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1350 LINDA RIDGE ROAD

PASADENA

Style: Contemporary

Year of Completion: 1950

Original Building Permit: #9660-K, issued by the City of Pasadena on April 12, 1950 for a one-story 3,500-square-foot residence and carport to be built on a 1.5-acre property. The house, to have a maximum height of twelve feet, would have a concrete foundation, wood-frame walls covered in plaster, a flat composition roof, and a brick chimney.

A copy of this permit is attached.

Cost to Build: \$37,500—a greater-than-average cost for a house of this size at the time.

Architect: Gregory Ain, considered to be the first local architect to work in the Modern idiom in Los Angeles. Please see the attached biographical materials.

Builder: Richard M. Illsley, who built a number of modern houses in Pasadena. Additional biographical information is attached.

Landscape Architect: Garrett Eckbo, who is said to have also designed the swimming pool. A short biography of Mr. Eckbo is attached.

First Owner: Walter W. Ralphs, Jr., a grocery-store executive, who intended to share the house with his wife Joanne P. Ralphs and their three children. Mr. Ralphs purchased the undeveloped parcel in March 1949. Mrs. Ralphs became a co-owner in 1951.

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Walter William Ralphs, Jr., was born in Los Angeles on February 27, 1916. Walter's grandfather, Walter B. Ralphs, was a partner of his brother George A. Ralphs who founded what is now the Ralphs supermarket chain in 1874. After graduating from Stanford University, Walter, Jr., became part of the family executive team that administered the chain until it was sold in 1968. A *Los Angeles Times* article from February 1960 is attached which synthesizes the history of Ralphs and includes a photo of Walter, Jr.

Walter and Joanne Ralphs were married in 1939. They had three children: Diane (born ca. 1942), Anthony (born ca. 1947), and William (born ca. 1948). The family had barely settled into their new Linda Ridge home before Mr. and Mrs. Ralphs separated in January 1952. Mrs. Ralphs later sued her husband for divorce. Child-custody and alimony disputes followed. Articles documenting the family rift are attached. Mrs. Ralphs evidently continued to live in the Linda Ridge house until it was sold in 1955.

After leaving the Ralphs firm, Walter took over a 40,000-acre cattle and hay ranch in Siskiyou County, noted for its production of organic beef. Remembered as a champion senior tennis player, he died in Beverly Hills on July 6, 2010 at the age of 94. A transcript of his obituary from the *Los Angeles Times* is attached.

Other Building Permits: The City issued a permit in September 1950 for the construction of a swimming pool, to cost \$3,500. Paddock Pools was the builder. This permit is missing from the file.

A water softener was installed in March 1955.

A permit was issued in October 1988 to construct a wood deck at a cost of \$4,000. Tyler & Cobleigh, Inc., of Pasadena was the contractor. A copy of this permit is attached.

The house was re-roofed with Class A materials in April 2006 for \$18,180.

A sewer lateral was replaced in June 2009.

(Note: Permits for very minor alterations, such as water heater replacement, are not included. Also not included are permits missing from the file or whose microfilmed or digital copies are indecipherable and not otherwise recorded or described in Assessor's records.)

Assessor's Records: The Pasadena City Assessor first visited the property on March 26, 1951 and recorded a newly-completed single one-story residence and garage. The house had a concrete-slab foundation, walls of plaster, a flat gravel roof, boxed cornices, and detailed trim. Heat was provided by two fireplaces and a radiant system. There were fifteen plumbing fixtures. Lighting fixtures were rated of "good" quality. Interior finishes were described as "detailed" and ceilings were insulated. There was one hardwood floor—all the other floors were cement. Overall construction quality of the house was rated "good"—the highest category available on the Assessor's form.

The Assessor estimated the square footage at 3,823. The house contained two living rooms (one may have been a dining room), six bedrooms, four tiled bathrooms, and a kitchen. The Assessor called the garage a "carport" which measured 25 by 26 feet at its largest points. Also on the property were 100 linear feet of 6-foot-tall wire fencing.

The Assessor returned on September 5, 1951 to record the completion of a swimming pool. Of irregular shape, it measured twenty by forty feet at its largest dimensions.

The Los Angeles County Assessor currently estimates the square footage of the house at 3,678 with six bedrooms and four bathrooms.

Copies of the City Assessor's building records are attached.

(Note: The Pasadena City Assessor's Office ceased operations in 1974. Their square footage totals often differed from those of the Los Angeles County Assessor's Office, since they frequently included garages, terraces, patios, etc. in their computation. It is advisable to rely on the County Assessor's square footage figures since they are more up-to-date and consistent.)

Other Owners and Residents: The property has had only one other owner. In August 1955 title was transferred to Everett A. Palmer, Jr. His wife Margaret Ann (Niedringhaus) Palmer joined him as co-owner in 1960. They shared the house with their four children. Mr. Palmer, born in New Jersey and a graduate of Cornell and the Harvard Business School, was in the process of establishing the Forge Die Company when he moved into the Linda Ridge house. His firm was characterized as "the most enterprising steel die business on the west coast." Mr. Palmer was active in the Neighborhood Church, the Boy Scouts, and the YMCA. He also served as vice-president of Barcelona Apartments, Inc., a multi-family structure located at 85 North Madison Avenue.

Mrs. Palmer, known as "Peg," raised in Pittsburgh and a graduate of the Fine Arts School of the Carnegie Institute of Technology, was active in Pasadena's cultural life. She initiated a cultural arts program for the city schools, served as president of the Assistance League, was a member of the Arts Alliance, and spearheaded the establishment of what would become the Pacific Asia Museum in the Grace Nicholson building on North Los Robles Avenue. Her Linda Ridge home was "a treasure trove of Oriental arts and crafts." Mr. and Mrs. Palmer were also members of the Flintridge Riding Club, the Newport Harbor Yacht Club, and the Valley Hunt Club. Biographical articles on the Palmers are attached.

The Palmer family has owned the Linda Ridge property for almost sixty years.

Notes: Some original drawings of the house are in the Gregory Ain collection at the Architecture and Design Collection of the University of California, Santa Barbara.

The Ralphs house is included in Gebhard and Winter's *An Architectural Guidebook to Los Angeles*. They attribute the design to Ain, Johnson and Day. "One of Ain's largest houses, it has been well maintained over the years." A copy of this citation is attached.

The house is also discussed in the 2008 publication *Gregory Ain: The Modern Home as Social Commentary*. An excerpt from the book, alluding to friction between the architect and his client, is attached.

Significance: The City of Pasadena has determined that the Ralphs house and its gardens are potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. A copy of the City's record is attached.

Sources:

Los Angeles County Assessor
 Los Angeles Public Library
 City of Pasadena, Planning and Development Department (Design & Historic
 Preservation Section)
 Pasadena Public Library
 Pasadena Museum of History (Research Library and Archives)

Ain, Gregory, Anthony Denzer, Thomas S. Hines.
Gregory Ain: The Modern Home as Social Commentary. New York, Rizzoli,
 2008.

Gebhard, David and Robert Winter. *An Architectural Guidebook to Los Angeles*.
 Salt Lake City, Gibbs-Smith, 2003.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*.
 New York, Knopf, 1984.

