

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PALM DESERT

THE PELLETIER HOUSE 1950

73297 Grapevine Street, Palm Desert, CA



Photo: Linda Holden Clode

A low stone wall originally circled the rear yard and the pool. The 4,587 square foot home contains 3 bedrooms and 3.5 bathrooms and sits on .93 of an acre of land.

The walls were made of rose colored concrete block. The original chimney and the above the roofline wood facing can still be viewed from the street.

One of the highlights of this home is the copious amount of rock that is on the side of the garage walls, and the entrance. The rock can also be found in the interior in the living room and in the master bedroom.

Adrien C. Pelletier, the original owner, was the President and Honorary Chairman of the Purex Corporation.

ARCHITECT:
ALBERT FREY, AIA,
CLARK & FREY

BUILDER:
ARTHUR COFFEY

LANDSCAPING:
CHESTER "CACTUS SLIM"
MOORTEN, MOORTEN
GARDEN

ORIGINAL OWNER:
MR. AND MRS. ADRIEN C.
PELLETIER



Official Modernism Week Event

THE HOUSE



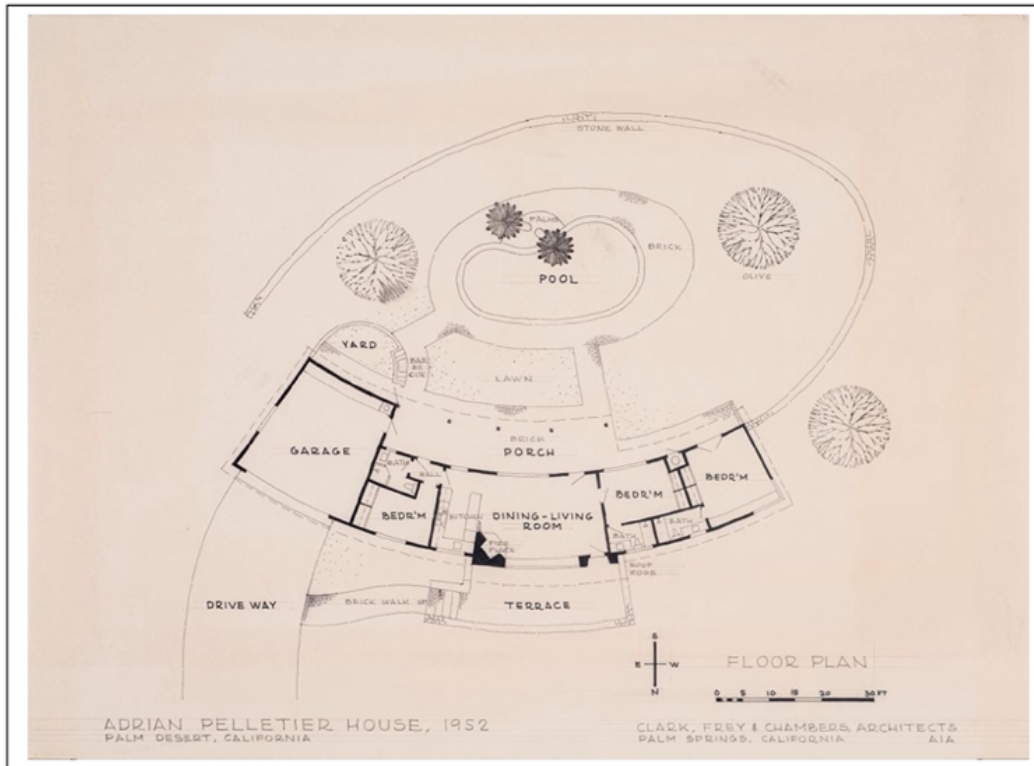
B&W photos: Julius Schulman, Albert Frey papers, Architecture and Design Collection. Art, Design & Architecture Museum; University of California, Santa Barbara.

THE HOUSE



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The home is curved with the lines of the pool emulating those of the home. The casita also curves; and the extended lines from home to casita create an oval.



1952 Adrian Pelletier House designed by Clark, Frey & Chambers Architecture and Design Collection. Art, Design & Architecture Museum, UC Santa Barbara



Photo: zillow.com

THE HOUSE



Photos: zillow.com





Photo: Palm Springs Art Museum Collection

ALBERT FREY

Albert Frey was born in Switzerland in 1903 and died in Palm Springs in 1998.

