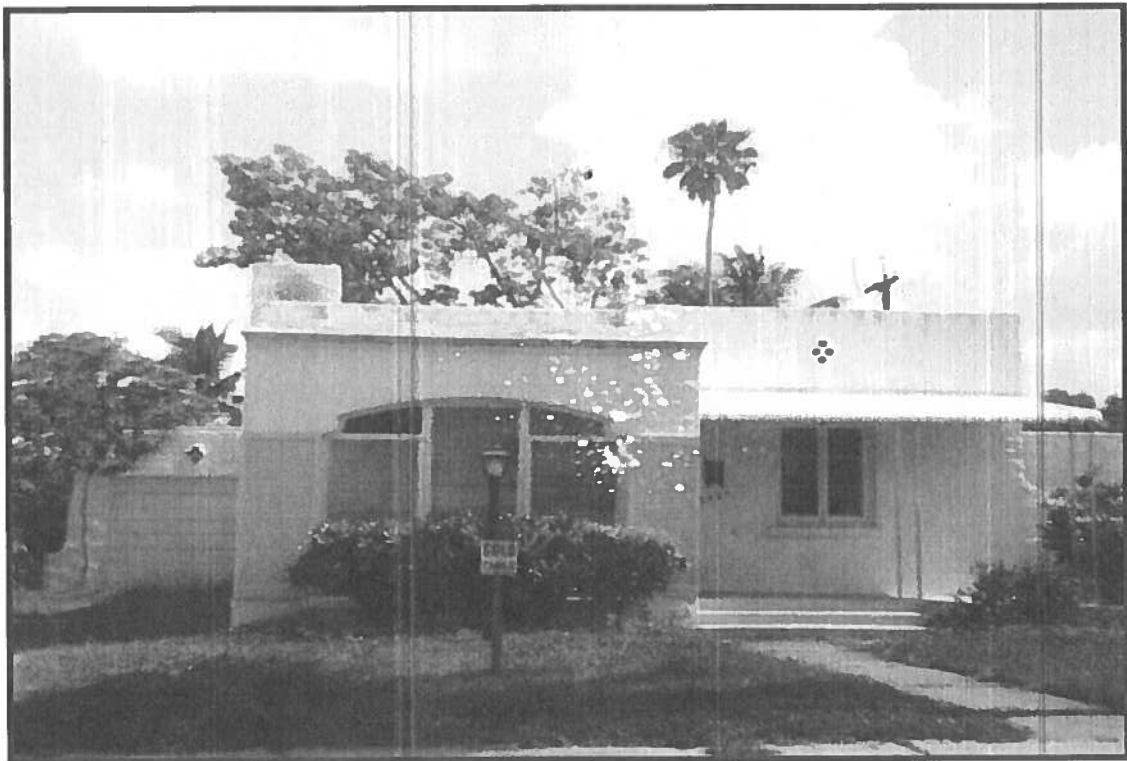


**REPORT OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES  
HISTORICAL RESOURCES & CULTURAL ARTS DEPARTMENT  
TO THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD  
ON THE DESIGNATION OF  
THE PROPERTY AT  
1221 MILAN AVENUE  
CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA**



Historic Photo: 1967



LHD 2022-007  
February 21, 2024

**LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION:  
1221 MILAN AVENUE, CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA**

**Application:** Historic Significance Determination as a result of code violations and the inability to obtain an after-the-fact permit.

*Historical Resources &  
Cultural Arts*

2327 SALZEDO STREET  
CORAL GABLES  
FLORIDA 33134

☎ 305-460-5093  
✉ hist@coralgables.com

<u>Folio Numbers:</u>	03-4107-018-4480
<u>Legal Description:</u>	Lot 9, Block 39, Coral Gables Granada Section Revised, according to the plat thereof as recorded in Plat Book 8, Page 113 of the public records of Miami-Dade County, Florida
<u>Original Permit No.:</u>	402
<u>Date of Construction:</u>	1923
<u>Original Architect:</u>	Lewis Brumm
<u>Present Owner:</u>	Peter & Anne Saliamonas
<u>Building Type / Style:</u>	One-story SFR / Mediterranean Revival
<u>Site Characteristics:</u>	The property is located on an interior lot on the north side of Milan Avenue between Columbus Boulevard and Madrid Street. The lot dimension is 50' by 100'.

**SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The single-family home at 1221 Milan Avenue was one of eight homes commissioned for Milan Avenue by City founder George Merrick in 1923. In accordance with Garden City precepts that guided Merrick's development of Coral Gables, he platted smaller lots on some streets in the new Granada Section intended for modest homes. Merrick envisioned Milan Avenue as a street of 'moderately-priced attractive houses,' offering housing for different income levels without sacrificing quality. He commissioned three members of his design team to demonstrate that these smaller homes were built with the same high-quality construction and Mediterranean Revival style features as other structures that shaped the new city in the early 1920s. The property has undergone modifications since its original construction but still possesses numerous of its character defining features.

The home at 1221 Milan Avenue was designed by architect Lewis Brumm who, in tandem with team member, H. George Fink, was largely responsible for developing the City's cottage genre. Additionally, the residence was home to Dr. John Thom Holdsworth and his family for thirty-seven years (1927-64). In 1926 Holdsworth was heavily recruited by the University of Miami Regents to develop the School of Business Administration. He became the first dean of the school when it was established in 1929 and remained at the helm until 1941. Hence, the property at 1221 Milan Avenue 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 the 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 1221 Milan Avenue 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, 1221 Milan Avenue meets the following **three (3)** criteria:

#### **A. Historical, Cultural significance**

Criterion 4: Exemplifies the historical, cultural, political, economic, or social trends of the community

#### **B. Architectural significance**

Criterion 1: Portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by one (1) or more distinctive architectural style

Criterion 2: Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction

## HISTORIC CONTEXT

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

Pre-1926: Coral Gables' Initial Planning & Development during Florida Land Boom

1927-44: Aftermath of 1926 Hurricane, Great Depression, New Deal, and Wartime Activity

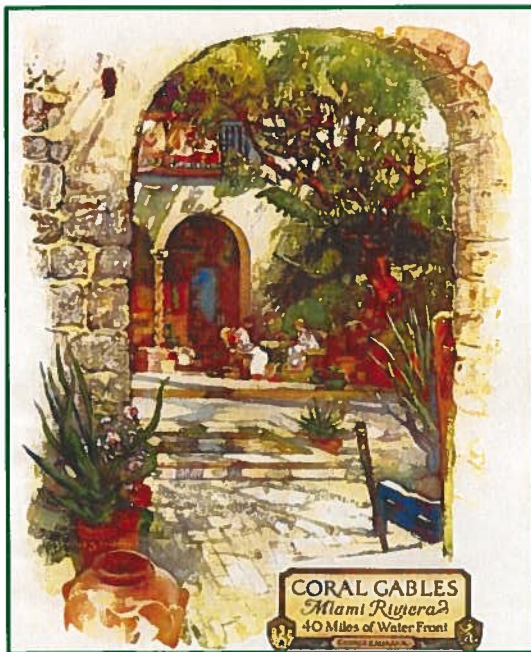
1945-63: Post World War II and Modern periods



**Figure 1: Streets in Coral Gables Under Construction, July 22, 1922**

The home at 1221 Milan Avenue was constructed in 1923 and is indicative of the type of architecture that was the founding premise of Coral Gables.

Coral Gables was originally conceived as a suburb of Miami and attracted investors from across the nation during the South Florida real estate boom of the 1920s. Founder George E. 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, cohesively-designed, Mediterranean-inspired city which is now considered one of the first modern planned communities in the United States. Advised by landscape architect Frank Button, artist Denman Fink, and architects H. George Fink, Walter De Garmo, H. H. Mundy and Phineas Paist, Merrick converted 3000 acres of citrus plantation and native hammock. (Figure 1)

