

SEPTEMBER 2017

# HOLLIN HILLS BULLETIN



## FROM THE CAHH PRESIDENT

### Our Condolences to Charlottesville

My wife Barbara and I have spent many happy weekends in Charlottesville, and have become very fond of the place. The idea of angry voices and clubs and torches marching across UVA's hallowed Lawn is nauseating. We are greatly saddened by the terrible events that followed, and we offer our condolences to the families of those killed and injured during the horrors of August 11 and 12. We will keep you in our thoughts.

### Protecting Our Architecture

As we move into fall, there will be increased activity to resolve the issue of protecting the architecture of Hollin Hills from erosion. As you may know, there are two initiatives: one to amend the restrictive covenants to, among other things, clarify the authority of the CAHH to administer and enforce the covenants; and a second initiative to determine if there is support within Hollin Hills for becoming a Fairfax County Historic Overlay District, which would require the county's Architectural Review Board to approve exterior changes to houses to preserve the architectural integrity of our community. If you are interested in participating in either or both endeavors, please let me know.

### Hollin-Hills.Org

We recently moved the community's website to a new URL address, and we have added SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) to both the [www.Hollin-Hills.Org](http://www.Hollin-Hills.Org) website (formerly [www.Hollinhills.net](http://www.Hollinhills.net)) and the [CAHHServices.net](http://CAHHServices.net) website (the membership and financial records, aka, the books). It is our hope to continue to add meaningful information to the website to have it be as useful as we can make it.

### Online Hollin Hills Directory

Do you know that there is an online version of the Hollin Hills Directory? If you visit [Hollin-Hills.Org](http://Hollin-Hills.Org) then scroll down the page, you will see an icon for the "Community Directory." Click it, and you will see a login page for the Directory. If you have an email on file with the CAHH, we will send you a password, which you can change as you like. There are also instructions to download this directory as an app on your cell *(continued on page 2)*

**GET READY  
IT'S COMING—  
COMPLETE WITH  
AN OOMPAH  
BAND!  
OUR FIFTH  
ANNUAL**



## Oktoberfest!

Mark your calendars for our 5th annual Oktoberfest which this year will be held from 3-6pm, Saturday, September 16 (a bit earlier than usual). It will be held at the Hollin Hills Pool parking lot, at the corner of Paul Spring and Fort Hunt Roads. You are invited to bring the whole family to this popular event which will, once again, be sponsored by the Civic Association of Hollin Hills (CAHH).

The CAHH will provide the German beer and bratwurst, and each family is asked to bring a side dish or dessert to share with their neighbors. Theme-related dishes (German potato salad, apple strudel, etc.) would be ideal, but aren't required. Bavarian dress is also encouraged but optional. Besides the great food and drink, there will be German music, a beer stein raffle, and activities for the kids.

David Rivera and Jaelith Hall-Rivera, the co-chairs for this event, will welcome your help. You can volunteer to lend a hand at [dahway@gmail.com](mailto:dahway@gmail.com), by phoning 703-944-6390 (David's cell) or 703-944-6563 (Jaelith's), or by contacting Susmita Dastidar, CAHH social chair, at 703-660-5938.

**Sponsored by the CAHH**

## CIVIC ASSOCIATION OF HOLLIN HILLS (CAHH)

### CAHH OFFICERS

|                |                  |              |
|----------------|------------------|--------------|
| President      | Gus Matson       | 768-3797     |
| Vice-President | Chris McNamara   | 660-9536     |
| Treasurer      | (Open)           |              |
| Secretary      | Frederike Ahrens | 571-481-4628 |
| Membership     | Linda Benson     | 312-907-1797 |

### DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

|        |                  |          |
|--------|------------------|----------|
| Pool   | Laura Kistler    | 768-4161 |
| MVCCA  | Kathy Seikel     | 768-2350 |
| Social | Susmita Dastidar | 660-5938 |
| Parks  | Bob Kinzer       | 768-4048 |

### CAHH COMMITTEES

|  |              |          |
|--|--------------|----------|
| ARCHIVIST                              | Judy Riggan  | 765-3025 |
| Historian                              | Scott Wilson | 765-4471 |
| (Also see Hollin Hills Archives below) |              |          |

### DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE (DRC)

|         |               |          |
|---------|---------------|----------|
| Chair   | Frank Collins | 660-6525 |
| Members | John Burns    | 660-9763 |
|         | John Nolan    | 231-2229 |
|         | GINNY WALLACE | 765-7116 |
|         | Ken Wilson    | 768-5838 |

CAHH-DRC Liaison Chris McNamara 660-9536

### HOLLIN HILLS POOL COMMITTEE

|       |               |              |
|-------|---------------|--------------|
| Chair | Barbara Bogue | 571-257-9313 |
|-------|---------------|--------------|

### PARKS COMMITTEE

|       |                   |          |
|-------|-------------------|----------|
| Chair | Elisabeth Lardner | 765-3023 |
|-------|-------------------|----------|

## HOLLIN HILLS BULLETIN

Published monthly since 1951 by the CAHH. Material in this publication does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the CAHH Board or the editor.

|                      |               |          |
|----------------------|---------------|----------|
| Editor               | Barbara Shear | 660-6543 |
| Editorial Assistance | Andrew Keegan | 660-1004 |

Deadline is the 15th of the preceding month.  
Articles generally should not exceed 500 words. Send your submission in the body of an email or as an attachment to [barbshear@verizon.net](mailto:barbshear@verizon.net). If you cannot produce computerized copy, please find someone to submit it for you.  
No material will be accepted over the telephone.

### Distribution problems:

- If you have not received your digital Bulletin, or to correct/change mail or email address, contact Linda Benson at 312-907-1797 or [linda.benson@me.com](mailto:linda.benson@me.com).
- To replace a missing paper Bulletin, contact Eleanor Fina at 703-768-3174 or [efina@gmail.com](mailto:efina@gmail.com).

## HOLLIN HILLS ARCHIVES

The Hollin Hills Archives are part of the Special Collections and Archives of George Mason University. To contact the SC&A staff with research questions, use the following:

- For general description of HH Archives contents, go to [http://sca.gmu.edu/finding\\_aids/hollinhills.html](http://sca.gmu.edu/finding_aids/hollinhills.html).
- For questions about collections, hours, usage, duplications, or directions go to [http://sca.gmu.edu/using\\_sc&a.html](http://sca.gmu.edu/using_sc&a.html).
- Other contacts: phone 703-993-2220, fax inquiries 703-993-8911, email [speccoll@gmu.edu](mailto:speccoll@gmu.edu).

## www.hollin-hills.org

Calendar of community events and information about our parks, the Design Review Committee, the National Historic Registry, and more.

## From the CAHH president *from page 1*

phone. Unlike the paper version of the directory, this version has the latest information available. There is one limitation: if your CAHH membership is lapsed, the directory will not open.

## Volunteers Needed

We need volunteers. I have already gotten questions about whether there will be a Hollin Hills House and Garden Tour in the spring of next year. My answer is yes, that's the plan. But the HHHGT takes months of preparation and the efforts of lot of people, so if you are interested in this, now is the time to say so. Please send me an email expressing your interest. Also, we will have a number of volunteer openings at the end of the year on the CAHH Board, the Greeters, the Parks Committee, the DRC, contributors to the HH Bulletin, technical experts for the websites and Facebook pages, and various ad hoc activities. Please step up. The community is only as strong as you make it.

## Have Some Fun

As mentioned on the front page, our Oktoberfest is coming this month, on September 16. I hope you are planning to attend.

And one last thing—have a block party! (And be sure to invite me.)

—Gus Matson, CAHH President

## Notable Neighbors

When I think I *really* know a Hollin Hills neighbor, I had best think twice about whether I really do. That is what I realized recently, after stopping to chat with Judith Lean as I strolled by the house on Martha's Road where she and her husband, Bob Meier, have lived for thirty years. Judith and Bob were out in front of their house trimming shrubs and digging up weeds. I did recognize, of course, that she has a touch of an accent, and obviously a good sense of humor. Now that I have done a bit of research, I have learned more about Judith, and I am amazed.

