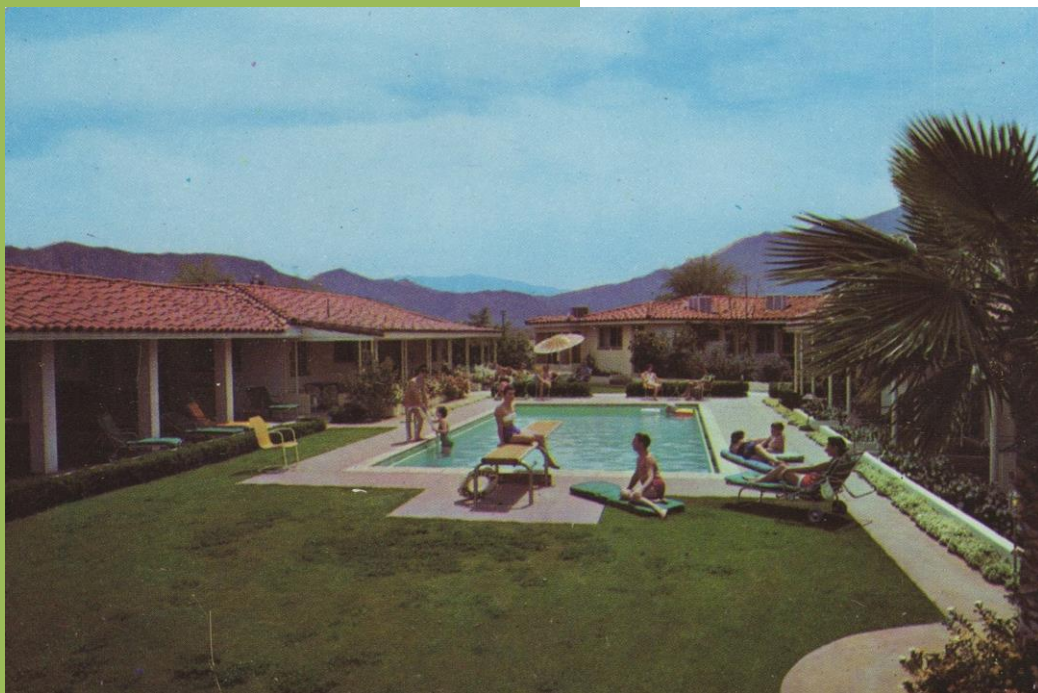


Villa Royale

1620 South Indian Trail
Palm Springs, CA 92264

**Nomination Application
for City of Palm Springs
Class 1 Historic Site**



Prepared by
Melissa Riche
for the
Palm Springs Preservation Foundation
January 2016

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the following individuals for their assistance:

**Amy Aquino
Ron Duby
Valorie Hodgert
Charles Murawski
Richard Pell
David Shahriari
Jeri Vogelsang**

Edited by

Ron & Barbara Marshall



**Early photograph of Villa Royale (Building 1) showing original signage.
(Courtesy Valorie Hodgert)**

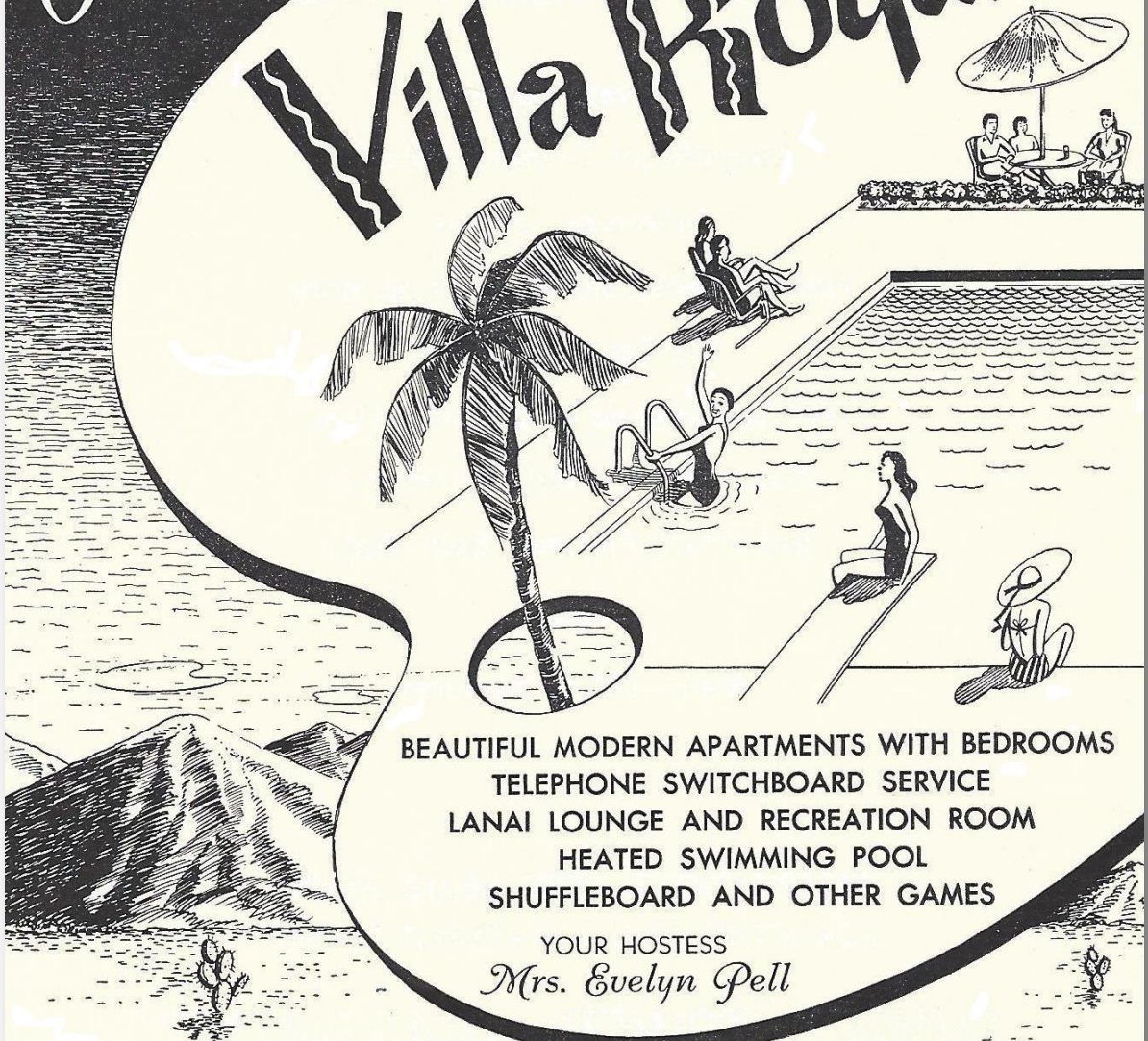
Cover Image: The reverse of this circa 1951 postcard reads, "VILLA ROYALE. 1620 Indian Trail, Palm Springs, Calif. Offers the best in casual desert living. Deluxe apartments, heated swimming pool. Lanai Lounge and Recreation Room. Telephone service, air conditioning, spacious and beautifully landscaped grounds."

(Published by Air Ames, Inc., Los Gatos, CA)

Play in the sun

AT

Villa Royale



BEAUTIFUL MODERN APARTMENTS WITH BEDROOMS
TELEPHONE SWITCHBOARD SERVICE
LANAI LOUNGE AND RECREATION ROOM
HEATED SWIMMING POOL
SHUFFLEBOARD AND OTHER GAMES

YOUR HOSTESS

Mrs. Evelyn Pell

FOR INFORMATION REGARDING RATES BY THE DAY, WEEK,
MONTH OR SEASON, WRITE, 'PHONE OR WIRE:

1620 INDIAN TRAIL
PALM SPRINGS, CALIF.

Villa Royale

TELEPHONE
PALM SPRINGS 2348

Advertisement from the January 1953 issue of *Palm Springs Villager* magazine.
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)

Villa Royale

CLASS 1 HISTORIC SITE NOMINATION - TABLE of CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: PAGE 4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: PAGE 5

CLASS 1 HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION APPLICATION FORM: PAGE 6

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: PAGE 10

EVALUATION for CLASS 1 HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION: PAGE 33

INTEGRITY ANALYSIS: PAGE 35

APPENDICES

- I Owner's Letter of Support
- II Assessor Parcel Numbers, Lot Numbers and Street Addresses
- III Assessor's Map
- IV Building Permit History
- V Photographic Documentation of Buildings and Site and Architectural Details
- VI Miscellaneous Historical Photographs and Ephemera
- VII Current Property Map
- VIII 2010 Grant Deed (Includes Legal Description)

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.”

In March of 2015 the PSPF board of directors, in consultation with the current owner of Villa Royale, assigned the task of writing the property’s Class 1 Historic Site nomination to Ms. Melissa Riche. The Owner’s Letter of Support is at Appendix I.



**This card was sent to guests by Evelyn Pell (Villa Royale owner) in December of 1953.
(Courtesy Valorie Hodgert)**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SIGNIFICANCE: Villa Royale (as configured today) is best described as a variety of California Ranch-style structures surrounding three separate courtyards. “Courtyard 1” is the original Villa Royale (1947-51) designed by Los Angeles-based home designer Kenneth Dreisbach and built in several phases over four years by local Palm Springs contractor Ralph Young. “Courtyard 2” was originally the small hotel Indian Trail Villa and was built in 1950. It became part of Villa Royale when it was purchased in 1985. “Courtyard 3” was originally the small hotel Country Manor and was built in 1956. It also became part of Villa Royale when it was purchased in 1985.

DESIGNATION CRITERIA: Villa Royale has not previously been evaluated for Class 1 Historic Site eligibility. A brief summary of the evaluation is as follows:

8.05.020 (a) paragraph 1 - **Events**: This criterion recognizes properties associated with events or patterns of events or historic trends. The applicable “pattern of events” is the construction of certain building types (specifically the small seasonal hotel) to support the rising tide of tourism to Palm Springs. As more building materials became available in the late 1940s, new commercial building was further spurred with hotels leading the way. Simultaneously, development expanded into south Palm Springs and Villa Royale was one of the first hotels built in this area. *Villa Royale is associated with these patterns of events and for its ability to exemplify a particular period of the national, state or local history. Therefore, Villa Royale qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site under Criterion 1.*

8.05.020 (a) paragraphs 3 & 4 - **Design/Construction**: Villa Royale is eligible as a fine example of a historically important building type, the small seasonal hotel, because it “reflects or exemplifies a particular period of the...local history.” As asserted in an earlier nomination (for Pompeii de Las Palmas), this building type slowly gained prominence between 1920 and 1965. A “small” hotel is defined in this and a previous nomination as 25 units or less and in recent decades many examples of this building type have been demolished. Villa Royale is a fine example of this historically important building type and notably still functions as a hotel. While Villa Royale does possess numerous distinctive characteristics that make up the modernist California Ranch-style, eligibility is not asserted under that factor as some of the architectural features have been compromised. Nevertheless, the most important defining features under the aforementioned building type are scale and function and both have remained intact. *Therefore, for its ability to represent a locally important historic building type (the small hotel built between 1920 and 1965), Villa Royale qualifies as a Class 1 Historic Site under Criteria 3 and 4.*

SUMMARY: This evaluation finds Villa Royale eligible for listing as a Palm Springs Historic Site under 8.05.020 (a) paragraphs 1, 3, and 4 of the local ordinance’s seven criteria. Villa Royale reflects and exemplifies an important pattern of events and particular period in the city’s history. Although Villa Royale retains many of its architectural features, some have been compromised, hence eligibility is not asserted under that basis. However, the most important characteristics representing the building type (scale and function) are still intact.



