the property was created or why something happened. The actual location of a historic property, complemented by its setting, is particularly important in recapturing the sense of historic events and persons. Except in rare cases, the relationship between a property and its historic associations is destroyed if the property is moved. ***Casa Adaire remains in its original location and therefore qualifies under this aspect.***

## DESIGN

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. It results from conscious decisions made during the original conception and planning of a property and applies to activities as diverse as community planning, engineering, architecture, and landscape architecture. Design includes such elements as organization of space, proportion, scale, technology, ornamentation, and materials. A property's design reflects historic functions and technologies as well as aesthetics. It includes such considerations as the structural system; massing; arrangement of spaces; pattern of fenestration; textures and colors of surface materials; type, amount, and style of ornamental detailing. ***Casa Adaire's essential characteristics of form, plan, space, structure, and style have survived mostly intact. Similarly, the structural system; massing; arrangement of spaces; pattern of fenestration; and the type, amount, and style of detailing have survived with a large portion intact. Though a large addition was built on the east side of the house, significantly altering that footprint, the addition is largely hidden from view, and is done using the same architectural vocabulary, and quality of construction, as the original structure.***

## SETTING

Setting is the physical environment of a historic property. Whereas location refers to the specific place where a property was built or an event occurred, setting refers to the *character* of the place in which the property played its historical role. It involves *how*, not just *where*, the property is situated and its relationship to surrounding features and open space. Setting often reflects the basic physical conditions under which a property was built and the functions it was intended to serve. In addition, the way in which a property is positioned in its environment can reflect the designer's concept of nature and aesthetic preferences. ***The setting of Casa Adaire continues to reflect the architects' original design relationship of site and structure.***

## MATERIALS

Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. The choice and combination of materials reveals the preferences of those who created the property and indicate the availability of particular types of materials and technologies. ***Casa Adaire's materials successfully represent the best of Spanish Colonial Revival design of the period, with high quality but simple stucco, tile, wood and glass. Later changes were done using the same materials and quality of construction and are done in such a way as to not negatively impact the overall historic fabric of the original building.***

## WORKMANSHIP

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. It is the evidence of artisans' labor and skill in constructing or altering a building, structure, object, or site. Workmanship can apply to the property as a whole or to its individual components. It can be expressed in vernacular methods of construction and plain finishes or in highly sophisticated configurations and ornamental detailing. It can be based on common traditions or innovative period techniques. Workmanship is important because it can furnish evidence of the technology of a craft, illustrate the aesthetic principles of a historic or prehistoric period, and reveal individual, local, regional, or national applications of both technological practices and aesthetic principles. Examples of workmanship in historic buildings include tooling, carving, painting, graining, turning, and joinery. ***The workmanship of Casa Adaire is comprised of high-quality finishes and materials, including hand painted decorative tile, stucco, red tile roof and carved wood detailing. The residence continues to express a high degree of period workmanship.***

## FEELING

Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. It results from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey the property's historic character. For example, a rural historic district retaining original design, materials, workmanship, and setting will relate the feeling of agricultural life in the 19th century. ***Casa Adaire is sited on a prominent lot which takes advantage of panoramic mountain views to the west. Accordingly, the residence and contributing structures retain their original integrity of feeling.***

## ASSOCIATION

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. A property retains association if it *is* the place where the event or activity occurred and is sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to an observer. Like feeling, association requires the presence of physical features that convey a property's historic character. For example, a Revolutionary War battlefield whose natural and man-made elements have remained intact since the 18th century will retain its quality of association

with the battle. Because feeling and association depend on individual perceptions, their retention alone is never sufficient to support eligibility of a property for the National Register. ***Casa Adaire is an important example of a custom-designed Spanish-Colonial Revival private residence in Palm Springs. Accordingly, it continues its association with a pattern of events that have made a meaningful contribution to the community.***

**INTEGRITY SUMMARY:** Casa Adaire appears to be in excellent condition partially due to the use of construction materials suitable for the harsh desert environment. This integrity analysis confirms that the building and site of Casa Adaire still possess all seven aspects of integrity. ***Though a significant addition has been made on the east wing of the home, it is comparatively hidden from public view. Also, the additions were designed using sympathetic materials and workmanship. In summary, the residence still possesses a high degree of integrity sufficient to qualify for designation as a Class 1 Historic Site.***

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## 8. Bibliography

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See endnotes in Appendices VII and VIII

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## 9. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: Approximately 1.51 acres (or 65,775 square feet)  
Property Boundary Description: See Appendix II

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## 10. Prepared By

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Name/title: Steven Keylon  
Organization: Submitted on behalf of the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation  
Street address: 1775 East Palm Canyon Drive, Suite 110-195  
City: Palm Springs State: CA Zip: 92264  
Telephone: (760) 837-7117  
e-mail address: [info@pspreservationfoundation.org](mailto:info@pspreservationfoundation.org)



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## 11. Required Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed application form. **Do not mount any exhibits on a board.**

1. **Attachment Sheets.** Include all supplemental information based on application form above).
2. **Maps:** For Historic Districts, include a sketch map identifying the proposed district's boundaries.
3. **Photographs:** Eight (8) sets of color photographs showing each elevation of the property and its surroundings.
4. **Non-owner's Notarized Signature:** If the applicant is not the owner, a notarized affidavit shall be provided (see following page).
5. **Site Plan:** One 1/8" to 1/4" scale drawing of the site, and eight reduction copies (8 1/2 x 11 inches). The site plan shall show all of the following: Property boundaries, north arrow and scale, all existing buildings, structures, mechanical equipment, landscape materials, fences, walls, sidewalks, driveways, parking areas showing location of parking spaces, and signs. **Indicate the square footage and use of each building and the date(s) of construction.**
6. **Public Hearing Labels:** Three (3) sets of typed self-adhesive labels of all property owners, lessees, and sub-lessees of record. **The labels shall include the Assessor's parcel number, owner's name and mailing address of each property with 400 feet from the exterior limits of the subject property.** Additionally, all Assessor Parcel Maps clearly indicating the 400-foot radius and a certified letter from a title company licensed to conduct business in Riverside County, California shall be submitted.

Note: If any property on this list is owned by the United States Government in trust for the Agua Caliente Indian Tribe or individual allottee, copies of notices with postage paid envelopes will be submitted to the Bureau of Indian Affairs to notify the individual Indian land owners of the public hearings.

# APPENDICES

## I Owner's Letter of Support

September 10, 2018

City of Palm Springs  
Historic Site Preservation Board  
3200 Tahquitz Canyon Way  
Palm Springs, CA 92262

Dear Honorable Board:

As current owners of Casa Adaire, the residence built by Walter Kirschner and the architects Brewster and Benedict at 417 Hermosa Place, we enthusiastically support the Class 1 Historic Site designation of our property by the City of Palm Springs. We have asked the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation, and Vice President Steven Keylon in particular, to assist us in the preparation of the required nomination paperwork. We greatly appreciate their efforts on our behalf.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at 917-539-5486.

Sincerely,



Nancie Cooper



Stephen Cooper



### III Grant Deed (which includes Legal Description)

RICHARD HADEN HOOD )  
TO )  
WALTER KIRSCHNER )

In consideration of Ten and no/100 Dollars RICHARD HADEN HOOD, a single man, does hereby grant to WALTER KIRSCHNER, an unmarried man, all that Real Property situate in the County of Riverside, State of California, described as follows:

Lots Thirty five (35) Thirty-six (36) and Thirty-seven (37) of Merito Vista, as shown by map on file in Book 12, page 94 of Maps, records of said Riverside County;

SUBJECT TO:

Second installment of general and special taxes for the fiscal year 1936-37;

Second installment of Coachella Valley County Water District taxes for the fiscal year 1936-37;

Conditions, restrictions, reservations, rights, rights of way and easements of record.

WITNESS my hand this 2nd day of November 1936.

Richard Haden Hood

U.S.I.R.S. \$9.50, cancelled

410

State of California )  
County of Riverside ) ss.

On this 2nd day of November in the year one thousand nine hundred thirty six before me, F. G. Ingram a Notary Public in and for said County and State, personally appeared Richard Haden Hood known to me to be the person described in and whose name is subscribed to the within instrument, and acknowledged that he executed the same.

WITNESS my hand and official seal the day and year in this certificate first above written.

(NOTARIAL SEAL)

F. G. Ingram  
Notary Public in and for said  
County and State.  
My Commission expires July 19, 1937.

#687

Received for record Nov 13, 1936 at 2 o'clock P. M. at request of Security Title Ins. & Gtee. Co. Copied in Book No. 302 of Official Records, page 409 et seq., Records of Riverside County, California.

Fees \$1.00

Jack A. Ross, Recorder

Compared: Convist, M. Alrick; Comparer, A. Burgess

## IV Notable Later Owners



*Swim party at the Gibbs Home, ca 1940. Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society*

### EARL AND CHARLOTTE GIBBS

Retired manufacturer Earl Gibbs and his wife Charlotte had an estate in Evanston, Illinois and the Old Mill Farm at Dowagiac, Michigan, where they raised thoroughbred horses. In the middle 1930s the Gibbs' began spending much of the year in Palm Springs, taking a house at Smoke Tree Ranch with their daughters Marjorie, Charlotte and Barbara. The girls went to Palm Springs High School, and Marjorie was training to get her pilot's license, becoming the youngest licensed female pilot in the country in 1938. She was soon attending UCLA, commuting back and forth in her plane. In December 1938 the Gibbs' purchased Casa Adaire from Walter Kirschner for \$70,000, and the estate became the lively site for many social events.

Gibbs was a member of the Vaqueros del Desierto, and in 1940 was appointed President of the Desert Circus, making that event a great success for many years. The following year he began managing the Palm Springs Field Club, bringing it out of the red.





*Gibbs Family Photos, ca. 1940, courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society. Top left, Marjorie Gibbs, the youngest female pilot in the country*

In 1941 Gibbs bought a horse ranch in Banning, where he began planning another estate. With the advent of World War II, Gibbs served two years in the Navy in the purchase and supply department, in Washington, D.C., where his family joined him. They rented Casa Adaire to Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Giberson of Texas, finally selling the house in February 1945 to Mrs. Anna K. Rives. Gibbs died in La Jolla in 1946 at only 61 years of age, of a sudden illness.

## MRS. ANNA K. RIVES

Wealthy lumber baron Judson C. Rives and his wife Anna had a stately home at 1130 Westchester Place in Los Angeles. After he died in 1940, his widow Anna began spending time in Palm Springs, buying Casa Adaire in 1945. For the next several years, she would split her time between the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Palm Springs. After selling the house in 1951 to Mr. and Mrs. Fred Crockett, she resided primarily in Beverly Hills, but returned to the desert each season until her death in 1957.



**IN THE GARDEN**—For the third year the Garden Club has arranged a tour of five of the Village's most beautiful gardens. Around 150 are expected to make the tour tomorrow afternoon. Pictured is the garden of Mrs. Leo Spitz on Hermosa place, which

will be visited. Mr. Spitz, executive head of production for Universal, bought the property in December and the family moved here from Beverly Hills. Shown with Mrs. Spitz is Mrs. Frank Bennett (on right), president of the Garden Club.

## LEO AND FRANCES “FRANKIE” SPITZ

Former attorney Leo Spitz retired as head of production at Universal-International Pictures in 1953, having earlier organized International Pictures with William Goetz. He had started at Paramount in the 1930s, before going on to RKO-Radio Pictures. Spitz and his wife Frankie bought Casa Adaire in December 1952. Leo Spitz died in April 1957, and several months later, in October, Mike Todd and his wife Elizabeth Taylor rented Casa Adaire, spending as much time there with their family as their schedules would allow. On Thursday, February 27, 1958, Elizabeth Taylor celebrated

her 26<sup>th</sup> birthday at Casa Adaire, the *Desert Sun* reporting that Mike Todd had “made a production” out of her birthday presents, which were presented “grab bag style, in a huge man-sized paper sack.” The gifts included a long black mink stole from Furs by Courtney. They returned the weekend of March 15<sup>th</sup>, leaving Palm Springs for Los Angeles Sunday night, to prepare for a trip to New York. However, Taylor contracted laryngitis, so she cancelled her plans to accompany Todd on the trip. Todd was killed in a plane crash in New Mexico on March 22, 1958. They had leased Casa Adaire through April 20.

#### JOSEPH AND EDNAH ROOT SHAPIRO

In December 1959, Frankie Spitz sold Casa Adaire to Joseph and Ednah Root Shapiro. Joseph Shapiro had founded the Simplicity Pattern Company. Ednah was an accomplished artist and was founder and president of Toy Clinics of America, Inc. creator of dolls and toys which had “proven so beneficial to rehabilitation of physically and mentally handicapped persons in institutions and hospitals throughout the United States.” Their primary residence was in New York City, though they also had a Connecticut farm with thoroughbreds.

#### NORMAN K. WINSTON

In November 1967 Casa Adaire was sold to New York developer and Democratic party fundraiser Norman K. Winston. After his death, the house was sold to the Coronet Creek Corporation, which sold it in 1984 to Scott D. Cameron.

#### SCOTT D. CAMERON

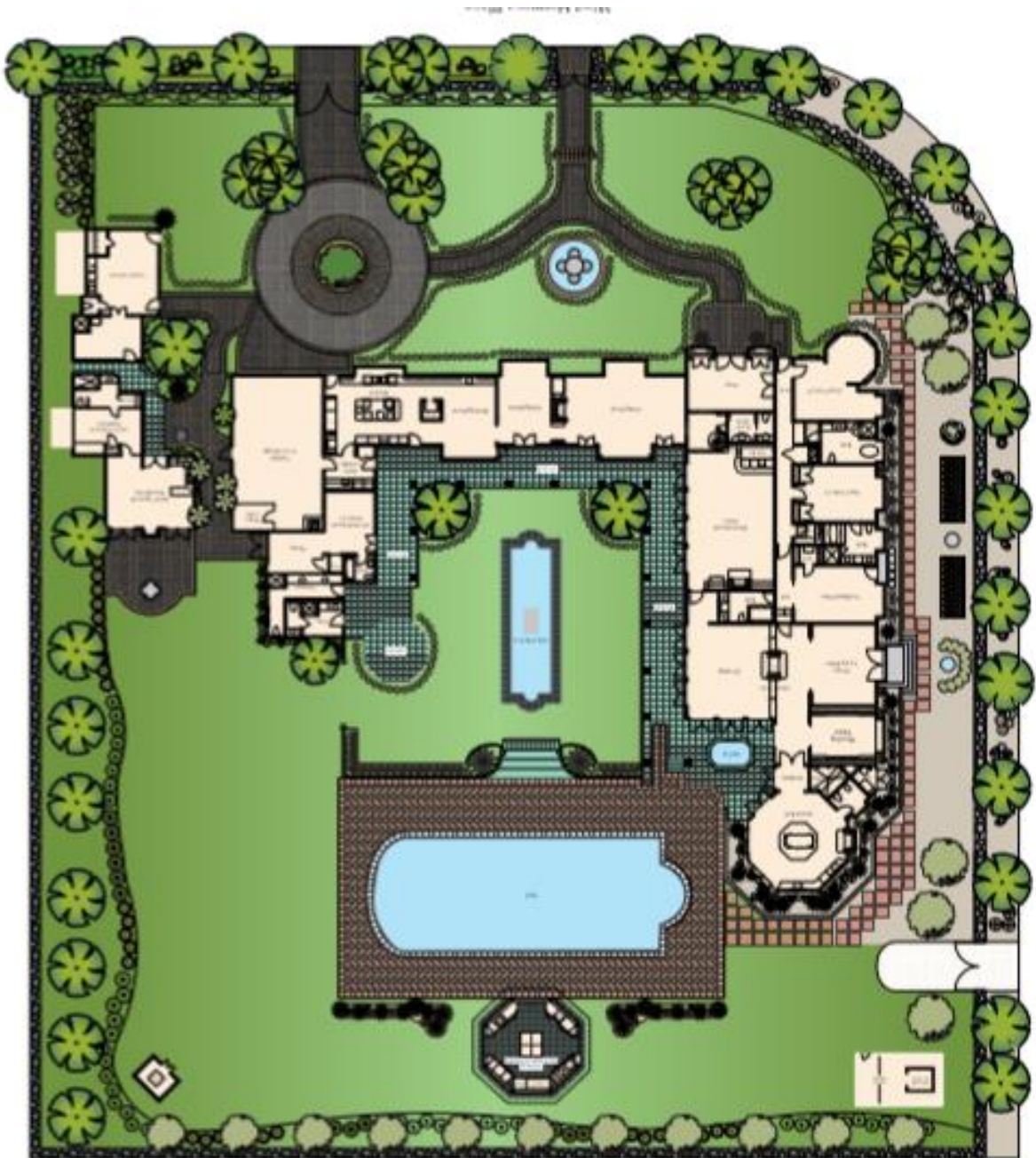
Scott D. Cameron was the son of Hollywood actress and cover girl Kay Aldridge and her husband Arthur Cameron. He bought Casa Adaire in 1984, and the following year added a large new bedroom wing adjacent to the existing east wing. Cameron lived in the house until 1993.





