

# **The Dorothy and Roland P. Bishop Residence**

**468 West Tahquitz Canyon Way  
Palm Springs, CA 92262**

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



**Prepared by**

**Steve Vaught**

**for the**

**Palm Springs Preservation Foundation**

**May 2019**

# Acknowledgements

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**Front cover: Bishop House, east elevation, showing covered entry terrace.**  
(Author photo. May 2019)

**Above: A vintage circa 1950s postcard showing the Willows and Bishop House from their hillside gardens.**  
(Author collection)

# **THE DOROTHY & ROLAND P. BISHOP RESIDENCE**

## **Class 1 Historic Site Nomination**

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## Introduction

**A 1947 view of the Bishop House taken by prominent Palm Springs photographer Gail B. Thompson. The exterior remains largely the same today.**  
(Image by Gail B. Thompson, Gayle's Studio Collection. Courtesy of Tracy Conrad)

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 January of 2019, the PSPF board of directors assigned the task of writing the Bishop Residence’s Class 1 Historic Site nomination to Steve Vaught.

# Executive Summary

## **SIGNIFICANCE:**

The Dorothy and Roland P. Bishop Residence (hereinafter referred to as the "Bishop House") is located at 468 West Tahquitz Canyon Way in the Historic Tennis Club neighborhood. Completed in 1925, the Bishop House is a rare and unique surviving example of the early part of the period of Palm Springs Between the Wars (1919-1941) as defined in the *Citywide Historic Context & Survey Findings* created by Historic Resources Group. The Bishop House was designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style by major Southern California architect William J. Dodd of Dodd & Richards. The house is considered to be a high-style interpretation of Spanish Colonial Revival, setting it apart from the majority of other Spanish-designed structures in Palm Springs, which were generally less formal and simpler adaptations. The Bishop House rises to particular distinction, not only for the quality of its architecture, but also for its connection to the adjacent Willows at 412 West Tahquitz Canyon Way. These two properties were built as twins and together, through both their shared and individual histories, they form a combination of exceptional historical significance.

## **DESIGNATION CRITERIA:**

The Bishop House is listed as being eligible for Class 1 Historic Site designation by the *Citywide Historic Resource Inventory*. Its twin, the Willows, has already been designated a Palm Springs Class 1 Historic Site pursuant to City Council Resolution 19409, on December 2, 1998.

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

**8.05.070 (C) (1) paragraph A2 - People:** This criterion recognizes properties associated with the lives of persons who made meaningful contributions to national state or local history. In this nomination, the Bishop House is associated Roland P. Bishop, an internationally known businessman considered the "Candy King," of Southern California. Bishop was the head of the largest confectionary and baked goods enterprise on the west coast with a distribution network that spanned the globe. In 1930, his firm merged with the National Biscuit Co., today's NABISCO. Bishop was one of a group of prominent and well-known figures who began building winter homes in Palm Springs in the 1920s, helping to popularize the village as a resort. The Bishop House is associated with Roland P. Bishop, a person who had influence in state and local history.

**Therefore, the Bishop House qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site under Criterion 2.**

**8.05.070 (C) (1) paragraphs A3, A4 & A5 - Design/Construction:** The Bishop House is eligible under the theme of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture. The home exhibits numerous signature elements such as an asymmetrical façade and floorplan, barrel-tiled, multi-gabled roof with minimal eave overhang, patios and terraces. As a custom residence skillfully designed by architect William J. Dodd, it rises to the level of work by master architects with high artistic values. **Therefore, for its distinctive characteristics, as the work of a Master architect, and for its high artistic values, the Bishop House qualifies as a Class 1 Historic Site under Criteria 3, 4 and 5.**

**SUMMARY:** This evaluation finds the Bishop House eligible for listing as a Palm Springs Historic Site under 8.05.070 (C) (1) paragraphs A2, A3, A4 and A5 of the local ordinance's seven criteria. Additionally, the Bishop House retains a "high degree" of integrity (see Section 7, "Integrity Analysis").



*Roland P. Bishop*

**Roland Porter Bishop, (1856-1950).**  
(Courtesy Los Angeles Public Library)



# 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**

Date:
Case No.
HSPB No.
Planner:

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

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## **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.

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### **1. Property Information**

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Historic name: Dorothy and Roland P. Bishop House; Bishop House

Other names: Villa Algeria

Address: 468 West Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, CA 92262

Assessor Parcel Number: 513-110-036 (See Appendix II)

Owner Name: Tracy Conrad and Paul Marut

Owner's Address: 1850 Smoke Tree Lane

City: Palm Springs, CA 92264

Telephone:

Fax number:

E-mail address: [tracy@smoketreeranch.com](mailto:tracy@smoketreeranch.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

1	1	Buildings (Contributing: original house; non-contributing: garage) Sites Structures Objects
1	1	<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: Inn

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## **4. Description**

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Architect: William J. Dodd A.I.A./Dodd & Richards

Construction Date and Source: 1925 (Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, original blueprints, etc.)

Architectural Classification: Spanish Colonial Revival

Construction Materials:

Foundation: Concrete slab  
Walls: Wood and stucco

Roof: Tile  
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 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.)**

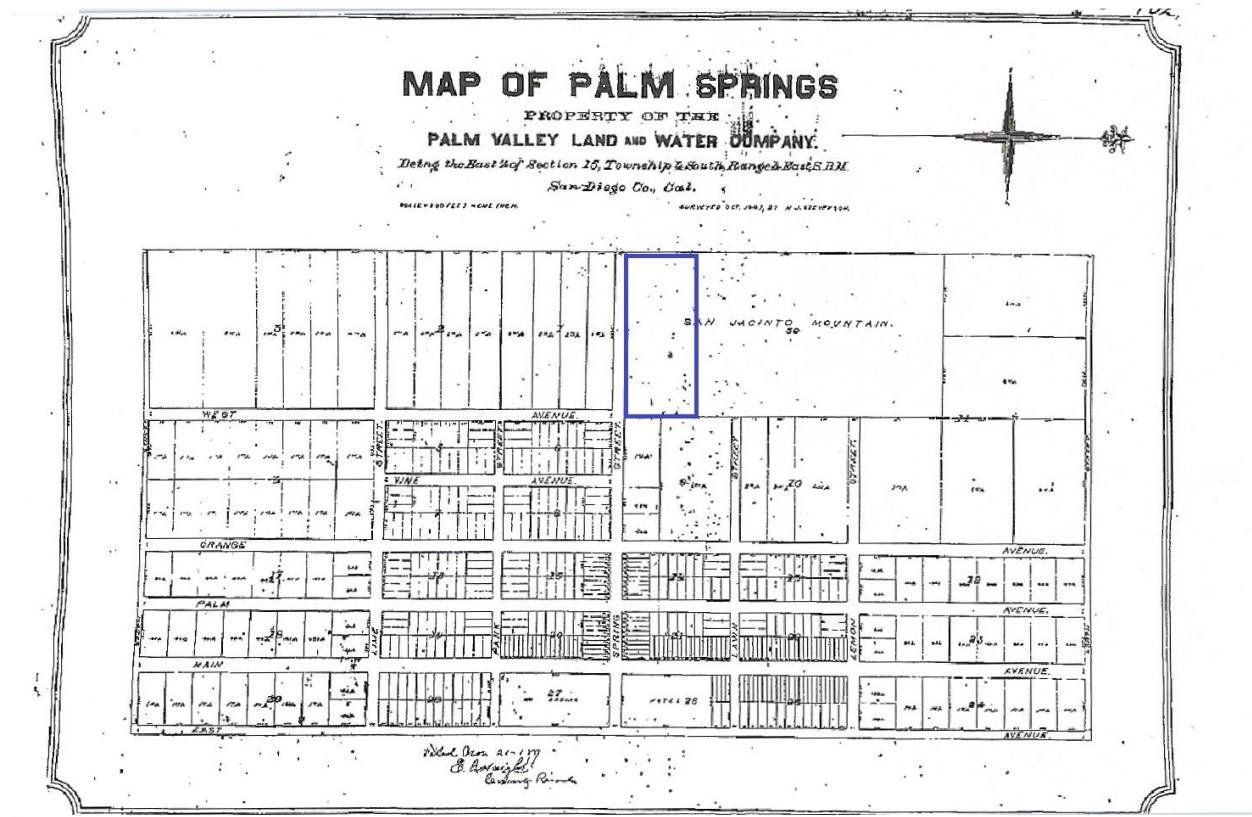
- the property is owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- the property has been removed from its original location
- the property is a birthplace
- the property is a grave or cemetery
- the property is a reconstructed building, object, or structure
- the property is commemorative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

## **6. Statement of Significance**

## Summary

The Bishop House, located at 468 West Tahquitz Canyon Way, was constructed on the westerly portion of Lot 4, Block 9, of Palm Springs in 1925. The eastern portion is occupied by its twin, the Willows, located at 412 West Tahquitz Canyon Way. The legal description of the parcel is 1.11 ACRES M/L IN POR LOT 4 BLK 9 MB 009/432 SD MAP OF PALM SPRINGS. It should be noted that the Riverside County Assessor's Office mistakenly states the home's build date as 1935, which is presumed to have been a data input error.

Today, the Bishop House and the Willows are included as part of the Historic Tennis Club Neighborhood and are operated together as a boutique hotel under the name of The Willows Historic Palm Springs Inn.



The 1887 tract map for Palm Springs showing the approximate future location of the Willows and the Bishop House. Note the original name of Tahquitz Canyon Way, which was Spring Street until 1930.

## First Owners, Dorothy and Roland P. Bishop



ROLAND P. BISHOP, president of Bishop & Co., of Los Angeles, manufacturers of crackers, candy and chocolate, arrived Friday on the City of Honolulu for a six weeks' stay. Left to right: Mr. Bishop, Mrs. Bishop, Mrs. William Mead of Beverly Hills and Roland Bishop, Jr. Mr. and Mrs. Mead accompanied the Bishops to Honolulu. Mr. Mead was not present when the picture was taken.

The Bishops, along with their son Roland Jr., and Nella Mead, are seen in an October 1927 image from the *Honolulu Advertiser*. The Bishops traveled frequently with their close friends the Meads around both the country and the world and built winter homes together in Palm Springs.

Roland Porter Bishop (1856-1950), was considered one of Southern California's leading businessmen during the first decades of the twentieth century. A native of Kentucky, he had come to Los Angeles in 1887 in the midst of the "Boom of the Eighties," to seek new opportunities on the west coast. Purchasing a small candy business, Bishop, along with his cousin William T. Bishop, built their enterprise, Bishop & Company, into a confectionary empire with a global reach extending to 24 countries. At its peak in the 1920s, Bishop & Company produced candy, crackers, cookies, and dried fruits and had more than 1,000 employees with factories in both Los Angeles and San Diego (see full Bishop biography in Appendix III).

In 1900, Bishop, who was a widower, married Dorothy Wellborn (1869-1956), daughter of U.S. District Court Judge Olin Wellborn. Together they had a son, Roland Porter Bishop Jr., in addition to the daughter Bishop had with his first wife. The Bishops were important figures in Southern California society and counted among their friends some of the best known and most successful people throughout the region. Their closest friends appeared to be William and Nella Mead.



**William and Nella Mead pose in the gardens of their Dreamwold estate for  
“Stereo Wizard,” Philip Brigandi in 1917.  
(The Huntington Library)**

Bishop and Mead had much in common: Both had come from the Midwest during the Boom of the Eighties and both had prospered in Southern California, with Mead gaining a fortune in the insurance industry and in real estate development. At the height of their successes, both Bishop and Mead built homes that were considered among the great showplaces of Southern California. While the Meads built Dreamwold, a grand Mediterranean villa above Vermont Canyon in Los Feliz, the Bishops built Rosewall, one of the finest and most important early estates in Beverly Hills.



**Rosewall, the Beverly Hills estate of Dorothy & Roland P. Bishop was designed by future Bishop House architect, William J. Dodd. This grand mansion was razed in the 1950s.  
(Image scanned from *The Mansions of Beverly Hills* by Michael Regan)**

Completed in 1916, Rosewall was an imposing Colonial mansion set on six acres of grounds adjacent to the Beverly Hills Hotel. Rosewall was designed by architect William J. Dodd. Although he had only been in Los Angeles a few years at the time, Dodd was already gaining a reputation as one of the region's most talented architects, turning out a series of mansions in Laughlin Park, Hancock Park and the very first estate in what would become Bel-Air, as well as commercial structures. His most notable achievement in the latter category was the much-praised Hearst-Examiner Building in downtown Los Angeles, which he collaborated on with Julia Morgan and his original partner, J. Martyn Haenke. Bishop was no doubt aware of Dodd's work by the time he launched construction of Rosewall, but he may have selected the architect through their shared connection as Kentucky natives (please see full Dodd biography in Appendix IV).

