

FOUR ARTS PLAZA



**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
TO THE
DESIGNATION REPORT OF 7-11-79
September 20, 1995**

**Landmarks Preservation Commission
Palm Beach, Florida**

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

FOUR ARTS COMPLEX 455 ROYAL PALM WAY

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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

Location: Four Arts Complex
455 Royal Palm Way
Palm Beach, Florida

Date of Construction: 1924 (Rovensky Building)
1929 (Gallery/Auditorium)
1938 (Library)

Principal Architect: Addison Mizner (1929)
Maurice Fatio (1938)
John Volk (1947)
Marion Sims Wyeth (1947)

Present Owner: The Society of the Four Arts

Present Use: Cultural Institution

Present Zoning: R-B (special exception use)

**Palm Beach County
Tax Folio Number:** 50-43-43-23-05-0210-010
50-43-43-23-05-0210-050
50-43-43-23-05-0210-060
50-43-43-22-00-0030-080
50-43-43-22-00-0030-090

**Current Legal
Description:**

The South 45.12 feet of the South 1/2 of Subdivision N of Government Lot 3, lying West of Ceiba Avenue, the South 1/2 of Subdivision N of Government Lot 3, between Coconut Row and Ceiba Avenue(less Seaview Ave. and the East 219.41 feet), in Sec. 22, Township 43 South, Range 43 East, and Lot 1, and land lying West of Lot 1 (less the East 43 feet), and land lying West of Lot 2 (less Lake Drive), the North 145 feet of the West 47 of Lot 3 and the East 88.9 feet thereof; and Lots 4, 5, 6, and 7, Block A, of Royal Park Addition, as in Plat Book 4,pg 1.

Gallery/Auditorium

Classification in the "Historic Building Survey of Palm Beach, 1981:

This is an Addison Mizner building, with simple, dignified Classical detailing. The original building of 1923, later burned, was built for the Club De Montmartre. The present building of 1929, by the most famous Palm Beach architect, was erected for the Embassy Club. It was taken over by the Society of Four Arts in the late 1930's.

Rovensky Building

Classification in the "Historic Building Survey of Palm Beach, 1981:

This is an Addison Mizner building, which one had full-length Gothic windows on the ground floor; it now features single and paired double-hung sash windows above a rusticated base. Mizner was the most famous Palm Beach architect.

Gate Piers

Classification in the "Historic Building Survey of Palm Beach, 1981:

These tall, dignified piers mark the entrance to a short street. They are among the best of Palm Beach's rare public monuments.

FLORIDA MASTER SITE FILE
Site Inventory Form

FDAHRM 802 ==
1009 ==

Site Name Four Arts Building Site No. 830 == Survey Date 8101 820 ==
Address of Site: 455 Royal Palm Way, Palm Beach, FL 33480 905 ==
Instruction for locating Royal Palm Way at S Lake Dr NE corner 813 ==

Location: Royal Park A 2 868 ==
subdivision name block no. lot no.
County: Palm Beach 808 ==

Owner of Site: Name: Four Arts Society, Tr 902 ==
Address: Four Arts Plaza, Palm Beach, FL 33480 832 ==

Type of Ownership institutional 848 == Recording Date 832 ==

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

Condition of Site: Integrity of Site: Original Use entertainment 838 ==

Check One		Check One or More			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	863 ==	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	858 ==	Present Use <u>museum</u>	850 ==
<input type="checkbox"/> Good	863 ==	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	858 ==	Dates: Beginning <u>+1929</u>	844 ==
<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	863 ==	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	858 ==	Culture/Phase <u>American</u>	840 ==
<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	863 ==	<input type="checkbox"/> Restored () (Date: <u>X</u>)	858 ==	Period <u>20th Century</u>	845 ==
		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved () (Date: <u>X</u>)	858 ==		

NR Classification Category: Building 916 ==

Threats to Site:

Check One or More			
<input type="checkbox"/> Zoning (<u>X</u>)	<u>X</u>) 878 ==	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation (<u>X</u>)	<u>X</u>) 878 ==
<input type="checkbox"/> Development (<u>X</u>)	<u>X</u>) 878 ==	<input type="checkbox"/> Fill (<u>X</u>)	<u>X</u>) 878 ==
<input type="checkbox"/> Deterioration (<u>X</u>)	<u>X</u>) 878 ==	<input type="checkbox"/> Dredge (<u>X</u>)	<u>X</u>) 878 ==
<input type="checkbox"/> Borrowing (<u>X</u>)	<u>X</u>) 878 ==		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (See Remarks Below):	878 ==		

