

**REPORT OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES
HISTORICAL RESOURCES & CULTURAL ARTS DEPARTMENT
TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
ON THE DESIGNATION OF
THE PROPERTY AT
3519 TOLEDO STREET
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA**



Historic Photo, c.1942



LHD 2024-002
March 20, 2024

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION:
3519 TOLEDO STREET
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA**

Application: Historic Significance Determination

Historical Resources &
Cultural Arts

Note: all observations were made from the public right-of-way.

2327 SALZEDO STREET
CORAL GABLES
FLORIDA 33134

☎ 305-460-5093
✉ hist@coralgables.com

Folio Number: 03-4118-005-0790

Legal Description: Lots 18 & 19, Block 40, Coral Gables Country Club Section Part Three, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 10, at Page 52 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Original Permit No. / Date: #5433 / May 1937

Original Architect: Robert M. Little

Original Owner: Wilson M. Leary

Current Owner: Charles B. & Jayne C. Daly Trust

Building Use, Type, Style: One-story SFR, Art Moderne

Site Characteristics: The property is a 14,280 SF (approx. 140' x 101') lot at the northeast corner of Toledo Street and Escobar Avenue.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Permitted in 1937 the single-family home at 3519 Toledo Street was designed by noted Modern architect Robert M. Little. It is representative of his skillful work in the 1930s of melding the newer Modernist Art Moderne style within the existing Mediterranean Revival landscape. Construction during the New Deal era was sparse in Coral Gables and the homes built were unique and transitional. Architect Robert Little was recognized as a leader of this transition in the Miami area and is now recognized as one of a group of influential architects who developed and guided the movement locally known as MiMo (Miami Modern). He also was nationally hailed for the University of Miami's modern-tropical 1947 campus master plan and the subsequent Modern campus buildings that he designed with Marion Manley and Robert Law Weed.

The home at 3519 Toledo Street is one of a handful of homes Little designed in Coral Gables. It represents a major turning point in Coral Gables architectural history as the City shifted from its Mediterranean foundation to embrace new styles. It stands as one of the few notable Art Moderne residences in the City and is a significant example of how the style was adapted in Coral Gables. Art Moderne emphasized geometric and curving forms, sleek and smooth surfaces with long horizontal lines. While this home is clearly Art Moderne, it retains influences of the Mediterranean Revival and is a significant example of the interpretation of Art Moderne in this Mediterranean-inspired city. The property at 3519 Toledo Street retains its historic integrity and exemplifies a pivotal moment in the historical, cultural, political, economic, and social trends of the community and thereby significantly contributes to the historic fabric of the City of Coral Gables.

CORAL GABLES REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES: Preserving the City's Story

The built environment reflects the beliefs, values, creative expressions, and technical capacity at a place in time in history. Historic Preservation preserves those structures and spaces that tell the story of the community's historic past. The buildings that comprise the Coral Gables Register of Historic Places portray the City's story of progress, change and preservation. They are valuable, non-renewable resources that embody our collective heritage. The retention of these tangible touchstones provides a sense of community, a sense of evolution, a sense of identity, a sense of ownership, and a sense of place for the City of Coral Gables. In other words, these historic resources provide continuity and context; they are the foundation of the City's identity.

Coral Gables is a Certified Local Government (CLG) and as such must maintain a Register of Historic Places and abide by associated preservation standards. A local community works through a certification process --jointly administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs)-- to become recognized as a Certified Local Government (CLG). Once certified the community gains access to benefits of the program and agrees to follow required Federal and State requirements.

The City of Coral Gables was certified in 1986 and was amongst the first cities in Florida to become a CLG. Hence, it is the task of Historic Preservation, and an obligation of Certified Local Governments, to identify and protect those resources that contribute to the story of the City over time. Furthermore, the City must abide by the federal regulations as put forth in The Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, & Reconstructing Buildings.

CRITERIA FOR SIGNIFICANCE

Article 8, Section 8-103 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code--*Criteria for designation of historic landmarks or historic districts*--states that to qualify for designation as a local historic landmark individual properties must have significant character, interest, or value as part of the historical, cultural, archaeological, aesthetic, or architectural heritage of the City, state, or nation.

The single-family residence at 3519 Toledo Street is eligible as a local historic landmark based on its historical, cultural, and architectural significance. ***For designation, a property must meet one (1) of the criteria outlined in the Code.*** As discussed below, 3519 Toledo Street meets the following **three (3)** criteria.

Historical, Cultural significance

- 4. Exemplifies the historical, cultural, political, economic, or social trends of the Community*

Architectural significance

- 1. Portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by one (1) or more distinctive architectural style*
- 2. Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction*

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Coral Gables Development: Country Club Section Part Three

Coral Gables' developmental history is divided broadly into three major historical periods:

- Initial Planning and Development/Florida Land Boom (Pre- 1926 Hurricane),
- 1926 Hurricane/Great Depression Aftermath and New Deal/Wartime Activity (1927-1944),
- and Post World War II and Modern periods (1945-1963).

Coral Gables, originally conceived as a Miami suburb, attracted investors from across the nation during the South Florida real estate boom of the 1920s. Founder George Merrick drew from the Garden City and City Beautiful movements of the 19th and early 20th century to create his vision for a fully-conceived Mediterranean-inspired city. He converted 3000 acres of citrus plantation and native hammock into a community with ornate plazas, grand entrances, parks, scenic areas, and golf courses melded with monumental buildings and tree-shaded picturesque streets. It is now considered one of the first modern planned communities in the United States.

Merrick and his team felt that Mediterranean designs harmonized with south Florida's climate and lifestyle. They combined elements commonly used in Spanish, Moorish, and Italian architecture, which is now known as the Mediterranean Revival style. During the 1920s, structures and amenities were built exclusively in accordance with this style with the goal of creating a suburb of architectural splendor with tropical luxuriance. During the 1920s it was a featured selling point in early promotional materials. (Figure 1)

Nationally-acclaimed landscape architect Frank Button drew the first comprehensive maps of Coral Gables in 1921-2. They were based on the grid from the Merrick family's citrus plantation and the surrounding native pineland. Merrick envisioned a City with Old World style and purposefully set aside vast amounts of valuable land for scenic and public amenities. He also recognized that automobile ownership was increasingly commonplace and wanted Coral Gables to embrace the motorist without sacrificing the beauty of the community or the comfort of the residents. Button's 1922 map lays out a series of wide parkways with center planting medians that were major thoroughfares across the development, as well as parkways with substantial swales for tree-planting that supplied internal access and scenic routes. (Figures 2 & 3) The grid opened at strategic locations to include grand entrances, plazas, and fountains to give focus to major arteries and provide visual interest for both the pedestrian and the motorist. Broad boulevards curved around planned features and amenities. Coral Gables' initial development centered around the Merrick family's Coral Gables Plantation in Section A. Lots in Sections A, B, and C were offered for sale in 1921-2. Early construction was concentrated north of, and in the direct vicinity of, the Granada Golf Course.



