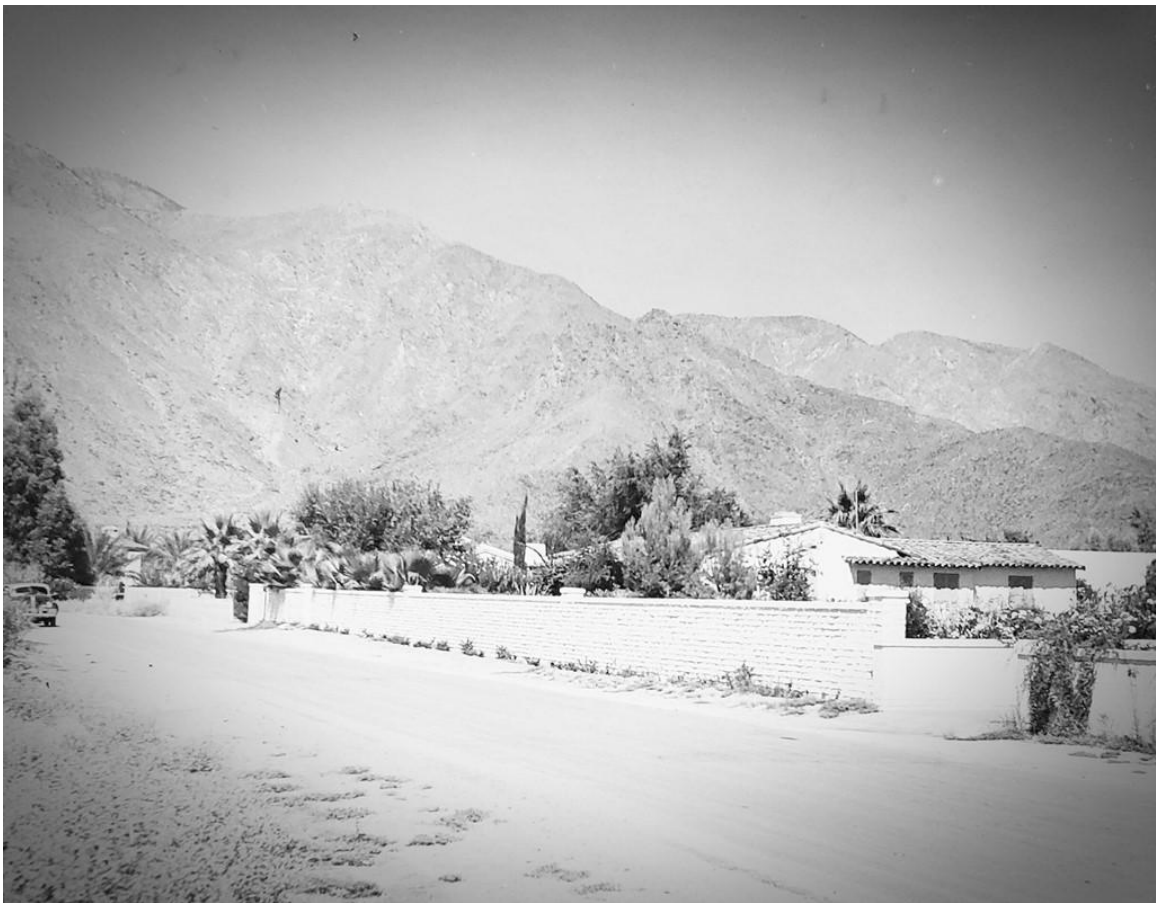


The Lloyd and “Tootsie” Simon Residence, 1936

Brewster & Benedict, Architects

388 East Valmonte Norte, Palm Springs, CA 92262



Nomination Application For City of Palm Springs Class I Historic Resource

Prepared by Steven Keylon

For the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation

FINAL February 7, 2026

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Barbara Marshall, and Orange Coast Title Company.

Original Owner: LLOYD AND AMELIA SIMON

Other notable past owners: IN SIMON FAMILY 1936-2021

Other Historic Associations: _____

Common Name of Property: LLOYD AND "TOOTSIE" SIMON RESIDENCE

Historic Name of Property: SAME

Attach to this application any information, photos, drawings, newspaper articles, reports, studies, or other materials to fully describe the characteristics or conditions that support this application for historic designation.

Architectural Style: SPANISH COLONIAL REVIVAL
(Refer to the Architectural Styles chapter of the Citywide Historic Context Statement, under Historic Resources on the Planning Home page (www.palmspringsca.gov).

Period of Significance: 1936
(See the Citywide Historic Context Statement Document.)

Please list any informational reference sources used to complete this application:
DESERT SUN AND PALM SPRINGS LIMELIGHT ARTICLES; ORIGINAL BLUEPRINTS; BUILDING PERMITS; CHAIN OF TITLE; KIRSCHNER RESIDENCE NOMINATION

PSMC 8.05.070 (C.1): Criteria for the Designation of Class 1 Historic Resources.

A site, structure, building or object may be designated as a Class 1 historic resource or a Contributing Resource in a proposed historic district by the Palm Springs City Council, provided both of the following findings are met.

Provide a written description of how the site qualifies as historic resource under one or more of the following criterion:

FINDING 1: The site, structure, building or object exhibits exceptional historic significance and meets one or more of the criteria listed below:

- i. The resource is associated with events that have made a meaningful contribution to the nation, state or community.¹
- ii. The resource is associated with the lives of persons who made a meaningful contribution to national, state or local history.
- iii. The resource reflects or exemplifies a particular period of national, state or local history.
- iv. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type of construction, a period of construction or a method of construction.²
- v. The resource presents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age, or that possesses high artistic value.
- vi. The resource represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction, as used in evaluating applications for designation of historic districts, for parcels on which more than one entity exists.
- vii. The resource has yielded or may be likely to yield information important to national, state or local history or prehistory.

¹ NOTE: Unlike the National Register criteria, The City's criterion does not consider "patterns of events". For consideration of "patterns of events", use Criterion "iii", reflecting a particular period.

² Unlike the National Register criteria "type, period of method of construction relates to construction only" For design theme or characteristics use Criterion "iii" (period) or Criterion v (high artistic value).

FINDING 2: The site, structure, building or object retains most if not all of the following aspects of Integrity, as established in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards³: Design, Materials, Workmanship, Location, Setting, Feeling, Association.

PSMC 8.05.070 (C.2) Criteria for the Designation of Class 2 Historic Resources.

A site, structure, building or object may be designated as a Class 2 historic resource, or a Contributing Resource to a proposed historic district by the Palm Springs City Council provided the site, structure, building or object exhibits exceptional historic significance and meets one or more of the criteria listed in Finding 1 above. A Class 2 historic resource is not required to meet the findings for integrity as described in Finding 2 (above).

PSMC 8.05.090 (C) Criteria and Findings for Designation of Historic Districts.

In addition to the criteria listed in Finding 1, to be considered for designation as a Historic District, a defined area must:

- a. Contain contributing resources on a majority of the sites within the proposed district which individually meet the criteria in Finding (1). The defined area may include other structures, buildings, or archaeological sites which contribute generally to the overall distinctive character of the area and are related historically or visually by plan or physical development.
(Identify list by address and APN number each site / parcel that meets the criteria outlined in Finding 1 above and document how each meets the criteria.)
- b. Identify non-contributing properties or vacant parcels to the extent necessary to establish appropriate, logical or convenient boundaries.
(Identify list by address and APN number each site / parcel within the proposed historic district that is considered non-contributing to the overall historic significance of the historic district.)

Please attach any additional information related to the application as necessary.

Questions: Contact the Palm Springs Planning Department at 760 323 8245.

³ Refer to the U.S. Department of the Interior Bulletin for How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property.

OWNER'S LETTER

Feb 2, 2026

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Bryan Mayo and I am the owner of 388 East Valmonte Norte in Palm Springs CA in the Movie Colony sub-division. My partner and I love Palm Springs and were looking for a 2nd home for retirement and we were drawn to 388 Valmonte because its exterior had not been modified from its original blueprints from the 1930s. Aerial photos confirmed before we purchased that the house's structure and footprint matched early 1930 and 1940 views. We loved its charm, warmth, natural light, and original rooms, windows and layout..

I contacted the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation to complete the Class 1 nomination process for the home, currently it is identified as Class 3. I am fully supportive of moving forward to make this a Class 1 historic residence.

We have already contacted and had our first onsite meeting with Sarah Yoon, the Preservation Officer for the city on September 15th, 2025.

We look forward to working with the city and the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation to move forward the process nominating the home to Class 1 designation.

Sincerely,

 2/2/2026

Bryan Mayo
2961 1st Ave
San Diego, CA 92103

INTRODUCTION

The Lloyd and Amelia ("Tootsie") Simon Residence at 388 East Valmonte Norte was designed in 1936 by Brewster & Benedict. The house marks a critical moment when Palm Springs was transforming from seasonal resort to permanent residential community, and when Spanish Colonial Revival architecture had evolved from ornamental historicism toward restrained, climate-responsive design.

The house sits within the Palm Springs Estates tract, one of the city's first residential subdivisions, developed by Prescott T. Stevens in 1927. By 1936, when the Simons commissioned their residence, the tract had matured into an established neighborhood attracting year-round residents who valued privacy, proximity to the village center, and the spaciousness characteristic of early Palm Springs development.

The residence demonstrates the defining characteristics of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture as interpreted during its mature phase. Low, one-story massing with smooth stucco walls; Clay tile roofs with exposed rafter tails; steel casement windows and French doors opening to shaded loggias and patios. The plan organizes around a rear courtyard, with principal rooms oriented toward outdoor living spaces rather than formal axes. Architectural effect derives from proportion, shadow, and the modulation of planes—not applied ornament.

This approach reflects a broader shift in Southern California residential architecture during the mid-1930s. While earlier Spanish Colonial Revival work emphasized picturesque romanticism—elaborate carved details, wrought iron, heavy timber—houses from this period favor functional clarity. Plans accommodate year-round desert living: shaded outdoor rooms, cross-ventilation, clear separation of public, private, and service zones. The style retained its essential connection to climate and regional identity while shedding decorative excess.

The Simon Residence exemplifies Brewster & Benedict's mature residential work. The firm produced a substantial body of custom homes and commercial buildings in Palm Springs between 1935 and 1938, establishing a consistent design approach: courtyard planning, restrained detailing, indoor-outdoor integration, and sensitivity to site and climate. The true significance of Brewster & Benedict lies in the breadth and consistency of their work—high-quality residential architecture that shaped Palm Springs' prewar identity.

Because the house remained in the Simon family, it was largely unaltered from 1936 through 2021, making it an exceptional document of interwar domestic architecture. Recent renovations have modified certain interior spaces and landscape features, but the essential architectural form—massing, materials, spatial organization, and the relationship between interior and exterior—remains intact and clearly legible.

Period of Significance: 1936

The period of significance for the residence is established as 1936, the year the house was designed and constructed. The property achieved its architectural significance at the time of completion. The essential features that convey this significance—massing, plan, materials, spatial organization, indoor-outdoor relationship—were established in 1936 and have remained substantially unchanged for more than eight decades.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

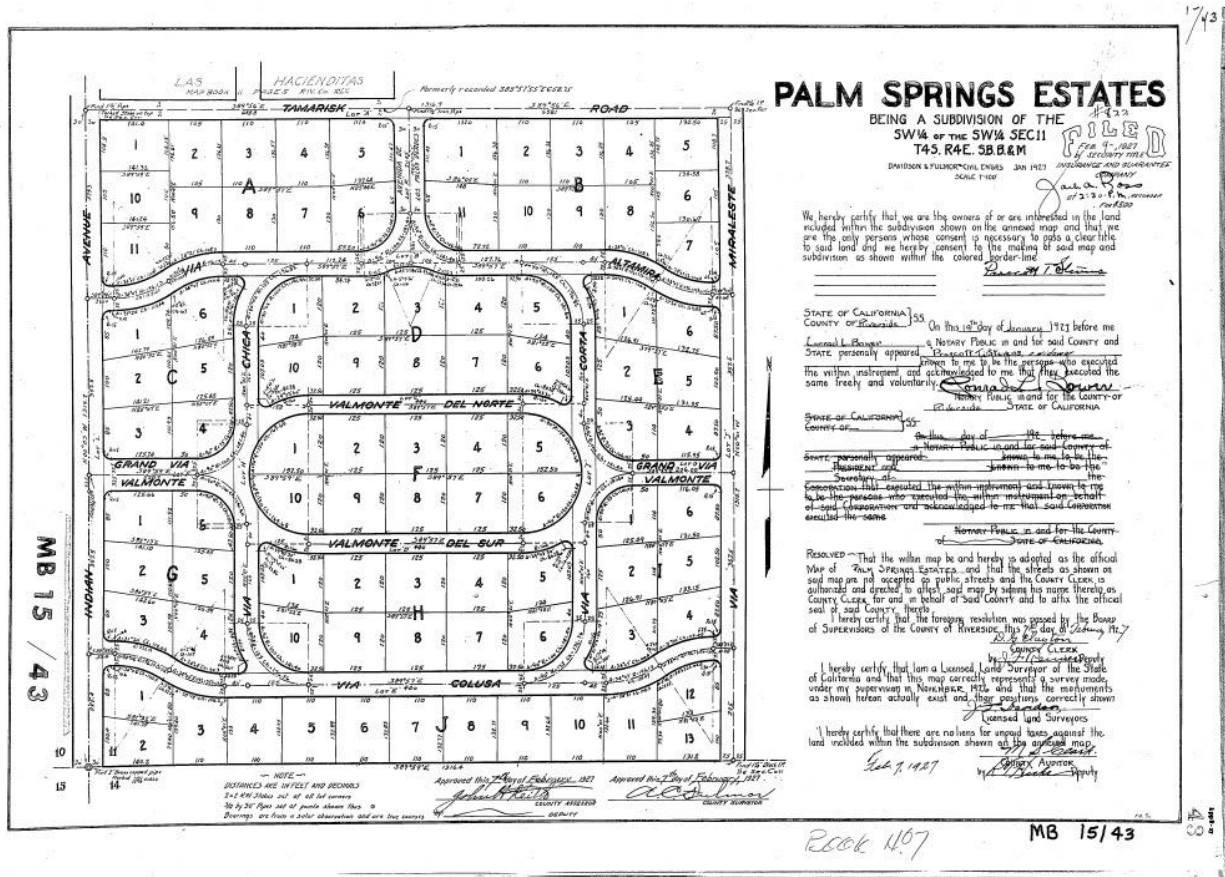
Background and Historic Context

Palm Springs Between the Wars (1919-1941)

The Lloyd and "Tootsie" Simon Residence was constructed during the period identified in the City of Palm Springs Historic Context Statement as Palm Springs Between the Wars (1919-1941). This era witnessed the transformation of Palm Springs from a modest spa town into an internationally recognized luxury winter resort, driven by improved automobile access, Hollywood patronage, and the construction of landmark resort hotels.