Areas of Significance: Architecture 910 ==

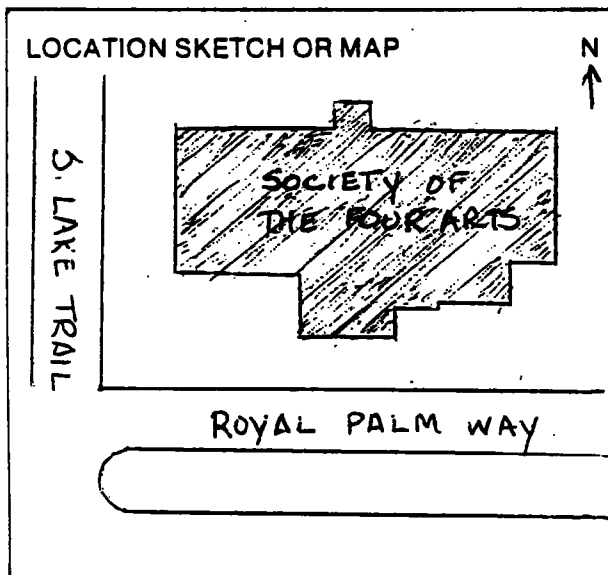
Significance: This is an Addison Mizner building, with simple, dignified Classical detailing. The original building of 1923, later burned, was built for the Club de Montmartre. The present building of 1929, by the most famous Palm Beach architect, was erected for the Embassy Club. It was taken over by the Society of Four Arts in the late 1930's.

Grade: A

LAPB

911 ==

ARCHITECT Mizner, Addison (Palm Beach, FL) 872 ==
 BUILDER Lightbown, Millard J 874 ==
 STYLE AND/OR PERIOD Mediterranean Revival 964 ==
 PLAN TYPE irregular; irregular 966 ==
 EXTERIOR FABRIC(S) stucco: roughcast 854 ==
 STRUCTURAL SYSTEM(S) brick # tile 856 ==
 PORCHES N/ square 1-bay entrance porch, round arches w/keystones on plain piers 942 ==
 FOUNDATION: 942 ==
 ROOF TYPE: hip # flat: parapet 942 ==
 SECONDARY ROOF STRUCTURE(S): tower: pavilion # parapet, urns 942 ==
 CHIMNEY LOCATION: offset: lateral slope # E/ end: interior 942 ==
 WINDOW TYPE: casement, 8, wood # 942 ==
 CHIMNEY: masonry, stuccoed 882 ==
 ROOF SURFACING: tile: barrel 882 ==
 ORNAMENT EXTERIOR: stucco # stone: coral # metal 882 ==
 NO. OF CHIMNEYS 2 952 == NO. OF STORIES 1 # 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: 26° 42' 40" 800 ==
 Site Size (Approx. Acreage of Property): 2 833 ==



Township	Range	Section

812 ==

UTM Coordinates:

890 ==

Zone Easting Northing

Photographic Records Numbers PB-7273-1-F1

860 ==

Contact Print



FLORIDA MASTER SITE FILE
Site Inventory Form

FDAHRM 802 = =
1009 = =

Singer Office Building and Site No. _____
Site Name Embassy Apartments 830 = = Survey Date 8101 820 = =
Address of Site: 437-441 Royal Palm Way, Palm Beach, FL 33480 905 = =
Instruction for locating S side of Royal Palm Way between Four Arts Plaza and S
Lake Dr 813 = =
Location: Royal Park A 2 868 = =
subdivision name block no. lot no.
County: Palm Beach 808 = =
Owner of Site: Name: Embassy Corporation
Address: P O Box 750

Type of Ownership corporate 848 = = Recording Date _____ 832 = =

Recorder:

Name & Title: Kidney, Walter C. (Architectural Historian)

Address: Landmarks Planning, Inc., Allegheny Square West

Pittsburgh, PA 15212 818 = =

Condition of Site: Integrity of Site: Original Use commercial 838 = =

Check One
☒ Excellent 863 = =
☐ Good 863 = =
☐ Fair 863 = =
☐ Deteriorated 863 = =
Check One or More
☒ Altered 858 = =
☐ Unaltered 858 = =
☒ Original Site 858 = =
☐ Restored () (Date: X) 858 = =
☐ Moved () (Date: X) 858 = =

Present Use other: apartments 850 = =

Dates: Beginning c. +1924 844 = =

Culture/Phase American 840 = =

Period 20th Century 845 = =

NOBP

NR Classification Category: Building 916 = =

Threats to Site:

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

Areas of Significance: Architecture 910 = =

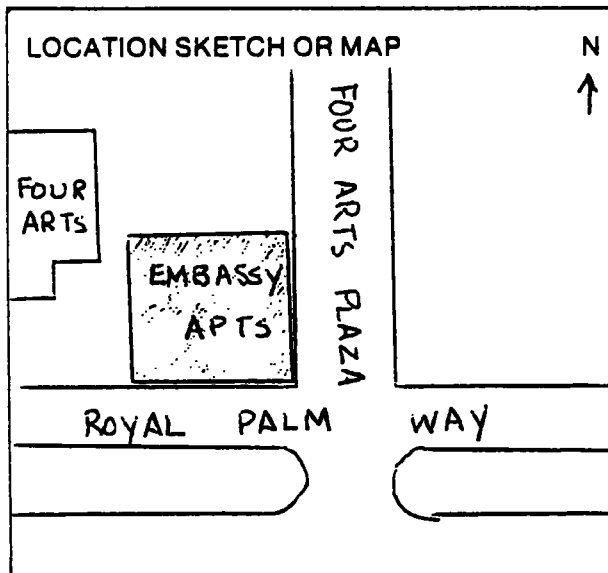
Significance: This is an Addison Mizner building, which once had full-length Gothic windows on the ground floor; it now features single and paired double-hung sash windows above a rusticated base. Mizner was the most famous Palm Beach architect.

Grade: C

pre-1947 (BP) LAPB

911 = =

ARCHITECT Mizner, Addison (Palm Beach, FL) 872 ==
 BUILDER _____ 874 ==
 STYLE AND/OR PERIOD Mediterranean Revival 964 ==
 PLAN TYPE square; irregular 966 ==
 EXTERIOR FABRIC(S) stucco: roughcast 854 ==
 STRUCTURAL SYSTEM(S) brick # tile 856 ==
 PORCHES E/ 1st-fl marquee, 2 iron balconies ea, 3rd and 4th fls # S/ iron balcony along 3rd fl, 3 iron balconies, 4th fl # (see cont. sheet) 942 ==
 FOUNDATION: _____ 942 ==
 ROOF TYPE: flat 942 ==
 SECONDARY ROOF STRUCTURE(S): _____ 942 ==
 CHIMNEY LOCATION: NW/ corner 942 ==
 WINDOW TYPE: French, 10, wood # casement, 6, wood 942 ==
 CHIMNEY: masonry, stuccoed 882 ==
 ROOF SURFACING: built-up 882 ==
 ORNAMENT EXTERIOR: stucco 882 ==
 NO. OF CHIMNEYS 1 952 == NO. OF STORIES 3 # 4 950 ==
 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: 26 ° 42' 40" 800 ==
 Site Size (Approx. Acreage of Property): LT 1 833 ==



Township	Range	Section

812 ==

UTM Coordinates:

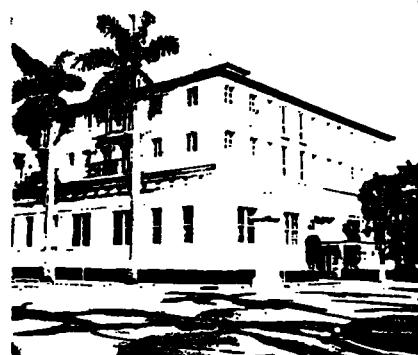
890 ==

Zone Easting Northing

Photographic Records Numbers PB-7273-2-F4

860 ==

Contact Print



CONTINUATION SHEET

Site Name: Singer Office Building and Embassy Apartments
Address of Site: 437-441 Royal Palm Way, Palm Beach, FL 33480

Porches Continued: N/ 1 balcony 2nd fl, 2 balconies 3rd fl

942==

FLORIDA MASTER SITE FILE
Site Inventory Form

FDAHRM 802 = =
1009 = =

Site Name gate piers Site No. 830 = = Survey Date 8011 820 = =
Address of Site: Four Arts Plaza at Royal Palm Way, Palm Beach, FL 33480 905 = =
Instruction for locating _____ 813 = =

Location: Royal Park A 3, 4 868 = =
subdivision name block no. lot no.
County: Palm Beach 808 = =

Owner of Site: Name: Four Arts Society ;
Address: Four Arts Plaza 902 = =

Type of Ownership institutional 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 other: entrance 850 = =

Check One		Check One or More		Present Use <u>other: entrance</u> 850 = =
<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent 863 = =	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered 858 = =			Dates: Beginning <u>c.+1930</u> 844 = =
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good 863 = =	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered 858 = =			Culture/Phase <u>American</u> 840 = =
<input type="checkbox"/> Fair 863 = =	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site 858 = =			Period <u>20th Century</u> 845 = =
<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated 863 = =	<input type="checkbox"/> Restored () (Date: <u>X</u>) 858 = =			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved () (Date: <u>X</u>) 858 = =			

NR Classification Category: Building 916 = =

Threats to Site:

Check One or More			
<input type="checkbox"/> Zoning (<u>X</u>) 878 = =	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation (<u>X</u>) 878 = =		
<input type="checkbox"/> Development (<u>X</u>) 878 = =	<input type="checkbox"/> Fill (<u>X</u>) 878 = =		
<input type="checkbox"/> Deterioration (<u>X</u>) 878 = =	<input type="checkbox"/> Dredge (<u>X</u>) 878 = =		
<input type="checkbox"/> Borrowing (<u>X</u>) 878 = =			
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (See Remarks Below): _____ 878 = =			

Areas of Significance: Architecture 910 = =

Significance: These tall, dignified piers mark the entrance to a short street. They are among the best of Palm Beach's rare public ornaments.

