

Texas Historical Commission staff (CTS/BB), 7/28/2011, rev 8/9/2011

Official Texas Historical Medallion and 16" x 12" plaque with post

Travis County (Job #11TV01) Subject BH, IL, ED, SC (Atlas) UTM: 14 620325E 3350763N

Location: Austin, 1800 San Gabriel

MATSEN HOUSE

IN 1953, DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR OF CHEMISTRY AND PHYSICS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN, FREDERICK ALBERT MATSEN (1913-2006), AND HIS WIFE, CECELIA CHRISTINA (KIRKEGAARD) MATSEN (1910-2006), BUILT THIS HOME. THE COUPLE WORKED WITH AUSTIN ARCHITECTS CARLTON BRUSH AND JOSEPH BUFFLER, INFLUENCED BY FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, WHO WAS ACTIVE IN RACINE, WISCONSIN, NATIVE TOWN OF THE MATSENS. THE TWO-STORY HOUSE IS BUILT OF LIMESTONE WALLS AND CEDAR SHAKES ON A WOOD FRAME. IT EXHIBITS MID-CENTURY MODERN AND INTERNATIONAL ELEMENTS, INCLUDING HORIZONTAL EMPHASIS IN THE FLAT ROOF AND WINDOWS, USE OF NATURAL LIGHT, AND A FLOOR PLAN INCORPORATING THE SLOPE OF THE SITE.

RECORDED TEXAS HISTORIC LANDMARK – 2011

MARKER IS PROPERTY OF THE STATE OF TEXAS

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

**RECORDED TEXAS HISTORIC LANDMARK MARKERS:
2011 Official Texas Historical Marker
Sponsorship Application Form**

Valid September 1, 2010 to November 15, 2010 only

This form constitutes a public request for the Texas Historical Commission (THC) to consider approval of an Official Texas Historical Marker for the topic noted in this application. The THC will review the request and make its determination based on rules and procedures of the program. Filing of the application for sponsorship is for the purpose of providing basic information to be used in the evaluation process. The final determination of eligibility and therefore approval for a state marker will be made by the THC. This form is to be used for Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (building marker) requests only. Please see separate forms for either Historic Texas Cemeteries or subject markers.

Proposed marker topic (official title will be determined by the THC): MATSEN HOUSE

County: TRAVIS

Town (nearest county town on current state highway map): AUSTIN

Street address of marker site or directions from town noted above: 1800 San Gabriel Street

Marker Coordinates:

If you know the location coordinates of the proposed marker site, enter them in one of the formats below:

UTM Zone Easting Northing
Lat: Long: (deg, min, sec or decimal degrees)

Otherwise, give a precise verbal description here (e.g. northwest corner of 3rd and Elm, or FM 1411, 2.6 miles east of McWhorter Creek): 1800 San Gabriel Street, Vance Park, Lot 3 of Outlots 12-14, Division E

NOTE: Recorded Texas Historic Landmark markers must be placed at the structure being marked.

Recorded Texas Historic Landmark markers definition: Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL) markers are awarded to structures deemed worthy of preservation for their historical associations and architectural significance. RTHL is a legal designation and comes with a measure of protection; it is the highest honor the state can bestow on a historic structure, and the designation is required for this type of marker. The RTHL designation becomes effective upon approval by the THC. Official Texas Historical Markers signify the RTHL designation, which comes only through application to and approval by the THC and must include public display of an Official Texas Historical Marker. Owners of RTHL-designated structures must give the THC 60 days written notice before any alterations are made to the exterior of the structure. RTHL status is a permanent designation and is not to be removed from the property in the event of a transfer of ownership. Only the THC can remove the designation or recall the marker. The marker must remain with the structure and may not be removed or displayed elsewhere until or unless the THC gives express approval in writing for such action. Once designated as RTHL, properties are subject to provisions of Texas Government Code, Section 442.006(f).

Criteria:

1. **Age:** Structures eligible for the RTHL designation and marker must be at least 50 years old.
2. **Historical significance:** Architectural significance alone is not enough to qualify a structure for the RTHL designation. It must have an equally significant historical association, and that association can come from an event that occurred at the site; through individuals who owned or lived on the property; or, in the case of bridges, industrial plants, schoolhouses and other non-residential properties, through documented significance to the larger community.
3. **Architectural significance:** Structures deemed architecturally significant are outstanding examples of architectural history through design, materials, structural type or construction methods. In all cases, eligible architectural properties must display integrity; that is, the structure should be in a good state of repair, maintain its appearance from its period of significance and be considered an exemplary model of preservation. Architectural significance is often best determined by the relevance of the property to broader contexts, including geography. Any changes over the years should be compatible with original design and reflect compliance with accepted preservation practices, e.g., the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*.
4. **Good state of repair:** Structures not considered by the THC to be in a good state of repair are ineligible for RTHL designation. The THC reserves the sole right to make that determination relative to eligibility for RTHL markers.

Special National Register considerations for RTHL marker applications: If a structure has been individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under either Criterion A or B **and** Criterion C (Architecture), the historical text compiled as part of the National Register nomination process may be submitted as part of the marker process, provided it includes the required reference notes and other documentation. Acceptance of the National Register information for the purposes of the marker process will be up to the sole determination of the THC. Listing in the NRHP does not guarantee approval for an RTHL marker. See the THC web site at <http://www.thc.state.tx.us/markerdesigns/madnrcrit.html> for National Register criteria.

Check this box if the property is individually listed in the NRHP.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Any individual, group or county historical commission (CHC) may apply to the THC to request an Official Texas Historical Marker for what it deems a worthy topic. Only complete marker applications that contain all the required elements and are submitted online as required can be accepted or processed by the THC (for RTHL markers, the required elements are: sponsorship application form; narrative history; documentation; legal description of the property; site plan; floorplan; historic photograph; and current photographs clearly showing each side of the structure—please resize photographs to 1-2 MB, or approximately 1024 x 768 pixels).

- Completed applications must be duly reviewed, verified and approved by the county historical commission (CHC) in the county in which the marker will be placed.
- The sponsorship application form, narrative history and documentation must be submitted as Microsoft Word or Word-compatible documents and sent via email attachments to the THC by no later than November 15, 2010.
- Required font style and type size are a Times variant and 12-point.
- Narrative histories must be typed in a double-spaced (or 1.5-spaced) format and include separate sections on context, overview, significance and documentation.
- The narrative history must include documentation in the form of reference notes, which can be either footnotes or endnotes. Documentation associated with applications should be broad-based and demonstrate a survey of all available resources, both primary and secondary.

- Upon notification of the successful preliminary review of required elements by the THC, a non-refundable application fee of \$100 is required. The fee shall be submitted to the THC within ten working days of application receipt notification.

APPROVAL BY COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

The duly appointed marker representative (chair or marker chair) noted below for the county historical commission will be the sole contact with the THC for this marker application. To ensure accuracy, consistency and efficiency, all information from and to the THC relative to the application—and throughout the review and production processes—will be via direct communication with the CHC representative. All other inquiries (calls, emails, letters) to the THC will be referred to the CHC representative for response. By filling out the information below and filing the application with the THC, the CHC representative is providing the THC with notice that the application and documentation have been reviewed and verified by the CHC and that the material meets all current requirements of the Official Texas Historical Marker program.