Pineda, Manuel and C. Caswell Perry. *Pasadena Area History*.
 Pasadena, Historical Publishing Company, 1972.

City Directories: 1950-

Los Angeles Times: May 30, 1952; August 19, 1954; September 2, 1954;
 March 21, 1958; February 21, 1960; July 23, 2010
Pasadena Star-News: December 7 and 8, 1969; May 3, 1987

Internet Resources, including California Index, California Death Index,
 Gale Biography Master Index, Ancestry.com, and Historic *Los Angeles Times*
 Database.

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2. Ralphs House, 1950
Ain, Johnson, and Day
(C. Raimond Johnson)
1350 Lindaridge Road

One of Ain's largest houses, it
has been well maintained over
the years.

Gebhard and Winter, p. 384

Another upper-class client was Walter Ralphs, a bakery and grocery store magnate. He commissioned a house because, he recalled, Ayn "had a great reputation... and was famous as *the* modern architect."⁴⁷ Work on the Ralphs residence began in February 1950, before the MoMA house was unveiled, indicating that Ayn's prominence was secured locally prior to the museum house. For a spectacular Pasadena site above the Arroyo Seco and Rose Bowl, the house was planned to accommodate the family's three children and that iconic feature of the Southern California postwar house: the swimming pool. According to Ralphs, Ayn laid out the schematic design while Garrett Eckbo designed the plantings and an unusually shaped pool, which included both angular and serpentine lines. Joseph Johnson supervised the construction, a practice consistent with the partners' habit of allocating site supervision to whomever lived nearest the job.

In order to respond to the topography and the views, and to make room for the pool, Ayn gave the Ralphs House a V-shaped plan. Ayn wanted to "make a feature" of the unusual form by placing an overhead lattice construction at the joint in the V, to articulate the entrance and connect the house's two wings. Ralphs questioned the cost and the necessity of the lattice work and this became a source of friction between the two. Johnson simply said: "There were client problems."⁴⁸ Although the client appreciated that the house was oriented to views, in 1950 smog problems rapidly spoiled the region's skies. Ralphs worried that the best feature of the house would be lost. Ayn, in a droll response, told him to think of his views "like a Chinese painting."⁴⁹

"No one seemed to like the Ralphs House," according to Johnson, probably referring to compromises demanded by their insistent client.⁵⁰ This was also another testament to the architects' preference for smaller, low-cost projects. At a final construction cost of approximately \$35,000, the Ralphs residence was one of the most extravagant houses of Ayn's career, but certainly not one of his finest. Although Ralphs and his wife were "happy with what he designed," they sold the house a year later, barely recovering their costs.

GREGORY AIN

Architect

Gregory Ain, who once said that architecture was meant “to enhance the quality of living,” was born in Pittsburgh into a Russian-Jewish immigrant family on March 28, 1908. His father was a clothing merchant. By the time Gregory was twelve years old, the family had moved to Los Angeles. Between 1924 and 1926 Ain studied mathematics at U.C.L.A., but in 1927 transferred to U.S.C. where he graduated with a degree in architecture the following year.

Ain’s first job was as a draftsman for the pioneer Southern California architects Rudolph Schindler and Richard Neutra. This was a good match since at the time Ain was very dissatisfied with his beaux arts training. Once he had gained the reputation as the first locally-produced architect to work in the Modern idiom, Ain established his own practice in 1935. While he developed many residential designs on his own, he also collaborated with Harwell Hamilton Harris. One of his largest projects in the 1930s was the Dunsmuir Flats low-cost housing development at 1281 South Dunsmuir Avenue in Los Angeles. Its classic Modernist style was featured in many architectural periodicals of the time. In 1940, Ain received a Guggenheim Fellowship to continue his work in low-cost housing, his designs notable for their site planning and innovative floor plans. He was said to be among “the first architects in California to refine and dignify low-cost housing.”

Around 1947, Ain went into partnership with Alfred Day and Joseph L. Johnson. Day (1909-1992) was a 1936 graduate of Cornell. Johnson (1911-1987) was the son of famed Pasadena architect Reginald Johnson. Although Ain would partner with other designers and draftsmen at the same time, Ain, Johnson & Day was very productive, especially in the late 1940s. The three men, working together, designed at least fourteen single-family residences, seven office buildings, and three multi-home developments over a four-year period, many in International or other avant-garde styles. Several of their clients were celebrities, such as singer Lena Horne. Ain and his partners were popular with their clients because they would compromise style if it clashed with what the user wanted. A number of their works were reported on in the *Los Angeles Times* and in architectural periodicals, such as *Arts & Architecture*, *Architectural Forum*, and *The Architectural Record*.

A 1,400-square-foot exhibition house Ain, Johnson & Day designed in New York for the Museum of Modern Art and the *Woman’s Home Companion* magazine was singled out for praise. Its spaciousness, openness and flexible floor plan were particularly noteworthy. Standard materials, such as striated plywood, were used creatively, and the expanses of glass, sliding and folding walls, and abundance of built-ins were seen by Easterners as the epitome of informal California living. Also given publicity were the multi-family developments for which Ain and his associates designed residences that, while being easily replicated, offered their owners variety, privacy, and convenient living. Landscape architect Garrett Eckbo joined the Ain team on several of these projects.

Between 1947 and 1963, Ain served as a visiting professor of design at U.S.C. He subsequently spent four years as Dean of the School of Architecture at Pennsylvania State University. He returned to Los Angeles in 1967 and retired from teaching.

Gregory Ain died on January 9, 1988 at the age of 79. His papers are in the collection of the University Art Museum at U.C., Santa Barbara.

Described as an architect with a rare humanist and egalitarian view, Ain had a strong social conscience. He said that "I have always felt that the architect must not regard his work as an opportunity to demonstrate his virtuosity! Instead, his work is a step to enhance the quality of living and it can be most effective when it is produced in collaboration with many other experts as well as other colleagues in his profession. The architectural profession can be truly effective only if it can join hands with all the other social scientists." *Los Angeles Times* critic Sam Hall Kaplan said Gregory Ain, in view of his socially and environmentally responsible designs, "deserves to be listed among the architectural heroes of Los Angeles."

