

The Devoted Classicist John J Tackett Classic Residential Design

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 1, 2014

Gracie Mansion



Gracie Mansion, official home of the mayor

ABOUT ME



John J. Tackett

With a Bachelor of Architecture degree and further training with remarkable employers, not the least being the legendary interiors firm, Parish-Hadley, I founded my own multi-faceted studio in 1987, John Tackett Design. Classic residential projects -- new houses and renovations -- have been completed nationwide: Lake Vermillion, MN, to Palm Beach, FL, and Mount Desert Island, ME, to Pebble Beach, CA. Collaborations are welcome.
johnjtackett@gmail.com

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BLOG ARCHIVE

▼ 2016 (8)

▼ December (1)

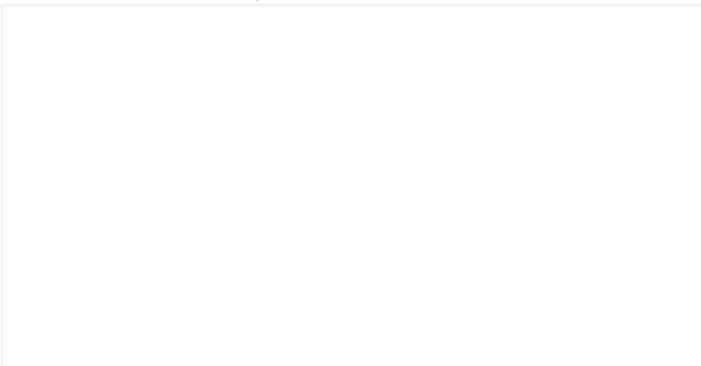
of New York City.
Photo via Architectural Digest.

There has been a storm of Sharknado intensity in the social media this week about the donation of \$65,000 worth of furniture from the mall/mail-order store West Elm for **Gracie Mansion**, the official residence of the mayor of the City of New York. Attention-getting headlines such as this one from [Curbed New York](#), "De Blassios Swap 300-Year-Old Antiques for West Elm at Gracie," incited indignation that the comparatively uncouth new First Family of NYC would not appreciate the relatively lavish refurbishing undertaken during the Bloomberg years, all paid for by private sources including a significant amount donated by Bloomberg personally. But it must be noted that the West Elm furnishings were for the private quarters of the residence and were given to the **Gracie Mansion Conservancy**, the non-profit group that supports the historic and decorative aspects of the property.



The Entrance Hall in 1946.
Image via Corbis.

The Gracie Mansion Conservancy was founded in 1981 at the start of a \$5.5 million renovation that was carried out 1981 to 1984 during the administration of Ed Koch. Two interior designers at their peak of popularity, **Albert Hadley** of Parish-Hadley Associates and **Mark Hampton** of Mark Hampton LLC, were invited to donate their services to decorate the mansion. Albert was to create a viable décor for the public rooms in the historic part of the house, essentially the Entrance Hall, Parlor, Sitting Room and Dining Room in addition to the State Guest Room suite. Mark was to decorate the Visitor's Entrance Hall, the Banquet Hall, and the Ballroom, all in the 1966 addition designed by architect **Mott B. Schmidt** and named in honor of former Mayor Robert Wagner, Susan, who had worked towards the creation of the wing but died before it was completed.



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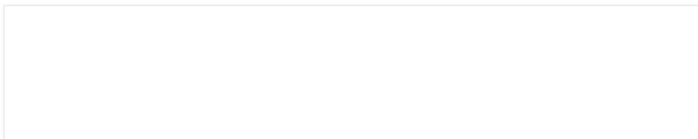
A 1983 sketch of a hall by Albert Hadley.
Image via One Kings Lane.

