

State of California – The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
**PRIMARY RECORD**

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
HRI # \_\_\_\_\_  
Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_  
NRHP Status Code \_\_\_\_\_

Other Listings \_\_\_\_\_  
Review Code \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) \_\_\_\_\_ Cottrell House \_\_\_\_\_

**P1. Other Identifier:** Yianilos Estate

\*P2. Location:  Not for Publication  **DRAFT**  Unrecorded  
and (P2b and P2c or P2d. Attach a Location Map a \_\_\_\_\_  
\*a. County San Diego  
\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ R \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_ ¼ of Sec \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_ B.M.  
c. Address 7727-7729 Lookout Drive City San Diego, CA Zip 92037  
d. UTM: (give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_ mE/ \_\_\_\_\_ mN  
e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate)

Resources located on Lots #34, #35, #41, and portions of Lots #42 and Lot #36, La Jolla Hills Subdivision #1479 of 1911. Also variously addressed at 8719, 7707, and 7719 Lookout Drive. APN: #352-012-16, 17, 19, & 20.

\*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

Overview: Built in 1936, 7727-7729 Lookout Drive is a classic One-story Cliff May Spanish/Mexican Hacienda. Although advertised as a "Rancheria" design, its stucco walls and terracotta tile roof is closer to May's early Haciendas than his slightly later board-and-batten wood shingled Rancherias. Its unique hollow square plan is organized around a central courtyard that is open to the sky. Recent "as built" drawings by architect Mauricio de la Pena note that it features five bedrooms and three and one-half bathrooms in its 2,260 square feet of covered living space. (See Continuation Sheet, Sec. P3a.)

\*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP2, Single Family Property; HP30, Trees, vegetation

\*P4. Resources Present:  Building  Structure  Object  Site  District  Element of District  Other (Isolates, etc.)

\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:

Historic  Prehistoric  Both

\*P7. Owner and Address:

LOOKOUT LLC  
(David & Felicia Mandelbaum)  
7510 Pepita Way  
San Diego, CA 92037  
\*P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, address)  
Diane Kane, Ph.D.  
7711 Lookout Drive  
La Jolla, CA 92037

\*P9. Date Recorded: October 2013

\*P10. Survey Type: (Describe) Intensive

\*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.") None

\*Attachments:  NONE  Sketch Map  Location Map  Continuation Sheet  Building, Structure, and Object Record  Archaeological Record  
 District Record  Linear Feature Record  Milling Station Record  Rock Art Record  Artifact Record  Photograph Record  
 Other (list) \_\_\_\_\_

B1. Historic Name: Cottrell House

B2. Common Name: Yianilos Estate

B3. Original Use: Residence: Horticulture B4. Present Use: Residence

\*B5. Architectural Style: Cliff May Hacienda/Rancheria

\*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alteration, and date of alterations) 1936;

Modifications to North façade windows: living room picture window replaced with larger window & flanking hinged doors; dining room windows replaced with paired single paned French doors; 6-light bedroom windows replaced with single pane window, as noted in description, 1960s. See integrity analysis, B10 for complete description & discussion.

\*B7. Moved?  No  Yes  Unknown Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Original Location: \_\_\_\_\_

\*B8. Related Features: Cliff May landscape, 1936; additional landscape elements (eg. terrace, pool, adjoining exterior covered patios, 1960s; palm treescape, 1963-1996; pool in-filled, 1990s; tree demolition, 2013. See Continuation sheet for description and integrity analysis under “Setting”.

B9. Architect: Cliff May b. Builder: Cliff May

\*B10. Significance: Theme Architecture Area San Diego Period of Significance 1936 Property Type HP2 Single Family Residence Applicable Criteria California Register Criterion 3 (Architecture & Master Architect)

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

Summary: The Cottrell House meets California Register Criterion 3 as an early Cliff May Hacienda/Rancheria. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a style (Hacienda/Rancheria), type (courtyard single family residence), period (early Cliff May-1936), and method of custom construction (rustic California rancho). Designed and built by Master Architect Cliff May, it is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials and craftsmanship, It has high integrity and is in good-to-fair condition. (See Continuation Sheet, Sec. B10)

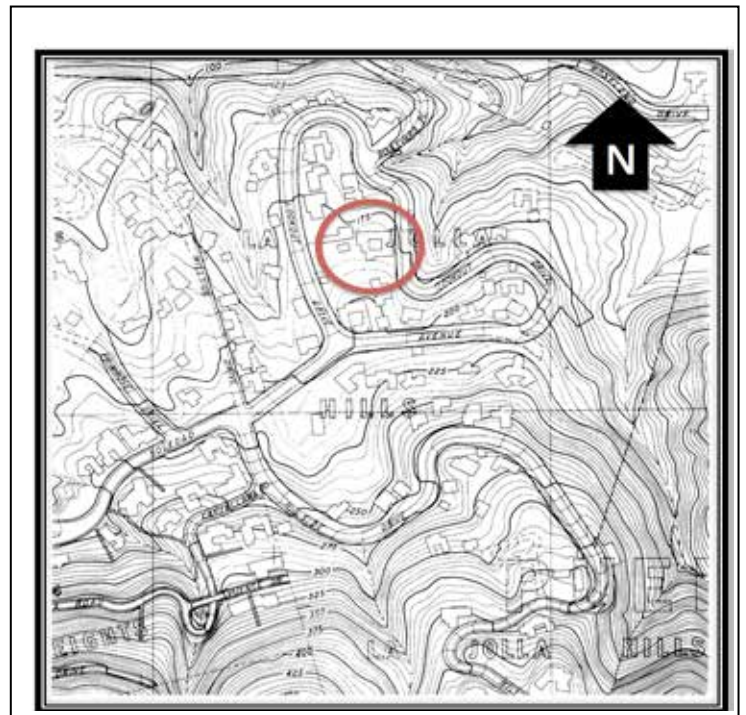
B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes)  
HP30, Trees & vegetation

\*B12. References: See Bibliography on Continuation Sheet

B13. Remarks: Property currently for sale.

\*B14. Evaluator: Diane Kane, Ph.D.

\*Date of Evaluation: October 2013



P3a. Description: (Continued from p. 1) Of wooden frame-on-slab construction, it has a low pitch, heavily mudded red tile roof with open eaves and exposed rafter tails that overhang its hand textured white stucco walls.

The Cottrell House is a highly intact transitional work of Architect/Designer Cliff May. There are three aspects of this home that sum up Mr. May's mastery of the early California ranch type to this point in his career, and that point to innovations that will be further explored in his Los Angeles work. The first is its completely enclosed interior courtyard, designed on a classic "hollow square" plan. The second is the use of a classic Mexican rancho enfilade circulation pattern to access individual rooms that is characteristic of his early homes in San Diego. And the third is the magnificent automobile approach and motor court. This includes three elements:

1. a lengthy estate-type driveway, entered through an impressive wrought iron gate (Photo 2 of 10);
2. a two-car garage, accessed through a massive custom wooden door (Photo 1 of 10); and,
3. a discrete pedestrian entry into the internal courtyard and home (Photo 2 of 10).

Because this is a courtyard home, where the central patio functions as an open air outdoor room, both interior and exterior facades are important. The architect's two dimensional design intent, therefore, is best understood in plan (the third dimension), where individual elevations reflect the function of each space (Figure 1). This is both an anachronistic throwback to an earlier period, when rooms were added based upon need, and a modernist approach displaying the dictum of "form follows function."

