



PAUL REVERE WAS HERE

Paul R. Williams Homes in La Cañada Flintridge



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PAUL REVERE WAS HERE: HOMES IN LA CAÑADA FLINTRIDGE

Paul R. Williams said he designed 32 homes in La Cañada Flintridge. Some of them are now almost 100 years old. The list below includes 24 of those 32 houses. What happened to the others? There are addresses that have been lost to time, and in the future we hope to discover them, and some houses have been demolished and erased from history. As you drive by these remarkable homes it will become strikingly obvious what a master architect Paul R. Williams was and how his homes remain vital and inviting. His talent, training and creative panache enabled him to design in a broad variety of architectural styles, add his signature touches and, give clients what they wanted. His homes in La Cañada Flintridge, built under remarkable social, cultural and personal circumstances, continue to delight.

A Word of Caution

Much of the charm and beauty of La Cañada Flintridge is its hilly terrain offering scenic views at almost every turn. But because of the terrain, many homes are sited on curving, narrow roads with no sidewalks and limited or no parking. Others are located on relatively flat roads, some with sidewalks, and some with roadside parking.

LOUIS AND VIRGINIA NOURSE CASS HOUSE

4236 Woodleigh Lane • 1922

English Tudor Revival

- Only the driveway is visible from the street
- Insurance broker Louis Cass and socialite Virginia Nourse Cass bought Flintridge land in 1921 when community had dirt roads
- First house Paul R. Williams designed in La Cañada Flintridge and plans and photos were published in Architecture magazine
- Cass family later commissioned Williams to design a second home in 1954, a ranch house in Temecula



DOUGLAS MITCHELL HOUSE

640 Berkshire Avenue • 1923

Colonial Revival

- Williams signature, the undulating line, appears in the winding driveway on which front gates open
- Manicured lawn lends another element to this formal home meant to show off the success of the homeowners
- Wood frame construction with white clapboard siding. 5,144 square feet with 6 bedrooms and 7 bathrooms
- Renovated in 1946
- Brothers Douglas and Standish Mitchell, who were executives at the Automobile Club in its early days, were neighbors



EDWIN WALKER RESIDENCE

1103 Roanoke Place • 1924

Spanish Colonial Revival

- Canyon view home on very secluded narrow street



JUD AND AUGUSTA RUSH HOUSE

609 Inverness Drive • 1924

Spanish Colonia Revival

- Williams was a master of understanding how to use a physical location. House, built downslope on a secluded winding street, takes advantage of canyon views from interior windows, outdoor terraces and backyard gardens
- Elaborately detailed with arched doors and windows, terracotta roof, decorative tile and wrought iron stair railings
- Renovated in 1947



CHARLES W. AND FLORA HUNTER HOUSE

721 Berkshire Avenue • 1924

English Period Revival

- Photo of original 1924 house
- House completed by prominent builder Glen O. Winget, for whom Paul R. Williams later designed a personal La Cañada Flintridge home
- Lot size is 1.78 acres designed with a tennis court, horse stables, riding ring and access to Flintridge equestrian trails
- Impressive and comfortable interior with extensive use of wood and 2 story entrance foyer with balustraded staircase



House seen today. Original house purchased in 2014 and remodeled.

EMILE B. AND GLADYS YOAKUM HOUSE

519 Meadow Grove Street • 1924

Spanish Colonial Revival

- Only the driveway is visible from the street
- Insurance broker Louis Cass and socialite Virginia Nourse Cass bought Flintridge land in 1921 when community had dirt roads
- First house Paul R. Williams designed in La Cañada Flintridge and plans and photos were published in Architecture magazine
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NEW ORLEANS FARMHOUSE STYLE HOUSE

4914 Alta Canyon Road • 1935

- Paul R. Williams built a few New Orleans Revival Style houses in La Cañada Flintridge
- Two acre site includes a main house by Williams, later enlarged but not by Williams, and a restored 1892 Victorian cottage
- Located on same street as Williams's Degnan House 5200 Alta Canyon Road
- Prolific architect Arthur Kelly, for whom Williams worked from 1917-1921, built his personal home on Alta Canyon Road



STUART M. AND LOIS SALISBURY HOUSE

4420 Gould Avenue • 1925

Spanish Colonial Revival

- Built for Los Angeles attorney/businessman and his family
- Williams's knowledge of period styles shows the training he received in the offices of Southern California architects who were masters of revival architecture
- One of many Spanish Colonial Revival homes Williams designed. Characteristic thick stucco walls, scalloped overhangs, terracotta tile roof and chimney with decorative vents
- Exterior wood shutters and cantilevered Monterey balconies. Dramatic interior wood beamed ceilings and stairway
- Eight bedrooms and five bathrooms
- One and a quarter acre park-like grounds with casita, pool, meandering flower paths and expansive lawns show Williams talent for harmonizing architecture and landscaping