In 1920, both the Bishops and the Meads had grown weary of the expense and time required to maintain such elaborate estates and they agreed to simplify their lives, selling their grand estates and taking up adjoining bungalows at the Beverly Hills Hotel. With fewer responsibilities, the couples began to spend more of their time traveling together, taking trips, often by motor, throughout the west and as far up as Canada. One spot that captured their attention in particular was the tiny village of Palm Springs, which was not yet the famed resort it was destined to become.

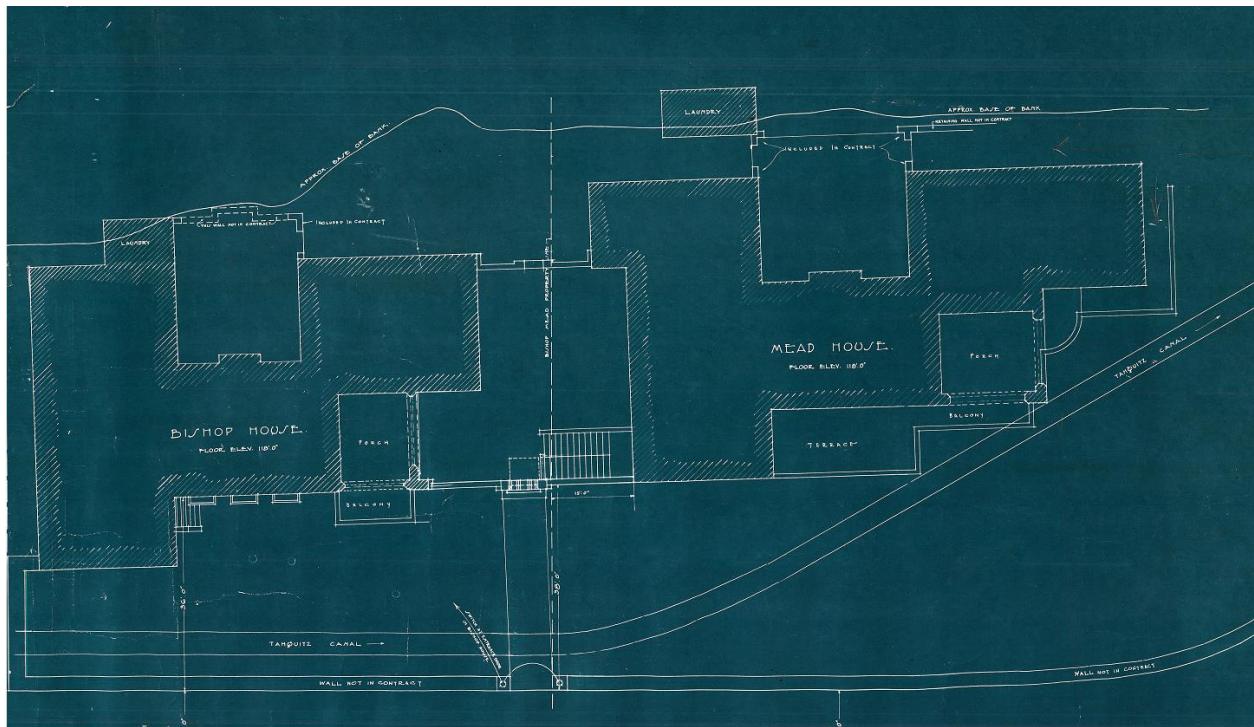
The couples were so entranced by the charm of the desert oasis that in 1924 they decided to make Palm Springs their permanent winter homes. That year, they bought acreage on the north side of what was then known as Spring Street just behind Nellie Coffman's Desert Inn and directly across from the hotel's Mashie golf course.

To some it may have appeared that the Bishops and the Meads had purchased unsuitable land. While it was undeniably picturesque, with a stand of desert willows providing greenery and the historic Tahquitz Ditch running directly through it, the land was mostly a steep boulder-strewn hillside with seemingly little space to build. The Bishops, the Meads, and their architect, William J. Dodd, however, were well versed in hillside construction in Los Angeles and knew the site provided significant possibilities.

### **Bishop House Construction**

Construction of the Bishop and Mead houses occurred more than a dozen years before the incorporation of Palm Springs as a city. Therefore, no city building records are extant. However, based on certain other sources such as newspaper references, period photographs, as well as the original blueprints for the Mead House/Willows, a reasonable timeline can be assembled.

William J. Dodd, who by this time was one of Los Angeles' most prominent architects under the firm name of Dodd & Richards, had been tasked with creating a two-house compound for the Bishops and the Meads. The homes were to be of equal size and designed together in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. Dodd responded by creating twin houses yet he skillfully managed to give each their own individual character and unique personality.



**A section of the original blueprints for the Bishop and Mead houses, dated November 24, 1924, shows the relation of the structures and the similarity of layout. Note the historic Tahquitz Ditch running through the property.**

(Courtesy of Tracy Conrad)

Both Dodd and his engineer partner William Richards worked to integrate rather than impose the houses onto their hillside lots while incorporating both the existing stacked stone walls as well as the historic Tahquitz Ditch into the design. The rocky hillside was disturbed as little as possible with the houses being draped over the topography instead of carving out a flat building pad. Evidence of this sensitive approach may still be visible at both the Bishop and Mead Houses.



**The Bishop House was built as much as possible directly onto the natural topography.**  
(Author Photo. May 2019)

Some blasting, however, was necessary and, according to the recollections of legendary Palm Springs figure and former mayor Frank Bogert, this created serious concerns among a number of villagers who feared a group of Los Angeles millionaires, the Bishops, Meads, and the Tom O'Donnells who were building higher up, were desecrating the foothill's natural beauty. According to Bogert, the nervous villagers' fears appeared to come to life the day blasting at the site sent a huge boulder hurtling over the village like a bomb before crashing to earth with a great noise.

Construction appears to have commenced either late 1924 or early 1925 and continued over the next months. The houses were likely completed in time for the Bishops and Meads to spend their first season in the desert beginning in the fall of 1925. Although there had been consternation over the construction within the village, the completed homes fit very well into the landscape and quickly became much admired village landmarks.



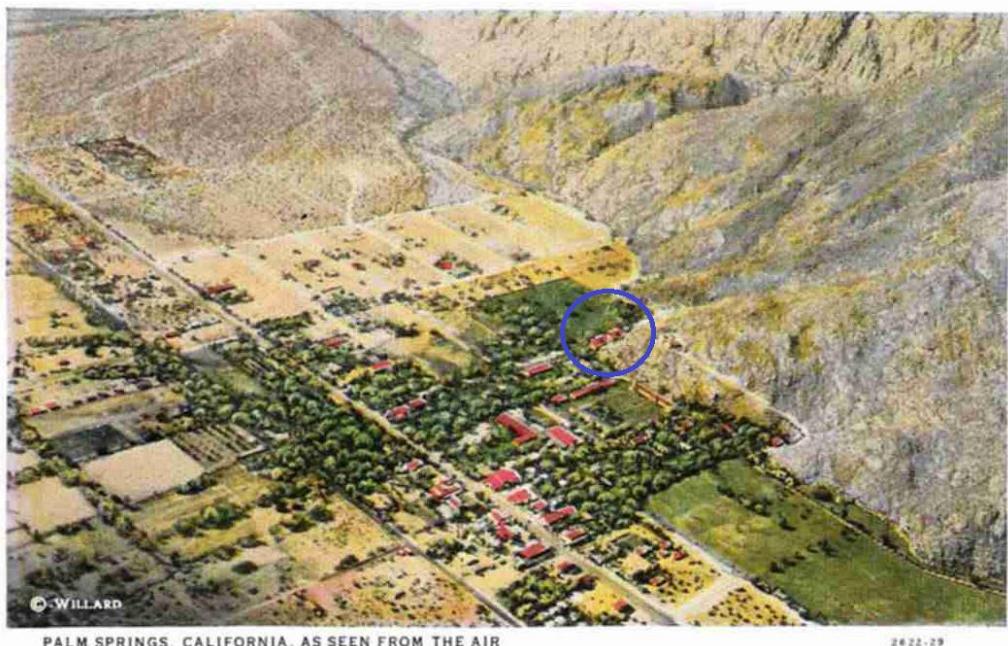
**The Bishop House as seen in this 1940s view taken across the Mashie Golf Course. Its twin, the Willows (Mead house) may be seen, partially hidden by landscaping, on the right. Above is the Tom and Winifred O'Donnell estate, Ojo del Desierto. Today, these three historic residences make up components of The Willows Historic Palm Springs Inn.**  
(Image by Gail B. Thompson, Gayle's Studio Collection. Courtesy of Tracy Conrad)

## The Architecture

The choice of Spanish Colonial Revival styling for the Bishop House was not surprising considering its popularity throughout Southern California during this period. The style far outpaced any other during the 1920s and 1930s with Spanish and Mediterranean being the preferred mode not only for houses but commercial, civic and ecclesiastical structures as well.

Palm Springs was no exception to this phenomenon. While its earliest structures had generally been of simple wooden and/or river rock design, by the start of the 1920s Spanish buildings were beginning to appear, either as new designs or remodels of older structures. The most notable of all Palm Springs' Spanish designs was the Desert Inn. Originally a complex of modest Craftsman and rustic clapboard cottages, Nellie Coffman, the Inn's owner, transformed the hostelry into a showplace of Spanish Colonial Revival structures, each designed by the talented Los Angeles architectural designer, William Charles Tanner.

Coffman's rebuild of the Desert Inn occurred contemporaneously with the construction of the Bishop and Mead houses as well as the O'Donnell house on the hillside above. Once completed, the grouping of red tile roofed structures running from Main Street (later Palm Canyon Drive) back to the foothill slopes beyond, presented a harmonious and picturesque image of a village transformed from ramshackle frontier town into sophisticated resort.



A 1929 postcard view by Stephen Willard shows the Spanish transformation of Palm Springs as evidenced through the hand-colored red tile roofs. The Desert Inn is center with the Bishop House and the Willows circled.  
(Author Collection)

In his design of the Bishop and Mead houses, William J. Dodd strove to create residences that would not only be visually attractive but also compatible with their desert setting and climate. Because of the temperature extremes the area experienced, Dodd and partner William Richards adapted the architecture to fit the environment. The stucco over wood walls were given added thickness to hold the cool in summer and the heat in winter. As a further buffer against temperature extremes, airspace was created between the roof and the interior ceilings. To prevent stagnation, circulating airflow was facilitated through the addition of vents. These vents were incorporated at various places on the facades, and because they were highly visible, they became defining decorative features as well with each house having a unique yet compatible style



**One of the decorative air vents on the Bishop House.**  
(Author Photo. May 2019)

The overall layout of the Bishop House was divided into three stories with the ground level reserved for mechanical, storage and staff quarters. On the third/attic floor there was a bedroom and storage spaces while the home's piano noble level contained the principal rooms which consisted of a living room, kitchen, three bedrooms and baths. There was no formal dining room in the original plans of either the Bishop or Mead houses with dining anticipated for either the front covered terrace or the rear terrace, which opened up by way of two sets of glass pocket doors from the living room. This terrace was enclosed on three sides by wings of the house and the fourth by a wall built against the hillside. To this wall, Dodd added an elegant decorative Persian tile fountain created by the noted firm of Gladding McBean & Co., which had also provided the roofing and bathroom tiles. Although the 1924 blueprints show the rear terraces of both the Bishop and Mead houses as open spaces, it appears that both were enclosed at an early date (by the mid-1930s).



THIS decorative wall fountain panel adorns a residence at **Palm Springs**, California. It is Persian type tile, specially designed by our architectural department at Tropico. The architects for the residence were Dodd & Richards. A striking example of the special tile work this company is prepared to execute



## GLADDING · McBEAN · & · CO.

GENERAL OFFICE: 660 MARKET STREET, SAN FRANCISCO

*Los Angeles Office: 621 South Hope Street*

*Seattle Office: Dexter Horton Building*

*Portland Office: U. S. National Bank Building*

*Oakland Office: Twenty-second and Market Streets*



The tile fountain of the Bishop House was so well done it was used in advertising by Gladding McBean & Co. as a showpiece of their work. This ad appeared in *Pacific Coast Architect* in 1928.