As chair or duly appointed marker chair, I certify the following:

- Representatives of the CHC have met or talked with the potential marker sponsor and discussed the marker program policies as outlined on the THC web site. CHC members have reviewed the history and documentation for accuracy and made corrections or notes as necessary. It is the determination of the CHC that the topic, history and documentation meet criteria for eligibility.

CHC comments or concerns about this application, if any:

Name of CHC contact (chair or marker chair): Marty Moulthrop

Mailing address:7400 Anaqua Drive **City, Zip:** Austin TX 78750

Daytime phone (with area code):512-343-0814 **Email address** (required):

jmoulthrop@austin.rr.com

PERMISSION OF PROPERTY OWNER FOR MARKER PLACEMENT

Property owner: Megan Matsen Meisenbach

Address:1800 San Gabriel Street **City, state, zip:**Austin TX 78701

Phone:512-940-2615 cell **Email address:** MMEISENBACH@austin.rr.com

Legal Description of the property (metes and bounds, lot and block, etc.): Vance Park, Lot 3 of Outlots 12-14, Division E

Upon receipt of the application, the THC will provide the owner with a letter that outlines the legal responsibility of ownership under the Recorded Texas Historic Landmark statute. The letter must be signed by the owner and returned to the THC before the evaluation can be completed.

NOTE: The property owner will not receive any additional copies of correspondence from the THC. All other correspondence—notice of receipt, request for additional information, payment notice, inscription, shipping notice, etc.—will be sent via email to the CHC representative, who is encouraged to share the information with all interested parties as necessary. Given the large volume of applications processed annually and the need for centralized communication, all

inquiries about applications in process will be referred to the CHC for response. The CHC is the sole liaison to the THC on all marker application matters.

SPONSORSHIP PAYMENT INFORMATION

Prospective sponsors please note the following:

- Payment must be received in full within 45 days of the official approval notice and must be accompanied by the THC payment form. The THC is unable to process partial payments or to delay payment due to processing procedures of the sponsor. Applications not paid in the time frame required may, at the sole discretion of the THC, be cancelled or postponed.
- Payment does not constitute ownership of a marker; Recorded Texas Historic Landmark markers and other Official Texas Historical Markers are the property of the State of Texas.
- If, at any time during the marker process, sponsorship is withdrawn, a refund can be processed, but the THC will retain the application fee of \$100.
- The Official Texas Historical Marker Program provides no means of recognizing sponsors or property owners through marker text, incising or supplemental plaques.

Marker sponsor (may be individual or organization): Megan Matsen Meisenbach

Contact person (if applicable): Phoebe Allen

Mailing address:2510 Cedarview Drive **City, zip:** Austin TX 78704

Email address (required):phoebezink@gmail.com **Phone: 512-627-8170 cell**

SHIPPING INSTRUCTIONS

In order to facilitate delivery of the marker, residence addresses, post office box numbers and rural route numbers are not permitted. To avoid additional shipping charges or delays, use a business street address (open 8 a.m.—5 p.m., Monday through Friday).

Name: Megan Matsen Meisenbach

Street address:1800 San Gabriel Street **City, zip:** Austin TX 78701

Daytime phone (required): 512-940-2615 **cell** **Email** (required):
MMEISENBACH@austin.rr.com

TYPE AND SIZE OF RECORDED TEXAS HISTORIC LANDMARK MARKERS

As part of its review process, the THC will determine the appropriate size marker and provide options, if any, for the approved topic based on its own review criteria, including, but not exclusive of, historical significance, replication of information in other THC markers, relevance to the Statewide Preservation Plan and the amount of available documented information provided in the application narrative. In making its determination, however, the THC will also take into account the preference of the CHC, as noted below.

The sponsor/CHC prefers the following size marker:

- 27" x 42" RTHL marker with post (\$1500)
- 27" X 42" RTHL marker without post* (\$1500)

- 18" x 28" RTHL marker with post (\$1000)
- 18" x 28" RTHL marker without post* (\$1000)
- RTHL medallion and 16" x 12" plaque with post (\$750)
- RTHL medallion and 16" x 12" plaque without post* (\$750)

*For an RTHL marker without post, indicate to what surface material it will be mounted:

- wood
- masonry
- metal
- other (specify)

SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION (via email required)

When the CHC has determined the application is complete, the history has been verified and the topic meets the requirements of the Official Texas Historical Marker Program, the materials should be forwarded to the THC via email at the following address:
markerapplication@thc.state.tx.us.

- The CHC or marker chair should send an email containing the following attachments (see attachment function under file menu or toolbox on your computer):
 - This application form
 - The narrative history (including documentation)
 - Legal description of the property
 - Detailed floor plan for each floor of the structure
 - Detailed site plan of the property
 - At least one historic photograph
 - Current photographs clearly showing each side of the structure

RECORDS RETENTION BY CHC: The CHC must retain hard copies of the application as well as an online version, at least for the duration of the marker process. The THC is not responsible for lost applications, for incomplete applications or for applications not properly filed according to the program requirements. For additional information about any aspect of the Official Texas Historical Marker Program, see the Markers page on the THC web site (<http://www.thc.state.tx.us/markerdesigns/madmark.html>)



Texas Historical Commission
History Programs Division
P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711-2276
Phone 512/463-5853
history@thc.state.tx.us

Matsen House

1800 San Gabriel Street, Austin, Texas

Compiled by Phoebe Allen, 512-444-1326, phoebezink@gmail.com

SUMMARY

Perhaps the most “modern” in style in the Judges’ Hill neighborhood, the Matsen House was built in 1952-53 by **Frederick Albert Matsen**, distinguished Professor of Chemistry and Physics at the University of Texas at Austin, and his wife, **Cecelia Kirkegaard Matsen**.

The Matsens worked with Austin architect **Carlton Brush**, in association with J. Robert Buffler, to design their Mid-Century Modern home with influences from the International and Shingle styles. **Frank Lloyd Wright** was a strong influence in the design, as the Matsens were from Racine, Wisconsin, where Wright was active. The Matsens’ daughter owns and resides in the home.

Architectural Description

The two-story Matsen House is constructed of Oak Hill limestone walls and exterior cedar shakes on a wood frame. A one-story carport with storage space along the north wall is attached to the house. The house makes good use of cross ventilation and sits on the lot in a diagonal in order to receive the cross-breezes. The foundation slab was laid on six feet of gravel to prevent movement typical in the neighborhood. Features of the Mid Century Modern and International styles include several which are applicable to the Matsen House:

1. Tied to the land: The spit level of the Matsen House conforms to the natural slope, with large overhangs, a large screened porch at the rear, and a large cement terrace on the south. The driveway along the north side of the property follows the horse path used by the 1851 Robertson-Lucy-Vance estate and is still lined with elm trees. A stacked stone and masonry wall four to five feet high leaves the south end of the house from the central stone wall, parallel with the street, and curves west toward the rear property line, breaking for a wrought iron gate along the front/east side; a wrought iron fence continues along the rear/west property boundary.

2. Horizontals: The Matsen House has a flat roof with deep overhangs, horizontal beams on the screened porch and windows with 2/2 and 3/3 horizontal lights. A large horizontal expanse is held up by an iron pole in the living/dining room.

