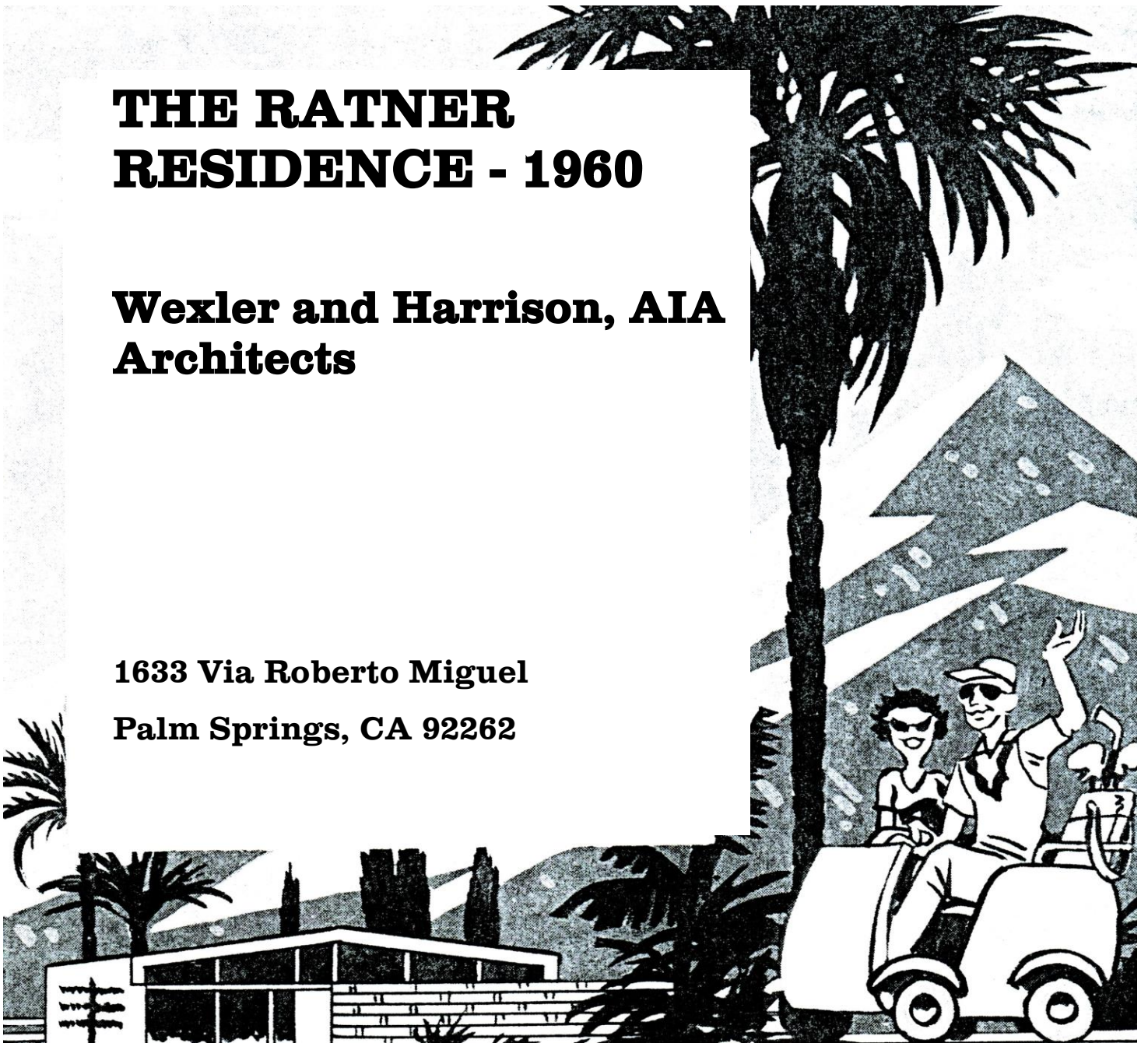


THE RATNER RESIDENCE - 1960

**Wexler and Harrison, AIA
Architects**

**1633 Via Roberto Miguel
Palm Springs, CA 92262**



Harper Goff Illustration

Prepared by

STEVEN KEYLON

For the

PALM SPRINGS PRESERVATION FOUNDATION

Final November 21, 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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the following individuals and organizations for
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Gary Wexler; Barbara Marshall; Frank Lopez, Palm Springs Art Museum Architecture & Design Center Archives, Erik Rosenow.

CLASS I HISTORIC RESOURCE NOMINATION

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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.” In January 2023, the PSPF board of directors assigned the task of writing the Ratner Residence Class I Historic Resource nomination to Steven Keylon.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ratner Residence is a residential tract home in the El Rancho Vista Estates neighborhood of Palm Springs. The house was one of about seventy designed by architects Donald Wexler and Richard Harrison for builder Roy Fey and was built in 1960. The structure is a prime example of one of their elegant Midcentury Modern designs. It exhibits numerous character-defining features that place it within the historical context of the Post-World War II Palm Springs (1945-1969) period, specifically under the theme of Post-World War II Single-Family Residential Development (1945-1969)





(to be completed by Planning staff:)

Date:
Case No.
HSPB No.
Planner:

CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
Department of Planning Services

HISTORIC RESOURCE DESIGNATION (HRD)

TO THE APPLICANT:

Complete all parts of this application. Denote "NA" for lines that are not applicable.
Submit the completed application with attachments to the Department of Planning Services at
3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, CA 92262 Phone: 760-323-8245 Fax: 760-322-8380

This application is for a proposed: (Check one) Historic Site / Resource Historic District:

Applicant's Name: LARRY YARCHEVER, 1633 VIA ROBERTO MIGUEL, PALM SPRINGS, CA 92262

Please Print

Owner Lessee Authorized Agent City Other

Applicant's Address: LARRY YARCHEVER, 1633 VIA ROBERTO MIGUEL, PALM SPRINGS, CA 92262

Number and Street Name or P.O. Box		
<u>PALM SPRINGS</u>	<u>CA</u>	<u>92262</u>
City	State	ZIP

Telephone Nos: 760-712-6568

Residence Cell Work

E-Mail address: larry.yarchever@gmail.com

Note: For Historic District applications: On a separate page, provide a list all sites / parcels within the proposed historic district boundaries with the following information provided for each parcel / APN.

Site Address: 1633 VIA ROBERTO MIGUEL, PALM SPRINGS, CA 92262

APN 677233003 Zone: _____ Section: _____ Gen'l Plan Land Use Desig. _____

Is the project is located on the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians Reservation? _____
(Refer to the Land Status Map under Tribal Resources on the Planning Department home page.)

Construction Date: 1960 Estimated Actual (denote source, i.e. bldg. permits)

Architect: WEXLER & HARRISON Builder: ROY FEY

Present Owner: LARRY YARCHEVER

Present Owner Address: 1633 VIA ROBERTO MIGUEL, PALM SPRINGS, CA 92262

Original Owner: BENJAMIN AND LEE RATNER

Other notable past owners: _____

Other Historic Associations: _____

Common Name of Property: _____

Historic Name of Property: RATNER RESIDENCE

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

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

Period of Significance: 1960
(See the Citywide Historic Context Statement Document.)

Please list any informational reference sources used to complete this application:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Summary

The Ratner Residence was designed for developer Roy Fey in 1960 by master architects Donald Wexler and Richard Harrison. As one of about seventy Wexler and Harrison mass-produced tract houses built in the El Rancho Vista Estates neighborhood, the residence is important as a highly intact contributor to the El Rancho Vista Estates housing tract, which has been identified on the Palm Springs Citywide Survey as a potential Historic District.

Location

The Ratner Residence is at 1633 Via Roberto Miguel, Palm Springs, California, 92262.

CHAIN OF TITLE

Primary sources show the chain of ownership for the Ratner Residence (LOT 14 MB 039/057 BARBARA TR UNIT 1 Lot 14 Subdivision Name BARBARA TR UNIT 1 Lot Type Lot Rec Map Type Map Book Map Plat B 039 Map Plat P 057):

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 04-28-1960 | El Rancho Vista Estates, Inc, to Benjamin M. Ratner and Lee Ratner, husband and wife as joint tenants. |
| 10-29-1962 | Benjamin M. Ratner and Lee Ratner, husband and wife, to Ronald P. Knox and Jessie Louise Knox, husband and wife. |
| 03-16-1970 | American Savings and Loan Association to Gerald G. Burg and Barbara A. Burg, husband and wife. |
| 01-27-1978 | Lt. Col. Gerald G. Burg, quitclaim deed to Barbara Conaway Burg. |
| 06-02-1983 | Franklin M. Phillips and Barbara A. Phillips, husband and wife, to Thomas Winstanley and Mary Winstanley, husband and wife and Ann Winstanley, an unmarried woman, all as joint tenants. |
| 04-02-1986 | Thomas Winstanley and Mary Winstanley, husband and wife, and Ann Winstanley, an unmarried woman, to Douglas Darden, a single man. |
| 06-02-1988 | Douglas Darden, a single man, to Douglas A. Darden and Judith M. Darden, husband and wife, as community property. |
| 09-12-1989 | Douglas A. Darden and Judith M. Darden, husband and wife, to Theodore C. Sandborg and Barbara C. Sandborg, husband and wife, as joint tenants. |
| 07-07-2003 | Theodore C. Sandborg and Barbara C. Sandborg, husband and wife, to Theodore Christian Sandorg and Barbara Curry Sandborg, Co-Trustees of the Sandborg Family Trust, dated January 02, 2001. |

- 06-07-2007 Theodore C. Sandborg, a widower, to The Sandborg Family Trust, dated January 02, 2001, Sole Trustee/Successor Trustee.
- 08-07-2007 Kerry Jo McBride, Successor Trustee, of the Sandborg Family Trust, dated January 02, 2001, to John O. Woitas and Renee H. Woitas, husband and wife as joint tenants.
- 03-04-2010 John O. Woitas and Renee H. Woitas, husband and wife as joint tenants, to Peter James Moore, an unmarried man.
- 11-23-2012 Peter James Moore, an unmarried man, to Moore-Marchant Investments, L.L.C.
- 11-14-2013 Moore-Marchant Investments, L.L.C., to Crystal S. Strode, a single woman, and Kevin G. McCandless, a single man, as joint tenants.
- 04-30-2020 Crystal S. Strode, a single woman, and Kevin G. McCandless, a single man, to Caitlin G. Freeman, Trustee of The Living Trust of Desert Silence Family Trust, dated June 22, 2020.
- 02-28-2023 Catilin G. Freeman, Trustee of The Living Trust of the Desert Silence Family Trust, to Larry C. Yarchever, Trustee of The Living Trust of the Desert Silence Family Trust.

PICTURE

OWNING YOUR OWN
LUXURY HOME IN **PALM SPRINGS**
ADJACENT TO, AND INCLUDING
A MEMBERSHIP IN
A FAMOUS GOLF CLUB,
FOR LESS THAN \$20,000.
COME OUT TO 3200 EAST VISTA CHINO
AND LET ROY FEY SHOW YOU
HIS EXCITING MODEL RESORT HOME
IN **EL RANCHO VISTA ESTATES**
AND TELL YOU HOW ONLY \$950 DOWN
LAUNCHES YOU ON THE
GOOD **PALM SPRINGS** LIFE.

3-bedrooms, 2-baths. Large living-room. Family-room and patio. Sunken Roman tub. Six-foot plastered overhang. Oven, range, and hood. Wall-to-wall carpeting. Large entry and over 20 other de-luxe features.

Roy Fey's *El Rancho Vista Estates*

GENERAL OFFICE: 2290 South Palm Canyon Drive Palm Springs, California FAirview 5-2082



When this photo ran in the “Desert Sun” on August 16, 1960, the caption read “CHECKING FROM THE GROUND UP is a literal approach for Roy Fey, owner-builder, and Dick Ranspot, sales manager, who are shown inspecting the site preparation for the El Rancho Vista Estates model home now under construction at the corner of North Palm Canyon Drive and Hermosa Drive. Opening for the model is planned for September 15. The model will be identical with El Rancho Vista Estates homes now being sold for \$19,950. with \$950 down. The houses feature three bedrooms, two baths, wall-to-wall carpeting, closed kitchens and family room, refrigerated cooling, and forced air heat. The present furnished model for the project may be seen daily at 3200 Vista Chino. (Waltz Photo).”

EL RANCHO VISTA ESTATES THE DEVELOPER – ROY FEY

The prolific developer of El Rancho Vista Estates, Roy Fey (1915-2000), has been credited with creating over 1,200 homes in the Coachella Valley.

Roy Fey was born October 12, 1915, in Chicago to Samuel (born in Russia, 1888-1973) and Pearl (born in Ukraine, 1891-1948) Fey. Roy was the middle child of three – sister Celia (1908-1967) and brother Albert (1907-1989) rounded out the family. Samuel and Pearl immigrated to the United States in 1910, settling in Chicago, where Samuel worked as a baker.

Roy Fey majored in accounting at Northwestern University, where he was president of the Alpha Gamma Pi accounting fraternity. In college, he met Ethel Winograd, a journalism major, and in 1939, they were married in Chicago. They would have two children, Robert “Bob” (1942-2022) and Barbara (b. 1945).

He graduated in 1942, became a certified public accountant, and was elected to the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. He began earning more than “\$100 per week at 22 (good money in those days).”¹

After establishing his own accounting firm, Fey became a leader in Chicago’s construction industry by developing two home construction companies. At the same time, he started the manufacture of Brentwood Trailers, with two factories in Chicago and Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. They were soon making over 3,000 house trailers a year.

Simultaneously, he began to build his reputation as a man with great social conscience by serving as treasurer and a board of directors member at Chicago’s Temple Menorah, in addition to being active in various other community affairs.

In the middle 1950s, Fey was planning the construction of a third Brentwood Trailers 45,000 square-foot manufacturing facility, this time in Banning. In 1956, Fey built the Desert Skies Apartment Hotel, designed by architectural designer Claude Powell, his first project in the desert. However, this project led him to many others for which he developed the reputation of being one of the best-known builders in the Coachella Valley. In a 1957 profile in the *Desert Sun*, writer Bill Rashall observed,

Now in any man’s language, trailers are certainly a long way from the accounting business, and by the way, he is a certified public accountant. He has erected more than 1,500 homes in Chicago, and presently under construction are 150 homes in West Chicago. And that isn’t all—

He is also the owner of a women’s wear business in Chicago and in the manufacture of leather and suede cloths for both men and women. And that isn’t all either. He is the owner of the American Condensor Corporation selling those products to manufacturers of television sets and to the U.S. Government.

And wade through just a bit more if you please. He is the owner of the Desert Skies apartment hotel here in Palm Springs and he also plans to erect a swanky bowling alley in Palm Springs.

“It’s a sport which I like very much,” he said. He also loves to fence with foils.

¹ “Bill Rashall Unedited,” *Desert Sun*, March 2, 1957, 4.

When I asked him how much he has invested in this Desert Skies apartment hotel, a plush hostelry if you want to know he answered about \$500,000 and then added: “I’d like to correct that amount. I just spent \$8,000 more for a total of \$508,000,” and he smiled.

“I’m thinking of liquidating all of my affairs back East and investing right here in California,” said Fey. “My wife and I have been coming to California for 16 years now and and we are delighted with all Palm Springs has to offer.”²

Rashall described Fey at the time as “mild-mannered, soft of voice and with a smile constantly playing around the corners of his eyes and mouth, one would never believe on first meeting Roy Fey that he had that drive, that aggressive push usually associated with young men who make their mark early in life.”³

In 1957, Fey told the *Desert Sun* “I’m sold right down to the marrow of my bones on this Palm Springs.”⁴ After building the Desert Skies, Fey’s first subdivision was at Caballeros Estates. Announcing the “new \$1 million resort home tract” in November 1959, the *Desert Sun* reported that architects Donald Wexler and Richard Harrison and decorator Tony Dalu had been hired to design twenty-seven speculative custom homes in the new tract.