I worked at Parish-Hadley in the 1980s and assisted Mr. Hadley in the aspects of the Gracie Mansion project that required architectural input from designing the improvements to the State Guest Suite to locating electrical outlets and reviewing construction plans as they impacted the interior design. The sketch titled "The Hall" above may or may not have been intended for Gracie Mansion but it is indicative of the drawings Mr. Hadley used to convey his ideas for committee approval and stir up support from his deep-pocketed friends. And it is from the same time period as his involvement at Gracie Mansion.



The Entrance Hall circa 1985.
Photo via City of New York.

Although Mr. Hadley was not opposed to painting the floor in two tones of gray as a checkerboard, the results as carried out under the direction of the Conservancy (and executed by a compensated family member of the committee) were too theatrical, including the marbleizing of the stair risers (painted out in a later refurbishing) and the non-relating compass star.



That Woman:
Wallis Simpson

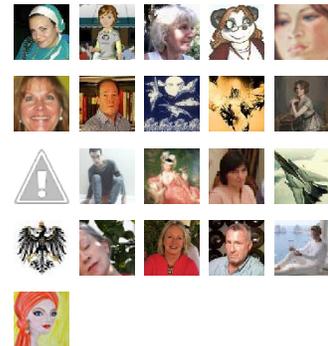


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Albert Hadley's conceptual sketch of the Parlor at Gracie Mansion.
Image via One Kings Lane.

Albert Hadley's concept for the furnishing of Gracie Mansion was not unlike that carried out for the second floor rooms at the White House for the Kennedys that he had worked on twenty years before with **Sister Parish**, later becoming her business partner in the legendary firm **Parish-Hadley Associates**. The idea was to take some historic pieces of Mid-Atlantic, if not New York, origin of the late 18th and early 19th century and supplement them with quality new furniture and comfortable upholstery to allow these rooms to be realistically used on both daily and official entertaining occasions, not a museum setting despite the historic nature of the mansion. It was not unlike how the Kennedys used the Yellow Oval Room, Family Dining Room and the adjacent hallways in the White House, decorated to be attractive enough for distinguished guests but comfortable enough for family use.



The Dining Room at Gracie Mansion, circa 1985.
Photo via City of New York.

Despite being known later as the Albert Hadley Refurnishing of the historic part of the mansion, very little of the work he proposed was actually realized. Although Mark Hampton seemed to have fared better in the Wagner Wing, the Conservancy committee approved but prevented most of Albert Hadley's contributions from being realized. The Dining Room was the one space where Mr. Hadley's ideas were clearly evident. All the furnishings were donated by Hadley supporters including the scenic wallpaper. Among Albert's own donations, in addition to his time, were the simple gauze curtains hung from stamped gilt metal valances; the committee

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THE CORINTHIAN COLUMN
A time to keep
silence

fought him on those, insisting much more formal window treatments would be better suited for the room. The final straw was the fitted carpet; the multi-colored striped carpet had been selected for the adjacent sitting room and a durable dark green moire-patterned plush-cut carpet was specified for the Dining Room. When the carpet company brought the goods (donated because of Mr. Hadley) to be installed, some ladies of the committee made a last-minute Executive Decision to switch the goods as the rooms were of similar size and the striped carpet could be stretched a bit to make up the difference. Since there was not any patterned fabric in the room, they thought the more colorful carpet was better. By the end of the day, Albert Hadley officially resigned from the effort and the committee was left to "play house" as it wished.



The visitor's entrance to Gracie Mansion showing the 1966 Susan Wagner Wing.
Photo by John Foreman for the [Big Old Houses](#) blog.

Despite press reports to the contrary, Mayor Ed Koch did not live in Gracie Mansion on a regular basis, preferring his rent-controlled apartment in Greenwich Village. A rule that allows that the only overnight guests may be the immediate members of the First Family and the official guests of the City of New York prevented Mayors Guiliani and Bloomberg from cohabitating there with their girlfriends. Mayor Bloomberg did contribute some of his own funds, however, to the \$7 million restoration in 2002 with the interior design carried out by his decorator of choice, **Jamie Drake**. Those interiors may be seen as photographed by Architectural Digest [here](#).