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

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.

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 a 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

| |
|----------|
| Date: |
| Case No. |
| HSPB No. |
| Planner: |

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

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 the 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: Villa Royale
 Other names: Villa Royale Apartments, Villa Royale Inn, Indian Trail Villa (Courtyard 2), Country Manor (Courtyard 3)
 Address: 1564, 1580 and 1620 South Indian Trail, Palm Springs, CA 92264
 Assessor Parcel Number(s): See Appendices II and III
 Owner's Name: David Shahriari, Peak Hospitality, Inc.
 Owner's Address: Villa Royale, 1620 South Indian Trail
 City: Palm Springs State: CA Zip: 92264
 Telephone: (760) 327-2314 Cell: (713) 392-1041
 Fax number: (760) 898-6853
 E-mail address: davids@villaroyale.com

2. Classifications

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 | |
|--------------|------------------|--------------|
| 7 | | Buildings |
| 1 | | Sites |
| | | Structures |
| | | Objects |
| <hr/> | | |
| 8 | | Total |

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"

3. Use or Function

Historic Use or Function: Hotel - Vacation Rental Apartments

Current Use or Function: Hotel

4. Description

Architect: Kenneth Dreisbach (architectural designer)

Construction Date and Source: First structure built in 1947 (multiple sources)

Architectural Classification: Modernist - California Ranch-style

Construction Materials:

Foundation: Concrete slab on grade

Roof: Clay tile

Walls: Frame wood construction covered with stucco & concrete block

Other:

Building Description: *Attach a description of the Building/Site/District, including all character defining features, on one or more additional sheets. (See pages 13-27)*

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

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.

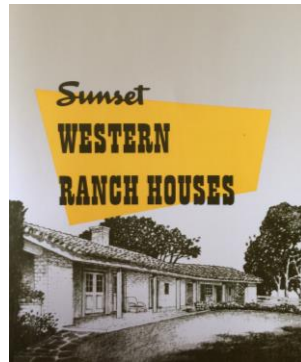
Other Criteria Considerations (Check all the boxes that apply.)

- 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

6. Statement of Significance

Summary

An early advertisement for Villa Royale Apartments touted “charming, informal desert living.” Early marketing material describes Villa Royale, somewhat mystically, as being “ideally situated in the mind,” while “the lovely spacious grounds and attractive setting invite relaxation.” Other early advertisements emphasized Villa Royale’s proximity to riding trails and the outdoor attractions in this area of south Palm Springs. Building started in 1947 with two houses and several rental apartments. Other buildings were added to Courtyard 1 until its completion in 1951. When Courtyard 1 was completed, it comprised one courtyard of five buildings gathered around landscaped gardens and a central swimming pool. In 1985, two adjacent small hotels, Indian Trail Villa and



Sunset’s editors wrote *Western Ranch Houses* in collaboration with Cliff May in 1946.

Country Manor, were added to Villa Royale. All of the structures were designed in a California Ranch-style possibly inspired by building designer Cliff May (known as the “Father of the California Ranch Home”), with influences from the “Hispanic hacienda style” from the adjacent Deep Well Guest Ranch.



Villa Royale advertisement from the February 1950 issue of *Palm Springs Villager* magazine. (Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)

The Architectural Designer

The architectural designer of Villa Royale was Long Beach-based Kenneth Dreisbach (not listed in AIA records). Records of Dreisbach's work have not survived. However, Valorie Hodgert (daughter of Villa Royale's original owner Evelyn Pell) recalls that Dreisbach worked closely on the design with Pell and Los Angeles-based builder Ralph Young. Both Dreisbach and Young spent a significant amount of time at the Villa Royale site during the construction.



Villa Royale owner Evelyn Pell standing on a ladder during construction of the office addition to Building 1. Family lore claims that Mrs. Pell derived the name for Villa Royale from the initials of her two children Valorie and Richard. However, it should be noted that the land for Villa Royale was purchased from the Rancho *Royale* (emphasis added) Hotel Company. (Courtesy Valorie Hodgert)

The Owners

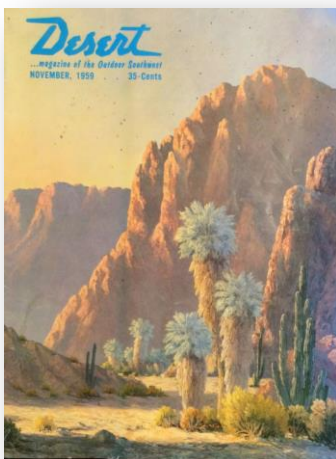
Villa Royale's original owners included three generations of a family that contributed to Palm Springs' history. Alfred Karl ("A. K.") Paul, the family's patriarch, moved his family to Palm Springs in 1946. A successful industrialist, Paul spent much of his time back east in Providence, Rhode Island with Foxon Company, a printing and packaging company with national clients. In 1956 he built the A. K. Paul Building on Industrial Place in Palm Springs, which became the home of Paul Associates, the Coachella

Valley's first commercial printing facility. The business became one of the largest printing and packaging companies on the west coast, printing labels for companies like Avon and See's Candies. (The building still exists as the Antique Galleries.)



A. K. Paul's printing company, Paul Associates, Inc., entered a float in the Palm Springs' 1959 Desert Circus Parade. (Courtesy Valorie Hodgert)

A. K. Paul was also charter member number 10 of the Thunderbird Country Club, although he never owned property there. Mildred Paul, his wife, was a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution and served as Regent of the Coachella Valley chapter. She was also an avid collector of the work of artist John Hilton who was famous for his desert landscape paintings



This painting by John Hilton appeared on the cover of the November 1959 issue of *Desert* magazine. It remains in the family of the original Villa Royale owners. (Courtesy Valorie Hodgert)

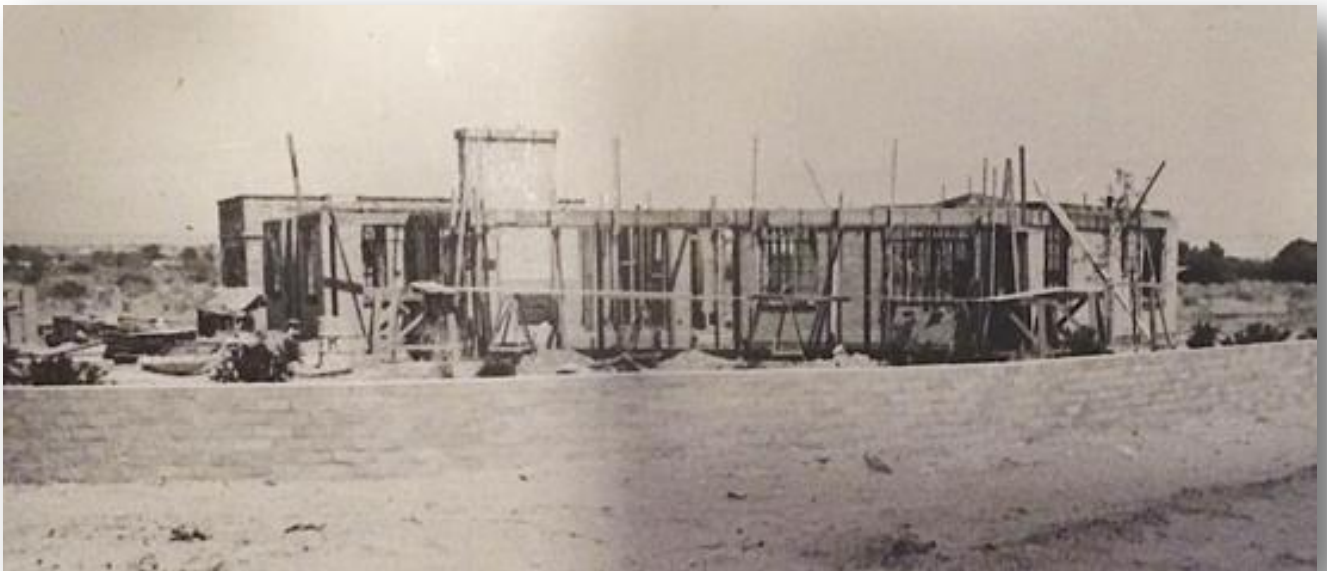
The Paul's daughter, Evelyn Pell, moved with them to Palm Springs in 1946. Pell, recently divorced, brought her two children Richard and Valorie with her. Pell operated and managed the day-to-day affairs of Villa Royale contributing, in small part, to the success of Palm Springs as a tourist destination. She was also a founding member, board member and chairman of the Desert Art Center (along with Frank Bogert, Zaddie Bunker and other Palm Springs luminaries). Pell served on the first Hotel Division Advisory Committee for the Chamber of Commerce and was Vice-Regent of the local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. In 1957, Pell handed over management of Villa Royale to her sister, Vicki de Venney, and went back into the family printing business. Pell's son Richard served on the city's Architectural Advisory Committee, then the Planning Commission, eventually becoming the President of the Palm Springs Chamber of Commerce.