Judith was born in the Outback in Australia, in the town of Broken Hill, 750 miles west of Sydney. She says that her mother's big goal was to get her out of Broken Hill so that she could become educated, and that is just what Judith did. She obtained a B.S. (with honors) in math and physics in Canberra. She found that she not only liked the courses she took, she decided to continue and received her doctorate in atmospheric physics from the University of Adelaide.

In 1980, during her doctoral studies, she participated in an international campaign to measure atmospheric ozone, and visited NASA's Wallops Island Flight Facility in Virginia, which is where the Nike Orion rocket was launched. Judith later moved to the United States and has become a highly recognized physicist and senior scientist for Sun-Earth System Research in the Space Science Division of the US Naval Research Laboratory.

Judith's work has been widely recognized. She has authored or co-authored more than 115 refereed journal papers and 34 conference proceedings in scientific literature, and has delivered more than 290 presentations at scientific meetings and lectures. Among other honors, in 2003, she was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in recognition of her distinguished and continuous achievements.

Besides these impressive accomplishments, Judith participates in a local "huddle," actively working on important current issues. And during our interview, what else did I find out about our neighbor Judith? Something of which she is very proud: Judith can lower her nose to the ground during a head stand!

--Mary-Carroll Potter

# Quick Takes

## WELCOME KITS

The newcomer's introduction to Hollin Hills is often a visit from their area greeter, who also brings along a Welcome Kit. For some time, Eleanor Fina has prepared these kits and supplied them to the greeters. She knows the importance of the greeter's role, having been one herself for many years. Rarely has a new arrival landed in Eleanor's bailiwick without her cheerful hello—in person, and also in the Bulletin.

As of this month, Eleanor has turned over her Welcome Kit role to Ellen Rydell. Thanks to both of them for having taken on this important Civic Association job.

Greeters who need more kits can reach Ellen at 703-768-3442 or rydell@verizon.net. And if you know of a newcomer who hasn't yet been officially greeted, please inform Membership Chair Linda Benson, linda.benson@me.com.

## POLICE/CITIZENS ADVISORY MEETINGS RESUME

After a summer hiatus, the first meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee of the Mt. Vernon District Police (CAC) will be on Tuesday, September 12, 7pm, at the Parker's Lane Government Building, speaker to be announced. All residents are invited.

Meantime, two reminders. With school starting again, be especially careful when driving in school zones and near school buses. And, whenever and wherever you leave your parked car, always make sure it's locked. Thieves love unlocked



## THE 2017 POOL SEASON WRAPS UP

The Hollin Hills Pool season is drawing to a close. Some of highlights are: the Bluefish winning season, great volunteer turn outs,

beautiful new landscaping thanks to Gretchen Spenser, and a slew of fun social events, thanks to Jovi Medic (Drury Lane) and Stef Hardee. Our last event, the annual Brat Night, is scheduled for Saturday, September 2. The final 2017 closing date is September 10, at 8 pm.

A variety of food trucks have been suppling pool members and other residents with wonderful, easy meals and snacks. Food trucks are also planned for two more evenings—Mondays, September 4 and 10. Watch for announcements.

Looking forward to May!

—Barbara Bogue, Pool Chair



## EARLY DAYS IN HOLLIN HILLS

Second generation Hollin Hiller Wendy Montanari Kilpatrick has, over the years, heard many anecdotes from original settlers about the early days of our community. Here are two of them.

Norma Odom, who lived at 7200 Beechwood Road and now lives at Greenspring, told Wendy that when she and her husband, Ray Odom, applied for a mortgage to buy their house, they were turned down because a wife's income couldn't be counted toward the mortgage! They finally did get a loan at another bank. Norma recalled that, in those days, she was one of only three working wives in Hollin Hills.

Bianca Meiklejohn, original owner of 7304 Rippon, said years ago that the "glass houses" were such a novelty that sightseers would drive around Hollin Hills, just to look at them. One day, she was near the front window breastfeeding her first-born daughter, Nanine, and noticed a car driving slowly by with its occupants all staring up at her house. The Meiklejohns got curtains soon after.