3. Regularity, not symmetry: The living/dining room, with 11.5 foot ceilings, has a large volume and dominates the house. It has a feeling of regularity in its proportions with the centered picture window flanked by double sliding doors. Large windows are repeated frequently.

4. Intrinsic elegance of materials: The materials of the Matsen House include seven iron poles, (one in the living room, two in the carport, plus four poles supporting the stair railing), asbestos boards in the overhangs and carport, cement floors downstairs, oak floors upstairs, and exterior natural cedar shakes. Two two-story, parallel limestone walls support the house - one on the front/east façade and a second which penetrates the living room, becoming the fireplace and a

sitting ledge, partially bisecting the house north to south. The central interior wall starts on the ground level by the short stairway as a planter in the living room and soars to become the fireplace wall, rising to 11.5 feet at the ceiling. The chimney is also limestone. The wall continues to the upstairs boys room and exits at the living room/study as the southern retaining wall. The wall does not appear in the girl's room.

5. Design flexibility: The living/dining room of the Matsen House is one large space. It is very adaptable and has been used by the Matsens for house concerts, dinner parties for foreign scientists and receptions.

6. Open, light and airy: The entry of this 2,338 square foot home opens to a large living-dining room with large windows and high ceilings – a beautiful effect from an idea of Wright. Built-in birch veneer cabinets and interior doors were lightened or “pickled” by the Matsens, who applied a white oil paint to the wood and rubbed it off with linseed oil. Adding to the openness is a minimal use of hallways—only one short hallway downstairs and one L shaped hallway upstairs. The Matsen living/dining room opens to the outdoors with two huge sliding doors that lead to a large screened porch with adjoining cement patio. The screened porch was often used for dining. Upstairs, the roof patio lets in the breeze, as did the attic fan closet (fan removed when air conditioning was installed). The architects oriented the house to accommodate the prevailing breezes, which were noted on the plans. The living/dining room and master bedroom are

surrounded by windows on three sides. The original Anderson windows are double-hung wood, with either three/three or two/two horizontal lights; there is one picture window on the west façade. The ripple glass sidelight at the front door is original, as is the 1/1 pebble-glass window in the downstairs bath. There is a total of 27 windows, most large. The living/dining area has four windows (6'8"x3'8") plus one picture window; the kitchen has two windows (5'9"x 3'7"); the downstairs study has three windows (5'3"x3'1"); the stairwell one (5'9"x3'8"); upstairs bedrooms have nine windows (4'2"x 3'11"), plus laundry window and five small windows 5'2"x3'3" (as measured from inside the window sills).

Alterations

The integrity of the house is solid, with few exterior or interior changes other than the Matsen's 1960s addition of metal gutters, which now contribute to a 5,000-gallon rainwater collection system installed in the back yard in July of 2008. The original owners extended a small utility/work room on the north side by three feet to include space for a washer/dryer; the roofline is lower than the original at this point, which is not visible from the street front. Doors are original to the house with the exception of the front door, a solid wood door - which was replaced with a similar¹ door due to weather deterioration, and a side kitchen door - which was

¹ The front door hardware was changed to a more substantial locking system, and a mail slot was added.

replaced with a wood door with glass panels to allow more light to enter. Screen doors are original. Porches are original and unchanged.

Cement floors downstairs were unfinished at first; the Matsens later added wall-to-wall carpet. Matsen's daughter has removed the carpet and stained the concrete floors, using throw rugs rather than carpet. Upstairs floors are original oak. The kitchen and baths have original tiles. Only the kitchen sink and one bathroom sink have been replaced. All other fixtures are original.

Architect: Carlton Brush, in association with J. Robert Buffler

Eugene Carlton Brush (1895-1987) was the grandson of Mary Ann Bradley (1829-1870) of Leeds, England, and **Seba Bogart Brush** (1827-1874), who came to Texas from their home in New Jersey in 1854 in a covered wagon and set up a general store and tinsmith shop on Congress between Fifth and Sixth Streets. Brush prospered in Austin and landed a contract to roof the Governor's Mansion then under construction. He made several trips between Austin and New York delivering cotton and purchasing general merchandise for his Austin store between 1861 and 1865, and moved his family back to New Jersey after the Civil War; following his wife's death he returned to Austin with his children. **Brush Square** in Austin is named for Seba Brush. His son George Austin Brush (1855-?) married Ida Harris (1866-1959) in Nashville in 1888. George continued the family business in Austin as Brush Hardware at Ninth and Congress.

George's son Carlton was sent to live with his mother's parents in Nashville, where he attended high school and studied architecture. He married Sarah Elmira Curry of Nashville in 1919, and after 1930² worked as an architect in Birmingham, Houston and Dallas before coming to Austin. According to the City Directory, he and his wife lived on Lullwood Road in the Wilshire Wood subdivision east of IH35 and the Country Club, from 1953 to 1964. He was likely an architect for Wilshire Wood; his brother **George Harris Brush** was associated with the subdivision's developers Walling, Bradfield & Brush in the 1950s; Bradfield & Brush were also listed in 1947 as the agents and developers of Vance Park. A Sunday advertisement in the American Statesman on May 25, 1941 indicates that the firm had also "guided Pemberton Heights." Carlton and Elvira Brush had three children – Carlton (1921-), Mae Harris Wilks (c1927-), and Elizabeth Peurifoy (c1925-). E. Carlton Brush died in Richardson, Texas in March of 1987.³

Carlton Brush and **Joseph Robert Buffler** (1903-1955) were professionally associated in the design of numerous residences and church projects in Austin that included Shoalcrest Baptist, Kinney Avenue Baptist, Hillcrest Baptist, and Tarrytown Baptist Churches, as well as the Baptist Student Center at The University of Texas. Buffler was born in Philadelphia and graduated with

² Brush and his family lived in Nashville in 1930, according to the 1930 census.

³ Austin City Directories 1949-1965. 1930 Census, Nashville, TN. Brush, Seba Bogart, Austin History Center vertical files.

a Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania in 1925, and a master's in 1927.

After a year's travel in Europe and North Africa, he taught at the University of Pennsylvania and entered private practice in 1931. After five years at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York, he came to the University of Texas as Assistant Professor of Architecture in 1941, was promoted to associate professor in 1946, and full professor from 1951 until his premature death in 1955; he served as Assistant Director of the School of Architecture from 1951-53.⁴

The Matsen's contractor, Mr. Yule, did not complete his contract, and the Matsen family added much of the final finish work and painting.

Judges' Hill Neighborhood Context

Shoal Creek was the natural western boundary of Austin when Edwin Waller laid out the city's original one-square-mile grid in 1839. In order to found the City of Austin, the Congress of the Republic of Texas condemned the land in and surrounding the village of Waterloo in 1839, offering the former headright owners either money or land elsewhere in Texas as compensation. The lots inside the 1839 city plan, as well as "Outlots" beyond the "Original City" grid Waller laid out, were sold to the highest bidders.

⁴ Roessner et al, "Joseph Robert Buffler," In Memoriam, Dec. 7, 1955.
<http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/2000-2001/memorials/SCANNED/buffler.pdf> accessed March 12, 2010.

