

480 South Ocean Boulevard



DESIGNATION REPORT

March 19, 2025

Landmark Preservation Commission

Palm Beach, Florida

DESIGNATION REPORT

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Table of Contents

I.	GENERAL INFORMATION	2
II.	LOCATION MAP	3
III.	ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION	4
IV.	HISTORICAL INFORMATION	9
V.	ARCHITECT'S BIOGRAPHY	14
VI.	STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	15
VII.	CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION	15
VIII.	SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	18

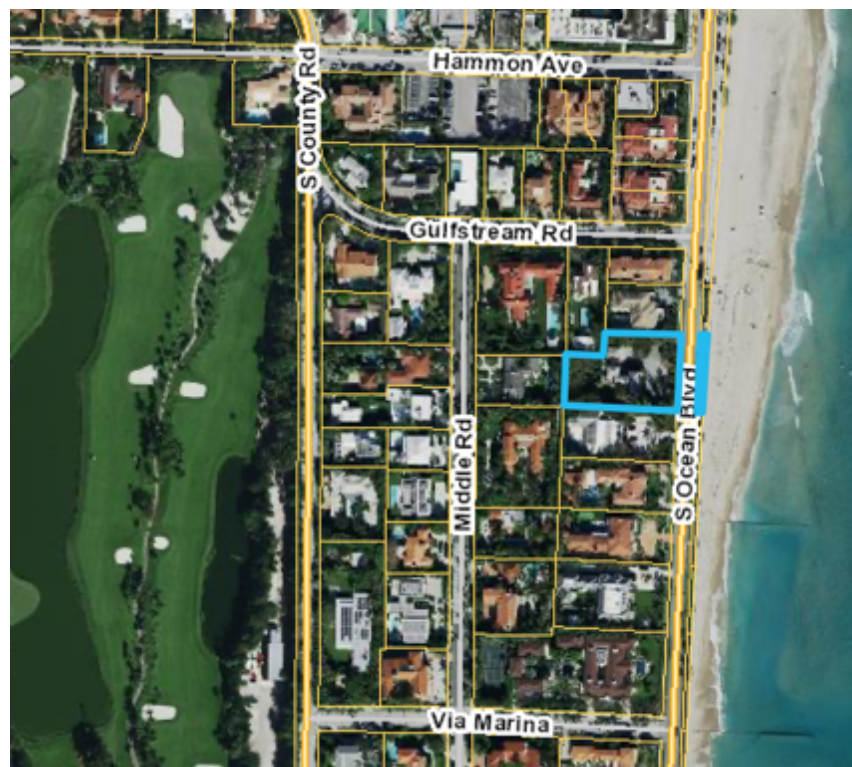
Report produced by Murphy Stillings, LLC

I. General Information

Location:	480 South Ocean Boulevard Palm Beach, Florida
Date of Construction:	1935
First Owner:	Mrs. Harold Fitzgerald
Architect:	Marion Sims Wyeth, Wyeth & King Architects
Builder/Contractor:	Smith, Riddle & Yetter
Present Owner:	Patricia A. Kahn Estate
Present Use:	Single Family Dwelling
Present Zoning:	R-A
Palm Beach County Tax Folio Number:	50-43-43-26-03-000-0011
Current Legal Description:	The Land Lying Between South Ocean Boulevard And The Waters Of The Atlantic Ocean Directly East Of Lot 1 Less and Except The Northerly 100 Feet Of Lot1 And All Of Lot 2 Singer Addition As Shown Upon The Plat Of Said Singer Addition To The Town Of Palm Beach, Florida As The Same Appears Of Record In Plat Book 8 At Page 81 In The Office Of The Clerk Of The Circuit Court Of Palm Beach County, Florida.

II. Location Map

480 South Ocean Boulevard



III. Architectural Information

The residence at 480 South Ocean Boulevard is located in Palm Beach's Estate section just south of mid-town Palm Beach on a parcel overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. The house was designed in the Monterey style of architecture with both British Colonial and early Palm Beach influences by Marion Sims Wyeth, one of the most important architects to practice in the Town of Palm Beach.¹ The house was commissioned in 1935 by long-time Palm Beach winter resident Mrs. Harold Fitzgerald and built by the highly regarded construction firm Smith, Riddle and Yetter.²



Wyeth designed the house with his skilled interpretation of the Monterey style on the main east facing facade of the dwelling with materials based on early Palm Beach architecture and building traits from the British Colonial style to the rear. The Monterey style originated as an interpretation of Spanish Colonial houses of

¹ The drawings are from the architectural firm Wyeth & King; however, Wyeth was the resident Palm Beach architect. Marion Sims Wyeth and Frederic Rhineland King formalized their partnership in 1932 with the formation of Wyeth & King Architects, New York and Palm Beach with King doing projects north of the Carolina border and Wyeth doing projects to the south.