*The magnificent tiled pool looking towards the house, ca. 1940*




V Changes to footprint of house



The current day floorplan



Changes to footprint since 1937

-  1946
-  1953
-  1985





1941



2018



1941

*Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society*



2018



## VI Photographic record of changes over time

### a. Front of House



*From the northeast corner of Hermosa and Mission, an arched opening in the stone wall surrounding Casa Adaire featured a path leading to the front door. Photo courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society, ca. 1940*



*The original placement of the heavy carved wood door was on a faceted section of the northeast corner of the house. Photo courtesy Stephen and Nancie Cooper, ca. 1948*



*Walter Kirschner's specimen cactus garden at the front of the house, with the Roosevelt guest cottage beyond. Photo courtesy Stephen and Nancie Cooper, ca. 1948*



*A guest walks on one of the lawn panels in Kirschner's cactus garden, 1946. Photo courtesy the author*





*Rows of citrus on the east side of the house, 1946. Photo courtesy the author*



*By 1967 when an episode of "Mayberry, R.F.D." was filmed at the house, the cactus garden had been replaced by a circular driveway*





*Aunt Bea and friends from “Mayberry, R.F.D.” showing the open lawns and circular driveway, which had replaced Kirschner’s cactus garden. 1967*



*Today, the front garden features classic Palm Springs plant species and lawn panels, with an added fountain and brick-lined pathways. New front door configuration beyond.*

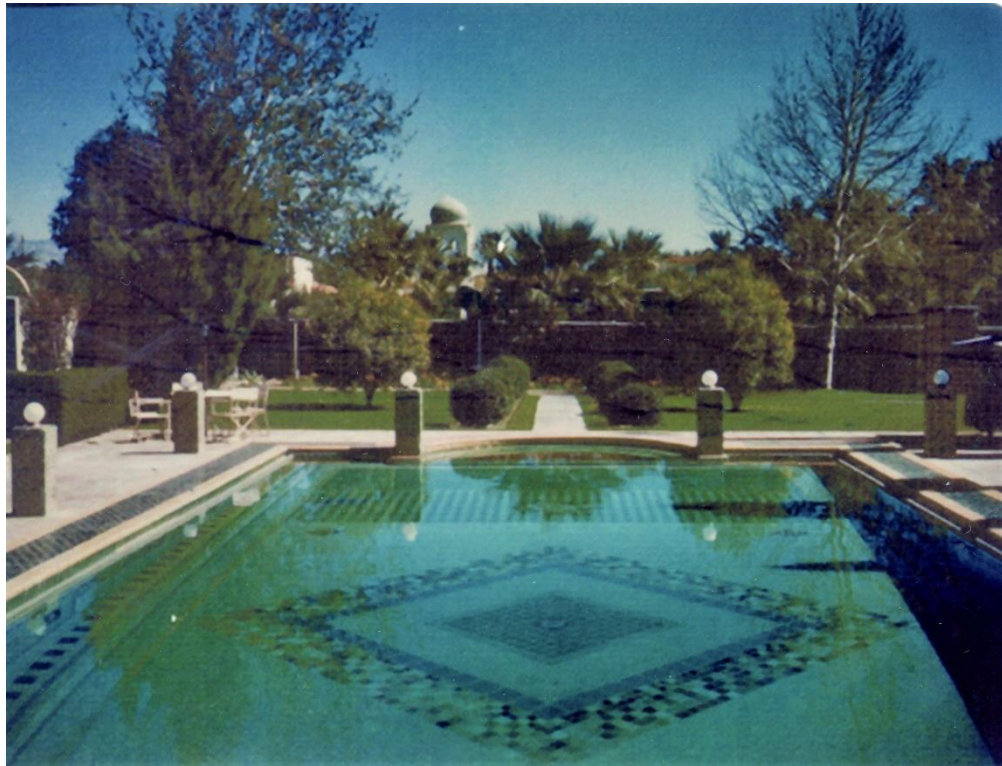
*Photo courtesy author, April 2018*

b. Rear Garden



*The spectacular tiled pool is the jewel of the rear garden. Vintage Kodachrome photos courtesy Stephen and Nancie Cooper, ca. 1948*





*Originally, ten square tiled columns supported white glass globe lights. Vintage Kodachrome photos courtesy Stephen and Nancie Cooper, ca. 1948*





*By the time photographer Robert Doisneau took these photos in 1960 for Fortune Magazine, the glass globes had been replaced by fixtures with painted steel shades*





*Today, only two of the tiled columnar light standards remain*



*Off the master bathroom was an enclosure with a high stucco wall, with arched opening to access swimming pool area. The interior is tiled in blue-green hand-painted tile, this area was Kirschner's small private pool, which he kept heated to 90 degrees. Note whitewash red tile roof. From a Kodachrome home movie, 1947. Author's collection*



*By 1967, when "Mayberry, R.F.D." filmed at Casa Adaire, Kirschner's pool patio had been roofed over with a metal awning*





*Today, Kirschner's private pool area has been covered with a red tiled roof, with a new adjacent master bathroom, housed in this distinctive hexagonal, hipped roof configuration, inspired by the original gazebo across the pool*



*The reflecting pool is today graced with a bronze mermaid figure. Original gazebo pictured at left*





*Original gazebo, ca. 1940. Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society*



*The gazebo still features a hand-painted decorative tile "carpet" and wainscot, from Walter Kirschner's stash of tile bought from a tile distributor who went bankrupt during the Great Depression*





*To the south of the pool, a low wall had a Claycraft tile panel picturing a peacock. Photo courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society*



BEAUTIFUL PICTORIAL PANELS IN TILE  
ADD DISTINCTION AND CHARM TO THE HOME

*Write for our illustrated folder*

**CLAYCRAFT POTTERIES**

1101 San Fernando Road    ::    ::    ::    Los Angeles

*An advertisement in California Arts & Architecture Magazine showed a variation on the pictorial tile panel*





*The peacock tiled panel still exists but has been incorporated into an open-air barbeque gazebo, again hexagonal in form with hipped, tile roof*



*In 1947, the open loggias at the rear of the house offered a pleasant spot for relaxing. Still from a 1946 Kodachrome film, author's collection. Today, more French doors have replaced smaller window openings in some cases*





*Servants stand in front of the original Roosevelt guest cottage, ca. 1940. Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society*



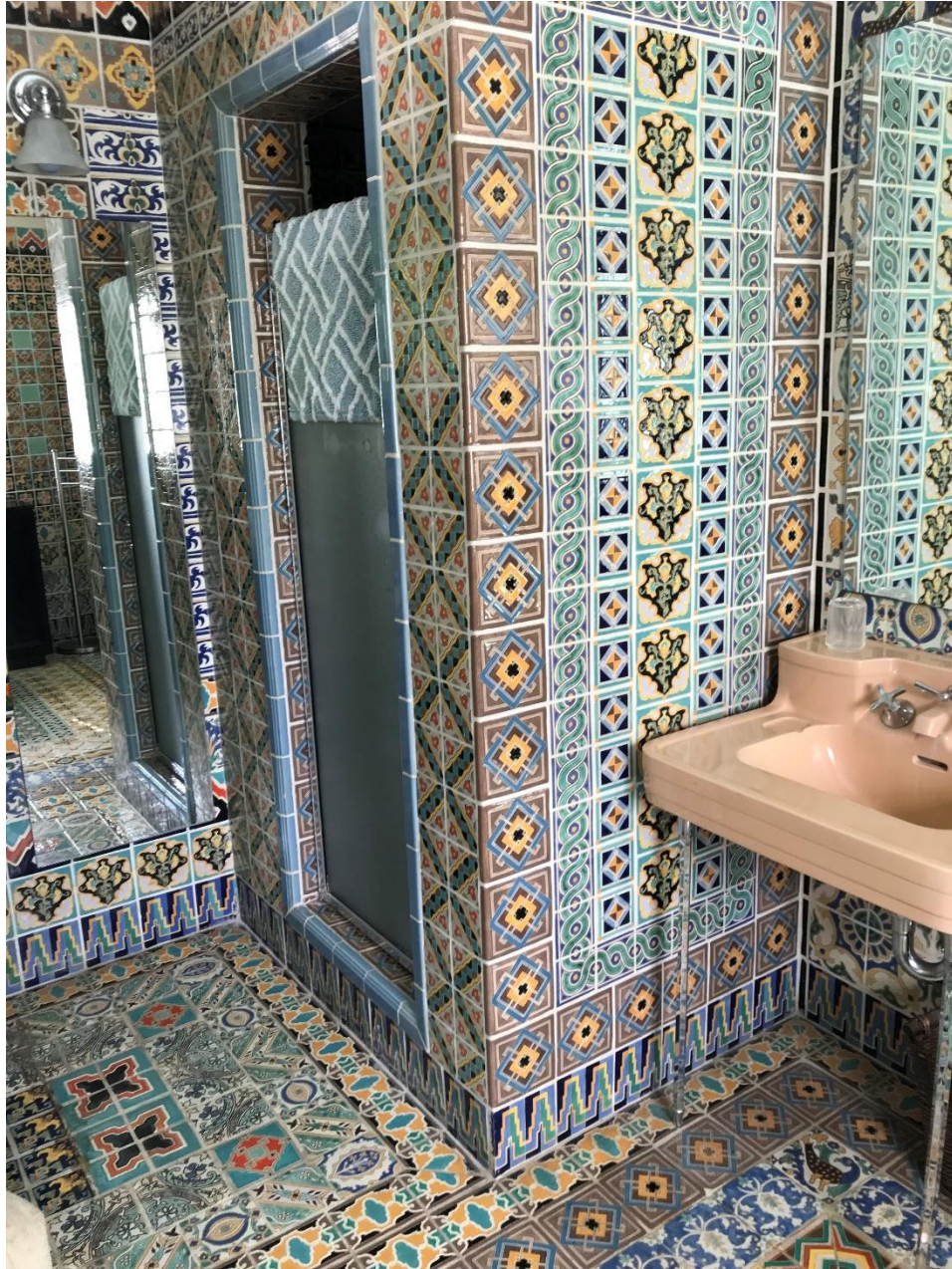
*The Roosevelt guest cottage today, door and window configuration altered with additional square footage added to front*



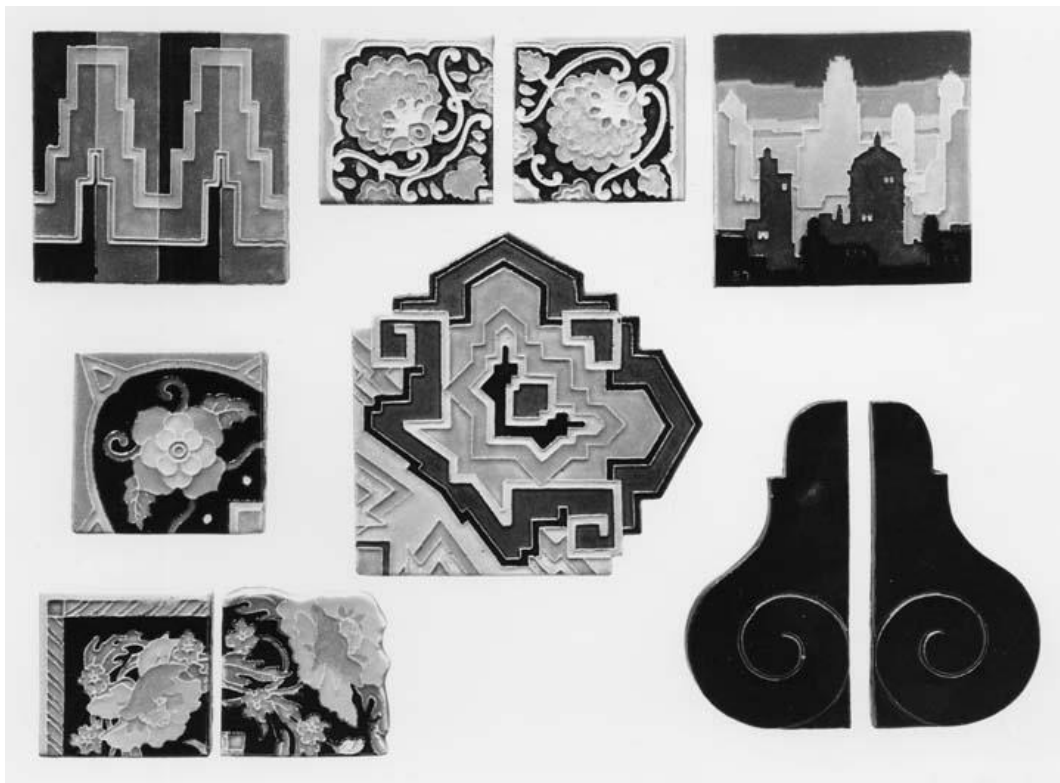


*A dazzling array of Claycraft tiles inside the Roosevelt guest cottage*





*Tiled floors and wall, with peach Crane sink*

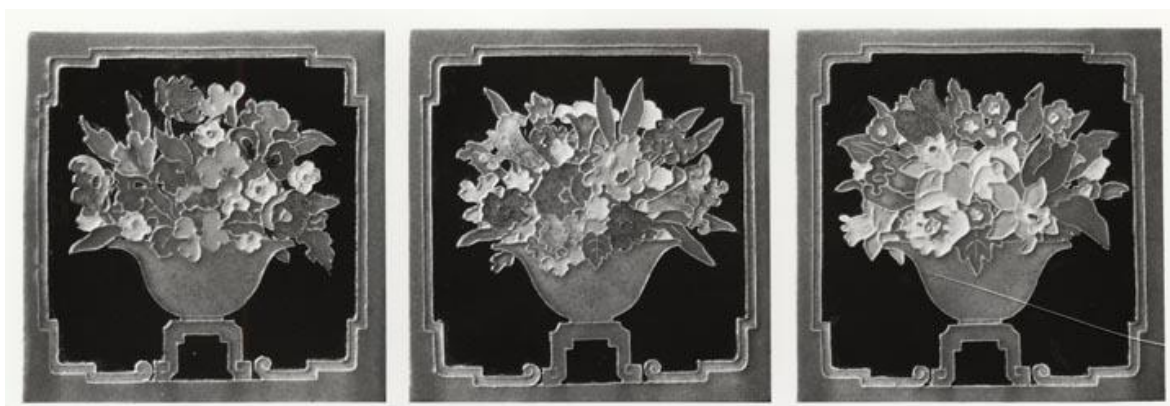


*This page from a 1930s Claycraft catalog shows samples of their hand-painted decorative tile, including a distinctive tile with city skyline motif. Courtesy California State Library*



*The city skyline tile installed in the Roosevelt guest cottage*





*Basket of flowers Claycraft tile in Roosevelt guest cottage, with a page from a 1930s Claycraft catalog*





*Circular stairway leading to lookout tower*



*Current front door configuration was added 1985*



*Asymmetrical, rambling hacienda style façade facing Hermosa Place*





*Current photos of garage area. Top photo shows barley twist column supports. Bottom photo shows bay window in kitchen*



## APPENDIX VII



*Portrait of Walter Kirschner painted by President Dwight D. Eisenhower at Kirschner's Grayson Farms in La Quinta. Courtesy the David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies*

