

Save Our Heritage Organisation

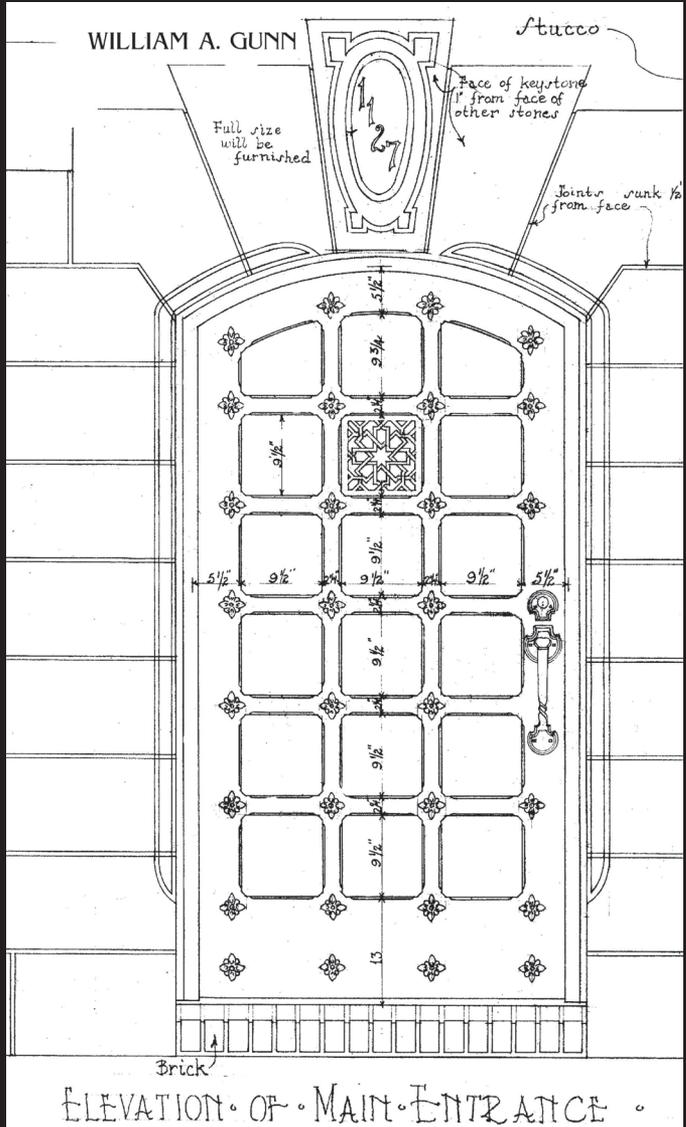
presents

A Tour of the Works of Noted Architect:



Richard S. Requa, AIA

Requa's Architecture in Coronado, California



RICHARD S. REQUA, AIA

was born March 27, 1881, in Rock Island, IL. He and his family moved to San Diego in 1900. His early employment with Hartwell Electric reflected his training in electrical engineering. In 1908 he joined the staff of architect Irving J. Gill as a “superintendent.” At this time he was also writing articles on office organization, home design, and landscaping for national and local publications. Requa was one of the San Diego Architectural Association’s original members.



1926

In 1911, Requa established his own office, and in 1913, he formed the firm of Mead and Requa with Frank Mead. Both men had a strong interest in the simple elements that make up the architecture of the Southwestern United States and the North African coastal regions. Added to this mix was the influence of the early Spanish architecture of California.

In May 1920, Mead left the firm, and Requa partnered with Herbert L. Jackson, who had also been in Gill’s office. Jackson’s principal skills were in structural engineering rather than design. The 1920s proved to be Requa and Jackson’s most prolific period. Landscape architect Milton P. Sessions worked closely with Requa on all his major projects.

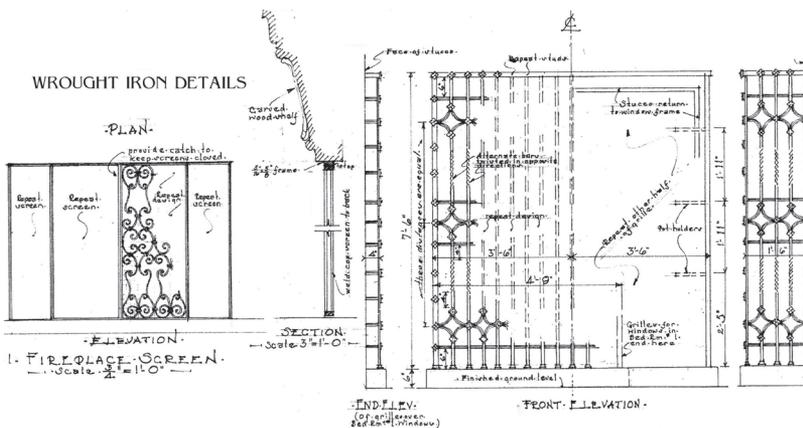
Requa was impressed with the similarity of terrain and climate between Southern California and the Andalusia area of Spain. It was during the 1920s that Requa developed a style that was to become his hallmark; he labeled it “Southern California Architecture.”