**The Persian fountain, which had fallen into disrepair for years, was fully restored in 2018 by the current owners.**  
**(Author Photo. May 2019)**

Both the Bishop and Mead houses were created with a central core on an east-west axis intersected by wings on either end and visually defined by their variegated gable rooflines.



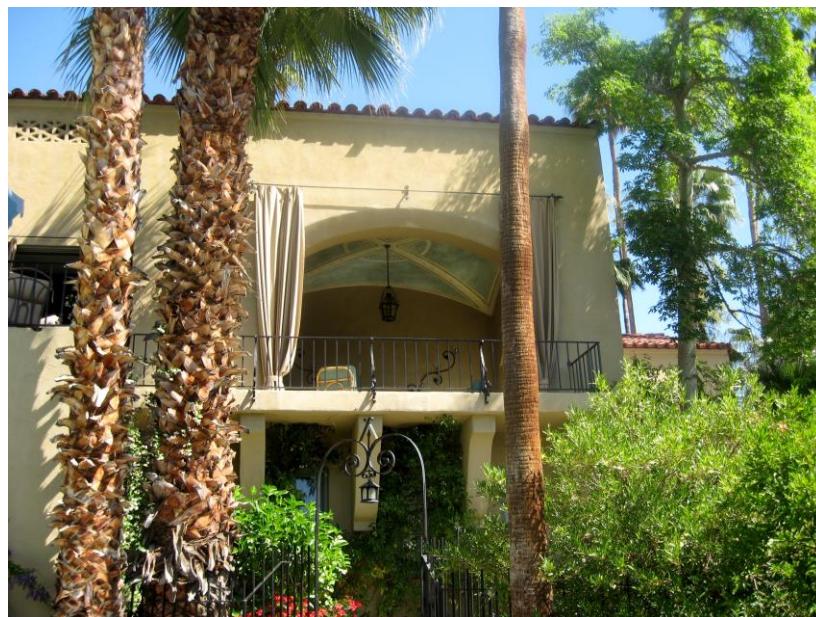
**This view looking south shows the multiple intersecting rooflines of the Bishop House. The lowest roof at center covers the dining room.**  
**(Author Photo. May 2019)**



The above photos show some of the ways in which Dodd achieved similar yet unique designs for both the Bishop and Mead Houses. In each house, a double-height living room featured three sets of French doors opening off the south façade. At the Bishop House (top), Dodd gave the doors verticality by adding windows above and topping them off by lunettes recessed into the wall. The doors opened out onto a narrow, decorative wrought-iron balcony supported by bold concrete corbels. At the Mead House/Willows (below), Dodd made the doors more horizontal and here, they opened onto a full terrace.



**A view of the Bishop House showing the decorative corbels used as support for the living room balcony.**  
(Author Photo. May 2019)



**At the Mead House/Willows the same style of heavy corbel is used as a decorative support for the entrance terrace.**  
(Author Photo. May 2019)

The most notable feature shared between the designs was the grand entrance terraces that provided a dramatic and cooling welcome to visitors stepping in from the desert sun. While both were virtually the same in dimensions, Dodd ensured that each were wholly unique with the Mead House/Willows arches as wide curves while the Bishop arches were more squared.



**Entrance terraces for the Bishop House (Left) and Mead House/Willows (Right).**  
(Author Photo. May 2019)



**View looking out from Bishop terrace showing original light fixture.**  
(Author Photo. May 2019)



(Image by Gail B. Thompson, Gayle's Studio Collection. Courtesy of Tracy Conrad)



(Author Photo. May 2019)

The above images taken exactly 70 years apart show how much has changed in the surrounding area and how little has changed at the Bishop House.

As for the interior of the Bishop House, while there have been a number of modifications through the decades, much of the original remains, particularly in the living room, which still features its original oak flooring and mahogany veneered bookcases and doors. The first image is from 1949, the second, 2019.



(Image by Gail B. Thompson, Gayle's Studio Collection. Courtesy of Tracy Conrad)



(Author Photo. May 2019)

The photos on the previous page, taken 70 years apart, show how many of the original features remain in the Bishop House living room. By 1949, the mahogany woodwork had been painted white. This was all restored to its original appearance during the 2018 restoration. Also restored was the large sandstone fireplace, which had been covered over in a previous remodel and replaced by a diminutive French marble mantel. The original B.B. Bell chandeliers shown in the 1949 image were lost at an unknown date and replaced in 2018 with compatible designs. Additionally, the house still retains two of its original Gladding McBean & Co. bathrooms.



**The geometric Moorish designs on the restored Bishop House entrance door, which still retains its original hardware.**  
(Author Photo. May 2019)

## Landscaping and Grounds

In addition to the residence itself, the Bishop House also included more than an acre of grounds. Based on vintage photographs it appears that a series of palm trees were added to the property, most still remaining today. These were intermingled with native succulents, yuccas and agaves. Both the Bishop and Mead houses were enclosed by a stack-stoned wall running east to west up Spring Street (today's Tahquitz Canyon Way) that is believed to have been constructed by Nellie Coffman in the early 1920s. This wall remains today as does the decorative wrought-iron entrance gate. Originally, the Tahquitz Ditch ran through the property and, while a few portions of it remain on the Mead/Willows grounds, nothing appears to be left of its course through the Bishop property.



This view taken from Tahquitz Canyon Way shows the original stacked stone walls incised by the entry gate to the Bishop House with its original wrought-iron gate and surround.  
(Author Photo. May 2019)

The grounds for both the Bishop and Mead houses extended up into the steep hillside rising behind the homes. A network of concrete steps, pathways and terraces were laid out which crossed between the two properties. While the portions on the Mead/Willows property have been restored by the current owners, those on the Bishop side were not maintained and are still in ruin at the present time including a decorative sun shelter built above the house.



**Genevieve and James B. Maher, owners of the Bishop House between 1949-1953, pose by the estate's sun shelter.**

(Image by Gail B. Thompson, Gayle's Studio Collection. Courtesy of Tracy Conrad)

## Post Construction

The completion of the Bishop and Mead houses in the fall of 1925 generated attention well beyond the confines of the Coachella Valley. Their construction drew notice on both a regional and even national level as examples of the type of quality homes being built by a high-end class of people, who were discovering the heretofore little known village of Palm Springs. The *Los Angeles Times* in particular made note on several occasions of the ever-growing list of famous capitalists from across the country building in the desert. Both the Meads and the Bishops were pointed out as was oilman Tom O'Donnell, razor magnate King Gillette, Mrs. George (Carrie) Birge of Birge Wallpaper, W.K. Kellogg of cereal fame, and the widow of railroad magnate Frederick W. Stevens, among others. The arrival of such important figures, not just as hotel guests but as semi-permanent residents, ultimately proved to be a turning point in the development of Palm Springs as a resort of international stature.

Once they were in their new desert home, the Bishops and the Meads began entertaining their many friends who came to visit. Because of the social stature of the couples, their gatherings and lists of house guests regularly made the press in the 1920s. Typical of such reporting is this mention in the society section of the *Los Angeles Times* of April 10, 1929.

## House Party

Mrs. William Mead and Mrs. Roland Porter Bishop of Beverly Hills entertained a coterie of friends over the week-end at their charming homes in Palm Springs, motor-ing down Friday and returning home Monday evening.

The guests included Mrs. William A. Barker, Mrs. Granville MacGowan, Mrs. Burton Edmund Green, Mrs. Ozro William Childs, Jr., Mrs. Irwin Herron, Mrs. Frank Thomas and Mrs. Willard James Doran.

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The Bishops and the Meads were to enjoy their desert homes for only a relatively short time. The circumstances had changed dramatically after William Mead's unexpected death at age 65 on November 23, 1927 from complications of neuritis. Although Nella Mead, along with the Bishops, continued to come to the desert regularly, it was never the same without "Billy," and in 1930, they each decided to sell their homes.

## **Additional Owners**

In 1930, Nella Mead sold the Willows to internationally famous attorney Samuel Untermeyer while the Bishops sold their home to Ralph and Eleanor Smith. At this time, the compound created by the Bishops and Meads was broken up with a separation made between the properties that was to remain until 2018.

It should be noted that a formal title search has been partially completed on the Bishop House, however it has only been completed back to 1961. The pre-1961 owners listed below have been culled from other available documentation, particularly past issues of the *Desert Sun* archives.

1925-1930 – Roland P. & Dorothy Wellborn Bishop

1930-1942 – Ralph M. & Eleanor Smith

Smith was a dairy rancher and executive with a dairy production firm. He died in 1939. The house was retained by his widow until 1942.

1942-1948 – Addison and Francis A. Hoof

The Hoofs were socially prominent Chicagoans who owned several homes in Palm Springs during this period. In 1942, the *Desert Sun* noted their purchase of the “famous Smith Estate.”

1949-1953 – James B. & Genevieve Maher

Maher was the son of John B. Maher, a Palm Springs winter resident who was president of Maher Bros. in Greenwich, CT. Maher purchased the Bishop House after his November 1947 marriage to the former Mary Genevieve Walker, who was a hostess of the Desert Inn.

1953-1954 – J.B. Van Nuys

Mr. Van Nuys was a member of the pioneering Los Angeles family that owned much of the San Fernando Valley in the 1800s. It was Van Nuys who added the estate’s garage in 1953, which was built at a cost of \$5,000. A guest/staff unit was later added above.

1954-1961 – Ralph Wilcox Taylor

Ralph Wilcox Taylor, a wealthy businessman from Newport, Rhode Island, had wintered in the desert before ultimately deciding to purchase the Bishop House in 1954. Taylor was the owner of two other famous estates on the East Coast – Fairlawn in Newport, Rhode Island, and White Court in Palm Beach, Florida. When Taylor purchased the Bishop House, he had it redecorated with fine antiques and renamed it Villa Algeria. In 1955, he purchased the La Paz Hotel and Guest Ranch. Taylor frequently entertained with teas, buffets and private concerts at his home, often bringing in starring acts from the La Paz’s Spur and Sable Room to perform for his guests. One of his most frequent

performers was Al Anthony who not only headlined at the Spur and Saddle he was also a good friend of Taylor's. Anthony regularly obliged at events large and small, often accompanying himself on the home's grand piano. One memorable event honored former Massachusetts governor Alvin T. Fuller while another was a tea held in honor of silent screen star Gloria Swanson.



**VILLA ALGERIA**, Ralph Wilcox Taylor's showplace home, was the scene of one of the smart weekend parties. Here the host, on left, is shown with Mrs. S. P. Manasse and Mrs. Thomas Fleming. Pianist Al Anthony, on right, was guest of honor and played during the evening. (W. A. Wood photo)

A 1956 *Desert Sun* image showing Ralph Wilcox Taylor on the left and entertainer Al Anthony on the right at Villa Algeria. The fireplace in the background does not appear to be the original living room fireplace and may be an alternate mantelpiece.

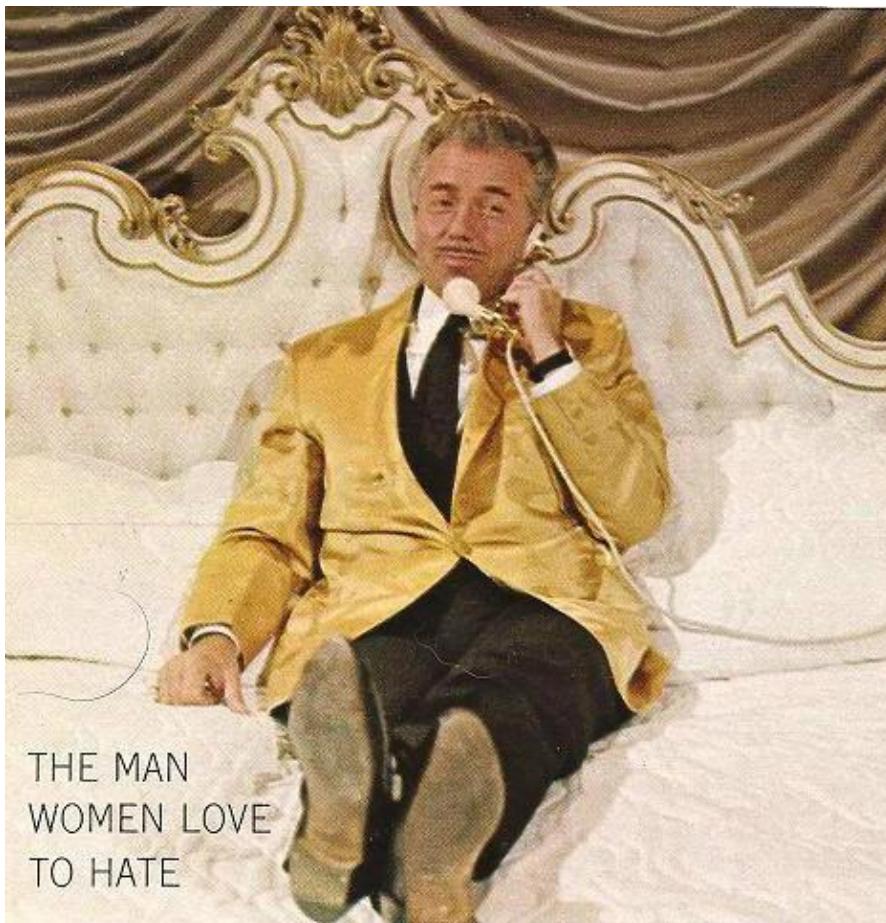
As much as he enjoyed Villa Algeria, Taylor put the house on the market starting in 1958. It appears that Al Anthony may have resided in the house during this time. Wilcox died of cancer at his Beverly Hills home in 1961.