**Figure 1: Advertisement in
House Beautiful, 1925**

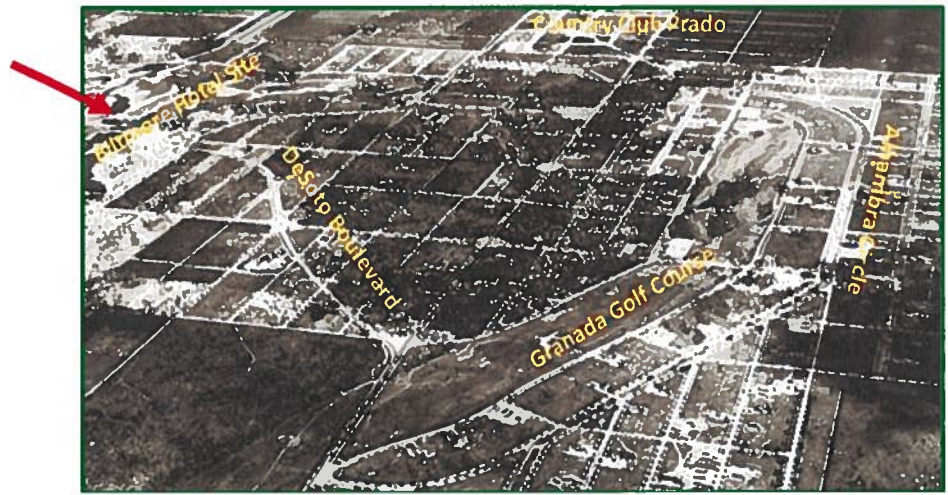
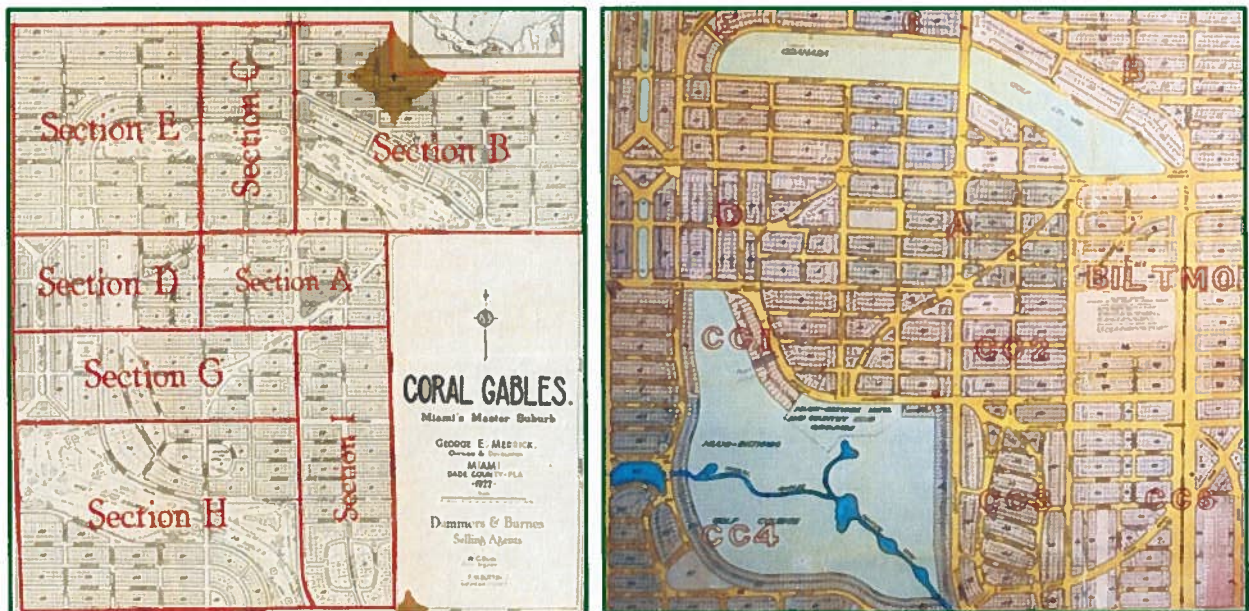


Figure 2: Aerial Photo: Coral Gables c.1925

In the mid-1920s Merrick announced plans for a \$10 million Biltmore Hotel complex in the undeveloped southern sections which included an 18-hole championship golf course designed by the legendary Donald Ross. Sections G, H, and I were subdivided to accommodate it. The reworked sections were renamed Country Club Sections Parts One through Six and the Biltmore Section. (Figures 3) The latter was labelled the “Heart of Coral Gables” and is where City Hall was later built. Button took this opportunity to add additional scenic boulevards which included Anastasia Avenue, Ocean Beach Drive (renamed University Drive), and Segovia Street. He rerouted streets such as Alhambra Circle which he curved around the west side of the Miami-Biltmore golf course (a portion was originally called Ferdinand Drive) and continued it to the south. He also fine-tuned existing streets such as DeSoto Boulevard. The S-shaped DeSoto Boulevard became a clearly defined scenic thoroughfare connecting the Granada and Miami-Biltmore golf courses. A traffic circle plaza with a magnificent pedestal-type fountain marks the halfway point. (Figures 2 & 3)



Figures 3: Map: “Miami’s Master Suburb,” 1922 [left]; “Miami Riviera,” 1925 [right]



Figure 4: Miami-Biltmore Hotel and Golf Course, looking north, 1931 *Courtesy FIU Archives*