² Town of Palm Beach Building permit #10635 dated September 11, 1935. The permit is for a frame residence and garage for the approximate cost of \$21,000.

northern California. The 1834 Larkin House in Monterey, California is generally identified as the first Monterey style house being an Angelized form of the Spanish Colonial house. The style, however, did not become widespread until California architect Robert E. Coate, Sr, helped revive the style by writing about early Monterey dwellings, designing houses in the style and winning a Better Homes in America Award for a Monterey style design.³ The later designs that were especially popular in the United States between 1925 and 1955 were a fusion of mostly Spanish Colonial and Colonial Revival styles with some examples incorporating French Creole design details. The result was designs that were two-story residences with the main identifying feature being a second floor, cantilevered, open-air balcony covered by the principal roof. Decorative detailing of these Monterey residences is often confined to the balcony railing, which are typically styled in wood or metal. The roofs are characteristically low-pitched with the exterior walls constructed of brick, stucco or wood. Early examples of the Monterey style tend to feature more Spanish details while later examples typically emphasized Colonial details.⁴ The British Colonial style of architecture is the commonly used name for an adaption of Georgian architecture for the British colonies, many which were in the Caribbean with similar climates to Palm Beach. The British Colonial style was introduced to Palm Beach in 1925 by Howard Major with the design of Major Alley on Peruvian Avenue. Major proposed that the British Colonial style, lighter and simpler in design than the Mediterranean Revival style, was better suited to the South Florida climate. The British Colonial style was not commonly used in Palm Beach, however, until the 1930s. In addition to the Monterey style and British Colonial influences, 480 South Ocean Boulevard also has influences from Palm Beach's early architecture, which prior to 1915 included numerous Shingle Style dwellings. As its name conveys, these were dwellings recognized for their use of shingles for the wall cladding and roof surfacing.

480 South Ocean Boulevard is located on the west side of South Ocean Boulevard between Gulf Stream Road and Via Marina.⁵ The two-story frame residence is surfaced with wood shingles and features low-pitched, asphalt shingle covered hipped roofs with a slight eave overhang and a simple wood cornice. This dwelling with one and two-story components sits on a raised masonry foundation, has corner board trim, a substantial brick chimney and a charming bay window with a copper roof on the south elevation and mostly symmetrical fenestration of six-over-six

³ Virginia Savage McAlester. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2021.

⁴ Murphy Stillings reports on Monterey Style residences.

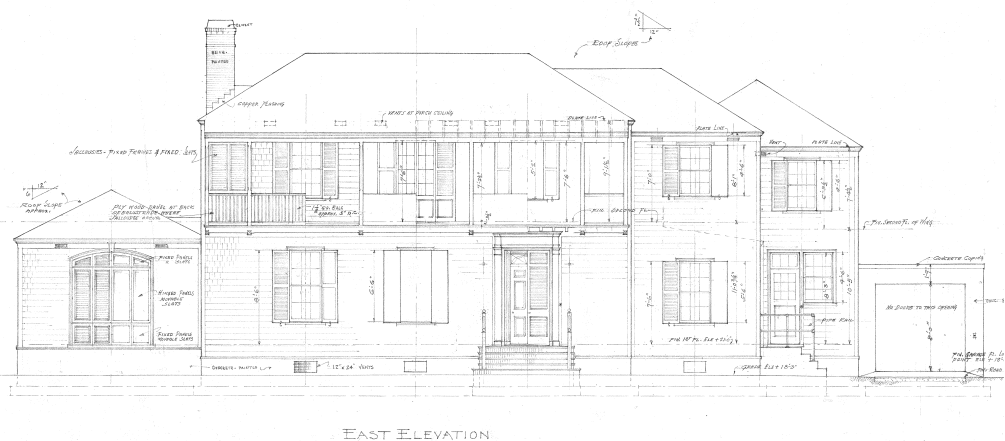
⁵ The property also has riparian rights across South Ocean Boulevard to the east along the Atlantic Ocean. The house is bordered to the north by 476 South Ocean Boulevard, to the northwest by 116 Gulfstream Road, to the west by 17 Middle Road and to the south by 500 South Ocean Boulevard.

wood sash windows throughout. Like many of his other Palm Beach designs, Wyeth used a U-Shaped plan with patios and terraces to merge the popular tropical “indoor-outdoor” way of life.