1961-1-14 – Dacial Company, Inc.

1961-12-15 – Estate of Ralph Wilcox Taylor

1963-5-23 – Dorothy M. Tolman

1973-10-2 – Marc H. Spinelli



**"The Man Women Love to Hate."** Count Marco as he appeared in a 1964 article in *TV Guide*.  
(Via It's About TV!)

Spinelli purchased the Bishop House in 1973, however, he appears to have been renting it from at least as early as 1969. The flamboyant Spinelli, who wrote under the name of Count Marco, was a famous syndicated columnist for the *San Francisco Chronicle*. At his peak in the 1960s, he also hosted a syndicated daily talk show that ran on KGO in San Francisco and KABC in Los Angeles. Count Marco earned his fame as an advice columnist, giving often brutal misogynistic advice that enraged women, but kept them reading with titles like "You Women Don't Own Your Husbands," and "Women Are Made for Laughing." At one point, he conducted a promotion where he selected a frumpy housewife for a complete makeover, dubbing her his "Fat Venus." The promotion was a huge success for Count Marco and *Chronicle* but his sexism did not sit well with everyone and he was known to occasionally be slapped in the face by random women he encountered in restaurants and on the streets of San Francisco.

Count Marco and the *Chronicle* considered it all harmless fun until 1974 when the newspaper received what became known as the "Red Phantom" letter which is believed to be the last verifiable communication from the Zodiac Killer. The letter and its ominous wording so frightened Count Marco he abruptly retired from public view, retreating to Palm Springs where he had redecorated the house with exotic antiques, some which purportedly once belonged to Rudolph Valentino.

*Editor—  
Put Marco back in the hell-hole  
from whence it came — he has  
a serious psychological disorder —  
always needs to feel superior. I  
suggest you refer him to a shrink.  
Meanwhile, cancel the Count Marco  
column. Since the Count can  
write anonymously, so can I —  
the Red Phantom  
(red with rage)*

The Red Phantom Letter.  
(Via Ten Days of Count Marco/The Zodiac Revisited)

1977-3-31 – Edward John Estreito Jr.

1978-4-19 – Bruno Belli & Carla Belli

1984-5-3 – Carla Belli

1984-4-29 – Rose E. Mihata

1989-11-7 – Rose E. Mihata Living Trust

2017-1-4 – Conrad-Marut Family Trust

## Current Owners

The current owners of the Bishop House, Tracy Conrad and Paul Marut, originally purchased the adjoining Willows estate in 1994. The house had fallen on hard times and the couple sought to restore it, a process that took nearly two years. When it was completed, the pair opened it as boutique 8-room hotel known as The Willows Historic Palm Springs Inn. Opened in October 1996, the successful enterprise earned considerable praise for the quality of its restoration and the charms of its accommodations.

The couple were aware that the Bishop House was the Willows twin and for some time they had considered the idea of rejoining them together if the opportunity presented itself. In 2017, that opportunity came and they were able to purchase the Bishop House, embarking on a restoration process that sought to return the house to its original glamour while updating it into additional guest rooms for the Willows.

The restoration process, which lasted through the end of 2018, was significant as the Bishop House had undergone some unsympathetic alterations through the decades, a situation complicated by a fire, which had damaged part of the interior in the 1980s. Fortunately, the couple had the home's twin, the Willows, as a blueprint in addition to a series of vintage images taken during the 1940s.

The restoration was completed at the end of 2018 with the Bishop House rejoining its twin for the first time since 1930. The Bishop House addition brought the available guest rooms at the Willows from its original 8 to 17.



A rare vintage color shot of the Bishop House from the 1940s. 70 years later, the façade remains largely unchanged.

(Image by Gail B. Thompson, Gayle's Studio Collection. Courtesy of Tracy Conrad)

## **Changes and Additions to the Bishop House**

Unfortunately, a search of extant permits connected to the Bishop House conducted by the City of Palm Springs Building and Safety Department failed to yield any permitted work prior to the 2017-2018 restoration/renovations. However, vintage photographic evidence of the home and comparisons with the Willows, allows for at least a general picture of notable alterations and modifications through the decades:

Originally, Bishop House lacked a garage, but in 1953 one was added on the property's west end. The garage, which was built at a cost of \$5,000 was later altered to include staff/guest quarters above. In the 2017/2018 restoration, the former garage was converted into two guest rooms, one of which is ADA compatible. Although not a contributing structure, the former garage was reworked to harmonize with the architecture of the main house. It is now known as the Casita.



**The former garage now contains two guest rooms, the Tahquitz above and the Garden below. The latter is ADA compliant. The reworking even allowed for a small private patio at the front.**  
(Author Photo. May 2019)

Due to lack of documentation, it cannot be verified when and to what extent portions of the interior were remodeled. The ground level, which once contained a boiler and other equipment, was remodeled into apartments prior to 2017. These were reworked into their present configuration in 2017/2018. This involved the addition of a small terrace running along the southern façade, which gives access to two of the ground floor guest rooms.



**The creation of two ground floor guest rooms required the addition of a small terrace which runs along the center of the southern façade. Staircase on the right is original.**

(Author Photo. May 2019)



**A new door and window were added for the creation of the Orchid Tree guest room. Both window and door were designed to match originals elsewhere on the façade. Note the original artistic vents, which have been glassed in and now provide light to the room.**

(Author Photo. May 2019)



**A portion of the north façade, showing kitchen door addition as well as placement of HVAC units as hidden behind wooden fencing.**

(Author Photo. May 2019)

- An exterior kitchen door was added to allow direct access from the outside.
- A small section of the roof was raised to create a skylight for the Cielito Room bath. This addition is not visible from the street.
- Kitchen remodeled and former passthrough opening to dining room enclosed.
- Modern decorative fireplace mantel removed from dining room.
- Several bathrooms remodeled or added in addition to the two original bathrooms.
- Former laundry room off rear (north) terrace returned to its original function.
- As the house had been broken up into apartments prior to the 2017/2018 restoration, at least one additional kitchen was removed from what is now the San Jacinto Room.
- Some of the tiles have been replaced on the roof.
- An elevated concrete patio space was added to the rear behind the house.
- The separation wall between the Bishop House and the Willows was removed and returned to its original 1925 configuration.
- Enclosure of the rear outdoor terrace. This addition appears to have occurred very early, perhaps as early as the 1920s and no later than the mid-1930s. The sliding glass doors are of recent vintage.



This 2012 photo shows how the windows on the west façade had been altered through the years.  
(Author Photo. May 2012)



The same view in 2019 showing restoration of the original 1925 window configuration.  
(Author Photo. May 2019)

## **Local Architectural Context**

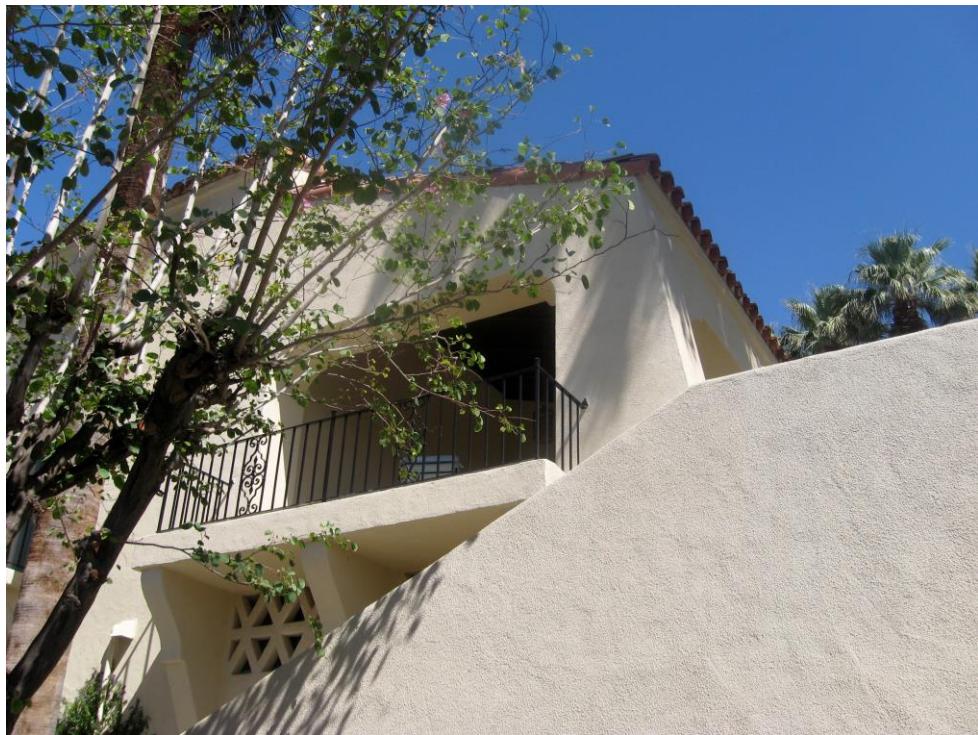
The Bishop House should be viewed within the context of the period between World Wars I and II, when Palm Springs was becoming established as a fashionable winter resort for wealthy and/or famous people. According to Historic Resource Group's [Palm Springs] *Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey 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**

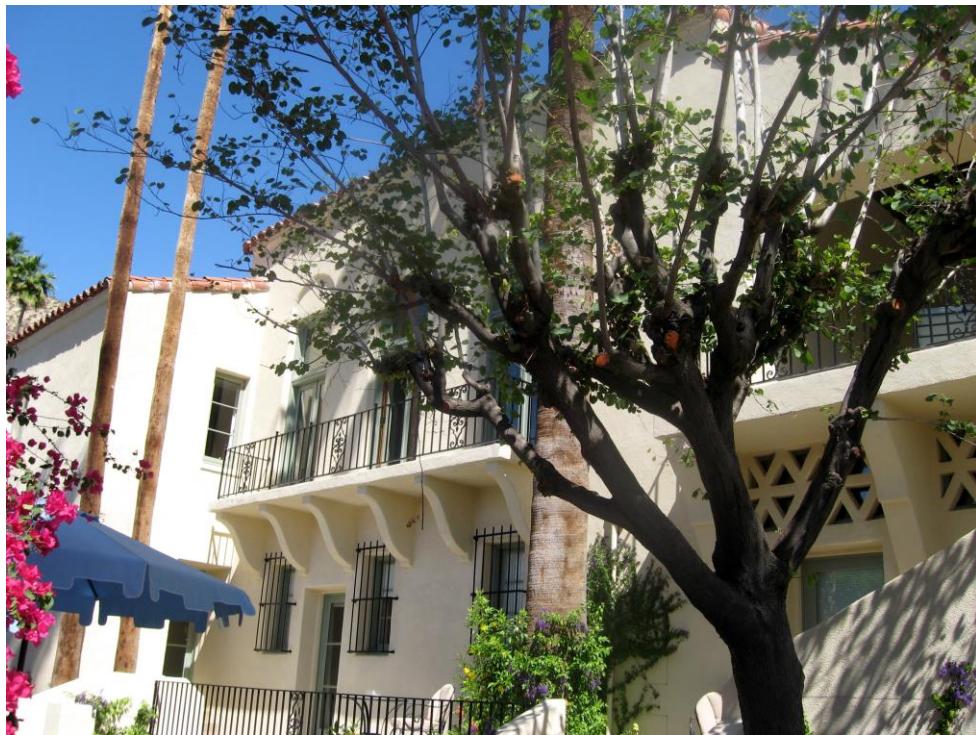
Location. The Bishop House is located on a prominent site elevated above the street and nestled against the foothills of Mount San Jacinto. The house is sited along with its twin, the Mead House/Willows together in the Historic Tennis Club Neighborhood on West Tahquitz Canyon Drive. The Willows is directly to the Bishop House's east. On the west, the Bishop House adjoins another historic estate, the Blue House (1948). Directly across Tahquitz Canyon Way and south of the Bishop House is the Villas at Old Palm Springs condominium complex. The north side is hillside with the historic Bougain Villa and O'Donnell houses above. The topography of the lot is varied, ranging from flat to steep hillside. The site includes mature palm trees, bougainvillea, annuals, cacti, succulents, etc.



