

# 134 SEA BREEZE AVENUE



## DESIGNATION REPORT

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 1996**

Landmarks Preservation Commission  
Palm Beach, Florida



**DESIGNATION REPORT**  
**134 SEA BREEZE AVENUE**

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Report produced by Research Atlantica, Inc.

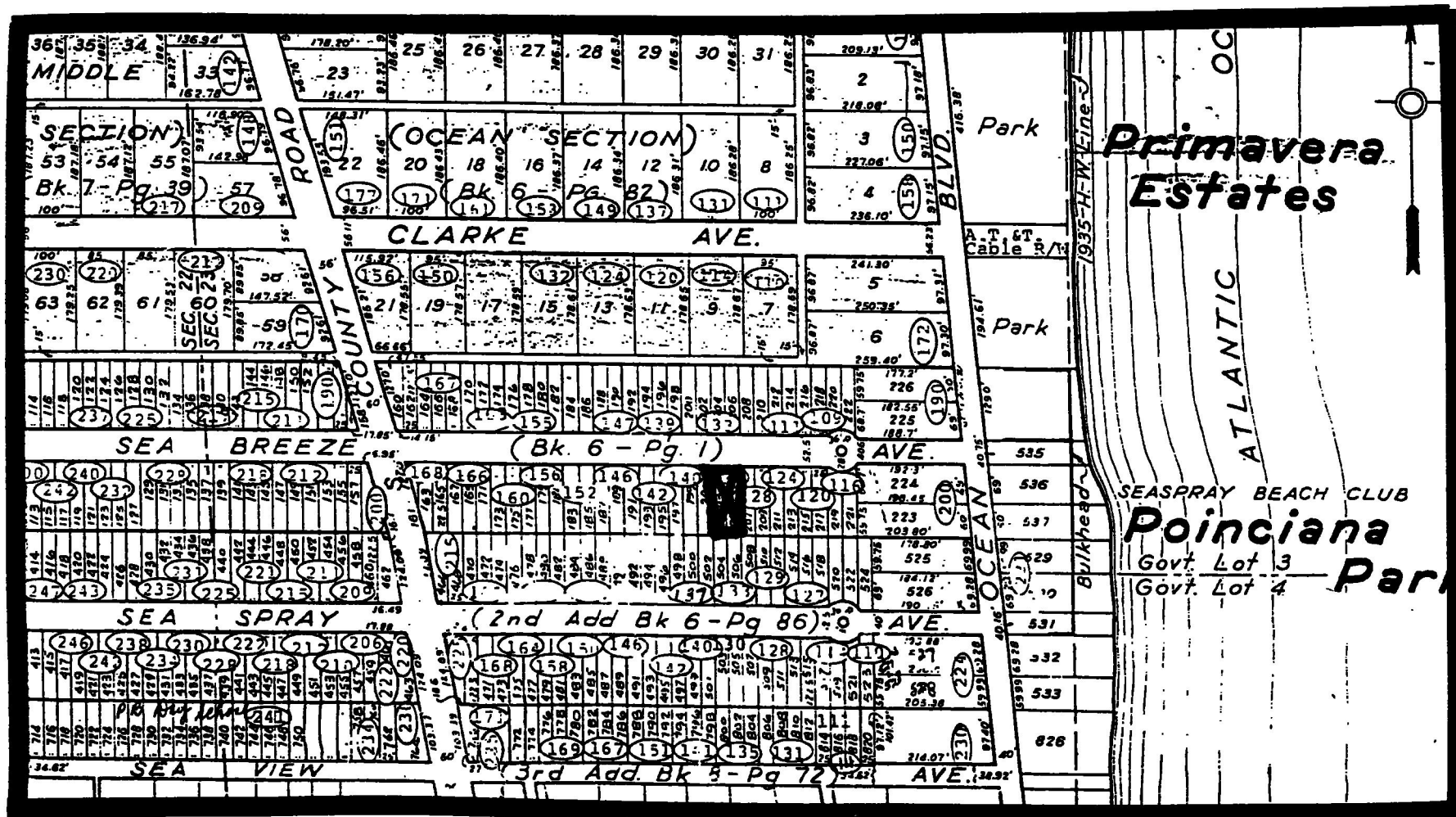
Report edited by Timothy M. Frank, AICP, Planner/Projects Coordinator, Town of Palm Beach.