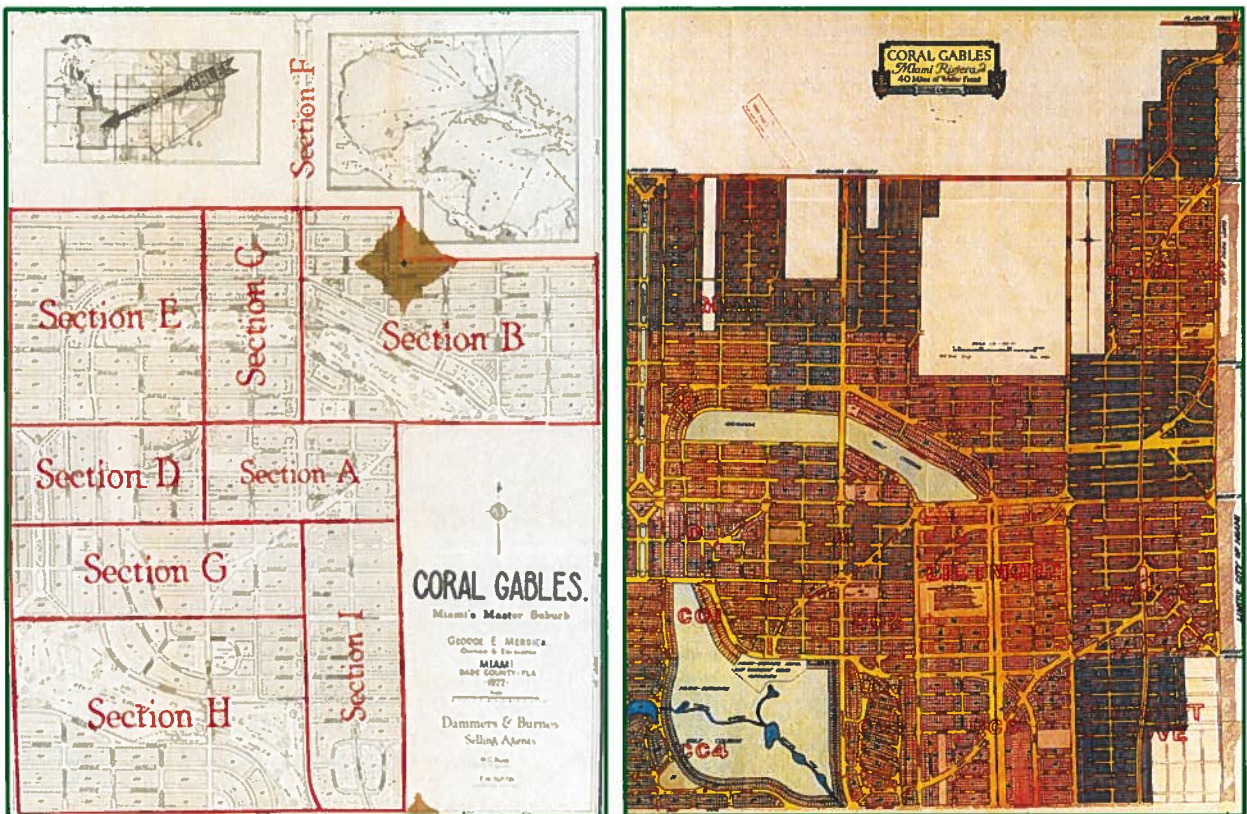


**Figure 2: Advertisement in House Beautiful, 1925**

The use of Mediterranean designs was one of the featured selling points in early promotional materials. Merrick and his team felt that this type of architecture harmonized best with south Florida's climate and lifestyle and it was one of the featured selling points for his community. The architecture constructed during Coral Gables' initial development combined elements commonly used in Spanish, Moorish, and Italian architecture, and has come to be known as the Mediterranean Revival style. During the 1920s structures and amenities were built almost exclusively per this style.

The home at 1221 Milan Avenue exemplifies the Mediterranean ideals and climate adaptations espoused by City founder George Merrick. As discussed below, it was designed by architect Lewis Brumm who was well-versed in Mediterranean-inspired architecture. He was amongst a small cadre of select architects Merrick commissioned to develop his vision in the mid-1920s.

Merrick’s design team carefully planned the city to maximize the potential intrinsic to its tropical environment. They laid out broad sweeping boulevards with grand vistas and tree-lined streets, plazas with fountains that invited visitors to linger, and Mediterranean-inspired homes that conveyed a quality of centuries-old permanence with generous street setbacks for front yards that celebrated the ‘tropical vegetation in a delightful profusion.’ The planned community employed restrictive zoning to control development and aesthetics. The plan embraced the City Beautiful ideals of copious amounts of public green space, tree-lined streets, and monumental public buildings. It also wholeheartedly incorporated the Garden City precepts of comprehensive planning with defined areas for different uses (i.e., residential, commercial, trades), supplying a wealth of public facilities, and offering housing for different income levels without sacrificing quality. Homes built for modest incomes were built alongside grand palazzos and a section of the City was devoted to multi-family housing.




**Figures 3: Coral Gables Maps**  
“Miami’s Master Suburb,” 1922 [left]; “Miami Riviera,” 1924 [right]

The first lots went on sale in November 1921. They were in Section A, the area immediately south of Merrick’s family home. Section B opened on December 27, 1921 and included the impressive Greenway Drives surrounding the proposed golf course and Alhambra Circle, a wide boulevard with a ‘parked’ center median. In January 1922 Section C was released for sale. The northern portion of this section featured predominantly 50 foot lots intended for high-quality smaller, affordable homes that became known as Coral Gables Cottages. Sales were brisk in these areas and, as shown on the 1922 map of Coral Gables (Figures 3) the remainder of the suburb was quickly divided into sections.

Throughout the early 1920s Merrick continued to re-invest the earnings into public amenities and into the expansion of land holdings. Accounts indicate that acquiring land north to Tamiami Trail was a priority and a hard-fought endeavor for Merrick. As illustrated on Button's 1922 map in Figures 3, while Granada Boulevard connected to the Tamiami Trail, Merrick only owned the small strips of land to either side (Section F). By 1923, with the acquisition of various tracts of land--some lot by lot--he replatted and renamed this area the Granada Section. (Figures 3 & 4)

The Granada Section spanned from Red Road (SW 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue) on the west, to Cortez Street on the east, and from Tamiami Trail (SW 8<sup>th</sup> Street) on the north, to Milan and Mendoza Avenues on the south. Merrick continued to purchase additional tracts in this area over the next several years. Merrick was unable to buy the property to the east of Cortez Street and this area remains as unincorporated Miami-Dade County to this day. (Figure 3 & 6)

When first launching Coral Gables during 1921-22, Merrick's team designed and built homes throughout the community to demonstrate their Mediterranean-inspired vision. In 1923, as Merrick substantially increased his land holdings, he began to develop streetscapes following Garden City precepts. Unlike earlier sections, the Granada Section was platted with large areas allocated for moderately-priced and smaller-sized homes. To showcase his vision for these homes, Merrick commissioned architects H. George Fink, Martin Hampton, and Lewis Brumm to design fifty-eight homes that "embody new and radical departures from the usual type of small house designing, with compactness, beauty and comfort that will appeal to smaller families...each home will be a different finely-detailed design." (Figures 5) Their distribution was: twelve on Ferdinand Street, eighteen on Genoa Street, eight on Milan Avenue, six on Capri Street, and fourteen on Pizarro Avenue. In October 1923 the launching of the Granada Section became Merrick's highest



The Granada Gateway—Located in the Center of the New Granada Section

## Granada Section— Another Opportunity

*The Surpassing Beauty of Coral Gables—the Wonderful Development of Coral Gables—the Remarkable Growth of Coral Gables—are all here Combined to Form a Most Extraordinary Investment Opportunity in the New Granada Section*

The first of a series of building lots in the Granada Section was made on Monday morning. The moderate and enthusiastic response of the buying public revealed the keen interest which is felt in all matters included in the remarkable development of Coral Gables.

To its clients in your mind the splendid location of the Granada Section, just remember that it centers around the two most beautiful architectural features in Coral Gables. The first of these is the magnificent Granada Entrance on N. W. Eighth Street; the second is the 400 houses and more beautiful Prado Terrace and Country Club Prado, now in course of construction.

Adjacent thereto are two exceptionally beautiful features like the Granada Section, bounded on the north by N. W. Eighth St. (Tamiami Trail) and on the south by Orange St., Alhambra Circle and the Coral Gables Golf Course. This part of Coral Gables has been the scene of greatest development during the past year, and will continue to be for all of next year.

In the Granada Section eighty-five houses, ranging in cost from \$7,500 to \$22,000 each, are now in course of construction. Within a few months the Granada Section will take its rightful place as one of the most beautiful parts of Miami's most beautiful suburb.

Now—1923—only a few more lots remain to be developed. If you are interested in this opportunity, call on the Granada Section today.

© 1923 The complete facts regarding the Granada Section—How Coral Gables offers opportunities—It's a real opportunity—call on the Granada Section today.

# CORAL GABLES

*Miami's Master Suburb*

Figure 4: Miami News  
 November 22, 1923

## START 40 DWELLINGS; 15 MILES OF STREETS

### Opening of New 450-Acre Granada Section Results in Huge Building Program.

CONSTRUCTION of 15 miles of additional streets and approximately 40 miles of sidewalks will be started within the next week at Coral Gables, under the supervision of J. W. Ricketts, superintendent of construction.

Ten miles will be laid in the north-west corner of the suburb, opening up an entirely new section—the Granada—which comprises about 450 acres. At the same time the construction of 30 new homes, moderately priced and from new and original designs by H. George Fink, Martin L. Hampton and Louis D. Brumm, will be started in the Granada section.

THE group of 40 new homes will be the first of a large number of residences to go up in the Granada section. While they are not expensive, they will represent the best of architecture. They will embody new and radical departures from the usual type of small house designing, with compactness, beauty and comfort that will appeal to smaller families. Most of the new homes will contain two bedrooms, combination living and dining rooms, kitchens with sink, cabinet, electric tank and water heater, and bath, with fixtures built in; garages linked artistically with the houses; screened loggias and large and delightfully planted patios with winding walks of flagstone paving, and unique lanterns of early Spanish designs, Gothic entrances, imported Spanish tile roofs, cypress beams and archways.

In addition, the same care will be taken with landscaping surrounding grounds as about the costliest homes in the suburb.

The homes will probably be completed by the first of next year and will be ready for occupancy at that time.

"I am confident that these homes will be entirely unique in Florida," H. George Fink, architect, who has designed many of the most beautiful homes in Coral Gables, said. "While 40 will be built at the same time, each home will be different in design and appearance. Repetition will be entirely avoided. Individual care has been taken with the plans for each of the homes and the result, I believe, will be astonishing."