—Wendy Montanari

# News of Our Parks

### UPCOMING WORK PARTIES

#### Two times! Two chances!

Join your neighbors on Saturday, October 14 at 9am and/or 3:30pm to work in Paul Spring Park, our biggest park. Ivy pulling, litter pick up, sign painting, bench cleaning and sealing, friendly conversations, community building, all are some of the many activities anticipated. Plan to meet at the foot of Rebecca, or wander through the park until you find Wardens Lee Ann Kinzer and Barbara Liggett for tasks and directions. Rain date is October 21.

#### Learn a new skill or sharpen an old one.

Join us in Brickelmaier Park on Saturday, November 4 at 9am for a work session on trail maintenance. Robert Fina, an experienced trail volunteer on the Appalachian Trail, has volunteered to teach us how to improve the park trail, and with luck solving the soggy trail conditions mid-park. Come and learn how to build a water bar and other tricks that more appropriately steward our resource and reduce stormwater erosion and trail ponding. You just may pick up a skill that is useful downstream of your downspout or in your driveway.

#### Or, work on your own

Here are some things you can do alone or with friends or family outside the formal work parties:

- **Litter, always litter.** Those big 2-4" rainstorms have brought many 'treasures' to our parks. Grab a bag and collect some on your next walk. Tell us your best find, and I'll add it to the October report.
- **Continue to nip at the ivy that embraces our trees.** Grab your clippers when you take a walk, and plan to free one or more tree trunks from their English ivy smothering. Clip the vine at about waist height, removing it from the tree down to the ground level. Leave the remaining vine above that height attached to the tree – it will dry up and fall off over time. Ripping at the time of cutting will likely do damage to the tree's bark. If still highly energetic after clipping, pull out the ivy away from the base of the tree by several feet.
- **Clean and seal the wooden benches** and (continued on page 4)



## Parks *from page 3*

picnic tables in our parks or clean and paint the park signs. They are in need of a bit of love and attention. Parks will supply the materials if you can volunteer the labor. If unable to volunteer, consider donating funds so that the CAHH can hire someone to complete these chores.

- **Poison ivy spraying.** All of the parks with the exception of Sutton Potter and the Wildlife Sanctuary have been treated twice for poison ivy. If you are a knowledgeable plants person, and willing to take on these two parks, please contact me for more discussion.

- **Dead or damaged trees:** keep your eyes wide open for them and report them to the park's warden or to me. Once your tree concerns are reported, the Parks Committee will have a professional arborist assess the tree and its condition. It is park policy to leaving standing stubs of trees, in the range of 15 to 20 feet tall, when possible for wildlife habitat.

### Update: Stormwater Work in Goodman Park

Fairfax County is working on Goodman Park. Funding for the design stage of the project became available July 1. Goodman is

one of the two Hollin Hills parks (Brickelmaier is the other) that are part of the Little Hunting Creek Paul Spring Branch which has been divided into two segments, both slated for stream restoration work.

- **Segment 1, Goodman Park,** is east of and parallel to Stafford Road. Design work to address the severe erosion and down cutting of the streambed was funded in the FY2018 budget.

Construction funding, if included, will be within the FY2019 County budget. Design and construction costs are estimated to be \$1.8 million.

**The County is planning to host a community meeting in the fall of 2017, date TBD, to kick-off and explain the project.**

- **Segment II, Brickelmaier Park,** is west of and parallel to Stafford Road. It is in the queue, at an expected total cost of \$1.3 million. No time is identified for design or construction, as other projects in the County are more critical at this time.

Do you have other parks questions, needs, or ideas? Please let me or a Park Warden know.

—*Elisabeth Lardner, Parks Chair*  
703-765-3023, [elardner@aol.com](mailto:elardner@aol.com)

## In Memoriam

*BEVERLY BYRNE of 2104 Martha's Rd, a long-time resident of Hollin Hills, died peacefully in her bed on July 28, 2017. A wake will be held at the family home from 4-8pm, on Thursday, September 21. Mass is scheduled for Friday, September 22, at 10:30am, at Good Shepherd Catholic Church. Her son John wrote this remembrance.*

Mom lived an active life in this day to day world and a life of the mind refreshed from a lifetime of reading—combinations not always found side by side. She was a modest person, born in 1926 into modest but sufficient circumstances, in a bungalow in Kansas City, Missouri before the Great Depression to a quiet father who was an office manager in a stockyard firm and a mother who, I always thought, contributed greatly to her energetic take on life. With two sisters and two brothers, Bev was never bound to be spoiled. She was also what perhaps can be termed a “cultural Catholic,” a product not only of the neighborhood Catholic grammar school run by nuns and later, a Jesuit college, but a reference point that sprung forth from this.