The attached biography of Ain from *Contemporary Architects* presents a fairly inclusive list of his works. Following are designs in the Los Angeles area singled out by architectural historians Gebhard and Winter (including some of their comments):

Edwards residence at 5642 Holly Oak Drive, Los Feliz (1936)—a series of walled enclosures

Ernest residence at 5670 Holly Oak Drive, Los Feliz (1937)—a Schindler-inspired design emphasizing large areas of glass and an indoor/outdoor relationship

Byler residence at 914 Avenue 37, Mount Washington (1937)—a Craftsman-inspired design that still looks brand new

Beckman residence at 357 North Citrus Avenue, Los Angeles (1938)—in the International style

Brownfield Medical Building at the northwest corner of Manchester Blvd. and Third Avenue, Inglewood (1938)—a small tastefully proportioned "rationalist" design

Tierman residence at 2323 Micheltorena Street, Silver Lake (1938-39)—a very ingenious house

Hay residence at 3432 Oakcrest Drive, Studio City (1939)—the International style at its most beautiful

Daniels residence at 1856 Micheltorena Street, Silver Lake (1939)—masterfully detailed and imaginatively planned

Ain's own home at 7964 Willow Glen Road, West Hollywood (1941)—all major spaces opening to a terrace

Orans residence at 2404 Micheltorena Street, Silver Lake (1941)—noted for its sloping shed roof and bands of glass

Mar Vista houses on Beethoven, Moore and Meier Streets, Mar Vista (1946-48)—fifty-two inexpensive low-income residences designed with an open floor-plan for internal flexibility

Park Planned Homes on Highview Street, Altadena (1946-47)—a block of mirror-image homes

Avenel housing, a 20-unit development at 2839 Avenel Street, Silver Lake (1948)—built to house film musicians, it has a roof with a raking angle

Cole residence at 3642 Lowry Road, Los Feliz (1948)—a regional version of the International style

Miller residence at 1634 Gilcrest Drive, Beverly Hills (1948)—a very impressionistic, really handsome house

Shairer residence at 11750 Chenault Street, Brentwood (1949)—very Neutraesque

Ralphs residence at 1350 Linda Ridge Road, Pasadena (1950)—one of Ain's largest houses

Mesner residence at 14571 Valley Vista Blvd., Sherman Oaks (1951)—noted for its jutting roof

153rd Street School at 1605 West 153rd Street, Los Angeles (1957)—accomplished with Ain's characteristic reticence.

Lewin residence on Jessen Drive, La Canada Flintridge (1962)—a very simple International style

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AIN, Gregory.

American. Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 28 March 1908. Studied mathematics, University of California, Los Angeles, 1924–26 and architecture, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1927–28. Married Agnes Budin, 1929; Ruth March, 1938; children: Emily and Christopher. Worked with R.M. Schindler, Los Angeles, 1932 and Richard J. Neutra, Los Angeles, 1932–35. In private practice, Los Angeles, from 1935. Visiting Professor of Design, University of Southern California, 1947–63; Professor, and Head of the School of Architecture, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, 1963–67. Address: 2830 Francis Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90005, USA.

Recipient: *House Beautiful Award*, 1937, 1938 and 1940; Pittsburgh Glass Award, 1938; Guggenheim Fellowship, 1940. Fellow, American Institute of Architects.

Works:

- 1936 Edwards House, 5642 Hollyoak Drive, Los Angeles
1937 Ernst House, 5670 Hollyoak Drive, Los Angeles
Dunsmuir Flats, 1281 South Dunsmuir Avenue, Los Angeles
Byler House, 914 Avenue 37, Mt Washington, Los Angeles
1938 Brownfield Medical Building, Los Angeles
Beckman House, 357 North Citrus Avenue, Los Angeles
Kun House, 7947 Fareholm, West Hollywood, Los Angeles
1939 Daniel House, 1856 Micheltorena Street, Silver Lake, Los Angeles
Hay House, 3132 Oakcrest Drive, Studio City, Los Angeles
Tierman House, 2323 Micheltorena Street, Silver Lake, Los Angeles
Vorkapich Garden House (pre-fabricated plywood house), 2100 Benedict Canyon Road, Beverly Hills, California
1941 Ain House, 7964 Willowglen Road, West Hollywood, Los Angeles
Orans House, 2404 Micheltorena Street, Silver Lake, Los Angeles
1948 Mar Vista Housing Development (100 houses), Mar Vista, Los Angeles
Avenel Housing Group, 2839–45 Avenel Street, Silver Lake, Los Angeles
Hollywood Guilds and Unions Office Building, Cahuenga Boulevard, Los Angeles
Miller House, 1634 Gilcrest, Beverly Hills, California
1949 Schairer House, 11750 Chenault Street, Los Angeles
Wilfong House, Altadena, California
1950 House, 1350 Linda Ridge Road, Pasadena, California
Beckman House, 15622 Meadowgate Road, Sherman Oaks, California
Hirschler House, 1200 Hillcrest Avenue, Pasadena, California
Museum of Modern Art House, New York
Kun House, 7947 Fareholm, West Hollywood, Los Angeles
1951 Margolis House, 5786 Valley Oak Drive, Los Angeles
Mesner House, 13957 Valley Vista Boulevard, Los Angeles
1952 Mesner House, 14571 Valley Vista Boulevard, Los Angeles
1954 Feldman House, 1181 Angelo Drive, Los Angeles
1955 Matthews House, San Rafael Avenue, Los Angeles
1957 153rd Street School, 1605 West 153rd Street, Los Angeles
Asher House, 263 Loring Avenue, Los Angeles
1960 Gallas House, 5326 Sherbourne Drive, Los Angeles
1961 Elterman House, 15301 Kingswood Lane, Sherman Oaks, California
1962 Berg House, Malibu, California
1963 Lewin House, 15310 Jessen, La Canada, California

Selected Exhibitions:

- 1944 *Built in USA : 1932–1944*, Museum of Modern Art, New York (catalogue by Elizabeth Mock)
1950 *Woman's Home Companion Exhibition House*, Museum of Modern Art, New York
Sixteen Southern California Architects, Scripps College, Claremont, California
1980 *The Architecture of Gregory Ain : The Play between the Rational and High Art*, University of California, Santa Barbara Art Museum (catalogue by David Gebhard and others)

Selected Publications:

By AIN:

Articles—"Small Scale Prefabrication" in *Arts and Architecture* (Los Angeles), March 1941; "The Flexible House faces Reality" in *Los Angeles Times Home Magazine*, 15 April 1951; "I like this House because it's Personality Plus" in *Los Angeles Examiner*, 13 March 1955; "Form follows Faction" in *Architectural Record* (New York), May 1965; "In Search of Theory" in *Arts and Architecture* (Los Angeles), January 1966.

On AIN:

Books—*Southern Californian Architecture 1769–1956*, by Donald Honnold, New York 1956; *Bay Area Houses*, edited by Sally Woodridge, New York 1976; *The Second Generation* by Esther McCoy, Salt Lake City, Utah 1984.

Articles—"Dunsmuir Flats" in *Architectural Record* (New York), February 1940; "Guest House" in *Architectural Record* (New York), April 1940; "Houses in Los Angeles" in *Architectural Forum* (New York), April 1940; "Los Angeles House for A.A. Ernst" in *Architectural Record* (New York), October 1940; "Tierman House" in *Arts and Architecture* (Los Angeles), April 1941; "Orans House" in *Arts and Architecture* (Los Angeles), April 1942; "Ain House" in *Arts and Architecture* (Los Angeles), May 1942; "Park Planned Homes" in *Progressive Architecture* (New York), July 1947; "100 Houses for Advance Development Company" in *Arts and Architecture* (Los Angeles), May 1948; "Basic Design for a 100-Unit Subdivision" in *Architectural Forum* (New York), April 1949; "Avenel Housing Associates Project" in *Progressive Architecture* (New York), February 1951; "Two View House" in *Interiors* (New York), August 1951; "Retrospect: Gregory Ain's Social Housing" by Esther McCoy in *Arts and Architecture* (Los Angeles), Winter 1981.

Bibliography—*The Search for Low-Cost Housing in the Architectural Work of Gregory Ain: A Selected Bibliography* by Robert B. Harmon, Monticello, Illinois 1981; *Gregory Ain*, by Lamia Doumato, Monticello, Illinois 1985.

