

## Context: Early Development (1884-1918)



Ramada and outside fireplace at the Desert Inn. Photograph not dated. Source: Calisphere.

FINAL DRAFT – FOR CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL

City of Palm Springs

Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings

HISTORIC RESOURCES GROUP

**CONTEXT: EARLY DEVELOPMENT (1884-1918)**

This theme explores the first Anglo-American settlers of the area, the founding of the town called Palm Springs, and its subsequent development into a winter health spa for patients afflicted with asthma, tuberculosis, and other respiratory diseases. Among the early settlers who played particularly important roles in the founding of the town and its development as a health resort were John Guthrie McCallum, the town's founder; Welwood Murray, who built and promoted the first hotel; and, remarkably for the time, a group of enterprising, resourceful businesswomen who played a critical role in the town's early commercial and social development, including McCallum's daughter, Pearl McCallum McManus; Nellie Coffman, who founded the Desert Inn and developed it into the village's most renowned resort; Dr. Florilla White and her sister Cornelia; and Zaddie Bunker, who operated the village's first automotive garage and became one of Palm Springs' wealthiest landowners.

The Coachella Valley's first permanent Anglo settler was John Guthrie McCallum, a San Francisco attorney and former State Legislator who arrived in Agua Caliente with his wife Emily and their five children in the spring of 1884. A typhoid epidemic five years earlier had left the McCallums' eldest son, Johnny, with tuberculosis; the family doctor had advised that the boy's only hope for recovery was to relocate to a warm, dry climate. The family moved to Los Angeles and McCallum secured an appointment as Indian agent in San Bernardino. It was from the nearby town of Banning that a local Indian guide named Will Pablo led McCallum through the San Geronio pass to the Cahuilla village of Agua Caliente.<sup>44</sup> As described by Pearl McCallum McManus, her father "...pictured this area with its dry healing climate as the answer to his prayers that his son might be healed. And in this new land he saw, from the sunshine, rich soil and abundant life-giving waters that flowed from the canyons, a vast future development...for abundant crops."<sup>45</sup> He purchased an initial 64 acres of railroad land<sup>46</sup> and employed local Indians to build a small adobe house at what is now the southwest corner of Palm Canyon Drive and East Tahquitz Canyon Way (now located at 221 S. Palm Canyon Drive; HSPB-5). When the adobe was complete McCallum fetched his family, with the youngest, four-year-old daughter Pearl, perched on the back of his saddle.<sup>47</sup>

The Tahquitz Ditch had long been a feature of village life by the time John Guthrie McCallum arrived in 1884. He expanded the Tahquitz Ditch, increasing its flow by tapping into one of the canyon's springs. McCallum began using water from the ditch to irrigate his ranch, and, as new settlers came, they availed

<sup>44</sup> Jane Ardmore, "Memories of a Desert Pearl," *Los Angeles Times*, September 25, 1966, W54-56, <http://www.proquest.com> (accessed September 25, 2012).

<sup>45</sup> W.H. Bowart with Julie Hector, Sally Mall McManus and Elizabeth Coffman, "The McCallum Centennial – Palm Springs' founding family," *Palm Springs Life*, April 1984, <http://www.palmspringslife.com/the-mccallum-centennial-palm-springs-founding-family/> (accessed September 25, 2012).

<sup>46</sup> Bowart et al., "The McCallum Centennial." Sources differ on the total amount of land McCallum ultimately acquired, ranging from approximately 1,800 to 6,000 acres.

<sup>47</sup> Ardmore, "Memories," W51.

themselves of the water provided by the Tahquitz Ditch. This became increasingly problematic for the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians as settlers continued to arrive in Palm Springs. Although McCallum had significantly increased the output of the Tahquitz Ditch, its resources were far from enough to accommodate the influx of new settlement he hoped to generate. In 1887, after forming the Palm Valley Water Company, McCallum embarked on the creation of an extensive new canal that would carry water from the Whitewater River for over eight miles across the rugged desert until it reached the McCallum ranch.<sup>48</sup> Completed in the fall of 1887, the stone-lined Whitewater Ditch had the capacity to carry a thousand miner's inches<sup>49</sup> of water into Palm Springs.<sup>50</sup>

The McCallum ranch flourished, and young Johnny McCallum's health improved in the desert climate. Firmly believing, in the words of his daughter Pearl, that the "dry healing climate [was] the answer to his prayers that his son might be cured," the elder McCallum promoted Palm Valley, as he called the area, as "an absolute cure for all pulmonary and kindred diseases."<sup>51</sup>



Welwood Murray's Palm Springs Hotel. Source: *Palm Springs Life*, "Men on the Forefront."

