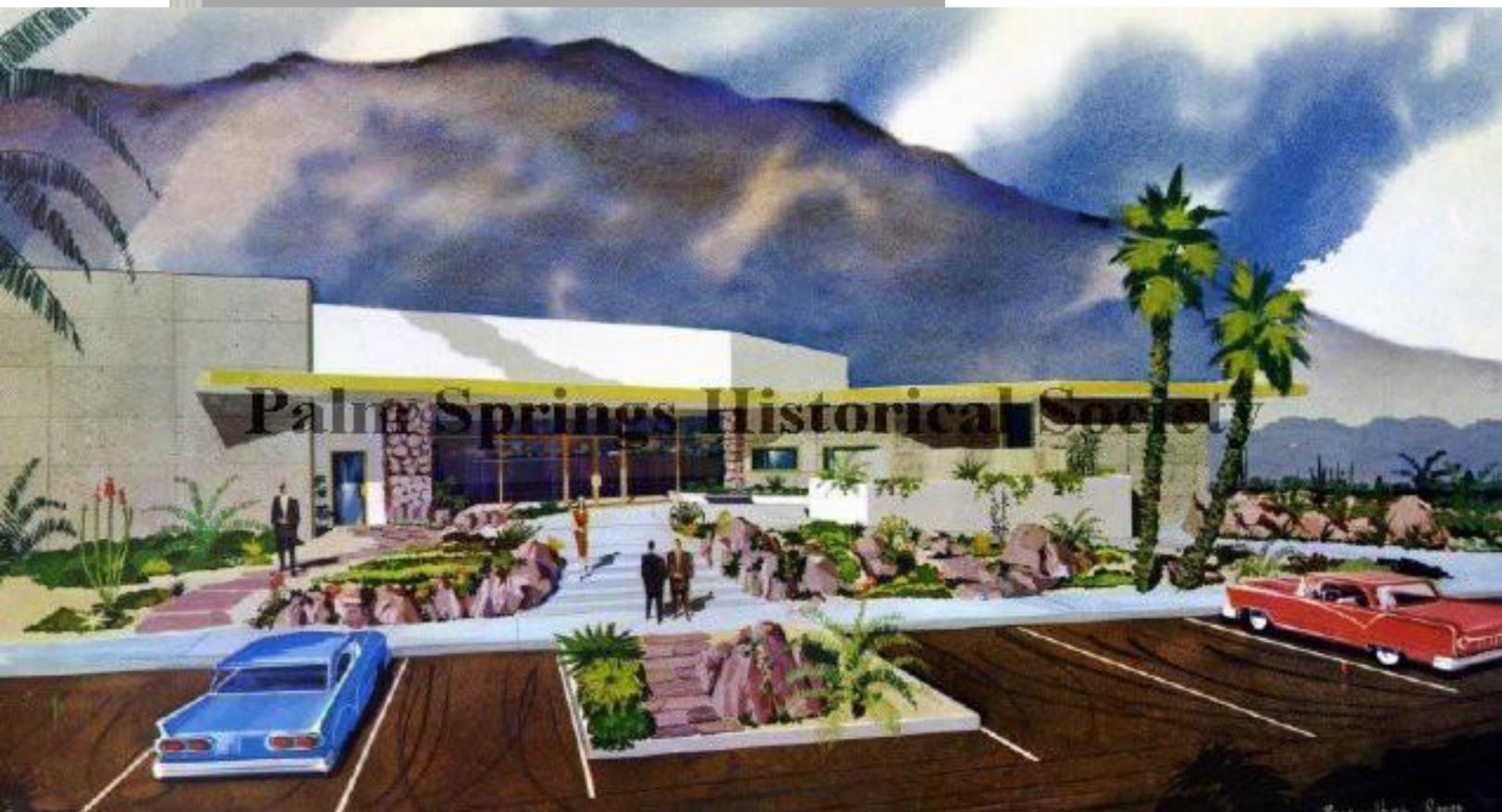


# Security First National Bank

500 South Indian Canyon Drive  
Palm Springs, CA 92264

## Nomination Application for City of Palm Springs Class 1 Historic Resource

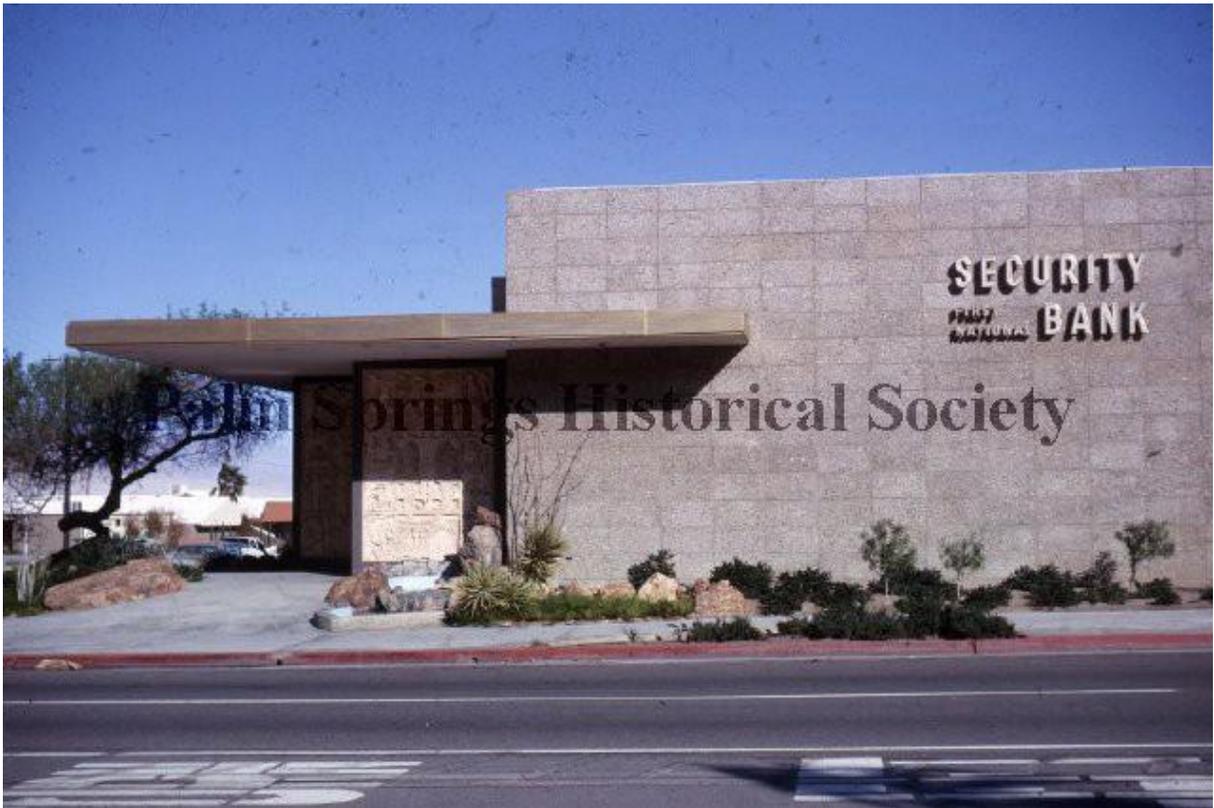


Prepared by  
Susan Secoy Jensen,  
Architect/Preservation Consultant  
For the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation  
June 2021

## ***Acknowledgements***

*The author would like to thank the following individuals for either research or editing assistance:*

Renee Brown  
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Ron & Barbara Marshall  
Ruthmarie Samson Schroeder



**Security First National Bank, front elevation, looking east.  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)**

**Cover image: Security First National Bank, postcard, view looking west.  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)**

# Security First National Bank

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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 July of 2020, the PSPF board of directors assigned the task of writing the bank’s Class 1 Historic Resource nomination to board advisory member Susan Secoy Jensen.



**Northwest corner of Security First National Bank.  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### SIGNIFICANCE:

The Security First National Bank, currently Union Bank, is located at 500 South Indian Canyon Drive, in Palm Springs (originally Indian Avenue). It is a single-story commercial building designed by modernist master architect, Joseph Bing Wong, completed in 1959. The Security First National Bank is an important example of a modernist structure and it exhibits numerous character-defining features that place it within the historic context of the Palm Springs modern period.

The location of the Security First National Bank is within a commercial district of Palm Springs and was originally part of the Financial District. Many other banks and financial institutions are located within this part of the downtown area of Palm Springs and are extant. Other notable banks include Santa Fe Federal Savings & Loan (now Architecture and Design Center, Palm Springs Art Museum), Coachella Valley Savings & Loan #1 (now The Bank, event venue), Merrill Lynch Building (now Eisenhower medical offices), Coachella Valley Savings & Loan #2 (now Chase Bank), E.F. Hutton (now retail and design services), and City National Bank (now Bank of America). For locations, see financial district map, page 6.

The most undeniably unique features of the Security First National Bank are the extraordinary bas-relief panels that were commissioned by the bank during the design of the building. Renowned sculptor, Lawrence Tenney Stevens produced exquisite art that is featured at the original main entrance of the bank. Two 8'x12' panels are original art, remain intact in their original location, and are titled "Palm Springs in Sculpture." The northwest corner of the site prominently displays them at the intersection of Indian Canyon Drive and Ramon Road.

### DESIGNATION CRITERIA:

The Security First National Bank has not previously been evaluated for Class 1 Historic Resource eligibility.

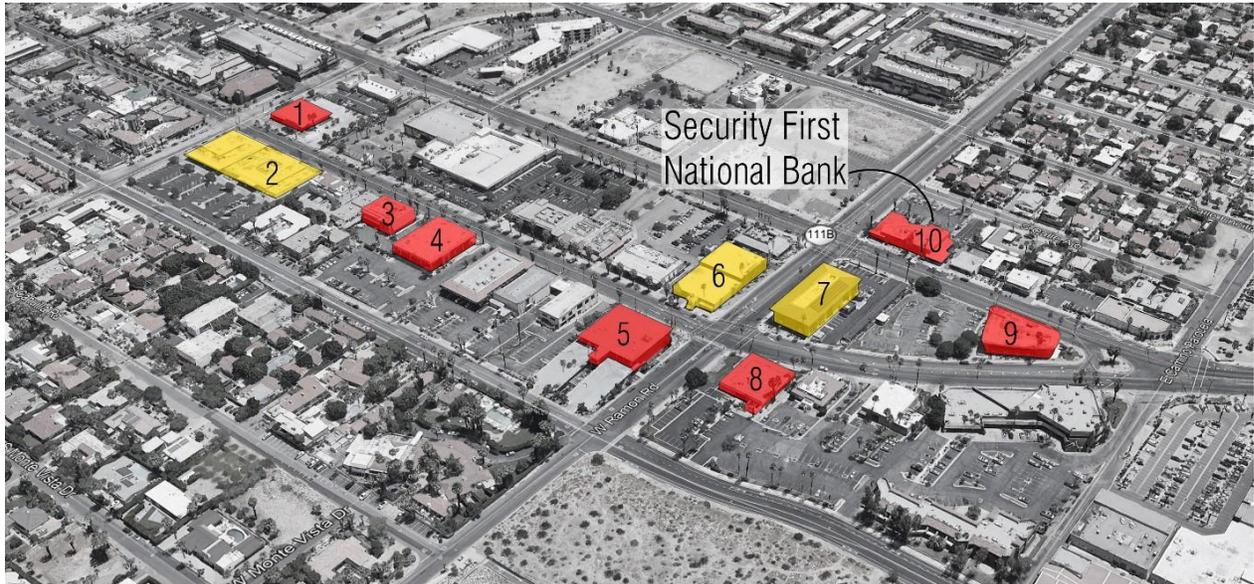
A brief summary of the evaluation contained in this nomination is as follows:

8.05.070 (C,1, a, b; iii, iv, v) Findings 1 & 2: The Security First National Bank is eligible under the theme of modern architecture because it possesses numerous distinctive characteristics that make up the modernist style, including one-story configuration, flat roof with cantilevered canopies, unadorned wall surfaces with lack of ornamentation, expansive amounts of glass, and use of natural materials. As a bank skillfully designed by the firm of Joseph B. Wong, it rises to the level of work by a Master Architect with high artistic values. Although minor modifications occurred during the passage of time, primarily interior, it maintains the vocabulary and overall design intent of the original design created by a Master Architect. Of equal importance, the Master Artist, Lawrence Tenney Stevens created the bas-relief panels for the Bank. Therefore, its distinctive characteristics, as the work of two Masters, and for its high artistic values, the Security First National Bank qualifies as a Class 1 Historic Resource under Criteria 8.05.070.

**SUMMARY:** *This evaluation finds the Security First National Bank eligible for listing as a Palm Springs Historic Resource under 8.05.070 (C,1, a, b; iii, iv, v), Findings 1 & 2 of the local ordinance's criteria. Security First National Bank retains a high degree of architectural integrity (see Section 7, "Integrity Analysis").*

## The Financial District of Palm Springs – 1950's-1970's

The financial district included several financial institutions and upscale retail establishments. Map is current, showing extant buildings.



- retail - department store
- financial institution

Legend for map:

1. Santa Fe Federal Savings & Loan (Architecture and Design Center, Palm Springs Art Museum)  
(Class 1 Historic Site, National Register of Historic Places)  
E. Stewart Williams, 1961
2. J. W. Robinson's Department Store (various retail)  
(Class 1 Historic Site)  
Pereira & Luckman, 1958
3. Coachella Valley Savings & Loan #1 (The Bank, event venue)  
(National Register of Historic Places)  
E. Stewart Williams, 1956

4. Merrill Lynch Building (Eisenhower medical offices)  
Donald Wexler, 1971
5. Coachella Valley Savings & Loan #2 (Chase Bank)  
(Class 1 Historic Site, National Register of Historic Places)  
E. Stewart Williams, 1961
6. Saks Fifth Avenue (vacant)  
Wurdeman & Becket, 1958
7. Alan Ladd Hardware (professional office building)  
Kaptur & Lapham, 1968
8. E. F. Hutton (retail and design services)  
Early 1960's
9. City National Bank (Bank of America)  
(Class 1 Historic Site)  
Rudi Baumfeld, Victor Gruen Associates, 1959
10. Security First National Bank (Union Bank)  
Joseph B. Wong, Wong Associates, 1959



Historic photos of intersection of Indian Avenue and Ramon Road.  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)





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# CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

## Department of Planning Services

3200 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, CA 92262

Phone 760 323 8245

Fax 760 322 8360

Historic Preservation Officer 760 322 8364 x8786

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## HISTORIC RESOURCE DESIGNATION (HRD)

### **WHEN TO USE THIS APPLICATION:**

Use this application if you are seeking Class 1 or Class 2 historic designation for a property or parcel or for historic district applications.

Use the MINOR ARCHITECTURAL APPLICATION FORM (MAA) if you are seeking approval for alterations to Class 1, Class 2, Class 3 or Class 4 historic sites. (Contact the Planning Department if you are unsure of the classification of your property.)

### **WHO MAY APPLY:**

Any individual or organization may apply to the City for consideration of a request for historic resource designation. Applications must be signed and notarized by the owner(s) of record of the site, structure, building or object for which the designation is sought.

### **PROCEDURE:**

1. For proposed historic sites or resources: Refer to Palm Springs Municipal Code ("PSMC") Section 8.05.070 for *Procedures and Criteria for the Designation of Class 1 and Class 2 Historic Resources*. Visit: [www.palmspringsca.gov/government/departments/planning/municipal\\_code/title\\_8/section\\_8.05 "Historic Preservation"](http://www.palmspringsca.gov/government/departments/planning/municipal_code/title_8/section_8.05_Historic_Preservation)).
2. For proposed historic districts: Refer to Municipal Code Section 8.05.090 for *Procedures and Criteria for Designation of Historic Districts*. Visit: [www.palmspringsca.gov/government/departments/planning/municipal\\_code/Title\\_8/section\\_8.05 "Historic Preservation"](http://www.palmspringsca.gov/government/departments/planning/municipal_code/Title_8/section_8.05_Historic_Preservation).
3. Complete all parts of the application and include related reports, mailing labels and back up information in support of the application. Denote "NA" for any line item that is not applicable.
4. Once the application is complete, contact the Planning Department and schedule a pre-application conference with the City's Historic Preservation Officer ("HPO").
5. Submit the completed application and related materials to the Department of Planning Services. A Planning Department case number will be assigned to the application.
6. Applications for historic site / resource or historic district designation are evaluated by staff in the City Planning Department who will prepare the application for consideration by the City's Historic Site Preservation Board ("HSPB") at a noticed public hearing. Applicants should plan on attending the hearing. City staff will schedule site visits for members of the HSPB to become familiar with the site prior to the public hearing. (Exterior review only, interiors are not subject to HSPB review.)
7. At the public hearing, the HSPB will evaluate the application and make a recommendation for City Council action. The City Council will consider the application and the HSPB's recommendation at a second noticed public hearing. The applicant should again attend that hearing.
8. The final action of the City Council to designate will be recorded on the property title with the County Recorder's office.

