

THE VILLAGERS  
2004 HOUSE TOUR COMMITTEE

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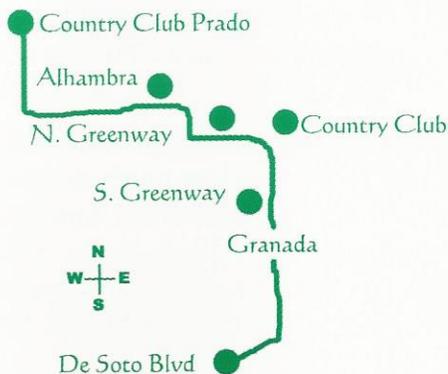
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A SPECIAL THANK YOU:

Lisa Chaffin, President of The Villagers  
The Honorable Don Slesnick, Mayor  
Mr. David Brown, Coral Gables City Manager  
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DEDICATED TO THE RESTORATION AND PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC SITES

Holiday  
House Tour  
2004

A Garden City  
Vision  
Coral Gables



The Villagers, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the preservation, appreciation and restoration of historic landmarks. The income generated from this tour will fund architectural scholarships for deserving students as well as for restoration projects in the community.

## A Garden City Vision Coral Gables

The homes on the 2004 Villager tour reflect the idea of A Garden City, the idea of living in a home surrounded by peaceful gardens, promenades, and winding parkways.

George Merrick, founder of the City of Coral Gables, surrounded himself with brilliant people who had complete understanding of his vision of an utopian town. Among those who assisted him with the original town plan was Frank Morse Button (1866-1938). A landscape architect and city planner, Button worked with Merrick developing a town in which the architecture and the beauty of nature would harmonize.

Frank Button was most likely aware of the turn of the century Garden City developments and the philosophy behind them. Garden Cities were designed not only for pedestrians, but also for the experience of a new pastime of the early 20th Century, the pleasure drive. As you view the homes on the 2004 tour, set aside the hurried pace of today's life and reflect on the idea of Merrick and Button's Garden City.

For more information on the concept of The Garden City refer to *Coral Gables, An American Garden City*, (c. 1997) by Editions Norma, University of Miami, School of Architecture and the website:  
[letchworthgardencity.net/heritage/index-3.htm](http://letchworthgardencity.net/heritage/index-3.htm).

### Refreshments and Gift Boutique

We invite you to join us for light refreshments and to visit The Villager Gift Boutique at the Jacobson home at 1200 Alhambra Circle.

Our famous homemade chutney, jelly and sweets make great holiday gifts. You will also find homemade breads, note cards, angel ornaments and calendars.

Members of The Villagers will also be selling their own special items.

This year's quilt, *Destination Miami*, is a memorabilia piece. The quilt pays tribute to Pan American Airways, Eastern Airlines, National Airlines and TWA. These airlines are closely connected to and valued for their place in the history and culture of Miami-Dade County.

The winning quilt raffle ticket will be drawn in the afternoon.

## 1515 Country Club Prado Home of Juan Jose Colombo

Landscape architect, Frank Button, created a garden setting for Country Club Prado. Just north of Mr. Colombo's home is the historic Country Club Entrance designed by artist Denman Fink. Mr. Fink was an uncle of George Merrick.

The eclectic style of this house was designed by architect, Upton D. Ewing. Mr. Ewing was also a philosopher and an inventor. The owner shared that the design reflects the Basque country home. These homes often had a courtyard between a small wing building and the living quarters. There is a lovely view of the pool from the courtyard. The design of the pool, with grass bordering the edges, is typical of the English pool setting.

Most likely, Mr. Ewing was also influenced by the British architect, C.F.A. Voysey (c. 1857-1941). Mr. Voysey was extremely influential in his day. His reputation for design was highly regarded in the United States of America as well as in Europe. The Colombo home reflects Voysey's style. Typical design elements are the smooth white stucco walls, the colorful trim and the open entry loggia. The high pitched sweeping roof line and the chimney-stack with chimney-pots is a signature of Voysey.

Another feature reminiscent of Voysey's design is the round turret with a large expanse of bow-windows that curve with the shape of the turret. These windows provide an axis of light from this rotunda through to the dining area. Mr. Colombo feels that the numerous views of the garden and the Prado make the home seem larger than it is. Voysey believed a house should reflect "Quietness in a storm, Economy of upkeep, Evidence of Protection, Harmony with surroundings, Absence of dark passages". (C. F. A. Voysey, Wendy Hitchmough, c.1995 Phaidon Press Limited).