At the same time, perhaps inspired by the success of the Alexanders, Fey was busy with work on the “Barbara Tract,” his first foray into large-scale tract subdivision. It would become known as El Rancho Vista Estates, and the firm Wexler and Harrison would also design the homes. It would also be their entry into the design of a tract development.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

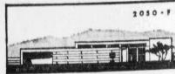
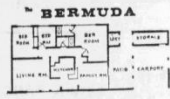
⁴ Ibid.

Look at these home styles to choose from!

3 DIFFERENT PLANS **9** DIFFERENT ARCHITECTURAL DESIGNS **40** UNIQUE QUALITY FEATURES

THESE EXTRAS UNQUESTIONABLY MAKE ROY FEY'S **El RANCHO VISTA ESTATES**

The **OUTSTANDING VALUE** IN NEW HOMES IN PALM SPRINGS



1. Over 1400 sq. ft. of living area.
2. 100 x 100 ft. lots.
3. Curbs, sidewalks and gutters.
4. Sewers in and paid for.
5. Telephone cable in to the house.
6. TV cable in to the house.
7. Each house oriented to welcome winter sun and shun summer heat.
8. Chrysler refrigerated air conditioning.
9. Forced-air heat.
10. Four inches of rock-wool insulation.
11. Complete fencing for privacy.
12. Nine different front elevations.
13. Front wall of house in molded design concrete block.
14. Six foot plastered climate-control overhangs.
15. Utilities underground from pole to house.
16. Inviting entry.
17. Large 14 x 21 living room.
18. Family room and adjoining patio.
19. Wall-to-wall carpeting in living room, bedrooms and halls.
20. Asphalt tile floors in kitchen and family room.
21. Soaker Roman tub and shower in master bath.
22. Bath built with tiled shower area.
23. Shavers enclosed.
24. Over 100 sq. ft. of lock-up outside storage.
25. Pass-thru bar between kitchen and family room seating four.
26. Separate laundry room with 220 volt out-let for appliances.
27. Extra large two-car carport.
28. Oven, range, and hood in matched colors.
29. Ash or hick cabinets.
30. Garbage disposal.
31. Two large sliding doors to patio areas.
32. Interior color co-ordinated by Murali Bering, A.I.D.
33. Qualified El Rancho Vista Estates owners receive membership in famous Palm Springs RANCHO CLUB golf course at no charge.
34. Two minutes away from Ranch Club golf course.
35. Two minutes away from tennis club.
36. Near to schools.
37. Near to churches.
38. Near to super-market.
39. Most magnificent view in the desert.

\$19,950 Total Price
\$950 Down

GENERAL OFFICE: 2290 SO. PALM CANYON DR. PALM SPRINGS, CALIF. FA 5-2082

Roy Fey's *El Rancho Vista Estates*

FURNISHED MODEL NOW OPEN
3200 East Vista Chino

BROKERS WELCOME

An advertisement that ran in the "Desert Sun" showed the three floor plans, as well as the various roof lines which lent variety to the tract houses.



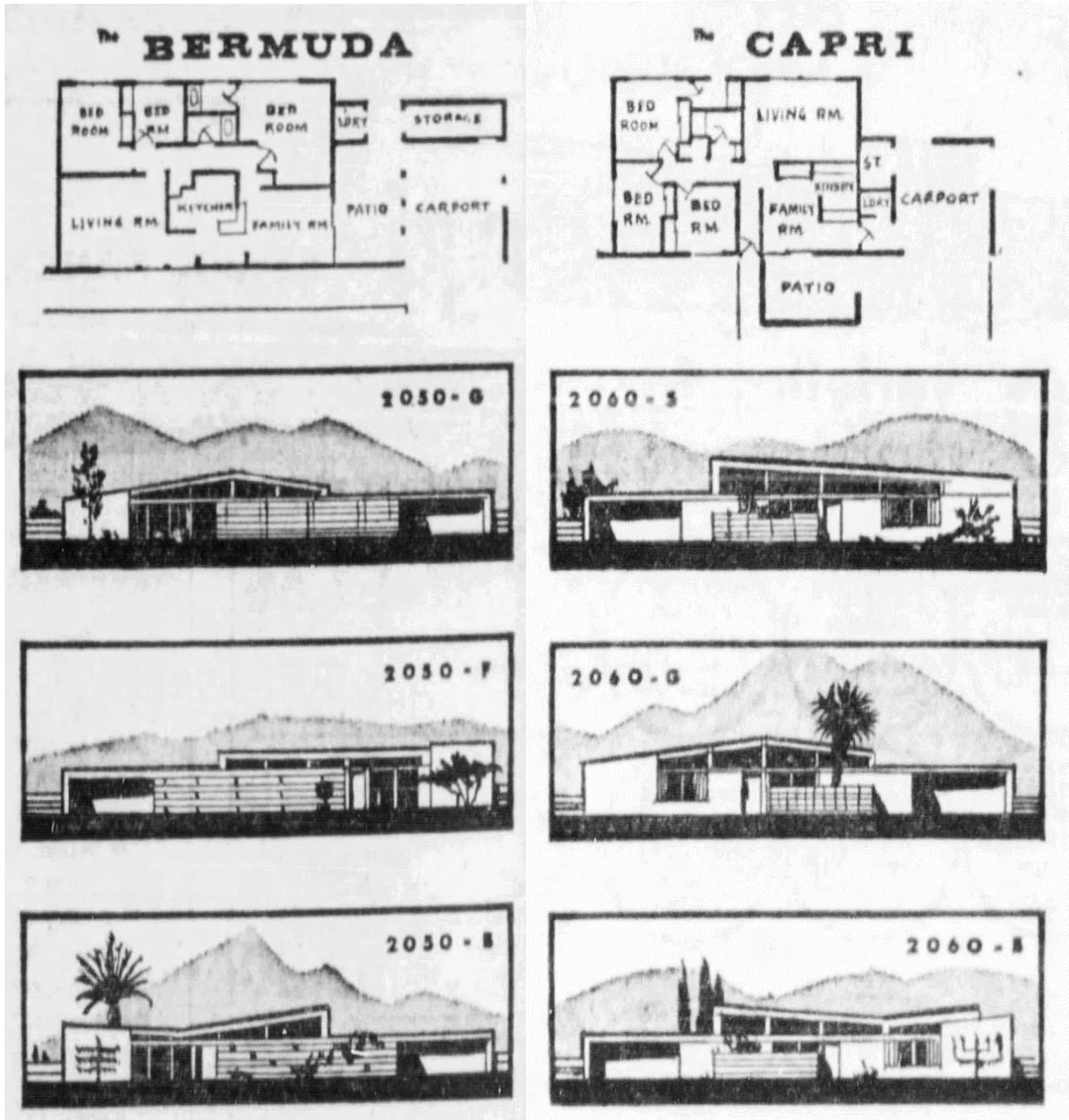
*This 1965 aerial photograph shows the proximity of El Rancho Vista Estates to the open desert surrounding the airport.
Courtesy Geospatial Collection, UCSB Library, University of California, Santa Barbara.*

THE TRACT - EL RANCHO VISTA ESTATES, 1960

Situated in the northeastern corner of Palm Springs, the Barbara Tract (soon to be known as El Rancho Vista Estates) was nearly isolated from the rest of the city at the time of development. Historical aerial photos taken before ground was broken show acres and acres of open desert surrounding the airport, with the beginnings of the developer Noel Clarke's Desert Park Estates tract adjacent to the Ranch Club, directly northwest of the Barbara Tract across Vista Chino.

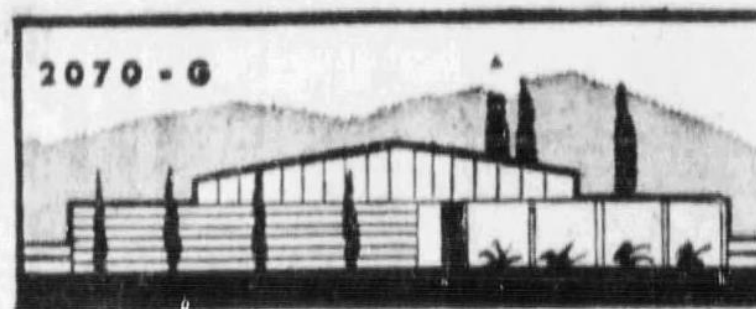
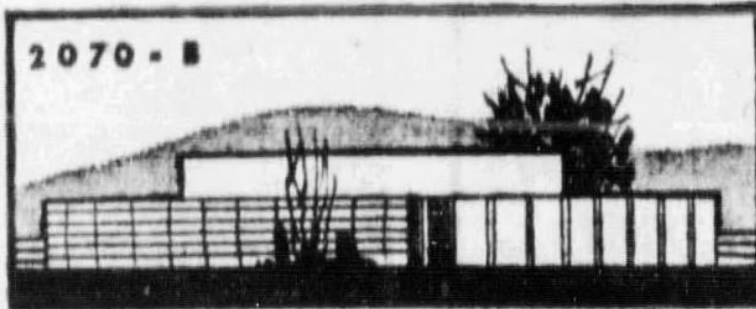
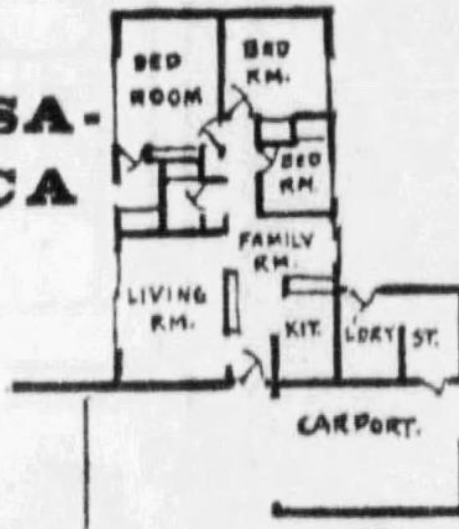
This tract comprised ninety-two parcels, with boundaries encompassing Vista Chino to the north, Chia Road to the south, North Gene Autry Trail to the east, and Avenida Fey to the west. The area was developed in three consecutive phases, progressing north to south. Barbara Tract Unit 1 (February 23, 1960) was a thirty-two-parcel tract, followed by the thirty-eight-parcel Unit 2 (filed July 13, 1960) and finally Unit 3 (July 19, 1960), which had twenty-two parcels. Each parcel was, at a minimum, at least 10,000 square feet (100 feet by 100 feet),

but because of the meandering street layout, some lots were larger and more irregular. The tract would have only one through road, Via Roberto Miguel, which gently curved from Vista Chino southward and eventually connected to Chia Road at the south. The rest of the tract was created using cul-de-sacs in varying lengths, crossing Via Roberto Miguel, or sprouting from it. The longest of these was Avenida Fey Norte, named for the developer.



Newspaper ads showcased the “Bermuda” and “Capri” floorplans and some of the various rooflines available to give the tract houses an individual character. G – Gabled; B = Butterfly; F = Flat; S = Slant.

The **CASA-
BLANCA**



The "Casablanca" floorplan.

Recognizing the potential of the Alexander Construction Company's innovative approach and economies of scale to “mass-produced” modern architecture in housing developments, Fey enlisted the services of the local architecture firm Wexler and Harrison to design the residences in El Rancho Vista Estates. This subdivision marked the inaugural venture into single-family tract residential development for Fey and Wexler and Harrison.⁵

In line with the Alexander's projects, the architects created three different floor plans, consisting of three-bedroom, two-bathroom layouts, complete with family rooms. The plans were named the “Bermuda,” the “Casablanca,” and the “Capri.” And, like the Alexanders, a variety would be achieved by how houses were sited on the lots, but most importantly, by using a diverse range of roofline styles. These roofline styles included gable, butterfly, slant, and flat roofs, collectively contributing to an engaging and dynamic architectural rhythm throughout the neighborhood. The same roofline could look drastically different by shifting how houses were sited on lots. Additionally, variations in concrete block and shadow block patterns were skillfully employed to imbue each house's unique and distinctive appearance. Wexler and Harrison were always eager to experiment with new building materials, and at El Rancho Vista Estates, they used newly developed Shadowal and Hi-Lite decorative concrete blocks, as well as creating unique patterns of their own by using standard concrete blocks in novel ways. (See “Shadowal and Shadow Block” section in the Appendixes, on page 39 for further detail).

Presumably because Fey came from Chicago, where the weather was more of a concern, the houses were fully insulated, rather than the typical open post-and-beam houses Wexler and Harrison had been designing,

MARKETING

Fey hired famed artist and Disney Imagineer Harper Goff to create a marketing plan for the new tract.⁶ Goff created whimsical and engaging illustrations, which were used in newspaper and magazine advertising, and a handsome brochure. Fey made sure to use his impressive track record as a developer in the Chicago area as a sales feature, stating, “Roy Fey has constructed your El Rancho Vista Estates home with scrupulous attention

⁵ Fey's earlier tract with Wexler and Harrison, Caballeros Estates (1959), had homes that were individually designed. So did Wexler and Harrison's earlier Sunmor tract for Sands Realty (1955).

⁶Biography of Harper Goff (March 16, 1911 – March 3, 1993). Harper Goff, originally known as Ralph Harper Goff, was a multi-talented American artist, musician, and actor. He left an indelible mark on the worlds of art, film, and entertainment, mainly through his association with The Walt Disney Company, where he made significant contributions to major films and the planning of Disney theme parks. Additionally, during World War II, he played a crucial role as an advisor to the U.S. Army in camouflage. Born in Fort Collins, Colorado, his early passion for art led him to study at the Chouinard Art Institute in Los Angeles and began working as an illustrator in New York. Following the war, Goff returned to California and embarked on a career as a set designer at Warner Bros. He was responsible for crafting the memorable sets in films like "Sergeant York," "Charge of the Light Brigade," and "Captain Blood." Goff was also a lifelong enthusiast of model trains, and it was during a visit to a London model-making shop in 1951, he crossed paths with Walt Disney, leading to a collaboration that would span several decades. Notably, he played a pivotal role in shaping the visual identity of Disney's groundbreaking live-action film, "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea," where he art-directed the exterior of the iconic Nautilus submarine and designed sets for every compartment within it. In subsequent years, Goff continued to make his mark in the film industry, creating the submarine "Proteus" for the film "Fantastic Voyage" and contributing to the highly acclaimed "Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory." Goff also significantly contributed to the early renderings and concept art for Disney's original theme park, Disneyland. In recognition of his lifetime of accomplishments, Harper Goff was posthumously named a Disney Legend. He passed away at the age of 81 at his home in Palm Springs.

to details of quality utilizing his hard-won experience in building over 8,000 homes of superior worth. Each home is designed with the desert in mind. As a beautiful machine for living on the desert, your El Rancho Vista home will provide unparalleled leisure and comfort. Truly a home to bring pride of ownership and prestige to the community.” The advertising copy went on to extol the many virtues of the fairly remote and open site he had chosen, while boasting of its close proximity to conveniences: “In a setting of desert and mountain magnificence, less than five minutes from the very heart of glamorous Palm Springs, Roy Fey has planned a new life for you. Starting with 100 x 100 ft. view lots, he first added curbs, sidewalks, and gutters. The sewers are in and paid for. Each home has been painstakingly oriented on its lot to welcome winter sun and shun summer heat. Next were added costly luxury features to ensure your comfort, such as Chrysler Refrigerated Air Conditioning, 4-inch rockwool insulation, complete fencing for privacy, and the highest quality building materials. No other community offers so much gracious and dramatic desert living.”