**Plan:** In plan, the north wing contains public functions, including the original walk-in foyer with guest closets and guest bath (also shared with the adjacent bedroom #1), the living room and dining room. The west wing is a service area with the kitchen, breakfast room, service courtyard, pantry, maid's suite (bedroom and bath) and mudroom. The south wing includes utilitarian functions like the garage with its adjacent workshop, an office/bedroom and a corner bedroom. The eastern wing is the most private in function with the remaining two bedrooms and related baths. All interior spaces are accessed via an enfilade type internal circulation, as well as through the adjacent covered courtyard patio. The indoor-outdoor nature of the plan is both visual and actual. Because all wings are single loaded, light and air enters each room from at least two directions. Likewise, each living space has at least two or more entrances/exits that facilitate airflow as well as pedestrian movement patterns.

**Elevations:** The courtyard facades open onto an interior garden that is flanked by covered *corredors* on the eastern and western sides. The exterior facades sequentially enjoy: 1. an expansive ocean view (north); 2. overlook Soledad Road (east); 3. face an embankment (south); or, 4. provide auto access from Lookout Drive via an elongated driveway (west).

The window and door configuration is contingent on the facade orientation and wing function, with each expressing a unique variation within an overall theme. Unifying window vocabulary includes: horizontally paned casement windows in 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8 light configurations; wide, flat wooden rails and stiles; 2 1/2" mitered trim; solid shutters with raised, reverse ogee molding frames; squared and

chamfered wooden window grilles; contemporary hinges; and lever-and-pin window operators (Photo 7 of 10).

Doors have one of four designs, depending upon function. The two entrance doors are deeply set, vertical wood planks, with heavy, exposed wooden lintels. All other exterior doors are glazed with 4 horizontal lights. Used singly and in pairs, their wood stile and rail profiles are similar to the windows. Interior doors between rooms have recessed panels that are trimmed with molding similar to the shutters. Doors for closets and utilitarian spaces are pegged vertical planks with chamfered grooves.

### Exterior Facades

Because of its large lot, terraced site, and lack of adjoining neighbors, the home was essentially a 3-dimensional object set into space that theoretically could be approached from any direction. But, just as the floor plan exhibited public and private spaces, the multiple facades also had public and private elements. The west and north facades were more publically oriented while the east and south facades were more private, as discussed below.

**South Façade:** By placing the home in the southeastern corner of its site, snuggled against a terraced embankment, May created an opportunity for protected outdoor terraces that adjoin bedrooms #3 and #4. Each terrace is accessed through a single 4-light door that faces south to capture the sun. The remainder of the southern elevation facing the embankment is blank stucco walls.

**East Façade:** This side of the house overlooks Soledad Road and sits approximately 5-10 ft. above the roadbed. Three bedrooms internally connected by two baths are located in this wing, whose eastward orientation captures the morning sun. Because the wing is private in function, its exterior has become heavily screened with patio walls and vegetation over the years, making it difficult to see from the public right of way. To secure privacy yet admit natural light, the architect located pairs of casement windows over the toilets in each bathroom. An additional pair of casements is found in the exterior wall of Bedroom #3. Bedroom #2 maximizes privacy, functionality and cross-ventilation by placing two pairs of banked 2-light casements high on the wall. Conversely, Bedroom #1 opens to the side yard with a pair of French doors that capture the view. All windows and doors on the east façade are single paned.

**North Façade:** The most distinctive façade is the northern one that overlooks La Jolla Shores, with views northward towards Torrey Pines State Park (Photo 3 of 10). All rooms located along this wing take advantage of the view with large single paned windows. None of these are original, but they have been installed in the original openings and have been in place for decades. For example, Bedroom #1 takes advantage of this view with a large picture window, while the dining room uses a pair of undivided-light French doors. The home's front entrance door, a replacement from the original, is also glazed. It is deeply recessed and capped with a massive, exposed wooden lintel. To the right of the front door, a stubby, battered chimney rises above the tiled roofline. Capped with a flat metal spark arrester, its rounded stucco edges mimic hand-applied adobe.

The most impressive feature of the north façade is a huge, single pane of floor-to-ceiling glass. Located in the center of the composition, it is flanked by narrower, hinged glass doors. In the mid-1960s, with Cliff May's consultation and approval, Mr. and Mrs. Yianilos updated the original ocean-viewing window

to a window-wall. This provided direct access to their new terrace and swimming pool (no longer extant) that replaced the original grass lawn. The terrace included colorful tiles painted by the owner, ceramic artist Teresa Yianilos.

**West Façade:** The most visible element of the west façade from Lookout Drive is its enormous custom garage door (Photo 1 of 10). Located at the extreme right side of the composition, it is large enough to accommodate two cars. The garage door terminates a vista down the long driveway that ends in an auto court with parking for several cars. The auto court faces a blank wall, positioned at right angles to the garage that advances towards the visitor in a sweeping arc. This protective wall both conceals the recessed entrance to the interior courtyard and screens the adjacent service court from view.

As in the other facades, the west façade sports a variety of window types functionally associated with its interior spaces. Paired single paned casements light the dining room to the extreme left side of the façade. A large picture window (probably not original), flanked by single-paned casements, illuminates the kitchen sink. Finally, a pair of 3-light casements lights the pantry. Tucked behind the curved screen wall is the service court. Although not visible from the street, the service court's façade features a pair of 4-light casement windows that illuminate the maid's room, while a smaller 2-light casement lights the mudroom.

### **Courtyard Facades**

The exterior facades featured either large sheets of glass to view the expansive surroundings, or imposing blank walls to provide privacy. In contrast, the interior courtyard is a private space with a domestic scale. Its friendly, inviting ambiance is underscored with the use of low overhanging eaves and gridded red clay tile flooring. Its central garden features warm-hued, broken stone paving that compliments the lush vegetation provided by clumps of Raphis palms, tree ferns and an enormous olive tree (Photo 5 of 10). All rooms enjoy both views and access to the courtyard through French doors and multi-paned casement windows—all original.

**South and East Courtyard Façades:** Due to the position of the garage and workroom, the blank wall treatment of the South Courtyard Façade is similar to that of the exterior walls. However, bedrooms #2, #3 and #4 in the south and east wings enjoy double French doors that open to the central space. This contrasts with their more closed exterior facades. Because bedroom #1 enjoys distant ocean views and exterior access, it is not directly connected with the interior courtyard. Rather, it accesses this space with a single 4-light door through a small vestibule next to the entrance foyer.

**North Courtyard Façade:** In the north façade foyer, a floor-to-ceiling, 8-light window, located opposite the front door, hints at the central patio that awaits the privileged guest. An even larger 16-light window looks into the courtyard from the living room. This inviting space accesses the central courtyard through two 4-light doors that flank the window.

**West Courtyard Façade:** The service wing facade, like the garage wing facade, is mostly closed to the courtyard with blank stucco walls. With the exception of a kitchen door at the far north end and a grilled window in the maid's room at the far south end, this façade is visually closed to the courtyard. Its blank

wall, however, provides a calming backdrop to the *corredor* work and gathering space on this side of the interior patio (Photo 4 of 10).

**Interior character defining features:** An arched entryway to the west of the entry foyer accesses the living room. Its character defining features include a pitched, painted and trussed open beam ceiling, rounded corner fireplace, arched book nook, and wooden plank floors (Photo 9 of 10). This room overlooks both the interior courtyard and the exterior terrace with its distant ocean views.

Cliff May's original design incorporated almost floor-to-ceiling windows on the northern and southern walls of this room. The courtyard window consisted of horizontally framed, 16-light, glass panels, while the enormous single paned ocean viewing window was flanked by narrow, multi-light casements (Figure 4). Both windows maximized light and views with available products.