**FOR HISTORIC SITE / RESOURCE APPLICATIONS, SEE CHECKLIST FOR CLASS 1 AND 2.**  
**FOR HISTORIC DISTRICT APPLICATIONS, SEE CHECKLIST FOR HISTORIC DISTRICTS.**



# CITY OF PALM SPRINGS

Department of Planning Services  
3200 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs, CA 92262  
Tel 760-323-8245 – FAX 760-322-8360

For Staff Use Only

Case Number: \_\_\_\_\_

In-Take Planner: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## HISTORIC RESOURCE DESIGNATION PLANNING / ZONING GENERAL INFORMATION FORM

TO THE APPLICANT: Complete all parts of this application. Denote "NA" for lines that are not applicable.

### Project Information:

Applicant's Name: Palm Springs Preservation Foundation

Applicant's Address: 1775 East Palm Canyon Drive, Suite 110-195

Site Address: 500 South Indian Canyon Drive APN: 508-121-001

Phone #: 760-837-7117 Email: info@pspreservationfoundation.org

Zone: C-1 GP: CBD Section/Township/Range: 23 / X 4 / X 4

Description of Project:

The Security First National Bank for Class 1 HRD

Note: For Historic District applications: on a separate page provide a list of all sites/parcels within the proposed historic district boundaries with the same information listed above.

Is the project located on the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians Reservation? Yes/No: No  
(Refer to the Land Status Map under Tribal Resources on the Planning Department home page)

Construction Date: 1959  Estimated  Actual (building permits)   
building permits

Architect: Joseph Bing Wong, Wong Associates

Original Owner: Security First National Bank

Common/Historic Name of Property: Security First National Bank

Other historic associations: Security Pacific Bank, Union Bank

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

HISTORIC RESOURCE DESIGNATION APPLICATION (CONT.)

**Criteria for the Designation of a Class 1 Historic Resource:**

Pursuant to the Palm Springs Municipal Code (PSMC) Section 8.05.070(C,1): 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. Refer to the US Department of the Interior National Register Bulletin "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation" of potentially historic resources for further information.

***Provide a written description of how the site qualifies as a historic resource per the following Findings. Please provide answers on a separate sheet or report.***

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

- a. The resource is associated with events that have made a meaningful contribution to the nation, state, or community. <sup>1</sup>
- b. The resource is associated with the lives of persons who made a meaningful contribution to national, state or local history.
- c. The resource reflects or exemplifies a particular period of national, state or local history.
- d. The resource embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction.
- e. The resource presents the work of a master builder, designer, artist, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age, or that possess high artistic value.
- f. 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.

**FINDING 2:** The site, structure, building or object retains one or more of the following aspects of integrity, as established in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Provide a written description for each element as listed: Design; Materials; Workmanship; Location; Setting; Feeling; and Association. <sup>2</sup>

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**Criteria for the Designation of a Class 2 Historic Resource:**

Pursuant to the Palm Springs Municipal Code (PSMC) Section 8.05.070(C,1): A site, structure, building, or object may be designated as a Class 2 historic resource or a Contributing Resource in a proposed historic district by the Palm Springs City Council, provided the site, structure, building, or object exhibits 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.

---

**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. *Provide a separate list by address and Assessor Parcel Number (APN) for each site/parcel that meets the criteria outlined in Finding 1.*
- b. Identify non-contributing properties or vacant parcels to the extent necessary to establish appropriate, logical or convenient boundaries. *Provide a separate list by address and APN number for each site/parcel within the proposed historic district that is considered non-contributing to the overall historic significance of the historic district.*

---

<sup>1</sup> NOTE: Unlike the National Trust criteria, the City's criterion does not consider "patterns of events". For consideration of "patterns of events", use Criterion "C", reflecting a particular period.

<sup>2</sup> NOTE: Refer to the U.S. Department of the Interior Bulletin for "How to Evaluate the Integrity of a Property".

**CITY OF PALM SPRINGS  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT APPLICATION  
HISTORIC RESOURCE DESIGNATION**

**CLASS 1 AND CLASS 2**

**APPLICANT'S REQUIRED MATERIAL CHECKLIST**

The following items must be submitted before a **Historic Resource Designation** application will be accepted. Please check off each item to assure completeness. Provide twelve (12) hard copies and one (1) PDF copy of the following materials unless otherwise noted:

	Applicant Only	City Use Only
<b>Application Information:</b>		
• General Information form (1 copy)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Notarized letter from property owner consenting to Historic Designation (1 copy)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Ownership and Address History ("Chain of Title") (1 copy)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Historic Resource Report:</b>		
The following items shall be included in a historic resources report describing the site, structure, buildings, or objects eligible and appropriate for designation per PSMC 8.05.070.		
• Photographs of the exterior of the proposed site, structure, buildings or objects.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Aerial photo of the site/resource (from Google Maps or equal).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Information on the architect, designer, and/or developer.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Date and method of construction. Provide copies of building permits.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• A detailed assessment of the character defining features describing materials, architectural details/style, landscape elements, or other relevant descriptors.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Evaluation of the site relative to the Criteria and Findings for Designation of Class 1 and Class 2 Historic Resources.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Additional Information:</b>		
• Site Plan: 8-12" x 11" or 11" x 17"	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Public Hearing labels per PSZC Section 94.09.00.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Any other documentation or research as may be necessary to determine the qualifications of the site, structure, building, or objects.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Applicants are encouraged to review the bulletin from the U.S. Department of the Interior titled "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation". (National Register Bulletin 15 (<http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/>)).

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## Statement of Significance

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### Narrative Description

The Security First National Bank was constructed on Lots 8, 9, 10, 18, 19 & 20, Vista Santa Rosa Tract, in 1959 (see Appendix II, III, and V). It is significant as an example of post-World-War II commercial development in Palm Springs, as the city's commercial core expanded northward and southward along Palm Canyon and Indian Canyon Drives. It is also significant as an example of Mid-century Modern commercial architecture and exhibits quality of design with distinctive features including its irregular plan, exposed concrete masonry construction, flat roof with wide cantilevered entrance canopy, and decorative bas-relief panels.

### First Owner, Security First National Bank

In the late 1950's, Security First National Bank created its second Palm Springs branch at 500 Indian Avenue. The bank was a complex institution which in twelve years, absorbed the small independent Desert Bank that began after World War II in Cathedral City, and the larger inland-area banking chain of Citizens First National Bank of Riverside.

Security First National Bank realized the importance of Palm Springs as a significant resort town. As stated in a souvenir brochure written by Herbert Samson to commemorate the opening of the new bank branch, "In the United States, perhaps even in the world, the village of Palm Springs is without parallel. In the short span of seventy-five years, it has become the nation's resort capital, where the successful and outstanding in the arts, science, industry, and public life come for the renewing of the spirit which is so pleasantly possible in the warm sun and dry air of its beautiful desert setting."<sup>1</sup>

The leaders of the bank realized that Palm Springs was also the year-round home of an increasing number of substantial citizens from coast to coast who chose to make the desert a way of life, and who brought the best of living to the desert. The goal of Security First National Bank was to accommodate those substantial citizens. In an announcement printed in the *Desert Sun* on September 3, 1959, Herbert Samson would run the new branch of the bank.

Herbert Samson was instrumental in making the project, specifically the art panels, become a reality. His love of Palm Springs and his vision led to the creation of this permanent record of Palm Springs' history. Born in Canada and associated with the Royal Bank of Canada, he was appointed Vice-President and manager of the Palm Springs branch in 1954. He was a member of the Chamber of Commerce, Flood Control District, Riverside County Republican Central Committee, Palm Springs Masonic Lodge, Tennis Club and Lions Club. Samson was also the treasurer of the Palm Springs Historical Society. It was through his activities with this organization that Samson was able to aid to such a great extent the research done for the bas-relief panels.<sup>2</sup>

Samson collaborated with the bank board to bring the project to fruition. In his brochure he wrote about the architecture of the bank "the charm of the desert is felt in its simplicity and quiet beauty. In the bank, this feeling has been reflected by the architect using natural materials by the adapt-

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<sup>1</sup>*The Story of Palm Springs in Sculpture*, Security First National Bank brochure, 1959, Herbert Samson

<sup>2</sup>*Desert Sun*, September 3, 1959.



ation, in design and plan, of nature's flowing lines and forms."<sup>3</sup> He was directly involved with all details, including the selection of the boulders for the landscape. Samson stated "Our fine new staff has been carefully selected and trained to insure the maximum of efficient, friendly, local service. We hope to see all of our old friends and many new ones when we open this wonderful new branch and extend a particular invitation to all of our village friends to stop in during open house on Saturday from 4 to 7 pm and view our new quarters."<sup>4</sup>

The bank devoted considerable resources to making an architectural and artistic statement in its new Palm Springs branch. The project was budgeted at \$450,000. Renowned artist, Lawrence Tenney Stevens was commissioned to create a pictorial record of the unfolding of the desert area from prehistoric times, through the arrival of the first white settlers, to present day in 1959. Herbert Samson was eminently fitted both to guide the bank in the development of the idea, and to write the description of the sculpture, which was its ultimate interpretation, because of his intimate knowledge and appreciation of the desert community. Herbert Samson spent many long hours of his own time in helping to gather the necessary data which sculptor Stevens used as a basis for the execution of the Palm Springs story in terra cotta bas-relief. His souvenir brochure referred to "those who first came to the raw desert and stayed to transform it into a resort oasis."<sup>4</sup> Samson, who lived in Palm Springs from 1927 until his death in 1974, was one of those pioneers and a respected community leader.

The bank intended to give the man on the street a resume of the history and life of the City of Palm Springs, since the ordinary visitor or resident seldom has the urge or time to delve fully into such fascinating matters. Many details of history had to be omitted because of the space allotted, but the bank's committee with all due humility and respect for the many fine people who developed the area, bravely went to work to help the artist choose the appropriate pictorial and interesting features, believing that if the audience was awakened and excited by the panels, then they would go to the library and museum to pursue the matter further.<sup>5</sup>

Samson awarded the commission for the bas-relief panels to his friend, Lawrence Tenney Stevens. They had met 18 years prior, when Stevens was a part-time resident and artist living in Palm Springs. Stevens, having excellent credentials, referred Joseph Bing Wong, Architect, for the bank building's design. The design team was established, and the work began.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Press Release, *Desert Sun*, September 19, 1959

<sup>5</sup> *Desert Sun*, November 4, 1959, "Bank's Sculptor Got Early Start"



**UNVEILING OF THE** pictorial record of the history of Palm Springs in sculpture highlighted a preview party last night for Palm Springs civic leaders at the new Security First National Bank's Ramon Road Branch in Palm Springs. Above, Lawrence Tenney Stevens, internationally known sculptor, who executed the 22 panels, prepares to signal the unveiling by striking a gong. Immediately behind him is Herb Samson, Security vice president and manager of the \$300,000 facility. Members of the Order of the Arrow, Boy Scout organization, participated in the ceremony. See other photos, stories of new bank Page 2. (Desert Sun Photo).

**Unveiling of the Lawrence Tenney Stevens-designed sculpture.  
(Desert Sun, September 19, 1959)**



HERB SAMSON, VICE PRESIDENT and manager of the new Ramon Road Branch of Security First National Bank, stops Joan Ewing and Maxine Page from entering the parking lot of the new \$450,000 branch. Samson tells the girls the official opening date is September 19, from 4 to 7 p. m.

*Desert Sun*, September 15, 1959.



Historic photo of bank drive-through looking north.

(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)



**Current view of drive-through looking north.**



**Historic view of drive-through looking north.  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)**

\* Security First National Bank feels both proud and humble in having the opportunity to present to Palm Springs, as part of its newest banking home, a pictorial record of the unfolding of this desert area from the dawn of prehistoric times, through the arrival of the first white settlers, to the present day.

"Palm Springs in Sculpture" is executed in bas-relief on off-white terra cotta, commissioned to the renowned sculptor, Lawrence Tenney Stevens, especially for the bank's Palm Springs Ramon Road Branch. Sculptor Stevens has depicted the Palm Springs story, with the key events highlighted individually, in twenty-two plaques which are grouped into two eight by twelve foot panels of eleven plaques each. One portrays the past; the other, the present.



**THE SCULPTOR...**

LAWRENCE TENNEY STEVENS, New Englander by birth and at one time a resident of Palm Springs, now lives at Tempe, Arizona. An artist who is "at home" in any medium, Stevens is recognized from coast to coast and abroad. Of particular note is his cast stone group dedicated to the young farmers of America which is located at the approach to the Fine Arts Building on the Los Angeles County Fair grounds. Stevens received his commission for this work as a result of his selection in a national competition of sculptors. He is an authority on Roman, Greek and Egyptian sculpture, and is a Fellow of the American Academy at Rome, where he devoted three years to intensive creative work with attendant travel to the sites of ancient civilizations. In preparation for the sculpture, Stevens came to Palm Springs and gathered the research material, spending much time with those in the Village to whom the facts of the early days and their proper sequence are known.

Then the long work of creating the designs and sculpturing the panels began. In this painstaking effort, which consumed more than a year's steady time, Stevens was ably assisted by his artist wife, Bea. One by one, each of the terra cotta plaques was transformed into its own step of the story through Stevens' artistry; he devoted a week to ten days on the creation of each of the panel sections, followed by three months of slow drying. Then to the kiln, for the firing which gives the clay its permanence. Each plaque was smoked at low temperature for a week, followed by three days at high firing. The kiln process alone required more than two thousand hours.

Thirteen months after the initial step, all twenty-two sections for the two panels were ready to be individually crated and shipped. Stevens supervised this final step, accompanied the panel sections to Palm Springs, and positioned each one at the site, where they remained covered until the official unveiling.

Thus was completed a labor of love, that people for years to come may see and enjoy...

"THE STORY OF PALM SPRINGS IN SCULPTURE".

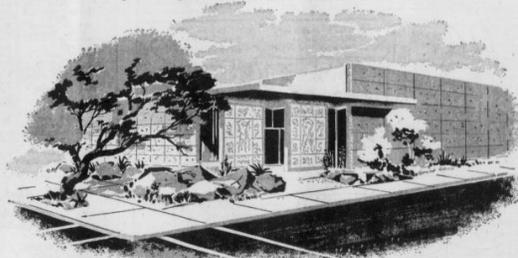
You are Cordially Invited

to Attend

the Open House

of the

Palm Springs Ramon Road Branch of



\* Artist's sketch of the front entrance of the bank at the corner of Ramon Road and Indian Avenue. THE STORY OF PALM SPRINGS IN SCULPTURE is contained in the two panels which frame the entrance.

The architect for the Palm Springs Ramon Road Branch of the bank is Joe B. Wong, A.T.A., of Scottsdale, Arizona. Chinese, Wong is a native Californian who

has won a wide reputation in the Southwest, and who has had particular experience in bank design.

He is well-known for his intuitive ability to see building materials so that they communicate a delicacy of feeling, and to

choose, from materials indigenous to the locale of his assignment, those especially well-suited to express the spirit of the area where the structure is located.

In the Ramon Road Branch, Wong has captured the feeling of the desert.

Security First National Bank

Saturday, September 19, 1959

Four to Seven p. m.

Refreshments and Souvenirs

**SECURITY FIRST NATIONAL BANK**

Palm Springs Ramon Road Branch  
Ramon Road & Indian Avenue, Palm Springs, California  
HERBERT SAMSON  
Vice President & Manager

## **The Bas-relief Panels at the Northwest Corner of the Bank Building**

(See Appendix VI for detailed description of individual bas-relief panels.)

The bas-relief sculptural panels are undeniably a distinctive character defining feature of the bank building, placed prominently at the original entrance to the bank.