The main east facing facade features the two-story section which contains the focal point of the Monterey style design – the second story open-air cantilevered balcony covered by the principal roof. This balcony includes a wood rail with simple balusters and chamfered posts supported by beams underneath. Leading to this balcony is a single door flanked by six-over-six wood sash windows. The first story of this Monterey design has two six-over-six wood sash windows flanked by louvered shutters as well as the attractive main entrance porch which is approached by a brick and stone stair with a wood rail, posts and balusters. This element features a classical entablature and pilasters framing the entry which is entered through full-height louvered shutters. Recessed behind this entry piece through a vestibule is the six-paneled wood entry door with a picturesque rectangular fanlight with glazing bars that radiate out like an open fan or sunburst.⁶ The design of this main entry suggests that Wyeth was using the later Colonial Revival influence in this Monterey design.



Entrance



EAST ELEVATION

Main Façade

Marion Sims Wyeth, Wyeth & King, 1935
 Courtesy of The Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach

Joined to this Monterey design is a more British Colonial design which originally had rooms in a hierarchy progressing to the south and west.⁷ The first floor of the Monterey portion of the dwelling housed the living room with the fireplace on the south wall, the entrance hall, the front stair hall and staircase and a guest bedroom

⁶ Doors with classical surrounds and fanlights were often featured in Colonial Revival style houses.

⁷ Wyeth & King, Architectural Drawings of the Residence and Garage for Mrs. Harold Fitzgerald, Job # 242, August 1935. The interior of the dwelling no longer features the rooms as originally constructed and described in this report. The original drawings were used to help describe the different styles of the dwelling and its initial history.

suite, while the second floor included two master bedroom suites. To the southwest is a one-story, hipped roof loggia which had a wide arched entrance with louvered shutters on the east facade and an opening onto a large patio surfaced with old brick adjacent to the north and west. This patio was located directly west of the original living room and south of the dining room while a terrace, also surfaced with old brick, was located west of the dining room. As noted previously, Wyeth placed these large outdoor areas adjacent to the public rooms to incorporate both indoor and outdoor living spaces for his Florida clients. Behind what was the staircase hall and guest bedroom suite to the west is a two-story hipped roof section that runs east to west like a hyphen. Included in this section was a dining room on the first floor with multiple service rooms above. North and west of the dining room is another two-story section that included the pantry, the kitchen and the servants dining room on the first floor and service areas above with an entrance leading from the side yard and adjacent driveway into the kitchen. Attached at the rear was a storeroom, back stair hall, laundry, and garage.⁸



Over the dwellings ninety-year history there have been additions, alterations and repairs to the dwelling. During Mrs. Fitzgerald's ownership from 1935-1969, the house appeared to be well maintained with minor additions and necessary repairs.⁹

⁸ Even though this house was built after the boom time era when houses were generally becoming smaller, wealthy clients still had a number of servants and houses were designed to accommodate them.

⁹ Per Palm Beach building permit records, the exterior additions, alterations and repairs during Mrs. Fitzgerald's ownership include February 1936 addition of a 15' patio wall; December 1936 addition to the existing garage; April

From circa 1970-2023 there were mostly minor additions, alterations and repairs with the only main addition being the construction of a detached two-car garage facing east on the north side of the dwelling designed by the architectural firm Wyeth, King & Johnson.¹⁰ In 2023, plans were submitted and permits issued to renovate the property. This included removing a non-original mansard roofed piece that had been added to the loggia, removing an equipment room on the rear, interior investigative demolition, and replacing the existing doors and windows, deteriorated wood shutters and shakes and the roofing material all to closely match the original Wyeth designs.¹¹



Historic Photo
Courtesy of The Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach

1937 addition to a bedroom; May 1939 addition of a frame patio house; March 1955 install elevator; 1968 repair laundry accessory building; and within this time frame various minor roof repairs and replacements.