A dining room with an open truss and beam ceiling and pegged plank floors occupies the northwest corner of the plan (Photo 10 of 10). Accessed through an arched opening from the living room, it shares the ocean view. This was originally accomplished through a pair of multi-paned 4-light casement windows that was flanked by raised panel shutters. (Figure 3). Today, the terrace is viewed through a pair of single paned French doors. The dining room occupied a pivotal spot in the floor plan. Located at a corner of the square, it bridged the living room and the kitchen that was entered through a second arched opening to the south.

The service wing faces west and includes a kitchen, pantry, maid's suite (bedroom and ensuite bath), service courtyard with storage shed, and a mudroom. Pedestrian entrances from both the garage and driveway access the courtyard adjacent to the mudroom. A large covered patio, emulating a Mexican era "*corredor*," located on the courtyard side of the service wing, also serves as an informal dining and gathering area (Photo 4 of 10). Accessed from the living room, kitchen and garage, it is comprised of a sloped, open beam, wooden ceiling (the underside of the roof extension) that is supported on thick wooden posts and lintels, and a red clay tile floor.

This house exhibits several characteristic elements of Cliff May's design at this early period in his career that was so strongly influenced by early California ranchos. Among them are: the U-shaped, rustic Mexican roof tiles that are stacked several layers deep, heavily mudded and irregularly laid (Photo 6 of 10); broad overhanging eaves with exposed rafter tails with rounded ends; deeply inset entrances with exposed wooden lintels on the northern and western facades that mimic adobe thick-walled construction (Photo 3 of 10); softly undulating stucco finishes to emulate hand applied plaster; wrought iron light fixtures; heavy exterior shutters and solid vertical plank doors; irregular plank floors and exposed wooden beamed ceilings (Photo 9 of 10); built-in arched nooks for storage shelves; a rounded and plastered corner fireplace typical of adobe *hornos* (Figure 4); arched openings between rooms; an enfilade floor plan; and an interior courtyard directly accessed by each room in the complex (Figure 1).

Typical of early California ranchos, the courtyard becomes an outdoor "work room," circulation element and social space that extends the interior living areas both visually and functionally. It is also a garden



that adds shade and greenery to the middle of the home. As is typical of Cliff May, the courtyard has a southern exposure for maximum sunlight, which is most noticeable in the living room.

The garage wing, that is located close to the southern property line and next to a cut embankment, has little opportunity for natural light. Because of the utilitarian function of the garage and storage/workroom, their placement on that side of the courtyard is a practical solution to the site's topographical constraints. Nonetheless, outdoor terraces, on the southern side of the two rear bedrooms (Bedrooms #3 & #4) that are snuggled against the hill, enable light to bounce into those rooms through multi-light doors. Likewise, private terraces adjacent to the eastern bedrooms provide additional outdoor living areas and views for those spaces. The exterior terraces are more fully discussed under "setting" in the integrity section.

Another Cliff May feature is the conscious insertion of quirky elements to make a new building appear as if it had been built over an extended period of time. This is evident on the ocean façade, where both the dining room and eastern corner bedroom are distinguished from the main living space with a slightly lower roofline. This subtle break supports the social importance of the main space and hints at sequential construction campaigns that are characteristic of vernacular ranchos.

Despite consciously antiquarian elements, this home also has many modern features for its period of construction, all of which are intact. For example, hand painted ceramic doorbells that announce visitors are located at each entrance. Multiple ensuite bathrooms with original wall and floor tiles, plumbing fixtures, mirrors and cabinetry are still extant. The kitchen cabinetry, tile counters, porcelain sink, faucets, and built-in appliances appear to be later additions associated with the Yianilos period of ownership. The enclosed patio and storage shed off the kitchen was most likely a drying yard for washed clothing in days before mechanical in-home dryers, but it later became a conscious feature of Mr. May's homes as private outdoor living areas for bedrooms.

The two-car attached garage with a service entrance into the house is especially significant. Its huge custom door is a characteristic Cliff May feature. Variants on its raised and chamfered checkerboard design, applied on top of vertical wooden boards, is found on many other homes from this time period. The door is currently unpainted, but traces of pigment indicate a former light-toned color. This is supported by a photo from the 1950s where the walls appear to be a pastel--perhaps pink or tan--and the windows, doors, eaves and other wooden trim is a distinctively lighter tone, most likely white (Figure 3). It is unknown at this time whether this is the original color palette; but, it is clear that the current uniform interior and exterior color scheme was chosen to freshen the property for its recent sale. A spectral color analysis can scientifically establish the original color scheme that can be easily restored.

The home is approached through a formal entryway of matching stuccoed pillars with tile caps, announcing "Casa de Bananas" that support a massive wrought iron gate. The garage and its drive provide an impressive and elegant entrance for those arriving by car that mimics similar approaches of rural haciendas historically located far from major highways. The "motor court" entrance gains additional formality through the curving wall that encloses the drying yard in the service wing. This feature sweeps the visitor towards the pedestrian entrance into the courtyard patio that is hidden from view as one approached by car. The solid plank entry door, covered by a sturdy wooden lintel, is recessed into what appears to be a massive blank adobe wall. Its wrought iron electrolier and painted

ceramic doorbell hint at welcoming spaces inside; but from the exterior, this forboding, security-conscious entrance says, “keep out”.<sup>1</sup>

**Site & Orientation:** A drawing published in August 1936 prior to the home’s construction, announced the project, architect and first owners, George F. and Marion Cottrell.<sup>2</sup> Recently relocated retirees from Denver, they owned the three lots (Lots 34, 35 and 42,) that contained the home, its driveway and ocean view terrace (Figure 2).<sup>3</sup> Located east of downtown La Jolla and overlooking La Jolla Shores, the 5/8 acre property was situated in the middle of a fairly level mesa with northward views up the coast. Although subdivided in 1911 (La Jolla Hills Subdivision, Map #1479), the neighborhood was far enough out of town to be inconvenient without an automobile. Development by the mid-1930s was slow and spotty; but, ample raw land was an attractive draw for large estate development, especially for those fortunate few who were able to afford it.

Situated on over 25,000 sq. ft. of land on three adjoining lots, the home was intended to sprawl across its setting like an early rancho. Mr. May maximized both the site and its ocean views by placing the home on the highest spot at the eastern edge of the site that had the best view. He then provided an approach from the west via a long, leisurely driveway. Access was easily taken at a point that was more or less level with Lookout Drive, since the Soledad Road alternative on the eastern side of the property was initially 10-20 feet below grade. Originally, both lots 42 and 34 were increasingly sloped uphill from north to south as one progressed east across the underlying mesa. Hence, a level building pad, driveway and front yard terrace were created by grading anywhere from 0-10 feet into the uphill trending slope. The estate was thus allowed to spill gradually downhill towards the ocean, providing the miniature “rancho” with seamless indoor and outdoor living for its prosperous inhabitants.

Although the north façade had a formal entrance with a doorbell and entry foyer, it is unlikely it was ever much used by guests, who would have arrived by automobile from the west, via the estate-type driveway. Ample guest parking is currently available in the auto court adjacent to the garage and driveway entrance to the home, so there is no need to park on the street. There is also no evidence of a pedestrian walkway or parking area from the property’s eastern side that is 5-10 feet above Soledad Road. Indeed, the historic photo shows only grass leading up to the front door. The “front” entrance clearly provided access to the ocean view yard from the home’s primary social space, but lost much of its function after the insertion of the living room glass doors by the third owners. Conversely, the driveway and forecourt entrance gained function and significance as the automobile inserted itself into American life.

<sup>1</sup> When the Spanish government granted land to a person of rank, laws required the grantee to erect improvements in the form of a house to secure the grant. The grantees could not rely on the Spanish soldiers to protect them from hostile forces, so the adobe houses were often designed along the Presidio model with rows of rooms around a central courtyard, from which to run the many operations of a farm or livestock ranch. The early 19<sup>th</sup> century haciendas usually consisted of an “L” or “U” shaped layout of rooms with a thick outer wall, minimal windows, thick heavy front door, and tall rear walls. Ron V. May and Dale Ballou May, “The John R. and Florence Porterfield Beardsley House,” National Register Nomination, October 12, 2010, p. 16 of 19.

