

Landmark Proposal for the Rich Cabana

4353 Marina Drive, Hope Ranch

Lot# 063-220-016

Prepared for Lee and Julia Carr
By Neal Graffy
September 8, 2010

Hope Ranch

The first residents of Hope Ranch were the Chumash Indians who, knowing a good thing when they saw it occupied the initial ocean front parcel. Located along the west side of the bluff above the gorge that provides access to Hope Ranch beach it was identified in 1924 by archaeologist David Banks Rogers. Rogers determined the inhabitants were of the "third culture" or Canaliño grouping which dated the village to around 500 AD or later.

The first written record of the property which concerns this history took place a few weeks before the December 6, 1776 founding of Mission Santa Barbara. Presidio Commandant Felipe de Goycochea, along with Fathers Antonio Paterna and Cristóbal Orámas, met to determine the boundaries of the Mission Lands and the Pueblo Lands. The Pueblo Lands were to be under the jurisdiction of the presidio and would eventually be available for homes and gardens of retired soldiers and new civilian settlers. The Mission Lands were to be under the control of the Franciscans. Theoretically these lands belonged to the Chumash Indians, the plan being that the lands were to be held for them by the mission fathers until such time as they could return to these lands and fend for themselves.

The division line between the mission and pueblo started at an *arroyo* about a quarter-mile from the front of the mission site (near today's Garden and Mission streets). Goycochea told the padres: "From here a straight line to the sierra in the north and towards the southeast to that sycamore which stands below at the beginning of the *Cañada de las Pozas*, will serve as the limit."

The *Cañada de las Pozas* (Glen, or Canyon of the Springs), that was to be the baseline separating the western edge of the Pueblo Lands from the Mission Lands, is the little canyon between Modoc Road and Arroyo Burro (aka Hendry's) Beach. Las Positas (the little springs) Road runs through it today and connects to Cliff Drive which leads to Marina Drive, the "back entrance" to Hope Ranch.

This route may have actually been the earliest entrance into the future Hope Ranch. About a half mile from the intersection of Cliff and Marina Drives, the mission fathers found one of the most important materials not only for the building of the mission church, but all the forthcoming construction projects – limestone – which was used to create mortar.

Though the gathering of seashells provided the first (and easiest obtainable) source of lime for Presidio and initial Mission construction, the later and more extensive church construction, outbuildings, dams, aqueducts and reservoirs called for a larger source of lime than the seashells could hope to supply. The discovery of the limestone deposits in Hope Ranch were indeed a Godsend and the area became known as "*La Calera*" (the kilns) from the limestone kilns the Franciscans built there. The site of the quarry itself can be located by present day Hope Ranch Street names - Cantera (quarry) Avenue and Corta (cutting) Road.

The secularization of the missions released the vast mission lands from the padres and the original concept of the land being returned to the Indians was for the most part ignored. For the ranch of the kilns, the change from Mission lands to private hands came in May of 1843 when

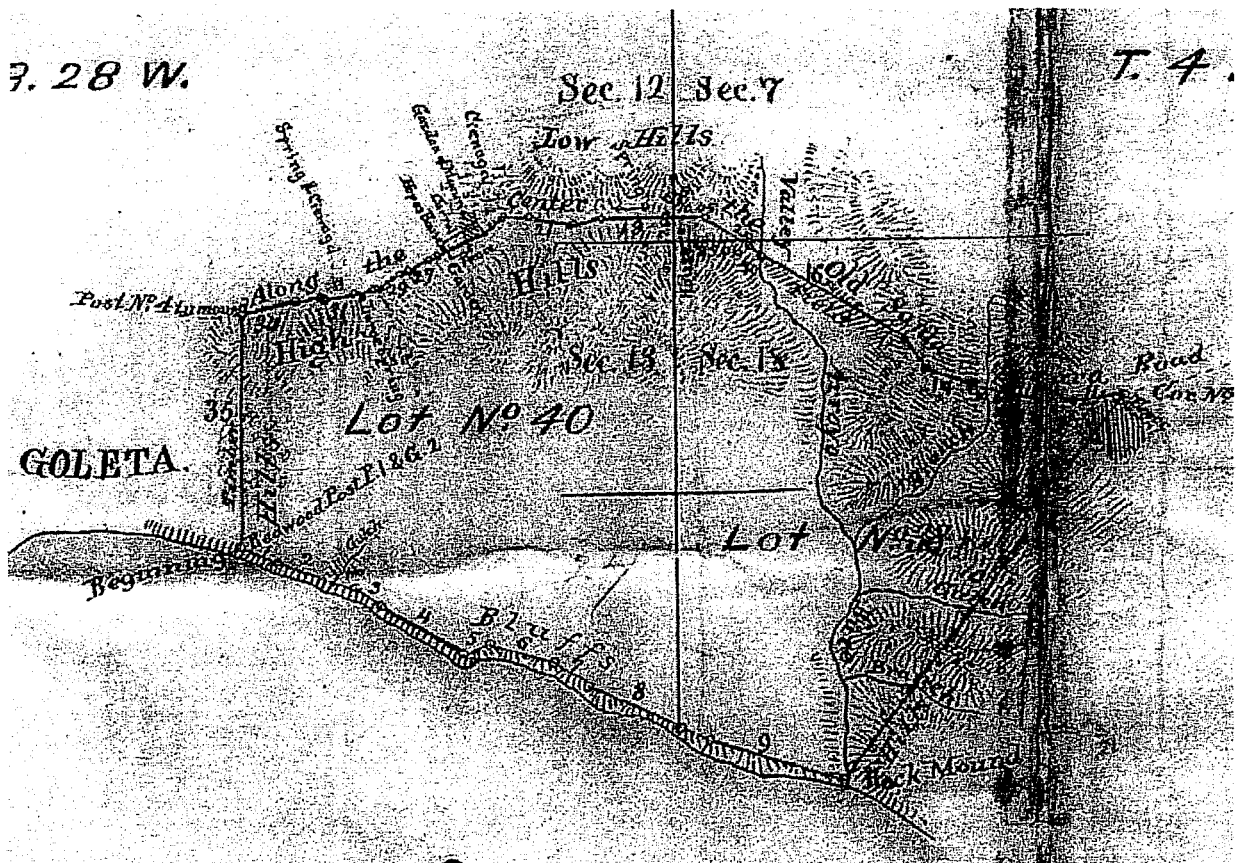
Governor Manuel Micheltorena granted rancho *La Calera* to Lt. Narciso Fabregat, a retired soldier of the Santa Barbara Presidio, as compensation for unpaid wages.

Three years later Fabregat sold the property to Thomas M. Robbins. About the same time Robbins received a grant from Governor Pio Pico for the property to the east, *Las Positas* (as well as Santa Catalina Island) and the 3,282 acre rancho was now *Las Positas y Calera*.

Originally from Massachusetts, Robbins had been in Santa Barbara for nearly two decades and was well-known and highly respected. He had first come to California in 1823 as first officer of the *Rover* and returned again in 1826 as captain of the *Waverly*. Apparently he left the *Waverly* and settled in Santa Barbara and opened a store on the beachfront at the foot of Burton's Mound (roughly between today's West Cabrillo Boulevard, Bath, Mission Creek and Chapala streets). Converting to the Catholic faith he married Encarnación Carrillo the granddaughter of a Presidio comandante. He was given a commission in the Mexican navy, commanding the schooner *California*.

Robbins Street was named for him in 1851 as it was more or less along the pathway that led to his home (somewhere in the vicinity of Portesuello Avenue and Las Positas Road). After Robbins' death in 1857, his wife held the property until April of 1861 when she sold 3,281.7 acres to Thomas Hope for \$8,000.

Hope, a native of Ireland, had arrived in Santa Barbara between 1850 and 1852. He worked for a while at Rancho Dos Pueblos, home of a fellow Irishman, Nicholas Den. After saving enough money to set out his own, he began raising sheep (possibly in partnership with Pedro C. Carrillo) at *La Cieneguita* (the little swamps), in the northwest section of the ranch that would eventually bear his name. In 1854 he was appointed the Indian Agent for Santa Barbara, quite appropriately, because just about the only Chumash village still left was at the *cieneguitas*.



Map of Rancho Las Positas y Calera c1875 (as it notes Hope's House). The cieneguitas is above the top left boundary. The "gulch" between points 2 and 3 is the entrance to Hope Ranch Beach and the future cabana site is around point 5. Hendry's (Arroyo Burro) Beach is noted by the "Rock Mound." The red line running off at an angle marks the easterly boundary.

He married Delia Fox in 1856, a union that resulted in six children and the building of a grand home to hold them all in 1875. Designed by Santa Barbara's leading architect, Peter J. Barber, "Hope House" still stands today at 399 Nogal Drive and was designated as Santa Barbara County Landmark in #10 on August 2, 1969

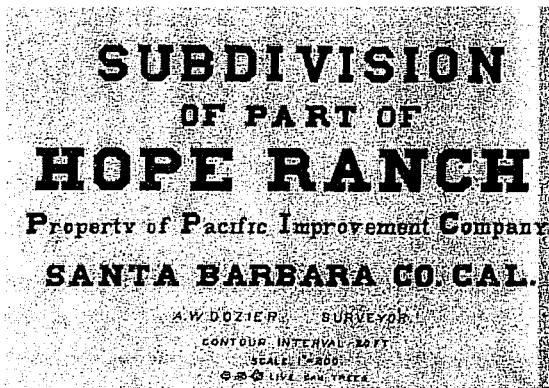
Following Hope's death in January, 1876, in accordance with his will, the ranch (which had been added to) was divided between his wife who received the western half of around 2,000 acres and the eastern half of another 2,000 (plus or minus) acres was divided between his five surviving children..

Delia Hope held onto her property until April 4, 1887 when she sold it for \$250,000 to the Pacific Improvement Company, the real estate division of the Southern Pacific Railroad. The purchase was well timed. Santa Barbara was just four months away from finally being connected by rail to the south. As planned, the tracks would continue from Santa Barbara along the north section of Hope's ranch and actually behind Hope's House (Vieja Drive follows the old railroad bed).

A month later rumors were circulating that the Pacific Improvement Company was planning to build an 800-room hotel in Hope Ranch. The hotel never materialized nor did the connection to the north which would lay stalled at Ellwood until 1901.