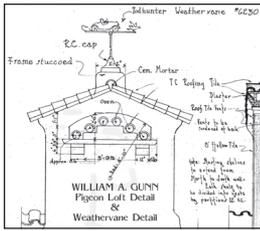
Beginning in 1925, as architectural editor for the San Diego Union he wrote weekly feature articles detailing the elements inherent in this style. He summarized the concept in one of his features:

This new style is characterized by plain walls of modeled stucco in soft, warm tones blending with its planting; low pitched, rambling roofs, preferably covered with burned clay tiles, sometimes combined with flat roofs enclosed by plain parapet walls; expansive, deep-set casements and French windows; ornament and moldings used with great restraint and discrimination; variety, charm, and distinction obtained rather by wood shutters, exquisite wrought iron window grills and lattice and quaint projecting balconies; generous mass planting of hardy shrubs and vines around the buildings, and delightful garden areas joined to the house by walls and hedges.

In March 1926, Requa made his first trip to the Mediterranean. During his travels in Spain and North Africa, Requa documented the architecture of these regions with both a still camera and a 16mm movie camera.

Although all of his home designs during the peak years of the 1920s were unique, the Coronado designs stand out as examples of his creative imagination unfettered by the clients' financial status. In addition to the newspaper articles, many of the homes were featured in national and local publications, the articles focusing on the furnishings as well as the landscaping and architectural design.





#1 William A. Gunn, 1127 F Avenue
1924-25 Requa and Jackson; Milton P. Sessions, landscape architect

The flatiron-shaped lot has a 180-foot frontage and is 240 feet deep. The construction is of rough-textured stucco over terra-cotta hollow tile. The 14-room home stretches across the front of the lot. There are 7 fireplaces.

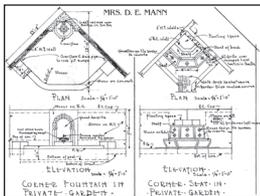
Batchelder and Malibu tile are used extensively inside and out. The living room is 35 feet by 20 feet with large windows overlooking patio gardens. The horseshoe shaped wall fountain at the back of the garden is on the tower wall that houses a pigeon loft at the top, and it is adjacent to a three car garage with chauffeur's quarters. On the northeast corner Requa designed a bronze ornamental ring to attach the telephone service wires, which are now underground.



#2 Dwight J. Peterson, 1007 Ocean Blvd.

1929 Requa and Jackson; Milton P. Sessions, landscape architect

On this project, Requa comes full circle. Having started his career in Irving Gill's office, he is now drastically altering a Gill exterior. Originally designed by Gill for C.L. Tutts prior to World War I, Requa transformed the Gill brick "box" exterior into an attractive half-timbered English Tudor façade. The high brick wall surrounding the lot was another Requa addition. The wooden entrance gate is an exact replica of one that Requa photographed in 1928 in an English garden. In the patio beyond is a Malibu tile wall fountain in excellent condition.



#3 Mrs. D.E. Mann, 1045 Loma Avenue
1926-27 Requa and Jackson; Milton P. Sessions, landscape architect

Many of the features in this home reflect design elements that Requa had photographed during his first Mediterranean trip taken a few months prior. The wrought iron Tunisian "harem" window grille on the tower, the deep-set entry the enclosed balcony above, and the simple-set entry

-set entry the enclosed balcony above, and the simple tower are all examples of these features. The size of the lot allowed for a long, shallow floor plan. Starting at the south end are the study, billiard room, and two-story living room. The second story over this area was added in the past decade. The original iron drapery hardware, chandeliers, and light fixtures are still in place. The flat roof is a typical feature of buildings on the North African coast. The entry hall is small with a wood coffered ceiling ornamented with iron studs. Massive arches lead off to the living room, dining room, and stairs. On the southwest corner of the lot was a “secret garden,” with a tile fountain, pool, and bench, which was removed long ago. The garage has been rebuilt and the high side and front wall are recent additions.

