



HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD

DATE: March 12, 2019

PUBLIC HEARING

SUBJECT: AN APPLICATION BY NANCY AND STEPHEN COOPER OF COBBLEWOOD PARTNERS, LP, OWNERS, REQUESTING CLASS 1 HISTORIC RESOURCE DESIGNATION OF 417 HERMOSA PLACE, "THE WALTER KIRSCHNER RESIDENCE" (AKA "CASA ADAIRE"), CASE HSPB #112. (KL).

FROM: Department of Planning Services

SUMMARY

The owners are seeking Class 1 historic resource designation for the Walter Kirschner Residence, located at 417 Hermosa Place. The residence was designed in 1936 in the Spanish Colonial Revival style and designed by the architectural firm Brewster & Benedict. Kirschner, who owned the parcel from 1936 to 1938, was principal owner of Grayson Companies, a very successful national chain of women's apparel stores. Through his friendships with President Franklin D. Roosevelt and then General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Kirschner worked to bring public awareness to the plight of European Jews during World War II and the atrocities of the Holocaust.

If designated as a Class 1 resource, the property would be subject to the historic preservation requirements of Palm Springs Municipal Code (PSMC) Section 8.05, and present and subsequent owners will be required to maintain the site consistent with that ordinance. In addition, as a Class 1 historic resource, the property owner may apply for a historic property preservation agreement, commonly referred to as a Mills Act Contract.

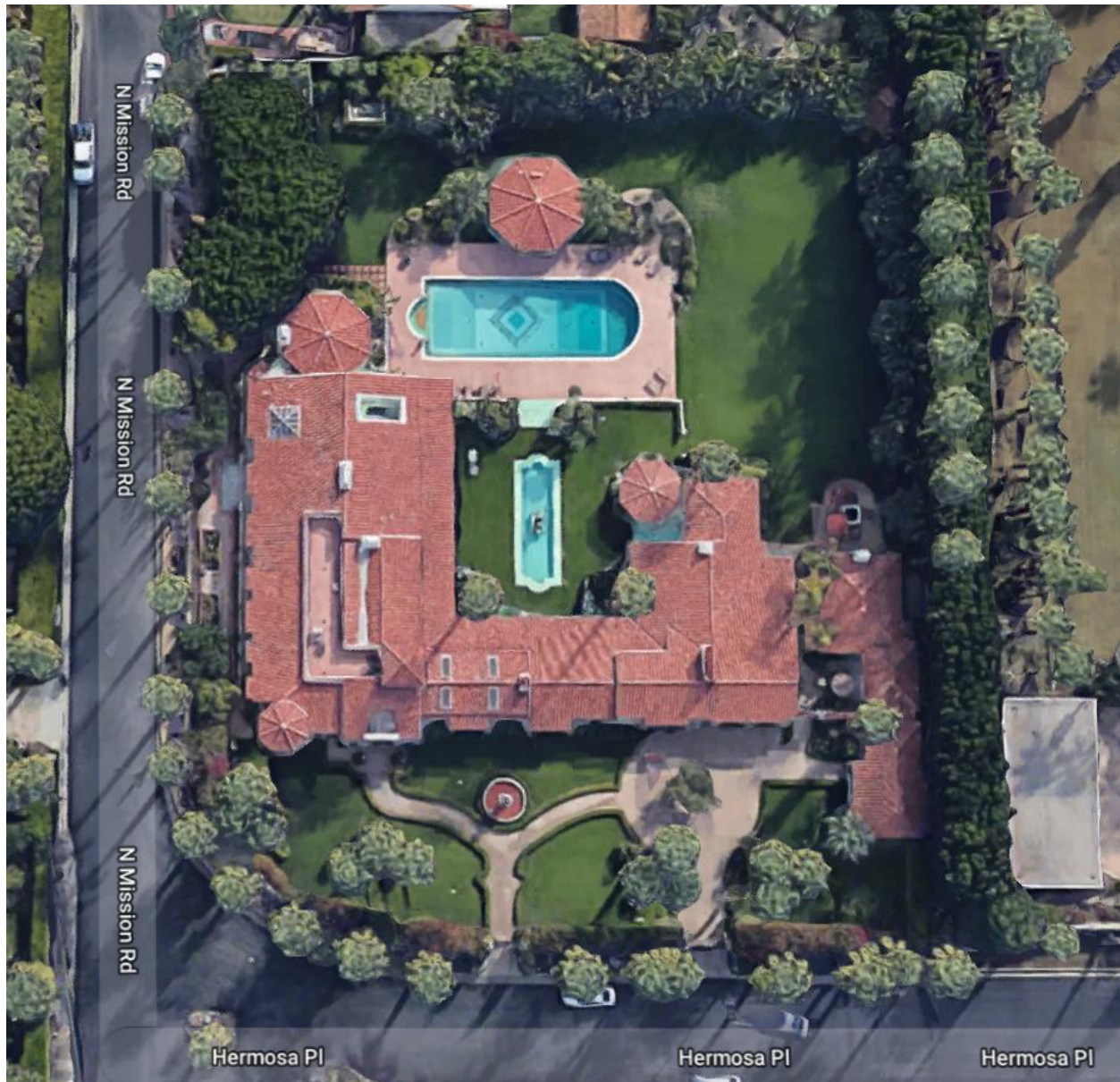
RECOMMENDATION:

1. Open the public hearing and receive public testimony.
2. Close the public hearing and adopt Resolution HSPB 112, "A RESOLUTION OF THE HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD OF THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA, RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY COUNCIL DESIGNATE THE PARCEL AT 417 HERMOSA PLACE APN #505-273-002, "THE WALTER KIRSCHNER RESIDENCE", (AKA "CASA ADAIRE"), A CLASS 1

HISTORIC RESOURCE (HSPB #112).”

BACKGROUND AND SETTING:

The single family residence at 417 Hermosa Place was constructed in 1937 according to the historic resources report (“the report”) on a roughly 1.5-acre lot. (See present-day aerial photo below.)



The Kirschner residence is a sprawling custom-built home in the Las Palmas neighborhood. The report identifies the architecture as “Mediterranean or Spanish

Colonial Revival, noting it is loosely based on the haciendas of the Andalusian region of southern Spain with a Hispano-Moorish influence.

BELOW THE KIRSCHNER RESIDENCE C. 1940.



BELOW A CONTEMPORARY VIEW OF THE KIRSCHNER RESIDENCE (2019)



The Kirschner's purchased the lots in November 1936, constructed the residence in 1937 and sold it in December of 1938. According to the report, page 64, notes "*In typical Kirschner fashion, the process of planning and building the house was more enjoyable than living in it, so after less than two years, he sold Casa Adaire...*" Thus as a finished residence, it appears the Kirschners occupied the home for barely a year. The report notes that the home was built by Kirschner to serve as a desert retreat for the Roosevelt family, however there is no confirmed evidence noted in the report that any of the Roosevelt family ever spent time at Casa Adaire during Kirschner's ownership.

The report notes the home was designed by notable architects Brewster & Benedict. This information was sourced from a Desert Sun newspaper article. The report discusses the landscape and site design of the Kirschner Residence however credit to a particular landscape architect or designer could not be confirmed.

The report notes the period of significance of the Kirschner Residence was between World War 1 and World War II (c. 1919 – 1941). During the period of significance, only one other family owned the property; the Earl and Charlotte Gibbs family; who owned it from 1938 until 1945. Gibbs, a retired manufacturer from Illinois was a member of the local equestrian club Los Vaqueros del Desierto, president of the Desert Circus and manager of the Palm Springs Field Club.

<i>Related Relevant City Actions by HSPB, Planning, Fire, Building, etc...</i>	
January, 2019	Exterior site inspection by members of the HSPB and City Staff.

<i>Ownership Status</i>	
2010	Purchase by current owners.

ANALYSIS:

Historic Preservation activities in Palm Springs are regulated under Municipal Code Section 8.05 ("*Historic Preservation*"). The purpose of the Historic Preservation Ordinance is:

"...to stabilize and improve buildings, structures or areas which are considered to be of historical, architectural, archaeological or ecological value, to foster civic beauty, to strengthen the local economy and to promote the use of historic resources for the education and welfare of the citizens."

Standard Conditions that apply to Class 1 Historic Sites or Resources

The following shall apply to a Class 1 Historic Site or Resource:

1. It shall meet the definition of a Class 1 historic resource as outlined in Municipal Code Section 8.05.020 including the findings outlined in Section 8.05.070 (C).
2. An archival file shall be maintained on the property by the City.
3. It may be qualified as 'historic' at the federal, state, and/or county level.
4. A marker explaining the historic nature of the site may be installed at the site in a location viewable from the public way.
5. Compliance with all rules and regulations for Historic Resources and Historic Districts under Chapter 8.05 of the Municipal Code shall be required.
6. If designated, the findings in support of designation shall be stated in a resolution of the City Council that shall be recorded with the County Recorders' office within 90 days of the effective date of the Council's resolution.

Evaluation of the Application. Pursuant to Municipal Code Section 8.05.070 (C), the HSPB shall evaluate the application and make findings for conformance with the following criteria:

Criteria for the Designation of Class 1 Historic Resources. A site, structure, building or object may be designated as a Class 1 historic resource, provided both of the following findings are met:

- a. The site, structure, building or object exhibits exceptional historic significance and meets one or more of the criteria listed below:*

The Kirschner Residence exhibits exceptional historic significance as a notable example of the type of large custom-designed homes that were being built in Palm Springs in the 1930's by Hollywood notables and wealthy business magnates like Walter Kirschner.

(Criterion 1) The resource is associated with events that have made a meaningful contribution to the nation, state or community;

The report does not identify any events associated with the Kirschner Residence.

(Criterion 2) The resource is associated with the lives of persons who made a meaningful contribution to national, state or local history;

According to the report, Walter Kirschner (1893 – 1974) was a person of significance at a national level during the period of significance of the Kirschner Residence. Kirschner was owner of a national chain of ladies apparel shops: Grayson-Robinson and S. Klein. Kirschner, a close family friend of the Roosevelt family, was an early proponent of the documentation of the atrocities of the Holocaust and the plight of European Jews during World War II.

The document "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation", page 15 notes the following:

“Properties eligible under Criterion “B” (Persons of significance) are usually those associated with a person’s productive life, reflecting the time period when he or she achieved significance. Properties that pre- or post-date an individual’s significant accomplishments are usually not eligible.” And “Length of association is an important factor when assessing several properties with similar associations.”

Staff considered Kirschner relative to the period 1936 to 1938 when he built and owned Casa Adaire. According to the report, Kirschner was already a highly successful businessman well before he built Casa Adaire. Furthermore, his efforts to bring attention to the humanitarian disaster of the Holocaust occurred well after he sold Casa Adaire. Thus, while he indeed was a successful and charismatic businessman and brought critically needed attention to the atrocities of World War II, neither accomplishments occurred during his association and ownership of Casa Adaire. Thus, staff would assert that Casa Adaire is not historically significant because of its association with the life of a person of significance.

(Criterion 3) The resource reflects or exemplifies a particular period of national, state or local history;

As noted in the report on page 19, the Kirschner Residence exemplifies the period between the wars (1919 – 1941) in local history when Palm Springs was a favored vacation destination for many of the Hollywood set and wealthy industrialists and businessmen. Staff concurs that the Kirschner residence is a very good example of the large custom-designed and built homes that were being built in Palm Springs in the 1930’s.

(Criterion 4) The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction;

On page 20, the report asserts that the Kirschner Residence embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Spanish Colonial Revival architecture that was popular both in Palm Springs and in Southern California in general when revival style architecture was in vogue. The characteristics noted include white stucco walls, red-tiled roof (although the report notes the roof was originally white-washed) wide covered loggias inclosing patios and courtyards, hand-painted decorative glazed tile with a Hispano-Moorish influence. Staff concurs with this assessment.

(Criterion 5) 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;

The report denotes Brewster & Benedict were the architects of the Kirschner Residence, although drawings and building permits have not been discovered, articles

in the Desert Sun corroborate this information. Brewster & Benedict had a highly productive practice in Palm Springs and Southern California. The firm dissolved in 1938.

The report also notes on page 20 the remarkable detailing of the Kirschner Residence with its axial courtyards and extensive use of decorative glazed tile and architectural elements reminiscent of the Spanish Colonial Revival period raises the aesthetic of the home to an artistic level. Staff concurs with this assessment.

(Criterion 6) 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; or

The Kirschner Residence does not qualify as a historic site under this criterion.

(Criterion 7) The resource has yielded or may be likely to yield information important to national, state or local history or prehistory.

No information has been provided in the historic resources report on any pre-historic significance of the site.

b. The site, structure, building or object retains one or more of the following aspects of integrity, as established in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards: integrity of design, materials, workmanship, location, setting, feeling, or association.

The application includes an evaluation of the residence relative to the seven aspects or qualities of integrity, as recognized by the National Register of Historic Places. The seven aspects or qualities include location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The application concludes that the residence retains a high degree of integrity despite some modifications. Below is staff's evaluation of the site's integrity.

1. Location:

The Kirschner Residence remains on its original parcel and thus has integrity of location.

2. Design:

The design of the Kirschner Residence is mostly intact, although a very large addition and renovation carried out in the 1980's that covered most of the east side of the home obscured a large portion of the original design and introduced details and decorative architectural elements that are more "grandiose" than that of the rest of the original structure. Although the large addition on the east side generally follows the Spanish

Colonial Revival architectural style, it significantly impacts the original design of the home. The modifications at the entry (described in non-contributing section below) partially obscure the view of the original second story tower. Staff would assert that the site possess only a fair degree of design integrity.

3. Setting:

The setting of the Kirschner Residence, that of an expansive custom-built home on a heavily landscaped large lot is mostly intact. Changes that have occurred to the setting over time include several large additions, changes in the landscape (removal of cypress trees, a small orchard of fruit trees east of the home, and shrubs), changes in the primary pedestrian entrance into the property, changes in the configuration and material of the driveway and pool terrace, removal of columns around the pool upon which light fixtures were located, and the addition of a low garden wall and green ceramic tile steps that created a change in elevation between the house and the swimming pool terrace. Thus although the general character of the setting – that of a large rambling home on an expansive fully landscaped lot remains intact, the integrity of setting has been impaired.

4. Materials:

The Kirschner Residence was constructed of conventional frame and stucco construction. The finishes and materials are consistent with large custom-built homes designed in the revival style that were popular in the 1930's. Of particular note is the extensive use of decorative glazed ceramic tile which contributes to the home's overall ambiance. The report notes on page 12 that the roof tile was originally whitewashed. The whitewashed finish no longer exists. Material changes that affect the integrity of the site include the precast pavers at the driveway and walkways, the brick terrace around the swimming pool, and stained glass window panels near the entry. Thus resource retains a fair degree of integrity of materials.

5. Workmanship:

The Kirschner Residence exhibits a high quality workmanship that typically would be found in a large custom-built home from the era. It has been well maintained and the workmanship of later additions was also carried out in a very high quality manner. Thus the resource retains integrity of workmanship.

6. Feeling:

The siting of the residence relative to its lot and view retains the original integrity of feeling of a custom-designed home in a predominantly residential neighborhood. As noted above, the addition and alterations at the entry and other parts of the home added decorative elements that feel more "grandiose" than those parts remaining from the original home. In light of these alterations, staff would assert the resource retains a good degree of integrity of feeling.

7. Association:

The residence retains its association with architects Brewster & Benedict and its first owner Walter Kirschner and second owner Earl Gibbs.

DEFINING HISTORIC CHARACTERISTICS

In considering a recommendation for historic resource designation it is important to distinguish those physical elements that are original or from the period of significance that contribute to the resource's historic significance from alterations, additions or features that were added at a later time that may be sympathetic to the original character, but which may create a false sense of historicity. Distinguishing original character-defining features from non-original elements aids the HSPB when it is tasked with evaluating future alterations to the historic resource.

The physical character-defining historic features of this resource include the following:

1. The rock wall at the perimeter of the property, except the block wall added along the west property line.
2. The mosaic tile clad swimming pool with two of ten surviving tile-clad light columns (glass globes are not original), and the reflecting pool located in the main south-facing courtyard of the home.
3. The expansive and lushly planted open space, gardens, patios, covered loggias, patios and terraces. (Landscaping was not surveyed or documented as to what plantings or trees survive from the period of significance, however the importance of open space contributes to the site's historic integrity, including the covered terraces, open yards, and vistas.)
4. All portions of the original structure that currently exist (stucco clad exterior walls, two-piece clay barrel roof tiles, deep covered loggias and terraces, the octagonal gazebo immediately adjacent to the house, windows (where it can be verified that they are original or from the period of significance).
5. The ceramic tile peacock image relocated to the gazebo south of the swimming pool

The non-contributing features include the following:

1. The ornamental iron gates at the pedestrian walkway at the streetfront.
2. The 1953 addition of the second guest cottage and covered patio, (because it is not from the period of significance).
3. The circular precast brick paver driveway, pathways and fountain in the front yard.
4. The 1968 permitted "therapy pool" (if it still exists).
5. The 1946 toilet room addition at the south end of the west wing.
6. The children's playhouse at the southwest corner of the property.

7. All changes associated with the major renovation and addition done from 1984 to 1993, included but not limited to:
 - a. A 720 square foot addition to the garage (making it a tandem garage) and the addition of the “barley twist” pilasters flanking the garage doors and the pedestrian archway west of the garage doors.
 - b. The 598 square foot addition to the 1953 guest house.
 - c. The 640 square foot octagonal covered gazebo built adjacent to, and south of the swimming pool. (The ceramic tile panel depicting a peacock on this gazebo is contributing and was relocated to this gazebo from a previous masonry wall in the same location.)
 - d. The east wing of the house, comprised of the two guest suites, bathrooms, office and associated rooms, and the octagonal master bedroom, including the modifications to the roof profile over the original east wing of the home.
 - e. The foyer and front door configuration with the arched entrance, double glass paned doors, “barley twist” pilasters, stained-glass windows, arched pediment, marble urns and pointed urn-shaped finial, and raised foyer roof.
 - f. The fountain in the courtyard adjacent to the guest cottage.
8. The green ceramic tile clad steps and adjacent decorative masonry columns and the low garden wall between the main swimming pool and the reflecting pool. (These do not exist in the photos from the period of significance.)
9. The brick pavers around the swimming pool.
10. The skylights in the roof adjacent to the main entry.
11. The French doors along the south elevation covered loggia that were installed where smaller windows originally existed.
12. The window and door configuration on the east elevation of the original guest casita.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The proposed historic resource designation is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Sections 15060(c)(2) (the activity will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment) and 15060(c)(3) (the activity is not a project as defined in Section 15378) of the CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, because it has no potential for resulting in physical changes to the environment, directly or indirectly.

NOTIFICATION

Pursuant to section 8.05.140 of the Municipal Code of Palm Springs, All property owners within five hundred (500) feet of the subject property have been notified and notice was made in a newspaper of general circulation.

CONCLUSION:

The Kirschner Residence meets the definition of a historic resource based on Criteria 3, 4 and 5, and retains a fairly good level of historic integrity, thus staff has concluded that the resource qualifies as a Class 1 historic site.