The completion of paved highway connections between Los Angeles and Palm Springs in 1924 reduced travel time to under four hours, making the desert accessible to wealthy Angelenos seeking seasonal refuge. This improved access coincided with the development of spectacular resort hotels—the Desert Inn (1925, William Charles Tanner), the Oasis Hotel (1925, Lloyd Wright), and the El Mirador (1927, Walker and Eisen)—that established Palm Springs' reputation as a premier destination for the nation's social and cultural elite.

The 1930s marked the community's maturation as a residential destination. While earlier visitors had stayed primarily in hotels, the decade saw increased construction of architect-designed estates and custom homes for year-round and seasonal residents. Business leaders, industrialists, and Hollywood figures began commissioning residences that reflected both their social status and the emerging expectation that Palm Springs architecture should respond thoughtfully to desert climate and lifestyle.



Residential Development and the Palm Springs Estates Tract

The Simon Residence was constructed within the Palm Springs Estates tract, originally developed by Prescott T. Stevens in 1927 as one of the first residential subdivisions in Palm Springs. Stevens, a prominent early developer, was responsible for several tracts located immediately surrounding the existing village and resorts in the 1920s, establishing the framework for Palm Springs' residential expansion during the interwar period.

The Palm Springs Estates tract was platted during the community's initial phase of residential subdivision, when wealthy seasonal visitors and permanent residents began commissioning architect-designed homes rather than relying solely on hotel accommodations. The subdivision's layout and lot sizes reflect the period's residential development patterns, with parcels large enough to accommodate substantial houses, detached garages, service buildings, and landscaped grounds suited to outdoor desert living.

The construction of the Simon Residence nine years after the tract's initial platting reflects the neighborhood's gradual build-out during the 1930s, as individual lots were acquired and developed with custom homes designed by established architectural firms.

Spanish Colonial Revival Architecture in the 1930s

Spanish Colonial Revival architecture dominated Palm Springs residential development during the interwar period, well-suited to the desert environment through its use of stucco wall surfaces, clay tile roofs, shaded porches and loggias, and courtyard-oriented plans. By the mid-1930s, however, the style had evolved significantly from its earlier, more ornamental phase.

The Spanish Colonial Revival architecture of the 1920s in Palm Springs often featured elaborate decorative elements: applied ornament, heavy carved wooden details, wrought iron work, and picturesque asymmetry intended to evoke romantic associations with California's Spanish Colonial past. By contrast, houses designed in the mid-to-late 1930s—including the Simon Residence—reflect a mature and restrained interpretation of the style, characterized by simplified forms, reduced ornamentation, and an emphasis on proportion, material consistency, and spatial planning over decorative effect.

This evolution reflected broader architectural trends in Southern California, where architects increasingly favored functional clarity and climatic responsiveness over historicist ornament. Houses from this period demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of desert living: plans organized around shaded outdoor rooms, deep roof overhangs providing sun control, grouped window openings maximizing cross-ventilation, and clear separation of public, private, and service zones reflecting modern domestic expectations.

The shift also reflected changing patterns of occupancy. While earlier resort architecture had been designed primarily for seasonal visitors with limited domestic needs, houses constructed in the mid-1930s increasingly accommodated year-round living, requiring more thoughtful planning for everyday comfort, household management, and long-term maintenance in the desert environment.



In this 1939 aerial photograph, the Simon Residence is outlined in red, and the second parcel immediately to the east of the house is shown. That parcel was later sold. Flight C_5750, Frame 227-34, January 1, 1939. Courtesy of UCSB Library Geospatial Collection.

Architecture of the Simon Residence

Site and Setting

The roughly 2,300-square-foot house is a low, one-story building arranged around a courtyard. Along Granvia Valmonte, a white brick wall with weeping mortar joints encloses the property, now partly covered in vines. This wall was added a few years after completion—1938 photographs show boulders originally marking the front edge.

The site was once twice this size. Historic aerials show the northern parcel, now 400 Granvia Valmonte, planted as an orchard. After it was sold off, architectural designer A. Belden Crist built his own house there around 1962.

The house pulls back from the street to create a semi-enclosed patio at the rear—the spatial center of the property. The main structure forms a U around this patio. A detached garage sits to the north, visually connected but clearly subordinate. An external stair leads to a sun deck on the garage roof. Originally, a curved brick wall enclosed the patio's northeast side.

The rear patio and its covered terrace function as an outdoor room, sized for dining and leisurely response to the climate. The siting prioritizes orientation and enclosure over

symmetry. A driveway turns at a right angle to reach the garage. Pedestrians enter through a wooden gate in the brick wall.

Plan Organization

The single-story plan divides into three zones around the rear patio: public spaces (living room, dining room) cluster along one wing, opening to the patio through glazed doors. The bedroom wing occupies quieter territory, buffered by short halls and closets. Service spaces (kitchen, pantry, maid's room, laundry) group together for efficiency.

The house sits on a raised foundation, an unusual design in Palm Springs, where most homes have a slab-on-grade foundation. A comparatively small basement mirrors the configuration of the dining room and houses the water heater and HVAC systems, accessed via a door with stairs from the driveway.

A covered front porch leads into the living room—the principal space, generously scaled, with multiple French doors to the patio and terrace. A fireplace anchors one wall, originally flanked by built-in bookshelves. The covered terrace had a concrete floor stained tobacco-leaf brown.

There are two bedrooms, each with closets and windows on two exposures. Both bedrooms have open-beamed ceilings and an adjacent bath. The primary bedroom, at the rear, is slightly larger and sits near the patio. Here, a small dressing room connects the bedroom to the bath, with a large closet adjacent. The bathrooms are compact, plumbing grouped to minimize runs. The original drawings show how an additional bedroom might be added, and the house was designed to easily accommodate that, though it was never built.

The kitchen was originally enclosed, with an adjacent pantry and service circulation. A maid's room and bath reflect the domestic norms of the period. The kitchen connects discreetly to both the dining room and the service yard, keeping household work separate from formal spaces.

Exterior Character

The exterior sits firmly within Mediterranean Revival and Spanish Colonial traditions, interpreted with the restraint typical of the mid-1930s. The house was originally specified for paint in the Old California theme: an off-white body with a darker painted dado on the lower walls—an aesthetic device typical of George Washington Smith's work, where Floyd Brewster had learned the style.

The house sits low to the ground, its horizontal massing spreading across the site. Simple gabled and hipped roofs rise at shallow to moderate pitches, topped with mission clay tile. Exposed rafter tails project beyond the eaves, casting rhythmic shadows along the walls. The exterior is smooth stucco, gently hand-troweled by hand. Steel casement windows gather in groups, emphasizing the horizontal lines. French doors and glazed openings face the patio, connecting interior and exterior spaces.

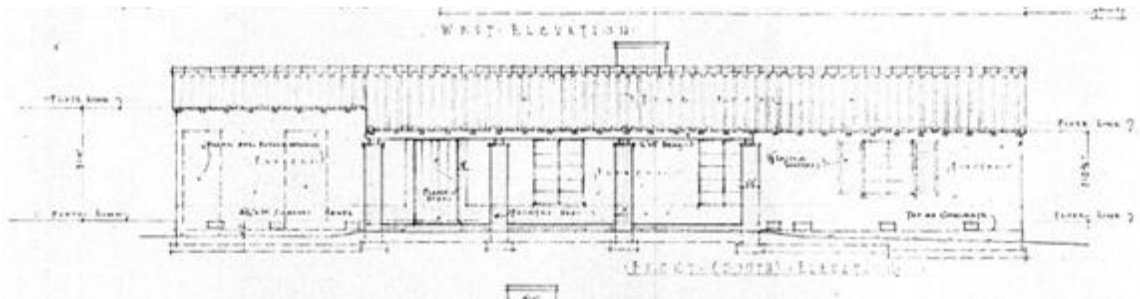
The original 1936 drawings show louvered shutters only on the two gabled-end bedroom windows, facing north and south. Early photographs confirm this arrangement. Today, however, most windows carry shutters, each fitted with hand-hammered wrought iron shutter dogs and hardware. The patina and craftsmanship of these fixtures suggest they were added early in the

building's history, creating a unified exterior treatment that, while not original, appears to date from the first years after construction.

The front porch rests on four squared brick pilasters, each terminating in a decorative stacked-tile finial that supports the horizontal beams. These brick pilasters were originally painted the color of the house. The floor of this porch was originally brick laid in a basketweave pattern. The rear porch uses simple vertical wooden posts. Detailing is economical but deliberate—proportion and material consistency over applied decoration.

The garage is utilitarian: minimal openings, a simple roofline that echoes the main house without competing.

Elevations



The **PRIMARY ELEVATION**, from the 1936 Brewster & Benedict blueprints.

The **primary (street-facing) elevation** presents a long, low, rambling horizontal composition characteristic of the informal "Old California" ranch idiom employed by Brewster & Benedict in the mid-1930s. The one-story façade is finished in smooth stucco and capped by a low-pitched roof clad in terra cotta barrel tiles laid with visible variation in tone and alignment.

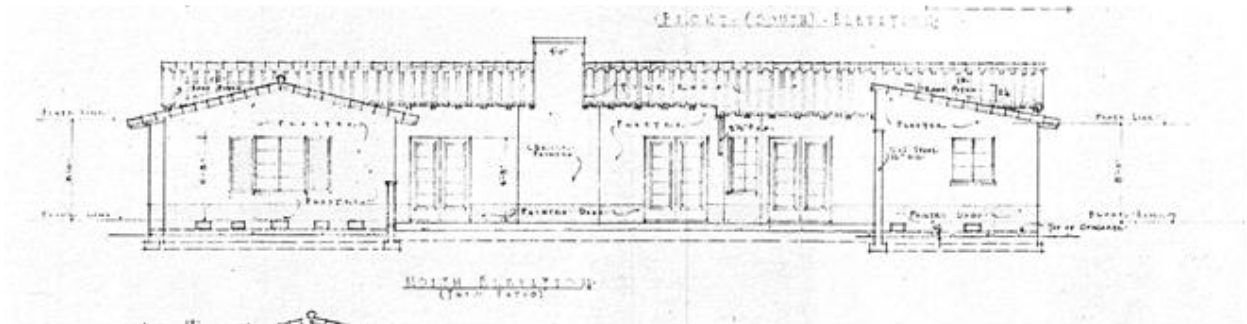
Read from left to right, the elevation begins with a broad expanse of unbroken stucco wall, deliberately left blank to reinforce the horizontal massing. This wall plane is accented by a single wrought-iron lantern. The façade then transitions to the raised front porch, set on a slightly elevated plinth paved in brick laid in a basketweave pattern. A vertical plank wood front door is set toward the left side of the covered porch zone and is flanked by iron porch lanterns. To the right of the door, a pair of steel casement windows is set into the wall behind the porch, lighting the principal living spaces.

The porch occupies the central portion of the façade and is distinguished by a deeper roof overhang extending across the right two-thirds of the elevation, creating a shaded outdoor room integral to the house's street presence. The overhang is supported by four brick pilasters rising from the porch paving and capped with stacked terra cotta tile finials. These pilasters carry a heavy horizontal wood beam that anchors the composition and visually reinforces the house's strong lateral emphasis.

The elevation terminates at the right with a forward-projecting volume corresponding to the front bedroom. This volume is punctuated by a centrally placed steel casement window. Throughout, applied ornament is minimal. Architectural effect is achieved through massing, proportion, material texture, and shadow.



In this photograph from the 2021 sale, the original configuration of the brick columns with stacked Mission tile finials is visible. They were later modified to extend the brickwork to the top.



*The **NORTH ELEVATION**, from the 1936 Brewster & Benedict blueprints.*

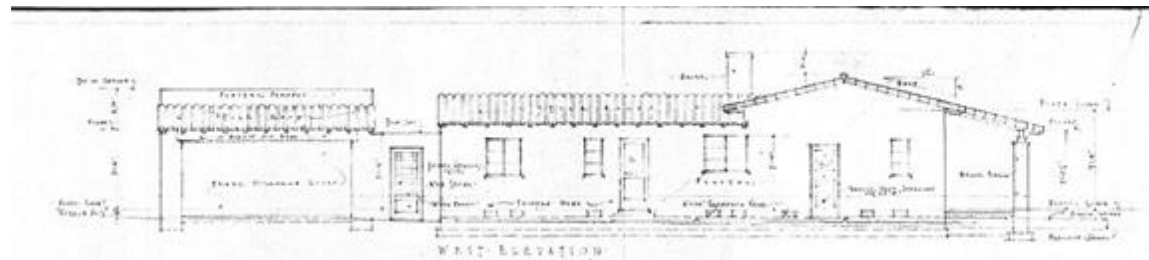
The **north elevation** addresses the rear patio and serves as the house's primary outdoor-facing wall, prioritizing access to open air, light, and views over street presentation. From left to right, the elevation begins with the garage structure, which reads as a simple stucco volume capped by a low-pitched gable roof and clay tile. Moving eastward, the north elevation continues with the covered rear terrace, supported by a series of simple square wood columns. This terrace, originally screened and now open, shelters a generous exterior room beneath the

main roof plane. A series of wood French doors open from the interior directly onto this terrace.

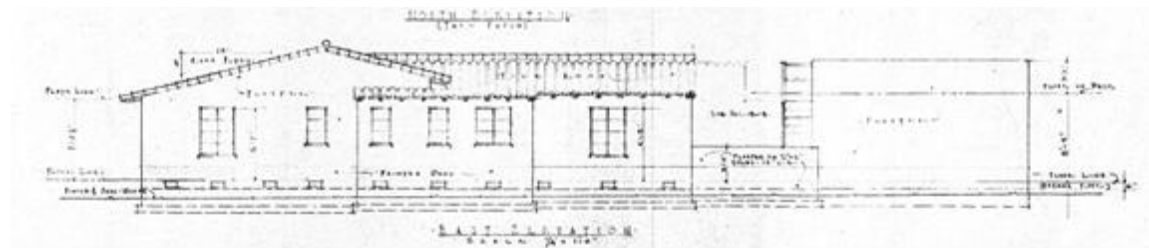
The wall plane then projects slightly forward to define the living room and dining room volumes, where additional French doors and steel casement windows face the patio. These openings are grouped to maximize transparency and ease of access, creating an essentially permeable boundary between enclosed and open space. A short connecting section transitions the elevation from public to private areas, expressed as a simplified stucco wall punctuated by a small steel casement window lighting the interior corridor.