Her years tracked much of the history of our times. At fifteen she started working shifts as a switchboard operator at the phone company and after graduating from high school in the midst of World War II held a succession of jobs in a world that, for a while, offered many opportunities to young women in the work force. She did not go straight from high school to college, she worked in department stores, shops, did a stint as an X-ray technician inspecting parts at the local airplane factory, and danced for the war effort with soldiers at the U.S.O. She saved enough money to go to college at Marquette which had a journalism school and had recently started admitting women. She put herself through college by working at the Milwaukee Journal and branched out into more lucrative options writing advertising copy for others. She got in on the ground floor of the only Catholic daily in the country, the Sun Herald, where all lived in voluntary poverty but not enough to keep the paper from folding. There she met Jeb, soon to become a

newspaperman for UP, and left college during her senior year to get married and start a family in Maine where she gave birth to four sons. With a growing family to care for, Bev and Jeb came to the DC area in 1961 with the Kennedy administration. Bev's minimalist taste and activist streak attracted her to the glass house Hollin Hills community where she harbored the light and lived until her death. Raising four boys and running a household in the sixties might seem like a full time job, but she always volunteered too, from working with disadvantaged children at Junior Village, to putting out the Hollin Hills Bulletin. This was a lifelong habit which continued to working with Maori children while accompanying Jeb on a post-retirement Fulbright to New Zealand to helping elementary students at Hollin Meadows upon her return. While raising us, she adjusted to life in the suburbs, taking classes in painting and classical piano, learning to play tennis, gardening, becoming an inspired cook, keeping up with the latest from Vatican II to The New Yorker and, alas, with us.

As her sons grew older, she re-entered the work force as a teacher in 1970. She taught English and journalism in the local high schools, first Groveton, then Fort Hunt, and then back to West Potomac, the merger of the two, where she influenced a generation of students until her retirement in 1987. The extra income allowed her to get the air-conditioning she coveted—hurray! From all reports she was a good listener and a constructive teacher whose gift was unobtrusively nudging her students. During this time she finished her undergraduate degree in journalism and went on to get a master's degree in literature. Her taste in later life ran to fiction: Nabokov, Flannery O'Conner, and Eudora Welty and she got a few articles published in literary journals. She made her house and garden things of beauty but most of all a home *(continued on page 5)*



**Bev Byrne** *from page 4*

that beckoned others from grandchildren to neighbors. Sometime our contemporaries would come over to see her and not us. Teacher get-togethers, the Hollin Hills Christmas pub, and the book club were hosted at our house for years. To help her widowed friends remain at their homes in their last years she was of assistance, sometimes past the point where 80-somethings should be caring for 90-somethings.

I remember her as unafraid of challenge, always ready to pitch in to make things better and typically able to do so, always ready to listen and usually worth listening to—even if it took you a while. She was a doer as long as she able and a reader as long as her eyesight lasted. Probably in her mind she was no big deal. She *was* a big deal. Peace came to her on July 28, 2017 at 4:46 pm.