I have always felt that the architect must not regard his work as an opportunity to demonstrate his virtuosity! Instead, his work is a step to enhance the quality of living and it can be most effective when it is produced in collaboration with many other experts as well as other colleagues in his profession.

Most contemporary work is done in a fever of ruthless money-making—that attitude must be replaced by an entirely different set of values. The architectural profession can be truly effective only if it can join hands with all the other social scientists and work with them, and the public at large, to defeat ruthless piracy.

—Gregory Ain

Gregory Ain's impulse to study architecture came from an acquaintance as a youth with R.M. Schindler's Kings Road house; his dissatisfaction with his Beaux Arts training determined him to work in the office of Richard Neutra. Combined in all his early work, which is his finest, are Neutra's repetitive windows and monoplane surfaces and Schindler's broken planes and accommodation of shell to plan. In the 1939 Tierman house, the modular fenestration is countered by a roof rising to a square skylight in the center of the plan and a dramatic brick chimney, the two-storey height of which is exposed in the open stairwell to the lower level. In his Hay house of 1939, he breaks up the volumes by treating the recessed front door and patio door as dark panels which extend to the second storey eaves.

Ain's interest in group housing for middle and low-income families began in his 1937 Dunsmuir Flats, his most frequently published work. The best-known view is of four staggered, two-storey, white blocks, the ceiling levels defined by continuous ribbon windows; not seen are the private porches and patios. The panel-post construction was an early effort to reduce cost, followed in 1939 by pre-fabricated plywood walls for a model house.

Ain received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1940 to continue his researches in low-cost housing and throughout the 1940s he designed, with the participation of clients, a number of projects for attached and detached housing that were notable for site planning and innovative floor plans. Few were built because lending agencies opposed multiple ownership. One of the several schemes to be built was the 1948 Avenel housing for a musicians' union whose members worked in films. The 20 attached units were broken into two blocks for a hillside site and private patios off the living rooms faced the view.

The 100-house Mar Vista development, begun the same year, used a staggered plan for the siting to ensure greater separation; there were variations of the basic design, but the two-bedroom and sleeping alcove plan was common to all. The living-room, kitchen, dining room, and bedroom alcove were essentially one space, which was opened by a glass wall to a patio.

For his more elaborate houses, he borrowed freely from the flexible plan of his low-cost housing and, in most cases, the alcove sleeping room became a library or guest-room. Ain also adapted many contractors' practices for large or small houses to save construction time and reduce cost. Aside from Irving Gill, Ain was the first architect in California to refine and dignify low-cost housing.

—Esther McCoy (1986)

Contemporary Architects
(1994); p. 19

Ain's Contributions Remembered

Kaplan, Sam

Los Angeles Times (1923-Current File): Jan 24, 1988;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Los Angeles Times (1881-1990)

pg. H2

Sam Hall Kaplan

Ain's Contributions Remembered

I never met Gregory Ain, who died a few weeks ago at the age of 79 after a lingering illness, but through his architectural designs and writings I knew him, and respected him.

From the 1930s to the early 1960s, Ain practiced and preached in Los Angeles a rare, humanistic architecture in which he considered design a tool to improve the lives of people and communities.

It is a design philosophy as appropriate today as it was then, and prompts a new appreciation of Ain's struggle to produce user-friendly, affordable housing and well-planned neighborhoods. Certainly, he deserves to be listed among the architectural heroes of Los Angeles.

Despite lean years in the profession during the 1930s and '40s, Ain produced an impressive body of work in the spirit of his selfless social consciousness. This included dozens of innovative single-family and tract houses, a few office buildings and some distinctive apartment complexes.

Among those still to be seen and admired is a two-story, four-unit project at 1281 S. Dunsmuir Ave., just west of the Crenshaw District. Despite a narrow, sloping site, Ain, in a 1937 design, manipulated the cubist-styled units to create an open, informal plan focused on a row of private gardens.

The result, under severe constraints, was a modernistic update of the tried and true bungalow court, inexpensive housing sensitively rendered.

Though not a stylistic ideologue, Ain championed a modern design vocabulary that he embraced and had learned as an apprentice at separate times to both R. M. Schindler and Richard Neutra, two lions of the modernist movement. In his later writings and comments, Ain indicated that Schindler tended to be more sensitive to function and Neutra to style.

"Ain idolized Schindler," recalls architect John Blanton, who for a time also worked for Neutra. "But Ain was more user-oriented; he wanted his designs to work for the clients, and therefore might compromise style. Because of this, clients loved him."

Blanton also remembered Ain as an engaging and sympathetic teacher, an impression shared by others. Ain taught for a number of years at USC and in the mid-1960s, was dean of the school of architecture at Penn State. He returned to Los Angeles in 1967, but because of varying illnesses, sadly, never fully resumed practice or teaching.

In his prime, Ain continually tried to extend the modernist idiom to build affordable housing. It was a dream for which he won in 1940, at the age of 32, a coveted Guggenheim Fellowship to study low-income housing. Among his sponsors were the renowned Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe.

During this time, Ain also designed about 20 small, well-planned houses for middle-income families, who otherwise, because of no alternatives, would have most likely ended up in ticky-tacky tract models, according to architectural historian Esther McCoy in a definitive study of Ain included in her book "The Second Generation." (The book is out of print but available through Hennessey + Ingalls, Santa Monica.)

McCoy notes that Ain "performed this service deep in the shadow of Neutra and Schindler, bringing to it a complexity greater than Neutra's and a simplicity greater than Schindler's." She adds that "Ain was part of that small select group of the '30s—Harwell Hamilton Harris, J. R. Davidson, Thornton Abell, John Lautner—that gave substance, variety and surprise to the Los Angeles scene."

In the 1940s, Ain continued to champion the need for well-designed, affordable housing in well-planned subdivisions, particularly to serve the flood of families expected in the postwar years. As a member of a jury judging a competition in 1945, sponsored by a national construction materials corporation, Ain warned that if architects did not meet this need, builders would, with poor designs.

Declared a report of the jury said to have been written in large part by the social-minded Ain, "too many architects in their zeal to promulgate new and frequently valid ideas withdraw from the common architectural problems of the common people."

Definitely not withdrawing from the fray was Ain. With Simon Eisner as planner and Garrett Eckbo as landscape architect, Ain in the postwar years pursued the development of a 280-unit cooperative in Reseda. It was to be a model community, sensitively planned with parks and playgrounds and a variety of modern-styled housing for a mix of families. But because the mix included minorities, the project could not get the needed backing of the Federal Housing Administration, and failed.

More successful was a tract development in Mar Vista, where as a principal in the firm of Ain, Johnson & Day, and in association again with Eckbo, Ain in 1947 planned about 100 houses on a 60-acre tract. But even there the FHA haunted him, reducing the number of units it would finance and requesting that in the interest of "good business practices," ranch and salt box designs be mixed with his modernist schemes.

A persevering Ain eventually produced 52 compromised, partially prefabricated, 1,050-square-foot houses there that sold in the late 1940s for about \$11,000 apiece, which was then a bit pricey for the area. Though the Mar Vista houses have been substantially altered over the last 40 years, they are still touted as an Ain design (and sell for about 20 times the original price.)