# WALTER KIRSCHNER

Walter Kirschner, the extraordinary man who commissioned architects Brewster & Benedict to design his Palm Springs estate, “Casa Adaire,” came from humble beginnings. Possessed with a strong entrepreneurial streak, as well as maverick ideas about marketing and design, Kirschner quickly became successful in his field of retail, so much so that he became both friend and advisor to several sitting presidents. Because of this, Casa Adaire was the first of several lavish estates meant to serve as desert retreats for members of the Roosevelt family. Casa Adaire was representative of the deep appreciation he had for architecture and design, Kirschner’s passion was the planning and creation of beautiful places, whether they were his stores or homes. Kirschner was the man who gave legendary architect Victor Gruen, “The Father of the Shopping Mall” his first big break, hiring Gruen to design stores for his Grayson’s chain, and as Gruen later recalled, “He was thoroughly extroverted. He loved to sit in the limelight and to win over his contemporaries with his generosity and charm.”<sup>1</sup> Even when conducting business in New York, Kirschner could be found in his signature attire: a white, wide-brimmed Stetson cowboy hat, boots (also white), and casual western wear. This tall, tanned man with an imposing deep Yiddish accent was an unforgettable force. As his granddaughter Diane Harris Brown recalled, Kirschner was an “ambitious, moral person, who had a spiritual side as well. Everyone said he was the most charming man, that he would look at you and you would just melt.”<sup>2</sup>

Walter Kirschner was born to Ephraim and Molly Kirschner on September 12, 1893 in Eishyshok, a shtetl (a small town with a large Jewish population) which is now in present-day Lithuania, though depending on the year, as boundaries were redrawn, has also been in Russia and Poland.<sup>3</sup> His father was a wool and linen manufacturer in the town, supplying nearby czarist army bases with material for uniforms and underwear.<sup>4</sup> According to his granddaughter, young Walter’s family considered him “a prodigy. He had a great brain, and was a quick learner, he could do arithmetic in his head. The family wanted him to go to the great Rabbinical Academy at Vilna to become a rabbi, but they claimed that as a child, Walter’s favorite toy was money. He loved playing with it and wanted to make it. They explained to him that he wouldn’t make any money as a rabbi,” so he decided to seek his fortune in the country he had dreamt about, the United States, seeing it as the land of opportunity.<sup>5</sup> Though he would tell friends and even the press in his later years that he stowed away on a ship to America, the actual story is a little less fantastic. Several of Kirschner’s half-siblings had moved to the United States and taken jobs in the textile business, and Kirschner



was sent over to join one of them when he was 16, around 1910. In New York, Kirschner very quickly gained experience and knowledge about the wholesale clothing industry, and in just a few years, with his unstoppable energy and drive, by the middle 1910s, had gone into a partnership Kirschner & Michaels, which manufactured a “popular priced line of intermediates, children’s and juniors’ coats for the trade.”



*Dorothy Kirschner, ca 1919. Walter Kirschner, ca 1937. Photos courtesy Carol Borden*

Around this same time Kirschner met Miss Dorothy Cohen, a New York-born girl from Brooklyn who was considered a great beauty, with blue eyes and blonde hair. She liked to play the piano and sing, and according to her granddaughter, was sweet, modest and shy, with a good sense of humor. Walter soon began courting her, as well as courting her father, Meyer, who had a successful clothing company. Each year Meyer Cohen would go to Paris and buy the latest fashions, bring them back to Brooklyn to be copied, giving Dorothy the originals to wear. Though she may not have been in love with Walter, her father talked her into the marriage, seeing Walter, with his strong entrepreneurial streak, as a potentially successful son-in-law. They married December 23, 1918, in New York. In 1920, a daughter Adaire was born, named after a popular song at the time, “My Sweet Adair.”

In 1921, Kirschner went into business for himself as a clothing manufacturer, and in 1927 was part of a small group of investors who incorporated Publix Chain Stores, Inc., with headquarters in New York City. Publix was established to provide stylish, high-quality but medium-priced ladies apparel in very attractive, well-designed stores in cities throughout the east and mid-west, announcing that, “It is the policy of the company to own its own buildings as well as the entire fixtures, furnishings, etc.” The chain quickly expanded, and in 1928 announced it would open twenty-five stores

throughout Michigan. Kirschner moved his family to Flint, where he oversaw planning of new stores.

His involvement went beyond simply finding the real estate, but Kirschner was involved in every detail of planning the elegantly designed interiors, so much so that he was even incorrectly described by the *Lansing State Journal* as the “New York City architect in charge of designing the Publix stores.”<sup>6</sup> His granddaughter recalled that Kirschner wanted women in the Midwest to be able to go to stores that had all the sophistication and high design of the stores on New York’s famed Fifth Avenue.<sup>7</sup> Another passion and talent was born, as Kirschner, with his appreciation for great design, correctly understood what it could do to make shoppers feel fashionable and comfortable, which would ultimately encourage sales.

Even after the Stock Market Crash of 1929, when most retailers were struggling to survive, Kirschner, with his business acumen and strategic ideas, pushed the firm into a period of incredible growth and success. In 1930, the company’s name changed from Publix Chain Stores, Inc. to Grayson Shops. They expanded into the West Coast in 1932, opening a store on Market Street in San Francisco. When Kirschner travelled to Oakland the following year to open a new store there, he announced that it would be the seventy-second store in the chain.<sup>8</sup> By this time, the firm had headquarters in both New York City and Chicago, and Kirschner had installed his nephew, Hyman P. Kuchai, as president of the chain. Kuchai was the son of his half-sister Rachel. Philip S. Harris was named vice-president, and Kirschner would serve as Chairman of the Board, continuing to oversee the design and location of new stores.<sup>9</sup>

By the early 1930s, Kirschner and his wife divorced, and she and daughter Adaire moved to Los Angeles. Kirschner soon followed, using Los Angeles as his home base, travelling around the country to open new Grayson’s stores. He also began spending more time in Palm Springs, primarily due to his health, but he was quickly captivated by the lure of the desert.

## **THE ROOSEVELTS**

Walter Kirschner was a great admirer of the Roosevelt family, Eleanor Roosevelt in particular, and was a heavy contributor to President Roosevelt’s campaigns.<sup>10</sup> “As money began pouring into Kirschner’s coffers through his revolutionary mass-buying, mass-selling technique, the Russian immigrant boy developed an ideal: to repay his adopted land. FDR was in the White House, and to Kirschner that spelled America.”<sup>11</sup> The family warmly called Kirschner “Uncle Walter,” and it was said that as an intimate of President Roosevelt, “Walter dined frequently with him in the White House and slept in the historic Lincoln bedroom when he was there. Roosevelt used to love to hear Kirschner’s stories and jokes, all recited in his heavy Yiddish accent.”<sup>12</sup>

During World War II, it was Kirschner who “brought the plight of the European Jews to the attention of President Roosevelt. One night, after a round of story- and joke-telling, Kirschner raised the topic that had been burning within him like a fire: to save the Jews in Europe. The president’s response: ‘I don’t want you to talk about the Jews to me, now or ever. I haven’t time to hear any Jewish wailing.’”

Thereafter the president would wisecrack to his family in Kirschner's presence: 'Watch out for [Uncle Walter]. He may turn out to be another Goldman.' – a reference to a wealthy Jewish supporter of F.D.R.'s during his race for governor of New York, who had switched sides one month before the election."<sup>13</sup>

“Roosevelt's policy with regard to the rescue of European Jews did not change. And Walter Kirschner never spoke against the president, not even after FDR's death, always praising him as a great man.”<sup>14</sup> And despite his conflicted feelings, Kirschner did all he could to help the Roosevelt children succeed. It was said at the time that, “Walter Kirschner, the fabulous mercantile tycoon...has done almost as much for the Roosevelt children as the magic name 'Roosevelt.'” President Roosevelt once confided to Kirschner that if any of his children was to make a mark in the world on his own, he believed it would be Franklin, Jr. “That was enough for Walter. After the war, when young Roosevelt joined the New York law firm of Roosevelt, Freidin and Lattauer, Kirschner gave the highly profitable legal business of Grayson-Robinson stores to FDR Jr.'s firm.”<sup>15</sup>

When Anna “Sistie” Roosevelt Boettiger and her husband, John – a former Chicago Tribune reporter – wanted a newspaper, Kirschner bought one for them – the *Arizona Times*, husband and wife each owning 45%, with Eleanor Roosevelt owning the other 10%.<sup>16</sup> When it eventually failed, he generously took the financial rap. Kirschner's daughter Adaire developed a close relationship with Anna.

Roosevelt's youngest son, John, was shy and often overshadowed by his extrovert brothers. After World War II John wanted a merchandising career, so Kirschner gave him a job as the Regional Merchandising Manager for Grayson - Robinson Stores in Los Angeles. Unlike his siblings, Roosevelt intended to "work his way up" without seeking to profit from his name and connections. John made Kirschner's New York apartment at the Pierre his home in the city, and he and Kirschner spent quite a lot of time together, sometimes at Kirschner's estate at Long Island.<sup>17</sup> Another of Roosevelt's sons Elliot dreamed up money-making ventures, and Kirschner loyally helped finance them, some of which were in Cuba after Fulgencio Batista took power in 1952.

After World War II, Kirschner was appalled at what the Nazis had done, and what transpired in Europe. He began his friendship with then-General Eisenhower during this period and travelled to Europe to see for himself what atrocities had taken place. His daughter Adaire recalled that Kirschner boarded General Marshall's plane to survey the damage, and Kirschner encouraged Eisenhower to bring camera crews in to film the death camps, ensuring there was documentation. He wanted this story told and was prescient enough to know that in the future, people would try to deny what had taken place. He also worked to get weapons and troops to secure Israel, so the refugees would have a safe place to go.<sup>18</sup>

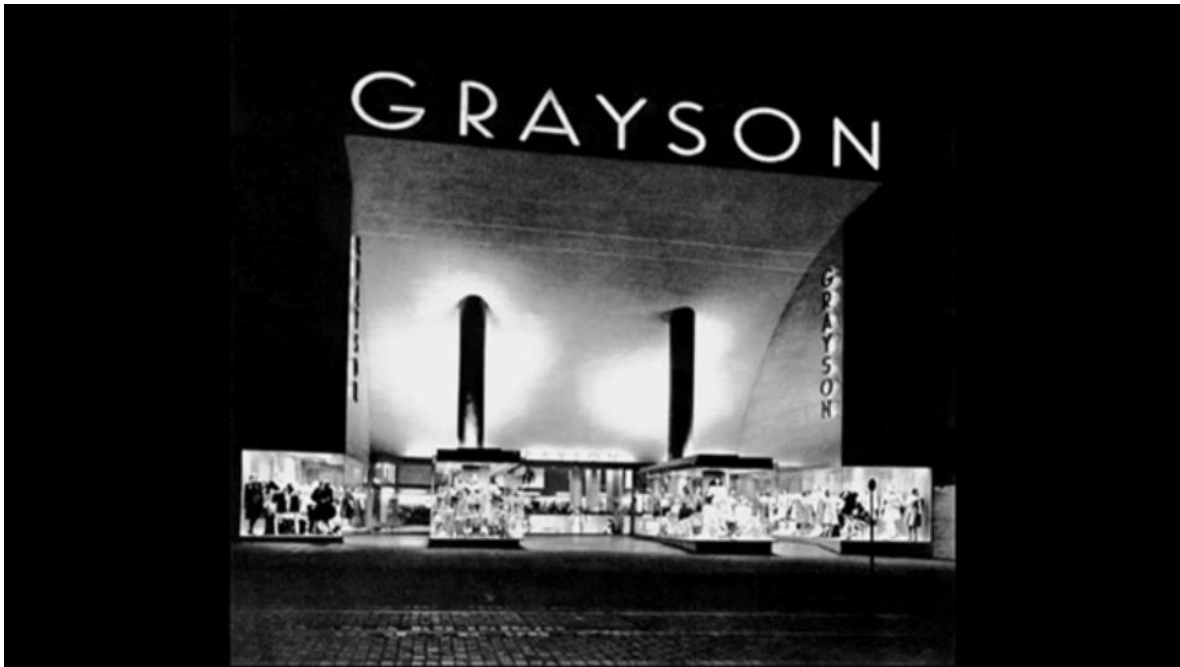




*Adaire Kirschner, 1936, the year Walter Kirschner built Casa Adaire. Adaire married Irving Harris in 1938, and they had two daughters, Diane and Carol. She passed away in 2012. Photo courtesy Carol Borden*

## **CASA ADAIRE**

In 1936, Kirschner bought three adjacent parcels in the Merito Vista tract of Palm Springs and hired architects Brewster & Benedict to design a lavish estate, which he named Casa Adaire after his daughter. Kirschner intended that the estate would serve as a private retreat for members of the Roosevelt family, and built a guest cottage adjacent to the house. In typical Kirschner fashion, the process of planning and building the house was more enjoyable than living in it, so after less than two years, he sold Casa Adaire and began planning his next larger estate on a date farm in Indio.



*Gruen and Krummeck's first Grayson's store in Seattle, 1940*

## **GRUEN AND GRAYSON'S**

Renowned architect Victor Gruen (1903-1980) is known today as “The Father of the Shopping Mall,” and his fame as a retail architect can be directly attributed to his early association and success with Grayson’s and with Kirschner. Kirschner always wanted the latest in design and had a daring eagerness for the best, and he found this in Victor Gruen. Born in Vienna in 1903, Gruen studied architecture at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts, designing some retail projects there, before leaving in 1938 when Germany annexed Austria. He arrived in New York "with an architect's degree, eight dollars, and no English."<sup>19</sup> He fell in love with Elsie Krummeck (who would become his partner in the firm of Gruen & Krummeck), found work as a draftsman, working on exhibitions for the 1939 World’s Fair, and got a small measure of attention with architect Morris Ketchum for a candy shop on Fifth Avenue, Barton’s Bonbonniere.

Because of this, one day Gruen and Krummeck were recommended to Philip Harris, vice-president of Grayson’s, who asked them to the Grayson offices to discuss some small revisions to the dressing rooms of a large store Grayson’s was planning in Seattle. While there, Gruen did a few sketches for Harris, who was impressed. He showed Gruen the plans an architect had already developed for the Seattle store, and asked his opinion. Gruen told Harris honestly that he was not impressed, and why. Harris brought the couple in to meet Grayson’s president Hyman Kuchai, Gruen explained his views, and Kuchai asked him what he would charge to make minor revisions to the exterior. When Gruen answered \$100, Kuchai told him he would give him \$200 if he could get them back by Monday (this was a Friday afternoon). Gruen and Krummeck worked feverishly over the weekend to create a whole new set of

blueprints for the entire store, and Krummeck created a watercolor rendering, all of which they showed Kuchai on Monday morning. Kuchai said, “This design is probably the craziest thing I’ve ever seen, but it shows some talent and maybe we can give you the opportunity to work for Grayson’s in the future,” handing them their \$200. He thanked them, and while showing them out, “expressed hope that his California partner would never see our drawings.” Next, a scene unfolded in cinematic detail, as described by Gruen:

*Then the door opened, and, like a deus ex machina, the California partner appeared. He was tall and slender, with a wide-brimmed hat over his tanned face; he was dressed entirely in white, with snow-white riding boots. This was Walter Kirschner. He had an aquiline nose and darkly shining eyes.*

*Although Mr. Kuchai tried to usher us out in a hurry, Mr. Kirschner wanted to know who we were and why we were there. He spotted the drawings, and, despite all the protests of his partner, he insisted on seeing them. He studied them gravely for a few minutes, then he turned to Elsie and me, asking in a sonorous voice, “What do you children have in mind for lunch?” “Nothing urgent,” we replied. “Then we will have a small, intimate meeting during lunch, just the three of us.”*

*The intimate lunch was in the swanky, spacious dining room of the Hotel New Yorker, where we were entertained by a raucous ice-skating show. All that noise made it difficult to communicate, but we finally understood that Kirschner was asking us what we were planning for tomorrow. I bluffed that I’d have to consult my calendar (even though I knew I had no plans for the next day), and he waved his hand: “I know exactly what you’re doing tomorrow. You’re flying to Seattle to make new plans for the store to be built there which will be based on the ideas that you have just presented.”<sup>20</sup>*

The next day Gruen and Krummeck found themselves on a first-class flight to Seattle, where they visited the existing store, and met with local contractors. Next, a whirlwind ten-day tour to Portland, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Santa Monica, San Diego, Omaha and Chicago, where they inspected stores and their locations to “form an opinion of position and structural properties.” Returning to New York, they submitted their report, and Kirschner hired them to serve as the “house and court architects” going forward for the Grayson’s chain. Kirschner and Gruen then travelled to Portland, where Gruen saw firsthand one of Kirschner’s mantras – “location, location, location.” Kirschner astutely understood the importance of prime real estate to maximize sales, and as Gruen later recalled, he:

*...learned his method of establishing new branch stores. First, he would appear in town in a snow-white Cadillac, accompanied by a beautiful young lady, whom he would introduce as his nurse. He would rent the most elegant suite in the best hotel. Once we had chosen a building, Kirschner would send a large basket of fruit from his ranch (oranges, tangerines, grapefruits, and dates) and a huge bouquet of flowers to the wife of the owner of the building. Then he would visit the landlord. With winning charm, he negotiated the lease. Then he hurried to the largest local bank, where he invited the bankers to provide him with a loan. He would convince the*

*bankers that they did not want to miss this opportunity, whereupon their wives also received fruit baskets and flowers.*

*Kirschner explained the often strikingly pretty nurses by saying that he had a serious heart condition. He also used this highly exaggerated or perhaps completely fictitious disease as a business advantage. If anyone objected or otherwise caused difficulties during negotiations, he would clutch his chest in pain, as if he were close to a heart attack. During the war, when the use of private cars was very limited, he visited his far-flung stores in an ambulance with wailing sirens<sup>21</sup>*

In fact, Kirschner did have a rather serious heart condition for several years, and his executive secretary Madeline (who Gruen may have confused for his nurse) carried a defibrillator when travelling with Kirschner and was, at the time, one of the few non-medical people trained to use one.<sup>22</sup>

Gruen humorously called Kirschner “and his henchmen a bunch of rascals on the brink of gangsterism. Walter Kirschner was a unique and curious mix of charm and very good business instincts. Similar to a gangland boss, he ran a tightly organized gang; the members of his gang probably committed no crimes, but they had to be ready for minor offenses at any time. To close associates, like us, he was a very benevolent tyrant. He was interested in the private lives and the welfare of his subjects; on the other hand, he expected you to be at his command anytime and anyplace.”<sup>23</sup>

Through World War II Grayson’s stores grew exponentially, with Kirschner directing Gruen and Krummeck to design innovative temporary “victory stores,” where war workers flush with cash could easily have access to whatever goods were available. In 1945, Grayson’s bought the Robinson’s Women’s Apparel chain, which had stores in New York, Maryland, Minnesota and Nebraska. The chain was renamed Grayson-Robinson, and by 1950 was the seventeenth largest retailer in the country, doing \$85 million in sales.