The elevation continues with the front bedroom, expressed as a slightly projecting gabled volume capped in clay tile. A pair of steel casement windows centered on this gable face lights the bedroom. Beyond this point, the wall plane advances slightly forward to form a shallow projecting bay corresponding to the primary bathroom and adjacent dressing room. The wall plane then recedes slightly to align with the main elevation at the primary bedroom, where a larger two-panel steel casement window serves the primary sleeping space.

From this point, the stucco wall curved outward to form the enclosing wall of the rear patio. This curved wall element terminated at the rear face of the detached garage structure. Throughout the elevation, wall surfaces are smooth stucco, fenestration is limited to steel casement windows with minimal trim, and applied ornament is absent.



The **WEST ELEVATION**, from the 1936 Brewster & Benedict blueprints.



The **EAST ELEVATION**, from the 1936 Brewster & Benedict blueprints.

The **west and east elevations** present simplified, utilitarian character, with modest fenestration serving bedrooms, circulation zones, and service spaces. Openings are regularly proportioned and devoid of applied ornament, emphasizing the house's restrained massing, functional clarity, and continuity of materials.

Brewster & Benedict: The Architects

The architectural firm of Brewster & Benedict, active in Palm Springs primarily between late 1935 and early 1938, played a significant yet long underrecognized role in shaping the city's prewar residential architecture. The partnership brought together Floyd E. Brewster, a highly trained architect with experience in Southern California and Santa Barbara, and Hiram Hudson Benedict, a dynamic and well-connected designer whose professional energy helped secure a wide range of residential commissions during Palm Springs' rapid growth as a winter resort in the 1930s.

Working during Palm Springs Between the Wars (1919–1941), Brewster & Benedict were responsible for a substantial body of custom residential work that interpreted Spanish Colonial Revival and Mediterranean Revival traditions through a pragmatic, regionally responsive lens. Their designs consistently demonstrate an understanding of desert climate, lifestyle, and seasonal use, emphasizing courtyard planning, informal massing, shaded outdoor spaces, and a close relationship between interior rooms and gardens.

Unlike earlier revival architecture that relied heavily on academic historicism or applied ornament, Brewster & Benedict's work reflects a late-phase evolution of the Spanish Colonial idiom, characterized by restraint, simplification, and an emphasis on proportion rather than decoration. Their houses typically employ smooth stucco walls, low-pitched clay tile roofs, steel casement windows, French doors opening to patios or loggias, and carefully composed asymmetrical elevations deployed as part of a coherent architectural strategy suited to desert living.

Brewster & Benedict's residential plans reveal a consistent organizational logic. Public rooms are oriented toward outdoor living areas, often arranged around patios or terraces that function as extensions of interior space. Private bedroom wings are separated for quiet and privacy, while service areas are compact and efficiently planned. This approach reflects contemporary domestic ideals of comfort and informality, as well as the practical requirements of seasonal occupancy.

Although some of the firm's largest and most elaborate commissions have received greater scholarly attention, the true significance of Brewster & Benedict lies in the breadth and consistency of their residential work, much of which has historically been misattributed or undocumented. As a group, their projects demonstrate a high level of design competence and artistic confidence, establishing the firm as master architects within the context of 1930s Palm Springs.

The Simon Residence exemplifies these characteristics and should be understood as a representative example of Brewster & Benedict's mature residential work, reflecting their distinctive approach to desert-adapted Mediterranean Revival design.

CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

Overall Form, Massing, and Plan

- One-story, low-slung horizontal massing characteristic of desert-adapted residential design of the 1930s
- Asymmetrical composition, avoiding formal axial symmetry in favor of informal Mediterranean planning
- Courtyard- and patio-oriented plan, with interior rooms organized to open onto outdoor living spaces
- Clear functional zoning separating public, private, and service areas

Roof Forms and Structural Expression

- Low- to moderately pitched gabled and hipped roofs
- Mission clay tile roofing, the tiles varying in color, integral to the Spanish Colonial / Mediterranean Revival vocabulary
- Exposed rafter tails at eaves, providing shadow, texture, and structural expression
- Roof extensions forming covered porches and loggias

Wall Materials and Exterior Finishes

- Smooth stucco exterior wall surfaces, uniform in finish and color
- Wood-frame construction expressed through massing rather than surface ornament
- Minimal applied decoration, emphasizing form, proportion, and shadow

Porches, Loggias, and Columns

- Covered entry porch and rear terrace/loggia, integral to the design rather than applied features
- Repetitive column spacing creating rhythm and shaded outdoor rooms
- Porches functioning as transitional spaces between interior and exterior

Fenestration and Doors

- Steel casement windows, vertically proportioned and grouped in pairs or triplets
- Consistent window head heights across elevations
- French doors opening directly from principal rooms to patios and terraces
- Flush-mounted window and door openings without decorative surrounds
- Fenestration patterns reflecting interior room functions

Primary Entry Features

- Recessed, sheltered front entry, located off-center on the primary facade
- Simple vertical wood plank front door, without applied ornament
- Entry defined by roof projection and shadow rather than architectural embellishment

Chimney

- Modestly scaled stucco chimney, integrated into the roofline
- Chimney treated as horizontal mass elements rather than vertical focal points

Indoor–Outdoor Relationship

- Strong physical and visual connection between living spaces and outdoor patios
- Extensive use of glazed doors and windows along garden-facing elevations
- Architecture designed to support outdoor living as an extension of interior space

Architectural Style and Design Intent

- Spanish Colonial / Mediterranean Revival idiom, interpreted in a restrained, late-period manner
- Emphasis on regional adaptation to climate rather than historicist ornament
- Expression of Brewster & Benedict's mature residential vocabulary, including restraint, proportion, and livability

CHANGES OVER TIME

1936–1939 (Original Construction)

The residence was constructed in 1936. Although not shown on the original architectural blueprints, a covered screened porch beneath the original clay tile roof was constructed as part of the original as-built condition. The porch volume is visible in a 1939 aerial photograph, indicating a construction-phase modification made contemporaneously with the original house.

Photographs taken shortly after completion show boulders at the front perimeter, but by the early 1940s the brick wall with weeping mortar joints had been constructed, enclosing both parcels.

Though the drawings only show shutters on the two bedroom windows at the gabled facades, louvered wood shutters were added soon after construction.

Pre-2021 (Mid- to Late-20th Century)

A dumbbell-shaped swimming pool was constructed in the rear yard, surrounded by concrete paving. No permit documentation for this pool has been identified. Exterior wood shutters were removed from most window openings. The exterior stucco finish was renewed with a more textured surface.

2021 (Condition at Time of Sale)

The rear-yard dumbbell-shaped swimming pool and surrounding concrete paving remained extant. The covered rear porch retained its wood framing and screening. The front brick columns still had their stacked Mission tile finials.

2022 Renovations

- The rear-yard dumbbell-shaped swimming pool and surrounding concrete paving were removed, and the area was regraded and landscaped with a turf panel.
- A new rectangular swimming pool was constructed in the front yard with concrete coping.
- Brick paving in a herringbone pattern was installed surrounding the new pool area and on the front porch, replacing the original basketweave brick.
- A square brick-paved patio with an adjacent wood shade structure was added near the front yard pool.
- A small turf panel was installed between the square patio and the driveway.
- The original brick front porch columns were modified: the narrower stacked Mission tile finials that formerly supported the wood beam were removed and replaced with brick matching the column shafts, resulting in columns constructed entirely of brick. The columns were originally painted to match the house color but have since been stripped of paint.
- The dining room, once separate but connected with direct access to outdoor dining, was opened to the living room by removing partition walls. The wall between the kitchen and dining room was similarly removed, opening the floor plan.

- The original screened porch at the rear of the house was stripped of its screening material and now functions as an open-air loggia beneath the original clay tile roof.
- The exterior stairway leading to the rear sun deck had its wood stairs rebuilt.

EVALUATION

The Lloyd and "Tootsie" Simon Residence is eligible for designation as a Class I Historic Resource under Palm Springs Municipal Code 8.05.070(C)(1) based on the following criteria:

Criterion (i) - Associated with Events that Have Made a Significant Contribution to the Broad Patterns of Local, Regional, State, or National History

Not Eligible

The property is not known to be associated with specific events that have made a significant contribution to local, regional, state, or national history. While constructed during an important period in Palm Springs' development, the residence does not derive its significance from association with particular historical events.

Criterion (ii) - Associated with the Lives of Persons Significant in Local, Regional, State, or National History

Not Eligible

While Lloyd and Amelia Simon were active civic participants and early permanent residents of Palm Springs, they are not recognized as individually significant in local, regional, state, or national history. The property's significance derives from its architectural qualities rather than from association with historically prominent individuals.

Criterion (iii) - Embodies the Distinctive Characteristics of a Type, Period, Region, or Method of Construction, or Represents the Work of a Master, or Possesses High Artistic Values

Not Eligible

The Lloyd and "Tootsie" Simon Residence is significant as a well-preserved example of Spanish Colonial Revival residential architecture adapted to the desert environment of Palm Springs in the mid-1930s. The house embodies the defining characteristics of the style as it was interpreted during its mature phase, when architectural expression favored restraint, horizontality, and climatic responsiveness.

The residence is characterized by low, one-story massing; smooth stucco exterior wall surfaces; clay tile roof forms; steel casement windows arranged in grouped openings; and covered porches and loggias that function as shaded transitional spaces. The plan is organized to emphasize indoor-outdoor living, with principal rooms oriented toward patios and garden areas rather than formal axial arrangements. Architectural interest is derived from proportion, rhythm, and the modulation of light and shadow across wall planes and rooflines, rather than from applied ornament.

These characteristics distinguish the Simon Residence from earlier, more ornamental Spanish Revival examples and place it firmly within the refined residential architecture that emerged in Palm Springs during the latter half of the 1930s. The property clearly illustrates the evolution of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture toward a regionally grounded, functionally responsive domestic form, making it a strong and representative example of its type and period.

Despite all of this, Palm Springs does not apply this Criterion in the same manner as places are evaluated nationally; thus, the Simon Residence does not qualify as a distinctive type of architecture in Palm Springs.

Criterion (iv) - Has Yielded, or May Be Likely to Yield, Information Important to Prehistory or History

Not Eligible

The property does not possess the potential to yield important information about prehistory or history. The significance of the Simon Residence is architectural and is already well-documented through original drawings, photographs, and physical evidence. The property's value lies in what it represents as a built work rather than in archaeological or undiscovered historical information.

Criterion (v) - Exemplifies or Reflects Special Elements of the City's Cultural, Social, Economic, Political, Aesthetic, Engineering, Architectural, or Natural History

Eligible

The Simon Residence reflects important elements of Palm Springs' architectural and social history during the city's formative interwar period. Constructed in 1936, the residence exemplifies the transition from seasonal resort architecture to year-round residential design, when Palm Springs was evolving from a modest spa town into a permanent residential community.

The house's planning—its emphasis on privacy, shaded outdoor rooms, and the clear separation of public, private, and service spaces—illustrates changing expectations for domestic life in the desert environment during the interwar years. The architectural form and spatial organization established at the time of construction remained substantially intact for more than eight decades, making the property an invaluable resource for understanding Palm Springs' residential development during this formative era.

The residence was constructed within the Palm Springs Estates tract, originally developed by Prescott T. Stevens in 1927 as one of the first residential subdivisions in Palm Springs. By 1936, when the Simon Residence was constructed, the tract had matured into an established residential neighborhood attracting year-round and seasonal residents who valued proximity to the village center while maintaining the privacy and spaciousness characteristic of early Palm Springs residential development. The construction of the Simon Residence nine years after the tract's initial platting reflects the neighborhood's gradual build-out during the 1930s, as individual lots were acquired and developed with custom homes designed by established architectural firms.

Spanish Colonial Revival architecture emerged as the dominant residential idiom during this period, particularly well suited to the desert environment through its use of stucco wall surfaces, clay tile roofs, shaded porches and loggias, and courtyard-oriented plans. By the mid-1930s, the style had entered a mature and restrained phase, characterized by simplified forms, reduced ornamentation, and an emphasis on proportion, material consistency, and spatial planning over picturesque effect.

The Simon Residence is representative of this refined interwar residential architecture and contributes to the understanding of how Palm Springs' architectural character was shaped during this formative period. Because the property experienced very limited alteration between 1936 and 2021, its significance is most accurately understood as concentrated at the point of design and completion in 1936, rather than extending across a broader span of occupancy or use.

Criterion (vi) - Represents the Work of a Master Architect, Designer, Engineer, or Builder

Eligible

The Lloyd and "Tootsie" Simon Residence is significant as the work of Brewster & Benedict, an architectural partnership responsible for a substantial body of residential and civic architecture in Palm Springs during the mid-to-late-1930s. While long underrecognized, the firm is now understood to have played an important role in shaping the city's prewar architectural identity.

The Simon Residence exemplifies the firm's characteristic approach to domestic design, including clear and efficient spatial planning, integration of indoor and outdoor living areas, sensitivity to climate and site, and a restrained architectural vocabulary emphasizing proportion and material over ornament. The house demonstrates Brewster & Benedict's ability to produce refined, contextually responsive residential architecture that contributed meaningfully to the development of Palm Springs' built environment.

Although some of the firm's larger or more formally elaborate commissions have received greater attention, the Simon Residence is significant as a representative example of their high-quality residential work, illustrating the consistency and sophistication of their design approach across commissions of varying scale.

Summary

For the reasons stated above, the Lloyd and "Tootsie" Simon Residence is eligible for designation as a Class I Historic Resource under PSMC 8.05.070(C)(I) Criteria (v), and (vi). The property is not eligible under Criteria (i), (ii), (iii), or (iv).

The property is a well-preserved and representative example of interwar Spanish Colonial Revival residential architecture in Palm Springs and a significant work by master architects Brewster & Benedict. Its significance derives from its architectural qualities, its representation of a significant period in local history, and its association with the work of recognized master architects, rather than from association with specific events or historically prominent individuals.

INTEGRITY ANALYSIS

Because the period of significance for the Lloyd and "Tootsie" Simon Residence is limited to 1936, integrity is evaluated with respect to the property's ability to convey its original architectural design and construction. The residence retains an exceptionally high degree of integrity relative to this period.

Location:

The house remains on its original site and retains integrity of location.

Design:

The property retains integrity of design. The original one-story massing, roof forms, courtyard-oriented plan, spatial organization, and relationship between interior and exterior spaces remain intact. Minor alterations—including the removal of stacked Mission tile finials from the front porch columns and the removal of screening from the rear porch—are localized and do not compromise the overall architectural conception or design intent established in 1936.

