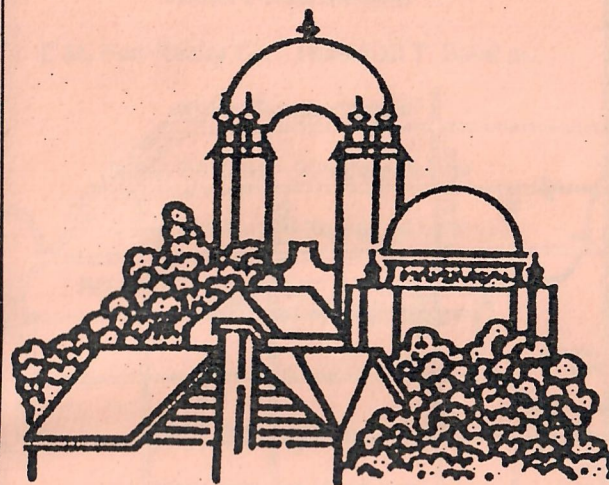


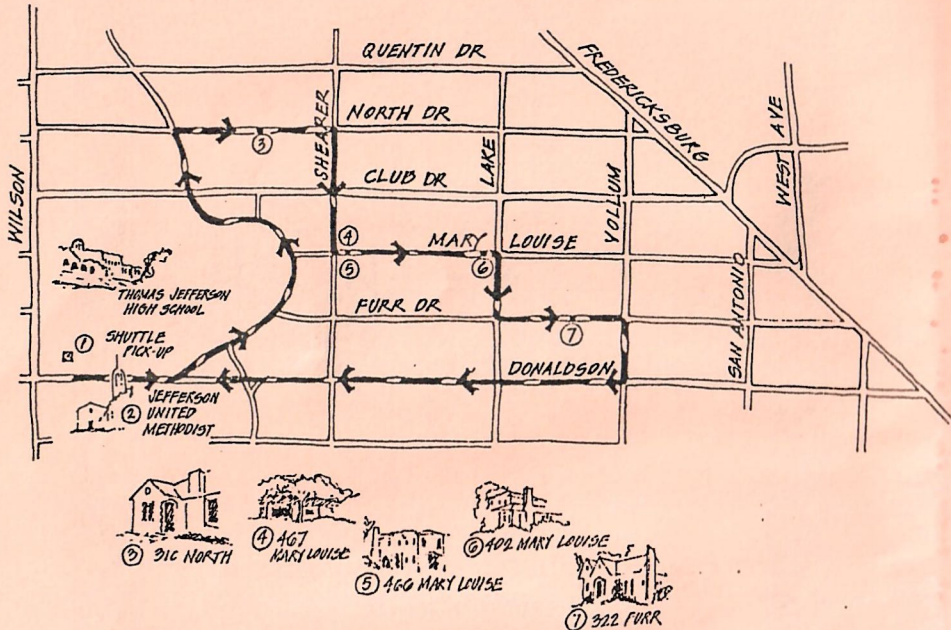
1998

The
Fourth Annual
"At Home in Monticello"
Tour of Homes



Presented by the
Monticello Park Neighborhood
Association
Sunday, November 1, 1998
11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

'98 Tour Map



Monticello Park's 1998 Home Tour

Designated a historic district in 1995, Monticello Park is one of the city's "youngest" historic neighborhoods. It is known for its delightfully eclectic mixture of homes in a variety of "Revival" styles, including English Tudor, Greek, Spanish Colonial, Cottage, Neoclassical, Italianate, and Moorish. Most of the homes here, ranging from mansions to cozy bungalows built from the 1920s to the 1950s, are full of charming and often quirky surprises.

Inside, Art Deco-era bathrooms mix tile colors boldly: pink and green, blue and peach, or even green and purple tile with purple ceramic bathtub, pedestal sink and toilet! Besides their original pedestal sinks and fixtures, these highly individual houses often have hardwood floors, crown moulding, fireplaces, ornate Art Deco gas heaters, and stylized stucco arches or pocket doors between rooms. As you walk through them, it's soon apparent that these are homes cared for by owners with the sense to leave the best of the old and classic intact, while updating and renovating for contemporary comfort.