The sophisticated Late Moderne Grayson’s stores were widely published and got Gruen and Krummeck a wealth of recognition, but by the late 1940s, Gruen decided to break free from his strong ties to Grayson’s, and the work tapered off before he finally made a clean break. He recalled, “We eventually ended our collaboration because we could not agree on new planning issues as they arose in new situations. *Architectural Forum* wrote about this under the headline, “Architect Bites Client.”<sup>24</sup>



*Kirschner's Tower Ranch, 1939. Photo by Gail B. Thompson, Gayle's Studio Collection, courtesy Tracy Conrad*

## **TOWER RANCH, 1939**

81-379 Avenue 46, Indio.

When he sold Casa Adaire in 1938, it was reported Kirschner would remain in Palm Springs until he built another smaller home in the area. In his signature style, however, his next estate would be much larger, and even more grand. In 1939 Kirschner purchased a property known as the Lombard Ranch, a 40-acre parcel for which he paid \$17,500.<sup>25</sup> The ranch had an existing fifteen acres of date palms which were income producing. The Spanish-Colonial Revival home Kirschner built, like Casa Adaire, was stucco with whitewashed Spanish tile roof, had four large bedrooms (the master bedroom was 20x30) and four bathrooms; a mahogany-paneled 30x60 foot living room and adjacent art gallery; guest cottages and separate homes for his employees. The house featured two heated swimming pools, completely tiled in decorative Spanish tile, and as at Casa Adaire, there was a hexagonal tile-roofed gazebo nearby. There were also riding stables, a tennis court, and a 40-foot lookout tower, which gave the ranch its name – “Tower Ranch.”





*Kirschner's elaborately tiled pool today. Photo courtesy Jim Burruss*



*The tiled pool and guest cottage. Photo by Gail B. Thompson, Gayle's Studio Collection, courtesy Tracy Conrad*

Gruen and Krummeck were often summoned to Tower Ranch, and Gruen recalled the estate thusly:

*He gladly arranged visits to his ranch for clients and liked to impress them with his enormous Spanish-style villa and his two large swimming pools. The huge windows of his living room were reminiscent of the windows of a furniture store. The house had a rich library, which looked richer because Kirschner had purchased handsome, leather-bound books in bulk. In an annex, there was an art gallery with velvet-covered walls and lights above each painting. Among the paintings were mounted labels, framed in bronze. One read, for example: 'Madonna by Raphael (copy), frame fourteen carat gold.' Kirschner had purchased a carload of copies of oil paintings and then hired a graphic designer to create the labels.*

*Kirschner did much of his business while he was in one of his swimming pools. He had phones installed all around them and would swim back and forth between calls. Our discussions about the design of various stores usually took place around the pool, though only Walter was swimming, while we wore bathing suits and sat at the edge. If a sensitive issue such as our fee was being discussed, Walter dived a lot, in order to claim later that he had never heard anything about the matter. Then when we eventually raised this point at picnics on dry land, he was in the habit of offering us half of our fee. We neutralized this unpleasant habit by demanding dual-fee deals, which stipulate that any negotiations that are not to the satisfaction of all parties may be terminated.<sup>26</sup>*

In 1942, Eleanor Roosevelt visited Kirschner at Tower Ranch, bringing her daughter Anna and her husband John Boettiger. After that visit, Kirschner began planning a retirement home for President Roosevelt, which would be built on part of his Tower Ranch property.<sup>27</sup>



*Loveless Ranch, built as President Roosevelt's retirement retreat. Photo by Gail B. Thompson, Gayle's Studio Collection, courtesy Tracy Conrad*

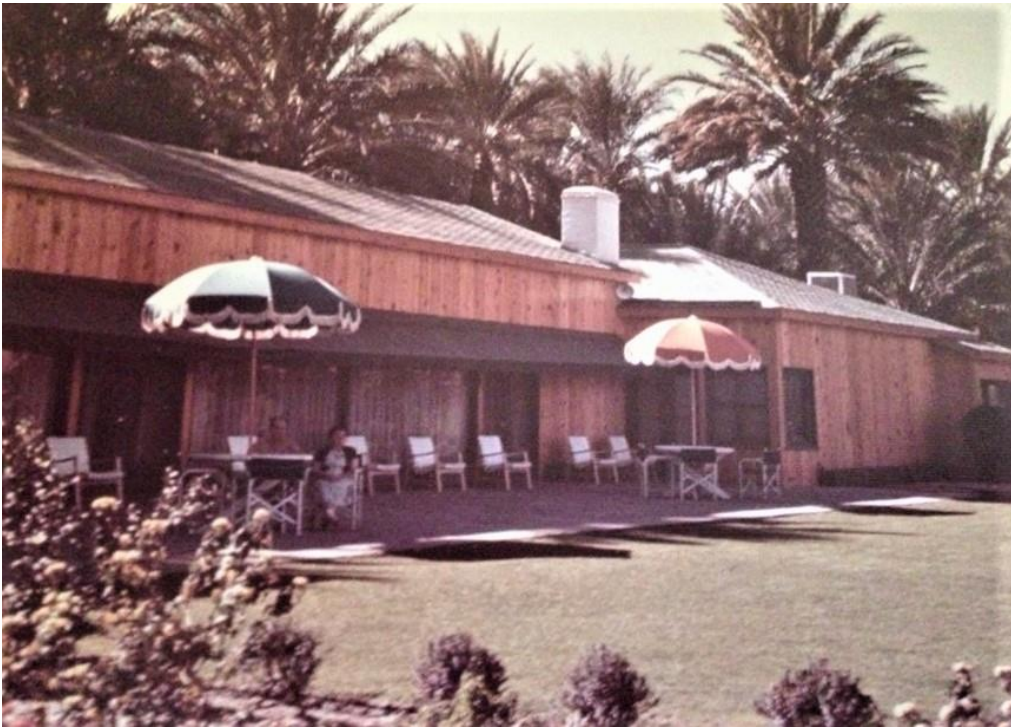
## **LOVELESS RANCH, 1943**

46-861 Madison Street, Indio

On a ten-acre parcel carved out of his Tower Ranch, Kirschner created a large estate which he hoped President Roosevelt would use after his retirement. From Madison Street, a five-room security house stood at the compound's entrance, which would house Roosevelt's Secret Service men, as well as a large garage building and caretaker's and servant's buildings. The compound was enclosed by an eleven-foot-high horseshoe-shaped wall. The large main house featured a high-ceilinged 66x40 foot living room with two fireplaces, a large bar and a dining table which could accommodate twenty. A professional kitchen could accommodate large-scale entertaining. The horseshoe shaped panel of lawn was inset with an enormous swimming pool, with pool house next to it. Adjacent were 300 date trees and two and a half acres of grapefruit trees.

President Roosevelt died in April 1945, before he could retire and enjoy the house. In 1947, Kirschner sold the property to Abraham and Esther Teitelbaum, husband and wife attorneys from Chicago. They lived in the house for more than ten years. Loveless Ranch has been demolished.





*Top: The living room of the main residence, Photo by Gail B. Thompson, Gayle's Studio Collection, courtesy Tracy Conrad*

*Left: the exterior of the main residence. Courtesy Robert Teitelbaum*



*Top: The pool and poolhouse. Bottom: Walter Kirschner stands tall and imposing at left in his signature western wear, with members of the Teitelbaum family at Loveless Ranch, ca. 1949. Courtesy Robert Teitelbaum*





*Grayson Farms. Photo courtesy Diane Harris Brown*

## **GRAYSON FARMS, 1947**

Adjacent to the La Quinta Hotel on Avenida Obregon.

After Kirschner sold the Tower Ranch estate and orchards in Indio, in 1947 he had an equally grand home built adjacent to the La Quinta Hotel, a 33-acre estate known as Grayson Farms, with a large date grove, citrus orchard and acres of other fruit trees. Once again, the large main house was Spanish-Colonial in design, with white stucco walls and whitewashed tile roof. The house was “L” shaped and surrounded by a stucco wall, which enclosed beautifully landscaped grounds and a raised patio area with a barbeque pit of flagstone, which itself cost \$10,000. The centerpiece of the gardens was an enormous biomorphic swimming pool, which featured an island in the middle planted with palm trees, accessed by a bridge. Kirschner’s granddaughter Diane recalls that the big pool was mostly “for show,” but that Walter had a smaller pool adjacent to the master bedroom, which he kept heated to a constant 90 degrees, and which he used often. “He loved to cook, and was very well-known for his chili, I can still see him in my head in the kitchen there. He told me that the secret ingredient in his chili was peanut butter.”<sup>28</sup> The estate also featured a large furnished office, servant’s quarters, a date





*The gardens at Grayson Farms featured a biomorphic swimming pool with an island at its center, accessible via a bridge. Photo courtesy Diane Harris Brown*

packing house and a barn. He loved to entertain at Grayson Farms, but didn't have many guest rooms, according to his granddaughter, but would put up his guests in the bungalows at the La Quinta Hotel.

Around 1948, Kirschner married his executive secretary, Madeline Yeo (1905-1995). According to his granddaughter, "she was every inch the lady, very elegant, and she really looked after him. He was of course a very busy man, but she handled every detail just as an executive secretary would. But she also gave him the emotional support a wife would."

In 1951, Kirschner invited his friend President Truman to La Quinta, offering Grayson Farms for the President's use, and booked a large block of rooms at the La Quinta Hotel for the Secret Service detail. Kirschner's neighbor, George Allen, offered his own house for use by Truman's White House staff. Truman was looking forward to the visit, but a hitch developed. The Secret Service came to survey the properties and discovered that "La Quinta has a telephone system as quaint as its adobes. The collective genius of the White House could figure out no possible way to operate a private Presidential switchboard through that desert-strung expanse. The vacation had to be abandoned."<sup>29</sup>

Another friend of Kirschner's was President Eisenhower, who did visit him at Grayson Farms and painted his portrait there.

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

February 1, 1951

Dear Mr. Kirschner:

I appreciated very much your letter of January thirty-first. The pictures which you sent me were most interesting and I am looking forward to seeing the second batch which you are sending me. I hope arrangements can be made so we can take advantage of that wonderful situation.

Sincerely yours,



Mr. Walter Kirschner  
Box 202  
LaQuinta, California

*Letter from President Harry S. Truman to Walter Kirschner, discussing plans for Truman's upcoming visit to Grayson Farms in La Quinta, 1951*

## **PALACE COUP**

In 1952, Kirschner's nephew Hyman Kuchai, who had served as president of the Grayson-Robinson company since the early 1930s, decided to retire. Phillip S. Harris, who had long served as vice-president, became president. In February 1953, Kirschner hired his friend Maurice J. Tobin to serve as vice-president of Grayson-Robinson. Tobin had recently been Truman's Secretary of Labor, and before that was the mayor of Boston and governor of Massachusetts.<sup>30</sup> In July 1953 Tobin died, and the following month, Kuchai returned to stage what Kirschner's granddaughter now refers to as a "palace coup," taking back full control of Grayson-Robinson, while forcing Walter Kirschner out of the company he had co-founded. Kuchai became "the family villain." Harris became president of S. Klein. The Grayson-Robinson company later went bankrupt.<sup>31</sup>

Crushed by the family betrayal, Kirschner was forced to sell his beloved Grayson Farms in La Quinta. The La Quinta Hotel bought it in 1954 planning to use it as a means of accommodating small groups who might want luxury accommodations, but the following year sold it for \$112,500 to Dr. Charles W. Benson and his wife Hawayo Takata, the sale facilitated by a \$75,000 loan from heiress Doris Duke -- Takata was a Reiki practitioner who was treating Duke. The Bensons renamed the estate Spring Board Farms. The shell of the house is now part of the La Quinta Resort serving as the Centre Court Café.

The Kirschners moved to Miami Beach, taking an eighth-floor penthouse apartment at the lavish new Belle Towers development on Belle Island, designed by noted architect B. Robert Swartburg. While in Miami, Kirschner began cooking up another big plan in nearby Havana, the creation of a luxury hotel-casino that would be the largest such property ever built there, the Monte Carlo de la Habana Hotel.

## **THE MONTE CARLO DE LA HABANA HOTEL**

In 1955, the Hilton Havana opened to great fanfare, elevating tourism in Havana, and the Welton Becket-designed high rise was touted as a national triumph by U.S.-backed Cuban authoritarian leader Fulgencio Batista y Zaldívar. Batista used the hotel as an example of national pride and accomplishment, economic progress, and proof that his policies were beneficial to the Cuban people.<sup>32</sup> By 1957, there was a palpable sense of optimism for people conducting business in Cuba, with the gross national product at a record high. Hotels were booked to capacity, and Havana was poised to combine the glamour and sophistication of Las Vegas and Monte Carlo. This attracted the attention of Meyer Lansky and Santo Trafficante, who began funneling money into Cuban hotels and casinos, which in turn "generated funds used to facilitate the corrupt political system" led by Batista.<sup>33</sup>

Against this backdrop of money, intrigue and glamour, Lansky and Trafficante began to secretly plan for the most grandiose hotel and casino ever to be constructed in Cuba. To be called the Monte Carlo de la Habana, the massive resort which would have it all: besides 656-room hotel building with casino, nightclub, restaurants and lounges, the project would include a marina with canals and berths for yachts, a landing pad for helicopters and hydroplanes, and a golf course. Needing \$20 million capital to fund the



project, they began assembling a board of directors of some well-connected U.S. businessman, politicians and entertainers, the most well-known being Frank Sinatra.<sup>34</sup> Sinatra planned to stage a weekly variety show from the hotel that would be televised. A report from lawyers representing the company explained:

*[Sinatra] wants to televise the hotel's properties from Cuba to the United States weekly, given that he is a producer and as an interested party in his programs intends to fulfill a double function: first, to put the hotel he manages in the spotlight; and second, to divert the profits produced by contracting the show in Cuba to a Cuban American company that will produce shows and movies from Cuba with panoramic vistas of the hotel serving as a backdrop.*<sup>35</sup>

As a guarantee, Sinatra offered to bring to Cuba the 20 most important entertainers to publicize the hotel, which would promote international publicity in favor of the government directed by Major General Fulgencio Batista y Zaldívar. Perhaps through Elliott Roosevelt, with whom Kirschner had business dealings in Cuba at the time, Kirschner became interested in the property, recognizing its potential, and excited about having another big design project to work on, so he signed on as one of the investors. Without ever making an announcement to the press about the project, in August 1958 construction began. Just a few months later, in January 1959 Kirschner's daughter Adaire and her family were visiting him in Havana and the group had planned to go on a fishing excursion. When the fishing trip was called off due to rain, they all decided to go back early to Miami. The following day, Castro marched into Havana and took control of the capital, the project was cancelled, and the investors lost millions.<sup>36</sup>

## LATER YEARS

After many years living in Miami, Madeline Kirschner, who had grown up in Seattle, longed to return to the West Coast, so Walter, also missing his daughter Adaire, found a penthouse apartment at the stylish new Sierra Towers in West Hollywood. Walter Kirschner died October 30, 1974, in Los Angeles. Madeline lived for twenty years more; she passed away April 11, 1995 in West Hollywood. Both are entombed at Forest Lawn Cemetery in Glendale.