ARCHITECT _____ 872 ==
 BUILDER _____ 874 ==
 STYLE AND/OR PERIOD Neoclassical Revival 964 ==
 PLAN TYPE square 966 ==
 EXTERIOR FABRIC(S) stucco 854 ==
 STRUCTURAL SYSTEM(S) masonry 856 ==
 PORCHES N/A

_____ 942 ==

FOUNDATION: _____ 942 ==

ROOF TYPE: N/A _____ 942 ==

SECONDARY ROOF STRUCTURE(S): Urns _____ 942 ==

CHIMNEY LOCATION: N/A _____ 942 ==

WINDOW TYPE: N/A _____ 942 ==

CHIMNEY: N/A _____ 882 ==

ROOF SURFACING: N/A _____ 882 ==

ORNAMENT EXTERIOR: ? stone: cast _____ 882 ==

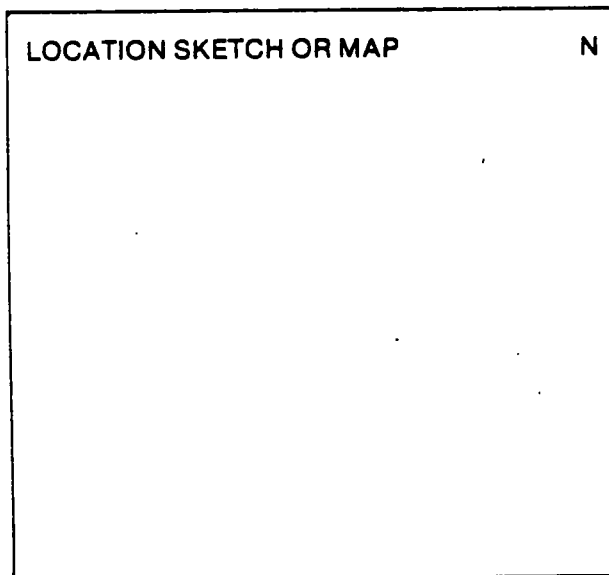
NO. OF CHIMNEYS N/A 952 == NO. OF STORIES 1 950 ==

NO. OF DORMERS N/A _____ 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' 40"

Site Size (Approx. Acreage of Property): N/A 833 ==



Township	Range	Section

812 ==

UTM Coordinates:

_____ 890 ==
 Zone Easting Northing

Photographic Records Numbers PB-8102-1-F15 860 ==

Contact Print

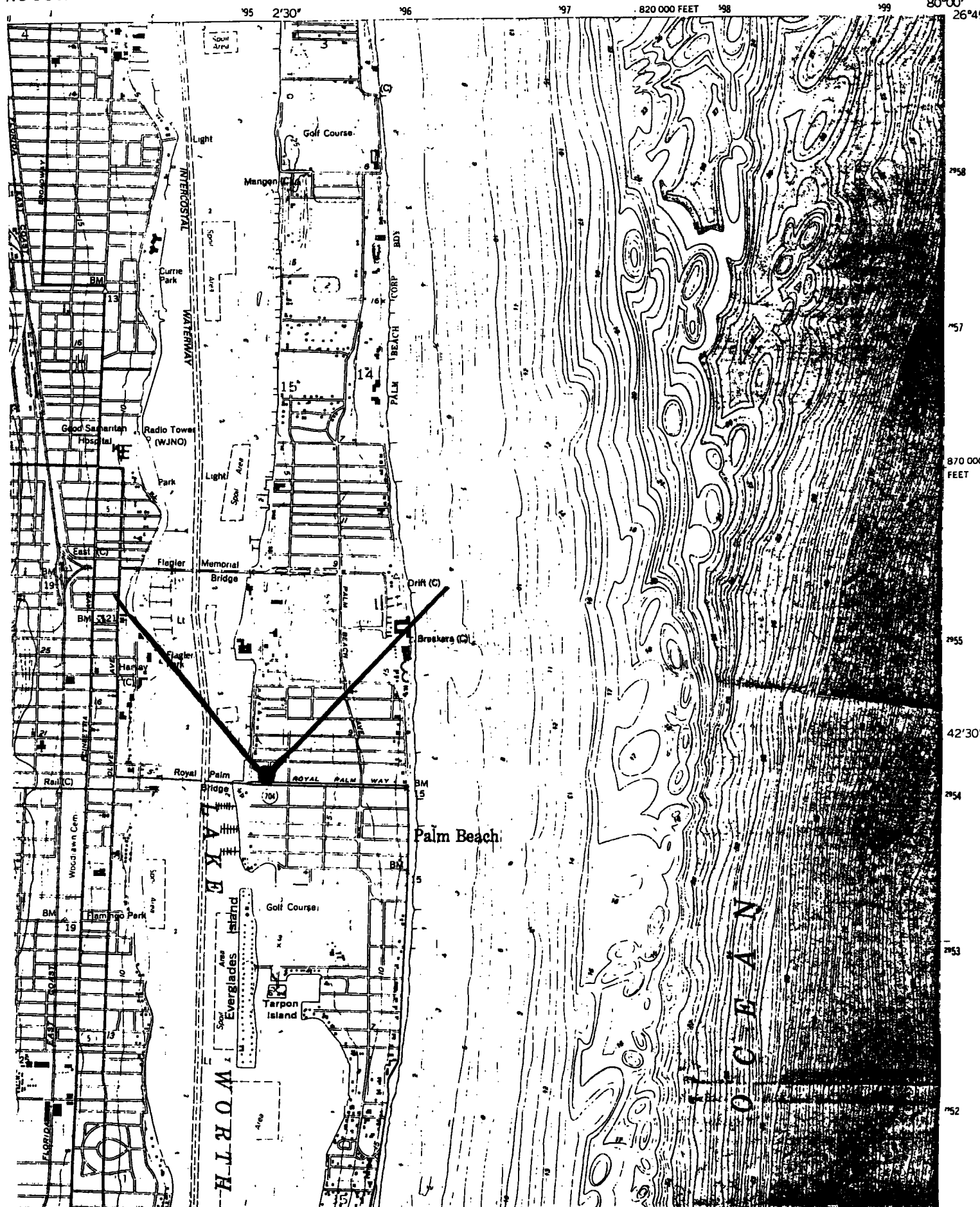


ATES
COMMERCE
IC SURVEY

The Society of the Four Arts

PALM BEACH QUADRANGLE
FLORIDA-PALM BEACH CO.

7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC-BATHYMETRIC)



III. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

The Society of the Four Arts is comprised of three buildings whose Mediterranean Revival style of architecture can be found throughout the complex. This style refers to a style derived from a combination of architectural features commonly found in countries and cultures bordering the Mediterranean Sea, primarily Spain and Italy.

The Society's two story library, located on the east side of Four Arts Plaza, was designed by Maurice Fatio. Completed in 1938 the smooth stuccoed building has distinctive Italianate features. A graceful tripartite entranceway enhances the symmetrical central block. Murals by Albert Herter depicting the Four Arts cover the walls of the recessed portico. Additional features found on the front entrance are a cut coral stone floor, two low platforms that are the bases for elegant bronze panthers and wrought iron lanterns. Above the entrance is a balcony with stone balusters and balustrade. A narrow stone belt course further defines the two stories.

A low-pitched hipped roof is covered with red barrel tile. The moderate overhang is enhanced by decorative brackets. A flat roofed rectangular wing extends to the north of the central building. Ground floor casement windows are framed with rectangular stone molding. Second story windows, also casement, have shutters and stone sills. A small outbuilding known as the summer house is found to the rear of the central block. Also completed in 1938 this building is maintained by the Garden Club of Palm Beach.

The largest building in the complex is the two story stuccoed gallery-auditorium. This was originally the Addison Mizner-designed Mediterranean Revival "Club de Montmartre" owned by Colonel Edward R. Bradley. Purchased from the Bradley estate in 1947 the building was renovated by John L. Volk for its present use. The asymmetrical building with multiple roof lines has many distinctive features that add to the integrity of the Mediterranean Revival style.

The main north facade entrance designed by John Volk is enhanced by a covered arched portico. The portico is topped by a relatively restrained pediment. The flat roof line is delineated with simple stone molding. A small tiled roof section can be found to the west of the entrance. The entranceway is further enhanced by a reflective pool and sculpture. Stone statues decorate the windowless West elevation.

The Royal Palm Way entrance designed by Addison Mizner has an arched double doorway of planked wood and wrought iron hardware. The wrought iron theme is continued on this elevation with lanterns and grill work on small windows. Five rectangular stone pilasters have decorative terminals that project above the roof line. This building section has a hipped roof covered with red barrel tile. A square cupola also has rectangular stone pilasters, fixed octagonal windows and a tile covered hipped roof.