Gracie Mansion as it appeared circa 1900 (prior to the 1923 restoration)
Image from Bettman Archives via Corbis.



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More can be read about the history of Gracie Mansion on John Foreman's Big Old Houses blog [here](#) and on the official website of the City of New York [here](#). In summary, the mayors bring their own furniture for their private rooms and it looks like the Gracie Mansion Conservancy arranged for this donation by West Elm to supplement the De Blassios' belongings although the furniture officially belongs to the Conservancy.

Posted by [John J. Tackett](#) at 3:39 PM 10 comments:

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Labels: [Albert Hadley](#), [Gracie Mansion](#), [Jamie Drake](#), [John Tackett Design Portfolio](#), [Mark Hampton](#), [Mott Schmidt](#), [Parish-Hadley Associates](#)

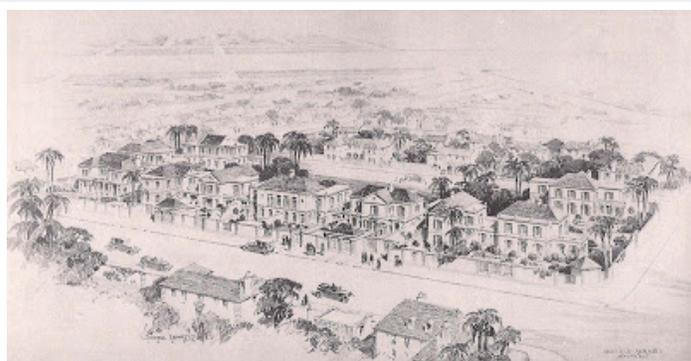
SUNDAY, JULY 3, 2011

Villages of Coral Gables



The "Gate House" garden pavillion, 1033 Hardee Road, Coral Gables.
Photo: John J Tackett for The Devoted Classicist blog.

The Devoted Classicist cannot move on without presenting one more of the many fabulous historic aspects of Coral Gables, Florida. As mentioned in the previous post on Venetian Pool, George Merrick began to realize his City Beautiful vision of a Mediterranean style community in 1921 with the help of a team of architects, artists, and landscape architects. Merrick relinquished some control, however, in 1925 by deeding over 100 building lots to the American Building Corporation, and investment group based in Cincinnati, Ohio, and former Ohio Governor Myers Cooper. A series of as many as twenty period revival theme villages were considered with a thousand residences. But fewer than 80 were ultimately constructed in six villages. The 1926 hurricane and the depression that followed ended Merrick's dream and, heavily in debt, he was removed from the Coral Gables commission.



A perspective rendering of French City Village, Coral Gables, by Schell Lewis, 1925.
Drawing: THE ARCHITECT, December, 1925.

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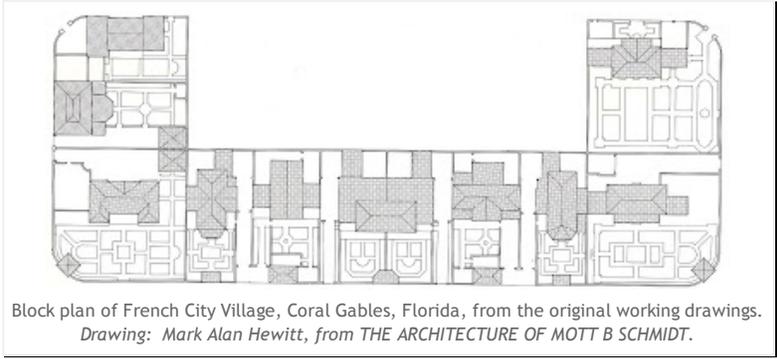
My favorite is the French City Village designed by Mott Schmidt because it is such a successful semi-urban enclave. Schmidt partnered with Anderson Fowler, a New Jersey developer and attorney, to create a contiguous but slightly varied group of small classical villas with walled gardens and garages in an interpretation of the eighteenth century French style.