# APPENDIX VIII

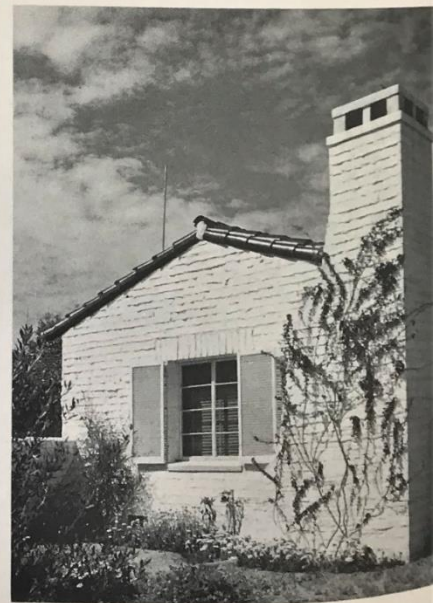
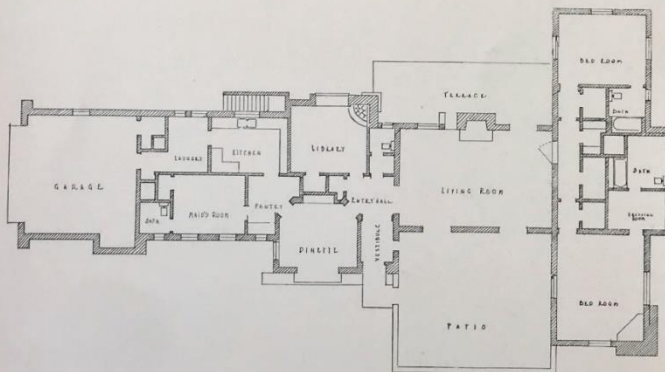


Photographs by Clyde Staughts

## THE RESIDENCE OF MR. AND MRS. ALVAH HICKS

Palm Springs, California

Designed by  
BREWSTER & BENEDICT



*Brewster & Benedict's home for Mr. and Mrs. Alvah Hicks was featured in California Arts & Architecture, June 1939*

# BREWSTER & BENEDICT

Though only in partnership for a relatively short time, the architectural firm of Brewster & Benedict created an astonishing number of high quality projects in Palm Springs, and their work shows their mastery of nearly any style popular at the time: Spanish Colonial Revival and other Mediterranean inspired architecture; Hollywood Regency, Bermuda, California Ranch and even Streamline Moderne. In fact, three of their buildings have been designated Class One Historic Sites, though Brewster & Benedict have not been given credit for their work (Pacific Building, the Cork ‘n Bottle, and the Bacon L. Clifton Building). While Floyd Brewster was a highly talented, university-trained and licensed architect, he was rather reserved and not quite as ambitious as his partner, Hiram Hudson Benedict who was, in the words of a later partner “a great salesman. He would sketch upside down in front of clients and that alone knocked their socks off.”<sup>37</sup> Though Benedict wasn’t licensed at the time, nor had he received the same extensive education as Brewster, he was a very capable designer, possessing immense drive, charisma and charm, which made for a dynamic partnership.

## **FLOYD E. BREWSTER**

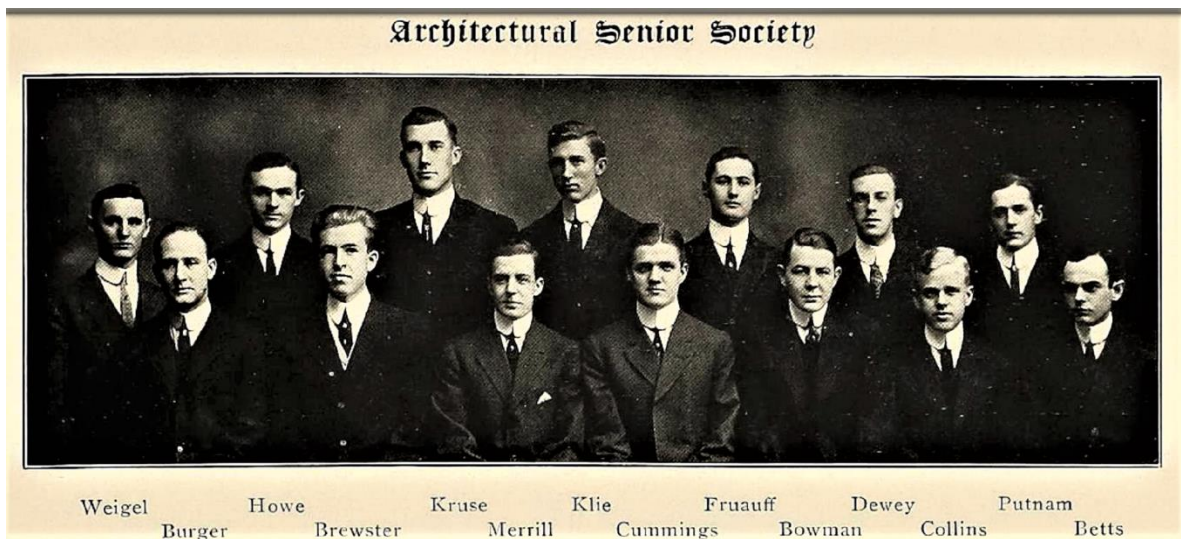
Floyd Emery Brewster was born in Lake Placid, New York, on August 17, 1888. His father, Emery A. Brewster (1860-1920) married Frances Ellen Bull (1863-1944) in 1883, and they had five children. Emery Brewster, a carpenter, was a descendant of Mayflower pioneer William Brewster, senior elder and leader of the Plymouth community.<sup>38</sup> Young Floyd was interested in music, taking guitar and singing lessons, and was praised for his fine bass voice.<sup>39</sup> He also was interested in art and had found he had a talent for drawing.

After graduating from Ithaca High School in 1908, Brewster enrolled in the architecture program at Cornell University, one of the world’s most highly regarded and prestigious schools of architecture. It was also the only Ivy League university to offer the Bachelor of Architecture degree. While at Cornell, Brewster was educated in the Beaux Arts curriculum, which emphasized “correct” reproduction of historical styles, axial symmetry in site planning, massing and composition, and which gave the highest architectural values to ceremonial grandeur, monumentality, and the formal discipline of the classical orders. The course was divided into four parts: construction and practice; expression; architectural composition; and history of architecture, with many hours of drawing, watercolor, and clay modeling.





*Floyd Brewster in photos from his Cornell yearbook, 1911*



Brewster was elected President of the Gargoyle Society, the campus architecture society. Known by the nickname “Monty,” his fellow classmates described Brewster in the Cornell yearbook as: “a typical product of the mountains, light-haired, raw-boned, silent and smiling, he takes his exercise before breakfast and everything else in sight from then on.”

After graduation in 1912, Brewster took the customary Grand Tour of Europe, travelling with a small group of architecture students, guided by Professor of Architecture A.C. Phelps. Phelps, who specialized in the history of architecture at Cornell and lectured regularly on the subject at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, took the group to France, Italy, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium and England. Recognizing his talent and strong aptitude, the Faculty of the School of Architecture recommended Brewster for a scholarship to graduate school, where he focused on courses in Design and Drawing from Life.<sup>40</sup>



*Brewster's designs for Bank of Lake Placid and Lake Placid Town Hall*

After completing graduate school in 1913, Brewster moved to Spokane, Washington, to work for his fellow classmate Harold Clarence Whitehouse, who had begun a practice with George H. Keith -- Keith & Whitehouse.<sup>41</sup> He worked there for a little more than a year, drafting and designing.<sup>42</sup> Returning to Lake Placid in 1915, he went into partnership with James Sarsfield Kennedy, of Brooklyn, and the firm of Brewster & Kennedy, Architects had offices in Lake Placid and Brooklyn. Brewster was soon busy and successful, designing several civic buildings, including the Lake Placid Town Hall and Post Office buildings; the Bank of Lake Placid; a bowling alley; the Lake Placid Pharmacy; a theatre building; a Masonic Temple and First Methodist church, as well as several residences. In 1916, Brewster was elected a member of the American Institute of Architects, and on July 1, 1916 he married Miss Hazel Arvilla Hunt of Santa Barbara.<sup>43</sup>

In the fall of 1917, Brewster and his wife moved to Riverside, California, where he took a position in the technical school at Polytechnic High School as Head of the Drawing Department, teaching classes in Architectural, Mechanical and Freehand drawing. With architectural work slow because of World War I, Brewster believed "that I would be of more use in this field than in private practice, at this time." He was also listed in city directories as a practicing architect in Riverside and became a member of the Southern California Chapter of the AIA.<sup>44</sup> While at Polytechnic, one of his star students was a young man named Hiram Hudson Benedict, who was a very talented artist and who, under the high school's program of advanced college training, began to assist Brewster at his architectural practice.<sup>45</sup>



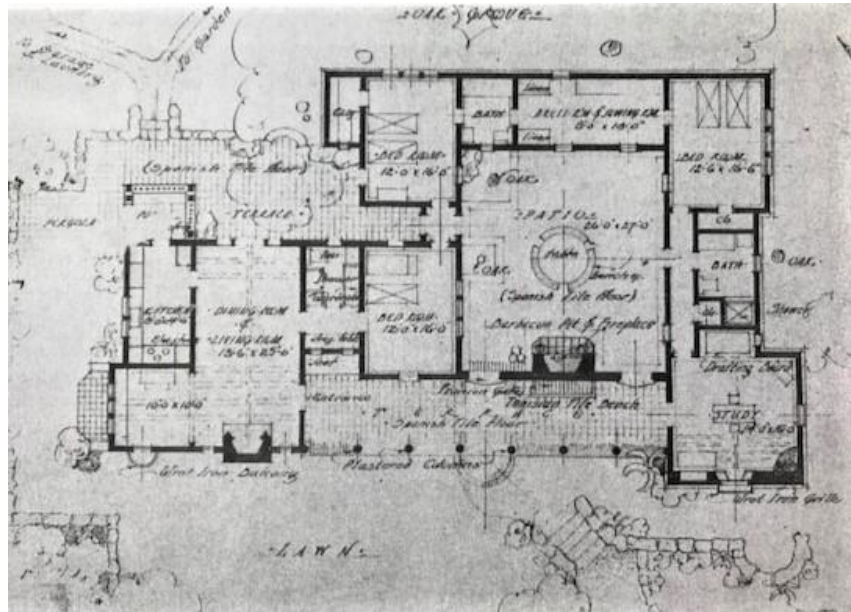
*Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, 1922. Floyd E. Brewster, architect; Lockwood de Forest, landscape architect*

After just a year, in 1918, Brewster moved to Santa Barbara, where he opened his own office. Some early projects in Santa Barbara included a \$20,000 home at 1930 Mission Ridge Road for the daughter of B.F. Goodrich and her husband John C. Breckenridge, grandson of U.S. Vice-President John C. Breckenridge; four houses in Channel Canyon in the “El Sol se Acuesta” tract, and another \$20,000 home on Mission Ridge Road for Mrs. Charles Forsythe.<sup>46</sup> An important and prominent project was the first iteration of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. Created in collaboration with legendary Santa Barbara landscape architect Lockwood de Forest, the museum was designed to retain three existing oak trees in a central patio, enclosed by wings with covered loggias. Charles H. Cheney, in the introduction to *Californian Architecture in Santa Barbara* (1929), pointed the Museum out as one of the more successful structures in Santa Barbara, observing, “The most pleasant reaction one gets from public buildings is that produced by the little Museum of Natural History, hidden away among the sycamores and oaks in Mission Canyon. Intimate in scale, it seems to be in complete harmony with nature, and the life that it depicts. This is much in contrast with the horrible caverns of museums so distressing to visitors in our big cities, which with their barnlike proportions and ugly backgrounds well-nigh destroy the very treasures they are supposed to display.”<sup>47</sup>

Two more important residential projects of this period included a \$23,000 Spanish-Colonial Revival home for J. Y. Parker at 1600 Paterna Road, for which Brewster won an honorable award from *Architect & Engineer* magazine in 1924.<sup>48</sup> The house Brewster designed for his own family was pictured in H. Philip Staats’ book *Californian Architecture in Santa Barbara*.

Most of these projects were designed in the Spanish-Colonial Revival style, a style made popular by architect Bertram Goodhue, who had used it for the buildings at the 1915-16 San Diego Panama-California Exposition. Adopted by all the leading





Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Floyd E. Brewster, Santa Barbara, 1922

architects of the day, including Reginald D. Johnson, Roland E. Coate, Wallace Neff and Paul R. Williams, the style remained the leading force in Southern California until World War II. Most of these fine architects used these Spanish and other Mediterranean design cues as inspiration for their contemporary homes. They believed this regional style would be most appropriate to California. But they were free in their interpretation, and in the words of architect W. Templeton Johnson, “We cannot simply be copyists of Italy, Greece, or Spain. The test of our architectural abilities is that in drawing upon the rich precedent of the Mediterranean, we should breathe into it such a spirit of originality and fitness for our own needs that we may by degrees evolve an architecture which we shall be proud to call Californian.”<sup>49</sup>

Instead, these architects sought to create the feeling or mood of their Mediterranean precedents, something that would be appreciated by their California clients, and suitable for the surrounding landscape and climate which evoked the Mediterranean. The style that emerged typically featured white stucco walls and red tiled roofs, while decorative elements borrowed from Spain included decorative painted tilework, intricate wrought iron, and carved wood elements. Because of the benign Southern California climate, there was an emphasis on the indoor/outdoor relationship, with rooms laid out in “U” or “L” shaped wings, for easy access to courtyards, which often featured a tiled fountain. In Santa Barbara the greatest proponent of the style was architect George Washington Smith, who was later dubbed the “Founding Father of the Spanish Colonial Style” by architectural historian David Gebhard. In January 1923 Brewster began arguably the most important part of his career, when he began working for George Washington Smith, whose magnificent structures are still the gold standard by which the Spanish-Colonial style is judged. Brewster would remain one of Smith’s most valued collaborators, remaining with him until his death in 1930.



*“Casa del Herrero,” the Residence of Mr. and Mrs. George Fox Steedman, 1925. George Washington Smith, architect*





*Architect George Washington Smith's staff outside the studio, ca. 1925. From left: Harold Edmondson, Hilma Torgeson, Floyd E Brewster, Lutah Maria Riggs, Douglas Honnold*

## **GEORGE WASHINGTON SMITH, THE “FATHER OF THE SPANISH COLONIAL STYLE”**

George Washington Smith presented a new approach in his Spanish-inspired designs that changed the course of architecture in Santa Barbara and in Southern California. Turning his back on the Spanish Renaissance and the Baroque, his inspiration was the Hispano-Moorish architecture in the Andalusian region of Spain. According to Patricia Gebhard, widow of architectural historian David Gebhard, “George Washington Smith unquestionably stands out among the eclectic architects of the 1920s, particularly with his work in Mediterranean or Spanish imagery. He was certainly an innovator, and his buildings have survived as lasting testimonies to his artistry.”<sup>50</sup> Part of his innovation was that, despite his use of traditional idioms, Smith’s houses are basically informal abstract patterns of mass and volume that do not rely solely on historic imagery for their aesthetic statement. “Smith was one of the first



architects to derive inspiration in scale, proportion, massing, colors, and texture from the farmhouses of Andalusia in southern Spain. He continued to produce some of the finest examples of Spanish Revival architecture throughout the 1920s.”