Ken Lyon, RA
Associate Planner,
Historic Preservation Officer

Flinn Fagg, AICP
Director of Planning Services

Attachments:

1. Vicinity Map
2. Draft Resolution
3. Application, related background materials, photos and plans.

“Casa Adaire”

The Walter Kirschner Residence

417 Hermosa Place

Palm Springs, CA 92262

Nomination Application For

City of Palm Springs

Class I Historic Site



Prepared by

Steven Keylon

For the

Palm Springs Preservation Foundation

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank
the following individuals and organizations for
their professional expertise and/or editing assistance:

Tracy Conrad; Walter Kirschner's granddaughters Diane Harris Brown and Carol Borden; Rafael Medoff, Director of The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies; Barbara and Ron Marshall; Orange Coast Title Company of Southern California; Renee Brown, Palm Springs Historical Society; Janice Woodside and Maureen Boren, Coachella Valley History Museum; Linda Williams, La Quinta Historical Society; Jim Burrus; Kellam de Forest and Ann de Forest; Melissa Riche; Steve Vaught; Ed Dimendberg; Lynda Mason, granddaughter of Hiram Hudson Benedict; Melinda Gandara; Sian Winship; Christine Lazzaretto; Ann Scheid; Jennifer Trotoux; Libby Simon; Judy Horton; Barbara Lamprecht; Chris George, Director of Marketing, La Quinta Resort;

*Front cover: 1940s Kodachrome of Casa Adaire.
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)*

“CASA ADAIRE”

THE WALTER KIRSCHNER RESIDENCE

CLASS 1 HISTORIC SITE NOMINATION

TABLE of CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: PAGE 3

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: PAGE 4

CLASS 1 HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION APPLICATION FORM: PAGE 5

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: PAGE 9

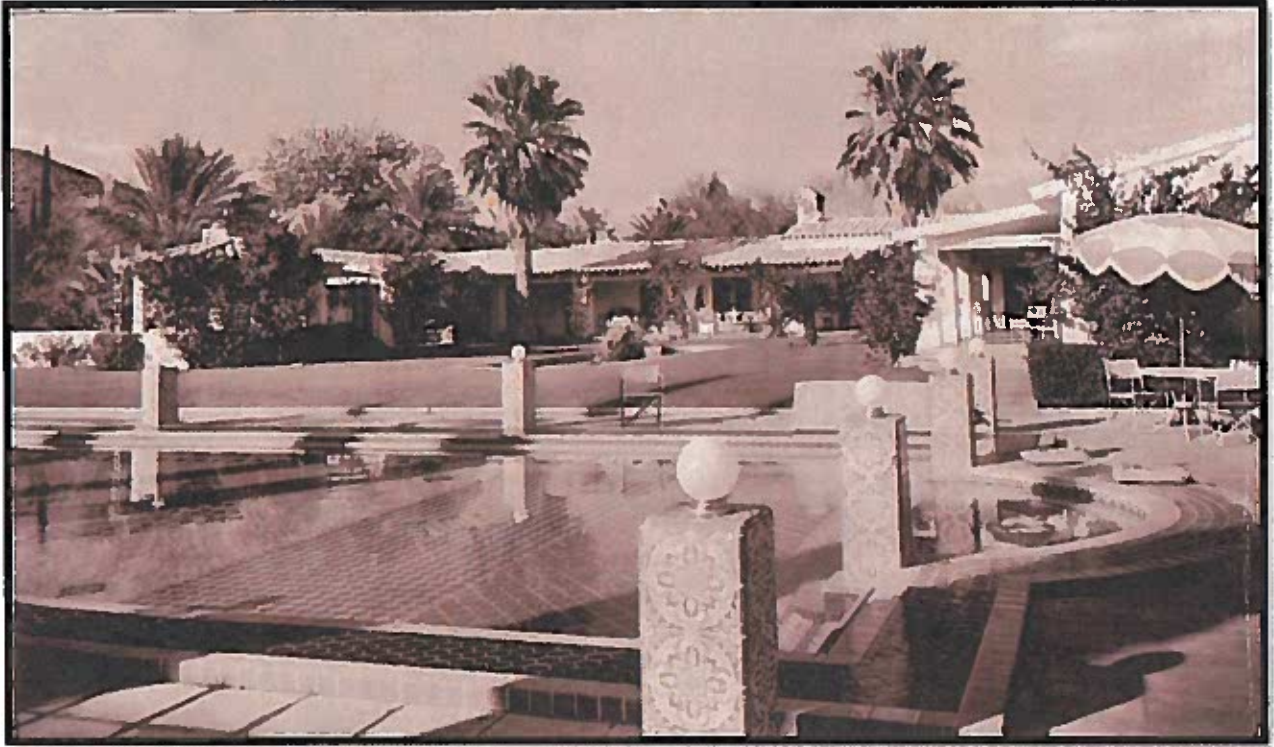
BACKGROUND/HISTORIC CONTEXT: PAGE 21

EVALUATION for CLASS 1 SITE DESIGNATION: PAGE 22

INTEGRITY ANALYSIS: PAGE 24

APPENDICES

I	Owner’s Letter of Support
II	Assessor’s Map
III	Grant Deed (which includes Legal Description)
IV	Later Owners
V	Changes to footprint of house
VI	Photographic record of changes over time
VII	Walter Kirschner
VIII	Brewster & Benedict



INTRODUCTION

The Palm Springs Preservation Foundation (PSPF) is a non-profit organization whose mission is “to educate and promote public awareness of the importance of preserving the historical resources and architecture of the city of Palm Springs and the Coachella Valley area.”

On April 4, 2018, the PSPF board of directors assigned the task of writing the residence’s Class 1 Historic Site nomination to board member Steven Keylon.

The Owner’s Letter of Support is at Appendix I.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SIGNIFICANCE: “Casa Adaire,” The Walter Kirschner Residence (hereinafter referred to as “Casa Adaire”) located at 417 Hermosa Place in Palm Springs, was built in 1937. Designed by the architectural firm of Brewster & Benedict, Casa Adaire is an important example of a custom Spanish-Colonial Revival structure, and the home exhibits numerous stylistic features that place it within the historic context of the period “Palm Springs between the Wars (1919-1941)” as defined in the *Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings* created by Historic Resources Group. This is a period when wealthy and influential people were building second homes in the growing and increasingly well-known resort Village. Though contemporary in function, most of these homes were typically built in Mediterranean-Revival styles meant to evoke a feeling of Old California.

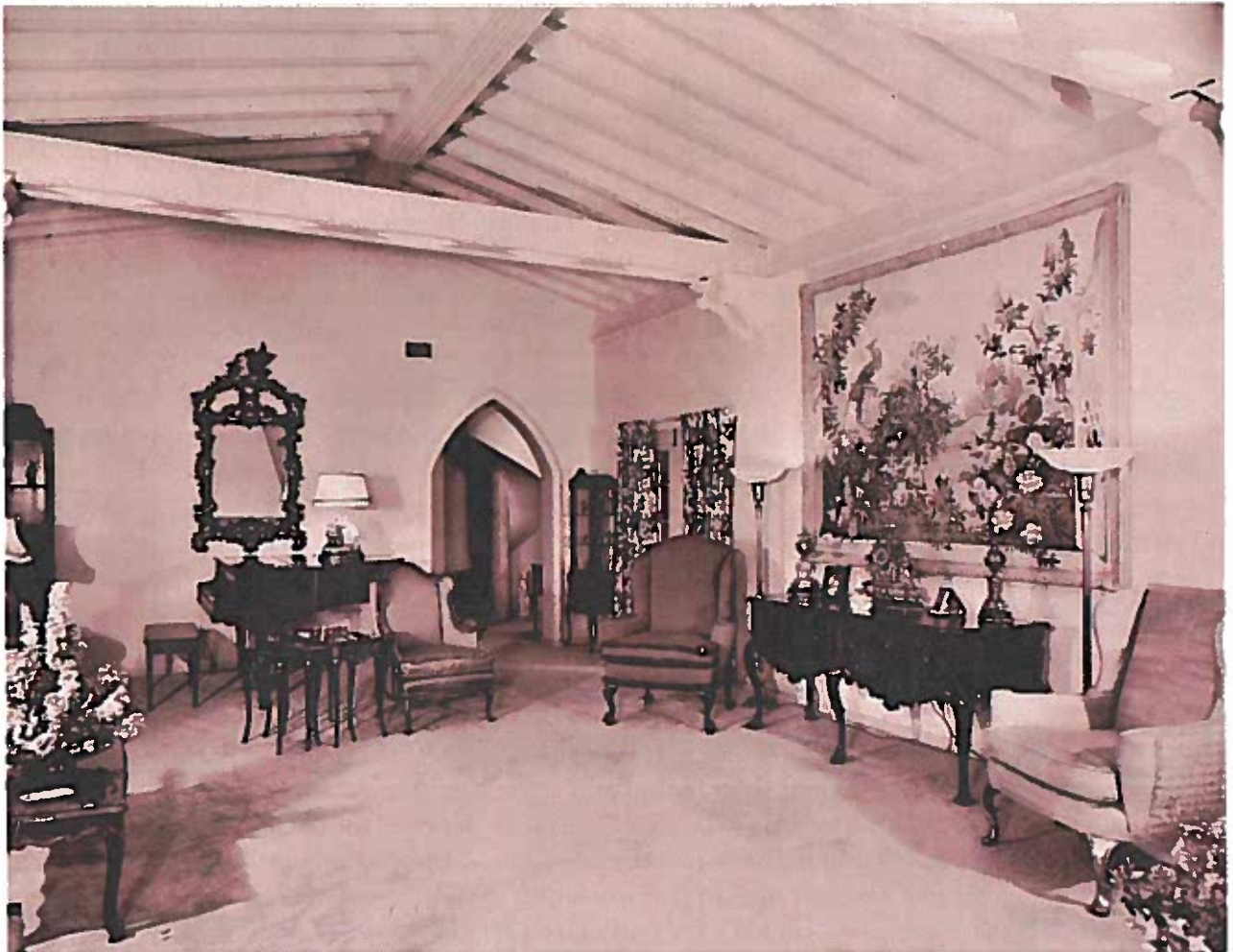
DESIGNATION CRITERIA: Casa Adaire has not previously been evaluated for Class 1 Historic Site eligibility, but it is included on the draft 2015 Citywide Historic Resources Inventory.

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

8.05.020 (a) paragraph 2 - People: This criterion recognizes properties associated with lives of persons who made meaningful contribution to national, state or local history; In this nomination, Casa Adaire was built for the wealthy owner of a national chain of ladies’ apparel shops, Grayson’s. Casa Adaire was meant to serve as a desert retreat for members of President Roosevelt’s family. Kirschner was a friend and advisor to Presidents Roosevelt, Truman and Eisenhower, and Casa Adaire was the first of at least three large estates he built in the Coachella Valley that were designed for the use of the Presidents and their families. Kirschner was an early advocate of the documentation of the atrocities of the Holocaust and travelled to Europe with Generals Eisenhower and Marshall to ensure that these atrocities wouldn’t fade into history. *Casa Adaire is associated with Walter Kirschner, a person who had influence in national history. Therefore, the residence qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site under Criterion 2.*

8.05.020 (a) paragraphs 3, 4 & 5 - Design/Construction: Casa Adaire is eligible under the theme of Spanish-Colonial Revival architecture because it possesses numerous distinctive characteristics that make up the Spanish-Colonial Revival style including white stucco walls, clay tile roof, broad loggias enclosing an inner court, decorative hand-painted tile. As a custom residence skillfully designed by architects Brewster & Benedict, it rises to the level of work by master architects with high artistic values. *Therefore, for its distinctive characteristics, as the work of Master architects, and for its high artistic values, the residence qualifies as a Class 1 Historic Site under Criteria 3, 4 and 5.*

SUMMARY: This evaluation finds Casa Adaire eligible for listing as a Palm Springs Historic Site under 8.05.020 (a) paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the local ordinance’s seven criteria. Additionally, Casa Adaire retains a “high degree” of integrity (see Section 7, “Integrity Analysis”).



An undated photo of the living room of Casa Adaire, ca. 1948. Brewster & Benedict's design featured open beamed ceilings, with Hispano-Moorish inspired door openings. Note masonry spiral staircase to the lookout tower beyond. Photo courtesy Stephen and Nancie Cooper.



CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

Department of
Planning Services
3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm
Springs, CA 92262
Telephone: 760-323-8245
Fax: 760-322-8360

HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION

The City of Palm Springs allows for the local designation of historic buildings, sites or districts within the City (Section 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code.) This application packet is to be completed in order to request a historic designation. For additional information, please contact the Department of Planning Services at 760-323-8245 or planning@palmspringsca.gov.

APPLICATION

The completed application and required materials may be submitted to the Department of Planning Services. The submittal will be given a cursory check and will be accepted for filing only if the basic requirements have been met. A case planner will be assigned to the project and will be responsible for a detailed review of the application and all exhibits to ensure that all required information is adequate and accurate. Incomplete applications due to missing or inadequate information will not be accepted for filing. Applicants may be asked to attend scheduled meetings pertaining to their project. These will include the Historic Site Preservation Board (HSPB) and the City Council.

HISTORIC SITE PRESERVATION BOARD (HSPB)

Once the application has been determined to be complete, the HSPB will review the application to determine whether the site meets the minimum qualifications for designation pursuant to Chapter 8.05 of the Palm Springs Municipal Code. If such determination is made, a public hearing will be scheduled for a future meeting.

A public hearing will be held by the HSPB to receive testimony from all interested persons concerning the Historic Site Designation. The public hearing may be continued from time to time, and upon complete consideration, the HSPB will make a recommendation to the City Council. Notice will be provided as indicated below.

CITY COUNCIL

After receiving the recommendation of the Historic Site Preservation Board, a public hearing will be held by the City Council to receive testimony from all interested persons concerning the requested Historic Site Designation. The public hearing may be continued from time to time, and upon complete consideration, the City Council will then conditionally approve, deny, or approve the application as submitted. The City Council's decision on the application is final.

NOTIFICATION

Prior to consideration of the application by the HSPB and the City Council, a notice of public hearing for an Historic Site Designation request will be mailed to all property owners within 400 feet of the subject property a minimum of ten (10) days prior to the hearing dates.



Office Use Only

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
Department of Planning Services

Date:
Case No.
HSPB No.
Planner:

HISTORIC SITE DESIGNATION APPLICATION

TO THE APPLICANT:

Your cooperation in completing this application and supplying the information requested will expedite City review of your application. Application submitted will not be considered until all submittal requirements are met. Staff may require additional information depending upon the specific project. Please submit this completed application and any subsequent material to the Department of Planning Services.

This form is to be used to nominate individual properties for Class 1 or 2 historic designations, or to nominate the formation of historic districts. Applicants are encouraged to review two bulletins from the US Department of Interior for additional information:

- "How to Complete National Register of Historic Places Registration Form" (National Register Bulletin 16A / <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb16a/>); and
- "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation" (National Register Bulletin 15; <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/>).

Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions in the Bulletins.

1. Property Information

Historic name: Casa Adaire
Other names: Not applicable
Address: 417 Hermosa Place, Palm Springs, CA 92262
Assessor Parcel Number: 505273002-6
Owner Name: Stephen and Nancie Cooper
Owner's Address: 1415 North Camino Centro
City: Palm Springs State: CA Zip: 92262
Telephone: (404) 372-6125
Fax number: Not applicable
E-mail address: billstewart54@gmail.com

2. Classifications

Ownership of Property. Fill as many boxes as apply.

- Private
- Public - Local
- Public - State
- Public - Federal

Category of Property. Fill only one box.

- Building (Note can include site)
- District
- Site (Exclusive of Structures)
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property. TOTAL must include at least One (1) in Contributing Column.

Contributing	Non-contributing	
2	3	Buildings (Contributing: original house and guest house; non-contributing: later additions to east wing, garage and later guest house)
4	2	Sites Structures (Contributing: swimming pool, reflecting pool, rock wall surrounding estate, octagonal covered gazebo; non-contributing: octagonal barbeque shelter, playhouse)
<hr/>		Objects
6	5	Total

If the building or site is part of a larger group of properties, enter the name of the multiple-property group; otherwise enter "N/A".
N/A.

3. Use or Function

Historic Use or Function: Private residence
Current Use or Function: Private residence

4. Description

Architect: Brewster & Benedict

Construction Date and Source: 1937 (*Desert Sun* newspaper archives)

Architectural Classification: Spanish-Colonial Revival

Construction Materials:

Foundation: Concrete slab

Walls: Frame wood construction covered with stucco

Roof: Tile
N/A

Other:

Building Description: *Attach a description of the Building/Site/District, including all character defining features, on one or more additional sheets. A thumb drive, containing detailed photographic information about Casa Adaire's exterior, etc., is provided with this nomination.*

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

Events

- (1) Fill this box if the property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

Persons

- (2) Fill this box if the property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

Architecture

- (3) Fill this box if the property reflects or exemplifies a particular period of national, State or local history, or

- (4) Fill this box if the property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or

- (5) Fill this box if the property represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or

- (6) Fill this box if the property represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

Archeology

- (7) Fill this box if the property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

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

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

6. Statement of Significance

Summary

Casa Adaire, located at 417 Hermosa Place, was constructed on Lots 35, 36, and 37, of Merito Vista Tract, in 1937 (see the grant deed in [Appendix X](#)).

First Owner, Walter Kirschner

On November 2, 1936, Richard Haden Hood sold Lots 35, 36, and 37 to Walter Kirschner.

Walter Kirschner (1893-1974) was the wealthy co-owner of the nationwide Grayson's chain of ladies' apparel shops, and was a friend and advisor to Presidents Roosevelt, Truman, and Eisenhower. Intended to be a retreat for the Roosevelt family, Casa Adaire was named for Kirschner's daughter Adaire (see full biography in [Appendix X](#)).

Subsequent Owners

Primary sources show the chain of ownership for Lots 35, 36, and 37, of Merito Vista Tract (which eventually became known as 417 Hermosa Place in what is commonly known as Old Las Palmas) as follows:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Owner(s)</u>
December 27, 1938	Earl E. Gibbs and Charlotte Gibbs
February 26, 1945	Anna K. Rives
March 20, 1951	Oak Spring Farm (Mr. & Mrs. Fred Crockett)
December 7, 1952	Leo Spitz
December 31, 1959	Joseph M. and Ednah Root Shapiro
November 22, 1967	Norman K. Winston
November 7, 1980	Cornet Creek Corporation
February 7, 1984	Scott D. Cameron
June 14, 1989	Scott D. Cameron, Trustee of Scott D. Cameron Family Trust
September 2, 1993	Bank of California, N.A.
March 7, 1994	Kenneth B. Shellan
January 26, 2007	Hermosa Mission, LLC
April 28, 2010	Cobblewood Partners, LP

The Architects

The architects of Casa Adaire were Floyd E. Brewster and Hiram Hudson Benedict (see [Appendix](#) for full biography and project list). Working in partnership from late 1935 through early 1938, Brewster & Benedict created a very large portfolio of some of Palm Springs' most iconic buildings of the period, though most have never been credited to them. Floyd

E. Brewster in particular was highly educated and very talented, and his partnership with the dynamic Brewster created some of the finest architecture in the 1930s. Because of this, Brewster & Benedict should be credited as master architects working in the Coachella Valley during this period. Casa Adaire is one of their most successful projects.

The Architecture

Today, according to property records, Casa Adaire is a single-family home, though zoned for multi-family because of the two guest houses. It currently has seven bedrooms, eight and a half baths, and is a 9,532 square foot stucco structure with a gently pitched red tile roof.

As designed by architects Brewster & Benedict in late 1936, Casa Adaire was built on three parcels which when combined total 1.51 acres. The site plan exhibits masterfully designed Beaux Arts symmetry and formality, with a series of primary and secondary axes around which the elements of the site are organized. The primary north/south axis bisects the parcel into two equal rectangles; this axis begins at the center the house's dining room (which itself was the center of the primary wing), continuing out through the center of the reflecting pond and swimming pool beyond, and terminating at a wall adorned with a decorative Claycraft tile panel depicting a peacock. A series of secondary axes, combined with the primary axis, divide the property into eight equal octants, which was used as a device to organize the site plan and placement of the house.

The entire property is enclosed by a rock wall, typical of walls built during this period in the Tennis Club and Old Las Palmas developments. Originally, a stone arched entry with gate pierced the wall at the northeast corner of the stone wall, a pathway leading to a heavy wooden paneled door on the faceted south east corner of the home.