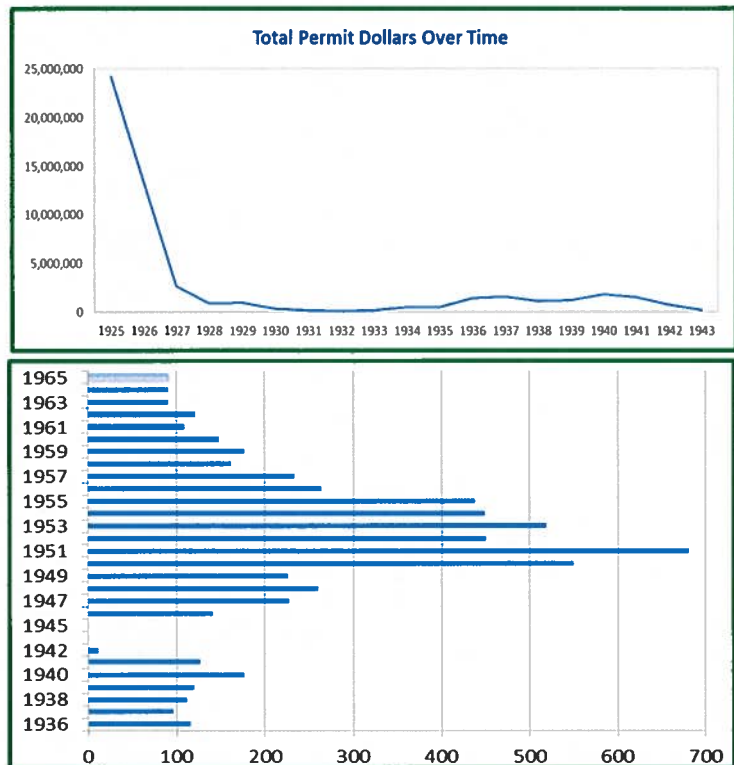
Golf courses were prominent features of Merrick’s plan, and the Biltmore Hotel complex was the crown jewel in Merrick’s campaign to attract tourists and to provide social amenities for residents. The Miami-Biltmore Golf Course, designed as a championship golf course, retained its elite status over the years hosting the Coral Gables Open Invitational (also known as the Miami-Biltmore Open) golf tournament on the PGA Tour from 1931 to 1937 and again from 1959 to 1962. The course opened January 2, 1926, and rapid growth in the area was anticipated. (Figure 4) Construction in the City had boomed in the early 1920s until the combination of the devastating Hurricane of 1926 and Great Depression drastically curtailed new development. In Coral Gables few single-family homes were built during the Depression Era. Hence, construction stalled in the vicinity of the golf course. (Figure 5)



Figure 5: Aerial Photograph, 1938 -- Red Arrow: 3519 Toledo Street
Courtesy University of Florida, Florida Collection.

In the aftermath of the 1929 Wall Street Crash, the economy in Florida declined steeply. Between 1929-1933 148 banks collapsed. By 1933, one out of every four Floridians was receiving some type of public relief. As the decade wore on, New Deal relief measures expanded and people adjusted to a new way of life. Their priorities and aesthetic changed, and this was reflected in all aspects of life including the types of homes built.

With the implementation of the New Deal and other incentives, the building industry finally experienced a small resurgence in the late 1930s. It abruptly halted again during from 1942-1945 as materials, expertise and manpower were diverted to the war effort. (Figures 6) As construction slowly recovered, building styles shifted. In Coral Gables, by the mid-1930s there was a distinct departure from the ornamented and picturesque Mediterranean Revival style that had dominated the City's landscape since its inception. In doing so, Coral Gables began to follow national housing trends and the City entered a new architectural era which boomed in the 1950s. The homes built during the New Deal era were unique, transitional, and some were of the Modernistic aesthetic. They represent a turning point in Coral Gables architectural history.

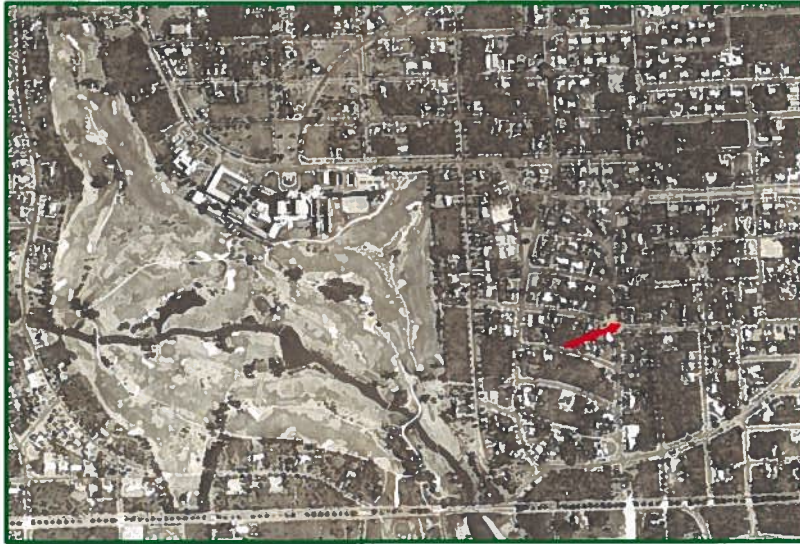


Figures 6: Coral Gables Permit Data
Total Building Permit Dollars, 1925-1943 [top]
SFR Building Permits, 1936-1965 [bottom]
Note: no data for 1945; zero permits for 1944

As illustrated in Figures 6 there were only a few hundred homes built in Coral Gables during this period. The single-family residence at 3519 Toledo Street, built in 1937, was a part of this small resurgence during the New Deal Era. It is prominently located east of the Miami-Biltmore Golf Course in Country Club Section Part Three (Figures 5 & 7) and designed in the late Modernistic Style of Art Moderne (see below). It is a noteworthy example of the type of architecture Coral Gables embraced as it shifted away from the Mediterranean Revival style of the 1920s.

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While the style of this home is clearly Art Moderne it retains influences of the Mediterranean Revival (discussed below), and it is a significant example of interpretation of the Art Moderne style in the southeastern Florida region. Architect Robert Little designed 3519 Toledo Street who was well-versed in both styles. In 1925 Little joined architect Robert A. Taylor's firm and aided in the design of Mediterranean Revival projects such as the Espanola Way on Miami Beach. In 1933 Little opened his own office on Miami Beach and shifted to Modernistic design for which he became well-known. Many of his homes from this period, like 3519 Toledo Street, embrace the Modernistic aesthetic while paying tribute to the City's foundational style.