<sup>48</sup> McCallum believed the Tahquitz and Whitewater ditches would provide enough water to maintain the peace between the new settlers and the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. However, inevitably, disputes over water remained a regular source of contention long after McCallum's death in 1897. This situation was exacerbated by an eleven-year drought that struck the region in 1893. It was not until 1911 that the federal government set distribution standards and repaired and modernized the Tahquitz Ditch. By the 1920s, well drilling in the area had made both the Whitewater and Tahquitz ditches obsolete. While the Whitewater quietly disappeared, the Tahquitz remained mostly intact well into the 1950s. McCallum's daughter, Pearl McManus, ensured it was retained not only as it ran before her Pink Mansion on Tahquitz Drive, but also within her Tennis Club. In 1939, a section was stocked with fish and made into the club's new trout stream (Vaught, *Sentinels in Stone*, 9).

<sup>49</sup> A miner's inch is a unit of flow in terms of volume per unit time, usually used in relation to flow of water. This unit of measure is derived from the amount of water that flows through a hole of a given area at a given pressure. The word 'inch' refers to the area of the hole in square inches. While the definition of a miner's inch varies by location, its usage was standardized in California in 1905. A Californian miner's inch is equivalent to 1/50 ft<sup>3</sup>/s (1 cubic foot per 50 seconds).

<sup>50</sup> Vaught, *Sentinels in Stone*, 9.

<sup>51</sup> Bowart et al., "The McCallum Centennial," quoted in John LoCascio, "A Different Kind of Eden: Gay Men, Modernism, and the Rebirth of Palm Springs" (Master's thesis, University of Southern California, 2013), 8.

In 1886 McCallum persuaded Scottish-born Dr. Welwood Murray to move from Banning and establish a health resort at Palm Valley.<sup>52</sup> Murray purchased a five-acre parcel on the north side of what is now Tahquitz Canyon Way (then Spring Street) between Palm Canyon Drive (then Main Avenue) and Indian Canyon Drive (then Indian Avenue) and opened the village's first hostelry, the Palm Springs Hotel (demolished).<sup>53</sup> Murray built a one-story, wood-framed building with a wraparound veranda and accommodations for 20 guests, and planted the land with oranges, ornamental shrubs, and trees.<sup>54</sup> Directly across Indian Canyon Drive were the mineral hot springs, where a bathhouse was built for the convenience of Murray's guests, many of whom suffered from respiratory diseases.<sup>55</sup> Murray later built a house for himself on his property, using railroad ties salvaged from the abandoned Palmdale Railroad (now located at 221 S. Palm Canyon Drive; HSPB-4).<sup>56</sup> Murray promoted the place by purchasing a camel and hiring a local Indian, Willie Marcus, to dress in Arab robes and stand with the camel at the Seven Palms train station, handing out brochures.<sup>57</sup> Though a seven-mile ride across open desert from the train station, the hotel was soon attracting visitors, including such noted personages as Fanny Stevenson, widow of Robert Louis Stevenson; John Muir; and Vice President Charles W. Fairbanks.<sup>58</sup>

Some of the visitors to Palm Valley stayed and settled the little village that began to develop around the McCallum adobe and the Palm Springs Hotel, at what is now the intersection of South Palm Canyon Drive (then Main Avenue) and East Tahquitz Canyon Way (then Spring Street). McCallum co-founded the Palm Valley Land and Water Company with Los Angeles businessmen O.C. Miller, H.C. Campbell and Dr. James Adams, and in 1887 surveyed and platted 320 acres of his land into a township that

<sup>52</sup> Greg Niemann, *Palm Springs Legends: Creation of a Desert Oasis* (San Diego: Sunbelt Publications, Inc., 2006), 43. Murray was not a licensed physician; his title was honorary, granted for outstanding medical service rendered to wounded sailors on a battleship during the American Civil War.