The following is an excerpt from the brochure produced by Security First National Bank:

*“Palm Springs in Sculpture” is executed in bas-relief on off-white unglazed terra cotta with grog, by renowned sculptor, Lawrence Tenney Stevens. The permanence of the terra-cotta material stems from a process first used for heroic sculpture over 2,000 years ago for the Etruscans, so enduring that many examples of the early art remain today. Sculptor Stevens depicted the Palm Springs story, with the key events highlighted individually, in twenty-two plaques which are grouped into two eight by twelve-foot panels of eleven plaques each. One portrays the past; the other the present.*

*The early pioneers, with their doughty resilience and stalwart determination, made present day Palm Springs possible. Their history, and the history of those who came later to develop a mid-desert Indian oasis into the mecca for relaxation that now draws the great and near great from all over the world, is a story worth translating to the permanence of sculpture.*

*In paying tribute to the forebears of the nation’s resort capital, to which the panel of the past is devoted, special mention should be made of the message which heads it: “The Desert is the Test of the Worth of Your Spirit.” This epigram is attributed to a Palm Springs cowboy artist who lived in the ‘20’s and is aptly symbolic of the character of those who first came to the raw desert and stayed to transform it.*

*Their efforts, combined with the natural abundance of water found years earlier by the Cahuilla Indians, brought forth the beginnings of Palm Springs. Water was the key. Without water, man-made abundance could not have come to pass.*

*The original design of pools and fountains of the new bank, therefore, were more than symbols. They remind us that the present development of the famous village, and the continued development of its bright future, depend upon the precious element of water, just as the sculptured panels, in representing the trials and tribulations of the pioneers, serve to remind us and future generations of “The Desert is the Test of the Worth of Your Spirit.”*

*The panels are to be found at the original entrance to the main lobby, on the corner of Indian Canyon Drive (originally Indian Avenue) and Ramon Road, positioned at right angles to the entrance door, and placed so that both may be seen at the same time. The panel which tells the story of the early days is to the left of the entrance; the panel of the present (1959) is to the right.*

## The Sculptor – Lawrence Tenney Stevens

Lawrence Tenney Stevens was born in Massachusetts in 1896. He first showed an interest in sculpture in his early adolescence and began experimenting with figures after his grandfather demonstrated how to carve figures from a broken alabaster vase. In 1917, he began four years at the Boston Museum School of Fine Arts.

Stevens first garnered international attention when he won the Rome Prize for sculpture in 1922, receiving a fellowship to study sculpture at the American Academy in Rome as well as funds to travel, to experience the art of Western Europe. He developed his own simplified style after his visit to Egypt shortly after the 1922 discovery of King Tutankhamun's tomb. He became an authority on Roman, Greek, and Egyptian Sculpture, and is a fellow of the American Academy at Rome, where he devoted three years to intensive creative work with attendant travel to the sites of ancient civilizations in Greece, Egypt, and Constantinople.



Lawrence Tenney Stevens with winning entry "Music" Prix de Rome, 1922.

Stevens was a contemporary, colleague, and friend of Daniel Chester French, who created the giant seated statue of Abraham Lincoln for the memorial in Washington. He met French, a fellow American sculptor, prior to his travels to Rome. French confided to Stevens that he wished he had Stevens' position in the art world at a time when French believed America was beginning to gain clout and credibility in sculpture. Following this exchange, Stevens made his artistic focus to use his sculpture to glorify that which he believed was uniquely American, and American-made.

He created notable works abroad and also following his return to the United States in 1926. In 1928, he was invited to Morocco for the winter and created portraits there which added considerably to his fame.

In the U.S., he had several commissions in New York, then moved west to Santa Barbara. It was in Southern California that he first met Millard Sheets, (1907-1989) already an established artist and founding professor of the fine arts program at Scripps College. The two artists became friends, and Stevens accompanied Sheets on his yearly trip to Mexico, where the two painted watercolors. Stevens sculpture "Monument to the Young Farmers of the Nation" (1938) currently stands at the entrance to the Millard Sheets Center for the Arts in Los Angeles, California.

The Eastman Kodak Company chose Stevens to make the medal model for their international competition to be given in gold. He executed numerous portrait heads in bronze and silver. He carved two colossal portrait busts in four-ton pieces of stone of the poets Charles Erskine Scott Wood and his wife, Sara Bard Field for their estate at Los Gatos, California.

When Stevens first visited Cody, Wyoming in 1929, Western art and furnishings were still faithful to the rustic expectation established in the prints and sculptures of Remington and Russell. By applying his simplified style to Cody's western motifs, Stevens forged a new way of romanticizing the American West that he hoped would advance the international view of American art. Stevens felt the Cody environs were the epitome of the West. He eventually acquired the 2000-acre Double L Bar Ranch there and used it as his part-time home and studio.

In 1929 he was commissioned by Architect Thomas Hastings to design and execute a pair of bronze doors, which serve as the entrance to the Fine Arts Building, Scripps College, Claremont, CA. He later created two ceramic life-size sea lion fountains there. In 1931, he created the bronze "Spirit of the Stampede", based upon the real-life bronco and rider at the Cody Stampede. It was the centerpiece of the first sculpture exhibition held at Cody's Buffalo Bill Museum. In 1933, he created three plaques, each six feet high, for Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming, to mark newly named mountain peaks. Also, in 1933 he created a magnificent black ceramic panther for the Musical Hall Rockefeller Center, New York. In 1936, he oversaw all sculpture for the Texas Centennial Exposition in Dallas. He created six large pieces consisting of three twenty-foot figures for the Esplanade of State, two pylon figures, male and female, twelve-feet high at the head of the 750-foot reflecting pool and an animal fountain 25 feet high in front of the livestock building. In 1937-39 he was commissioned to do a group for the New York World's Fair, "The Tree Life," a 60-foot-high figure from a historic elm donated by the State of Connecticut, and on each side of the central figure stood a 10-foot figure, male and female, carved in rare Australian red Eucalyptus grown in California. At the same time, a 12-foot-high cast stone sculpture group in front of the Fine Arts Building at the Los Angeles County Fair Ground, Pomona, dedicated to the young farmers of America, was commissioned.

One of his most interesting accomplishments is a remarkable series of 85 block cuts which tell an engrossing story of a big game hunt in which Stevens participated in the Wyoming Rockies. His linocut prints evolved from sketches he made during a series of big-game hunting expeditions through the Rocky Mountains near Cody, Wyoming, beginning in 1930, and a mountain lion hunt in the Bradshaw Mountains of Arizona in 1933. In 1935, Stevens translated the sketches to pieces of linoleum and hand-pulled a limited number of prints from them using his own book-press. The style has been interchangeably referred to as Cowboy High Style, Cody High Style, and Cowboy (or Western) Deco.<sup>6</sup>

Stevens friend and colleague, Millard Sheets served as a wartime artist and correspondent for *Life* magazine during WWII and was director of the new Los Angeles County Art Institute. Sheets believed that art should be incorporated into the design of a building from the outset, rather than being tacked-on later. His fortuitous support from financier Howard F. Ahmanson, whose Home Savings & Loan Association became a national banking giant, led to Sheets' commissions to design the art and architecture for scores of banks within Ahmanson's Home Savings & Loan empire.

Lawrence Tenney Stevens would have his opportunity to incorporate his art into the design of a bank building, as well. Herbert Samson was a friend of Stevens, and he had an impact on bringing him to Palm Springs. Stevens was attracted to the place itself, the quiet beauty, the climate, the surrounding scenery and he and his wife wintered there.

The Stevens moved from their picturesque dude ranch, the Double L Bar Ranch at Cody, Wyoming in October 1941, to winter in Palm Springs. Herb Samson at Security First National Bank assisted them to obtain the charming little Cornelia White home and grounds, as their leased home and studio. Stevens also established a studio at an Indian Avenue location where he worked and gave instruction.

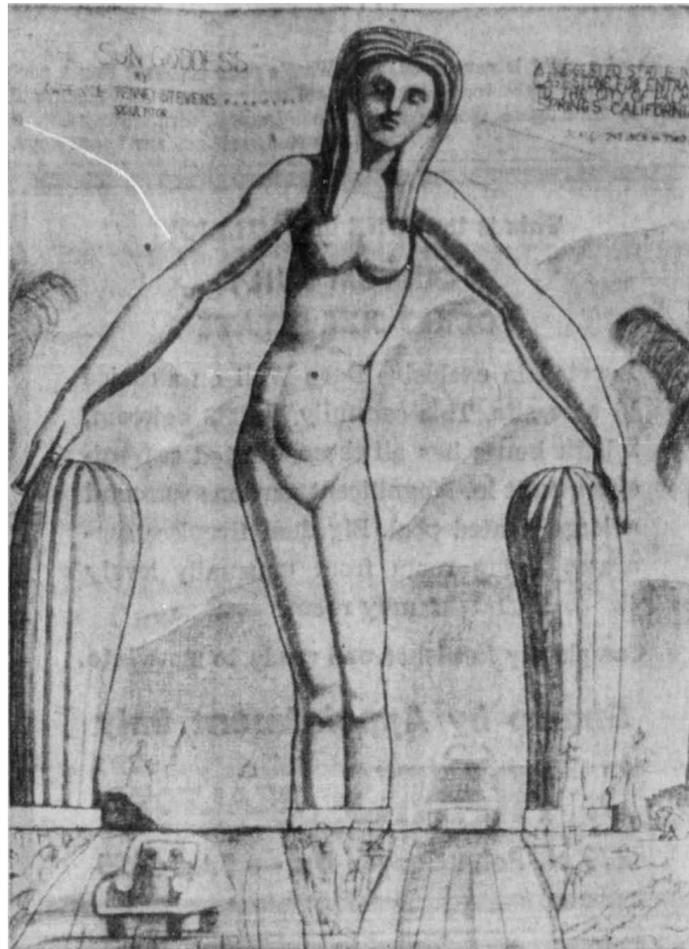
Stevens, a dynamic personality, and tireless worker pursued unusual figures in desert woods, such as greasewood, and in eucalyptus as well as in clay and other more usual mediums. His genius was demonstrated by the flowing, living lines of the human form created by carving a piece of greasewood, as well as magnificent figures from ten-foot lengths of eucalyptus.

In 1941 in Palm Springs, Stevens sat in the beautiful gardens of Miss Cornelia White's home, which later became the location of the Desert Museum. He carved a 10-foot figure from the rare trunk of an Australian red eucalyptus. This was to be a monument for the City of Palm Springs, one which would attract tourists and amaze visitors as they entered the city. He was committed to the project which occupied most of his time and energy, though there was no commission or deadline involved. Stevens was so passionate about the project he opined "It was truly creative work done solely because of inner promptings. The rhythm of the tree trunk suggested the subtle flowing pose of a female figure. The wood was so beautiful I wished to keep as much of it as part of the figure as possible, removing only the necessary bits to give the work definite form and significance. With another trunk cut in two, and with the aid of some of my students I carved the forms of the barrel cactus." Stevens went on to describe sculpture "The grace of the figure and the 'Mona Lisa' expression of the face with its aura of massive hair seems to signify the sun and invigorating air. I used large limbs of the tree to supply the outstretched arms which touch the tops of the cactus

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<sup>6</sup> *Journal of the Print World*, January 2019. "The Overlooked Influence of Lawrence Tenney Stevens."

form, thus symbolizing all of the desert and its forms, touched by the Mother-Sun.”<sup>7</sup> The final piece would need to be much larger, and it needed funding. Stevens estimated the cost to be \$35-40,000. His vision was never fulfilled. However, it was an influential impression upon Stevens, and perhaps manifested 18 years later in the sun goddess of the bas-relief panels at Security First National Bank.



THIS IS THE "Sun Goddess," which is planned as an entrance way to the City of Palm Springs by internationally known sculptor Lawrence Tenney Stevens of Tempe, Ariz. In 1941 he completed a 10-foot high similar work. The above sketch is scaled to 34 feet, an arbitrary height, with the final size determined in this case by the money available for such a project.

***Desert Sun, November 5, 1959.***

<sup>7</sup> The *Desert Sun*, November 5, 1959, "Sculptor Dreams of 'Sun Goddess'."

Another effort for Stevens, in 1942, was the design of the seal for the City of Palm Springs. Stevens applied his bold Moderne style to a linocut print that appeared in the *Desert Sun* newspaper of Palm Springs, California, on April 17, 1942. He submitted a plaster model of his proposed design which was considered amongst several other applications. It was not the final selection.



In 1942, war interrupted any furtherance of his proposals. Stevens volunteered for the armed forces to fight in World War II. Prior to deployment to Africa in May 1942, he moved from Palm Springs back to his 2,000-acre ranch in Cody, Wyoming. During the war, he was actively engaged in repairing aircraft. After serving in the war, he moved to Tulsa, then Tempe, Arizona, where he established his studio which became internationally known.

While living and working in Tempe, Stevens, at age 63, received his commission for the Security First National Bank panels. Stevens came to Palm Springs and gathered the research material, spending much time with those in the Village with whom the facts of the early days and their proper sequence are known.

Then the long work of creating the designs and sculpturing the panels began. There was data to gather, decisions of selection, rough sketches, scale models, full sized drawings for approval, line tracings on the 32 slabs of specially prepared clay (shipped from California to his Tempe, Arizona studio), each weighing 175 pounds, the finishing of the reliefs to refine the drawing and give a play of light and dark, the photographing for the committee to check details and critique. In this painstaking effort, which consumed more than a year's steady time to complete the twenty-two sections, Stevens was ably assisted by his wife, Bea (a young artist). Bas-relief requires a frontal plane and back plane and the preservation of these two planes is the key to purity. It requires masterful draftsmanship, coupled with a divine sense of feeling as to where a line begins and is lost as another begins at the edge of a form. This is the secret of bas-relief and because it is such a disciplined form of art there have been few down through the ages with this ability.

One by one, each of the terra cotta plaques was transformed into its own step of the story through Stevens' artistry; he devoted a week to ten days on the creation of each of the panel sections, followed by three months of slow drying. Then transferred to slabs which carried the sections into the kiln, for the long smoking, firing, and cooling process which gives the clay its permanence. Each plaque was smoked at low temperature for a week, followed by three days at high firing. The kiln process alone required more than two thousand hours.

Thirteen months after the initial step, all twenty-two sections for the two panels were ready to be individually crated and shipped. In Stevens' words "Sculpture and Architecture are the most lasting of the Arts, and because of the exactions demanded in their making are considered the most perfect by many scholars. These panels took over a year of constant effort, with many years of experience as a basis, and a willingness to work hard with a time deadline."<sup>8</sup> Stevens supervised this final stage, accompanied the panel sections to Palm Springs, and positioned each one at the site, where they remained covered until the official unveiling. The two panels weigh 4,000 pounds.

Stevens' efforts were coordinated with his friend and colleague, architect Joseph B. Wong. They both lived and practiced in the Phoenix, Arizona area. The design team understood and appreciated the desert, and remained in direct communication with their client, Security First National Bank. Herbert Samson, Vice President, and manager of the bank, served as the project manager.

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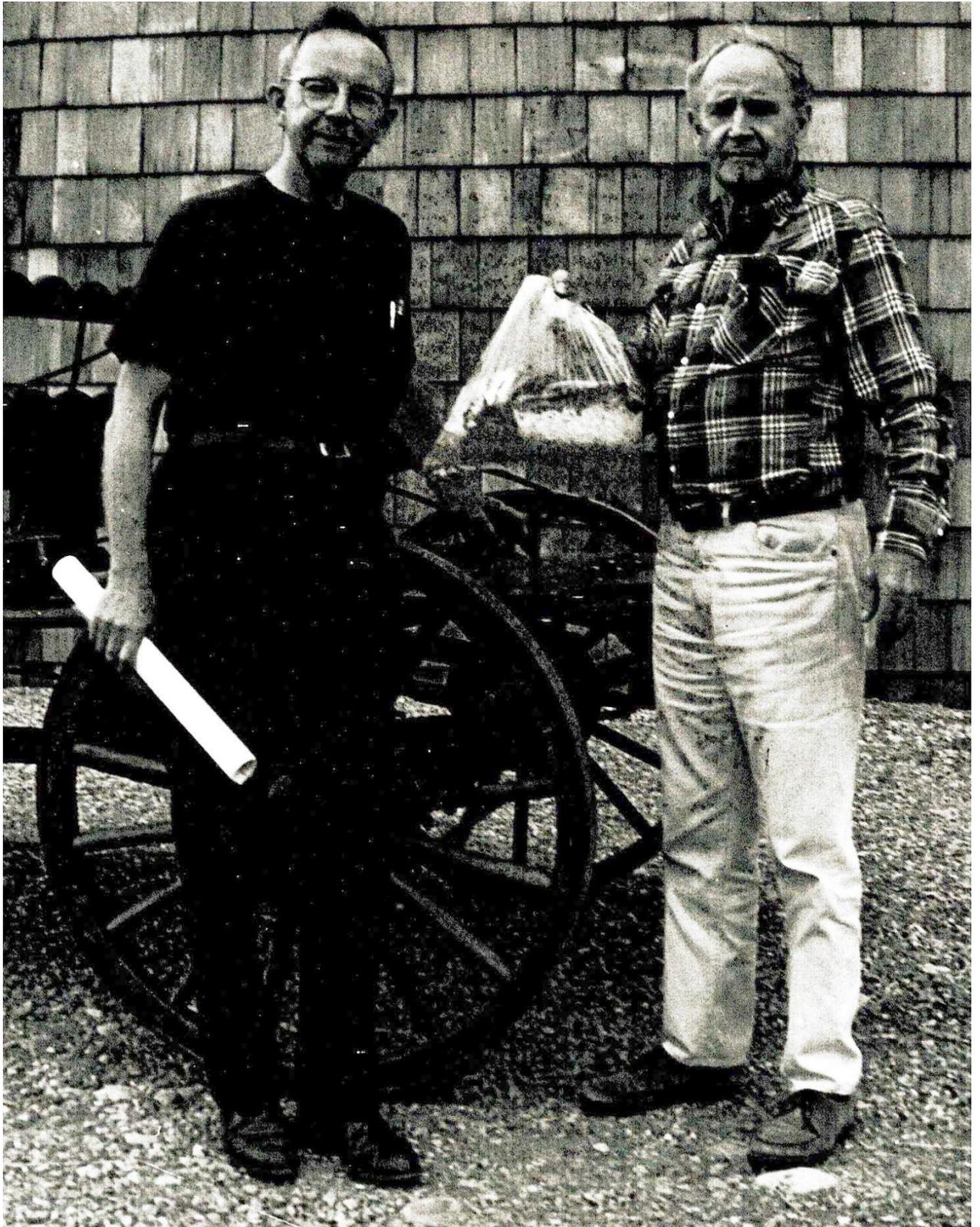
<sup>8</sup> *Desert Sun*, November 3, 1959. "Sculptor Stevens' 'Dream' May Become Artistic Reality."