The land that became Monticello Park was originally a dairy farm owned by George Calvert — perhaps he was the one who planted some of the large pecan trees you still see here. According to one story, the developer who bought this land in the Twenties had plans to turn it into a luxury subdivision with a country club and golf course. Testifying to this grand vision are "Club Drive" and the allee of palm trees lining Mary Louise Drive, as well as the mansion-sized homes close to Kampmann Drive (and the fact that its major streets are called "Drives").

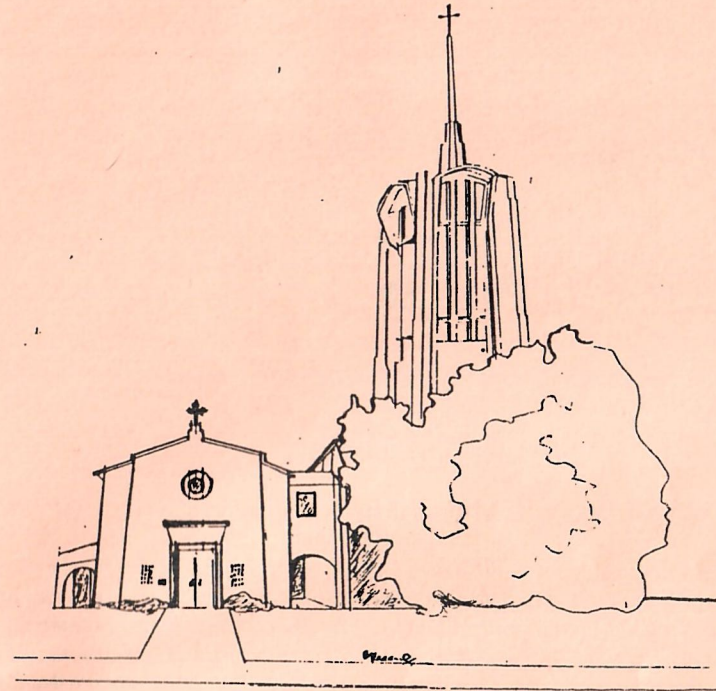
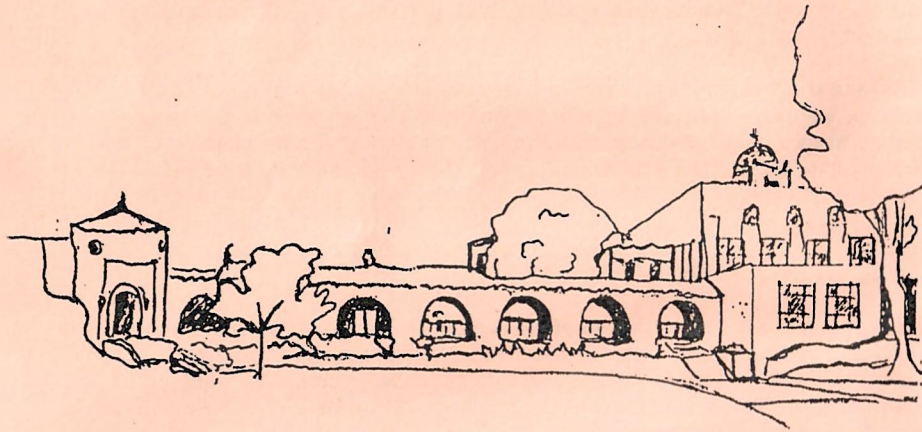
But whether it was the rumblings of the coming Depression or the developer just changed his mind, Thomas Jefferson High School was built on the sprawling grounds where upscale residents once might have teed off. Designed the year of the stock market crash (1929) by the architecture firm Adams & Adams, the palatial Spanish Colonial Revival building was an extravaganza of lavish detail inspired by San Antonio's missions as well as Spain's Alhambra. Churrigueresque Baroque columns around the grand entrance recall the elaborately carved stone trimming Mission San Jose, while a silver-capped, domed tower crowns the school in Mission style. Art Deco cast stone ornaments suggesting Maya headdresses trim the upper part of the building, and the elaborate detailing continues inside. The school even had its own gardener and grounds keeper.

Jefferson High School made such a splash when it opened in 1932 that it was featured in *Life Magazine* and *National Geographic* in the 1930s and 1940s. Two movies starring Jane Withers were made on the campus: *High School* (1938) and *Texas Girl* (1939).

