

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PALM DESERT

# THE HOPALONG CASSIDY HOUSE 1955

73498 Joshua Tree Street, Palm Desert, CA



Original paint colors



As it looks today.

Photo: Linda Holden Clode

Hopalong Cassidy was a fictional cowboy hero created in 1904 by the author Clarence E. Mulford, who wrote a series of short stories and novels based on the character who was immortalized first in film, and later on television by movie star, William Boyd. Boyd was not only a prolific actor but also an astute businessman, advancing the licensing and promotional aspects of the entertainment business, as well as being an early property investor in the desert.

Rumor long held that Boyd's house was self-designed, but it now seems likely that while he was involved, the architect was Charles W. Doty. Although William Boyd was one of the most successful Hollywood stars of all time, he wanted a private, rather modest residence where he and his wife Grace (Gracie) could live in relative obscurity.

**ARCHITECT/DESIGNER:**

CHARLES W. DOTY  
(ATTRIBUTED) WITH  
INPUT FROM  
WILLIAM BOYD

**ORIGINAL OWNERS:**

WILLIAM & GRACE BOYD  
(1955-1971)

**RESTORATION:**

MARIO HERNANDEZ  
(2005-2007)



Official Modernism Week Event

# THE HOUSE



Photo: Redfin.com

The two bedroom, two bathroom house is a rectangular 1,892 square foot bungalow orientated towards the rear highlighting the large pool with overlooking bar. The stools were saddles and rumour has it that each was named after a celebrity horse.

The front of the house has a small window from the kitchen. Apparently, Gracie, who was very tiny, used to stand on the stove and peer out to see if she knew the person who was knocking on the door before she answered it.

The wrought iron grille beside the front door has the initials HC in it.

The home has floor to ceiling glass in the rear, a corner fireplace and vaulted beamed ceilings.



Photos: Desert Sun, July 30, 2019

# CHARLES W. DOTY

Rancho Mirage-based designer Charles W. Doty worked in the office of Walter White in the early 1950s. Doty, never licensed as an architect, occasionally collaborated with licensed architects. He is best known for his design of the Mr. and Mrs. Richard Winans Residence (1956) in Palm Springs, which was published several times in the Los Angeles Times.

The design of the Boyd House is attributed to Charles Doty. He also designed Boyd's investment property, the Tripalong Apartments (1958).

Doty's other residential and commercial buildings include the Indian Wells Country Club Homes (1959) in Indian Wells, the Continental Six (1960), a small apartment enclave in Palm Desert named for the six original owners who all owned Lincoln Continentals, and the Vista Del Valle Clubhouse (1967) in Desert Hot Springs. Along with architect C.E. Betraun, Doty also designed the Ocean Shores Golf and Country Club (1966) in Ocean Shores, Washington.



Continental Six. Photo: pscondos.com

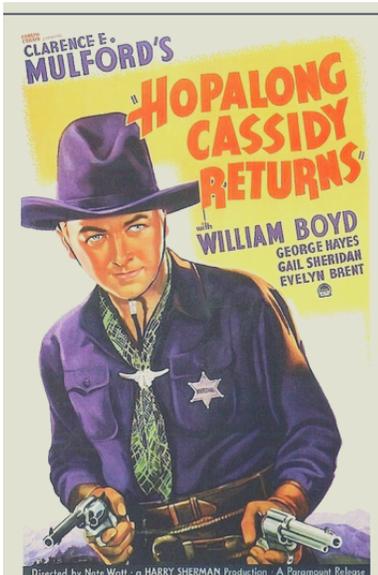


# HOPALONG CASSIDY

Hopalong Cassidy was the hero from the imagination of author Clarence E. Mulford who began a series of short stories and novels back in 1904.

William Boyd, as Hopalong Cassidy (Hoppy), had a long and storied career and was a true pioneer of his time.

Originally a silent movie star whose character transitioned well to the talkies, Boyd worked for both for Paramount and United Artists and made an amazing 67 movies as Hopalong. His character was always the good guy (even though he wore a black hat!) and had salient advice for his young fans. For example, his 'Hoppy Creed' suggested that "they listen to their parents, work hard and always wear their rubber boots!"



Boyd moved to television in 1949 in what was the first western for NBC. He continued with his radio show producing 104 along with 52 half hour TV shows. With his combined movie and TV career, no one has equalled the longevity of one continuous character.

By 1955, Boyd, at age 60 was ready to retire. He had a devoted crew, most of whom had been with him for many years. It just so happened that CBS was about to launch a new western and Boyd successfully negotiated his crew moving to the new production. The decision turned out to be an excellent one as the production company worked on Gunsmoke from 1955 to 1975 and Boyd was able to take that retirement knowing he had assured the security of his crew.

Before Star Wars and Harry Potter were merchandising mega businesses, Boyd had grasped the power of advertising. He was receiving 5,000 letters a week from his young fans and thought that they might want to have a memento of their hero. He began giving out Hoppy coins but soon realized that there was more opportunity there.