But in my opinion, it really is not the designs that distinguished Ain's career, conscientiously rendered and accomplished as they were. What marked his work, and for which I am confident he will be remembered, was its motivation: The belief that design could, and should, be socially and environmentally responsible, indeed, that in its use there is an obligation to better serve mankind.

Such beliefs elevate architecture, and remind us of its marvelous and exciting potential. For that we thank, and remember.

RICHARD M. ILLSLEY

Builder

Richard Mather Illsley, Pasadena, was the builder of a number of modernist houses in the Pasadena area. Born in Evanston, Illinois in October 1897, he was the son of William Augustus Illsley, the well-known Chicago contractor who built the Wrigley Building. The younger Mr. Illsley attended Phillips Exeter Academy. After service in World War I, during which he served in both the French and American armies, Mr. Illsley graduated from Yale University in 1920. He relocated to Pasadena in 1926, where he soon became involved in the development of the Rancho San Rafael, serving as secretary of the Alta San Rafael company from 1929 to 1934. In the early 1930s, he built several houses in association with D. C. Armour, including 1290 Inverness Drive in Linda Vista.

Around 1935, Richard Illsley set himself up in business as a general contractor, with offices at 35 South Raymond Avenue. He and his wife Elizabeth (Libby) Montgomery Illsley, after living for several years at 100 North San Rafael, moved to 210 San Miguel. Over the next 32 years, Mr. Illsley was to make a name for himself in quality residential construction, most often in the contemporary mode. He retained special affinity for the Linda Vista/San Rafael area, building and living in several different homes over the years, such as 1235, 1415, and 1475 Linda Ridge Road. Mr. Illsley did construct homes in other areas of Pasadena, however, including the Harriman residence—a Colonial Revival at 721 Madre in East Pasadena. It is thought he designed many of the houses himself.

Richard Illsley's last office location before his retirement in 1967 was 1074 South Arroyo Parkway. He died in Pasadena in December 1969 at the age of 72, survived by his wife and a son and daughter. A copy of his obituary is attached. Mrs. Illsley had graduated from Northwestern University and served as a teacher at the Polytechnic School in Pasadena. She survived her husband by many years, passing away in December 1995 at the age of 94.

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ILLSLEY—Richard Mather Illsley passed away December 6, 1969. A resident of Pasadena since 1926, he was the son of William Augustus Illsley, well-known Chicago contractor who built the Wrigley Building. He was a graduate of Yale University, a member of Beta Theta Pi, and was a member of All Saints Episcopal Church. He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth M. Illsley; his daughter, Mrs. William F. Gleason III of New York City; his son, David Winthrop Illsley of Pasadena; five grandchildren, and his sisters; Mrs. Edwin Bonta of Montclair, New Jersey and Mrs. Durrell Tuttle of Clifton, New Jersey. Services 11 a.m. Tuesday, at All Saints Episcopal Church, 132 N. Euclid Ave., Pasadena. Memorials to a favorite charity: Turner & Stevens Co., Pasadena, directors.

Pasadena Star-News,
December 7, 1969; p. D-12

R. M. Illsley Final Rites Set Tuesday

Funeral services for Richard Mather Illsley, a Pasadena resident since 1926 and engaged in the building business; all of his life, will be held at 11 a.m. Tuesday at the All Saints Episcopal Church, 132 N. Euclid Ave., Pasadena, of which he was a member.

Born in Evanston, Ill., he was the son of William Augustus Illsley, well known Chicago contractor who built the Wrigley residence, now the home of the Pasadena Tournament of Roses.

Mr. Illsley went to France with the American Field Service in World War I and then joined the French army. When the U.S. entered the war he enlisted in the U.S. First Division at St. Nazaire.

He attended Phillips Exeter Academy and graduated from Yale in the "War Class" of 1920.

He is survived by his widow, Elizabeth M. Illsley; his daughter, Mrs. William G. Gleason III of New York City; his son, David Winthrop Illsley of Pasadena; five grandchildren, and two sisters; Mrs. Edwin Bonta of Montclair, N.J., and Mrs. Durrell Tuttle of Clifton, N.J.

Turner and Stevens Mortuary of Pasadena are directors in charge. Contributions may be made to friends' favorite charity.

Pasadena Star-News,
December 8, 1969; p. 3

GARRETT ECKBO

Landscape Architect

Garrett Eckbo, sometimes referred to as the “dean of West Coast modern landscape architects,” was born in Cooperstown, New York, on November 28, 1910. He grew up in Alameda, California where he lived with his mother and stepfather who was a buyer and seller of second-hand goods. After studying landscape architecture at the University of California, Berkeley in the 1930s, he later attended the Harvard Graduate School of Design where he was introduced to the modern movement in architecture.

Eckbo’s first job was with the San Francisco office of the Farm Security Administration where he planned the landscapes of farm workers’ encampments. During World War II he designed fifty West Coast housing sites for defense workers. After the war, Eckbo settled in Los Angeles where he felt he did his best work. Through several highly successful collaborations, Garrett Eckbo would become a leading practitioner of the “California style” of landscape architecture, characterized by the integration of aesthetic ideas and social values, and reflecting his strong belief in social betterment. He designed for the rich and the poor, but the landscapes he created for Hollywood luminaries like Gary Cooper and Louis B. Mayer are the best remembered.

The partnership of Eckbo, Royston & Williams, which lasted from 1945 to 1958, established an office in Pasadena in 1946. They designed landscapes for several Case Study projects. A later partnership became one of the most prominent architectural and environmental planning firms in the world: Eckbo, Dean & Williams, formed in 1958, which became Eckbo, Dean, Austin & Williams in 1967.

In 1965, Eckbo joined the landscape architecture faculty at U.C., Berkeley, spending several years as chair of the Department. He left the school in 1978.

Eckbo’s exposure to the Bauhaus while at Harvard was a primary influence on all his subsequent work, his landscape designs reflecting the asymmetrical geometry favored by Walter Gropius and others. He was the author of several books, including *Landscapes for Living* in 1950 and *The Art of Home Landscaping* in 1956. Among his large projects were the Fresno Mall and the reconfiguring of the University of New Mexico campus, both done in the 1960s. However, Eckbo seemed to favor smaller garden spaces, regarding them as his “laboratory.”

Among the landscaping projects for which Garrett Eckbo was responsible in the Pasadena area: the Alfred Day residence at 3588 Canyon Crest Road in Altadena (1948); the Ralphs residence at 1350 Linda Ridge Road (1950), the Community Facilities Planners Building at 1414 South Fair Oaks in South Pasadena (1958), the campus of Ambassador College (early 1960s), and the Friend Paper Company at 100 West Green Street, Pasadena (1965).

Garrett Eckbo died in Oakland on May 14, 2000 at the age of 89. A copy of his obituary from the *Los Angeles Times* is attached.

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by Tim Gregory

Garrett Eckbo; Landscape Architect

By ELAINE WOOD
Times Staff Writer

Garrett Eckbo, the dean of West Coast landscape architects, died May 14 after suffering a stroke at a retirement home in Oakland. He was 89.