Like movie extras from that era, you are invited to stroll through Jefferson's beautiful halls as well as Jefferson United Methodist Church and the homes on tour. The Monticello Park Neighborhood Association is especially grateful to Jefferson United Methodist Church for serving as tour headquarters and the place where prize drawings will be held for those who enter and correctly solve the riddles in the "Discover the Distinctive Detail" contest that is part of the tour. So sharpen your powers of observation, and let's begin.

**Thomas Jefferson High School
723 Donaldson Avenue**

Adams & Adams, Max Frederick, Architect, 1932

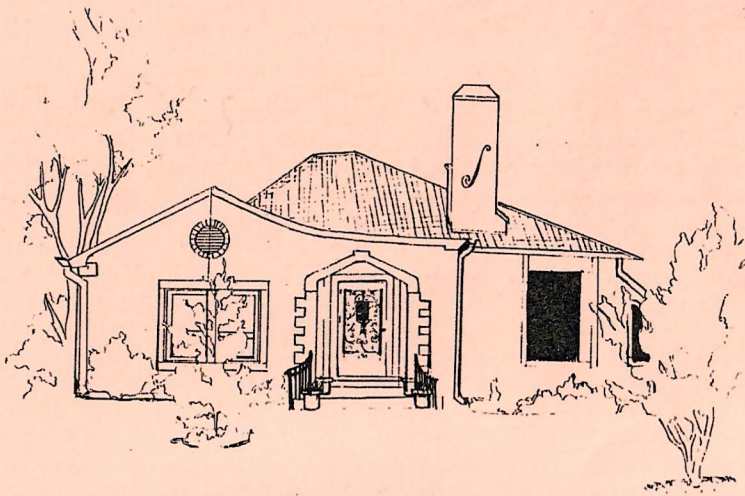


**Jefferson United Methodist Church
758 Donaldson Avenue**

Main sanctuary, 1958
Henry Steinbomer, Architect

Fascination with Sputnik and the dawning Space Age shaped the streamlined architecture of the Fifties, apparent here in the soaring belltower and metal spire topped by a cross. Inside the main sanctuary, stained glass windows and elegant ribbed woodwork likewise reach toward the heavens with streamlined forms retaining just a hint of the Gothic style. A blue tile mosaic (also big in the Fifties) and veined peach marble provide the perfect backdrop for the huge but simple metal cross attached to the wall.

In cold weather, the chapel (completed in 1949) and sanctuary are warmed by radiant heating - hot water circulated through pipes in the concrete floor - a technology popular in the Fifties. Steinbomer also designed St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Alamo Heights, completed in 1955.



As shiny as silver
 It brightens the cold
 With the warmth of a fire
 And the beauty of old.

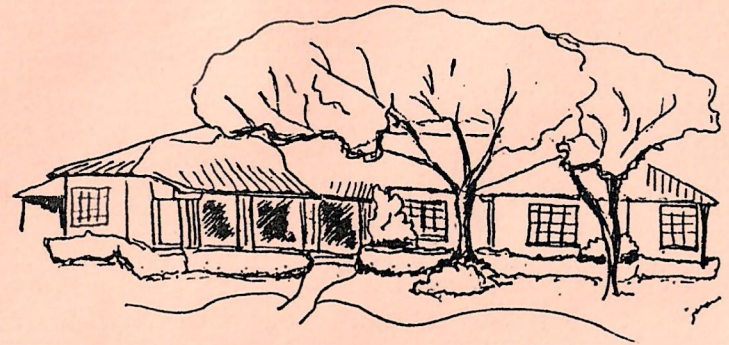
The Woods House at 310 North Drive

Compact and well appointed, this cozy brick home has a storybook appeal that starts with the parlor's fireplace, peach walls, and white crown moulding. A Moorish arch leads from parlor to dining room, where an antique gas space heater serves as a reminder of how beautiful utilitarian things can be (yes, it still works). On warm days, the vintage wood Venetian blinds keep out the sun.