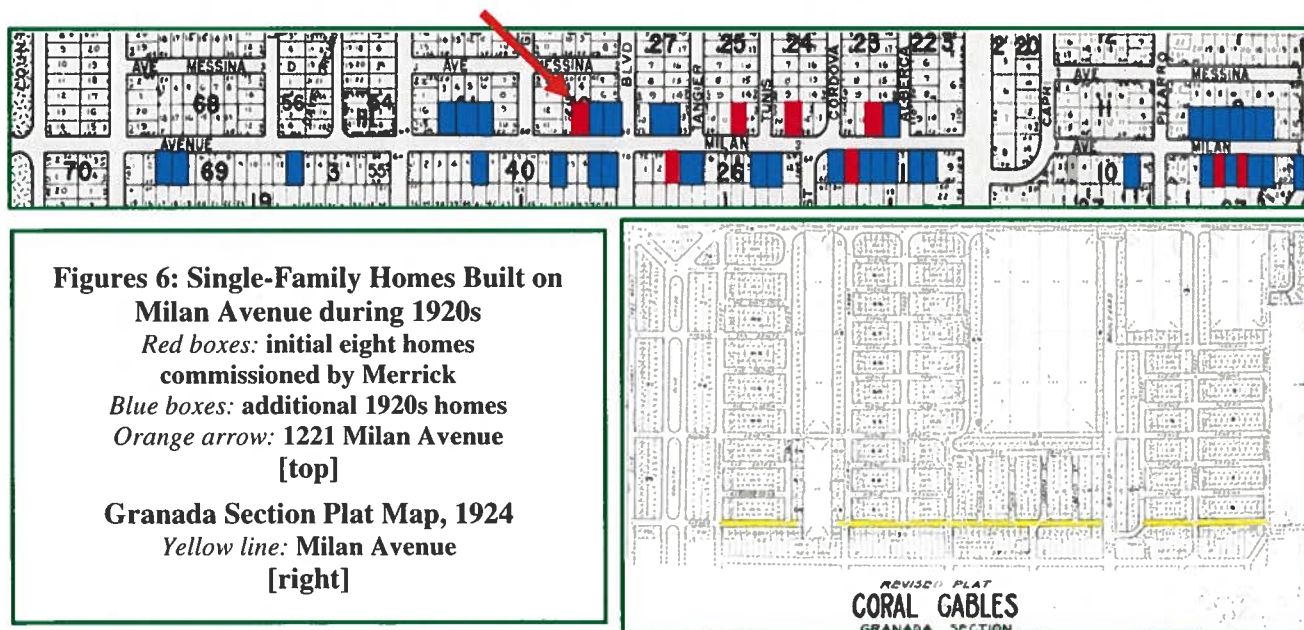
Figures 5: Miami Herald  
 September 24, 1923

priority. He redirected hundreds of workers to lay streets, sidewalks, and watermains. By November these fifty-eight moderately-priced homes, amongst others, were under construction in the Granada Section.

In a 1925 publication authored by George Merrick, entitled *Coral Gables Miami Riviera: Heart of the American Tropics*, he characterized the design tenets of the moderately-priced Mediterranean Revival style homes, in this manner:

*A small house, in which every detail is a joy, is made beautiful with a cloistered entrance whose slightly pointed arched and carved columns lead to an open patio, as finely thought out and executed as a Renaissance palace, and as beautiful in its setting. Another small house, whose wall spaces are unusually simple, has as its chief decoration an entrance loggia with a group of three round arches, the middle slightly higher than the other two, separated by twisted columns so delicate and right that no other decoration is necessary. Even grouped ventilator holes are made to play delightful part in the design of a whole house front, and such inconspicuous details as in the iron work of a window, the trim of a chimney, the curve of a garage roof, the right placing of a huge Spanish water jar to break the surface pattern of an open veranda, are harmonious, styled, architecturally right.*

Many of these smaller homes are now classified as the Coral Gables Cottages.



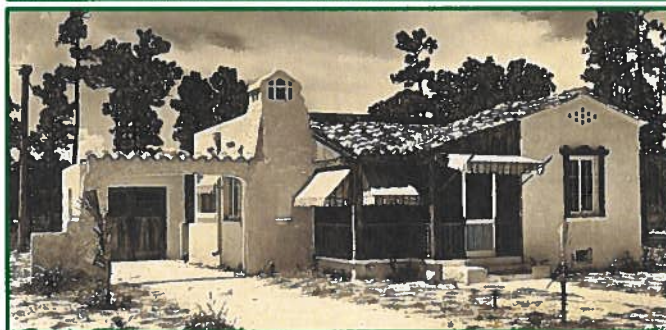
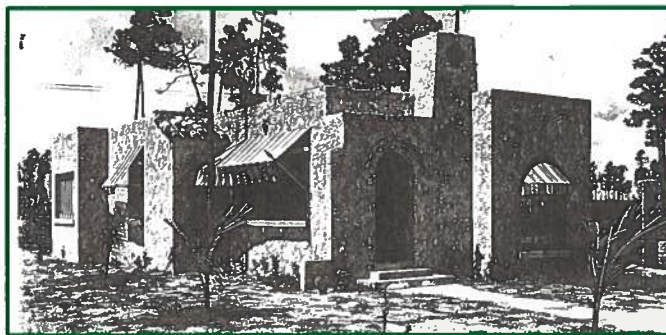
As seen in Figures 6, Milan Avenue (yellow line) is the southern boundary of the Granada Section and is comprised of 50' lots. The eight homes on Milan Avenue commissioned by Merrick are denoted in red in Figures 6. Note that at the time Merrick began developing Milan Avenue, it was not a contiguous road as he had not yet acquired the strip of land that would later be platted with El Rado Street. Hence, he concentrated his commissions to the east of this area. These eight homes were at 818 (Permit #344), 826 (Permit #343), 1029 (Permit # 385) (Figure 7, bottom), 1036 (Permit #387) (Figure 7, top), 1115 (Permit #384), 1129 (Permit #383), 1144 (Permit #386), and 1221 (Permit #402). Original plans for the homes at 818 and 826 Milan Avenue have not been located to date but they are attributed to architect H. George Fink. Lewis Brumm designed the homes at 1036 and 1212 Milan Avenue. Martin Hampton designed the remaining four.

As intended these homes provided a model for, and sparked interest in, developing Milan Avenue with moderately-priced homes. The houses on the street represent Merrick's vision for these smaller homes and many are amongst the earliest of what is now known as the Coral Gables Cottage.

*Frequently at night Mrs. Merrick and I drive through Coral Gables. We go into moderate-priced sections and we find something which gives me even more pride in the accomplishment of an ideal—people who formerly used stock plans can now have a well-appointed home... it is gratifying to see the difference in the attractiveness of one of our very moderately priced houses as compared to a house of similar cost in the unrestricted section of Miami.*

George Merrick, June 28, 1925

*Florida Times Union*



**Figures 7: 1036 [top] and 1029 [bottom]  
Milan Avenue, July 1924**

*Courtesy of Fishbaugh Collection*



**Figure 8: Francis Cyril  
Guest on Major, 1925**

*Courtesy of Florida Memory*

Records indicate that as Merrick began developing the Granada Section, his brother-in-law, Paul Kuhn, took on the financing of several of Merrick's initial commissions. The home at 1221 Milan Avenue was one. Kuhn married Merrick's sister Helen in 1920. Unfortunately, shortly after construction of the home was completed in 1924, and prior to its sale, Kuhn died suddenly. To aid Kuhn's widow and her three young children, Francis Cyril "Cy" Guest, a purchasing agent in Merrick's Coral Gables Home Department, assumed the final financing of the home. In 1925, with the incorporation of the City, Guest joined the Coral Gables Fire Department at the rank of lieutenant. In 1926 he became a member of the Coral Gables police force. (Figure 8) Two years later Sergeant Guest was tragically killed on Christmas Eve by a drunk driver as he directed traffic around a fire truck attending to a house fire. Guest was the first Coral Gables officer killed in the line of duty. His name is on the honor roll inscription on the National Law Enforcement Memorial in Washington, D.C. (Panel 56, West Wall, Line 7). Guest owned 1221 Milan Avenue for two years and leased it to seasonal visitors. In 1926 he sold the house to one of his tenants, William T. Yale. In 1927, Yale sold the home to incoming University of Miami professor, John Thom Holdsworth. Dr. Holdsworth established the School of Business and lived in the home for thirty-seven years. (See Ownership History section below for more information on Dr. Holdsworth and complete list of owners)



There were few homes built on Milan Avenue during Coral Gables second developmental period (1926-1944). The dire downturn in the economy, coming so closely on the heels of the September 1926 hurricane, had a drastic impact on new construction and the building of single-family homes ground to a halt. The Post-War prosperity that followed these lean years created an optimism which reigned through the 1950s and 1960s and resulted in the unprecedented building boom. During this era single-family homes in Coral Gables followed national trends both in numbers and in style and were a distinct departure from the ornamented, picturesque Mediterranean Revival style that had dominated the City's landscape since its inception. By the late 1950s Milan Avenue was built out with new residences and remains to present day as street of modest single-family homes. (Figures 9 & 10)



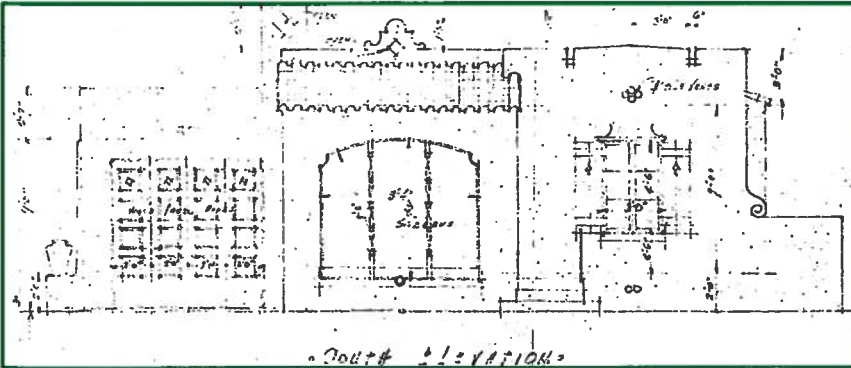
**Figure 9: Current Aerial Photograph**  
*Courtesy of Miami-Dade County Property Appraiser*



**Figures 10: Aerial Photographs: 1938 [top]; 1957 [bottom]**

Hence, the home at 1221 Milan Avenue retains its historic context. It was commissioned by City founder George Merrick to be a model for moderately-priced, attractive homes built in the Mediterranean Revival architectural style that defined his vision for the City. These modest homes were smaller in size and built with the same high-quality construction and features as other structures that shaped the new city in the early 1920s. The architect, Lewis Brumm, was hand-picked by Merrick and played a significant role in the development of this genre in the City. The home at 1221 Milan Avenue is amongst the earliest of what is now known as the Coral Gables Cottage and is a testament to the ideals espoused by Merrick.

