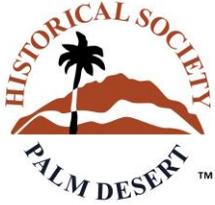


# HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PALM DESERT



## *The Hourglass*



Spring 2024

Ed. Merilee Colton

### Living Large in Small Spaces

The Historical Society of Palm Desert, in partnership with Modernism Week, offered the third annual **sold-out** walking tour on February 22nd and 23th, 2024 in South Palm Desert. On February 23rd, the 5:00 p.m. local news on NBC had a clip of the tour: <https://nbcpalmsprings.com/2024/02/23/living-large-in-small-spaces-walking-tour/>

Walking Tour registration began at Hugh Kaptur's historically-designated Kings Point condominiums on Shadow Mountain. The tour wended throughout the Painters' Path area just south of The Sandpiper. Along the way we saw homes by Patten and Wild, Walter S. White and John P. Moyer, as well as those designed by over 20 different contractors and builders in the area at the time.

This lovely (photo right) 1300 square foot Walter White has all of his hallmarks: the house is angled on the lot, a corner mitered window, clerestory windows, large overhangs, wing walls, large panes of sliding glass inviting indoor outdoor living, center ridge beams in a low-pitched roof, two



flanking outrigger beams and the corner of the eaves at a 45-degree angle. This home is just one of at least nine Walter Whites on Hedgehog and in the area, and constitutes a true Modernist living museum.

Gracious homeowners Kim and Ken Jones invited us into their home in Kings Point. We also saw interiors of William Krisel's Sandpiper (Gene and Pam McGuire) and Bissner Sr.'s and Robert Pitchford's Sands and Shadows 2 (Jim Capronigro and Colleen Kelly, homeowners, photo left). We also had the privilege of viewing a Walter White home



Walter White homeowners Krisa and Rob in their living room on Hedgehog

on Hedgehog, as well as the grounds of Sandpiper Circle 13 and Sands and Shadows 1. The walkers had a chance to see how the deliberate policy of the Palm Desert Corporation and subsequently, the city, ensured lively, varied neighborhoods and condominium developments that offered opportunities for those who wished to live in smaller homes. The average home is between 1200 and 1400 square feet. With the expanding middle class, these homes were an important addition to mid-20th century South Palm Desert.

We are grateful to the homeowners who so generously shared their space and enlightened us about Living Large in Small Spaces.

**By Linda Holden Clode**

*Photos by Linda Holden Clode*

**HSPD MISSION STATEMENT  
TO COLLECT, PRESERVE AND RECORD THE  
HISTORY OF OUR CITY AND COMMUNITIES, AND  
TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO THE SOCIETY'S ARCHIVES  
AND ARTIFACTS THROUGH EXHIBITS,  
PUBLICATIONS, PROGRAMS AND EVENTS**



Sandpiper homeowner Gene Mcguire (red shirt) leading a tour at his home.

### It's That Time Again!



The HSPD's youngest volunteer, Talia Hight, prepares envelopes for mailing member renewal notices, coming to your mailbox soon. Be sure to renew your membership promptly so our educational programs and events can continue. If you know someone who would like to join, there is a membership application in this newsletter.

Now is the time to select your membership level as well, from Individual (\$30) to Lifetime (\$1,000-\$5,000) and several choices in between.

We thank you, and Talia thanks you!

## President's Letter



This time of year it's light out later, it's warming up, and it's time for a Picnic in the Park. We are doing things a bit differently this year. On Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, instead of celebrating at the Palm Desert Civic Center Park, we will be hosting our annual picnic behind the Firehouse Museum in the parking lot from 11 AM to 2 PM. Our first "**Picnic in the Back**" will feature Keedy Burgers, grilled hot dogs, baked beans, fresh fruit, and of course, Erika's world-famous brownies. \$10.00 per person donations will be gladly accepted.

If you have donations for our Opportunity Drawing, please bring them by the Firehouse during business hours, Friday through Monday, 10 AM to 3 PM. To RSVP for **Picnic in the Back**, call the Firehouse at (760) 346-6588 and leave a message with your name and the number of people joining you. Or you can email the Firehouse at [hspd.firehouse@gmail.com](mailto:hspd.firehouse@gmail.com). Please RSVP by April 1<sup>st</sup> to allow for an accurate count.