Because of his very strong background and proficiency in drafting and drawing, Brewster became one of Smith’s most important designers, second only to Lulah Maria Riggs in prominence on his staff. Gebhard also observed, “Though Smith was trained as both an architect and fine art artist, his drawings, rather surprisingly, are not very good. What he intended in his buildings is evident in his drawings, but the drawings have no life of their own.” Smith counted on Brewster, and Riggs, who was equally gifted, to give his ideas life. According to Patricia Gebhard, Brewster was a good choice for the Smith office. She explains, “Not only was he an excellent draftsman (his perspectives were close to Riggs’s in their expressiveness), but he also helped Smith supervise ongoing construction, chiefly that being done outside of Santa Barbara. Riggs made site visits with Smith, but she did not do extensive out-of-office supervision and seems to have had little contact with clients. At least one client preferred not to have any contact with her at all.”<sup>51</sup> By the mid-twenties the Smith office, besides Brewster and Riggs, consisted of Harold Edmondson, Douglas Honnold, and Hilma Tyson. The close-knit group often ate lunch together in the courtyard adjoining the office.”<sup>52</sup>

After Brewster joined his office in 1923, Smith felt he could expand the scope of his practice and began designing projects away from Southern California. One of the first was a commission for Russel K. Dougherty in Colorado Springs, Colorado. For the next seven years until his death many of Smith’s major commissions were in more remote locations, and it was Brewster’s responsibility as construction supervisor to serve as Smith’s representative for those projects, often making several site visits.<sup>53</sup> The project Brewster would most fondly remember later was the Templeton Crocker home in Pebble Beach, which Brewster oversaw during its two years of construction. Another was “Casa del Herrero,” the home of Mr. and Mrs. George Fox Steedman, and one of the most magnificent George Washington Smith houses still standing. Brewster and Steedman developed a strong friendship during the course of construction, a friendship that would be important to Brewster several years later. A project which Brewster brought to the office, and one that he had a very strong hand in the design of, was for his friends Mr. and Mrs. William M. Danner of Santa Barbara. Mr. Danner wrote Smith after the job was complete, saying, “We certainly appreciate the interest that you and Mr. Brewster have shown in helping us to get a very lovely home.”<sup>54</sup>

On March 16, 1930, Smith died suddenly from a heart attack, and Lulah Maria Riggs worked to complete any projects still in process, before closing the office. On April 3, 1930, shortly after Smith’s death, the Santa Barbara Chapter of AIA unanimously elected Brewster an associate member. Brewster once again opened his own small office, and though work was slow due to the Great Depression, he did design the Jefferson Elementary School (now the Santa Barbara Middle School) at 1321 Alameda Padre Serra, 1930.<sup>55</sup> The project won an Honor Award, Honorable Mention for the school from the Santa Barbara Community Arts Association.

By October 1933, the financial devastation of the Great Depression had slowed down work so much that Brewster was on the verge of losing his house to foreclosure.

Desperate, he wrote to George Fox Steedman, urgently requesting a \$400 loan, explaining the dire situation. Steedman had developed a relationship with Brewster over the course of the construction of his house. Steedman decided to take him under his wing, offering him temporary work at his shop if necessary. They collaborated on the design of a blacksmith's shop, where Steedman displayed his remarkable collection of tools used for his metalsmithing and woodworking projects. Steedman had an office in the northwest corner of the building, which featured a tile mural of Santa (Saint) Barbara, and Brewster designed a space devoted to flower arranging for Steedman's wife Carrie.<sup>56</sup>

One of President Roosevelt's first policies after becoming President was the creation of the New Deal, with one important program being the National Housing Act of 1934. This spurred the creation of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), a program meant to encourage building by regulating interest rates, which facilitated more people being able to afford a mortgage. Soon after the creation of the FHA, Brewster was appointed to the position of staff architect of the FHA. He worked out of the Los Angeles office, a position he held until 1935, when his old student Hiram Hudson Benedict contacted Brewster from Palm Springs, where a building boom was taking place.<sup>57</sup>



*Floyd E. Brewster's drawing for the patio of the George Washington Smith-designed Vincent House, Pebble Beach, 1923*



*Architectural designer Hiram Hudson Benedict, ca. 1936.  
Photo courtesy Lynda Mason*

## **HIRAM HUDSON BENEDICT**

Hiram Hudson Benedict (1900-1984) was born in Riverside to Charles Benedict, a farmer, and his wife Edith. As a boy Benedict wanted to be a civil engineer, but in his junior year in high school he took a Mechanical Drawing class under Floyd E. Brewster at Riverside Polytechnic High School. Brewster recognized the boy's talent and proficiency, and encouraged him to pursue architecture instead, enrolling him in an Advanced College Study Course, as well as employing him as a draftsman for his own private practice.<sup>58</sup> The first of Benedict's eight marriages came in 1919, when he married Margaret Mildred Robertson. The couple would go on to have three children.

Benedict spent the 1920s bouncing from the office of one accomplished architect to another, first briefly as draftsman for James Osborne Craig before joining the Los Angeles office of distinguished architect John C. Austin (1920-21), who advised Benedict to "go out and get experience. Go all over the country and don't work in any place for over a year."<sup>59</sup> Benedict next became draftsman for George Washington Smith in Santa Barbara (1921-23). After architect Smith fired him, Benedict was in the Pasadena office of Marston, Van Pelt & Maybury (1923-25), first as draftsman and later as designer. The years 1926 and 1927 found Benedict in New York City, working under architect James Gamble Rogers, where Benedict oversaw design detail for the Yale University Sterling Memorial Library. Finally, Benedict returned to Los Angeles and the office of Walker & Eisen (1927-29) who were busy designing the El Mirador Hotel in Palm Springs. After the Stock Market Crash of 1929, work soon dried up and in the



early 1930s Benedict worked as designer for an architect in Detroit before finding work with the FHA office in Los Angeles in 1934, where he presumably encountered Floyd Brewster once again.

In 1935, Benedict moved to Palm Springs and partnered with another draftsman, Allan J. Taylor, opening an office on the lower floor of the Palm Springs Theatre. Because architectural work was still slow in Southern California overall, unlicensed architects began to open satellite offices for established, licensed Southern California architects – for example, John Porter Clark (who was still unlicensed) arrived in 1932 to work under the name of the Pasadena firm Van Pelt & Lind; Charles O. Matcham opened a satellite office designing for licensed architect Earl Heitschmidt in 1934. Affiliated first with Los Angeles architect Gene Verge, in late 1935 Benedict convinced old friend and mentor Brewster that there was work to be had in Palm Springs, and so the office of Brewster & Benedict opened in Palm Springs. Their first project was high profile, an exhibition house for Bullocks Department Store, which would be located in Old Las Palmas. It was the first of three Bullocks Demonstration homes the architects would design.

Besides the array of residential projects for Palm Springs' society leaders such as Alvah Hicks and Katherine Finchy, another high-profile structure was the Pacific Building, described at the time as being of the "Italian Renaissance type of architecture." The Pacific Building, which opened in the spring of 1937, was built for Pacific Stores, Inc., and had eleven shops on the lower floor, with eighteen apartments on the upper. Five of the stores fronted Palm Canyon Drive, while six opened onto a charming patio with tiled fountain. Each apartment had a living room, kitchenette and bath, the intention being to provide low-priced apartments for people employed in the Village.<sup>60</sup> (For a complete list of known projects designed by Brewster & Benedict, see Appendix IX).

By early 1937, the office was humming with activity, and it was reported that Brewster & Benedict would "keep the organization intact and busy throughout the summer. Besides Floyd Brewster, member of the American Institute of Architects, and his partner H. H. Benedict, the staff consists of Martin Williamson, Clair Lukens, Charles Klingerman (color artist and draughtsman), William Vandel, John Cook and Miss Eula Morrison, secretary."<sup>61</sup> In order to maintain the busy office year-round, they would need a bigger, better office, ideally one that was fully air conditioned. Their next office, at 419 North Palm Canyon, which opened in the summer of 1937, was larger, and air conditioned, the *Desert Sun* reporting, "the new structure, built at a cost of \$5,000, will have private offices for Mssrs. Brewster & Benedict, a large reception room, and a large drafting room 17x30 feet in size."<sup>62</sup>



*Pacific Building, 1937. Brewster & Benedict, architects*

Though the reasons aren't clear, the Brewster & Benedict partnership came to an abrupt halt in early 1938, with Brewster leaving Palm Springs to return to Los Angeles, where he again worked for the Federal Housing Authority as an architectural inspector. After World War II, Brewster is known to have designed a branch of Glendale Federal Savings in Studio City and the Granada Hills Presbyterian Church. He divorced his wife Hazel in 1952, and moved to Las Vegas, where he designed the Las Vegas Central Fire Station and an addition to the home of a former Cornell classmate J. H. Morgan. He died in Monrovia, California on May 16, 1971.

Benedict remained much more active after Brewster's departure, staying in their office in Palm Springs and entering into partnership with another licensed architect, Robert M. Finlayson of Monrovia. Over the course of the next year, Finlayson & Benedict designed several homes for Palm Springs residents including Harold Barkow and Morris F. Richardson, a six-room hotel, "Casa Fiesta," and remodeled the Palm Springs Hotel, adding a cocktail lounge named the "Luau Room." That partnership too came to an abrupt halt, when in January 1939 Finlayson took out an ad in the *Desert Sun*, announcing that he had severed ties with Benedict, and that he was no longer responsible for any debts contracted by him. Benedict moved to Phoenix for a year but returned in 1940 to design an addition to the de Laitre residence. During World War II, Benedict served in the U.S. Navy, 13th Naval District, working as the principal architect designing naval air bases. His headquarters were at Sand Point, Seattle, and when the war ended, he became a partner in the prominent Seattle architectural firm Bain, Overturf, Turner & Associates, returning to Palm Springs in 1946 to open a satellite office for that firm, with his bride of a year Emma. During this period, he designed a ranch-style home at Thunderbird Country Club for Phil Harris and Alice Faye and also donated his services to design a Girl Scout Youth Center on Avenida de los Caballeros, before being asked to return to Phoenix by Royal Lescher of the firm Lescher & Mahoney, where Benedict designed the exterior of the new St. Joseph's Hospital.



*Glendale Federal Savings Bank, Floyd E. Brewster, architect*



*Floyd E. Brewster, left at the groundbreaking of the Granada Hills Presbyterian Church, seen below*







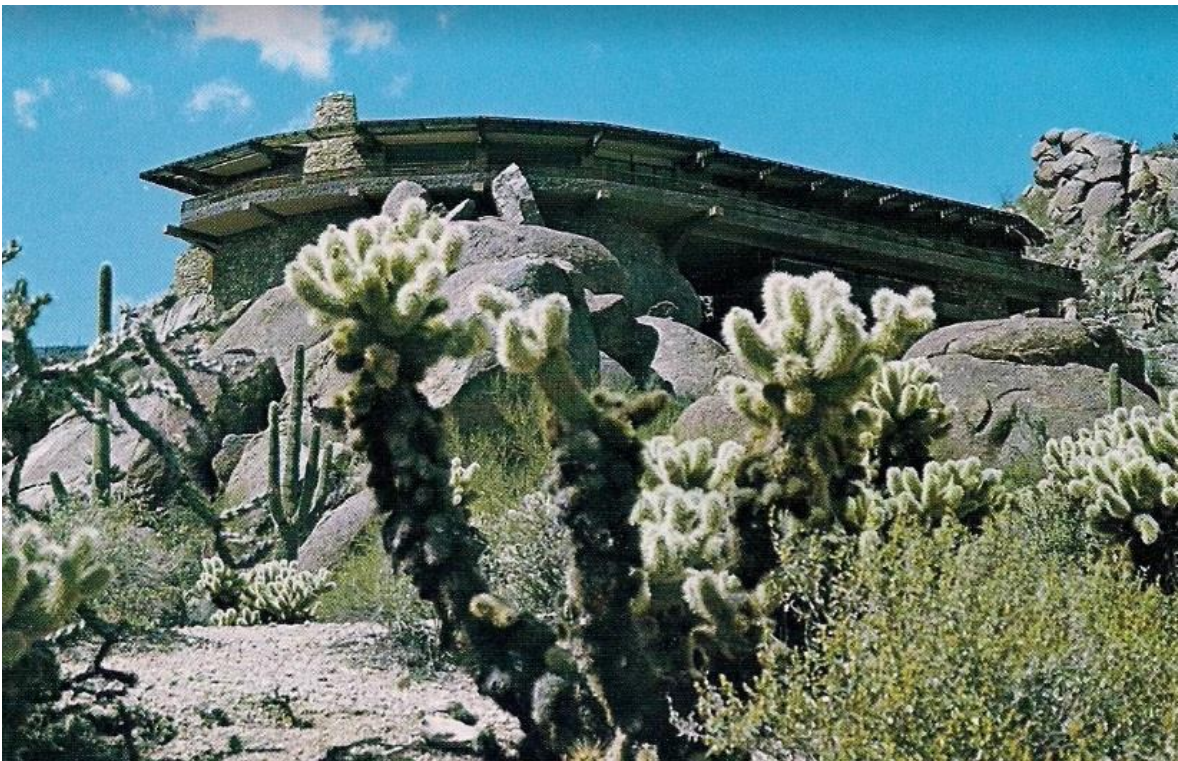
*Residence of Phil Harris and Alice Faye, Thunderbird Country Club, Hiram Hudson Benedict, architect*

Benedict opened his own office in Scottsdale, and for the next twenty years remained very busy, becoming licensed in 1956. Some of the more prominent projects were homes for such notables as Walter Winchell, Elliot Roosevelt, Dr. Loyal Davis, Dewitt Merriam, Henry Sturgis, Clare Booth Luce and Sterling Hebbard. He designed the Paradise Valley Racquet Club as well as the surrounding homes of the Paradise Hills subdivision, and several other banks and civic buildings in and around Phoenix. Outside of the area, he designed the tiki-themed Half Moon Inn in San Diego and was consulting architect for the Capalana Country Club in Vancouver. In 1970 Benedict was hired by filmmaker Antonioni to act as technical advisor for his film “Zabriskie Point.” In the film, a house Benedict had earlier designed for Carl Hovgaard – the spectacular hillside home known as “Boulder Reign” – was to be blown up, and Benedict created scale models to serve that purpose.

Benedict was a devoted collector of wives. He divorced his first wife Margaret in 1936, marrying Evelyn Cady the following year in Palm Springs. He married his third wife Lucile in 1951, and after she died in 1954, he married Capi, who died the same year. In 1955 he married Evelyn, divorcing her the same month. A family member later recalled he married one of his wives twice. Finally, in 1955 Benedict married Lois Grace, an artist, who would later design landscapes for many of his projects. Hiram and Lois retired to Nordlan, Washington – where he passed away in November 1984. Lois died in September 1988.



*Paradise Valley Racquet Club, Scottsdale, Arizona, 1955. Hiram Hudson Benedict, architect*



*"Boulder Reign," the Hovgaard Residence, 1970. Carefree, Arizona, Hiram Hudson Benedict, architect*



## APPENDIX IX

# BREWSTER & BENEDICT THE PALM SPRINGS PROJECTS

The following list of structures designed by Brewster & Benedict was assembled from a variety of sources. Because no archive of their work exists, clues were found in the *Desert Sun* and other archives online, architectural journals of the day, telephone and city directories. This list is by no means complete, and further research may yield more work by the firm.

## NON-RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS

### The Pacific Building, 756-798 North Palm Canyon Drive



Now a Palm Springs Class 1 Historic Site, the Pacific Building housed eleven shops on the ground floor, some of which opened onto an inviting patio with tiled fountain. Upstairs, 18 apartments were created “in order to supply a strong demand for low-priced apartments for people employed in the Village. Each

apartment floorplan was unique, but each had a living room, kitchenette and bath. The architecture of the Pacific Building was inspired by that of Northern Italy, with custom-designed red roof tile supplied by Gladding McBean, as “there is no feature more essential to the beauty of California architecture than the picturesque roof of tile. Patterns of every type have been created to meet the requirements of the architect.” Much attention was given to the detailing, as *California Arts & Architecture* described,





“the color scheme is unique, the upper story being Spanish white, the three-foot overhang with stencils of light blue and apricot. The lower story is apricot color trimmed with brown, with transom bars of aluminum, giving a very rich effect.”