The Matsen House is located in the **Judges' Hill neighborhood**, a few blocks walk northwest of the Texas State Capitol and southwest of The University of Texas campus. The neighborhood takes its name from the many judges and attorneys who built homes in the area, beginning in 1851, just after Austin was selected as the state capitol, with **Elijah Sterling Clack Robertson** (1820-1879), whose father had been the empresario of Robertson Colony. Robertson's home, built on a bluff overlooking Shoal Creek, was followed by several more along West Avenue, the western boundary of the 1839 Original City of Austin.

Adjacent to the downtown business district, the homes in this neighborhood are some of the oldest in Austin. Spanning a period from the 1850s through the turn of the century, the structures provide insight into the transitioning architectural styles and building materials of the time. Many elegant, historic homes still line both sides of West Avenue including the landmark 1855 Chandler-Shelley House, also known as **Westhill** at 1703 West Avenue, and the 1870 **Denny-Holliday House** at 1803 West Avenue. There have been three general periods of activity in the Judges' Hill area. First is that beginning during the Republic and running through World War I, roughly 1840 to 1914. The style is reflected in Abner Cook homes and other early buildings. With the Victorian era came a more formal regimen of manners and social style, reflected in homes of the time. A number of these have been lost. The second phase of development includes the period between the two world wars, 1914 to 1945. It includes primarily Italianate, Colonial

and Classical Revival, and Arts and Crafts Bungalow styles. The third phase, following WWII, saw the addition of a few homes in the post-war Ranch and Mid Century Modern styles.

The Judges' Hill neighborhood continues to experience controversial revitalization and conversion of some single family residences to professional offices. On West Avenue, for example, two blocks from San Gabriel, is a series of three modern apartment and condominium buildings that replaced exceptional historic homes, including two in the 1700 and 1800 blocks: the Richardsonian Romanesque **Edward Mandell House** home at 1704 West Avenue, built in 1891 and demolished in 1967, and the **Angeline Townsend-Thad Thomson** home at 1802 West Avenue, built in 1868 and demolished in 1962. Other "ghosts" of the Judges' Hill neighborhood include the 1882 home of Judge A.S. Walker and his son-in-law Rector Thomson at 1508 Rio Grande, the Chiles home at 1606 West Avenue, and the 1909 Haskell Caswell Jr. home at 1500 West Avenue, demolished by the widening of 15th Street, as well as the Frank Brown home that predated it.

The Judges' Hill Neighborhood Association is in the process of nominating the neighborhood as a City of Austin Historic District and National Register Historic District.

Property and Building History: *Lot 3, Outlot 12-14, Division E, Vance Park*

E.S.C. Robertson owned three adjacent outlots (12, 13 and 14) by 1852. These three outlots transferred hands several times during the war years before being conveyed in 1871 to Sampson and Henricks, and in 1879 to **Sam T. Scott** and his wife Mary, then passed down to her daughter **Julia Vance** in 1909 before being subdivided as Vance Park in 1947. The 1851 Robertson-Lucy-Vance House, demolished in 1966, was still standing next door, at 1802 San Gabriel, when the Mid-Century Modern Matsen House was constructed. The Matsen driveway, lined with elm trees, follows the route of the road to the former stables of the old estate.

The present owner, Megan Matsen Meisenbach, grew up with her brother and parents in the home from 1953 to 1969, and has lived there from 2000 to the present. Megan and her husband Dr. Albert E. Meisenbach III, have owned the home since her parents' deaths in 2006.

Significant Persons Associated with Building

Frederick Albert Matsen (1913-2006), professor of chemistry & physics at the University of Texas at Austin, and his wife, **Cecelia Kirkegaard Matsen**, raised two children in their Judges' Hill home – Dr. Frederick Albert (Rick) Matsen III⁵, and musician Megan Cecelia Matsen Meisenbach. Rick's children include Susanna Lovell Matsen, Frederick Albert Matsen IV, and Laura Jane Megan Matsen.

⁵ Dr. Rick Matsen, M.D., an orthopedic surgeon, is the inventor of a titanium shoulder implant.

Al Matsen was born on July 26, 1913 in Racine, Wisconsin to Danish immigrant parents Frederick Albert Matsen Sr. and Karen 'Carrie' Iverson Madsen. Al was the only surviving child of his mother and father, a seamstress and barber. He was the first college graduate in the family, earning his bachelor's degree in chemistry from the University of Wisconsin in 1937. He completed his Ph.D. in both chemistry & physics at Princeton University in 1941. After a year at Bucknell University as an associate professor, he joined the staff of the University of Texas at Austin, where he did research and taught for over 50 years. His first research was on the theory of liquids. In 1945 he spent one year at the University of Chicago working with Robert Mulliken, Clemens Roothaan and John Platt. He developed a spectral theory good enough to impress Linus Pauling, a member of the Guggenheim Committee. In 1950 Matsen received a Guggenheim Fellowship to Oxford, England where he studied under the renowned Professor Charles Coulson at King's College London and Oxford (1951-52); the award was for studies in chemical physics covering interpretation of electronic spectra of aromatic molecules.

Matsen was the pivotal force in convincing UT's administration to establish their first computer center in 1950. According to Doug Klein, a Matsen post-doc and professor at Texas A&M University at Galveston, "I think that UT was one of the first universities to view the computer as a resource like a library with access to be provided to all faculty, and ultimately all

students. I think that his foresight in the general use of the computer in research and in education is a landmark idea and attitude.”⁶

Program notes from the UT Class Convocation of the College of Natural Sciences, December 5, 1998, in which Matsen was the guest speaker, state:

“In a long and distinguished career at the University of Texas, Matsen explored the connections between chemistry and quantum mechanics, and was a pioneer in introducing advanced computational techniques to the UT campus. ... Matsen is widely recognized for his research in chemical physics and theoretical chemistry. His research into the applications of group theory to many-body problems is respected throughout the world. Even after his retirement he maintained an active research program in magnetism, superconductivity, and the foundations of quantum mechanics. Matsen was a pioneer in introducing the use of computers on the UT campus and arranged for a major gift of an IBM CPC machine from Humble Oil in 1958. Computation developed very rapidly at UT in part because UT President and fellow chemistry professor **Norman Hackerman** was subjected to an intense lobbying effort by Matsen. When the **University Computation Center** was established in the early 1960s, Dr. Matsen was named its first director. In 1979 he helped found the **Institute for Theoretical Chemistry**, which is made up of faculty from the departments of chemistry, biochemistry and chemical engineering. In this same period he was a principal in guiding the growth of the theoretical physics program and recruiting many of our best known faculty to the campus. In 1985 Dr. Matsen organized an important international conference on Supercomputers: Architectures, Algorithms and Scientific Computation. A year later The University acquired its own supercomputer. When Dr. Matsen retired from his teaching duties, his friends and family honored him by endowing the **F.A. Matsen Lectureship in the Theories of Matter**. As he approached his Emeritus title,

⁶ “Professor Frederick Albert Matsen, Chemistry, Biochemistry & Physics (1914-2006)”, memorial website established 2010:
http://web.me.com/patandmel/UTexas_Physics_History/Frederick_Albert_Matsen.html

Dr. Matsen chose to establish endowed graduate student fellowships in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry and in the Department of Physics.”⁷

Matsen arranged perhaps the first quantum chemistry conference in 1956 at UT. In 1961 he received a National Science Foundation Senior post-doctoral Fellowship to the Institute Henri Poincaré in Paris, France. There his paper entitled “Sous-Algèbre de Complexes Associés in Spectroscopie Théorique” was communicated to the French Academy by the Nobel Laureate Prince Louis Broglie.