**I. GENERAL INFORMATION**

<b>Location:</b>	134 Sea Breeze Avenue Palm Beach, Florida
<b>Date of Construction:</b>	1925
<b>Principal Architect:</b>	Unknown (1925) John L. Volk (1927)
<b>Present Owner:</b>	Francesco and Dina Scatigno
<b>Present Use:</b>	Residential
<b>Present Zoning:</b>	R-B
<b>Palm Beach County Tax Folio Number:</b>	50-43-43-22-06-000-2011-001
<b>Current Legal Description:</b>	Poinciana Park, E 1/2 of Lot 201 & Lts 203 & 205

**Classification in the "Historic Building Survey of Palm Beach."**

"Stylistically consistent with other Mediterranean Revival houses in the area. The deep doorway is a strong compositional feature, and the smooth corner quoins and window and door surrounds on the first story provide an effective contrast to the textured stucco."



**LOCATION MAP: 134 SEABREEZE AVE.**

FLORIDA MASTER SITE FILE  
Site Inventory Form

FDAHRM 802 ==  
1009 ==

Site Name \_\_\_\_\_ Site No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Address of Site: 134 Seabreeze Ave. Palm Beach, FL 33480 Survey Date 8011 820 ==  
Instruction for locating S side of Seabreeze Ave E of S County Rd 905 ==  
Location: Poinciana Park 203 205 813 ==  
County: Palm Beach 868 ==  
Owner of Site: Name: Ryerson, J B and June H 808 ==  
Address: P O Box 566, Palm Beach, FL 33480 902 ==  
Type of Ownership private 848 == Recording Date \_\_\_\_\_ 832 ==

Recorder:

Name & Title: Kidney, Walter C. (Architectural Historian)  
Address: Landmarks Planning, Inc., Allegheny Square West 818 ==  
Pittsburgh, PA 15212 838 ==

Condition of Site: Integrity of Site: Original Use private residence 850 ==  
Check One Check One or More  
☐ Excellent 863 == ☒ Altered 858 ==  
☒ Good 863 == ☐ Unaltered 858 ==  
☐ Fair 863 == ☒ Original Site 858 ==  
☐ Deteriorated 863 == ☐ Restored ( ) (Date: X) 858 ==  
☐ Moved ( ) (Date: X) 858 ==  
Present Use private residence 850 ==  
Dates: Beginning +1925 844 ==  
Culture/Phase American 840 ==  
Period 20th Century 845 ==

NR Classification Category: Building 916 ==

Threats to Site:

Check One or More  
☐ Zoning ( X ) 878 == ☐ Transportation ( X ) 878 ==  
☐ Development ( X ) 878 == ☐ Fill ( X ) 878 ==  
☐ Deterioration ( X ) 878 == ☐ Dredge ( X ) 878 ==  
☐ Borrowing ( X ) 878 ==  
☐ Other (See Remarks Below): \_\_\_\_\_ 878 ==