Spring also means we will be wrapping up our Friday Night Lecture Series for the season. Our speaker for April 19<sup>th</sup> will be Steve Bryant. Steve has a YouTube channel called Sidetrack Adventures with nearly 150,000 subscribers. He will be speaking about his exploits, focusing on historically significant and sometimes lost areas, mostly in the southwest. Our speaker for May 17<sup>th</sup> will be Linda Castro with CalWild, the California Wilderness Coalition. Linda will be speaking about CalWild's efforts regarding the proposed Chuckwalla National Monument. She will also discuss a collection of the letters home written by the servicemen stationed at General Patton's Desert Training Center during WWII.

Looking forward to seeing you all at these upcoming events!

***Rob Pitchford***



## HSPD Architecture and Design Committee Report

The Architecture and Design (A&D) Committee consists of HSPD Board members and other interested HSPD members. For the last three years our walking tours in Shadow Mountain and Painters' Path have been our focus. One of our goals has also been to develop files on historic homes and architects. This season five small pamphlets were designed by committee member and architect Charlie Franks, which are available at the Historical Society. More will be developed in the future as we continue our research. If you are interested in meeting other like-minded HSPD members who have a passion for architecture, we would welcome you to the A&D Committee. You can leave a message for me at the Firehouse, 760-346-6588.

Here are some other notes about activities we have been engaged in. Along with the Frey Symposium, Modernism Week featured great lectures. Particularly enjoyable were the ones on Sunnylands' interior designer, Billy Haines and another on an early California modernist architect, Irving Gill. But the highlight, undoubtedly, was our own Luke Leuschner's excellent and thought-provoking lecture on the Palm Desert Corporation.

Drawing on our archives and using primary source material, including film clips, Luke delivered an engaging and lively lecture. He highlighted the developmental vision of Cliff Henderson, but he also stressed the environmental struggles of Randall Henderson, Cliff's brother, to maintain the integrity of the desert. He opened with Randall's famous article in Desert Magazine about the "two deserts". The contrast between the two brothers couldn't have been more striking. Our Archivist Rochelle McClune, who has worked with Luke extensively, was also in attendance. Luke graduates from Berkley in May and is returning there for graduate work in the Fall.

David Toltzmann, HSPD Vice President and A&D Committee member and I alternate attending the Coachella Valley Preservation Committee which meets quarterly in the Henderson Building. The group, under Robert Zafran, consists of representatives from the cities throughout the valley. We share information about education and advocacy in our communities. The recently renovated Max Wilcockson house, Walter White, designer, was one of the presentations given by our Indio colleagues in March. Meanwhile, enjoy the rest of the season. Cheers! **Linda Holden Clode**

## Archivist's Corner



The number one research request HSPD gets is from people wanting to know the history of their home, so we created a quick checklist to get folks started. Let us know if you find this useful!

Feel free to contact the Historical Society of Palm Desert for guidance at [HSPD.firehouse@gmail.com](mailto:HSPD.firehouse@gmail.com)

**Rochelle McCune, HSPD Archivist**

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### Checklist: Research Your Home

#### Home & Property

1. Visit the [County Recorders office](#), a Title Company, friendly realtor or paid site to get the Original Grant Deeds for the property.
2. Online address search:
  - A. [Riverside County Property Search](#)
  - B. Real Estate Listings via [Redfin](#), [Zillow](#), [Realtor](#)
  - C. [Google Maps](#) - look at image history
  - D. [MCM Google Map](#) - updated occasionally with historic information
  - E. [UCSB aerial photo collection](#) & [LA Library Aerial Photograph Collection](#) to see how the footprint of the building has changed over time.
3. Determine if any subsequent work has been done on the property:
  - A. Get permits from the County Recorder's office or the city
  - B. Check old newspapers - they used to publish permit information
4. [Historical Society of Palm Desert](#) - if the property is in Palm Desert, there are "in person" resources available at HSPD including a cache of 1950's-1960's job cards.