The highest quality architecture and site planning were described this way: “Roy Fey and his Architectural firm have gone to great expense to make sure that the exciting homes that they have designed for you are placed properly on the large 100 x 100 ft. plus lots so that you are assured of maximum privacy as well as climate-wise use of your space. The relation of your bedrooms, window walls, and leisure areas to sun and shadow patterns is called orientation and El Rancho Vista Estates are the first to eliminate hit-and-miss plot planning and employ careful study in this vital field.”

The advertising used bullet points to convey the many features of the El Rancho Vista Estates homes:

- Inviting entrées
- 3 & 4 Bedrooms, 2 & 3 Baths
- Large 14 x 23 Living Room
- Family Room and Patio
- 9 different front elevations featuring molded design concrete block facades.
- Five-foot plastered climate control overhangs.
- Wall-to-wall carpeting in living rooms, bedrooms, and halls.
- Tile floors in kitchen and family room.
- Utilities underground from pole to house.
- Sunken Roman Tub and Shower in master bath.
- All baths with tiled shower area. Showers enclosed.
- T.V. and telephone cables installed.
- Extra-large two-car carport. Separate laundry room.
- KITCHEN HIGH-LIGHTS
- Oven, range, and hood in matched colors.
- Birch cabinets.
- Garbage Disposal.
- Pass-thru bar seating four between Kitchen and Family Room.

To further entice would-be homebuyers, the homes could be equipped with swimming pools starting at \$3,500, which included “high-capacity filter and heater, and 2 feet of paved marginal patio surrounding the pool. All of this can be included in your mortgage. Also, smart native stone or block fireplaces can be added to your living room for low cost, starting at \$500.” As an added incentive, Fey advertised that “the proud purchaser of a home in El Rancho Vista Estates, is, if qualified, automatically and at no charge, entitled to a (golfing) membership in the world-famous Palm Springs Ranch Club. He will be living less than two minutes away from this club’s unmatched facilities for outdoor recreation, including the tennis club, Olympic swimming pool, riding stables, restaurant, and shops. Schools, churches, and supermarkets are nearby. Discover the delights of country club living surrounded by clean air, desert beauty, and relaxed people at play.”

A model home was built off-site at the corner of North Palm Canyon and Hermosa Drives in 1960.

By 1961, four-bedroom, three-bath houses were also being offered.

LATER PHASES

After Fey built around seventy of the Wexler and Harrison-designed houses, Fey teamed up with Joe Koch to form Fey and Koch Construction. They pivoted from the Wexler and Harrison-designed houses. By late 1961, they built cheaper, more traditional homes in El Rancho Vista Estates, advertised as the only F.H.A. houses available in Palm Springs. The two- (\$16,975) and three-bedroom (\$19,775) two-bathroom houses had gabled, pitched roofs over simple, rectangular forms with a symmetrical, recessed front door entry. Variety was achieved with minor variations in detailing on the rather spare facades. About twenty-one homes were built before Fey’s involvement with El Rancho Vista Estates was through.

Most of the remaining lots were developed between 1978 and 1980 in a quasi-Spanish ranch house design.

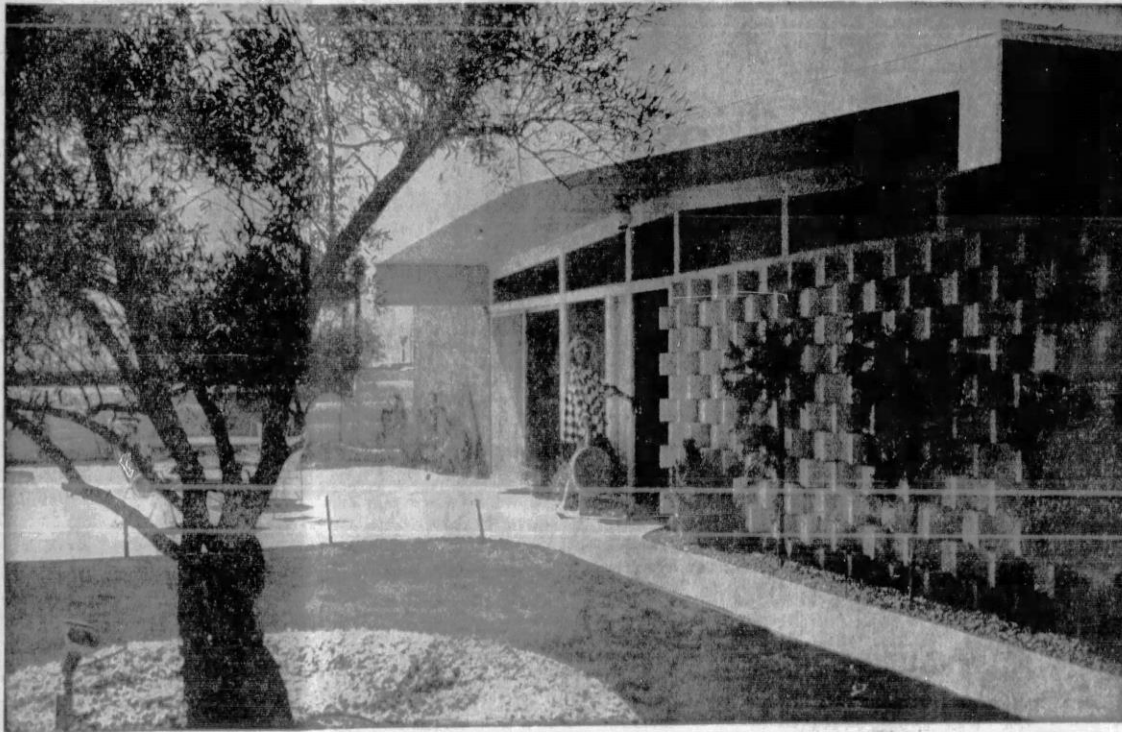


“Los Angeles Times” advertisement, March 11, 1962, showing the style of the second phase, non-Wexler and Harrison homes.



A 1965 aerial photo shows both the 1960-1961 Wexler and Harrison-designed houses, as well as the non-Wexler and Harrison houses from 1961-62, grouped more toward the bottom of the photo. Courtesy Geospatial Collection, UCSB Library, University of California, Santa Barbara.

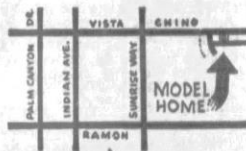
Come Live With Us in El Rancho Vista Estates



ONE OF OUR STRIKING HOME STYLES WITH A 6 FOOT WEATHER-WISE OVERHANG AND SCULPTURED WALL

Roy Fey PRESENTS A RANCH CLUB GOLFING MEMBERSHIP TO EACH QUALIFIED EL RANCHO VISTA HOME OWNER

- 3 BEDROOM — 2 BATH — OVER 1400 SQ. FT.
- 100 X 100 VIEW LOT — FAMILY ROOM — PATIO —
- WALL-TO-WALL CARPETING — SUNKEN ROMAN TUB
- CHRYSLER REFRIGERATED AIR CONDITIONING —
- OVEN — RANGE AND HOOD — DISPOSAL — SEWERS
- SIDEWALKS — FENCES



FURNISHED MODEL HOME OPEN

Decorated by Muriel Bering
AT 3200 EAST VISTA CHINO

\$19,950 total price **\$950** down

El Rancho Vista Estates

FOR INFORMATION CALL FA 5-2082 OR FA 4-4811 . . . ALL BROKERS WELCOME

The model home for the El Rancho Vista Estates tract was at 3200 East Vista Chino (the address has since changed to 3390 E. Paseo Barbara). From the "Desert Sun," May 7, 1960).

THE ARCHITECTS – WEXLER AND HARRISON

Wexler and Harrison Architects (1952-1961) was established following the completion of their apprenticeship with architect William Cody. They secured office space on the second floor of the Town & Country Center located at 174 North Palm Canyon Drive. As a result, they were tasked with designing a building for E.F. Hutton at the Town & Country Center in 1955. One of the firm's earliest significant projects was the Palm Springs Spa and Bathhouse, situated at the prominent intersection of Tahquitz-McCallum Way and Indian Canyon Drive. Over the years, Wexler and Harrison Architects would take on various projects, including residences, residential communities, educational facilities, financial institutions, and office spaces.

Through mutual agreement, the partners decided to go their separate ways, and their partnership ended amicably in 1961.

Richard A. Harrison (1921-1993) received his education at U.S.C. He and his wife raised three children in Palm Springs at their residence in Deepwell Estates. Harrison was deeply involved in housing and development projects and established his own office in 1961, located at 577 Sunny Dunes, a building designed by Howard Lapham. Harrison's notable solo projects are the Patencio Building, Seven Lakes Country Club development, Frances Stevens Park and Art Center modifications, Bermuda Dunes Cooperative Apartments, and the Julius Corsini School in Desert Hot Springs.

Donald Wexler (1926-2015) completed his education at the University of Minnesota. After graduating, he moved to Los Angeles and gained experience working for Richard Neutra, whose influence is evident in Wexler's architectural style. He and his wife raised three children in their Palm Springs residence, which Wexler himself designed on East Verbena Drive. Wexler is renowned for his pioneering use of steel in residential architecture. His designs for public buildings, including the striking Palm Springs Airport, served as inspirational and practical models for other municipalities. His Steel Development House Number 2 is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Both Richard Harrison and Donald Wexler have received stars on the Palm Springs Walk of Stars in recognition of their outstanding contributions to architecture. These stars represent just one of many accolades and honors they received for their exceptional work in the architectural profession.

THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE RATNER RESIDENCE

The Ratner Residence used Wexler and Harrison's "Bermuda" floorplan. The Bermuda was a three-bedroom, two-bathroom home with a large living room and separate family room. The house was sited so that it was pushed back toward the rear of the parcel, creating a very large front yard space. An entry door was placed in the middle of the primary facade, opening onto a large living room and relatively small kitchen. The living room featured floor-to-ceiling walls of both fixed panes and aluminum-framed sliding glass doors on two walls. The kitchen opened onto the family room with a counter-height bar. More sliding glass doors opened from

the family room into an enclosed, open-air patio, which led to the open carport. One could access a locked storage closet and a laundry room from the carport.

A hallway, accessed from either the living room or family room, led to the three bedrooms. The primary bedroom had a private bathroom, while the other two bedrooms used a shared bathroom accessed from the hallway.

The roofline on the Ratner Residence is the “G” (for gabled) roofline. A long, gently gabled roof covers most of the structure, while a gently upsloping volume meets it on one side. On each end of the gabled roof are downturned flaps. This feature would be adapted and used by architect Richard Harrison multiple times on commercial structures, usually as a repeated motif.

Most walls were either stucco, some punched with aluminum-framed sliding windows or floor-to-ceiling walls of fixed pane or aluminum-framed sliding glass doors. On the primary facade, a long feature wall was designed with Shadowal block, each block embossed with a single recessed and angled portion (Shadowal also produced a block with two angled indentations), creating a pattern of opposing triangles in a regular rhythm.

A private enclosed yard was created at the front of the house using large plywood panels, staggered to make alternating indentations. This fence was painted the same off-white as the house. The color palette for the home was originally off-white paint, with a light blue front door as an accent. A poured concrete path runs parallel to the house, from the front door to the driveway. A relatively small opening along the house’s foundation was left open for planting along the length of the pathway.

Initially, the house was landscaped simply, with a large grass panel within the fence enclosure. From early aerials and the few historical images available, it is unclear whether the existing mature palm trees or olive trees are from when the house was built in 1960, though it is likely.

CHANGES OVER TIME

There have been remarkably few changes to the Ratner Residence since it was built. In 1970, the swimming pool was added at the front of the house. In 1973, an eighty-foot long, six-foot-high concrete block wall was built in the rear yard along the north side of the parcel. The following year, another 110-foot concrete block wall replaced the plywood fence in about the same location. The only other permitted change was a re-roof in 1979.

At the rear of the house, a few of the original aluminum-framed windows have been replaced with vinyl-framed windows, and a glass block section was added to the exterior wall in the shower of one of the bathrooms at the rear of the house.

At the front of the house, a narrow column of vintage glazed ceramic blocks was added, each one pierced with a biomorphic shape. This reversible decorative feature runs from the ground to the bottom of the gable roof’s downturned left-hand flap.



This 1965 aerial photograph shows the configuration of the plywood fence enclosing the grassy front yard area. Courtesy Geospatial Collection, UCSB Library, University of California, Santa Barbara.



The top photograph shows how architect Richard Harrison adapted the long gabled roofline with downturned flaps into a long single roofline with multiple downturned flaps. This example is from a commercial structure on Arenas Road. The bottom photograph is a gabled roofline at El Rancho Vista Estates.

Character-Defining Features of the Ratner Residence

Contributing Elements

The Ratner Residence is an exceptional example of a Midcentury Modern residential tract structure. It exhibits numerous extant character-defining features from its period of significance (1960), including:

- “Bermuda” floor plan
- Shadowal concrete block and stucco walls
- Floor-to-ceiling fixed pane and aluminum-framed sliding glass doors
- Gabled roofline with turned-down flaps over the primary portion of the home, with another volume with a gently sloping roofline to meet the gabled roof
- Clerestory windows
- Open carport with adjacent storage closet
- Enclosed, open-air patio between carport and residence

Non-Contributing Elements

- Non-original vinyl-framed windows at the rear of the structure
- Swimming pool
- Concrete block walls enclosing the front-loaded pool
- Light over the front door
- Decorative glazed clay block column with biomorphic cutouts

ORIGINAL OWNERS OF RATNER RESIDENCE

The first owners of the Ratner Residence were Benjamin Maximilian Ratner (1901-1981) and his wife Lee (1902-1991). Benjamin Ratner was born to Jacob and Ettie Ratner in Newark, New Jersey. He attended the New Jersey School of Law, graduating in 1924. Ratner would practice law until he retired around 1970 and was a New Jersey Bar Association member. He married Lee Weiner, and the couple had two sons, George and Edward. The Ratners were members of the Millburn B’nai B’rith and lived in Irvington, New Jersey. Very little biographical information could be found on the Ratner family. They owned the home relatively briefly, from 1960 to 1962.



Jessie Knox was a stewardess for T.W.A. Courtesy Stephanie Knox Levesque.

SUBSEQUENT LONGTIME OWNERS

After the Ratners sold the house, only a few people lived there for over a few years.

RONALD AND JESSIE KNOX (1962-1970)

The Ratners sold the house to Ronald and Jessie Knox on October 29, 1962. Ronald Palmer Knox was born in Dayton, Ohio, on January 24, 1935, to Herbert and Velma Knox. After college, he was a Petty Officer in the Navy, stationed at the Long Beach Naval Station. He then embarked on a long career in ticketing sales for Trans World Airlines (T.W.A.). On April 24, 1962, Knox married Jessie Louise Jones, born in Hopkins, Kentucky, on April 11, 1938.

Jones was a stewardess for T.W.A. According to daughter Stephanie, “Mom was a very social person, travel was in her blood. Dad was sociable, too, had an easygoing personality, a dry sense of humor, and enjoyed get-togethers with people. He went to college in California and had an art background. I believe that was why he was interested in architecture.”⁷ The couple lived briefly in Topanga Canyon in Los Angeles after marriage, but when T.W.A. transferred Ronald Knox to the Palm Springs Airport, they bought the house in El Rancho Vista Estates. While living there, the couple would have three children: Andrew, born in 1963; Tracy, born in 1965; and Stephanie, born in 1967. When Knox was transferred to Derry, New Hampshire, in 1970, they sold the house to Gerald and Barbara Burg.

⁷ Telephone interview with Stephanie Knox Levesque, May 17, 2023.



Kodachrome photographs from the 1960s show original details of the Ratner Residence. The top photo shows the original off-white paint with light blue accent door, Shadowal concrete block, and the original light fixture. The other photos show the white-painted plywood fence and original landscape in the front yard. Photographs courtesy Stephanie Knox Levesque.