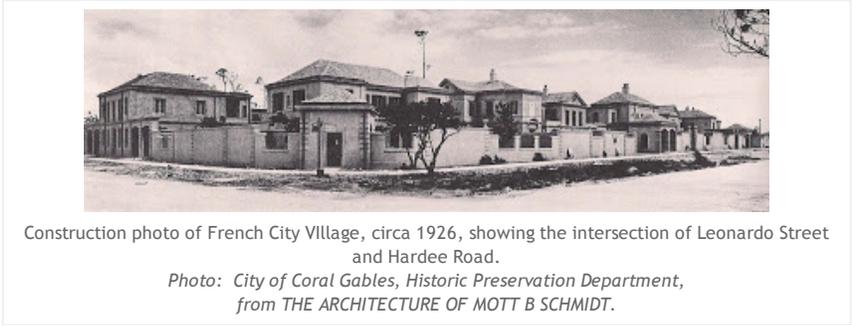
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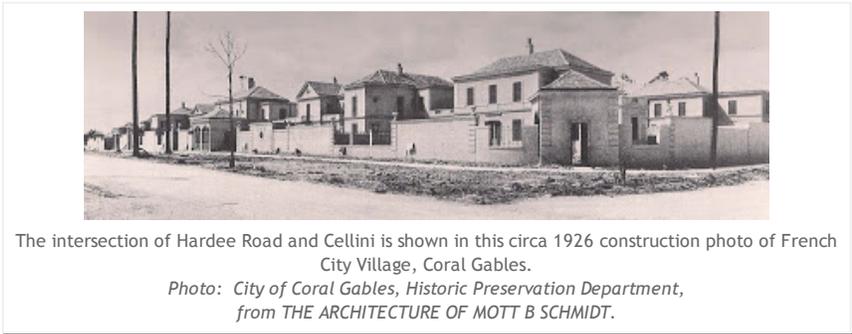
Block plan of French City Village, Coral Gables, Florida, from the original working drawings. Drawing: Mark Alan Hewitt, from *THE ARCHITECTURE OF MOTT B SCHMIDT*.



Construction photo of French City Village, circa 1926, showing the intersection of Leonardo Street and Hardee Road.

Photo: City of Coral Gables, Historic Preservation Department, from *THE ARCHITECTURE OF MOTT B SCHMIDT*.

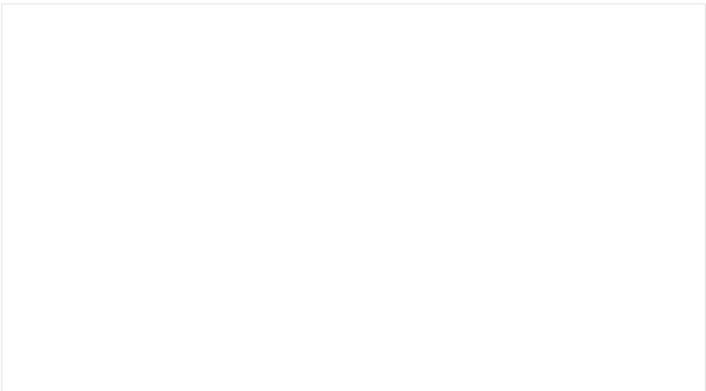
Consisting of a total of eleven original lots on a block bordered by Hardee Road on the south, Cellini on the east, Cotorro on the north, and Leonardo on the west, the houses form a desirable grouping that anticipated the "townhouse" developments that started becoming popular forty years later. The corner garden pavilions which appear as gate houses are an especially nice touch.



The intersection of Hardee Road and Cellini is shown in this circa 1926 construction photo of French City Village, Coral Gables.

Photo: City of Coral Gables, Historic Preservation Department, from *THE ARCHITECTURE OF MOTT B SCHMIDT*.