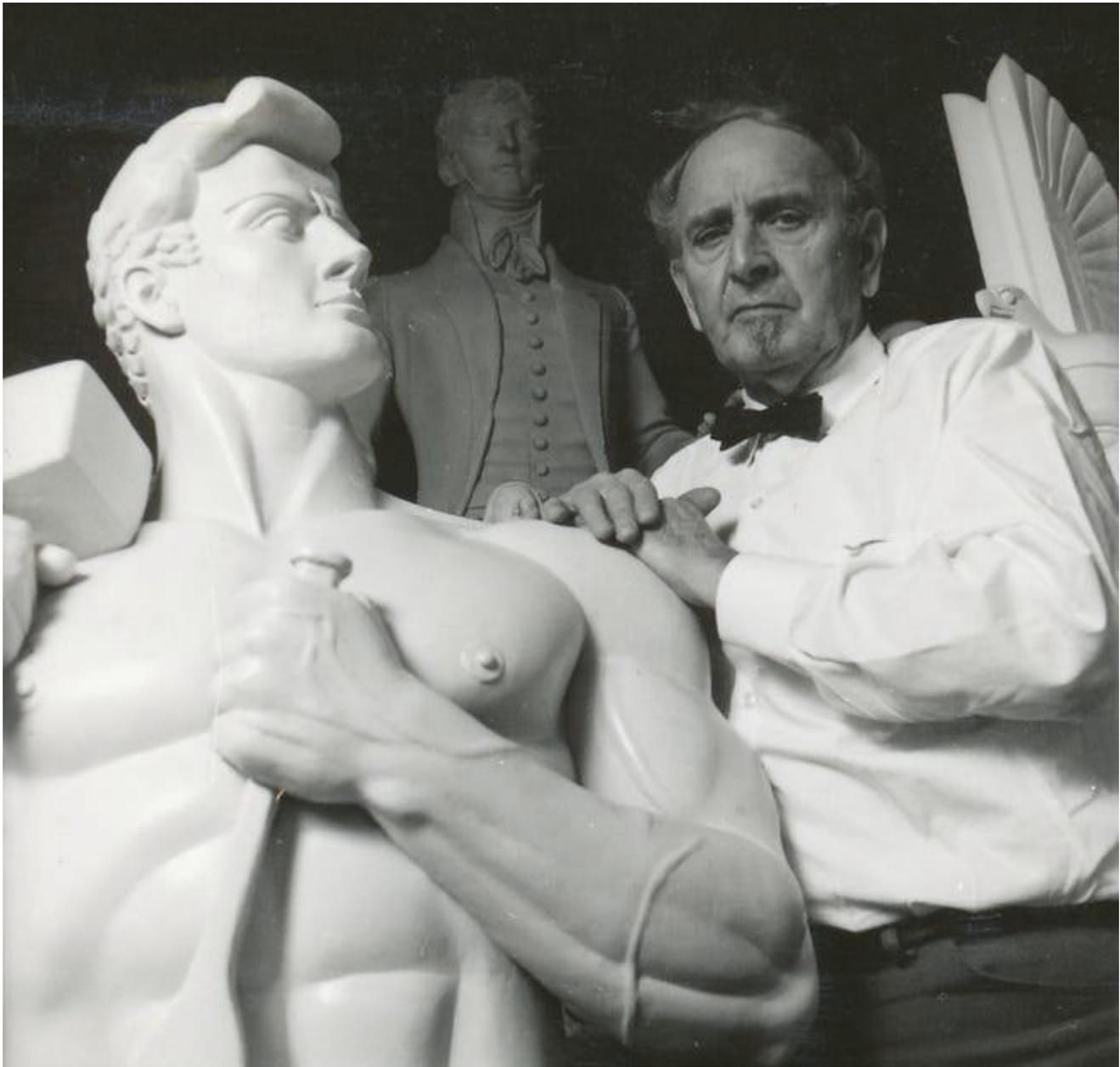
IVY BAKER PRIEST, treasurer of the United States, took a lively interest in the sculptured history of Palm Springs, which adorns the entrance of Security First National Bank's Palm Springs Ramon Road Branch. Herbert Samson, vice president and manager of the branch, is shown in-

forming her of the famous resort capital's early history. Mrs. Priest stayed over to enjoy the warm weather following a visit with President Eisenhower prior to returning to Washington. (Harvey Oster Photo).

**Herbert Samson describes the sculptured history of Palm Springs to the treasurer of the United States.  
(Desert Sun, February 10, 1960)**



**A casual pose of Herbert Samson (left) and Lawrence Tenney Stevens.  
(Courtesy Ruthmarie Samson Schroeder, family photo archives)**



**Lawrence Tenney Stevens lived and sculpted in Tempe, Arizona until his death in 1972.  
(Last known photo of Lawrence Tenney Stevens, stylized Self-Portrait)**



**Current view of panel.**



**Historic view of panel looking North.  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)**



**Historic view of panel.  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)**



**Current view of panels.**



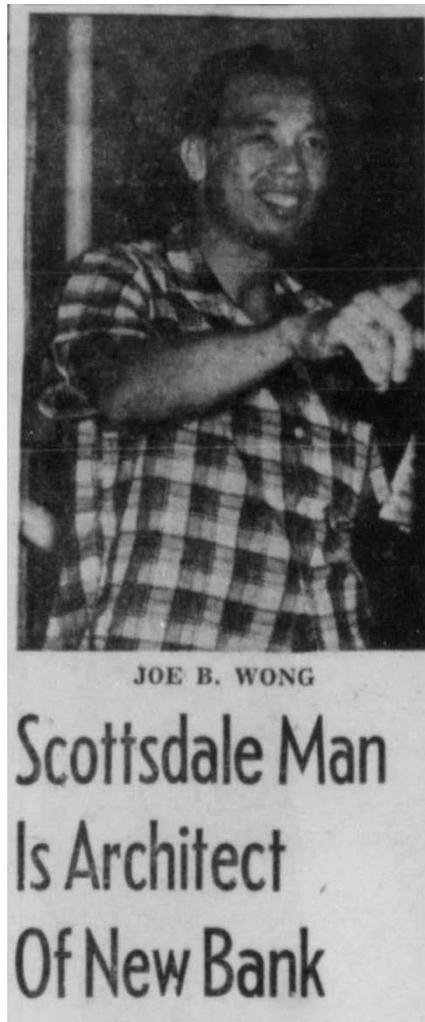
**Culver Nichols (left), unidentified man, Herbert Samson (right).  
(Courtesy Ruthmarie Samson Schroeder, family photo archives)**



**Historic view of panels from Ramon/Indian intersection.  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)**



**Historic photo of panels at original entry.  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)**



### **The Architect – Joseph Bing Wong (1921-2011)**

The unique architectural design of Security First National Bank's new Palm Springs Ramon Road branch was done by Joseph (Joe) Bing Wong, A.I.A., of Scottsdale, Arizona. Wong won wide recognition in the Southwest for his ability to communicate a delicacy of local feeling and interpretation of his buildings' surroundings, which was much sought for by the Security First National Bank. In Palm Springs, Wong chose materials natural to the locale so the bank blends with its desert setting. Desert rocks are used throughout the building to expand the feeling desired. The spacious lobby and extensive use of glass gives the feeling of the surrounding desert, and yet the warmth of the Village has been retained using natural desert plantings. Wong also designed the special entrance way in which the historical bas-relief panels, executed by the internationally known Lawrence Tenney Stevens, are placed as a tribute to Palm Springs.

Joe Wong was born August 17, 1921 in the copper mining town of Clifton, Arizona. As a child he learned the value of hard work as he helped his single mother raise his seven siblings. He worked in his family's general store and restaurant until 1940 when the family moved to California. He realized education would lead to a better life. He attended the University of California, Berkeley,

and received his degree from the School of Fine Arts. Wong subsequently worked a string of jobs including Ship Conversion Engineer at General Engineering & Drydock in San Francisco, providing architectural services for the U.S. Army during World War II, and as an architect at Nichols-White Architects in Palo Alto, and Higgins & Rudd Architects of San Jose. He practiced architecture for five years in Palo Alto, married, then returned to Arizona in 1952. He had two children, Jeffrey and Judy, and was married to his wife, Lili, for 63 years until Lili passed away. He settled in Scottsdale, a community of about 2,000 people, and he worked for Hiram Hudson Benedict, who was one of the first architects practicing in Scottsdale. He established Wong Associates, Architects in 1954, beginning an illustrious career.

Being an Asian American at that time in Scottsdale had its challenges. Regarding purchasing his family's first house, during the negotiations for the home, someone had passed a petition around the neighborhood, saying they didn't want Chinese in the area. The petition failed, and there was not much evident prejudice after that. Wong is believed to be one of the first Asian American architects to be licensed in Arizona. He later was licensed in California and Nevada, and with the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB). His extensive involvement in the community includes the Scottsdale Library Board, Design Review Board, Building and Fire Advisory Board, Scottsdale Advisory Board of Appeals, Lions Club, Rotarians Boys Club, and Scottsdale Charros. He was a Life Fellow of the International Institute of Arts and Letters, American Institute of Architects member, and a patron of the arts. His work focused on the seamless continuity of the surrounding mountains and the integrity of the magnificent Arizona desert.

Wong's design philosophy was that buildings should blend in with and maintain the integrity of the surrounding desert landscape. He maintained this vision in designing over 550 private homes, offices, banks, restaurants and schools. Among his notable projects are the Carefree Sundial, Scottsdale's Fifth Avenue buildings, Hopi School, Scottsdale Boys Club, El Dorado Park Community Center, and additions to the Valley Ho and Camel Back Inn. He was influential in the City of Carefree, Arizona and even named several streets, including Ho Hum Drive. He also felt a connection to Native American communities and designed many Native American housing projects on tribal lands in Arizona.

Wong and his family performed with the Scottsdale Community Players Theater, which started in a one-room structure and is one of the longest-running community-based theatres in the Valley. Audiences quickly outgrew this venue, and they started design and construction of a new enlarged theatre with phases built in 1956, 1964, and 1967. Joe B. Wong, Wong Associates, Architects designed it which became the Stagebrush Theatre, the oldest non-profit theatre in the Valley.

He designed the Carefree Inn, a luxury resort-hotel in Carefree, Arizona, in 1964. It was a three-million-dollar project under the management of Western International Hotels, owners of the Oasis Hotel in Palm Springs. Wong's design contains 80 terrace rooms in a three building, two-level complex connected by ramps and bridges. An additional 25 rooms are located in ten cottages surrounding the main structures. Contemporary Spanish décor is maintained throughout the resort. The Coronado specialty dining room continues the Spanish Décor, and it includes a dance floor and a luxurious coffee shop, overlooking the terrace and pool patios. The resort includes meeting and banquet rooms, tennis, riding stables, swimming, and access to the adjacent golf

Course. It is the nation's newest luxury hotel in 1964 and is the sister hotel of the Oasis Hotel in Palm Springs.<sup>9</sup>

Wong was both artist and architect. Art was a hobby, and he dabbled in various medium and took classes at Lawrence Tenney Stevens' studio.

Wong's firm was active until he retired in 1998.



**Watercolor created by Joe B. Wong.  
Obituary, private collection shared by friend 2011.**



**Retrospective of grand opening, retail project, 1963. Wong is fourth from left.  
*Arizona Contractor & Community*, 2013.**

<sup>9</sup> *Desert Sun*, February 1964. "Carefree Is The Word For Town And Also For New Luxury Hotel."



**Photo Caption "Grand opening of Park 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Building Retail Shops".**

**Architect Joe Wong displays rendition to Southwest Management Group  
and C. O. Johnson & Son Building Company, April 24, 1963.  
*Arizona Contractor & Community, Spring 2013.***

## Architecture

The architecture exemplifies mid-century modernism with its simplicity and quiet beauty. The architect has captured this feeling using natural materials by the adaptation, in design and plan, of nature's flowing lines and forms.

Typical of these materials were the native stone veneer, a native aggregate of river-run gravel taken from a stream bed near Palm Springs and set in a matrix of concrete, and Whitewater Canyon stone, quarried and rolled down the mountain through an earth slide. This stone is used for both exterior and interior plantings. In the words of the Architect, "It was quite a sight to see the russet boulders coming down, the lichen and moss clinging to their crevices, and the golden flecks of the rock glinting in the sun."<sup>10</sup>

The stone, still extant, is carried indoors for one wall that links the wide parking lot and patio entrance to the lobby, and for the pool, where water running through rock creates the effect of a gently splashing waterfall. The pool no longer exists.

The interior of the bank had an eighty-foot lobby which was softly lit within a 14-foot-high luminous ceiling panel of diffused light that features acoustical properties. The interior featured black, white, and gold vinyl flooring and "black sequin" 80-foot-long counters that cross the broad lobby diagonally. New innovations in banking were represented by Formica counters, and specially designed furnishings including the wastebasket, which were designed by the bank and were mass-produced in Grand Rapids, Michigan, to be available for all banks.

A unique feature of the bank was the private open-air customer conference room, where the blue sky was the ceiling, and typical Palm Springs adobe is teamed in paving and in planters, accented by a redwood wall. This may have been possible only in a climate such as Palm Springs.

With 9,000 square feet of space, the new plans included such modern accessories as drive-in teller windows, night depository, a lobby of 3,500 square feet and 800 square feet of interior plantings. "It will be a quietly spectacular edifice of stone and glass, and not the least of its contributions to the community's architectural welfare will be an attractive landscape plan, including fountains and pools, and trees to grace an otherwise barren expanse of asphaltic parking lot."<sup>11</sup>

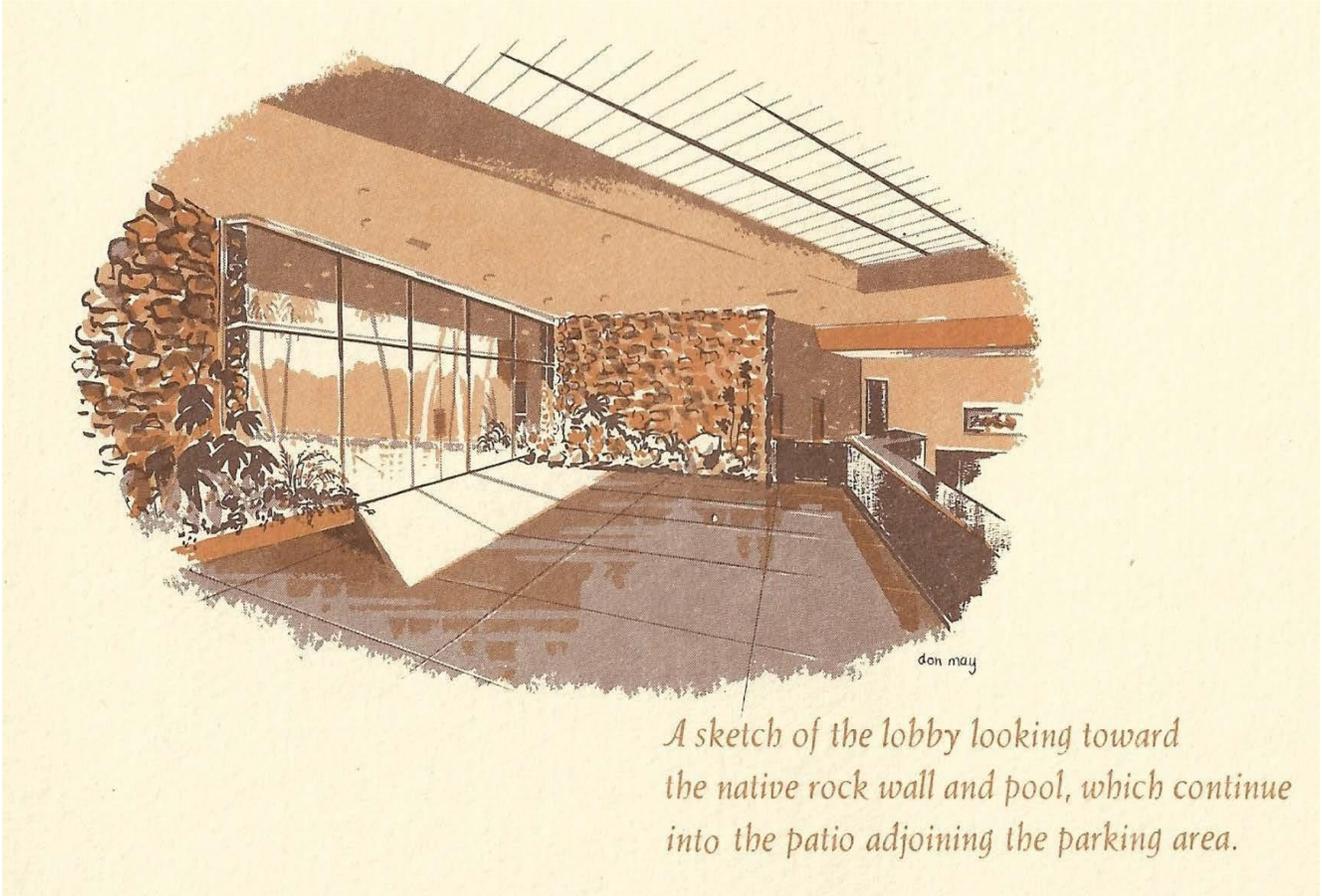
Beneath the lobby floor was entrenched a sixty by twenty-three-foot vault, encased in ton upon ton of reinforcing steel, enclosed on all four sides by eighteen inches of concrete. Here the essential records of the bank's more than 200 branches were preserved on microfilm, with the quality of protection representative of the mid-century nuclear age.