Casa Adaire was designed to be a contemporary house in function, but the elements of the design were loosely based on the haciendas of the Andalusian region of southern Spain, with their Hispano-Moorish influence. Floyd Brewster described the house as "of the hacienda type in Spanish desert design" in the *Desert Sun* in 1936. The house is wood-framed, with creamy white stucco walls and a gently sloped red tiled roof (these tiles were originally whitewashed). Windows and trim are painted a blue-green characteristic of the Spanish-Colonial Revival style of George Washington Smith and others of the period. The main house is a "U" shape, which encloses a panel of lawn inset with a tiled reflecting pool. On the primary (north) façade facing Hermosa Place, two asymmetrical bay windows with carved wood vertical supports and elegantly thin window fenestration, animate the otherwise simple elevation. The tiled roof has several staggered heights, typical of the Andalusian hacienda; exposed, curved rafter tails support the whitewashed, red tile roof. A second story open air lookout tower is topped with a hipped tile roof. Mismatched yet distinctive Andalusian-inspired chimneys and colorfully tiled pyramidal towers added to the rambling hacienda feeling.

Inside, the large rooms were originally never more than one room deep, which provided an abundance of natural light from at least two exposures. The primary wing facing Hermosa Place features a large 30x17 foot living room, with fireplace and open beamed 12' ceilings. Originally, pointed arched doorways harkened back to the Hispano-Moorish

influence of the Andalusian region of southern Spain (these arched doorways have been modified). Double French doors open out onto the covered loggias, while a large bay picture window faces the garden in front. The formal dining room is 20x13 feet, again with French doors and a large picture window facing Hermosa. A large kitchen and garage, and an entry hall, complete the primary north wing.

The east wing has a hallway with masonry spiral staircase to the lookout tower and which continues to the large private suite of rooms for Walter Kirschner. Off the master bathroom was an outdoor area enclosed by high stucco walls, and completely tiled in light blue-green hand-painted tile. This presumably had a much smaller pool for Kirschner's use, which he kept heated to 90 degrees while he was in residence. This enclosure had access to the rear garden by a tall arched door in an arched opening. This area has since been modified. (see appendix X)

The west wing, in addition to the garage, has an attached guest suite with sitting room and bathroom. Like the rest of the house, all the rooms in these two east and west wings have open beamed ceilings, ample windows and French doors leading out to the covered loggias.

On the west side of the property, separate from but close to the main house, was a guest cottage meant for the use of the Roosevelt family. Inside, a large open-beamed combination sitting room/bedroom is adjacent to one of the most spectacular rooms in the entire house, a large bathroom completely tiled in a dizzying array of hand painted decorative tile, recalled the lavish Moorish-inspired bathrooms of southern Spain. Kirschner had bought the inventory of a Southern California decorative tile distributor who went bankrupt during the Depression. That inventory included a large quantity of Claycraft tile, examples of which can be seen in this bathroom.

As is typical of the Mediterranean Revival inspired Californian architecture of the 1930s, there is an easy relationship between indoors and out, and this is enhanced by beautifully designed gardens. All rooms at the rear of the house open onto the covered loggia, providing easy access to the landscaped spaces. The landscape design at Casa Adaire showed the sure hand of a highly trained landscape architect, but the project cannot be positively attributed to any known practitioner. It does not show up on the project lists of most of the most prominent Southern California practitioners of the day who were known to have worked in the Coachella Valley (no licensed landscape architects were living and working in Palm Springs until 1958), but the landscape could possibly have been planned by legendary Santa Barbara landscape architect Lockwood de Forest. Brewster had worked with de Forest on many projects before and during his years with architect George Washington Smith (see Appendix X – Brewster & Benedict). Some of de Forest's signatures are present, such as the emphasis on the borrowed vista of San Jacinto, and the contrast between a strong axial design with a more informal landscape at the front of the property. In an email from his son Kellam, "the lack of a listing [on his project list] does not rule out that the garden wasn't designed by my father, Lockwood de Forest. My father did make trips to Palm Springs in the 1930s. I have always assumed that he had a client or clients in Palm Springs. Sometimes my father would just sketch his ideas on a piece of paper and leave the paper with the client" (email from Kellam de Forest, April 20, 2018). If this is the case, it can be assumed the landscape was installed according to de Forest's

sketch by a local nursery, probably Millard Wright, who often installed the landscapes designed by Los Angeles landscape architects at the time.

The circulation at the front of the house has a driveway leading to the garage, and originally had a pathway to the front door from the northeast corner of the rock wall enclosure, but was primarily dominated by a large grass panel, which Kirschner turned into an exotic cactus specimen garden, with three large beds of a variety of mature cacti. The cactus garden was created by the C.D. Young Cactus Nursery and installed by J.A. Wakeland of Cabazon. (*Desert Sun* newspaper October 29, 1937). The landscape at the front of the house was informal and asymmetrical, following the asymmetrical design of the primary façade. A single Queen palm was planted next to the front door, around which grew a large flowering vine. A single Mexican fan palm was placed near the entry to the garage.

At the rear of the house, the landscape is more formal, anchored by a pair of large *Washingtonia filifera* specimens at each junction of the "U" shaped loggia, the square columns of which were originally adorned with trellised grids to support flowering vines, while another pair of sago palms flanked the reflecting pool. A pair of date palms originally anchored the view towards the covered gazebo. Looking north towards the swimming pool, two symmetrical groves of stately Italian cypress flanked the low wall featuring the tiled peacock panel, emphasizing the primary north/south axis. (These Italian cypress no longer exist) Along the east/west secondary axis which runs through the tiled swimming pool, a pair of mature *Washingtonia filifera* flanked the path running west, while a pair of deciduous trees flanked the path leading east on the opposite side. A hexagonal, white stucco open-air gazebo adjacent to the west wing and overlooks the pool and is topped by a hipped tile roof, the floor and wainscot inside tiled with more of Kirschner's collection of hand-painted decorative tile.

The highlight of the rear garden is the enormous swimming pool completely tiled in a variety of Hispano-Moorish inspired patterns, as well as solid colored field tile, all of which came from Kirschner's stash of tile. The pool measures 68' 7" x 25' 5" with a deep end of 9 feet. The perimeter of the pool originally featured a raised lip tiled in deep blue or terra cotta colored hexagonal hand-painted field tile, bordered by yellow, and banded with vertical green tiles. The pool was surrounded by ten light standards -- short tiled square columns, which were originally topped by round white glass globe shades. Only two of these remain.

In summary, Casa Adaire exhibits many features which place it solidly within the Spanish-Colonial Revival canon including light stucco walls, tiled roof, loggias enclosing a patio with water feature, and decorative hand-painted tile. Photographs of selected architectural details can be found in [Appendix VII](#).

Changes and Additions to Casa Adaire

No blueprints have turned up to determine the original design of Casa Adaire, but through photographs and building permits, a good sense of what changes took place and when can be established. The following additions and modifications have been made to the residence since Walter Kirschner sold it in 1938, most of which happened in 1985:

- In March 1951, an addition was made at the time Mrs. Anna Rives sold the property to Mr. and Mrs. Fred Crockett. This work was valued at \$1,000, and the building permit mentions wood frame and stucco. This is probably a bathroom addition on the south side of the west wing, near the open-air octagonal gazebo.
- In January 1953, a permit for work valued at \$3,000 describes the addition of a bedroom and bath, with covered patio. The addition would be wood-framed and stucco, with a tile roof. This appears to be the addition of a second guest cottage near the original guest cottage on the western part of the site. Another permit mentions the addition of a bathtub, wall heater, sink and toilet. A 1972 aerial photo shows this second guest house already built. A further addition to this guest house was built in 1985.
- By 1967, when the TV show "Mayberry RFD" filmed three episodes at Casa Adaire, Kirschner's cactus garden had been replaced by a long circular driveway, and a new large opening was cut into the northeast section of the stone wall at the perimeter to provide access to the driveway.
- In 1968, a "small therapy pool" and associated furnace were installed.
- The largest changes to the house came under the ownership of Scott D. Cameron, who owned the house from 1984 to 1993. Under Cameron's ownership, the following changes took place:
 - Cameron added 720 square feet to the garage, making it a larger tandem garage.
 - The later guest house got a 598 square foot addition, and a 640 square foot octagonal covered patio was built adjacent to the peacock tiled mural near the pool.
 - The major change took place adjacent to the east wing, where a large addition was built adjacent to the east boundary of the dwelling, adding a long hallway with two new guest suites with adjacent bathrooms; a bedroom/office; to complement the existing master bedroom, a private living room, a large dressing room and a large octagonal master bathroom, keeping with the theme of octagonal buildings on the site, were added.
 - The foyer and front door configuration were modified, and a grand arched entrance with double glass paned doors was built, flanked by barley twist columns and stained-glass windows with the initial "C" for Cameron incorporated. The columns supported an arched pediment, also monogrammed with the initial "C," adorned on top by a pair of marble urns containing fruit, and a pointed marble urn in the center. The tile roof above the foyer was raised, which dwarfed the second story lookout somewhat.
 - This new addition reduced the size of the adjacent citrus grove, but materials and architectural vocabulary remained consistent with that established by Brewster & Benedict in 1936.
- In 1986, Cameron had a long block wall built along the west side of the property.

These changes and additions were done sensitively and are nearly all within secondary or tertiary portions of the site and do not diminish the historic or architectural significance of the primary elevations of the residence, especially when viewed from the street.

Other changes that can't be attributed to an owner or year include:

- The removal of eight of the ten tiled light standards surrounding the pool; only the pair flanking the steps leading into the pool remain.
- The raised tiled lip surrounding the pool has been removed, the paving around the pool is today brick laid in a herringbone pattern.
- In the rear garden, the groupings of Italian cypress, sago palms, and some other plant material has been removed or replaced, with the introduction of some other species which are not incompatible. Also, the pathways leading from the swimming pool designed to emphasize the secondary east/west axis are now missing.
- The front of the house has been landscaped with a formal parterre garden featuring and beds of white roses, enclosed by low boxwood hedges; a mature multi-trunk olive tree underplanted with lavender; small panels of turf; magenta bougainvillea espaliered against the rock walls; a large fountain; and groupings of mature palm trees. These changes, while not original to the house, still reflect landscape design from the period of significance, and don't detract from the overall feeling.

Local Architectural Context

Casa Adaire should be viewed within the context of the period between World Wars I and II, when Palm Springs was becoming established as a fashionable winter resort for wealthy and/or famous people. According to Historic Resource Group's draft [Palm Springs] *Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings*, "In the 1920s and 1930s a number of architects and designers from Los Angeles and elsewhere worked in Palm Springs, designing Spanish and Mediterranean Revival-style residences primarily as winter homes for seasonal residents. As the focus on regional expression through architecture evolved, period and exotic revival styles took hold throughout California. Mediterranean Revival and Spanish Colonial Revival examples prevailed, in large measure due to the Panama-California Exposition, held in San Diego in 1915. Well suited to the region's warm, dry climate, the Spanish Colonial and Mediterranean Revival styles in particular appealed to many Southern California residents for their exotic appearance and sense of history."

Site Description

Location. Casa Adaire is located on a prominent corner in the Merito Vista tract in what is now commonly known as Old Las Palmas. The residence is bounded on the north by Hermosa Place, by the enormous de Laitre Residence to the west, by two residential parcels to the south, and by North Mission Road to the east. The topography of the lot is relatively flat. The site includes mature palm trees, boxwood hedges, roses, sago palms, etc. A legal description of the property is provided at [Appendix III](#).

Permit History

May 12, 1949	Electrical	8 outlets, 2 fixtures
March 19, 1951 and	Building	Remodel existing building per plan, frame stucco (permit dated 1941, but is issued to Rives, who didn't own property until 1951; \$1,000 value of work)
May 20, 1951	Building	Metal canopy alongside swimming pool
September 13, 1951	Building	Sprinkler system
January 12, 1953	Plumbing	1 bathtub, 1 wall heater, 1 lavatory, 1 toilet
January 21, 1953	Building	Add bedroom and bath; also covered patio; frame and stucco, tile roof as per plan (\$3,000 value of work)
February 13, 1953	Electrical	11 outlets, 4 fixtures
September 2, 1955	Plumbing	1 cesspool
April 27, 1967	Building	Install Furnace and 7 ½ ton a.c. unit
January 10, 1968	Swimming Pool	Underground wiring; install furnace
January 10, 1968	Swimming Pool	Install Small Therapy Pool
September 25, 1984	Building	Hookup to City Sewer
May 22, 1985	Building	Multiple additions to single family dwelling: added square footage to dwelling 3,096; garage 720; guest 598; patio 640
November 7, 1985	Building	Construct gunite 6x10 spa under permitted patio
June 19, 1986	Building	Masonry Wall – 25' of 4 ½ high block wall and 275' of 6' high block wall along west side yard
November 3, 1987	Building	Construct new stairway access to existing pool equipment pit. Include changeout or direction of pool heater

BACKGROUND / HISTORIC CONTEXT

The relatively short history of Palm Springs can be organized into several distinct periods, as defined by the Historic Resources Group's *Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings*. These include the following:

- Native American Settlement to 1969
- Early Development (1884-1918)

- Palm Springs between the Wars (1919-1941)
- Palm Springs During World War II (1939-1945)
- Post-World War II Palm Springs (1945-1969)

It is within the context of the period “Palm Springs between the Wars” that Casa Adaire will be evaluated. The following context statement is edited from Historic Resource Group’s *Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings*:

Palm Springs Between the Wars (1919-1941): This context explores the transformation of Palm Springs from a modest spa town into a luxury winter resort in the years between the First and Second World Wars. By 1918 Nellie Coffman and her sons, George Roberson and Earl Coffman, understood the town’s potential, not as a health spa for asthmatics and consumptives, but as an exclusive winter resort for the well-to-do, and set about transforming their sanatorium into the luxurious Desert Inn, one of the most renowned hostelryes in the country. Their success inspired the development of two equally spectacular hotels in the 1920s and cemented the town’s growing reputation as one of the country’s premier luxury winter resorts. The Oasis Hotel, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, Jr. (known as Lloyd Wright) opened in 1925 by Pearl McCallum McManus; and the grand Hotel El Mirador, designed by Walker and Eisen in a sumptuous Spanish Colonial Revival style and opened in 1927.

Automobile tourism played an early and important part of the success and growth of Palm Springs as a destination. In 1914, highway bonds were passed in Riverside County for extensive road improvements and construction of new routes. As part of these efforts, the highway connecting Los Angeles and Palm Springs was completed in October 1916. Pavement of the highway through to Indio was completed in 1924, allowing travelers to drive all the way from Los Angeles to Palm Springs in less than 4 hours, all on paved roads.

The first residential subdivisions were recorded in the early 1920s on tracts largely concentrated on land immediately surrounding the existing village and the resorts. Several tracts were subdivided by Prescott T. Stevens, along with other prominent early Palm Springs settlers including Pearl McManus, Raymond Cree, and Harriet Cody.

In the 1920s, business tycoons, industrialists, and other wealthy businessmen, along with the Hollywood elite discovered the desert and began to transform Palm Springs into an international resort. While the movie stars primarily stayed at the resort hotels when visiting Palm Springs, other wealthy residents and seasonal visitors started building architect-designed estates and drawing increased attention to the growing resort town.

The 1930s saw Palm Springs blossom, as more and more celebrities made it their winter weekend getaway, and more development sprang up to house and entertain them. By the start of World War II, Palm Springs had so long been thought of as a movie star’s playground that some of the neighborhoods were described as “Beverly Hills in the desert.” One section was so filled with film notables, the neighborhood was ultimately dubbed the “Movie Colony.”

In the 1930s important figures in finance and business continued to flock to the desert in the winter, helping to cement the village's reputation as one of the nation's top winter resort destinations.

Architecturally, the Spanish and Mediterranean Revival styles were the town's dominant architectural expression during this period. In addition, there are examples of simplified Ranch houses featuring rustic details and board-and-batten exterior walls. Beginning in the 1930s, prominent Modernist architects began making significant contributions to the architectural landscape in Palm Springs.

EVALUATION:

Criterion 2: Significant Persons. Criterion 2 recognizes properties associated with the lives of persons who made meaningful contributions to the national, state or local history. Walter Kirschner was a prominent owner of a national chain of ladies' apparel shops Grayson-Robinson and S. Klein. More importantly, Kirschner was a friend and advisor to Presidents Roosevelt, Truman and Eisenhower, and was an early proponent of the documentation of the atrocities of the Holocaust, to ensure future generations would not forget this horrific period, Kirschner encouraged President Roosevelt and General Eisenhower towards that end. Casa Adaire was built as the first in a series of desert retreats for members of the Roosevelt, Truman and Eisenhower families. Hence, the residence qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site on the local registry under Criterion 2.

ARCHITECTURE (Criteria 3 – 6)

Criterion 3: (That reflects or exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history). Casa Adaire, completed in 1937, exhibits many stylistic markers which place it directly in the historic context of Palm Springs' Period between World Wars I and II. The private residence represents a prime and largely intact example of the significant Spanish Colonial Revival architecture for which Palm Springs is widely known. As such, the residence may be viewed as an important component of the historic trends that have come to define Palm Springs' image as a center of important Spanish Colonial Revival architecture, i.e., an historic trend that exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history. The residence qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site on the local registry under Criterion 3.

Criterion 4: (That embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or) Type, Period, and Method of Construction: "Type, period, or method of construction" refers to the way certain properties are related to one another by cultural tradition or function, by dates of construction or style, or by choice or availability of materials and technology. To be eligible under this Criterion, a property must clearly illustrate, through "distinctive characteristics" a pattern of features common to a particular class of resources. "Distinctive characteristics" are the physical features or traits that commonly recur in individual types, periods, or methods of construction. To be eligible, a property must clearly contain enough of those characteristics to be considered a true representative of a particular type, period, or method of construction. Characteristics can be expressed in terms such as form, proportion, structure, plan, style, or materials.

Casa Adaire is eligible under the theme of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture because it possesses distinctive characteristics that make up the many qualities of the style, such as white stucco walls, a red-tiled roof, wide covered loggias enclosing a patio with water feature, hand painted decorative tile with a Hispano-Moorish influence, open beamed ceilings, stone wall enclosing the property, classic landscape using plant materials typical of the 1930s in Palm Springs, and an architectural design that strives to create an easy open relationship between indoors and outdoors. As such, the residence is eligible under this criterion because it represents an important example of building practices in Palm Springs in the 1930s. The residence qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site on the local registry under Criterion 4.

Criterion 5: (That (a): represents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age; or (b): that possesses high artistic value).

5a: Work of a Master: In the case of Casa Adaire, the work of Brewster & Benedict can certainly be described as the “work of a master” in view of their individual and joint histories of architectural excellence (see [appendices IV and V](#)).

5b: Properties possessing high artistic values: High artistic values may be expressed in many ways, including areas as diverse as community design or planning, engineering, and sculpture. As an example of the Spanish Colonial Revival, the residence certainly articulates the best of Mediterranean inspired Californian architecture to a level of excellence and confidence that, in total, could easily be considered an aesthetic ideal. For its high artistic values, the residence qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Site on the local registry under Criterion 5.

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

INTEGRITY

Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance. To be listed in the local registry, a property must not only be shown to be significant under the criteria, but it also must have integrity. The evaluation of integrity is sometimes a subjective judgment, but it must always be grounded in an understanding of a property's physical features and how they relate to its significance. Historic properties either retain integrity (that is, convey their significance) or they do not. The definition of integrity includes seven aspects or qualities. To retain historic integrity a property will always possess several, and usually most, of the aspects. The retention of specific aspects of integrity is paramount for a property to convey its significance. Determining which of these aspects are most important to a particular property requires knowing why, where, and when the property is significant. The following sections define the seven aspects and explain how they combine to produce integrity.