¹⁰ The original garage doors on this structure were Tilt A Doors according to the plans. From c. 1970 - 1985 other additions, alterations and repairs included a 1970 roof replacement to closely match the original asbestos tiles, a 1970 alteration to the east facade of the loggia by enclosing a portion and installing fixed glass, a 1970 air conditioning replacement and a 1982 re-roofing of the patio house roof to match the existing. In 1986 the roof was replaced with asphalt shingles to closely match the look of the asbestos shingles that were originally on the dwelling.

¹¹ ARCOM Staff Approval Permit # A-23-03128 (8/11/2023) and Interior Investigative Demolition Permit #B-23-99095 (6/30/2023). The work on Permit# A-23-03128 has not been completed. Mold, asbestos and lead paint removal and remediation were completed. According to Lighthouse Building, Development & Design, the contractor for the project, a structural engineer deemed the structure and foundation sound. The architectural drawings from Stergas & Associates AIA indicate that the property was going to be renovated to closely match Wyeth's original design.

IV. Historical Information

The property at 480 South Ocean Boulevard is located on an oceanfront lot in Palm Beach's Singer Subdivision between Gulfstream Road and Via Marina. This land was originally part of Hiram F. Hammon's homesteaded property, which in 1873 was the first homesteaded property in what became the Town of Palm Beach.¹² Hammon's 169 acre property extended from the ocean to Lake Worth and from the current day Royal Palm Way on the north to the Bingham estate on the south, which today is 1250 South Ocean Boulevard.¹³ For much of the 1870s and 1880s, the area along Lake Worth remained a small community of early pioneers. The area began to see more winter tourists in the 1880s, but it was not until the 1890s when Standard Oil business magnate Henry Flagler became instrumental in transforming the island into a preeminent winter resort by extending his Florida East Coast Railway southward and opening the immense Royal Poinciana Hotel in 1894 and the Breakers Hotel in 1896.¹⁴ By the turn of the century, Palm Beach was playing host to the nation's most fashionable, wealthy and powerful citizens.

For most of the Flagler era, winter residents spent the season at the hotels where much of the social activity was based. By the middle of the 1910's, things started to slowly change with some winter residents seeking their own cottages in developing residential areas.¹⁵ In 1918, Paris Singer, son of Isaac Singer who founded the Singer Sewing Machine Company, began buying property in Palm Beach for what was to be the Touchstone Convalescent Center with villas and a clubhouse for shell-shocked soldiers returning from World War I.¹⁶ Singer's property included a plot that went from Lake Worth to the Atlantic Ocean and from Peruvian Avenue on the north to El Bravo Way on the south, all within Hammon's original homestead. Together with his architect Addison Mizner, Singer developed the Mediterranean Revival-style villas and clubhouse at the western end of Worth Avenue for the convalescent center, but with no soldiers accepting the terms of the offer to convalesce in Palm Beach, Singer instead used the property to establish the Everglades Club in early 1919, forever changing the architectural and social

¹² After proceeds from the sales of these 169.2 acres had amounted to well over a million dollars, the United States Department of the Interior found it to be the most valuable claim ever filed and they sent a representative to interview Mr. Hammon. Hammon Avenue, two streets north of 480 South Ocean Boulevard, is named for Hiram Hammon.

¹³ The Bingham-Blossom house known as Figulus was completed in 1893 in the Shingle Style for Charles William Bingham and his wife, Mary Payne Bingham, of Cleveland, Ohio. It was designed by local builder George Lainhart at what is today 1250 South Ocean Boulevard. The house was seriously damaged by fire and demolished in 1974.

¹⁴ The Breakers Hotel was originally named the Palm Beach Inn. It was changed to the Breakers Hotel in 1901.

¹⁵ Some of the new residential subdivisions included Floral Park, Royal Park and Poinciana Park.

¹⁶ During World War I, Paris Singer built several hospitals in Europe for the war-wounded as well as donating the use of his estate Oldway in Paignton to be used as a military hospital.

landscapes of Palm Beach.¹⁷ With the rest of his land, Singer formed the Ocean and Lake Realty Company and platted the Singer Addition subdivision on much of this land east of County Road and South of Worth Avenue.

