

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PALM DESERT

THE VIRGIL PINKLEY HOUSE 1959

73165 Fiddleneck Lane , Palm Desert, CA



Photo: L. Holden Clode

Featured in Architectural Digest's Spring 1961 issue, this 4-bedroom, 3 bathroom, 4121 sq. ft home sits on .5 of an acre. It was also featured during Palm Desert's Modernism Signature Home Tour 2018.

One of the home's distinctive features is the 1'x1' windows on the south wall. Inside, vaulted redwood ceilings frame the expansive living and dining rooms and highlight a spectacular rock fireplace.

ARCHITECT:
JOHN OUTCAULT, A.I.A.

INTERIOR DESIGN:
MARY AYER SCHWYZER,
A.I.D.

ORIGINAL OWNERS:
MR & MRS VIRGIL
PINKLEY

 **modernism week**
Official Modernism Week Event



Photo by Maynard Parker,
Architectural Digest March 1961



Entry Lattice Wall, Photo: redfin.com

Another interior feature is the geometric wood wall screen in the entry.

One of the original bathrooms features pink tile.

As the editor of newspapers, Mr. Pinkley had a beautiful birch library built to store his book and periodical collection. The secluded den has a secret room where published works by prior owners are on display.



Den – March 29, 1961, Photographer Maynard L. Parker Courtesy of calisphere.org



Photographer Maynard L. Parker
Source: the Huntington
Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens

John Outcault was born in 1927 in Chicago, Illinois. His parents moved to Palm Springs in 1936. They owned and operated the Townhouse Hotel (now the Avalon). He graduated from Palm Springs High School in 1945 and served in the U.S. Navy in 1946.

Outcault attended the University of Southern California School of Architecture in 1946-1952, graduating with a Bachelor of Architecture. While he was a student he apprenticed in the offices of Clark and Frey in Palm Springs. Outcault worked in several different offices before opening his own practice including the State of California Division of Architecture (1952-1953), in New York (1953-1956), and Clark, Frey & Chambers of Palm Springs in 1956. In that same year he opened his architecture office in Palm Desert. Outcault received his California license in 1957.

John Outcault, AIA

Between 1957 and 1998 Outcault designed many commercial, public, and residential buildings, most of them located in the Coachella Valley. He was very prolific. Not only did he design many custom homes, he also was responsible for the many commercial buildings along El Paseo where he had his offices on the corner of San Luis Rey and El Paseo. He also designed several small condominium projects mainly in the Shadow Mountain area.

As well, he was often contracted to do additions or remodels of existing buildings. In particular, among others, he did many Walter Whites.

In the early days of Palm Desert, he served on the Board of Trustees of the College of the Desert, was active in the development of the Living Desert Reserve, and involved in the growth and incorporation of the City of Palm Desert.

More than any other, one might say that Outcault shaped the look of Palm Desert.

John Outcault died in 1998.

(Overview based on the Archives at UC Santa Barbara)



Secret Room off the den, Photo: redfin.com

MR AND MRS VIRGIL PINKLEY

Virgil Pinkley was raised in San Bernardino. He graduated from the University of Southern California in 1946 and was named its outstanding alumnus that year.

As a news editor and journalist, Pinkley was the head of the United States press operation in Europe, during WWII. He served with the United Press for 20 years and during that time he worked in all parts of Europe covering the Italian invasion into Ethiopia, the Spanish civil war and the day and night blitzes in London.



"Virgil Pinkley, United Press European manager and staff correspondent, inspects a machine gun in a Malay thicket during a visit to one of the British regiments that have poured into Singapore to bolster its defenses. Pinkley is on a globe-girdling tour, studying news coverage preparations during the war."

Desert Sun, October 25, 1941

Returning to Los Angeles after the war, Pinkley became founding editor and publisher of the Los Angeles Times-Mirror News as well as a local radio news program and two TV community service programs.

Pinkley's first wife died in 1964; he married a Mrs. Margaret Edith Smith of Winnipeg, Canada, and Palm Desert in 1965.

Pinkley was editor and publisher of the Indio News, the El Centro Post and Imperial Valley Press, the Brawley News and formerly was vice president and general European manager of United Press, renamed United Press International. Pinkley retired in 1967.



Missouri Valley Special Collections,
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Historical Society of Palm Desert

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