GERALD AND BARBARA BURG (1970-1978)

Gerald Glen Burg was born around 1931 in Washington state. Very little biographical information could be found about the Burgs. He married Barbara A. Conoway in 1953 in Washington. The Burgs added the swimming pool and concrete block walls before selling the house at the time of their divorce in 1978.

The only other long-term owners were Kevin McCandless and Crystal Strode, who owned the house from 2013-2020.

Other Sources Consulted

- Historic Resources Group. *City of Palm Springs Citywide Historic Context Statement & Survey Findings*. Pasadena, 2015 (Final Draft, December 2018).
- Architectural Resources Group. *City of Palm Springs Historic Resources Survey*. San Francisco, 2004.
- Historic Site Preservation Board. *Inventory of Historic Structures*. Palm Springs, 2001.
- www.newspapers.com (*Desert Sun* and *Los Angeles Times*).
- City of Palm Springs (Planning and Building Departments).
- Ancestry.com.
- Palm Springs Historical Society.
- Riverside County Assessor's Office.

BACKGROUND/HISTORIC CONTEXT

From the Historic Resources Group's Citywide Survey:

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)

POST-WORLD WAR II PALM SPRINGS (1945-1969)

This context explores the post-World War II boom and related development that left Palm Springs with what many consider the largest and finest concentration of mid-twentieth century modern architecture in the United States. Hollywood film stars and Eastern industrialists were joined in the postwar decades by ever-increasing numbers of tourists. The growing prosperity of the postwar years and the rise of the car culture created a leisured, mobile middle class that sought, in Palm Springs, the "good life" that had previously been

available only to the wealthy. This surge of visitors and seasonal residents - by 1951 the city's winter population swelled to almost 30,000 from a permanent population of 7,660 – coincided with the peak of modernism's popularity.

The population growth accelerated in the 1950s, bringing a demand for civic necessities such as schools, libraries, museums, a city hall and police headquarters, as well as offices, stores, and housing. Palm Springs' growth as a tourist destination brought a demand for inns, resorts, and tourist attractions. Tourism also introduced a demand for affordable second homes for a growing middle class; the construction and financing methods for building such mass-produced housing tracts were already developing in suburban areas of larger cities, including nearby Los Angeles, and found a ready market in Palm Springs. Though Palm Springs was a smaller municipality, this economic climate provided many opportunities for locally based architects, as well as several Los Angeles architects, to explore and develop a wide range of architectural types and ideas, sometimes influenced by sophisticated global design trends. These conditions and the architects' talents lead to the development of an exceptional group of modern buildings which later came to be identified as “Palm Springs Modernism” or “The Palm Springs School.”

The desert climate and casual lifestyle all but demanded unconventional design, and clients were more accepting of, even sought out, a more adventurous style in the resort atmosphere of Palm Springs than they would have in their primary residences. In the two decades after the war, Palm Springs was transformed with new commercial and institutional buildings, custom homes, and many housing tracts.

THEME: POST-WORLD WAR II SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (1945-1969)

Postwar Residential Architecture in Palm Springs (1945-1969)

The exuberance and optimism from the war victory, the population explosion, and the creation of automobile-centric suburbia in the building boom that followed meant great changes for the way Americans lived in the post-World War II era. Southern California was at the forefront of this new era, and its tradition of experimentation in architecture placed it in an ideal position to lead the exploration of suburban residential architecture after World War II. This sub-theme explores the important role of architecture in the development of Palm Springs after the war, and discusses buildings that are important as examples of particular architectural styles or as the work of significant architects or designers. Following precedents started in the 1930s, the decade of the 1940s further reinforced the prominence of modern architecture in defining the growth of Palm Springs after World War II. This paralleled the trend throughout California; as prosperity returned with the war, and as the peacetime return of soldiers brought a demand for new development, a young generation of architects exposed to modernism in their training or travels before and during the war wanted to put those ideas into practice. This new generation of architects combined a concern for landscape and site relationships, the use of natural materials, and innovative building technologies to create a new regional architecture. This was also a period of exuberance and optimism that was directly reflected in the architecture. According to historian Kevin

Starr, the theory that domestic architecture would not take up where it had left off before the war was fundamental.

In the 1950s, with the town's expansive growth, Palm Springs architects were able to explore a wide range of residential architectural ideas with willing clients interested in modern design. These respond in various ways to the demands of the location: controlling the sun's heat, respecting the natural landscape, and creating homes of pleasure and recreation. Palm Springs' residential architecture of this period included affordable, mass-produced housing, along with custom homes designed with sizable budgets. The distinctive solutions of several local architects show a high quality of concept and execution that matches the quality of the more widely publicized Los Angeles Modern architects of the same period.

Donald Wexler and Richard Harrison formed a partnership in 1952 after meeting at the office of William Cody, where both worked. Wexler, a graduate of the University of Minnesota architecture school, had worked for Richard Neutra in Los Angeles before moving to Palm Springs. Wexler and Harrison's early house designs show the influence of both Neutra and Cody, but also the beginning of a distinctive approach to design. Wexler's interest in engineering led to simple designs expressing their wood post-and-beam and steel frame structure. This is seen in three particular houses: for developer Sam Martin Zalud, Wexler and Harrison designed two houses as part of a small planned neighborhood around a communal park, named Lilliana Gardens. The floor plans of these two houses were the same, featuring a central open atrium next to the living room; the two houses were differentiated by their front walls, one faced in rubble stone, and one with slump block, which William Cody often used. At the same time, Wexler built a house (1955, 1272 E. Verbena Drive) for his family. It is also wood post-and-beam, but smaller and simpler, and designed to be expanded as his family grew.

Sub-theme: Single-Family Residential Development (1945-1969)

The postwar boom, a prosperity beyond imagination, combined with surging population growth and the democratization of privilege, would change Palm Springs forever.

In the immediate post-World War II era, California in general experienced a period of unprecedented growth. Many individuals who came west to participate in the war effort, including former military personnel, decided to settle permanently. Between 1940 and 1950, California's population increased by 53 percent, which was partially accounted for by the 850,000 veterans who took up residence after the war. As a result, the construction of residential properties became a major focus of development in the post-World War II era. The immediate and widespread need for housing inspired a variety of responses. For communities that were largely built out, land previously considered "unbuildable" became more attractive. For newer communities, large new tracts were developed.

Development in Palm Springs during this period reflected these wider trends. The permanent population of Palm Springs rose 292 percent between 1940 and 1960, from 3,434 to 13,468 people. Charting the local population shows this steep growth lasted in Palm Springs for decades after the war. Even as full-time residency

increased in Palm Springs, the seasonal visitor population outpaced these increases. Whereas seasonal visitation in 1940 was estimated to be 100,000 people, by 1953 it was 250,000, and 500,000 by 1960.

In Palm Springs, postwar single-family residential development followed several patterns. First, expansion/tract development occurred eastward, and then southward into the flat exposed parcels of the desert floor with the creation of homes for middle class and upper middle class residents. Second, empty parcels within existing developments were subject to in-fill development. Third, previously “unbuildable” parcels in the foothills were now economically viable for the development of luxury homes. Fourth, after 1959, new laws permitted the lease and development of the checkerboard of open parcels owned by the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. This offered developers a wide variety of opportunities previously denied within the city.

Immediately after the war, between 1945 and 1949, some twenty new tracts were recorded in and around Palm Springs. The developers involved in these ventures tended to be early citizens of the city who saw potential in Palm Springs. An example of this was the Chino Mesa Estates tract (1945) developed by Ernest Off (1901-1993). Off had been instrumental in prewar housing development in the city. After leaving Palm Springs in 1937 and moving to Brentwood and Beverly Hills, he returned to purchase and develop the 22½ acres north of Las Palmas for the development of high-end homes. The home sites were marketed as “Exclusive, Restricted, Sheltered” and noted for their proximity to Las Palmas Estates.

Prior to World War II, Palm Springs had been a tourist and vacation home destination for the wealthy. Postwar prosperity brought a new group of tourists and second home-owners to the city: the upper middle and middle classes. This gradual democratization of Palm Springs would irrevocably change the city during the 1950s and 1960s, first with expansive single-family residential development and ultimately through the creation of innovative forms of multi-family residential development and ownership options. The creation of new tracts and subdivisions also resulted in a less concentrated, more scattered development pattern.

A more practical, yet important factor in residential development in Palm Springs and the entire southwest was the accessibility of air conditioning. Although individual residential air conditioning units were available as early as 1939, widespread acquisition and use was delayed by the war. In 1947, British scholar S.F. Markham wrote, “the greatest contribution to civilization in this century may well be air conditioning – and America leads the way.” In the 1950s, residential air conditioning became another way to keep up with the Joneses. More than one million units were sold in 1953 alone. For communities like Palm Springs, air conditioning meant the “season” could be extended and year-round living was practically viable for the first time.

During the 1950s, residential development in Palm Springs continued to expand eastward and southward. Like other locations in Southern California, it was a period in which large developers dominated the scene; among them were William Grant, Noel B. Clarke, A. R. Simon, George and Robert Alexander, Roy Fey, and Jack Meiselman. However, a series of small developers still flourished. Examples included Roy W. Burton’s Burton Tract (1957); auto salesman-turned-real estate developer Sam Janis who subdivided Janis’ Hilltop Estates (1958);

and David M. Benjamin (1894-1987), who developed the El Mirador Park tract (1946) and Mountain View Estates (1956).

By the close of the 1950s great changes were afoot for Palm Springs residential development. New communities to the south and east including Palm Desert, Indian Wells, and Rancho Mirage were beginning to encroach on Palm Springs as the chic desert destination for home ownership. Another important factor was the 1959 Equalization Law signed by President Eisenhower that equalized allotted Indian lands, thereby setting the stage for development of Reservation lands within the City of Palm Springs. The Equalization Act was intended to provide for a reasonable degree of equalization of the value of allotments made to tribal members and was enacted in response to litigation in Federal court in *Segundo et al. v. United States et al.*⁴⁶⁸ The tribe and tribe members (allottees) could now realize profits from their lands and developed the 99-year lease. This allowed for longer agreements, encouraging development that had previously been hindered by short-term leases. For developers, this represented new opportunities for projects throughout the city. From large (Canyon Country Club) to small (Smoke Canyon Estates), residential projects on leased land were often attractive for their location and lower sales prices (made possible because the purchase of land was not involved). With increased demand, economic prosperity, air conditioning, and availability of new land for development, Palm Springs became home to a number of custom and tract home developments by prominent Southern California developers and wealthy speculators. From early on, many of these subdivisions emphasized architecture and/or the glamour associated with Palm Springs.

EVALUATION:

CRITERION 1 – Significant Events - The resource is associated with events that have made a meaningful contribution to the nation, state or community: The Ratner Residence is not affiliated with significant events and **does not qualify under Criterion 1.**

CRITERION 2 – Significant Persons - The resource is associated with the lives of persons who made a meaningful contribution to national, state or local history: The Ratner Residence is not affiliated with significant persons and **does not qualify under Criterion 2.**

ARCHITECTURE (Criteria 3 – 6)

CRITERION 3 - The resource reflects or exemplifies a particular period of national, state or local history: The Ratner Residence, completed in 1960, exhibits many stylistic markers that place it directly in the historic context of the “Post-World War II Palm Springs” period; of the theme of Postwar Residential Architecture in Palm Springs (1945-1969), and the sub-theme Single-Family Residential Development (1945-1969). The structure is a fine example of the mass-produced, architect-designed, single-family residences built in large tracts by developers throughout the Coachella Valley in this period. Before World War II, Palm Springs primarily attracted affluent tourists and vacation home buyers. However, after the war, a surge in prosperity led to a different demographic of visitors and second home purchasers: the upper middle class and middle class

individuals. This shift toward a broader and more diverse group of residents impacted Palm Springs in the 1950s and 1960s. Initially, it manifested through the extensive construction of single-family homes, eventually evolving into introducing innovative multi-family residential developments and ownership choices.

Furthermore, the development of new neighborhoods and subdivisions contributed to a more dispersed and less concentrated urban growth pattern in the city. This growth was further enhanced with the widespread availability of more affordable central air conditioning, making the homes inhabitable year-round. Roy Fey's El Rancho Vista Estates used mass-production building techniques to provide stylish architect-designed residences with affordable, luxurious amenities. The highly intact Ratner Residence may be considered an essential component of the historical trends that have come to define Palm Springs' image as a center of important modern architecture, i.e., a historical movement that exemplifies a particular period of the national, state, or local history. **The structure qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Resource on the local registry under Criterion 3.**

CRITERION 4 - The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction: The Ratner Residence is a highly intact contributing resource to the potential El Rancho Vista Estates Historic District, which Historic Resources Group identified in their 2015 Citywide Survey. As a fine example of the use of mass-production building processes for postwar tract housing, the Ratner Residence is noteworthy for its type or method of construction. **It qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Resource on the local registry under Criterion 4.**

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

As designed by master architects Donald Wexler and Richard Harrison, the Ratner Residence possesses a mastery of the modernist design principles employed by the partners, using the most straightforward and humble materials. Extensive use of glass, both fixed and sliding/opening, protects from the sun by deep overhangs, provides shelter from the harsh desert climate and allows for cross-ventilation. This convergence of the interior and exterior spaces was a hallmark of the midcentury modern period. As a residential tract structure artfully designed by Wexler and Harrison, this building rises to a master architect's level with high artistic values. **Therefore, the structure qualifies as a Class 1 Historic Resource under Criterion 5 for its distinctive characteristics representing the Midcentury Modern style and high artistic values.**

Criterion 6: (That represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction). This Criterion was created to address the resources contained within a potential Historic District. 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.

The Ratner Residence's historic significance does not rely on other properties or associated developments. Also, the H.R.G. Citywide Survey has identified El Rancho Vista Estates as potentially eligible to be a Historic District, but because the district has not been nominated to date, it does not apply to this nomination. **Hence, the structure does not qualify under Criterion 6.**

Criterion 7: (That has yielded or may be likely to yield information important to the national, state or local history or prehistory.) The Ratner Residence is not expected to yield information critical to the national, state, or local history or prehistory. Hence, the structure **does not qualify under Criterion 7.**

SUMMARY: This evaluation finds The Ratner Residence eligible for listing as a Palm Springs Historic Resource under 8.05.070 (C.1.a.) paragraphs (iii, iv, and v) of the local ordinance's seven criteria.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

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.

DESIGN

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. It results from conscious decisions made during the original conception and planning of a property and applies to activities as diverse as community planning, engineering, architecture, and landscape architecture. Design includes such elements as organization of space, proportion, scale, technology, ornamentation, and materials. A property's design reflects historic functions and technologies as well as aesthetics. It includes such considerations as the structural system; massing; arrangement of spaces; pattern of fenestration; textures and colors of surface materials; type, amount, and style of ornamental detailing. ***The Ratner Residence's essential elements of form, plan, space, structures, configuration, and style have remained intact. Similarly, the structural system, massing, the arrangement of spaces, and the type, amount, and style of detailing have survived almost entirely intact.***

MATERIALS

Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a period 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 types of materials and technologies. ***The Ratner Residence's materials represent the best Midcentury Modern design, with high-quality but simple decorative concrete block, aluminum, wood, glass, and stucco.***

WORKMANSHIP

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a 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 Ratner Residence was built as one of nearly seventy residences at the El Rancho Vista Estates tract using mass-production building techniques, providing affordability utilizing an economy of scale. This innovation in building represents a breakthrough in the technological practice of the period.***

LOCATION

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

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 Ratner Residence was designed as one of about seventy residences designed by architects Wexler and Harrison in a tract of mass-produced houses. The individual character was achieved by various ways of siting the homes,***

and in their rooflines and detailing. This setting within El Rancho Vista Estates continues to reflect Wexler and Harrison's originally designed relationship of site and structure.