New houses in a sympathetic design have now filled in the remaining lots, except for 1042 Cotorro Avenue; it is listed for sale for \$790,000 and includes a design for a small villa in the same style of the neighboring houses.



LABELS

- [101 East 63rd Street](#)
- [1020 Fifth Avenue](#)
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- [121 East 73rd Street](#)
- [123 East 79th Street](#)
- [128 East 73rd Street](#)
- [1471 1475 Havenhurst Drive](#)
- [15 E 96th Street](#)
- [1500 South Ocean Blvd](#)
- [2 East 67th Street](#)
- [21 Dairy Road](#)
- [22 East 71st Street](#)
- [2920 R Street NW](#)
- [30 East 70th Street](#)
- [376 Gin Lane Southampton NY](#)
- [480 Park Avenue](#)
- [545 and 548 North County Road](#)
- [60 East 93rd Street](#)
- [778 Park Avenue](#)
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- [960 Fifth Avenue](#)
- [973 Fifth Avenue](#)
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- [Alnwick Castle](#)
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The east end of 1032 Cotorro is shown with the vacant lot at 1042.
Photo: John J Tackett for The Devoted Classicist blog.

The Devoted Classicist is enamored of the abandoned shell at 1032 Cotorro at the intersection with Leonardo Street. (Early readers of this blog might recall some coincidental similarities to the new house by John Tackett Design featured in the December 19, 2010, post of The Devoted Classicist). The classic proportions and siting so close to the sidewalk are noteworthy; despite the current condition, it is a wonderful semi-urban house. The real estate ad notes that it is a Short Sale, subject to bank approval; the listed price is \$1,550,000 as is.



1032 Cotorro, Coral Gables.
Photo: John J Tackett for The Devoted Classicist blog.

- [Amalienburg](#)
- [Americus Georgia](#)
- [Andrea Palladio](#)
- [Andrée Putman](#)
- [Andrew Jackson](#)
- [Anita O'Keefe Young](#)
- [Ann and Gordon Getty](#)
- [Ann and Monroe Carell Jr](#)
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- [Betty Hadley](#)
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- [Billy Baldwin](#)
- [Billy Haines](#)
- [Blair House](#)
- [Blanche Levy](#)

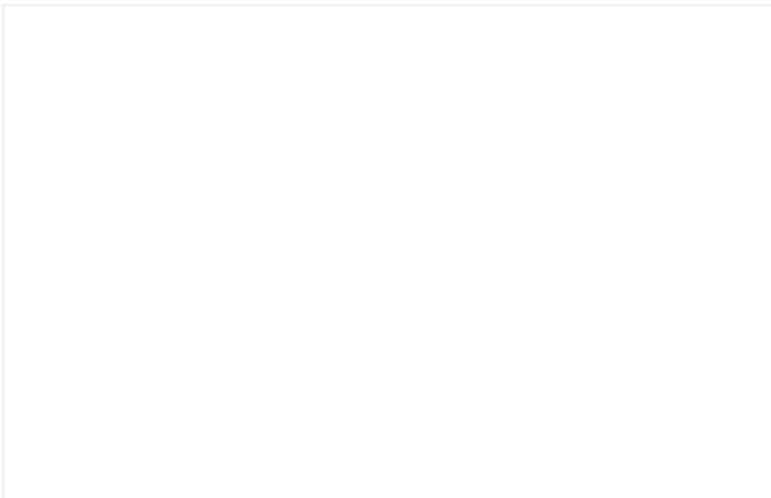


1032 Cotorro, Coral Gables.
 Photo: John J Tackett for The Devoted Classicist blog.



1032 Cotorro at the intersection with Leonardo Street.
 Photo: John J Tackett for The Devoted Classicist blog.

The house at the corner of Hardee and Leonardo, 1033 Hardee Road is listed for sale at \$2,495,000. (See the July 4, 2011, post of My Little Housing Blog, linked in the Blog Roll on the right margin of this page, for more photos). And 1013 Hardee is listed for \$1,095,000. More information on these property listings can be found by a Google search of the address.