<sup>2</sup> “Rancheria Home Under Construction for Cottrells,” *San Diego Union*, Sunday August 30, 1936.

<sup>3</sup> Deed, Lots 34 & 35, La Jolla Hills Subdivision, recorded April 5, 1936, Book 508, p. 364, San Diego County Recorder, San Diego, CA. Notice of Completion, November 10, 1936, Book 578, Page 405, San Diego County Recorder, San Diego, CA.



By the late 1930s, Cliff May began to design grand auto entrances for his more elaborate ranch homes in Los Angeles. These combine eloquent points of arrival and parking for guests with daily utilitarian functions, such as hauling groceries into the kitchen, using the most convenient path. Hence, the auto and pedestrian functions become integrated into one elegant and functional point of arrival, focused on automobile transportation, that becomes the hallmark of middle class suburban living. Cliff May's innovative solution at the Cottrell house is only possible because his clients provided sufficient space to design an authentic Mexican-era hacienda arrival pattern and update it for the modern age. As one of the last homes May built in San Diego, the Cottrell House becomes a pivotal transitional work to his later production in Los Angeles.

**Boundaries:** Despite recent internal lot line adjustments under Parcel Map #17817, the estate's boundaries under single ownership are mostly intact from its earliest period (Figure 2). A portion of Lot 41(also identified as Parcel #3 of Parcel Map #17817), of the vintage 1911 La Jolla Hills Subdivision #1479 Map was sold to another party, removing the northwestern corner of the original estate. The estate's boundaries therefore encompass the remainder of Lots 34, 35, 36, 41 and 42 of the La Hills Subdivision #1479, or Parcels 1, 2, 4 and 5 of Parcel Map #17817.

**\*B10. Significance:** (Continued from p. 2)

**California Register Criterion 3, Architecture:** The Keeper of the National Register recognized the Hacienda style by May in the 2000 National Register listing of the Lindstrom House, located at 4669 East Talmadge Drive, in San Diego, California.<sup>4</sup> Like the National Register listed Lindstrom and Beardsley houses, the Cottrell House, as noted in the description section of this nomination, clearly shares the defined characteristics of his trademark Hacienda style. These three properties, among others, contribute to understanding the historical context of Cliff May's early architectural career in San Diego. The Hacienda style Cottrell House has high artistic value and embodies the distinctive characteristics reminiscent of the Mexican era 19th century adobe dwellings that were true to Old California. It is also architecturally significant as the only foursquare hacienda Cliff May designed prior to his move to Los Angeles. It clearly meets all categories noted under California Register Criterion 3 for architectural significance.

**California Register Criterion 3, Master Architect:** The Cottrell House/Yianilos Estate is a notable work of Master Architect Cliff May and it has high artistic value. Cliff May's designs contributed to the Spanish Revival of the 1930s, proffering low, rambling dwellings, red tile roofs, and completely walled-in courtyards in a fusion of the Spanish Hacienda and his own invention: the California Ranch House style.<sup>5</sup> As a sixth generation San Diegan, May had firsthand understanding of the true borderlands architectural vernacular and its appropriateness for modern living.<sup>6</sup> His plans featured attractive, highly functional arrangements that combined indoor and outdoor living spaces.

<sup>4</sup> Ron V. May and Dale Ballou May, "The John R. and Florence Porterfield Beardsley House," National Register Nomination, October 12, 2010, p. 8 of 49.

<sup>5</sup> Joseph Giovannini. "The Man Behind the Ranch House," *New York Times*, July 3, 1986: C1.

<sup>6</sup> Carol Greentree. "May, Cliff (1908-1989) architect/builder, author," in Birnbaum, Charles A. and Robin Karson, editors, *Pioneers of American Landscape Design*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 2000: 246-248.

Originally a business major in college, May dropped out to build handcrafted furniture modeled on the sturdy Monterey-style. His apprenticeship under master carpenter Wilbur F. Hale, association with building contractor Orville U. Miracle, and real estate contacts through his future father-in-law, Roy Lichty, positioned him for contracts to furnish new houses built for speculative sale. These associations led in 1932 to financial backing for his first home design, a suburban Hacienda-style ranch in Talmadge Park.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the Depression, it quickly sold for \$9,500. As the National Housing Act, National Recovery Act, and National Defense Act began providing work opportunities and financing housing construction, May and his backers began selling speculation Hacienda houses that proved exceeding popular. Their success caught the attention of the *San Diego Union*, *Sunset Magazine*, and other periodicals. Such public acclaim inspired other investors to provide vacant lots and to develop additional partnerships with May that fueled his business. In 1936, the *San Diego Union* described May as:

Probably the youngest builder of fine homes in San Diego. With the belief that California's architecture has a historic background more vivid and real than any other part of the country, May, with the cooperation of the Century Lumber Co., has been building homes for permanent San Diego residents in which the early settlers of the Golden state would have been happy."<sup>8</sup>

Considering the severity of the economy in 1931 through 1934, this fortuitous partnership allowed May to advance his career at a time when his youth, inexperience, and lack of personal funds and creditworthiness would otherwise have prevented others from entering the building industry. Miracle's business connections and construction expertise, and Lichty's financial sponsorship, coupled with popular media publications, enhanced May's local career.

Equipped with his solid, comfortable furniture, May's houses began to sell quickly. By the mid-1930s, he was a developer-architect offering a choice between houses based on native California adobe models and what was called a "Yankee version" that had the same plan but was surfaced in board-and-batten.<sup>9</sup>

By the end of the decade, May's name become synonymous with the Western Ranch House architectural style.<sup>10</sup> May's work during this period had a powerful and pronounced influence on the shape of architecture designed and created by post-Depression builders, contractors, architectural designers, and custom architects. Projects ranged in size from individual and tract ranch homes to large-scale subdivisions, and in price from budget conscious ranchers to Mid-Century Modern custom estates for the rich and famous. Examples can be found in virtually every community across America, and even abroad.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> May & May, *ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *San Diego Union*, "History Provides Background for New Residences," January 12, 1936. Quoted in May & May, *ibid.*, p. 10 of 49. For a listing of his building production, see Attachment E.3: "Cliff May Designed & Built Projects, 1931-1936."

<sup>9</sup> Giovannini, *ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> May and May, *loc. cit.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

May's patio centered, easy-living plans became staples of domestic architecture and garden design in the postwar years.<sup>12</sup> His use of inexpensive construction materials and practical concepts earned May recognition in *House Beautiful*, *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Sunset Magazine*. The publishers of *Sunset* were so impressed by May that they published two books on his work and commissioned him to design their own Menlo Park headquarters.<sup>13</sup>

May continued his design career until his death in 1989, with a productive career that spanned six decades.<sup>14</sup> He has been recognized by the San Diego Historical Resources Board as a Master Architect, with three of his homes already designated: 7477 Hillside Drive (HRB Site #679, 8/26/2004); 3130 Shadowlawn Street (HRB site #1031, designated 11/18/2011); and, 4777 Avion Way (HRB Site #1053, designated 5/24/12).<sup>15</sup>

Despite the extensive publicity during his lifetime and later scholarship following his death, very little has been published about the beginning years of May's career in San Diego until recently. Most accounts gloss over this period with sketchy yet colorful lore that includes his stint as a jazz saxophonist and local bandleader, and his familial association with the Estudillos--one of San Diego's early California families during the Mexican period. They note his birth in San Diego on August 29, 1908, his marriage to Jean Lichty, daughter of San Diego's Talmadge Park developer Roy Cook Lichty, and the story of how the young couple visited furniture stores for ideas for custom furniture that they then built and stocked in model homes. These accounts then jump to 1937 and later, when he and his family moved to Los Angeles to begin a long career that is well documented.<sup>16</sup>