The post-war prosperity following these lean years created an optimism which reigned through the 1950s and 1960s and resulted in an unprecedented building boom. (Figures 6) During this time single-family homes in Coral Gables continued to follow national trends both in numbers and in style. Prior to the building boom, the Coral Gables Country Club sections around the Biltmore Hotel and Golf Course remained largely undeveloped. (Figure 5) As illustrated in Figures 7, by the late 1950s they were largely built out with new residences and retain their residential context of single-family homes to present day.

Figures 7:
Aerial Photographs:
East of Miami-Biltmore Golf Course

1948 [top]
1957 [center]
Note: Red Arrow: 3519 Toledo Street
Courtesy University of Florida, Florida Collection.

Current, 2023 [bottom]
Courtesy Miami-Dade Property Appraiser

Modernistic Styles (1920-1940)

The residence at 3519 Toledo Street is one of a handful of homes built in the City that demonstrates the influences of the Modernistic Styles. This residence, built in 1937, is in the Art Moderne Style. The Modernistic Styles were distinctly different from the eclectic and revivalist styles that preceded it. Modernistic Styles emphasized sleek lines with Machine Age geometric decorative elements.

The early form of the Modernistic Styles was Art Deco. A creative but short-lived movement, from 1925 to 1940, it permeated all modes of the arts from architecture to decorative arts to fashion. Art Deco was common in public and commercial buildings built in the 1920s and early 1930s, but it was rarely used in domestic architecture.

Art Moderne, or Streamline Moderne, is a later type of the Modernistic Styles. As the Great Depression of the 1930s progressed, the Modernistic Styles changed. It became more austere, less ornamented, and more streamlined with a horizontal emphasis. Streamlining was a concept first conceived by industrial designers who favored the aerodynamic pure-line concept of motion and speed. Hence, the sharp angles and the vertical emphasis of Art Deco were replaced with simple, aerodynamic curves, and horizontality of Art Moderne. This later type emphasized smooth surfaces, curving forms, long horizontal lines, and sometimes nautical elements. Exotic woods and stone were replaced with cement and glass. Cylindrical forms and long horizontal window groupings were common. Building forms were arranged at times to impart the impression of a ship or locomotive. (McAlester)

Character-Defining Features of Art Moderne:

- Horizontal orientation and massing
- Smooth exterior wall surfaces, usually stucco
- Asymmetrical
- Flat roof or low-pitched roof, often a with coping or wide soffit
- Horizontal grooves or lines in walls
- Horizontal members accented
- Rounded edges
- Casement, corner, or ribbon windows arranged horizontally
- Glass brick walls or window inserts
- Porthole windows
- Chrome hardware
- Metal balustrades
- Other ornamentation was sparse, strategically-placed, and was usually geometric, abstract, stylized, or nautical in nature
- Subdued colors: base colors were typically light earth tones, off-whites, or beiges; and trim colors were typically dark colors (or bright metals) to contrast from the light base

As discussed below, the single-family residence at 3519 Toledo Street exhibits the majority of these Art Moderne character-defining features. The Modernistic Styles were used most often in public and commercial buildings. Hence, this home represents both the somewhat rare domestic use of Art Moderne, as well as the architectural turning point in Coral Gables as it embraced other styles.

SIGNIFICANCE ANALYSIS AND DESCRIPTION

Executive Summary



**Figures 8: 3519 Toledo Street, Front (West) Façade
c.1942 [top]; Current, 2024 [bottom]**

Situated in Coral Gables Country Club Section Part Three, the single-family residence at 3519 Toledo Street sits east of the Biltmore Golf Course. Permitted in 1937 and designed by Modernist architect Robert Little (Permit #5433) it was constructed during the New Deal Era when building in Coral Gables was sparse. This home is built in the Modernistic Style of Art Moderne and is an example of a new architectural direction in the city as Coral Gables shifted away from the elaborate and embellished Mediterranean Revival style of the 1920s toward simpler and more modern designs. Art Moderne emphasized geometric and curving forms, sleek and smooth surfaces with long horizontal lines. While this home is clearly Art Moderne, it retains influences of the Mediterranean Revival and is a significant example of the interpretation of Art Moderne in this Mediterranean-inspired city. Hence, the property exemplifies a pivotal moment in the historical, cultural, political, economic, and social trends of the community.

The Modernistic Styles were most often used for the design of public and commercial buildings. 3519 Toledo Street is a significant example of its rarer use in residential architecture. As described

in more detail below, the home exhibits character-defining features of the Art Moderne which include, but are not limited to: asymmetrical, horizontal massing and orientation; cylindrical form at the front entry; smooth, light-colored, earth-toned exterior stucco surfaces; low-pitched roofs with wide eaves; sparse ornamentation using only elements that selectively enhance the geometry, sleekness, and horizontality of the structure, most notably the use of brick (horizontal lines, shutters, lintel, circular grille) and the built-in planters, as well as the ribbons of fenestration; geometric chimney stack, circular ‘porthole’ with brick ‘basketweave’ grille (Figure 9), and the attached garage.



Figure 9: Garage ‘Porthole’ Brick Screen, 2024

Additionally, the home is a significant example of the interpretation of the Art Moderne style which exhibits Mediterranean Revival influences with its casement windows (originally steel), a series of gabled roofs clad in barrel tile, rafter tails, and a dominant chimney. This Art Moderne home honors and embraces George Merrick’s vision for adapting residential design to the rigors of South Florida’s climate while maintaining the integrity of the Art Moderne style. With its thick cement masonry block walls which keep the home cool, the light-colored stuccoed exterior walls which reflect the sun’s heat, and the varied windows that provide much needed ventilation and light in this tropical environment, it embraces both the style and its environment.

Designed by noted Modern architect Robert M. Little, 3519 Toledo Street is representative of his skillful work in the 1930s of melding the newer Modernist Art Moderne within the existing Mediterranean Revival landscape. The construction of new homes during the New Deal era was sparse in Coral Gables and the homes built during this era were unique and transitional. They represent a turning point in Coral Gables architectural history. Little was recognized as a leader of this transition, designing numerous homes on Miami Beach during this period. The home at 3519 Toledo Street is one of a handful of homes he designed in Coral Gables. It is also one of the few notable Art Moderne residences in the City and is a significant example of how the style was adapted in Coral Gables.