Areas of Significance: Architecture 910 ==

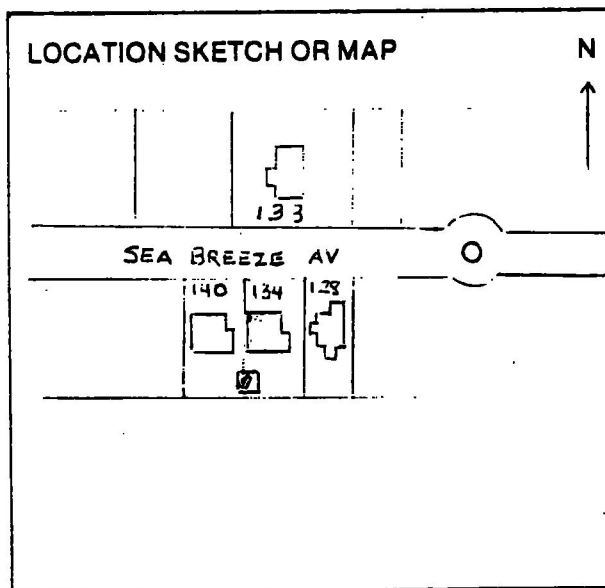
Significance: Stylistically consistent with other Mediterranean Revival houses in the area. The deep doorway is a strong compositional feature, and the smooth corner quoins and window and door surrounds on the first story provide an effective contrast to the textured stucco.

Grade: C

911 ==

BP

ARCHITECT \_\_\_\_\_ 872 = =  
 BUILDER Zablocki, B G 874 = =  
 STYLE AND/OR PERIOD Renaissance Revival 964 = =  
 PLAN TYPE square; inaccessible 966 = =  
 EXTERIOR FABRIC(S) stucco: roughcast 854 = =  
 STRUCTURAL SYSTEM(S) frame 856 = =  
 PORCHES N/ recessed round-headed doorway 942 = =  
 FOUNDATION: \_\_\_\_\_ 942 = =  
 ROOF TYPE: hip 942 = =  
 SECONDARY ROOF STRUCTURE(S): none 942 = =  
 CHIMNEY LOCATION: E/ end: exterior 942 = =  
 WINDOW TYPE: DHS, 4/1, wood, sills on consoles 942 = =  
 CHIMNEY: masonry, stuccoed 882 = =  
 ROOF SURFACING: tile: barrel 882 = =  
 ORNAMENT EXTERIOR: stucco 882 = =  
 NO. OF CHIMNEYS 1 952 = = NO. OF STORIES 2 950 = =  
 NO. OF DORMERS none 954 = =  
 Map Reference (incl. scale & date) USGS Palm Beach 7.5 MIN 1:24,000  
1946 (photorevised 1967) 809 = =  
 Latitude and Longitude: \_\_\_\_\_ 800 = =  
26° 42' 00"      "      "  
 Site Size (Approx. Acreage of Property): LT 1 833 = =



Township	Range	Section

812 = =

UTM Coordinates:

Zone \_\_\_\_\_ Easting \_\_\_\_\_ Northing \_\_\_\_\_ 890 = =

Photographic Records Numbers PB-7902-12-F25

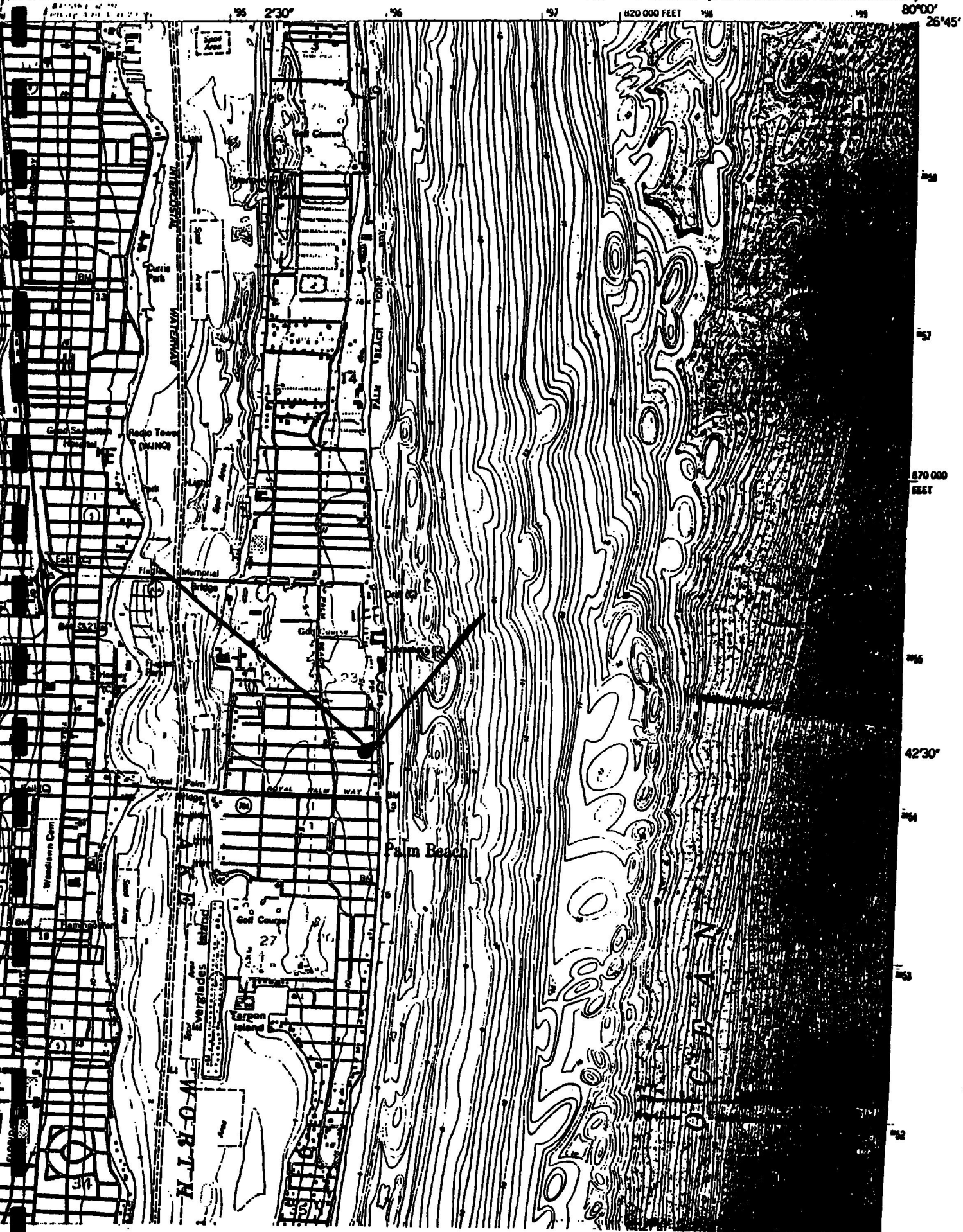
860 = =

Contact Print



**134 Seabreeze Avenue**

**PALM BEACH QUADRANGLE  
FLORIDA-PALM BEACH CO.  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC-BATHYMETRIC)**



#### IV. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

The house at 134 Seabreeze Avenue was built in Poinciana Park in 1925. Although no architect is listed in the building permits, well known realtor Charles Manning was the original owner.<sup>1</sup> In 1927, Manning sold the house and moved to 153 Clarke Avenue.<sup>2</sup> At that time John L. Volk did a complete renovation of the house for Samuel H. Harris a well known theatrical producer and his wife Alice. Sketches show that the house as it stands in 1996 is consistent with Volk's 1927 design.<sup>3</sup> It is a two story house constructed of clay tile and covered with stucco. It is designed in the Mediterranean Revival style with many eclectic features that give it unusual appeal.

The Mediterranean Revival style of architecture was inspired by European structures that were built around the basin of the Mediterranean Sea. Borrowing themes from Spanish, Italian, North African and Moorish examples, the architectural style was widely used in California and Florida during the 1920s and 1930s, and adapted well to Florida's climate. The walls of a Mediterranean style building are usually stuccoed in a light color. This contrasts with the low pitched terra cotta tile roof that is typical of the style.<sup>4</sup>

Although many of the Mediterranean Revival style houses in Palm Beach are monumental in scale, 134 Seabreeze Avenue is a more modest example. Symmetrical in fenestration, the design of this building has an Italian Renaissance feel and is dominated by its front door. The door is deeply recessed into the wall surface and is surrounded by a Romanesque type arch with cast stone quoins.<sup>5</sup> The quoins are also found on the corners of the front facade. Pairs of Italianate arched windows topped with quoins on either side of the door create balance in the design.