**The Colonial House Hotel, 572 North Palm Canyon (now Colony Palms)**

Designed for Mrs. Thelma Wertheimer, Brewster & Benedict created the original hotel buildings in a contemporary interpretation of the Monterey Colonial Revival style. Over the course of a few years, two large wings were built, and charming bungalows scattered through the expansive grounds. William Marte was the contractor.



### **Town House Hotel, 359 South Belardo**

Built by contractors Atkin & Marsh for Frank Pershing (nephew of General John Pershing) and Richard Outcault, this 28-unit, \$50,000 “French Colonial” apartment hotel which featured a two-story main building with three large townhouse apartments and ten hotel rooms, as well as a beautifully landscaped bungalow court with seven attractive cottages. Now part of the Viceroy Hotel.

## Remodeling and additions to Sunshine Court, DeMuth Court, and Ed Bunker Court, 343 North Palm Canyon

Herbert Carpenter owned three separate but adjacent bungalow court hotels, and Brewster & Benedict remodeled all three to be similar in style, adding additional rooms in the process.



### Lone Palm Hotel, 1276 North Indian Canyon

The *Desert Sun* reported in 1936 that the design of the new Lone Palm Hotel would be “different from anything ever built here and are very unique.” From Indian Canyon, a portal with a neon sign and a single palm tree announced the entrance. A long pathway down the central axis featured striped paving and a central bed of flowering color. At the terminus was a swimming pool and main building with an octagonal lobby, the long pathway lined with duplex bungalows and gardens.





### **Palm Springs Hotel Remodel, 257 North Palm Canyon**

In 1937 Brewster & Benedict designed an addition to the Palm Springs Hotel which added a 90-foot long wing with businesses at the street level, and hotel rooms above. The existing hotel lobby was extended, and the kitchen and cocktail lounge enlarged and remodeled



### **Dr. Bacon L. Clifton Building, 700 North Palm Canyon**

After designing Dr. Clifton's new residence in Little Tuscany, Brewster & Benedict designed this small building to house Clifton's dental practice.



## Clarence Simpson's Radio and Frigidaire Shop, 342 North Palm Canyon

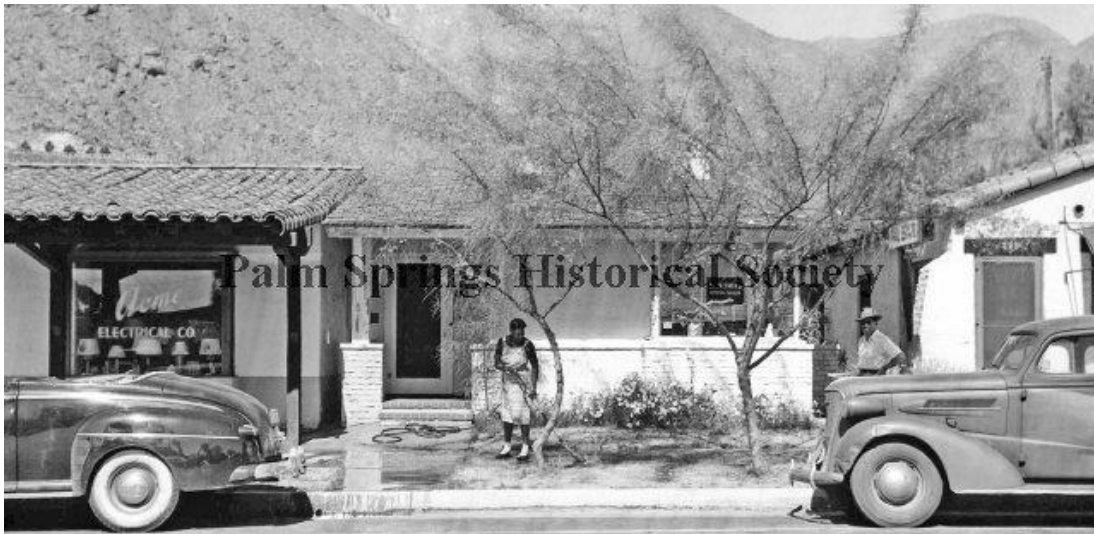
Known now as the Cork n' Bottle, the Streamline Moderne façade of Clarence Simpson's Radio and Frigidaire shop was Brewster & Benedict's most modern structure in the desert. A tall central tower is flanked by shorter stepped vertical forms, while a streamlined stainless steel-framed marquee creates a visor over the front door and shop windows. To the right of the store can be seen the Goff Hotel. Brewster & Benedict added rooms and completed a façade redesign in 1937, adding a red tile roof and colorful tile window surrounds.

## La Cita Apartments 391 South Palm Canyon Demolished.



**El Dorado Hotel, 278 South Palm Canyon**

Built for Harry Mutascio, the owner of the popular Harry's Palm Springs Café, the El Dorado was a “combination store, apartment and hotel building. For several years, Maloof's Department Store occupied the retail space on the ground floor.



**MacManus Building, 419 North Palm Canyon**

Pearl McCallum McManus and her husband A.G. commissioned this small office building, which was first occupied by Brewster & Benedict as their architectural offices. Besides private offices for each architect, there was a large reception room and a 17x30 foot drafting room. The building was completely air conditioned using the latest equipment. A covered porch faced Palm Canyon.



# RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS



## **Bullocks All-Electric Demonstration Home, 339 Vereda Sur**

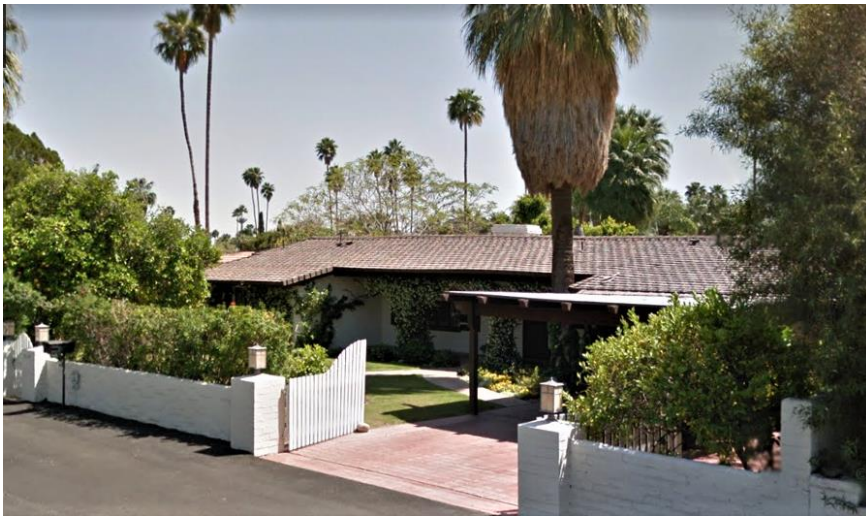
Brewster & Benedict's first project in Palm Springs was the All-Electric Bullocks Demonstration Home, which was built by Harold J. Hicks. After it opened January 30, 1936, hundreds of people toured the house which featured the

latest in technology, including air conditioning by Cool-Aire, which dehumidified, cooled and filtered the air; an all-electric kitchen with range and refrigerator by Westinghouse; and a Thermador "head to heels" bathroom heater. The rambling house was described as "a modern interpretation of the French New Orleans picturesque dwelling. Long and low, its light colors harmonizing with the desert's delicate shadings." After being open for tours, the home sold to Earle C. Anthony and his wife. Anthony was a businessman, broadcasting pioneer and philanthropist, as well as a Packard dealer (his neon sign in Los Angeles was the first in the country).





**Residence of  
Lloyd and  
“Tootsie”  
Simon, 388  
East Valmonte  
del Norte**



**Residence of  
Mr. and Mrs.  
Milton Hicks,  
523 Camino  
Sur**



**Residence of  
Mr. and Mrs.  
H. Dalziel  
Wilson, 561  
Camino Norte**





### **Blanche Brill Residence, 591 West Stevens**

This large estate is composed of four adjacent lots which equal nearly 1.5 acres, the nine bedroom, eight-and-a-half bath house is angled to maximize the views and is 5,300 square feet. Built for Blanche Brill, who came from a Philadelphia family that manufactured automobile wheels and railroad equipment, the house was later owned by Harry Warner of Warner Brothers Studio fame.





**Residence of Alvah F.  
and Theresa Hicks,  
404 Camino del Sur**

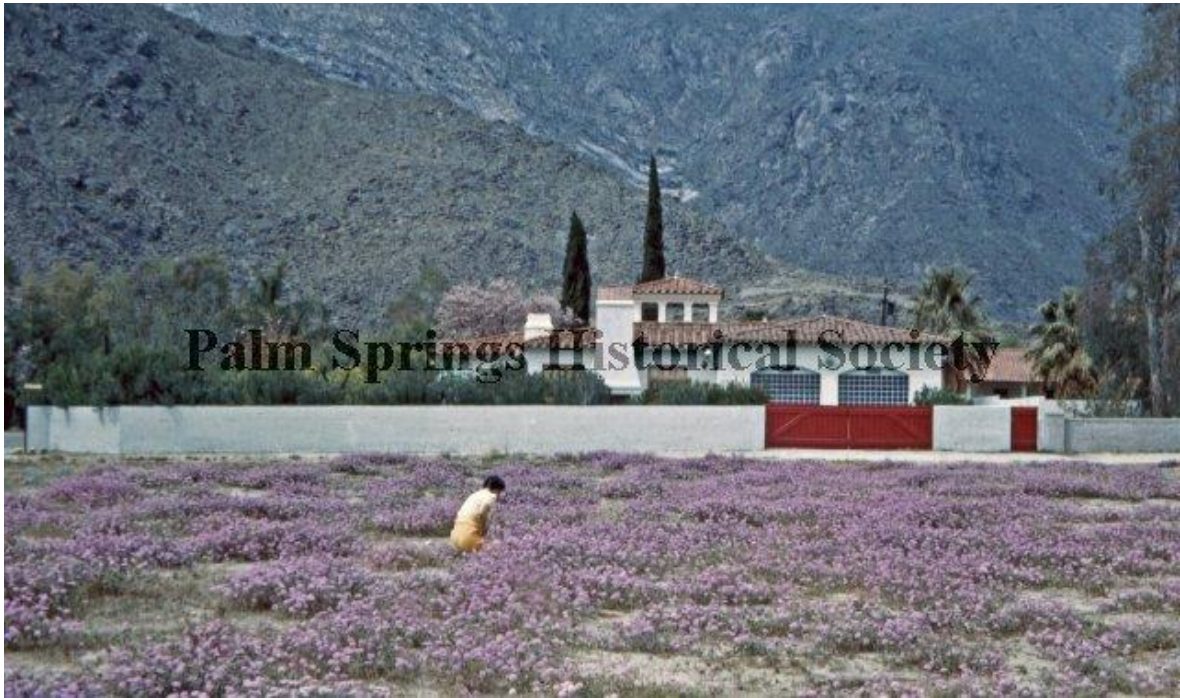
Built using a new product, 12x24 inch adobe-style concrete blocks with heavy mortar joints, the Hicks Residence was featured in the June 1939 issue of *California Arts & Architecture*, the magazine noting “in Palm Springs, where the desert evenings are balmy and the skies beautiful to behold, the outdoor facilities of a home are of primary importance. In the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Hicks the large living room overlooks the enclosed patio on one side and opens out onto the broad terrace on the other. The barbecue with its grill and oven and convenient shelves nearby is one of the added delights of this home. Sturdy,

serviceable furniture, ollas and other colorful pottery make this terrace a real outdoor

living room. The exterior walls are painted a Spanish white with pale blue trim.” The real showstopper, however, was the unique cobalt blue glazed tile roof.







### Residence of Ludovica Graham, addition. 226 Alejo

The *Desert Sun* reported in 1937, “Mrs. Ludovica D. Graham, formerly of Reno, Nevada, is making extensive alterations and additions to her home on Alejo street, opposite the O’Donnell golf course. The new dining room will be 22x33 feet in size.” The estate known as Villa Teresa had been built originally for Alvah and Teresa Hicks, and was later owned by Liberace.

### Earl Strebe Residence, 1350 East Tachevah

The ranch-style home has been demolished.

### Paul Kersten Residence, 1532 West Wawona







**Residence for Mr.  
Hal Forrest, 608  
South Indian  
Trail**

Hal Forrest was the cartoonist for the popular “Tailspin Tommy” comic strip, and this large house and studio was built in Pearl and A.G. McCallum’s Indian Trails tract. Partially two stories, Forrest’s studio was on the second floor. Later, 20<sup>th</sup> Century-Fox producer Joseph M. Schenck owned the home.



Residence for Miss Katherine Finchy, 388 West Stevens







## Additions and Remodeling of the Residence of Henry and Dorothy Weinberger, 457 Hermosa Place

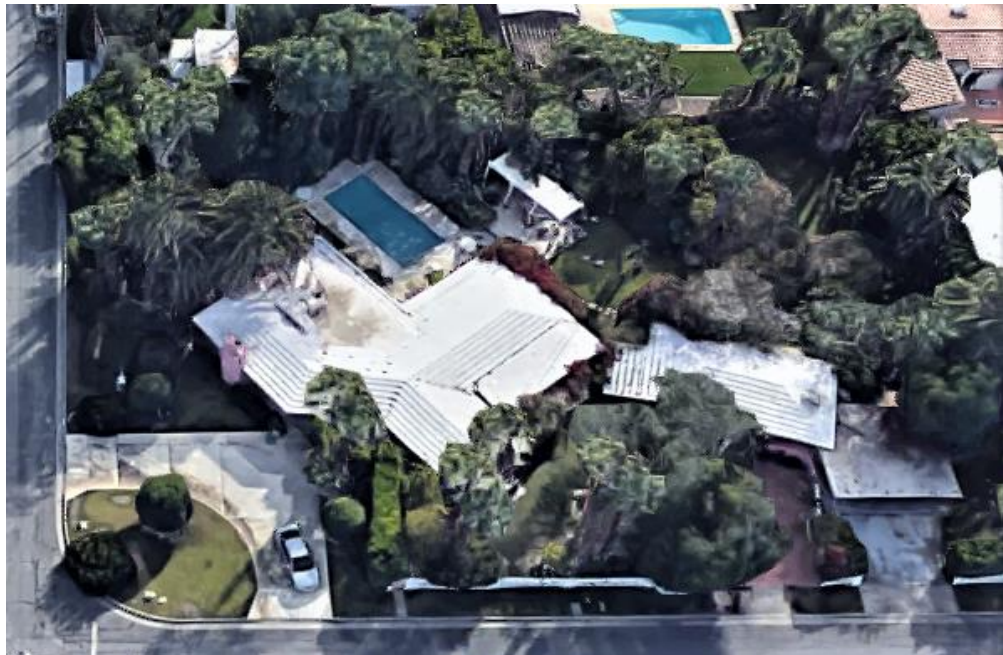
On an enormous parcel adjacent to Casa Adaire, the Weinberger Residence was originally built in 1928 for R.H. Hood. Weinberger, an executive with the Columbia Broadcasting Company, hired Brewster & Benedict to remodel the house and designed an addition “two stories in height and will have a unique stair hall with a circular stair with wrought iron hand rail. The lower floor will have an exceptionally large living room, and the sleeping quarters will be on the second floor. The heating system will be converted into an electric cooling system next spring when the warm weather sets in, the same equipment to be used for both heating or cooling.”