Subsequent Owners

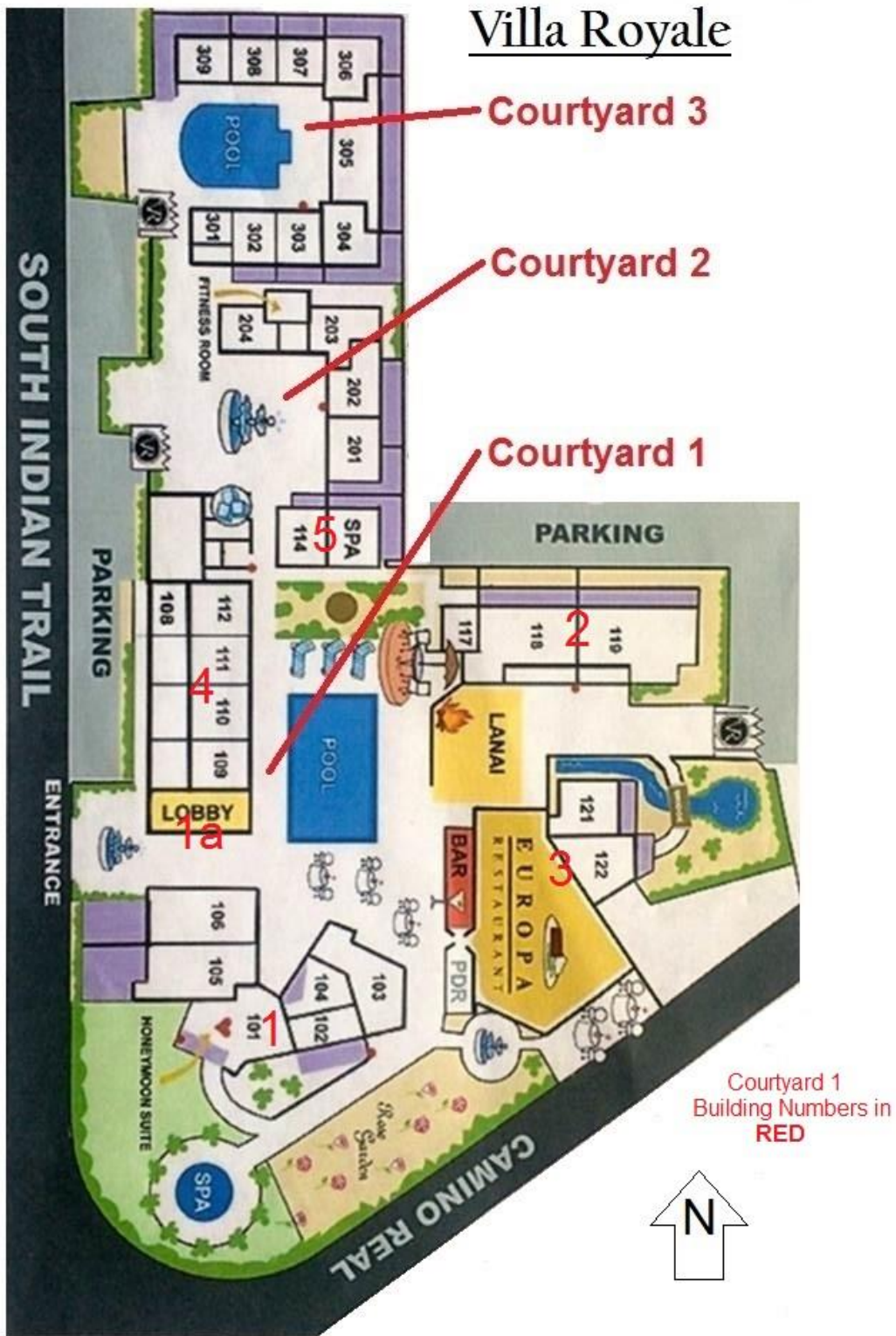
Subsequent owners of Villa Royale included Emmy-award winning set designer Chuck Murawski, Hollywood and Broadway actors Amy Aquino and Drew McCoy (husband and wife), and Tony Shalhoub and Brooke Adams (husband and wife).

Chuck Murawski became very involved with the city of Palm Springs, serving on the tourism board (until famously fired by Sonny Bono) and then on the city council, where he instituted the first "Village Fest" pedestrian markets in downtown Palm Springs.

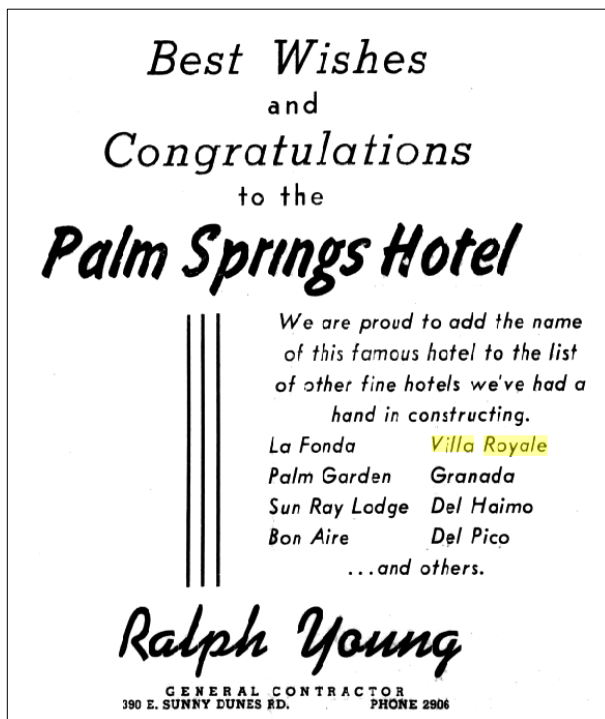
Villa Royale (Courtyard 1)



**Notes on Building 1 by Mildred Paul read "When we begin to build on our triangle of land in junction of 2 roads."
(Courtesy Valorie Hodgert)**



Building permits (see Appendix IV) for Villa Royale from 1947 to 1953 show Ralph Young as the contractor, and permits all read “as per plan” (no plans have been uncovered). According to Valorie Hodgert (daughter of Evelyn Pell), Ralph Young was a Los Angeles-based contractor who was involved in the construction of various Palm Springs commercial buildings.



February 14, 1952 *Desert Sun* newspaper advertisement from Villa Royale building contractor Ralph Young.

Villa Royale initially comprised three buildings, all with clay tile roofs, low-pitched rooflines, and deep porches allowing guests to relax in the shade, just steps from the central pool. A fourth building was added in 1950 on the western side of the property, adjacent to the recreation room. A fifth two-room building was added in 1951 at the north end of the property creating four sides to the main courtyard. Interviews with Valorie Hodgert (daughter of Pell) discussed at length the complex order of construction of Villa Royale Courtyard 1 (Buildings 1–5).

Building 1 (Lot 25) (Present day Rooms 101-106). A March 5, 1947 building permit on behalf of owner Evelyn Pell described an 8-room dwelling of 8-inch concrete block, “as per plan.” Building 1 also included rental apartment(s) and according to annotated photographs of the early construction, rental apartment(s) were included in the construction. The building permit lists the dwelling as a “Duplex” and the square footage as 2,765 square feet. The main dwelling served as the Pell’s home. The southwest façade of Building 1 features a deep porch with round metal columns. A central doorway is topped with structural square glass blocks allowing in extra light (this feature is repeated above many of the doorways). The living room includes large windows that look onto the porch and gardens. Raised brick planters frame the entryway to the porch.



**Villa Royale, Building 1 (the “Pell House”) with Pell’s two children in the rose garden.
(Courtesy Valorie Hodgert)**



**Villa Royale, rear of Building 1 under construction in 1947.
(Courtesy Valorie Hodgert)**

Early photographs of Building 1 show doorways with glass blocks above lintels, as well as metal framed single, double, and triple casement windows. Brick lined the window sills but two-core concrete block was the primary building material. A gently sloping hip roof was finished in the “straight barrel mission tile” design.



This photograph is annotated “Form is laid out for my duplex rental apartments” (herein referred to as Building 2). (Courtesy Valorie Hodgert)

Building 1 (Pell House and apartments) was completed in the spring of 1948. In August 1950 a permit was pulled to build a small (200 square foot) office with a glass front and tile roof, valued at \$2,500. In a July 2015 interview with Hodgert this was remembered as an “extension” built to the back of Building 1.

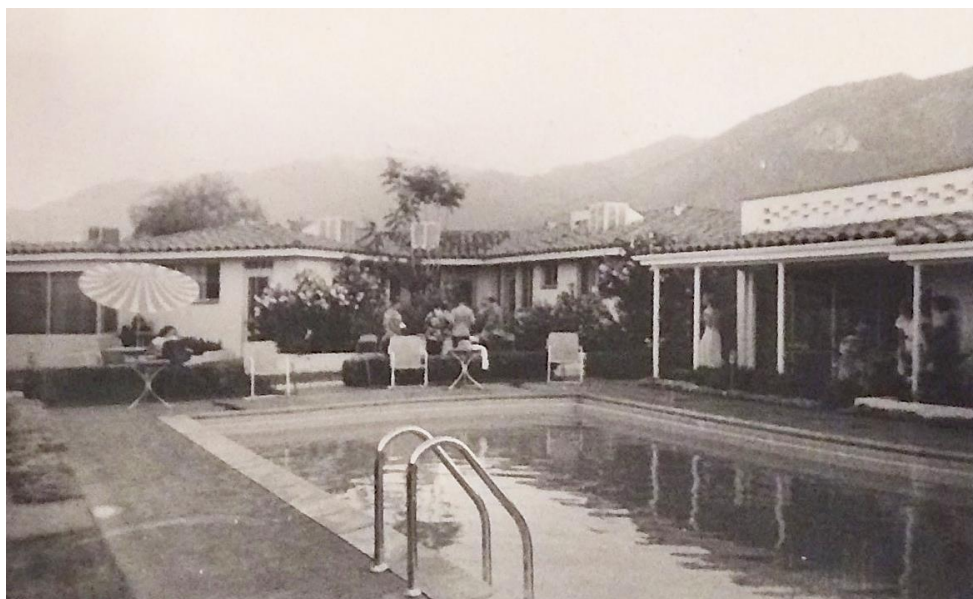


Photograph oriented south-southeast dated June 1950 of Villa Royale with Building 3 on the left, and the back of Building 1 on the right. (Courtesy Valorie Hodgert)

Building 1a (Lot 25): The first building to be completed on the Villa Royale site was an unattached garage with rooftop sundeck identified by its conspicuous pierced brick parapet. It was built first as storage for building materials. This garage was converted into the lanai-recreation room in early 1951. The garage was itemized on the building permit for Building 1 as 400 square feet.



Photograph of Building 1a (right) under construction. Mildred Paul's notes read, "Evelyn completed her garage first to store all building accessories." (Courtesy Valorie Hodgert)



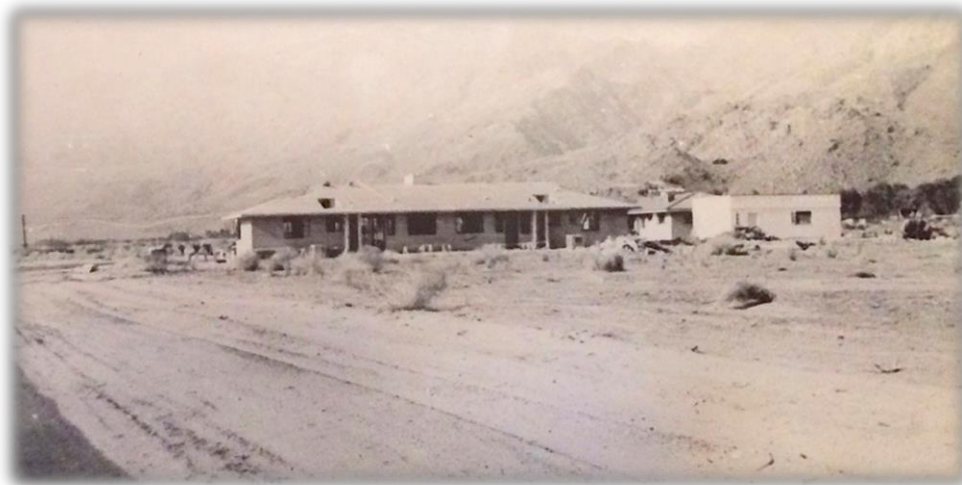
Villa Royale, early 1951. Building 1's "Glass front" office addition can be seen on the left. To the right is Building 1a (the original garage with pierced brick parapet) which was converted to a lanai-recreation room (note later porch extension in this photograph). (Courtesy Valorie Hodgert)

The permit for the addition of a porch to Building 1a was pulled on December 8, 1950. This new entertainment space proved to be quite a draw for local events, including regular meetings of the local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. On January 26, 1951, a *Desert Sun* newspaper article describes a “Smart cocktail party at Villa Royale...the gay affair will christen a new fun room at Villa Royale, with Manager Evelyn Pell as co-hostess.” Little more than a week later on February 2, 1951 the *Desert Sun* newspaper ran an article about the recent opening of the lanai-recreation room at Villa Royale, describing it as a “most attractive room which is truly Hawaiian with its bamboo curtains and furniture.”