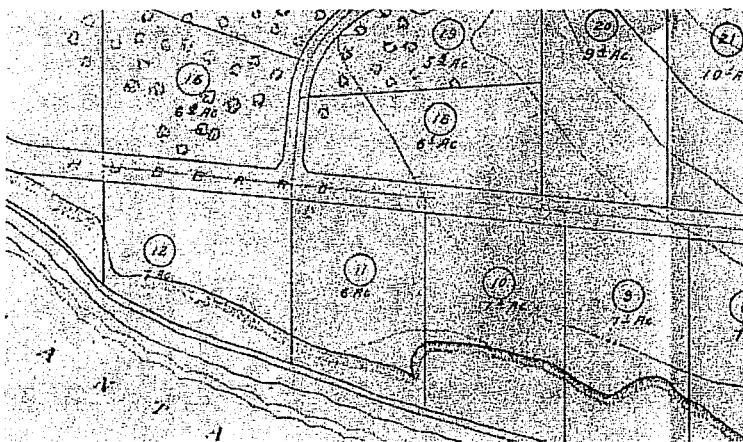
In 1900 as work was nearing completion to close the railroad gap between Ellwood and Santa Margarita the P.I.C. announced that the Hope Ranch would be subdivided for a planned community of wealthy residents. Again, like the hotel and previous reports of forthcoming residences over the past thirteen years, nothing happened. But in 1904, the P.I.C. planted 360 palms along the main drive through the ranch and three years later they again sent out a report that the opportunity to build exclusive homes was forthcoming.

What they were counting on was the Potter Hotel's new country club being constructed along Las Palmas Drive. Opening in 1909, it featured a club house, golf links, polo grounds and a race track and as well as archery, skeet, and "beautiful drives along the oak covered roads." The Potter's wealthy guests, once having viewed the ranch, would certainly be tempted to acquire land in this pristine setting.



The Pacific Improvement Company only subdivided a portion of the ranch offering fifty-four lots ranging from two to fifty acres with prices starting at \$600 per acre (though a similar P.I.C. brochure stated \$100 to \$2500 per acre). To "insure a desirable neighborhood" a building restriction of \$3,500 was instituted. All the oak trees in the parcels were counted and noted on the map included with each brochure.

The future Rich holdings were identified as lots 10 (6.9 acres) and 11 (6.7 acres) and located on



Hubbard Avenue, named for Thomas Hamlin Hubbard, a noted Civil War general though more importantly, a vice-president of the Southern Pacific Railroad and president of the Pacific Improvement Company. Apparently sales were not brisk and the P.I.C. changed the plan a bit and increased the number of lots to 89 totaling 825 acres with the sub-division now called "Hope Ranch Park."



Looking west into Hope Ranch from Cliff Drive c1910

Even though the P.I.C. touted the convenience of a rail station near the entrance to the ranch it was still a long and lonely drive to town and the few lots sold were reacquired by the P.I.C.

In early 1919 the Pacific Improvement Company sold Hope Ranch to New York financier G. Maurice Heckscher who didn't get any further than his predecessors did. Four years later, James W. Warren, president of the Santa Barbara County National Bank & Trust Company secured an option from Heckscher and on March 26, 1923 held a public auction in the auditorium of the Santa Barbara Recreation Center for "Hope Ranch Building Lots." While Warren retained most of the lots according to the P.I.C. sub-division plan, lots 10 and 11 were sub-divided into four possible lots designated as 10a, & b and 11 a & b. The auction was a dismal failure.

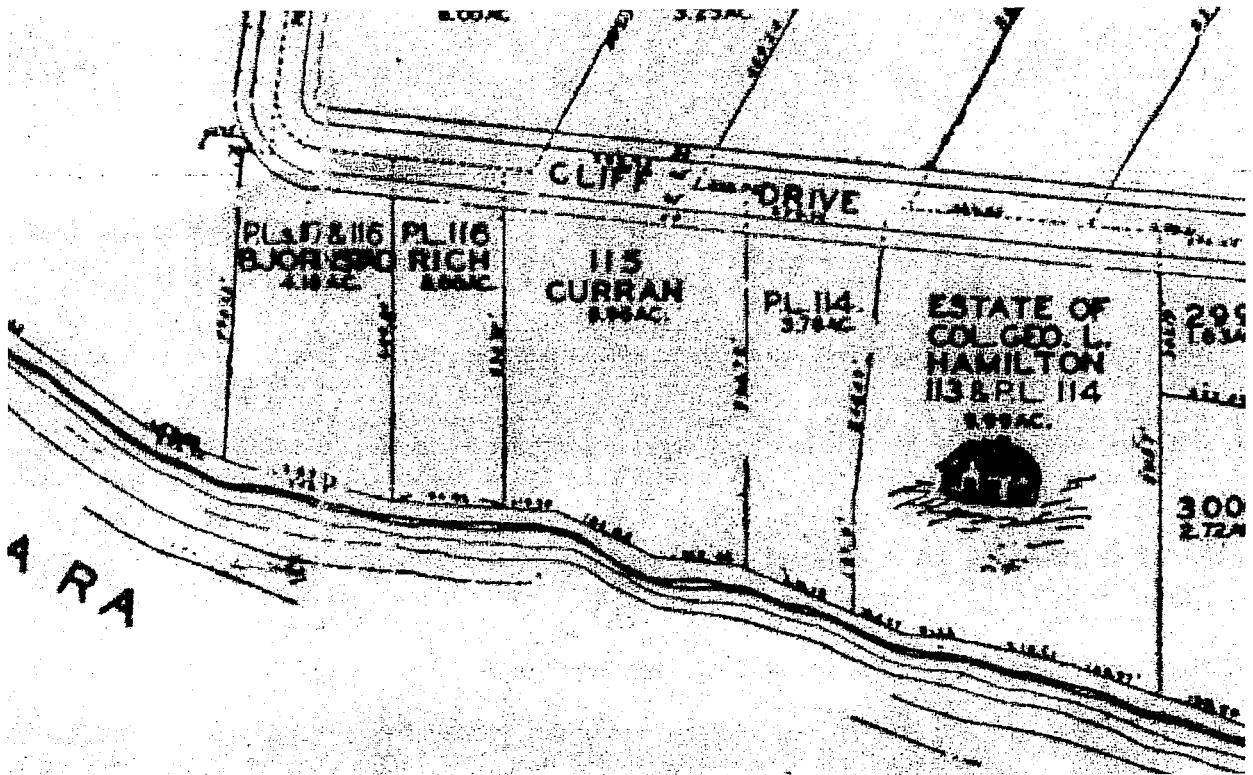
Harold S. Chase (brother of Pearl Chase and son of realtor H. G. Chase) had picked up a number of the lots and saw the potential for a grand opportunity. He rounded up 15 investors and in 1924 purchased 850 acres of Hope Ranch under the name of Santa Barbara Estates, Inc. for \$350,000. This was primarily the land east of Las Palmas and Roble Drives. The following year he formed a second corporation, La Cumbre Estates, and picked up the remaining 1,200 acres of Hope Ranch to the west for \$500,000.

A number of things were in Chase's favor. That County Supervisor Sam Stanwood was a stockholder was certainly one of them. For years toll gates operated at either end of the ranch. When Chase offered to open a right-of-way through Hope Ranch, Stanwood saw to it that it was promptly paved. The rest of the private roads throughout the ranch were paved by the stockholders. With improved roads and the advancement in automobile technology a visit to

Santa Barbara for groceries or a trip up from Los Angeles to the weekend retreat was not the slow and hazardous undertaking it had been a decade and a half earlier.

Initial sales were made to the stockholders of the company and the first estates were built by Chase, Peter Cooper Bryce, William Dickinson and others.

In February, 1927 parcel 116, consisting of three acres was sold to film actress Irene Rich.



A map of Hope Ranch Park dated September, 1928 shows from left to right Parcels 117 & 116, 4.16 acres, A. J. Bjornstad, Parcel 116, 3.00 acres, Irene Rich, and Parcel 115, 6.96 acres, John M. Curran (an investor in the Santa Barbara Estates Co.). All of these lots would eventually be part of the Rich holdings. Note that at this time Cliff Drive had replaced Hubbard Avenue..

Irene Luther Rich

The new owner of this Hope Ranch property was born on October 13, 1891 in Buffalo, New York to William and Mabel Luther. Circumstances of a not too clear nature induced the Luthers



to leave Buffalo and relocate to Idaho where William had interest in a silver mine. The only piano in town was at the local brothel and young Irene, needing to practice was soon playing piano in a whorehouse. The Idaho winters were found to be worse than Buffalo's and at Mrs. Luther's urging the family moved to Spokane, Washington.

Irene was just seventeen when she married Elvo Deffenbaugh, a man about six years her senior. The marriage was short but did result in the birth of a daughter, Frances Luther Deffenbaugh, on January 8, 1910. Her next marriage in 1912 was to U.S. Army Major Charles H. Rich who adopted Frances. The Rich's were stationed in Hawaii when their first child, a son was born, though he died in infancy. Irene felt the Army doctors in Hawaii were less than capable, so pregnant with their second child, in 1917 she headed for the mainland and gave birth to a daughter, Martha Jane Rich in San Francisco. The marriage by then was all but over and Irene became a realtor to support her family.

According to her daughter Jane, Irene took a trip to Los Angeles "to see what Hollywood was all about" and found herself hired as an extra in a film called *Stella Maris*, produced by Pickford Films. Within six months she was in two more films, an uncredited extra in one but fourth on the bill in the other. Despite the competition from seasoned professionals and the thousands hoping for their first break, something "clicked" for the 27-year old woman and coveted roles – now credited - quickly came her way and she appeared in fourteen films between 1918 and 1919. She soon moved her family (including her parents) to Los Angeles. In 1920 while working for Samuel Goldwyn (later to be the "G" of MGM) she starred opposite Will Rogers in three films. Her star was quickly rising.

However, she wasn't under contract with any studio and was able to "play the field" meeting and working with the pioneers who would soon rise to dominate the industry – William Fox, David Selznick, John Ford, Thomas Ince, Metro Pictures (the future first "M" of MGM) and Louis B. Meyer (the other "M" of MGM) and many others.

For her 22nd film, she left Hollywood and came to Santa Barbara to co-star in what would be the last film produced by the American Film Company. Since their arrival in Santa Barbara in July, 1912, the "Flying A" as they were more familiarly known, had cranked out nearly 1,200 films.