- [Blythedunes](#)
- [Bob Christian](#)
- [Books](#)
- [Bracquenie](#)
- [Brian J McCarthy](#)
- [Bright Young Things](#)
- [Brighton Pavilion](#)
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- [Candib residence](#)
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- [Carrere and Hastings](#)
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- [Carter's Grove](#)
- [Cathedral House of the Cathedral of St John the Divine](#)
- [Catherine Rogers Arthur](#)
- [Cathy Whitlock](#)
- [Cavendish Dynasty](#)
- [Cayetana Fitz James Stewart](#)
- [Cecil Beaton](#)
- [Cedric Gibbons](#)
- [Central Gardens Historic District](#)
- [Charles Cockerell](#)
- [Charles M Goodman](#)
- [Charles Morris](#)
- [Charles Sevrigny](#)
- [Charles T Haight](#)
- [Charles Wesley Goyer](#)
- [Charleston](#)
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- [Chickering Road estate](#)
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A view along Leonardo Street showing No. 6105 on the left, and 1033 Hardee on the right.
 Photo: John J Tackett for The Devoted Classicist blog.



1013 and 1009 Hardee Road, Coral Gables.
 Photo: John J Tackett for The Devoted Classicist blog.



1025 and 1021 Hardee Road, Coral Gables.
 Photo: John J Tackett for The Devoted Classicist blog.

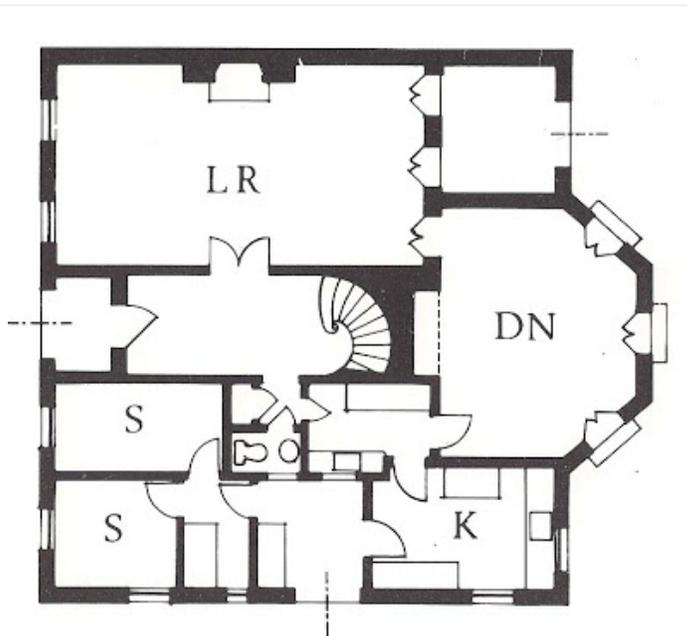
- Christopher Spitzmiller
- Cindy Kelly
- Cistercian Monastery
- City Beautiful
- Clare and Tony White
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- Clement Conger
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- Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
- Comte de Survilliers
- Concealed Doors
- Conyers Farm Greenwich
- Coral Gables
- Coral Gables. Stucco
- Count Moise de Camondo
- CPH Gilbert
- Cragwood
- Craig Hamilton
- Craig Wright
- Cross & Cross
- Cullman & Kravis
- Cunard Style
- Curt DiCamillo
- Curtains
- Custom Carpets
- Custom Embroidery
- Custom Upholstered Furniture
- Dallas
- Dallas Architects
- Daniel Burnham
- Daniel Forcart
- Daniel H Burnham
- David Anthony Easton
- David Garrick
- David Kleinberg
- David Richmond Byers 3rd
- David Wiesand
- Daylesford
- Decimus Burton
- Decoration Ancient and Modern
- Decorative Arts Trust
- Decorative Painting
- Delano and Aldrich
- Denning and Fourcade
- Devonshire House
- Diana Vreeland
- Diane Arbus
- Diane Von Furstenburg
- Diego Suarez
- Ditchley
- Dixon Gallery and Gardens
- Dmitry Rybolovlev
- Dodie Rosekrans