Doug Klein further comments, “His particular computational research almost entirely was focused on the description of the electronic structure of atoms and molecules. Relevant schemes for integral evaluation were developed and turned into operative computer programs in his group. There was a very comprehensive table of molecular integrals published from his group, *Quantum Chemistry Integrals and Tables*. Seminal work was done on a series of small diatomic molecules (most of less than five electrons), both in their ground states and excited states. Several renowned scientists working with computers came out of his group.”⁸ Matsen published over 200 papers and was the author or co-author of six books: *Premedical Physical Chemistry* (with Hackerman and Meyers (1950); *Quantum Chemistry Integrals and Tables* (with Miller and

⁷ Program for the UT Class Convocation of the College of Natural Sciences, December 5, 1998.
Contact: Dean Mary Ann Rankin

⁸ Oakes, Melvin. “Professor Frederick Albert Matsen, Chemistry, Biochemistry & Physics (1914-2006)”, memorial website, 2010,
http://web.me.com/patandmel/UTexas_Physics_History/Frederick_Albert_Matsen.html

Gerhauser); *Vector Spaces and Algebras for Chemists and Physicists* (1970); *The Unitary Group in Quantum Chemistry* (with Ruben Pauncz, 1968); *Algorithms, Architectures and Scientific Computation* (with T. Tajima); *Science Tales*, a popular overview of great accomplishments in science.

Matsen pioneered a unique undergraduate honors chemistry course first called "The Vector Space Theory of Matter" and later "Theories of Matter" from the perspective of modern quantum mechanics. It is said that no other university or professor would have dared offer such a course at the time. For more than three decades he taught at UT, using an iconoclastic choice of algebraic quantum mechanical ideas – the course was often described as "mind-expanding" by the students exposed to his teaching. During the 1970s he **pioneered use of the computer in teaching**, especially in the context of his freshman chemistry course. He was a fellow of the American Physical Society and a member of the International Academy of Quantum Molecular Science, and an Exxon consultant for 35 years, helping to develop the processes for the liquefaction & gasification of coal.

Scientific conferences and lecture invitations required many trips to Europe as well as Mexico, Peru and Japan, to confer with colleagues. The Matsen home in Austin hosted many internationally acclaimed scientists at the dining table. Matsen was a valued advisor to **Professors John Silber** and **Norman Hackerman** during their administrative careers at UT, and

he was much involved in developing chemistry and physics at UT, particularly in choosing and recruiting candidates for chaired positions there.

In a 1993 article, Hackerman outlines how Matsen brought the first computer to the University of Texas:

“Perhaps the event of greatest significance toward the end of the decade was the department’s leadership in entering into the more than casual use of computation in the research process. Matsen had by now gone over to theoretical chemistry more or less fully. ... The specific event was a gift of an IBM CPC machine in 1958 from the Humble Co., engineered by Matsen. Interested faculty members and graduate students literally carried the machine into the building, installed it, and operated it with minimum involvement of higher authority, who were not yet aware of its potential significance. Excessive paperwork was thus avoided. Regardless of the method of insertion, its presence and use had a great effect on the department and especially in physical chemistry. It clearly led to more powerful instruments, and as computing capacity rose so did the need for greater capacity. The position of leadership this University has enjoyed ever since probably originated with the acquisition of the then very powerful CDC 6600 in 1966 and in the formation of a university computing center. This was leading edge computing hardware, and the institution has maintained that position ever since, as evidenced most recently by the creation of the UT System Center for High Performance Computing in 1986 ...”⁹

On September 1, 1997, Dr. Matsen became Professor Emeritus of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry and the Department of Physics. Professor Matsen personally endowed two graduate fellowships in physics and theoretical chemistry. In a Nov. 3, 2009 letter to his daughter regarding Matsen’s charitable contributions to the University, Martha King,

⁹ Norman Hackerman and A. Campion, “Almost 50 Years of Physical Chemistry at the University of Texas,” *Annual Review of Physical Chemistry*, 1993, 44:1-12. (page 6)

director of the Office of the Vice President for Development, wrote: "...your father played a major role, either as donor or as honoree, in these [endowments]. You should be particularly proud to note that the **F.A. Matsen Endowed Presidential Fellowship in Theoretical Chemistry**, accepted by the Board of Regents in 1997, was the first Endowed Presidential Fellowship created at the University. There are only 25 such endowments currently benefiting graduate students at the University."

In 1988, colleagues, family, friends and former students endowed a Regents Lectureship on Theories of Matter to honor Matsen's outstanding contributions in research & teaching.

His research was primarily in chemical physics, with much early interest in molecular electronic spectra. Upon his visit to Professor Coulson at Oxford in 1950, he became an early advocate of first-principles computational quantum chemistry, and published electronic-structure papers through the 1950s and '60s, first on atoms, then on diatomics, especially lithium hydride and numerous states of helium oxide, as well as some smaller species. This multi-configurational electronic-structure computation occupied much of his group's efforts through the 1950s on into the 1960s. With his visit to Paris his interest in group theory was heightened, so that he pursued some ligand-field theory for transition-metal complexes, but mainly it culminated in a long series of papers on "Spin-free Quantum Chemistry." Some of this concerned the clarification of the idea and role of spin, while some concerned related novel group algebraic ideas and techniques.

This spin-free and symmetry-related research occupied much of his group's efforts from the 1960s on through the 1990s, with initial work focused on the symmetric group of permutations, and later work – especially after a short visit with Marcos Moshinsky in Mexico – focused on the unitary group, and related Lie algebras. This work was marked by a strong focus on the formal mathematics translated into a convenient but still abstract physical form, much of which could also be discerned in his freshmen chemistry course. From his group came a four-decade long string of more than three dozen doctoral students in chemistry and physics, and occasionally in computer science, who went into both industry and academia.

Additional honors and awards include: National Science Foundation Senior Postdoctoral Fellow, American Physical Society Fellow, Lowdin Distinguished Lecturere at Uppsala University Sweden, Fellow of International Academy of Quantum Molecular Science, and Establishment of the Annual R.A. Matsen Regental Lectures on the Theories of Matter. He was on the editorial board of the Journal of the American Chemical Society, International Journal of Quantum Chemistry, and Advances in Quantum Chemistry.