<sup>53</sup> Murray was also responsible for the establishment of Palm Springs' first cemetery in 1894. That year, when Murray's son Erskine died he was buried on a triangular plot of land his father owned at the west end of what is now Alejo Road. Elizabeth Murray was laid to rest alongside her son in 1911, and Welwood Murray himself was buried there in 1914. Following Murray's death, his heirs deeded the plot to the village, the Palm Springs Cemetery District was established to manage it, and it was named the Welwood Murray Cemetery (HSPB-2). Many of the town's pioneers were subsequently buried there, including Pearl and Austin McManus, Zaddie Bunker, the White sisters, Nellie Coffman, and Alvah Hicks. Source: Niemann, 46. Cornelia White, Dr. J. Smeaton, and Edward Bunker were the three trustees of the Palm Springs Cemetery District at its formation. Source: "Post Held Since 1917 is Resigned by Cornelia White," *The Desert Sun*, March 7, 1941; "Pair Honored for Long Service Careers in Palm Springs Cemetery District Work," *The Desert Sun*, December 19, 1964.

<sup>54</sup> Western Resort Publications, *Palm Springs Area Yearbook* (Palm Springs: Ferris H. Scott, 1954), 15. The 1929 Sanborn map shows the main hotel building, expanded with stone and adobe additions, located near the corner of what were then called Spring Street and Indian Avenue.

<sup>55</sup> Renee Brown, "Palm Springs History: Mineral springs are for healing," *The Desert Sun*, May 16, 2014, <http://www.desertsun.com/story/life/2014/05/15/agua-caliente-palm-springs-hot-mineral-springs-healing/9156853/> (accessed January 13, 2015).

<sup>56</sup> Niemann, 46. A 1936 article in *The Desert Sun* ("Landmark is Removed from Plaza Project," *The Desert Sun*, October 23, 1936) notes that the house "was constructed many years ago for Mrs. Brooks," and later purchased by Dr. Murray, and was moved in 1936 to the "Indian Reservation" to make way for the construction of the Plaza. However, all other sources note that it was built by Murray. The house, later owned by Cornelia White, was relocated at least twice, first in 1944 to the southwest corner of Tahquitz Canyon and Indian Canyon, then to the Village Green in 1979. The reference to its relocation to the "Indian Reservation" in 1936 is unclear.

<sup>57</sup> Kevin Starr, *The Dream Endures: California Enters the 1940s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 24-25.

<sup>58</sup> *Palm Springs Area Yearbook*, 15.

corresponds to what is today's downtown. An auction on November 1, 1887 sold 137 parcels for a total of more than \$50,000.<sup>59</sup> Houses were built, orchards planted, and more visitors and seasonal residents arrived each winter.<sup>60</sup> McCallum opened a small one-room store to provide canned goods, hay, grain, and other merchandise needed by early settlers and travelers.<sup>61</sup> The first church, later the Community Presbyterian Church, was built in 1890 by Thomas Chritchlow in memory of his wife, on a parcel at the southeast corner of Palm Canyon (then Main) and Andreas Road (then Lawn Street) donated by Welwood Murray (HSPB-11; demolished).<sup>62</sup> Although McCallum called the place Palm Valley, it soon came to be known as Palm Springs after Murray's hotel.<sup>63</sup>

In 1890, Johnny McCallum relapsed, and died the following January at the age of 26. Three years later, torrential rains caused a flood that wiped out Palm Springs' fields and orchards. This was followed in 1894 by the start of a devastating drought that would last eleven years. The village's water sources in Whitewater and Tahquitz canyons dwindled and eventually dried up completely,<sup>64</sup> and McCallum and other settlers lost their petition with the federal government to gain control over the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians' water rights in Tahquitz and Andreas Canyons.<sup>65</sup>

