

649 MIRADA AVENUE

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(8 DOLORES, 750 DOLORES)



1917 ~ Mediterranean style

ARCHITECT: John K. Branner OWNERS: Treat ~ Bonini ~ Marmor

BY CONSTANCE PRATT; REVISED IN 2006 BY MARIAN LEIB ADAMS

Payson Jackson Treat, this house's first owner, commissioned San Francisco architect John K. Branner to design the 4,500-square-foot structure for him and his wife, Jessie. It was situated so that Dolores Street provided an opening to bring in the view between neighboring houses, giving a wide vista from the living room across San Francisco Bay to the Fremont hills. It was built as a single-story stucco house facing onto Dolores; today access is from Mirada.

Stairs lead up to a covered entry porch, added in the 1980s, on the southeast side of the house. Inside, a hall leads to the 18- by 36-foot living room, which has been beautifully preserved by the current owners. Ceilings here and in the study and dining room are 10 feet high. Floors in living room, dining room, and hall are oak. Original crystal chandeliers hang in the living room and front hall.

The living room's walls have elaborate detailing, with white plaster panels framed in wood painted a contrasting gray. This framed panelwork continues above windows on the northeast and southeast walls. Centered on the living room's interior wall, the impressive fireplace has a molded-concrete mantel with framed panels above. Flat, fluted columns flank the fireplace and provide a focal point for the room. French doors and a large window on the northeast wall, with arched panes on top, open onto a redwood deck overlooking fruit trees, berry vines, and a vegetable garden. Rounded columns between the arched windows accentuate the Mediterranean design.

Off the living room is a paneled study with built-in bookshelves; pocket doors can close it off. A fireplace on the room's west wall, which was destroyed in the 1989 earthquake, has been paneled over. The large window on the southeast wall is topped by an arched upper pane.

Opposite the study, through the living room and more pocket doors, is the dining room; on the northwest wall are two built-in corner cabinets with multipaned glass doors. This room also has framed panels of contrasting colors, and two large double-hung

windows overlook the deck. French doors under an arched window between the corner cabinets lead to the breakfast room and kitchen. A swinging door opens to an old pantry, which has built-in cupboards and silver drawers.

Off the modern kitchen and breakfast room, added in the mid-1980s, the original kitchen has been made into a television room. The former maid's room is now a study and bath. Beyond the kitchen are a small inside porch and laundry area near the back door. Past the TV room, an interior hall leads to two bedrooms and two baths on the southwest side of the house; one of them is the original master bedroom. A third bedroom and bath are off the front hall.

Stairs from the main hall go down to the master bedroom suite, which includes a bedroom, dressing area, and spacious bathroom. An exterior door leads from the bedroom to the tennis court.

A separate cottage in a parking area on the northwest corner of the lot was remodeled, probably during the Treat tenure, and has served off and on as a student rental.

THE OWNERS

Payson Jackson Treat. Treat, who was born in New York in 1879, was Stanford's first Ph.D. graduate and its first professor to hold a full-time appointment in East Asian studies (then called Far Eastern affairs). He earned his A.B. at Wesleyan University in 1900 and A.M. at Columbia in 1903. That fall, he came west to study with Max Farrand, a distinguished scholar in American history; when Farrand left

Stanford to become visiting professor at Cornell in 1905, Treat was appointed as instructor. In 1906–07, he conducted research in Asia, and was an instructor at Harvard in 1908–09.

In June 1909, he married a former student, Jessie Duff McGilvray, daughter of John McGilvray, the contractor who supervised the building of the Outer Quad. The Treats occupied the duplex at 591 Salvatierra Street until 1917, when they moved to 750 Dolores Street, as the house was then numbered.

From 1922 to 1929, Treat was head of Stanford's History Department. During his years on the faculty, he taught more than 7,000 students, and he maintained a card file that included information not only about his students, but about their children as well. He was a man of clever wit who was active in the Sierra Club in its early days.

The Treats had no children, but Jessie Treat was known for the cookies and petits-fours she prepared for student open houses. She was also a major force in the creation of the Stanford Women's Clubhouse. Jessie Treat died in 1961. Payson Treat continued to live in the house until his death, in 1972. By that date, he had witnessed 68 years of Stanford's then-80 year history.

Charles Bonini. In September 1973, Bonini, an assistant professor of statistics at the Graduate School of Business, moved into the house with his family. He was born in 1933 in Ridgeway, Pennsylvania, and received an A.B. from College of the Holy Cross in 1955, and an M.S. (1957) and Ph.D. (1962) from Carnegie Mellon. Stanford was his first teaching

position. His family occupied the house until 1984.

His research interests are in applications of management science and statistical procedures in business. During his nearly 40-year career at the Business School, Bonini taught courses including statistics and modeling to generations of students; in 1999 he won the Robert T. Davis Award, presented for extraordinary contributions to the school. That year, Bonini retired as William R. Timken Professor on Management Science.

Michael Marmor. Jane and Michael Marmor, both physicians, moved into the house in the summer of 1985, after completing renovations.

Michael Marmor was born in New York City in 1941 and received his A.B. (1962) and M.D. (1966) from Harvard. He joined the Stanford faculty in 1974, where he now serves as professor of ophthalmology; he was chair of the department from 1984 to 1992. He also serves as a faculty member in the human biology program.

His research interests focus on the physiology and pathophysiology of the retina and the relationship between human vision and art, music, history, literature, and sport. For more than 20 years, he has taught a human biology class on the eye and implications of vision. He is a member of the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

Jane Marmor, a radiation oncologist, was born in 1940 and graduated from Stanford in 1962; she earned her medical degree from Harvard, where she was a classmate of her future husband, in 1966. She is past president

of the San Mateo County Medical Association and recently retired from her position as medical director of radiation oncology at Sequoia Hospital in Redwood City.

Together the Marmors manage a family art foundation, the Marmor Foundation, which has donated a collection of contemporary art to the Cantor Art Center at Stanford.

To make the house more contemporary, the Marmors and architect John Northway of Palo Alto designed a remodel that still retains the original footprint and details of the house. They extended the hall and entry about 10 feet and built a covered stucco porch that fits the Mediterranean design of the house. Above the front door, a fanlight window ties into original details elsewhere in the house.

In the former parking area off the front of the house, a master bedroom suite nestles into the house at a lower level; they also expanded a balcony off the living room into a spacious deck. The deck leads down to a seating area with hot tub; a tennis court along Dolores Street is down more stairs and along a path.

On the back of the house, they added a new kitchen and breakfast area. Modern plumbing was added throughout the house. During the Loma Prieta earthquake, the study's fireplace chimney collapsed, damaging the deck

over the master suite. Removing the fireplace created space to enlarge the study.

The Marmors have incorporated into their home and surrounding grounds their own varied interests and pleasures. The spacious living room is a setting for chamber music concerts, sometimes featuring Mike Marmor as clarinetist. The tennis court gets frequent use. There are vegetable plots and a fruit orchard on the 1³/₄-acre lot.

The original house had extensive gardens down the slope from the living room toward Dolores and Mirada, including roses and other flowers. The gardens apparently were a source of great pride for Professor Treat, but in later years they became rundown. By the time the Marmors acquired the house, restoration was not feasible, so they relandscaped, mixing formal plantings with open space for the old California oaks and for fruit trees. Landscape architect Kenneth Arutunian created the initial design.

The house still has many connections with its past, including a photograph of Jessie Treat, who looks out from the living room over the sloping grounds. All of the central rooms in the house are much as they were when the house was first built.

SOURCES

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