Today Building 1a is the Villa Royale’s office and check-in area. The pierced brick parapet is still intact, as is the metal staircase that leads up to the roof sundeck.

Courtyard 1 Swimming Pool: Designed and installed by Paddock Pools, an October 1, 1948 permit describes an 18’ x 40’ Gunite pool, at a cost of \$8,000. The original pool is still in place although the diving board has been removed.

Building 2 (Lot 40) (Present day rooms 117, 118 and 119). On April 7, 1947 a building permit pulled by A. K. Paul “owner” and “contractor” describes “two units, concrete block,” 1,900 square feet, with a 300 square foot porch, with a value of \$20,000. The building extended from the Camino Real (then Vista de Oro) side of the



**Building 2: Mrs. Paul’s notes read “Completed duplex before back wall is erected.”
This view is looking south from Camino Real (then Vista de Oro).
(Courtesy Valorie Hodgert)**

property but a breezeway (permit date June 30, 1947) would link it to Building 3. (This is now the bar area immediately adjacent to the pool and next to the entrance to the Europa Restaurant). The California Ranch-style of this duplex mirrored Building 1, and featured a tile roof, metal casement windows, brick windowsills, glass block and stucco over cement block. According to Hodgert these two 2-bedroom apartments (each with living room and kitchen) were very much the project of Mildred Paul. Hodgert describes Mildred’s project management as “fierce” reportedly threatening workers with a rifle on one occasion!



**Villa Royale, Building 2 (two 2-bedroom apartments).
(Courtesy Valorie Hodgert)**



**Villa Royale Buildings 1 and 2 nearing completion. View from Vista de Oro (today Camino Real).
(Courtesy Valorie Hodgert)**

Building 3 (Lot 40) (Today the Europa Restaurant, plus present day rooms 121 and 122). A building permit pulled on behalf of A. K. Paul on September 13, 1947 describes a six-room, 2,076 square foot dwelling constructed of 8-inch concrete block. The California Ranch architectural style mirrored Buildings 1 and 2. An 8-foot deep porch was added to the property along the west façade, in the summer of 1950. This porch was enclosed in 1987 to make a breakfast area as part of the creation of the Europa Restaurant.

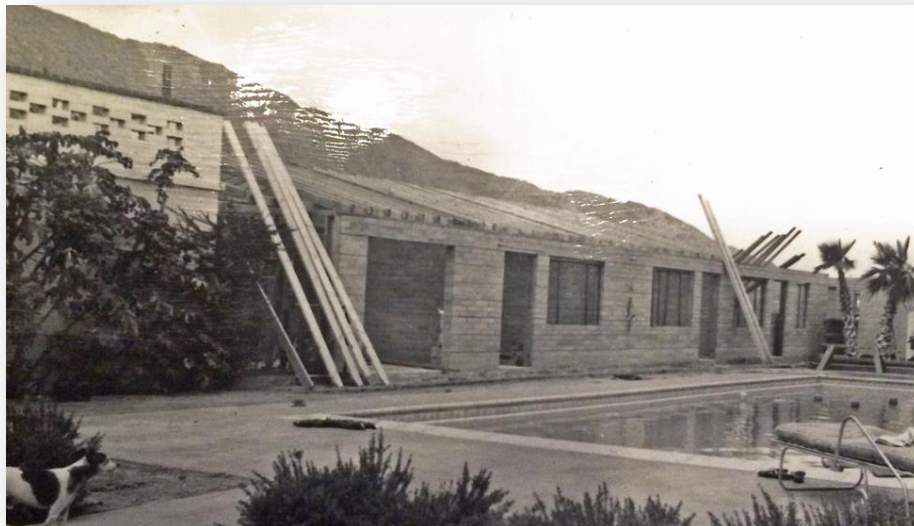
Located on the Camino Real (east) side of Villa Royale property, this building was to be the west coast home of the Pauls. Mildred Paul had a restaurant-size kitchen built in the home and Hodgert opines that the kitchen layout and size is very much the same today as it was when installed. In addition to the expansive kitchen, the house had two bedrooms, a large living room, dining room, and a “gift closet.”



**Building 3 (left) circa 1950 with porch extension under construction. Building 1 (right) with office extension under construction.
(Courtesy Valorie Hodgert)**

Building 4 (Lots 25 & 26) (Present day rooms 108 through 112). Villa Royale continued its expansion in 1950 with the addition of three more apartments on the west side of the property (adjacent to the garage). The building permit for Building 4 is dated May 5, 1950 for “owner Evelyn Pell” and describes “three multiple dwelling units...3-unit and garage, laundry room, frame and stucco, tile roof, as per plan...Value: \$24,000...Build area 3,000 square feet. Construction 8” block.” Reportedly, these smaller one-

bedroom units could be made larger by accessing rooms that faced Indian Trail. One of the rear rooms is now the manager's office. Design and construction were similar to the earlier buildings, with metal casement windows and clay tile roofs. The only minor difference in the construction of Building 4 (from Buildings 1, 1a, 2 and 3) was the horizontal indentation at every third brick course which is still visible today.



**Building 4 under construction, with Building 1a (garage) to the left.
(Courtesy Valerie Hodgert)**



**This 1950 photograph shows the construction of Building 4. The deeply scored brick courses are shown.
(Courtesy Valerie Hodgert)**

Building 5 (Lots 25 & 26) (Present day room 114 and Spa). The final structure of Courtyard 1 was built in April of 1951 with the construction of two apartments totaling 900 square feet. These units were built behind the garden area adjacent to the pool, on the north side of the property, with south-facing patios. Design details were similar to the existing buildings (i.e., 8-inch concrete block, casement windows and tile roof). The units were one-bedroom apartments with living room, bedroom, bathroom, and kitchen. As with Building 4, the walls included a horizontal indentation at every third brick course.

Villa Royale Opens for Business

While the official opening date of Villa Royale is not known, the property is mentioned by name in an August 31, 1948 article in the *Desert Sun* newspaper and an advertisement for the hotel appears in the February 1950 issue of *Palm Springs Villager* magazine (shown on page 10). That advertisement shows the finished pool and Buildings 1, 2, and 3, but building 4 had not yet been constructed.



The first mention of Villa Royale may have occurred in this brief August 31, 1948 *Desert Sun* newspaper article. However, an unidentified "BRAND NEW 5 room apartment" at the 1620 Indian Trail address is advertised in the *Desert Sun* as early as October 17, 1947.

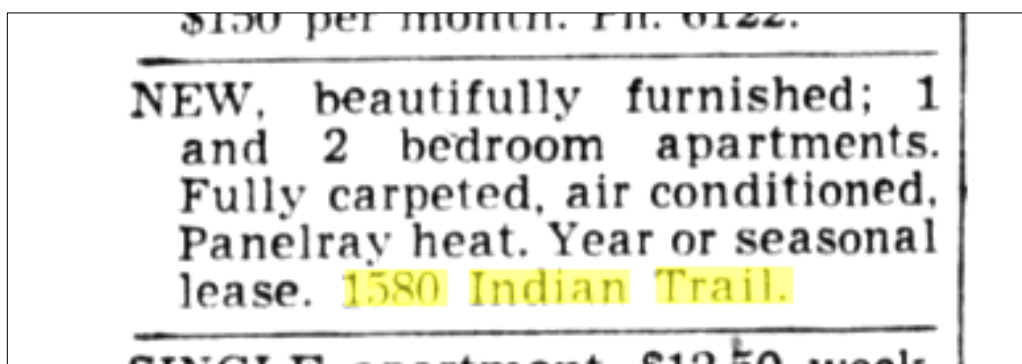
Once the lanai-recreation room (Building 1a) opened and Buildings 4 and 5 were completed, parties, events, and meetings were held regularly at Villa Royale. In a May 1951 *Desert Sun* newspaper advertisement, Villa Royale was included in a co-op advertisement for "Operation Summer" and described as an "Apartment Court with capacity for 28 guests...Children accepted."

Villa Royale's operation has continued almost uninterrupted to the present day. It remained relatively untouched by the next owners, Thomas K. and Elsie Tousley, and their son Thomas C. Tousley. In 1984 the property was purchased by Chuck Murawski.

While the changes Murawski made to the property were largely cosmetic rather than structural, they have left their mark. In 1985, Murawski expanded what is today known as Villa Royale when he purchased the two adjacent properties, i.e., the Indian Trail Villa (at 1580 Indian Trail) and the Country Manor (at 1564 Indian Trail). Within the context of this nomination, the buildings comprising Indian Trail Villa (Lot 27) and Country Manor (Lot 28) are referred to as Villa Royale Courtyards 2 and 3, respectively.

Villa Royale Courtyard 2 (Lot 27) (original “Indian Trail Villa” at 1580 Indian Trail).

Built in April 1950 by Mr. and Mrs. Jules Jorz, the owners and contractors, Indian Trail Villa started its life as a single-story L-shaped, four-unit apartment complex with attached porch. Built of wood frame and stucco, the 3,246 square foot structure featured a composite roof with an estimated value of \$26,000. The apartments looked on to a landscaped area. New owners installed a 16’x32’ swimming pool in 1953. Initially, the one and two-bedroom furnished apartments were made available with yearly leases.



“NEW, beautifully furnished” apartments at the Indian Trail Villa
Address in a November 10, 1950 advertisement in the *Desert Sun* newspaper

A March 18, 1959 advertisement described the accommodations as “Deluxe furnished 2 bedroom apartment with kitchen and large living room...TV, magnificent mountain view...Quiet home atmosphere...Air conditioned, heated, and filtered pool.” The design of the four units was California Ranch-style, with large windows and deeply-set covered porches.

In the mid-1980s, the building was altered cosmetically and many of the windows were modified to be arch-framed. French doors were added to create access to enclosed patios at the rear of each room and the swimming pool was filled in to create a brick-paved courtyard and fountain.

Villa Royale Courtyard 3 (Lot 28) (original “Country Manor” at 1564 Indian Trail).

Built for Mr. and Mrs. Winterhalter, an August 14, 1956 building permit describes “5-unit apartments” with construction by Ryan & Ryan Contractors (known locally for building Meiselman houses).