Sunset Jones returned the studio to the Western genre that had first made them famous. Film



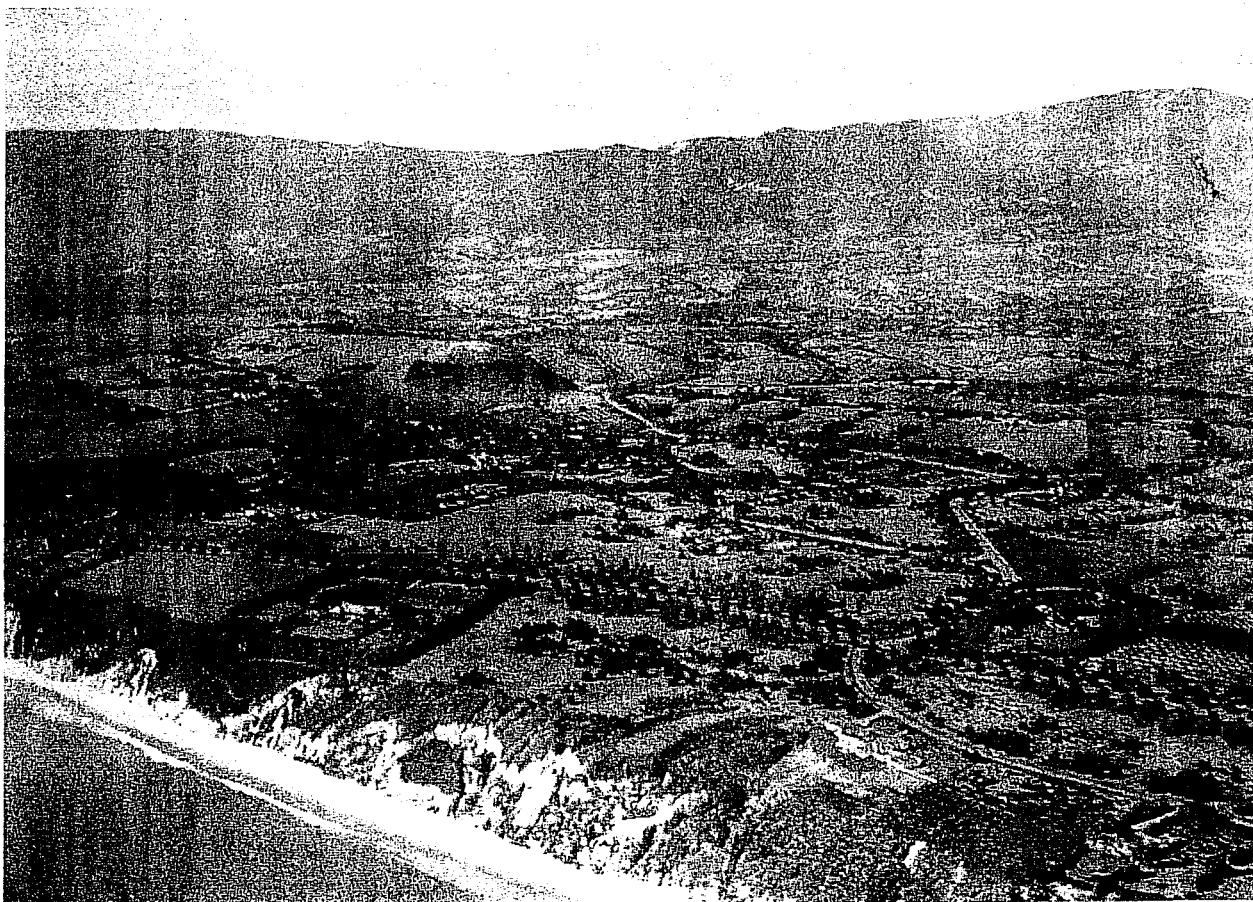
magazines reported the movie “co-starring Charles Clary and Irene Rich, is full of strong human appeal, real Western atmosphere and beautiful [Santa Barbara] backgrounds” and also noted “the personal popularity of the stars, Miss Rich and Mr. Clary.”

Unfortunately, the star power of Miss Rich (at left with Clary) and the “notable cast” could not save the studio. A month later the bankrupt company sent out their last film, an unreleased production from 1919 ironically entitled *Payment Guaranteed*.

Returning to Hollywood she worked in sixty films during the twenties. During part of this period she was under contract to Warner Brothers and had made twenty-one silent films with them before making her first talkie in 1928 in the appropriately titled *Women They Talk About*. The studio told her they didn't like her voice and advised that she had no future in the new sound movies.

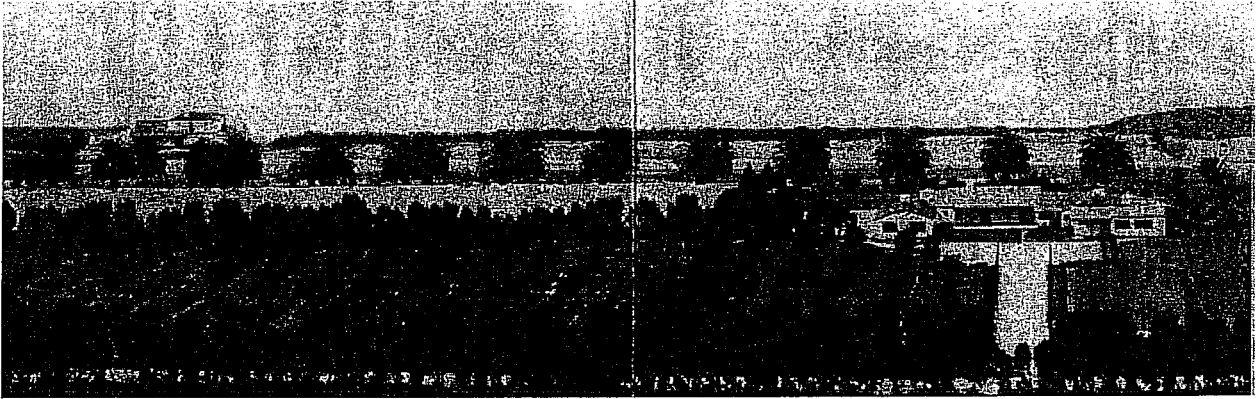
In spite of Warner's prognostication Rich took her "worthless" voice elsewhere and made thirteen more films (all sound) at other studios before retiring from the film industry in 1932 to begin a second career...in radio.

In her private life, Rich had divorced her second husband in 1921 and in April 1927 married David F. Blankenhorn, creating a family of six with her two daughters and his two sons, David T. and John. Blankenhorn was a Los Angeles realtor of some renown who had sold Catalina Island to William Wrigley. He was also great friends with Harold S. Chase and in partnership with Chase, purchased twenty lots in Hope Ranch between Marina, Estrella Drive, and Cantera Avenue in October 1926. Three months later Irene bought her own lot in Hope Ranch.



Around 1928 - at lower left, the empty field is Rich's lot 116, and the future cabana lot, #115. Above the palm lined Marina Drive, just in from the right is the Blankenhorn residence where the family would stay on their visits to Hope Ranch.

Irene had plans for her empty shoreline property and it didn't immediately involve building a house. Her daughter Jane recalls "Mother bought a great number of trees from the Beverly Hills Nursery at Santa Monica and Wilshire Boulevards. I thought it would take a fleet of trucks to bring them up. I was quite surprised when just one truck showed up full of coffee cans each with a seedling. Later, mother planted some cypress along the property, she wanted it to look something like the Monterey coast."



A view of the empty bluffs along Marina, east of the Rich property (c1928). The road in the foreground barely showing through the trees is Mariposa Drive and at far right, the road just past the tops of the palms and curving into Marina is Creciente Drive. Coincidentally, the home at right belongs to David Blankenhorn, third husband of Irene Rich.

The deed to Hope Ranch properties required the owners to build homes to be no less than a stated cost. In the case of Irene's property, it was to be \$25,000. However, as she was married to David Blankenhorn, whose home was on Mariposa Drive, there was no need or rush for her to build anything on her property.

The marriage to Blankenship ended in November 1931. Irene now at age 40 made six more movies before heading to Chicago to work at the World's Fair in a "Model Sound Stage" that brought "Hollywood to the Shores of Lake Michigan."

These would be the last scenes Irene would shoot as she stepped from in front of the camera to behind the microphone. From October 4, 1933 to May 28, 1944 the *Irene Rich Dramas* were heard weekly on NBC (and later CBS). In the same fashion that Irene, without any formal or even informal training succeeded as a realtor, as a silent screen as well as sound picture actress she excelled at her new role. Nine months after her show first aired, the *New York Times* reported "Life begins anew in the forties for Irene Rich, whose radio voice personality is evidence among the broadcasters that her successful career on the screen will be repeated at the microphone. After a year of experience on the air she finds that the technique of broadcasting is far different from either stage or motion pictures, in which lines are memorized."

The sponsor of her show was Welch's Grape Juice. Irene won them over during the interview process by telling the Board of Directors that "Welch's Grape Juice saved my life." They were all ears after that proclamation and she then explained that when she was expecting, "she couldn't keep anything down and Welch's Grape Juice had the startling affect of tasting just as

good coming back up as it did going down.” While the board decided not to pursue that testimonial for the quality of their product, they did take note of Irene’s beautiful, trim figure and that was soon credited to her consumption of Welch’s.

The show was originally broadcast in Chicago, then New York and finally in Hollywood where Irene started making movies again in 1938.

During this time Irene’s three-acre Hope Ranch property had remained vacant. This changed in late 1940 when her daughter Frances started plans for construction of a home and studio.

Frances Luther Rich

By 1940, 30-year old Frances Rich was well on her way to becoming an acclaimed sculptor. The past eight years had been spent studying and working alongside several of the acknowledged masters and she'd already had two major public commissions in addition to a number of private requests.

And, it all started with a bar of soap.

As befitting the daughter of a top actress, Frances had been well educated at private schools in Switzerland and more closer to home, at the Santa Barbara School for Girls. It was at the latter, where Frances possibly initiated her interest in sculpting while modeling in clay. Her education continued at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts where she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1931.

After her graduation, it appeared Frances would follow in her mother's footsteps. Her first stop was at the Belasco Theater on Broadway where she had a role in *Brief Moment*, a comedy by S. N. Behrman. The show ran from November 1931 through



February 1932. Her brief moment on Broadway was followed by a slightly longer stint in movies. She had small, but credited parts in 1932's *Unholy Love*, *The Thirteenth Guest* and *Officer 13*. For her first film of 1933 she was second on the bill with Rex Bell in *Diamond Trail*, following that with a small part in *Zoo in Budapest* before finishing her career in John Ford's *Pilgrimage*, the movie that would take her to fame.