The McCallums' second son, Wallace, died in 1896 at the age of 29; John Guthrie McCallum died in 1897. Daughter Pearl, away at school in Chicago, returned to the family's Los Angeles home to care for her widowed mother while her only surviving brother, Harry, tried to maintain the ranch. After Harry's death in 1901 at the age of 30, Pearl McCallum and her by-then invalid mother returned to Palm Springs.<sup>66</sup> Pearl had the dead trees in her father's apricot orchard cut down and sold for firewood, sold her family's shares in the Palm Valley Land and Water Company, and periodically sold pieces of land to pay debts and taxes.<sup>67</sup>

Palm Springs withered as many settlers moved away, abandoning their houses and orchards.<sup>68</sup> But a few hearty pioneers, including the McCallums and Murrays, stayed through the years of drought, and some newcomers arrived as well. In 1898 Mrs. Lavinia Fryatt Crocker opened a sanatorium, the Green Gables

<sup>59</sup> Bowart et al., "The McCallum Centennial."

<sup>60</sup> *Palm Springs Area Yearbook*, 15.

<sup>61</sup> Niemann, 38. The exact location of McCallum's store has not been determined.

<sup>62</sup> Julie Baumer, "Hundreds Celebrate 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Church," *The Desert Sun* Volume 40, 204, March 30, 1967, <http://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc?a=d&d=DS19670330.2.55#> (accessed June 19, 2015), and Henderson et al., 71.

<sup>63</sup> Several promotional maps from the 1880s refer to the Palm Springs area as Palmdale after the early promotion of what would become Smoke Tree Ranch.

<sup>64</sup> *Palm Springs Area Yearbook*, 15.

<sup>65</sup> Ann Greer, "Men on the Forefront," *Palm Springs Life*, March 2013, <http://www.palmspringslife.com/Palm-Springs-Life/March-2013/Men-on-the-Forefront/> (accessed May 15, 2015). After her father and brothers passed away, Pearl McCallum and her by-then invalid mother returned to Palm Springs, where they sold off their family's shares in the Palm Valley Land and Water Company.

<sup>66</sup> Bowart et al., "The McCallum Centennial."

<sup>67</sup> Ardmore, "Memories," 56.

<sup>68</sup> The drought effectively ended any serious farming endeavors in Palm Springs itself but the southeast Coachella Valley became a major agricultural center, particularly after the introduction of date palms in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Health Resort, at the foot of Mt. San Jacinto, with tent houses to accommodate her patients.<sup>69</sup> That same year David Manley Blanchard, a tubercular auctioneer from Minneapolis, opened the town's first general store.<sup>70</sup> Blanchard had arrived in Palm Springs in 1897 after contracting tuberculosis following a bout of pneumonia. He bought three burros and transported mail between Palm Springs and the train station at Seven Palms. In 1898 he opened a feed and grocery store in the adobe that had formerly housed the Bradshaw Stage station. He later purchased property on Andreas Road (then Lawn Street) between Palm Canyon (then Main) Drive and Indian Canyon Drive (then Indian Avenue) on which he built a larger store along with a small four-room hotel and several tent houses (demolished). Blanchard also served as the village's postmaster and barber.<sup>71</sup>

Nellie Coffman, the daughter of hoteliers and wife of a Santa Monica physician, first visited Palm Springs in 1908 and was immediately impressed with the village's potential as a winter health resort. At that time the town's permanent population was 14.<sup>72</sup> The following year Nellie, her husband Dr. Harry Coffman, and their sons George Roberson<sup>73</sup> and Earl Coffman, bought a bungalow on almost two acres just north of the McCallum adobe, at the northwest corner of Palm Canyon Drive (then Main Avenue) and Tahquitz Canyon Way (then Spring Street) and opened a boarding house, the Desert Inn and Sanatorium (demolished; HSPB-17). Nellie rented the bungalow's three bedrooms to guests, mostly respiratory patients escaping harsh winters, and put up a tent house for herself and her family, adding more for additional guests as needed.<sup>74</sup> Dr. Coffman cared for the medical needs of their guests while Nellie managed the housekeeping and the books.<sup>75</sup> She soon gained a reputation for her culinary skills after stuffing two traveling reporters from the *Los Angeles Times* with chicken soup, lamb chops, hot biscuits and strawberry jam.<sup>76</sup>

By 1915, with the growing understanding that tuberculosis was a communicable disease caused by microbes rather than "unhealthy" climates, Nellie recognized that her Inn would be more successful hosting tourists rather than consumptives; beginning that winter season, tuberculosis patients were no

<sup>69</sup> "Struck it Rich," *Red Front Store News*, August 1, 1914.

