



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Report to the Historical Resources Board

DATE ISSUED: July 14, 2022 REPORT NO. HRB-22-026

HEARING DATE: July 28, 2022

SUBJECT: **ITEM #05 – Joseph E. Jessop, Sr. House**

RESOURCE INFO: [California Historical Resources Inventory Database \(CHRID\) link](#)

APPLICANT: Kevin and Jill Smith Family Trust 04-13-12; represented by HLLK Architects

LOCATION: 414 La Crescentia Drive, Peninsula Community, Council District 2
APN 532-461-0100

DESCRIPTION: Consider the designation of the Joseph E. Jessop, Sr. House located at 414 La Crescentia Drive as a historical resource.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Designate the Joseph E. Jessop, Sr. House located at 414 La Crescentia Drive as a historical resource with a period of significance of 1929-1970 under HRB Criterion B. The designation excludes the detached, modified 1929 garage, the converted 1951 garage, the detached pool house/shed, the 2019 pool/ covered patio structure, and the 2020-2021 additions to the residence. This recommendation is based on the following finding:

The resource is identified with Joseph E. Jessop, Sr., a historically significant person and retains integrity for that association with a period of significance of 1929-1970. Specifically, the resource was the primary residence of Jessop, Sr. from 1929-1996, who served as an early leader in revitalizing downtown San Diego, a prominent member of the San Diego Yacht Club, and an executive of the J. Jessop Jeweler who led the business's growth in San Diego.

BACKGROUND

This item is being brought before the Historical Resources Board in conjunction with a proposed building modification or demolition of a structure of 45 years or more, consistent with San Diego Municipal Code Section 143.0212. The subject resource is a two-story single-family residence located on a graded lot. The parcel contains several accessory structures and a pool.

The property has not been identified in any historic surveys, as the subject area has not been previously surveyed.

ANALYSIS

A Historical Resource Research Report was prepared by Nexus Planning, which concludes that the resource is significant under HRB Criteria B, C, and D. Staff concurs that the site is a significant historical resource under HRB Criterion B, but not under HRB Criteria C and D. This determination is consistent with [the *Guidelines for the Application of Historical Resources Board Designation Criteria*](#), as follows.

CRITERION B - Is identified with persons or events significant in local, state or national history.

The property is significant under Criterion B for its association with Joseph E Jessop, Sr. (1898-1996). Jessop, Sr. was part of a large multi-generational family involved in the eponymous J. Jessop and Sons Watchmaker/Jessop Jewelers company. Jessop, Sr. was born in Miramar on the family ranch and later moved to Coronado. His parents opened a watch and jewelry repair store as early as 1891 in downtown San Diego. At a young age, Jessop, Sr. worked in the family store as a page boy during the Christmas season. Before college, he trained with the Student Army Training Corps for twelve weeks, ending his program as World War I concluded. Later, he attended the University of California, Berkeley and where he earned his bachelor's degree, and then continued his education at Harvard University, where he obtained a master's degree in business administration. After college, he began the Escondido Canyon Company, which canned fruits, but decided to ultimately join the family business full time, working as the accountant, sales manager, and eventually the president.

Jessop Sr. was involved in the San Diego Yacht Club (formed 1852). During his membership in the 1920s, he built the first Star boat in San Diego, competed against 112 other yachts, and won the race. In 1928, Jessop, Sr. assisted and offered financial assistance to several teenage boys to start a Junior Division of the club, although the proposal was initially met with resistance from the older members. The following year, he was named the Commodore of the club and remained one of the eleven men active in the organization during the Great Depression. As a dues-paying member, Jessop, Sr. and the other men kept the club functioning during this time. In the 1950s, downtown San Diego experienced an exodus of merchants as businesses left the district for newly developed suburban malls. Jessop, Sr. and other leaders created the Downtown Association to entice businesses and customers back into the city. The organization promoted events called "Dollar Days," "Bargain Days," "Window display Contests," and "Mother of the Year Contests." Jessop, Sr. met with prominent San Diego businessmen and raised \$63,000 (equivalent to over \$600,000 in 2021), forming the San Diegans Incorporated in 1958. This organization monitored the city's development for several years and fought to build the B Street tunnel, which expanded San Diego City College's acreage and access. Under Jessop, Sr.'s leadership, the City of San Diego built the Community Concourse, including a theatre, convention center, parking structure, and the city administration building. Lastly, in the 1950s, Jessop Sr. founded a real estate division responsible for expanding the family jewelry company throughout San Diego, eventually leading the company to become one of the five largest privately owned jewelry retailers in the nation by 1960. In 1970, Jessop Sr. sold the business to Dayton Hudson Corp.