LOCATION

Location is the place where an historic property was constructed or the place where an historic event occurred. The relationship between the property and its location is often important to understanding why the property was created or why something happened. The actual location of a historic property, complemented by its setting, is particularly important in recapturing the sense of historic events and persons. Except in rare cases, the relationship between a property and its historic associations is destroyed if the property is moved. ***Casa Adaire remains in its original location and therefore qualifies under this aspect.***

DESIGN

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. It results from conscious decisions made during the original conception and planning of a property and applies to activities as diverse as community planning, engineering, architecture, and landscape architecture. Design includes such elements as organization of space, proportion, scale, technology, ornamentation, and materials. A property's design reflects historic functions and technologies as well as aesthetics. It includes such considerations as the structural system; massing; arrangement of spaces; pattern of fenestration; textures and colors of surface materials; type, amount, and style of ornamental detailing. ***Casa Adaire's essential characteristics of form, plan, space, structure, and style have survived largely intact. Similarly, the structural system; massing; arrangement of spaces; pattern of fenestration; and the type, amount, and style of detailing have survived largely intact. The addition to the east is largely hidden from view, and is done using the same architectural vocabulary, and quality of construction, as the original structure.***

SETTING

Setting is the physical environment of a historic property. Whereas location refers to the specific place where a property was built or an event occurred, setting refers to the *character* of the place in which the property played its historical role. It involves *how*, not just *where*, the property is situated and its relationship to surrounding features and open space. Setting often reflects the basic physical conditions under which a property was built and the functions it was intended to serve. In addition, the way in which a property is positioned in its environment can reflect the designer's concept of nature and aesthetic preferences. ***The setting of Casa Adaire continues to reflect the architects' original design relationship of site and structure.***

MATERIALS

Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. The choice and combination of materials reveals the preferences of those who created the property and indicate the availability of particular types of materials and technologies. ***Casa Adaire's materials successfully represent the best of Spanish Colonial Revival design of the period, with high quality but simple stucco, tile, wood and glass. Later changes were done using the same materials and quality of***

construction and are done in such a way as to not negatively impact the overall historic fabric of the original building.

WORKMANSHIP

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. It is the evidence of artisans' labor and skill in constructing or altering a building, structure, object, or site. Workmanship can apply to the property as a whole or to its individual components. It can be expressed in vernacular methods of construction and plain finishes or in highly sophisticated configurations and ornamental detailing. It can be based on common traditions or innovative period techniques. Workmanship is important because it can furnish evidence of the technology of a craft, illustrate the aesthetic principles of a historic or prehistoric period, and reveal individual, local, regional, or national applications of both technological practices and aesthetic principles. Examples of workmanship in historic buildings include tooling, carving, painting, graining, turning, and joinery. ***The workmanship of Casa Adaire is comprised of high quality finishes and materials, including hand painted decorative tile, stucco, red tile roof and carved wood detailing. The residence continues to express a high degree of period workmanship.***

FEELING

Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. It results from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey the property's historic character. For example, a rural historic district retaining original design, materials, workmanship, and setting will relate the feeling of agricultural life in the 19th century. ***Casa Adaire is sited on a prominent lot which takes advantage of panoramic mountain views to the west. Accordingly, the residence and contributing structures retain their original integrity of feeling.***

ASSOCIATION

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. A property retains association if it *is* the place where the event or activity occurred and is sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to an observer. Like feeling, association requires the presence of physical features that convey a property's historic character. For example, a Revolutionary War battlefield whose natural and man-made elements have remained intact since the 18th century will retain its quality of association with the battle. Because feeling and association depend on individual perceptions, their retention alone is never sufficient to support eligibility of a property for the National Register. ***Casa Adaire is an important example of a custom-designed Spanish-Colonial Revival private residence in Palm Springs. Accordingly, it continues its association with a pattern of events that have made a meaningful contribution to the community.***

INTEGRITY SUMMARY: Casa Adaire appears to be in excellent condition partially due to the use of construction materials suitable for the harsh desert environment. This integrity analysis confirms that the building and site of Casa Adaire still possess all seven

aspects of integrity. *Aside from some additions that are relatively hidden from public view, and which were designed using sympathetic materials and workmanship, the original footprint of Casa Adaire remains intact. In summary, the residence still possesses a high degree of integrity sufficient to qualify for designation as a Class 1 Historic Site.*

8. Bibliography

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

Xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower connection specifically

9. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Approximately 1.51 acres (or 65,775 square feet)

Property Boundary Description: See **Appendix II**

10. Prepared By

Name/title: Steven Keylon

Organization: Submitted on behalf of the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation

Street address: 1775 East Palm Canyon Drive, Suite 110-195

City: Palm Springs State: CA Zip: 92264

Telephone: (760) 837-7117

e-mail address: info@pspreservationfoundation.org

11. Required Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed application form. **Do not mount any exhibits on a board.**

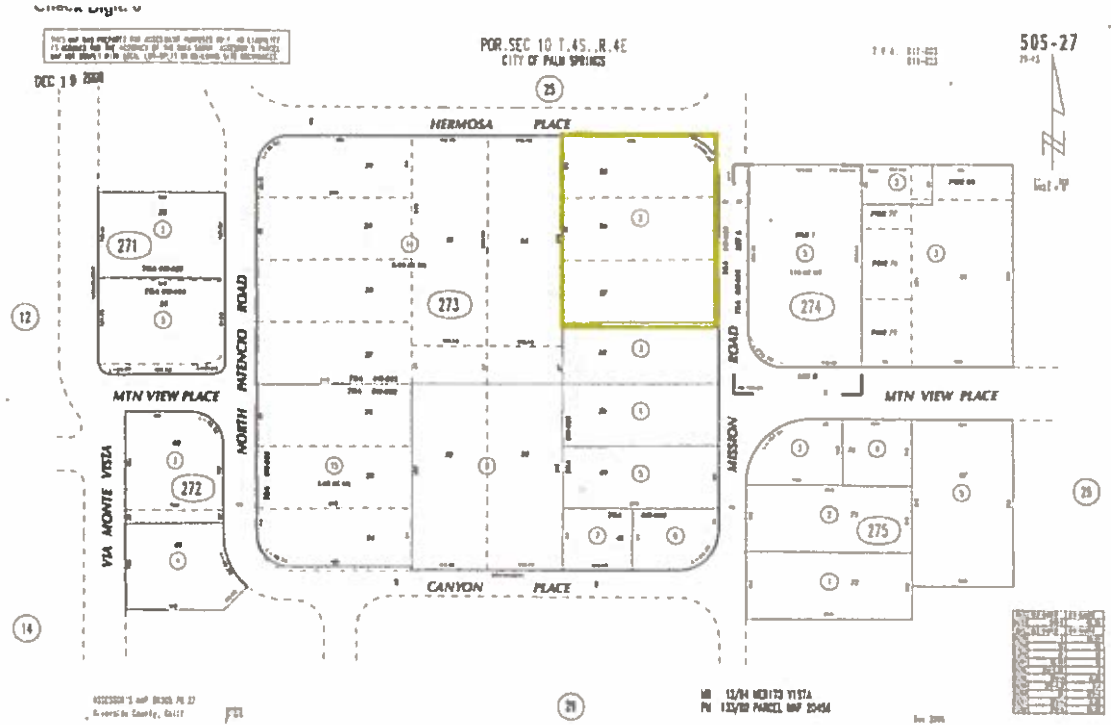
1. **Attachment Sheets.** Include all supplemental information based on application form above).
2. **Maps:** For Historic Districts, include a sketch map identifying the proposed district's boundaries.
3. **Photographs:** Eight (8) sets of color photographs showing each elevation of the property and its surroundings.
4. **Non-owner's Notarized Signature:** If the applicant is not the owner, a notarized affidavit shall be provided (see following page).
5. **Site Plan:** One 1/8" to 1/4" scale drawing of the site, and eight reduction copies (8 1/2 x 11 inches). The site plan shall show all of the following: Property boundaries, north arrow and scale, all existing buildings, structures, mechanical equipment, landscape materials, fences, walls, sidewalks, driveways, parking areas showing location of parking spaces, and signs. **Indicate the square footage and use of each building and the date(s) of construction.**
6. **Public Hearing Labels:** Three (3) sets of typed self-adhesive labels of all property owners, lessees, and sub-lessees of record. **The labels shall include the Assessor's parcel number, owner's name and mailing address of each property with 400 feet from the exterior limits of the subject property.** Additionally, all Assessor Parcel Maps clearly indicating the 400-foot radius and a certified letter from a title company licensed to conduct business in Riverside County, California shall be submitted.

Note: If any property on this list is owned by the United States Government in trust for the Agua Caliente Indian Tribe or individual allottee, copies of notices with postage paid envelopes will be submitted to the Bureau of Indian Affairs to notify the individual Indian land owners of the public hearings.

APPENDICES

I Owner's Letter of Support

II Assessor's Map



III

Grant Deed (which includes Legal Description)

RICHARD HAZEN HOOD)
TO)
WALTER KINGSCHER)

In consideration of Ten and no/100 Dollars RICHARD HAZEN HOOD, a single man, does hereby grant to WALTER KINGSCHER, an unmarried man, all that Real Property situate in the County of Riverside, State of California, described as follows:

Lots Thirty five (35) Thirty-six (36) and Thirty-seven (37) of Maric Vista, as shown by map on file in Book 24, page 64 of Maps, records of said Riverside County;

EXCEPT TO:

Second installment of general and special taxes for the fiscal year 1936-37;

Second installment of Coachella Valley County Water District taxes for the fiscal year 1936-37;

Conditions, restrictions, reservations, rights, rights of way and easements of record.

WITNESSE my hand this 2nd day of November 1936.

Richard Hazen Hood

U.S.I.P.S. #0.20, cancelled

410

State of California)
County of Riverside) ss.

On this 2nd day of November in the year one thousand nine hundred thirty six before me, F. G. Lawrence a Notary Public in and for said County and State, personally appeared Richard Hazen Hood known to me to be the person described in and whose name is subscribed to the within instrument, and acknowledged that he executed the same.

WITNESS my hand and official seal the day and year in this certificate first above written.

(NOTARIAL SEAL)

F. G. Lawrence
Notary Public in and for said
County and State.
My Commission expires July 13, 1937.

#107

Received for record Nov 13, 1936 at 2 o'clock P. M. at request of Security Title Ins. & Trus. Co. Copied in Book 10, 304 of Official Records, page 404 of seq., Records of Riverside County, California.

John H. Coe

John H. Coe, Recorder

Composed: Corriat, R. Alfred; Designer: J. Parsons



IV Notable Later Owners

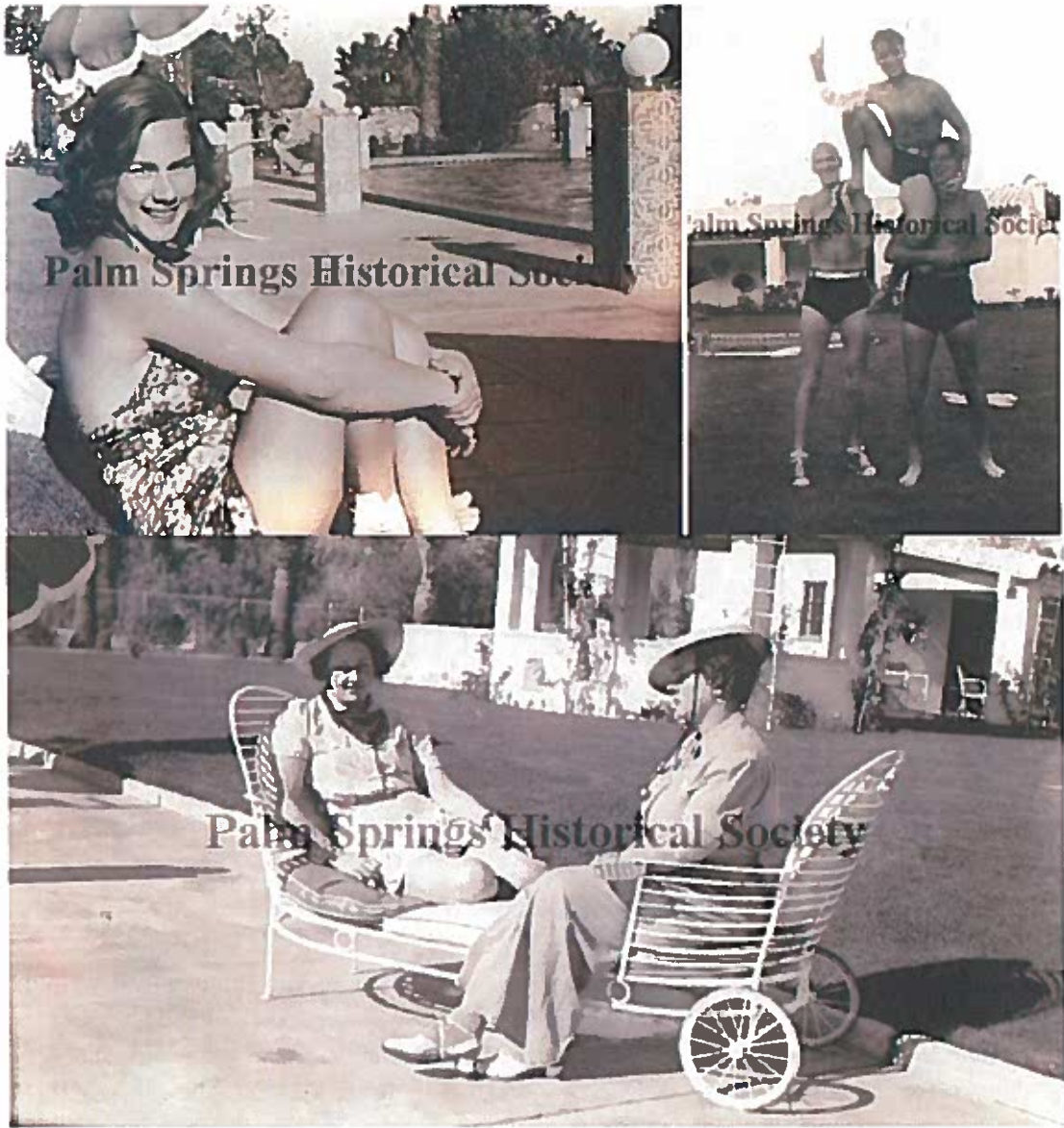


Swim party at the Gibbs Home, ca 1940. Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society

MR. AND MRS. EARL GIBBS

Retired manufacturer Earl Gibbs and his wife Catherine Gibbs had an estate in Evanston, Illinois and the Old Mill Farm at Dowagiac, Michigan, where they raised thoroughbred horses. In the middle 1930s the Gibbs' began spending much of the year in Palm Springs, taking a house at Smoke Tree Ranch with their daughters Marjorie, Charlotte and Barbara. The girls went to Palm Springs High School, and Marjorie was training to become an airplane pilot, becoming the youngest licensed female pilot in the country in 1938. She was soon attending UCLA, commuting back and forth in her plane. In December 1938 the Gibbs' purchased Casa Adaire from Walter Kirschner for \$70,000, and the estate became the lively site for many social events.

Gibbs was a member of the Vaqueros del Desierto, and in 1940 was appointed President of the Desert Circus, making that event a great success for many years. The following year he began managing the Palm Springs Field Club, bringing it out of the red.

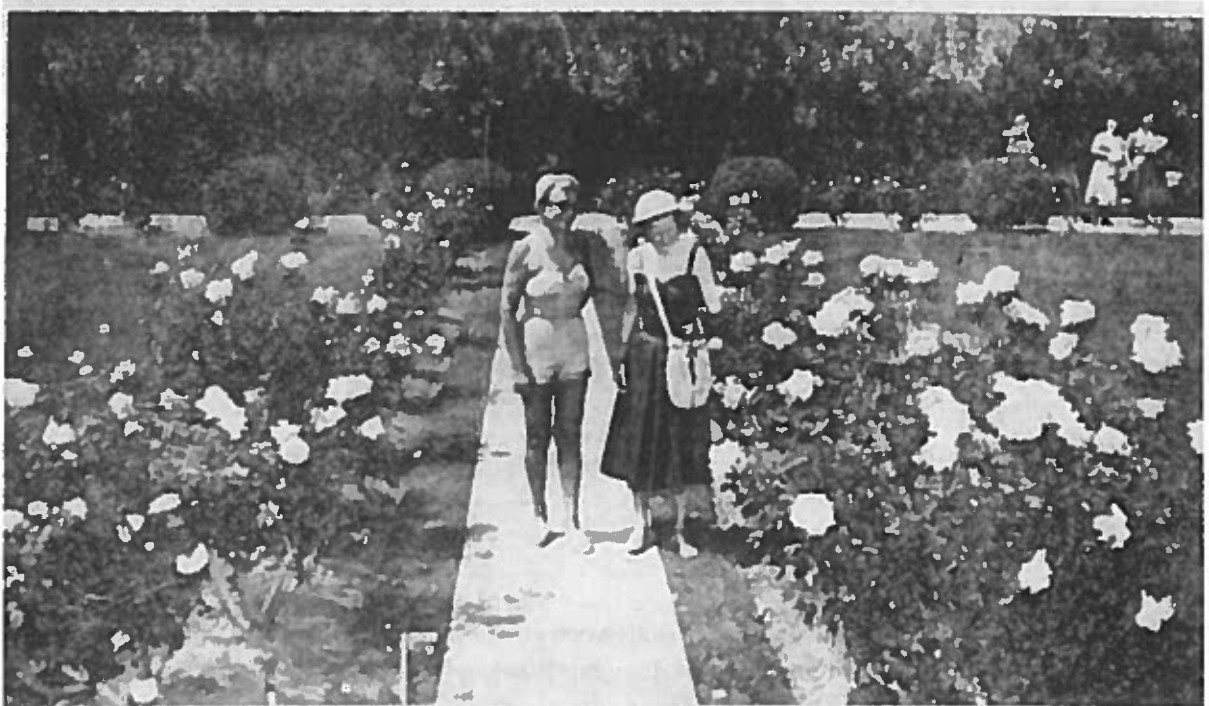


Gibbs Family Photos, ca. 1940, courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society. Top left, Marjorie Gibbs, the youngest female pilot in the country.

In 1941 Gibbs bought a horse ranch in Banning, where he began planning another estate. With the advent of World War II, Gibbs served two years in the Navy in the purchase and supply department, in Washington, D.C., where his family joined him. They rented Casa Adaire to Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Giberson of Texas, finally selling the house in February 1945 to Mrs. Anna K. Rives. Gibbs died in La Jolla in 1946 at only 61 years old, of a sudden illness.

MRS. ANNA K. RIVES

Wealthy lumber baron Judson C. Rives and his wife Anna had a stately home at 1130 Westchester Place in Los Angeles. After he died in 1940, his widow Anna began spending time in Palm Springs, buying Casa Adaire in 1945. For the next several years, she would split her time between the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Palm Springs. After selling the house in 1951 to Mr. and Mrs. Fred Crockett, she resided primarily in Beverly Hills, but returned to the desert each season until her death in 1957.



IN THE GARDEN—For the third year the Garden Club has arranged a tour of five of the Village's most beautiful gardens. Around 1:30 are expected to make the tour tomorrow afternoon. Pictured is the garden of Mrs. Leo Spitz on Hermosa place, which

will be visited. Mr. Spitz, executive head of production for Universal, bought the property in December and the family moved here from Beverly Hills. Shown with Mrs. Spitz is Mrs. Frank Bennett (on right), president of the Garden Club.

LEO AND FRANCES "FRANKIE" SPITZ

Former attorney Leo Spitz retired as head of production at Universal-International Pictures in 1953, having earlier organized International Pictures with William Goetz. He had started at Paramount in the 1930s, before going on to RKO-Radio Pictures. Spitz and his wife Frankie bought Casa Adaire in December 1952. Leo Spitz died in April 1957, and several months later, in October, Mike Todd and his wife Elizabeth Taylor rented Casa Adaire, spending as much time there with their family as their schedules would allow. On Thursday, February 27 1958, Elizabeth Taylor celebrated her 26th birthday at Casa Adaire, the *Desert Sun* reporting that Mike Todd had "made a production" of out of her birthday presents, which were presented "grab bag style, in a huge man-sized paper sack." The gifts included a long black mink stole from Furs by Courtney. They returned the weekend of March 15th, leaving Palm Springs for Los Angeles Sunday night, to prepare for a trip to New York. However, Taylor got laryngitis so she cancelled her plans to accompany Todd on the trip. Todd was

killed in a plane crash in New Mexico on March 22, 1958. They had leased Casa Adaire through April 20.