Eventually, he had licensed cowboy boots, other clothing, hats, comic books, lunch kits and all of the merchandise that today we take for granted that goes with a successful movie. In those days, it was ground breaking and made Boyd a wealthy man.

He appeared on the covers of many magazines including Time, Life, Look, TV Guide and the Saturday Evening Post.

**HOPALONG CASSIDY "PLAY-COWBOYS"**

**HOPPY SHOOTIN' IRON**  
50 shot repeater cap gun, in  
stant re-load, precision loaded,  
die cast zinc alloy and riveted.  
1.95 pp

**HOPPY KNIFE**  
Two bladed trail knife 3 3/4"  
long. Picture of Hoppy and  
Topper on handle. Vinylite belt  
attachment... 1.25 pp

**HOPPY TRICK ROPE**  
Any youngster from 3 up can spin  
it like an expert. Box has 12"  
high Hoppy cutout... 1.00 pp

**HOPPY SPURS**  
genuine roset spurs with leather  
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Fit any shoe... 1.95 pp

**HOPPY HOLSTER SET**  
Holsters made of genuine split  
cowhide with nail studded belts,  
with two Hoppy guns and two  
holsters... 1.95 pp  
with one gun  
and one holster... 3.95 pp

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Little Cowboys  
won't need  
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ing or night to  
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Platformed soles and heels give added  
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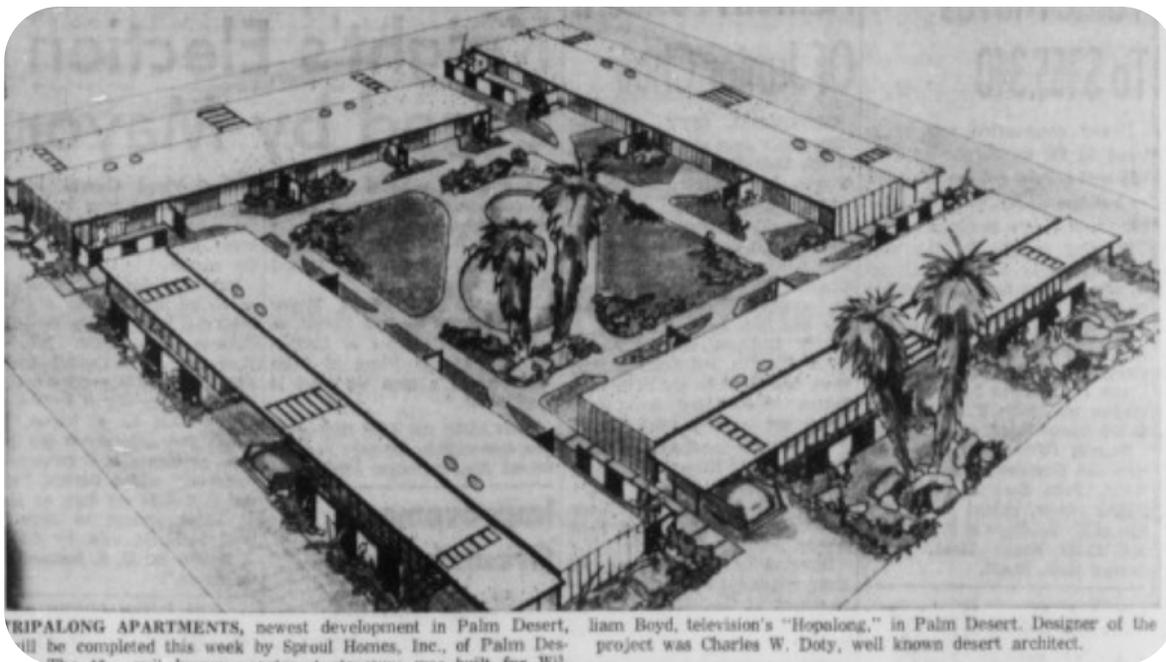
Boyd and his wife, Grace, were active participants in the social scene in the area, particularly at the Shadow Mountain Club.

# INVESTMENT PROPERTIES



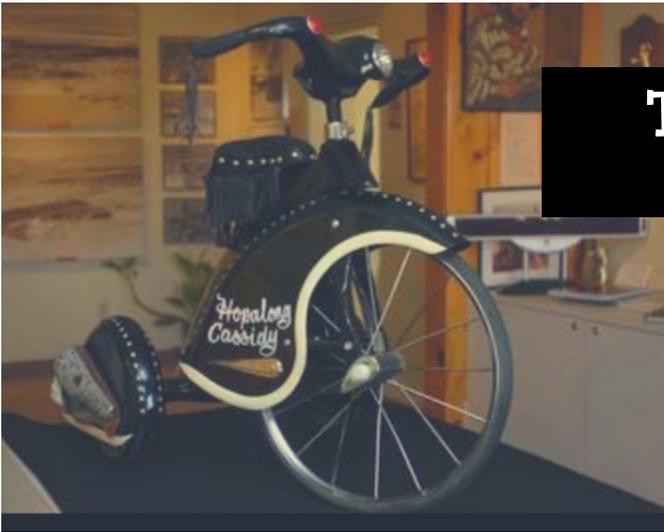
Photo: Linda Holden Clode

William Boyd's large property holdings included the 1958 Tripalong Apartments, designed by Charles W. Doty. According to the Desert Sun: *"The luxurious, modern apartment project features four individual buildings, forming a square around a figure-eight swimming pool designed by desert architect Bill Doty. Real estate man Dick Coffin, who served as Boyd's agent during construction of the project while the Boyds toured Europe said each building has four, one-bedroom apartments. Each apartment unit includes bedroom, living room, dining room and bath All furnishings and decor were selected by Boyd and Coffin."*