The homes built in this era were unique, transitional, and most were of the Modernistic aesthetic. Comparison of historic photographs with the extant structure (Figures 8), examination of building records, and correlation with public records, indicate that there have been few changes to the historic character-defining features of the home. As per, Article 8, Section 8-103 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code--*Criteria for designation of historic landmarks*: “Districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects of national, state and local importance are of historic significance if they possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, or association.” It is Staff’s determination that this property possesses sufficient integrity for designation. Thus, the property at 3519 Toledo Street significantly contributes to the historic fabric of the Coral Gables and is part of the collection of quality residences that contributes to the City’s sense of place over time.

Extant Exterior Description & Alterations Discussion



Figures 10: Toledo Street Views, 2024
Looking East [top]; Looking Southeast [bottom]

The single-family residence at 3519 Toledo Street sits on a third of an acre lot (approx. 140' x 101') at the northeast corner of Toledo Street and Escobar Avenue. The home is setback 34' from the street and spans approximately 90' across the two lots. Several mature oak trees shade the property. Running along the north side of the property is an asphalt driveway leading to the side-facing, attached garage. A gently curved concrete walkway leads from the driveway to the curved front entry. (Figure 11)

The home, constructed in 1937, is in the Art Moderne style. It is asymmetrical, simple in form, and is arranged in a geometric fashion. It is comprised of a series of one-story rectangular masses with gable roofs that stretch across the property. A strategically-placed cylindrical form marks the front entry. As seen in Figures 12, the 1937 structure had one addition constructed in 1940. It is highlighted in blue. Architect William Shanklin designed this bedroom addition whose gable roof faces Escobar Avenue. Shanklin kept the same scale and detailing of the 1937 Little design. Of these two

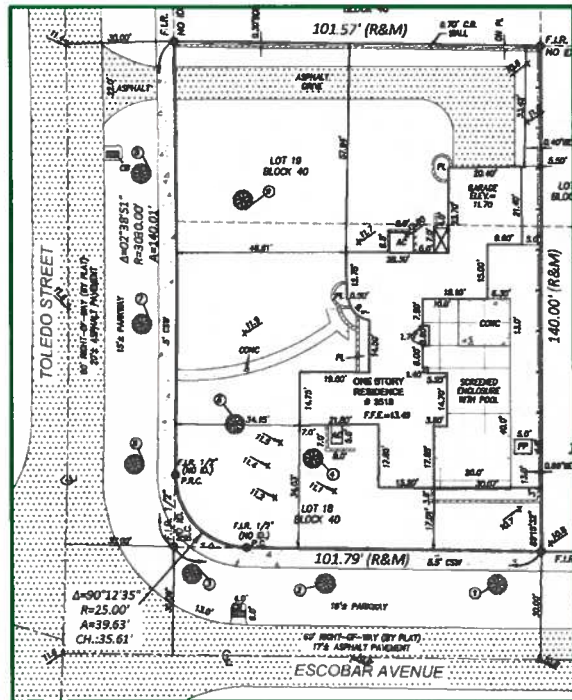
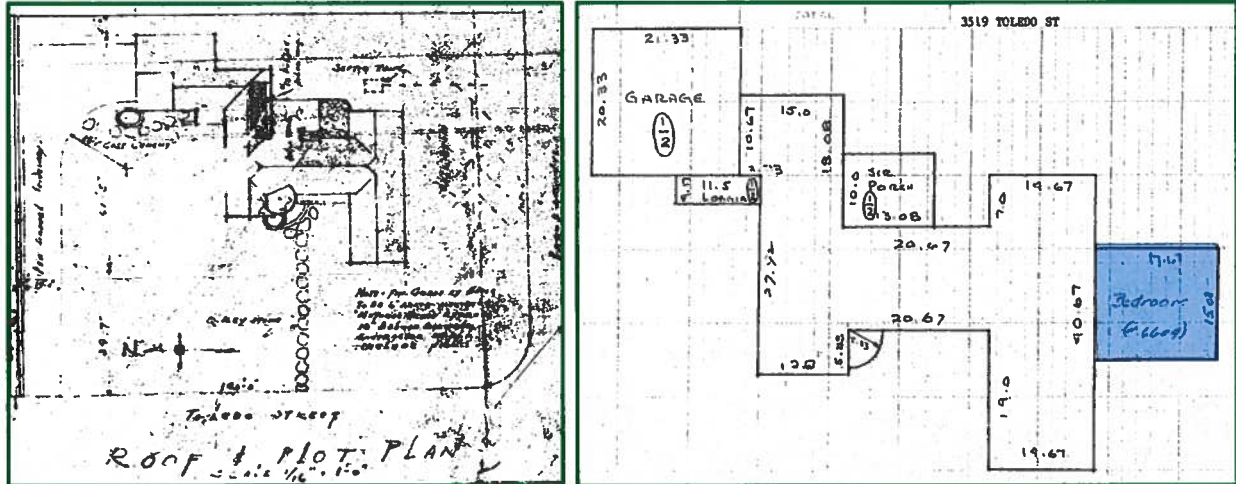


Figure 11: Property Survey, 2023
Courtesy Online Land Surveyors, Inc.

early permits, only one sheet of the original permit #5433 (see Attachment A) has been located. No original elevation drawings are available. However, an historic photo dating the early 1940s (Figure 13) provides early documentation of the home.



Figures 12:
1937: Permit #5433, Roof & Plot Plan
[top left]
1940 Addition (blue), City Tax Card
[top right]
2023 Aerial Photo
Courtesy Miami-Dade Property Appraiser
[bottom]



Built over a crawl space, the house is constructed with masonry block units. As was common with Art Moderne, the stucco is smooth, and the ornamentation of the home is sparse using elements that selectively enhance the geometry, sleekness, and horizontality of the structure. An emphasis on horizontality is a primary character-defining feature of the Art Moderne style. The one-story height and the long length of the home along the property achieve this horizontality. Other dominant factors in establishing its horizontal orientation are the low-pitched roofs with wide eaves, the fenestration arrangements, the tile and brick horizontal accents (e.g., banding, lintels and ‘shutters,’), as well as the built-in planters and the rectangular chimney.