1001 Hardee Road, Coral Gables.
 Photo: John J Tackett for The Devoted Classicist blog.

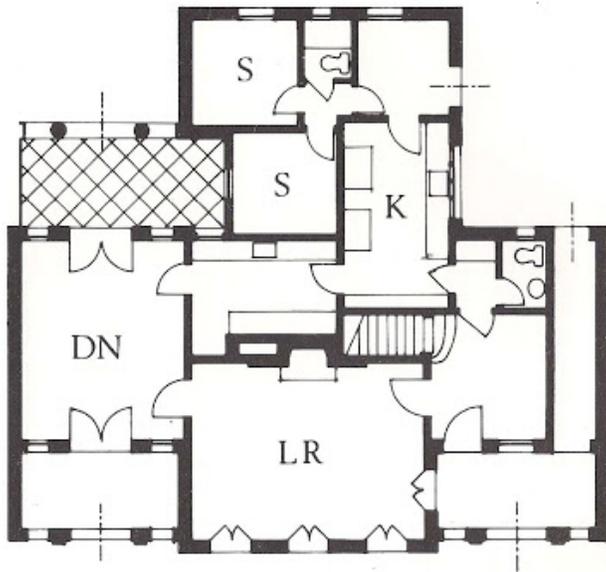


The "Gate House" garden pavillion at 1001 Hardee Road.
 Photo: John J Tackett for The Devoted Classicist blog.



The ground floor plan of 6105 Leonardo Street.
 Drawing: Mark Alan Hewitt, THE ARCHITECTURE OF MOTT B SCHMIDT.

- Dogs
- Donald Albrecht
- Donatella Versace
- Dorothy Draper
- Drayton Hall
- Duches of Alba
- Duchess of Windsor
- Duchesse de Mouchy
- Duke and Duchess of Cambridge
- Duke and Duchess of Devonshire
- Duke and Duchess of Northumberland
- Duke and Duchess of Windsor
- Duncan Lee
- Duncan Phyfe
- Eddie Ross
- Edith and Woodrow Wilson
- Edward Burgess Hudson
- Edward Harkness
- Edward Vason Jones
- Edward VIII
- Edwina and Louis Mountbatten
- Elizabeth Taylor
- Ekaterina Rybolovlev
- Elizabeth Holkes Western
- Ellen and Wolcott Blair
- Elsie de Wolfe
- Eltham Palace
- Emiliano F. Castro
- Emilio Terry
- Emily and Edward Inman
- Enid Lady Kenmare
- Episcopal Church
- Equestrian Estate
- Esmond Harmsworth
- Estate Renovation
- Eugenia de Montijo
- Evelyn Marshall Field
- Evergreen Museum and Library
- Eyford Park
- F. Burrell Hoffman
- False Doors
- Ferdinand Bloc
- Ferguson and Shamamian
- Ferne Park
- Films
- Filoli
- Fine French Furniture
- Florence de Dampierre
- Folding Screen
- Folly
- Fontainebleau
- Fornasetti
- Frances Adler Elkins
- Frances Cheney
- Francois Catroux
- Francois Herve



The ground floor plan of 1013 Hardee Road. Note: the scale is not the same for these two plans.
 Drawing: Mark Alan Hewitt, *THE ARCHITECTURE OF MOTT B SCHMIDT*.