Week Building Permits Here Hit \$247,100

**\$40,000 for Five
New Residence
Units is Largest**

Building permits issued in the City of Palm Springs the past week had a valuation of \$247,100, according to records of the city building department.

Largest permit, \$40,000, went to Mr. and Mrs. Winterhalter for construction of five units at 1584 Indian Trail

Others issued were:

Louis Gaudiello, 1530 North Indian Avenue, addition of eight units, \$39,000; E. L. Hooper, 524 Calle Abronia, repair fire damage, \$4,000; W. A. Darwin, 1153 May

This August 27, 1956 *Desert Sun* newspaper article reported the building permit issued to Country Manor as being the largest of the week. The address number in the article is incorrectly recorded as 1584 (rather than 1564) most likely due to the sloppiness of the handwriting on the building permit.

The apartments comprised 2,738 square feet with a 650 square-foot patio area. The structure, with attached porch, surrounds an 18' x 34' pool on three sides. The permit lists the building as of frame and stucco construction, with a composition roof and a building value of \$40,000. Per the plumbing permit, the five original units (later the number of apartments was increased to nine) had eight bathrooms and four of the units had kitchens. By January 1957 final inspections were complete.



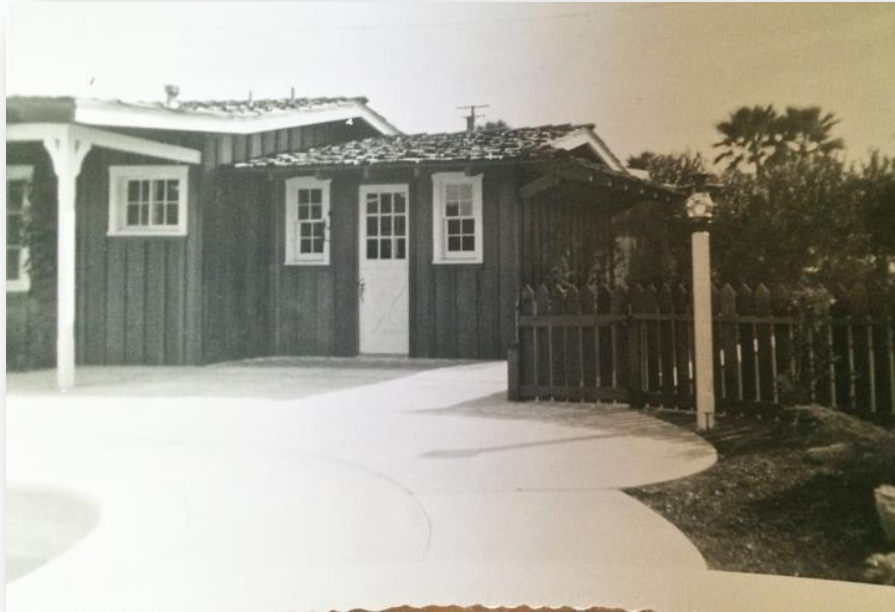
This February 1957 photograph of Country Manor (Courtyard 3) shows present day Room 305 of Villa Royale. (Courtesy David Shahriari)

The west-facing central apartment (now Room 305) was the largest unit. It featured a full-size Western-style kitchen with pine cabinets and a large brick fireplace in the living room. The kitchen and fireplace, as well as the wood-beamed ceiling, are still intact. Vintage photographs from 1956 show the ovoid pool. The basic layout and structure of the buildings have not changed. Previous owner Murawski replaced the roof with clay tile and stuccoed the exterior facades (originally board and batten) to create a look that mirrored that of the original Villa Royale.



A February 1957 photograph shows the original architectural details of Courtyard 3 (then the Country Manor). (Courtesy David Shahriari)

In 1964 a smaller storage unit was remodeled and a bathroom was added. This is surmised to be Room 301. Photos dated Christmas 1956 and February 1957 show a group of Western-style buildings built in an E-shape around the ovoid swimming pool. The siding is board and batten/clapboard, and the roofs are cedar shake. The roofline is extended all the way round the pool-facing façade creating a deep porch with Western-style supports and trusses. Windows appear to be wood-frame, multi-pane, white painted. The small office/storage building (now room 301) has a “Dutch door.”



This February 1957 photograph of Country Manor (Courtyard 3) shows the cedar shake roof. At right is the original storage room which is today Room 301. (Courtesy David Shahriari)

Murawski Makeover

Chuck Murawski had collected European furniture for many years with the dream of one day owning an inn. He describes the look he created for Villa Royale in a March/April 1991 *Country Inns* magazine article:

“I’ve spent a lot of time in Europe...and my heart is still there. We patterned the inn after the European style. There’s a wonderfully intimate feeling here.” But it is in the décor that Murawski’s expertise shines. “I chose to create different environments,” he says, “rural versions of my favorite European countries. And then I tried to make them authentic down to the last detail.”

It took five years of collecting on dozens of trips – when Villa Royale was still only a dream – for Murawski and Lee to assemble their collection.

Murawski utilized all the tricks of the trade to lend architectural subtlety to each room. For instance, he stuccoed the walls in the Cote d’Azur room and then rubbed them with

darker paint and glazed them to add character and an old feeling. The floor tiles in the Belgian room are laid tightly together in the European manner, without the use of grout. And fieldstone was used for the floor of the Greek room to give the experience of ancient stones.

After Murawski purchased the two adjoining properties on Indian Trail (Courtyards 2 and 3), he replaced the board and batten at the former Country Manor (Courtyard 3) with painted stucco. In 1991, he replaced the cedar shake roof with clay tile to match the roofs of the original Villa Royale. Murawski added wood-burning fireplaces in nearly every unit of the three courtyards, tiled all the floors (according to the style of each room) and created private patios for many of the units to include private jacuzzis. External walls were added between patios in some cases. Some windows were replaced with French doors leading to private patios. Some windows in Building 1 were filled in or replaced, to redistribute interior space (according to building permits, rooms 202, 203, and 204 had casement windows replaced). Interior square arches in these units were changed to rounded arches, and wood-burning fireplaces installed. For the porch supports in Courtyard 1, Murawski had individual stone pillars custom carved in Mexico and shipped to Villa Royale, piecing them together on site. Fortunately, many of these changes are reversible or do not change the scale and massing of the contributing structures. The cumulative impact of these changes is addressed in paragraph 7, "Integrity Analysis."

Local Historical Context

Post-World War II development in Palm Springs grew at a frenetic pace as more building materials became available. The tourist boom followed suit. Nevertheless, the



The February 1952 issue of *Palm Springs Villager* magazine featured an article written by Melba Bennett (then owner of Deep Well Guest Ranch). The 1952 article contained this photograph showing the architectural style of the ranch's first guest rooms. (Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)

south end of Palm Springs was still relatively rural and tourist accommodations were limited to the popular Deep Well Guest Ranch which, along with the more exclusive Smoke Tree Ranch, featured a host of “western-style activities.” This made the Villa Royale’s selection of a “California Ranch” architectural style a foregone conclusion. The map from the 1952 *Palm Springs Area Year Book* shows how many vacation apartments and hotels had sprung up between 1947 and 1952 in Palm Springs and Villa Royale led the way as one of the earliest small hotels in south Palm Springs.

The Rancho Royale Hotel Company (The Biltmore)

The opportunity for the A. K. Paul family to purchase the land for Villa Royale was quite serendipitous. The Levin family (the owners and developers of the nearby Biltmore Hotel) had formed a company known as the Rancho Royale Hotel Company. According to a 1989 *Desert Sun* newspaper article about the Biltmore Hotel, in 1946 San Francisco-developer Samuel H. Levin arrived in Palm Springs representing the Levin family and purchased 50 acres for his new hotel. It is surmised that the Levins purchased far more land than they needed for the Biltmore Hotel and started selling lots. The lots for Villa Royale were sold to the Paul family on March 21, 1947.

In selling off parcels of land adjacent to the planned Biltmore, the Levin family stumbled on zoning issues as not all the land they sold or tried to sell was zoned for R3 development. A lawsuit from 1952 relates to a purchaser of Lot 38 (undeveloped to this day, but in the ownership of Villa Royale since 1985), with the Rancho Royale Hotel Company as defendants. In May 1948, a Ms. Peggy Evans purchased Lots 37 and 38:

“[Following a] conference with defendant Robert Levin regarding the possibility of improving Lot 38 with multiple dwelling units and Levin was advised that plaintiff so intended to improve the property. Plaintiff was not then informed that deed restrictions had been placed on the property by defendant owners in 1946, which restrictions, among other things, classified Lot 38 as R-1 property upon which only a single family dwelling could be erected.”

The Levins had to refund Evans all of her original investment plus interest and the lot reverted back to the Rancho Royale Hotel Company. It changed hands twice more before becoming part of Villa Royale in 1985.

Hollywood Lore

Villa Royale became popular with Hollywood stars and Mickey Rooney was a “regular visitor” according to Hodgert. One of the leading writers and screenwriters of the era, Irving Shulman (whose credits include “Rebel Without A Cause”) stayed with his family at Villa Royale for several weeks each year, “always in one of the original two-bedroom duplexes” (now Room 118). In the October 1955 issue of *Palm Springs Villager* magazine, Irving Shulman is interviewed and photographed with his family during one of his stays at Villa Royale and comments it was his “seventh summer” in Palm Springs. Irving specifically mentions Villa Royale several times in his 1959 novel, *The Velvet Knife*.



Author Irving Shulman with his wife Julia and daughters Joan and Leslie are seen poolside at the Villa Royale in the October 1955 issue of *Palm Springs Villager*.

Site Description



This 2015 aerial view (top oriented to the west) shows Villa Royale at the junction of South Indian Trail and South Camino Real with East Palm Canyon Drive shown for reference. (Courtesy Google Maps)

Location. Villa Royale is located in south Palm Springs in the Deepwell neighborhood. The property is bounded to the west by South Indian Trail and to the east by South Camino Real (formerly Vista de Oro). The southern tip of Villa Royale's property forms a junction between the two streets. The property is just half a block north of Highway 111. A current property map is provided at Appendix VII.

Around the pool and in other parts of the property can be found palm trees, mesquite and Manzanita trees, bougainvillea, birds of paradise, citrus trees and, at the south end of the property, a rose garden.

A full legal description of the property is provided at Appendix VIII and the Assessor's Map is at Appendix III.

The Building Type

Villa Royale exemplifies the small seasonal hotel that flourished in post-World War II Palm Springs. This building type slowly gained prominence in Palm Springs between 1920 and 1965. Early 1950s advertisements described Villa Royale as "beautiful modern apartments." Today, a configuration such as the original Villa Royale might be described as "serviced apartments" or, by virtue of its compact size, a "boutique hotel."

Chain of Ownership

As previously mentioned, the land that now belongs to Villa Royale was originally owned by the Rancho Royale Hotel Company. Every lot (except one where pre-1947 ownership was not listed) belonged to Rancho Royale Hotel Company.