Figure 13: Front (West) Façade, c.1942

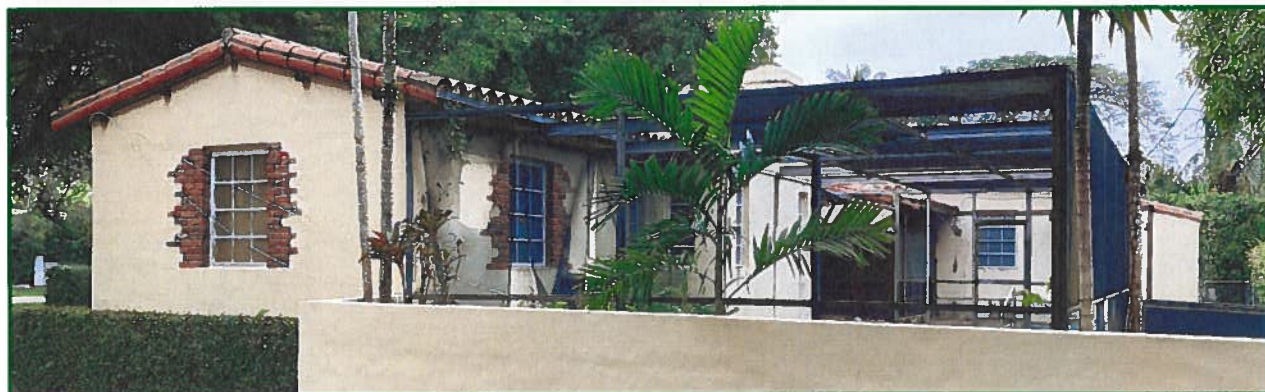


Figure 14: Front Entry, 2024

The home is primarily comprised of a series of rectangular masses of varying sizes under low-pitched gables roofs currently clad in S-tile. A singular cylindrical mass forms the front entry to the home. (Figures 12 & 14) Its shallow pyramidal roof rests on the adjacent cross gable roofs. Adding to the geometry and horizontality of the home are built-in planters. The attached circular planter off the corner of front entry and the spiral planter off the garage aid in softening the angular masses and are typical Art Moderne features. (Figures 12, 13, 15, & 18)

The front entry area shown in Figure 14 depicts numerous Art Moderne aspects of the home. The curved front entry is a hallmark feature. Horizontality is emphasized by the molded cornice in the eave overhang under the shallow-pitched pyramid roof, the band of glazed tiles that align with the top of the doorway, (Figure 13) and by the curved bullnose coral rock steps that gracefully cascade into the adjacent built-in planters. The planter flanking the entry on the north is circular and wraps around the corner of the adjacent front-facing gable wing. The planter to the south is rectangular and runs the full length from the entry mass to the second front-facing gable wing on the front façade. It runs under the cross-gable section and further accentuates the long triplet ribbon window of its façade.

Steel casement windows, arranged to accentuate horizontality, was common in Art Moderne structures. In this home there is a triplet ribbon window on the street-facing façade. Most of the remaining windows are the same height and are arranged in a rhythm across the facades that keeps the eye moving and they read as a horizontal band around the house. The fenestrations are all recessed, and most do not have sills; hence they have the appearance of being cut-out which contributes to the geometric nature of the home. The windows were originally steel casements. (Figure 13) Building records indicate that in 1971 twenty-five steel casement windows were replaced with twenty-five awning windows with no alterations to the size of the openings.



Figures 15: 3519 Toledo Street, 2024
From Top to Bottom:
Front (West) Façade; From Southwest Corner of Property;
Side (South) Façade; Rear (East) Façade From Escobar Avenue Looking North

Horizontal grooves or lines and the accenting of horizontal members are character-defining features of the Art Moderne style. In this home Little does this in subtle and unique ways. At the front entry Little used glazed tile on the horizontal band. On the remainder of the home Little uses brick as the accent material. Brick laid as stretchers are horizontal and as a familiar material it evokes an innate perception of horizontality. The smooth stucco façade aids in emphasizing the brick features. Brick is used for horizontal banding on the garage, on the side and back porches it is used as a cap for the stepped enclosure walls (Figures 18), and for the two sills on the street-facing windows – they are the only sills on the home. (Figures 15, top)

The most distinct use of the brick accents is for the garage’s porthole basketweave grille (discussed below, Figures 9 & 18) and for the ‘shutters.’ Brick is used to flank some of the windows in a manner that evokes shutters. However, the feature is not rectangular mimicking a shutter but rather the edges are irregular forming a series of horizontal lines that disappear into the stucco. Although original elevation drawings have not been located to date, it is surmised that Little used this feature on the triplet window of the front façade and on the windows of the south side façade facing Escobar Avenue. As discussed above and seen in Figures 12, Shanklin designed a south wing addition in 1940. He used this feature on all the windows of the addition. At the junction of the south façade 1937 home and the west façade 1940 wing, the addition truncated the shutter feature. Shanklin compensated by wrapping it around the corner. (Figures 16) The new addition essentially replicated Little’s original design and this wrapping of the shutter is the only obvious indication that the southern wing was an addition. Currently on the front façade there is one window with painted on brown shutters and another brown rectangle above another window. These are not original and were added by the current owner.



**Figures 16: Brick ‘Shutter’ Wrapping the Corner
at South Façade 1937 Home & West Façade 1940 Addition, 2024**

The large chimney rising at the approximate center of the home is also detailed in an Art Moderne fashion. It is rectangular in shape and adds to the home’s geometric nature. The rectangular volume is laid lengthwise with horizontal accents. At the top of the chimney is a concave cap. This is complemented by the raised molding that wraps around the chimney at its midpoint.