—John Byrne

## Design Review

### July Actions

*The Design Review Committee (DRC) met on Wednesday, July 12, 2017, at Sherwood Regional Library. Members present: Frank Collins (Chair), John Burns, John Nolan, Ginnie Wallace, and Ken Wilson.*

- **7501 Elba Road, Bosch residence:** The DRC reviewed plans for new doors and changes to the whole-house fan. The committee conceptually approved the plans and will contact the owner to submit final drawings.
- **7322 Rebecca Drive, Sydow residence:** The homeowner presented plans for a patio and retaining wall at the back of the house, changes to a walkway at the front of the house, and a shed. The DRC provided guidance on all three and gave conceptual approval to the projects, asking the owner to give additional thought to a lighting plan/lighting fixtures. The homeowner will provide the committee with final plans for each, prior to construction.
- **7315 Rebecca Drive, Osgood residence:** The DRC conceptually approved a proposed welded-wire fence for the side yard. Frank Collins is to contact the new homeowners to communicate the conceptual approval and request final plans and materials images.
- **7500 Elba Road, Heffner/Hight residence:** The DRC conceptually approved a proposed welded-wire fence based on a homeowner-supplied diagram of the fence location/size. The committee will request final plans and materials images from the homeowners.
- **2406 Brentwood Place, Davidson residence:** The DRC gave final approval to the homeowner's plans for a master bedroom extension based on the revised design and supporting materials provided by the homeowner.
- **7700 Elba Road, VanAmeyden and Clark residence:** The DRC discussed proposed repairs to an existing deck, including paint color choices. The committee recommended cabling versus 2" X 4" wood pieces as part of a deck repair project.
- **2213 Glasgow, Heck:** The committee requested neighbor notification for a privacy screen constructed by the homeowners.

### August Actions

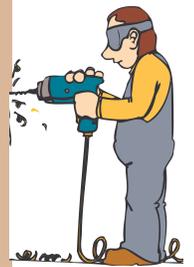
*The DRC met on Wednesday, August 9, 2017, at Sherwood Regional Library. Members present included Frank Collins (Chair), John Nolan, Ginnie Wallace, and Ken Wilson.*

- **7315 Rebecca Drive, Osgood residence:** The DRC gave final approval to a proposed welded-wire fence for the side yard as documented and using the materials presented.
- **7401 Recard Lane, Segura residence:** The DRC approved as presented detailed plans for a backyard shed.

### ABOUT THE DRC

The Civic Association of Hollin Hills DRC meets monthly to offer homeowners guidance about potential exterior property renovations and whether those desired renovations are in harmony and conformity with the association's Design Review Guidelines.

All DRC-approved projects are subject to and must comply with Fairfax County building regulations, policies, and codes. Homeowners should complete appropriate County permit processes prior to the start of any renovations.



- **7501 Elba Road, Bosch residence:** The DRC conceptually approved the homeowner's plans to install a 36" door and 24" window panel as previously suggested by the committee. The committee will request the homeowner send revised drawings for final approval.
- **7500 Elba Road, Heffner/Hight residence:** The DRC conceptually approved a proposed welded-wire fence based on homeowner-supplied materials images. The committee will request images of the gate that will be part of the fence prior to making a decision about final approval.

### Next Meeting

The next DRC meeting will be on Wednesday, Sept. 13, 7pm, at the Sherwood Meeting Room,, Sherwood Regional Library, (2501 Sherwood Hall Ln, Alexandria, VA 22306).

—Chris McNamara

### CLASSIFIEDS

**FOR SALE:** Men's bicycle. Very good condition: \$45.

—Paul Bubernak, 703-765-8327

**RECOMMENDED:** Brad Furman (Entropic Enterprises, Cell: 703-201-6797, bafurm@gmail.com) recently renovated our lower level bathroom in the most contemporary style, using European products, a beautiful job, exactly as we wanted! He has basically rebuilt our house: remodeled our kitchen, taking down walls and adding an island, installed recessed lighting throughout, painted, rebuilt a restraining wall, removed an elevated porch, built a deck with a fish pond, installed sliding glass doors, plus many refined touches too numerous to mention. He grew up in Hollin Hills & knows the idiosyncrasies of these houses. A master craftsman who cares! Easy and fair to work with. —Cliff Bernier

# mid-century modern COMMUNITIES IN AMERICA

southern  
california:  
gill  
schindler  
neutra

**H**ollin Hills is listed on the National Register of Historic Places in part because it is the largest collection of International Style homes in the country designed by a single architect and built by a single developer, in a style now popularly known as Mid-Century Modern. But it by no means is the *only* concentration of such homes.