Courtyard 1 (Lots 25, 26, and 40). Lots 25, 26 and 40 were purchased in March 1947 by the Pauls. At the end of 1947, lots 25 and 26 were deeded to Evelyn Pell. Lots 25 and 26 were the location of Pell's home (Buildings 1 and 1a) and subsequently Buildings 4 and 5. Lot 40 (where Buildings 2 and 3 are located) was deeded to Villa Royale in 1956, as were lots 25 and 26.

Pell and her family owned and operated Villa Royale until 1963. Mildred Paul became 'President' of Villa Royale, while Pell was listed as 'Secretary' on the Grant Deed dated June 28, 1963 to Dr. and Mrs. Thomas K. Tousley of Los Angeles. The Tousleys purchased the property for their son Thomas C. Tousley. In 1984 the younger Tousley sold Villa Royale to Charles Murawski and Robert Lee. In 1992 the hotel was sold to European Country Inn, but reverted to Lee Affiliates in 1993 when European Country Inn was foreclosed upon.

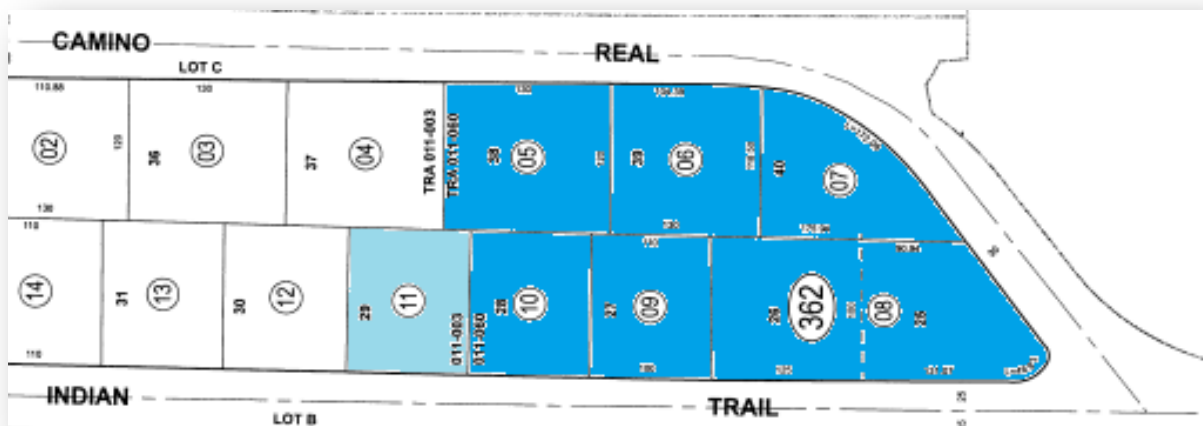
In 1997 Villa Royale was purchased by actors Amy Aquino, Drew McCoy, Brooke Adams and Tony Shalhoub in the name of Villa Royale, LLC. David L. and Grace E. Arnold (of Full House Enterprises) purchased Villa Royale in 2004. The property was foreclosed upon in 2009. In 2010 Peak Hospitality (David Shahriari) purchased Villa Royale and is the current owner.

Courtyard 2 (Lot 27). In 1947, Lot 27 was purchased by Elmer Olson who then deeded the property to his wife. In March 1950, the lot was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Jorz, who built the rental apartments. They sold the property in 1953 to Mr. and Mrs. Kaufman. Thereafter the property changed hands every two or three years, until it was purchased in 1985 by Chuck Murawski and Robert Lee.

Courtyard 3 (Lot 28). In 1947 Lots 28 and 29 were sold by the Rancho Royale Hotel Company to Mr. and Mrs. Edward Marshall. In 1955, the two lots were sold to Mr. and Mrs. Kaufman. In 1956, Lot 28 was sold to the Winterhalters, who built Country Manor. They remained owners until 1971. The property subsequently went through five different ownerships until Murawski and Lee purchased it in September 1985.

Parking and empty lot (Lots 38 & 39). These two lots also originally belonged to Rancho Royale Hotel Company. In the 1950s and 1960s, this land belonged to a well-known local interior designer, Sophie August, and subsequently to her trustee. The two lots were purchased in November 1985 by Murawski and Lee. The south half of Lot 39 is now parking for the Europa Restaurant, and Lot 38 remains vacant.

In the final Grant Deed, dated July 1, 2010, Villa Royale comprises Lots 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 38, 39, and 40 of Rancho Royale (see Appendix VIII).



This shows the lots identified in the July 1, 2010 Grant Deed. While included in the deed, Lot 29 (in light blue), 1562 South Indian Trail, is a single family home used by the current owner of Villa Royale and is not included in this nomination.

BACKGROUND/HISTORIC CONTEXT

The relatively short history of Palm Springs can be organized into three more or less distinct periods that include Prehistory, the Settlement Period, and the Modern Period. It is within the context of the last period that this building will be evaluated.

Modern Period (1925-1960s): This period can be considered to have begun with the construction of the area's first "modern" structure, Rudolph Schindler's Paul and Betty Popenoe Cabin in 1922. With this building the area's predominant architectural style, which was based on established Mexican and Spanish Colonial motifs, began to change. Incorporation of the town of Palm Springs followed in 1938. During the post-World War II era, Palm Springs' economy prospered through tourism. Hollywood celebrities discovered the desert oasis and patronized its hotels, inns, nightclubs and restaurants; celebrity-seeking tourists soon followed, transforming Palm Springs from a sleepy village into an increasingly cosmopolitan environment that saw the construction of schools, hospitals, an airport and other important public works projects. The commercial core along Palm Canyon Drive (originally Main Street) flourished. In the 1950s the downtown core was expanded by the construction of the cross-axis of Tahquitz-McCallum Way that extended from the center of the original settlement to the airport, spurring new development along the way. Early residential development also expanded into new sub-divisions composed of midcentury modern homes in the areas surrounding the town's original core.

EVALUATION for CLASS 1 HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION

Criterion 1: Significant Event (*Completed because Criterion 1 is marked above*).

To qualify for listing under this criterion, a property must be associated with one or more events important in the defined historic context. *Criterion 1 recognizes properties associated with events or patterns of events or historic trends.* One important pattern of events was the growth of small hotel construction in general and in southern Palm Springs in particular. Villa Royale was one of the first post-World War II tourist accommodations in south Palm Springs (previously little existed except for Deep Well Guest Ranch and Smoke Tree Ranch). As an early and fine example of a small hotel in south Palm Springs, *Villa Royale is associated with this pattern of events for its ability (1) to exemplify the beginning of small hotel construction catering to resort tourism in this part of the city, and (2) in a broader context, an example of a building type that slowly gained prominence in the city between 1920 and 1965.. Villa Royale qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site on the local registry under Criterion 1.*

Criterion 2: Significant Persons. Criterion 2 recognizes properties associated with the lives of persons who made a meaningful contribution to national, state or local history. While the original and subsequent owners of Villa Royale might be considered individuals of some importance, it does not appear they rise to the level of "significant" local importance. *Hence Villa Royale does not qualify 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*). Villa Royale is eligible under this criterion because it represents an important period in the history of Palm Springs, most notably, the post-World War II construction of small hotels in south Palm Springs catering to the growing resort tourist industry.

Therefore, for its ability to convey a period in the city's history, Villa Royale qualifies as a Class 1 Historic Site under Criteria 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. While Villa Royale possesses numerous distinctive characteristics that make up the California Ranch-style, including simplicity and functionality, that assertion is not made in this nomination due to modifications to some of the architectural features over the last 68 years. Nonetheless, the enduring historicity of Villa Royale rests in its ability to convey the scale, massing and ambiance of a small hotel, a building type which slowly gained prominence between 1920 and 1965. Villa Royale's scale and function have remained unchanged. Therefore, for its ability to convey a distinctive building type important in the city's history, Villa Royale qualifies as a Class 1 Historic Site under Criteria 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). This criterion is not asserted for Villa Royale.

Criterion 6: (That represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction). This Criterion was created to address the resources contained within a potential historic district. As such, Criterion 6 does not apply. Hence, Villa Royale does not qualify under Criterion 6.

ARCHEOLOGY

Criterion 7: (That has yielded or may be likely to yield information important to the national, state or local history or prehistory). Villa Royale does not qualify for listing on the local registry under Criterion 7.

SUMMARY: This evaluation finds Villa Royale eligible for listing as a Palm Springs Historic Site under 8.05.020 (a) paragraphs 1, 3 and 4 of the local ordinance's seven criteria.

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

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. ***Villa Royale 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. ***Although Villa Royale has seen some alteration, the essential characteristics of form, plan, space, structure, and, to a degree the style, have survived intact. Similarly, the structural system and massing has largely survived. Fortunately, there is extensive documentation in the form of vintage photographs taken by the original owner and annotated by the owners that illustrate and confirm the original style and plan of Villa Royale. The large west-facing porch in the original owner's house is now enclosed and glazed, but it has not been extended and its profile remains the same as the original design. However, windows in some rooms have been replaced by French***

doors to access private patios. Early photographs and illustrations of Villa Royale show that the original design of Villa Royale buildings, layout, and pool area remain the same today as when they were first built.

In addition, Courtyards 2 and 3 that have been part of Villa Royale since the mid-1980s have also retained their location and to a large extent, their original design. In the case of Courtyard 2, the simple L-shape building that featured five apartments has been upgraded cosmetically and the original swimming pool has been filled in and replaced with a fountain, but the overall design remains the same as it was in 1950. At Courtyard 3, cosmetic changes included replacing cedar shake roof with clay tiles, and replacing board and batten siding with stucco to mimic Courtyard 1.

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 Villa Royale continues to reflect the original design relationship of site and structure. During nearly 70 years of existence as a small, intimate resort hotel, the setting has seen cosmetic improvements and the addition of landscape features, including fountains, spa pool, brick pavers, and granite pillars (that surround original porch supports). Trees and shrubs have grown, others have been replaced, but the overall setting remains as originally advertised: one of "casual desert living" and "lovely spacious grounds and attractive setting [that] invites relaxation."***

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. ***While some of Villa Royale's materials have been modified (e.g., board and batten replaced with stucco) these materials are more suitable for the desert climate and were replaced for design consistency. However, these changes do not constitute a significant loss of the physical elements that expressed the design during the building's period of significance; the particular pattern and configuration that today forms the building site survives intact. In most other aspects, original materials remain at Villa Royale, with original metal casement windows much in evidence, as well as original painted wood eaves, clay tile roofs, and painted brickwork. Although many porch supports are encased in granite, this condition is reversible and the original porch supports remain in place.***

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 Villa Royale is comprised of simple concrete block and brick, stucco, etc., and continues to express a contemporary 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. ***The Villa Royale's original small scale of construction remains intact and continues to contribute to the feeling of an intimate resort. Additionally, Villa Royale was sited to take advantage of panoramic views of the mountains and designed around a large central pool further creating an intimate resort-like feel. Accordingly, Villa Royale retains its 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. ***As previously stated in this nomination, Villa Royale is an important example of a particular building type in Palm Springs. Accordingly, it continues its association with patterns of events important to the local history.***

INTEGRITY SUMMARY: Villa Royale appears to be in excellent condition partially due to the use of construction materials suitable for the harsh desert environment and also as a result of ongoing improvements and upgrades.