Figure 17: Front Chimney, 2024



Figures 18: Northern Wing Containing the Garage, 2024

In the late 1930s, as automobile ownership continued to rise, the placement of garages moved from being detached structures at the rear of the property to becoming attached to the home. Modernists tended towards celebrating the garage and not hiding or camouflaging its function. In Art Moderne they were often a side-facing appendage as seen in this home. Little 'celebrated' the garage with several Art Moderne features that would draw attention to it. (Figures 18) On the west street-facing façade there is a large 'porthole' opening with brick grillwork in a unique 'basketweave' pattern. (Figure 9 & 18) Two horizontal bands of stretcher-laid brick pass through the porthole and wrap around the side and rear facades. He also attached a large descending built-in spiral planter at its northwest corner. (Figures 18 & 19) It is interesting to note that while Little celebrated that garage with the features and drew attention to it from the street he also reduced its size visually by adding the slightly higher truncated gable roof over the rear of the garage and porch leading to it. (Figures 12, 18, & 19) Hence, while the garage is set back from the house it is still a dominant feature of the home.

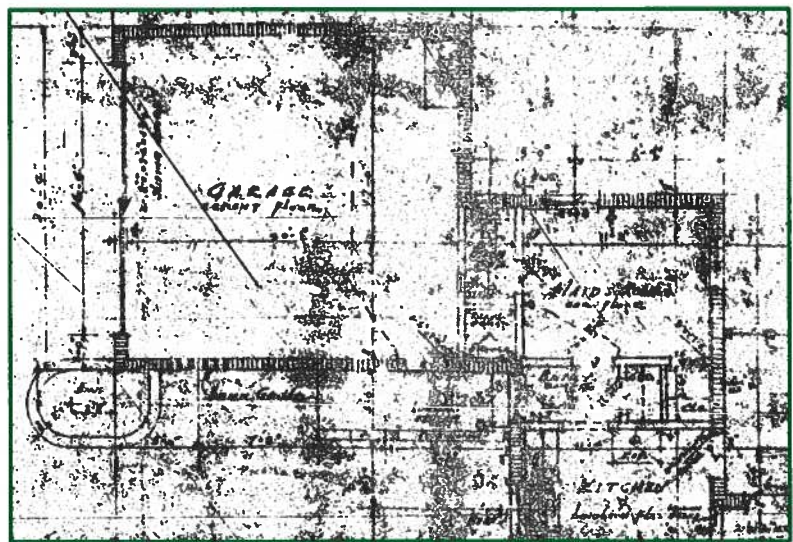


Figure 19: Floor Plan, Garage Area, Permit #5433, 1937

Designed by noted Modern architect Robert M. Little, 3519 Toledo Street is representative of his skillful work in the 1930s of melding the newer Modernist Art Moderne within the existing Mediterranean Revival landscape. Notable Mediterranean Revival influences on this home include the series of gabled roofs clad in barrel tile, comprehensive use of casement windows, rafter tails, and a dominant chimney. While clearly an Art Moderne style home, it blends with Merrick's existing Mediterranean built environment.

Ownership History

1937-1952	Wilson M. Leary (1906-1959) & Frances L. Leary
1952-1960	Ernest B. Johnson & Elizabeth M. Johnson
1960-1970	James E. Phifer & Frances W. Phifer
1970-1972	Arthur Serra, Jr. & Marilyn M. Serra
1972-1975	Harry L. McFarlane & Sara E. MacFarlane
1975-1982	Philip Nemeth & Peggy Ann Nemeth
1982-2021	Charles B. Daly (1924-2014) & Jayne Childs Daly (1926-2021)
2021-Present	Estate of Charles & Janet Daly

Architect: Robert M. Little (1903-1998)

Born in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, Robert Murray Little studied architecture at the Beaux Arts and T-Square Club Atelier in Philadelphia. From 1921 to 1925 he worked in the Pennsylvania area with the office of John T. Windrim. In 1925 he accepted an offer from architect Robert A. Taylor and relocated to Florida to assist in the designing and construction of Espanola Way on Miami



ROBERT M. LITTLE, AIA

Figure 20:
Robert Little, 1959
Courtesy The Florida Architect

Beach. Little continued to work for Taylor for the next seven years. Their designs were heavily classical or Mediterranean Revival in style.

Little opened his own office on Miami Beach in 1933 and a second office in Fort Lauderdale four years later. During the 1930s he designed many Mediterranean-Modernistic style bungalows for developer Lester Preu. Most were located on Miami Beach. In the 1940s he became disillusioned with the state of architecture on Miami Beach and moved his practice to Miami and his designs focused on modern architectural styles. Little is now recognized as one of a group of influential architects who developed and guided the movement locally known as MiMo (Miami Modern).

Little was a prolific designer with projects throughout South Florida and in Puerto Rico. Well-respected in the field he was elected president of the AIA Florida South Chapter for 1947 and of the Florida Association of Architects for 1950. In 1959 he was chosen as the Florida Regional Director on the AIA National Board and served the 1960 and 1961 terms. Little also sat on the County Board of Appeals for building code cases, and he was a visiting critic for Cornell University. In 1960 he was selected to the American Institute of Architects' College of Fellows, a high professional honor, for his contributions to design.

Amongst his notable legacies are his contributions to the University of Miami campus. Founded in 1925 the original campus concept was based on Mediterranean Revival architecture with a lush

tropical landscape. The first cornerstone was laid in 1926 but, due to the hurricane, the economy and other issues, campus construction never progressed at its original site. Twenty years later Little, along with architects Marion Manley and Robert Law Weed, designed a new master plan based on Modern concepts. Asymmetrical blocks of long, narrow buildings painted in primary colors were sited to take advantage of open, airy green spaces offset by a minimal, abstract landscape. It became a national model for new campus planning. Little designed several of the buildings. They include the Merrick Building (1950), the Ring Theatre (1951, associate architect Marion Manley), the Lowe Art Gallery (1952), the Easton Residence Hall (1954), and the West Elementary Lab School (1955). For the School of Music (Figure 21), he designed the Volpe Building (1954), the Pick Music Library (1957), and Rehearsal Hall (1958-1960).