<sup>70</sup> Niemann, 91.

<sup>71</sup> Niemann, 91, and Ann Greer, "Men on the Forefront," *Palm Springs Life*, March 2013, <http://www.palmspringslife.com> (accessed March 4, 2015).

<sup>72</sup> "Mrs. Coffman, Palm Springs Developer, Dies," *Los Angeles Times*, June 11, 1950, 3.

<sup>73</sup> Roberson was Nellie Coffman's son by her first marriage.

<sup>74</sup> *Palm Springs Area Yearbook*, 15.

<sup>75</sup> Ernie Pyle, "Persistence for Eight Years," *Daily Boston Globe*, March 27, 1942, 23, <http://www.proquest.com> (accessed September 25, 2012).

<sup>76</sup> Bess M. Wilson, "Noted Desert Hostess Traces Rise to Fame," *Los Angeles Times*, January 5, 1941, D10, <http://www.proquest.com> (accessed September 25, 2012).

longer permitted at the Desert Inn.<sup>77</sup> She began acquiring more land, including the adjacent Green Gables. In 1917 Coffman's sons, George and Earl, went off to Europe to fight in World War I.<sup>78</sup>

Coffman's decision to focus on the tourist trade was propitious. It coincided with a series of events whose combined effects would set the stage for the transformation of Palm Springs in the 1920s. The growing popularity and affordability of the automobile, and the completion of a new road from Banning, made the village more accessible.<sup>79</sup> Wealthy American tourists, cut off from Europe for the duration of the war, were forced to limit their travels to domestic destinations and discovered the rustic spa town set amidst the beauty and solitude of the surrounding desert. The lethal postwar influenza pandemic of 1918-19 brought more well-healed visitors fleeing the contagion of the big cities; Los Angeles doctors sent their own families to Palm Springs for safety.<sup>80</sup>



The lodge at the Desert Inn, c. 1920.  
Source: Calisphere.

When George and Earl returned from the war in 1918 they, like Nellie, saw the town's full potential, not as a health spa for asthmatics and consumptives but as an exclusive winter resort for the well-to-do, and went into business with their mother.<sup>81</sup> They dropped "Sanatorium" from the boarding house's name and over the next decade set about expanding and reconstructing the Desert Inn into a first-class resort hotel, a "vast grassy haven"<sup>82</sup> occupying the entire block between Andreas and Tahquitz and extending west into the foothills of Mount San Jacinto.

A number of other settlers contributed to the development and growth of Palm Springs in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1913 Dr. Florilla White, a physician originally from upstate New York, and her sister Cornelia,

<sup>77</sup> Apparently, Dr. Coffman felt there was no place for him in the new operation, and the couple soon divorced. Lawrence Culver, *The Frontier of Leisure: Southern California and the Shaping of Modern America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 153-154.

<sup>78</sup> Niemann, 62-63.

<sup>79</sup> Culver, 154-55.

<sup>80</sup> Pyle, "Persistence," 23.

<sup>81</sup> Pyle, "Persistence," 23.