Although Addison Mizner was the first architect to open an office in Palm Beach in 1918 and popularize the Mediterranean Revival style, Marion Sims Wyeth was not far behind when he opened the second architectural office in town in 1919. With his prestigious architectural background and social connections, opportunity came almost immediately for Wyeth with a number of significant Palm Beach commissions in 1920 including the first house in El Bravo Park for developer Frank Clement. In 1921 he had the fortuitous introduction to newlyweds Edward Francis “E.F.” Hutton and his wife Marjorie Post Hutton while they were looking for an architect to design a house on Golf View Road just east of the Everglades Club. Wyeth was hired by the Hutton’s to design Horgarcito, their Spanish Revival house on an impressive lot overlooking the Everglades golf course. With the success of Horgarcito, Wyeth was chosen as the architect and president for Paris Singer’s and E.F. Hutton’s Golf View Road Development Company which developed houses first on speculation and then from private commissions along Golf View Road on land from Singer’s Ocean and Lake Realty Development Company.¹⁸

During the 1920s land and housing boom, Wyeth was a highly sought after architect designing distinguished buildings for the Who’s Who of Palm Beach. When the United States fell into the Great Depression in 1929, Palm Beach had already experienced a slowdown in the real estate frenzy of the 1920s with much of the building speculation coming to a standstill. Despite the declines, construction never completely stopped in Palm Beach, but instead, houses were reduced in size with the trend of moving away from the large, ornate, Mediterranean Revival style estates to more simplified traditional styles of architecture.¹⁹ During the 1932 and 1933 winter seasons, Wyeth spent less time in Palm Beach and like other architects in town had many fewer commissions than in prior years. However, by 1934 during the late

¹⁷ The Everglades Club opened with twenty-five charter members and was a rousing success. The Mediterranean Revival-style building not only changed the architecture essence of the resort but moved part of the social scene away from Flagler’s hotels in the northern part of town, south into an exclusive private realm centered on Mizner’s new Everglades Club complex and its companion streetscape Worth Avenue.

¹⁸ Jane Day. From Palm Beach to Shangri La: The Architecture of Marion Sims Wyeth. In Association with the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach. New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc. 2021.

¹⁹ Ibid. The collapse of Florida banks in 1926 along with the devastating hurricanes in 1926 and 1928 brought most of the building speculation to a halt. Paris Singer ran into major troubles overextending his real estate ventures on Singer Island and in 1927 was arrested and charged with criminal fraud for deceptive advertising, though he was cleared of these charges shortly after. Eventually, in 1936, the name of the residential street called Singer Place was changed to Middle Road as residents forgot Mr. Singer’s accomplishments and sought to distance themselves from his scandals.

Depression/New Deal Era commissions began to pick up and Wyeth returned to Palm Beach for a longer winter season. A December 30, 1934, Palm Beach Post newspaper article titled “Construction Program Doubles that of ’33,” described this building trend:

“More than doubling the construction activity of 1933, the building totals for the community have neared the \$2,000,000 mark, showing greatest indication of an upward trend since a new low was reached in 1932. With 22 new residences and several commercial structures to its credit, Palm Beach underwent a new building boom this past summer. In 1929, both Palm Beach and West Palm Beach were still feeling the effects of hurricane reconstruction and building totals skyrocketed. In 1931, the community fell into line with the depression and began the downward slump. This year the Federal grants for public improvements have done much to augment the building totals, though Palm Beach has seen a distinct renaissance in building interest and notable in its building circles because of the distinct swerving from the Spanish architecture that has held sway since the war to new types of Colonial structures taking their inspiration from the West Indies and the old Southern homes.”²⁰

By 1935 Wyeth’s practice was back in full swing with many new commissions. It was also a time when some prime land was coming available in Palm Beach. In February 1935, a Public Auction was held to sell numerous lots in the Singer Addition subdivision, including the property that became 480 South Ocean Boulevard.²¹ In part the advertisement for this auction stated, “Lots 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6, each 100 feet wide by 225 feet deep on Ocean Boulevard including full riparian rights, are the only remaining ocean front property of this type available in Palm Beach.”²²

In September of 1935, Mrs. Harold (Helen) Fitzgerald commissioned Wyeth to design a residence on the south portion of lot 1 and all of lot 2 along South Ocean Boulevard on property in the recently auctioned Singer Addition. Mrs. Fitzgerald was an early winter resident of Palm Beach who understood both the value of the lots’ prime location as well as the enjoyment of living and entertaining on an oceanfront property. She belonged to both the nearby Everglades Club and Bath and

²⁰ “Construction Program Doubles That for ’33 Latest Returns Show.” Palm Beach Post, 30 December 1934.