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<sup>1</sup>Building Permit # 387, February 5, 1925, on file with the Town of Palm Beach.

<sup>2</sup>" Charles Manning's New Spanish Home Nears Completion," **Palm Beach Post**, 17 April, 1927.

<sup>3</sup>John L. Volk, "John L. Volk on John L. Volk, " Volk Archives, Palm Beach, Florida, N.D. p.1. and "Client List sorted by Date," Volk Archives.

<sup>4</sup>Virginia and Lee McAlester, **A Field Guide to American Houses**. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988) pp. 416-430.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid. pg. 301-307. In 1888 a monograph on the work of Boston architect Henry Hobson Richardson (1838-1886) was published. Richardson popularized the "Richardson Romanesque" form that is suggested by the arched entrance at 134 Seabreeze and gives the house a unique eclectic feel.

The main roof of the house is hipped and is covered with multicolored barrel tile. Secondary roof structures on the west facade and on the separate garage in the rear are shed and are also covered with tile. Exposed cypress beams decorate the cornice. A simple stucco chimney is visible on the east of the house.

Windows styles are mixed. The front facade has some windows with arched tops and some with squared tops. These double hung sash windows are 4/1 and 8/1. Some of them are shuttered although these shutters do not appear on Volk's original sketches. Sills on the second story windows of the front facade extend forward. Originally, these supported wrought iron balconets.<sup>6</sup>

Only the front of the home was available for inspection.

## V. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

In a brochure published in the early part of the century and entitled "Poinciana Park: the Preferred Location," City Builders Realty Company called Palm Beach the place, "Where Summer Spends its Winter."<sup>7</sup> Touted as a "Sportsman's Paradise," with good beaches and even a school for the children, tourists were encouraged to rent cottages for the winter season rather than stay in one of the hotels. Although not a City Builder's cottage, 134 Seabreeze is located in Poinciana Park, and is representative of the "Boom Times" era of Palm Beach history.

The house at 134 Seabreeze Avenue was built in 1925 by B.G. Zablocki for Charles Manning. The cost was \$30,000. No architect is listed on the permit for the two story stucco and tile building.<sup>8</sup> Charles Manning was a well known realtor in town. When he sold the Seabreeze Avenue house in 1927 and moved to Clarke Avenue the story was carried in the **Palm Beach Post**.<sup>9</sup>

In 1926, John Volk, a young architect from Larchmont, New York had moved to Palm Beach after a short stay in Key West. Volk set up a private architectural practice and opened an office at the Daily News Building at 208 Brazilian Avenue with partners Frank D. Craig and John S. Stevens. After successfully completing a number of

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<sup>6</sup>John L. Volk, Original sketch on file at Volk Archives.

<sup>7</sup>"Poinciana Park: The Preferred Location," real estate brochure on file with the Palm Beach Preservation Foundation. No Date.

<sup>8</sup>Building Permit # 387, February 5, 1925 on file with the Town of Palm Beach.

<sup>9</sup>"Plans Mansion," Palm Beach Post, 25 February, 1927; "Charles Manning's New Spanish Home Nears Completion," Palm Beach Post, 17 April, 1927.

houses in the Northwood section of West Palm Beach the renovation of the house on Seabreeze Avenue was Volk's first Palm Beach project. Because building permits for 134 Seabreeze Avenue skip from 1925 to 1946, confirmation of this information came from other original sources. In a hand written manuscript John Volk noted that his "first building was for Sam Harris the theatrical producer on Sea Breeze Avenue."<sup>10</sup> To confirm Harris' residence at 134 Seabreeze City Directories were consulted. Although no City Directory is available for 1928, Samuel H. Harris and his wife Alice are listed at 134 Seabreeze in the 1929 **Palm Beach City Directory**. The house was called "Via Mimosa" and the Directory states that Harris also lived in Great Neck, Long Island.<sup>11</sup>