**General view as seen from Tahquitz Canyon Way showing wall and entrance gate.**  
(Author Photo. May 2019)



**View looking north up towards Bishop House entrance terrace. Wall in foreground is exterior staircase.**  
(Author Photo. May 2019)



**View looking north showing most of the southern façade.**  
(Author Photo. May 2019)



**View looking east down Tahquitz Canyon Way. Former garage (now Casita) at left. Current owners were able to create 9 parking spaces and an enclosed private garden terrace.**  
(Author Photo. May 2019)



**Looking up towards tri-part French doors opening from living room to balcony.**  
(Author Photo. May 2019)



**View east across new terrace to original staircase.**  
(Author Photo. May 2019)



**Detail of exterior staircase and showing the Willows amidst mature palms.**  
(Author Photo. May 2019)



**Detail of intersecting rooflines.**  
(Author Photo. May 2019)



**View looking west showing reopened passage between Willows and Bishop House. Note elevated patio on right added during 2017/2018 renovation.**

(Author Photo. May 2019)



**View showing Willows and Bishop House looking towards the south.**

(Author Photo. May 2019)

## 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 the Bishop House 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 hosteries 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. Roland P. Bishop was one of Southern California's most prominent businessmen as the head of Bishop & Company, a confectionary giant that had more than 1,000 employees and a global distribution network spanning the globe. In 1930, the same year he sold his desert retreat, his company merged with National Biscuit Company becoming part of NABISCO. Bishop was a well-known and influential figure on a state and national level. 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).** The Bishop House, completed in 1925, 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.

The Bishop House 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 stucco walls, a red-tiled roof, a wide covered patio with water feature, hand painted decorative tile by Gladding McBean & Company, original wrought-iron work, mahogany veneer doors, book cases, two original Gladding McBean tiled baths, classic landscape using plant materials typical of the 1920s 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 1920s. 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 the Bishop House, the work of William J. Dodd, A.I.A. of Dodd & Richards can certainly be described as the “work of a master” in view of his history of architectural excellence. (See Appendix IV.)

**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 a high-style 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.

**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 and as such it does not apply to this nomination. Hence, the residence 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.) The Bishop House is not likely to yield information important to the national, state or local history or prehistory. Hence, the residence does not qualify under Criterion 7.

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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. ***The Bishop House 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. ***The Bishop House's essential characteristics of form, plan, space, structure, and style have survived largely intact. Similarly, the structural system; massing; arrangement of spaces; pattern of fenestration; and the type, amount, and style of detailing have survived largely intact. In spite of being nearly 100 years old, the Bishop House has not suffered from extensive exterior alterations and/or additions other than a few windows and doors added during its conversion to an inn.***

## 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 the Bishop House continues to reflect the architect's 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.

***The Bishop House's exterior surface materials, which consist primarily of stucco over wood framing with a barrel-tiled roof have remained essentially intact and continue to express the physical elements as designed during the building's period of significance; the pattern and configuration that today forms the residence and contributing structures survives intact.***

## 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 the Bishop House is evidenced by the high quality of its materials from wrought-iron, decorative tile from Gladding McBean, multiple arches, balconies, patios, all of which were part of the original design/construction. The residence continues to express a high degree of 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 Bishop House is sited on a prominent hillside lot which takes advantage of panoramic valley and mountain views from east, south and west. Accordingly, the residence 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. ***The Bishop House 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: The Bishop House 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 the Bishop House still possess all seven aspects of integrity. Aside from the addition of a garage and some minor sympathetically-designed modifications (e.g., several doors, window, and small concrete terrace), the original footprint of the Bishop House remains intact. 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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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

Bogert Frank: *Palm Springs First Hundred Years*. Rev. ed; Palm Springs Public Library, 2003.

Bright, Marjorie Belle. *Nellie's Boarding House: A Dual Biography of Nellie Coffman and Palm Springs*. Palm Springs, CA; ETA Publications, 1981.

*Maxwell's Los Angeles City Directory*. Los Angeles, CA; Los Angeles Directory Co, Various dates 1893-1925.

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Merchell, Anthony A. & Tracy Conrad. *Ojo del Desierto: The Thomas O'Donnell House in Palm Springs*. Palm Springs, CA; The Willows Historic Palm Springs Inn, 2009.

*Palm Springs City Directory*. Long Beach, CA; Western Directory Co., Various dates.

Regan, Michael. *Stars, Moguls, Magnates: The Mansions of Beverly Hills*. Los Angeles, CA; Regan Publishing Co., 1966.

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Ibid and Tracy Conrad. *Einstein Dreamt Here: The Willows Historic Palm Springs Inn*. Palm Springs, CA; The Willows Historic Palm Springs Inn, 2015.

### Newspapers

Various issues of:

*Desert Sun*  
*Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*  
*Los Angeles Times*  
*New York Times*

### Internet Resources

Accessingthepast.org  
Ancestry.com  
Findagrave.com  
Palm Springs Preservation Foundation  
Realtor.com

### Interviews

Frank Bogert (By Tracy Conrad)  
Tracy Conrad (various dates)

### Other Sources Consulted

Palm Springs Historical Society  
City of Palm Springs (Planning and Building Departments)  
Historic Resources Group. *City of Palm Springs Citywide Historic Context Statement; Survey Findings*. Pasadena, 2015 (Final Draft, December 2018).  
Riverside County Assessor's Office

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### **9. Geographical Data**

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Acreage of Property: Approximately 1.11 acres (or 48,351 sq. ft.)  
Property Boundary Description: See Appendix II

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## **10. Prepared By**

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Name/title: Steve Vaught

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

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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.

# Appendix I

## Owner's Letter of Support

May 31, 2019

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

RE: Class 1 Historic Site Nomination

Honorable Historic Site Preservation Board Members,

As the current owner of the Dorothy and Roland P. Bishop Residence located at 468 West Tahquitz Canyon Way, I enthusiastically support the Class 1 Historic Site designation of my property by the City of Palm Springs. I have asked the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation to assist me in the preparation of the required paperwork.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at tconrad412@aol.com.

Sincerely,

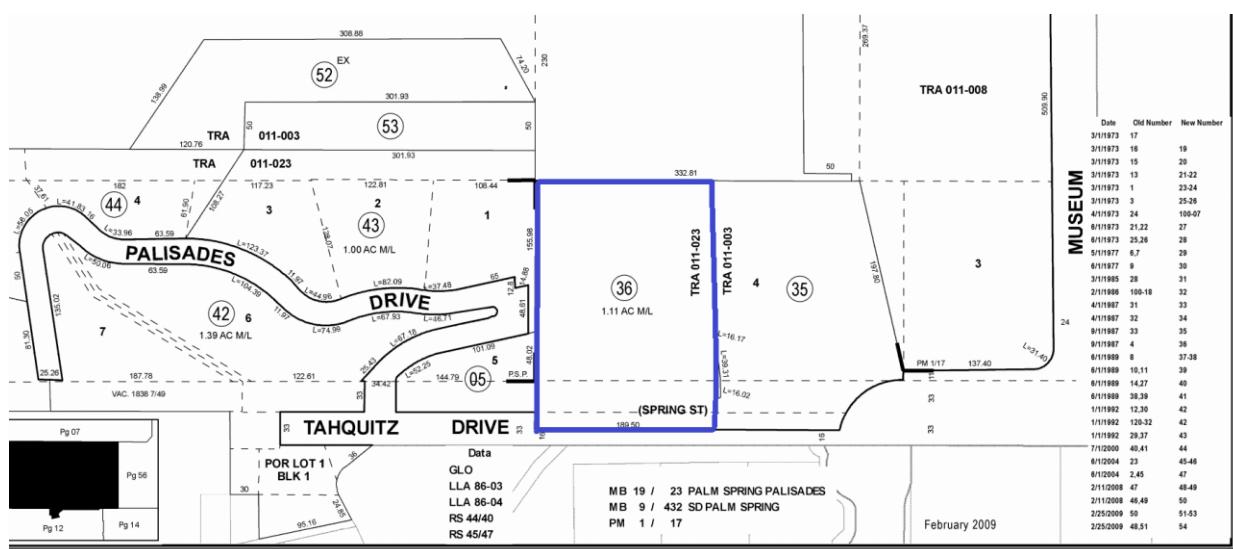


A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Conrad".

Tracy Conrad

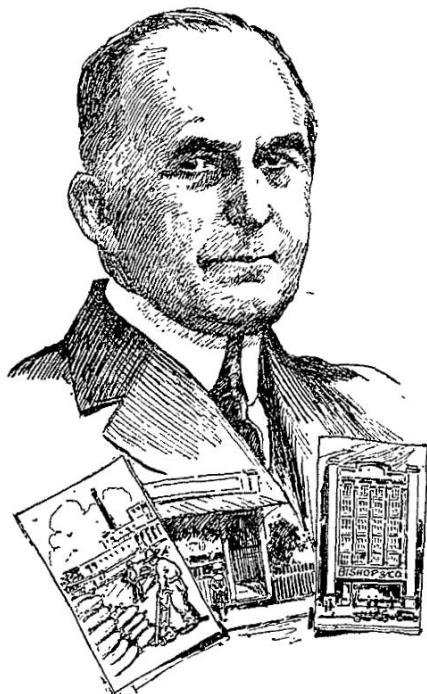
# Appendix II

## Assessor Map



## Appendix III

### Roland Porter Bishop



A 1923 sketch of Roland P. Bishop showing scenes from his career  
from peanut distributor to "Candy King."  
(Via *Los Angeles Times*)

Roland Porter Bishop was born on November 25, 1855 in the northeastern Kentucky town of Flemingsburg. His father Henry operated a livery stable, which serviced both travelers along the westward highway as well the surrounding farm community. Bishop was named after his grandfather on his mother's side and like his namesake he was more affectionately known as Roly. Bishop came into the world at a very dangerous time. Flemingsburg had recently been struck by a devastating cholera epidemic, which ultimately killed 65 of its approximately 500 citizens. Fortunately, the Bishops were spared, but only two years later, Henry died of what was described as "brain fever" at the age of 50.

Henry's death forced Bishop's mother, Lucy Porter Bishop, to go to work. With her family savings she purchased a boarding house where she took in lodgers and provided meals. During this time, Bishop resided in an all-female household. In addition to his mother, there were his older sisters Lucy and Arie and two half-sisters, Nancy and Ellen. According to the 1860 census, Lucy Bishop was doing fairly well, listing the value of her real estate at \$2,000 in addition to \$1,000 in cash assets.

The family's life in Kentucky, however, was dramatically changed with the outbreak of the Civil War. Kentucky was a slave state, but because of its precarious position sandwiched between the Union and Confederate sides, the Commonwealth officially staked out a neutral position. Nonetheless, the violence and turmoil spilled over and forced Lucy and her children to flee across the Ohio River to Cincinnati where she was taken in by her late husband's brothers.

The Bishop brothers could be counted among Cincinnati's leading citizens with one of them, Richard M. Bishop, just completing his term as the city's mayor. Known as R.M., he had established a successful wholesale grocery business in 1848 known as Bishop & Wells. This was later changed to R.M. Bishop & Company, which he ran with his brother William T. Bishop. R.M. later rose to the pinnacle of Ohio politics when he was elected the state's 34<sup>th</sup> governor in 1878.

The fortunate circumstances of her late husband's family must have eased the transition from small town Flemingsburg to the metropolis of Cincinnati with its population of more than 160,000. Roly was enrolled in the local schools and, to make extra money to help out the family, he began to work at his uncle's wholesale grocery operation. Starting in 1870 and continuing over the next decade, Bishop worked at R.M. Bishop & Co., learning every aspect of the wholesale grocery business.