The third building in the complex also designed by Addison Mizner is the Rovensky Building, formerly the Embassy Apartments. This three story box-shaped building is located on the corner of Four Arts Plaza and Royal Palm Way. Its stuccoed exterior is enhanced by sculpted stone blocks on the first level and a belt course with decorative medallions between the first and second story. A wrought iron railing covers the balcony that runs the length of the second story on the south elevation. Various smaller balconies are found on the third floor.

A low-pitched hipped roof is covered with red barrel tile. The moderate overhang is enhanced by decorative wooden brackets. Ground floor windows are 4/4 single hung sash while upper floor windows are casement. French doors exit to the balconies.

Additional elaborations to the Four Arts Plaza are the two Volk-designed piers that grace the entrance of the avenue. These modern pillars are topped with stylized urns.

IV. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The Society of the Four Arts is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting interest in art, literature, drama and music. The roots of the present day society date back to the 1920s when pioneering arts promoters and early society leaders such as John Riter, the Stotesburys, Paris Singer and Hugh Dillman actively participated in The Society of the Arts. This organization used the newly opened Paramount Theater and the Whitehall Hotel for art exhibits and concerts¹.

In 1936 a newly incorporated Society of the Four Arts led by Maud Howe Elliot moved into a vacant store provided by Colonel Edward R. Bradley. The Royal Palm Way site was in the Spanish Provincial Building formerly known as the Embassy Club. The first art exhibit sponsored by the Society was a display for 50 Old Masters owned by members. Highlighting this exhibition was Rembrandt's "Aristotle Contemplating the Bust of Homer"².

By January 1938 the Society purchased land owned by John Phipps whose family donated additional property to the Society for use as a parking lot. Architect Maurice Fatio, an original member of the Board of Trustees, donated his services for the design of a building which he called "modified Spanish architecture"³. On the front loggia of this building Albert Herter painted canvas murals depicting the four arts:

¹Donald Curl, **Palm Beach County**, Windsor Publications, Inc. p.101.

²"The Society of The Four Arts Celebrates Its Golden Anniversary", **Palm Beach Life**, February 1986. pp. 125-130.

³**Palm Beach Life**, pp. 125-130.

painting and sculpture, music, drama and literature. The first exhibition in the Society's new home was "Origins of the Modern Movement", again artwork on loan from Society members.

Members of the Palm Beach Garden Club conceived the idea of having a tropical garden complement the building. Under the guidance of Mrs. Alfred Kay lush Florida foliage was introduced onto the Society's property. After World War II landscape architect Richard Webel redesigned the gardens with pathways and a fountain. He also added the formal Chinese garden. The maintenance of the garden remains under the auspice of the Garden Club.

By 1947 the Society purchased Bradley's Embassy Club on Royal Palm Way. Bradley had commissioned Addison Mizner in 1928 to design the Embassy Club as a night club. The club was never a success. When Bradley died the Society purchased not only the building but also the surrounding property adjacent to Lake Worth.

Architect John Volk suggested renovations of the newly purchased buildings rather than new construction. Volk began the transformation of the Embassy Club into a cultural center when he added a roof to the large open air courtyard. He transformed this area into a 718 seat theater and converted the bar and grill into a gallery/boardroom. He retained the original loggias. Specific areas were allocated for gallery space, sculpture, work areas, children's rooms and administrative offices. A new entrance on the north facade was created which overlooked a landscaped parking area. Two modern pillars were added to the intersection of Ceiba Avenue and Royal Palm Way giving newly landscaped Ceiba a distinctive mall appearance. Throughout the massive renovations Volk was able to retain the original integrity of Mizner's Spanish style. At the grand opening in January 1948 Volk's design was described as "masterful"⁴.

With the renovations of the Embassy Club building into new gallery space and administrative offices the original Four Arts building designed by Fatio was remodeled by well-known Palm Beach architect Marion Sims Wyeth. Wyeth redesigned this two story building to house the Society's growing library collection. The library is open year round for both residents and non-residents of Palm Beach.

Major expansions have continued. In 1993 the Society acquired the Embassy Apartments, also known as the Spanish Provincial Apartments. This building was originally designed for Paris Singer by Addison Mizner in 1924. After the Society's acquisition the building was dedicated to Palm Beach financier John E. Rovensky and is now known as the Rovensky Building. It houses the Children's Library and the Society's administrative offices.

⁴Palm Beach Life, 1986.