Local research into his San Diego beginnings were initiated in the 2003 *La Jolla Historical Survey*, conducted by Architect Milford Wayne Donaldson. Cliff May was one of 11 architects recommended for inclusion in an emerging historic district of master architects who worked in La Jolla. At the time, only 4 properties were identified with Cliff May, and two of those (6116 and 6117 Avenida Cresta) were jointly associated with Thomas Shepherd.<sup>17</sup> Mr. May was also so included in the 2007 *San Diego Modernism Historic Context Statement* in the "Contributing Designers of Modern San Diego" section, with a brief entry as follows:

### **Cliff May (1908-1989)**

Master Designer and builder Cliff May, who had gained earlier notoriety in San Diego and Los Angeles for his Spanish Revival style residences, was also a well known designer of Ranch style home as early as the late 1930s. His homes were grand in scale with expansive, sprawling floor plans frequently encircling a landscaped central courtyard. A strong connection between interior and exterior was a key component of May's houses.

<sup>12</sup> Milford Wayne Donaldson, *La Jolla Historical Survey*, City of San Diego Planning Department, 2003: 49.

<sup>13</sup> Greentree, *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Donaldson, *ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> "Register of Historical Resources," Historical Resources Board, City of San Diego, <http://www.sandiego.gov/planning/programs/historical/pdf/2013/register130124.pdf>, accessed August 12, 2013.

<sup>16</sup> May & May, *ibid.*, p. 12 of 49.

<sup>17</sup> Donaldson, *ibid.*, "Master Architects Emerging Historic District," pp. 46-56.

May designed and built hundreds of tract homes, as well as several custom-designed ranch style homes.<sup>18</sup>

Three other inventories of Cliff May's work have been consulted for this report to provide an overview of his production in San Diego, prior to his moving to Los Angeles. Mary van Balgooy, who has written two articles on Cliff May, states in her publications that by the time May moved to Los Angeles, he had designed over 50 homes.<sup>19</sup> That means between 1932-1936, he designed, on the average, 10 houses per year--or almost one a month.<sup>20</sup> However, Van Balgooy's inventory, prepared for her articles, notes 47 houses have been verified through field and archival documentation.<sup>21</sup> Ten were located outside San Diego County, ranging from Montecito to Tijuana, Mexico. In the San Diego area, 15 were within San Diego County, 12 were within San Diego City, and 10 were in La Jolla. Even though Van Balgooy does not include the two Thomas Shepherd homes on Avenida Cresta in her inventory, it is clear that Cliff May did more than a quarter of his pre-1937 San Diego area work in La Jolla.

Keith York's *San Diego Modern* website identifies 32 homes built in San Diego County prior to Mr. May's move to Los Angeles.<sup>22</sup> Nine were located in the City of San Diego and 9 were in La Jolla. An inventory done by Ron and Dale May, Bruce Coons and Mary van Balgooy for a 2011 SOHO tour of Cliff May properties notes 36 properties in San Diego County prior to Mr. May's move to Los Angeles.<sup>23</sup> Of these, 13 were built in the City of San Diego, and 11 were built in La Jolla. (Both inventories include the two properties on Avenida Cresta identified in the La Jolla Historical Survey with Thomas Shepherd.) A recent field survey of the La Jolla properties verified that all the homes exist today and are in very good condition. The only home to exhibit a four-sided courtyard is the Cottrell house, making it an unusual example in his early work.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *San Diego Modernism Historic Context Statement*, City of San Diego, October 17, 2007: 98.

The San Diego projects included in the report were:

The Lindstrom House, 4669 East Talmadge Dr, San Diego (1933)

Colonel Arthur J. and Frances O'Leary House, 4725 Norma Drive, Kensington (1932)

Alexander and Nancy Highland House, 2400 Presidio Drive, Mission Hills (1934)

Violetta Horton Spec House #1, 7445 Hillside Drive, La Jolla (1935)

Violetta Horton Spec House #2, 7447 Hillside Drive, La Jolla (1935)

Violetta Horton/Cliff May Spec House #3, 7477 Hillside Drive, La Jolla (1935)

Violetta Horton Spec House #4, 7575 Hillside Drive, La Jolla (1935)

<sup>19</sup> Mary van Balgooy, "Designer of the Dream: Cliff May and the California Ranch House," *Southern California Quarterly*, 2004: 127-144. Accessed JSTOR, July 24, 2013.

<sup>20</sup> "Before LA: Cliff May's Beginnings in San Diego," *Journal of San Diego History*, Fall 2011, Vol. 57, NO. 4:255-271.

<sup>20</sup> This calculation assumes an even rate of home production over the 5-year period. In actuality, May's earliest production was quite small, but it picked up dramatically in 1935 and 1936 as his work became better known. In fact, the "unbuilt" projects date from the two later years. He may have simply been unable to scale up his production.

<sup>21</sup> Van Balgooy, Mary. "Cliff May In\_Process Project Index," La Jolla Historical Society, Cliff May files.

<sup>22</sup> York, Keith. "Cliff May," Modern San Diego: <http://www.modernsandiego.com/>  
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<sup>23</sup> Bruce Coons, Ron and Dale May, Mary van Balgooy, "Cliff May's First Houses in San Diego, 1932-1936," undated spreadsheet, La Jolla Historical Society, Cliff May files (courtesy Mary van Balgooy).

<sup>24</sup> Bruce Coons, private communication, August 12, 2013.

This early Hacienda style house represents an important stage in May's development of the style that led up to the later Rancheria and then Western Ranch style, for which he became so famous across the nation in the next decades. These comfortable and casual homes met the needs of modest and low cost housing for millions of families. As one of the last of his custom commissions prior to moving to Los Angeles, the Cottrell House's significance lies in understanding how May drew from surviving 19th century adobe ranch buildings to create custom residential architecture during the depths of the Great Depression in Southern California.

Its unusual use of a completely enclosed courtyard and its impressive lengthy driveway, imposing double car garage door and auto court point to his design direction in the post war years. His suburban ranch houses eloquently accommodate widespread automobile use with: wide lots designed for low, rambling plans; flipped floor plans with kitchens near the garage; and, garages prominently oriented toward the street. Within the context of May's long career as a designer and architect whose designs influenced mainstream residential architecture across America, the Cottrell House has importance as a pivotal project that closes a locally influenced historicist chapter in his life and points to another, more populist and modern one in Los Angeles and elsewhere, therefore meeting California Register Criterion 3 for its association with Master Architect Cliff May.

**Integrity Analysis:** A property's integrity is assessed using seven attributes that contribute to its authenticity and significance. Enumerated in National Register Bulletin 15, they are: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The Cottrell House's integrity is discussed below using the framework of these seven attributes.

**Location:** Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred. The Cottrell House is in its original location that consisted of Lots 34, 35 and 41 of the La Jolla Hills Subdivision of 1911.

**Design:** Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. The Cottrell House's Cliff May Hacienda/Rancheria design of 1936 is virtually intact as originally constructed, except for modifications to the fenestration of the north façade in the mid-1960s. The first change involved a single paned picture window that was inserted into the north wall of bedroom #1 in the original multi-paned window opening. The second change swapped an existing fixed picture window with a floor-to-ceiling picture window. This was flanked by two glazed and hinged doors that provided direct access to the new pool and terrace. The third change occurred in the dining room, where the original casement windows were replaced with paired single paned doors that likewise accessed the pool terrace.