FEELING

Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period. 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 nineteenth century. ***The Ratner Residence is situated within the potential Historic District of El Rancho Vista Estates. The single-family tract home conveys the feeling of the Midcentury Modern period for which Palm Springs is internationally known. The Ratner Residence still blends well into this unique neighborhood. Accordingly, the Ratner Residence retains its original integrity of feeling.***

ASSOCIATION

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. A property retains association if it is the place where the event or activity occurred and is sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to an observer. Like feeling, association requires the presence of physical features that convey a property's historic character. For example, a Revolutionary War battlefield whose natural and man-made elements have remained intact since the eighteenth century will retain its quality of association with the battle. Because feeling and association depend on individual perceptions, their retention alone is never sufficient to support eligibility of a property for the National Register. ***The Ratner Residence is not associated with an important historic event.***

INTEGRITY SUMMARY: This integrity analysis confirms that the site and structures of the Ratner Residence still possess six aspects of integrity.

APPENDICES

I Owner's Letter of Support

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

September 2, 2023

Dear Honorable Preservation Board,

As the current owner of a Wexler Harrison home in El Rancho Vista Estates, designed by Donald A. Wexler in Palm Springs, I am proud to support the Class 1 Historic Status site designation of my home and honored that the Board has recognized yet another significant example of the work of Donald A. Wexler.

Under the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation, I have engaged the services of its Vice President Steven Keylon to assist and guide me through the process of achieving the Class 1 Historic Status including all required nomination paperwork.

I am looking forward to supporting Steven and the Board in helping secure this notable and celebrated achievement.

Respectfully submitted,



Larry Yarchever

cc: Steven Keylon

II Assessor's Map and Aerial

Riverside County, CA - Community: Property Search
Property ID Number (PIN/APN): 677233003





9/15/2023

This map and the data contained herein is for demonstration purposes only. Aumentum Technologies assumes no liability whatsoever associated with the use or misuse of such data, and disclaims any representation or warranty regarding the completeness or accuracy of the data. Note: Acreage and Square Footage data shown are approximate and may not be consistent with records maintained for appraisal purposes. ©2020 Aumentum Technologies Data sources: Aumentum Technology, Customers Geospatial Commons (DASC), U.S. Census, esri.

Property Address	1633 VIA ROBERTO MIGUEL PALM SPRINGS, CA 92262
APN	677233003

III Building Permits

Date	Owner	Permit Type	Description of Work
03-17-1960	El Rancho Vista Estates	Electrical	54 outlets, including lights and switches; 10 light fixtures; 1 meter loop; 1 220 volt outlet.
04-14-1960	El Rancho Vista Estates	Plumbing	2 bathtubs; 2 lavatories; 2 toilets; 1 sink; 1 automatic washer; 1 water piping; 1 water heater; 2 gas outlets.
04-20-1960	El Rancho Vista Estates, Inc.	Building	Construct 6 room frame and stucco dwelling – compo roof. 100 x 100 lot size; R-1; 1400 sq. ft. house; 540 sq. ft. carport.

05-22-1960	El Rancho Vista Estates	Sewer	Sewer inspection.
08-04-1970	Mrs. C. Burg	Building	Construct gunite conc. Swimming pool in rear yard area. Size: 14 x 16 x 32 ft.
02-21-1973	Mrs. T. Lee	Building	Construct 80 ft. of 6' high conc. Block wall in rear yard along north side of property.
06-17-1974	Col. Burg	Building	Const 110 lin ft of 6 ft hi conc block wall, 25 ft back from front property line, across the front of the dwelling.
05-12-79	B. Burg	Building	Compo re-roof.

Announcing **shadowal**
TRADEMARK
concrete masonry

the block with 1000 faces

Shadowal block for the home adds new dimension and character to a room. The standard modular 8" x 16" face makes it easy to lay-up in the wall.

Shadowal block for the smart shop can be used with equal distinction for interior and exterior walls—blends perfectly with other building materials.

Shadowal block for the exterior of industrial buildings gives the effect of expensive special shapes at only slightly more than the 8" x 8" x 16" units.

Shadowal block for schools breaks up large wall expanses with attractive patterns. Shadowal masonry is also fireproof, sound absorbing, requires no finishing.

Shadowal block available from NCMA members

National Concrete Masonry Association - 38 South Dearborn - Chicago

Shadowal decorative concrete block (“The block with 1000 faces”) was introduced in 1956 and trademarked by the National Concrete Masonry Association.

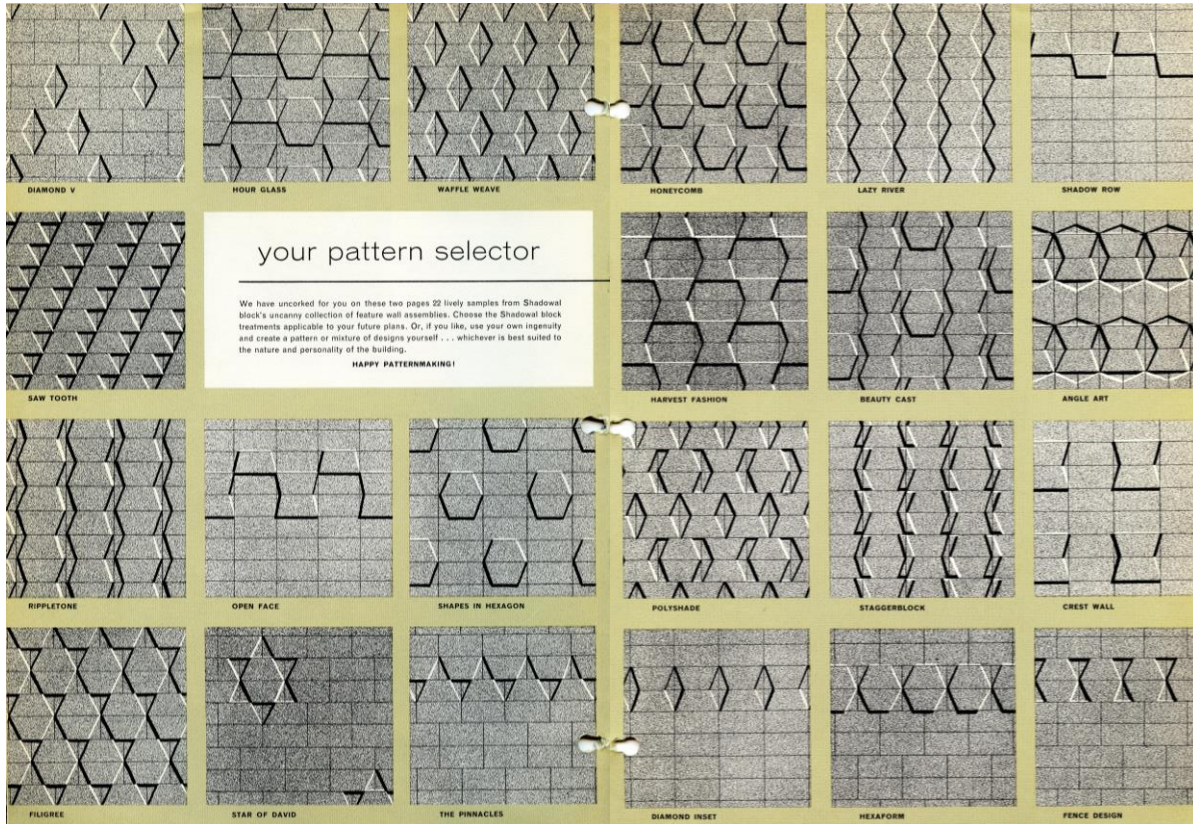
IV SHADOWAL, HI-LITE, AND SHADOW BLOCK

Now known as concrete masonry units (C.M.U.s), concrete blocks were introduced in the late nineteenth century with various patents for block designs. The industry expanded rapidly after Harmon Palmer invented the first commercially successful concrete block machine in 1900. Multiple manufacturers produced unique proprietary blocks using unique molds or special aggregates in the concrete mix. Although concrete blocks meant to emulate natural stone were popular for the first quarter of the twentieth century, they fell out of fashion following World War II.

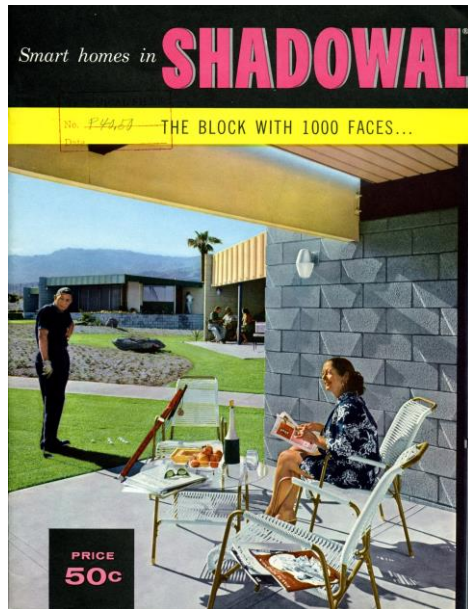
Manufacturers marketed concrete blocks as an economical building material, ideal for industrial, agricultural, and residential projects. The block became associated with utilitarian structures but soon transitioned into a supporting role as a substrate for applied finishes, such as stucco. In a 1925 catalog for concrete block, artist Alfonso Lannelli said that “stucco becomes a sensitive medium through which the texture-and-tone qualities of each period can be expressed.”

By the 1950s, decorative new variations on the concrete block were introduced and quickly took off. One of these, "screen blocks," allowed the concrete block to assume a significant design role. These ornamental screen block designs created free-standing walls that served as partitions while allowing air circulation.

Another variation, shadow blocks, quickly became a defining architectural feature, both structural and decorative. Shadow block featured a shallow relief design that created shadow patterns when hit by light.



Two-page 1959 magazine advertisement showed the almost infinite ways variety could be achieved with Shadowal concrete blocks. Courtesy Ron and Barbara Marshall.



Architect William Krisel used Shadawal concrete block at his Sandpiper condominiums in Palm Desert, starting in 1958, and was featured on the cover of this Shadawal brochure. Courtesy Ron and Barbara Marshall.



Shadawal patterns by Wexler and Harrison at El Rancho Vista Estates.



Shadowal diamond patterns by Wexler and Harrison at El Rancho Vista Estates.

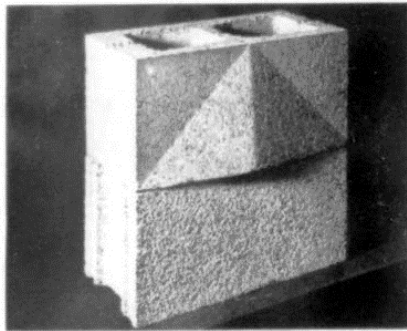
Shadowal was previewed at the National Concrete Masonry Association of Chicago's annual conference in New Orleans in 1956. The first blocks put into production were by the Best Block company, which began producing them in August of 1956. Shortly after that, the molds were purchased by block manufacturers around the country, and the Shadowal product was put to use throughout the United States. Reporting on the first structures built using Shadowal, *Concrete Magazine* reported in October 1957, "You notice a Shadowal exterior! Whether you're driving along a highway, or going up a winding driveway overhung with trees, the moment you see a use of this block with "one thousand" faces, it strikes you as something different."⁸

⁸ "Shadowal in Use . . . in Milwaukee," *Concrete Magazine*, October 1957, 20.

All Producers Can Make Besser Hi-Lite Block

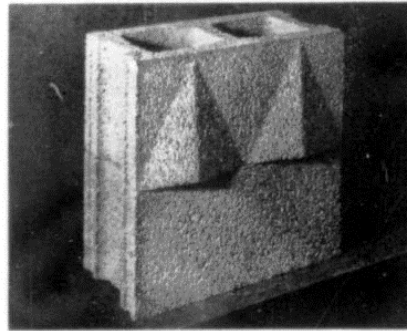
Hi-Lite block, an attractive design block for both exterior and interior walls, has been introduced by Besser Company, Alpena, Mich. Based on the conventional 8" x 8" x 16" masonry unit, Hi-Lite block features single and double raised pyramid facing designs that enable architects or builders to create a myriad of patterns and dramatic architectural effects.

Hi-Lite block will give blockmakers a new competitive block for the building industry. Its sculptured appearance adds glamour to ordinary



block and should greatly stimulate the demand for concrete masonry units. Hi-Lite block can be made from lightweight or dense aggregate

as fast as standard block. With only a few additional mold parts, blockmakers will be able to gain full production of Hi-Lite block in a matter



of minutes, the company states. And the same set of mold parts fits all standard wall widths.

Hi-Lite block mold parts are available to all block plants. Literature and complete information is available from Besser Company.

Enter D42 on Inquiry Card

How to Figure Color for Ready Mixed Concrete

Frank D. Davis Co., 2704 Santa Fe Ave., Los Angeles 58, Calif., has recently produced a folder, "Colors for Ready Mixed Concrete", that is

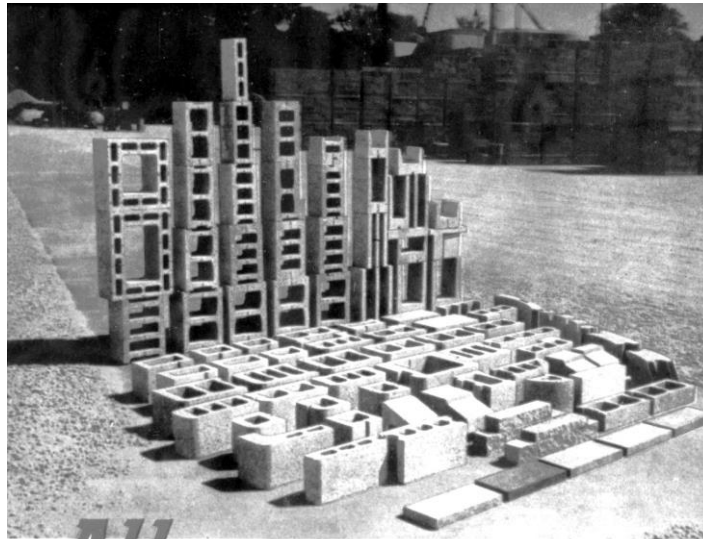
APRIL, 1958

For more information use postcard facing page

"Hi-Lite" decorative concrete block, with triangulated bas-relief designs, was introduced by the Besser Company of Alpena, Michigan, who also produced molds so local suppliers could make them on-site. From "Concrete" Magazine, April 1958.

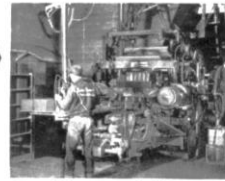


Wexler and Harrison's variations using Hi-Lite shadow blocks at El Rancho Vista Estates.



All made on the **VIBRAPAC** →

Yes — every unit shown in the above illustration . . . in fact, many more units not shown . . . are made on a standard Besser Vibrapac. The versatility of the Vibrapac makes it possible for the blockmaker to supply ALL units used in building a complete concrete masonry structure. Besser originated the Plain Pallet Stripper principle and only ONE set of Plain Pallets is required for ALL sizes of units . . . a tremendous time-saving, cost-reducing feature. Now we also have patio block, split-block, Shadowal Block and the new Besser HI-LITE Block. Write today for literature.



Dependable and versatile Vibrapac machine, fully automatic including front feeding of pallets. Off bearer removes green block with the help of a Besser Power Hoist, at the same time returning empty pallets to the machine.



The new Besser HI-LITE Design Block is easy to make on the Vibrapac and causes no production problems. Only a few mold parts are required.