The addition of special collections such as the Addison Mizner Collection (volumes on architecture, designs and Mizner notebooks) add to the scholastic integrity of the library. The development of the sculpture garden has added another dimension to the complex. The acquisition in 1976 of Isamu Noguchi's "Intetra" enhanced the Society's permanent collection. Concerts have varied from the Vienna Boys Choir(1974) to Victor Borge(1982). The lecture series is equally diverse, ranging from the Duke of Marlborough (1977) to James Michener(1976)⁵.

The goal nurtured by a small group of Palm Beach residents in 1936 to promote the arts has developed into a thriving arts complex. The Society of The Four Arts has become an integral part of the Town of Palm Beach.

V. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The three buildings and two piers that comprise the Society of the Four Arts complex are significant under the Criteria for Designation listed in Section 16-38A of the Town of Palm Beach Landmarks Preservation Ordinance #2-84. They exemplify the broad cultural and social history of Palm Beach during the 1930s and 1940s, embody distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, represent the notable works of four well-known architects and show the adaptability of Palm Beach buildings by ingenious renovations.

VI. 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."

The Four Arts Plaza complex reflects the broad cultural and social history of the Town of Palm Beach during the 1930s and the 1940s. The Society of the Four Arts, a non-profit corporation, promoted a level of refinement through public support of the

⁵Olivia Gazzam Morrish, "A History of The Society of The Four Arts". 1983.

Society's sponsorship of art exhibits, musical concerts, literary readings and lectures. The development of an art gallery and library has made a substantial impression on Palm Beach life. Therefore, the complex fulfills criteria (a) for Historic Designation.

(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 craftsmen."

The three buildings within the complex have distinguishing characteristics of the Mediterranean Revival style of architecture. Features found on all the buildings are low-pitched hipped roofs with barrel tile, stucco exteriors, stone ornamentation, belt courses and wrought iron. Additionally each building displays individual features. The library has an elegant tripartite entranceway that is enhanced by bronze sculpture and a painted mural. The Rovensky building's symmetrical shape is dotted with wrought iron balconies and decorative medallions. The two-story art gallery/auditorium has an arched portico topped by a simple pediment on the north entrance while the south entrance has impressive wood planked doors. A square cupola adds additional interest to this building. These features meet the requirements for 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 three buildings which comprise the Four Arts Plaza have the unique distinction of having Palm Beach's four most prominent architects involved in either the original design or major renovations of the complex. Original buildings were designed by Addison Mizner and Maurice Fatio. Later renovations by John Volk and Marion Sims Wyeth kept the integrity of Mizner's and Fatio's original designs while expanding the facilities to house the ever growing Society. The buildings and accompanying gardens are a harmonious blend of the talents of these four masters therefore fulfilling criteria (d) for Historic Designation.

VII. ARCHITECT'S BIOGRAPHY

Addison Mizner

Addison Cairns Mizner was one of the Palm Beach's most flamboyant architects from his arrival on the island in 1918 to his death in 1933. With Richard M. Hunt and Stanford White he was known as one of the "great society architects". Mizner socialized with the wealthy, and through his contacts introduced Mediterranean Revival architecture to Palm Beach, revolutionizing the shape of the town.

Mizner was born in 1872 in Benicia, California, the son of a prominent California pioneer family. Although he never studied architecture at the university level, Mizner absorbed design concepts "in the field" while his father was ambassador to Central America. Fluent in Spanish from his time in Guatemala City, Mizner travelled to Spain where he lived in Salamanca for less than a year. Despite the fact that his time in Spain was short his travels left a lasting imprint on his life and work.

From 1893 to 1896 Mizner expanded his knowledge of Spanish style architecture by serving an apprenticeship with a leading proponent of the style, Willis Polk, in San Francisco. His apprenticeship taught him draftsmanship and construction techniques and eventually led to a partnership with Polk. From California Mizner traveled to New York City where he benefitted from a friendship with Stanford White, who helped him become established in the city.

Mizner first visited Palm Beach in 1918 while recovering from an accident. Already established as a New York architect, he stayed with Paris Singer, son of Sewing Machine mogul Isaac Singer and husband of dancer Isadora Duncan. Singer was interested in developing Palm Beach as a resort for the wealthy of New York. Mizner received a \$6,000 per year retainer from Singer to encourage his New York society cliental to build vacation homes in Palm Beach.

The Everglades Club, designed in 1918, was Mizner's first project and set the tone for the new Palm Beach. Addison Mizner moved away from the single cottage style town of Henry Flagler and moved toward a resort of fashion and elegance.

In the Town of Palm Beach Mizner buildings included dozens of mansions, the Via Mizner, Via Pariogi, office buildings, apartments, and shops. One of Mizner's unique attributes was his ability to adapt to circumstances. When the elements of his Spanish style buildings became unavailable (iron work, tiles, etc. that help define the Mediterranean Revival style) he established Mizner Industries to produce the needed materials. Eventually he produced the new and "antique" furniture used to decorate his houses.