A retired professor of landscape architecture at UC Berkeley, Eckbo was a leader of the modern landscape movement, creating gardens the New York Times once called "the horticultural equivalents of the architecture and furniture of Charles and Ray Eames."

Eckbo designed outdoor spaces for the very poor as well as the very rich. His projects ranged from the grounds for a Central Valley housing project for migrant farm workers to gardens for Hollywood luminaries such as Gary Cooper and Louis B. Mayer.

A native of Cooperstown, N.Y., Eckbo grew up in Alameda, Calif. He studied landscape architecture during the 1930s at UC Berkeley



Office of Public Affairs, UC Berkeley

Garrett Eckbo

and later at Harvard, where he encountered the modern movement and studied under professors such as Walter Gropius, the founder of the Bauhaus.

The Bauhaus influence on Eckbo was profound, reflected in the asymmetrical geometry of his land-

scape designs.

His first major job was in the San Francisco office of the Farm Security Administration, where he and his colleagues in the New Deal agency created "national scale" programs of new plantings for farm workers' organizations.

He later designed plans for 50 West Coast housing sites for defense workers during World War II.

After the war, he settled in Los Angeles, where he practiced for two decades ending in 1965. Eckbo believed it was here that he did his best work.

One project during a period of experimentation in the 1950s was a highly theatrical pool designed for the owner of Cole of California, a swimsuit company. The Beverly Hills pool featured a series of diving platforms that allowed models to disappear unnoticed into its depths and surface like Esther Williams.

"L.A. is larger, looser, a place of freer movement socially than the Bay Area," he once said. "The years I spent there were the best of my professional life."

In 1985 he joined the landscape architecture faculty at UC Berkeley, serving as department chairman until 1989. He was a professor

'L.A. is larger, looser, a place of freer movement socially than the Bay Area. The years I spent there were the best of my professional life.'

GARRETT ECKBO

until 1978. He continued to take on landscaping work until a few years ago.

In the 1960s Eckbo designed the Fresno Mall, the first pedestrian mall in the middle of a California city. Around the same time he banished cars from the center of the University of New Mexico when he was hired to unify the sprawling campus by designing new outdoor spaces.

He founded several landscape architecture firms, most notably Eckbo, Dean, Austin & Williams in

San Francisco and Los Angeles. He was the author of several books, including "Landscapes for Living" in 1950 and "The Art of Home Landscaping" in 1958.

He is survived by his wife, Arline, of Oakland, daughters Marilyn Kwaszkin and Allison Peper of Los Angeles, six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Although he undertook massive public commissions, Eckbo believed that no space was too small for improvement. The landscape artist regarded the small garden as his laboratory.

A few years ago, he revisited a Los Angeles neighborhood for which he created a park-like setting in the 1940s. Two Los Angeles architects who owned a home in the Mar Vista development asked if he would tackle their tiny backyard. Accepting the assignment with pleasure, Eckbo placed a pond close to the house so that its sounds would carry inside and composed darker and lighter foliage to create an illusion of depth and "the opportunity for imaginative exploration."

"You're inventing a world that's always changing, with enough order to avoid confusion but never so much that you get bored," he said when the job was done. To Eckbo, that was the point of landscaping.

Saving Customer Money Has Paid Off for Ralphs

Marketing Dynasty Started in 1873
Has Grown as Fabulously as Los Angeles

BY NORRIS LEAP

When you say, "Ralphs," every Southlander knows what you mean—supermarkets.

But in the one-story offices at 3410 W 3rd St., headquarters of the 40 Ralphs supermarkets from Santa Monica to Santa Ana, it means more.

It means five tall men — two grandfathers and their three sons, all Ralphs — who wander in and out of each other's offices and share equal rank and seem to have no secrets from one another.

It means buying whole crops of farms and all the milk of great dairies.

Facilities Huge

It means a 13-acre industrial complex of a bakery, a delicatessen plant, a creamery and warehouses at 4845 San Fernando Rd. One warehouse can hold enough to feed Glendale or Pasadena for a year.

It means a marketing dynasty founded by a one-armed bricklayer in 1873 when Los Angeles was small enough to spit across and most males tried it.

And it means a father-and-son and cousinly relationship that possibly is unique in business.



PLANNING AHEAD—Five Ralphs are looking at the plans for one of four new stores now being built. Seated is Walter W. Ralphs Sr., board chairman; standing, from left to right, are Walt Jr., Albert Sr., Albert Jr. and Richard Ralphs.

Times photo by Jack Gaunt

Los Angeles Times
February 21, 1960:

continued...

New Policy Ruled

The ex-bricklayer was George A. Ralphs. He set up a store on the fringe of town at 6th and Spring Sts. where the Hayward now stands, determined to succeed by a then-unheard-of policy: Save the customer money. That cost him his first partner, a man now known only as Francis. Francis worked in the store while Ralphs solicited orders house-to-house with a slogan, "Our prices are the lowest in town."

He got the orders but Francis said the prices would ruin them. With Ralphs it was policy; he would not budge. Francis sold to Ralphs' brother, Walter B.

5-Cent Markups

Walter B. later said of that: "We took farm produce in trade. The big cost was handling. If a farmer unloaded sacked grain on our sidewalk and another bought a sack and did the handling, we took only a 5-cent markup."

That policy brought such success it led to another. Their landlord raised the rent. The Ralphs bought the site from the landlord and rebuilt. Thenceforth they could be their own landlords. They still are except for their markets in three shopping centers.

In 1883 a third policy was born. It shocked all Southern California. It was a day when most groceries were sold on credit. Then hard times came.

Dodged by Friends

"It got so bad," George A. said later, "that friends dodged me on the street because they couldn't pay. I couldn't stand that."

The Ralphs decided to sell

only for cash. Disaster was predicted. Instead, the Ralphs saved so much they cut prices. Sales went up.

In 1886 Walter B. sold his share and George A. became sole owner. Los Angeles grew, and the store with it. It moved four times, settling "finally" at 635 S Spring, now a parking lot.

Started Young

In 1902 George A. decided to train a successor or two, preferably a Ralphs. His own son Albert was only 4. George A. took on two nephews, first Walter W. and then Elmer, sons of Walter B. They were teen-agers. They were hardly of voting age when he gave them authority.

That, too, became a policy: Catch a Ralphs young and train him fast.

In 1909 the store was incorporated. George A. took a third and sold each nephew a third. In 1911 Ralphs spread to a second store at Pico and Normandie, then

to one in Highland Park and another at 35th and Vermont.

Results Natural

The rest—the self-service supermarkets Ralphs started in 1928, the industrial complex on San Fernando Rd., the crop-purchasing, today's 40 markets and the four a-building—all seem natural results of George A.'s original policy: save the customer money.

There is one other obvious major factor. That is the special way the Ralphs seem to have of developing executives in the family.

There are today five tall Ralphs (all over 6 ft.) with a new crop coming up. The five all seem to have been reared in much the way Albert Sr. was.

At Work When 11

"My father," he said, "was great at hunting and fishing. He took me with him and taught me. He gave me my first shotgun when I was 11."

He also put him to work when he was 11, and somehow taught the boy to love the store.

All five started that way, at the bottom. All five, excepting Walter Sr., went to college. All five became marketing experts.