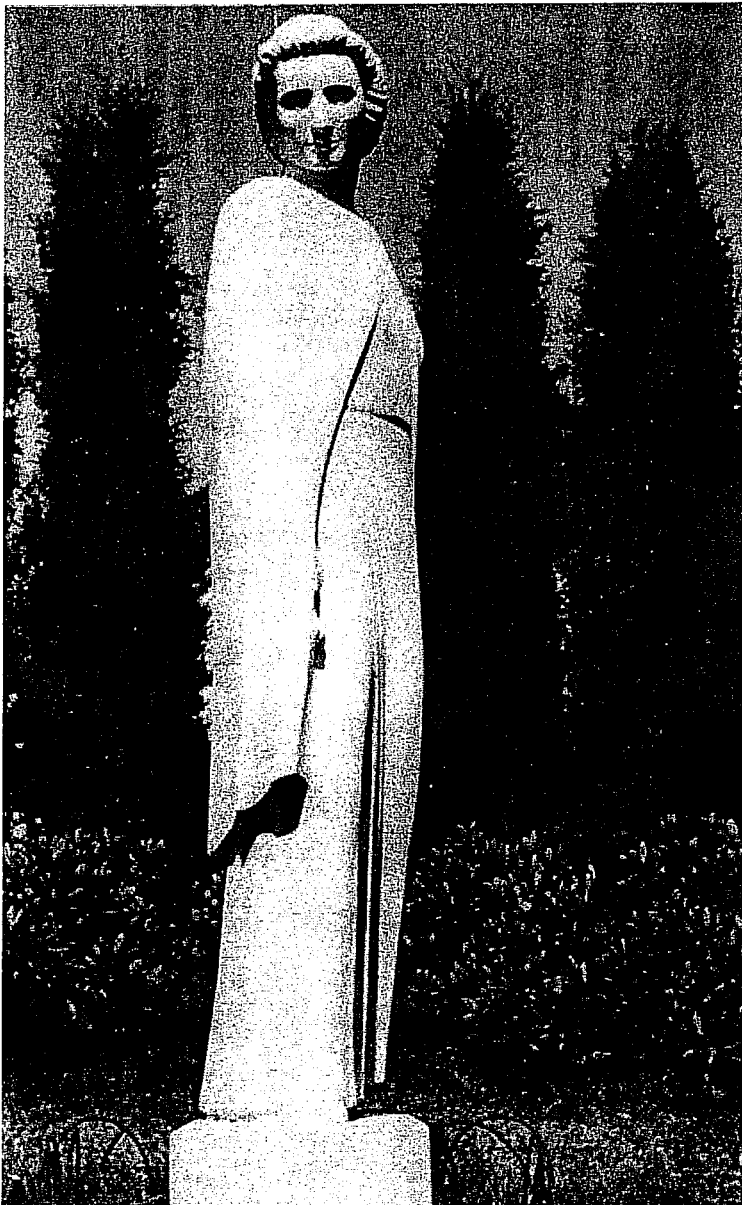


During this time, her mother was still acting and no different than the actors of today, was endorsing a number of products including Lux Soap. As a result the family had more complimentary bars of Lux Soap than they could ever wash with and Frances found them ideal for an easily portable and always handy sculpting medium.

It wasn't Frances' role as a nurse in this film that changed her life, it was her activities off camera. As Frances later recalled "I'd been making little soap models of the sets between scenes and rehearsals. One of John's [director Ford] friends, sculptress Malvina Hoffman was on the set one day and he introduced her to me. She was quite impressed with my "models" and it was almost immediately decided that I should go to Europe with her, a guide and friend such as few beginning sculptors have ever had."

Irene decided she would cover Frances' schooling overseas, but she'd have to arrange for her own transportation costs. At the time Frances was in New York working on a bust of stockbroker Ray Skofield (the county park bearing his surname in Rattlesnake Canyon is his former ranch). When he heard of her plight, Ray suggested they put a little money aside into a few shares of this and that while she worked on his bust. When she finished the job, Ray sold her shares and her transportation woes were gone.

Twenty-three year old Frances sailed that summer to Europe where she would spend the next two years studying and working with Hoffman and attending the Beaux Arts in Paris. She also took the opportunity to hone her skills in fresco painting by spending time as a student and assistant of the renowned Mexican painter Ángel Zárraga.



Returning to America, she opened a studio in New York but continued her studies at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts School under Alexandre Iacovleff. The following year, in 1937, Frances moved to Bloomfield Hills, Michigan to attend the Cranbrook Academy of Art. For the next three years she work closely with Swedish scuptor Carl Milles, who would transcend the role of teacher to become one of her her closest friends and colleagues until his death in 1955.

Two prominent pieces marked the beginning of her formal professional career. At Purdue University in 1938 she created six massive bas reliefs above the entrance to the Union Building and at left, her 10-foot tall Army-Navy Nurse Monument which was dedicated November 9, 1938 at Arlington National Cemetery.

After eight years of intense artistic study in the great schools of Europe and America she decided not to reopen her New York studio but to return to Santa Barbara to design and build her home and studio in Hope Ranch on the property her mother had bought in 1927.

Frances Rich Studio – 112 Chapala

Frances' first residence and studio in Santa Barbara was at 112 Chapala Street and by the fall of 1940 she was hard at work. In early January, 1941, Diego Rivera, one of Mexico's leading artists made his first visit to Santa Barbara to spend a week with Frances painting her portrait which was to hang in her new Hope Ranch home. She and her mother had met Rivera in San Francisco the previous month and he had mentioned how much he'd love to paint Frances. A deal was struck resulting in Rivera painting not only Frances, but also a self-portrait for Irene while Frances in turn did a bust of Rivera.



The two artists at work at Frances' studio at 112 Chapala

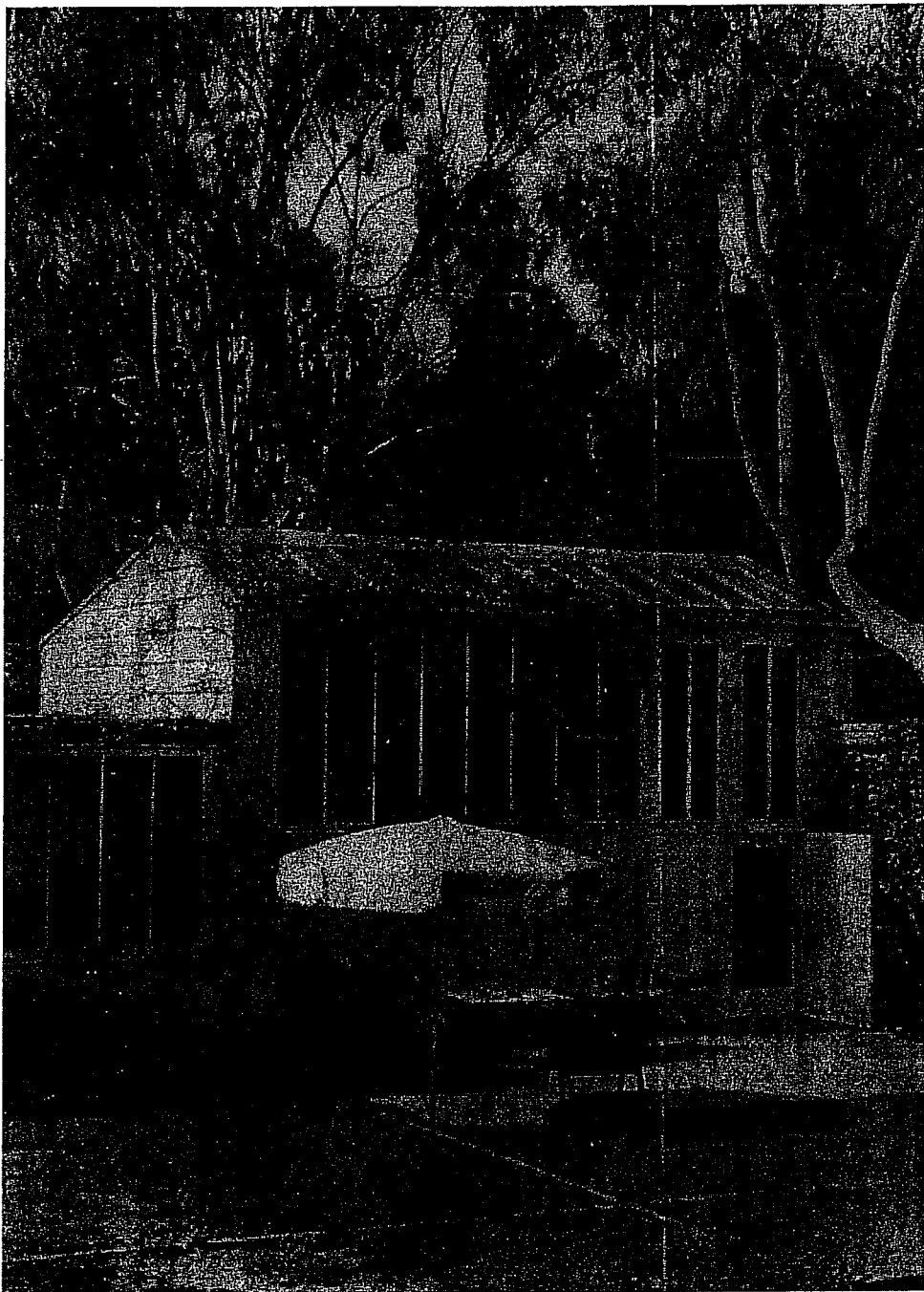


Diego Rivera's painting of Frances. Not long after it was put in place at her new home, it was damaged by an earthquake on June 30, 1941. If it was removed and saved or destroyed when the house was demolished is not known.