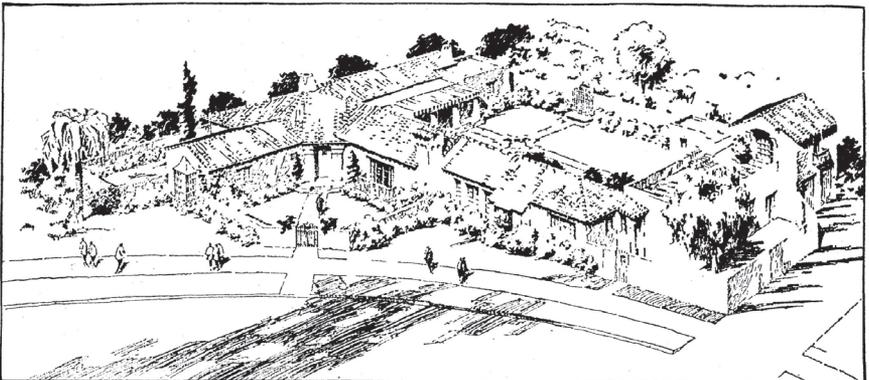
From Historic North Africa Comes Coronado's New Architectural Jewel



#4 E.L. Wallbridge, 1038 E Avenue
1927 Requa and Jackson; Milton P. Sessions,
landscape architect

The home was demolished in 2003, a classic example of no historic oversight and indifferent ownership. As you can see from the sketch, it was spread over several

lots at the corner of E and Tolita Avenues. The house surrounded an enclosed patio in Requa's typical Mediterranean style.





**#5 Darwin R. and Clara Aldridge,
801 Tolita**

1928 Requa and Jackson

The exterior reflects several Craftsman elements, such as the window treatment and main entry. Quite often the service building (garage or servants quarters)

were built first and lived in while the main residence was being constructed.

#6 Edward Fuller, 1010 Olive

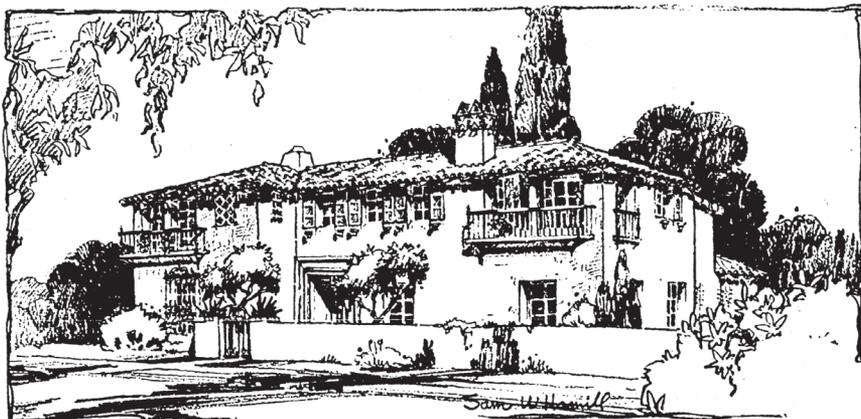
1931 Requa and Jackson

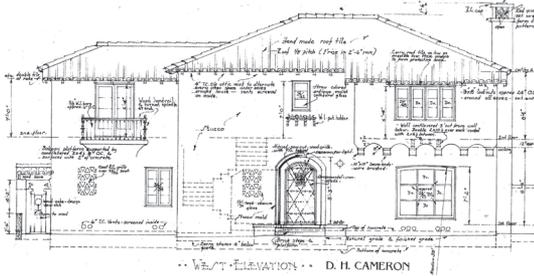
The exterior is a definitive example of Requa's "Southern California Architecture" style. The interior was in the Colonial style to harmonize with the Fuller's collection of heirloom antiques. The original second floor plan consisted of two bedrooms, dressing rooms, baths, and a sunroom. The interior space has since been greatly expanded and the Colonial treatment removed. The house now covers nearly all of the triangular lot. There is an enclosed patio with the original curved tile wall fountain and a small pool. The iron front entrance lamp and gate are original. All of the ironwork was black. The eyebrow over the front entrance and the wrought iron work on the wall are later additions.

Typically Californian for Sunny Southland

Designed to enhance the triangular corner site at Teuth street and Olive avenue, Coronado, this charming Southern California home has been planned by Requa & Jackson, architects, for Mr. and Mrs. Edward Fuller.

