

Racquet Club South -- A Neighborhood With A Rich Past And Charming Present

By Aileen Fields

Certified by Palm Springs in 2008, the land encompassing Racquet Club South was once nestled between a bucolic neighborhood on the eastern border, in contrast of the glamour to the west, with the Racquet Club and all its Hollywood trappings.



Pictured at left are Clark Gable and Charlie Farrell at the Racquet Club, circa 1930-1940s

Many celebrities visiting the area from the 1930s through World War II enjoyed both areas.

A stable called the Ranch Club, at the corner of Vista Chino and Sunrise Way, was available with horses for rent, and equestrians rode through the rural areas across the street, which is now the Racquet Club South neighborhood. The owner of the land at the time, named Clark, sold the land after World War II, which was developed into custom-sized lots with no mass tract building. Each lot was required to be at least 100 feet by 100 feet, and custom homes sprang up through the 1960s with only a few lots left after 1980. One of the boundaries, Farrell Drive, was named after Charlie

Farrell, an early actor who donated land for the local airport.

On the west parameter, Alexander homes were built during the 1950s on Racquet Club Drive, providing second homes for part-time visitors and snowbirds, as well as working-class families of modest means. Through the years, older homes have been remodeled by new residents, as buyers appreciate the beauty of the area, with the San Gorgonio peaks rising to the north and the Santa Rosa mountains to the west, topped by the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, an international attraction. A mixture of architectural styles has emerged over the years, with ranch-style, mid-century modern and eclectic remodels.

Local residents of the area come from all walks of life – retired couples, working-class families, snowbirds and professional “yuppies.” The quiet neighborhood is in close proximity to shopping with markets, cleaners, a gas station and several small businesses available only a few blocks away at Vista Chino and Sunrise Way. Fine restaurants, movies, as well as many other attractions are available within a matter of minutes, as the neighborhood is only a mile from the heart of the City. Residents enjoy ample backyards with family and pets. Many of them can be seen walking their dogs early in the morning or at twilight.

Taking pride in their neighborhood, members of Racquet Club South have established a Neighborhood Watch program as well as creating unique “blade” signs, identifying their neighborhood, not only for current visitors but future generations. Who knows? Someday you may see a celebrity walking her dog in this peaceful neighborhood.