Frances Rich Home and Studio - Hope Ranch



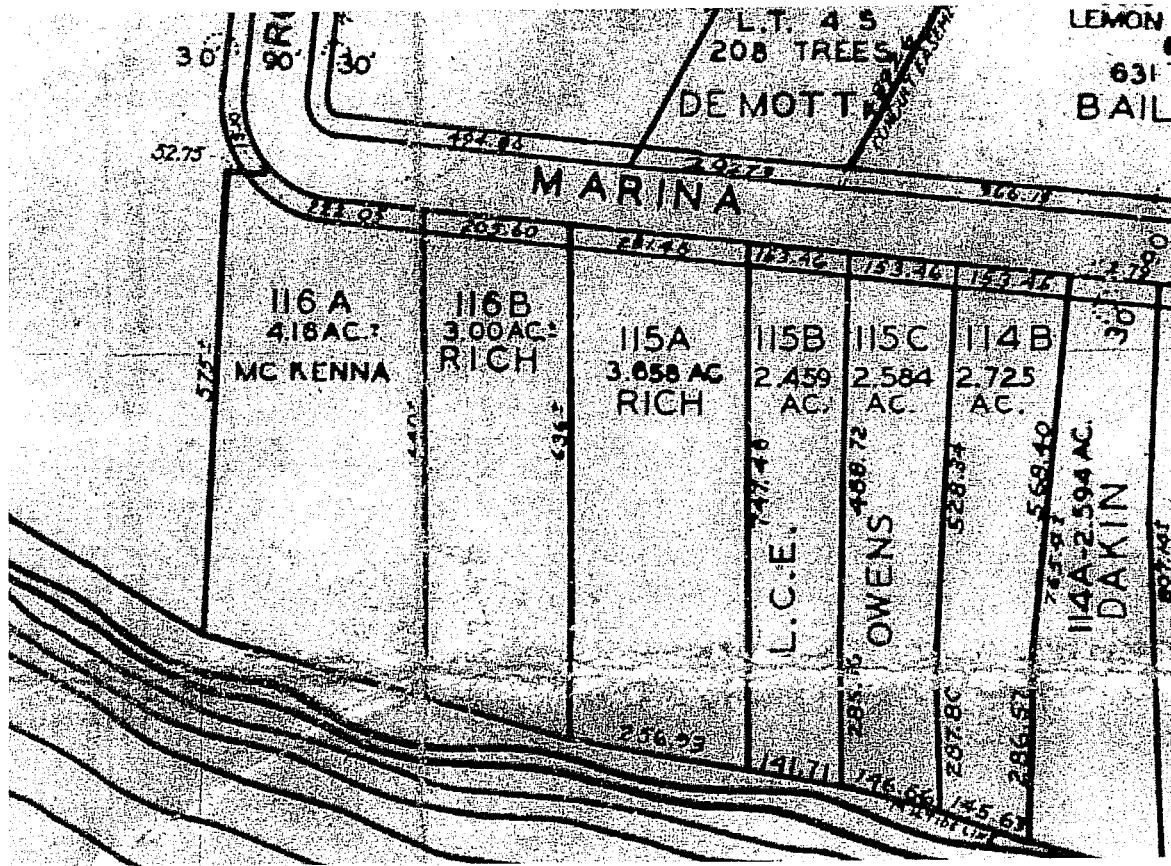
Frances did the design for her new home and studio. The south facing section (above) shows her kitchen at far left, next, the living room with three large windows facing the channel and her bedroom at far right. A sunny patio separates the living room from the bedroom. The statue on the pedestal at the side of the patio is most likely "Jane with Little Billy" created in 1938 for her sister Jane and her son. On the pedestal on the opposite side is a large bust, possibly that of Diego Rivera. Barely showing on the wall behind "Jane and Little Billy" is what appears to be the Rivera fresco of Frances.



The studio was behind the house and faced north (towards Marina). The tall ceilings and wide interior gave Frances ample room for some of the larger works she would undertake.

These are the only photos that have come to light of Frances' home and studio. They were located at Smith College where Frances left her papers. The back of the photos were marked "Studio home by the sea. Santa Barbara, California. Designed by Francis Rich, built 1941."

The plans and permits for these structures were not found in the county active or archived files. It is assumed they have been destroyed.



Though she'd let her daughter build her home and studio on her original 3.00 acres, Irene apparently still had visions of a future home for herself on the Hope Ranch bluffs. In January and February of 1941 Irene purchased two portions of the former 6.96 acre Parcel 115. The two pieces were combined into the 3.658 acre "Parcel 115A."

Events in Hawaii the following December kept both women from pursuing further progress on either property.

Irene had made ten movies since her return to Hollywood in 1938, but for the war years she kept off the screen. She still had her weekly radio program, but filled in the off-air hours with USO work and as a volunteer for the Women's Ambulance and Defense Corps.

Frances quickly enrolled in a few mathematics and engineering drawing courses at Santa Barbara State College and was promptly hired as an engineer-draftsman at Lockheed Aircraft Corporation. When Congress created the WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Services) in July 1942, she applied and was accepted and returned to her old alma mater, Smith College, for training in the first officers' candidate class. She subsequently was put in charge of the Navy's V-mail communications, but left that assignment to act as Special Assistant to the

Director of the Womens' Reserves, Captain Mildred McAfee. At the war's end, Frances held the rank of Lieutenant Commander.

Even the Rich's Hope Ranch property did its part for the war effort. An observation post was dug into the edge of the bluff and manned by several soldiers who were set up with "facilities" in the small garage nearby. According to Jane Rich Mueller "it was the only home in Hope Ranch that had a balcony on the cliff and a toilet in the garage."

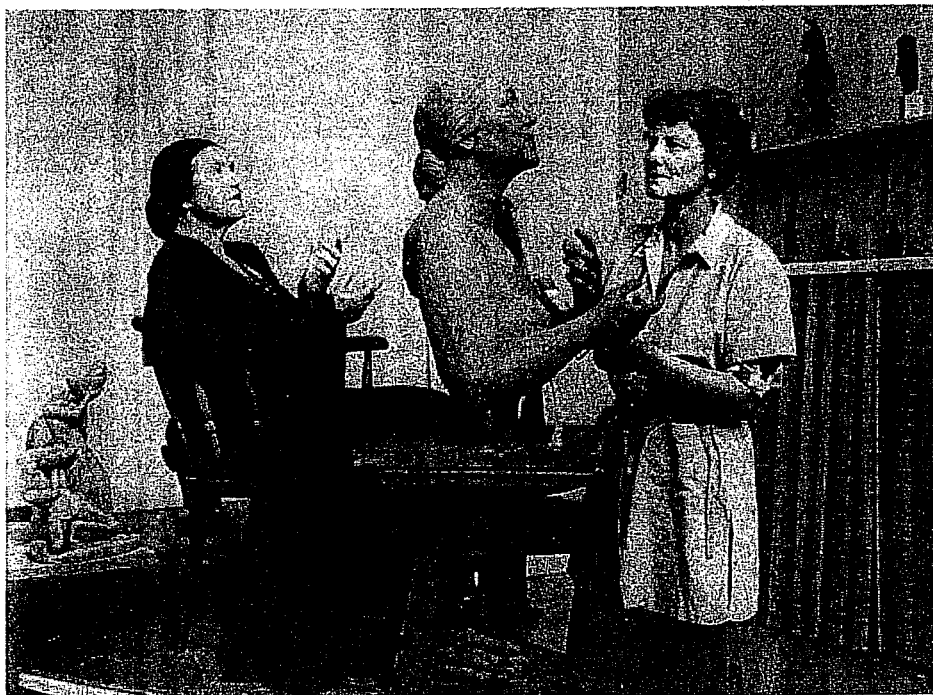
Though Frances had started the decade ready to work at her new home and studio in Hope Ranch, the end of the war found her yearning for further art training. She returned to California to enter a graduate program at Scripps College at Claremont and proceeded from there to Columbia University. In 1947, she once again returned to Smith College, this time as a full professor with the position of Director of Public Relations.

As for Irene, now edging closer to 60, she was working harder than ever. Five movies had followed her war time hiatus including *Fort Apache* which reunited her with director John Ford. In 1948 she co-starred in the Broadway musical *As the Girls Go* in the role of the first female president of the United States.

In April 1950, Frances resigned from Smith College and finally returned home to Santa Barbara to again pursue her career as a sculptress. *The Santa Barbara News-Press* welcomed her back with a large article and several photographs showing her enjoying her home and studio. The article noted she already had several commissions waiting for her.

Her first one-man show was at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art in October, 1952. The show ran for a month and featured forty-eight of her pieces, including a work in process, a bust of opera singer Lotte Lehmann, Frances' friend and neighbor. While the reviewer (identified only by the

initials H.J.S.) was exceptionally critical of several of her pieces, overall the review proclaimed Miss Rich to possess "prodigious talent."



At left, Francis works with Lotte Lehmann prior to the show.

From this point on, Frances was her own woman. She had long been identified as “daughter of film actress Irene Rich” and even when she received the commission for the Army-Navy Nurse Monument in 1937 the *New York Times* headline read “Daughter of Irene Rich Gets Order for Arlington Cemetery.” Now Frances was the star and she certainly was Santa Barbara’s star. The *News-Press* could not publish enough about her. In 1953 at the Santa Barbara Biltmore Hotel’s Festival of the Madonna there were over one hundred exhibitors with more than 150 Madonnas yet it was Frances that got the headlines and the photos with the caption “Frances Rich, internationally known Santa Barbara artist.”

Every new show and each return home from Europe earned her headlines and photos: “Frances Rich Back from European Tour, Eager to Resume Sculpting,” “Miss Frances Rich Sculpts Medallion, Madonna and Child,” Frances Rich has Show in San Francisco Palace,” Frances Rich Back from Italy; Plans to Reopen Studio.”

Frances opened her Hope Ranch studios and gardens in September 1955 as part of a fund raiser for the Pacific Coast Music Festival. For two weekends art lovers and the general public received a very rare view of her private life and workspace. In one of several articles about the event she mentioned she was “tremendously pleased and honored by a letter she’d received from her former teacher Carl Milles ordering one of her St. Francis statues which would be placed in the famed Milles Gardens in Stockholm which are visited by some 150,000 patrons annually.”

Frances had long had a fascination of Saint Francis dating back to 1935 when she spent Good



Friday in Assisi, the city of his birth. She had made several statues of St. Francis of varying sizes and poses, including “the singing Saint Francis” which stood for decades at the edge of her bluff overlooking the Hope Ranch beach.

Milles died ten days after he sent his letter to Frances. He was buried at his home, Millesgården, near Stockholm. It took a special act of the Swedish king to allow the burial as it was not in a cemetery as required by Swedish law.