An interesting feature of the design is the architects' planning for harmony in exterior and interior treatment. The exterior is typically Southern Californian, while the interior is planned for colonial heirlooms.





#7 D.H. Theodora Cameron, Esq., 815 Alameda

1927-28 Requa and Jackson

The living room is 28 by 16 feet with a large plate glass window overlooking the golf course and North Island at one end. The other end opens onto a paved terrace. French windows lead into what appears from the outside to be a glass enclosed pergola. Both the library and dining room open onto the garden terrace.

#8a William and Emma Barie, 875 Alameda Blvd.

1919 Mead and Requa

Two unique features in the garage are a service pit where one could work on the underside of the car and a power outlet for recharging electric car batteries. The extensively detailed plans include fireplaces, porches, chimneys, fountains, wrought iron grilles, pergolas, and a site plan.

#8b Lt. John F. and Rose Greenslade, 875 Alameda

1933 Requa and Jackson

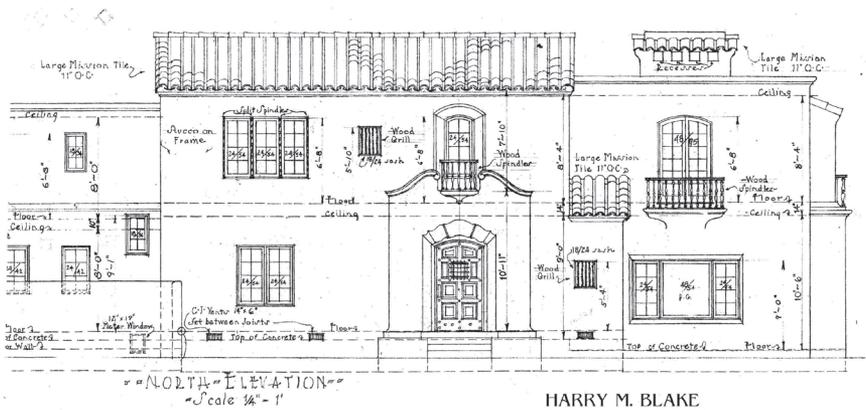
In November 1933, Lt. Greenslade commissioned Requa and Jackson to make alterations to the original Barie house. The caststone entrance was added and a portion to the South was cut off, turned to face west and became a separate building facing 9th Street. The plans provided for steam heat and built-in furniture. This is one of several occasions when Requa was called back several years later by a client to enlarge or “modernize” one of his firm’s earlier projects.





#9 Harry M. and Myrtle Blake, 300 9th Street
1924-25 Requa and Jackson

Elevations, window grilles, fireplaces, chimneys, gates, corbels and railings are part of the details shown on the plan set for this home. Requa regularly used full-scale drawings of wrought iron pieces, railings, and corbels to guarantee that the finished piece matched his design.

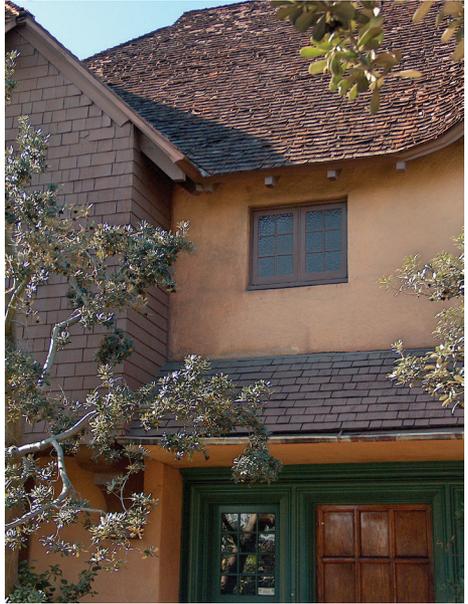


**#10 Lt. Cmdr. Alga D. and
Mary Bernhard,**

1244 Alameda

1925 Requa and Jackson

This “English style cottage” is a three-story home constructed of hollow tile and reinforced concrete. The exterior and interior details reflect the style and materials used in English homes in the 1800s. The front door design and hardware were custom-made to match their British counterparts. The heating system has “modern” electric controls.