FLINTRIDGE COMPANY HOUSE

3713 Chevy Chase Drive • 1926

Storybook French/English Revival

- Spec house designed by Paul Williams for Frank Flint's development company Flintridge Properties. Estimated that Williams designed about 10 spec homes, many in Chevy Chase Drive neighborhood
- Steeply pitched oversize shake roof
- Brick exterior with recessed arched entrance that opens to Williams signature grand foyer
- Interior wood beamed ceilings, French doors and built in cabinets
- Renovated in 1956
- Close to long gone FLINTRIDGE sign, a HOLLYWOODLAND sign lookalike that Frank Flint built on the ridge above his development



FLINTRIDGE PROPERTIES HOUSE

3733 Chevy Chase Drive • 1926

Spanish Colonial Revival

- Possible spec house
- Renovated 1939



MOTLEY H. FLINT HOUSE

811 Inverness Drive • 1926

Spanish Colonial Revival

- House built for Frank Putnam Flint's brother Motley who promoted investments in the Julian Petroleum Corporation which collapsed in 1927 swindling 40,000 investors. In 1930 an angry investor shot and killed Motley in a courtroom
- Asymmetrical façade, thick stucco exterior walls, decorative wrought iron on windows and a tower that rises from the low pitched terracotta roof
- Very grand 6,527 square foot house designed with a ballroom, theater, pool with dressing rooms and horse stables
- Remodeled 1930
- Situated on a winding street off Chevy Chase Drive, the house has a slim front yard and opens up to the back, a signature Williams design, with pool and canyon vistas



FLINTRIDGE PROPERTIES HOUSE

600 Chatham Place • 1927

Spanish Colonial Revival

- Possible spec house
- Renovated 1931



FLINTRIDGE PROPERTIES HOUSE

503 Dartmouth Place • 1927

Spanish Colonial Revival

- On same street as Katherine Bloss Flint House, this house at almost the top of La Cañada Flintridge has canyon views from the back
- Prominent single front door leads to 5,298 square feet interior with 3 fireplaces
- Wood frame construction with stucco exterior, arched windows and wood shutters
- Renovated 1945



FLINTRIDGE PROPERTIES HOUSE

4155 Chevy Chase Drive • 1934

Colonial Revival

- Built as spec house and one of the few model homes, or what was called at the time demonstration houses, in the community
- Typical Williams eclectic design as a classic style mixes with New Orleans/French Colonial and low slung Ranch House motifs in a house that appears to embrace an easier Southern California lifestyle
- Renovated in 1954





JAMES AND DOROTHY DEGNAN RESIDENCE

5200 Alta Canyada Road • 1927

Spanish Colonial Renaissance Revival

- Built as a weekend retreat this sumptuously ornate and palatial estate sits close to the street with a picturesque arched front door surrounded by half balcony and regal cast stone finials, columns and shells
- 7,724 square foot interior has a 2 story entry with an archway that leads to a loggia with marble floors, balcony and a Bachelder tile fountain
- Interior bas-relief plaster scenes of the Bible and a stairway with stained glass window
- Paul R. Williams design encouraged Southern California lifestyle with an outdoor living room on the patio
- Grand scale of the home is matched by that of the gardens which were of particular importance to homeowner Dorothy Degnan, a well-known California landscape artist
- Magnificent 1 acre grounds, which includes a terraced slope, of gardens on one side of property include decorative iron gates, guest house, caretakers cottage, a Mojolica mosaic set in arched openings and a grotto in the faux bois style with sculpted concrete that looks like sinuous tree branches
- Number one Warner Brothers Studios movie star Dennis Morgan and wife Lillian lived in the house in the 1940's and called it "living out in the country" and kept farm animals. He thought the house was too big for regular furniture and bought a "colossal" dining room set that had been on display at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. When the Morgans moved they left the dining set for the next homeowners



WILLIAM H. AND JOSEPHINE HARRISON HOUSE

453 Somerset Place • 1927

Tudor Revival

- Neighbor of Paul R. Williams designed Ida May Phillips House, at 445 Somerset this sprawling home built for the Vice President of the Los Angeles Investment company and family occupies the entire end of a cul de sac
- The house shows how Williams mastered the art of combining period style and details with an interior that met the demands of modern living
- The interior has soaring vaulted wood beamed ceilings, arched entrance doors, original tile bathrooms with original fixtures and walls of windows that view the Sierra Madre Mountains and the Flintridge Country Club
- French doors open the house in back to an acre of magnificent grounds, a guest house and pool with pool house
- The Los Angeles Times article January 23, 1927: "Paul R. Williams drew the plans of the home and it will be of the Old English type.... It is expected that the completed home will be one of the show places of Southern California."
- Remodeled in 2004