**SIGNIFICANCE ANALYSIS AND DESCRIPTION**



**Figures 11:**  
**1221 Milan Avenue**  
**Front (South) Façade**  
**Permit #402, 1923**  
**[top]**

**Historic photo, 1967**  
**[bottom]**  
*Courtesy of Miami-Dade  
County Property Appraiser*

**Figures 12:**  
**1221 Milan Avenue**  
**Front (South) Façade**  
**Current Photos**  
**2009 [top]**  
*Courtesy of Google Earth*  
**2022 [bottom]**



The single-family home at 1221 Milan Avenue was commissioned by City founder George Merrick in 1923. Merrick purposefully developed and financed eight homes on Milan Avenue following Garden City precepts of offering housing for different income levels without sacrificing quality. These commissions exemplified his vision for a moderately-affordable yet attractive home in the Mediterranean Revival style. Hand-picked by Merrick for his experience in Mediterranean-inspired architecture, architect Lewis Brumm designed this two-bedroom home with a sleeping porch and a detached garage. As intended, these initial homes led to a series of modest homes being built in the 1920s along Milan Avenue. This modest residential type is now known as the Coral Gables Cottage. The home at 1221 Milan Avenue, one of the earliest homes built in the City, was built as an archetype upon which Coral Gables was founded.

Merrick and his original design team felt that Mediterranean-inspired architecture harmonized best with south Florida's climate and lifestyle. 1221 Milan Avenue is a fine example of adapting residential design to the rigors of South Florida's climate while maintaining the integrity of the Mediterranean Revival style and exemplifying Merrick's vision and goal. Its thick masonry walls were intended to keep the home cool and its light-colored stuccoed exterior to reflect the sun's heat. The varied windows afforded much needed ventilation and light in this tropical environment. Its construction over a crawl space supplied added ventilation and separation from the high-water table.

The home possesses numerous character-defining features of the Mediterranean Revival style. These include but are not limited to: textured stucco finish; combination of roof types and heights; a series of arched openings; a distinctive knob-arched opening facing the street; Spanish-inspired chimney with diamond-shaped cutouts; detached garage whose parapets were designed to mirror the main home; wing walls; barrel tile roof; decoratively arranged groups of round vents in diamond configuration; projecting bays; and recessed casement windows with protruding sills and swooped masonry hoods.

Visual assessment of the property as well as examination of permit documents and historic photographs indicates that there were few changes to the character-defining features of the home at 1221 Milan Avenue prior to the unpermitted alterations by the current owner. (see Description and Alteration section below) As per, Article 8, Section 8-103 of the Coral Gables Zoning Code--*Criteria for designation of historic landmarks or historic districts*: "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." Staff has determined that this property possesses sufficient integrity for designation and this property is part of the collection of quality residences planned during the land boom period.

### Extant Exterior Description and Alteration Discussion

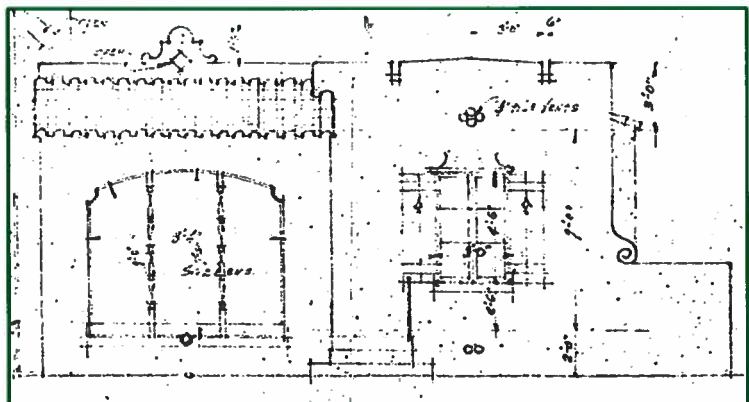
As illustrated in Figures 12, the home has had significant alterations and additions since the current owner purchased it in 1998. Permits for most of the work have not been found to date. On February 8, 2021, the property was cited by Code Enforcement for work without a permit. In June 2021 the owners filed a permit (BL-21-06-7236) for after-the-fact-work, namely for the addition on the front façade and for the side entry. The plans were rejected by Building, Structural, Electrical, and Zoning. The Zoning comments were extensive and included (but not limited to): proof of permitting for enclosing the garage, attaching it to the house and expanding it into the rear setback; the lack of a covered parking space which is required by Code; and FAR and ground coverage calculations. In March 2022 the plans were signed out by the owner and the permit remains open. Code enforcement of the violations is still active. On June 27, 2022, the owners filed a Historic Significance Determination application.

To provide clarity, a broad timeline for alterations to the property, as determined by available public records, is discussed below prior to the extant exterior description. A series of property surveys in Figures 16 and 18 aid in illustrating the timeline. As indicated by the foundation plan from the original 1923 permit (#402 – see Appendix A) the two-bedroom home had a screened covered front porch with entry from an open air entry terrace along the front façade and a screened sleeping porch at its northeast corner. A detached one-car garage sits at the northwest corner of the home. Note that the foundation plan shows a wall connecting the home to the garage, but was constructed with the SE corner of the garage touching the NW corner of the home. The 1978 property survey indicates that this footprint remained for over fifty years. (Figures 16)

It appears that the only alterations of note during this period involved roof tile and fenestration. Between 1940 and 1967 (Figures 14 & 11) the original barrel tile roof of the entry porch was replaced with a flat white tile. The roof returned to barrel tile in 1988 and the current S-tile roof was installed in 1997. There are permits on file for both of these interventions. Also between 1940 and 1967, the front screened entry porch was the enclosed for living space. Note that the vertical frame members retained the tripartite division of the original spindles. (Figures 11 & 13) In 1970 a permit was issued to replace nine wood windows with aluminum in same openings. In 1982 these jalousies were changed to awning windows and it appears that the screened sleeping porch was enclosed for living space at this time.

**Figure 13: Front (South)  
Façade,  
Permit #402, 1923**

*Note: parapet ornamentation  
eliminated  
prior to construction*



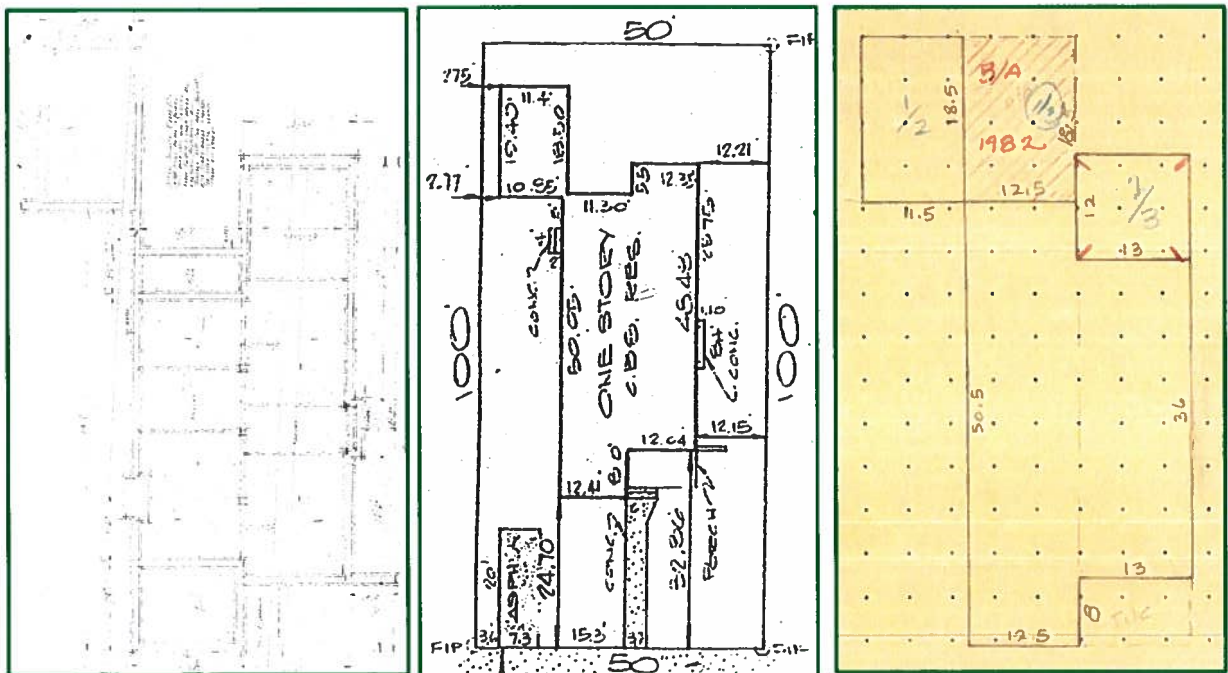


**Figures 14: Front (South) Façade: Historic Photos**  
 c.1940 [left]; 1979 [right] *Courtesy of Miami-Dade County Property Appraiser*

In 1981 a permit was filed for an addition and interior alterations. In January 1982 the owner rescinded the permit citing lack of funds and his permitting fees were refunded. The only work that progressed at this time was the construction of a roofed porch at the rear of the home along the east façade of the garage. (Figure 15) It is denoted as porch in the 1993 survey in Figures 18.