Setting:

The residential setting along Valmonte Norte remains consistent with the historic development pattern. Changes to landscape features, including pool location and paving, are secondary site elements and do not diminish the integrity of the architectural resource.

Materials:

The residence retains integrity of materials. Original materials, including smooth stucco wall surfaces, clay tile roofing, steel casement windows, wood doors, and exposed structural elements, remain largely intact. Later site and landscape modifications do not obscure or replace the primary historic fabric.

Workmanship:

The house continues to express the workmanship characteristic of Brewster & Benedict's residential architecture, including careful proportioning, restrained detailing, and thoughtful integration of structure and finish.

Feeling:

The property retains integrity of feeling, continuing to convey the character of a mid-1930s desert-adapted Spanish Colonial Revival residence through its low profile, shaded porches and loggias, and strong indoor–outdoor orientation.

Association:

Because the property's significance is architectural rather than associative, integrity of association is retained through the continued presence of the original design and physical fabric that embody the work of Brewster & Benedict and the architectural context of Palm Springs in 1936.

Future Stewardship:

The current owners have expressed intent to restore select architectural features altered in the recent past, including the reinstallation of exterior wood shutters consistent with historic placement, and the restoration of exterior stucco to its original texture. These planned improvements are consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and further reinforce the long-term preservation of the property's historic character.

Summary Integrity Finding

Given the narrowly defined period of significance (1936) and the limited scope of alterations between 1936 and 2021, the Lloyd and "Tootsie" Simon Residence retains a very high degree of integrity. The property continues to clearly convey its architectural significance as designed and constructed by Brewster & Benedict and meets the integrity requirements for designation as a Class I Historic Resource.

CONCLUSION

The Lloyd and "Tootsie" Simon Residence at 388 East Valmonte Norte represents an exceptional example of Spanish Colonial Revival residential architecture from Palm Springs' formative interwar period. Designed and constructed in 1936 by Brewster & Benedict, the residence embodies the refined, climate-responsive approach to desert domestic architecture that characterized the mid-1930s, when Palm Springs was evolving from seasonal resort to permanent residential community.

The house demonstrates clear eligibility for designation as a Class I Historic Resource under Criteria (v) and (vi). It embodies the distinctive characteristics of mature Spanish Colonial Revival design, reflects significant elements of the city's architectural and social history during the interwar period, and represents the high-quality residential work of master architects Brewster & Benedict. The property retains exceptional integrity, with its essential architectural features—massing, materials, spatial organization, and indoor-outdoor relationship—remaining substantially intact from the 1936 period of significance.

The Simon Residence contributes meaningfully to the understanding of Palm Springs' architectural development during a critical transitional era and merits recognition and protection as a Class I Historic Resource.

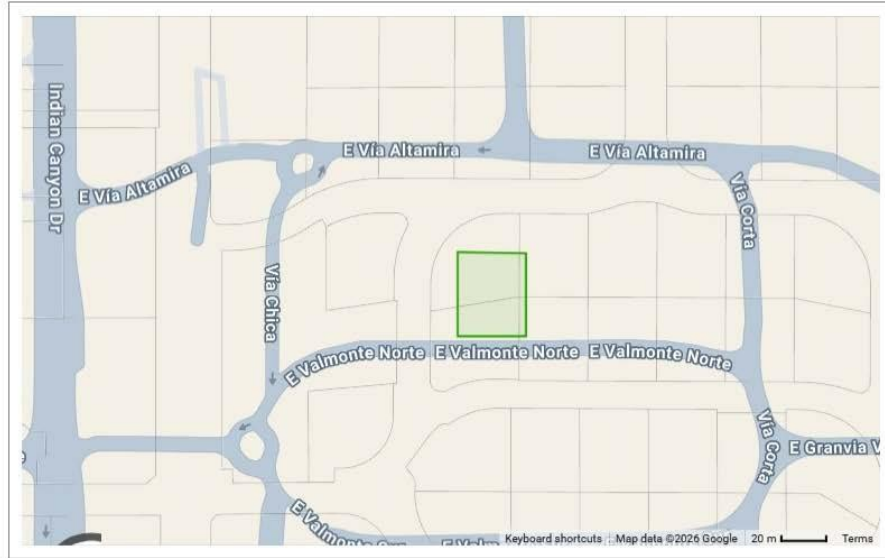
APPENDICES

I. Assessor's Map and Aerial

a.

Property Address	388 VALMONTE NORTE PALM SPRINGS, CA 92262
Assessment No. (PIN)	507184010
APN (GeoCode)	507184010
Property Type	Single Family Dwelling
TAG	011-003 PALM SPRINGS
Acreage	0.28
Doing Business As	
Business Use	
Legal Description	
LOT 7 BLK D MB 018/071 R R BUSH TR Lot 7 Block D SubdivisionName R R BUSH TR LotType Lot RecMapType Map Book MapPlatB 018 MapPlatP 071	

Riverside County, CA - Community: Property Search
Property ID Number (PIN/APN): 507184010



Aumentum
TECHNOLOGIES

8.5x11 Landscape

Selection(s)
Parcels/Condos

1/6/2026

This map and the data contained herein is for demonstration purposes only. Aumentum Technologies assumes no liability whatsoever associated with the use or misuse of such data, and disclaims any representation or warranty regarding the completeness or accuracy of the data. Acreage and Square Footage data shown are approximate and may not be considered with respect to any other use. Data sources: Aumentum Technology Customer Geographic Information (GIM) U.S. Census, etc.

The best public portal solution for valuation information!

II. Chain of Title

388 East Valmonte Norte, Palm Springs, California

APN: 507-184-010

Legal Description: Lot 7 in Block 0 of R.H. Bush Tract, City of Palm Springs, County of Riverside, State of California, as shown by Map on file in Book 18, Page 71 of Maps, Records of Riverside County, California.

Commonly Known As: 388 E. Valmonte Norte, Palm Springs, CA 92262

Source: Orange Coast Title Company

Chain of Title Summary (1936–2023).

The subject property, Lot 7 in Block D of the R. R. Bush Tract in Palm Springs, was first conveyed in 1936, when developer R. R. Bush acquired the tract from The Foss Construction Co. and shortly thereafter transferred Lot 7 to Lloyd N. Simon.

Chain of Title

388 East Valmonte Norte, Palm Springs, California

APN: 507-184-010

Legal Description: Lot 7 in Block “D” of the R. R. Bush Tract, City of Palm Springs, County of Riverside, State of California, as shown by map on file in Book 18, Page 71 of Maps, Records of Riverside County, California.

1936 — Creation of the Tract / Initial Conveyance

May 5, 1936

The Foss Construction Co., a California corporation, to R. R. Bush, a married man.

Corporation Grant Deed conveying multiple lots, including Lots 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 in Block H of the R. R. Bush Tract, Palm Springs, Riverside County, California, as per map recorded in Book 18, Page 71 of Maps, Records of Riverside County.

Recorded May 12, 1936, in Book 282 of Official Records, Page 102, Records of Riverside County.

1936 — First Conveyance of Subject Lot

June 12, 1936

R. R. Bush and Ethel Bush, husband and wife, to Lloyd N. Simon, a married man.

Grant Deed conveying Lot 7 in Block “D” of the R. R. Bush Tract, Palm Springs, Riverside County, California, as shown by map on file in Book 18, Page 71 of Maps.

Recorded July 24, 1936, in Book 283 of Official Records, Page 443, Records of Riverside County.

1955 — Joint Tenancy Normalization

May 24, 1955

Lloyd N. Simon, a married man, to Lloyd N. Simon and Amelia N. Simon, husband and wife, as joint tenants.

Joint Tenancy Grant Deed (Deed of Convenience) conveying Lots 7 and 8 in Block “D” of the R. R. Bush Tract, Palm Springs, Riverside County, California, as shown by map on file in Book 18, Page 71 of Maps.

1957 — Survivorship-Out Conveyance

June 13, 1957

Amelia M. Simon, a widow, to Jacques R. Simon, a married man, and Roslyn Levy, an unmarried woman.

Grant Deed conveying Lot 7 in Block “D” of the R. R. Bush Tract, Palm Springs, Riverside County, California, as shown by map on file in Book 18, Page 71 of Maps.

1971 — Partition / Interest Consolidation

March 1, 1971

Jacques R. Simon and Claire Simon, husband and wife, to Roslyn Lang.

Grant Deed conveying an undivided one-half (1/2) interest in Lot 7 in Block “D” of the R. R. Bush Tract, Palm Springs, Riverside County, California, as shown by map on file in Book 18, Page 71 of Maps, together with all shares or interest in The Whitewater Mutual Water Company stock.

After this conveyance, Roslyn Lang holds full title.

1990 — Estate / Heir Consolidation

July 5, 1990

Charles Joseph Lang III, as to an undivided 4/6 interest; Michael Lang, as to an undivided 1/6 interest; and Robert Lang, as to an undivided 1/6 interest, to Charles Joseph Lang III and Suzanne B. Lang, husband and wife, as joint tenants.

Quitclaim Deed conveying Lot 7 in Block “D” of the R. R. Bush Tract, Palm Springs, Riverside County, California, as shown by map on file in Book 18, Page 71 of Maps.

2016 — Trust Conveyance

April 8, 2016

Charles Joseph Lang III and Suzanne B. Lang, husband and wife, to Charles Joseph Lang III and Suzanne Barbara Lang, as Trustees of the Lang Family Trust, dated April 8, 2016.

Grant Deed conveying Lot 7 in Block “D” of the R. R. Bush Tract, Palm Springs, Riverside County, California.

2021 — Trust to LLC

November 24, 2021

Charles Joseph Lang and Suzanne Barbara Lang, as Trustees of the Lang Family Trust dated April 8, 2016, to Queen Bee Ventures, LLC, a California Limited Liability Company.

Grant Deed conveying Lot 7 in Block “D” of the R. R. Bush Tract, Palm Springs, Riverside County, California.

2023 — Internal LLC Normalization

January 27, 2023

Queen Bee Ventures, LLC to Queen Bee Ventures, LLC, same parties continuing to hold the same proportional interest.

Grant Deed; transfer exempt under Revenue & Taxation Code §11911.

2023 — Current Ownership

August 25, 2023

Queen Bee Ventures, LLC, a California Limited Liability Company, to 388 E. Valmonte Norte, LLC, a California Limited Liability Company.

Grant Deed conveying Lot 7 in Block “D” of the R. R. Bush Tract, Palm Springs, Riverside County, California.

III. Permit History

Very limited permit history was available from city records.

- **March 10, 2022 — Building Permit No. 2022-803 (New Pool/Spa):** New pool and spa, including a stub-out for a future fireplace; **valuation: \$55,000;** contractor: **JRC Construction.**¹

2022-803

- **April 4, 2022 — Building Permit No. 2022-1388 (Mechanical Equipment Change-out):** Change-out of **two HVAC split systems;** **valuation: \$53,500;** contractor: **Nexgen Air.**²

2022-1388

- **April 12, 2022 — Building Permit No. 2022-1611 (Additions/Alterations – Interior Remodel):** Interior remodel of **2,278 SF** of the existing dwelling; **valuation: \$65,000;** contractor: **CMT;** permit record marked **expired** in the provided permit packet.³

IV. Historic Photographs



In this 1938 photograph taken from the front yard of 385 Valmonte Norte, directly across the street, the original “Old California” paint designed by Brewster & Benedict is visible, with a lower dado painted a darker color. Note that the brick columns in front are painted. This depicts the original landscape, enclosed by a perimeter of boulders, prior to the construction of the brick wall.



This later photograph from roughly the same location shows the brick wall with weeping mortar joints has been built, with wood gate for pedestrian access.



In this detail from an early photograph, the stacked Mission tile finials atop the brick columns are visible, painted a light color.



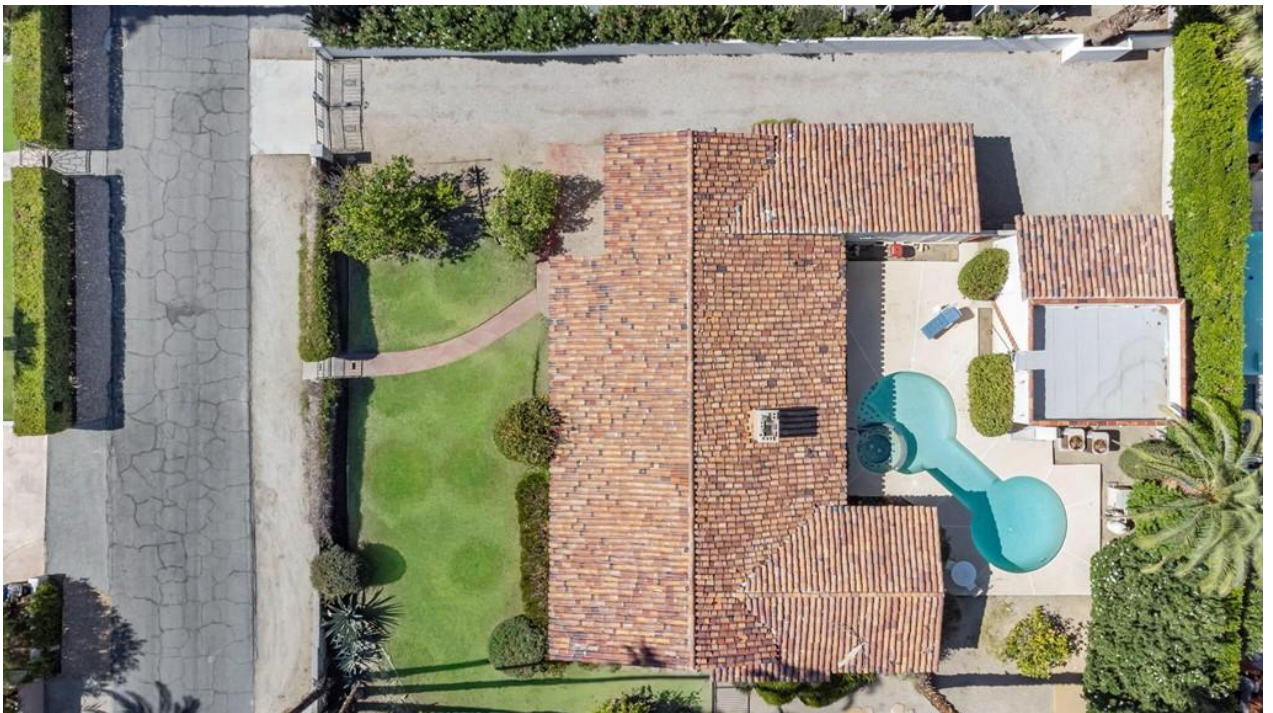
A circa 1950s photograph shows the brick wall enclosing both parcels, which originally comprised the lot; the other parcel was sold in the early 1960s.