It is interesting to note that the home was built during the Prohibition era and that the architect was also an inventor. In the living room there is a bookcase that, with the touch of a secretly placed button, opens to reveal a Bible Bar. The original wall paper still exists and is in mint condition. A glass cabinet in the living room holds a set of glassware depicting pink elephants. This set is original to the Bible Bar.

From the second floor balcony there is a wonderful view of the living room. The beautifully designed balustrade adds to the ambience of the home. Above the French door that looks out to the fountain in the courtyard, notice the colorful stained glass art created by the late Brian Rowe of Rowe Glass Studio in Miami, Florida.

Mr. Colombo designed the addition of the master suite and created the loft style studio in the wing building that was originally a two-car garage.

## 1200 Alhambra Circle Home of Steven and Jo Jacobson

This home overlooks the parklike setting of Alhambra Circle designed by landscape architect, Frank Button, who also landscaped the historic Charles Deering Estate.

Originally laid out as a bridle path, the median of Alhambra Circle ran along the back of the stable housing the horses. In her article *Show Horses Pranced in Early Coral Gables*,\* Leah La Plante tells the story of John A. Gazlay and The Coral Gables Riding Academy. Ms. La Plante writes "The Academy was given a permit allowing the horses to be ridden throughout the city." The Merrick team thought of everything to enhance living in this Garden City.

The Jacobson home has doubled in size since the original structure was built in 1926. The architect, C. E. Haley, designed this house in the Mediterranean Revival style that was so popular in the 1920s. The style of this house can also be referred to as Spanish Eclectic or Old Spanish. This style imitates design elements from Spanish, Italian and Moorish architecture.

Of the many homes in Coral Gables that fall under this stylistic category, each one maintains its own individual character. In the Jacobson home the front façade has an open entry loggia with large round arches. In the second level above the entry loggia are two stained-glass windows. In between the loggia and the projection of the playroom there is a lion face spouting water into two bowls. The exterior of the house has a rough textured stucco surface. The varied roof lines and the stucco treatment are typical design elements of these Old Spanish homes. The family room addition and the veranda overlooking the pool/patio area compliment the style of the original structure.

The wainscoting and the decorative crown moulding in the living room and the sitting area were added by the previous owner. The master suite has a vaulted ceiling made of tongue and groove board.

Jo Jacobson has an appreciation for the art of mosaics. In the dining room is a beautiful mosaic she purchased from the Vatican in Rome, Italy.

The Jacobsons and their two daughters enjoy the indoor and outdoor living at this beautiful Mediterranean Revival home.

\**Show Horses Pranced in Early Coral Gables*, Leah La Plante, *South Florida History*, Volume 25, Nos. 1-2, 1997, p. 28.

## 1101 North Greenway Drive Home of George "Rod" Timinsky

As the city evolved and recovered from the 1926 Hurricane and the Depression of 1929, the creation of a new outlook on the world was occurring. Always a delight to motor the boulevards of George Merrick's city of green, now sleek airplanes and ocean liners also served to indulge peoples' fantasies. The emphasis of the era was on modernity, speed and romance.

The smooth, curving lines and surfaces of these new modes of transportation were soon being adapted to a new architectural style referred to as Art Moderne. In 1937 renowned architects Phineas Paist and Harold Steward were commissioned to design this home on North Greenway.

The details of the façade serve as an excellent example of the Art Moderne style.

The design elements the architects utilized are smooth stucco surfaces, sleek eyebrow ledges over the expansive window glaze and curved wall corners. Emphasis has been placed on horizontal lines through the positioning of the windows and the banding that stretches across the width of the front elevation.

An octagonal shaped window is centered above the front door. Other features include the fluted columns and the exquisite craftsmanship of the decorative frieze depicting birds above the entry door.

The Art Deco architectural style also used details that can be found on the North Greenway house—like the frieze of the birds, the two small friezes of an acanthus leaf, and the eyebrow ledges. The difference in the two styles is that the Art Deco movement emphasized vertical projections and Art Moderne looked to the horizontal of a fast moving airplane or ocean liner. It is not unusual to find decorative elements from both movements on the same building.

The Granada Golf Course across the street appears as an extension of Mr. Timinsky's sweeping lawn.