**Figure 15: 1982 Rear Porch**  
*Courtesy of Miami-Dade County Property Appraiser*



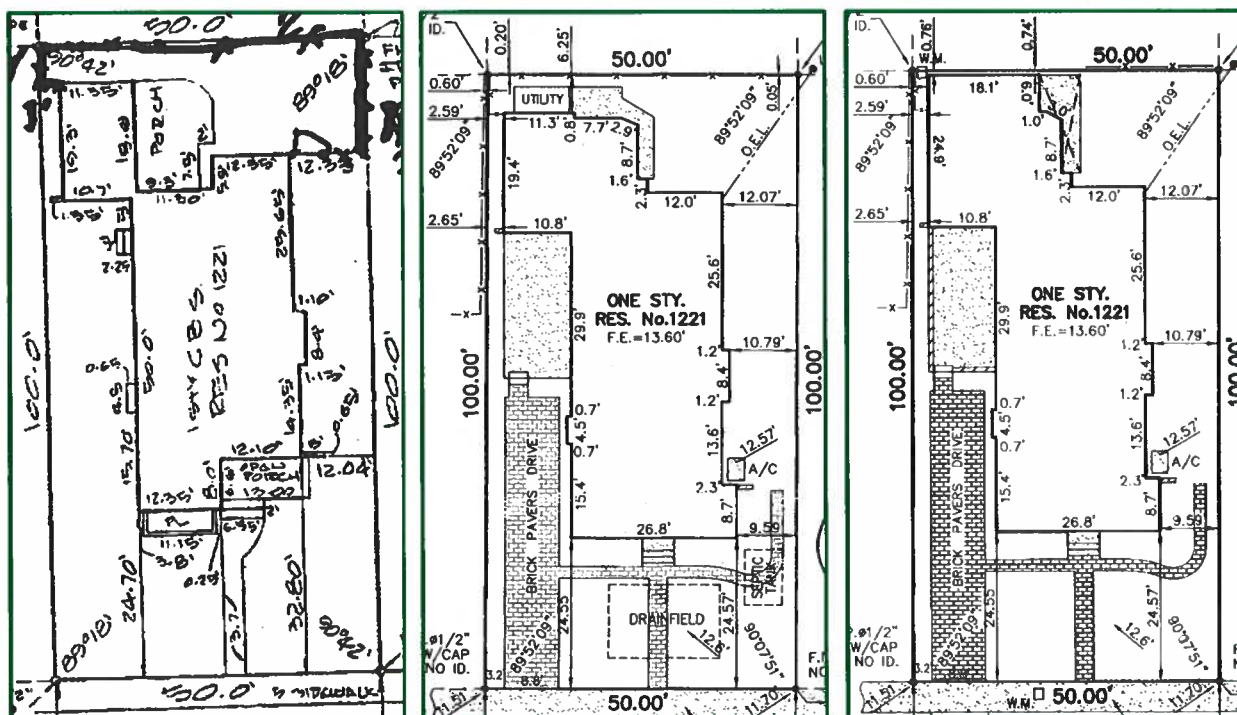
**Figures 16: Building Footprints**  
 1923 Permit #402 [left]; 1978 Property Survey [center] *Courtesy of Lannes & Garcia, Inc.;*  
 1982 Miami-Dade County Building Jacket [right]

In 1998 the current owners bought the property. As illustrated by the property surveys in Figures 18 and the photos in Figures 11 and 17-31, the home has had several additions and alterations during their tenure. Except for the brick paver walkways and driveway, permits for the following work have not been found or proffered to date.

Between 2009 and 2011 the open porch area on the front façade was enclosed for living space. A comparison of the property surveys indicates that the addition may be slightly larger than the original porch area; being extended to the east. (Figures 16 & 18) Also note that the front entry was moved from a side entry off the porch to a street-facing entry. Figures 17 show the home in 2009 and in 2014 after the alteration. A September 2011 property survey in Figures 18 documents that work had occurred by this time.



Figures 17: 1221 Milan Avenue,  
 Front (South) Façade:  
 2009 [top]; 2014 [bottom] Note: enclosed garage  
 Courtesy of Google Earth



Figures 18: Property Surveys

1993 [left] Courtesy of Kaplan & Bloom; 2011 [center] Courtesy of A. Fiore & Assoc.; 2021 [right] Courtesy of Noster, LLC

The 2011 property survey also illustrates other notable changes. Along the west side of the home, in front of the garage, a raised concrete pad was laid. This prevents access to the garage and leaves the home without the covered parking space required by the City of Coral Gables Zoning Code. It is also clear by this time the garage and the 1982 porch were enclosed for living space. By 2021, as recorded on the property survey, this area was extended approximately another six feet north into the rear setback. (Figures 18, 19, 30, & 31) The following description of the extant home will reference these alterations to provide clarity for the reader.



**Figure 19: 1221 Milan Avenue, Front (South) Façade, 2022**

The single-family residence sits on a 50' x 100' interior lot on the north side of the street. The home is approached by a brick paver walkway from the sidewalk to the front entry steps and by a matching paver driveway that runs along the western property line terminating at a raised patio. The one-story house sits above a crawl space and is built of cement block units covered with textured stucco. The living space of the home is primarily under a flat roof with simple parapets of varying heights. On the front façade the shed-roofed bays are clad in Spanish-S barrel tile. (Figures 19-21) The windows are recessed with protruding sills and are predominantly awning in type. A tapered, Spanish-inspired chimney stack rises along the side (west) façade. Note that some of the original diamond openings at its top have been infilled and that stack has been extended to incorporate a pyramidal barrel-tiled chimney cap. (Figures 14 & 19)



**Figure 20: Current Aerial, 2021**  
*Courtesy of Miami-Dade County Property Appraiser*



**Figures 21: Front (South) Façade [right] *Courtesy of Owner***  
*Note:* porch enclosure extends beyond the east façade of the original home  
**Southwest Corner, Arched Opening of Original Screened Porch, 2022 [left]**

The front south-facing façade is comprised of two shed-roof bays. The western bay is original to the home and served as a screened entry porch. The front-facing opening has a distinctive segmental arch with knobbed-corners. The opening on the west side façade is a semicircular arch. (Figures 21) Pre-1967, the screens were replaced with fixed windows. As mentioned above and illustrated in Figures 11, the framing of the first window iteration in these openings followed the location of the original spindles as closely as feasible. The current configuration does not. The eastern bay is the unpermitted c. 2011 infill addition whose footprint appears to be slightly larger than the original open-air porch. Its shed roof is slightly lower than the adjacent bay and the original round vent feature on the parapet face is still visible. The arched front door is now located at the center of the front façade at the western end of this bay. The entry steps are contemporaneous to the c. 2011 addition. Adjacent is a large window arranged in a triple window configuration with divided light center flanked by clear view panels. On the east façade of the c. 2011 addition an opening has been blocked up or this portion of the façade has remained unstuccoed and unpainted behind the vegetation. (Figures 22)



**Figures 22:  
East Façade of  
c. 2011 Addition:  
Southeast  
Corner of Home,  
2022**



The home was designed with two wing walls. Their locations and configurations are documented in the 1967 historic photo (Figures 11 & 23) and appear on the property surveys. (Figures 16 & 18) It is not clear how much of the original wing wall at the southeast corner of the home remains as it is obscured by vegetation. A portion may have been subsumed by the c. 2011 addition. However, a segment does appear to be extant and serving as a screen wall for the HVAC unit. (Figures 24)



**Figure 23: Historic Photo, 1967**  
*Red circles: Wing Walls*



**Figures 24:**  
**Wing Wall Obscured by Vegetation**

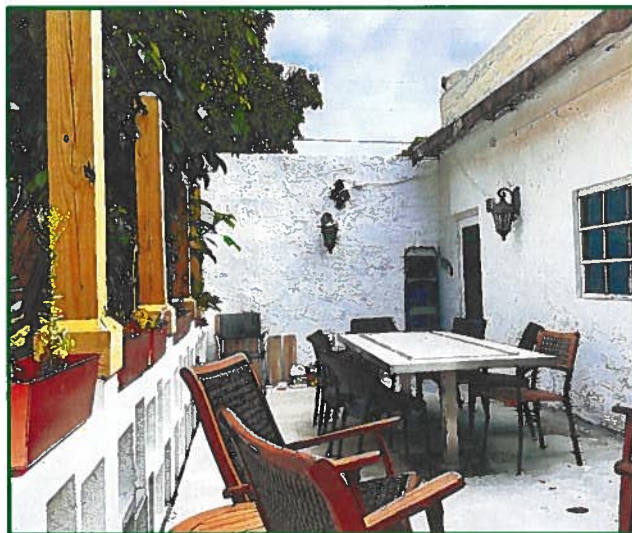
The only copy of the original Permit #402 (see Attachment A) found to date is from microfilm. While the copy has incurred some damage, the placement, size and type of fenestration and other features is easily determined. As illustrated in Figures 27 & 28 below, comparing the extant home with the permit, it is clear that the original portions of the west and east facades remain intact. The windows were originally casement in type and are currently primarily awning. Permits for the window installations specifically state that the original opening sizes were to be retained. Centered above many of the windows are the original groupings of round vents arranged in a diamond formation. (Figures 25 & 28)

A feature of particular note is the flared hoods above some the windows, such as those flanking the chimney on the west façade and center window on the east façade. The chamfered 'lintels' are extant and the masonry 'swoop' appears to have varying degrees of alteration but is a feature that could be restored based on the permit drawings. (Figures 25, 27, & 28)