ATTRACTIVE NEW DWELLINGS ERECTED IN ALL PARTS OF CITY

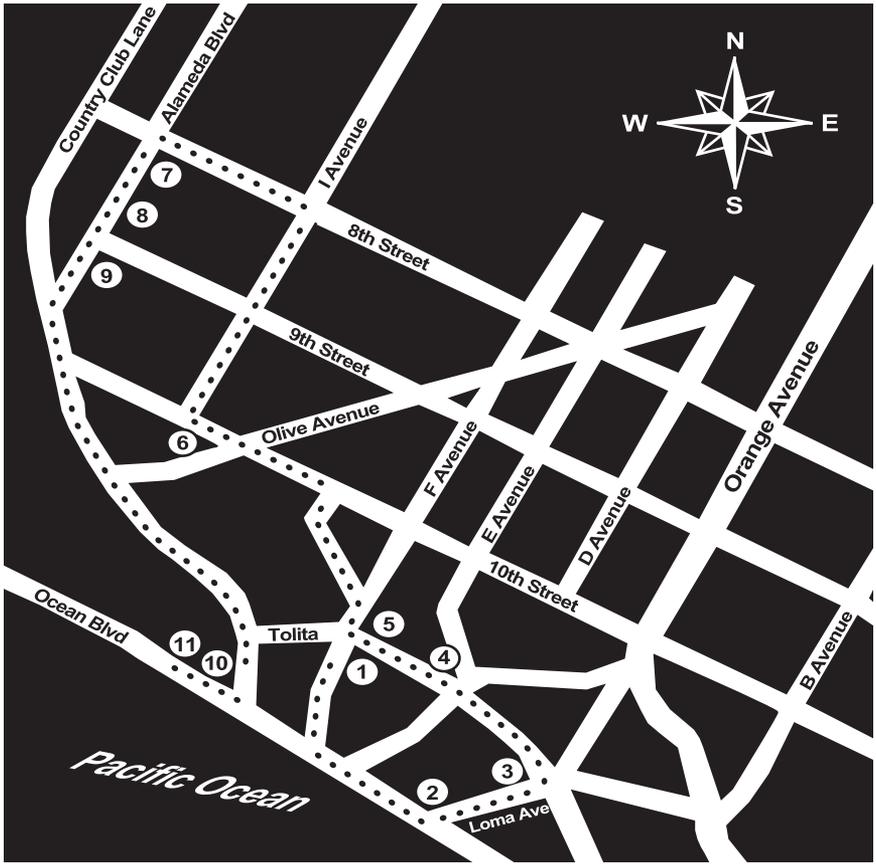


#11 J. Harold and Helen Peterson, 619 Ocean Blvd.

1929 Requa and Jackson

This is another Requa project where the client wanted a New England Colonial living room and dining room. The library, done in knotty pine, is a small, intimate room off the entry hall. In addition to the usual first floor rooms, there were also two servants' rooms and a guest room. The second floor had three bedrooms with individual baths and dressing rooms. The three-car garage had the chauffeur's quarters above. The house wraps around a spacious grass patio with a fountain centered at the four intersecting brick walks. Against the north wall was a built-in garden bench with an overhead iron lamp. The back of the bench is a pastel-hued stucco aerial map of the Pt. Loma/Coronado harbor area. The map and lamp remain, but the bench is gone. Against the east property line wall is a Persian water rug style fountain. The water ran down the entire face of the serrated tile design, into the basin, and along an open trough in the brick wall down to the central patio fountain. The wall panel remains but the basin and brick wall are gone, replaced by a swimming pool. Another modern feature, seen from the street, is the square tower of an elevator shaft.





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 1929 Requa and Jackson

Parker H. Jackson

Tour guide Parker H. Jackson considers himself to be Richard Requa's historian. Over a decade ago, Jackson discovered the extensive, uncataloged architectural collection of the San Diego Historical Society Archives. At the time, Requa's office drawings made up the bulk of the files. Jackson and Philip Klauber provided the means for computer cataloging the work. As Mr. Jackson undertook the project, he focused on the career of Requa and his influence on the architectural style we are surrounded by today. Requa labeled it "Southern California Architecture."

Jackson regularly lectures on Requa's architectural career and the 1935 Exposition. He uses videotapes taken from Requa's own films, which he has edited and captioned. Jackson has also funded the reprinting of Requa's 1937 book *Inside Lights on the Building of San Diego's Exposition: 1935*, and he lives in a home designed by Requa in 1926 as a model home for the Kensington Heights subdivision, and which is City of San Diego Historic Site #394.



Written by Parker H. Jackson

Edited by Alana Coons and Julie Kolb

Architectural drawings courtesy of San Diego Historical Society

Graphic Design and Photography by Sandé Lollis

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