You'll want to tarry in the pine-plank-floored kitchen to admire the 1940s Chambers gas stove, which comes with a well in the back for deep-frying in a removable bucket (the owner was so enchanted by this classic stove that she insisted it remain when she purchased the home). Above, note the luscious-looking fruit on the wallpaper border.

Just off the kitchen, the perfect place for morning coffee in nice weather is the louvered veranda looking out on the back yard. The owner's cat also likes to hang out in the comfortable wicker chairs here, while keeping an eye on the birds outside and the stenciled ivy and grapes accenting the room's upper corners.

In the back bedroom, don't miss the cool Art Deco armoires and matching dresser with the big circle mirror. The home was constructed in 1941 for the Wilbur Starnes family.



Hard as a rock
 Yet pretty as a bloom
 These colorful squares
 Fill more than one room.

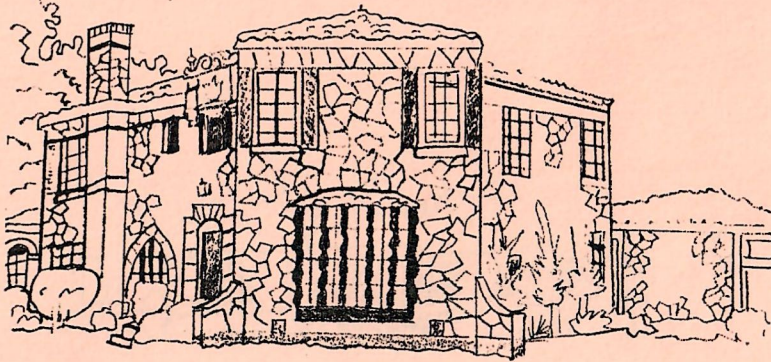
The Christmas House at 467 Mary Louise Drive

Set at an interesting angle on a large corner lot, the Christmas house was a relative latecomer to the neighborhood that began in the 1920s. Built in 1952, its one-story plan combines the Fifties' fondness for the rambling "ranch" style layout and the distinctive Spanish/Mediterranean accents provided by the stone masonry and red-tiled roof.

Inside, the Spanish/Mediterranean theme continues with the same type of floor tile that graces the McNay Museum's grand front terrace. Called "Mission" tile for its fluid, Spanish/Moorish-influenced designs and association with San Antonio's historic missions, it was originally made here around the turn of the century and is again available at local distributors. It is also called "concrete tile" because it is made by pouring semi-liquid colors into a mold that is then hydraulically pressed with sand and cement.

Other intriguing interior details include crystal chandeliers like those at the Guenther Hotel; an old-fashioned ironing board that folds conveniently out of a little door in the wall (in a small room that suggests a maid's sewing nook if you're old enough or rich enough to remember when people had live-in maids); and a pink-and-green tiled bathroom with green square tub and matching sink and commode. In the master bedroom, the elaborate plaster crown moulding complements 18th-century style furniture and lace curtains. Another bedroom holds a doll collection, while the cheerful, yellow-tiled kitchen displays a collection of teapots.

The home's original builder was a banana distributor. The first owner put a merry-go-round in the large back yard, where neighborhood children gathered to play.



It's not a coat
To wear in winter.
Yet arms watch over
All who enter.

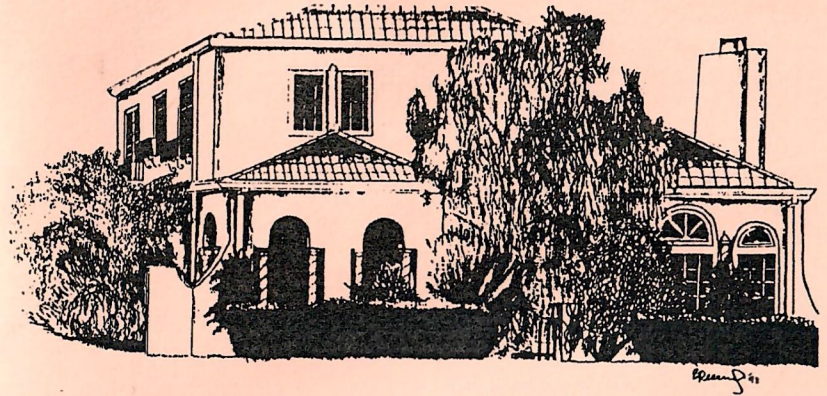
The Aguirre House at 466 Mary Louise Drive

This imposing, two-story limestone brings to mind the old saying that your home is your castle. Built in 1941, it was designed by N. Strauss Nayfach, one of San Antonio's most prominent architects during the Forties and Fifties. Nayfach designed several homes in Monticello Park, but his best known public building is the Alameda Theater (1949), the last of San Antonio's great movie palaces.