Equal in Rank

Albert Sr. told of their equality in rank. Besides himself and Walter W. Sr., there are Walt Jr., 43; Albert Jr., 39, and Albert's brother Richard, 34.

"Titles don't mean anything," Albert Sr. said. "We rotate offices. Walter Sr. is board chairman. He's the oldest, so I guess he'll stay chairman. But last year Walt Jr. was president. This year it's Albert Jr. It works this way: If any one of us says no, we don't do it."

That sounds like a way to block progress, but with the Ralphs it isn't; witness the 500,000 customers and the \$100 million-plus sales.

The secret? Probably it's this: In business every Ralphs sees eye-to-eye with every other Ralphs on how to save the customer money.

Grocery Chain Heir Sued for Divorce

Walter W. Ralphs Jr., 36, grandson of one of the founders of the grocery chain bearing the name, was sued for divorce in Superior Court yesterday on charges of cruelty by Mrs Joanne P. Ralphs, 33.

The wife asked for custody of three children, Diane, 10; Anthony, 5, and William, 4, and for \$1507 a month in support and alimony.

The complaint also made demands for all of the community property, including the family home, 1350 Linda Ridge, Pasadena.

The couple were married in San Francisco Nov. 18, 1939, and separated last Jan. 10, according to the petition prepared by Atty. William P. Gray.

MRS. RALPHS ADMITS TRIPS WITH ATHLETE

Los Angeles Times (1923-Current File); Aug 19, 1954;
ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Los Angeles Times (1881-1990)
pg. 31

MRS. RALPHS ADMITS TRIPS WITH ATHLETE

Mrs. Joanne P. Ralphs, 34-year-old divorced wife of Walter W. Ralphs Jr., 37, testified in Pasadena Superior Court yesterday she made trips to Santa Barbara and spent a week end in Las Vegas with Sabin Carr, world-famous pole vaulter.

Mrs. Ralphs, of 1350 Linda Ridge Road, Pasadena, made the admissions to Superior Judge Thurmond Clarke, in whose court a hearing on her petition for custody of the three Ralphs children was continuing yesterday.

The attractive blonde, who was divorced from the grandson of the late Walter B. Ralphs in January, 1953, is seeking custody of a daughter Diane, 12. Mrs. Ralphs was granted custody of all three children including Diane and two sons, Anthony, 10, and William, 6, under terms of the divorce but subsequently sent Diane to live in Ralphs' home because the child was not getting along with her brother Anthony.

Ralphs has countered with a suit asking custody of the three children and contending that

Mrs. Ralphs has become "emotionally unstable" since the divorce and was not providing proper care for the children.

Mrs. Ralphs receives \$1000 monthly alimony and \$200 a month support for each child under terms of a property settlement agreement entered into at the time of the divorce. They were married Nov. 18, 1939.

COURT DIVIDES CUSTODY OF 3 RALPHS CHILDREN

Custody of the three children of Joanne P. Ralphs, 34, and her divorced husband, Walter W. Ralphs Jr., was divided between the two parents yesterday in a decision handed down by Superior Judge Thurmond Clarke in Pasadena. Judge Clarke ruled that custody of the daughter, Diane Ione, 13, be divided between the two parents with the child to make her home with the father but to alternate her residence between her father and mother every month.

Mrs. Ralphs, of 1350 Linda Ridge Road, Pasadena, was given custody of her two sons, Anthony Walter, 11, and William Wilshire, 7, with the provision that they visit their father every other week end. The custody of the children will be divided equally at the Christmas holidays and each parent will have all three children for a one-month period during the summer vacation, Judge Clarke ruled.

Los Angeles Times
September 2, 1954; p. A2



PERPETUAL ALIMONY—Mrs. Joanne Ralphs, 38, former wife of Walter W. Ralphs Jr., 42, admitted she wanted alimony for life, even if she married again. She is asking payments be raised to \$1700.
Times photo

Ralphs' Ex-Wife Says She Asked Life Income

Failure of Another Marriage Reason for Request, Court Told at Alimony Hearing

Mrs. Joanne Ralphs, 38, yesterday admitted she had asked her divorced husband, Walter W. Ralphs Jr., 42, vice-president of a market chain, for an agreement to perpetuate her \$1000-a-month alimony to insure her security if a new marriage failed.

"I'm afraid I might end up baby sitting in my old age if I married again and it didn't turn out," Mrs. Ralphs explained to Superior Judge Elmer D. Doyle.

Shows Letter

She had just been confronted with a letter she had written a year ago to her ex-husband in which she confessed "an intuition" that she might remarry within the year. There were two men who would be "very excellent fathers for our boys," the missive said.

"Of course," the letter said in part, "the only thing that stops me is money. I love my present life of 12 months' vacation a year. Having my own income, with no strings attached, has made my life very enjoyable indeed.

"If you could continue with an income for life, even though I marry (with your approval of the man), I might take the plunge."

Same Line

A second letter, along the same line, addressed to her ex-husband's parents was also put in evidence by



OPPOSED—Walter Ralphs Jr. counters alimony bid by seeking a reduction.
Times photo

Atty. Glenn A. Lane, counsel for the market man, who is opposing her plea to increase the \$1000 monthly alimony to \$1700 monthly, "because of an increase in living costs."

"I'll never write another letter," Mrs. Ralphs said, adding that neither of the two men mentioned "had turned out too well."

Ralphs testified that he had been living beyond his income and he asked that

RALPHS HEARING

Continued from First Page

the alimony he has been paying since the 1953 divorce be reduced to \$500 monthly. He said he had remarried and had another child by his present wife, as well as the three children he is supporting by his former marriage. He also has the three children of his present wife by her prior marriage residing in his home, he said. These are partially supported, \$75 monthly apiece, by their father, the market man said.

Mrs. Ralphs is receiving \$200 a month for support of the youngest son, 10 years

old, in her custody. The child needs \$1200 worth of orthodontia, her lawyer, Robert S. Barnes, said. Judge Doyle took the case for study.

Walter William Ralphs Jr., 94, a former executive in his family's Los Angeles-based grocery store chain who went on to establish a sprawling Northern California cattle ranch recognized for its humane and sustainable business practices, died of melanoma July 6 at his home in Beverly Hills, said his stepdaughter Robin Joy Berenson.

Ralphs was born in Los Angeles on Feb. 27, 1916, and attended Stanford University.

He joined the family business, which had been launched as Ralphs Bros. Grocers in downtown Los Angeles in 1874. The family sold the company to Federated Department Stores in 1968 for \$60 million, and it has changed hands several times since then.

In 1964, he took over Prather Ranch in Macdoel in Siskiyou County. The ranch, co-owned by Jim and Mary Richert, was honored in 2005 with the Environmental Stewardship Award Program administered by the National Cattlemen's Beef Assn.

The cattle and hay ranch, with 4,000 head grazing on more than 40,000 acres, was recognized for stewardship practices that are inventive, cost-effective and contribute to environmental conservation. It is noted for the organic beef it produces.

Ralphs was a passionate tennis player who continued to play competitively into his 90s and was nationally ranked in his age group.