The floor plans of the houses are variations of a common theme. They all were designed with the ground floor to have an entrance hall with stairs, an adjacent vestibule with coat closet and powder room, a living room with a fireplace, a dining room, a serving pantry, a service porch, at least one small porch suitable for entertaining, and two servant's rooms sharing a bath. No second floor plans were available, but the original scheme was smaller than the ground floor footprint; my guess is that there were usually three bedrooms and two baths upstairs.



An original single house in French Provincial Village, Coral Gables at 501 Hardee Road.
 Photo: John J Tackett for *The Devoted Classicist* blog.



- Frederick Crace and Son
- Frederick Victoria and Son
- French Riviera Cote d'Azur
- Frist Learning Center
- Furlow Gatewood
- Furniture Floor Plan
- Gabriel
- Games Gamble Rogers
- Garden Conservancy Open Days
- Gardens
- Gary Hagar
- Gaser Tabakoglu
- Gatchina
- Geoffrey Bennison
- Geoffrey Ghin
- George A Shastey
- George Gershwin
- George Merrick
- George Oakes
- George Stacey
- Georgiana Cavendish
- Gervase Jackson-Stops
- Gianni Versace
- Gilded Age
- Glenn Keyes
- Goldfinger
- Goyer-Lee House
- Grace Kelly
- Gracie Mansion
- Graham Stuart Thomas
- Green Room
- Greentree
- Guigne Court
- Guignecourt
- Gunnebo
- Gustavian
- Guy Dawber
- H Page Cross
- H.G. Selfridge
- HABS
- Halsey Minor
- Halston
- Handpainted Wallpaper
- Handwerker Playhouse
- Hardwick Hall
- Harewood House
- Harold Simmons
- Harrie T Lindeberg
- Harry Potter
- Hearst Castle
- Hector Alexander
- Hector Alexander Samada
- Hector Samada
- Helen Young
- Helga and Floyd Gottwald Jr
- Henry DuPont
- Henry Flagler

An original double house in French Provincial Village, Coral Gables, 516 - 520 Hardee Road.
Photo: John J Tackett for The Devoted Classicist blog.

Nearby, Phillip Lippincott Goodwin was the architect of the French Provincial Village. It has some charming houses, but the development lacks the cohesive quality that helps make Schmidt's block so successful. Goodwin teamed with Henry Killam Murphy to co-author the 1924 book *French Provincial Architecture* which proved to be an inspiration for houses around the country. Murphy designed a development in Coral Gables as well; his Chinese Village is surely one of the most exotic examples of 1920s residential architecture in the whole country.



The Chinese Village, Coral Gables, San Sovino Avenue at Maggiore Street.
Photo: John J Tackett for The Devoted Classicist blog.

The other unique development that sparks my imagination is the Dutch South African Village by architect Marion Syms Wyeth. The white stucco walls, shaped gables, and twisted column chimneys are delightful.



6704 So Le Jeune Road, Coral Gables, Dutch South African Village.
Photo: John J Tackett for The Devoted Classicist blog.

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- [Henry Killam Murphy](#)
- [Hermes Mallea](#)
- [Heron Bay](#)
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- [Jeffrey Simpson](#)



A view from Maya Avenue of 6705 San Vicente Street, Dutch South African Village.
 Photo: John J Tackett for *The Devoted Classicist* blog.



6776 South Le Jeune Road (SW 42nd Avenue), Dutch South African Village.
 Photo: John J Tackett for *The Devoted Classicist* blog.

All these unique homes are cherished today and any proposed renovation must keep the integrity of the original design. The City of Coral Gables Historic Committee reviews all plans for the required approvals prior to issuing permits for construction.

For more information on the architect Mott Schmidt, see *The Architecture of Mott B Schmidt* by Mark Alan Hewitt, the source for the measured drawings and historic photos shown in this post. It was published by Rizzoli in 1991.

A special thanks to Ian MacDougald for his expert navigation and driving in taking The Devoted Classicist to these locations.

Posted by [John J. Tackett](#) at 2:29 PM 22 comments:

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