

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0684538

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	SEP 19 1978
DATE ENTERED	DEC 1 1978

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC John Derby House  
*James Daniel*

RECEIVED  
JUN 20 1978

AND/OR COMMON

OHP

**LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
2535 East Chevy Chase Drive

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
22

CITY, TOWN  
Glendale

VICINITY OF

STATE  
California

CODE  
06

COUNTY  
Los Angeles

CODE  
037

**CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME  
Carole and Michael H. Dougherty

STREET & NUMBER  
2535 East Chevy Chase Drive

CITY, TOWN  
Glendale

VICINITY OF

STATE  
California 91206

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
Los Angeles County Recorder's Office

STREET & NUMBER  
325 West Temple

CITY, TOWN  
Los Angeles

STATE  
California 90012

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS** See Continuation Sheet

TITLE A Guide to Architecture in Southern California

DATE 1965

FEDERAL STATE  COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
Los Angeles County Art Museum

CITY, TOWN  
Los Angeles

STATE  
California

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

*James Daniel*

The ~~John~~ Derby House is an American Modernistic house with ornamentation of Mayan inspiration. The house is of a unique pre-cast concrete and knit block construction. Most of the exterior is covered with stucco.

The house is basically a four story mass (25' on each side) arising out of a long rectangular mass (73' X 21'), both of which are anchored to the base of a decomposed granite hillside. The top two stories of the tower-like mass are perpendicularly intersected by another mass (23' X 27'). The roofs of the long rectangular mass are garden decks.

There are two main entries to the house: one being up a flight of exterior stairs shielded by pierced block screens into a two story living room focusing on a walk-in fireplace with wrought iron gates and original andirons. Over this, running diagonally across the room is a balcony/library. On this level is the rectangular master bedroom two stories in height with a studio loft over a portion of it. The three pairs of vertically stacked window/doors here are separated by block pillars and open to a roof deck. The master bath on this level has the original tile, tub and sink.

The other entry through the garden leads to a six-sided dining room also focusing on a fireplace with a hood of decorative block extending to the ceiling. A window wall of pierced block is opposite. Off this room on one side is the children's bedroom wing and on the other, the service wing.

There are twenty-two exterior doors also serving as windows; many have an overlay of wrought iron screens whose design was inspired by the Yucca plant. The main entry doors are bordered by leaded glass as are the living room doors which open to balconies facing east and south. The latter are protected by pierced block sunscreens which start at midpoint and rise to the roofline.

All the lighting fixtures, some inspired by an American Indian design, are extant as is the original icebox. The house is basically unaltered from the original.

Also on the property is an original pirced block bridge and a storage shed built of lath on a rock and stone foundation. There are numerous rock retaining walls, stone steps and rock terraced slopes, concrete and stone paths, benches and barbeque. Scattered on the property are many California Live Oak and Eucalyptus trees as well as some tall Pittosporum shrubs.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1926

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Lloyd Wright

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The following was written by Esther McCoy, author, architectural historian and correspondent for Progressive Architecture. The quotations are taken from a letter by Alson Clark, librarian of the Architecture and Fine Arts Library of the University of Southern California and have been added to Mrs. McCoy's material.

The Derby House built in 1926 is one of six houses designed by Lloyd Wright or his father, Frank Lloyd Wright, in a system called Knit-Block. Concrete blocks were cast in a mold of an abstract design drawn from nature, the design either embossed or pierced; the blocks were knitted together with steel rods. "...the first house using reinforced concrete blocks was built by Lloyd Wright, and the senior Wright acknowledged the fact that the idea came from his son." The material and system was judged by the Wrights to be suitable for a semi-arid climate - essentially a mud form pierced and opened up for light. The textured concrete block period lasted less than ten years with the Wrights.

The sunscreens were used by Wright in this house "at least four years before Le Corbusier proposed them for buildings in Algiers, and thirty years before Edward D. Stone popularized them ..." The library/balcony which runs diagonally across the living room "is undoubtedly the prototype for the living rooms in Frank Lloyd Wright's famous unbuilt 'Saint Mark's Tower' project in New York three years later."

Lloyd Wright's houses differ from his father's in several respects; one, the concentration of ornament rather than an overall texture; two, Lloyd used ornament as counterpoint to large areas of plain walls. The extensive use of planar surfaces in Lloyd's work shows the influence of Irving Gill, in whose San Diego office he worked as a draftsman as a young man. (Gill's houses were undecorated cubes.)

Lloyd's skill in creating dramatic (often theatrical) spaces and forms is a contribution too little recognized. Lloyd's houses are unique in the grandeur of their scale, (even for a structure of limited size); they are self-contained in their scale, seldom establishing a benchmark from which they can be measured but instead simply being objects in space. Some of this scaleless tendency may come from the German Expressionists, but Lloyd's interest in the

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES** See Continuation Sheet

Clark, Alson. Librarian, Architecture and Fine Arts Library,  
University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California,  
Personal communication, March 1978

(See continuation sheet)

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Approx. 1/4 acre  
UTM REFERENCES

A	11	388420	3780520	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property is an irregular hillside city lot approximately 98' x 133' x 89' x 58' x 96' and bounded by Chevy Chase Drive on the east. Its legal description is Lot 17, Block 2 of Tract 8103 in the County of Los Angeles.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE	DATE
Carole Dougherty	May 3, 1978
ORGANIZATION	TELEPHONE
owner	246-0508
STREET & NUMBER	STATE
2535 East Chevy Chase Drive	California 91206
CITY OR TOWN	
Glendale	

**12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL  STATE  LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE *Kinoy McEllon*

TITLE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE **SEP 13 1978**

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION *Charles O. ...* DATE *12/14/78*

ATTEST: *W. Kay ...* KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER DATE *12/13/78*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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theater gives to his houses a certain kinship with the stage or movie set. Lloyd was one of the few who could combine a livable plan with high drama.

