

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Marguerita Lane Historic District
Los Angeles County, California

Marguerita Lane is eligible for listing in the National Register as a historic district under Criterion C. The district is locally significant in the context of Period Revival architecture as an excellent collection of small-scale Spanish Colonial Revival single-family houses. While there are many distinguished examples of Spanish Colonial Revival style houses in Pasadena, the district is unique in that it was developed as a unified tract of houses in similar styles and on relatively small lots. Virtually unchanged since it was developed between 1927 and 1930, the district retains a high level of physical integrity.

Many scholars attribute the rise of the Spanish Colonial Revival style to the Panama-California Exposition in 1915. Bertram Goodhue (1869-1924) was the principal architect of the exposition. The style he chose was an adaptation of the ecclesiastical architecture of 18th century Spain. Now referred to as Churrigueresque, the style was named after a family of Spanish architects and sculptors who applied elaborate ornamentation to the Spanish Baroque.

The following year Goodhue was invited by his good friend George Hale (1868-1938) to develop a new plan for Caltech. To some extent, the Goodhue plan followed an earlier campus plan by Hunt and Grey. In 1921, Goodhue's first building, Bridge Hall of Physics, was built, uniting in its highly original design the simple lines of the early modern movement with decorative elements contrasting with smooth stucco surfaces, which characterized the Spanish Baroque. Although Goodhue died in 1924, his New York office carried out the building of the two wings of the west campus plan in accordance with his original designs.

Goodhue's only house in Pasadena was located at 1245 South Grand Avenue. Designed for John N. Willys in 1916, it once had a spectacular Churrigueresque style entrance. In 1950, the house was split into three separate houses - the other two now have addresses at 1210 South Grand Avenue and 695 Columbia Street. In addition, the chauffeur's cottage is now a separate house at 1215 South Grand Avenue.

One of the first Churrigueresque style houses in Pasadena, the Garford House at 1126 Hillcrest Avenue, was designed by Marston & Van Pelt. Designed in 1916, the house has a front door framed in elaborate Spanish Baroque forms made so popular by the exposition, and an L-shaped plan enclosing a patio, onto which major rooms open.

The Panama-California Exposition helped to promulgate Spanish architecture as the appropriate California tradition, and soon Spanish forms were adopted as the leitmotif for building types and whole urban districts to which the style had not been previously applied. Several towns, including Fullerton and Santa Barbara, established policies requiring the use of the style. Between 1920 and 1930, thousands of single-family houses and apartment buildings were designed in the style to house the soaring population. By this time, the style contained a greater element of fantasy and less of a scholarly

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examination of what the buildings of the Spanish colonists had looked like. The buildings were often composed of details and elements drawn directly from the buildings of Spain and other countries of the Mediterranean, more often than from the actual Spanish Colonial buildings remaining in the region such as the California missions. The character-defining features of the style include courtyards, tiled roofs, Churrigueresque ornamentation, slightly rustic exterior plaster finish, wrought iron details such as door and window grilles, pierced stucco screens, fountains, and decorative glazed tile (the last three being references to Islamic Spain.)

The Marguerita Lane Historic District was planned in 1927 by Dr. Alexander Schutt as a private street of artist studios which he called "studio houses."¹ Very few artists, in fact, occupied the houses. The City Directories document that individuals representing a wide variety of occupations lived in the houses. Dr. Schutt briefly lived in the house at 284.

Building permit records document that fourteen of the houses were designed by either Denman Schutt or the Schutt Brothers, and in some cases they functioned as the contractor as well. Denman and Burton Schutt, the Schutt Brothers, were born² in Racine, Wisconsin and received their earlier education in Bismark, North Dakota and Pasadena, California. Their father, Dr. Alexander Schutt appears to have developed Marguertia Lane as a way of advancing his son's careers as architects and builders. However, Marguertia Lane is the only known work of the Schutt Brothers. There after, they worked independently or under the name Schutt and Scott. Denman opened an architecture office in 1927, while Burton opened his own office in 1930, after working briefly in Hawaii. Their only work listed in the National Register, is the De Golyer House and Gardens in Texas, which is now the Dallas Arboreteum. It was designed under the name, Schutt and Scott for oilman Everett De Golyer 1939. By this time, Denman had changed his surname Scott. Their other major work as a team was a residence for Patricia Detring in Bel-Air, California in 1942. Both died relatively young, Denman died in 1948 while Burton died in 1954. Arguably, Burton had a much more successful career than Denman. His work was widely published in newspapers and architectural journals of the day. He designed numerous residential and commercial buildings, mostly in the communities of Bel-Air and Beverly Hills. He is best known for designing the Bel-Air Hotel in 1945.

Most of the Spanish Colonial Revival details described above can be found in one or more of the houses in the district. Because of the small scale of the houses in the district, it appears as though the designers decided to focus on one or two elements of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture rather than trying to

¹ "Art Village is Planned for City." *Pasadena Star News*, August 9, 1927, part 2, page 1.

² Burton was born 5/16/1906.

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include as many details as possible in each house. Thus, the district collective illustrates the character-defining features of the style.

Some of the most interesting design features were introduced in the first houses in the district. On the north side of the street, the recess of the windows grows consistently deeper from 225 to 245 (west to east), showing an overall design plan for the district. The "birdcage" balcony at 234 is an eye-catching feature visible from the entrance to the street, and the plaster scroll on this house's entry wing wall is a surprising feature that only meets the eye after a careful look at this house. One of the other early houses on the block, 254, features an asymmetrical gabled roof that is a rare form for its time.

Every house in the district is sufficiently intact to contribute to the character of the district. Seven detached garages are also contributors. The other garages, however, are attached to the houses either directly or by breezeways and are considered part of the main building.

Most neighborhoods in Pasadena developed during the 1920s and/or 1930s reflect a variety of Period Revival styles that might include Italian Renaissance, Monterey, Tudor, as well as the Spanish Colonial. The Marguerita Lane Historic District is unique in that it is one of the few concentrations of Spanish Colonial Revival style houses on a single street. This can be attributed to the fact that it was developed as a tract by an individual, Dr. Alexander Schutt, with a singular vision. There are only two comparable developments in Pasadena, Oak Knoll Gardens and Arboleda Drive. Oak Knoll Gardens was developed by the B.O. Kendall Company between 1921 and 1922 and includes twenty-six French and American Colonial Revival style houses. Arboleda Drive was planned in 1929 by Margerete Morrow and designed by the architect Myron Radon. It consists of twelve houses and four garages.