²¹ “Sale at Public Auction By Order of The United States Court.” Palm Beach Post, 24 February 1935. Lot 2 was added to part of Lot 1 to become the property at 480 South Ocean Boulevard.

²² Ibid

Tennis Club and socialized with Palm Beach's leading families. Newspaper articles from the time noted Helen Fitzgerald socializing at the same clubs and events as Wyeth and his wife Eleanor and according to those who had known Wyeth well, "many of Marion Sims Wyeth's Palm Beach evenings were dedicated to obligatory, endless social engagements where friends would become clients, and clients would become friends."²³ Mrs. Fitzgerald was a friend who became a client entrusting Wyeth with the design of her new oceanfront house.

Mrs. Helen Fitzgerald was born Helen Bird Johnson in 1880 to parents Otis and Lucretia Read Johnson originally of Cumberland, Maryland. Helen Johnson was a social secretary for Mrs. Lillian Knox, wife of Pennsylvania Senator Philander Chase Knox, and accompanied Mrs. Knox on a visit to Palm Beach in 1905 where she met Harlan Kent Bolton. Bolton was a very early winter resident of Palm Beach coming first to the Island as a boy with his father James Bolton in 1880 where they stayed at E.N. Cap Dimick's Cocoanut Grove house, the first hotel in Palm Beach. James Bolton of Chicago was the inventor of the New Family Sewing Machine, one of the most popular of the 19th century. Before starting his company, Bolton was working for the Singer Manufacturing Company. Harlan Bolton and Helen Johnson were married in 1905 and resided in Bolton's hometown of Chicago while also spending time during the winter season in Palm Beach, often residing in one of the Breakers Hotel cottages.²⁴ In Palm Beach, the Boltons socialized with America's high society and in 1919 Harlan Bolton was chosen as one of the select founding members of the Board of Governors of the Everglades Club.

James Bolton passed away in 1917 and Harlan stepped in to run the successful family sewing machine business along with his father's colleague F.P. Smith. Unfortunately Harlan passed away just three years later in 1920 at the age of forty-five, leaving Helen a widow.²⁵ Helen continued to spend the winter season in Palm Beach during the early 1920s where she joined the cottage colony occupying the large Shingle Style Breakers cottage "Sea Crest."²⁶ These were the boom time years

²³ Shirley Johnston. Palm Beach Houses. New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc. 1991.

²⁴ Historical Society of Palm Beach County: "H.K. Bolton Photographic Scrapbook". This is a photographic album of approximately 600 snapshots documenting the social season in Palm Beach from 1905-1917. The snapshots represent a rare glimpse of social activities during the Flagler Era and show one of the Boltons group in front of the Breakers Cottage Wave Crest where they were staying.

²⁵ Harlan K. Bolton was buried beside his wife Helen Bird Johnson's family in Oak Hill Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

²⁶ There were originally 9 large Shingle Style cottages created by the Breakers Hotel in 1902 for guests who found hotel rooms too small for the season or who were waiting for their own house to be built. During her marriage to Harlan Bolton and as an affluent widower, Mrs. Harlan (Helen) Bolton "wintered" at a Breakers Cottage so she could house and entertain out-of-town guests during the winter season. As late as 1933 the Palm Beach Post reported that Helen Fitzgerald would be staying "at Wave Crest, her cottage on Breakers Row." She stayed in various Breakers Hotel cottages over the years.

in Palm Beach and Helen Bolton was entrenched in Palm Beach society and the many charitable organizations, including her “pet philanthropy the Women’s Exchange of Chicago where she was ably assisted by others of the Chicago colony.”²⁷

In 1924, Helen Bolton married Harold Fitzgerald. Harold was originally from Brookline, Massachusetts but for many years lived at 127 East 56th Street in midtown Manhattan. Harold Fitzgerald, also a widower of several years, served in the Army during World War I, was a member of many prestigious clubs in New York and Massachusetts, and had two children, Eleanor and Desmond, and a sister Mrs. Charles A. Van Rensselaer. The Fitzgeralds spent much of their time in New York City though they had a house in Litchfield, Connecticut and also continued to spend part of the winter season in Palm Beach, again renting a Shingle Style Breakers cottage.²⁸ In 1935, Helen decided to purchase the property and build a house at 480 South Ocean Boulevard where she could host and entertain guests in a prime location overlooking the ocean.²⁹ Wyeth was very familiar with the location having designed many houses in close proximity including his own house Tre Fontaine just one block west and south of this property on Middle Road.³⁰ Experienced contractors Smith, Yetter & Riddle were hired to build the dwelling that was well under construction by October 1935 when Helen made a trip to Palm Beach to check on its progress.³¹