Jessop, Sr. held a variety of positions in various organizations, including the chairman of the executive committee of First National Bank from 1943 until his retirement in 1968; a founder and past president of the San Diego Maritime Museum, helping to obtain the Star of India for San Diego; a founder of the Whittier Institute for Diabetes and Endocrinology at Scripps Memorial Hospital in La Jolla; an influential member of the committee that planned and developed Mission Bay into the world's largest aquatic park; and the representative of the Downtown Association to travel to Washington D.C. in 1962 when the city of San Diego was chosen as the finest All-American City. In 1976, the San Diego Rotary Club gave Jessop, Sr. the "Mr. San Diego" award, recognizing his contributions. In 1995, the San Diego Hall of Champions (now the San Diego Sports Association) awarded Jessop, Sr. the "Community Champion" of the year.

Other properties associated with Joseph Jessop, Sr. include his childhood home in Coronado and other residential properties which were demolished. Various business addresses related to Jessop, Sr. have also been identified; however, staff did not find sufficient evidence that any of these properties are a good representative of Jessop, Sr.'s productive life. The Jessop family was previously recognized under a historical designation in 1998 (HRB #367), but HRB #367 was significantly altered in 2005-2007 and no longer retained integrity. The subject resource located at 414 La Crescentia Drive is the only intact building that holds the strongest association with Jessop, Sr.; Jessop, Sr. constructed it as his primary residence in 1929 and continued to reside at this location throughout his productive life.

The 1929 Tudor home retains the integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association as it relates to Criterion B. However, staff recommends excluding the detached 1929 garage, the converted 1951 garage, and the detached pool house/shed due to alterations that occurred outside of the period of significance. Similarly, the 2019 pool/ covered structure and the 2020-2021 additions to the residence are recent constructions that happened after the period of significance and hold no association with Joseph Jessop, Sr. The period of significance is defined as 1929 to 1970, covering the time when Jessop, Sr. became the youngest Commodore of the San Diego Yacht Club, his 1950s involvement with downtown San Diego revitalization, the 1950s-1960s leadership in the family jewelry company, and terminating in 1970 when he sold the business.

Significance Statement: The subject resource was the primary residence of Joseph E. Jessop, Sr, a well-known civic and business leader in San Diego, from 1929-1970. In the 1950s-1960s, Jessop, Sr. served as an early leader in revitalizing downtown San Diego when post-war developments concentrated in the suburbs. He was the owner and executive of the J. Jessop Jeweler, leading the company's growth in San Diego until 1970. Therefore, staff recommends the designation under HRB Criterion B for the association with significant person Joseph E. Jessop, Sr. with a period of significance of 1929-1970.

CRITERION C - Embodies distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period or method of construction or is a valuable example of the use of natural materials or craftsmanship.

The subject resource is situated on a parcel that contains a single-family residence and multiple accessory buildings. Constructed in 1929 in the Tudor Revival style, the residence features a two-story form with a one-story wing. Its exterior cladding includes stucco, brick, and wood siding. Its steeply pitched cross-gable roof is sheathed with textured concrete tiles. The residence is connected to a one-story converted garage space to its northeast. A second converted garage is located on a

lower grade than the residence and is accessible by stairs connected to the residence from the east. The site also contains modern landscape elements, a pool, a pool structure, and a modified shed/pool house.

The Tudor Revival residence includes a primary entrance facing west. On the west elevation, the entrance is located on a wall plane with brick and half-timbering details. The entry door is a single-glazed, one-lite wooden swivel door. A cantilevering gable is also present on this elevation, featuring gable-end wavy clapboards and decorative brackets. Windows designs on this elevation are varied but are mostly casement windows. The north elevation features a wood and glass hyphen, which connects to a modified 1951 garage. The second story details include a louvered gable vent and three casement windows. Dormers exist on this elevation at the cutaway at the roofline. Towards the eastern portion of the north elevation, an addition clad in board-and-batten siding can be observed. The east elevation faces out towards San Diego Bay; this elevation features a second-story balcony, a gable with a cantilevering balcony, and half-timbering details. Fenestration consists of a single-lite swivel door, casement windows, fixed windows, and La Cantina folding doors. The south elevation features a pair of leaded windows and a chimney. The chimney is clad in brick and stucco and contains two chimney pots.