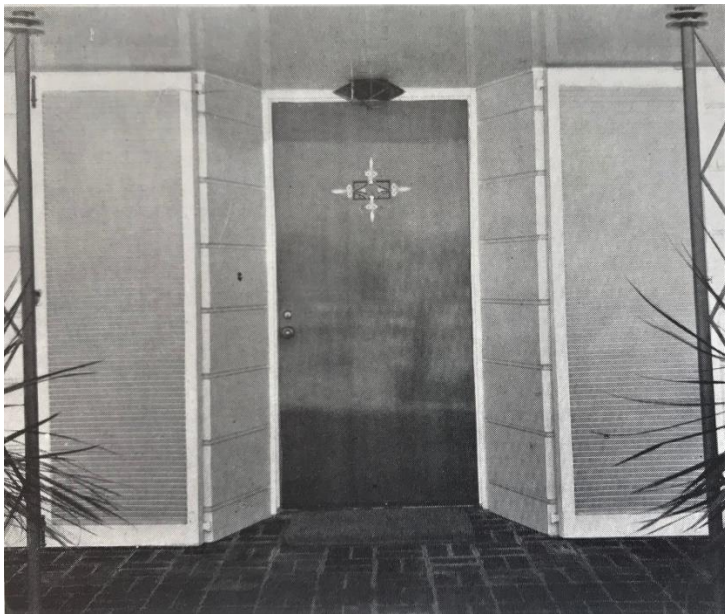
**Residence of Karl and Rosamund de Laittre, 415 Via del Sol**

Karl de Laittre was a Minnesota lumberman, banker, state legislator, and president of the Minneapolis City Council. He and his wife Rosamund commissioned this large and attractive contemporary Bermuda-style house. Built on a generous corner lot and angled to create enclosure around the rear swimming pool, the rear garden offered sweeping views of the San Jacinto Mountains. Hiram Hudson Benedict returned in 1940 to design a guest cottage. The address has been changed to 1575 North Via Norte.





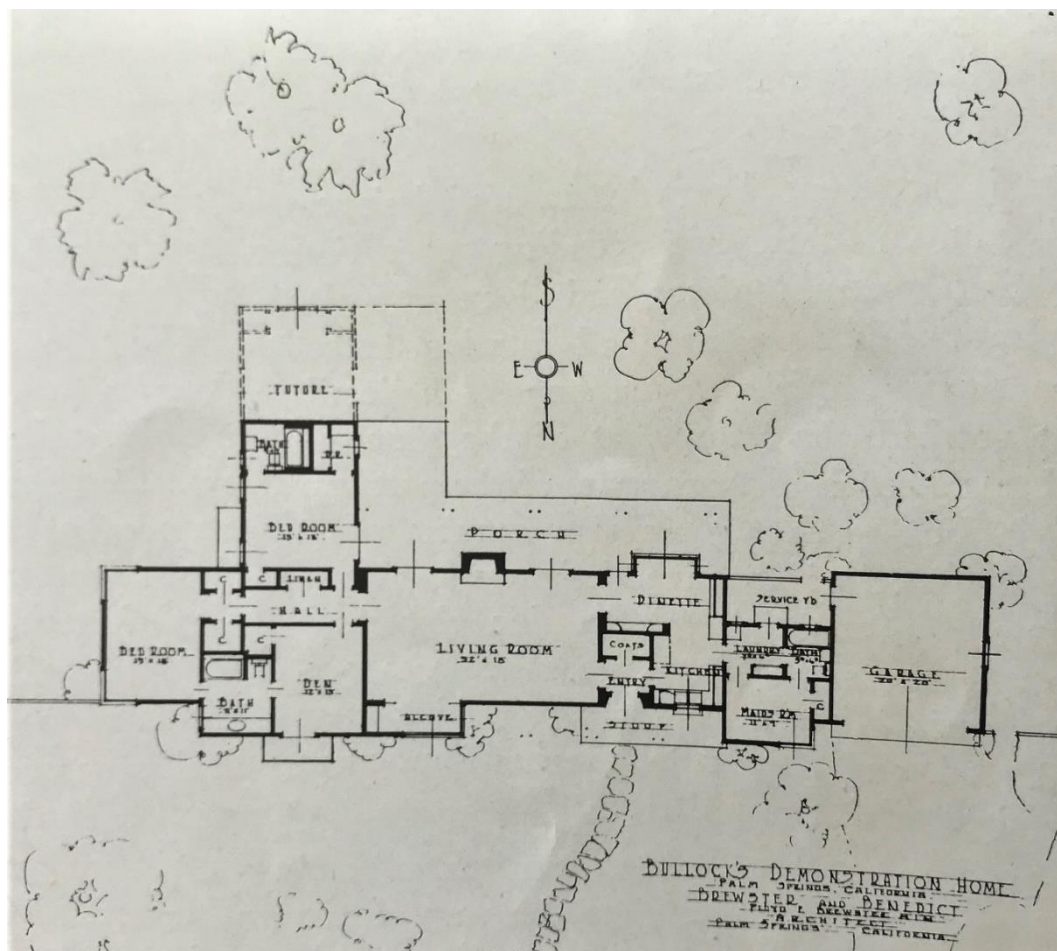
## Bullock's All-Electric Demonstration Home, 201 Vereda del Norte



The second Bullock's Demonstration Home designed by Brewster & Benedict was "the last word in a comfortable desert home." Featured in *California Arts & Architecture*, the modern house was described as in the "New Orleans French style," with frame and stucco construction and a sandy-white heavy shingle roof. Painted off-white and light lemon yellow, with shutters and trim in white, a terra cotta dado was painted on the lower section of the house,

while sage green grille work celebrated the New Orleans style. Built to withstand the desert extremes, the house was doubly insulated and featured the latest combination air conditioner/heater unit in the basement. After hundreds toured the home, it was sold to Hazel Forbes Richman for \$23,000.









*Brewster & Benedict's rendering for the Bullock's Demonstration Home in Little Tuscany, 1937*

## The Little Tuscany Tract

As conceived by Alvah Hicks, the Little Tuscany tract would feature homes inspired by the architecture of the Tuscan Region of Italy. After visiting the region in 1935, the *Desert Sun* reported that Hicks had been inspired by the “tranquil beauty of the picturesque rock homes of this storied area which overlooks Florence, and Mr. Hicks remembered that he had property in Palm Springs similarly located. Thus Little Tuscany came about – a beautiful little tract which overlooks Palm Springs. Endeavoring to keep the building development here all in the nature of that of the old Tuscany, the firm of Brewster and Benedict, which already has designed several beautiful residences for the tract, as well as innumerable fine homes and other handsome structures in the Village, has been delegated to exercise architectural supervision of home building in the tract.”<sup>63</sup> The newspaper continued: “The fact that there are only three home-building sites left in Little Tuscany shows the demand for hillside lots. The remarkable residential potentialities of Little Tuscany, an exclusive home area, with some twenty-three large sites originally platted, commanding a view of the mountains and desert, gently rising from the northwest section of the Village, are of the best. The panorama view that is obtained from any spot in Little Tuscany, is one that would be hard to equal anywhere. After the tract was first opened to public sale by

the Harold J. Hicks realty concern, the home sites were readily taken up. Among the first buyers were Mr. and Mrs. Charles Farrell of Palm Springs and Hollywood, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Adams of Cincinnati, Mr. and Mrs. Earl Gibbs of Michigan, Mrs. Frank S. Roberts, James V. Guthrie of Palm Springs, Walter Lewis of Riverside, Mr. and Mrs. Earl Strebe and Doctor Bacon L. Clifton, all prominent local people, and Mr. and Mrs. Adolphe Menjou, well known Hollywoodites.”



### **Bullock's Demonstration Home, 1725 North Tuscan Road**

The third Demonstration Home designed by Brewster & Benedict for Bullock's was constructed by contractor William Marte and his associate, H. L. Hansen. "The house is of a type of architecture prevalent in Tuscany, a residential section overlooking Florence, Italy (all homes built in Little Tuscany are restricted to this type of architecture). It has 3 bedrooms and 3 baths, and the bedrooms, living room and dining room open on a large patio that commands a wonderful view of the mountains and desert. The foundation to the house and the walls surrounding it are built of granite."<sup>64</sup>





*The third Bullock's Demonstration Home designed by Brewster & Benedict*





## Residence of Dr. and Mrs. Bacon L. Clifton, 669 West Chino Canyon

Brewster & Benedict designed this Tuscan-inspired home for dentist Bacon L. Clifton and his wife. Nestled amongst the enormous boulders of the canyon, the stucco and red-tile roofed house has a splayed layout with granite-walled patios overlooking the valley below.





### **Residence for Frank Pershing, 453 West Santa Rosa**

Frank Pershing had earlier employed Brewster & Benedict to design his Town House hotel. For his home built nearby in the Tennis Club, the architects designed a contemporary home inspired

by Monterey Colonial ranch houses had modern touches like corner steel casement windows. The house was credited at the time to Brewster, Benedict & Taylor.

### **Residence for Mr. Morris Cohn, 388 East Mel**

Demolished.

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ENDNOTES: WALTER KIRSCHNER

- <sup>1</sup> “Shopping Town: Designing the City in Suburban America,” by Victor Gruen, edited and translated by Anette Baldouf. University of Minnesota Press, 2018, p. 87.
- <sup>2</sup> Telephone interview with Diane Harris Brown, granddaughter of Walter Kirschner, August 24, 2018.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>4</sup> “There Once Was a World: The 900-Year Chronicle of the Shtetl of Eishyshock,” by Yaffa Eliach, Little Brown & Company, 1998, p. 281.
- <sup>5</sup> Telephone interview with Diane Harris Brown, August 24, 2018.
- <sup>6</sup> “Garment Manufacturer's Index,” Volume 2, April 1921, p. 15; “Rushing Work on Store Structure,” Lansing State Journal, July 18, 1928, p. 15.
- <sup>7</sup> Telephone interview with Diane Harris Brown, August 24, 2018.
- <sup>8</sup> “Michigan Manufacturer and Financial Record,” Volume 45, p. 37; “Firm Declares Faith in the City,” Oakland Tribune, May 23, 1933, p. 10.
- <sup>9</sup> Telephone interview with Diane Harris Brown, August 24, 2018. Rachel Kuchai obituary, Los Angeles Times, January 13, 1951, p. 20.
- <sup>10</sup> Telephone interview with Diane Harris Brown, August 24, 2018.
- <sup>11</sup> “D.C. Wash,” by Ruth Montgomery. The Oil City Derrick, Oil City, Pennsylvania, February 24, 1953, p. 6.
- <sup>12</sup> Email from Diane Harris Brown, August 26, 2018; “There Once Was a World: The 900-Year Chronicle of the Shtetl of Eishyshock,” by Yaffa Eliach, Little Brown & Company, 1998, p. 652-653.
- <sup>13</sup> “There Once Was a World: The 900-Year Chronicle of the Shtetl of Eishyshock,” by Yaffa Eliach, Little Brown & Company, 1998, p. 652-653.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid, p. 652-653.
- <sup>15</sup> “D.C. Wash,” by Ruth Montgomery. The Oil City Derrick, Oil City, Pennsylvania, February 24, 1953, p. 6.
- <sup>16</sup> Letter from Adaire Harris to Roger and Sandra Harris, July 6 1981, at Coachella Valley History Museum.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> Telephone interview with Diane Harris Brown, August 24, 2018.
- <sup>19</sup> “The Terrzzo Jungle,” Malcolm Gladwell, The New Yorker, March 15, 2004.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid, p. 89.
- <sup>22</sup> Telephone interview with Diane Harris Brown, August 24, 2018.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid, p. 101.
- <sup>25</sup> “Desert Magazine,” September 1939, p. 34.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid, p. 89.
- <sup>27</sup> “Frogs and Snails and Mobster Tails,” by Robert Teitelbaum and Cindy Carter. Teitelbaum Publishing, 2018, p. 45.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>29</sup> New York Daily News, February 24, 1953, p. 4.
- <sup>30</sup> “D.C. Wash,” by Ruth Montgomery. The Oil City Derrick, Oil City, Pennsylvania, February 24, 1953, p. 6.
- <sup>31</sup> By 1961, Grayson-Robinson had 212 stores, with \$102 million in sales, but in May 1962, there was a stock market slump, and by August, they were down to 28 stores, and filed for bankruptcy protection, claiming debts of \$10.5 million.
- <sup>32</sup> “Fulgencio Batista's Economic Policies, 1952 – 1958,” dissertation by Michael P. McGuigan, University of Miami, 2012, p. 280.
- <sup>33</sup> “When the Mob Owned Cuba.” Smithsonian Magazine.com, October 28, 2016. (<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/mob-havana-cuba-culture-music-book-tj-english-cultural-travel-180960610/>).
- <sup>34</sup> “Havana Nocture: How the Mob Owned Cuba and then Lost it to the Revolution,” by T.J. English, Harper Collins, 2007, p. 290.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>36</sup> Telephone interview with Diane Harris Brown, August 24, 2018.



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ENDNOTES: BREWSTER & BENEDICT

<sup>37</sup> Quote from architect Don Woods comes from Modern San Diego website: (<http://www.modernsandiego.com/BenedictHiram.html>).

<sup>38</sup> "Central New Jersey Home News," New Brunswick, NJ, November 9, 1995, p. 37; article on Floyd Brewster, Jr.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. "My father was a singer, a bass. That's where I get my lower range quality."

<sup>40</sup> "Official Publications of Cornell University," 1912-13.

<sup>41</sup> "Cornell Alumni News," May 1913.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> "Cornell Alumni News," August 1916; "ENGAGEMENT IS ANNOUNCED: About forty relatives were invited to the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Charles L. Hunt, 1223 Anacapa Street, last evening, when the engagement of their daughter, Hazel Arvilla Hunt to Floyd Emery Brewster of Lake Placid, N. Y., was announced. The evening was pleasantly spent with music and refreshments. Pink and white sweet peas and Cecil Brunner roses, arranged in bouquets, formed the decorations, Mr. Brewster is a member of the architectural firm of Brewster and Kennedy of Brooklyn, N. Y., and Lake Placid; member of the American Institute of Architects at the Octagon, Washington, D. C.; also accepted as registered architect of New York state. He is a graduate of Cornell university, 1912, post graduate 1913." From "Santa Barbara Morning Press," Volume 44, Number 258, 28 June 1916

<sup>44</sup> "The Architect," March 1918.

<sup>45</sup> Hiram Hudson Benedict AIA application, 1956.

<sup>46</sup> "Santa Barbara Morning Press," Volume LI, Number 47, 4 November 1922.

<sup>47</sup> "Californian Architecture in Santa Barbara," by H. Philip Staats, 1929, p. vi.

<sup>48</sup> Jury: Elmer Grey, David C. Allison, and Pierpont Davis, of LA. William Conklin of SB. Dec '24, pp. 49-55

<sup>49</sup> W. Templeton Johnson, "The Mediterranean," Allied Architects Association of Los Angeles, Bulletin 1 (October 1, 1925), 14.

<sup>50</sup> "George Washington Smith, Architect of the Spanish Colonial Revival," Patricia Gebhard, Gibbs Smith, Salt Lake City, 2005, p. xi.

<sup>51</sup> "George Washington Smith, Architect of the Spanish Colonial Revival," Patricia Gebhard, Gibbs Smith, Salt Lake City, 2005, p. 64

<sup>52</sup> "Lutah Maria Riggs: A Woman in Architecture, 1921-1980," by David Gebhard, Capra Press, 1992, p. 12.

<sup>53</sup> "George Washington Smith, Architect of the Spanish Colonial Revival," Patricia Gebhard, Gibbs Smith, Salt Lake City, 2005, p. 71.

<sup>54</sup> Letter, Sept 25, 1927, GWS Collection, ADC, Art Museum, UCSB.

<sup>55</sup> "Los Angeles Times," April 9, 1930, p. 30.

<sup>56</sup> The shop remains virtually unchanged today and is part of the National Historic Landmark Casa del Herrero, open to the public. The house's National Historic Landmark nomination quotes Steedman, talking about Brewster's plea for work, "Brewster worked on drawings from 3/3/34 to 6/8/34 and worked out \$400 @ 15¢ hour" (seemingly a mathematical impossibility).

<sup>57</sup> "Desert Sun, November 5, 1937.

<sup>58</sup> "Benedict Designs Homes Around a Client's Needs," Arizona Republic, February 18, 1962, p. E-17.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> "Pacific Building Now Ready for Tenants," "Desert Sun," April 7, 1937, p. 10.

<sup>61</sup> "Brewster and Benedict Design Many New Projects," "Desert Sun," April 9, 1937, p. 14.

<sup>62</sup> "Desert Sun," Jun 4, 1937.

<sup>63</sup> "'Little Tuscany' Sites Nearly All Taken; 3 Left," Desert Sun, April 9, 1937, p. 12.

<sup>64</sup> "Desert Sun," December 17, 1937.