EDNAH ROOT SHAPIRO

In December 1959, Frankie Spitz sold Casa Adaire to Joseph and Ednah Root Shapiro. She was founder and president of Toy Clinics of America, Inc. creator of dolls and toys which had "proven so beneficial to rehabilitation of physically and mentally handicapped persons in institutions and hospitals throughout the United States." Their primary residence was in New York City, though they also had a Connecticut farm with thoroughbreds.

NORMAN K. WINSTON

In November 1967 Casa Adaire was sold to New York developer and Democratic party fundraiser Norman K. Winston. After his death, the house was sold to the Coronet Creek Corporation, who sold it in 1984 to Scott D. Cameron.

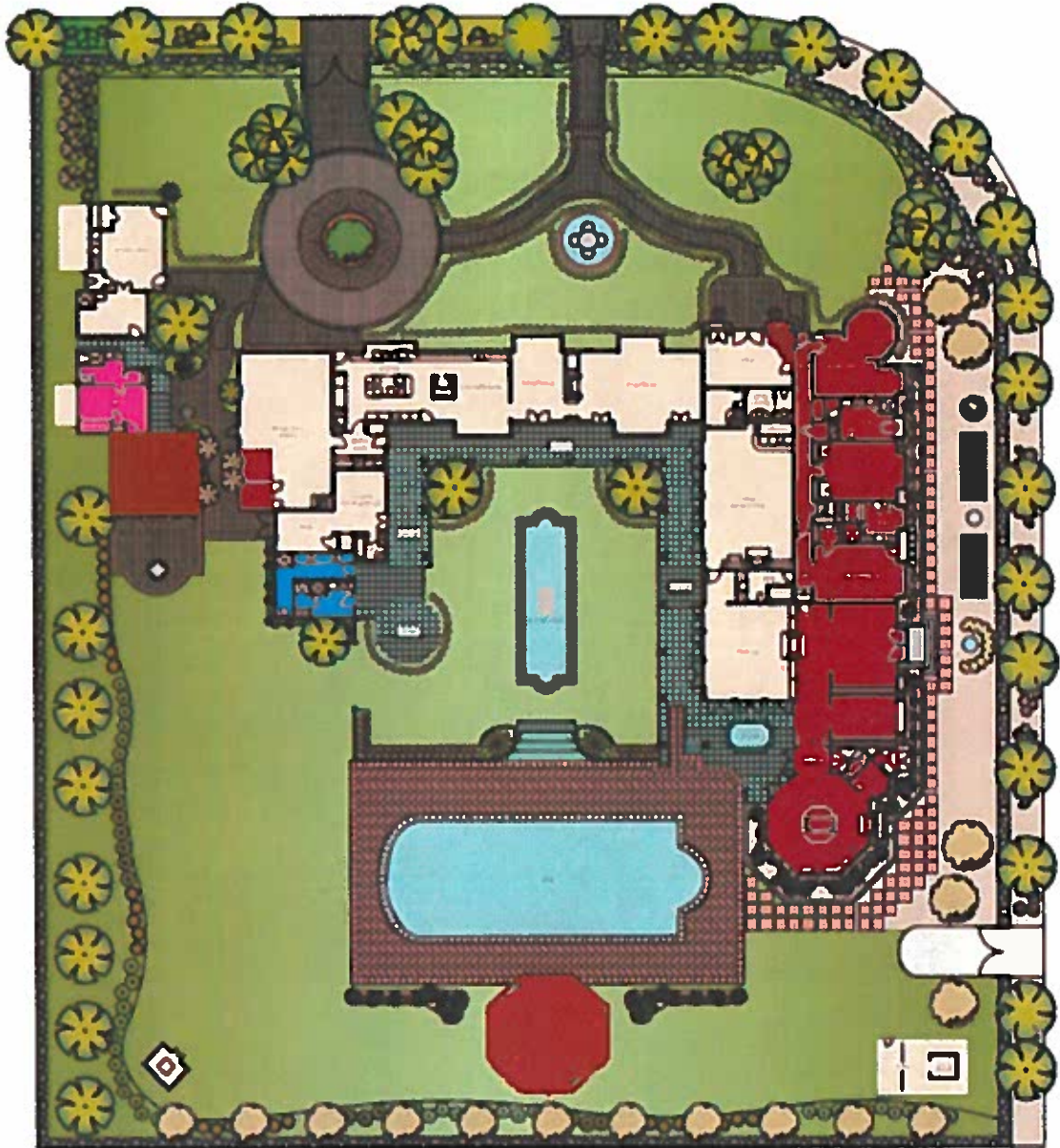
SCOTT D. CAMERON

Scott D. Cameron was the son of Hollywood actress and cover girl Kay Aldridge and her husband Arthur Cameron. He bought Casa Adaire in 1984, and the following year added a large new bedroom wing adjacent to the existing east wing. Cameron lived in the house until 1994.




V Changes to footprint of house



The current day floorplan



Changes to footprint

-  1951
-  1953
-  1985



1941



2018



1941

(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)



2018

VI Photographic record of changes over time

a. Front of House



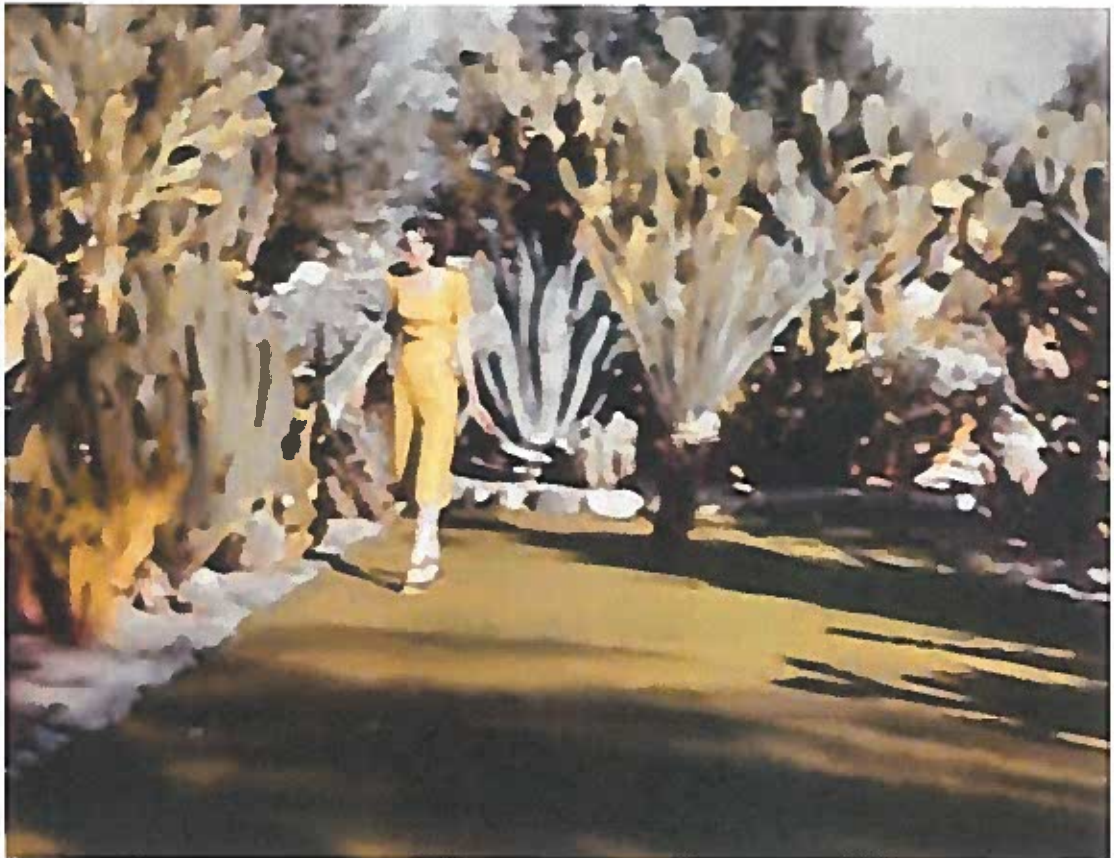
From the northeast corner of Hermosa and Mission, an arched opening in the stone wall surrounding Casa Adaire featured a path leading to the front door. Photo courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society, ca. 1940



The original placement of the heavy carved wood door was on a faceted section of the northeast corner of the house. Photo courtesy Stephen and Nancie Cooper, ca. 1940



Walter Kirschner's specimen cactus garden at the front of the house, with the Roosevelt guest cottage beyond. Photo courtesy Stephen and Nancie Cooper, ca. 1940



A guest walks on one of the lawn panels in Kirschner's cactus garden, 1946. Photo courtesy the author



Rows of citrus on the east side of the house, 1946. Photo courtesy the author



By 1967 when an episode of "Mayberry, R.F.D." was filmed at the house, the cactus garden had been replaced by a circular driveway.



Aunt Bea and friends from "Mayberry, R.F.D." showing the open lawns and circular driveway, which had replaced Kirschner's cactus garden. 1967



*Today, the front garden features classic Palm Springs plant species and lawn panels, with an added fountain and brick-lined pathways. New front door configuration beyond.
Photo courtesy author, April 2018*

b. Rear Garden



The spectacular tiled pool is the jewel of the rear garden. Vintage Kodachrome photos courtesy Stephen and Nancie Cooper, ca. 1940



Originally, ten square tiled columns supported white glass globe lights. Vintage Kodachrome photos courtesy Stephen and Nancie Cooper, ca. 1940



By the time photographer Robert Doisneau took these photos in 1960 for Fortune Magazine, the glass globes had been replaced by fixtures with painted steel shades.



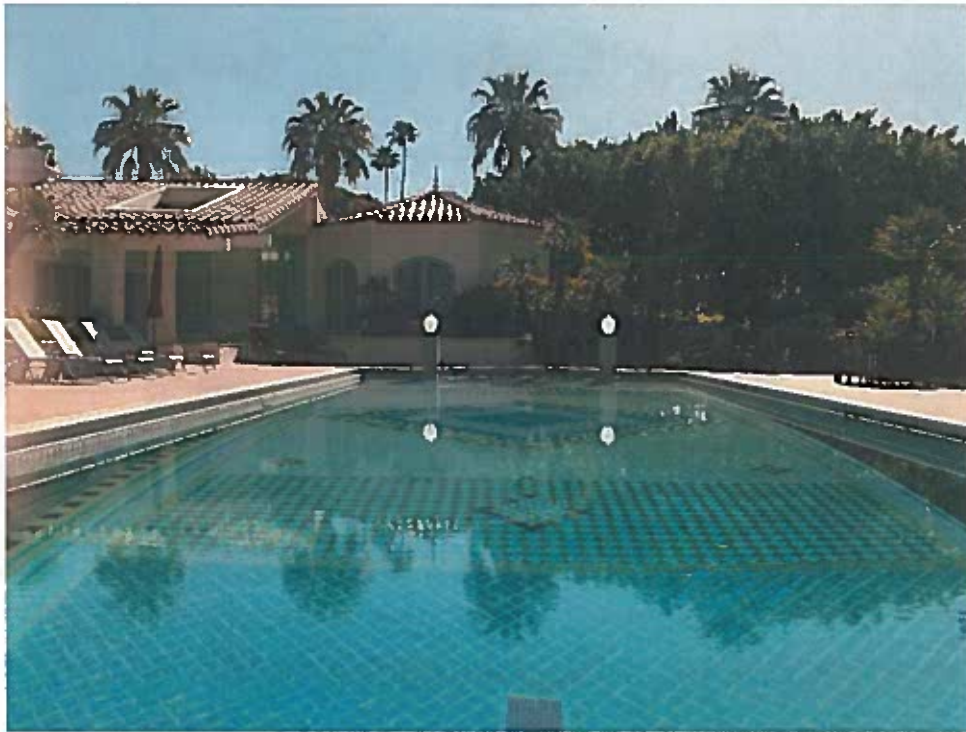
Today, only two of the tiled columnar light standards remain.



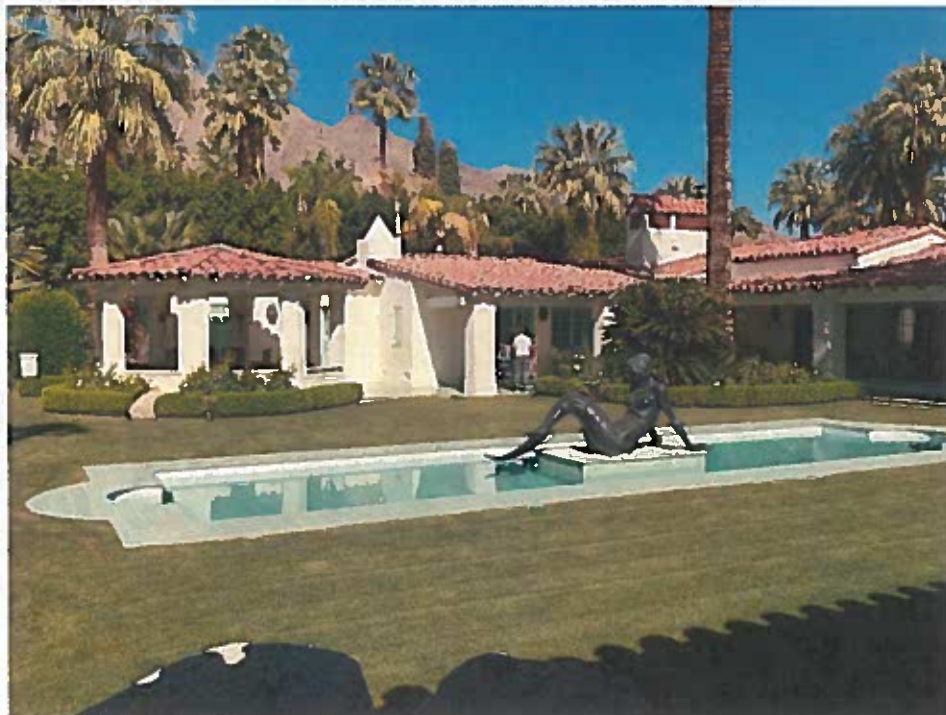
Off the master bathroom was an enclosure with a high stucco wall, with arched opening to access swimming pool area. The interior is tiled in blue-green hand-painted tile, this area was Kirschner's small private pool, which he kept heated to 90 degrees. Note whitewash red tile roof. From a Kodachrome home movie, 1947. Author's collection



By 1967, when "Mayberry, R.F.D." filmed at Casa Adaire, Kirschner's pool patio had been roofed over with a metal awning.



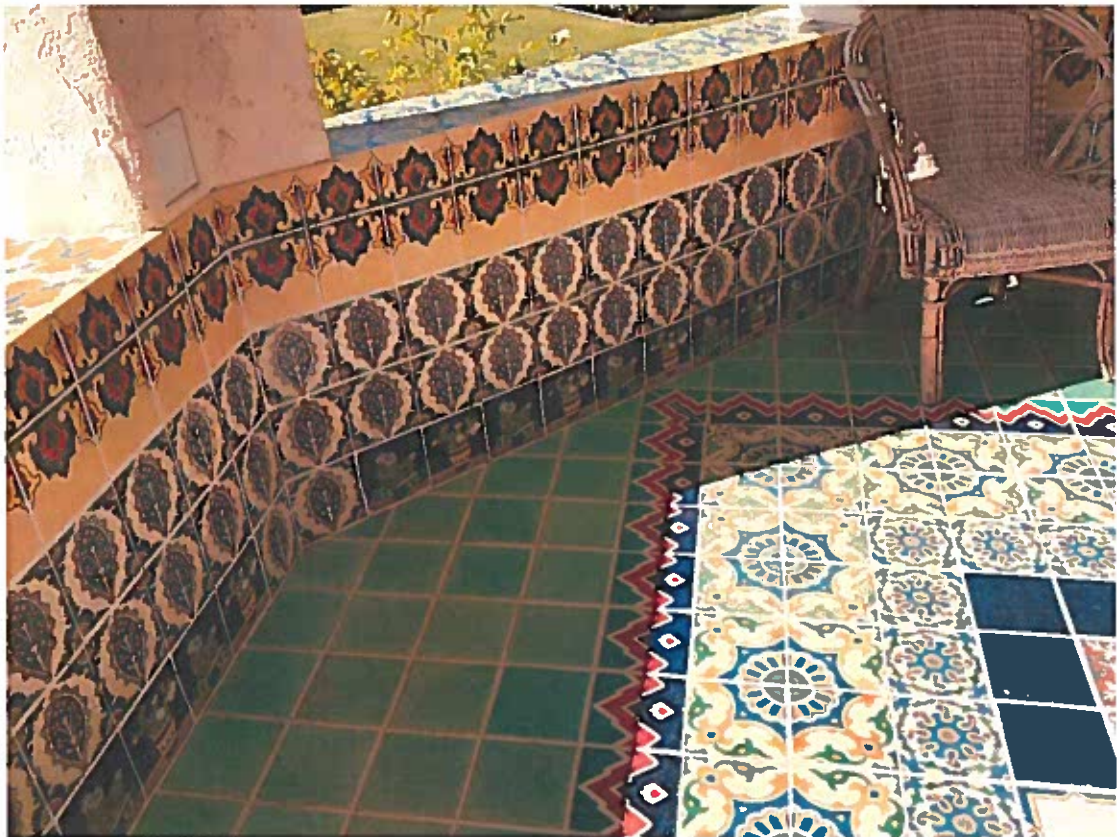
Today, Kirschner's private pool area has been covered with a red tiled roof, with a new adjacent master bathroom, housed in this distinctive hexagonal, hipped roof configuration, inspired by the original gazebo across the pool.



The reflecting pool is today graced with a bronze mermaid figure. Original gazebo pictured at left.



Original gazebo, ca. 1940. Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society.



The gazebo still features a hand-painted decorative tile “carpet” and wainscot, from Walter Kirschner’s stash of tile bought from a tile distributor who went bankrupt during the Great Depression.



To the south of the pool, a low wall had a Claycraft tile panel picturing a peacock.



**BEAUTIFUL PICTORIAL PANELS IN TILE
ADD DISTINCTION AND CHARM TO THE HOME**

Write for our illustrated folder

CLAYCRAFT POTTERIES

1101 San Fernando Road

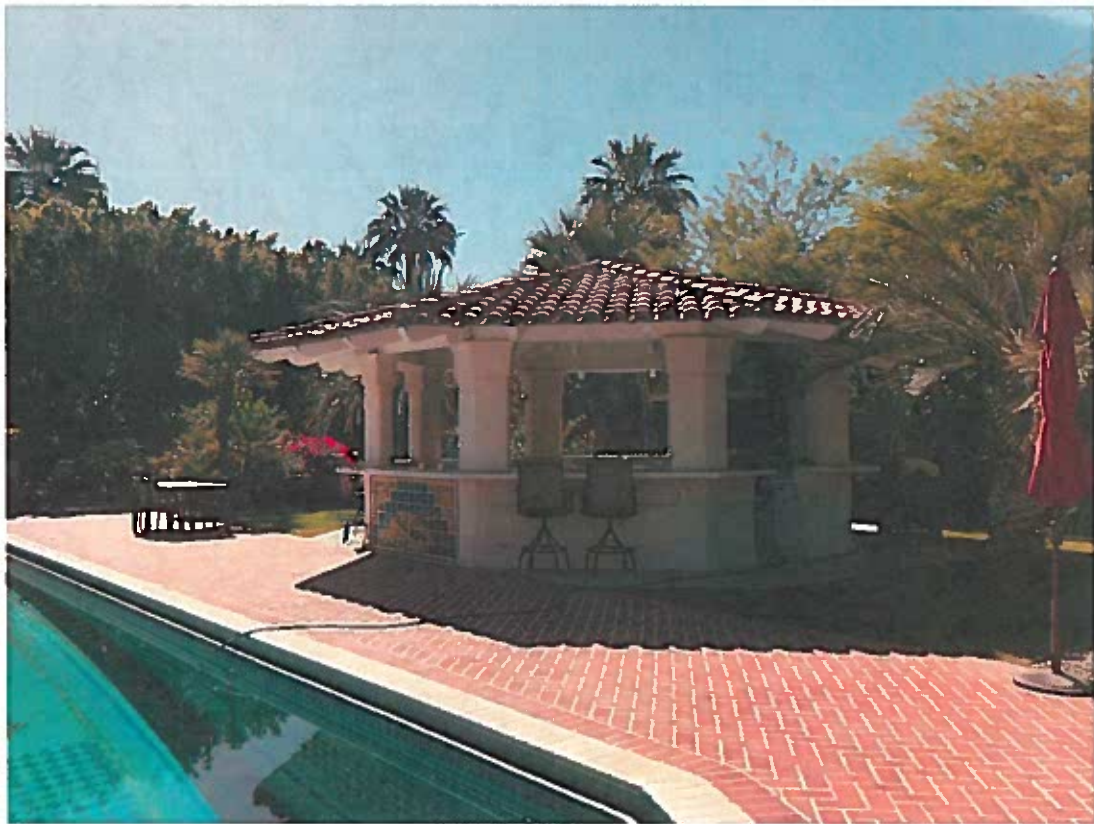
::

::

::

Los Angeles

An advertisement in California Arts & Architecture Magazine showed a variation on the pictorial tile panel.