The period of significance relative to this historic property is 1959, as originally designed and constructed by the masterful team of client, architect, and artist.

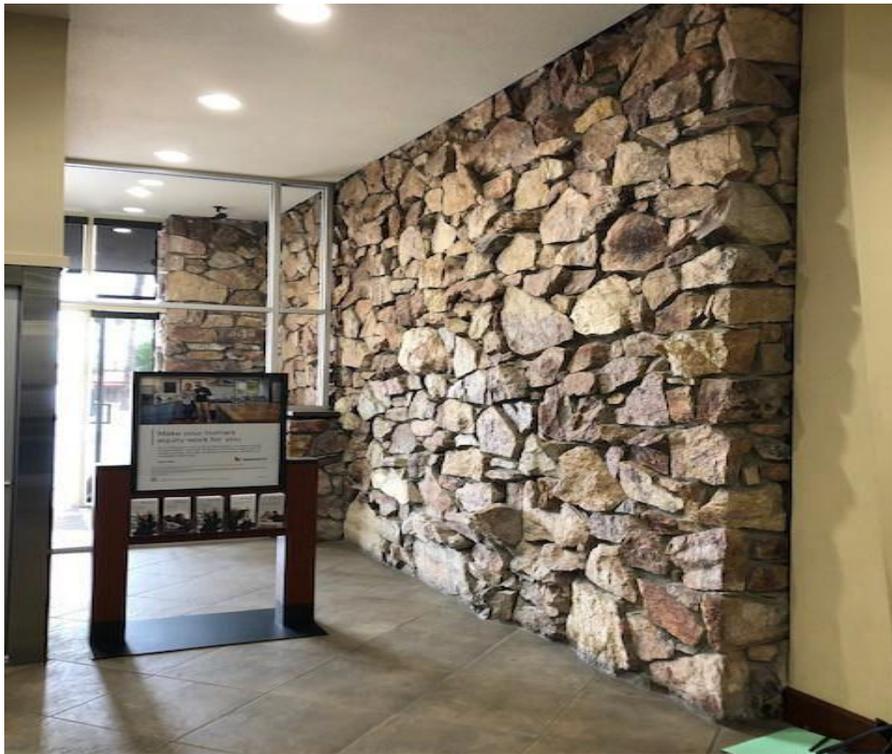
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<sup>10</sup> *Palm Springs Life*, November 1958.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*



***The Story of Palm Springs in Sculpture*, published by Security First National Bank, 1959.**



**Current view of the native rock wall in the lobby.**

## Changes and Additions to Property (See diagram, page 40.)

The following additions and modifications have been made to the bank since it was originally constructed:

### Security First National Bank (later Security Pacific National Bank)

- A block building was added, 1964. Utility building.
- Electrical upgrades, 1966.
- Mechanical alterations, including new equipment in the basement and rooftop with appropriate screening added, 1972.
- Interior remodel including new partitions and ceiling, 1977.
- Walk up teller window added, east wall – entry area, 1978.
- Remove existing walk-up window and install a ready-teller machine, 1981.
- Re-roof, 1983.
- Remove ATM and install drive-up teller with covered canopy, 1986.
- Construct 200 linear feet of concrete block wall, 4' high along street, 6' high on side, 1986.
- ADA site upgrades, 1988.

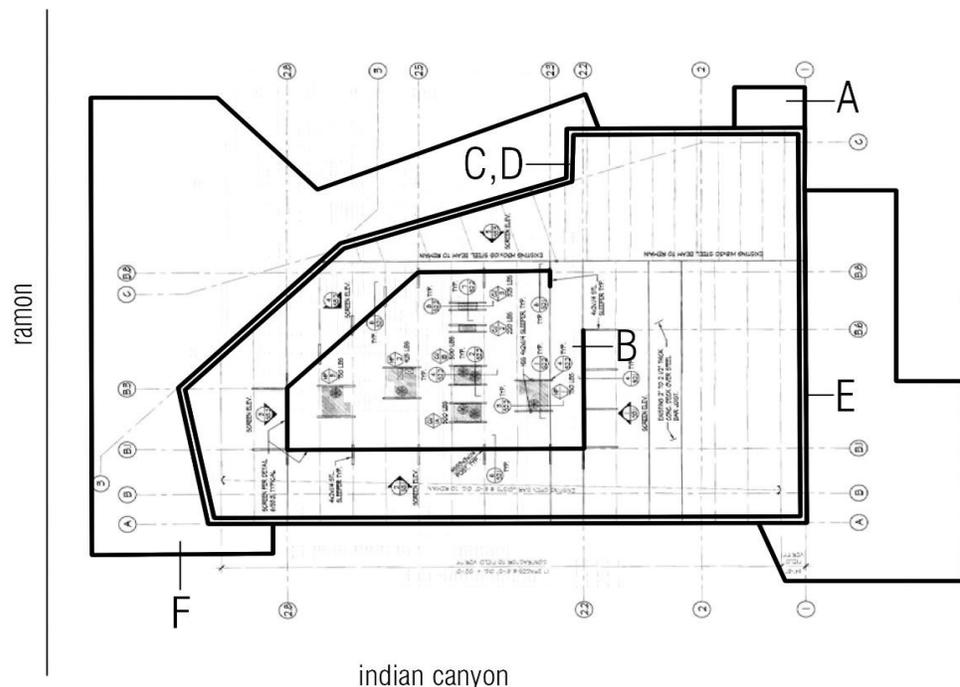
### Valley Players Guild

- Interior renovations to install seats, lighting, stage, wall, doors, etc. for theatre, 1990.

### Union Bank

- New storefronts, remodel entry, ADA upgrades, 2008.
- Remove and replace 5 signs, 2009.
- Interior remodel, and ADA upgrades, 2010.
- HVAC renovation including new rooftop equipment and screening, 2014.

- A. block building, 1964
- B. mechanical equipment screen, 1972+2014
- C. walk-up teller window, 1978
- D. remove walk-up teller window and install ready teller machine, 1981
- E. install drive-up teller, 1986
- F. new storefronts, remodel entry, ada upgrades, 2008



## Local Architectural Context

The Security First National Bank should be viewed within the context of the period Post World War II (1945-1969). A post-World War II surge of visitors and seasonal residents coincided with Modernism's rise in popularity. As a result, commercial architecture in Palm Springs from this period reflected an acceptance of Modernism and expressed a wide range of Modern interpretations as it increasingly served two purposes: the need for tourist-oriented buildings for seasonal visitors, and the need for practical daily services such as banks, shops, and gas stations for the growing population of permanent residents. Commercial development during this period consisted of both infill development in the original commercial core, and the continued northward and southward expansion of the commercial district along Palm Canyon and Indian Canyon Drives. Many commercial buildings ranging from small single or multi-tenant office and retail buildings to large department stores were designed by prominent architects of the period. Bank architecture across the nation adopted Modern design, including drive-through service, to attract customers in the economic expansion after 1945. In fact, Palm Springs had its own financial district inclusive of several financial institutions and upscale retail establishments, as illustrated on page 6. The majority of the buildings, originally designed as banks, are either Class 1 Historic Resources, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, or designated as both distinguished listings.

Palm Springs boasts an extraordinary collection of custom designs by noted architects which were also by their size, position, and design, de facto civic landmarks celebrating the town's wealth. The population growth accelerated in the 1950's, bringing a demand for civic necessities such as schools, libraries, museums, a city hall and police headquarters, as well as offices, stores, housing and banking for both commercial and residential customers. Though Palm Springs was a smaller municipality, this economic climate provided many opportunities for locally based architects, as well as those from other areas, 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", "Desert Modernism" or "The Palm Springs School".



**Permit History** (See Appendix V for copies of originals.)

December 17, 1958 – Building Permit No. 1363. Permission to construct the herein described building is hereby granted. Building to be constructed in accordance with the regulations of the City of Palm Springs. No work to be covered without inspection. 9300 SF, Lots 9, 10, 19, 20. Tract: Vista Santa Rosa. Owner: Security First National Bank. Contractor: Kretz & Wilson.

February 1, 1959 – Permit No. 1318. Plumbing, 2 lavatories, 4 toilets, 2 sinks, 1 water heater, 1 gas furnace, 4 floor drains. Contractor: Viking Heating & Cooling.

July 11, 1959 – Building Permit 1363A, Lots 9, 10, 20 & 19. Sewer Connection and Building Permit. Owner: Security First National Bank. Contractor: Kretz & Wilson. Sewer Connection fee: \$401.63

November 14, 1964 – Building Permit No. B 7608. Construct block building. Owner: Security First National Bank. Contractor: Entman.

October 24, 1965 – Building Permit No. B 8670, commercial remodel. Contractor: Eric Entman.

January 13, 1966 – Building Permit No. 9650 (Electrical Permit). Owner: Security First National Bank. Contractor: Eric W. Entman, Co.

February 16, 1966 – Building Permit No. A 1609 (Electrical Permit)

February 14, 1972 – Mechanical Permit M-1501. Replace basement located compressor motor and install 2 small A.C. systems plus one large roof-mounted compressor with screening requirement per approval of Planning Division. Contractor: Serfass & Co.

March 9, 1977 – Building Permit No. B 0263. Interior remodel of exist. Bank Bldg. including new partitions, ceiling. Contractor: W. E. Colglazier

May 15, 1978 – Electrical permit No. A 1477. Add 2 outlets. Contractor: Colglazier.

August 15, 1978 – Building Permit No. B 3600. Install walk-up teller window. East wall/entry area, per planning approval. Contractor: Walt Colglazier. State license No. 262830.

October 26, 1981 – Building Permit No. B 8503. Remove existing walkup window and install a ready-teller machine. Owner: Security Pacific National Bank. Contractor: Oltmans Construction Co.

June 3, 1983 – Building Permit No. B 1636. Re-roof. Owner: Security Pacific Bank.

February 2, 1986 – Building Permit No. B 3238. Remove ATM and install drive-up teller with covered canopy. Owner: Security Pacific Bank. Architect: P. Rigano, Redlands, CA. Contractor: Baedaker Construction Co., Palm Springs, CA.

June 2, 1986 – Building Permit No. B 08809. Construct approx. 200 LF of concrete block wall, 4' high along street, 6' high on side. Owner: Security Pacific Bank.

April 13, 1988 - Create required handicap parking space at new location in parking lot. Construct curbed ramp and ramped sidewalk to rear, main entry. Owner: Security Pacific Bank. Contractor: Bryant Jr. Inc.

1990 - Building Permit application to install seats, lighting, stage, wall, doors, etc. for theatre. Owner: Valley Players Guild.

July 27, 1990- Building Permit No. B18561. Occupancy Load to be updated. Fire Department Requirements. New plumbing. No stages or platforms to be constructed. Owner: Valley Players Guild, 255 N. Cielo, Palm Springs.

May 14, 2008 - Building Permit No. C 22474. New storefronts. Remodel entry, install new controlled access unit. New curb ramp.

June 29, 2009 - Building Permit No. C 24472. Remove and replace 5 signs. Owner: Union Bank, 500 S. Indian Avenue, Palm Springs, CA. Contractor: Coast Sign Inc., Anaheim, CA.

March 2, 2010 - Building Permit No. C 26642. Interior remodel of existing teller stations and access area. ADA compliance modifications. Minor Electrical additions. Exterior ADA modifications. Owner: Union Bank, 445 Figueroa ST. #700, LA Architect Kevin Ary, Burbank, CA. Contractor: Consolidated Construction, San Clemente, CA.

June 19, 2014 - Building Permit No. 2014-2006. HVAC renovation. Includes new platforms and parapet screening. Owner: Virgil Wedge, 328 California Avenue, Reno, NV. Architect: Revel Young #C10974, Palm Springs. Structural Engineer: Tang Structural Engineers #S4433, Fontana, CA. Contractor: Osborn Construction, Reno, NV.

## **Background / Historic Context**

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

- Native American Settlement to 1969
- Early Development (1884-1918)
- Palm Springs between the Wars (1919-1941)
- Palm Springs during World War II (1939-1945)
- Post-World War II Palm Springs (1945-1969)

It is within the context of the period "Post-World War II Palm Springs" that the Security First National Bank will be evaluated.

## EVALUATION:

(Only criteria 3, 4, and 5 are asserted)

## ARCHITECTURE

**Criterion 3:** *(That reflects or exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history).* The Security First National Bank was designed by the prominent architect, Joseph Bing Wong. The stylistic markers of the building place it directly in the historic context of Palm Springs' Modern Period. The Security First National Bank represents a prime and intact example of the significant modernist architecture for which Palm Springs is widely known. As such the Security First National Bank may be viewed as an important component of the historic trends that have come to define Palm Springs' image as a center of important midcentury architecture. This historic trend exemplifies a particular period of the national, state or local history. *The Security First National Bank qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Resource on the local registry under Criterion 3.*

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

The Security First National Bank (1959) is eligible under the theme of Modern architecture because it possesses distinctive characteristics that embody the Mid-Century Modern Style such as overall horizontality, blurred boundaries of architecture and landscape, expansive amounts of glass, use of organic materials, etc. Additionally, the Security First National Bank is eligible under this criterion because it represents an important example of building practices in Palm Springs at midcentury. *The Security First National Bank qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Resource on the local registry under Criterion 4.*

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

**5a: Work of a Master:** A master is a figure of generally recognized greatness in a field, a known craftsman of consummate skill. The property must express a particular phase in the development of the master's career, an aspect of his work, or a particular idea or theme in his craft. A property is not eligible as the work of a master, however, simply because it was designed by a prominent architect. For example, not every building designed by Frank Lloyd Wright is eligible under this portion of Criterion 5, although it might meet other Criteria.

The Security First National Bank exemplifies architect Joseph Wong's early commercial work. The concepts of simple materials, an open floor plan, the use of large glass areas that create transparency through the building, lack of ornamentation, and simple geometry are displayed here. Outdoor spaces contribute to the design and thin projecting overhangs for shade are evidence of the architect's guiding principles that have been retained throughout the years which remain timeless design. He achieves a delicacy of local feeling and interpretation of this building's surroundings and landscape. Wong chose materials natural to the locale so the bank blends with its desert setting. Desert rocks are used throughout the building to expand the feeling desired. The spacious lobby and extensive use of glass gives the feeling of the surrounding desert, and yet the warmth of the Village has been retained through the use of natural desert plantings. He designed the special entrance way in which the historical bas-relief panels are prominently displayed.

The Security First National Bank exemplifies artist Lawrence Tenney Stevens' creative genius through the bas-relief panels. As a past resident of Palm Springs, and full-time resident of Tempe, Arizona, he understood the enigmatic qualities of the desert. His work is recognized throughout the world.

**5b: Properties possessing high artistic values:** High artistic values may be expressed in many ways, including areas as diverse as community design or planning, engineering, and sculpture.

The design of the Security First National Bank provides shelter and shade from the harsh desert sun, and allows fresh air to circulate throughout the building. The open floor plan and use of natural materials flowing from exterior to interior are evident in the bank's design. This convergence of interior and exterior space was a common practice in mid-century modern design.