These modifications paralleled those made by Cliff May in his 1939-built West Los Angeles Home and were done with Mr. May's assistance and approval. According to family members, Cliff May, who a friend of Spero and Theresa Yianilos, often visited the property. Their addition of an ocean view terrace and pool off the living room mirrored changes Cliff May made to his West Los Angeles home in 1949 and 1956. Mr. May's addition of an enlarged patio and swimming pool shifted his house's focus from

the street to the back yard.<sup>25</sup> Now an outdoor room for casual entertaining, the rear yard was accessed through huge sliding glass doors. This design innovation contributed to the post-war “California Lifestyle” of casual indoor-outdoor living. The property’s evolution under the tutelage of Cliff May reflects Mr. May’s approach to his own homes, which he never stopped modifying.<sup>26</sup> The minor changes made to open up the north façade to a pool terrace for casual entertaining were made over 50 years ago and have become part of the property’s history associated with Cliff May.

**Setting:** Setting is the physical environment of a historic property. The Cottrell House was originally built on Lots 34, 35, 42 of the La Jolla Hills Subdivision of 1911. The three lots provided spacious grounds for a gracious rambling hacienda with a spectacular north facing view of La Jolla cove. Shortly after construction, the Cottrells added a portion of Lot 36 to their holdings, presumably to protect their ocean view from future development. This is the property’s extent during the Cottrell’s tenure in the home.

Little is known of the original Cliff May landscape associated with the Cottrell House, although Cliff May is known to have favored a specific plant palette that added to his home’s “Early California” ambience. These included olives, bananas, pepper trees, oleanders, wild grapes, Castilian roses, aloes, yuccas, dracaenas, prickly pear cactus and brightly colored annuals like marigolds and zinnias. May was not opposed to suburban style green lawns, often placing them in his courtyards to provide a lush green contrast with his simulated whitewashed adobe walls.<sup>27</sup>

A conceptual drawing published in the *San Diego Union* prior to its construction in 1936 shows low shrubs assembled in beds surrounding the exterior perimeter of the structure. These are anchored with tall trees at the corners (Figure 5). The drawing’s small size, poor resolution and sketchy hand make plant identification conjectural at best. Similar trees with slightly better resolution are depicted in an undated *San Diego Union* ad for Cliff May Homes, published that same year.<sup>28</sup> This image shows a background similar to the Cottrell’s distant view up the coast, and includes a view into an open courtyard that shows what may be an olive tree. The tall trees could be eucalyptus and/or bearded Mexican Fan Palms. An undated photo of the north façade that was taken prior to the development of the front yard terrace and pool area in the mid-1960s shows a flat grass lawn, low foundation plantings, a mature banana tree and two potted dracaenas, all associated with May’s landscaping concepts as described in print, photos and drawings (Figure 3).

<sup>25</sup> Paul C., Johnson, ed. and Editorial Staff of Sunset and Magazine and Books. *Western Ranch Houses by Cliff May, Sunset Magazine*. Reprint 1997 by Hennessey & Ingalls of 1958 Lane Publishing Company Book.p. 30-31. Caption to photos:

1939. This is how the terrace looked before remodeling. Small paved area, close to house, barely large enough for patio furniture; treated as separate from the house, which looks out upon it through paned windows, French doors; access limited.

1949. Terrace after remodeling. Paving doubled in area, follows wings, has room for several sets of furniture. Free access between house and terrace, French doors replaced with solid panes, living room window with sliding glass door.

<sup>26</sup> Giovannini, *ibid.* “Built in 1953, [Mandalay, his Los Angeles home] what was first a 12-room, 6,500 square foot house was expanded many times. The children’s rooms were doubled, and a separate dining area and a library were built; bathrooms were improved.” The home eventually totaled around 10,000 sq. feet, with modern gadgetry like automatic sprinklers, electronic surveillance and mood lighting continuously added until he died.

<sup>27</sup> “Recreating an ancient Mexican hacienda,” Eloise Roorbach, *American Home Magazine*, 1935.

<sup>28</sup> “Preserving for California the Fascinating Architectural Traditions of Its People,” Advertisement, *San Diego Union*, 1936.

The second owners, J. Logan and Zemula Abernathy, added Lot 41 in 1943. They became avid cymbidium orchid growers after their retirement to La Jolla from Kansas City in the late 1940s and presumably used the additional parcel to pursue their horticultural interests in hybridizing orchids. The third owners, Spero and Theresa Yianilos were palm enthusiasts. They acquired Lot 41 from the Abernathys five years after they purchased the home in 1963, also using it for horticultural purposes.

Consequently, Lot 41 has historically been associated with the property's horticultural history, and until recently, contained greenhouses and specimen palm plantings that over time turned it into a lush, private enclave that was almost invisible from the street. Indeed, it was not included in the *2003 La Jolla Historical Survey* due to its lack of visibility that impeded assessment from the public right of way (Figure 6).

According to palm specialist William Evans,<sup>29</sup> in 2012, the property contained hundreds of palms with a total value at upwards of \$50,000. They included: three kinds of Phoenix palms, King and Queen palms, Butia palms, Livistonia palms, Yellow Butterfly Palms, Arengia palms, Howea palms, Fishtail palms, Raphis palms, Elephant's Foot palms, Kentia palms, Shaving Brush palms, Pigmy Date palms, Mexican Fan palms and multiple Cycads. According to Mrs. Yianilos,<sup>30</sup> the palms were imported by Mr. Yianilos—some surreptitiously--from all over the world and hybridized on the property for San Diego's benign climate. A 1982 article noted that: "The home is a living testament to palm trees. On her grounds alone are 80 to 90 different species of palms."<sup>31</sup>

For a private collection, the property contained an exceptionally wide selection of palms, cultivated over a half a century, making it a small yet significant local arboretum. The rarest palms were from Lord Howea Island off the coast of Australia.<sup>32</sup> These high-altitude dwelling trees are limited in their natural range to the last few hundred feet at the top of their native mountain habitat. Other tropical specimens on the property included Coral trees, dracaena, banana trees, Bird of Paradise, fiddle leaf fig, Dragon trees and bamboo.

Other than the driveway that was lined with Queen and King palms interspersed with huge Cycads (Photo 2 of 10), the placement of the palms seems to have had no particular design. A 1988 article stated that: "feathery kentias (Theresa's favorite) are scattered about. Rhapsis palms fill one whole greenhouse (located on Lot 41). Groves of banana, mango, macadamia and mulberry trees flank other

<sup>29</sup> D. Kane interview with Bill Evans, November 27, 2012.

<sup>30</sup> D. Kane interview with Theresa Yianilos, November 22, 1998.

<sup>31</sup> Mike Krey. "Jolla's palms have a crusader in Yianilos," *La Jolla Light*, March 25, 1982. (Yianilos File, La Jolla Historical Society Archives.) The article further notes that there were more than 130 species of palm. With 90 different species, the property had around 70% of known palm species in 1982.

<sup>32</sup> D. Kane interview with Bill Evans, *ibid.*

boundaries of the property.”<sup>33</sup> The tropical nature of the property intensified after Mr. Yianilos died in 1996 and Mrs. Yianilos became seriously ill. Lack of regular maintenance over the past decade allowed the plantings to naturalize. The property’s new owner recently stripped the palms from the property, destroying its cultural landscape before it could be properly evaluated for historical significance for its association with Mr. and Mrs. Yianilos, Post-World War II horticultural industry and related Tiki/Polynesian resorts in San Diego.

The terrace with hand painted tiles that Mr. and Mrs. Yianilos created in the 1960s is still extant, and the location of their adjoining pool is visible. Although the pool was filled in several years ago, its location is readily visible. Other extant features that contribute to the property’s setting include the original driveway and entry gate.