#### Previous Owners

5. County Recorder's office or the city
6. Old Phone Books - lists names & addresses ([PS phone books online](#))
7. Old Social Registers - lists names, addresses and social club information
8. [ancestry.com](#) and census records
9. [archives.com](#)
10. If you want to find the first person to buy the land from the US Government, check [Bureau of Land Management](#) to find the "original owner" of the property

#### Additional Resources

11. Publications - may provide information about previous owners, social events at the property and notices of property improvements.
  - A. [newspapers.com](#) - includes Desert Sun, LA Times and NY Times archives
  - B. [CDNC](#) - California Digital Newspaper Collection

- C. [NewspaperArchive.com](http://NewspaperArchive.com)
- D. [Desert Sun](http://DesertSun.com) - its archived articles can be accessed via newspapers.com
- E. [Palm Springs Life](http://PalmSpringsLife.com)
- F. [Villager Magazine Digital Archive](http://VillagerMagazineDigitalArchive.com)
- G. [Desert Magazine of the Southwest](http://DesertMagazineoftheSouthwest.com) - digitized copies are on Yumpu (digital magazines and catalogues)

12. Online Resources:

- A. [California Revealed](http://CaliforniaRevealed.com) - California State Library digitization project
- B. [Accessing the Past](http://AccessingthePast.com) - Coachella Valley Digital History Collaborative
- C. [Online Archive of California](http://OnlineArchiveofCalifornia.com) - 300 contributing institutions including:
  - Architect’s Archives - If you have determined who the architect was, you can go to their Archives. [Note: PS Art Museum Archives has Frey & Kaptur papers]
  - Photographic archives: searchable through OAC or by name e.g. Maynard Parker, Julius Shulman, Ezra Stoller
- D. [USModernist](http://USModernist.com) - digital archive of Mid-Century Modern houses
- E. [Preservation Mirage](http://PreservationMirage.com) - architectural history of Rancho Mirage
- F. [PS Preservation Foundation](http://PSPreservationFoundation.com) - architecture of Palm Springs
- G. [Palm Springs Historical Society](http://PalmSpringsHistoricalSociety.com) - PSHP online collection
- H. [Internet Archive](http://InternetArchive.org) - millions of free books, movies, software, music, websites, and more.
- I. Social Media - MidCenturyModern on Facebook; ask your friends and neighbors (SoPD has a Facebook page, so does Palm Desert Natives)

13. In-Person Resources:

- A. Local Historical Societies (PS, PD, RM, LQ, CV)
- B. Local Historians and Preservation Organizations
- C. [AIA Archives](http://AIAArchives.com) - physical items are in deep storage until 2025
- D. [PS Architecture & Design Center](http://PSArchitectureandDesignCenter.com)
- E. Architectural Digest - access at your local library (professional subscription \$240 per year).



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*For a license plate that supports California museums, go to [www.dmv.gov](http://www.dmv.gov)*

# The Kedy Burger Is Back !!

## Join Us at the Museum for Our Spring Picnic



**Date:** Sunday, April 7, 2024

**Time:** 11:00 am - 2:00 pm

**Where:** The Historical Society of Palm Desert Firehouse Museum  
72861 El Paseo Drive, Palm Desert

**Cost:** \$10.00 Per Person and Donations will be accepted

**Dress:** Casual

**Picnic Fare:** Kedy Burgers, Grilled Hot Dogs, Baked Beans, Fresh Fruit, and Erika's delicious Brownies! Water and Cold Beverages.

**Vegetarian Burgers & baked bean options will be available.**

**Opportunity Drawing:** Donations will be accepted & appreciated!

**Auction Items** may be dropped off at the Firehouse during business hours:  
Friday thru Monday, 10:00am-3:00pm

**RSVP:** Please call the Firehouse (760) 346-6588. Leave a message to RSVP including your full name and the number of people joining you. Or you can email the Firehouse at [hspd.firehouse@gmail.com](mailto:hspd.firehouse@gmail.com)

**RSVP by Monday, April 1st** to allow for an accurate count!





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Fill out the information below and mail along with credit card information or a  
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**Historical Society of Palm Desert, P.O. Box 77, Palm Desert, CA 92261-0077**

**OR**

Join or renew quickly using PayPal on our website: visit [www.hspd.org](http://www.hspd.org) and click on "Join!"

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- Contributing \$100
- Patron \$250
- Bronze Lifetime \$1000
- Silver Lifetime \$2500
- Gold Lifetime \$5000



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Credit Card Number

Exp Date

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