Helen Fitzgerald owned 480 South Ocean Boulevard for thirty-four years until her death in 1969. During this time she was often noted in the newspaper to host out of town family and friends and entertain at her dwelling. In 1942, she opened her gardens as one of four houses on the prestigious Garden Club of Palm Beach tour that was raising funds for the area Army Camps. After her passing at the age of 88 in May 1969, Allen and Esther Ransom, who had been living on El Vedado Road for a number of years, purchased the property. The Ransoms were originally from Kalamazoo, Michigan but had been splitting their time between Winnetka, Illinois

²⁷ Palm Beach Post, 8 February 1923.

²⁸ Litchfield, Connecticut was historically a popular location for wealthy families and individuals who desired property outside of the New York metropolitan area. Henry Fitzgerald passed away in 1948 and Helen J Fitzgerald donated her historic “Oliver J. Wolcott Jr. Home” to the Litchfield Historical Society In Loving Memory of Her Husband Harold Fitzgerald 1878-1948. Prior to his passing, Harold Fitzgerald did spend time with his wife in Palm Beach and was a member of the golf committee at the Seminole Country Club.

²⁹ The shingle wall cladding of her new dwelling was likely influenced by her admiration of the Shingle Style Breakers cottages where she spent a number of seasons.

³⁰ Wyeth built his own residence Tre Fontaine at 61 Middle Road in 1924. In 1936, Singer Place was renamed Middle Road and 1st, 2nd and 3rd Street were named Hammon Avenue, Gulfstream Road and Via Marina.

³¹ An October 13, 1935, excerpt in the Palm Beach Post noted that “Mrs. Helen Fitzgerald arrived at La Solana to see how her new house on the South Ocean Boulevard is progressing.”

and Palm Beach for many years. Esther passed away in 1974 followed by Allen in 1984. After Allen's death, Patricia A. Kahn obtained the property and owned it for nearly forty years before her passing in August of 2024.

V. Architect Biography

Marion Sims Wyeth, of Wyeth & King Architects

Marion Sims Wyeth was as one of Palm Beach's foremost architects in a career that spanned over fifty years. Wyeth was noted for his "quiet, subdued and rational" interpretations of many architectural styles. With Addison Mizner, Maurice Fatio, Howard Major and John Volk, Wyeth was considered one of the "Big Five" architects credited with creating the Palm Beach style admired for its beauty and elegance as well as its extravagance.

Wyeth was born in 1889 in New York, a son of Florence Nightingale Sims and Dr. John Allan Wyeth. Dr. Wyeth was a Civil War poet, surgical pioneer, and founder of New York's Polyclinic Hospital, the first postgraduate medical school in the United States. Marion's grandfather, Dr. James Marion Sims, founded the field of gynecology and the first woman's hospital. Marion Sims Wyeth began his architectural studies at Princeton University and completed his classic training at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris in 1914. At the time, the École was considered one of the finest schools in the world with its style of education based on studying the classics, mostly Roman architecture. After completing school, Wyeth served as secretary to the U.S. Ambassador in Rome. Upon his return to New York, Wyeth became associated with the architectural offices of Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue and later with Carrere and Hastings, the firm that designed Whitehall for Henry Flagler.

Arriving in Palm Beach at the age of 30, Wyeth met with immediate success. From 1920, Wyeth shared a New York office with Frederic Rhineland King, a friend from his student days in Paris, until 1934 when they formalized the partnership of Wyeth & King architects with Wyeth running the Palm Beach office designing commissions south of the Carolina border and King running the New York office designing the commissions to the north. William Royster Johnson joined Wyeth's Palm Beach office as a draftsman in 1924. In 1944 he became a partner, and the firm name changed to Wyeth, King and Johnson. Over the years, the firm designed buildings ranging from Mediterranean Revival to classical renditions of the Georgian, French, and Colonial styles, including the Monterey.