The peacock tiled panel still exists but has been incorporated into an open-air barbeque gazebo, again hexagonal in form with hipped, tile roof.



In 1947, the open loggias at the rear of the house offered a pleasant spot for relaxing. Today, more French doors have replaced smaller window openings in some cases.



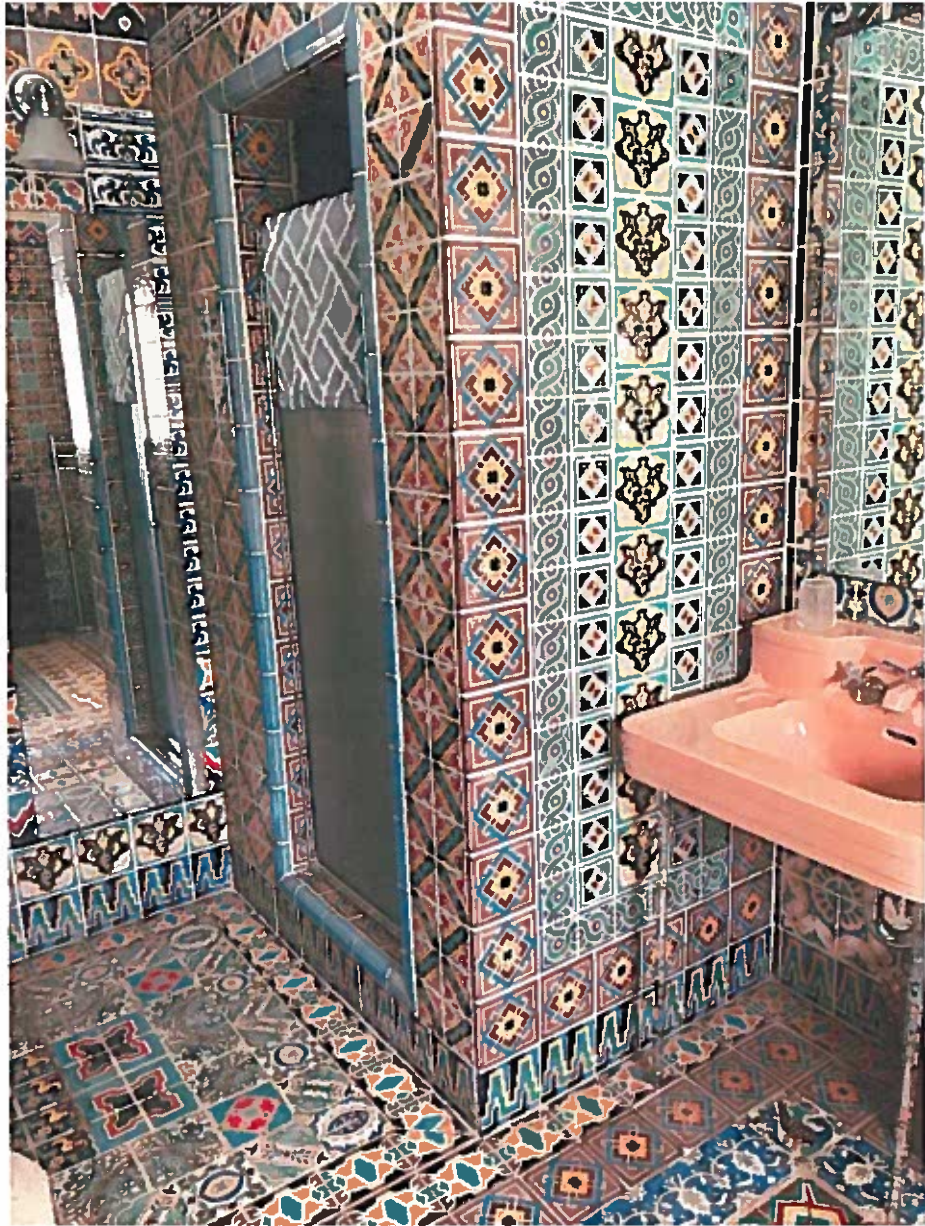
Servants stand in front of the original Roosevelt guest cottage, ca. 1940. Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society

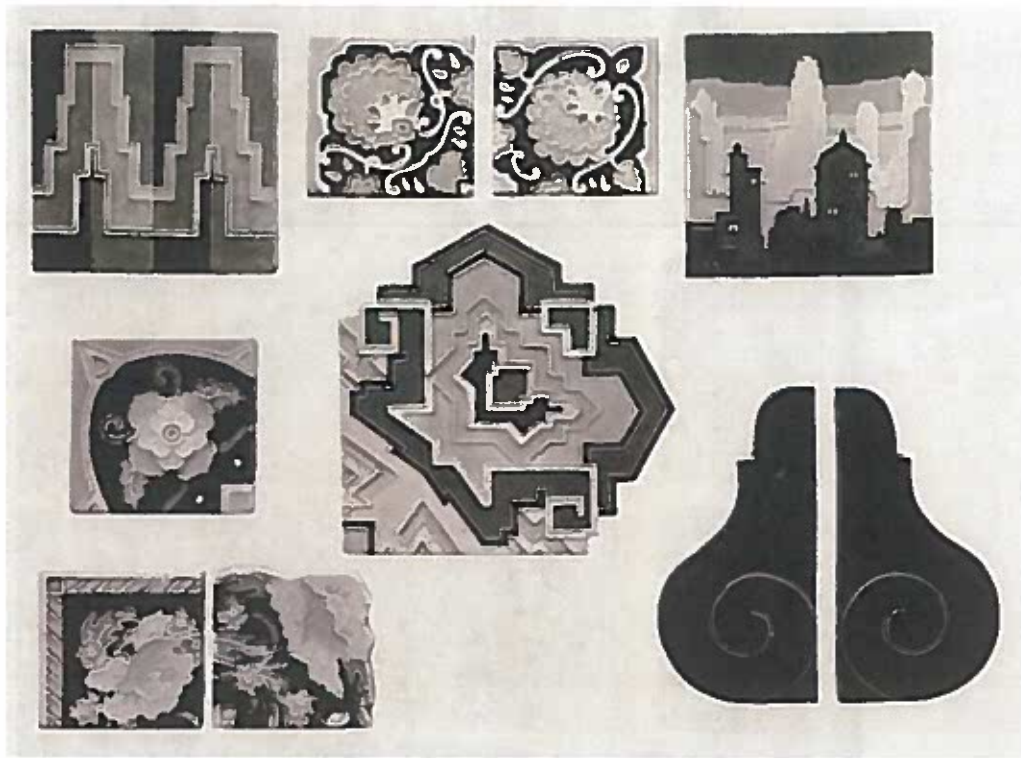


The Roosevelt guest cottage today, door and window configuration altered with additional square footage added to front.



A dazzling array of Claycraft tiles inside the Roosevelt guest cottage





This page from a 1930s Claycraft catalog shows samples of their hand-painted decorative tile, including a distinctive tile with city skyline motif. Courtesy California State Library.



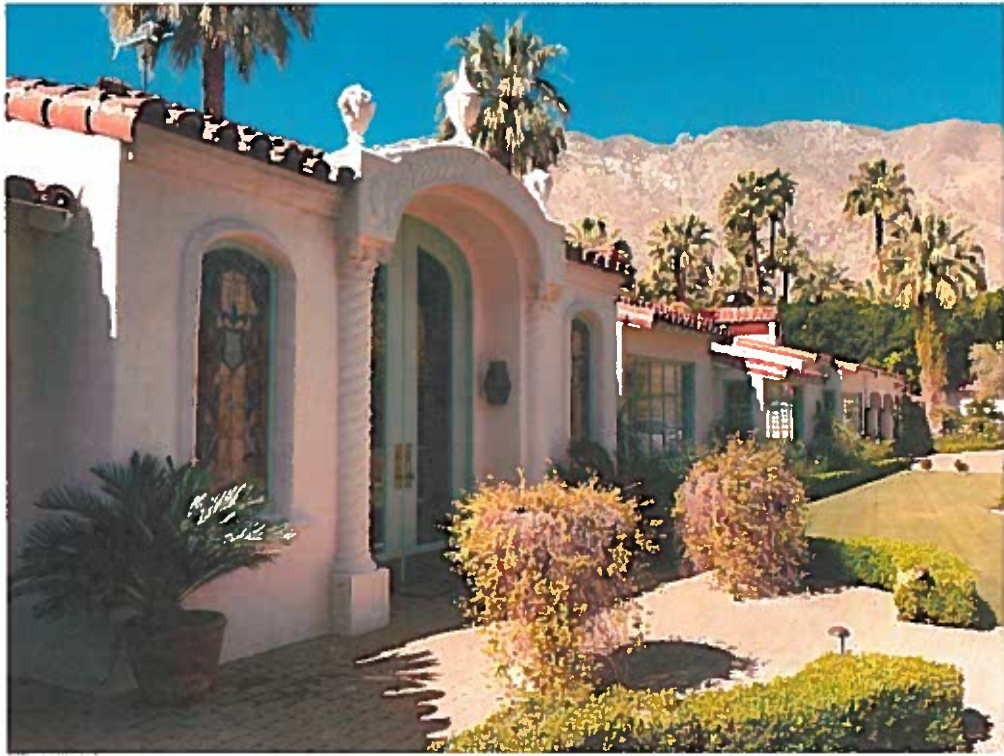
The city skyline tile installed in the Roosevelt guest cottage.



Basket of flowers Claycraft tile in Roosevelt guest cottage, with a page from a 1930s Claycraft catalog.



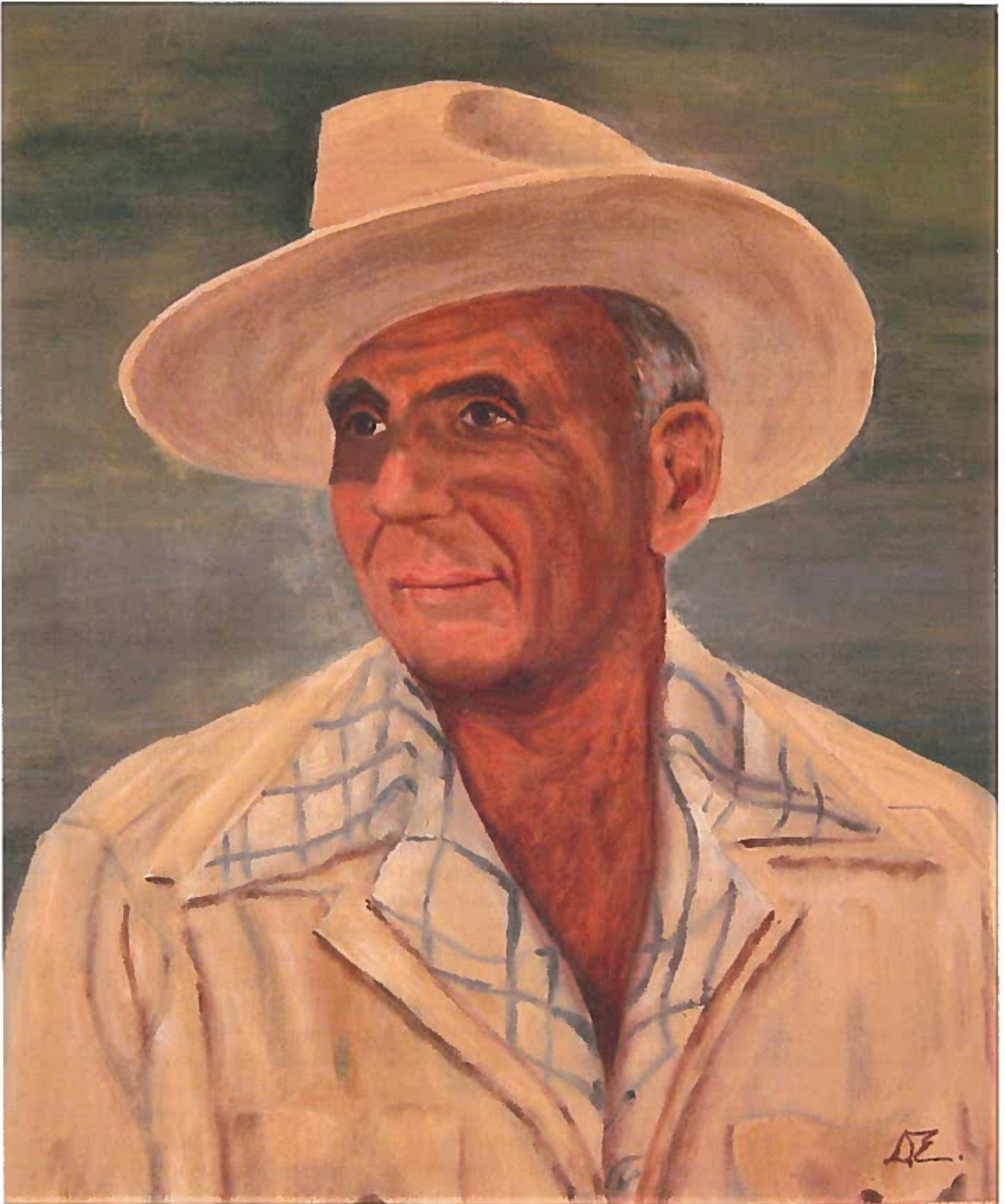
Circular stairway leading to lookout tower



Current front door configuration, added 1985.



Asymmetrical, rambling hacienda style façade facing Hermosa Place.



Portrait of Walter Kirschner painted by President Dwight D. Eisenhower at Kirschner's Grayson Farms in La Quinta. Courtesy the David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies

WALTER KIRSCHNER

Walter Kirschner, the extraordinary man who commissioned architects Brewster & Benedict to design his Palm Springs estate, “Casa Adaire,” came from humble beginnings. Possessed with a strong entrepreneurial streak, as well as maverick ideas about marketing and design, Kirschner quickly became successful in his field, so much so that he became both friend and advisor to several sitting presidents. Casa Adaire was the first of several lavish estates meant to serve as desert retreats for members of the Roosevelt family. Casa Adaire was representative of the deep appreciation he had for architecture and design, Kirschner’s passion was the planning and creation of beautiful places, whether they were his stores or homes. Kirschner was the man who gave legendary architect Victor Gruen, “The Father of the Shopping Mall” his first big break, hiring Gruen to design stores for his Grayson’s chain, and as Gruen later recalled, “He was thoroughly extroverted. He loved to sit in the limelight and to win over his contemporaries with his generosity and charm.”¹ Usually dressed in his signature cowboy hat, boots and casual western attire, even in New York City, this tall, tanned man with an imposing deep Yiddish accent was a force. As his granddaughter Diane Harris Brown recalled, Kirschner was an “ambitious, moral person, who had a spiritual side as well. Everyone said he was the most charming man, that he would look at you and you would just melt.”²

Walter Kirschner was born to Ephraim and Molly Kirschner on September 12, 1893 in Eishyshok, a shtetl (a small town with a large Jewish population) which is now in present-day Lithuania, though depending on the year, as boundaries were redrawn, has also been in Russia and Poland.³ His father was a wool and linen manufacturer in the town, supplying nearby czarist army bases with material for uniforms and underwear.⁴ According to his granddaughter, young Walter’s family considered him “a prodigy. He had a great brain, and was a quick learner, he could do arithmetic in his head. The family wanted him to go to the great Rabbinical Academy at Vilna to become a rabbi, but they claimed that as a child, Walter’s favorite toy was money. He loved playing with it and wanted to make it. They explained to him that he wouldn’t make any money as a rabbi,” so he decided to seek his fortune in the country he had dreamt about, the United States, seeing it as the land of opportunity.⁵ Though he would tell friends and even the press in his later years that he stowed away on a ship to America, the actual story is a little less fantastic. Several of Kirschner’s half-siblings had moved to the United States and taken jobs in the textile business, and Walter was sent over to join one of them when he was around 16, around 1910. In New York,

Walter very quickly gained experience and knowledge about the wholesale clothing industry, and in just a few years, by the middle 1910s, had gone into a partnership Kirschner & Michaels, which manufactured a “popular priced line of intermediates, children’s and juniors’ coats for the trade.”



Dorothy Kirschner, ca 1919. Walter Kirschner, ca 1937. Photos courtesy Carol Borden

Around this same time Kirschner met Miss Dorothy Cohen, a New York-born girl from Brooklyn who was considered a great beauty, with blue eyes and blonde hair. She like to play the piano and sing, and according to her granddaughter, was sweet, modest and shy, with a good sense of humor. Walter soon began courting her, as well as courting her father, Meyer, who had a successful clothing company. Each year Meyer Cohen would go to Paris and buy the latest fashions, bring them back to Brooklyn to be copied, giving Dorothy the originals to wear. Though she may not have been in love with Walter, her father talked her into the marriage, seeing Walter, with his strong entrepreneurial streak, as a potentially successful son-in-law. They married December 23, 1918, in New York. In 1920, a daughter Adaire was born, named after a popular song at the time, “My Sweet Adair.”

In 1921, Kirschner went into business for himself as a clothing manufacturer, and in 1927 was part of a small group of investors who incorporated Publix Chain Stores, Inc., with headquarters in New York City. Publix was established to provide stylish, high-quality but medium-priced ladies apparel in very attractive, well-designed stores in cities throughout the east and mid-west, announcing that, “It is the policy of the company to own its own buildings and well as the entire fixtures, furnishings, etc.” The chain quickly expanded, and in 1928 announced it would open twenty-five stores throughout Michigan. Kirschner moved his family to Flint, where he oversaw planning of new stores. His involvement went beyond simply finding the real estate, but

Kirschner was involved in every detail of planning the elegantly designed interiors, so much so that he was even incorrectly described by the *Lansing State Journal* as the “New York City architect in charge of designing the Publix stores.”⁶ His granddaughter recalled that Kirschner wanted women in the Midwest to be able to go to stores that had all the sophistication and high design of the stores on New York’s famed Fifth Avenue.⁷ Another passion and talent was born, as Kirschner, with his appreciation for great design, correctly understood what it could do to make shoppers feel fashionable and comfortable, which would ultimately encourage sales. In 1930, the company’s name changed from Publix Chain Stores, Inc. to Grayson Shops, Inc., and they continued to expand at a rapid pace, even after the Stock Market Crash of 1929. The chain expanded to the West Coast in 1932, opening a store on Market Street in San Francisco. When Kirschner travelled to Oakland the following year to open a new store there, he announced that it would be the seventy-second store in the chain.⁸ By this time, the firm had headquarters in both New York City and Chicago, and Kirschner had installed his nephew, Hyman P. Kuchai, as president of the chain. Kuchai was the son of his half-sister Rachel. Philip S. Harris was named vice-president, and Kirschner would serve as Chairman of the Board, continuing to oversee the design and location of new stores.⁹

By the early 1930s, Kirschner and his wife divorced, and she and daughter Adaire moved to Los Angeles. Kirschner soon followed, using Los Angeles as his home base, travelling around the country to open new Grayson’s stores. He also began spending more time in Palm Springs, primarily due to his health.