Los Angeles Times
July 23, 2010; p. AA7

**EVERETT A. PALMER and
MARGARET ANN PALMER**

Everett A. Palmer, Jr., and Margaret Niedringhaus Palmer moved to Pasadena in 1946 from Pennsylvania where he had worked for the U.S. Steel Corporation. They moved to Southern California after visiting Pasadena in 1945 when Everett, home from the European war theater, was discharged from the Army at Camp Cook in Lompoc, California.

Since moving to Pasadena the Palmers have both been involved with the city's cultural activities.

In pre-Pasadena days the Palmers' roots were in the East. Everett — born May 17, 1915 in Elizabeth, New Jersey — was a graduate of Cornell University and the Harvard Business School. Margaret "Peg" was born Sept. 6, 1915 and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She was a graduate of the Fine Arts College of the Carnegie Institute of Technology.

They were married May 31, 1941 in Pittsburgh and are the parents of four children: Everett A. III born June 13, 1942; Jeffrey P. born July 31, 1944; Gregory L. born Oct. 28, 1948; and Margaret Ann "Peggy" born July 28, 1951. Young Peggy broke family tradition by being the first girl born in the Palmer family in 132 years.

Everett worked for Columbia Steel Company until 1955 when he established the Forge Die Company in Monterey Park. The company, which manufactured ninety-seven component parts in the first rocket to the moon, was described by *Business Management* as "the most enterprising steel die business on the west coast."

Although most of his activities center around his work, Mr. Palmer was a member of the board of trustees of the Neighborhood Church of Pasadena and he was active with the Boy Scouts and the YMCA.

Mrs. Palmer has been an active volunteer in Pasadena's cultural community. As a member of the Pasadena Parent-Teacher Association Council she initiated the Cultural ARTS (Art-Research-Tours Service) Program for Pasadena school children. The program provided films and lectures to schools and sponsored class visits to cultural centers in the area.

Mrs. Palmer spearheaded the community effort to establish the Pacificulture Center and Asia Museum in the Oriental Grace Nicholson building, which had housed the Pasadena Art Museum for thirty years until it was moved to new quarters. She became familiar with the old building at 46 N. Los Robles Avenue when she worked as a volunteer with the Art Alliance of the Pasadena Art Museum. Its distinctive Chinese architecture and her own interest in Asian art, together with her belief that greater understanding of the art and culture of the East will help lead to a more peaceful future prompted her to suggest the development of the Pacificulture Center and Asia Museum. As president of the Pacificulture Foundation she has encouraged participation of persons of Asian ancestry in the Pasadena area.

Mrs. Palmer was president of the Pasadena Assistance League when Craftfair Shop for senior citizens was established. She is a member of the Pasadena Art Museum Art Alliance and the city's Foreign City Affiliation Committee. She was an early member of the Carmelita Coordinating Committee which evolved in 1964, at her suggestion, into the Pasadena Arts Council which coordinates the cultural events of the city. The Palmers' major hobbies are skiing, sailing, and traveling. They are members of the Newport Harbor Yacht Club, the Flintridge Riding Club, and the Valley Hunt Club of Pasadena.

An arts patron remembers

By HAROLD N. HUBBARD
Staff Writer

ONE woman has lived the history of Pasadena's art organizations, often as president, for more than 40 years. She is Peg Palmer, formally Mrs. Everett A. Palmer, but everyone calls her Peg, which is what she likes.

She enjoys being informal. You may catch her at home wearing pants with her shirttail hanging out. She will laugh and say, "Ten years ago no one would ever have seen me dressed like this." She keeps up with the times, helped perhaps by 10 grandchildren, aged 4 to 14.

Some breezy weekend now might find Palmer dressed like a sailor with her husband aboard their 46-foot, Newport-based yacht, Sol Searcher. Or she might meet you at home in one of her gorgeous, authentic Chinese costumes. He has one decorated with gold leaf-wrapped threads.

The Palmers reached Pasadena in February 1946 with a house trailer but no parking place. They found one behind a dairy.

Now their Linda Vista home is a treasure trove of Oriental art and crafts, including his Tibetan saddle rugs, collected on the couple's travels.

A graduate of the Fine Arts School of Carnegie Institute of Technology, Palmer likes to talk about art, including its history in Pasadena.

"I think there was more activity by the Pasadena public interested in art during the 40s and 50s than I see now," Palmer said.

"The city was smaller and everyone was friendly, most newly arrived from the East, as we were. There was no smog, the air was sparkling, the mountains were visible every day. It was all beautiful.

"There was a lot of excitement, everything was being done by volunteers, everyone wanted to do something

Please see PALMER,
Page B-7

Pasadena Star-News
May 3, 1987; p. B-7

continued...

Palmer: A look at a city's love of art

Continued from Page B-1

important that would make a difference. It was a building time."

The seeds of Pasadena's fervor for art were planted years before with the establishment in 1891 of Throop University, dedicated to basic education, exploring and encouraging science, art and superior craftsmanship, Palmer said.

"Three new institutions grew out of Throop — Polytechnic School, Caltech, and the Pasadena Art Institute, which became the Pasadena Art Museum," Palmer said. "The university could be compared to the trunk of a family tree with some of today's institutions as branches."

One of the early branches, the Pasadena Art Institute, founded in 1924, was especially fruitful.

It was given the Dr. Ezra Carr estate and its extensive Carmelita Gardens, present site of the Norton Simon Museum at Orange Grove and Colorado boulevards. The Institute moved into the Carr residence, presenting exhibitions and teaching art.

From its classes, the Pasadena Art Workshops was formed, and from its children's gallery came Kidspace, a participatory museum for children.

In 1960, the Palmers joined Pacificulture Foundation, formed to establish a Japanese inn and art center. She became president and by 1970, the membership had grown from 11 to 1,500.

"At a meeting at the Carr house I suggested that we start an Oriental art museum, planting the seed for the Pacific Asia Museum," Palmer said.

The beautiful Chinese palace

that now houses the museum was built by Grace Nicholson, a Pasadena Art Institute trustee, in the 1920s as a home for herself and her Oriental art galleries.

Before its present incarnation, the home served as the site for the Pasadena Art Museum. In 1943, Nicholson gave her building to the city for art and cultural purposes under control of the Art Institute for 25 years. That same year, the city got Carr's Carmelita Gardens for 25 years. The Pasadena Art Institute moved into Nicholson's Oriental palace, and in 1954 changed its name to Pasadena Art Museum.

The Art Museum moved into an impressive new building on the Carr estate site in 1969. But by 1974, facing an ever-increasing financial burden, the museum made arrangements with

Norton Simon to bring his extensive collection of 19th and 20th century art to Pasadena. He assumed the museum's debts and opened his own museum on the site in 1975 after extensive remodeling.

With the departure of the Pasadena Art Museum from the Nicholson galleries, Nicholson's building reverted to the city.

"One group wanted to make it a parking lot," Palmer said. "As president of the Pacificulture Foundation, I invited Sofia Adamson to join in working to obtain the galleries for an Oriental art museum. After two years of public campaigning, the city allowed us to lease it. The name was changed to Pacific Asia Museum."

Recently, Palmer and Adamson, the last two of the original board members, were elected life trustees.



John Lloyd / Star-News

Peg Palmer's house, which is filled with Oriental pieces, displays her love of art