Since its construction in 1925, and the alterations by John Volk in 1927, 134 Seabreeze Avenue has undergone few changes. A bathroom was updated in 1946 and an elevator was added in 1954. Roof repairs, gutters and air conditioning have all been documented but the house retains the integrity of Volk's early design.<sup>12</sup>

## **VI. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The house at 134 Seabreeze Avenue is important as the first project by well known architect John L. Volk in the Town of Palm Beach. It illustrates the early development of Volk's architectural style and is important for study as an example of Mediterranean Revival architecture. The house also exemplifies the development of an important early neighborhood in Palm Beach, Poinciana Park. It shows how styles changed from the 1920s to the 1930s.

## **VII. CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION**

Section 16-38A of the Town of Palm Beach Landmarks Preservation Ordinance #2-84 outlines the criteria for designation of a landmark or landmark site and suggests that at least one criterion must be met to justify the designation. Listed below are criteria which relate to this property and justification for designation:

**(a) "Exemplifies or reflects the broad cultural, political, economic or social history of the nation, state, county or town."**

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<sup>10</sup>John L. Volk, "John L. Volk on John L. Volk." Private Manuscript, Volk Archives, Palm Beach, Florida, p.1.

<sup>11</sup>**Palm Beach City Directory, 1929, p. F15,**

<sup>12</sup>Building Permits on file with the Town of Palm Beach.

Poinciana Park was one of the most important real estate developments during the 1910s and 1920s in the Town of Palm Beach. 134 Seabreeze is a good example of the type of house that was built in that neighborhood. It reflects the wide variety of sizes and styles that were available during the Boom years.

**(c) "Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or is a specimen inherently valuable for the study of a period, style, method of construction or use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship."**

The house at 134 Seabreeze Avenue is a good example of the Mediterranean Revival style of architecture built in Palm Beach during the Boom years of the 1920s and 1930s. Sketches by architect John Volk show how the house developed, changed details from the 1920s to the 1930s, and still fit in perfectly with the scale and design of the neighborhood. In the 1990s this house illustrates important lessons in design review that are "inherently valuable for study" thus fulfilling criteria (c).

**(d) "Is representative of the notable work of a master builder, designer or architect whose individual ability has been recognized or who influenced his age."**

The single family residence at 134 Seabreeze Avenue is a notable work by well known architect John Volk. As Volk's first project in Palm Beach it has added importance because it represents the start of a successful career that spanned seven decades. It is also important because it shows how Volk could change details in a house in response to new ownership while still working within the character of the neighborhood. As such it clearly fulfills criteria (d) for listing as a Palm Beach Landmark.

## **VIII. ARCHITECT'S BIOGRAPHY**

The original architect for 134 Seabreeze Avenue is unknown.

### **John Volk**

John Volk has been called the last of the "original" Palm Beach architects. He was one of an elite group of early 1920s architects which included Addison Mizner, Maurice Fatio, and Marion Sims Wyeth who developed the architectural styles of the island that came to be known as the "Palm Beach Style." His designs included the Royal Poinciana Playhouse, conversion of the Four Arts Gallery, the Florida Capital Building on Royal Palm Way and several shops on Worth Avenue including the Everglades Colonnade.

Volk was born in Graz, Austria in 1901. He came to the United States with his parents at the age of nine and grew up in New York. He was a graduate of the Columbia University School of Architecture and the Ecole des Beaux Arts. Volk opened his office in Palm Beach in 1925.

Volk designed more than 1000 houses, theaters, clubs, shops, and other buildings and lived in Palm beach from 1925 to his death in 1984. He designed homes for some of the wealthiest and most powerful people in America over his 58 year career in Palm beach including Colonel Robert McCormack, William Paley, George Vanderbilt, Nicholas DuPont, Henry Ford II, Herbert Pulitzer, Matthew Mellon, George Storer, Horace Dodge II, and John S. Phipps.

