

## City's Oldest Neighborhood Is Nestled Next To The Mountains

By Frank Tysen

Palm Springs is home to 26 unique and distinctive neighborhoods within the City's Office of Neighborhood Involvement, including the Historic Tennis Club neighborhood, named after the prestigious Tennis Club founded in 1937.

Its surroundings form the oldest neighborhood in Palm Springs. Tucked against the San Jacinto Mountains, it extends east to Belardo with Tahquitz Road on the north and Ramon Road on the south. In the 1880s it was owned by San Francisco Judge John McCallum, who tried unsuccessfully to develop agriculture here. The first settlers lived in homes made of adobe, railroad ties or clapboard. The surviving McCallum adobe was moved to The Village Green and at Casa Cody stands a preserved 1910 adobe once frequented by Charlie Chaplin.



Later Spanish style homes were built including the 1925 O'Donnell House, now a Class I historic site, prominently located on the hill overlooking the neighborhood. It was built by Nellie Coffman for oilman Thomas O'Donnell who helped her finance the Desert Inn, which was razed for the Desert Fashion Plaza.

**The 1925 O'Donnell House, pictured, overlooks the Historic Tennis Club Neighborhood in downtown Palm Springs.**

Right below is the former 1927 home of Nellie Coffman's son, Paul Roberson, which is now Le Vallauris restaurant, one of the earliest Class I historic sites.

The area is dotted with small inns. Every December these hostleries host the popular Walk of the Inns. Class I historic inns include the Willows, located across from Le Vallauris. The Inn was once owned by actress Marion Davies and hosted notables like Albert Einstein.

Around the corner is the ranch-style Casa Cody founded by Harriet Cody. She arrived in Palm Springs in 1916 in a gypsy wagon with her health seeking husband William Harold Cody, Buffalo Bill's first cousin. This Vassar graduate started the first horse stable before opening the hotel in 1932.

Nearby is the Korakia Pensione, built in 1924 by painter Gordon Couts. When his young bride refused to move to Tangiers, he built her this Moroccan palace. Winston Churchill painted here. This picturesque hotel, a bohemian hangout during Couts' time, today hosts many fashion shoots.

Across the neighborhood is the Ingleside Inn, a former Spanish colonial estate transformed into lodging in 1940 by former Councilwoman Ruth Hardy who planted Palm Canyon's palm trees. A traditional celebrity hang out, Ingleside's restaurant, Melvyn's, continues to be "in". It features lively jam sessions each Sunday afternoon.

The neighborhood's charm is its eclectic mixture of 400 homes, condos, apartments, inns and restaurants, many surrounded by historic stone walls. There is even an Indian burial ground. Being next to the Village makes it especially desirable.

Consequently, residents ardently guard the neighborhood's historic character and livability which included efforts to quiet down Palm Canyon nightclubs' excessive noise. For more information about organizing your neighborhood, visit [www.palmspringsneighborhoods.com](http://www.palmspringsneighborhoods.com).