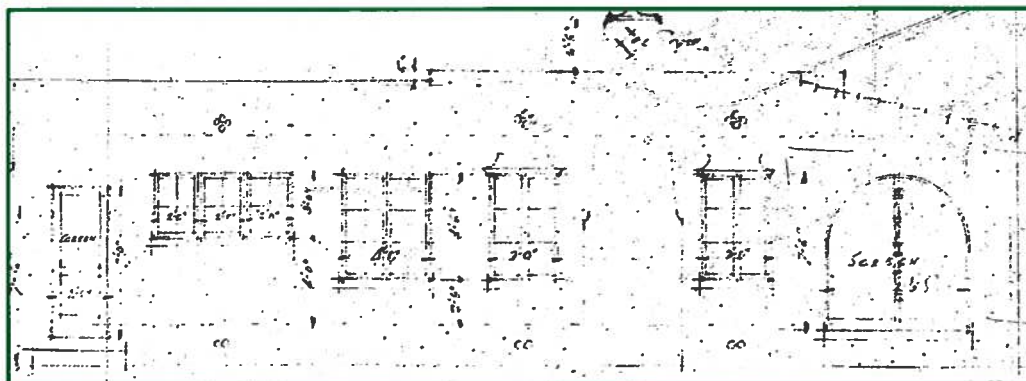


**Figures 25: Flared Hoods Feature Over Windows, 2022  
West Façade [left]; Lintel Detail, East Façade [right]**

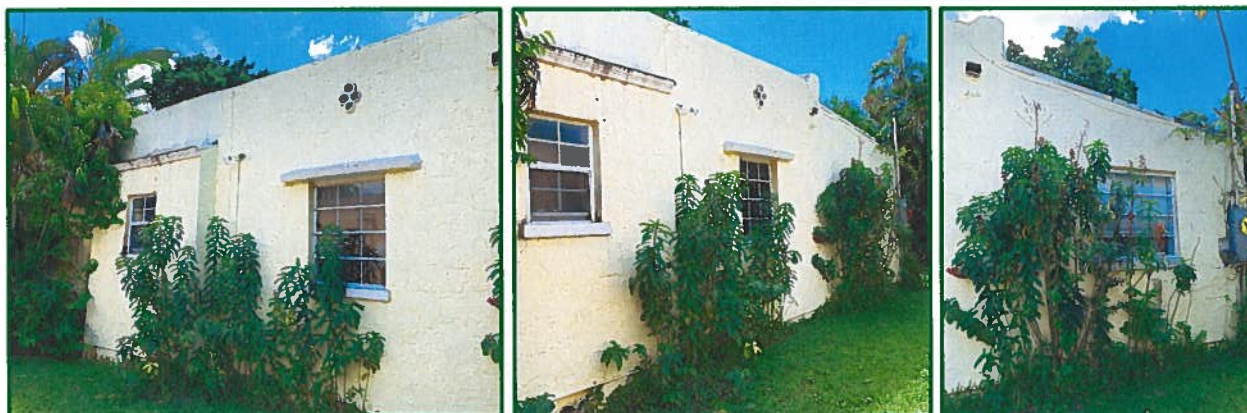
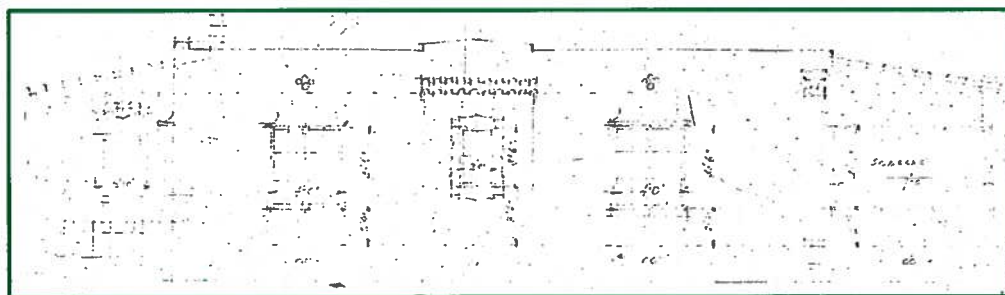
The west façade is shown below in Figures 27. The chimney has a shouldered configuration that tapers to a narrow square top. An original diamond cutout remains on the west face of the chimney. (Figure 25) The pyramidal, tiled chimney cap is a later addition. At the northern end of this façade is a side entry that originally stepped down to the driveway within only a few steps of the garage. It now leads onto the raised patio area. As discussed above, the raised patio was added by the current owner by 2011 and makes the original detached garage inaccessible. The vehicular door was blocked up as seen at the end of patio in Figure 26. Note the original round vents are extant. As discussed below, the garage is encapsulated to its north and east by additions and is now living space for the home.



**Figure 26: Raised Patio along West  
Façade and Enclosed Garage, 2022**  
*Courtesy of Owner*



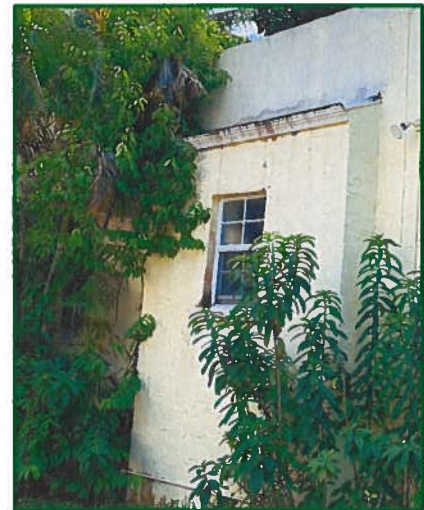
**Figures 27: West Façade**  
**Permit # 402, 1923 [top]**  
**Looking North, 2022 [bottom]:**  
**Northern end [left]; Central section [center]; Southern (Front) portion [right]**



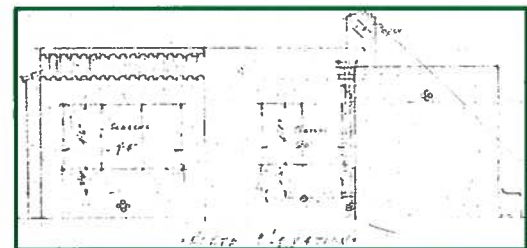
**Figures 28: East Façade: Permit #402, 1923 [top]**  
**2022 [bottom]**  
**Looking South: Southern section[left]**  
**Looking North: Center portion [center]; North (Rear) end -- enclosed sleeping porch [right]**

On the east façade is a shed-roofed, projecting pop-out bay feature. (Figures 28 & 29) It is positioned at the center of the flat-roofed portion of the façade. Originally clad in two rows of barrel tile, the small roof is currently untiled.

The northeast corner of the home was originally a screened sleeping porch. Like the bay on the east façade, it historically had a barrel tile roof on its shed roof and it is now unclad. (Figures 28, right & Figures 30) The screened openings porch were enclosed with awning windows by 1982. The size of the opening on the east (side) facade appears to have been retained along with its sill. (Figures 28, right) On the north (rear) façade the large opening was reduced and currently accommodates two windows. The original size of the opening is easily discernable in the change of stucco texture. (Figures 30)



**Figure 29: Side (East) Façade:  
Projecting Bay, 2022**



**Figures 30: Rear (North) Façade  
Permit #402, 1923 [top]  
Northwest Corner, 2022 [left]**

The remainder of the rear of the home is comprised of the enclosed 1982 porch, the enclosed original garage, and the post-2011 rear addition behind them. As discussed above, a roofed porch was added to the property in 1982 and recorded by the Miami-Dade Property Appraiser. (Figure 15 & Figure 16, right) It was nestled into the area where the southeast corner of the detached garage and northwest corner of the home met. (Figures 18, left) By 2011 the porch was enclosed as seen in left image in Figures 30 & 31. As recorded in the 2021 property survey (Figures 18, right), another addition was constructed that extended the porch addition by approximately six feet to the north and wraps behind the garage and into the rear setback. (Figures 31, top right) The bottom photo in Figures 31 is looking south and shows the west façade of this addition and of the original garage. From this photo it appears the west façade of the original garage retains its fenestration pattern and its diamond-shaped, grouped round vent feature.



**Figures 31: Rear Additions, 2022**

**Enclosed Porch [top left]**

**Addition into Rear Setback [top right] *Courtesy of Owner***

**West Façades of Rear Addition and Original Garage [bottom] *Courtesy of Owner***

### Ownership History

As stated above, the single-family residence was commissioned by city founder, George Merrick in 1923. It was one of eight homes he commissioned on the street. They were to serve as examples of high-quality modest homes, demonstrating his vision for this, and several adjacent streets, as he launched the Granada Section. His brother-in-law, Paul Kuhn contributed financing towards this home. When Kuhn died suddenly, a member of Merrick's sales team, Francis "Cy" Guest assumed his interest. Guest's contributions to the City of Coral Gables are noted above. In 1926 Guest sold the home to William T. Yale, a real estate salesman from New York who wintered in the Miami area. After the 1926 Hurricane, Yale divested his properties in Florida. He sold the home to Dr. John Thom Holdsworth in 1927. Holdsworth and his family lived in the home for the next thirty-seven years.

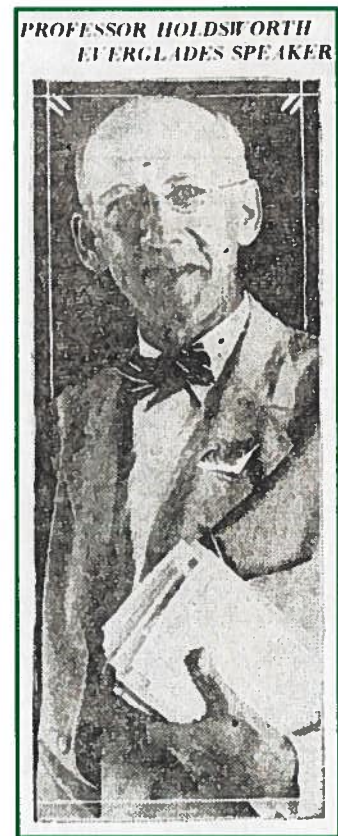
Dr. John Thom Holdsworth (1873-1965) (Figure 32) was a noted economist and professor. Born in Ontario, Canada, he received a Ph.D. in finance at the University of Pennsylvania in 1907. Before moving to Florida in 1926, he was the dean of the School of Business Administration at the University of Pittsburgh for ten years (1908-1918) and the vice president of the Bank of Pittsburgh from 1918 to 1923. In 1923 Holdsworth became the president of the Philadelphia Land Bank and for the next two years he served as a professor of money and banking at Princeton University.

By the mid-1920s Holdsworth was being heavily recruited to help launch the University of Miami. In 1925 he was the second faculty member appointed by the chairman of the regents. It was his function to develop the School of Business Administration. The following year he was appointed Professor of Economics and Director of Evening Courses. In 1929 he launched the School and became its first dean. He remained at the helm until he stepped down in 1941.

In 1964 Holdsworth sold the property at 1221 Milan Avenue to the University of Miami for \$1.00. The property then passed through several owners until the current owners purchased it in 1998. See below for a full listing of known owners.

#### **List of Owners, 1221 Milan Avenue**

1923-26	Francis Cyril Guest / Paul Kuhn
1926-27	William T. Yale
1927-64	John Thom Holdsworth & Adele Holdsworth
1964-65	University of Miami (\$1.00)
1965-67	Earl & Peggy Thomas
1967-69	Jesse & Betty Ann Christiansen
1969-79	Alan D. Vetterick & Nancy Lazarus Vetterick & Gary Lazarus
1979-84	Eduardo & Maria Baro
1984-88	Michael & Laurie Martin
1988-98	Kathleen Phillips
1998-Present	Peter & Anne Saliamonas



**Figure 32: Dr. John Thom Holdsworth**  
*Miami Herald, 2/5/1927*

**Architect: Lewis Brumm**

Lewis Davis Brumm was a California architect who moved his practice to Miami in the early 1920s. It is not clear if Coral Gables founder, George Merrick recruited Brumm, who had extensive experience in Spanish Colonial architectural design, but it is clear that soon after his arrival he became a core member of Merrick's design team.