Lawrence Tenney Stevens had received world renowned fame by 1959, and had spent many years gathering information about Palm Springs which ultimately led to the commission for the bank. His bas-relief panels received local, and international recognition, thus the reputation of Security First National Bank as an outstanding financial institution.

*As the work of Masters, and for its high artistic values, the Security First National Bank qualifies for listing as a Class 1 Historic Resource on the local registry under Criterion 5.*

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

### INTEGRITY

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

### LOCATION

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

The Security First National Bank is located prominently at the intersection of Indian Canyon Drive (originally Indian Avenue) and Ramon Road at its original location. The overall site remains intact, and several of the original buildings of the Palm Springs Financial District are extant. See Map, Page 6. ***The Security First National Bank remains in its original location and therefore qualifies under this aspect.***

### DESIGN

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. It results from conscious decisions made during the original conception and planning of a property and applies to activities as diverse as community planning, engineering, architecture, and landscape architecture. Design includes such elements as organization of space, proportion, scale, technology, ornamentation, and materials. A property's design reflects historic functions and technologies as well as aesthetics. It includes such considerations as the structural system; massing; arrangement of spaces; pattern of fenestration; textures and colors of surface materials; type, amount, and style of ornamental detailing. ***The Security First National Bank's essential characteristics of form, plan, space, structure, and style have survived mostly intact. Similarly, the structural system; massing; arrangement of spaces; pattern of fenestration; and the type, amount, and style of detailing have survived with a large portion intact. Architect Joseph Bing Wong designed the bank utilizing indigenous materials and methods of construction. The stone is original, and in exceptionally good condition. The modern design of the exterior walls and building footprint are original and in very good condition. These character defining features remain intact. The original color palette was harmonious with desert earth tones and is reflected in the current color palette.***

***Though minor additions have occurred since the original construction of the Security First National Bank, the modifications and additions are seamlessly integrated with the original architecture, and have been done using the same architectural vocabulary, and quality of construction, as the original structure. Examples include the drive through banking canopy, interior remodel and roof top HVAC equipment and screens. The historic resource remains intact.***

## **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 views of the mountains remain as stunning as originally designed. The landscape organically engages with the interiors of the structures, as originally intended. ***The setting of the Security First National Bank continues to reflect the architect's original design relationship of site and structure.***

## **MATERIALS**

Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. The choice and combination of materials reveals the preferences of those who created the property and indicate the availability of particular types of materials and technologies. ***The Security First National Bank's materials successfully represent the best of mid-century modern design, with high quality stone, concrete, wood and glass.***

## **WORKMANSHIP**

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

## FEELING

Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. It results from the presence of physical features that, taken together, convey the property's historic character. For example, a rural historic district retaining original design, materials, workmanship, and setting will relate the feeling of agricultural life in the 19th century. ***The Security First National Bank is sited on a prominent corner lot which takes advantage of panoramic mountain views to the west. It remains harmonious with the landscape at the corner of Indian Canyon Drive and Ramon Road, and has maintained the setting to exemplify the extraordinary bas-relief panels at the original entry. Accordingly, the building 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 18th century will retain its quality of association with the battle. Because feeling and association depend on individual perceptions, their retention alone is never sufficient to support eligibility of a property for the National Register. ***The Security First National Bank is an important example of a modern, financial institution in Palm Springs. Accordingly, it continues its association with a pattern of events that have made a meaningful contribution to the community. It represents the movement in Palm Springs to offer modern design to the masses in an upscale business environment.***

**INTEGRITY SUMMARY:** The Security First National Bank appears to be in excellent condition partially due to the use of construction materials suitable for the harsh desert environment. This integrity analysis confirms that the building and site of the Security First National Bank still possess several aspects of integrity. ***In summary, the building still possesses a high degree of integrity sufficient to qualify for designation as a Class 1 Historic Resource.***

---

## **Bibliography**

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

### Books

Bogert, Frank. *Palm Springs First Hundred Years*. Palm Springs Heritage Associates, 1987.

### Other Documentary Sources

Historic Resources Group. *City of Palm Springs Citywide Historic Context Statement; Survey Findings*. Pasadena, 2015 (Final Draft, December 2018). 500 South Indian Canyon Drive is included in the Citywide Historic Resource Inventory as Eligible (page 43).

*Arizona Contractor & Community*, Volume 2, Issue 1, Spring 2013.

City of Palm Springs Building Permits, as listed in nomination.

*Desert Sun* newspaper:

- "One of Country's Great Sculptor's Becomes Esteemed Addition to Palm Springs Fast Growing Artist Colony," November 7, 1941
- "Wife of Sculptor is reported to be recovering," March 6, 1942
- "Suggested as Seal for City of Palm Springs," April 17, 1942
- "Noted Sculptor Proposes Idea of Colossal Statue to Be Established at North Entrance to Palm Springs," April 24-May 1, 1942
- "Around Town with Hildy Crawford," September 11, 1959
- "New Bank to Feature 'Old' Faces, Scottsdale Man Is Architect of New Bank," September 19, 1959
- "Sculptor Stevens' 'Dream' May Become Reality," November 3, 1959
- "Bank's Sculptor Got 'Early' Start," November 4, 1959
- "Sculptor Dreams of Sun Goddess," November 5, 1959
- "Carefree Is the Word for Town and Also for New Luxury Hotel," February 7, 1964
- "City's Past, Present Depicted in Sculptured Panels," August 10, 1966
- Tracy Conrad. "Spectacular Architecture and Art Adorned This Palm Springs Bank," August 25, 2019

David L. Gray. "Union Bank Sculpture Panels." Modernism Week Lecture, Friends of the Palm Springs Library, February 21, 2017.

*Journal of the Print World*. April 2015 – January 2018 (14 publications).  
[www.journaloftheprintworld.com](http://www.journaloftheprintworld.com)

Lawrence Tenney Stevens Trust. [www.lawrencetenneystevens.com](http://www.lawrencetenneystevens.com)

Lebow, Edward. "The Amazing Colossal Sculptor." *Phoenix New Times*, October 31, 1996.  
<http://www.phoenixnewtimes.com/1996-10-31/culture/the-amazing-colossal-sculptor/>

"Movie About Wong's Life and Work." *Modern Phoenix*  
<http://www.modernphoenix.net/architects.htm>

*Palm Springs Life*, November 1958, December 1958, Pictorial 1959.

*The Story of Palm Springs in Sculpture*. Security First National Bank, Palm Springs, November 1959.

Herbert Samson. "Sculptured Interpretations of THE HISTORY OF PALM SPRINGS." July 31, 1959. Reprinted by The Bank of California, Courtesy of Ruthmarie Samson.

#### Other Sources Consulted

City of Palm Springs (Planning and Building Departments)

Palm Springs Historical Society

Riverside County Assessor's Office

Interview with Ruthmarie Samson Schroeder.



Historic photo of east elevation, view from parking lot.  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)



Current view of east elevation, view from parking lot.



**Current view of Lawrence Tenney Stevens panel.**



**Historic view of Lawrence Tenney Stevens panel.  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)**



**Current wall detail of masonry block with aggregate.**



**Partial view of north elevation.  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)**



**Current view of northeast corner.**



**Historic view of northeast corner.  
(Courtesy Palm Springs Historical Society)**

**APPENDIX I – The owner does not support the nomination.**

500 South Indian Canyon Drive, Palm Springs

Jeff Pieper <jeff.pieper@pieper.com>

To: Barbara Marshall

Cc: Info at PSPF

Mon, Apr 5 at 2:01 PM

Barbara,

I want to thank you for your interest in our property at 500 Indian Canyon in Palm Springs. After careful review of your report, we respectfully can not endorse your efforts to classify our building as historic. We believe that this classification will cause significant hardship and significantly impact the value of the property. We would request that you not proceed with this process to designate it as historic. Thank you for understanding on this matter.

Sincerely

Jeff Pieper

Barbara Marshall <atomicbee57@yahoo.com>

To: Jeff.Pieper@pieper.com

Cc: Info at PSPF

Tue, Mar 16 at 5:57 PM

Dear Mr. Pieper,

Attached please find the final draft of the Security First National Bank (now Union Bank) historic resource nomination prepared for the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation by PSPF board advisor and preservation architect Susan Secoy Jensen. Also attached is Appendix VI, Detailed Description of Bas-relief Panels.

Not included are: Appendix I, Owner's Letter of Support (the document we're asking that you consider signing); and Appendices II-V (documents I assume you already have in your possession).

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions about the city of Palm Springs' historic resource application process (Barbara Marshall, atomicbee57@yahoo.com or 760-808-6988).

Please feel free to contact Susan should you have any technical/architecture questions (susan@secoyarchitects.com or 714-926-7812, <https://secoyarchitects.com/>).

We look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Barbara Marshall

PSPF board member/Treasurer

760-808-6988

[www.pspreservationfoundation.org](http://www.pspreservationfoundation.org)

----- Original Message -----

Subject: 500 South Indian Canyon Drive, Palm Springs

Date: 2021-03-08 12:29

From: Jeff Pieper <Jeff.Pieper@pieper.com>

To: info@pspreservationfoundation.org

Gary,

We are in receipt of your letter requesting consent for designating the Union Bank building in Palm Springs as a Class 1 Historical Resource. Your letter indicates that a nomination for this property has already been prepared. As we evaluate this request, we would like to review this nomination in an effort to fully understand the historical issues involved with our property. Can you please send us all of the nomination information that has been prepared for our property? Once we receive this information, we will review the package and be able to appropriately respond to your request.

Thank you for your efforts. We look forward to working with you.

Jeff Pieper



APPENDIX III - Grant Deed

CHICAGO TITLE COMPANY  
COMMERCIAL DIVISION

DOC # 2019-0469836  
11/14/2019 08:00 AM Fees: \$23.00  
Page 1 of 4  
Recorded in Official Records  
County of Riverside  
Peter Aldana  
Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder

RECORDING REQUESTED BY:  
Chicago Title Company

Escrow No.: 114299-TG3  
Title No.: 114299-x49

WHEN RECORDED MAIL DOCUMENT AND  
TAX STATEMENT TO:

Rolling Hills Investment Property Holdings, LLC  
3 Eucalyptus Lane  
Rolling Hills, CA 90274

\*\*This document was electronically submitted  
to the County of Riverside for recording\*\*  
Received by: TERESA #134

508-121-001; 508-121-013; 508-121-012

APN: 508-121-001, 508-121-013, 508-121-012

SPACE ABOVE THIS LINE FOR RECORDER'S USE

TRA: 011

GRANT DEED

THE UNDERSIGNED GRANTOR(s) DECLARE(s)

DOCUMENTARY TRANSFER TAX is \$ 4,510.00 CITY TAX \$ 0

- computed on full value of interest or property conveyed, or
- computed on full value of items or encumbrances remaining at time of sale,
- Unincorporated area  City of Palm Springs, and

FOR A VALUABLE CONSIDERATION, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged,  
Sierra Nevada Developers, LLC, a Nevada limited liability company

hereby GRANT(s) to

Rolling Hills Investment Property Holdings, LLC a California limited liability company, as to an undivided two-third interest, and Daniel F. Nguyen and Lisa E. Nguyen, as Trustees of The Daniel F. Nguyen and Lisa E. Nguyen Revocable Living Trust, dated June 5, 2008, as amended, as to an undivided one-third interest, both as tenants in common

the following described real property in the County of Riverside, State of California

SEE EXHIBIT A ATTACHED HERETO AND BY REFERENCE MADE A PART HEREOF

Dated: October 11, 2019

Sierra Nevada Developers, LLC,  
a Nevada limited liability company

By: Virgil A. Wedge  
Name: Virgil A. Wedge  
Title: Managing Partner

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_

A notary public or other officer completing this certificate verifies only the identity of the individual who signed the document to which this certificate is attached, and not the truthfulness, accuracy, or validity of that document

State of California )  
County of Nevada ) SS:

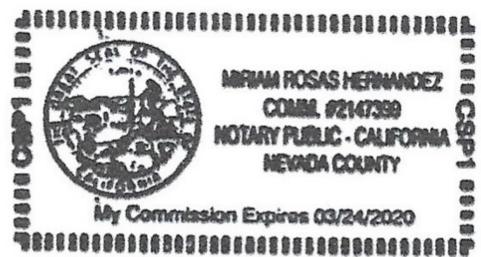
On 10/11/2019 before me, Miriam Rosas Hernandez  
a Notary Public, personally appeared Virgil A. Wedge

who proved to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence to be the person(s) whose name(s) is/are subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged to me that he/she/they executed the same in his/her/their authorized capacity(ies), and that by his/her/their signature(s) on the instrument the person(s), or the entity upon behalf of which the person(s) acted, executed the instrument.

I certify under PENALTY OF PERJURY under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing paragraph is true and correct.

WITNESS my hand and official seal.

Signature Miriam Rosas Hernandez (Seal)



Dated: 9.30.2019

Sierra Nevada Developers, LLC,  
a Nevada limited liability company

By: [Signature] For Sierra Nevada Developers LLC  
Name: SUZANNE LANDUCCI 328 California Ave. Ste 1  
Title: MANAGING PARTNER/OWNER Reno, Nevada 89509

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_

A notary public or other officer completing this certificate verifies only the identity of the individual who signed the document to which this certificate is attached, and not the truthfulness, accuracy, or validity of that document.

State of California )  
County of SAN FRANCISCO ) SS:

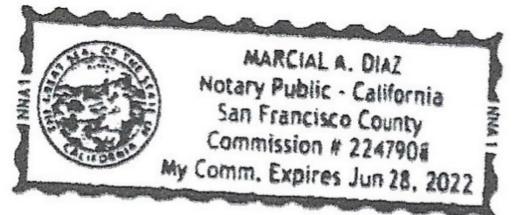
On SEPTEMBER 30, 2019 before me, MARCIAL A. DIAZ, NOTARY PUBLIC  
a Notary Public, personally appeared SUZANNE WEDGE LANDUCCI

who proved to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence to be the person(s) whose name(s) is/are subscribed to the within instrument and acknowledged to me that he/she/they executed the same in his/her/their authorized capacity(ies), and that by his/her/their signature(s) on the instrument the person(s), or the entity upon behalf of which the person(s) acted, executed the instrument.

I certify under PENALTY OF PERJURY under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing paragraph is true and correct.

WITNESS my hand and official seal.

Signature [Signature] (Seal)



**EXHIBIT A**  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

THE LAND REFERRED TO HEREIN BELOW IS SITUATED PALM SPRINGS, IN THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, AND IS DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

LOTS 8, 9, 10, 16, 17, 18, 19 AND 20 OF VISTA SANTA ROSA TRACT, IN THE CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA, AS SHOWN BY MAP ON FILE IN BOOK 15, PAGE 87 OF MAPS, RIVERSIDE COUNTY RECORDS.