This integrity analysis confirms that the buildings and site of Villa Royale still possess sufficient integrity to qualify Villa Royale for designation as a Class 1 Historic Site.

8. Bibliography

Attached is a list of books, articles, and other sources cited or used in preparing this application and other documentation that may be relevant.

Books

Connolly and Wasserman. *Updating Classic America Ranches*. Taunton Books, 2006.

Sunset Magazine in collaboration with Cliff May. *Sunset Western Ranch Houses*. Lane Publishing Company, 1946.

Johns, Howard. *Palm Springs Confidential*. Barricade Books, NJ, 2004.

Moruzzi, Peter. *Palm Springs Holiday*. Gibbs Smith, Layton, Utah, 2009.

Other Documentary Sources

Fredericks, Betty. *Country Inns* magazine. March/April 1991.

Desert Sun newspaper (multiple editions)

Palm Springs Villager (multiple editions)

Peterson, Don R. *Palm Springs Galaxy*. MARDO Corporation, 1987.

Shulman, Irving. *The Velvet Knife*. Doubleday, New York, 1959.

Other sources consulted:

Telephone interview: Chuck Murawski, April 23, 2015, plus email exchanges

Telephone interview: Amy Aquino, June 10, 2015, plus email exchanges

Telephone interview: Valorie Hodgert, July 12, 2015

In-person interview (oral history): Valorie Hodgert, July 27 & 28, 2015

Other Sources Consulted

City of Palm Springs (Planning and Building Departments)

Palm Springs Historical Society

Palm Springs Public Library

Riverside County Assessor's Office

9. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Estimated: 3.5 acres

Property Boundary Description: See Appendix VIII

Parcel Numbers: See Appendix II

Villa Royale is bounded to the south by the intersection of Indian Trail and Camino Real. It is bounded to the west by Indian Trail and to the east by Camino Real. The north boundaries are Lot 28 (west) and Lot 38 (east).

10. Prepared By

Name/Title: Melissa Riche

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

11. Required Documentation

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 districts 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.

Appendix I: Owner's Letter of Support



December 8, 2015

Mr. Flinn Fagg
Director of Planning Services
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way
Palm Springs, CA 92262

Dear Mr. Fagg,

Please accept this letter as authorizing the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation (PSPF) to act as my agent/representative in matters regarding the Class I Historic Site designation of the Villa Royale Inn at 1620 South Indian Trail in the city of Palm Springs, California.

It is my desire that as much of the site as possible be designated as historic.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Mr. Ronald Marshall of PSPF at (760) 837-7117.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David B. Shahriari".

David B. Shahriari
Property Owner

Appendix II: Assessor Parcel Numbers, Lot Numbers and Street Addresses

Lots 25, 26, 27, 28, 38, 39 and 40 of Rancho Royale, Palm Springs, County of Riverside, California; Map Book: 508; Page/Block: 362

APN 508-362-008-8, Lots 25/26, 1620 South Indian Trail (Courtyard 1, original Villa Royale)

APN 508-362-007-7, Lot 40, 1620 South Indian Trail (rear of Europa Restaurant and rear units on Camino Real side of property)

APN 508-362-006-6, Lot 39 (parking on south side behind Courtyard 2 on South Camino Real side of property, otherwise a vacant lot)

APN 508-362-005-5, Lot 38 (vacant lot behind Courtyard 3 on South Camino Real side of property)

APN 508-362-009-9, Lot 27, 1580 South Indian Trail (Courtyard 2, original Indian Trail Villa)

APN 508-362-010-9, Lot 28, 1564 South Indian Trail (Courtyard 3, original Country Manor)

NOTE: Although included on the July 1, 2010 Grant Deed (Appendix VIII), APN 508-362-011-0, Lot 29, 1562 South Indian Trail, is a single family home used by the current owner of Villa Royale and is not included in this nomination.

Appendix IV: Building Permit History

1620 Indian Trail

- Building Permit No. 2739, March 5, 1947, 8 room dwelling, 8" conc. Block, As per plan (Lot 25)
- Building Permit No. 2776, April 7, 1947, 2 units, conc Block, As per plan (Lot 40)
- Building Permit No. 2915, June 30, 1947, Add Breezeway, As per plan (Lot 40)
- Building Permit No. 3022, September 13, 1947, 6 Room Dwelling, 8" conc Block, As per plan (Lot 40)
- Building Permit No. 3670, October 1, 1948, 18x40 Swimming Pool, Gunite (Lot 25)
- Building Permit No. 4295, May 5, 1950, 3 Unit and Garage, laundry room, Frame & stucco, Tile roof (Lot 25)
- Building Permit No. 4373, July 1, 1950, Add 8' porch (Lot 25)
- Building Permit No. 4413, illegible 1950, Build office, Glass Front, Tile Roof (Lot 25)
- Building Permit No. 4635, December 8, 1950, add porch to recreation room, Frame/stucco, Tile roof (Lot 25)
- Building Permit No. 5056, June 27, 1951, Add 2 apt., 8" concrete block, Tile roof, as per plan (Lot 25)
- Building Permit No. 6286, July 8, 1953, Add bathroom and office. Frame and stucco, as per plan (Lot 25)
- Building Permit No. 6336, August 11, 1953, erect canopy over garage + apt, per plan

1580 Indian Trail

- Building Permit No. 4259, April 13, 1950, 4 Unit apt., Frame + Stucco, roof, as per plan (Lot 27)
- Building Permit No. 6189, April 29, 1953, Swim Pool 16'x32', (Gunite) (Lot 27)

1564 Indian Trail

- Building Permit No. 8875, August 14, 1956, Const. 5 Unit Apt., Frame + Stucco Const., Compo Roof (Lot 28)
- Building Permit No. 8899, August 28, 1956, 18x34 Gunite Swim Pool (Lot 28)

NOTE: The foregoing is an abbreviated list of permits and does not include numerous electrical, plumbing, interior remodel, etc. permits.

Appendix V: Photographic Documentation of Buildings and Site and Architectural Details (taken in of June 2015)

(Additional photographs can be found on the accompanying CD.)



Villa Royale, Building 1.



Villa Royale, Courtyard 1 looking south.



Building 2, breezeway-lanai.



Building 1a showing the original stairs to the roof deck of garage (now office).



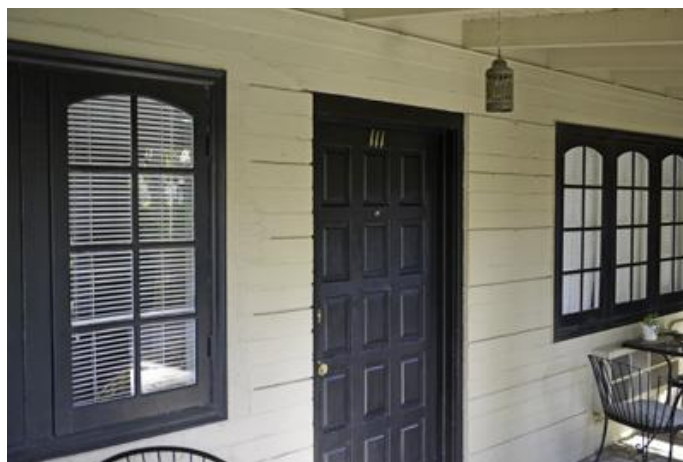
Building 3 showing former porch now enclosed as a breakfast room for Europa Restaurant.



Building 1, Room 103, original window.



Building 1, Room 105, entry door (replaced), glass block detail and original windows.



Building 4, Room 111, showing original brickwork with horizontal indentations. The door and windows have been replaced.



Building 1, Room 101, entry and deep porch. The door and windows have been replaced.



Courtyard 2, general view.



Courtyard 3, Room 305, entry, windows, porch and eave details.



Courtyard 3, Rooms 305, 306, 307.



Courtyard 3, with Room 305 at head of pool.



Courtyard 3, Room 301.

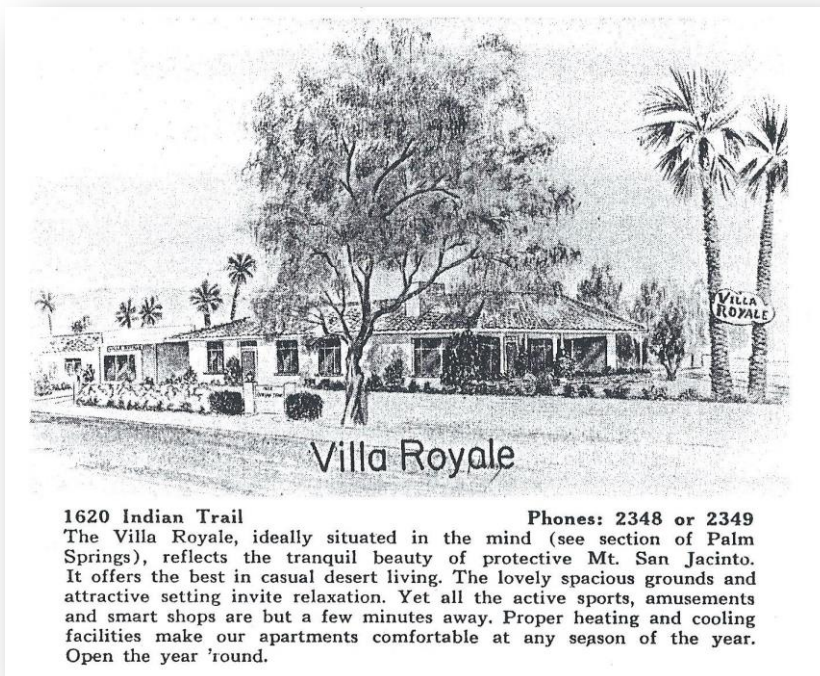
Appendix VI: Miscellaneous Historical Photographs and Ephemera

(Additional historical images can be found on the accompanying CD.)



VILLA ROYALE, ideally situated in the South Section of Palm Springs, reflects the tranquil beauty of protective Mt. San Jacinto. It offers the best in casual desert living. The lovely, spacious grounds and attractive setting invite relaxation, yet amusements and smart shops are but a few minutes away. There is telephone service to each apartment while heating and air conditioning facilities make for comfortable living at any season. Located just north of Indio Road at 1620 Indian Trail. Telephone 2348. Mrs. Evelyn Pell, Manager. Open year around.

This Villa Royale ad appeared in the 1952 *Palm Springs Annual Yearbook*.