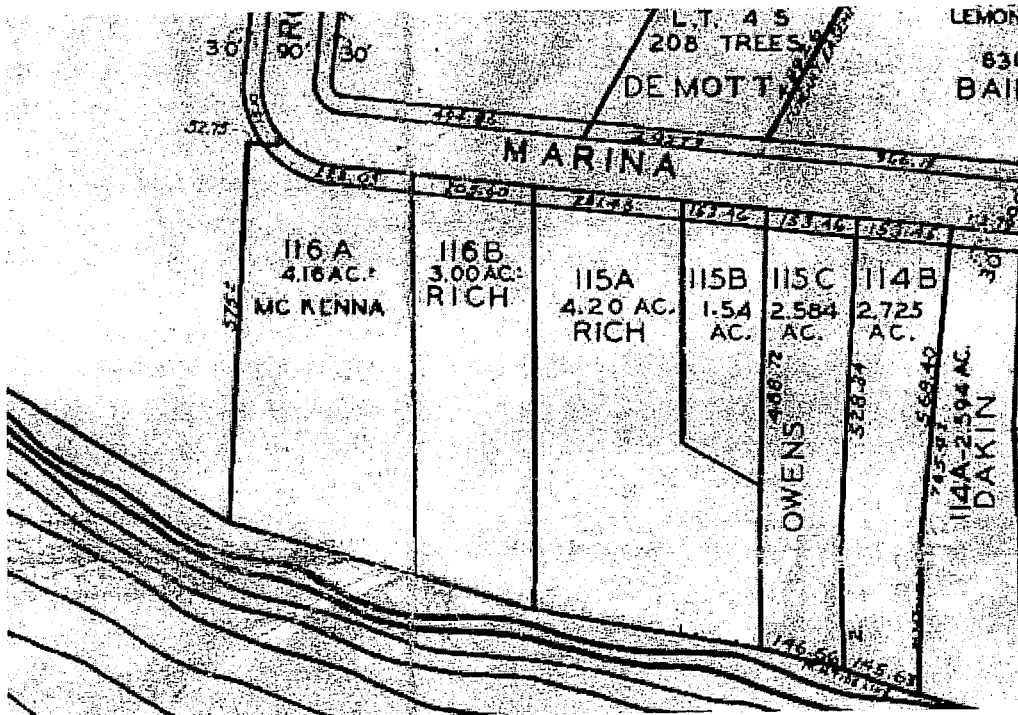
In 1960, when Frances visited Milles’ home (a museum and extensive gardens filled with his sculptures) she was “deeply moved” to find her St. Francis – per his request - standing guard outside his tomb.

More purchases

At about the same time that Frances had returned to the art world, her mother, Irene took her final curtain call and made a large change in her life as well. After a successful run of 420 shows, *As the Girls Go*, closed in January, 1950. A month later Irene married George H. Clifford, the president of Stone & Webster Service Corp., an engineering and utilities firm.

In the summer of 1952 the *News-Press* reported that Irene and her husband would be staying at the studio home of their daughter and the Cliffords planned to build a home on the property next door. A year later, there had been no construction, but Irene and Frances did make a most unusual purchase of Hope Ranch property.

In August of 1953, Harold Chase sold them the southern half of Lot 115B. Prior to the split, the 2.5 acre lot had the best potential of the Marina Drive parcels for beach access. Chase now gave this opportunity to Irene and Frances and left the future owner of Lot 115B an acre and a half of land with no beach frontage.



Though the deed made the standard Hope Ranch Park condition that the main residence could not be less than a certain amount (in this case, \$20,000 which was interesting as Irene's original 3 acre purchase in 1927 stated \$25,000) it also added that as long as Lot 116B and 115A remained owned by either or both Riches, they were to be considered as one parcel and would allow a guest cottage to be built along the southern portion of the former lot 115B.

The Clifford's decided not to build a home on the property after George told Irene "he was just too old to build a new house." Instead, they bought a home at 900 Monte Drive on the top of a knoll, overlooking Laguna Blanca instead of *el océano azul*.

The Cabana

However, the move to Monte Drive didn't mean the Cliffords were abandoning the thought of building on their Marina Drive property. On June 27, 1956 Irene Clifford received permit #876 for a cabana and porch at 4385 Marina Drive. Don MacGillivray was the contractor and Jack Boydson noted as the draftsman. The total cost was estimated to be \$4,400 for a wood sided structure with a wood shingled roof. Actual dimensions were not given but rather just the square footage showing 680 square feet for the building, 384 square feet for the porch and 55 square feet for a dressing room. There was no electricity, but there was plumbing, most likely for a shower. The County Fees were a whopping \$14.00 for the building permit and \$1.80 for the plumbing.

Simple it may have been, but building it would have been something else. The cabana is nestled 50 feet above the beach and 85 feet from the top of the bluff. At that time, the trail to the beach was to the west having been cut and improved by tenant William Rohrback and Steve Brown, one of Bill's students (who simply worked for beer).

Contractor MacGillivray would have to create his own path to the site, grade it, pour the foundation and get the construction materials and tools down there too. Another matter to consider was the rainfall that year. Though there was no rain for June through September 1956 (not unusual), the following rain year (calibrated from October through September) was the sixth heaviest year from 1930 to 2003. Rainfall during the construction period totaled: October 1.41", November .51", December 4.51", January 3.71", February 9.84", and March 6.43".

The architect for the cabana is technically unknown. The plans do not exist in the county archives and Don MacGillivray's construction era records are long gone.

However...

"I think mother designed it with Don [MacGillivray]. She was very fond of him. He did a lot of work for her and Fran. He was very talented." – Jane Rich Mueller , August 27, 2010

"The cabana was wonderful – I think Irene organized the construction of it. When you're sitting on top overlooking the ocean, you can't see it. She wanted it remote. When she built it there was no bathroom – so she added a little outhouse half way up the hill – she added running water later." - Bill Rohrback May 25, 2007

Life on the property

In October, 1953 William Rohrback, met Frances at a party at art collector Wright Ludington's house. William was looking for a place to stay and Frances thought she might need someone on the property to keep an eye on things. She would go to Europe for several months at a time while her pieces were cast or to travel with Irene and George. Other times exhibitions would take her away from her home.

Bill moved onto the property and stayed nearly thirty years. Here are a few of his observations taken from interviews in 2007 and 2010.

"The location was perfect for me since I was teaching art at UCSB and it was a short distance from there to the campus.

"The main house was beautifully designed, and there was a main studio for Frances and three guest cottages. All the rental units were illegal [and none had building permits she just "built them"]. I asked her one time about how she got away with all of this and she said "I know Harold Chase." In 1962 Frances built a bomb shelter – very secretly. It had oriental carpets, water, and three beds. [The bomb shelter actually did have a building permit.]

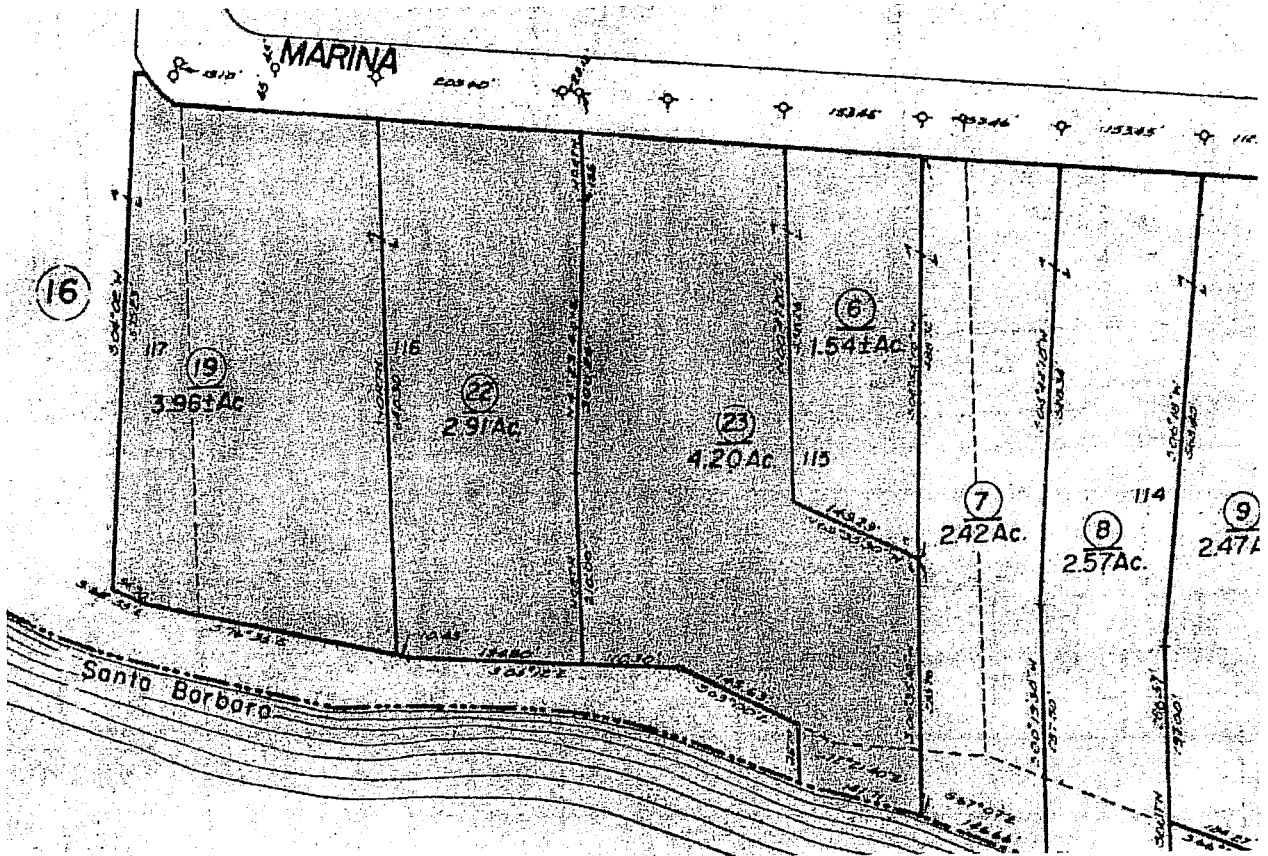
"Frances' best friend was Katharine Hepburn who often came up "quietly." She was marvelous. She loved the property, the quiet and solitude. I once went with Kate, her father and her bodyguard to Istanbul.

"Some of the other tenants were jazz musician Charles Lloyd, {Dr.} Charlie Piper and his wife Judy. I think he was an intern and single when he first moved in. Then he met Judy and they got married and stayed a few years more. Ray Strong [artist and founder of the Oak Group] and his wife Elizabeth were there in the early 60s. I also had students coming over too.

"It was a magical place. There was a rough trail from the main house to the cabana. We all went down there for cocktails, sunsets, and sunsets with cocktails. We'd go down to the beach and get mussels and I'd cook them French style. One day on the beach a woman told me the mussels were poisonous and then showed me where we I could get Pismo clams along the beach in front of the Bryce's. They were great, but I still ate the mussels. There were many weddings at the property.

"Irene was wonderful, the most charming person I've ever met. She had the best telephone voice, you'd think the queen of England had answered the phone. I also went with Irene, George and Fran to Europe."