The golf course, originally called the Coral Gables Golf Course, opened on January 1, 1923. Langford and Moreau of Chicago, leading golf course designers of the era, were commissioned to design this course.

## 1006 South Greenway Drive Home of Eugenio and Elizabeth Hernandez

The site of the Hernandez home, included in The Country Club of Coral Gables Historic District, is bordered by the original Merrick family grove, now the Granada Golf Course, and Granada Boulevard.

Designed in 1923 by Walter De Garmo, the house is of Mediterranean Revival style. This house was once the home of Arva Moore Parks, noted local historian and preservation activist. During her ownership the house was rehabilitated and the family room, master bedroom and bath, and courtyard were added. The entry hall and living room reflect the original 1923 plan. The stained-glass window over the front door was commissioned by Ms. Parks.

Original hand-made wall sconces and curtain rods remain in the living room. The antique chandelier was added at a later date. The bi-fold French doors that look out to the courtyard were designed by Ms. Parks.

Once open to the courtyard, the loggia has been enclosed and the French doors to the dining room removed. The columns and arches are authentic features. Of special interest in the dining room is the ceiling and frieze mural painted by Andres Valerio in 1983. The mural depicts Gables' landmarks as they existed in 1923.

The outdoor kitchen courtyard was inspired by the architecture of 1923. The current owners, Mr. and Mrs. Hernandez, along with their two children, practically live in this relaxing tropical setting. Originally owned by Miami attorney, Paul C. Taylor, Ms. Hernandez continues the tradition of noted owners. She is the City Attorney for the City of Coral Gables.

### ◆ The Country Club of Coral Gables\*

The Coral Gables Golf and Country Club, as it was first known, opened in the Spring of 1923. The club and the Granada Golf Course were part of the 1921 city plan designed by landscape architect, Frank Button and George Merrick. The fire of 1983 destroyed all but the six coral rock arches that serve as the only remaining historic trace of the club's past glory.

Recently rehabilitated and redecorated, the club is currently in full operation.

*\*Bathroom facilities are available through the 997 N. Greenway Drive entrance.*

## 2825 De Soto Boulevard Home of Marisol and Oscar Hidalgo

The Hidalgo home, featured in the May 1999 edition of *Architectural Digest*, follows the theme of A Garden City Vision. The site of this home is surrounded by three sides of street frontage and sits toward the back of the lot majestically looking out to the expansive front garden. The overall effect is one of a garden pavilion gracefully suspended over the garden setting.

Mr. and Mrs. Hidalgo hired internationally renowned architect, Jorge Hernandez, to solve the challenge of placing a 6,000 square foot home on such an unique parcel of land. Interestingly, Mr. Hernandez had envisioned designing a house on this lot years prior to being selected as the architect. Mr. Hidalgo, a general contractor, also has a degree in architecture and attended l'Ecole Speciale d'Architecture of Paris.

The style of the home, built in 1994-95, is Neo-classical with reference to the architecture of Andrea Palladio (1508-1580) and Neo-Palladianism. The home is one of a series of designs which combines elements of classicism with modern architecture—a signature of Mr. Hernandez's work. Mr. Hidalgo believes that classicism is reborn and reinterpreted over again at every age.

The most unique element in the house is a floating Tuscan temple front reminiscent of English architect Inigo Jones' (1573-1652) façade for St. Paul's Church in Covent Garden. At the Hidalgo house the pediment is supported by concrete consoles reminiscent of the entry of The Laurentian Library in Florence, Italy, by Michelangelo Buonarroti (c. 1475-1564) and the corbels of the Ducal Palace in Mantua, Italy, by Giulio Romano (c. 1499-1546). This concept has had a strong foundation for architecture until the era of modernism.

Mr. Hernandez's design reflects a lot of movement in the front elevation. The columns supported by corbels support the pediment. The open loggia and upstairs balcony create a depth to the space; the back of the house is flat with the articulation of the loggia on the side. The front and the back of the house present different faces or personalities. The U-shaped rear courtyard features a swimming pool, a formal terrace and an outdoor kitchen. The scale of the spaces and volumes of the home are intimate in feeling.

The dynamic of the house is the volumes that are worked out perfectly. The Neo-Classical design plan is based on symmetry. All of the spaces work together in the Hidalgo home to provide a perfect environment for the couple and their three children to entertain family and friends.