Assessors Map

Property Profile

**CHICAGO TITLE COMPANY**



**Chicago Title**

**Address**

S INDIAN CANYON DR  
1 SPRINGS , CA 92264-7436

**Mail Address**

3 EUCALYPTUS LN  
ROLLING HILLS , CA 90274-5010



...sales.com

**Provided By**

**Cindi Monaco**

364 S Indian Canyon Drive  
Palm Springs, CA 92262  
cindi.monaco@ctt.com



CHICAGO TITLE COMPANY

**500 S INDIAN CANYON DR, PALM SPRINGS, CA 92264-7436**

**Secondary Owner:**

IENT PROP HOLDINGS L ; NGUYEN, DANIEL F

3 EUCALYPTUS LN , ROLLING HILLS, CA 90274-5010

500 S INDIAN CANYON DR , PALM SPRINGS, CA 92264-7436

508-121-001      **Lot Number:**                      8,9

**Page / Grid:**

**Lot Code:** 8,9

Property Profile

**Subdivision:** VISTA SANTA ROSA TRACT

**Legal Brief Description:** LOT:8,9 CITY:PALM SPRINGS SUBD:VISTA SANTA ROSA TRACT LOT 18 LOTTYP LOT

**City / Muni / Twp:** PALM SPRINGS

0	<b>Year Built:</b>	<b>Square Feet:</b>	
0	<b>Garage:</b>	<b>Lot Size:</b>	38,332 SF
	<b>Fireplace:</b>	<b>Number of Units:</b>	0
	<b>Pool:</b>	<b>Use Code:</b>	Commercial (General)

11/14/2019	<b>Seller:</b>	SIERRA NEVADA DEVELOPERS LLC,
\$4,100,000.00	<b>Document#:</b>	<u>2019-0469836</u>

\$1,814,303.00	<b>Percent Improvement:</b>	60.22%	<b>Homeowner Exemption:</b>	
\$721,746.00	<b>Tax Amount:</b>	\$23,589.50	<b>Tax Rate Area:</b>	11-051
\$1,092,557.00	<b>Tax Status:</b>	Current	<b>Tax Account ID:</b>	508121001
<b>Value:</b>	<b>Market Land Value:</b>		<b>Tax Year:</b>	2019

<https://ca-riverside-ttc.publicaccessnow.com/Search/PropertyAddressSearch.aspx>

Property Profile

CHICAGO TITLE COMPANY



500 S INDIAN CANYON DR, PALM SPRINGS, CA 92264-7436

1/14/2019  
1,800,000.00  
WELLS FARGO BANK NA

**Document#:** 2019-0469837  
**Loan Type:** Commercial Loan  
**Type of Financing:**

**Borrowers Name:** ROLLING HILLS INVESTMENT PROP HOLDINGS L; NGUYEN, DANIEL F

**Lot Number:** 8-10&16-20  
**Subdivision:** VISTA SANTA ROSA TRACT  
**Map Ref:** MB 15 PG 87  
**City / Muni / Twp:** PALM SPRINGS

1/14/2019  
\$1,100,000.00  
Multiple Parcels Involved in this transaction

**Document#:** 2019-0469836  
**Document Type:** Grant Deed  
**Type of Sale:** Sales Price Rounded from Tax

**Buyer Vesting:** RL

SIERRA NEVADA DEVELOPERS LLC

**Lot Number:** 8-10&16-20  
**Subdivision:** VISTA SANTA ROSA TRACT  
**Map Ref:** MB 15 PG 87  
**City / Muni / Twp:** PALM SPRINGS

06/11/2002  
\$1,550,000.00  
Multiple Parcels Involved in this transaction

**Document#:** 2002-316713  
**Document Type:** Grant Deed  
**Type of Sale:** Price Unconfirmed

**Buyer Vesting:**

SIERRA NEVADA DEVELOPERS LLC  
DERMODY GLENDALE LTD PARTNERSHIP

Property Profile

**Lot Number:** 8-10&16-20  
**Subdivision:** VISTA SANTA ROSA TRACT  
**Map Ref:** MB15 PG87  
**City / Muni / Twp:** PALM SPRINGS

06/00/2002

**Document#:** 2002-0316713  
**Loan Type:**  
**Type of Financing:**  
**Borrowers Name:**

**Lot Number:** 8,9  
**Subdivision:** VISTA SANTA ROSA TRACT  
**Legal Brief Description:** LOT 18 LOTTYP LOT  
**City / Muni / Twp:** PALM SPRINGS

Property Profile

CHICAGO TITLE COMPANY



500 S INDIAN CANYON DR, PALM SPRINGS, CA 92264-7436

1/18/1997  
\$550,000.00

**Document#:** 252981  
**Document Type:** Grant Deed  
**Type of Sale:** Full-Computed from Transfer Tax

RMODY GLENDALE LTD PARTNERSHIP  
WHITE BROTHERS INV CO

**Buyer Vesting:**

**Legal Brief Description:** LOTS 8, 9, 10 & 18 MB 015/087 VISTA SANTA ROSA FOR TOTAL DESCRIPTION SEE ASSESSORS MAPS  
**City / Muni / Twp:** PALM SPRINGS

# CITY OF PALM SPRINGS BUILDING PERMIT

**OWNER**  
Security Pacific

**JOB LOCATION**  
510 S. Indian Avenue

**CONTRACTOR**  
Milt Colegiallar

**STATE LIC. NO.**  
262230

**LOT NO.**  
B-10

**BLOCK NO.**

**TRACT**

Vista Santa Rosa

**ASSISSOR'S PARCEL NO.**

508-121-001

**LOT SIZE**  
180x202

**ZONE**  
C-1

**SIZE ZONE**  
9.9

**HEIGHT**

**GROUP OCCUP.**  
F-2

**PROV'T**

**SIDE**

**SIDE**  
N/A

**REAR**

SETBACKS (AS CONSTRUCTED)

Permission to construct the herein described building is hereby granted. Building to be constructed in accordance with the regulations of the City of Palm Springs. No work to be covered without inspection.

**THIS PERMIT VOID IF CONSTRUCTION IS NOT STARTED WITHIN 120 ONE HUNDRED TWENTY DAYS CONDITIONS OF PERMIT**

Per planning approval

**AA or Case No.**  
**OWNER OR CONTRACTOR**

**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEV. - BLDG. DIV**

*W. E. Colegiallar*

*(Signature)*

**THIS PERMIT MUST BEAR CITY TREASURER'S VALIDATION**

**DESCRIPTION OF WORK:**  
Install walk-up caller window East wall/entry area

AREA	TYPE OF CONSTRUCTION
	I II III IV V

**TOTAL VALUE OF WORK** \$ 5,000.00

Blldg. Permit Acct. 11-3711 \$ 22.00

Plan Check Acct. 11-349 \$ 20.80

Comm. Tax Acct. 11-3126 \$ 50.00

**TOTAL FEE** \$ 53.30

**DATE**  
8/15/78

**PERMIT NO.**  
B 3600

4413  
1/21/10

# CITY OF OLIM SPRINGS BUILD PERMIT

Issued by Permit Dept

01/09/10 10:18:20

DATE

600 sq. ft. (approx. area)

Project # 1011001

CONTRACTOR

APPLICANT	YASER EL-SAYED	TYPE OF PERMIT	REMODEL
PROJECT NO.	1011001-4	PERMIT NO.	100

LOT	101	BLK	11	SEC	100
ST. NAME	101 ST.	LOT	11	BLK	100

CONSTRUCTION TO BE PERMITTED UNDER THIS PERMIT IS LIMITED TO THE REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE OF EXISTING STRUCTURES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE BUILDING CODE OF THE CITY OF OLIM SPRINGS. NO NEW TO BE CONSTRUCTED WITHIN THE PERMIT AREA.

**This Permit Must Bear  
City Treasurer's Validation**

DESCRIPTION OF WORK  
Remodeling of a 600 sq. ft. (approx. area) building.  
Includes: electrical, plumbing, and HVAC systems.  
ESTIMATED COST: \$100,000.00  
TOTAL VALUE OF WORK: \$100,000.00

TOTAL VALUE OF WORK: \$100,000.00  
TOTAL FEE: \$1,000.00

APPLICANT: YASER EL-SAYED  
ADDRESS: 101 ST. 11 BLK 100

CONTRACTOR: BAROLD BOYER

DATE: 10/25/10

NO: 1363

3/9/77

B 0263

Interfor ren. del of exist bank bldg.  
including new partitions, ceiling.

Drywall 2/20/77

Completed w/0 major issues  
3.22.77 C. B. B.

SECURITY FIRST NAT'L. BANK

500 S. Indian Ave.

M. E. Colglazier

680-130  
REV. 7-1-59

**Bill Lehmann**  
**TYNEX SECURITY**

**JOB RECORD CARD**

AN STRAIGHT CONTRACT

HOURLING 1302A

IF MAKE

FINAL GAS 2-11-59  
FINAL TIME 2-11-59

HOURLING 1311A

IF MAKE

HOURLING 1311A

IF MAKE

HOURLING 7534

IF MAKE

STATION	PERSON

LOT 9,10,20 & 19

BLDG Visite Santa Rosa  
SUD Security Kirat  
OWNER

**APPROVALS**

ACCENT

STATION LOCATION  
CONTRACTOR

Patricia M. B. B.  
Security Kirat  
Water Meter

Senior Construction  
2-11-59  
396.63  
+ 5.00  
401.63

500 So. Indian Ave  
Kretz & Nilson

1311A

1311A

FRID 9-2-78 22617  
LORR 9-4-78 22617

8/15/78

B 3600  
A 1477

East wall/entry area  
install walk-up letter window  
2 - Outlets

Security Pacific

500 S. Indian Ave.

Coleglazier

RM

Electrical Permit

2-17-66

A 1009

Final

4-2-16-RH

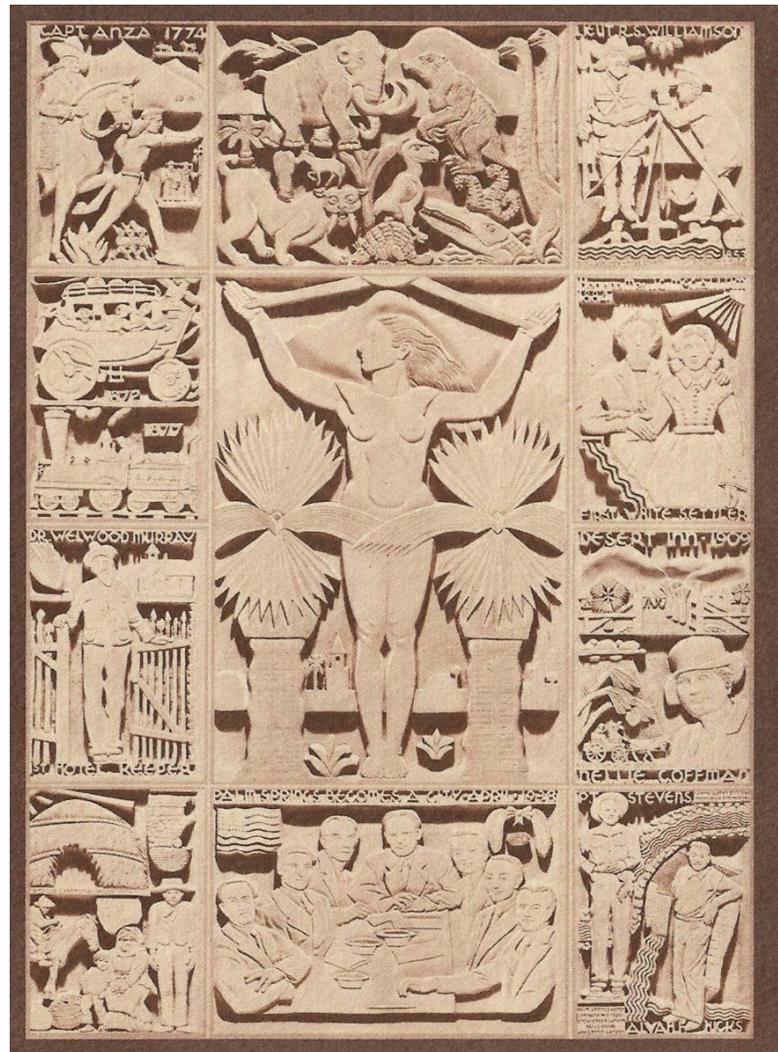
City National Bank

500 So. Indiana Avenue

Portland, RI

## Appendix VI: Detailed Description of Bas-relief Panels

### Panel of the Past



The heroic female figure in the center panel is a symbolic one and truly represents architectural sculpture at its best. The human figure is the purest note for the sculptor; it has ever been so and will continue as long as human beings populate the earth. Lawrence Tenney Stevens studied this form and presented his "Sun Goddess" to the City of Palm Springs 18 years prior to the creation of this panel. The original sun goddess was never realized. (See nomination, page 23.)

The female figure, lifting her arms to reach the rays of the sun, stands within the shelter of the guardian mountains from which arrives life-giving water. She represents the joy of living and emphasizes the benefits of sun and water. As a woman, she is looking into the future, more important to her than the present.

On either side of the figure stand the native Washington palms which were nature's gift to the early Indians. The Palm fronds provided the material for shelters. The seeds of the palm furnished food.

The Sun Goddess expresses the warmth of Life, the protection of nature and is a symbol of the influence of Woman in our desert civilization.



The prehistoric panel is located at top center. Here, the sculptor creates a reminder of the changes which nature has made through centuries of time. Depicted are the animals and birds which roamed the south-west deserts eons ago. At lower right is the ancestral crocodile (phytosaur) of the upper Triassic period; the upper left flying reptile (Pteranodon) of the Cretaceous era; far right are two sea lizards (plesiosaur) of the Upper Cretaceous period; the bottom center heavy scaled reptile (palaescincus), also Upper Cretaceous period; center right is the flightless bird (diathyma) of the Eocene era; the primitive horse, also of the Eocene era; and the saber-toothed cat, Mammoth, and giant sloth of the Pleistocene era.



The upper left panel commemorates the trek of Captain Juan Batista De Anza across the California desert in 1774. Preceded by a friendly Indian guide, the explorer is astride a magnificent stallion. His saddle bag carries a design of Spanish Missions, and the crest of King Carlos of Spain who commissioned his expedition. Also in the panel are two Catholic friars, Garces and Dias, some of De Anza's soldiers, and a silhouette of one each of the 65 cattle and 140 horses which accompanied the trek and were part of the first white ventures into the desert.

Historians may debate the matter, but tradition states that De Anza came this way in 1774, therefore a salute to him and his men as the forerunners of the later California settlers. From De Anza's saddle horses, to the later stagecoaches, and to railroads, transportation progressed, and with it the development of California.

This panel recognizes Captain De Anza as a great explorer, and it is also a tribute to the intrepid Spanish padres who made early California history. The Spanish Missions, many still in existence, span the length of California along El Camino Real. They are reminders of the great part they played in the development of California. It was believed that the way of life of the early Californians was the inspiration for the leisurely life enjoyed by our desert residents.



Depicted in the upper right panel, in 1853, the Congress of the United States, recognizing the importance of the West and the new State of California, voted funds for a survey for a railroad route from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean. Five parties of Army Engineers were sent into the west to make surveys over different routes.

One of these, the Williamson expedition, was encamped in the San Gorgonio Pass, when they learned of an Indian village some miles to the east, on the edge of the Colorado desert. Late in the afternoon of November 15, 1853, a Lieutenant Parke led a wagon-train to Agua Caliente (the early name of Palm Springs). They stopped by the hot water springs, shaded by cottonwoods and palms, where "the Spa" was located at the corner of Indian Avenue and Tahquitz Drive. Their official report describes this scene: "The place was evidently a favorite camping ground for Indians. When we arrived many Indian boys and girls were bathing in the warm spring, and a group of squaws were cooking the evening meal." Williamson is depicted with his surveyor tools. This panel is also a tribute to the U. S. Army Engineers. In their construction programs, surveys and map making, they have given an unsung, but devoted performance of peace-time service to the American people, as great a contribution as their service in time of war.



The panel left and second from top is the Grant Stage of 1872. The 19<sup>th</sup> century was an exciting period in the development of the West. After California became a state in 1850, plans were laid for a trans- continental railroad – a dream that only American pioneers could envision. The railroad to the west was years away.

The challenging need for transportation to California was met by the development of stagecoach and freighting lines, and the Overland mail. One of the best known in early California was the Butterfield Lines with a southern route from Tucson to Yuma, and to San Diego. This line connected with one to Los Angeles and San Francisco. Some desert wagon routes were established by the earlier government surveys. Early maps show that in the 1870's Agua Caliente (Palm Springs) was a stop on the stage line from Prescott, Arizona to San Bernardino. Not as well-known as Butterfield, the Grant Stage was named for its owner-operator, James Grant of Prescott. In Palm Springs, the horses were watered, and the travelers rested in the natural oasis. The coach shown in the panel is an authentic Concord Stage, in common use at that time. The "Arizona Miner" issue of September 28, 1872, on file in the State Archives, Phoenix Capitol Building, contains an advertisement of Grant's Stage Line, giving timetable and information on fares. Within a few years, the railroad replaced the stagecoach, ending this epoch of the West.

Below is shown a wood-burning locomotive, in use when the Southern Pacific Railroad pushed its lines from Los Angeles to Yuma, for contact to both East and West. The development of this trans-continental railway is part of America's history. Surveys begun in 1853 covered various routes, but northern and southern congressmen failed to agree on a choice. The Civil War made it imperative that California and the Pacific Coast be bound to the Union. President Lincoln signed the Pacific Railroad Act on July 1, 1862. Six months later, January 8, 1863, the Central Pacific Railroad (which later became the Southern Pacific) began construction. Following the completion of the first trans-continental railroad, when the Central Pacific joined the Union Pacific at Promontory, Utah, on May 10, 1869, plans for expansion were developed.

Southern Pacific pushed its lines east from Los Angeles to Colton on July 16, 1875, and to Indio (then Indian Wells) on May 29, 1876. On September 30, 1877, the line had crossed the Colorado River to Yuma. Connection was made there with the Southwest's historic stagecoach and freighting lines – the Southern Overland Mail, and the Butterfield Stages. Palm Springs was now served by the railroad from both west and east. A few years later saw the Southern Pacific linked with Texas and Pacific lines. The era of overland mail and stagecoach ended, and a new vital force went to work for the growth of the Southwest.

Our woodburning locomotive, faithfully reproduced from files of the Southern Pacific is a reminder of the historical; post-civil war period.



The panel to the right, second from top, shows Judge John Guthrie McCallum and his wife who arrived in Palm Springs in 1884. Seeking a mild, healthful climate for the benefit of an ailing son, he was advised by Indian friends to come to Palm Springs. The first white settler, endowed with great ability, integrity and character, he achieved prominence and success in San Francisco. He sat in the councils of the great leaders of his time and was chosen to carry the electoral vote of California back to Washington when Lincoln became President.