There are numerous examples of homes inspired by the International Style, not necessarily confined to a single neighborhood but clustered in communities across America. They were designed by noted architects and reflect the diverse character of the terrain, the climate, the historic heritage of the area, the tastes and income of the owners for whom they were built, and the evolution of the Modern style of architecture itself.

This is the first in a series to consider residential architecture else-

where built in a style inspired by the same influences that inspired Charles Goodman. They will hopefully increase our understanding of our own neighborhood and tempt us to do some exploring on our own.

**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA** Like so many trends in 20th century America, the International Style in architecture first appeared in Southern California. This was largely due to the efforts of three architects—Irving Gill, Rudolph Schindler, and Richard Neutra. None of these men studied architecture in this region. Rather, they migrated there after doing so elsewhere. All of them were inspired by, and worked for, Frank Lloyd Wright. But as their careers progressed, they moved away from Wright's Arts and Crafts-inspired style toward what would become known as the International Style.



*Gill's Scripps House (1915) La Jolla*

Beginning in 1910, he designed a series of homes that looked like crisp, more substantial versions of adobe buildings—white or off-white exteriors, with concrete walls and floors, flat roofs, no overhang, no ornament inside or out, often featuring arcades and walled gardens, but with modern touches such as metal-framed casement windows. Architectural historian Thomas Hines says of these homes “such residential masterworks... rivaled, or surpassed, in historic importance any modernist structures being built” anywhere else in the world at this time.

It appears that Gill came up with these designs solely on his own, contrary to his claim to have been inspired by Sullivan and Wright. His designs anticipated the tenets of the International Style, a term not even used until the early 1930s. Unfortunately, his career suffered from his being rejected as the chief architect for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition, celebrating completion of the Panama Canal. The architect chosen instead developed a florid style rich with ornamentation that led to the popularity of various Mission Revival styles thereafter. Nevertheless, twelve of Gill's buildings are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and roughly 90 of the homes he designed were built in Southern California, along with many commercial and cultural buildings.

**RUDOLPH SCHINDLER** (1887-1953): Born in Vienna, Schindler studied architecture in Austria under the emerging modernists Otto Wagner and Adolf Loos. He was inspired to emigrate to America in 1914 by Loos, who was a strong advocate of new architectural trends there, and because Schindler had been inspired by the famous Wasmuth Portfolio published in Germany in 1910 to showcase Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie Style. He arrived here just before World War One began, thereby avoiding the trauma it brought to his countrymen in Austria.

Schindler initially moved to Chicago to work under Wright and then followed him to Los Angeles, where he assisted in the design and construction of the complex of buildings at Hollyhock House while Wright was in Tokyo working on his Imperial Hotel. Schindler

**IRVING GILL** (1870-1936): Born near Syracuse, New York, Irving Gill moved to Chicago in 1890 to study architecture via on-the-job training with the firm of Adler & Sullivan. He worked directly for Frank Lloyd Wright and under the tutelage of Louis Sullivan, considered to be the foremost father of the high rise office building. In 1893, Gill moved to San Diego to recover his health and to practice architecture.

After designing houses in the then-popular Shingle and Prairie styles, Gill developed his own distinctive approach. He was intrigued by concrete as his basic method of construction. Inspired by the reform spirit of the emerging Progressive Era and the focus on efficiency in industry, as well as by his Quaker upbringing, he wanted to design homes that were simple, easy to keep clean, and had a minimum of ornamentation. Most importantly, he was impressed by the Spanish-inspired design of adobe homes and churches in the region.



*From top: Gill's Dodge House (1916) West Hollywood; interior of King's Road House, Schindler's own home,*



*Schindler's Lovell Beach House (1926)  
Newport Beach*

in which he lived for the remainder of his career, is known as the King's Road house. It became known as the first International Style home built in the United States, with a very simple rectangular structure, consisting of two residences, made of unfinished concrete, redwood, canvas and glass, with no ornamentation. Each occupant had a studio room, sleeping porches were located on the roof, there is a shared kitchen, and the main rooms have large sliding doors that open onto sheltered patios which function as outdoor rooms.