V. 2021 Photographs

These photographs are from the real estate listing in 2021, showing the house in the original condition when the Simon family sold it for the first time since being built in 1936.



Primary façade, 2021.



Primary façade and 2021 aerial showing the dumbbell-shaped swimming pool in the rear patio area.



The detached garage and driveway.



Pool in rear patio, and sun deck on top of garage.



The rear screened patio.



A wrought iron gate has replaced the original wooden gate.



Views of the front of the house. Note the stacked Mission tile finials on top of the brick columns.



The view of the dining room from the entry, top. The large living room, bottom.



Living room top, and dining room, bottom.



The original kitchen before remodel.



The screened porch and pool in rear patio. Note stairs to roof deck have been removed.



Pool area top. Primary bedroom, bottom.



Primary bath, top. Second bedroom, bottom.



Second bathroom, top. Third bedroom, bottom.



Former maid's room off the kitchen being used as an office.

VI. Contemporary Photographs -Taken by the Author November 2025



View of primary façade, 2025.



Views of primary façade and brick column detail.



Front porch, top. Rear covered patio.



Views of the rear patio. Note rebuilt stairs leading to roof deck.



More views of the rear garden.



Views of the bedroom wing to the east of the structure.



Closeup view of steel casement windows, showing the hardware for the shutters, which are missing, top. The bottom photo shows the service wing of the house and the driveway. Note the original trash compartment sunken into the ground at bottom left.



More views of the driveway, motor court, garage, and service wing.

VII. Lloyd and Amelia Simon Biography

FIRST OWNERS – THE SIMON FAMILY (1936-2021) LLOYD, “TOOTSIE,” ROSLYN, AND JACQUES

Lloyd Newton Simon (1890–1957) was born on February 25, 1890, in New York, where he spent his early adulthood pursuing a career in commerce and management.¹ On May 28, 1913, he married Amelia Michaels (1893–1969) in Manhattan.² Amelia, known familiarly as “Tootsie,” was born in New York on July 14, 1893, and assumed the role of homemaker following the couple’s marriage.³

The Simons established their family during their years in the New York metropolitan area. Their children included Roslyn Virginia Simon, born in New York City in 1914, and Jacques R. Simon, born in New Jersey on August 1, 1919.⁴ Census records from 1920 and 1930 document the family residing in Manhattan, with Lloyd listed successively as a merchant and manager and Amelia as wife and homemaker.⁵

Sometime around 1935, Lloyd and Amelia Simon relocated permanently to Palm Springs, becoming among the city’s early year-round residents, having their Brewster & Benedict-designed house built in 1936. By the late 1930s, Lloyd Simon had established himself professionally as a Special Agent for the Equitable Life Assurance Society of New York, serving Palm Springs and the surrounding region. His appointment was formally announced by Equitable’s district management and reflected both his completion of intensive company training and his established standing within the community.⁶

¹ United States Census, 1920 and 1930; Lloyd Newton Simon residence and occupation entries, Manhattan, New York; Amelia Michaels Simon listed as wife and homemaker; compiled from Ancestry records.

² Marriage record, Lloyd Newton Simon and Amelia Michaels, Manhattan, New York, May 28, 1913; as summarized in Ancestry family tree records.

³ United States Census, 1920 and 1930; Lloyd Newton Simon residence and occupation entries, Manhattan, New York; Amelia Michaels Simon listed as wife and homemaker; compiled from Ancestry records.

⁴ United States Census, 1920 and 1930; Lloyd Newton Simon residence and occupation entries, Manhattan, New York; Amelia Michaels Simon listed as wife and homemaker; compiled from Ancestry records..

⁵ United States Census, 1920 and 1930; Lloyd Newton Simon residence and occupation entries, Manhattan, New York; Amelia Michaels Simon listed as wife and homemaker; compiled from Ancestry records.

⁶ “Simon Appointed Equitable Agent,” *Desert Sun*, announcement by D. S. Dickman, district manager for the Equitable Life Assurance Society of New York, announcing the appointment of Lloyd N. Simon as special agent for the Palm Springs area; article notes Simon’s civic activity and past presidency of the Lions Club



LLOYD N. SIMON

The Man from Equitable asks-

What happens to your family if...?

YOUR FAMILY... Today your paycheck keeps it sheltered, clothed and fed. But, should you die, will they continue to have the basic needs of life?

To help you provide for your loved ones' welfare, Equitable offers a wide variety of Family Security plans from which to choose. Costs are low. For more information call...

Lloyd N. Simon

P.O. BOX 286

PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA

LET THE MAN FROM EQUITABLE BRING YOU PEACE OF MIND

Simon maintained a Palm Springs office and appeared regularly in local newspaper advertising as "The Man from Equitable," a locally recognizable figure associated with family financial security and insurance services during the city's formative resort years.⁷ His professional role placed him in regular contact with residents, seasonal visitors, and business leaders, reinforcing his visibility within Palm Springs civic life.

⁷ Lloyd N. Simon, advertisement, "The Man from Equitable asks—What happens to your family if...?" *Desert Sun*, promoting family security plans offered by the Equitable Life Assurance Society of New York; includes portrait of Simon and Palm Springs post office box address.

Alongside his professional work, Simon was deeply engaged in civic affairs. Contemporary newspaper accounts describe him as “active in all civic affairs” and note his service as past president of the Palm Springs Lions Club, an organization central to community leadership and philanthropy in the period.⁸ His civic standing was further recognized through his appointment as a community ambassador for the Al Malaikah Shrine, a ceremonial and representational position within the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles-based temple.⁹

During World War II, the Simons’ son Jacques R. Simon served in the U.S. Army Air Forces. In 1943, he was promoted to first lieutenant at Davis–Monthan Field in Tucson, Arizona, where he was assigned as a maintenance and supply training officer; contemporary reports identify Lloyd N. Simon by name and Palm Springs address, underscoring the family’s established residence and prominence within the community during the war years.¹⁰ At the same time, the Simon residence at 388 East Valmonte Norte continued to function as the recognized family home. On February 5, 1943, *The Desert Sun* announced the marriage of Lt. Jacques R. Simon, son of Lloyd and Amelia (“Tootsie”) Simon of that address, to Claire LeCashman of New York, further underscoring the property’s role as the familial center for the second generation during the war years.

Lloyd Newton Simon died on October 30, 1957, at the age of sixty-seven. Retrospective newspaper notices later recalled him as “one of the most outstanding civic workers in Palm Springs,” with particular recognition for his involvement in youth activities, reflecting the breadth and durability of his civic contributions.¹¹

Following Lloyd Simon’s death in 1957, Amelia (“Tootsie”) Simon remained at the family home at 388 East Valmonte Norte, where she continued to be actively engaged in Palm Springs civic life until her death in 1969. Contemporary accounts describe her as active in numerous local organizations, including the Auxiliary of Desert Hospital, the Palm Springs Desert Museum, the Garden Club, and the Boys’ Club, reflecting a pattern of sustained civic participation that paralleled and extended the family’s public presence in the city.¹²

The Simons’ long-standing presence and public service were later acknowledged in family obituary accounts identifying Lloyd and Amelia (“Tootsie”) Simon as “Palm Springs pioneers,” a designation reflecting both their early permanent residence and sustained civic prominence

⁸ “20 Years Ago, Oct. 31, 1957,” *Desert Sun*, retrospective notice recalling the death of Lloyd N. Simon at age sixty-seven and noting his distinction as one of Palm Springs’ most outstanding civic workers, particularly for his involvement in youth activities.

⁹ “Lloyd Simon Receives Shrine Appointment,” *Desert Sun*, reporting the appointment of Lloyd N. Simon as ambassador of the Al Malaikah Shrine to the Palm Springs community

¹⁰ “Jacques Simon Wins Promotion,” *Desert Sun*, reporting that Jacques R. Simon, son of Lloyd N. Simon of Palm Springs, was promoted to first lieutenant at Davis–Monthan Field, Tucson, Arizona

¹¹ “20 Years Ago, Oct. 31, 1957,” *Desert Sun*, retrospective notice recalling the death of Lloyd N. Simon at age sixty-seven and noting his distinction as one of Palm Springs’ most outstanding civic workers, particularly for his involvement in youth activities

¹² “Amy Simon Dies; Service in New York,” *Desert Sun*, obituary reporting the death of Amy M. Simon, age seventy-five, of 388 Valmonte Norte; noting her arrival in Palm Springs thirty-two years earlier, civic involvement with Desert Hospital Auxiliary, the Desert Museum, Garden Club, and Boys’ Club, and funeral services held in New York

during the city's formative decades.¹³ Together, Lloyd and Amelia Simon exemplify the professional and civic leadership that shaped Palm Springs' development from the interwar period through the postwar era.

After Lloyd Simon's death in 1955, Amelia deeded the house to her two children. After Amelia's 1969 death, Lloyd Simon deeded the house to his sister Roslyn. The house eventually was inherited by her children, who finally sold it in 2021, marking the end of the Simon family's eighty-five year ownership of the house.

¹³ "Jacques R. Simon, 1919–2012," obituary, *Desert Sun* (Palm Springs, CA), published online via MyDesert.com, identifying Lloyd and Amy ("Tootsie") Simon as Palm Springs pioneers, June 2012.

VIII. Original Architectural Drawings

ROOM	PLASTERING		PAINTING		WOOD TRIM		FLOORS		HEATING		REMARKS	ELECTRICAL												DOOR SCHEDULE				
	WALLS	CEILING	WALLS	CEILING	BASE	STANDING	OAK	CEN. LIN.					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	No.	SIZE	REMARKS	
STAGE																												
LIVING RM.	PLASTER	PLASTER	PAINT	PAINT	NO. 1 OAK																			1	5'6" x 6'0" x 1 3/4"	Blank Door		
DINING RM.	PLASTER	PLASTER	PAINT	PAINT	NO. 1 OAK																			2	5'0" x 6'0" x 1 3/4"	Door 582		
ENTRANCE HALL	PLASTER	PLASTER	PAINT	PAINT	NO. 1 OAK																			3	2'0" x 6'0" x 1 3/4"	Door 200		
BED RM #1	PLASTER	PLASTER	PAINT	PAINT	NO. 1 OAK																			4	2'4" x 6'0" x 1 3/4"	Door 200		
BED RM #2	PLASTER	PLASTER	PAINT	PAINT	NO. 1 OAK																			5	2'8" x 6'0" x 1 3/4"	Door 582		
BATH #1	PLASTER	PLASTER	PAINT	PAINT	NO. 1 OAK																			6	2'8" x 6'0" x 1 3/4"	Door 582		
BATH #2	PLASTER	PLASTER	PAINT	PAINT	NO. 1 OAK																			7	2'8" x 6'0" x 1 3/4"	Door 582		
BATH #3	PLASTER	PLASTER	PAINT	PAINT	NO. 1 OAK																			8	2'8" x 6'0" x 1 3/4"	Door 582		
HALL	PLASTER	PLASTER	PAINT	PAINT	NO. 1 OAK																			9	16'0" x 7'0" x 1 3/4"	Blank Door		
STAIRS	PLASTER	PLASTER	PAINT	PAINT	NO. 1 OAK																			10	5'0" x 4'0" x 1 3/4"	Blank Door		
CLOSET	PLASTER	PLASTER	PAINT	PAINT	NO. 1 OAK																			11	1'0" x 3'0" x 1 3/4"	Blank Door		
LINEN	PLASTER	PLASTER	PAINT	PAINT	NO. 1 OAK																			12	1'0" x 3'0" x 1 3/4"	Blank Door		

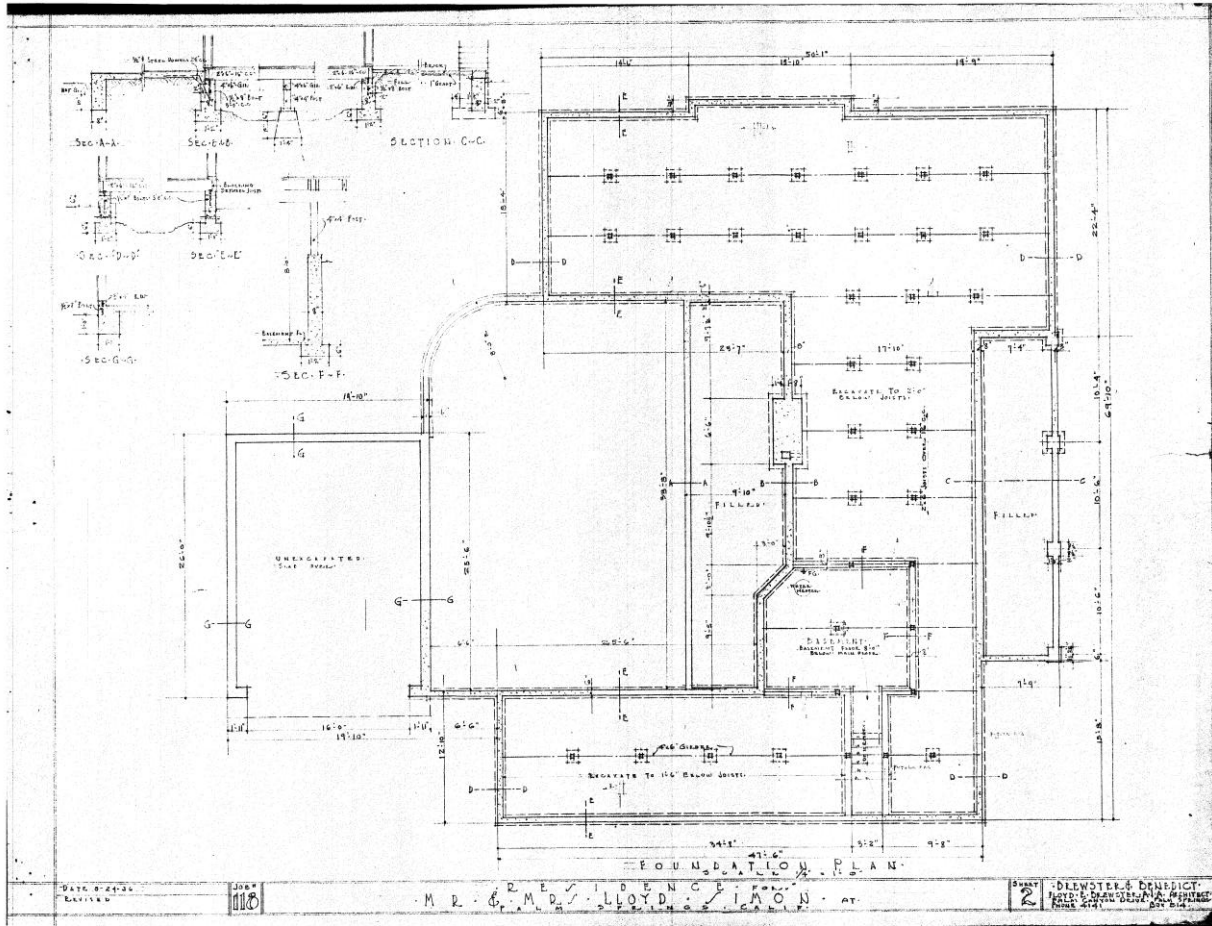
NOTE:
 1- BRACKET ONE CEILING LIGHT, SWITCH AT HEAD OF STAIRS.
 2- BRACKET 1- CEILING LIGHT, 1- BRACKET, 1- OUTLET, 1- SW.
 3- FUTURE BATH: WIRE FOR SWITCH & BRACKET.
 4- BRACKET 2- BRACKETS, 2- SW'S, 1- 1/2" NO. 1- OUTLET.
 5- FRONT PORCH: 2- BRACKETS, 1 SWITCH.