The nature of the Honorable John Guthrie McCallum was such that he not only sought the best in climate for his son and family, but he also sought to give of his talents, to build, to create, to develop this land to which he had been attracted. He purchased lands from the Southern Pacific Railroad. He brought water across many miles of sand, to create an oasis of fruit trees, apricots, figs, and grapes. He was devoted to the welfare of the local Indians, and during his years in Palm Springs worked diligently on behalf of their rights. He tried to interest his associates in San Francisco to the desert he loved, but they were lacking his vision.

Because of his vision, and the ability of his daughter, Pearl McCallum McManus, to perpetuate it, the people of future generations are beneficiaries. Pearl is also revered in the panel of the present.



The panel on the left, third from the top, depicts Dr. Welwood Murray. Dr. Murray came from his native Scotland with his invalid son and built, in 1886, Palm Springs first hotel in the block opposite the acclaimed Desert Inn. He is depicted as the highly individual Scotsman, wearing a sweater and tam, in a hospitable pose at the entrance to his hotel. Dr. Murray was a man of many talents. He experimented with trees and shrubs which added to the beauty and character of his hotel and its exotic grounds. The quaint rooms each boasted a tiled Scottish fireplace. He played host to many world travelers and continued the hotel operation until 1909. He sold his properties in 1914 to Dr. Florilla White and Miss Cornelia White. The historic hotel site was demolished in the 1950's, and modern buildings were constructed by new owners.

In the upper right corner of the panel, the sculptor has shown the first Community Church, built in 1889 in the northwest corner of Dr. Murray's property, where the Carnell Building now stands. Land donated by a surviving son, George Welwood Murray, is the site of the present public library.



The panel right, third from top, shows Mrs. Nellie N. Coffman. No more fitting title could be applied to this remarkable lady than the loving term "Mother Coffman." A woman with a great heart, she was not only mother to her two sons, George Roberson and Earl Coffman, but she was also "Mother" to her large staff, to thousands of guests at the Desert Inn, and to the villagers, the children and the older ones, through her many years. Her portrait symbolizes her character by the utter simplicity of hat and dress.

Above her portrait, is the wide, welcoming gate to the early Desert Inn, founded as a sanitarium in 1909 by Mrs. Nellie Coffman and her physician husband. The Inn grew through the years into a world-famous hotel, with the active assistance of her two sons who shared its management with their mother. These three, with their far-sighted understanding of the relaxing change that the desert could offer to people in our fast-moving times, contributed in greatest measure to our growth into a modern community. Her arrival in Palm Springs by wagon in the midst of a desert wind and rainstorm is shown at the lower left of the panel.

Her life was one of service, to her beloved village, to her state and her country. She showed the same hospitality and warmth to a local person in need, that she showed as hostess to the governor of the State or to an Ambassador.

Nellie Coffman, the first modern hotelkeeper, who set the highest standard for the Palm Springs, is memorialized in the Nellie N. Coffman Junior High School, a recognition of 19 years of service on the local school board.



The lower left panel depicts an Indian scene and is dedicated to Indian friends of the Agua Caliente Band of Mission Indians, whose lives and lands are interwoven with the rest of the community. Here is displayed the tribal ceremonial house, which was in use on Section 14, near the bath house until the 1930's. Sometimes called "the big house", it was circular, about 40 feet in diameter, with a roof opening through which escaped the smoke from ceremonial fires. In this house were performed the sacred rites – here is where they worshiped the Great Spirit – UM NAW, God of the Indians.

The lower half of the panel shows a family group, with olla, and basket, handiwork of an earlier generation. The Indian's faithful pony was his prized possession. The pictographs were once found in many places between 29 Palms and Palm Springs. They guided the Indians to water. Unfortunately, recent history erased the preserved set of "sign pictures" in Andreas Canyon.

In the upper right-hand corner is shown the "Walk-In Well" which existed for many years at Indian Wells. According to the late Chief Francisco Patencio, the early day Indians wintered here and spent their summers in Chino Canyon, until a flood washed out the mesa of rich farming soil and left a rocky waste below the present Cienega in the Canyon.



The panel at bottom right show the outstanding developers of Palm Springs in the 1920-1940 period, P.T. Stevens, at left, and Alvah Hicks. They shared a love for the land and an understanding of the importance of water.

P.T. Stevens acquired extensive land areas from the Southern Pacific Railway, in the north end of town. He expanded the Whitewater Mutual Water Company, which today delivers quantities of irrigation water to many homes. He was one of the developers of El Mirador Hotel, and later built a golf course to the east of the hotel on property which is now subdivided and improved with residences. He donated the land for our first modern school, which was named the Frances S. Stevens School, in memory of his wife. His daughter, Sallie Stevens Nichols, and her husband, Culver Nichols continued his spirit of service to Palm Springs.

Alvah Hicks developed the first fine subdivisions on land purchased from P.T. Stevens. Builder of beautiful homes, he established a criterion that still stands. He purchased the Palm Springs Water Company from Mr. Stevens and had the foresight to obtain additional water rights in Snow Creek and Falls Creek Canyons to supplement the original domestic water supply from Chino Canyon. He was one of the incorporators of Palm Springs in 1938 and served on its first council. His sons, Harold and Milton, continued the businesses he headed – the Palm Springs Water Company and the Palm Springs Builders Supply. They carried on the splendid example of high devotion to the community's well-being set by their Father.



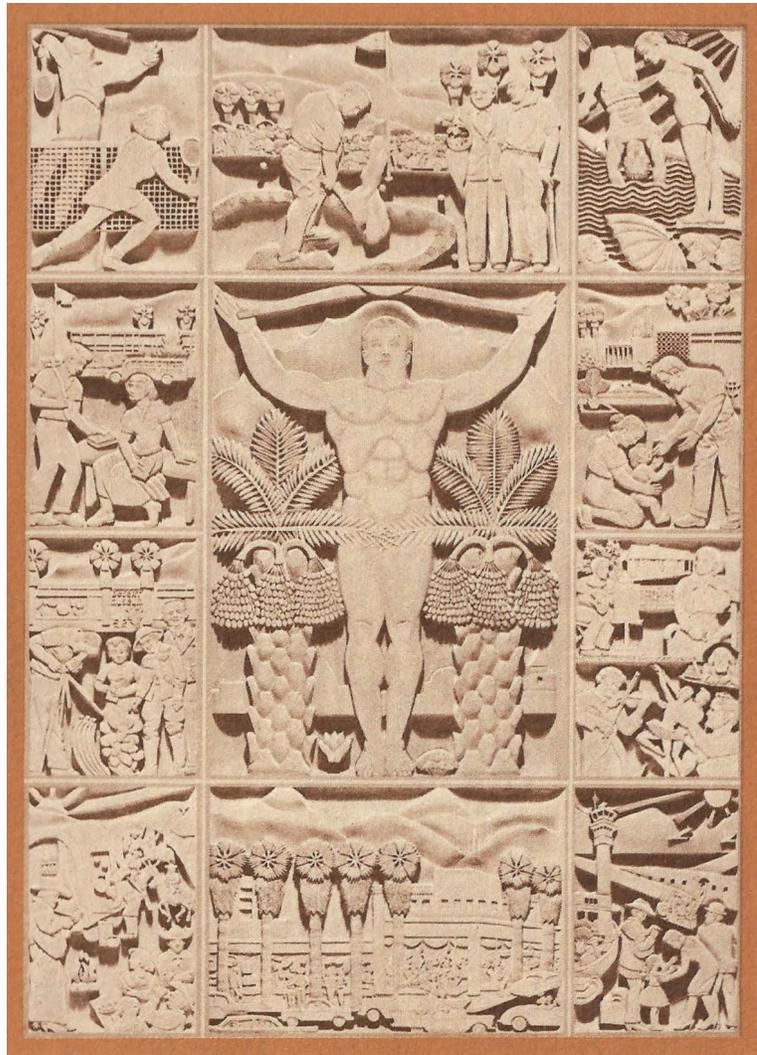
The panel at the bottom center shows the seven first Palm Springs City Council members, From the left are shown Justice J. G. McManus, Frank Shannon, Mayor Philip L. Boyd, Alvah Hicks, Robert Murray, and Dr. Bacon L. Clifton. Boyd was the first mayor of the city, was active at the time of the creation of the panels, and was a member of the bank Board of Directors.

From the mid-twenties, when the village began its real growth, until April 1938, Palm Springs was governed by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors. Village leaders, through the Chamber of Commerce, provided supplementary services to the community such as creating Police and Fire Protection Districts.

Before 1938 it was realized that the village should be incorporated to provide local continuous supervision of its growth. The checkerboard pattern of our geography presented a unique legal problem. All even- numbered sections were Indian lands, and the odd-numbered sections were non-Indian lands on which the major developments were taking place. By a special enabling act, passed by the State Legislature in 1937, Palm Springs was permitted to incorporate as a city of the sixth class, the only city in California having within its borders Indian land.

The problems of government are as old as civilization. To set the proper standards, to combine the ideal with the practical, to build solidly and yet have a vision of what our future should be, was the challenge facing our first city council. The city's growth since 1938 shows how well they planned.

## Panel of the Present



The talented sculptor, Lawrence Tenney Stevens, created in this panel a series of portraits and scenes which are familiar to the residents and visitors to Palm Springs. He brought an old-world skill to this presentation of modern-day living.

When we admire the sculptured art of Ancient Greece and Rome it is well to remind ourselves that the sculptors work was of a contemporary period. He pictured what he saw and knew firsthand. The bas-relief panels of permanent terra cotta, created by Stevens, will long preserve the story of Palm Springs Mid-Century. Future generations share its beauty and accuracy of detail.

The panels tell in their own way of the attraction Palm Springs offers. Climate, healthful sports, commerce, culture, education and family life are depicted in the several scenes. They show the good life enjoyed during the 1950's, and the part our desert continues to play in restoring and preserving the health of many people.

The central panel has the symbolic male figure occupying it and it's the counterpart to the heroic female figure in the historical panel. His strength, vigor, and purity exemplify the dynamic power of young America.

His arms, outstretched toward the sun, extend a welcome to those in need of its warming rays. He typifies the ingenuity of the American man who has conquered and controlled the forces of nature to make our desert a pleasant place.

The date palms beside him remind us that they were brought to the arid Coachella Valley by man from Egypt, more than fifty years ago. Then he brought to the desert the water to enable these, and other fruits of the soil to flourish.

He has developed communities where there was wasteland, replaced sand-dunes with golf courses, and made it possible for people from distant places to travel to Palm Springs in a few hours.

Like the Greeks of old, he has been mindful of the need for balance, in the education of body, mind and character.

The climate of the village, where “the sun goes to spend the winter” makes golfing, tennis and swimming second nature to residents and visitors. These activities represent but a part of the healthful benefits offered by the winter resort to all people. (Top 3 panels.)





Long known as “America’s Foremost Winter Resort,” Palm Springs is also recognized as the Golf Capitol of the world. The internationally famous Racquet Club and Tennis Club have made popular the game of tennis for decades. And the residents of Palm Springs have built swimming pools to enhance the comfort of home-living to a degree unmatched elsewhere. Palm Springs boasts more swimming pools than any other city of its size.

The golf courses have attracted players from all parts of the world, including the British-American Ryder Cup Matches. A few years ago, President Eisenhower spent a golfer's vacation in Palm Springs. Tennis and swimming stars of world renown have performed here.

The youth of the Palm Springs community have been given wonderful opportunities to learn these skills, among other body building sports, in one of our country's loveliest resorts.



Left, second from top, the panel shows the vital importance of those that make their home in Palm Springs, and the education of their youngsters. The school panel is a symbol of the pride taken by Palm Springs residents in its public schools. With pupils in attendance from many states, educators faced a particular challenge to produce “the habitual vision of greatness,” so necessary for the mind of the young.

The people of Palm Springs were proud of the increasing quality of their educational product, thanks to dedicated teachers and administrators. They were proud of the schools developed through the years by members of the Board of Education. The building of new classrooms was practically an annual program because of increased growth.



Right and second from top, Home life in Palm Springs is depicted as child and mother greet the returning father after the day's work. The background shows typical palms, patio, and home architecture, with the "standard equipment" pool. Homes of distinctive architecture were the pride of Palm Springs people. Many were year-round homes of those livelihoods earned here, and whose children are being educated in the schools. Some were homes of those who are living their years of retirement here. Others were winter homes occupied for several months by those from harsh climates. Apartments and trailers mean "home" to a number. Whatever form the dwelling takes, these show "our people," welcomed from near and far.



Left, third from top. To the many enlightened people whose intellectual qualities and refinement of taste have encouraged them to bring cultural arts to the community, the people of Palm Springs owe a great debt of gratitude. From a very modest beginning, the Desert Museum has grown to a position of real stature in the life of Palm Springs. Its early struggles seemed to develop a set of spiritual muscles and determination in the small group who know how important and desirable the museum would be. A significant extension of its work is the Desert Wildlife Sanctuary, near Palm Desert, sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Philip L. Boyd.

In the background is shown the new museum building, built in 1957, by public subscription on land east of the library donated by Miss Cornelia B. White. A beloved figure, she appears in the helmet, breeches and boots she often wore, sharing her vast knowledge of desert life. One of the Museum's earliest supporters, she gave many of its historical items and early Indian handicrafts.

Miss Cornelia B. White, and her sisters, Mrs. J. Smeaton Chase, and the late Dr. Florilla M. White, were among Palm Springs' early pioneers, arriving in 1917. Their eastern background added a quality of gentleness and character to the young village.

Because of Miss White and other benefactors, the Museum is able to provide programs for young and old. The many exhibits of historical, natural and cultural value contribute to the education and entertainment of thousands each year. Of note, the cameo appearance of Herbert Samson in the right of the panel is an unscripted tribute, by Lawrence Tenney Stevens, of Samson's involvement with the project.



Right – third from top. The upper part of the panel shows the historic adobe, the first white settler’s residence, built by Judge J.G. McCallum. It has been preserved as an historic landmark by his daughter, Mrs. Pearl McManus.

Affectionately known as “Auntie Pearl” she has earned this title by the respect and devotion of many people from all parts of the world. In this upper scene, Mrs. McManus is sitting for her portrait.

Pearl McManus inherited from her late father a vision of what this desert land could become. She established high standards and through the years remained steadfast to her ideals. Her advice and wise counsel to civic leaders have on many occasions preserved growth in the right direction. Some of her real estate developments which have added to the architectural beauty are the Oasis Hotel, the famous Tennis Club, the Village Green, the J. W. Robinson store, Sak’s Fifth Avenue, and others.

In the forefront in the development of cultural life, Mrs. McManus encouraged many musicians and artists to bring their talents to the community.

In the lower part of the panel, the sculptor, through his art, is portraying the other higher arts of music, literature, and the ballet dancers being formed by his sculpture.



Bottom left – Horseback riding in the style and costume of the early settlers was a Palm Springs tradition, especially when the ride was coupled with a jaunt to a rendezvous where pancakes and other hearty food await. The custom was preserved by the Desert Riders; the early-morning chuck wagon and campfire was part of the Western heritage.



Bottom center – The intriguing atmosphere of North Palm Canyon Drive is captured by the sculptor in this portion of the bas-relief. Highlighting the features which have produced a unique idiom; the varied and often superlative architecture of the celebrated shops, the casual costume of the Villagers, the constant busy parade of Sunday bumper-to-bumper sightseers, Stevens has recreated the essence of the Village “Main Street,” beneath its towering ridges and thrusting Washingtonia palms. The bridal veil of Tahquitz Falls can be noted to the right of the mountain range. A salute to the shop keepers and merchants. Trade is of great importance in the life the community.

There are many fine, local shops which have added tremendous charm to business areas. Palm Springs has been fortunate in attracting nationally famous metropolitan stores. Their branches have added a color and quality to local commerce to meet the needs of sophisticated shoppers from nearby communities and many states.

Sun saturated by day, as the panel section implies, after dark Palm Canyon Drive takes on a new aspect. Transformed by the myriad miles of wiring which spotlight the trees and plants like players on a stage, the broad avenue becomes a melody of mysterious light and spectacular shadow throughout the velvet desert night.



Bottom right – The air transportation scene is a heart-warming one of parents and children arriving from colder climates, to benefit from the warmth and sunshine. Mere hours away from the largest cities, Palm Springs looked more and more to jet-travel to influence local economy.

The sculptor provides a vision of the future, as he points towards tomorrow's jet travel to Palm Springs from all corners of the globe. At the same time is portrayed today's busy ebb and flow of visitors to the cactus-bordered airfields of the nation's resort capital, with the massive control tower hinting of tomorrow, and the ever-present desert sun spreading its warmth above a continuing scene of welcome greetings and reluctant farewells.