Professor Matsen was the embodiment of a committed deep-thinking researcher with interdisciplinary interests – a unique teacher with a style, methods and course-content unmimickable by those with a purely educational focus.¹⁰

¹⁰ Obituary of F.A. Matsen, Austin American Statesman, circa May 29, 2006. Various papers

Cecelia Christina Kirkegaard Matsen (1910-2006) was born to immigrant Danish parents Elenora and Peter Kirkegaard. ‘Ceil’ supervised her four younger siblings while her mother worked outside the home. Cecelia and Al met at the Racine Pure Milk Company where they both were employed. She studied singing and music at Wisconsin College and, after her marriage in 1938, at Bucknell University. As a soprano soloist, she won a medal in the Chicago-Land Music Festival at Soldiers’ Field. While Al was finishing his studies at Princeton during the Depression, she helped support them by working for the Gallup Poll Company. Ceil sang in church choirs in Austin for over 30 years, at First English Lutheran and, beginning about 1963, at St. Martin’s Lutheran.¹¹

Current Owners

Megan Matsen Meisenbach is the daughter of the Matsens who built the house at 1800 San Gabriel. First prize winner of the National Flute Association’s Chamber Music Competition and recipient of the National Endowment of the Arts Solo Recitalist Award, Megan Meisenbach has been repeatedly honored with yearly touring grants from the Mid-America Arts Alliance and the

from the estate of Al Matsen, now in the hands of his daughter at the Matsen House. “Fall Convocation 1998,” Focus On Science, The College of Natural Sciences at UT Austin, spring 1999, page 16. Program for the UT Class Convocation of the College of Natural Sciences, December 5, 1998. Oakes, Melvin. “Professor Frederick Albert Matsen, Chemistry, Biochemistry & Physics (1914-2006)”, memorial website, 2010, http://web.me.com/patandmel/UTexas_Physics_History/Frederick_Albert_Matsen.html

¹¹ Obituary of Cecelia Matsen, Austin American Statesman, circa Jan. 27, 2006.

Texas Commission on the Arts. She has toured internationally and in 26 states as a flute soloist and chamber musician, and has recorded works from the standard repertoire as well as given premieres of new music.

Dr. Albert E. Meisenbach graduated from the University of Texas and from Baylor College of Medicine in Houston; he held an internship at Brackenridge Hospital. He has been a physician in Austin since 1974 providing patient care in clinics for the City of Austin and the University of Texas at Austin Health Center, and for several years he was Health Officer for the Austin Travis County Health Department.

CONCLUSION & JUSTIFICATION

The Matsen House merits historic landmark status as a Mid-Century Modern style home and for its importance to the City of Austin as the home of prominent physicist, chemist and professor, Al Matsen. The integrity of the home's exterior, as well as its interior, has been beautifully maintained and deserves preservation with status as a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark. The home continues to serve as a residence in a neighborhood where homes are increasingly utilized as businesses. Historic designation would help preserve the home and the integrity of Judges' Hill. The Judges' Hill Neighborhood Association supports the inclusion of this home into a future City of Austin and National Register Historic District.

DEED CHAIN for Outlots 12, 13, 14 as related to 1800 San Gabriel Street

Date	Grantor/Grantee	Vol/page
21 Feb 1851	Texas patent #192 to James Cole, Outlot 14E	F/58
1 July 1851	James Cole to ESC Robertson , Outlot 14E, \$120	F/58-59
6 Nov 1851	Gov. Bell to ESC Robertson of Lot 13 Div. E, Outlot 13E	E/408-409
3 June 1852	Gov. C.P Hansborough Bell to John Hemphill Outot 12E	F/99
10 Aug 1852	John Hemphill to ESC Robertson , Outlot 12E, \$154	F/100
24 Feb 1859	ESC Robertson of Bell County to Milton W. Simms , Outlots 12,13,14E. \$2,000	N/97
27 Nov 1860	Lucy & M.W. Simms to Leonidas D. Carrington , 12-14, \$8500	P/193-194
25 Jan 1862	L.D. Carrington to M.W. Sims , 12-14, \$8500	P/323-324
23 May 1862	M.W. Sims to A. Henricks , 12-14, \$7500	P/408-09
1 June 1871	Henricks died in 1866, leaving wife Rachel A. Henricks and 3 daughters: Kate, J. Carter, Nellie; property was conveyed to George W. Sampson & Abram Henricks* 251/79	
	[*Note: Abner Cook built the Sampson-Henricks Building as a general merchandise store at 620 Congress in 1859]	
31 Dec 1879	Rachel A. Henricks, Kate Henricks, Nellie Henricks, Jennie Carter Henricks to Sam T. Scott , \$5000	
	48/537	
15 Sept 1893	Sam T. Scott to wife Mary P. Scott , 12-14	107/596-599
23 Sept 1909	Estate of Mary P. Scott (died 28 Sept 1908) to Julia E. Vance	
25 Mar 1918	Julia Vance to Ewell Nalle , part of Outlot 12E	367/151-152
26 Apr 1932	Julia Vance to City. \$10,000. Parts of Lots 12 and 13, Division E, 12.848 acres, east side Shoal Creek between 17 th & 19 th .	Vol. 480, page 203
6 Sept. 1934	City to Public for designated street. Portions of Outlots 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, & 13, Division E, from 12 th to 19 th for Shoal Creek Blvd.	
7 Aug. 1947	Julia Vance to the Public. Owner of Vance Park, Section One, for residential use between Nalle and 19 th , San Gabriel to Shoal Creek Blvd. estate of Julia Vance, deceased. Vol. 867, page 457, and 14/239 (Notes: Julia E. Vance is the surviving daughter of Mary P. Scott, wife of Sam T. Scott, to whom the premises known as lots or outlots 12, 13, and 14 in Division E were conveyed by Rachel A. Henricks by deed recorded in Vol. 48, pp. 537-38. Virginia Lucy is her cousin. Bradfield & Brush , developers and agents.)	
19 Dec 1953	Julia Vance (died 14 June 1950) to F. A. & Cecelia Matsen. Plat Book 4 page 336. Book 1150, Page 286	
April 5, 1951	Ama Ford Vance Norfleet & husband, of Caddo Parish, and George Shelley as executors of Julia Vance estate, deceased, to F. A. Matsen and wife Cecelia K. Matsen. \$1,500 note, \$18,000. Lot 3, Vance Park. Plat 4/336. Subject to Vance Park Addition, Book 852, p 441. Vol 1150, page 286.	
10 Oct 2006	Cecelia & Al Matsen estate to Megan Meisenbach. Lot 3, Vance Park. Plat Book 4, page 336. #20006198364 and #2006207858	

OCCUPANCY CHAIN for 1800 San Gabriel

Year	Occupant Name and Reference	Source
1953	Matson, Fredk A. (Cecilia) prof UofT [sic]	
1955	Matsen, F. Albert (Cecilia K.) director spectroscopic research laby UofT	
1960	Matsen, F. Albert (Cecilia) prof UofT	
1965	Matsen, F. Albert (Cecelia) prof UofT	
1970	Matsen, F. Albert (Cecelia) prof U of T	
1975	Matsen, F. Albert (Cecelia) prof U of T	
1980	Matsen, Fredk A. & Cecelia, prof U of T	
1985	Matsen, Fredk A. & Cecelia, prof U of T	
1990	Matsen, Fredk A. prof U of T	

Owner Megan Meisenbach reports that the family had an unlisted phone number due to a robbery at some point, which may account for the missing house in further city directories.

1996	Matsens nor 1800 San Gabriel are listed [directory changes to Polk Cross Reference Directory]
2000	Matsens nor 1800 San Gabriel are listed
2003	Matsen is not listed. 1800 San Gabriel: "no current listing"
2005	No current directory listing.