<sup>82</sup> Ernie Pyle, "Never Undignified," *Daily Boston Globe*, March 30, 1942, 11, <http://www.proquest.com> (accessed September 25, 2012).

a former teacher at the University of North Dakota, purchased the Palm Springs Hotel from Welwood Murray. Dr. White had stayed as a guest at the hotel the previous year before joining her adventurous younger sister in Mexico, where she was then living. Forced to return to the United States to escape the chaos of the Mexican Revolution, the sisters settled in Palm Springs to manage the hotel and invest in real estate, buying entire blocks of what would become downtown Palm Springs. Cornelia White moved into Murray's "Little House" of railroad ties (now located at 221 S. Palm Canyon Drive; HSPB-4). Dr. White served as the village's health officer during World War I and organized The Nightingales, a group of volunteer nurses from Riverside, to help in the 1918 influenza pandemic.<sup>83</sup>

Carl Gustav Lykken, a mining engineer from North Dakota, knew Cornelia White from her teaching days and later in Mexico, where he worked as a surveyor. He fled the Mexican Revolution with the White sisters and at their suggestion settled in Palm Springs in 1913. With a partner, J.H. Bartlett, Lykken purchased David Blanchard's general store and in 1914 moved the operation to a new building across Main Street, a simple frame building at what is now 180 N. Palm Canyon Drive (HSPB-9). Originally called Lykken and Bartlett, the store became known as Lykken's Department and Hardware Store after Lykken became the sole operator. For many years the store housed the town's post office, telegraph service, and only telephone, with an extension to the Desert Inn.<sup>84</sup>



J.H. Bartlett and Carl Lykken in front of their store. Note the First Community Church in the background. Source: *Palm Springs Life*, "Men on the Forefront."

<sup>83</sup> Niemann, 77-79.

<sup>84</sup> Niemann, 95-96. The store was remodeled in the Spanish Colonial Revival style in the 1930s.



Master carpenter Alvah Hicks also arrived in Palm Springs in 1913, with his wife Tess and their two young sons. Originally from New York, Hicks had moved to Los Angeles in 1912 and then to the desert, looking for building and contracting work. He quickly gained a reputation for high-quality work and built houses for many of the village's early settlers. In the 1920s Hicks would develop some of the village's premier neighborhoods including Old Las Palmas and Little Tuscany, and bought control of the Palm Valley Land and Water Company founded by John Guthrie McCallum.<sup>85</sup>

Ed Bunker and his wife Zaddie, self-taught mechanics from Missouri, arrived in Palm Springs with their young daughter in 1914 and opened the village's first automotive garage in a corrugated metal shed (demolished) on the west side of Palm Canyon Drive (then Main Street) at Andreas Road (then Lawn Street), just north of the Desert Inn. They purchased additional property nearby and built the Bunker Cottages (demolished). After Ed left and the couple divorced, Zaddie continued to run the garage on her own. During World War I Zaddie took over the transportation of mail and visitors from the train station, which had been the responsibility of George Roberson, and became the first woman issued a chauffeur's license in California.<sup>86</sup> She eventually became one of the village's wealthiest landowners and most prominent citizens, as well as a licensed pilot, taking her first solo flight at age 66.<sup>87</sup>

Prescott T. Stevens, a successful Colorado cattle rancher, relocated with his wife Frances to California in 1912 to seek refuge from her respiratory problems. They first settled in Hollywood, where he invested in real estate, then moved to Palm Springs for the better air. By 1920, Stevens had purchased a large amount of land north of downtown Palm Springs, as well as several thousand acres from the Southern Pacific Railroad to the east and the north of the village to ensure a steady supply of water for his holdings. Stevens also bought shares in the original Palm Valley Water Company, and then formed the Whitewater Mutual Water Company and the Palm Springs Water Company. He put in underground piping to bring water to Palm Springs from Whitewater Canyon at Windy Point ensuring a steady supply of water despite wind or rain. Many of the homes in northern Palm Springs still use this water system.<sup>88</sup>

The village's first pharmacy was opened in 1917 by Dr. Jacob John Kocher, who constructed an adobe building (demolished) on the east side of Main Drive (now Palm Canyon), across from the Desert Inn and south of Lykken's Department Store.<sup>89</sup> Kocher became one of the town's leading physicians and when the Palm Springs Board of Trade was founded in 1918, was elected its first president.

<sup>85</sup> Niemann, 129-130.

<sup>86</sup> Niemann, 81-83. Zaddie Bunker would become one of Palm Springs' wealthiest landowners and at the age of 60 obtained her pilot's license.