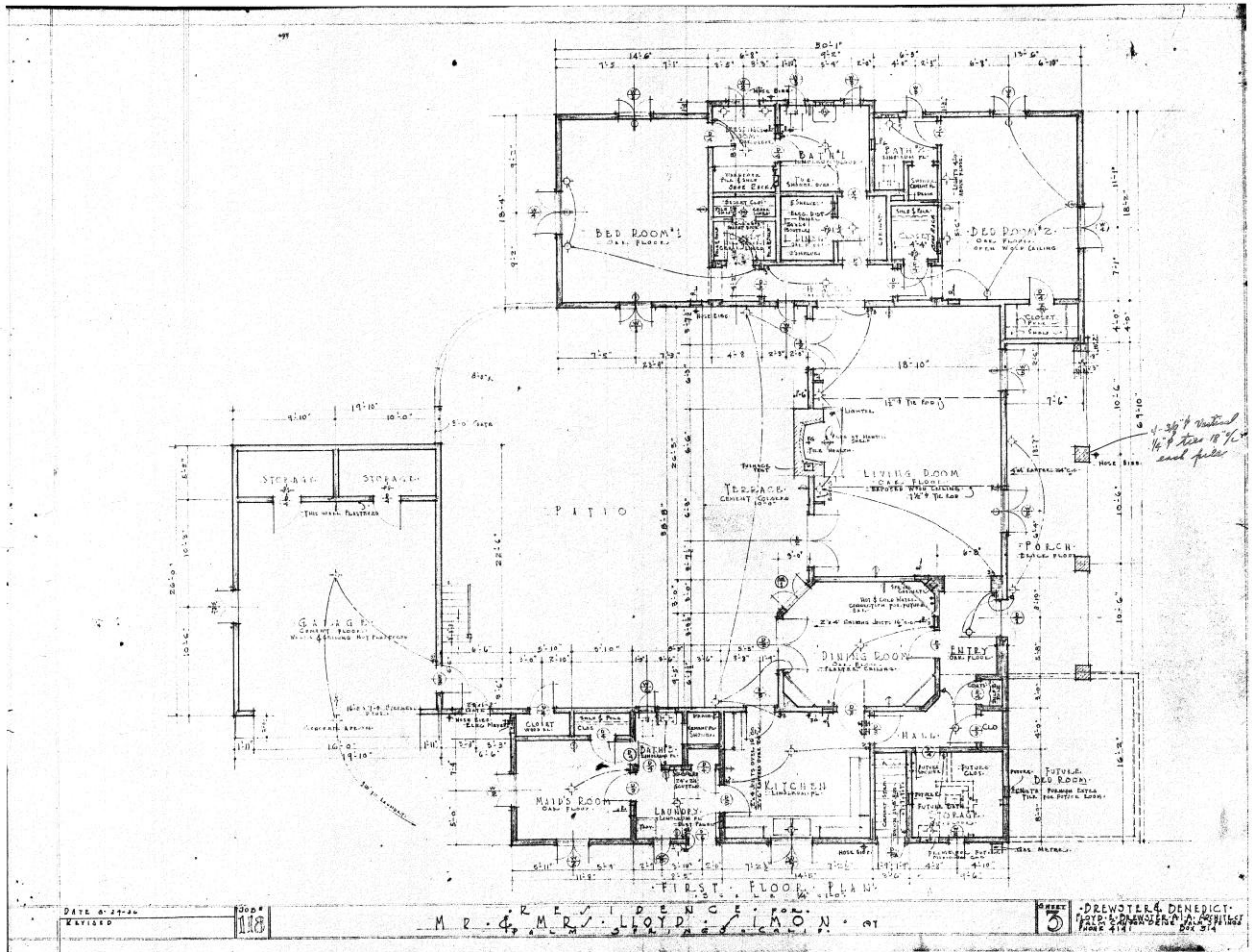
GRANDIA ST. KEY PLAN
NO SCALE

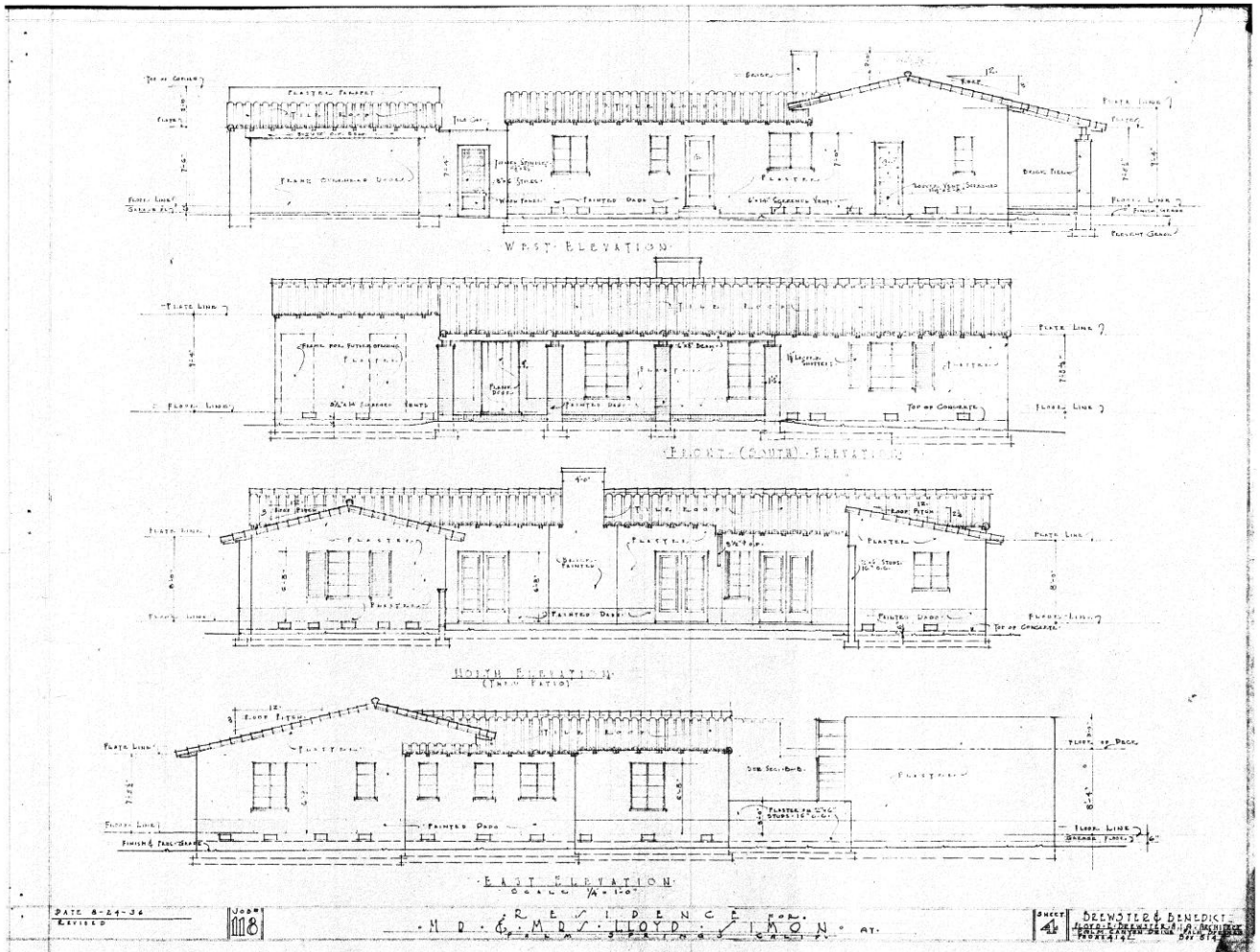
DATE: 4-21-36
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

MR. C. M. P. LLOYD - ARCHT. - I. M. O'N. AT

1 GREENBERG & DEAN, INC.
ARCHT. & ENGINEERS
100 N. 3rd St. PHILADELPHIA, PA.







IX. Brewster & Benedict Context

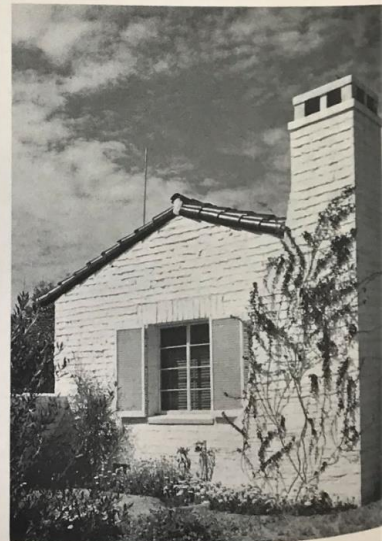
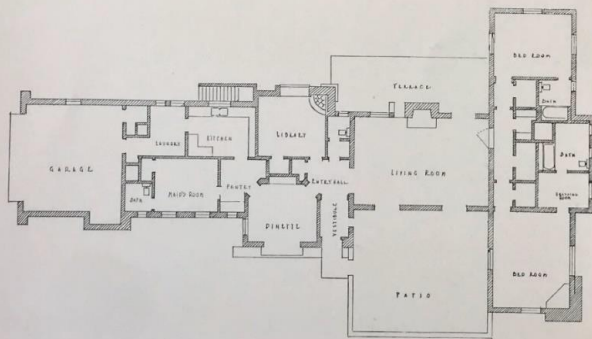


Photographs by Clyde Staughts

THE RESIDENCE OF
MR. AND MRS. ALVAH HICKS

Palm Springs, California

Designed by
BREWSTER & BENEDICT



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

BREWSTER & BENEDICT

(This section has been extracted from the author's "Casa Adaire" nomination, 2018)

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

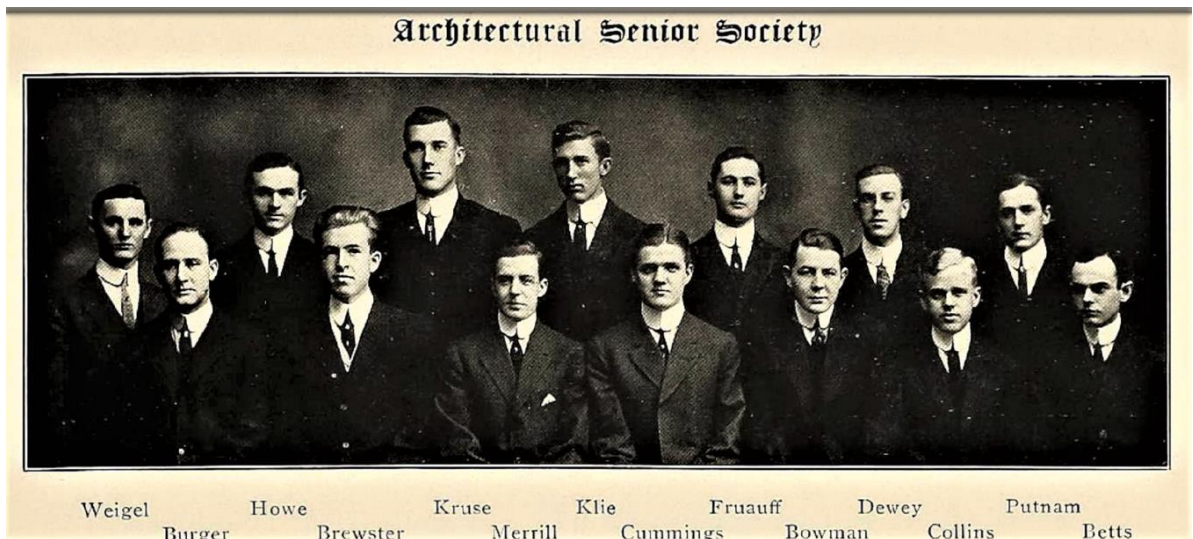
FLOYD E. BREWSTER

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

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



Floyd Brewster in photos from his Cornell yearbook, 1911



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

After graduation in 1912, Brewster took the customary Grand Tour of Europe, travelling with a small group of architecture students, guided by Professor of Architecture A.C. Phelps. Phelps, who specialized in the history of architecture at Cornell and lectured regularly on the subject at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, took the group to France, Italy, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium and England.

Recognizing his talent and strong aptitude, the Faculty of the School of Architecture recommended Brewster for a scholarship to graduate school, where he focused on courses in Design and Drawing from Life.⁴⁰



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

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

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

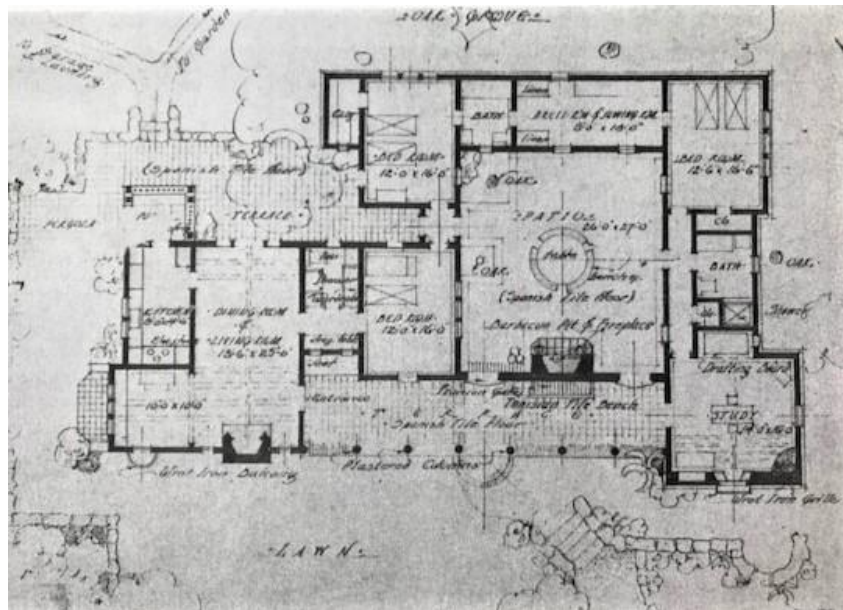


Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, 1922. Floyd E. Brewster, architect; Lockwood de Forest, landscape architect

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

Two more important residential projects of this period included a \$23,000 Spanish-Colonial Revival home for J. Y. Parker at 1600 Paterna Road, for which Brewster won an honorable award from *Architect & Engineer* magazine in 1924.⁴⁸ The house Brewster designed for his own family was pictured in H. Philip Staats’ book *Californian Architecture in Santa Barbara*.