Modifications to the resource include the 1940 addition to the original garage, 1940 addition to residence (location unknown), 1951 construction of a new garage, 1951 conversion of the original garage, and the 1961 porch addition to the east elevation, a 2019 pool/ standalone patio structure construction, and a 2020-2021 addition/remodel. Further alterations occurred between 1961 and 2003, including the reconfiguration of the front door on the west elevation to the east; the removal of the original front door and replacement with a bay window with brick infill; the installation of several large fixed picture windows; the small addition on east elevation (now replaced with a larger addition); and a second-story porch on the east elevation. The 2020-2021 rehabilitation effort includes the remodel of the 1951 garage and the construction of a glass hyphen, the removal of the 1961 porch cover, the reversal of the 1961-2003 front door reconfiguration, and some window replacements. This project also included, but was not limited to, the construction of a new window in a new window opening on the south elevation, new concrete steps, new La Cantina folding doors in an existing window opening, new metal canopies over the entry doors, an addition on the east elevation clad in board-and-batten, a new cantilevering balcony with glass railing, and new glass-railing system on an existing second-story balcony which replaced the old wood railing.

While many of the 1961-2003 alterations were removed in 2020-2021 as a part of the rehabilitation project, the rehabilitation work did not restore the building to the point that sufficient integrity is retained. Along the west (front) elevation, the original front door has been lost and not restored to its original design, as the original design is unknown. The report has identified several unoriginal windows (some rehabilitated), and their original conditions are also unknown. Additionally, the location and extent of a 1940 addition to residence worth \$700 cannot be ascertained. In terms of the integrity of setting, the immediate surrounding the subject property was graded in 1951, which has configured the driveway to its current layout, posing marginal integrity concerns. Although the property has been rehabilitated recently, and most 1961-2003 alterations have been removed, the cumulative impact of integrity loss from alterations to door and fenestration elements, the building no longer retains the integrity of design, materials, and workmanship as it relates to Criterion C for the Tudor Revival Architecture.

CRITERION D - Is representative of a notable work of a master builder, designer, architect, engineer, landscape architect, interior designer, artist or craftsman.

Established Master Architect Ralph L. Frank designed Joseph E. Jessop, Sr. House. Frank was born in Kansas in 1889 and moved to San Diego in 1920. After working as a salesman for the real estate firm Grable-Francisco-Bleifuss Company, he began working for Ralph E. Hurlburt as a draftsman. By the mid-1930s, Frank and Hurlburt partnered with builder James Slaughter to form the firm Hurlburt, Frank & Slaughter. This company designed and built several houses throughout San Diego for high-end clients. Ralph L. Frank was involved in designing buildings in the Brookes Terrace subdivision in Marston Hills; his breadth of work also covers buildings in Uptown, Point Loma, La Playa, and La Jolla, in a variety of architectural styles, including Spanish Eclectic and Monterey Revival. He also designed 20 U.S. National Bank branches in partnership with Grant King. The economic depression 1930s caused Frank to shift his projects to simple, cost-effective, affordable housing promoted by the FHA; these buildings were designed in the Colonial Revival style and the Cape Code style. In Ralph L. Frank's later years, he shifted his design to more contemporary and modern styles.

According to the Criterion Guidelines, for a property to meet the requirements for Criterion D designation, "[a] resource must express a particular phase in the development of the master's career, an aspect of his/her work, or a particular idea or theme in the craft." The subject property is an early example of Ralph L. Frank's work in 1929 before his partnership between Ralph Hurlburt and James Slaughter and may be significant in its own right to demonstrate his breadth of architectural styles and represent an example of his design during a phase in his early career; It is known that his later work between 1930 and 1950 are typically two-story Monterey and Colonial Revival in design. However, alterations and modifications discussed earlier makes physical features and design quality attributable to the Master challenging to identify, as many windows and doors have been replaced, and their original design is unknown. Some window sashes contain bullseye glass, indicating a more historical origin, but the report provides no additional information regarding these windows. Due to the cumulative impacts of integrity loss from alterations to door and fenestration elements, the building no longer retains the integrity of design, materials, and workmanship as it relates to Criterion D for association with Ralph L. Frank.

Established Master Builder Harry C. Brawner has constructed this property through his firm H C Brawner & Son. Brawner moved to San Diego in 1903 at 38 and began working as a building contractor. In the 1910s and 1920s, Brawner partnered with Harmon Hunter to form Brawner & Hunter. Brawner & Hunter were known for their quality of construction and enduring construction techniques. As such, they were sought by prominent architects of the era, including Irving Gill, William Hebbard, William Johnson, and Emmor Weave. They have all been established as Master Architects by the City of San Diego.

