

Explore The Movie Colony East Neighborhood

By James Franklin

When you first enter the Movie Colony East neighborhood from the north along Paseo El Mirador don't be surprised if you hear the sounds of Keely Smith's "Jump, Jive An' Wail," the First Lady of Las Vegas still lives here.



Built in 1946, the Frank Sinatra home in the Movie Colony East neighborhood was designed by prominent Palm Springs architect E. Stewart Williams.

Just around the corner at 1210 N. Via Donna is another neighborhood landmark "Frey House 1," where architect Albert Frey built his home when he moved to Palm Springs. Some of the more exotic parts of the property have been removed but the original 1940 home still stands next to a development that was once part of the El Mirador golf course.

Turn right from Paseo El Mirador and you'll encounter 1185 Pasatiempo, which is where Howard Hughes hid out during the 1960s. In later years Cameron Crowe, who directed "Jerry Mcquire," "Almost Famous" and "Vanilla Sky," grew up at 1240 Pasatiempo Road and probably walked the three blocks to Katherine Finchy Elementary School.

The empty lot on the corner of Avenida Caballeros and Tachevah across from the school is believed to have been owned by Bob Hope, and since he could not put in a swimming pool he left it vacant. Hope did own the house behind the lot at 1014 Buena Vista, but used it as a guest house.

If you continue down Avenida Caballeros to El Alameda and turn left, Bing Crosby's home comes into view at 1011 El Alameda, right on the corner across from the park. Continue on El Alameda to Hermosa and there on the corner you might hear a faint whisper of "Thanks for the Memories," as this was the home that Bob Hope occupied from 1946 until his death in 2003.

Go right on Hermosa to Verbena and you will see at 1272 Verbena the home of Donald Wexler, the architect of the glass-walled concourse at the Palm Springs airport and the steel framed homes at the north end of the City. Wexler sold his home in 2001 for \$635,000.

Back to Hermosa, across Tamarisk to Via Colusa, turn right and discover at 1145 Via Colusa the most famous party house in the neighborhood with a pool shaped like a piano. The owner built the place in 1947 for \$110,000 and stayed until the breakup of his marriage to Ava Gardner in 1953. Frank Sinatra then sold the house and it fell into disrepair. It was purchased, restored and sold in 2000 for \$1,345,000.

What's the hardest part about living in Movie Colony East? Keeping up the traditions of the 1950s and 1960s and having great parties throughout the year! Martini anyone?