Between 1923 and 1925 Brumm designed over a hundred homes commissioned by Merrick such as the residence at 1221 Milan Avenue. They ranged from larger two-story Spanish-inspired homes on the prominent Greenways to modest Mediterranean Revival style cottages along Genoa Street. During this time period Brumm and architect H. George Fink were largely responsible for producing the earliest designs that demonstrated Merrick's vision for moderately-priced homes.

Most of Brumm's work in Coral Gables occurred prior to the incorporation of the City. Hence, permits for many early homes are not readily available and the extent of Brumm's work is still being discovered. The following are single-family homes known to be designed by Brumm that are currently historically-designated and listed on the Coral Gables Register of Historic Places.

Individual historic landmarks:

- 1246 Asturia Avenue (Permit #215, 1923)
- 925 Castile Plaza (Permit #250, 1922-3)
- 1224 Granada Boulevard (Permit #252, 1923)
- 1507 Pizarro Street (Permit #391, 1924)
- 1243 Asturia Avenue (Permit #516, 1923)
- 2817 Columbus Boulevard (Permit #716, 1924)
- 644 Alhambra Circle (Permit #1280, 1925)

Contributing resources in historic districts:

- 1234 South Greenway Drive (Permit #500, 1923).
- 1319 Castile Avenue (Permit #501, 1923)
- 625 North Greenway Drive (Permit #525, 1923)
- 2203 Alhambra Circle (Permit #618, 1923)
- 1504 South Greenway Drive (Permit #620, 1923)
- 1115 North Greenway Drive (Permit #1681, 1925)
- 1225 North Greenway Drive (Permit #1279, 1925)

Lewis Brumm started the work on his Coral Gables home on Avenue Castille last week. Mr. Brumm has had wide experience in Spanish architecture, and was a resident of California for many years. His new home is distinctively Spanish, and one of the finest in the bungalow type at the Gables.

**Figure 33: Lewis Brumm Designing Home  
Coral Gables  
*Miami News*, 12/26/1922**

Mr. Lewis Davis Brumm has opened offices for the practice of architecture, at 412 Calumet Building, Miami, Fla., and desires manufacturers' samples and catalogues.

**Figure 34: Lewis Brumm Opens  
Architectural Office in Miami  
*Architectural Record*, March 1923**

## CASE HISTORY

A Historic Significance Request was submitted on June 27, 2022. Upon further review, Staff made the determination that the property located at 1221 Milan Avenue, did meet criteria for designation as a local historic landmark. The determination letter was issued to the property owner, Mr. and Mrs. Saliamonas, on August 1, 2022. As a result of this determination, the designation was scheduled for review by the Historic Preservation Board on September 21, 2022. At this meeting, the Board agreed with staff's recommendation and found that the property is significant to Coral Gables history and deemed it a Local Historic Landmark, listing it on the Coral Gables Register of Historic Places. Following the results of the Board meeting, the property owner submitted a Notice of Appeal to the City Clerk. The appeal was heard by the City Commission on May 23, 2023. A resolution by the City Commission remanded the matter with direction to the Board to further review the designation and provide a more detailed explanation as to the reasoning for either designating or not designating the property as a local historic landmark.

## 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.

Constructed in 1923 in the Mediterranean Revival Style the property at 1221 Milan Avenue (legally described as Lot 9, Block 39, Coral Gables Granada Section Revised) 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:

### **A. Historical, Cultural significance**

Criterion 4: Exemplifies the historical, cultural, political, economic, or social trends of the community

- When first launching Coral Gables during 1921-22, Merrick's team designed and built homes throughout the community to demonstrate their Mediterranean-inspired vision. In 1923, as Merrick substantially increased his land holdings, he began to develop streetscapes following Garden City precepts. Unlike earlier sections, the Granada Section was platted with large areas allocated for moderately-priced and smaller-sized homes. Records indicate that as Merrick began developing the Granada Section, his brother-in-law, Paul Kuhn, took on the financing of several of Merrick's initial commissions. The home at 1221 Milan Avenue was one. As



intended these homes provided a model for, and sparked interest in, developing Milan Avenue with moderately-priced homes. The houses on the street represent Merrick's vision for these smaller homes, and was built as an archetype upon which Coral Gables was founded.

**B. Architectural significance**

Criterion 1: Portrays the environment in an era of history characterized by one (1) or more distinctive architectural style

- Founder George E. 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, cohesively-designed, Mediterranean-inspired city which is now considered one of the first modern planned communities in the United States. The use of Mediterranean designs was one of the featured selling points in early promotional materials. The home at 1221 Milan Avenue was built in the Mediterranean Revival architectural style that defined his vision for the City. The architect, Lewis Davis Brumm, had extensive experience in Spanish Colonial architectural design and was a key member of Merrick's design team.

Criterion 2: Embodies those distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, or period, or method of construction

- The existing home, although altered, possesses numerous character-defining features of the Mediterranean Revival style. These include but are not limited to: textured stucco finish; combination of roof types and heights; a series of arched openings; a distinctive knob-arched opening facing the street; Spanish-inspired chimney with diamond-shaped cutouts; detached garage whose parapets were designed to mirror the main home; wing walls; barrel tile roof; decoratively arranged groups of round vents in diamond configuration; projecting bays; and recessed casement windows with protruding sills and swooped masonry hoods.

**Staff finds the following:**

The property located at 1221 Milan Avenue is significant to the City of Coral Gables history based on:

**HISTORICAL, CULTURAL AND ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

**Therefore, Staff recommends the following:**

A motion to **APPROVE** the Local Historic Designation of the property at **1221 Milan Avenue** (legally described as Lot 9, Block 39, Coral Gables Granada Section Revised) based on its historical, cultural, and architectural significance.

Respectfully submitted,



Anna C. Pernas  
Historic Preservation Officer

Selected References

- Archival Photograph Collection, City of Coral Gables, Historical Resources Department.
- Aerial Photography: Florida Collection. University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries.
- Building Records, Building and Zoning Department, Microfilm Division, Coral Gables, Florida.
- Building Permit Record Books, City of Coral Gables, Historical Resources Department.
- Merrick, George, *Coral Gables Homes, Miami Florida*, c.1925
- Merrick, George, *Coral Gables Miami Riviera: Heart of the American Tropics*, c.1925
- Miami-Dade County Property Appraisers Department Records
- Miami-Dade County Clerk, County Property Records
- Milas, Aristide J. & Ellen Uguccioni, Coral Gables Miami Riviera: an architectural guide, University Press of Florida, 2004.
- Newspapers.com
- Florida Union Times
- “Merrick’s Romantic Story of Great Coral Gables Development” June 28, 1925.
- Miami Herald
- “1221 Milan Ave” sale, February 1, 1979, p.213.
- “1221 Milan Ave” sale, February 21, 1999, p.129.
- “Coral Gables To Have Big Building Program: 50 Moderate Priced Homes to be Built in Northwest Section of Suburb” October 15, 1923, p.14.
- “Coral Gables Man Dies in Columbus, O.” July 14, 1924, p.2.
- “Merrick will Market New Granada Section” November 19, 1923, p.7.
- “Motorist Arrested for Officer’s Death” December 27, 1928, p.2.
- “Prominent on Faculty at University of Miami” September 25, 1927, p.20.
- “Start of 40 Dwellings; 15 Miles of Streets” September 24, 1923, p.11.
- “University of Miami Has Three New Deans” June 10, 1928, p.2.
- Miami News
- “58 Residences Will Be Built in Coral Gables” November 1, 1923, p.1.
- “Coral Gables Marks 15 Years of Progress Since Founding” April 4, 1940, p.17.
- “Dr. John Holdsworth, Ex-Dean at U-M” obituary, October 23, 1965, p.13.
- “Everyone Is Talking About What We Are Doing at Coral Gables” February 10, 1922, p.23.
- “Granada Section – Another Opportunity” November 22, 1923, p.19.
- “Many Spanish Homes to be Constructed in the Next Few Months” April 30, 1923, p.16.
- “Opening Auction Sales at Coral Gables—Miami’s Master Suburb” November 25, 1921, p.18-19.
- “Paving the Way for ‘Castles in Spain’” December 7, 1921, p.19.

New York Times

“Miami and the story of its remarkable growth: an interview with George E. Merrick” March 15, 1925.

Parks, Arva Moore, *George Merrick's Coral Gables "Where Your 'Castles in Spain' Are Made Real!"* Ponce Circle Development LLC with Centennial Press, Miami, Florida, 2006.

Parks, Arva Moore, George Merrick, Son of the South Wind: Visionary Creator of Coral Gables, University Press of Florida, 2015.

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Real Estate Records for 1221 Milan Avenue, Historical Resources Department, Coral Gables, Florida.

United State Census Bureau. Various years.

## 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.

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.