THE ROOSEVELTS

Walter Kirschner was a great admirer of the Roosevelt family, in particular Eleanor Roosevelt, and was a heavy contributor to President Roosevelt’s campaigns.¹⁰ “As money began pouring into Kirschner’s coffers through his revolutionary mass-buying, mass-selling technique, the Russian immigrant boy developed an ideal: to repay his adopted land. FDR was in the White House, and to Kirschner that spelled America.”¹¹ The family warmly called Kirschner “Uncle Walter,” and it was said that as an intimate of President Roosevelt, “Walter dined frequently with him in the White House and slept in the historic Lincoln bedroom when he was there. Roosevelt used to love to hear Kirschner’s stories and jokes, all recited in his heavy Yiddish accent.”¹²

It was Kirschner who “brought the plight of the European Jews to the attention of President Roosevelt. One night, after a round of story- and joke-telling, Kirschner raised the topic that had been burning within him like a fire: to save the Jews in Europe. The president’s response: ‘I don’t want you to talk about the Jews to me, now or ever. I haven’t time to hear any Jewish wailing.’ Thereafter the president would wisecrack to his family in Kirschner’s presence: ‘Watch out for [Uncle Walter]. He may turn out to be another Goldman.’ – a reference to a wealthy Jewish supporter of F.D.R.’s during his race for governor of New York, who had switched sides one month before the election.”¹³

“Roosevelt’s policy with regard to the rescue of European Jews did not change. And Walter Kirschner never spoke against the president, not even after FDR’s death, always praising him as a great man.”¹⁴ And despite his conflicted feelings, Kirschner did

all he could to help the Roosevelt children succeed. It was said at the time that, "Walter Kirschner, the fabulous mercantile tycoon...has done almost as much for the Roosevelt children as the magic name 'Roosevelt.'" President Roosevelt once confided to Kirschner that if any of his children was to make a mark in the world on his own, he believed it would be Franklin, Jr. "That was enough for Walter. After the war, when young Roosevelt joined the New York law firm of Roosevelt, Freidin and Lattauer, Kirschner gave the highly profitable legal business of Grayson-Robinson stores to FDR Jr.'s firm."¹⁵

When Anna "Sistic" Roosevelt Boettiger and her husband, John – a former Chicago Tribune reporter – wanted a newspaper, Kirschner bought one for them – the Arizona Times, husband and wife each owning 45%, with Eleanor Roosevelt owning the other 10%.¹⁶ When it eventually failed, he generously took the financial rap.

Roosevelt's youngest son, John, was shy and often overshadowed by his extrovert brothers. After World War II John wanted a merchandising career, so Kirschner gave him a job as the Regional Merchandising Manager for Grayson - Robinson Stores in Los Angeles. Unlike his siblings, Roosevelt intended to "work his way up" without seeking to profit from his name and connections. John made Kirschner's New York apartment at the Pierre his home in the city, and he and Kirschner spent quite a lot of time together, sometimes at Kirschner's estate at Long Island.¹⁷ Another of Roosevelt's sons Elliot dreamed up money-making ventures, and Kirschner loyally helped finance them, some of which were in Cuba after Fulgencio Batista took power in 1952.

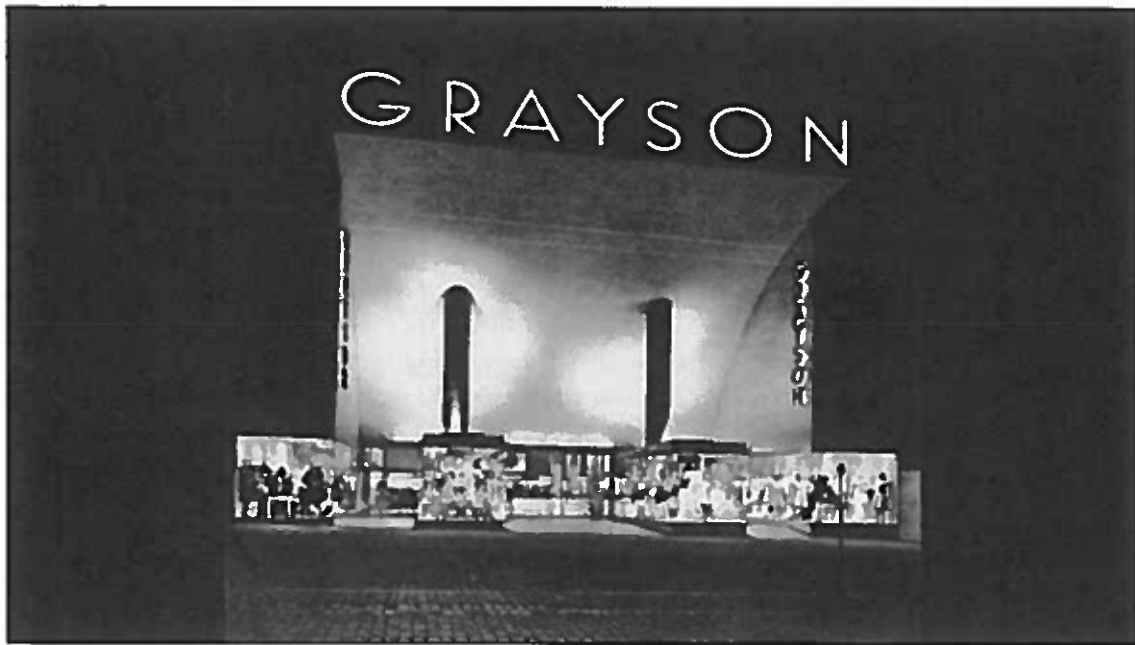
After World War II, Kirschner was appalled at what the Nazis had done, and what had gone on in Europe. He began his friendship with then-General Eisenhower during this period and travelled to Europe to see for himself what atrocities had taken place. His daughter Adaire recalled that Kirschner boarded General Marshall's plane to survey the damage, and Kirschner encouraged Eisenhower to bring camera crews in to film the death camps, ensuring there was documentation. He wanted this story told and was prescient enough to know that in the future, people would try to deny what had taken place. He also worked to get weapons and troops to secure Israel, so the refugees would have a safe place to go.¹⁸



Adaire Kirschner, 1936, the year Walter Kirschner built Casa Adaire. Photo courtesy Carol Borden

CASA ADAIRE

Kirschner bought three adjacent parcels in the Merito Vista tract of Palm Springs and hired architects Brewster & Benedict to design a lavish estate, which he named Casa Adaire after his daughter. Kirschner intended that the estate would serve as a private retreat for members of the Roosevelt family, and built a guest cottage adjacent to the house. In typical Kirschner fashion, the process of planning and building the house was more enjoyable than living in it, so after less than two years, he sold Casa Adaire and began planning his next larger estate on a date farm in Indio.



GRUEN AND GRAYSON'S

Renowned architect Victor Gruen (1903-1980) is known today as “The Father of the Shopping Mall,” and his fame as a retail architect can be directly attributed to his early association and success with Grayson’s and with Kirschner. Born in Vienna in 1903, Gruen studied architecture at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts, designing some retail projects there, before leaving in 1938 when Germany annexed Austria. He arrived in New York “with an architect's degree, eight dollars, and no English.”¹⁹ He fell in love with Elsie Krummeck (who would become his partner in the firm of Gruen & Krummeck), found work as a draftsman, working on exhibitions for the 1939 World’s Fair, and got a small measure of attention with architect Morris Ketchum for a candy shop on Fifth Avenue, Barton’s Bonbonniere.

Because of this, one day Gruen and Krummeck were recommended to Philip Harris, vice-president of Grayson’s, who asked them to their offices to discuss some small revisions to the dressing rooms of a large store Grayson’s was planning in Seattle. While there, Gruen did a few sketches for Harris, who was impressed. He showed Gruen the plans an architect had already developed for the Seattle store, and asked his opinion. Gruen told Harris honestly that he was not impressed, and why. Harris brought the couple in to meet Grayson’s president Hyman Kuchai, Gruen explained his views, and Kuchai asked him what he would charge to make minor revisions to the exterior. When Gruen answered \$100, Kuchai told him he would give him \$200 if he could get them back by Monday (this was a Friday afternoon). Gruen and Krummeck worked feverishly over the weekend to create a whole new set of blueprints for the entire store, and Krummeck created a watercolor rendering, all of which they showed Kuchai on Monday morning. Kuchai said, “This design is probably the craziest thing I’ve ever seen, but it shows some talent and maybe we can give you the opportunity to work for Grayson’s in the future,” handing them their \$200. He thanked them, and

while showing them out, “expressed hope that his California partner would never see our drawings.” Next, a scene unfolded in cinematic detail, as described by Gruen:

Then the door opened, and, like a deus ex machina, the California partner appeared. He was tall and slender, with a wide-brimmed hat over his tanned face; he was dressed entirely in white, with snow-white riding boots. This was Walter Kirschner. He had an aquiline nose and darkly shining eyes.

Although Mr. Kuchai tried to usher us out in a hurry, Mr. Kirschner wanted to know who we were and why we were there. He spotted the drawings, and, despite all the protests of his partner, he insisted on seeing them. He studied them gravely for a few minutes, then he turned to Elsie and me, asking in a sonorous voice, “What do you children have in mind for lunch?” “Nothing urgent,” we replied. “Then we will have a small, intimate meeting during lunch, just the three of us.”

The intimate lunch was in the swanky, spacious dining room of the Hotel New Yorker, where we were entertained by a raucous ice-skating show. All that noise made it difficult to communicate, but we finally understood that Kirschner was asking us what we were planning for tomorrow. I bluffed that I’d have to consult my calendar (even though I knew I had no plans for the next day), and he waved his hand: “I know exactly what you’re doing tomorrow. You’re flying to Seattle to make new plans for the store to be built there which will be based on the ideas that you have just presented.”²⁰

The next day Gruen and Krummeck found themselves on a first-class flight to Seattle, where they visited the existing store, and met with local contractors. Next, a whirlwind ten-day tour to Portland, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Santa Monica, San Diego, Omaha and Chicago, where they inspected stores and their locations to “form an opinion of position and structural properties.” Returning to New York, they submitted their report, and Kirschner hired them to serve as the “house and court architects” going forward for the Grayson’s chain. Kirschner and Gruen then travelled to Portland, where Gruen saw firsthand one of Kirschner’s mantras – “location, location, location.” Kirschner astutely understood the importance of prime real estate to maximize sales, and as Gruen later recalled, he:

learned his method of establishing new branch stores. First, he would appear in town in a snow-white Cadillac, accompanied by a beautiful young lady, whom he would introduce as his nurse. He would rent the most elegant suite in the best hotel. Once we had chosen a building, Kirschner would send a large basket of fruit from his ranch (oranges, tangerines, grapefruits, and dates) and a huge bouquet of flowers to the wife of the owner of the building. Then he would visit the landlord. With winning charm, he negotiated the lease. Then he hurried to the largest local bank, where he invited the bankers to provide him with a loan. He would convince the bankers that they did not want to miss this opportunity, whereupon their wives also received fruit baskets and flowers.

Kirschner explained the often strikingly pretty nurses by saying that he had a serious heart condition. He also used this highly exaggerated or perhaps completely fictitious

disease as a business advantage. If anyone objected or otherwise caused difficulties during negotiations, he would clutch his chest in pain, as if he were close to a heart attack. During the war, when the use of private cars was very limited, he visited his far-flung stores in an ambulance with wailing sirens²¹

In fact, Kirschner did have a rather serious heart condition for several years, and his executive secretary Madeline (who Gruen may have confused for his nurse) carried a defibrillator when travelling with Kirschner and was one of the few non-medical people trained to use one.

Gruen humorously called Kirschner “and his henchmen a bunch of rascals on the brink of gangsterism. Walter Kirschner was a unique and curious mix of charm and very good business instincts. Similar to a gangland boss, he ran a tightly organized gang; the members of his gang probably committed no crimes, but they had to be ready for minor offenses at any time. To close associates, like us, he was a very benevolent tyrant. He was interested in the private lives and the welfare of his subjects; on the other hand, he expected you to be at his command anytime and anyplace.”²²

Through World War II Grayson’s stores grew exponentially, with Kirschner directing Gruen and Krummeck to design innovative temporary “victory stores,” where war workers flush with cash could easily have access to whatever goods were available. In 1945, Grayson’s bought the Robinson’s Women’s Apparel chain, which had stores in New York, Maryland, Minnesota and Nebraska. The chain was renamed Grayson-Robinson, and by 1950 was the seventeenth largest retailer in the country, doing \$85 million in sales.

The sophisticated Late Moderne Grayson’s stores were widely published and got Gruen and Krummeck a wealth of recognition, but by the late 1940s, Gruen decided to break free from his strong ties to Grayson’s, and the work tapered off before he finally made a clean break. He recalled, “We eventually ended our collaboration because we could not agree on new planning issues as they arose in new situations. *Architectural Forum* wrote about this under the headline, “Architect Bites Client.”²³



Kirschner's Tower Ranch, 1939. Photo by Gail B. Thompson, Gayle's Studio Collection, courtesy Tracy Conrad

TOWER RANCH, 1939

81-379 Avenue 46, Indio,

When he sold Casa Adaire in 1938, it was reported Kirschner would remain in Palm Springs until he built another smaller home in the area. In his signature style, however, his next estate would be much larger, and even more grand. In 1939 Kirschner purchased a property known as the Lombard Ranch, a 40-acre parcel bought for \$17,500.²⁴ The ranch had an existing fifteen acres of date palms which were income producing. The Spanish-Colonial Revival home Kirschner built, like Casa Adaire, was stucco with whitewashed Spanish tile roof, home had four large bedrooms (the master bedroom was 20x30) and four bathrooms; a mahogany-paneled 30x60 foot living room and adjacent art gallery; guest cottages and separate homes for his employee. The house featured two heated swimming pools, completely tiled in decorative Spanish tile. There were also riding stables, a tennis court, and a 40-foot lookout tower, which gave the ranch its name – “Tower Ranch.”



Kirschner's elaborately tiled pool today. Photo courtesy Jim Burruss.



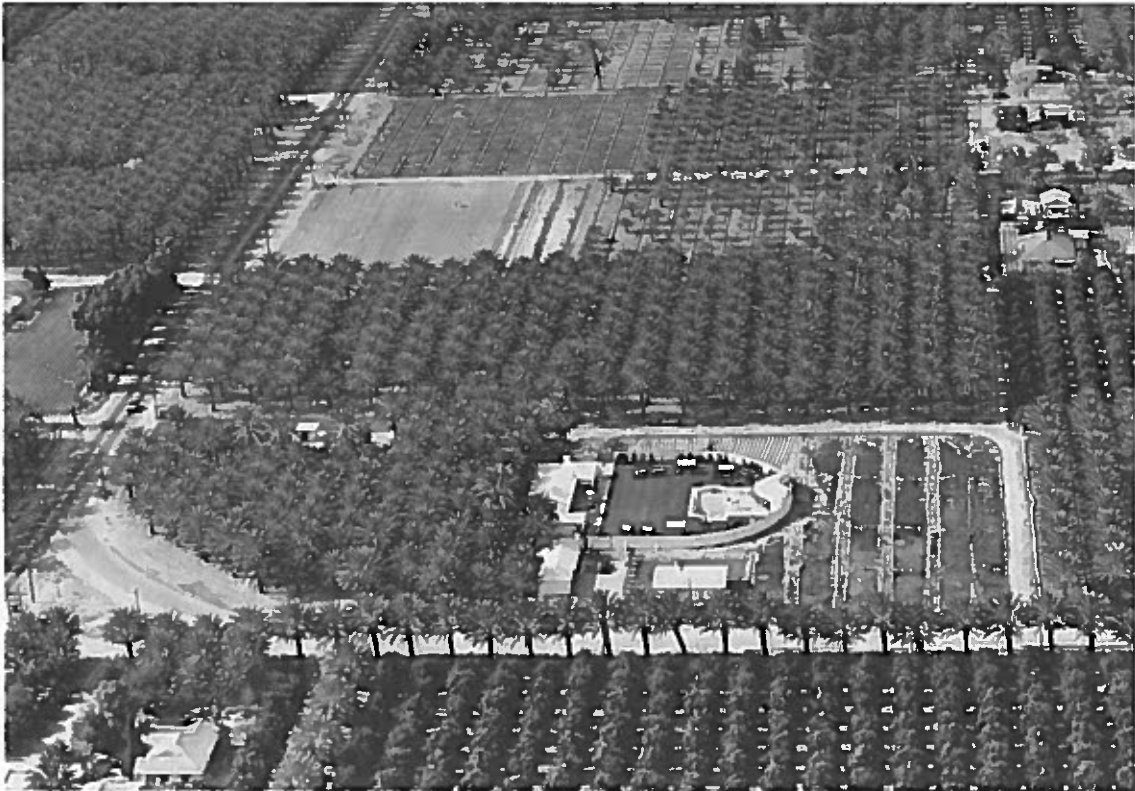
The tiled pool and guest cottage. Photo by Gail B. Thompson, Gayle's Studio Collection, courtesy Tracy Conrad

Gruen and Krummeck were often summoned to Tower Ranch, and Gruen recalled the estate thusly:

He gladly arranged visits to his ranch for clients and liked to impress them with his enormous Spanish-style villa and his two large swimming pools. The huge windows of his living room were reminiscent of the windows of a furniture store. The house had a rich library, which looked richer because Kirschner had purchased handsome, leather-bound books in bulk. In an annex, there was an art gallery with velvet-covered walls and lights above each painting. Among the paintings were mounted labels, framed in bronze. One read, for example: 'Madonna by Raphael (copy), frame fourteen carat gold.' Kirschner had purchased a carload of copies of oil paintings and then hired a graphic designer to create the labels.

Kirschner did much of his business while he was in one of his swimming pools. He had phones installed all around them and would swim back and forth between calls. Our discussions about the design of various stores usually took place around the pool, though only Walter was swimming, while we wore bathing suits and sat at the edge. If a sensitive issue such as our fee was being discussed, Walter dived a lot, in order to claim later that he had never heard anything about the matter. Then when we eventually raised this point at picnics on dry land, he was in the habit of offering us half of our fee. We neutralized this unpleasant habit by demanding dual-fee deals, which stipulate that any negotiations that are not to the satisfaction of all parties may be terminated.²⁵

In 1942, Eleanor Roosevelt visited Kirschner at Tower Ranch, bringing her daughter Anna and her husband John Boettiger. After that visit, Kirschner began planning a retirement home for President Roosevelt, which would be built on part of his Tower Ranch property.



Loveless Ranch, built as President Roosevelt's retirement retreat. Photo by Gail B. Thompson, Gayle's Studio Collection, courtesy Tracy Conrad

LOVELESS RANCH, 1943

46-861 Madison, Indio

On a ten-acre parcel carved out of his Tower Ranch, Kirschner created a large estate which he hoped President Roosevelt would use after his retirement. From Madison Street, a five-room security house stood at the compound's entrance, which would house Roosevelt's secret service men, as well as a large garage building and caretaker's and servant's buildings. The compound was enclosed by an eleven-foot-high horseshoe-shaped wall. The large main house featured a high-ceilinged 66x40 foot living room with two fireplaces, a large bar and a dining table which could accommodate twenty. A professional kitchen could accommodate large-scale entertaining. The horseshoe shaped panel of lawn was inset with an enormous swimming pool, with adjacent pool house. Adjacent were 300 date trees and two and a half acres of grapefruit trees.

President Roosevelt died in April 1945, before he could retire and enjoy the house. In 1947, Kirschner sold the property to Abraham and Esther Teitelbaum, husband and wife attorneys from Chicago.



Top: The living room of the main residence, Photo by Gail B. Thompson, Gayle's Studio Collection, courtesy Tracy Conrad

Left: the exterior of the main residence. Courtesy Robert Teitelbaum.



Top: The pool and poolhouse. Bottom: Walter Kirschner stands tall at left in his signature western wear, with members of the Teitelbaum family at Loveless Ranch, ca. 1949. Courtesy Robert Teitelbaum.