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



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

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

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



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



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

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

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

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

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

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

On March 16, 1930, Smith died suddenly from a heart attack, and Lulah Maria Riggs worked to complete any projects still in process, before closing the office. On April 3, 1930, shortly after Smith’s death, the Santa Barbara Chapter of AIA unanimously elected Brewster an associate member. Brewster once again opened his own small office, and though work was slow due to the Great Depression, he did design the Jefferson Elementary School (now the Santa Barbara Middle School) at 1321 Alameda Padre Serra, 1930.⁵⁵ The project won an Honor Award, Honorable Mention for the school from the Santa Barbara Community Arts Association.

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

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

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



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



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

HIRAM HUDSON BENEDICT

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

Benedict spent the 1920s bouncing from the office of one accomplished architect to another, first briefly as draftsman for James Osborne Craig before joining the Los Angeles office of distinguished architect John C. Austin (1920-21), who advised Benedict to "go out and get experience. Go all over the country and don't work in any place for over a year."⁵⁹ Benedict next became draftsman for George Washington Smith in Santa Barbara (1921-23). After architect Smith fired him, Benedict was in the Pasadena office of Marston, Van Pelt & Maybury (1923-25), first as draftsman and later as designer. The years 1926 and 1927 found Benedict in New York City, working under architect James Gamble Rogers, where Benedict oversaw design detail for the Yale University Sterling Memorial Library. Finally, Benedict returned to Los Angeles and the office of Walker & Eisen (1927-29) who were busy designing the El Mirador Hotel in Palm Springs. After the Stock Market Crash of 1929, work soon dried up and in the early 1930s Benedict worked as designer for an architect in Detroit before finding work with the FHA office in Los Angeles in 1934, where he presumably encountered Floyd Brewster once again.

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

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

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



Pacific Building, 1937. Brewster & Benedict, architects

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

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



Glendale Federal Savings Bank, Floyd E. Brewster, architect



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





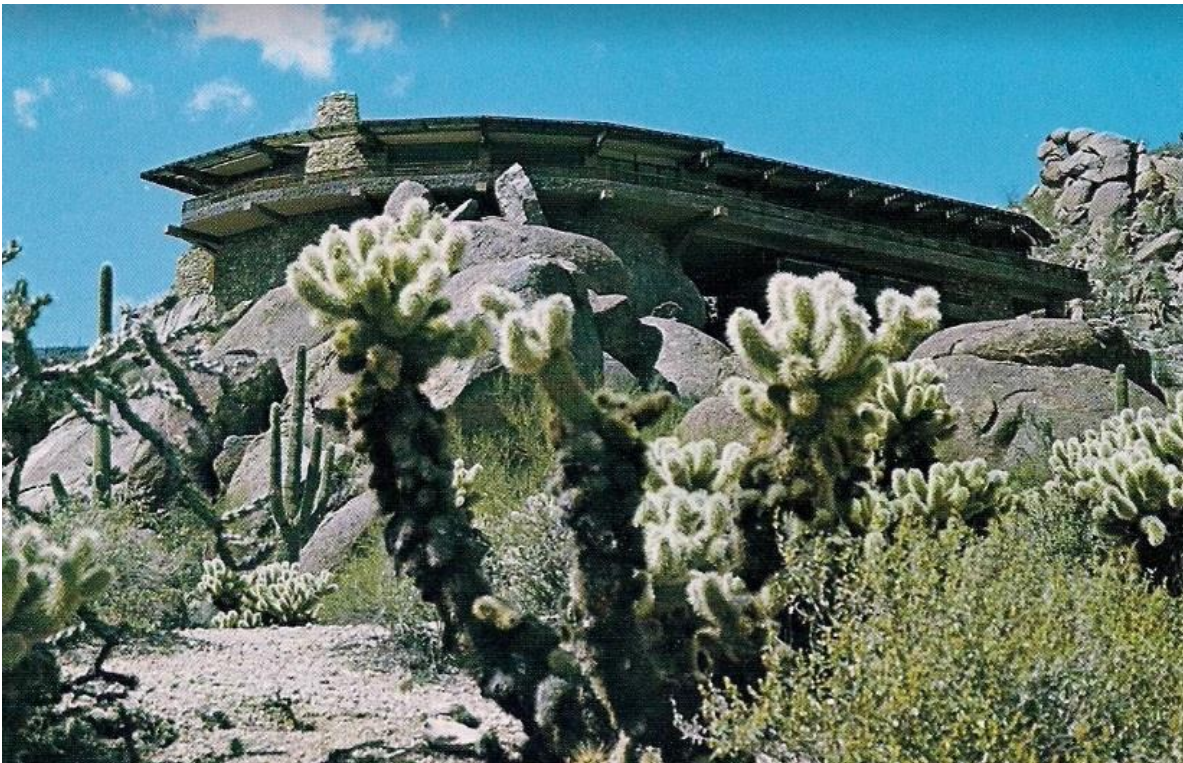
Residence of Phil Harris and Alice Faye, Thunderbird Country Club, Hiram Hudson Benedict, architect

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

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



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



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

THE PALM SPRINGS PROJECTS

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

NON-RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS

The Pacific Building, 756-798 North Palm Canyon Drive

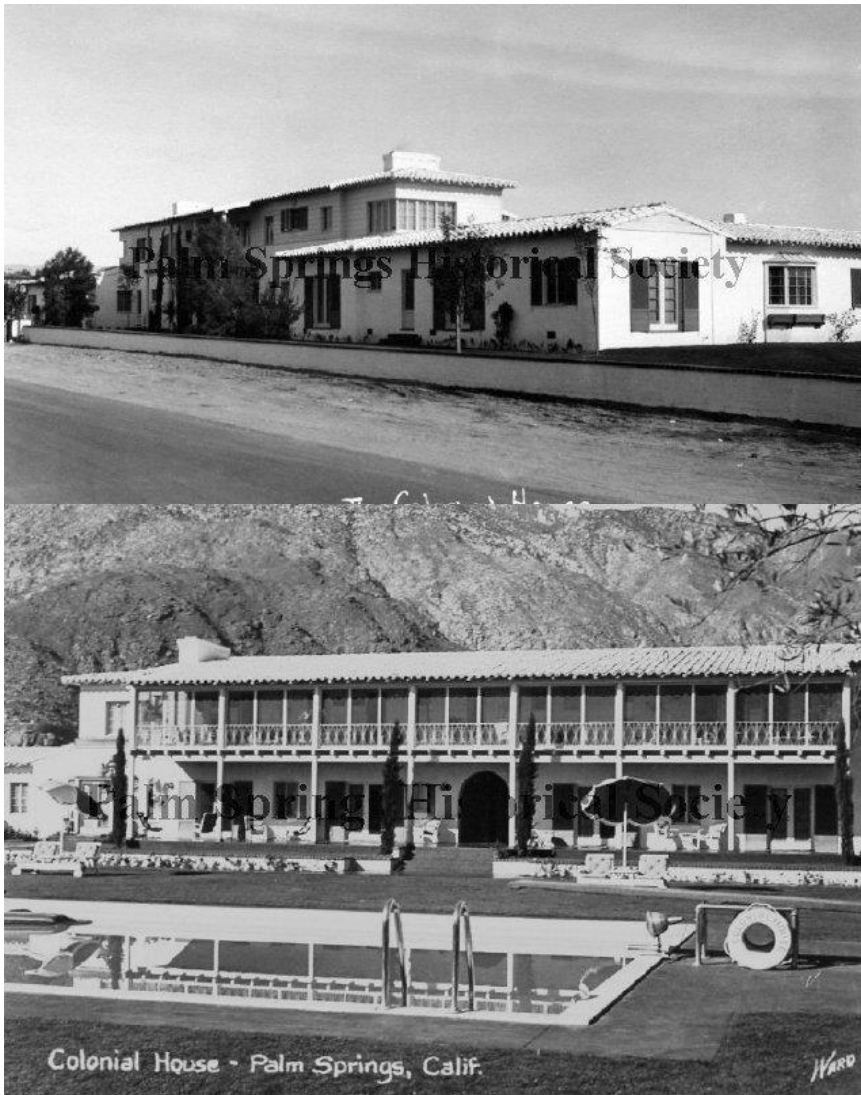


Now a Palm Springs Class I Historic Site, the Pacific Building housed eleven shops on the ground floor, some of which opened onto an inviting patio with tiled fountain. Upstairs, 18 apartments were created “in order to supply a strong demand for low-priced apartments for people employed in the Village.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

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



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



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

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



**Town House
Hotel, 359 South
Belardo**

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

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

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



Lone Palm Hotel, 1276 North Indian Canyon

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





Palm Springs Hotel Remodel, 257 North Palm Canyon

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



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

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



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

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

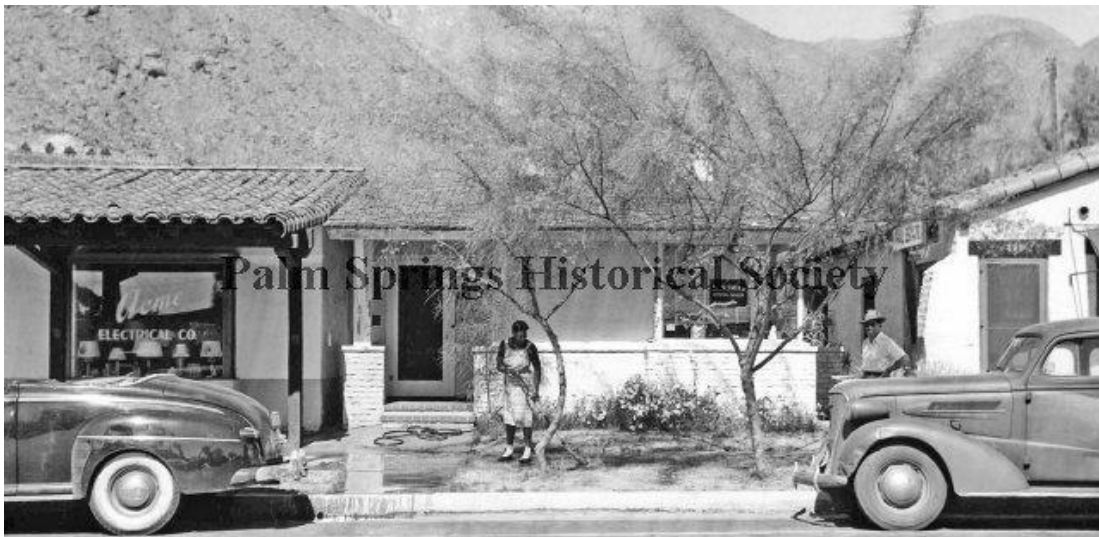
La Cita Apartments 391 South Palm Canyon

Demolished.



El Dorado Hotel, 278 South Palm Canyon

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



MacManus Building, 419 North Palm Canyon

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

RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS



Bullocks All-Electric Demonstration Home, 339 Vereda Sur

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

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



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



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



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



Blanche Brill Residence, 591 West Stevens

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



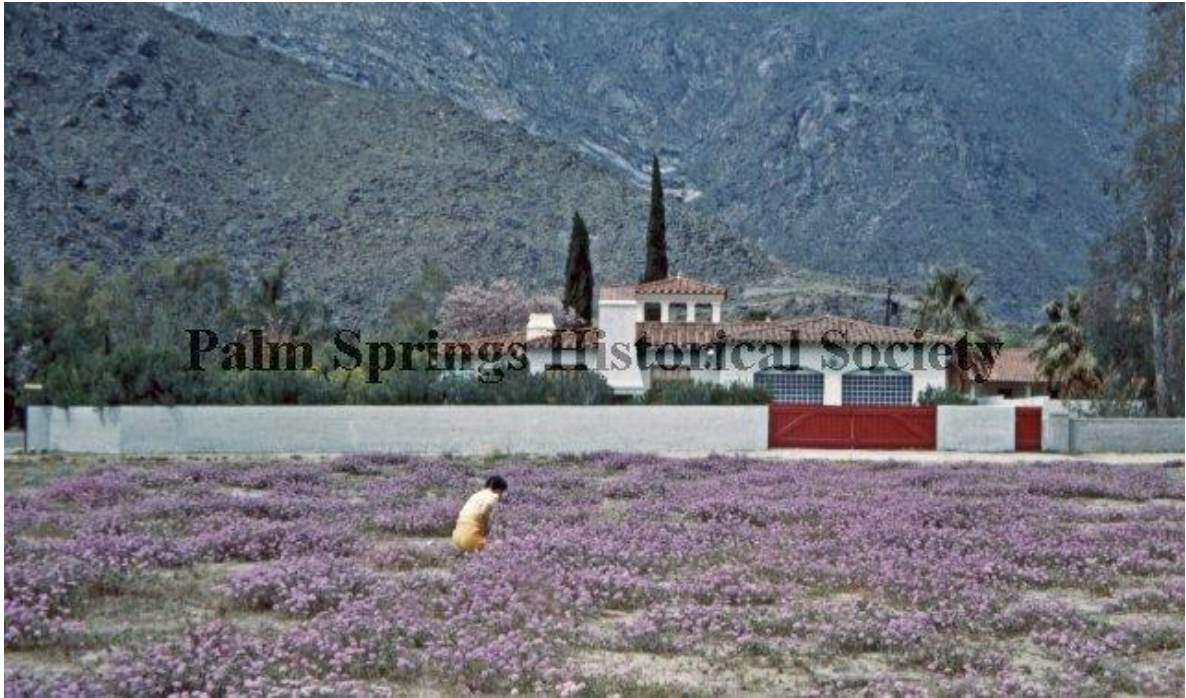
Residence of Alvah F. and Theresa Hicks, 404 Camino del Sur

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

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

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





Residence of Ludovica Graham, addition. 226 Alejo

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

Earl Strebe Residence, 1350 East Tachevah

The ranch-style home has been demolished.