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Property Address:	1221 Milan Avenue
Lot Description:	interior lot
Date of Construction:	1924
Use:	single-family residence
Style:	Mediterranean Revival
Construction Material:	concrete block covered with textured stucco
Stories:	one-story
Roof Types:	flat, shed

**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

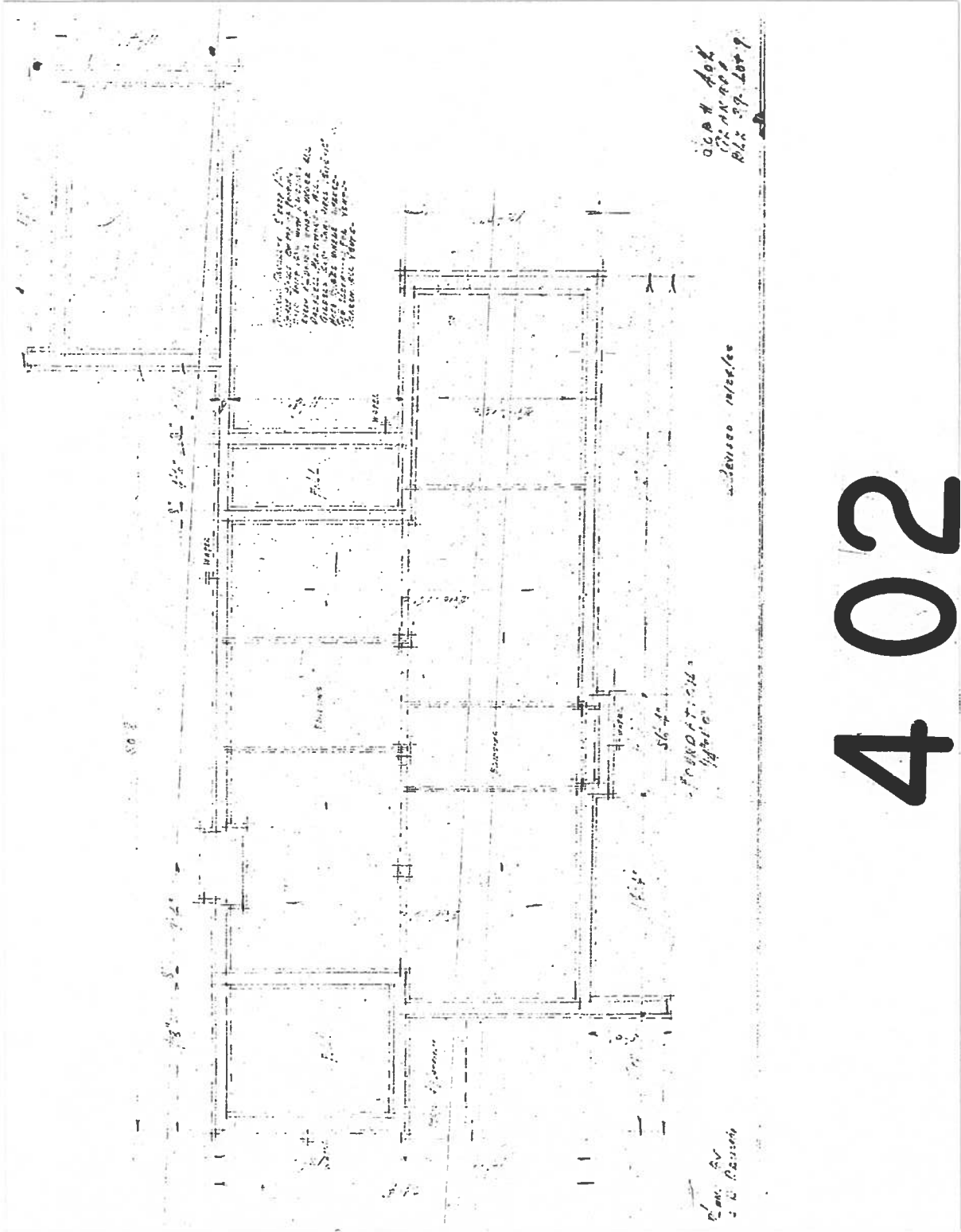
Style: Mediterranean Revival

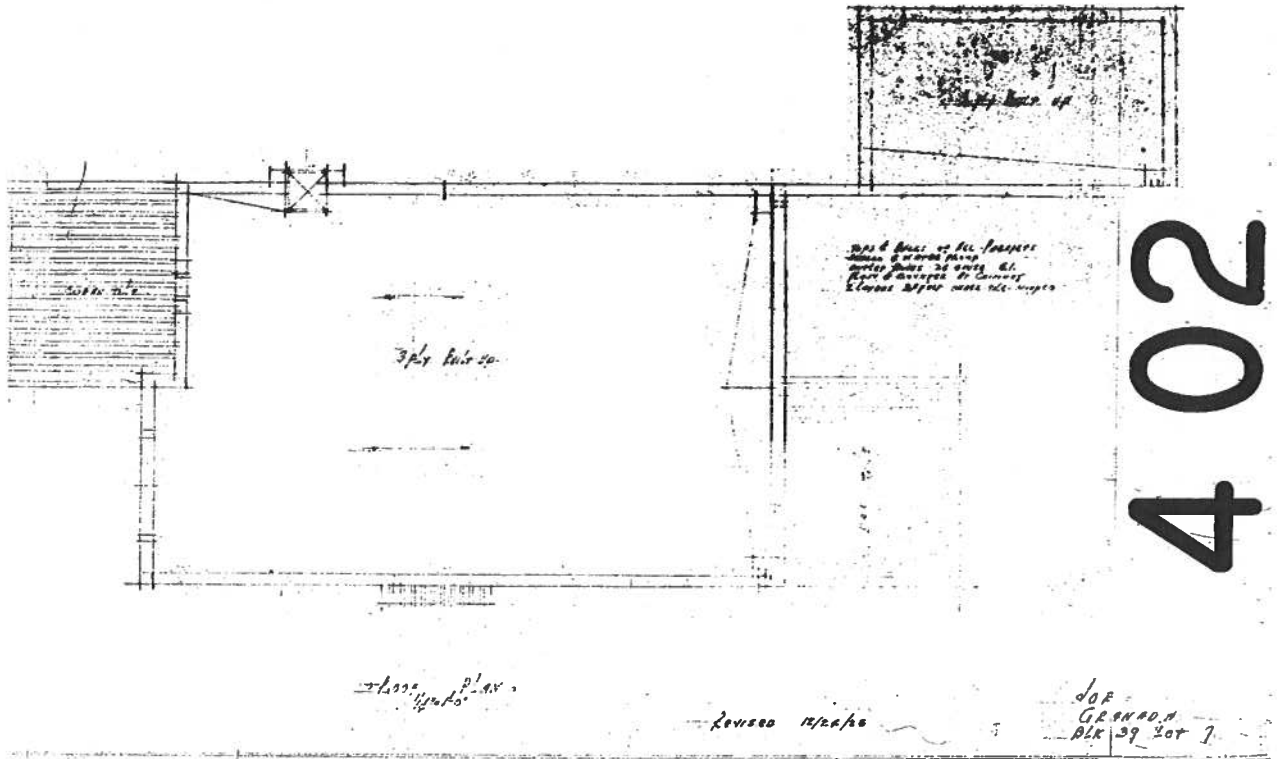


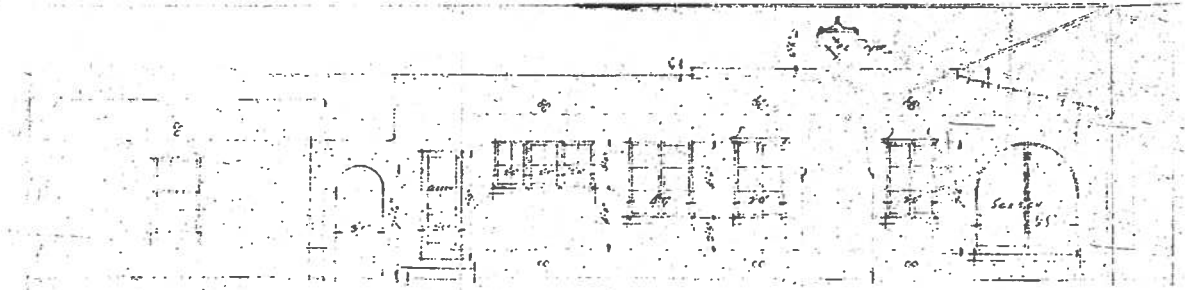
- ✓ thick masonry walls
- ✓ textured stuccoed exterior walls
- ✓ construction over a crawl space
- ✓ combination of roof types and heights
- ✓ arched openings – in particular a distinctive knob-arched opening
- ✓ Spanish-inspired chimney with diamond-shaped cutouts
- ✓ detached garage whose parapets were designed to mirror the main home
- ✓ wing walls
- ✓ barrel tile roof
- ✓ decoratively arranged groups of round vents in diamond configuration
- ✓ projecting bays
- ✓ recessed casement windows with protruding sills and swooped masonry hoods
- ✓ flat roofs with stepped parapets

# Appendix A: Permit #402, 1923

## Architect: Lewis Brumm







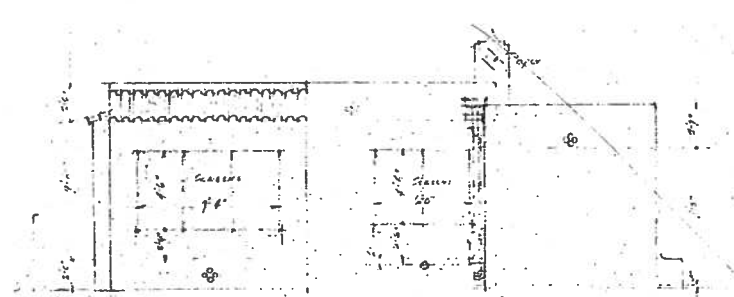
Plan of the building



Plan of the building

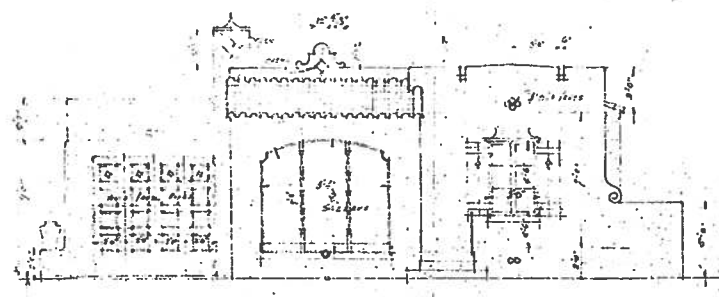
Plan of the building

Plan of the building



Plan of the building

See drawing in the book  
for typical details  
of the building



Plan of the building

Plan of the building

Plan of the building

Plan of the building

402