In the late 1870s, he felt the time was right to branch out on his own, forming the enterprise of Bishop & Spear with partner George B. Spear. Bishop & Spear was a commission mercantile business that covered a variety of goods, but their specialty became wholesale peanut distribution, brought up the Mississippi River from Tennessee. Years later, he begged a reporter for the *Los Angeles Times* not to write that he'd gotten his start in peanuts fearing, "People will think I sold peanuts on the street and give me a great laugh."

Bishop & Spear was a notable success, beginning in Cincinnati before ultimately headquartering in St. Louis, Missouri. By 1885, the firm was described in the *Cincinnati Enquirer* as "one of the largest commission-houses in the west." At the time he founded his company, Bishop appears to have returned to Kentucky at least on a part-time basis. The reasons are unknown but it may have had something to do with romance. On New Year's Day 1881, he married 20-year-old Cartmell Brady Huston in Morganfield, Kentucky. Cartmell (b. 1860) was a member of one of the most important families in the region. Her father, Judge George Huston (1821-1904), was a leading figure in the community and president of the local bank. The family gained added fame through Cartmell's sister, Nancy Huston Banks (1849-1934), who became a famous pioneering female journalist and novelist.

In 1884, Cartmell gave birth to a daughter, Sarah Huston (1884-1969). Although Bishop was continuing to find success in St. Louis with Bishop & Spear, in 1887 the family made the critical decision to start life anew 2,000 miles away on the west coast. The reason was Cartmell who had become ill and it was believed the warmer, drier climate of Southern California would help restore her to good health.

The Bishops arrived in Los Angeles in June of 1887, renting rooms at the Hotel Ammidon at the corner of Grand Avenue and Washington Street, which described itself as a "first-class private hotel situated in an orange grove." It must have seemed like a paradise to the newly-arrived Midwesterners, but no sooner had the family begun to settle into their new life than word was received of tragedy back in St. Louis. Early in the morning of August 7, 1887, the Bishop & Spear peanut warehouse was destroyed in a massive fire that completely leveled the three-story building and greatly damaged adjoining businesses.

Worst of all, the fire took the lives of three firemen who were attempting to control the blaze as well as a spectator who was struck by debris when a wall unexpectedly collapsed. The tragedy was reported across the country and was described in the St. Louis papers as, "the most terrible catastrophe that has befallen the [St. Louis] Fire department in its history." It is not known whether Bishop still maintained an interest in the enterprise at the time, but the news must have been devastating nonetheless.

In spite of the tragedy in St. Louis, Bishop tried to build a new life in Los Angeles. While he may have come to California for his wife's health, the timing was excellent for him as well. He had arrived during the peak of what is known as the "Boom of the Eighties." The boom, which was set off by a rate war between the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe railroads, sent thousands of new arrivals swarming into the Southland virtually overnight causing land prices to skyrocket. Suddenly, the entire Southland was in the grip of land speculation fever as seemingly everyone had a "choice lot" to sell. Prices doubled, tripled, and quadrupled in a matter of hours and then doubled again on lots sight unseen.

With the rest of Southern California distracted by the real estate boom, Bishop quietly pursued other options. The key was to try and find a business with unlimited growth potential that had not already been overexploited by other competitors. It took a few months but, in the fall of 1887, he found the answer – sweets. Bishop had no experience selling candy at the time, but he figured the same principles that helped him sell peanuts and other products would apply just as well. Bishop purchased a small candy factory with ten employees located at 138 South Spring Street, which was then on the outskirts of the business district. "Second and Spring was at the far end of things in the city then," he later recalled. But obscurity also meant he had the market largely to himself and he rolled up his sleeves and went to work.

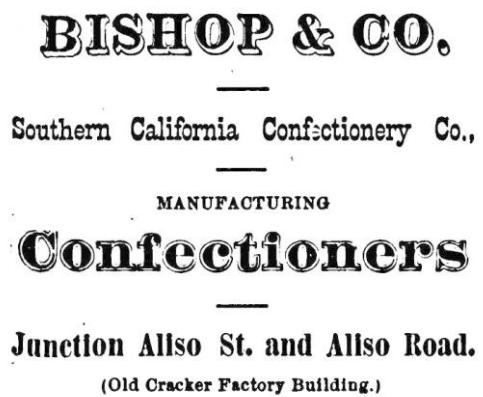
The first critical decision Bishop made was to send for his cousin in Cincinnati, William T. Bishop Jr., to become his business partner. William had impressed Roland with his business skills while they worked side-by-side at R.M. Bishop & Co. and he knew he was the right man to help his new venture grow into a success. William accepted the invitation, arriving in Los Angeles by the end of the year. The business was a true family affair with Cartmell joining up as the company's first salesperson.

Starting out as Southern California Confectioners, the venture grew rapidly, so much so, that within a year they had already outgrown their original factory, relocating to the Cracker Factory Building at 339 Aliso Street. Even this proved to be too small for the exploding business and they shifted down the street in a new space at the corner of Aliso

and Lyon Streets. In 1891, yet another move was required with the enterprise, now renamed Bishop & Co., taking quarters at 110-112 North Los Angeles Street.

In the midst of all the heady growth of his firm, Bishop was visited by tragedy when he lost his wife Cartmell to an unspecified illness on March 29, 1891. Press reports indicated that she had been in failing health for a while but was believed to have been improving at the time of her death. She was only 30 years old. The loss of his young wife must have been devastating to Bishop who was now a widower with a child to raise on his own.

To numb his pain, Bishop threw himself even further into company affairs, which continued to grow at such an impressive rate it was becoming almost unmanageable. In 1893, Bishop & Co. added a third partner, Joseph O. Koepfli. In June of 1894, however, in what must have felt like *déjà vu* for Bishop, the company's factory at 7<sup>th</sup> and Alameda Streets caught fire, destroying the entire operation, valued at \$50,000, of which only \$19,000 was insured. Fortunately, no one lost their lives and the company had a full stock of goods at their Los Angeles Street showroom. As a result, business was not interrupted while the factory was rebuilt.



An 1888 advertisement for Bishop & Co.  
(Via 1888 *Los Angeles City Directory*)

Bishop & Co. soon began expanding its production to include not only candies, but also crystalized and preserved fruits, chocolates, dates, jams, and crackers. When it came to the latter, Bishop & Co. was a pioneer in packaging crackers in air-tight tins. During the early years, they also experimented with other products such as bakers' supplies and fine cigars, but the big successes came from the candies, crackers, and fruit products.

By 1895, the firm had grown so much they were employing approximately 125 people, not including an additional 75 who came in during the fruit canning and crystalizing season. And, as a 2008 retrospective in the *Downtown News* noted, Bishop & Co. was considered a "forward thinking" company, with nearly half its workforce being women, and not just in low level work but in upper management as well.

Bishop discovered that Angelinos were very loyal to local businesses, which greatly benefited the company against competition from other parts of the country. Yet, he also

found it had the best of both worlds with limited competition at home and a welcome response in other markets. The company soon began to expand out, first through the region, then across the state, and then the country, before ultimately making its way worldwide. As the company grew, Bishop employed a small army of salespeople who traveled to various businesses in different territories with tasty samples to lure new customers. Bishop & Co. also ran a healthy mail-order operation with "attractively packaged" boxes and tins of Bishop's treats with such whimsical names as Migirl Chocolates, Daisy Marshmallows, and Calarab Dates.

Another major part of the Bishop & Co. marketing strategy was to have a booth at every fair and exhibition possible, from local Chamber of Commerce displays all the way up the World's Fairs, with the company visible at both the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago and the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis, where Bishop & Co. won awards of excellence.

And there was Bishop & Co. itself. The firm regularly opened its doors for tours allowing visitors to see the operation for themselves and to be tempted by the treats they saw up close, no doubt earning a new group of customers with every tour. On one such occasion in 1895, the *Los Angeles Times* reported on such a group who were "afforded the opportunity of consuming all they wanted and of seeing more than any of them could possibly eat." On yet another occasion, a group of 100 boys, aged 12-16 from the Y.W.C.A. Hiking Club, passed through wide-eyed but respectful as Bishop took them from room to room and showed them the wonders of candy making. At the end, each boy was handed a box of candy as a gift. One boy, "a little bit of a fellow," declared he was going to save it as a gift for his sister. Upon hearing this, Bishop leaned in and handed him a second box as a reward for his unselfishness.

Bishop's sweets were an easy sell to begin with, which was a good thing as Bishop himself was not the most dynamic spokesperson for his products. That role was fortunately filled by his more outgoing cousin, William. The quiet, unassuming Bishop preferred to operate behind the scenes. "Mr. Bishop is the last person you can imagine in the candy and cracker business," wrote Katherine Lipke in the *Los Angeles Times* in 1923. "If I had been asked to characterize him I'd put him in the chair as a president of a small college, or as an ambassador, or something dignified like that. But in the candy business? Nay. Nay."

Average in height, with a receding hairline that was growing more gray than brown, and consistently attired in dark, conservative business suits that hung slightly loose on his lean frame, Bishop looked to be an unlikely candidate for "Candy King" of Southern California. The only giveaway were the eyes, which twinkled a bright blue, offering a hint that there was a bit of mischief behind the staid exterior.

Indeed, Bishop's low-key personality did not keep him from becoming a leader in the Los Angeles business and social community and he was much involved in various civic, social and charitable activities. He was one of the earliest and oldest surviving members of such venerable organizations as the Board of Trade, the Chamber of Commerce, the Los Angeles Athletic Club and the Los Angeles Country Club, among others.

And in 1900, at age 45, he found love again, marrying Dorothy Wellborn (1869-1956), the daughter of U.S. District Court Judge Olin Wellborn. It was the second time he would marry the daughter of a judge. The ceremony took place at the home of the bride's parents in their large mansion on Ellendale Place in the West Adams district. After the October 23<sup>rd</sup> ceremony, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that "[t]he service united in marriage two of Los Angeles' most prominent and popular society people."

The honeymoon, which began in late January 1901, was to be a European holiday including a cruise through the Mediterranean. However, disaster struck on February 12, 1901, when the ship they were sailing aboard, the *Spartan Prince*, was wrecked right near the entrance of Gibraltar. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, the Bishops and the other first-class passengers were saved only after "considerable difficulty." The incident did not dampen the couple's shared enthusiasm for travel and they would make it a regular part of the lives for the duration of their marriage.

On September 8, 1905, the Bishops welcomed a son, Roland Jr., into the family. Bishop's daughter Sarah Huston was already an adult and on her own by this time so the addition brought a welcome youthful energy to the family home at 1280 West Adams Street. Both Bishop and his cousin William had resided in West Adams, which was then considered one of the city's high-class districts starting the 1890s, living in several homes, sometimes together, before finally settling at 1280 and 1342 West Adams, respectively.

Bishop & Co. continued to expand throughout the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. In 1907, construction began on a new fruit packing and cracker plant. Located at 780 South Alameda Street, the huge factory, covering some 100,000 square feet, was intended to be just the first of a series of seven buildings planned for the property. Completed in 1908, the new Bishop factory represented a far cry from their original home in 1887, which measured a mere 20' x 80'. Yet even this proved to be too small to handle the growing demand. During the 1910s, the company had widened its product line to include canned goods such as soups and beans, instant cocoa, and ketchup. At the same time, they extended their reach southwards, opening a factory in San Diego that employed more than 100. This all was in addition to sales offices in New York City, Seattle and San Francisco.

In 1916, the company made the announcement that it had just signed a twenty-year lease on an entire building in the mammoth \$10,000,000 Warehouse Terminal complex, which was under construction at East 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Central Avenue. The lease, which was said to be valued at \$750,000 would give Bishop & Co. a building of 6 floors and a basement, with direct access to a rail line as well as loading docks for trucks. The total floor space would increase the company's capacity to 175,000 square feet making it, according to the *Los Angeles Times*, "one of the most modern confection, biscuit and chocolate plants in the United States."

In speaking for the partnership as he usually did, William T. Bishop announced that the move would allow the firm to double its workforce, which then stood at 500. "When our 'Sunlight' plant is done," he said, "we will at last be in a position from which even increased business will not force us to move." Bishop's reference to sunlight was related to the design of the massive building, which was to be 100 feet wide and 260 feet in

length. Separated from the other buildings by a private street, it allowed a flood of natural sunlight to enter through the bands of nearly floor-to-ceiling windows that ran the length of the structure on all floors.

Providing proper light for the employees was only a part of the benefits the Bishop's planned for their employees. They would also be given their own restaurant, which was located on the second floor as well as their own roof garden, filled with plants, shrubbery and flowers, where employees could relax between shifts or on break.