Included in the designs of John Volk are some of the most prominent buildings in the Palm Beach area including the First National Bank, the Royal Poinciana Plaza, the center section of the Town Hall, the Beach Club, Good Samaritan Hospital, and the golf terrace and orange gardens of the Everglades Club. He also extensively modified and rebuilt the Bath and Tennis Club after a major hurricane.

Numerous other buildings are the result of Mr. Volk's labor and it must be noted that no particular style can be exclusively associated with Mr. Volk. Unlike other talented architects who developed or refined specific styles, John Volk understood and perfected many varying architectural styles from the popular Mediterranean Revival to Contemporary Design.

## **IX. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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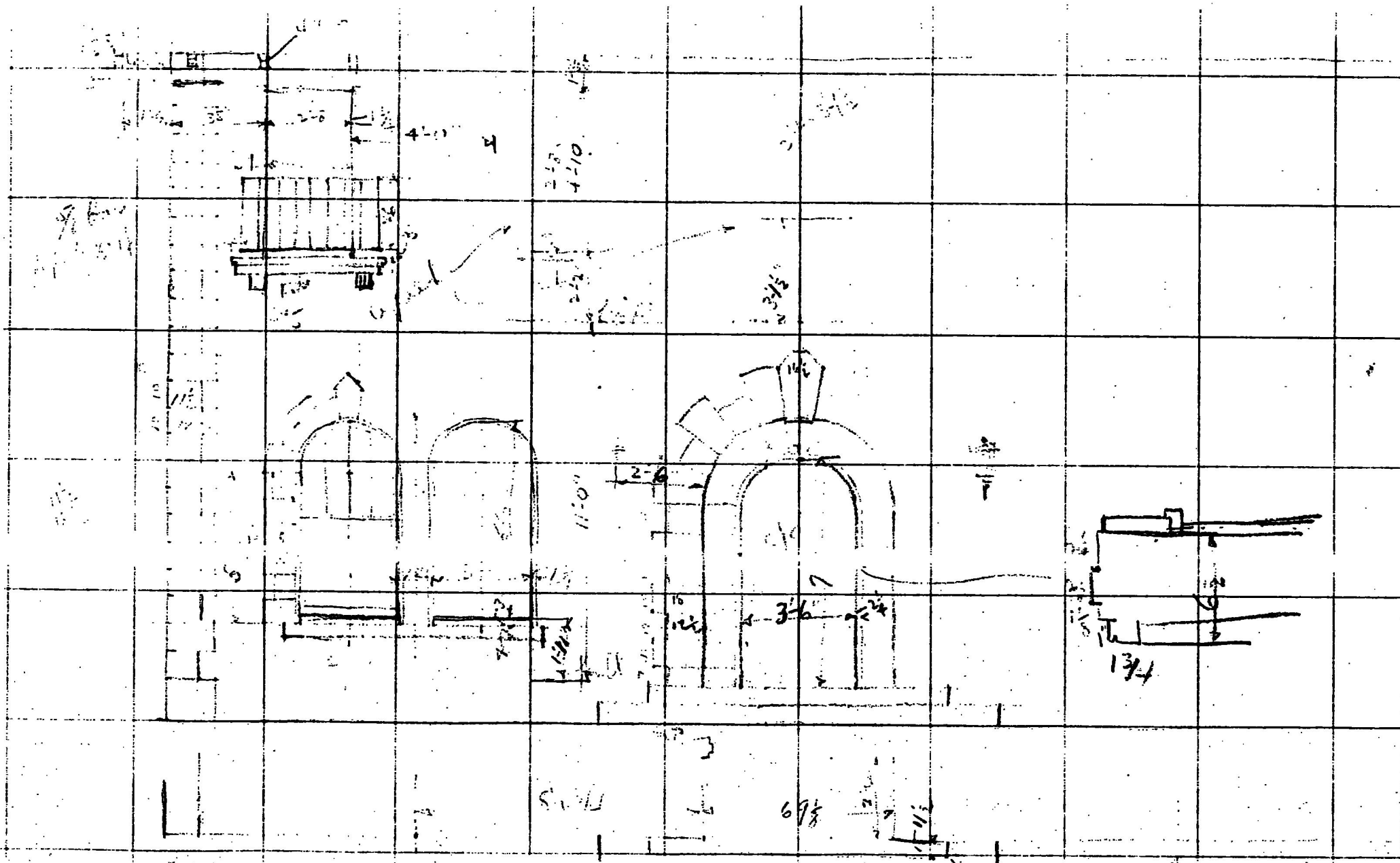
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\_\_\_\_ "134 Seabreeze," . Drawing on File at Volk Archives.