He worked for Le Corbusier in Paris, but moved to New York in 1928 and in 1930 partnered with A. Lawrence Kocher. In 1931 they designed the Aluminaire House, the first all metal (aluminum) house in the U.S. It was exhibited twice, the second time at MOMA in 1932 as part of the show, 'International Style-Architecture since 1922.' The Aluminaire now rests outside the Palm Springs Art Museum.



ALBERT FREY

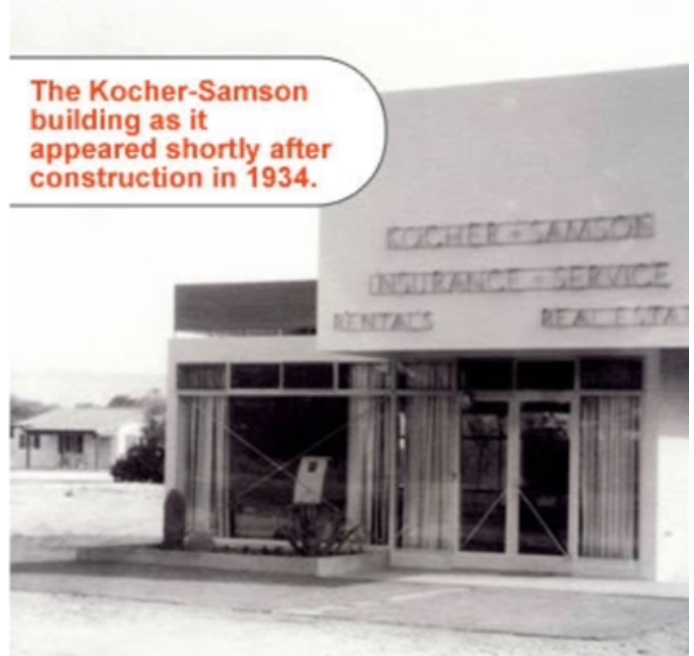
It is fun to note that although Palm Springs rightly lays claim to Frey, his first home was right here in Palm Desert in 1934!

While working on the Kocher-Sampson building in Palm Springs, he stayed in this small homestead at the corner of HWY 111 and HWY 74 in Palm Desert.

The house had its own well and electric power. The chimney and fireplace were made of adobe. He drove the open road from Palm Desert to Palm Springs every day in his 1932 Ford convertible.

From 1934 to 1937, Frey worked directly with John Porter Clark. They subsequently collaborated for over 20 years although not in the same firm.

Clark became the managing architect for the College of the Desert (under master planner and design architect, John Warneke). Frey's firm, Chambers and Frey, worked directly under Clark beginning in 1958 designing several key buildings, including the campus center which still stands.



Photos: Palm Springs Art Museum Collection

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20717 APPROVED JUL 18 1961		ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS LAYOUT	
ARCHITECT <i>Robert Chambers</i>		CAMPUS CENTER	
JOHNSON & NIELSEN STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS		FREY & CHAMBERS ARCHITECTS A.I.A. 879 NO. PALM CANYON DRIVE PALM SPRINGS, CALIF. JOHN PORTER CLARK COORDINATING ARCHITECT	
THARALDSON, MATTHEWSON & ARSABRIGHT MECHANICAL ENGINEERS		COLLEGE OF THE DESERT	
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College of the Desert Archives

CHESTER MOORTEN, LANDSCAPE DESIGN

The original landscaping was done by Chester "Cactus Slim" Moorten of Moorten's Botanical Gardens in Palm Springs.

Cactus Slim began his career in Hollywood where he was an original Keystone Cop and a stand-in for Howard Hughes. He developed tuberculosis on a film set and went to recover near Joshua Tree where he panned for gold and collected beautiful cacti.



Photo: www.moortenbotanicalgarden.com

Moorten moved to Palm Springs in 1938 and bought property from renowned nature and desert photographer, Stephen Willard, (now Moorten's Botanical Gardens, 1701 South Palm Canyon Drive, Palm Springs). The business grew to include landscape design and soon Slim and his wife, Patricia, were hired to create desert landscapes for the homes of Walt Disney, Red Skelton, Jimmy Van Heusen, Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby and others.

(Source: www.moortenbotanicalgarden.com)

Historical Society of Palm Desert
www.hspd.org