The Historical Resources Research Report did not identify individual aspects of the subject building that can be attributed to Henry C. Brawner. An aspect of Brawner's work is his high-quality construction and enduring construction techniques. However, the report did not specify any physical elements of the building as a product of Brawner's technique and craftsmanship. The report did not comment on the quality of construction on the structural framing or cladding materials, the quality of the masonry, the quality of woodwork or plasterwork, or the fit and finish of fenestration elements. Under Criterion D evaluation, the report stated that the property "possesses unique features and a design that is custom to its site" but did not elaborate on its unique features. In fact,

under Criterion C evaluation, the report dictates, "[t]he property is an example of typical construction techniques and materials...Historical evidence does not substantiate any claims that the property exemplifies high craftsmanship..." Consequently, staff did not find sufficient evidence to qualify the subject building as a notable work of Brawner for his high-quality construction or enduring construction techniques. Therefore, staff does not recommend that the building be designated under Criterion D as a notable or representative of Master Builder Henry C. Brawner.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Designation brings with it the responsibility of maintaining the building in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. The benefits of designation include the availability of the Mills Act Program for reduced property tax; the use of the more flexible Historical Building Code; flexibility in the application of other regulatory requirements; the use of the Historical Conditional Use Permit which allows flexibility of use; and other programs which vary depending on the specific site conditions and owner objectives. If the property is designated by the HRB, conditions related to restoration or rehabilitation of the resource may be identified by staff during the Mills Act application process, and included in any future Mills Act contract.

CONCLUSION

Based on the information submitted and staff's field check, it is recommended that Joseph E. Jessop, Sr. House located at 414 La Crescentia Drive be designated with a period of significance of 1929-1970 under HRB Criterion B for its association with Joseph E. Jessop Sr. The designation excludes the detached, modified 1929 garage, the converted 1951 garage, the detached pool house/shed, the 2019 pool/ covered patio structure, and the 2020-2021 additions to the residence.



Alvin Lin
Assistant Planner



Suzanne Segur
Senior Planner/ HRB Liaison
Development Services Department

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Attachment(s):

1. Draft Resolution
2. Applicant's Historical Report under separate cover

RESOLUTION NUMBER
ADOPTED ON 7/28/2022

WHEREAS, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego held a noticed public hearing on 7/28/2022, to consider the historical designation of the Joseph E. Jessop, Sr. House (owned by Smith Kevin & Jill Family Trust 04-13-12, 414 La Crescentia, San Diego, CA 92106) located at **414 La Crescentia Dr, San Diego, CA 92106**, APN: **532-461-01-00**, further described as LOT 21 POR LOT 20 & in the City of San Diego, County of San Diego, State of California; and

WHEREAS, in arriving at their decision, the Historical Resources Board considered the historical resources report prepared by the applicant, the staff report and recommendation, all other materials submitted prior to and at the public hearing, inspected the subject property and heard public testimony presented at the hearing; and

WHEREAS, the property would be added to the Register of Designated Historical Resources as **Site No. ,** and

WHEREAS, designated historical resources located within the City of San Diego are regulated by the Municipal Code (Chapter 14, Article 3, Division 2) as such any exterior modifications (or interior if any interior is designated) shall be approved by the City, this includes but is not limited to modifications to any windows or doors, removal or replacement of any exterior surfaces (i.e. paint, stucco, wood siding, brick), any alterations to the roof or roofing material, alterations to any exterior ornamentation and any additions or significant changes to the landscape/ site.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED, the Historical Resources Board based its designation of the Joseph E. Jessop, Sr. House on the following findings:

(1) The property is historically significant under CRITERION B in connection with Joseph E. Jessop, Sr. who is an historically significant person and retains integrity of that association. Specifically, the resource was his main residence during his most productive years as a civic and business leader with a period of significance of 1929-1970. This finding is further supported by the staff report, the historical research report, and written and oral evidence presented at the designation hearing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, in light of the foregoing, the Historical Resources Board of the City of San Diego hereby approves the historical designation of the above named property. The designation includes the parcel and exterior of the building as Designated Historical Resource **Site No. .**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the designation shall exclude the detached, modified 1929 garage, the converted 1951 garage, the detached pool house/shed, the 2019 pool/ covered patio structure, and the 2020-2021 additions to the residence.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Secretary to the Historical Resources Board shall cause this resolution to be recorded in the office of the San Diego County Recorder at no fee, for the benefit of the City of San Diego, and with no documentary tax due.

Vote:

BY: _____
DAVID MCCULLOUGH, Chair
Historical Resources Board

APPROVED: MARA W. ELLIOTT,
CITY ATTORNEY

BY: _____
LINDSEY SEBASTIAN,
Deputy City Attorney

RECORDING REQUESTED BY
CITY OF SAN DIEGO
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

WHEN RECORDED MAIL TO

HISTORICAL RESOURCES BOARD
ATTN: HRB SECRETARY
1222 FIRST AVENUE, MS 501
SAN DIEGO, CA 92101

SPACE ABOVE THIS LINE FOR RECORDER'S USE

RESOLUTION NUMBER

HISTORICAL DESIGNATION OF PROPERTY ON

414 La Crescentia, San Diego, CA 92106

ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER **532-461-0100-00**

HISTORICAL RESOURCES BOARD NUMBER