**The huge Bishop & Co. factory had its own railroad spur line.**  
(Courtesy Los Angeles Public Library)

Located at 1366 East Central Avenue, Bishop & Co.'s new headquarters marked the apex of the company's development from modest origins into a candy empire. With a staff of nearly 1,000, the company claimed a market of not only every part of the United States, but an ever-expanding global reach as well that involved 24 countries from South America to Australia, and China. To help keep the sweets flowing, even in the heat of summer, Bishop built a truck lined with ice chambers to distribute chocolate bars across the region as far east as San Bernardino.

Bishop's expansion and growth extended into his personal life as well. The company's meteoric success made him a man of extreme wealth and in the mid-1910s, he and Dorothy decided they needed a home that reflected their status. Dorothy's sister Lillian had married Burton E. Green, one of the founders of Beverly Hills, and the couple decided to build a new home near them in the "estates" section and adjacent to the recently-completed Beverly Hills Hotel. The elevated site they had purchased covered some six acres and had what was then almost unbroken views in every direction. "There is perhaps no finer site in Beverly Hills," wrote the *Los Angeles Times*, "than that chosen for the Bishop home."

To design the residence, the Bishops chose William J. Dodd. The Canadian-born Dodd had only recently arrived in Los Angeles, but was already exhibiting much talent in his work, which included both residences and commercial structures. However, Bishop may have already been familiar with him from Kentucky, where Dodd had practiced for decades before moving west. For the Bishops, Dodd eschewed the ever-growing trend for Spanish Colonial or Mediterranean in favor of a decidedly East Coast looking Georgian Colonial mansion of twenty rooms spread over three stories. Sheathed in ruddy brick with granite trim, the home's most distinct feature was the grand colonnaded portico, which led some to compare it to the White House. Dubbed Rosewall after the color of the home's brick façade, the house was hailed as one of the region's grandest homes upon its completion in 1916.

Rosewall may have been the Bishops' dream home, but in practice it proved to be too big for just the three of them not to mention the considerable cost of upkeep and staff, which included a Serbian butler and a private chef. Less than four years after its completion, the Bishops sold Rosewall to banker Irving Hellman for a reported \$100,000 and moved across the street to a bungalow at the Beverly Hills Hotel. Relieved of the responsibilities and costs of their massive estate, the Bishops were free to indulge more in their passion for travel, which they often did with their close friends, William and Nella Mead.

The Meads had followed virtually the same course as the Bishops, having built a grand mansion in the Los Feliz hills before ultimately selling it as well in 1920 and moving into a bungalow at the Beverly Hills Hotel next to their friends. The childless Meads had even fewer attachments than the Bishops as Mead had largely retired from active business by this time. Mead, who had also served in the California Assembly and on the very first Los Angeles Water Commission, had made a great success in subdividing a large part of the former Griffith holdings in the hills of Los Feliz.

While he continued to run Bishop & Co. from his modest glass-walled office in the Terminal Warehouse, at 65 years old, Bishop began to consciously slow down, especially after Roland Jr., went off to college in the east. Bishop purchased a fancy new Stutz automobile which he, Dorothy and the Meads used for frequent road trips around the Southland and beyond, even up to places as far as Canada. It was on one of these trips that the couples discovered the beauty of Palm Springs and, in 1924, they made the decision to build adjoining winter residences behind the Desert Inn.

Palm Springs became a favorite destination, but it was far from the only one. There were trips abroad both to Europe and to the far east. In October of 1927, the couples, along with Roland Jr. left for an extended stay in Hawaii and the Orient, but no sooner had they arrived in Honolulu than Mead became seriously ill. Cutting the trip short, they returned to California, but Mead did not improve and he died the following month of neuritis at the age of 65.

After her husband's death, Nella Mead continued traveling with the Bishops regularly and in 1930, they all decided to simplify their lives even further, selling their Palm Springs getaways. But Bishop took it even further. At 75, he made the decision to finally retire when an opportunity came to sell Bishop & Co. to the National Biscuit Co., better known by its acronym of NABISCO. Officially, the move was a merger, and William was retained as

president, but within a few years, Bishop & Co., which had been a Southern California institution for more than a generation, ceased to exist. The sale of the company was done as a stock swap with the Bishops receiving some \$6,000,000 in NABISCO stock, which would be more than \$87,000,000 in 2019 dollars.

The Bishops and Nella Mead celebrated their freedom by taking a trip around the world that lasted much of the year. When they returned, they took up their bungalows at the Beverly Hills Hotel as before. In spite of his official retirement, Bishop did not quit business altogether, maintaining positions on various boards including the Beverly Hills Realty Co., the Old Colony Mortgage Co., and the Beverly Hills Insurance Agency, among others. He also kept track of his investments from a downtown office, which he maintained with his cousin William on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor of the Foreman Building, 707 South Hill Street.

In 1937, the Bishops, again feeling the itch to have a home of their own, purchased the Goodrich estate at 209 Copa de Oro Drive in Bel-Air. Although not as grand as Rosewall, the 1927 John Byers-designed home, was an impressive residence nonetheless. Of English Tudor styling, the home offered privacy and elegance on its one-acre setting. The couples enjoyed the home for about a half-dozen years before returning yet again to the simpler life of a Beverly Hills Hotel bungalow. After their departure, their former home became a favorite of celebrities with later owners including Dick Powell and June Allyson and Frank Sinatra, among others.

On New Year's Day 1950, Roland and Dorothy Bishop were stunned by the news that that their son, Roland Jr. had died at his newly-built home in the beach community of Playa Del Rey. As a child, Roland Jr. had been much doted upon by both his loving parents, growing into a handsome young man of 6'1," and blessed with both wealth and social prestige. Yet in spite of, or perhaps because of, the ease of his fortunate circumstances, Roland Jr. never seemed to have found his calling, instead leading the dissipated life of a playboy, involved in scandals, lawsuits and failed marriages. He ultimately found some stability as a citrus grower in Riverside County, but it was not enough and he died at the age of 44.

The shock of his son's death may have pushed Bishop himself over the edge. Even at 94, he had been reported as still active, sharp of mind and maintaining a regular schedule. Around the end of August, 1950, however, he began to slow down. From there the end came rapidly. He died on September 26, 1950 in his bungalow at the Beverly Hills Hotel. Dorothy lived half-dozen years longer before passing herself in 1956.

In her 1923 profile on Roland P. Bishop for the *Los Angeles Times*, journalist Katherine Lipke managed to provide a rare bit of insight into a man who was widely known in business but little known privately. She ended her piece with the summation:

"They say, the wise ones, that those who spend their lives among little things, become little, but after seeing Mr. Bishop in his office high up over Seventh Street, suggesting everything that is quietly big, yet surrounded by infinitesimal bits of sweets, the things which have absorbed him for thirty-six years, I knew that it takes a big man to make a big business out of little things."

## **Appendix IV**

### **William J. Dodd, AIA**



**William J. Dodd**  
(Via Calisphere)

William James Dodd achieved his greatest success during the period that has come to be known as the Golden Age of Southern California architecture. It was a time when both the region's designs and their designers became renowned on a national and international scale. Dodd's contemporaries in the field included some of the most important and influential architects ever to practice in the Southland yet he was more than able to hold his own, leaving a lasting legacy of timeless designs that ran the gamut from residences to skyscrapers, theaters and schools. Dodd was an artist in the truest sense of the word and his works continue to reflect his mastery of scale and proportion.

Dodd liked telling people he was born in Chicago, a claim extended to official documents such as census forms and passport applications. Yet, he was in fact born in Canada, in Quebec City on September 22, 1862. He also later claimed to be part of the first class of the Chicago Art Institute, an assertion that the institute has not been able to verify. Why Dodd would promote such a deception is not known, but as an architect, he could hardly be blamed for wanting to associate himself with the city that produced the likes of Louis Sullivan, William Le Baron Jenney, and Frank Lloyd Wright.

Dodd did indeed live in Chicago, having immigrated with his family from Canada in 1869. After first taking up residence on South Des Plaines Avenue, the Dodds relocated to West Harrison Street in 1871. It was an unfortunate move, which unintentionally put them directly in the path of the Great Chicago Fire, which devastated the city just a few months later. The Dodd's survived the conflagration and continued to live in the city, which began the long process of recovery. It is not known where Dodd gained his education. It is

assumed it was in the Chicago public schools, but it is unknown what college(s) he may have attended.

By the late 1870s, Dodd was shown to have embarked on the career of architecture, gaining a position as a draftsman in the offices of William Le Baron Jenney (1832-1907). The innovative and influential Jenney is considered one of the great architects of his age, hailed as the “Father of the skyscraper.” It was Jenney who designed what is considered to be the first skyscraper, the ten-story Home Insurance Building in Chicago in 1885. Dodd, no doubt, received a first class architectural education through his work with Jenney. Others who also worked under him at various times included future masters of the Chicago School of Architecture, Daniel Burnham, Louis Sullivan, William Holabird and Louis Roche.

In 1880, he had moved over to the office of Solon Spencer Beman, who was at the time designing the planned city of Pullman, Illinois for the Pullman Car Company. Dodd worked for Beman for at least several years before managing to gain a plum position as a designer for Mc Kim, Mead & White in New York City, considered the greatest of the Gilded Age architects. The dates and duration of his employment are unknown, but by 1886 he had relocated to Louisville, Kentucky, becoming a member of the Western Association of Architects.

It was in Louisville that Dodd would remain for the next quarter century, becoming one of the city's finest and most important architects. During this time, he was involved in several partnerships including Wehle & Dodd (1887-1888); Maury & Dodd (1889-1895); Dodd & Cobb (1896-1904), and Mc Donald and Dodd (1906-1912). While his focus was primarily in Kentucky, he accepted commissions in other states as well including Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Tennessee and Virginia. Dodd's output during these years was assessed as being “structures of exceptional craftsmanship and high style, designs which traced the transitional tastes and technologies of the period before Modernism.”

Unlike many architects, Dodd did not specialize in one particular type of structure. Rather, his oeuvre ran the gamut from residences to office buildings, stores, apartments, hotels, churches, theaters, schools and government offices. However, whatever the building, the underlying principles and well-defined styling remained constant. Counted among the most notable commissions of his Kentucky years were “Bonncot,” the Charles Bonnycastle Robinson Residence (1891); Nelson County Courthouse (1892); Harry McGoodwin Residence (1893); St. Paul’s Episcopal Church (1895); John P. Starks Residence (1898); Western Branch of the Louisville Free Public Library (1905); Seelbach Hotel (1907); and the Standard Oil of Kentucky Building (1912), among many others.

Dodd's artistic expressions went beyond the architecture itself. He was also a talented glass designer, who often created beautiful art glass windows for his building projects as well as even creating some of the furniture. Some of his finest work was the Teco pottery he turned out for the Gates Potteries Co. of Terra Cotta, Illinois. Dodd's pieces are said to be “among the most sought-after and rarest of the Arts and Crafts products introduced” by Gates.

By the end of 1912, Dodd had enjoyed a successful career as an architect for more than 30 years. While some might have considered retiring, Dodd decided to start a whole second career by relocating to Los Angeles. Arriving at the end of 1912, Dodd settled into a comfortable house in the Wilshire district with his wife, Ione Estes Dodd (1861-1950). The daughter of a well-connected family in Memphis, Tennessee, Ione and Dodd had been married since 1889.

Although new to the city and with a tremendous amount of competition to contend with, Dodd appears to have built up his practice quickly and he soon joined forces with Los Angeles architect J. Martyn Haenke to form the partnership of Dodd & Haenke. Dodd had not only talent as an architect, he had the ability to sell himself to potential clients. Charming, affable, and a good story-teller, Dodd made friends with ease and was an inveterate "joiner," gaining memberships in numerous civic and social organizations including the venerable Los Angeles Athletic Club (LAAC). He became one of the original founders of the Uplifters Club, a "by invitation only" offshoot of the LAAC, whose members included some of the city's most important citizens. One member was "Wizard of Oz" author L. Frank Baum.

Among his many talents, Dodd was also a credible singer and actor, and was always happy to appear in various productions and "hi jinx" put on by the Uplifters at their Rustic Canyon hideaway. Dodd would later design the Uplifters club house, which he personally elaborated with friezes and other artistic embellishments. Additionally, Dodd became a booster of the Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra, precursor of today's Philharmonic, and had been a founding board member of the Louisville Symphony Orchestra.