<sup>87</sup> Niemann, 81-83, and Rita Strombeck, "Women With Vision," *Palm Springs Life*, March 2013, <http://www.palmspringslife.com/Palm-Springs-Life/March-2013/Women-With-Vision/> (accessed March 5, 2013).

<sup>88</sup> Greer, "Men on the Forefront."

<sup>89</sup> Sanborn fire insurance map, 1929.

In addition to respiratory patients, hoteliers, and merchants, Palm Springs attracted artists and writers in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, drawn no doubt by the beauty and solitude of the desert. The first of these was Carl Eytel, a German-born artist who emigrated to the United States in 1885 and developed an interest in the American west. He settled in Palm Springs in 1898 and, with the permission of the McCallums, built a small cabin out of lumber salvaged from abandoned houses (demolished). It was located near the site of the present-day Tennis Club. Eytel's pen and ink drawings helped to expose Palm Springs to the outside world, and he was hired by author and booster of the American West George Wharton James to illustrate James' book *The Wonders of the Colorado Desert*.<sup>90</sup> Landscape artist and Hearst cartoonist Jimmy Swinerton traveled to Palm Springs in 1907 after contracting tuberculosis and being given less than a year to live. He lived in Palm Springs until his death in 1974.<sup>91</sup> British-born writer and photographer J. Smeaton Chase arrived in Palm Springs in 1915. Chase was the author of several popular books about California, including *Yosemite Trails* and *California Coastal Trails*. He married Isabel White, the sister of Dr. Florilla and Cornelia White, in 1917, and in 1920 wrote *Our Araby: Palm Springs and the Garden of the Sun*, a book that did much to publicize the up-and-coming desert resort.<sup>92</sup>

<sup>90</sup> Niemann, 108.

<sup>91</sup> Niemann, 110.

<sup>92</sup> Niemann, 108-109.

#### EARLY DEVELOPMENT (1884-1918): ELIGIBILITY

##### **Property Types: Single-family Residence, Commercial Building, Remnant Feature**

Properties eligible under this theme represent some of the earliest extant *built* resources in the city's history. Resources from this period are associated with the Anglo-American settlers of the area, the founding of the town called Palm Springs, and its subsequent development into a winter health spa and tourist destination. Resources from this period are rare,<sup>93</sup> and all extant resources are likely already known. Resources eligible under this theme may include buildings (residential and commercial), along with ancillary structures, infrastructure, or other remnant features.

Remnant features from this period may include infrastructure improvements, including irrigation and stone walls. Of the many stone walls found in Palm Springs, perhaps the most historically significant are those lining the remains of the village's legendary irrigation canals – the Tahquitz and Whitewater ditches.<sup>94</sup> Entering the village across the modern-day Las Palmas neighborhood, the Whitewater Ditch skirted the mountain edge along the present-day sites of the O'Donnell Golf Course, Desert Inn, and The Willows, before crossing diagonally over the Tennis Club neighborhood. Not long after its completion, the Whitewater Ditch was extended to bring water to the development of Palmdale, site of modern-day Smoke Tree Ranch. A remnant of John McCallum's irrigation canal remains on the grounds of the Casa Cody Inn (175 S. Cahuilla Road; HSPB-59). There are also remnant stone walls in many residential neighborhoods, including the area now known as the Tennis Club neighborhood.

Rare surviving properties from this period include the McCallum Adobe (HSPB-5), the oldest remaining building in Palm Springs; and Miss Cornelia White's "Little House" (HSPB-4). Both buildings have been moved from their original locations and reconstructed at the Village Green Heritage Center. Another early example is the 1916 Reginald Pole adobe on the grounds of the Casa Cody (1916, 175 S. Cahuilla Road; HSPB-59). Also remaining from this period is the stage stop at Smoke Tree Ranch.