The socially popular Wyeth was a prolific craftsman and more than 100 of his designs have graced the Island. Some of his most well-known Palm Beach designs include Qui Si Sana, Casa Juanita, Hogarcito, Casa de Los Arcos, Vita Serena, Southwood and the Betheseda by the Sea rectory. His largest and most impressive project was Cielito Lindo, a 45,000-square-foot Spanish Moorish-Revival-style mansion built for James Donohue and Jessie Woolworth Donohue in 1927. In 1946-1947, it was sold to developers, who split the property and created five houses. And while Joseph Urban is credited with Mar-a-Lago, Wyeth's association with the project was essential for its original design and completion. Wyeth also had an impressive list of prominent works outside of Palm Beach. Some of these include Good Samaritan Hospital and the Norton Gallery of Art in West Palm Beach, the Governor's Mansion in Tallahassee, and Doris Duke's Shangri La in Honolulu.

Wyeth served as a trustee of the Society of the Four Arts (1936-1969) and as its president (1956-1961). He became the first Palm Beach architect to be elected a fellow of the American Institute of Architecture in 1954 and received the Test of Time Award from its Palm Beach Chapter in 1981. Marion Sims Wyeth passed away in 1982 at the age of 93.

VI. Statement of Significance

480 South Ocean Boulevard is significant as Marion Sims Wyeth's accomplished interpretation of a Monterey style dwelling with British Colonial and Shingle Style influences. Mrs. Harold Fitzgerald, the first owner who commissioned Wyeth to design the dwelling in 1935, had been spending winters in Palm Beach since the early 1900s and was a well-known member of the Island's social set. The shingle wall cladding of her new dwelling was likely influenced by her admiration of the Shingle Style Breakers Hotel cottages where she spent a number of winter seasons. In addition, the combinations of the three styles make this property a unique Wyeth design.

VII. Criteria For Designation

Section 54-161 of the Town of Palm Beach Landmarks Preservation Ordinance 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 the criteria which relate to this property and justification for designation:

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

The house at 480 South Ocean reflects the broad cultural, economic and social history of the town of Palm Beach. The dwelling was built on an oceanfront parcel in the Singer Addition subdivision in 1935 during the late Depression/New Deal Era. Despite downturns from the stock market crash and ensuing Great Depression, construction in Palm Beach slowed but never stopped. Instead, the size, scale and style of houses were reduced and simplified with the Spanish and Mediterranean Revival styles giving way to more traditional Colonial styles in various revivals and renditions. And although Palm Beach still had the status and cachet to attract the wealthy and prominent from across the country and around the world, the trend of moving away from grand ornate estates to more manageable residences continued for decades. Furthermore, the original owner Mrs. Helen Fitzgerald, exemplifies this criterion as she was a member of Palm Beach's social set for nearly 65 years beginning in 1905 during the Flagler era, then as part of the original group that made the Everglades Club a rousing success and later enjoying the season in her oceanfront dwelling that exhibited the more traditional architecture of the mid-1930s.

- (3) “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 residence at 480 South Ocean Boulevard is a very good example of Marion Sims Wyeth's skillful interpretation of the Monterey style of architecture with British Colonial and Shingle Style influences. The frame dwelling has low-pitched hipped roofs with slight eave overhangs and mostly symmetrical fenestration in an elongated U-shaped design. The main east facing Monterey style facade has the requisite second floor, cantilevered balcony and the design of the main entry with its classical entablature, pilasters, paneled door, and picturesque fanlight suggests that Wyeth was using the later Colonial Revival influence in this Monterey design. The attached loggia and rear pavilions with the adjoining patio and terrace to create the elongated U-shape design suggest Wyeth's use of the British Colonial style to create the union of indoor and outdoor spaces while the wood shingle cladding suggests a reference to early Palm Beach Shingle Style dwellings.

- (4) “Is representative of the notable work of a master builder, designer or architect whose individual ability has been recognized or has influenced his age.”**

The dwelling at 480 South Ocean Boulevard is a distinguished and unique representation of the design work of Marion Sims Wyeth. Wyeth was one of the most important architects to practice in the Town of Palm Beach and over his more

than fifty year career he designed masterful buildings in varying sizes and styles for many of Palm Beach's most prominent patrons. This 1935 dwelling shows how Wyeth was able to adapt to the post-1920s boom years and design a house blending traditional styles in an appropriate size, scale and plan for a notable patron.

VIII. Selected Bibliography

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