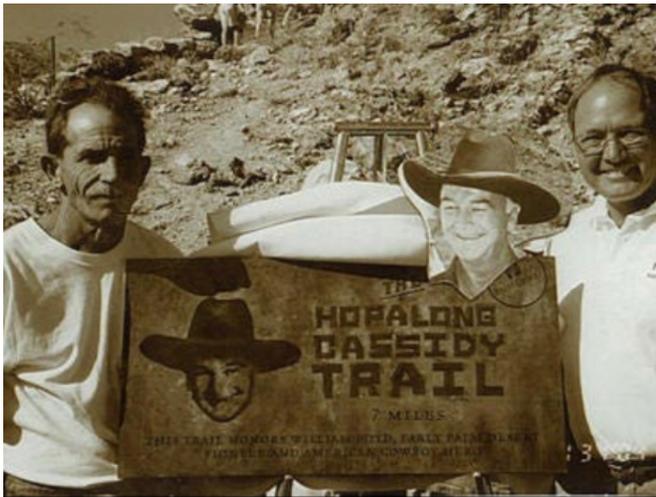


Desert Sun, Nov 1, 1958

# THE PALM DESERT LEGACY



The Historical Society of Palm Desert hosted an exhibit of Hopalong Cassidy memorabilia in January of 2004.



At the same time, they took the lead in sponsoring the building of a 7.4 mile challenging trail dedicated to Cassidy in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument. Trail builders Doug Webster and Mike Schuler are pictured here. Replicas of the wooden 'Hoppy' coins were given out to attendees at the trail site dedication in January, 2004.

The legacy of William Boyd as Hopalong Cassidy remains an inspiration. He was an innovator, a successful businessman and a true hero who added greatly to the romance of Palm Desert.

## HOPALONG CASSIDY'S CREED

- ◇ 1 ◇  
THE HIGHEST BADGE OF HONOR A PERSON CAN WEAR IS HONESTY.  
BE TRUTHFUL AT ALL TIMES.
- ◇ 2 ◇  
YOUR PARENTS ARE THE BEST FRIENDS YOU HAVE.  
LISTEN TO THEM AND OBEY THEIR INSTRUCTIONS.
- ◇ 3 ◇  
IF YOU WANT TO BE RESPECTED, YOU MUST RESPECT OTHERS.  
SHOW GOOD MANNERS IN EVERY WAY.
- ◇ 4 ◇  
ONLY THROUGH HARD WORK AND STUDY CAN YOU SUCCEED.  
DON'T BE LAZY.
- ◇ 5 ◇  
YOUR GOOD DEEDS ALWAYS COME TO LIGHT.  
SO DON'T BOAST OR BE A SHOW-OFF.
- ◇ 6 ◇  
IF YOU WASTE TIME OR MONEY TODAY, YOU WILL REGRET IT TOMORROW.  
PRACTICE THRIFT IN ALL WAYS.
- ◇ 7 ◇  
MANY ANIMALS ARE GOOD AND LOYAL COMPANIONS.  
BE FRIENDLY AND KIND TO THEM.
- ◇ 8 ◇  
A STRONG, HEALTHY BODY IS A PRECIOUS GIFT.  
BE NEAT AND CLEAN.
- ◇ 9 ◇  
OUR COUNTRY'S LAWS ARE MADE FOR YOUR PROTECTION.  
OBSERVE THEM CAREFULLY.
- ◇ 10 ◇  
CHILDREN IN MANY FOREIGN LANDS ARE LESS FORTUNATE THAN YOU.  
BE GLAD AND PROUD YOU ARE AN AMERICAN.



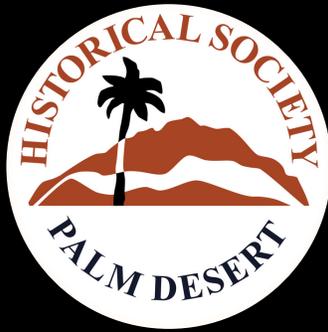
PROGRAM





# HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PALM DESERT

One in a series of monographs created by the Historical Society of Palm Desert's Architecture and Design Committee celebrating the many architecturally-significant homes in Palm Desert.



## Museum Address:

Located in the Old Palm Desert Fire Station  
72-861 El Paseo Drive, Palm Desert

Open Friday - Monday October through May  
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Free Admission

## Mailing Address:

PO Box 77, Palm Desert CA 92261-0077

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

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