Schindler's most famous residence was designed only three years later, the Lovell Beach House in Newport Beach, considered by architectural historian Thomas Hines to be "one of modernism's major monuments." It differs from the pure International Style in its use of concrete, load-bearing walls and an interior chopped up into many rooms, but it was unquestionably modern and dramatically different from any other homes in the region.

Schindler's career did not flourish as he had hoped. Many clients were radical intellectuals and artists with limited funds. To design houses they could afford, he used cheaper materials, switched from concrete to wood frame and stucco walls, and occasionally employed shoddy construction practices. Viewed as laid back and casual, he also had a prickly personality. To the end, he denied that he designed in the International Style, instead following the inspiration of Frank Lloyd Wright. His homes generally exhibited more structural variation than the simple geometry of the International Style, and he abandoned the use of flat roofs. Over the course of his career, he designed 500 homes of which 150 were built, almost all in Southern California.

**RICHARD NEUTRA** (1892-1970): Also born in Vienna, Richard Neutra was raised in a prosperous home peopled by the artists and intellectuals that flourished in that city before the Great War. He became friends with Rudolph Schindler when they studied architecture under Otto Wagner and Adolf Loos, but unlike Schindler, Neutra stayed in Austria and suffered the trauma of war, serving as an artillery office on the Balkan front and contracting malaria and TB in the process.

Before migrating to America in 1923, Neutra worked in Berlin for the German modernist architect Eric Mendelsohn. While there, he became acquainted with the emerging Bauhaus School of design. He came to America for the same reasons that Schindler did, as well as in response to Schindler's urging him to do so. Neutra first worked for Frank Lloyd Wright in Chicago and taught briefly as Wright's Taliesin compound before moving to Southern California, living in Schindler's King's Road home, and forming a partnership with him.

Neutra designed homes that anticipated the International Style from the very beginning, rejecting Frank Lloyd Wright's love of masonry and ornament. Neutra wanted to create homes that were simple, modular, with a light weight skeletal frame, that featured

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then went out on his own, starting by designing his own home in West Hollywood (located just two blocks from Irving Gill's Dodge House).

Schindler's home,

industrialized components, and integrated the indoors and outdoors. He varied his specific materials and design based on client and location, but his approach was the same.

Neutra's most famous residence was the Lovell Health House, built in 1929. It was the first home built in America with a steel frame, with white walls made of Gunitite and such industrial style features as interior lights made from headlamps in the Model A Ford. When it was completed, the proud owner invited Angelinos to tour it, and thousands responded. This building made Neutra's career, enabling him to enjoy a flourishing architectural practice over the next four decades. It also served as a major factor in rupturing his friendship with Schindler, who had designed the Lovell Beach House for the same customer.

Neutra even managed to attract commissions for expensive homes during the Depression. These came from the Hollywood movie colony, since motion pictures flourished during that era as a form of escapism. His design concepts formed the basis for the pioneering Case Study House program in Southern California after World War Two that imprinted the International Style in the American consciousness and fomented the spread of Mid-Century Modern homes. Eventually he would be featured on the cover of Time. By the end of his career, 197 of his designs for homes were constructed, of which



138 were in Southern California, along with numerous commercial and cultural structures. He designed one home in Washington, DC, the Ann & Donald Brown house at 3005 Audubon Terrace NW.



*Neutra's Lovell Health House (1929) Los Angeles  
(he and Schindler both designed houses for Lovell).*

### CONCLUSION

These three great architects did not operate in a vacuum. All three were influenced by Louis Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright. Schindler and Neutra studied under Otto Wagner and Adolf Loos. Neutra worked for Eric Mendelsohn. They also influenced each other. Schindler's home was two blocks from one of Gill's most well-known houses, and Schindler's first house mate in his duplex was a man who constructed many of Gill's homes. Schindler and Neutra were partners for a brief period. And Neutra, who was a prolific author in espousing his theories of architecture, introduced Irving Gill to Europe in one of his books.

As will be seen in future articles, a new force for Modernism arrived in America in the 1930s, as members of the Bauhaus School fled Hitler's Germany. Had it not been for their arrival, Gill, Schindler, and Neutra would be the unchallenged founders of the International Style in this country.

—Michael S. McGill