According to Megan Meisenbach, Albert E. 'Bert' and Megan Meisenbach lived at 1800 San Gabriel to care for her parents from 2000 to 2006, while the Meisenbach legal residence was 7609 Shoal Creek Boulevard. Cecelia Matsen died in January 2006. Frederick Albert Matsen died in May 2006. From 2006 to the present, Bert and Megan have owned and occupied 1800 San Gabriel.

ATTACHMENTS

Architectural Elevations
Architectural Floor Plans (2)
Architectural Detail Plans
Architectural Plot Plan
Survey Site Plan

PHOTOS provided by Megan Matsen Meisenbach

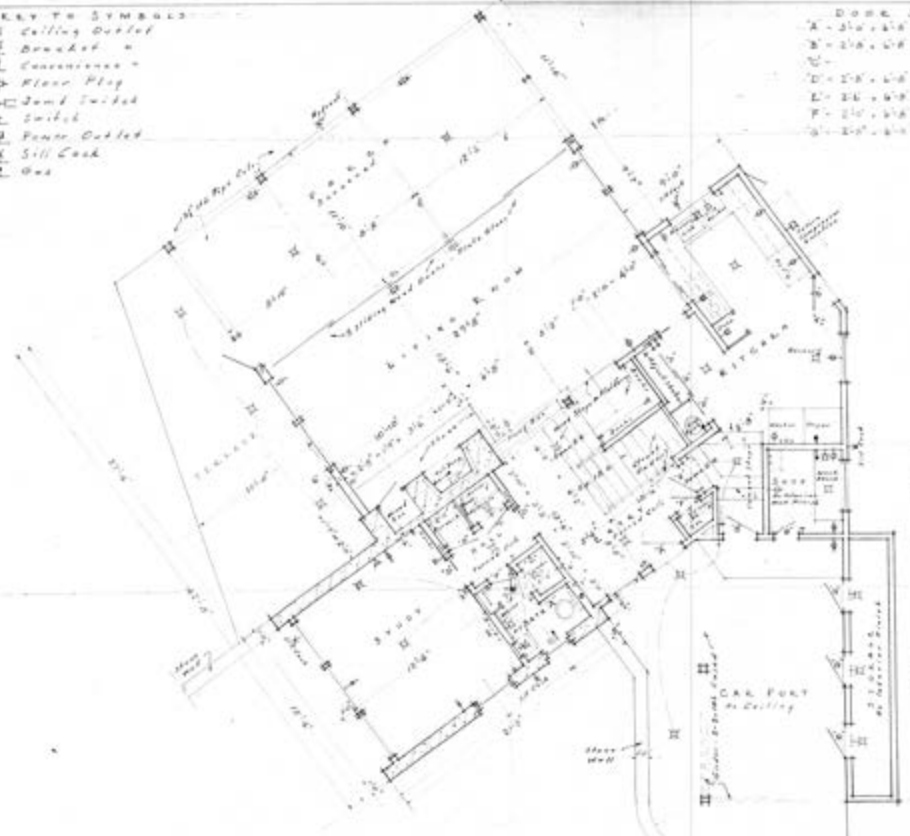
Back/NWfacade2010.jpg
Back/SWfacade1957.jpg
Dr. F. A.Matsen teaching.tif

Entry.jpg
Front/SEfacade1953.jpg
Kitchen2010.jpg
LivingRoom2010.jpg
MatsenFamily1953.jpg
NWconstruction1952.jpg
Prof. F. A. Matsen portrait.tif
SE/FrontMarch2010.jpg
SouthSide2010.jpg
Stairs/Wall LR.jpg

NOTE: A vertical file on Professor Matsen has been established by his daughter at the Austin History Center with clippings and historical photos.

- KEY TO SYMBOLS
- Ceiling Outlet
 - Branch "
 - ⊥ Concourse -
 - ⊕ Floor Plug
 - ⊕ Joint Switch
 - ⊕ Switch
 - ⊕ Power Outlet
 - ⊕ Sill Cook
 - ⊕ Gas

- DOOR SCHEDULE
- A - 3'0" x 6'6" - 1 1/2" Flush
 - B - 2'6" x 6'6" - 1 1/2" Interior
 - C -
 - D - 2'6" x 6'6" - 1 1/2" Flush
 - E - 2'6" x 6'6" - 1 1/2" Flush
 - F - 2'6" x 6'6" - 1 1/2" Flush
 - G - 2'0" x 6'6" - Pull-Flushed

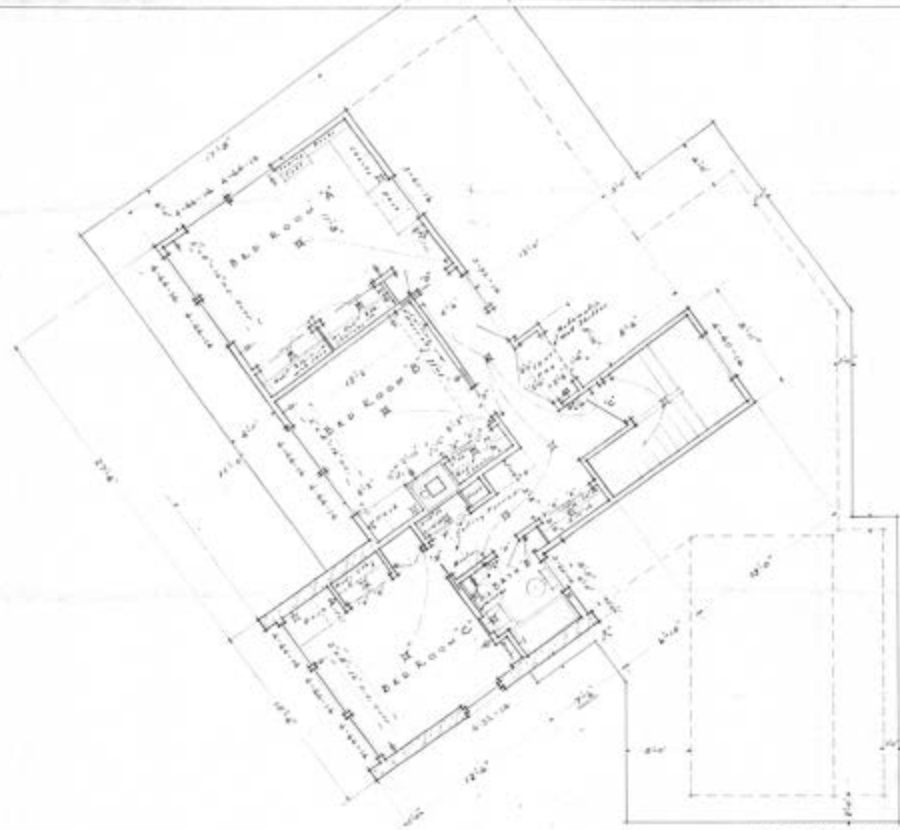


FIRST FLOOR PLAN

CALTON BUDEN AIA ARCHITECT
 4600 LEXINGTON RD. AUSTIN TEXAS
 PHON: 451-1111 FAX: 451-1112

MR. & MRS. F. A. MATSIEK
 1500 SAN GABRIEL AUSTIN TEXAS

DRAWING SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"
 DATE: 1/1/1988



Note: All Second Floor Ceiling Joist (4" x 12") 2'-0" x 16" members 2' on center

SECOND FLOOR PLAN

RESIDENCE FOR

CARLTON BAUGH AIA ARCHITECT
 4000 Lullwood Rd. Austin Texas
 JOSEPH DUFFEL AIA ASSOC. ARCH.