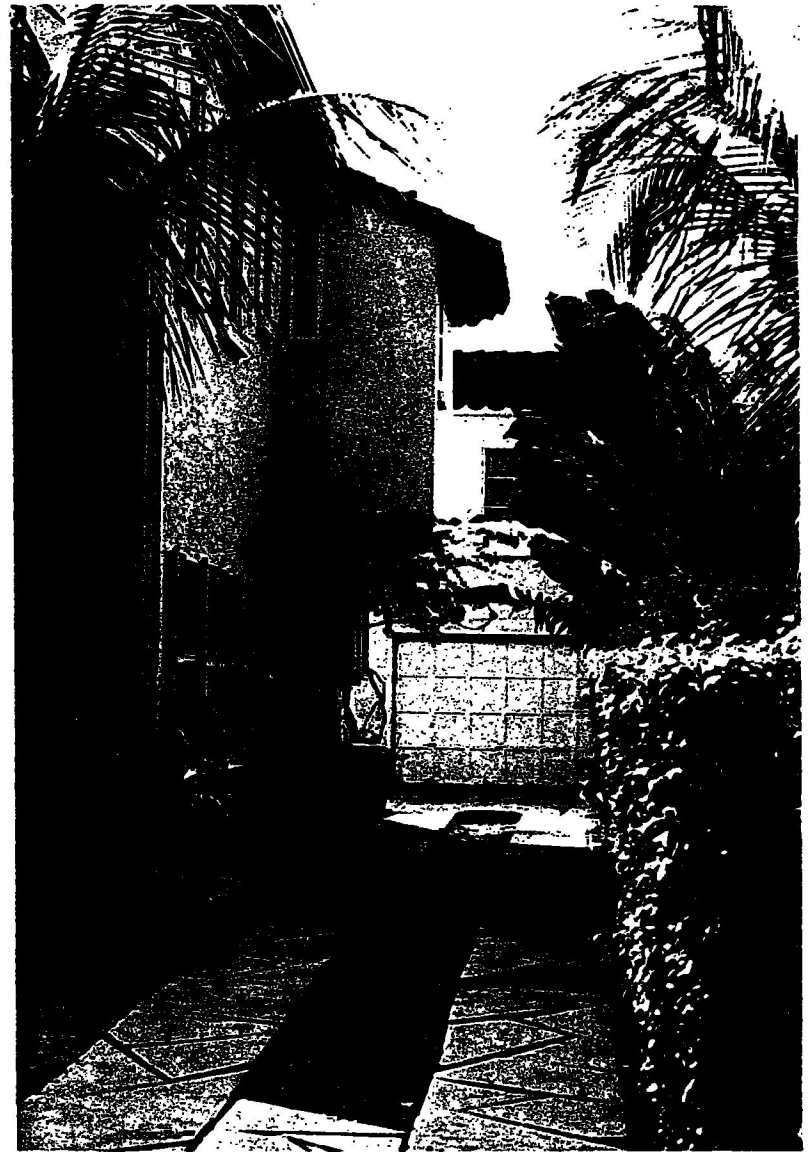
East Facade, showing hip roof, chimney & 4/1 windows.



Original sketch of 134 Seabreeze by John L. Volk.



Front entrance with Romanesque style arch.



West Facade, showing overhang and detached garage.