JOHN BISHOP AND LILLIAN GREEN HOUSE

4151 Commonwealth Avenue • 1927

English Tudor Revival

- Built as a country retreat for Long Beach rancher and real estate investor John Bishop Green and wife Lillian Green. Couple sold estate at the beginning of the Great Depression
- Like other La Cañada Flintridge commissions for Williams, this grand estate was meant to show the social position and wealth of the original homeowners
- Williams designed a red brick exterior with a grand entrance and period details, note the sloping roof, half timbering and pot-top chimneys, but furnished house with modern conveniences including an intercom system and electric refrigeration. Mixing classical style and modernity was typical of Williams
- Grounds included an 1,800 foot guest house, pool, tennis courts and horse stables
- Despite numerous owners, including a family that lived here for 60 years, and being a film location for 1970's television shows, the 7,400 square foot interior with 10 foot doors, ornate hand carved wood ceilings, hard wood and cork floors and leaded glass windows remains close to the original and has its original kitchen
- Some home restoration done when the house was the 2011 Pasadena Showcase House of Design



IDA MAY PHILLIPS HOUSE

445 Somerset Place • 1927

Italian Mediterranean Revival

- In the 1930 census of the unincorporated township of Flintridge Ida May Phillips was listed at the Mother-in-Law of the family that lived in this house and yet the home is named after her
- Paul Williams elegantly sited this multi-level brick house on the rise of a steep hill and mixed Classical touches, a Palladian window and a front door surrounded with pediment and pilasters, with Spanish Colonial elements including arched doorways and decorative iron grilles on the windows
- A small terrace, with columns, overlooks the front porch and a larger terrace has a vista of sloping gardens
- Called “a master of creative eclecticism,” Williams added quoins, the rectangular blocks at the corners of this house frequently seen on Renaissance buildings, to this Mediterranean house
- Williams, known for his attention to detail, created an opulent interior with a 35-foot-long living room that has a mahogany ceiling with hand-carved corbels supporting beams
- River rock garages and walls added well after house was completed

JOSEPH T. AND ALICE MARY EDWARD HOUSE

3718 Chevy Chase Drive • 1928

Spanish Colonial Revival

- Williams strikingly set the house high on a hilly corner lot for a physician and family
- Arched front door and repeating arched windows give quiet drama to timeless house
- Extensive use of ornamental ironwork including on a pair of light sconces on either side of the front door



1243 Flanders Drive • 1947

New England Revival

Second story added in 2003





KATHERINE BLOSS FLINT HOUSE

524 Dartmouth Place • 1929

Colonial Georgian Revival

- Katherine Flint commissioned Paul Williams to design a smaller version of the La Cañada Flintridge home where she and her husband lived
- The original home Katherine and Frank Flint shared was a 1914 romanticized version of a “Southern governor’s mansion” that was sold in 1929, the year Frank Flint died, and then demolished
- Here the exterior is formal and elegantly proportioned but also inviting
- Sited on a half-acre this 5,400 square foot landmark house with wood siding has a grand columned entrance and a Palladian window
- The interior befit a woman of wealth and has sumptuous details including a mahogany paneled library, beveled glass windows, decorative moldings and a signature Williams grand entrance staircase with a curving wood handrail. A second staircase is at the back of the house
- The veranda off the family room looks out on a terraced backyard with pool, gardens and lawn

WALTER D.K. AND MARGARET GIBSON HOUSE

4200 Beresford Way • 1937

French Colonial Revival

- Built for philanthropist Gibson, heir to the Spreckels sugar fortune and creator of the Gibson martini, and his wife Margaret, widow of a famous polo player
- Period exterior with a sophisticated, but comfortable interior and a Paul Williams signature sinuous staircase
- Photographed in 1940 by Maynard Parker, who chronicled the social elite, for House Beautiful magazine whose editor encouraged housewives, the Intended readers, to study the photos of the house to learn both better living and the social values the house represented



ROBERT AND ANNA ECKHARDT HOUSE

501 Georgian Road • 1932

Colonial Revival

- One of many stately Colonial Revival houses Williams designed
- Renovated in 1955



GLENN O. WINGET/COLIN SMITH HOUSE

4121 Pembury Place • 1934

Colonial Revival

- Designed for builder/contractor who frequently worked with Williams



This tour was created on behalf of the Los Angeles Conservancy and the Southern California Chapter of the National Organization of Minority Architects Paul Was Here campaign in 2021.

Special thanks to Mary Alice Wollam for the creation of this additional tour.

The Los Angeles Conservancy is a nonprofit membership organization that works through education and advocacy to recognize, preserve, and revitalize the historic architectural and cultural resources of Los Angeles County.

We believe that historic places tell great stories, give us a sense of place, help us learn who we are and what we value as a culture, and embody our shared history.

SoCalNOMA seeks to advance and support the education and careers of those who have been historically under-represented in the field of architecture and various allied design/build professions.

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