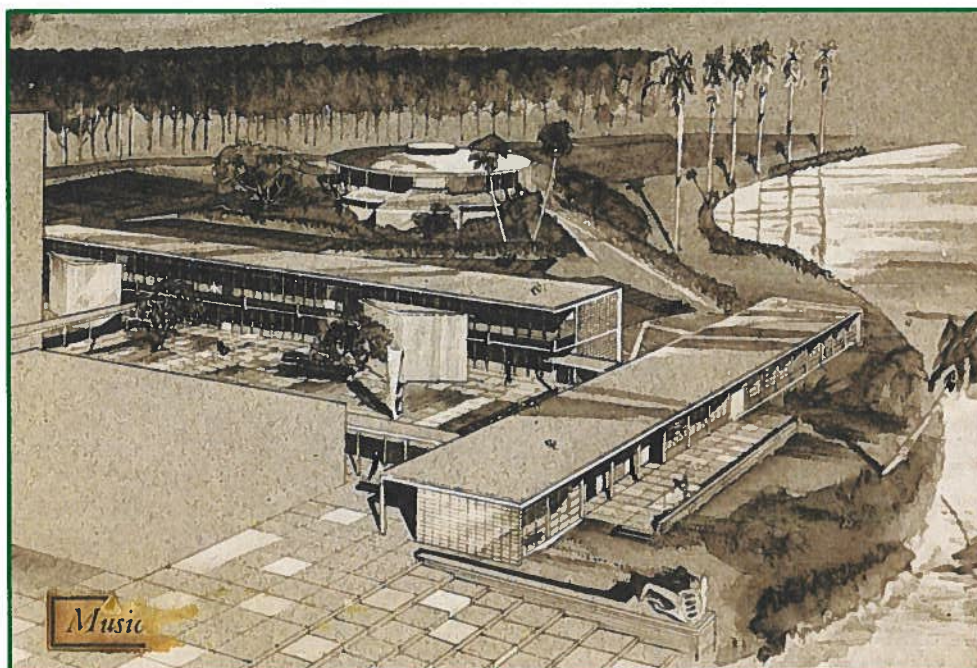


Figure 21: Proposed Architectural Drawing for the UM School of Music, 1954
Courtesy UM Libraries Digital Collection

In addition to his work at the University of Miami, Little currently has two structures on the Coral Gables Register of Historic Place; the commercial building at 247 Malaga Avenue (1948) and a single-family home at 922 Castile Avenue (1934) which is a contributing structure in Castile Avenue/Plaza Historic District. He also has several structures on the National Register of Historic Places. This includes the International style Edificio Empresas Ferre (1953) in Puerto Rico and a number of residences in Miami Beach's historic districts.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The purpose of historic designation within the City of Coral Gables is defined in Article 8, Section 8-101 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code as,

“to promote the educational, cultural, and economic welfare of the public by preserving and protecting historic structures or sites, portions of structures, groups of structures, manmade or natural landscape elements, works of art, or integrated combinations thereof, which serve as visible reminders of the history and cultural heritage of the City, region, state or nation.”

It is the intent of the Coral Gables Zoning Code to recognize all buildings which possess “significant character, interest or value as part of the historical, cultural, archaeological, aesthetic, or architectural heritage of the City, state or nation” qualify for designation as a local historic landmark (Coral Gables Zoning Code, Article 8, Section 8-103). To that end, the eligibility for designation as a local historic landmark is defined by the Coral Gables Zoning Code as meeting **one (1)** (or more) of the criteria stipulated in Article 8, Section 8-103.

Permitted in 1937, the property at 3519 Toledo Street (legally described as Lots 18 & 19, Block 40, Coral Gables Country Club Section Part Three, according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 10, at Page 52 of the Public Records of Miami-Dade County, Florida) is significant to the City of Coral Gables’ history based on the following **three (3)** criteria found in the Coral Gables Zoning Code, Article 8, Section 8-103:

Historical, Cultural significance

4. *Exemplifies the historical, cultural, political, economic, or social trends of the Community*

Architectural significance

1. *Portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by one (1) or more distinctive architectural style*
2. *Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction*

Staff finds the following:

The property located at **3519 Toledo Street** is significant to the City of Coral Gables history based on:

HISTORICAL, CULTURAL & ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Therefore, Staff recommends the following:

A motion to **APPROVE** the Local Historic Designation of the property at **3519 Toledo Street** (legally described as Lots 18 & 19, Block 40, Coral Gables Country Club Section Part Three), based on its historical, cultural, and architectural significance.

Respectfully submitted,



Anna Pernas

Historic Preservation Officer

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REVIEW GUIDE

Definition:

The Review Guide comprises of some of the extant and character-defining features, which contribute to the overall significance of the structure and/or district. Hallmark and character-defining features are the *visual and physical features that give a building its identity and distinctive character*.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties embody two important goals: 1) the preservation of historic materials and, 2) the preservation of a building's distinguishing character.

Every historic building is unique, with its own identity and its own distinctive character. Character refers to all those visual aspects and physical features that comprise the appearance of every historic building. Character-defining features are the visual and physical features that give a building its identity and distinctive character. They may include the overall building shape, its materials, craftsmanship, decorative details, features, and aspects of its site and environment.

Use:

The Review Guide may be used to address the impact that additions, modifications, alterations and/or renovations may have on the historic structure and site.

The Review guide may also inform appropriate new construction in an historic district, neighborhood, or streetscape.

Property Address:	3519 Toledo Street
Lot Description:	corner lot
Date of Construction:	1937
Use:	single-family residence
Style:	Art Moderne
Construction Material:	concrete block clad with smooth stucco
Stories:	one-story SFR with an attached garage
Other:	

NOTE: The Review Guide is to be referenced in conjunction with the information and photographic documentation contained elsewhere within this Report. Character-defining features may include, but are not limited to, the listing found on the following page.

CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES

Property: 3519 Toledo Street
Style: Art Moderne



- ✓ asymmetrical, horizontal massing and orientation
- ✓ cylindrical form as the front entry
- ✓ smooth, light-colored, earth-toned exterior stucco surfaces
- ✓ low-pitched roofs with wide eaves
- ✓ sparse ornamentation usage that selectively enhances the home's geometry and horizontality
- ✓ 'porthole' opening with 'basketweave' grille
- ✓ brick & tile horizontal lines
- ✓ brick 'shutters'
- ✓ brick walls
- ✓ built-in rectangular, circular and spiral planters
- ✓ ribbons of fenestration (originally steel casements)
- ✓ dominant geometric chimney stack with flared top
- ✓ attached garage
- ✓ series of gabled roofs clad in barrel tile
- ✓ rafter tails

ATTACHMENT A: Permit #5433
Architect: Robert M. Little, 1937