M. R. & MRS. F. A. MATSEN
 1800 SAN GABRIEL AUSTIN TEXAS

DRAWING
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"
 DATE: OCT. 1932

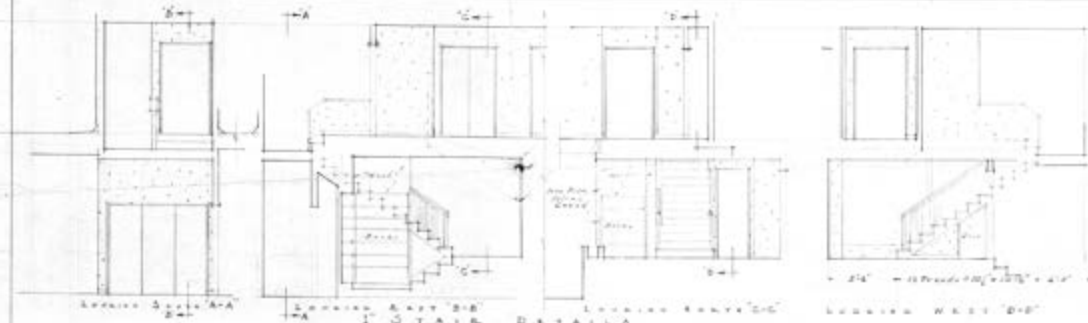


DETAILS PLOT PLAN

RESIDENCE FOR
M. R. & MRS. F. A. MATSEN

DRAWING 1
SCALE 1"
DAY 1

CARLTON BRUSH AIA ARCHITECT
4006 LULLWOOD RD. AUSTIN TEXAS
J. K. ROBERT BUFFUM AIA ASSOC. ARCH.



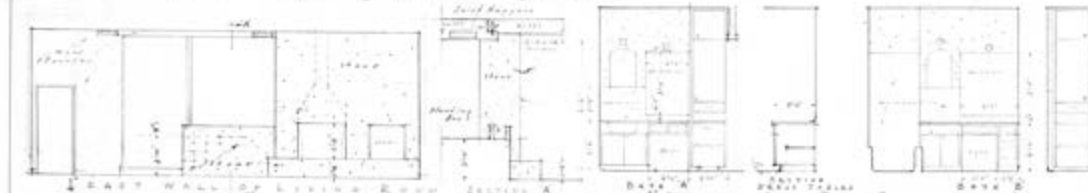
LOOKING EAST WALL SECTION A-A

LOOKING EAST WALL SECTION B-B

LOOKING EAST WALL SECTION C-C

LOOKING WEST WALL SECTION D-D

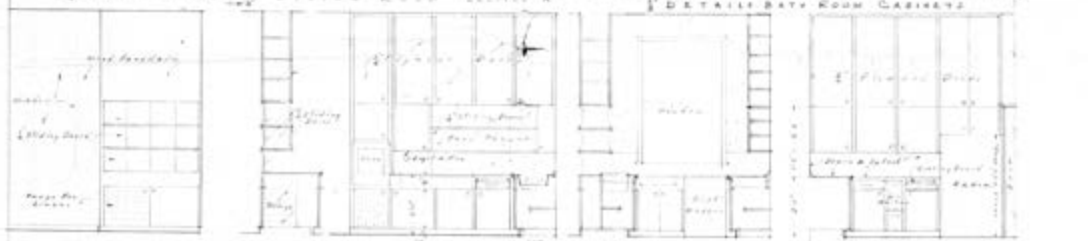
STAIR DETAILS



EAST WALL OF LIVING ROOM SECTION A

DETAILS BATH ROOM CABINETS

KITCHEN CABINETS



KITCHEN CABINETS

WALL SECTION

WALL SECTION

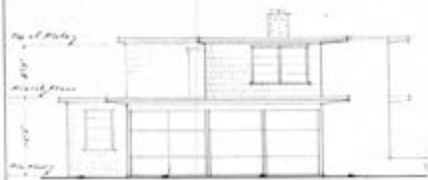
SOUTH WALL

DETAILS

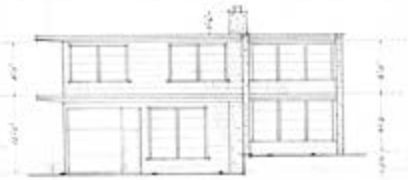
CHELSEA BRUDA AND ARCHITECT
 8000 LULLWOOD AV. AUSTIN TEXAS
 JOURNAY SUPPLES AND ASSOC. ARCH

RESIDENCE FOR
 MR. & MRS. F. A. MATSEN
 1500 SAN GABRIEL AUSTIN TEXAS

DRAWING
 SHEET 12 OF 14
 DATE 12/11/1952



WEST



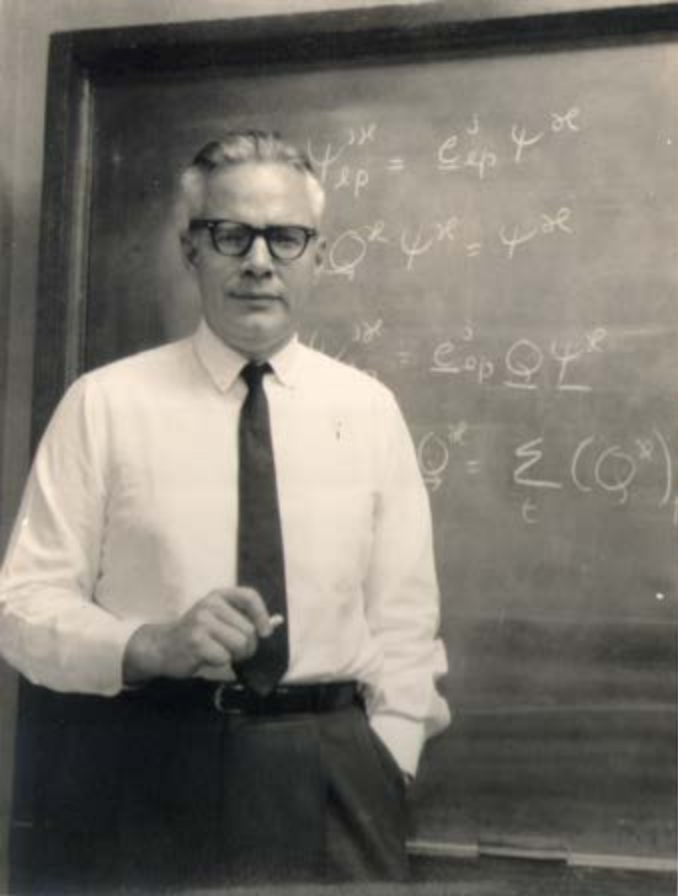
SOUTH



EAST



NORTH



$$\psi_{xp} = \sum_j \psi_{xj}$$

$$\hat{Q}^2 \psi = \psi$$

$$\psi = \sum_j \hat{Q}_j \psi$$

$$\hat{Q}_j = \sum_t (\hat{Q}_j^t)$$









MAR • 57