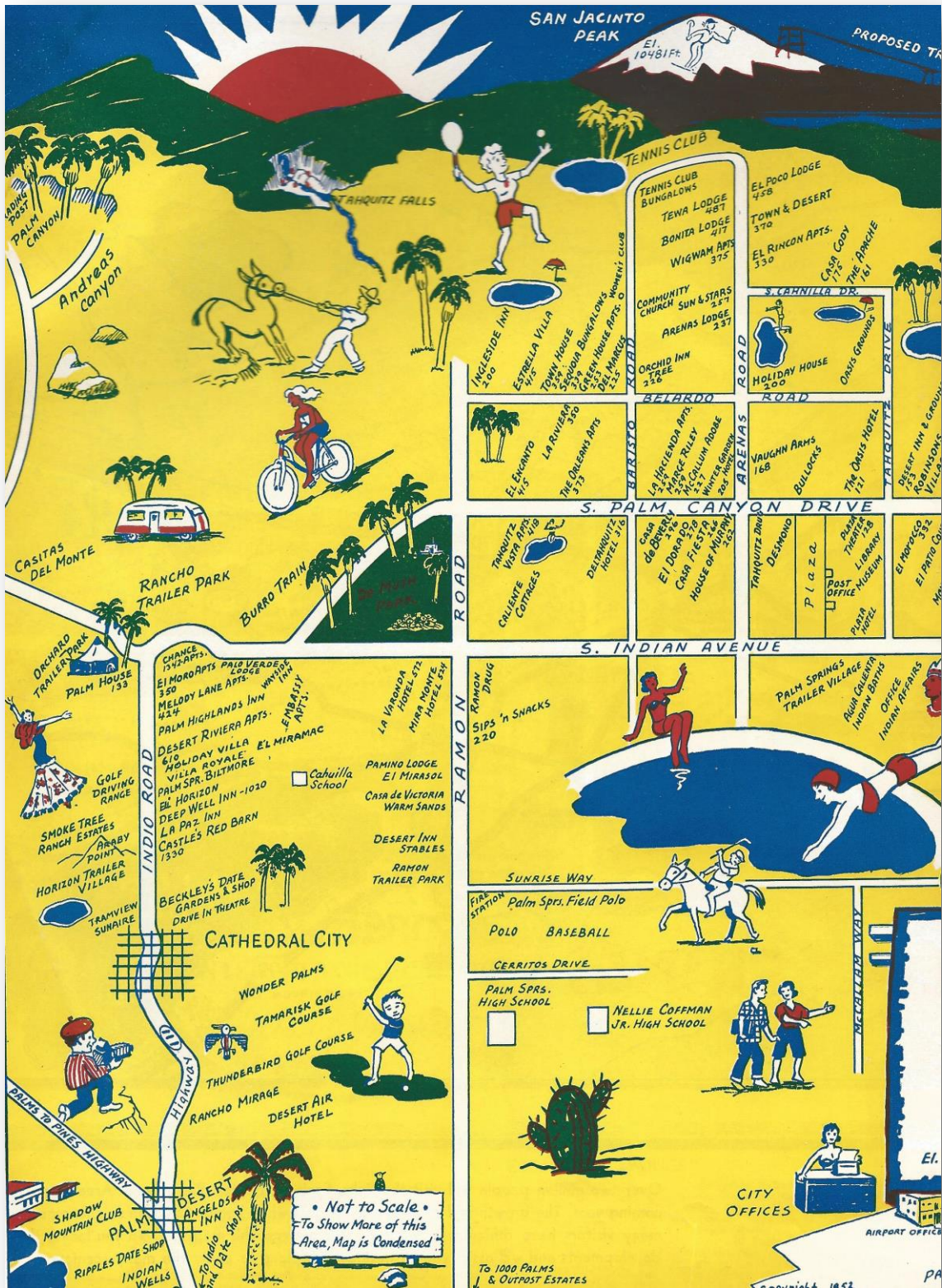
Villa Royale

1620 Indian Trail

Phones: 2348 or 2349

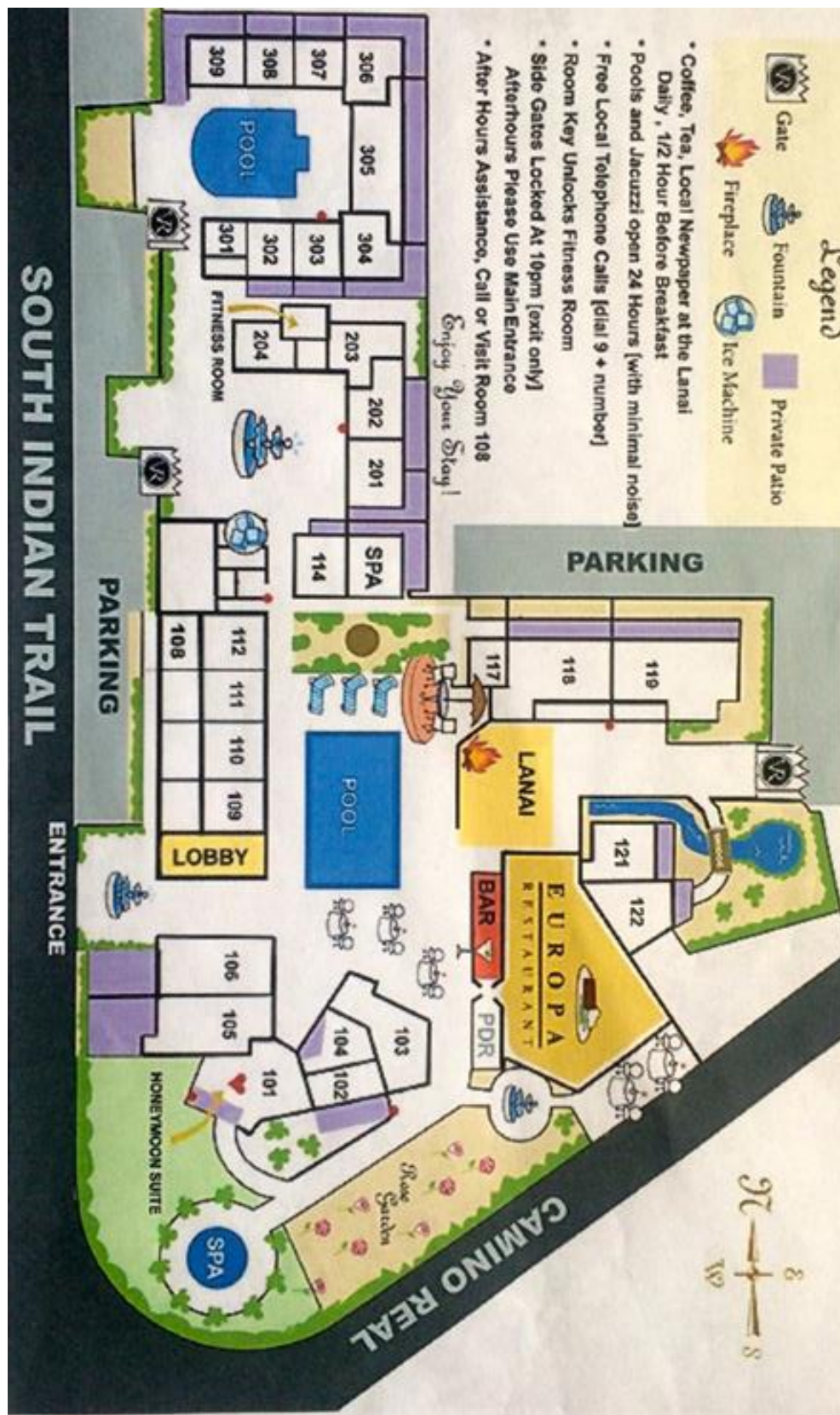
The Villa Royale, ideally situated in the mind (see section of Palm Springs), reflects the tranquil beauty of protective Mt. San Jacinto. It offers the best in casual desert living. The lovely spacious grounds and attractive setting invite relaxation. Yet all the active sports, amusements and smart shops are but a few minutes away. Proper heating and cooling facilities make our apartments comfortable at any season of the year. Open the year 'round.

This entry, which appears in a 1955 booklet entitled *The Palm Springs and Desert Resort Area Story*, describes Villa Royale as “ideally situated in the mind.”



The 1954 Palm Springs Area Yearbook Recreation Map shows Villa Royale (off of "Indio Road") along with other hotels and landmarks.

Appendix VII: Current Property Map



Appendix VIII: 2010 Grant Deed (Includes Legal Description)

CHICAGO TITLE COMPANY

RECORDING REQUESTED BY:
Chicago Title Company

AND WHEN RECORDED MAIL TO:
David Shahriri
3834 Reklaw Drive
Studio City, CA 91604

DOC # 2010-0413897
08/30/2010 08:00A Fee:35.00
Page 1 of 1 Doc Tax Paid
Recorded in Official Records
County of Riverside
Larry W. Ward
Assessor, County Clerk & Recorder

| S | R | U | PAGE | SIZE | DA | MISC | LONG | RFD | COPY |
|---|---|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| | | | 485 | 428 | PCOR | NCOR | EMF | NCHG | EXAM |
| | | | | | | | T | CTY | UNI |

APN 508-362-005-5, 508-362-006-6, 508-362-007-7,
503-362-008-8, 508-362-009-9
508-362-010-9, 508-362-011-0

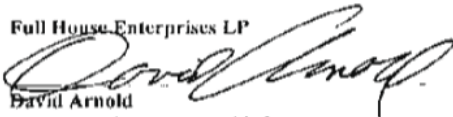
Order No.: 106746112X59 Escrow No.: 00007060 NS

GRANT DEED TRAD11-060 35-

The undersigned grantor(s) declare(s) that documentary transfer tax is \$3,428.70 County
 computed on full value of property conveyed, or
 computed on full value less value of liens or encumbrances remaining at time of sale.
 unincorporated area city of Palm Springs AND

FOR A VALUABLE CONSIDERATION receipt of which is hereby acknowledged,
Full House Enterprises LP, a California limited partnership

hereby GRANT(S) to ~~David Shahriri~~ Peak Hospitality, Inc., a California Corporation
 City of Palm Springs
 the following described real property in the County of RIVERSIDE, State of California:
**LOTS 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 38, 39 AND 40 OF RANCH ROYALE, AS SHOWN BY MAP ON FILE IN BOOK 21,
 PAGES 35 AND 36 OF MAPS, RECORDS OF RIVERSIDE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA.**

Full House Enterprises LP

 David Arnold
 Document Date: July 1, 2010

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
 COUNTY OF Orange)
 On July 13, 2010 before me, Barry Langfelder
 A NOTARY PUBLIC, personally appeared David Arnold

who proved to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence to be the person(s)
 whose name(s) is/are subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged to
 me that he/she/they executed the same in his/her/their authorized capacity(ies),
 and that by his/her/their signature(s) on the instrument the person(s) or the
 entity upon behalf of which the person(s) acted, executed the instrument.

I certify under PENALTY OF PERJURY under the laws of the State of
 California that the foregoing paragraph is true and correct.

WITNESS my hand and official seal.

Signature Barry Langfelder

MAIL TAX STATEMENTS THE SAME AS ABOVE or Address Noted Below

Name _____ Street Address _____ City & State _____

106746112-x59

Note: This 2010 grant deed incorrectly identifies the property tract as "Ranch Royale" vice "Rancho Royale" as indicated in previous deeds.