Several covered patios on the eastern and southern exterior perimeters are private outdoor spaces associated with the home’s bedrooms #3 and #4. These were added by Mr. and Mrs. Yianilos and are associated with their tenure in the home.<sup>34</sup> It is clear from the home’s plan that the French doors leading from the bedrooms to the home’s exterior were intended to provide access to the yard; but to what type of yard is not established. That decision, left to the owner’s discretion, evolved over time.

On the southern property line, the current landscape elements consist of a 12 ft. wide terrace tiled with square red pavers that extends along the back of the house. They lead from the garage to a freestanding 8 ft. high brick wall that is capped with red clay roof tiles. Because this wall does not seem to be well integrated into the home’s construction, nor made with the same level of materials or craftsmanship, it is most likely a later addition associated with the Yianilos period. A rustic wooden door in this wall provides access to the rear patio from the eastern side of the property, while a wrought iron gate (Yianilos period) provides access from the driveway to the west. Behind the terrace, a short, steep slope rises to the southern property line. It is terraced with wooden boards and planted with seasonal vegetation. The white composite board fence at the top of the slope is of recent vintage and was added by the adjoining neighbor to the south.

The paved area outside bedroom #4 once served as Mrs. Yianilos tile painting workshop, where a collapsible table and open-shelved workbench still remain from those activities. A wooden patio cover provides shade and weather protection across the tiled area at the rear of the home. It is supported on post-and-beam framework and pierced with corrugated plastic light wells. Its poor craftsmanship and more contemporary materials indicate later construction. The same can be said for the covered patio along the eastern property line. A freestanding 6 ft. high brick privacy wall establishes its perimeter. It is covered by corrugated plastic panels supported on a post-and-beam frame. In fair-to-poor condition, the egg-crated roofing shades red tiled pavers. Their checkerboard grout pattern has been interrupted by poorly patched trenching activity.

<sup>33</sup> Bailey, *ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> No doubt, Cliff May would have endorsed this modification of the home, since he practiced continuous experimentation on his own property to meet evolving needs. Giovanni, *ibid.* In a 1988 *Los Angeles Times* article, Cliff May refers to Mandalay as a “demonstration house,” where he experimented with design approaches used on more than 1,000 houses during the course of his career. Ruth Ryon, “For May, Less Is More: Architect Takes Aim at ‘Monuments,’” *Los Angeles Times*, April 24, 1988. <http://articles.latimes.com>, accessed January 7, 2013.





Remaining vegetation that contributes to the setting includes a few specimen Mexican Fan palms, Raphis palms, a Dragon tree, a Bird of Paradise and a few additional foundation plantings. Various mature plantings, selected for screening, rim the property's perimeter. Until recently, the courtyard contained a mature Mexican Fan palm (removed) and a huge olive tree (extensively pruned), presumably from the Cliff May period of construction. The rest of the property's vegetation is gone.

In conclusion, due to the recent removal of most of the palm trees, the property's integrity of setting is severely compromised for its association with Mr. and Mrs. Yianilos during the 1963-2007 period. But, its setting for its association with Cliff May is consistent with Mr. May's landscaping concepts from the 1936 period of construction. These include the site's terraced topography, ocean views, entrance gate, elongated driveway, auto court, mature foundation plantings and courtyard olive tree.

**Materials:** Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. Cliff May chose a hand applied stucco that exhibits soft undulating surfaces and rounded edges, chamfered and distressed wood, massive wooden lintels, and rustic wood casement window and shutter systems with distinctive wood grills that evoke Old California farmhouse themes. The wrought iron entry gate, massive custom double garage door and enormous multi-paned picture window are extant and in original condition. Other trademark artistic embellishments include terra cotta Mission half-barrel tiles that are stacked and heavily mudded. These are supported on wooden rafters that are visible in the overhanging eaves. All the bath tiles and plumbing fixtures are intact, as are the courtyard paired French doors, interior plank doors, tile floors and wooden ceiling beams. Because these materials remain intact, the house has excellent integrity in this category.

**Workmanship:** Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. From the beginning of his career, Cliff May provided certificates of excellence in workmanship. These listed each of the subcontractors for the house, with a promise of excellence in materials and workmanship.<sup>35</sup> Few of these certificates survive, but it is a known fact that each house came with this guarantee. For this reason, along with the excellent survival of the original materials over time, it is clear that the Cottrell House has excellent integrity of Workmanship. In Cliff May's case, the workmanship at this time was purposely rustic to emulate unskilled laborers of Early California. The wall stucco has been hand applied to create a subtle undulating surface that evokes a sense of an old adobe building and interior edges have been hand rounded. The wooden window grills, chamfered garage door, and shutters are custom designed and hand detailed examples of conscientious workmanship. Likewise, the heavily mudded roof tiles are explicit attempts to reproduce untutored hand troweling. Rustic workmanship is a character defining element of Cliff May's early designs like the Cottrell House, which exhibits excellent integrity in this category.

<sup>35</sup> See illustration of an original certificate for 4669 Talmadge Drive in San Diego, in May & May, *ibid.*, p. 39.

**Feeling:** Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. Cliff May's Hacienda style houses were intended to convey the relaxed feeling of the old 19th California ranchos that were part of his family heritage. Being intimately familiar with the historic design elements that characterized these buildings, he took care to integrate them into his Hacienda/Rancheria designs. Details include the hand-troweled stucco, heavily mudded and stacked tile roofs, exposed beam ceilings, custom doors, windows, shutters, grills, and ironworking. The fully enclosed courtyard plan with its open-air *correadors* and enfilade circulation patterns fundamentally evokes earlier times, when this outdoor room was used for working, entertainment and relaxation. The Cottrell House is faithful to this 1930s romantic Hacienda expression, and has excellent integrity of Feeling.

**Association:** Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. The Cottrell House is directly associated with architect Cliff May, who was an important 20th century architect in California. This association represents the earliest portion of his productive years and exhibits the evolution of his design development from Hacienda to Rancheria and eventually his Western Ranch style.

**Integrity Conclusion.** The Cottrell House has excellent integrity of Location, Design, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling and Association. Although the lush palm landscaping associated with Spero and Theresa Yianilos has been severely compromised, the property overall retains excellent historical integrity for its association with Master Architect Cliff May, its Spanish/Mexican Hacienda design and its property type as a full courtyard ranch house.

The hacienda is in good to fair condition. It has been recently repainted, but not lived in for more than 5 years. Other than a kitchen remodel in the 1970s, it has not seen any major upgrades since originally constructed. The 1930s plumbing, wiring, flooring and roofing could benefit from sensitive rehabilitation to keep the property in service.