Paul Kersten Residence, 1532 West Wawona





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

Hal Forrest was the cartoonist for the popular “Tailspin Tommy” comic strip, and this large house and studio was built in Pearl and A.G. McCallum’s Indian Trails tract.

Partially two stories, Forrest’s studio was on the second floor. Later, 20th Century-Fox producer Joseph M. Schenck owned the home.



Walter Kirschner Residence ("Casa Adaire"), 1937

417 Hermosa Place

The Walter Kirschner Residence represents Brewster & Benedict's most architecturally elaborate Palm Springs commission and stands as the firm's most formally composed Spanish Colonial Revival estate. Designed in 1937 for Walter Kirschner, wealthy co-owner of the nationwide Grayson's chain of ladies' apparel shops and advisor to Presidents Roosevelt, Truman, and Eisenhower, the residence was christened "Casa Adaire" after Kirschner's daughter. The property exemplifies the firm's ability to execute large-scale, formal estate architecture while maintaining their characteristic attention to courtyard planning, indoor-outdoor integration, and desert climate responsiveness.

Unlike the firm's more restrained residential work, Casa Adaire employs a symmetrical entrance facade, an elaborate entry sequence through multiple courtyards, and more ornamental detailing than typically seen in Brewster & Benedict's domestic architecture. The residence features arcaded loggias, decorative ironwork, and carefully articulated elevations that demonstrate the firm's command of academic Spanish Colonial Revival vocabulary when commissioned for high-profile clients. Designated as a City of Palm Springs Class I Historic Site in 2019, Casa Adaire occupies an important place in the Brewster & Benedict oeuvre as evidence of the firm's range and sophistication, though it should be understood as an estate-scale outlier rather than representative of their typical residential approach.

Residence for Miss Katherine Finchy, 388 West Stevens





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

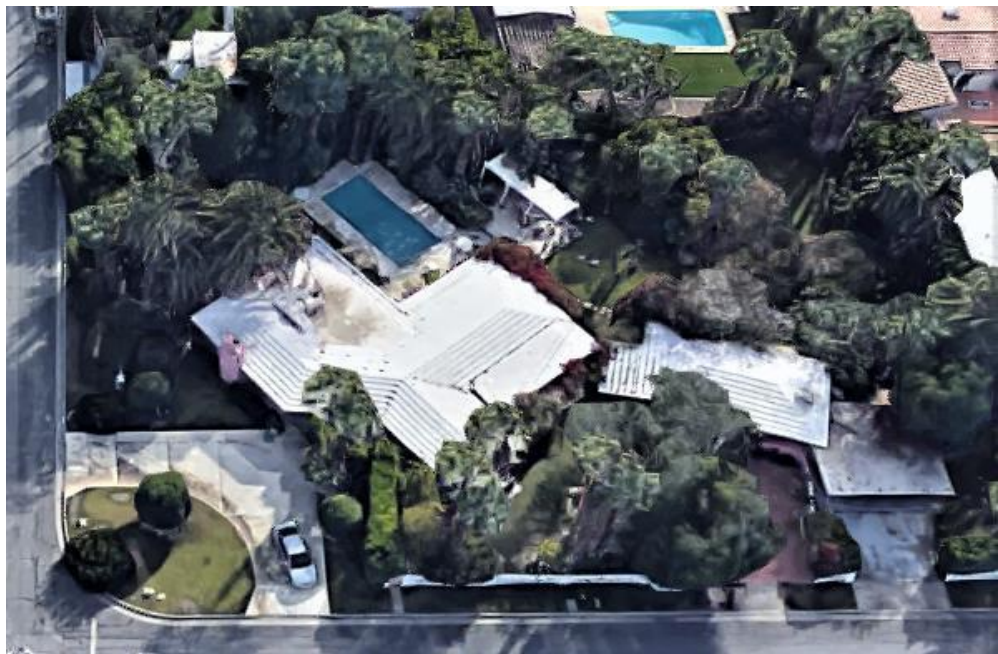
On an enormous parcel adjacent to Casa Adaire, the Weinberger Residence was originally built in 1928 for R.H. Hood. Weinberger, an executive with the Columbia Broadcasting Company, hired Brewster & Benedict to remodel the house and designed an addition “two stories in height and will have a unique stair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





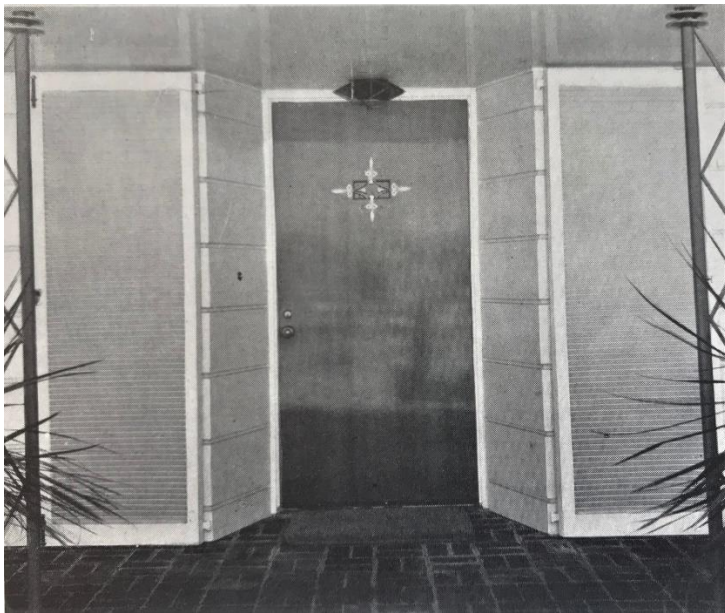
Residence of Karl and Rosamund de Laittre, 415 Via del Sol

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



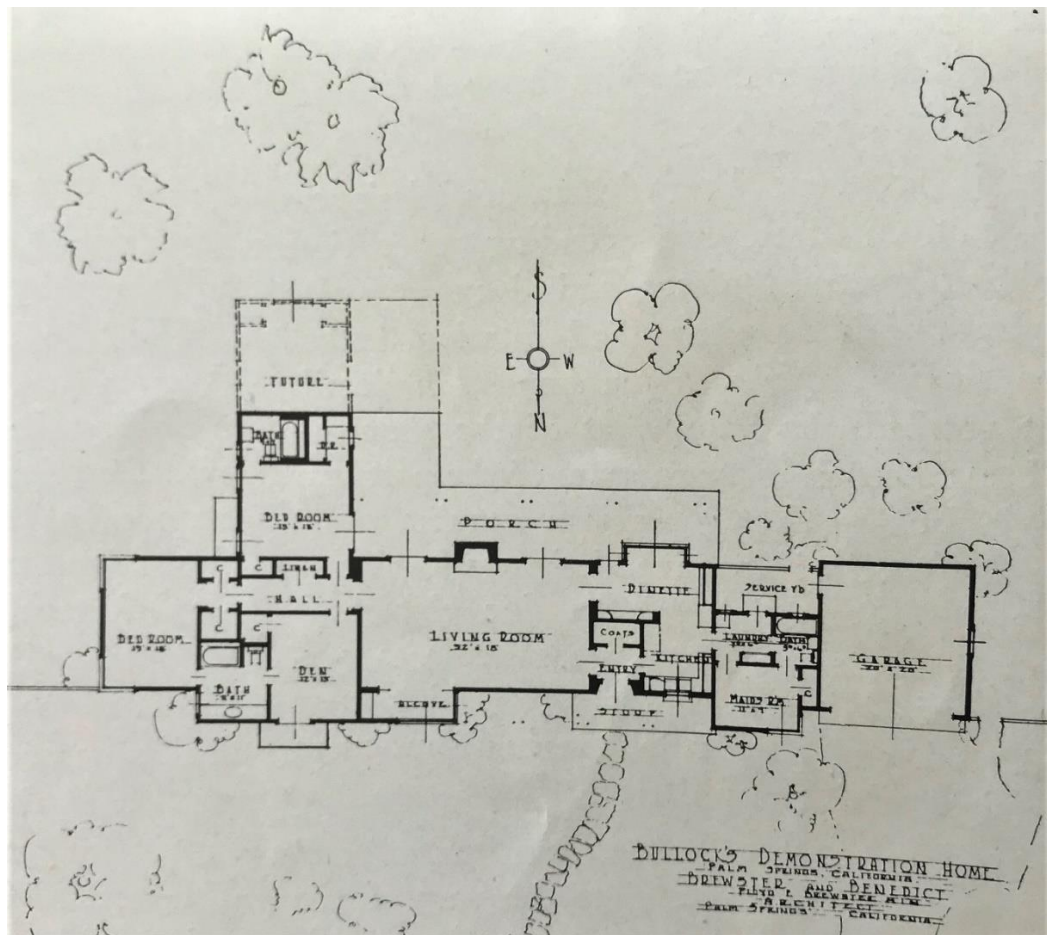


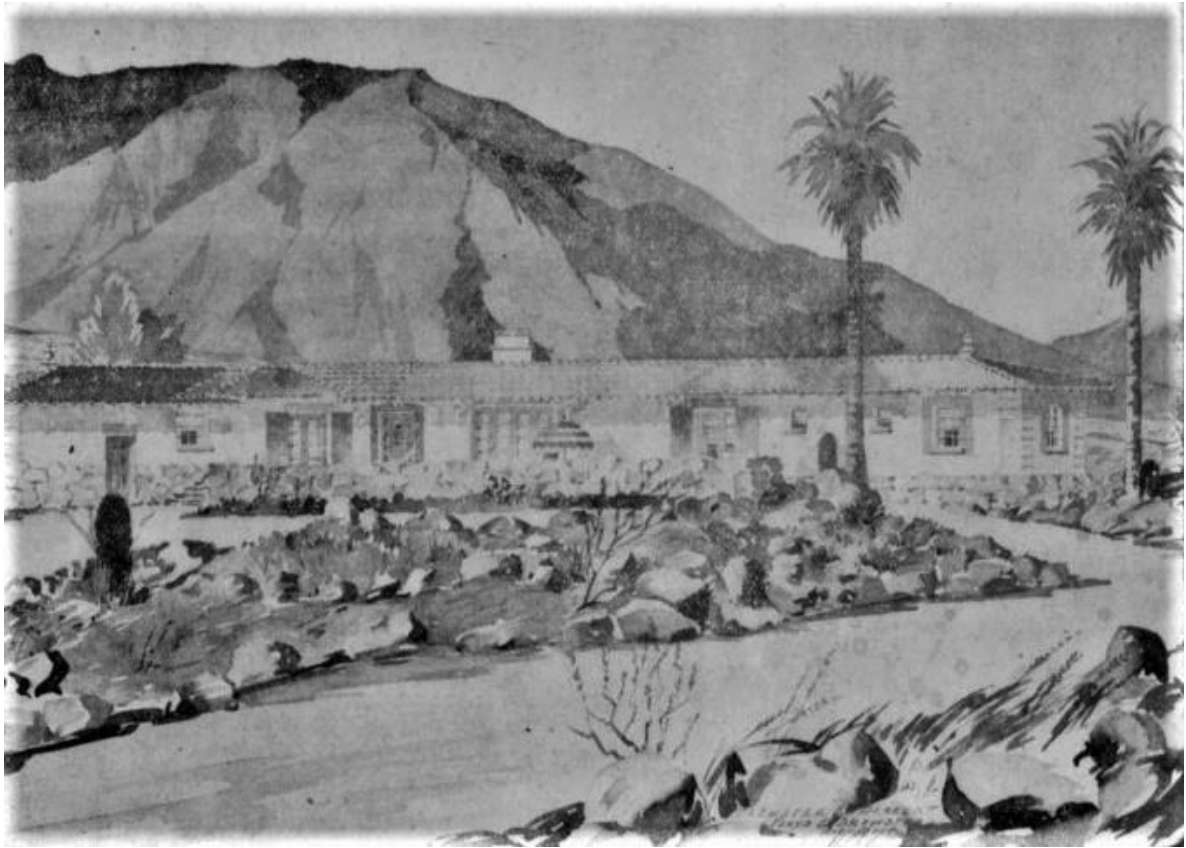
Bullock's All-Electric Demonstration Home, 201 Vereda del Norte



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

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





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

The Little Tuscany Tract

As conceived by Alvah Hicks, the Little Tuscany tract would feature homes inspired by the architecture of the Tuscan Region of Italy. After visiting the region in 1935, the *Desert Sun* reported that Hicks had been inspired by the “tranquil beauty of the picturesque rock homes of this storied area which overlooks Florence, and Mr. Hicks remembered that he had property in Palm Springs similarly located. Thus Little Tuscany came about – a beautiful little tract which overlooks Palm Springs.

Endeavoring to keep the building development here all in the nature of that of the old Tuscany, the firm of Brewster and Benedict, which already has designed several beautiful residences for the tract, as well as innumerable fine homes and other handsome structures in the Village, has been delegated to exercise architectural supervision of home building in the tract.”⁶³ The newspaper continued: “The fact that there are only three home-building sites left in Little Tuscany shows the demand for hillside lots. The remarkable residential potentialities of Little Tuscany, an exclusive home area, with some twenty-three large sites originally platted, commanding a view of the mountains and desert, gently rising from the northwest section of the Village, are of the best. The panorama view that is obtained from any spot in Little Tuscany, is one that would be hard to equal anywhere. After the tract was first opened to public sale by

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



Bullock's Demonstration Home, 1725 North Tuscan Road

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



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



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

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





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



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

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

Residence for Mr. Morris Cohn, 388 East Mel

Demolished.

ENDNOTES: BREWSTER & BENEDICT

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

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

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

⁴⁰ "Official Publications of Cornell University," 1912-13.

⁴¹ *Cornell Alumni News*, May 1913.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ *Cornell Alumni News*, August 1916; "ENGAGEMENT IS ANNOUNCED:

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

⁴⁴ "The Architect," March 1918.

⁴⁵ Hiram Hudson Benedict AIA application, 1956.

⁴⁶ *Santa Barbara Morning Press*, Volume LI, Number 47, 4 November 1922.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

⁵⁴ Letter, Sept 25, 1927, GWS Collection, ADC, Art Museum, UCSB.

⁵⁵ *Los Angeles Times*, April 9, 1930, p. 30.

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

⁵⁷ "Desert Sun, November 5, 1937.

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

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ "Pacific Building Now Ready for Tenants," *Desert Sun*, April 7, 1937, p. 10.

⁶¹ "Brewster and Benedict Design Many New Projects," *Desert Sun*, April 9, 1937, p. 14.

⁶² *Desert Sun*, Jun 4, 1937.

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

⁶⁴ *Desert Sun*, December 17, 1937.