Professionally, Dodd gained immediate prestige through his association with pioneering female architect Julia Morgan. In 1913, she, Dodd and Haenke collaborated on the design of the *Los Angeles Examiner* Building for William Randolph Hearst. Executed in the Spanish Mission style, the newspaper plant was hailed for its architectural beauty. As Gebhard and Winter noted in their seminal *An Architectural Guidebook to Los Angeles* (Revised edition, 2018), "[T]his was certainly one of California's most distinguished Hispano-inspired buildings."

Dodd and Haenke's partnership lasted only a few years and in 1915 he joined forces with engineer William Richards to create Dodd & Richards. It was through this partnership that Dodd would design his best-known works. In 1915, Dodd completed a major estate home for millionaire J.M. Danziger on a high promontory on the Danziger Ranch. This land later became the exclusive residential district of Bel-Air, with the Danziger home considered its first estate. That same year, he designed Rosewall for millionaire "Candy King" Roland P. Bishop and his wife Dorothy Wellborn Bishop on a prominent view lot next to the Beverly Hills Hotel. While the Danziger estate had been done as an Italian villa, Rosewall was a classic Georgian Colonial, brick-faced with a portico of white marble columns. Both of these estates were later demolished in the 1950s.

Of all his residential designs, Dodd was most prolific in the ultra-exclusive enclave of Laughlin Park. Originally intended as a private estate for pottery magnate Homer Laughlin, the land had been planted with an impressive and diverse variety of exotic

trees, shrubbery and flowering plants. In 1913, the land was opened up by Laughlin's heirs as a private residential tract. Dodd was entranced by the site's beauty and would make it his and Ione's home for the remainder of his life. Dodd designed at least four houses in the neighborhood including two for himself. His first home, completed in 1915, would later gain fame as the residence of Charlie Chaplin. Still later, it was combined with the estate next door to become an office and guest quarters for Cecil B. De Mille. Another house, of Italian design, which he designed for New York millionaire Kenneth Preuss in 1922, would later become home to 1930s singing sensation Deanna Durbin. The terraced gardens, which were modeled on the Villa Lante, were laid out by Frank Lloyd Wright Jr.

Lloyd Wright, who would go on to a successful architectural career separate and apart from his famous father, had been one of a number of aspiring architects mentored by Dodd. Another was Adrian Wilson. Dodd always believed in giving back and always had an open door for those he saw who had promise.

During the late 1910s and 1920s, Dodd's drawing board was filled with projects that, like his Kentucky output, ranged from residences to skyscrapers. A few of his most notable efforts included the Kinema Theatre on Grand Avenue (1917); the Ville De Paris Department Store (1917); the Harris & Frank Building (1921) and the Brock Co. Jewelers Building (1922). Dodd's most famous commission was the Pacific Mutual Building in downtown Los Angeles, a 12-story Beaux Arts masterpiece at 523 West 6<sup>th</sup> Street.

Dodd also designed the Hollywood branch of the Los Angeles Public Library as well as the Jacob Riis Boy's School and the George Washington High School. He also designed several medical office buildings in Los Angeles and Pasadena during this period, the Hollywood Roof Ballroom on Vine Street (1924) and a pair of Mediterranean villas in Palm Springs for the Roland P. Bishops and the William Meads. The homes were set against a steeply sloping hillside. Dodd and Richards were both well adapted to hillside construction as evidenced by both the Laughlin Park houses and several Bel-Air designs including the estate of author Gene Stratton-Porter (1927).

William J. Dodd's long and prolific career came to a sudden end on June 14, 1930, while he was vacationing in Italy with his wife, Ione. It was reported that the architect had died of an acute but unspecified illness. His body was returned back to Los Angeles for burial. He was 68. Today, a number of Dodd's buildings, both in Los Angeles and Kentucky have been lost in the name of progress. However, in recent years there has come a new appreciation for the architect's work through his many extant designs.

## Appendix V

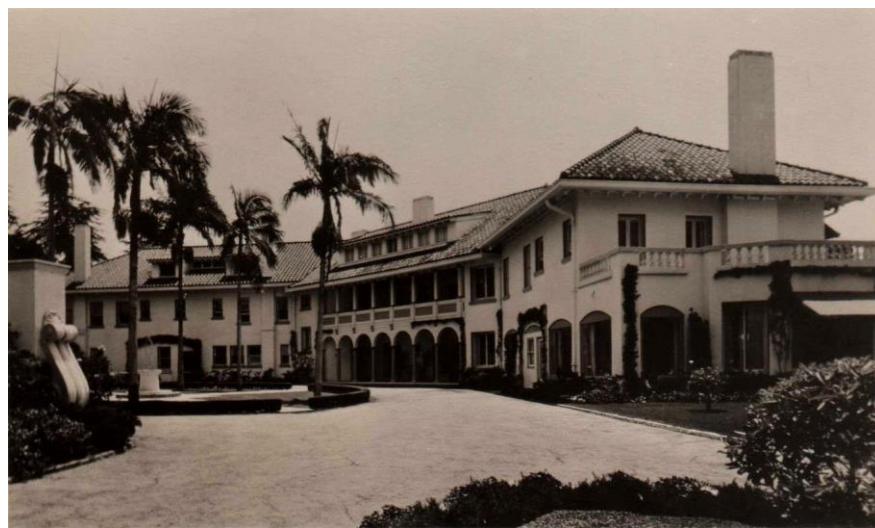
### Selected Commissions of William J. Dodd

During his more than 40 years as an architect, William J. Dodd designed dozens of structures that ranged from private homes to skyscrapers. His career was divided into two distinct phases, his Louisville, Kentucky years (1886-1912) and his Los Angeles career (1912-1930). Below is a small sample of some of Dodd's most notable Southern California commissions.



**Los Angeles Examiner Building (1912-1913), in association with Julia Morgan and J. Martyn Haenke.**

(Via Los Angeles Department of Water & Power Associates)



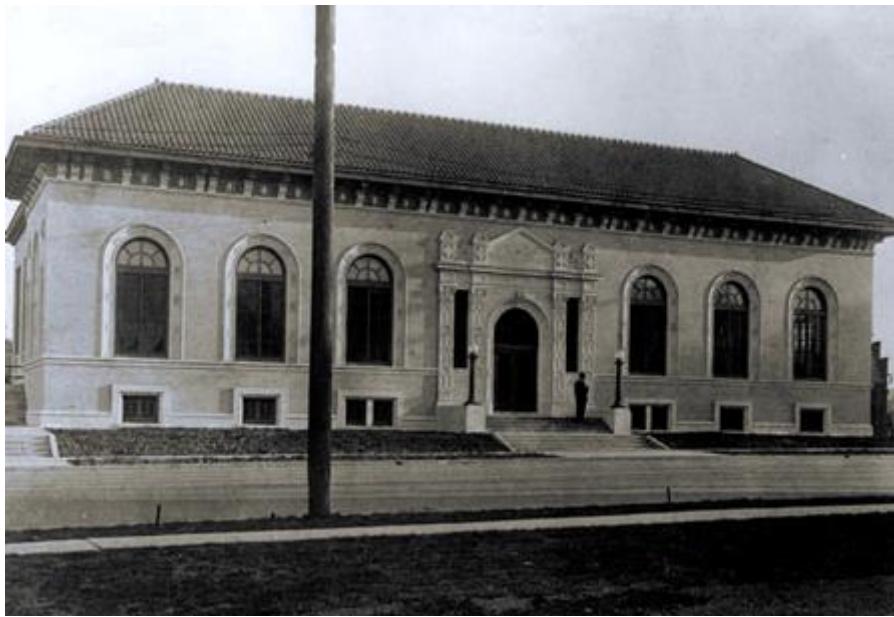
**The J.M. Danziger Estate was the first house built in what would become Bel-Air (1916).**  
(Author collection)



**Dodd's own home in Laughlin Park, Hollywood (1915), was later home to Charles Chaplin and Cecil B. De Mille.**  
**(Via Hilton & Hyland)**



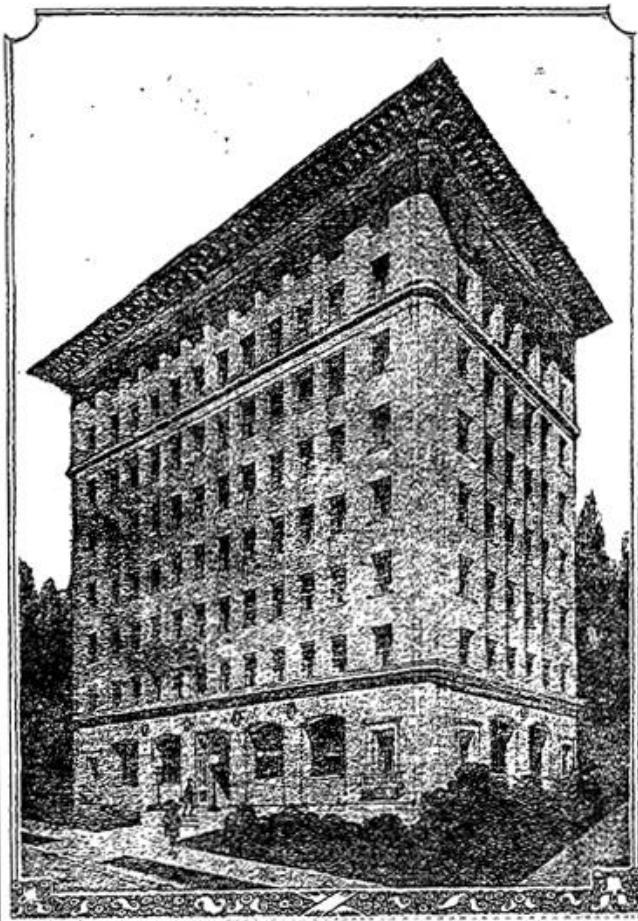
**The Kinema Theatre (1917).**  
**(Via On Bunker Hill)**



**The Boyle Heights Branch of the Los Angeles Public Library.**  
(Via On Bunker Hill)



**The Uplifters Club House in Rustic Canyon (1923).**  
(Via On Bunker Hill)



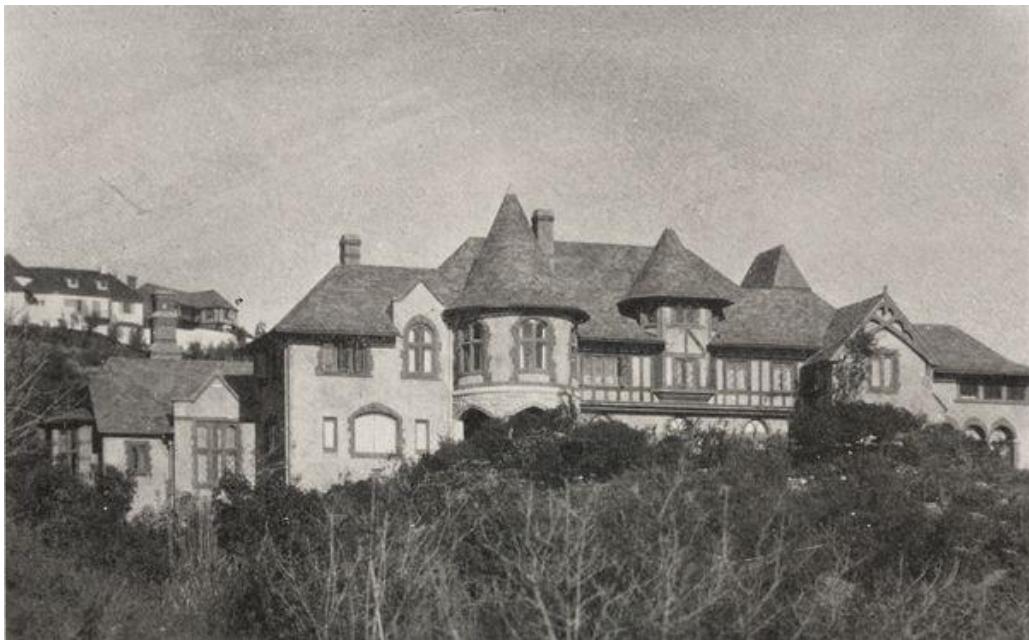
**Physician's Building on West 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Los Angeles (1923).**  
(Via *Los Angeles Times*)



**George Washington High School, Los Angeles.**  
(Courtesy Water & Power Associates)



**The Hollywood Rooftop Ballroom, Vine Street, Hollywood (1924).**  
(Via California State Library)



**The Gene Stratton-Porter Residence, Bel-Air (1927).**  
(Author collection)