<sup>93</sup> The Palm Springs Hotel was demolished in 1954 to clear the site for new development (Fred Weigel, "Another Landmark of Village Disappearing," *The Desert Sun* XXVIII, 32, December 9, 1954.). Lykken's Department Store (HSPB-9) still stands but was remodeled in the Spanish Colonial Revival style in the 1930s. Bunker's Garage was replaced in 1929 with a Mission Revival-style building and eventually became the Village Pharmacy; it was demolished in 1967, along with the Desert Inn, to make way for the Desert Inn Fashion Plaza. Kocher's adobe pharmacy was demolished, probably in 1934 for construction of Kenneth Colborn's Palm Springs Shops Building (Roger C. Palmer, PhD, *Palm Springs Then & Now* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), 49. Sanborn maps indicate that the adobe was intact in 1929 and was located where the Colborn building and the Center's Bank of America branch were successively constructed.)

<sup>94</sup> Information about the Tahquitz and Whitewater Ditches largely adapted from Steve Vaught, *Sentinels in Stone: Palm Springs' Historic Tennis Club Neighborhood and its Iconic Walls* (Palm Springs, CA: Palm Springs Preservation Foundation, 2015), 7-11.

### Applicable Eligibility Criteria

A building or remnant feature from this period may be eligible for historic designation under one or more of the following criteria:

CRITERIA	REASON
A/1/3 (Pattern of Development/Period) <sup>95</sup>	As a rare example of early residential or commercial development, or a remnant feature representing the first built resources associated with the Anglo-American settlement of Palm Springs.
B/2/2 (Person)	For its association with a significant person in the early history of Palm Springs. Significant persons within this theme include the earliest Anglo-American settlers who were influential in the establishment and development of Palm Springs.
C/3/4,5 (Architecture)	As a good or rare example of an architectural style, property type, or method of construction, particularly adobe construction, from the period; or as the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect. Additional information about architectural styles from each period and their associated character-defining features are outlined in the Architectural Styles chapter.

### Integrity Considerations

Each type of property depends on certain aspects of integrity to express its historic significance. In order to be eligible for listing at the federal, state, or local levels, a property must retain sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance under this theme. Properties and features from this period are extremely rare and represent some of the earliest development in Palm Springs; therefore, a greater degree of alteration may be acceptable.

CRITERIA	REQUIRED ASPECTS OF HISTORIC INTEGRITY
A/1/3 (Pattern of Development/Period)	A property or feature from this period eligible under Criteria A/1/3 (Event) should retain integrity of design, feeling, and association, at a minimum, in order to convey the historic association with the city's early Anglo-American settlement. It is expected that integrity of setting may have been compromised by later development. Due to the importance and rarity of resources from this period, a property may remain eligible if it has been relocated.

<sup>95</sup> Note that eligibility criteria are listed in the standard format National Register/California Register/Local. Note that National Register/California Register Criterion A/1 can be applied to a single event important in history, or to an overall trend or pattern of development. The City of Palm Springs local ordinance distinguishes these into separate criteria – Criterion 1 applies to properties that are associated with a singular event; Criterion 3 applies to properties that “reflect or exemplify a particular period” in history.

CRITERIA	REQUIRED ASPECTS OF HISTORIC INTEGRITY
B/2/2 (Person)	A residential property significant under Criterion B/2/2 (Person) should retain integrity of design, feeling, and association, at a minimum, in order to convey the historic association with a significant person.
C/3/4,5 (Architecture)	A property important for illustrating a particular property type, architectural style or construction technique; or that represents the work of a master must retain most of the physical features that constitute that type, style, or technique. <sup>96</sup> A property significant under Criterion C/3/4,5 (Architecture) should retain integrity of design, workmanship, and feeling, at a minimum, in order to be eligible under this theme. In adobe structures, the adobe walls should remain largely intact, and the building should retain the majority of the character-defining features associated with an adobe structure of its age. Alterations that are consistent with upgrades typically seen in early adobe structures, including later wood frame additions and replacement windows within original window openings, are acceptable. It is expected that the setting will have been compromised by later development.

#### **Early Development (1884-1918): Registration Requirements**

To be eligible under this theme, a property must:

- date from the period of significance;
- display sufficient character-defining features of the construction method or architectural style to convey its historic significance; and
- retain the essential aspects of historic integrity.

<sup>96</sup> *National Register Bulletin 15.*