Grayson Farms. Photo courtesy Diane Harris Brown

GRAYSON FARMS, 1947

Adjacent to the La Quinta Hotel on Avenida Obregon.

After Kirschner sold the Tower Ranch estate and orchards in Indio, in 1947 he had an equally grand home built adjacent to the La Quinta Hotel, a 33-acre estate known as Grayson Farms, with a large date grove, citrus orchard and acres of other fruit trees. Once again, the large main house was Spanish-Colonial in design, with white stucco walls and whitewashed tile roof. The house was “L” shaped and surrounded by a stucco wall, which enclosed beautifully landscaped grounds and a raised patio area with a barbeque pit of flagstone, which itself cost \$10,000. The centerpiece of the gardens was an enormous biomorphic swimming pool, which featured an island in the middle planted with palm trees, accessed by a bridge. Kirschner’s granddaughter Diane recalls that the big pool was mostly “for show,” but that Walter had a smaller pool adjacent to the master bedroom, which he kept heated to a constant 90 degrees, and which he used often. “He loved to cook, and was very well-known for his chili, I can still see him in my head in the kitchen there. He told me that the secret ingredient in his chili was peanut butter.”²⁶ The estate also featured a large furnished office, servant’s quarters, a date



The gardens at Grayson Farms featured a biomorphic swimming pool with an island at its center, accessible via a bridge. Photo courtesy Diane Harris Brown.

packing house and a barn. He loved to entertain at Grayson Farms, but didn't have many guest rooms, according to his granddaughter, but would put up his guests in the bungalows at the La Quinta Hotel.

Around 1948, Kirschner married his executive secretary, Madeline Yeo (1905-1995). According to his granddaughter, "she was every inch the lady, very elegant, and she really looked after him. He was of course a very busy man, but she handled every detail just as an executive secretary would. But she also gave him the emotional support a wife would."

In 1951, Kirschner invited his friend President Truman to La Quinta, offering Grayson Farms for the President's use, and booked a large block of rooms at the La Quinta Hotel for the secret service detail. Kirschner's neighbor, George Allen, offered his own house for use by Truman's White House staff. Truman was looking forward to the visit, but a hitch developed. The secret service came to survey the properties and discovered that "La Quinta has a telephone system as quaint as its adobes. The collective genius of the White House could figure out no possible way to operate a private Presidential switchboard through that desert-strung expanse. The vacation had to be abandoned."

Another friend of Kirschner's was President Eisenhower, who did visit him at Grayson Farms and painted his portrait there.

PALACE COUP

In 1952, Kirschner's nephew Hyman Kuchai, who had served as president of the Grayson-Robinson company since the early 1930s, decided to retire. Phillip S. Harris, who had long served as vice-president, became president. In February 1953, Kirschner hired his friend Maurice J. Tobin to serve as vice-president of Grayson-Robinson. Tobin had recently been Truman's Secretary of Labor, and before that was the mayor of Boston and governor of Massachusetts.²⁷ In July 1953 Tobin died. In August 1953, Kuchai returned to stage what Kirschner's granddaughter refers to as a "palace coup," taking back full control of Grayson-Robinson, while forcing Walter Kirschner out of the company he had co-founded. Kuchai became "the family villain." Harris became president of S. Klein, and Kirschner became The company later went bankrupt.²⁸

Crushed by the family betrayal, Kirschner was forced to sell his beloved Grayson Farms in La Quinta. The La Quinta Hotel bought it in 1954 planning to use it as a means of accommodating small groups who might want luxury accommodations, but the following year sold it for \$112,500 to Dr. Charles W. Benson and his wife Hawayo Takata, the sale facilitated by a \$75,000 loan from heiress Doris Duke -- Takata was a Reiki practitioner who was treating Duke. The Bensons renamed the estate Spring Board Farms.

The Kirschners moved to Miami Beach, taking an eighth-floor penthouse apartment at the lavish new Belle Towers development on Belle Island, designed by noted architect B. Robert Swartburg. While in Miami, Kirschner began cooking up another big plan in nearby Havana, the creation of a luxury hotel-casino that would be the largest such property ever built there, the Monte Carlo de la Habana Hotel.

THE MONTE CARLO DE LA HABANA HOTEL

In 1955, the Hilton Havana opened to great fanfare, elevating tourism in Havana, and the Welton Becket-designed high rise was touted as a national triumph by U.S.-backed Cuban authoritarian leader Fulgencio Batista y Zaldívar. Batista used the hotel as an example of national pride and accomplishment, economic progress, and proof that his policies were beneficial to the Cuban people.²⁹ By 1957, there was a palpable sense of optimism for people conducting business in Cuba, with the gross national product a record \$2,800,000. Hotels were booked to capacity, and Havana was poised to combine the glamour and sophistication of Las Vegas and Monte Carlo. This attracted the attention of Meyer Lansky and Santo Trafficante, who began funneling money into Cuban hotels and casinos, which in turn "generated funds used to facilitate the corrupt political system" led by Batista.³⁰

Against this backdrop of money, intrigue and glamour, Lansky and Trafficante began to secretly plan for the most grandiose hotel and casino ever to be constructed in Cuba. To be called the Monte Carlo de la Habana, the massive resort which would have it all: besides 656-room hotel building with casino, nightclub, restaurants and lounges, the project would include a marina with canals and berths for yachts, a landing pad for helicopters and hydroplanes, and a golf course. Needing \$20 million capital to fund the project, they began assembling a board of directors of some well-connected US businessman, politicians and entertainers, the most well-known being Frank Sinatra.³¹

Sinatra planned to stage a weekly variety show from the hotel that would be televised. A report from lawyers representing the company explained:

“[Sinatra] wants to televise the hotel’s properties from Cuba to the United States weekly, given that he is a producer and as an interested party in his programs intends to fulfill a double function: first, to put the hotel he manages in the spotlight; and second, to divert the profits produced by contracting the show in Cuba to a Cuban American company that will produce shows and movies from Cuba with panoramic vistas of the hotel serving as a backdrop.”³²

As a guarantee, Sinatra offered to bring to Cuba the 20 most important entertainers to publicize the hotel, which would promote international publicity in favor of the government directed by Major General Fulgencio Batista y Zaldívar. Perhaps through Elliott Roosevelt, with whom Kirschner had business dealings in Cuba at the time, Kirschner became interested in the property, recognizing its potential, and excited about having another big design project to work on, so he signed on as one of the investors. Without ever making an announcement to the press about the project, in August 1958 construction began. Just a few months later, in January 1959 Kirschner’s daughter Adaire and her family were visiting him in Havana and the group had planned to go on a fishing excursion. When the fishing trip was called off due to rain, they all decided to go back early to Miami. The following day, Castro marched into Havana and took control of the capitol, and the project was cancelled, and the investors lost millions.³³

LATER YEARS

After many years living in Miami, Madeline Kirschner, who had grown up in Seattle, longed to return to the West Coast, so Walter, also missing his daughter Adaire, found a penthouse apartment at the stylish new Sierra Towers in West Hollywood. Walter Kirschner died October 30, 1974, in Los Angeles. Madeline lived for more than twenty years more, she passed away April 11, 1995 in West Hollywood. Both are entombed at Forest Lawn Cemetery in Glendale.

¹ “Shopping Town: Designing the City in Suburban America,” by Victor Gruen, edited and translated by Anette Baldouf. University of Minnesota Press, 2018, p. 87.

² Telephone interview with Diane Harris Brown, granddaughter of Walter Kirschner, August 24, 2018.

³ Ibid.

⁴ “There Once Was a World: The 900-Year Chronicle of the Shtetl of Eishyshock,” by Yaffa Eliach, Little Brown & Company, 1998, p. 281.

⁵ Telephone interview with Diane Harris Brown, granddaughter of Walter Kirschner, August 24, 2018.

⁶ Garment Manufacturer’s Index, Volume 2, April 1921, p. 15; “Rushing Work on Store Structure,” Lansing State Journal, July 18, 1928, p. 15.

⁷ Telephone interview with Diane Harris Brown, granddaughter of Walter Kirschner, August 24, 2018.

⁸ Michigan Manufacturer and Financial Record, Volume 45, p. 37; “Firm Declares Faith in the City,” Oakland Tribune, May 23, 1933, p. 10.

⁹ Telephone interview with Diane Harris Brown, granddaughter of Walter Kirschner, August 24, 2018. Rachel Kuchai obituary, Los Angeles Times, January 13 1951, p. 20

¹⁰ Telephone interview with Diane Harris Brown, granddaughter of Walter Kirschner, August 24, 2018.

¹¹ “D.C. Wash,” by Ruth Montgomery. The Oil City Derrick, Oil City, Pennsylvania, February 24, 1953, p. 6.

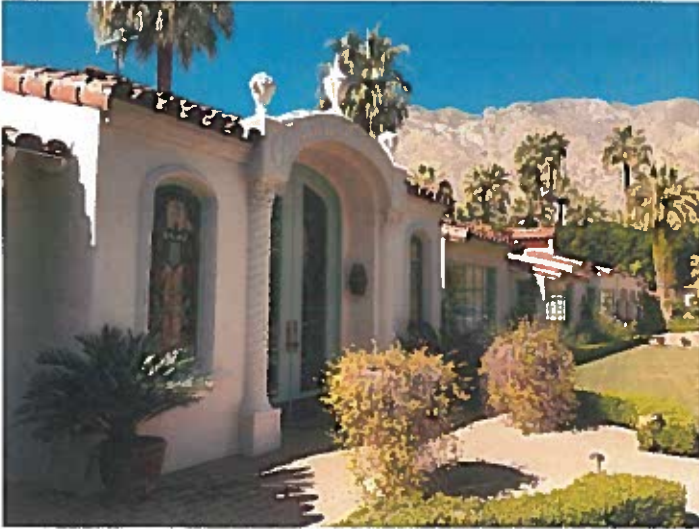
-
- ¹²Email from Diane Harris Brown, granddaughter of Walter Kirschner, August 26, 2018; "There Once Was a World: The 900-Year Chronicle of the Shtetl of Eishyshock," by Yaffa Eliach, Little Brown & Company, 1998, p. 652-653.
- ¹³"There Once Was a World: The 900-Year Chronicle of the Shtetl of Eishyshock," by Yaffa Eliach, Little Brown & Company, 1998, p. 652-653.
- ¹⁴Ibid, p. 652-653.
- ¹⁵"D.C. Wash," by Ruth Montgomery. The Oil City Derrick, Oil City, Pennsylvania, February 24, 1953, p. 6.
- ¹⁶Letter from Adaire Harris to Roger and Sandra Harris, July 6 1981, at Coachella Valley History Museum.
- ¹⁷Ibid.
- ¹⁸Telephone interview with Diane Harris Brown, granddaughter of Walter Kirschner, August 24, 2018.
- ¹⁹Malcolm Gladwell, The Terrazzo Jungle, The New Yorker, March 15, 2004,
- ²⁰Ibid.
- ²¹Ibid, p. 89
- ²²Ibid.
- ²³Ibid, p. 101.
- ²⁴Desert Magazine, September 1939, p. 34.
- ²⁵Ibid, p. 89
- ²⁶Ibid.
- ²⁷"D.C. Wash," by Ruth Montgomery. The Oil City Derrick, Oil City, Pennsylvania, February 24, 1953, p. 6.
- ²⁸By 1961, Grayson-Robinson had 212 stores, with \$102 million in sales, but in May 1962, there was a stock market slump, and by August, they were down to 28 stores, and filed for bankruptcy protection, claiming debts of 10.5 million. They asked permission to pay debtholders only 10% of the \$19 million they owed, but eventually worked out an agreement to make full payment over the course of ten years, but after a year they went into straight bankruptcy, and the company failed.
- ²⁹"Fulgencio Batista's Economic Policies, 1952 – 1958," dissertation by Michael P. McGuigan, University of Miami, 2012, p. 280.
- ³⁰"When the Mob Owned Cuba." Smithsonian Magazine.com, October 28, 2016 (<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/mob-havana-cuba-culture-music-book-tj-english-cultural-travel-180960610/>)
- ³¹"Havana Nocture: How the Mob Owned Cuba and then Lost it to the Revolution," by T.J. English, Harper Collins, 2007, p. 290.
- ³²Ibid.
- ³³Telephone interview with Diane Harris Brown, granddaughter of Walter Kirschner, August 24, 2018.

CASE HSPB 112 – SUPPLEMENTAL PHOTOS 417 HERMOSA PLACE – THE KIRSCHNER RESIDENCE



CASE HSPB 112 – SUPPLEMENTAL PHOTOS - 417 HERMOSA PLACE – THE WATER KIRSCHNER RESIDENCE

NON-ORIGINAL FRONT ENTRY LOOKING WEST



NON-ORIGINAL FRONT ENTRY OBSCURING VIEW OF TOWER



NON-ORIGINAL BRICK POOL TERRACE, GARDEN WALL & GREEN CERAMIC STEPS



POOL, LIGHT COLUMNS, NON-ORIGINAL GAZEBO



UNDERWATER VIEW OF SWIMMING POOL FROM SERVICE VAULT



ORIGINAL PEACOCK PANEL RELOCATED ON NON-ORIGINAL GAZEBO



**BREWSTER & BENEDICT DESIGN
BEAUTIFUL NEW RESIDENCE**

A beautiful new residence is now under construction for Paul Kirschner on Palm Canyon Drive in Las Palmas Estates. The home was designed by Architects Brewster & Benedict.

This architectural firm also drew the plans for an eight-room residence for Walter Kirschner in the Hood Tract. Figures have been called for the construction of this. The extensive home place will include a tennis court and swimming pool. The home will be of the hacienda type in Spanish desert design.

Now being built is the first home in the finely located Little Tuscany tract in the northwest section of the village. This lovely home is in Tuscan type of architecture.

An interesting new residence, plans for which are being drawn by Brewster and Benedict, is that of Albert Kirk of Santa Cruz. In typical Spanish architecture, it is soon to be constructed in Palm Canyon Estates.

Plans also are being prepared for a Spanish hacienda type home in Desert Trails Tract for Hal Forrest, artist for the popular "Tallapin Tommy" comic strip. One of its features will be an interesting studio on the second floor. It will contain about eight rooms.

(By

T

than

era.

cour

that

fact

It

was

V

Wh

it?

the

up

E

acle

bird

His

N

was

got

T

from

unn

natu

the

and

and

star

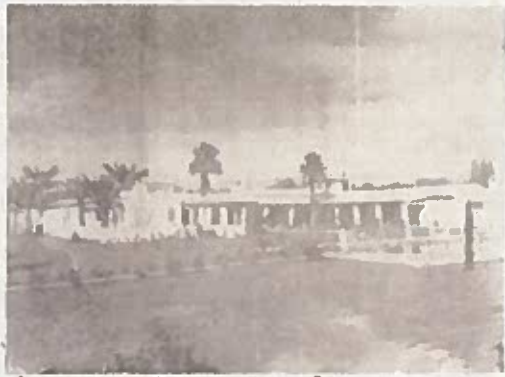
the

E

(SALE TO GIBBS)

Friday, December 30 to Friday, January 6, 1939

Michigan Capitalist and Horseman Buys Palatial Palm Springs Home



Beautiful home of Walter Kirchner which was sold after week to Mr. and Mrs. Earl E. Gibbs of Dearborn, Michigan, for a consideration said to be \$75,000.

Photo by Frank Perdue

C. of C. Proves Useful In Many Ways

Since the village became a city with city status and everything, some long have believed that the absence of concrete to support its projects and its future should be recognized in the city council but it would seem after a visit to the chamber office, that there are many reasons why the city council should be without taking more time than they have to give for not only paying their dues, but also for the duty of a member and council in regard to city affairs are very heavy on all who have kept in touch with the city council and its members will learn.

It is certain should the whole issue of the city council be used to answer the following: How and why the council is necessary? The chamber of commerce very graciously did help.

They learned contained a check in the next issue, with (page, however) (continued on Page Twelve)

Lions Club Recommends Daylight Saving

During a general meeting Thursday at the Desert Inn the Palm Springs Lions Club officially was pronounced as favoring the adoption by the city of daylight saving time.

The motion that the Lions Club should recommend the adoption of daylight saving time was adopted by a unanimous vote of the members present. The motion was introduced by the club president, and a motion was made by the club secretary.

It will be noted that the Lions Club is not in favor of the time change of an hour which will run until March 11.

With the opening this year after Christmas and will all the added work and facilities—particularly in the city—because the Los Angeles Fair Club enterprise is being gathering that the 20,000 expected to have been on hand last year.

\$70,000 Purchase Shows Confidence in Palm Springs

Probably the largest real estate deal of the winter was a \$70,000 purchase of a home in the city of Palm Springs. It is the sale of the home, the purchase price of \$70,000, to Mr. and Mrs. Earl E. Gibbs of Dearborn, Michigan. The deal was made by Charles Mathews of the Michigan A. A. Co., who is a real estate broker. It is understood that the consideration was \$75,000.

After spending some money in Palm Springs, and after making one other deal, Mr. Gibbs and his family have returned to their home in Dearborn, Michigan. It is not known exactly when they will return to Palm Springs, but it is expected that they will return in the near future.

Mr. Gibbs was formerly a prominent business man in Dearborn, Michigan. He has been in the city of Palm Springs for several years, and has been very successful in his business there. He is now a resident of Dearborn, Michigan.

Mr. and Mrs. Gibbs have their children, Josephine, Marjorie, and an unnamed child, who will soon reach the age of 10. They are a well-to-do family, and are very active in their community.

They have just purchased a home at Simba Tree and provided for a large garden. The home is a beautiful one, and is very well equipped. It is a very desirable home, and is a very good investment.

Mr. Gibbs is a very successful businessman, and has been very active in his community. He is a member of the Lions Club, and is a very active member. He is a very successful businessman, and has been very active in his community.

City Council Protests New Highway

Protesting the construction of a new straight road from Highway 96 to the Road Three bridge and an extension beyond in the case that of the proposed truck stand a day (continued on Page Twelve)

Calendar

- Monday, Dec. 26 - Christmas Eve
- Tuesday, Dec. 27 - Christmas Day
- Wednesday, Dec. 28 - New Year's Eve
- Thursday, Dec. 29 - New Year's Day
- Friday, Dec. 30 - New Year's Day
- Saturday, Jan. 1 - New Year's Day
- Sunday, Jan. 2 - New Year's Day
- Monday, Jan. 3 - New Year's Day
- Tuesday, Jan. 4 - New Year's Day
- Wednesday, Jan. 5 - New Year's Day
- Thursday, Jan. 6 - New Year's Day
- Friday, Jan. 7 - New Year's Day
- Saturday, Jan. 8 - New Year's Day
- Sunday, Jan. 9 - New Year's Day
- Monday, Jan. 10 - New Year's Day
- Tuesday, Jan. 11 - New Year's Day
- Wednesday, Jan. 12 - New Year's Day
- Thursday, Jan. 13 - New Year's Day
- Friday, Jan. 14 - New Year's Day
- Saturday, Jan. 15 - New Year's Day
- Sunday, Jan. 16 - New Year's Day
- Monday, Jan. 17 - New Year's Day
- Tuesday, Jan. 18 - New Year's Day
- Wednesday, Jan. 19 - New Year's Day
- Thursday, Jan. 20 - New Year's Day
- Friday, Jan. 21 - New Year's Day
- Saturday, Jan. 22 - New Year's Day
- Sunday, Jan. 23 - New Year's Day
- Monday, Jan. 24 - New Year's Day
- Tuesday, Jan. 25 - New Year's Day
- Wednesday, Jan. 26 - New Year's Day
- Thursday, Jan. 27 - New Year's Day
- Friday, Jan. 28 - New Year's Day
- Saturday, Jan. 29 - New Year's Day
- Sunday, Jan. 30 - New Year's Day
- Monday, Jan. 31 - New Year's Day

Dar Bow For

That of our... Mr. Gibbs... (continued on Page Twelve)

'Buy Is W Loca

Buy... (continued on Page Twelve)