AS-1338

BESSER Company

Dept. 139, Alpena, Mich., U.S.A.
FIRST IN CONCRETE BLOCK MACHINES

From "Brick and Clay Record," May 1958.

Besides the Shadowal and Hi-Lite patterns, architects invented standard concrete blocks to create shadow effects by placing blocks on their sides or using different-sized blocks that would protrude from the wall. One use of shadow block is formed when standard concrete masonry units are placed in a manner that projects the block from the face of the home.

One of the most recognizable forms of shadow block is the projecting H-block, including the open-ended eight-inch block.

PACE SETTER PAVILION, 1959

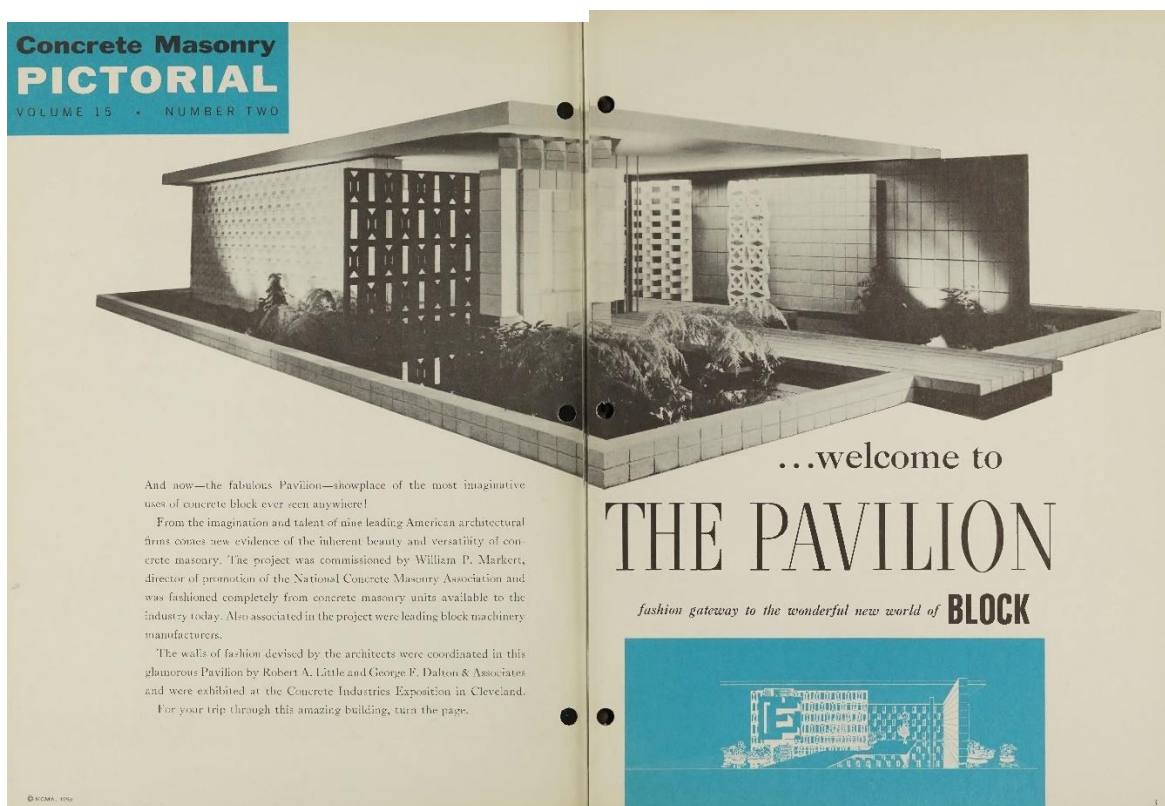
To illustrate what the new shadow block and screen block patterns could do, the National Concrete Masonry Association built a very novel Pavilion for the 1959 Concrete Industries Exposition in Cleveland. They hired nine leading architects to use their imagination and create new patterns using both shadow and screen blocks. The architects included Marcel Breuer, Paul Rudolph, A. Quincy Jones and Frederick E. Emmons.

A twenty-two-page brochure was produced, describing the project this way:

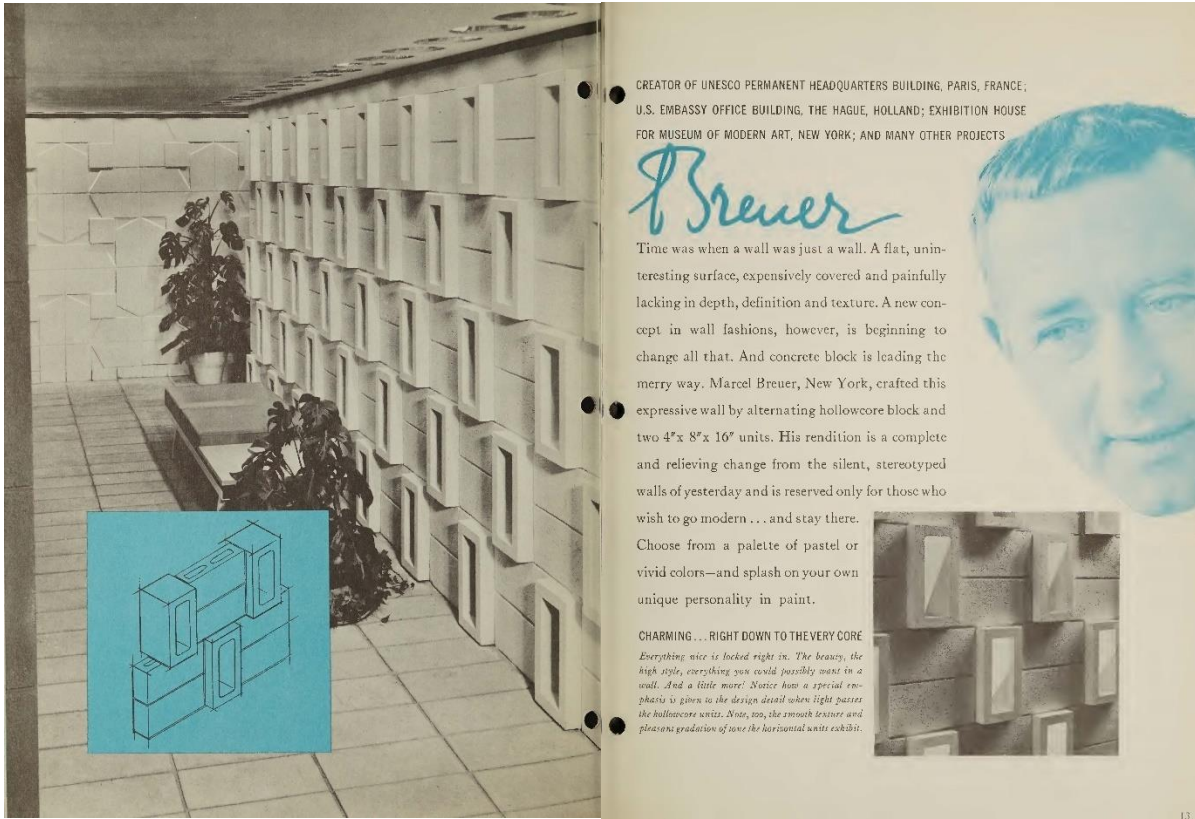
And now—the fabulous Pavilion—showplace of the most imaginative uses of concrete block ever seen anywhere!

From the imagination and talent of nine leading American architectural firms comes new evidence of the inherent beauty and versatility of concrete masonry. The project was commissioned by William P. Markert, director of promotion of the National Concrete Masonry Association and was fashioned completely from concrete masonry units available to the industry today. Also associated in the project were leading block machinery manufacturers.

The walls of fashion devised by the architects were coordinated in this glamorous Pavilion by Robert A. Little and George F. Dalton & Associates and were exhibited at the Concrete Industries Exposition in Cleveland



The cover of the Pavilion brochure.



CREATOR OF UNESCO PERMANENT HEADQUARTERS BUILDING, PARIS, FRANCE;
 U.S. EMBASSY OFFICE BUILDING, THE HAGUE, HOLLAND; EXHIBITION HOUSE
 FOR MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK; AND MANY OTHER PROJECTS

Breuer

Time was when a wall was just a wall. A flat, uninteresting surface, expensively covered and painfully lacking in depth, definition and texture. A new concept in wall fashions, however, is beginning to change all that. And concrete block is leading the merry way. Marcel Breuer, New York, crafted this expressive wall by alternating hollowcore block and two 4"x 8"x 16" units. His rendition is a complete and relieving change from the silent, stereotyped walls of yesterday and is reserved only for those who wish to go modern . . . and stay there.

Choose from a palette of pastel or vivid colors—and splash on your own unique personality in paint.

CHARMING . . . RIGHT DOWN TO THE VERY CORE

Everything nice is locked right in. The beauty, the high style, everything you could possibly want in a wall. And a little more! Notice how a special emphasis is given to the design detail when light passes the hollowcore units. Note, too, the smooth texture and pleasing gradation of some the horizontal units exhibit.

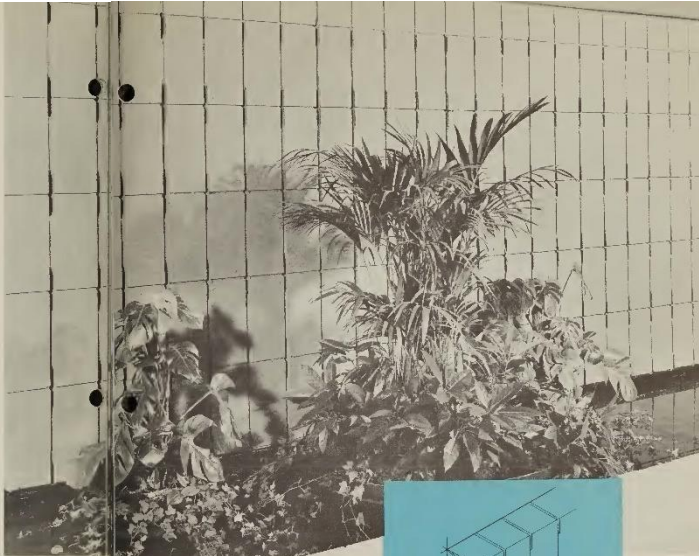


Architect Marcel Breuer's contribution: "Time was when a wall was just a wall. A flat, uninteresting surface, expensively covered and painfully lacking in depth, definition and texture. A new concept in wall fashions, however, is beginning to change all that. And concrete block is leading the expressive wall by alternating hollowcore block and two 4"x 8"x 16" units. His rendition is a complete and relieving change from the silent, stereotyped walls of yesterday and is reserved only for those who wish to go modern ... and stay there. Choose from a palette of pastel or vivid colors-and splash on your own unique personality in paint."

CREATOR OF U.S. EMBASSY IN AMMAN, JORDAN; SARASOTA-BRADENTON AIRPORT; JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL, SARASOTA, FLORIDA; AND MANY OTHER PROJECTS

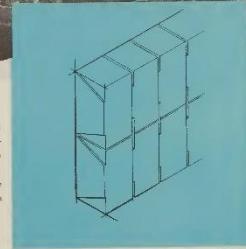
Rudolph

Architect Paul Rudolph, New Haven, Connecticut, has proved that Shadowal block not only has a handsome face but a smart and distinguished profile as well. Simply by turning the sculptured faces of the solid Shadowal units to the left and stacking them vertically, Rudolph hit upon an interesting notched effect which he found could be distinctively carried throughout the entire expanse of the wall. A wonderful relief from the staid walls of yesterday.

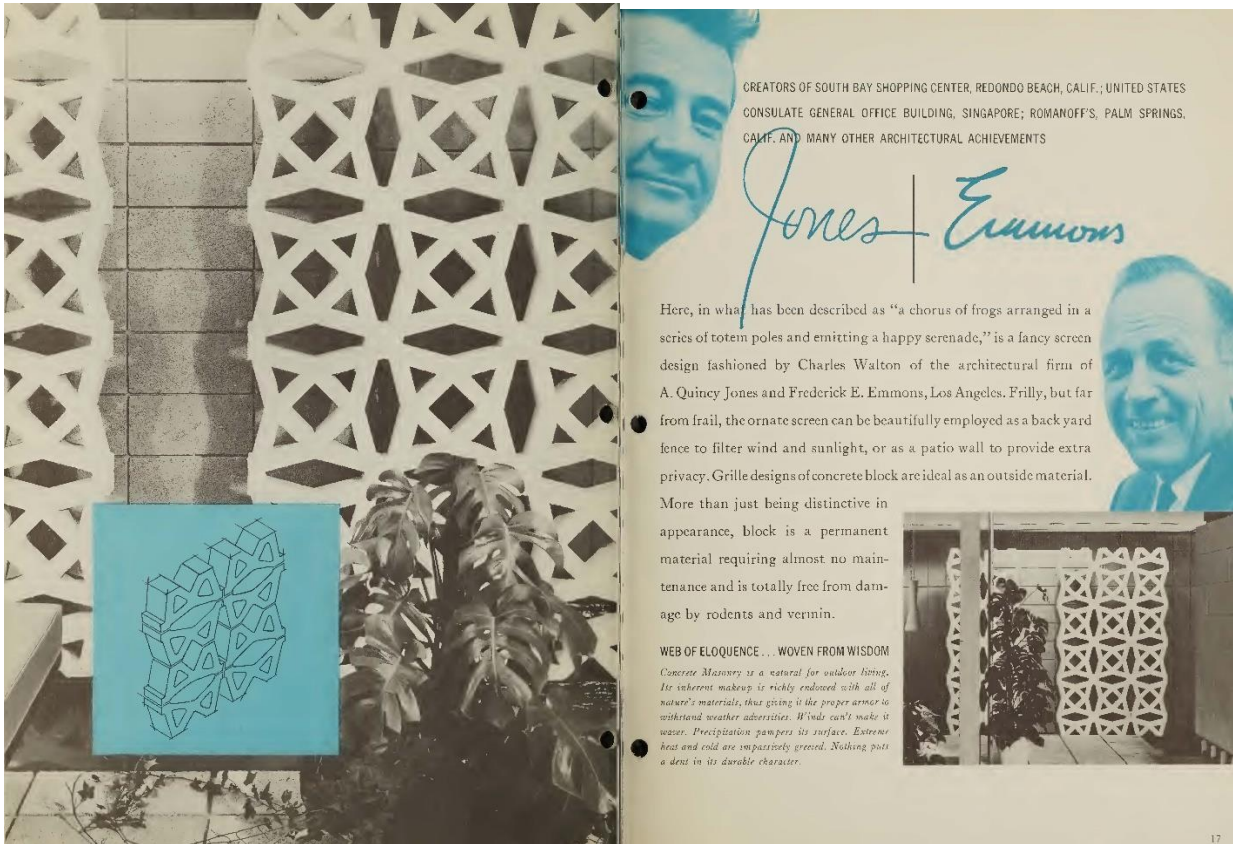


SHADOWAL BLOCK . . . WITH AN ADDED TWIST

Patterns as these, stylish yet conservative, are often given added personality by application of pastel or solid paint - the above having been done in a rugged gun-metal grey to enhance its masculinity. Any exterior, despite its lengthiness - school, commercial building, industrial plant, etc. - can be relieved of visual monotony by employing the imagination and sparkle of Rudolph's design.



“Architect Paul Rudolph, New Haven, Connecticut, has proved that Shadowal block not only has a handsome face but a smart and distinguished profile as well. Simply by turning the sculptured faces of the solid Shadowal units to the left and stacking them vertically, Rudolph hit upon an interesting notched effect which he found could be distinctively carried throughout the entire expanse of the wall. A wonderful relief from the staid walls of yesterday.”