New Owners



The County Assessor's Map from 1976 shows both the old Hope Ranch parcel numbers (117, 116, 115, 114) and lines (dotted) and the counties' numbers. At that time the two lots shaded tan (063-220-019 and 063-220-022) still belonged to Frances. The 2.91 acres of 063-220-022 were the original 3 acres Irene had bought in 1927 and where Frances' home, studios, bomb shelter and most of the guest cottages were. Some may have been on the adjoining parcel. Frances had originally intended to leave this to Smith College but then changed her mind. The property was sold to Robert Webb in 1995 who sold it two years later to Chris Lancashire

Shaded green, lot 063-220-023, the parcel with the cabana, was sold to Nick Kallens in December 1968.

In blue, the upper half of the former parcel 115B is lot 063-220-006. Frances apparently bought it after the lot was split and she sold it in December 1967 to Barbara Strauss.

Irene Rich died at the Marina Drive property on April 22, 1988, leaving behind a life's work of over 100 films. Many of the films are available for home viewing and can be seen from time to time on Turner Classic Movies. Her famous slimming ads for Welch's Grape Juice can be found in old copies of the Saturday Evening Post, Life, and other period magazines. She was awarded two stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, one for her motion picture contributions and the other for her work in radio.

Frances Rich passed away at her home in Payson, Arizona, October 14, 2007. She was 97. Her sculptures are highly prized and in museums, private collections and on rare occasions at auction.

Though both women lived in a number of cities and addresses as they developed their careers the Marina Drive property was always their home destination. Even during the difficult times following her third divorce and absence from movies, Irene kept the property. The home, studios and cottages Frances built, including the guest cottage built for Irene have all been demolished. The only remaining element of the Riches life in Santa Barbara is the humble cabana above the beach where mother, daughter and guests relaxed and enjoyed the rewards of their many years of struggle and success.

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Illustration Acknowledgements

- Page 4 Map of Hope Ranch, c1875, Graffy Collection, digital, original source unknown
- Page 5 Map of Hope Ranch, c1909, Graffy Collection
- Page 6 View from Cliff Drive, c1910, Santa Barbara Historical Museum
- Page 7 Map of Hope Ranch, September 1928, Graffy Collection
- Page 8 Photo of Irene Rich, Graffy Collection, digital, original source unknown
- Page 9 *Sunset Jones* advertisement and still, Graffy Collection
- Page 10 aerial view of Hope Ranch c1928, Santa Barbara Historical Museum
- Page 11 view of Hope Ranch, Marina Drive, September, 1928, Graffy Collection
- Page 13 photo of Frances Rich, scanned from *The Sculpture of Frances Rich*, p73
- Page 13 film poster of *The Diamond Trail*, Bruce Hershenson Collection, internet copy
- Page 14 photo of Army-Navy Nurse Monument, scanned from *The Sculpture of Frances Rich*, p10
- Page 15 photo of Frances Rich & Diego Rivera, scanned from *The Sculpture of Frances Rich*, p59
- Page 16 photo of Diego Rivera painting of Frances Rich, scanned from *The Sculpture of Frances Rich*, p60
- Page 17 photo of Frances Rich home, Frances Rich papers, Smith College
- Page 18 photo of Frances Rich studio, Frances Rich papers, Smith College
- Page 19 map of Hope Ranch, c1941, Graffy Collection
- Page 20 photo of Frances Rich & Lotte Lehmann, scanned from *The Sculpture of Frances Rich*, p69. Original photo by Hal Boucher
- Page 21 photo of St. Francis statue, scanned from *The Sculpture of Frances Rich*, p35
- Page 22 map of Hope Ranch, c1953, Graffy Collection (a little photoshop magic on 1941 map)
- Page 25 map of Hope Ranch, c1976 Assessors Parcel Map Book & Index, Graffy Collection

What is a Cabana?

To start with, the word has been slightly anglicized from the Spanish cabaña (hut, cottage, cabin) and can be traced back to the Latin word capanna meaning hut.

The definition for a cabana is about as broad as a barn. There appears to be a gray line between what can be called a cabana and a bathhouse, beach house and changing rooms.

Here is a sampling of definitions for a cabana from architectural web pages:

“A cabana is a freestanding structure with an opening side facing a beach or swimming pool.”

“A cabana or cabaña is a temporary or permanent free standing shade structure with traversing curtains, decorative drapes and/or solid walls.”

“A cabana is a freestanding structure covered with a roof for shade and is typically placed poolside or seaside and is a place of privacy for changing clothes or providing shelter from the sun. Cabanas aren't always paired with a swimming pool and many now include such luxuries as skylights, screened windows, electricity and plumbing. Today's cabanas are hardly the shanties of the past and are now considered a true luxury.”

“Cabanas vary widely in terms of size. A small cabana may be as diminutive as four by four feet, resembling a small bathroom. A large cabana, on the other hand, may be as large as a hospitality suite, coming in at about 40 by 80 feet. The size of the cabana often dictates how it can be furnished.

Other Santa Barbara Beachfront Cabanas

As best as can be found using Google Earth and the California Coastal Records Project, there are just three beachfront cabanas in private ownership along the Santa Barbara County coastline – the Bryce, Rich and Clark cabanas.

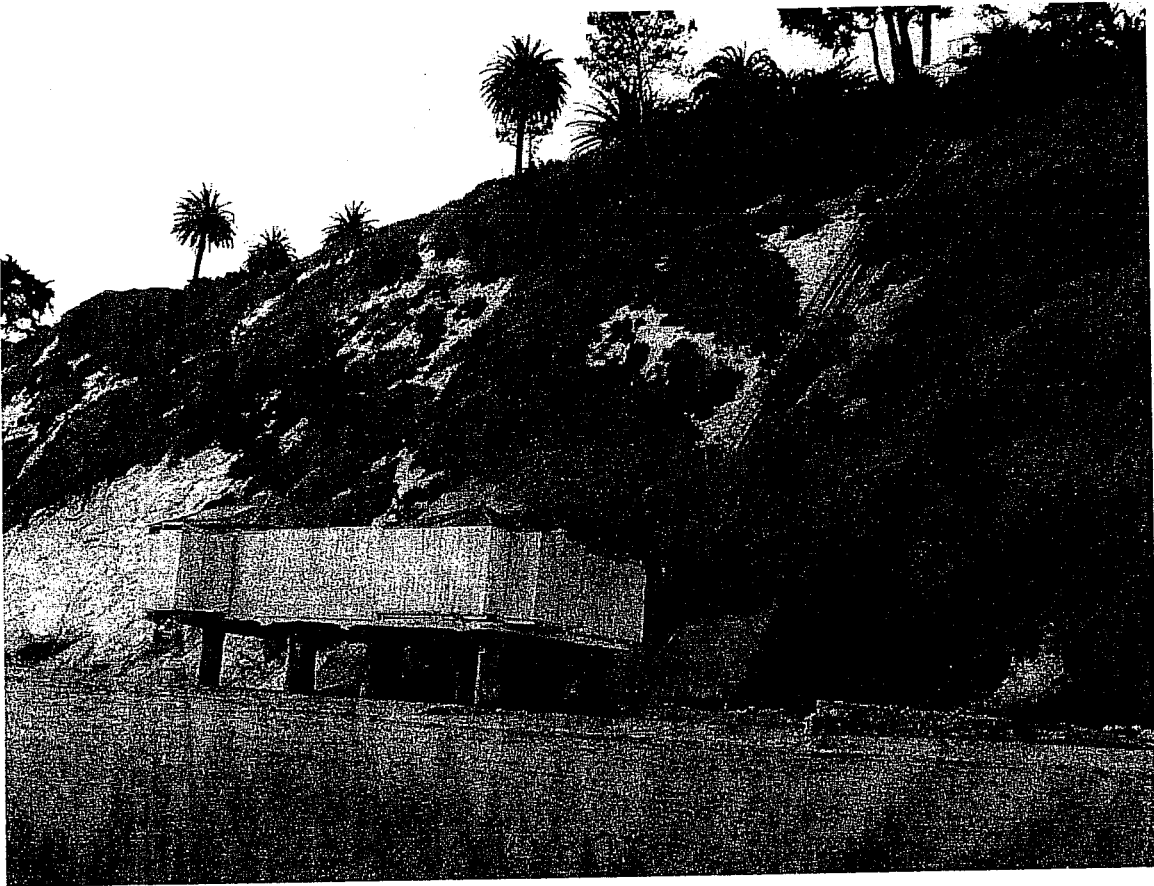
There are palapas, trailers, and many beachfront homes. A number of homes do have permitted “cabanas” on the property behind the homes which therefore are not actually on the beach fronting side of the property and most appear to be used as guest cottages.

Long gone from the scene are a series of bathhouses that existed from the late 1870s to early 1900s on Santa Barbara’s West Beach. Cabanas and a restaurant on Hope Ranch Beach, cabanas in front of the Biltmore Hotel at Butterfly Beach and at the Miramar Hotel.

The Hope Ranch Association has a “bathhouse” (at right below) built in the late 1920s above its beach for use of members.



Bryce Cabana - 1930



The cabana and funicular to reach it were built in 1930 for the Peter Cooper Bryce family. Their 50-acre estate "Florestal" covered the area between the ocean, Roble Drive and Las Olas Drive (the road to Hope Ranch beach).

The funicular was at an incline of 45 degrees and ran on two railroad tracks 175 feet long embedded in a reinforced concrete roadbed. The total price for the funicular was \$22,279 but many problems, adjustments (and costs) followed before it was straightened out. (Thanks here to Alex Cole's 2001 Historic Resources Study on the funicular Credit for these tidbits.)

Essam Khashoggi bought the property in 1981 at which time the funicular was still working. It was last used in 1987. The Bryce bathhouse on the beach below has been boarded up for years to protect it from vandalism.

After Khashoggi failed in his 1999 attempt to remodel the main residence (designed by George Washington Smith) he split the property and moved into his recently completed guest house. The main house, 34 acres and the funicular were sold to Vinny Smith (Quest Software) who investigated restoring the funicular. The cost was estimated at around \$1.1 million. The Smiths did not undertake the renovation and sold the property to Geoff and Alison Rusack in 2005.

The Clark Estate Cabanas



The Clark Estate cabanas are located below the Clark Estate at the edge of East Beach. There are three changing rooms (technically cabanas) and a beach house.

The date of construction was not researched. The Clarks have owned the property since 1923. According to local legend and current news reports, no Clark family members have been to the estate for well over half a century.