After the collapse of Mizner's project in Boca Raton, and the failure of the Mizner development, he continued to live in Villa Mizner but had financial trouble maintaining his life style. Mizner died of a heart attack on February 5, 1933.

Maurice Fatio

Maurice Fatio was one of the Palm Beach's top architects from the 1920s to the early 1940s. His firm, Treanor & Fatio, was one of the largest architectural firms in Palm Beach and Fatio's distinctive designs can be seen throughout the Island.

Fatio was born in 1897 in Geneva, Switzerland. He studied architecture under Karl Moser at the Zurich Polytechnical. After graduation in 1920, Fatio came to America and apprenticed with Harrie T. Lindeberg, a prominent New York architect of Norman and English style country houses.

In 1921, Fatio formed a partnership with William A. Treanor, another architect in Lindeberg's firm. They quickly achieved a great deal of success, constructing numerous houses, primarily Colonial, on Long Island as well as buildings in Manhattan, including Beekman Tower on the East River.

Fatio's association with Florida can be traced to his employment with Lindeberg, when he received the commission for eight small houses in New Smyrna, Florida. In October 1923, Treanor and Fatio were asked to be the architects for the Olympia Beach development, now Jupiter Island. The next year Fatio opened an office in Palm Beach.

Fatio's many commissions for houses and commercial buildings in Palm Beach were based on his reputation in New York as well as his charm, good looks, and European manner. During his career in Florida, Fatio designed in many diverse styles. Mediterranean Revival, more specifically, Italianate houses incorporating tower blocks, were designed for William McAneeny (195 Via Del Mar), the Coopers (801 South County Road), Mortimer Schiff (920 South Ocean Boulevard), and Daniel McCarthy (550 South Ocean Boulevard). More horizontal, symmetrical and formal Florentine houses were designed for Otto Kahn (690 North County Road) and Joseph Widner (1500 South Ocean Boulevard). In the mid-30s, Fatio began designing in the Georgian and British Colonial styles. Large commissions for Albert Worswick (1860 South Ocean Boulevard), E. F. Hutton (1768 South Ocean Boulevard), and Wolcott Blair (1960 South Ocean Boulevard) with their simple materials and uncluttered lines reflected the sober economic climate and set the pace for the smaller Colonial and Regency commissions that followed them.

During this time, Fatio also worked in the modern style, producing such modern masterpieces as "The Reef" built for Mrs. Barclay Douglas (Jo Hartford). Other modern houses were designed for Messmore Kendall, aviation pioneer Grover Loening, and Prince and Princess Zalstern-Zalessky (Evangeline Johnson Merrill).

World War II brought a halt to construction in Palm Beach. Although Fatio was already beginning to suffer from cancer, he entered the Office of Strategic Services in June of 1943. He died of cancer later that same year, on December 2, 1943.

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.

Marion Sims Wyeth

One of Palm Beach's earliest and most successful architects is Marion Sims Wyeth whose career spanned sixty years. Wyeth was noted for his "quiet, subdued and rational" interpretations of both the Spanish and Italian styles. With Addison Mizner, Maurice Fatio, Joseph Urban and John Volk, he is credited with creating the "Palm Beach Style".

Wyeth, a member of the well-known family of artists, was born in New York City in

1889. He began architectural studies at Princeton in 1910 and completed his classic training at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris. He started his career in New York with the firm Carrere and Hastings before relocating to Palm Beach in 1919 where he met with immediate success. He was a founding partner in Wyeth and King, later becoming Wyeth, King and Johnson; New York and Palm Beach.

The socially popular Wyeth was a prolific craftsman whose designs are found throughout Palm Beach. More than one hundred of his residences have graced the Island. Some examples are Qui Si Sana, Casa Juanita and Hogarcito. His impressive list of contributing works includes many prominent structures: i.e., the Good Samaritan Hospital, Seminole Golf Club, Bethesda-by-the-Sea rectory, the Norton Gallery and the Governor's Mansion in Tallahassee.

Wyeth's contemporaries recognized his genius. He was known to help Addison Mizner bring reality into some of his more complex ideas. While Joseph Urban is credited with Mar-a-Lago, Wyeth's association with the project was essential for its completion.

Later in his career Wyeth designed houses in a Southern Colonial style. He always remained faithful to his classic training. Refined and graceful designs were his trademark.

Wyeth, who died in 1982, was the first Palm Beach architect to be elected to a fellow of the American Institute of Architecture.

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Royal Palm Way entrance to art gallery/auditorium



West elevation, Library



Entrance to Four Arts Plaza through Volk-designed pillars



Rovensky Building, south elevation
former Spanish Provincial Apartments