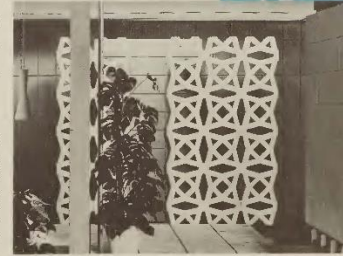
CREATORS OF SOUTH BAY SHOPPING CENTER, REDONDO BEACH, CALIF.; UNITED STATES CONSULATE GENERAL OFFICE BUILDING, SINGAPORE; ROMANOFF'S, PALM SPRINGS, CALIF. AND MANY OTHER ARCHITECTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Jones | Emmons

Here, in what has been described as "a chorus of frogs arranged in a series of totem poles and emitting a happy serenade," is a fancy screen design fashioned by Charles Walton of the architectural firm of A. Quincy Jones and Frederick E. Emmons, Los Angeles. Frilly, but far from frail, the ornate screen can be beautifully employed as a backyard fence to filter wind and sunlight, or as a patio wall to provide extra privacy. Grille designs of concrete block are ideal as an outside material. More than just being distinctive in appearance, block is a permanent material requiring almost no maintenance and is totally free from damage by rodents and vermin.

WEB OF ELOQUENCE . . . WOVEN FROM WISDOM

Concrete Masonry is a natural for outdoor living. Its inherent makeup is richly endowed with all of nature's materials, thus giving it the proper armor to withstand weather adversities. Winds can't make it waver. Precipitation pampers its surface. Extreme heat and cold are unpassively greeted. Nothing puts a dent in its durable character.



"Here, in what has been described as "a chorus of frogs arranged in a series of totem poles and emitting a happy serenade," is a fancy screen design fashioned by Charles Walton of the architectural firm of A. Quincy Jones and Frederick E. Emmons, Los Angeles. Frilly, but far from frail, the ornate screen can be beautifully employed as a backyard fence to filter wind and sunlight, or as a patio wall to provide extra privacy. Grille designs of concrete block are ideal as an outside material. More than just being distinctive in appearance, block is a permanent material requiring almost no maintenance and is totally free from damage by rodents and vermin."



Some inventive shadow block patterns devised by architects Wexler and Harrison at El Rancho Vista Estates.



Architects Wexler and Harrison at El Rancho Vista Estates devised some inventive shadow block patterns.



FUN in the SUN

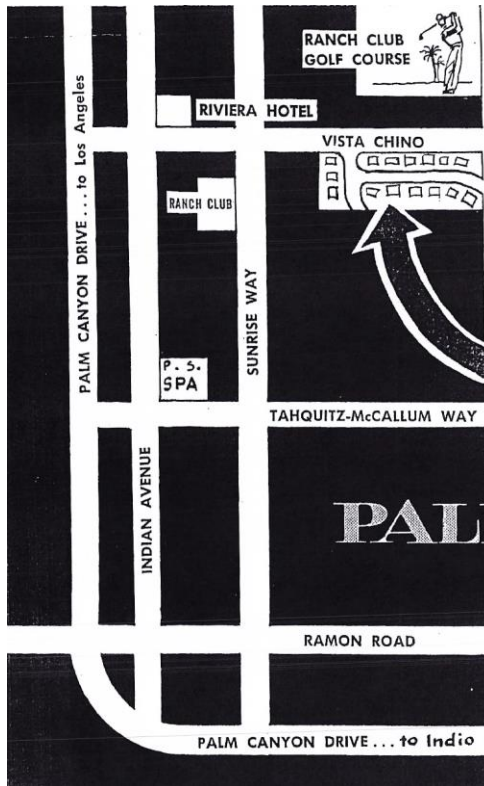
"LIVE" in *El*

PLAN 2050
ALL HOUSES CONTAIN 1405 SQ. FT. OF LIVING AREA

THE BERMUDA

RANCHO VISTA ESTATES

In a setting of desert and mountain magnificence, less than five minutes from the very heart of glamorous Palm Springs, Roy Fey has planned a new life for you. Starting with 100 x 100 ft. view lots he has first added curbs, sidewalks, and gutters. The sewers are in and paid for. Each home has been painstakingly oriented on its lot to welcome winter sun and shun summer heat. Next were added costly luxury features to insure your comfort such as Chrysler Refrigerated Air Conditioning, 4 inch rockwool insulation, complete fencing for privacy, and highest quality building material. No other community offers so much of gracious and dramatic desert living.



The Importance of Orientation

Roy Fey and his Architectural firm have gone to great expense to make sure that the exciting homes that they have designed for you are placed properly on the large 100 x 100 ft. plus lots so that you are assured of maximum privacy as well as climate-wise use of your space. The relation of your bedrooms, window walls, and leisure areas to sun and shadow patterns is called orientation and EL RANCHO VISTA ESTATES are the first to eliminate hit-and-miss plot planning and employ careful study in this vital field.

TOTAL PRICE FROM
\$20,450.
\$950. DOWN

El Rancho Vista
ESTATES

PALM SPRINGS

for more fun in *Life!*



EL RANCHO VISTA ESTATES . . . GENERAL OFFICES & MODEL HOME
1011 North Palm Canyon Drive, Palm Springs, California • FAIRVIEW 4-3381

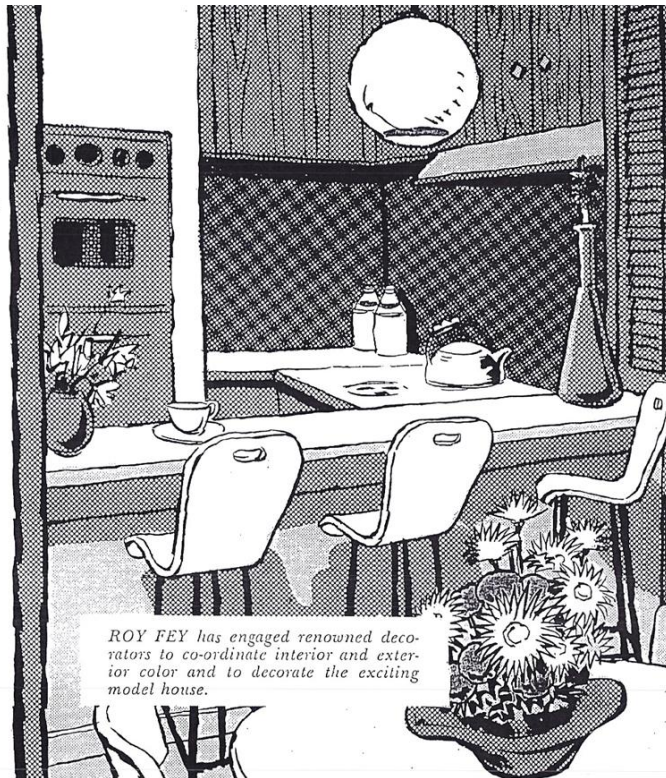
Your NEW HOME

IN *El Rancho Vista*
Estates features . . .

- Inviting Entrees • 3 & 4 Bedrooms, 2 & 3 Baths
- Large 14 x 23 Living Room • Family Room and Patio
- 9 different front elevations featuring molded design concrete block facades.
- Five-foot plastered climate control overhangs.
- Wall-to-wall carpeting in living room, bedrooms, and halls.
- Tile floors in kitchen and family room.
- Utilities underground from pole to house.
- Sunken Roman Tub and Shower in master bath.
- All baths with tiled shower area. Showers enclosed.
- TV and telephone cables installed.
- Extra large two-car car-port. Separate laundry room.

Kitchen *High-lights*

- Oven, range, and hood in matched colors.
- Birch cabinets.
- Garbage Disposal.
- Pass-thru bar seating four between Kitchen and Family room.



ROY FEY has engaged renowned decorators to co-ordinate interior and exterior color and to decorate the exciting model house.

The GOOD
El Rancho Vista
FEELING

THE proud purchaser of a home in EL RANCHO VISTA ESTATES is, if qualified, automatically and at no charge, entitled to a (golfing) membership in the world famous Palm Springs Ranch Club. He will be living less than two minutes away from this club's unmatched facilities for outdoor recreation including the tennis club, olympic swimming pool, riding stables, restaurant, and shops. Schools, churches, and super-markets are nearby. Discover the delights of COUNTRY CLUB living surrounded by clean air, desert beauty, and relaxed people at play.

El Rancho Vista Estates are average in cost at \$20,000. A single bedroom unit is now being built for \$17,000. Features high ceilings, tile and marble, and 2 1/2" of glass double-pane windowing throughout. Also, most units have air conditioning. Plans are subject to price listing with the cost starting at \$2000.



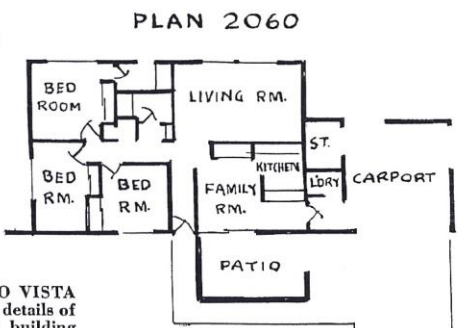
Did You Know?

THAT Palm Springs is the Winter Golf Capital of the World?
 THAT there are no less than 11 sports and courses within 10 miles of EL RANCHO VISTA ESTATES?
 THAT the "Desert Classic," the world's richest golf tournament, is held here?
 THAT because of its delightful climate there are more swimming pools in Palm Springs alone than in 32 of the 50 states?
 THAT there are three Nationally known tennis clubs and five heavy hitting academies close to EL RANCHO VISTA ESTATES?
 THAT Palm Springs has become a recognized center for Music and Art?
 THAT the team to be completed Mt. San Jacinto Trolleyway will bring skiing and winter sports within minutes of your home?
 THAT hiking and mountain recreation areas abound in the vicinity?
 THAT the average temperature in EL RANCHO VISTA ESTATES is 70 degrees?
 THAT there are 353 days of sunshine in EL RANCHO VISTA ESTATES?

NO WONDER EVERYONE DREAMS OF LIVING IN PALM SPRINGS



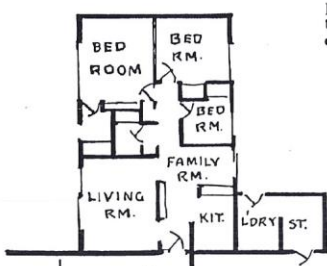
THE CAPRI



EXTRA CONVENIENCE
 EL RANCHO VISTA HOMES have TWO sliding doors to make the outdoors easy to get to.

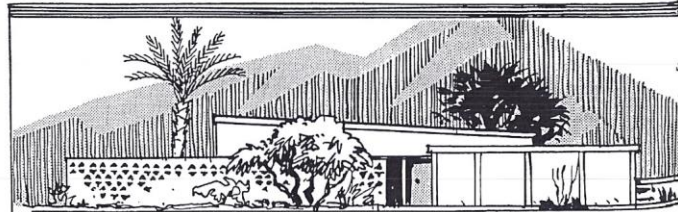
Roy Fey has constructed your EL RANCHO VISTA ESTATES home with scrupulous attention to details of quality utilizing his hard won experience in building over 8,000 homes of superior worth. Each home is designed with the desert in mind. As a beautiful machine for living on the desert your El Rancho Vista home will provide unparalleled leisure and comfort. Truly a home to bring pride of ownership and prestige to the community.

EXTRA STORAGE
 EL RANCHO VISTA HOMES abound in roomy, outside lock-up storage, there being up to 100 square ft. per house.



PLAN 2070

EXTRA SHADE
 EL RANCHO VISTA HOMES have deep five-foot overhangs thereby insuring the maximum of cooling efficiency



THE CASA BLANCA

VI Contemporary Images – Photos by Author, January 2023

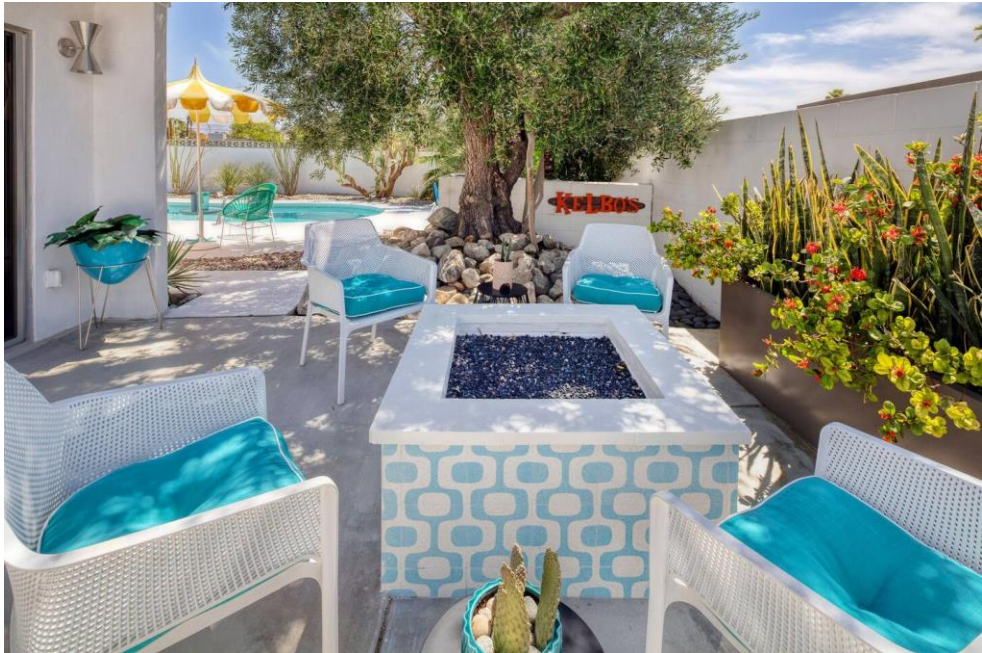




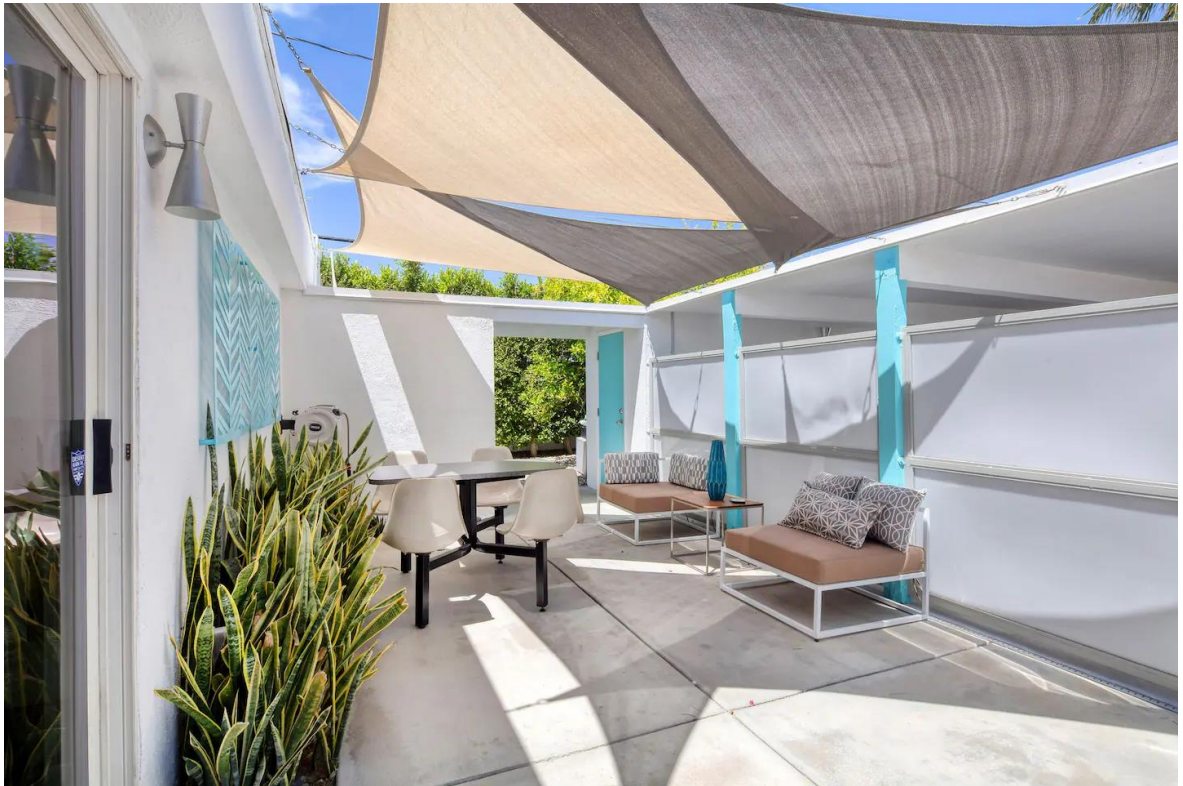




















VII Grant Deed

**RECORDING REQUESTED BY AND
WHEN RECORDED MAIL TO:**

FULLERTON, LEMANN,
SCHAEFER & DOMINICK, LLP
215 North D Street, First Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92401

MAIL TAX STATEMENTS TO:

Larry C. Yarchever, Trustee
1633 Via Roberto Miguel
Palm Springs, CA 92262

THIS SPACE FOR RECORDER'S USE ONLY

APN: 677-233-003

GRANT DEED TO A REVOCABLE TRUST

The undersigned Grantor declares that this conveyance transfers
Grantor's interest to Grantor's revocable living trust for zero ("0") consideration
This transaction is exempt from the Documentary Transfer Tax pursuant to R & T §11930.