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### Acknowledgements

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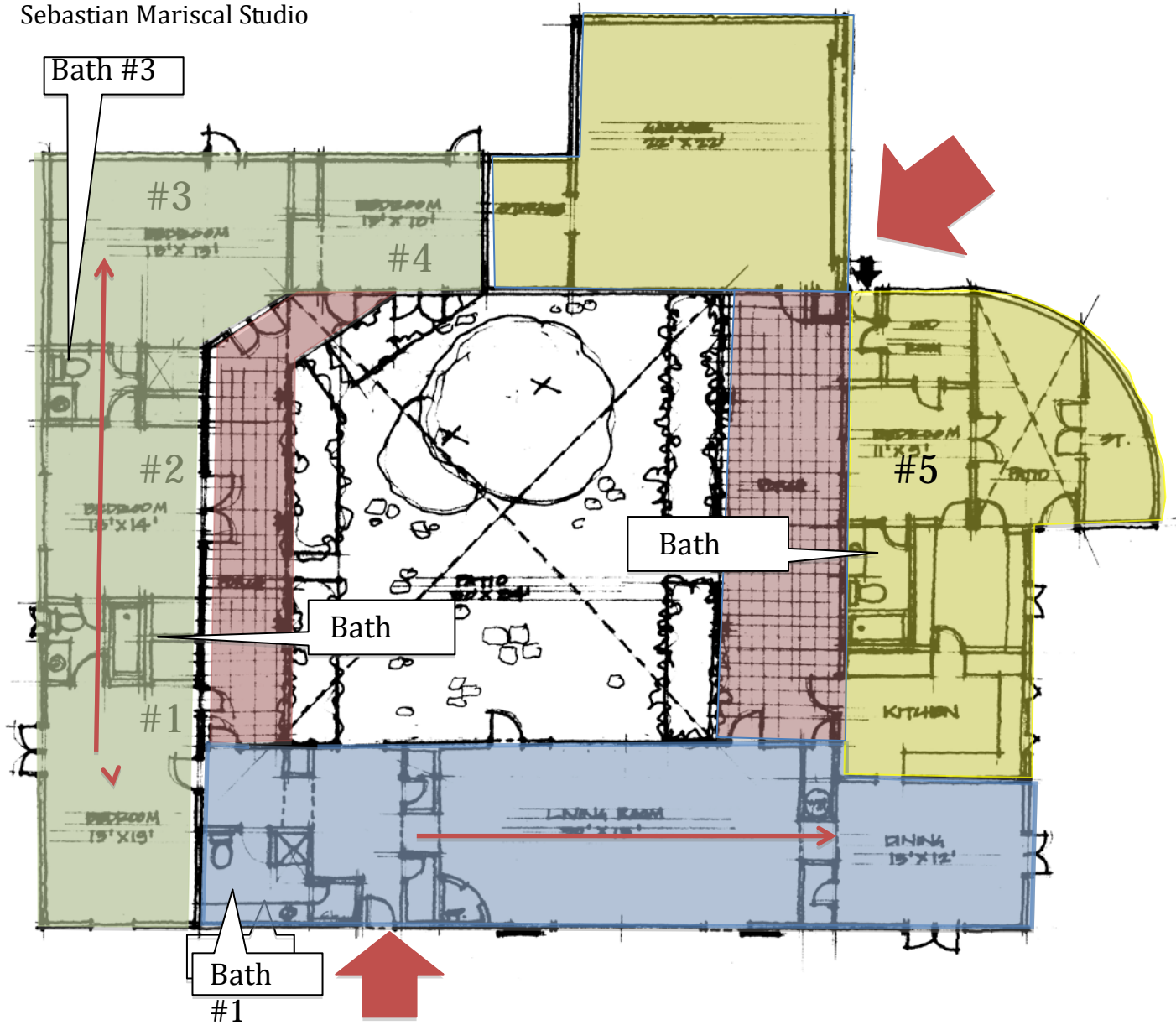
Mary van Balgooy, Author and Preservationist, MD.



Figure 1. Cottrell House “As Built” Floor Plan

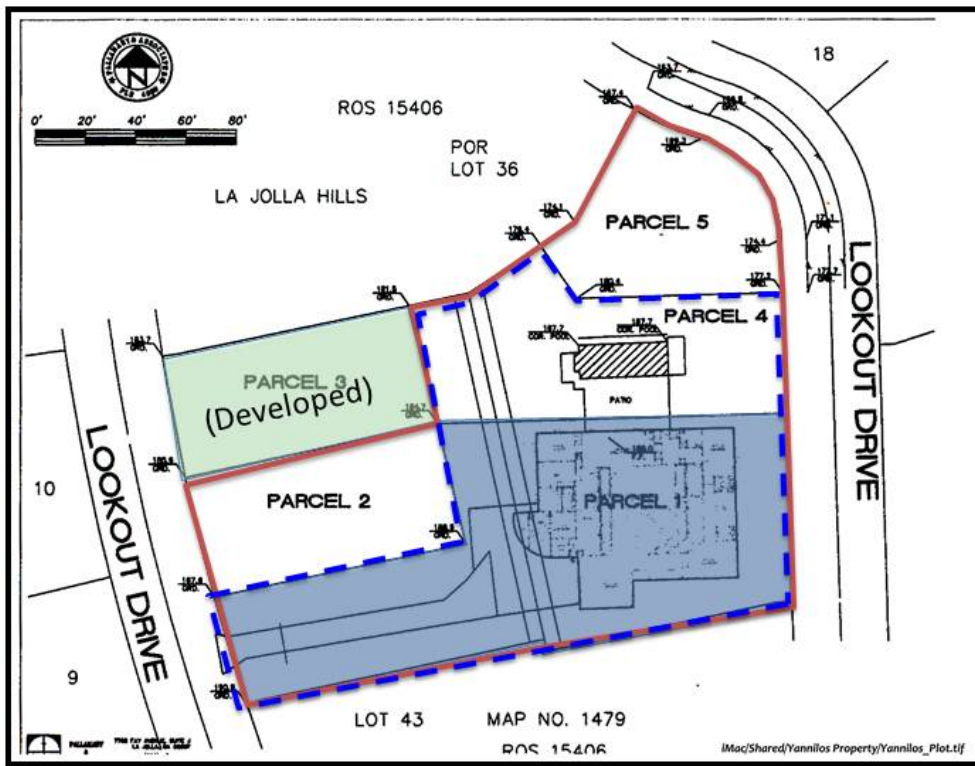
### Cottrell House “As Built” Floor Plan

Mauricio de la Pena, c. 2011  
Sebastian Mariscal Studio





### Cottrell House Site Plan



Record of Survey #15406, showing estate boundaries, new parcel lines and proposed historic designation boundaries.

Figure 2. Record of Survey #15406 showing estate boundaries, old and new parcel lines and historic property boundary as identified by the City of Los Angeles

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\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Cottrell House

\*Recorded by Diane Kane, Ph.D.

\*Date October 14, 2013



Continuation  Update

## Historic Photographs



Figure 3. Cottrell House North Façade, c. 1965      Courtesy, Yianilos Family



Figure 4. Cottrell House Living Room, c. 1937  
Courtesy UCSB Art & Architecture Museum Archives, Cliff May Files





### Cottrell House Landscape, 1936 & 2012



Figure 5. *San Diego Union* Announcement, August 30, 1936 Source: GenealogyBank.com



Figure 6. Yianilos Estate, Aerial Photo, 2012

Courtesy: Willis Allen Real Estate

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\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Cottrell House

\*Recorded by Diane Kane, Ph.D. \*Date October 14, 2013  Continuation  Update

## PHOTOGRAPHS\*

(All photos by Diane Kane in November 2012, July & September 2013, except where noted.)

### \*PHOTOGRAPH LOCATIONS NOTED ON ACCOMPANYING PLANS

- 1 of 10 West Façade, Auto Court & Garage, facing east. (9/28/13)
- 2 of 10 Driveway and entrance gate from Auto Court, facing west. (11/24/12)
- 3 of 10 North Façade & Patio, facing south. (9/28/13)
- 4 of 10 *Courtyard Corredor* (west façade), facing north. (9/28/13)
- 5 of 10 Courtyard with Historic Olive Tree, northeast. (9/28/13)
- 6 of 10 Roof Tile and Eave Detail, North Façade, facing south. (7/28/13)
- 7 of 10 Window & Shutter Detail, West Façade, facing east. (9/28/13)
- 8 of 10 Living Room and Coastal View, 1936.  
Courtesy, Santa Barbara Museum of Art & Architecture Archives.
- 9 of 10 Living Room, facing west. (11/4/12)
- 10 of 10 Dining Room, facing northwest (7/28/13)



**Figure 7. PHOTO LOCATION PLAN**