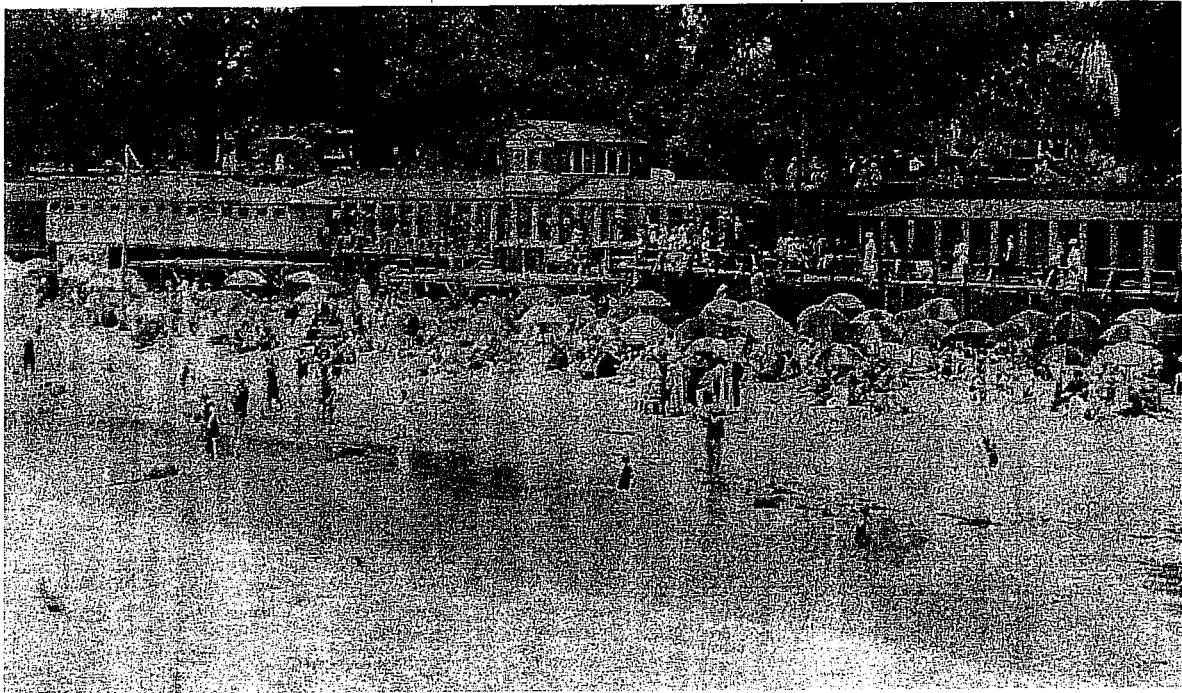
Long Gone Landmark Cabanas

Hope Ranch Beach Cabanas c1930s

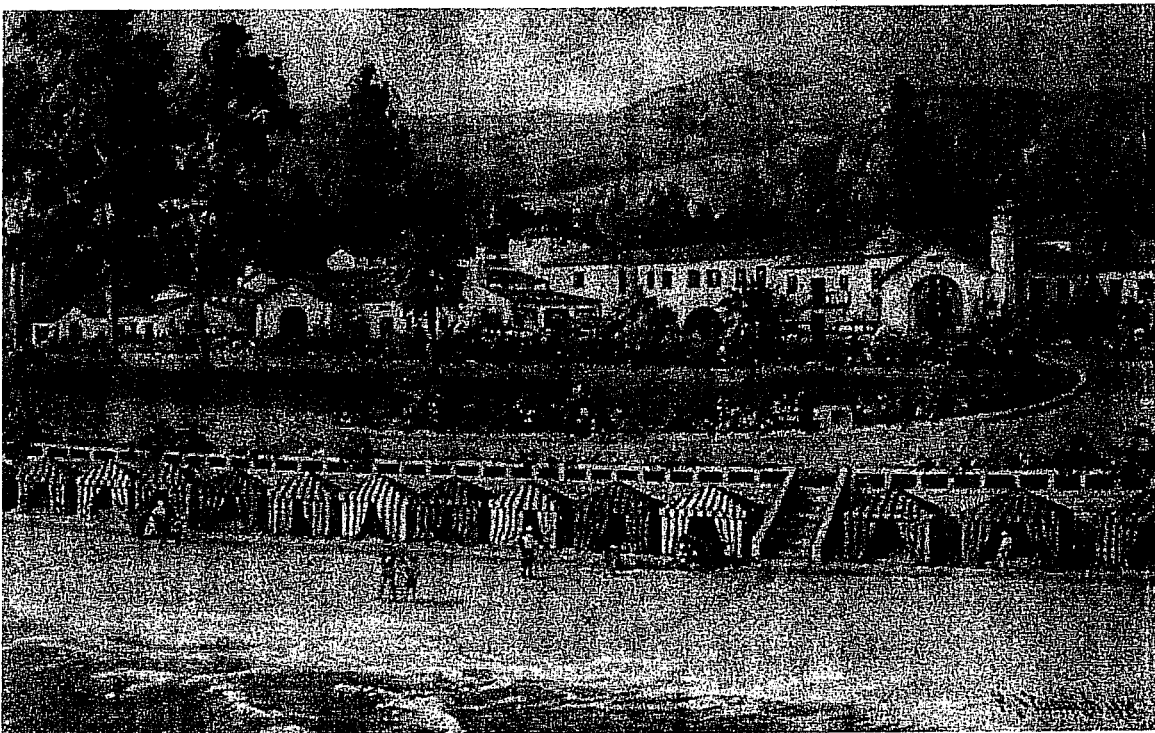


These cabanas as well as a restaurant and pavilion were on the east side of the Hope Ranch beach in the 1930s (*photo courtesy Santa Barbara Historical Museum*).

Miramar Hotel Changing Rooms c1930s



Biltmore Hotel Cabanas c1930s



Rich Cabana Landmark Qualifications

A) It exemplifies or reflects special elements of the County's cultural, social, economic, political, archaeological, aesthetic, engineering, architectural or natural history;

Yes

B) It is identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history;

The Rich Cabana is intrinsically linked to Irene Rich, an American actress and radio personality who earned worldwide fame and recognition in her profession; as well as her daughter Frances, an artist and sculptress whose achievements were just as highly regarded in her field.

The cabana was used and enjoyed by Irene and Frances Rich as well as their many friends, guests and tenants who included actress Katharine Hepburn, musician Charles Lloyd and artist Ray Strong.

W Don MacGillivray was the contractor for the cabana. Though his Santa Barbara resume includes lifeguard, policeman and twenty years as a home builder, he is more widely recognized for his many years of public service to the community - two terms as a Santa Barbara City Councilman, three terms as mayor, and three terms to the California State Assembly.

C) It embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period or method of construction or is a valuable example of the use of indigenous materials or craftsmanship;

The first homes in Hope Ranch Park tended to be in the “Santa Barbara Style” (Spanish Mediterranean), not too different from the gardens and estates of Montecito, this primarily due to their architects, George Washington Smith, Reginald Johnson, Joseph Plunkett and William Edwards and their contemporaries.

During the 1950s, a number of the homes built in HRP were reflecting the new trend in California living, the Ranch Style home. Generally credited to architect Cliff May and popularized by the bible of Southern Californian Living, Sunset Magazine, there were but three simple commandments: livability, flexibility and unpretentious character.

The Rich Cabana, in style and appearance, is a ranch house, albeit a small one, and it lives up to the three essential truths:

Livability – seen as “open floor space, large windows, and sliding glass or folding doors” to bring sun, air and a connection to the outdoors to the interior.

Flexibility – “addressed by the open floor plans that allowed rooms to be rearranged and serve multiple purposes.” The Rich Cabana can provide a feeling of comfort and seclusion for a party of one, an intimate and romantic setting and yet be enjoyed by parties ranging in size from a child’s birthday, to a wedding reception (which it often was).

Unpretentious – Most people passing by don’t even know it’s there. From its simple open beamed interior to the board and batten exterior, the Rich Cabana does not typify the million dollar construction that accompanies the million dollar views found elsewhere in Southern California.

D) It is representative of the work of a notable builder, designer, or architect;

The construction of the Rich Cabana is credited (verified by Santa Barbara County Permit #876) to W. Don MacGillivray. As the construction industry of the late 20th century has not been studied in any manner to ascertain whether Mr. MacGillivray’s methods of construction are superior to his contemporaries or unique in his approach to his craft, his name is well known as a public servant having been elected to two terms as a Santa Barbara City Councilman, three terms as mayor, and three terms to the California State Assembly.

The draftsman for the plans for the Rich Cabana is credited (verified by Santa Barbara County Permit #876) to Jack Boydston (William Jackson Boydston) who practiced his trade in Santa Barbara from as early as 1949 through the 1970s. As with Mr. MacGillivray, there has been no study done to rank Mr. Boydston’s work. That he was obviously successful in his profession, being a sole proprietor for until his retirement speaks much about his work and abilities. In world of the arts, much has been said of Mr. Boydston as his being a master potter and credited with inventing a “super metallic glaze that rivaled that of Beatrice Wood.”

E) It contributes to the significance of a historic area, being a geographically definable area possessing a concentration of historic, prehistoric, archaeological, or scenic properties, or thematically related grouping of properties, which contribute to each other and are unified aesthetically by plan or physical development;

The Rich Cabana most certainly contributes to the significance of the Hope Ranch area. It is the embodiment of what every beach-fronting, scenic-property owner in Hope Ranch would have wanted for their family and guests and is the only cabana to have been constructed along the bluffs of Hope Ranch.

F) It has a location with unique physical characteristics or is a view or vista representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the County of Santa Barbara;

With a few exceptions, the 100-mile Santa Barbara county coastline presents sheer cliff faces above the beaches. The Rich Cabana is located along a sloping portion of a bluff face which provided a rare and unique opportunity for construction.

Having survived in this location for fifty-four years it has long been a familiar visual feature for hikers, boaters and beach strollers between Hendry's and More Mesa beach.

G) It embodies elements of architectural design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship that represent a significant structural or architectural achievement or innovation;

See "D"

H) It reflects significant geographical patterns, including those associated with different eras of settlement and growth, particularly transportation modes or distinctive examples of park or community planning;

The ability for the Riches to create trails from their property to the beach, let alone build the cabana demonstrates an era when the ability to enjoy and maintain a property was the privilege of the property owner and not a function of state and local agencies.

The Riches use of a simple construction style that blends the cabana into its natural surroundings demonstrates their acknowledgment of their responsibility to the environment as well as neighbors and the general public. A rather different sentiment than the ostentations in-your-face approach so seemingly typical of today.

I) It is one of the few remaining examples in the County, region, state, or nation possessing distinguishing characteristics of an architectural or historical type or specimen.

Summing up all that has been written - yes.

The Rich Cabana is a rare gem. Of the three privately owned beachfront cabanas know to exist along the 100 mile Santa Barbara County coastline, the Rich Cabana remains the only one still in use.