Documentary Transfer Tax is \$0.00

* Exempt from fee per GC27388.1; document transfers real property that is a residential dwelling to an owner-occupier.

City of Palm Springs

Unincorporated Area of _____

CAITLIN G. FREEMAN, Trustee of the LIVING TRUST OF DESERT SILENCE FAMILY TRUST, dated June 22,
2020, the GRANTOR,

HEREBY GRANTS TO:

LARRY C. YARCHEVER, Trustee of the LIVING TRUST OF DESERT SILENCE FAMILY TRUST, dated June 22,
2020, the GRANTEE,

All of THAT PROPERTY situated in the County of Riverside, State of California, and commonly known as
1633 Via Robert Miguel, Palm Springs, CA; which property is bounded and described as set forth in
Exhibit "A" attached hereto.

SUBJECT TO the Restrictions, Conditions, Covenants, Rights, Rights of Way, and Easements now of
record, if any.

The then-acting Trustee has the power and authority to encumber or otherwise to manage and dispose
of the hereinabove described real property; including, but not limited to, the power to convey.

Executed on 2/16, 2023, in Missoula County, Montana.

Feb 16th


CAITLIN G. FREEMAN, TRUSTEE

VIII El Rancho Vista Estates Potential Historic District

In 2015, Historic Resources Group identified El Rancho Vista Estates as one of nine potentially eligible Historic Districts. The following information is taken from the Survey Findings Summary:

“The survey identified nine potential historic districts that meet the registration requirements for listing at the federal, state, or local levels. For each district, individual properties were evaluated as contributors or non-contributors based on whether they were constructed during the period of significance, and whether they retain sufficient historic integrity to convey their significance as part of the district.”

The identified historic districts are:

1. Caballeros Estates
2. Deep Well Ranch
3. El Rancho Vista
4. Las Palmas Summit
5. Racquet Club Road Estates
6. Sunmor / Enchanted Homes
7. Twin Palms
8. Vista Las Palmas
9. Vista Santa Rosa

El Rancho Vista Estates

NAME	El Rancho Vista Estates Historic District
ANALYSIS	71 total properties; 48 contributors; 67% contributing
STATUS CODE	3S/3CS/5S3
BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION	El Rancho Vista Estates is bounded by Vista Chino on the north, the south side of Chia Road on the south, North Gene Autry Trail on the east, and the west side of Via Roberto Miguel on the west. This boundary represents Phases I and II of El Rancho Vista Estates, designed by architects Wexler & Harrison.
PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION	El Rancho Vista Estates has a strong sense of time and place. It is composed of one-story, single-family residences designed in the Mid-century Modern architectural style by architects Wexler & Harrison. Wexler & Harrison placed a variety of rooflines including gable, butterfly, and flat throughout the curved streets of the development to give the neighborhood a dynamic architectural cadence. Variations in concrete block pattern were also used to give each house an individual look. The district is characterized by curving streets with sidewalks, landscaped parkways, mature trees, and dramatic rooflines, which give the neighborhood a dynamic appearance.
PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE	1960-1964
APPLICABLE CRITERIA	A/1/3, C/3/4,5 (District Criterion 6)
CONTEXT	Post-World War II Palm Springs (1945-1969)
THEME	Post-World War II Single-Family Residential Development / Mid-century Modern Architecture
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	The El Rancho Vista Estates Historic District is eligible for listing in the National Register, the California Register, and as a local historic district. It is significant under Criterion A/1/3 for its association with residential development in the City of Palm Springs in the postwar era, reflecting an important period of growth in the city, and for its association with important merchant-builder Roy Fey. It is significant under Criterion C/3/4,5 as an excellent and intact collection of Mid-century Modern residential architecture designed by prominent local architects Wexler & Harrison. It is the first residential subdivision designed by the firm.
DEVELOPMENT HISTORY	In 1960 Roy Fey, one of Palm Springs' most prolific developers and builders, looked eastward from the village and established the tract that would become El Rancho Vista Estates (1960-61, Wexler & Harrison). The "Barbara Tract," as it is officially known on the tract maps, was developed in three quick, successive phases from north to south, and included a street named after the developer himself (Avenida Fey). The development sat virtually isolated in the northeastern part of Palm Springs. The potential historic district comprises Phases I and II of the development, reflecting the portion designed by Wexler & Harrison.

	<p>Seeing the potential of what the Alexander Construction Company was doing with modern architecture in housing tracts, Fey engaged the local architecture firm Wexler & Harrison to design homes in El Rancho Vista Estates. The subdivision was the first single-family tract development by Donald Wexler and Richard Harrison in Palm Springs. Similar to the Alexander developments, the architects for El Rancho Vista Estates placed a variety of rooflines including gable, butterfly, and flat throughout the curved streets of the development to give the neighborhood a dynamic architectural cadence. Variations in concrete block pattern were also used to give each house an individual look.</p> <p>Three basic floor plans included three-bedroom/two bath and two-bedroom/two bath versions with family rooms, priced at \$16,995.¹ Buyers also received a “golfing membership in the nearby Ranch Club at no additional cost.”² A furnished model home was located at 3200 East Vista Chino—likely the present-day parcel located at the southwest corner of Vista Chino and Via Roberto Miguel. These homes were marketed to Los Angeles residents as part of the “Balanced Power Homes” program by the Southern California Gas Company that positioned the combined use of gas and electric power as less expensive than “All Electric Homes” that were popular in Southern California during the period.³</p>
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¹ “Classified Ad 15,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 27, 1962, D14.

² “Advertisement,” *Desert Sun*, May 7, 1960.

³ Display Ad 312, *Los Angeles Times*, March 11, 1962, P15.



Context View on Avenida Fey Norte



Context View on Avenida Fey Norte



3395 E. Camino Rojos



3472 E. Camino Rojos



3666 E. Camino Rojos



3452 Avenida Fey Norte

NUMBER	DIR	STREET	SUFFIX	YEAR	ARCHITECT	Architectural style	Evaluation	Status Code
3399		AVENIDA FEY NORTE		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3421		AVENIDA FEY NORTE		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3452		AVENIDA FEY NORTE		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3474		AVENIDA FEY NORTE		1961; 2006	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3475		AVENIDA FEY NORTE		c. 1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3500		AVENIDA FEY NORTE		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3511		AVENIDA FEY NORTE		1961	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
3550		AVENIDA FEY NORTE		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3551		AVENIDA FEY NORTE		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3576		AVENIDA FEY NORTE		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3577		AVENIDA FEY NORTE		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3588		AVENIDA FEY NORTE		1961	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3589		AVENIDA FEY NORTE		c. 1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3622		AVENIDA FEY NORTE		1961	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3623		AVENIDA FEY NORTE		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3667		AVENIDA FEY NORTE		1963	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
3690		AVENIDA FEY NORTE		1961	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3691		AVENIDA FEY NORTE		1959	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D

NUMBER	DIR	STREET	SUFFIX	YEAR	ARCHITECT	Architectural style	Evaluation	Status Code
3420	E	AVENIDA FEY NORTE		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
3666	E	AVENIDA FEY NORTE		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3395	E	CAMINO ROJOS		1961	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3420	E	CAMINO ROJOS		1961	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
3472	E	CAMINO ROJOS		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3477	E	CAMINO ROJOS		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3510	E	CAMINO ROJOS		1959	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
3552	E	CAMINO ROJOS		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
3555	E	CAMINO ROJOS		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
3570	E	CAMINO ROJOS		1959	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3573	E	CAMINO ROJOS		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
3585	E	CAMINO ROJOS			Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
3588	E	CAMINO ROJOS		1961	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3600	E	CAMINO ROJOS		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
3607	E	CAMINO ROJOS		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3663	E	CAMINO ROJOS			Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3666	E	CAMINO ROJOS		1961	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3694	E	CAMINO ROJOS		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D

NUMBER	DIR	STREET	SUFFIX	YEAR	ARCHITECT	Architectural style	Evaluation	Status Code
3695	E	CAMINO ROJOS		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3351	E	PASEO BARBARA		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3352	E	PASEO BARBARA		1961	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
3390	E	PASEO BARBARA		1961	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3393	E	PASEO BARBARA		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3440	E	PASEO BARBARA		1961	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3445	E	PASEO BARBARA		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3466	E	PASEO BARBARA		c. 1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
3467	E	PASEO BARBARA		1961	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3488	E	PASEO BARBARA		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3489	E	PASEO BARBARA		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3522	E	PASEO BARBARA		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3523	E	PASEO BARBARA		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
3555	E	PASEO BARBARA		1961	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3556	E	PASEO BARBARA		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3597	E	PASEO BARBARA		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3598	E	PASEO BARBARA		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
3622	E	PASEO BARBARA		c. 1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D

NUMBER	DIR	STREET	SUFFIX	YEAR	ARCHITECT	Architectural style	Evaluation	Status Code
3625	E	PASEO BARBARA		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
3663	E	PASEO BARBARA		2002	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
3666	E	PASEO BARBARA		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
3676	E	PASEO BARBARA		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
3677	E	PASEO BARBARA		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
1521		VIA ROBERTO MIGUEL		1961	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
1543		VIA ROBERTO MIGUEL		1961	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
1552		VIA ROBERTO MIGUEL		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Not Visible	7R
1555		VIA ROBERTO MIGUEL		1961	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
1565		VIA ROBERTO MIGUEL		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
1593		VIA ROBERTO MIGUEL		1964	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
1594		VIA ROBERTO MIGUEL		1961	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Non-contributor	6Z
1622		VIA ROBERTO MIGUEL		1960	Wexler & Harrison	No style	Non-contributor	6Z
1627		VIA ROBERTO MIGUEL		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
1633		VIA ROBERTO MIGUEL		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Not Visible	7R
1659		VIA ROBERTO MIGUEL		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D
1673		VIA ROBERTO MIGUEL		1960	Wexler & Harrison	Mid-century Modern	Contributor	3D

El Rancho Vista Estates Historic District

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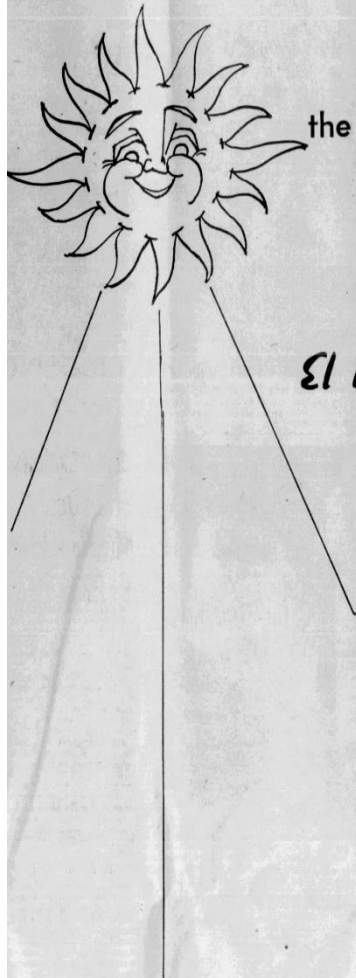
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LEGEND

- CONTRIBUTOR
- NON-CONTRIBUTOR
- NOT VISIBLE
- INDIVIDUALLY ELIGIBLE
- DISTRICT BOUNDARY
- TRACT BOUNDARY

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71-411 Highway 111
Rancho Mirage
Framing Contractors | STOKBAK & GORDON
67-784 Highway 111
Cathedral City
Cement Contractor | STOKBAK & VASQUEZ
67-784 Highway 111
Cathedral City
Plaster and Stucco | HOAMS CONSTRUCTION CO.
71-418 Highway 111
Rancho Mirage
Pools | GERHARD HAMMER
27-488 Sonora Avenue
Palm Desert
Painting | H. H. ELACK MASONRY
67-911 Highway 111
La Quinta, Box 12
Block Walls & Fireplaces | HOLLYWOOD DISTRIBUTORS
588 Industrial Place
Palm Springs
Tapcoo Rugs & Ovens | SHOWER DOORS DELUXE CO.
11321 Anabel Street
Garden Grove, California
Tub Enclosures | "RED" SMITH ROOFING CO.
67-784 Highway 111
Cathedral City
Roofing | MASSEY CONSTRUCTION CORP.
Box 601
Palm Springs | Paving & Sewers
INDUSTRIAL ELECTRIC CO.
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Palm Springs
Electrical Contractors | JOHN DEFOE
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Fencing | MATERIAL EXPEDITORS
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North Hollywood | Door, Frames & Finish Hardware
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45-844 Flower Street
Indio
Floor Tile | ROBERT M. WILLIAMS
747 Camino Real
Palm Springs
Ceramic Tile | C. H. PIERCE
45-135 Jackson Street
Indio
Grading | LE MEN PLUMBING CO.
425 E. Sunny Dunes
Palm Springs
Plumbing | PALM SPRINGS MIRROR & GLASS CO.
482 North Indian
Palm Springs | MEL GREENBE
4119 E. Palm Canyon
Lumber | PERRY GILL
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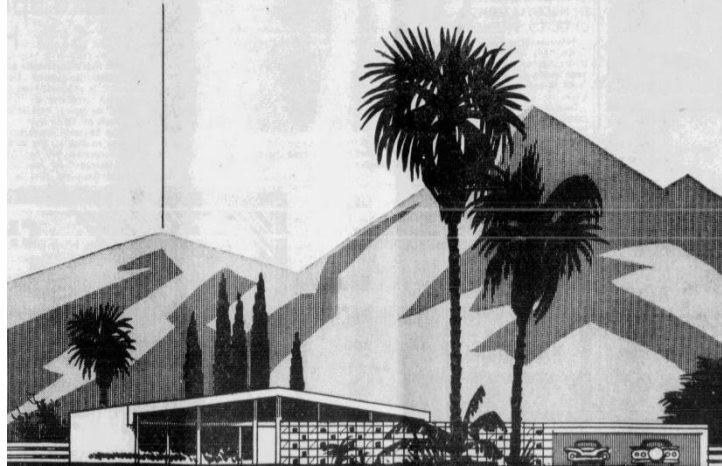
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