Nayfach's original architectural plans for this house, calling for "California Spanish rock" (actually Texas limestone appears to have been used), were passed down to the current owners. Besides the handsome woodwork throughout, the home retains its original Art Deco chandelier in the dining room, as well as its original wall sconces above the living room mantel. But the living room's most dramatic feature is the large, arrow-shaped window to the left of the fireplace, a shape echoed by the wrought iron around the front screened door and the peephole in the solid wood door just behind it. Perhaps Nayfach got his inspiration for this detail from Jefferson High School, which has several "arrow" windows.

Speaking of windows, check out the glass louvers surrounding the sun porch off the living room, a charming reminder of the days before air-conditioning. French doors in the family room open onto the patio, making the most of San Antonio's almost year-round good weather. In the kitchen, notice the built-in corner cupboards and handy pass-through to the dining room. And don't miss the wonderful 1940s tiled baths with their original pedestal sinks and other fixtures in powder pink and pale blue.

Picking up on the Spanish/Mediterranean theme that characterizes several homes on this block, curving wrought iron twines up the staircase, while graceful arches lead from room to room, and terra cotta tile crowns the roof.



Twisted like taffy
Yet strong with support
This upstanding team
Has the grace of fine art.

The Ehrisman House at 402 Mary Louise Drive

With its red-tiled roof, smooth white stucco, and Baroque porch columns topped with ornate capitals, this 1920s Spanish Colonial Revival gem captures the romance of this historic style. Circle-top windows spill light into the living room, while Mission tile paves the pretty front porch. If you were planning to have a wedding at home, this would be the home to have: inside, it's easy to imagine a bride floating down the lovely double staircase, framed with triple arches upheld by delicate white columns.

In the entry hall, the 100-year-old Gustave Becker grandfather clock chimes the hour, just one of the many treasures scattered throughout. Art Deco chandeliers and wall sconces cast their glow across the living and dining rooms, making the authentic cherrywood moulding gleam.

A converted antique gas lamp lights the island in the updated kitchen, where the added-on solarium opens onto a lushly landscaped deck and pool area, where huge crotons, bougainvillea, and palms sway with tropical allure.

In the family room off the kitchen, separated from the front hallway by the home's original pocket doors, hardwood floors give way to cool Saltillo tile, wood beams span the ceiling, and Mexican folk art and a collection of crosses brighten the walls.



Her grandmother German had fingers so nimble
She crafted this treasure with thread and a thimble.
Her name and the date of this labor of love,
Add a finishing touch to the shade of a dove.

The Rodriguez House at 322 Furr Drive

The Roaring Twenties gave birth to this superbly eclectic house, which may have been the first on the block. Built in 1922, it has steep gables reminiscent of the Cottage Revival style, while the asymmetrical brick trim recalls the highly individual craftsmanship that went into even modest homes of this era.

Inside, the living room welcomes guests with a brick fireplace flanked by built-in bookshelves and high windows. The adjacent dining room, lighted by a bay window, artfully demonstrates the finesse with which the owners have mixed vintage details with contemporary accents. Behind the dining room's modern black chairs hangs handwoven linen made nearly 100 years ago.

In the kitchen's breakfast nook, a compact table and two chairs neatly fold down from the wall with American ingenuity. And in what seems an unusually large bathroom for that speak-easy era (do you suppose the original owners made gin in their bathtub?), a whole wall of built-in wood cabinets provides both storage and appealing design. The wall sconces and plumbing hardware are original, too.

Out back in the yard is a touch worthy of that home-and-garden guru, Martha Stewart: a garden shower, or "gartendusche," for cooling off after yard work or other sweaty outdoor projects. The owners say they're not that uncommon in Germany, which is where they purchased the plumbing for their garden shower. "Sometime after we installed it, Martha Stewart featured them on her show," they add.

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