The general scheme of Lloyd's outdoor spaces reflects his years in the office of landscape architects and landplanners, Olmsted and Olmsted; he worked with them on plans for Balboa Park, Palos Verdes and the City of Torrance. The siting of the house on the decomposed granite soil, the layout of the gardens show a debt to the Olmsteds.

The Derby House "is one of the landmarks of modern architecture in Southern California."

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Item Number 6 -- continued

Representation in Existing Surveys

Historic Preservation Element, City of Glendale

Date: 1977 Local

Depository: Planning Division

City: Glendale

State: California

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Item Number 9 -- continued

Gebhard, David and Von Breton. Lloyd Wright, Architect 20th Century Architecture in an Organic Exhibition, Standard Printing of Santa Barbara, Inc. (1971)

Gebhard, David and Winter, Robert. A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California, Peregrine Smith, Inc. (1977)

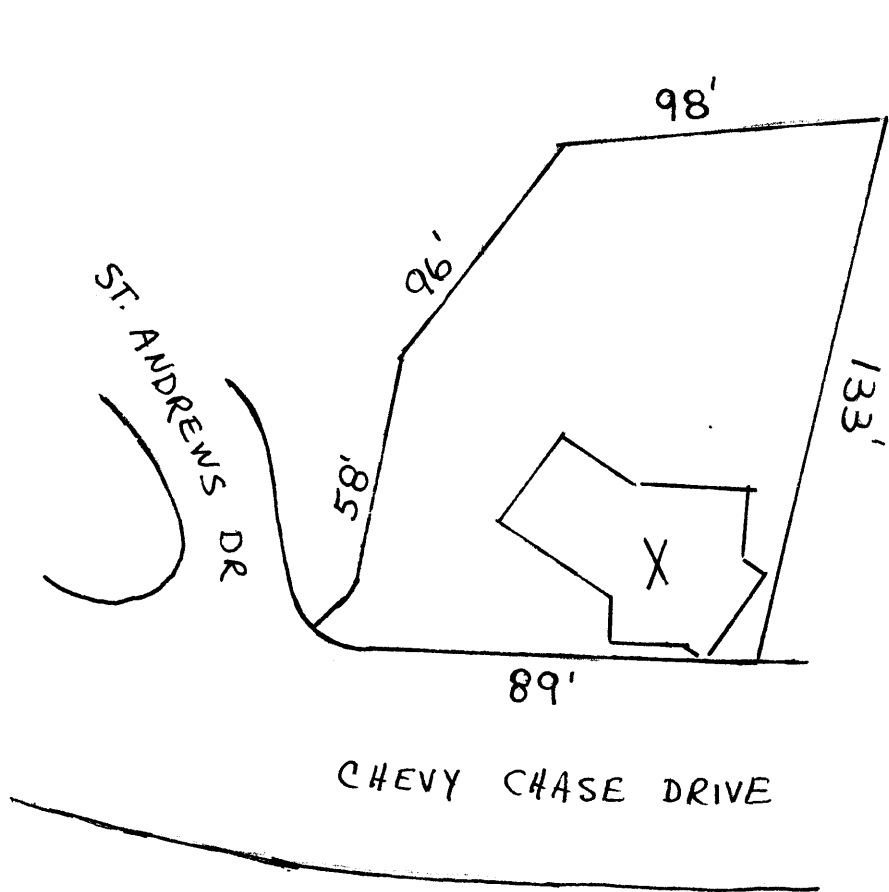
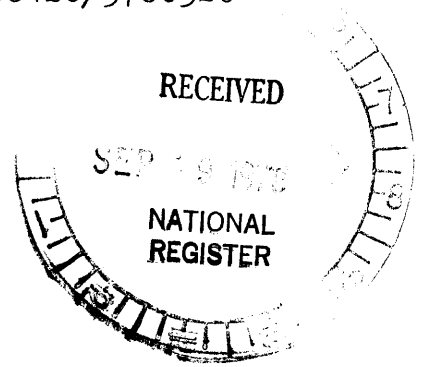
McCoy, Esther. Architectural historian, Personal communication  
March, 1978

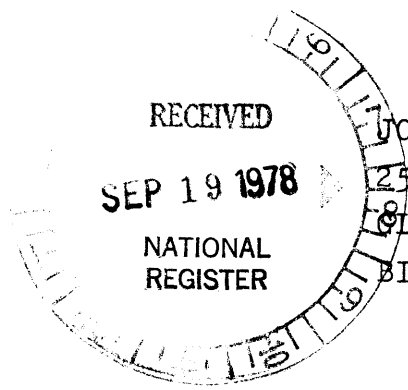
McCoy, Esther. "Historical Background, Before the Silvers",  
Progressive Architecture, 10:76 (1976)

Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture Since 1780, A Guide to the Styles, The M.I.T. Press (1969)

Wright, Lloyd. Interview June, 1977

JOHN DERBY HOUSE  
2535 EAST CHEVY CHASE DR.  
GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA 91206  
UTM REFERENCE:  
11/388420/3780520





JOHN DERBY HOUSE  
2535 EAST CHEVY CHASE DRIVE  
GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA 91206  
BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF MAIN  
MASSES

