

State of California — The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
**PRIMARY RECORD**

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
HRI # \_\_\_\_\_  
Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_  
NRHP Status Code \_\_\_\_\_

Other Listings \_\_\_\_\_  
Review Code \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Page 1 of 4 Resource name(s) or number (assigned by recorder) *Gillin Residence*

**P1. Other Identifier:**

\*P2. Location:  Not for Publication  Unrestricted

\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad

\*c. Address *70-924 Fairway Drive*

\*e. Other Locational Data: Assessor's Parcel Number Block: Lot:

\*a. County *Riverside*

Date:

City *Rancho Mirage*

Zip *92270*

\*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries.)

*Architect William Cody designed this one-story, "U"-shaped, Desert Modern residence in 1958. Located along the greens of the Thunderbird Country Club golf course, the flat-roofed house is 3,802 square feet, with four bedrooms and 3.75 bathrooms, and occupies a .38 acre parcel. Vertical boards and stucco sheathe the exteriors. Windows are primarily floor to ceiling with some clerestories. There are mitered glass corners on the projecting section of the east elevation. Deep overhangs are either cantilevered, supported by square wood posts, or secured by narrow, exposed beams that cross over the flat roof to eaves on the opposite side. The primary elevations are within the "U" and open onto the triangular swimming pool and continuous lawns of the back yard and golf course greens. A concrete path parallels the double carport and passes through a metal gate leading to a covered entrance walkway. The flat walkway roof, supported by thin square wood posts, is a Cody trademark. Square blue-green mosaic wall panels are placed north of the exterior entrance gate and adjacent to the main entrance door to the south. Several corners of the concrete block perimeter walls have projecting, offset blocks to catch desert shadows. Around the pool, shallow concrete steps are set diagonally from the house creating a triangular shape similar to the form of the swimming pool. Landscaping in the front is desert-themed, with gravel, palms, and cacti. Other areas have lawns bordered by flowerbeds, mature palms, and trimmed hedges. The house appears original and in excellent condition.*

\*P3b. Resource Attributes: (list attributes and codes) *HP2. Single-family Property*

\*P4. Resources Present:  Building  Structure  Object  Site  District  Element of District  Other

P5a. Photo



**P5b. Description of Photo:** (view and date)  
*north elevation  
November 2002*

\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Sources:  historic  
*1958/ Source: Metrosca*

\*P7. Owner and Address:  
*Walter W. Cruttenden III  
14 Chatham Court  
Newport Beach, CA 92660*

\*P8. Recorded by:  
*P. Moruzzi, T. Grimes, L. Heumann  
Leslie Heumann and Associates  
600 N. Sierra Bonita Ave  
Los Angeles, CA 90036*

\*P9. Date Recorded:  
*September 23, 2002*

\*P10. Survey Type:  
*Intensive Survey.*

\*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none")  
*None.*

\*Attachments:  None  Location Map  Sketch Map  Continuation Sheet  Building, Structure, and Object Record  
 Archaeological Record  District Record  Linear Feature Record  Milling Station Record  Rock Art Record  
 Artifact Record  Photograph Record  Other (list)

**BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD**

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\*NRHP Status Code 3S

\*Resource Name or #: *Gillin Residence*

B1. Historic Name: *Gillin Residence*

B2. Common Name: *Same*

B3. Original Use: *Single-family Residence*

B4. Present Use: *Single-family Residence*

\*B5. Architectural Style: *Desert Modern*

\*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations): *Constructed in 1958*

*Note: No building permits exist prior to incorporation of the City of Rancho Mirage in 1973.*

*No building permits for exterior modifications found.*

\*B7. Moved? No Yes Unknown Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Original Location: \_\_\_\_\_

\*B8. Related Features: *None.*

B9a. Architect: *William Cody*

b. Builder: *Unknown*

\*B10. Significance: Theme *Country Club Era*

Area *Rancho Mirage*

Period of Significance: *1951 - 1973* Property Type: *Single-family Residence* Applicable Criteria: *C*

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity)

*The Gillin Residence is architecturally significant as an outstanding example of the Desert Modern style, as created and interpreted by architect William F. Cody. The Gillin Residence appears in the William F. Cody building list and was built in 1958 according to public records. These records are confirmed by the 1958 phone directory, which lists the Gillin as owners. The house resonates with Cody's trademark design elements: the flat roof, cantilevered overhangs, thin steel walkway roof supported by delicate square steel posts, glass walls, street privacy, and mitered glass corners. The triangular swimming pool is a clever touch. In the country club areas of Rancho Mirage the houses are oriented towards the rear for spectacular golf course views; the Gillin Residence is a prime example of this orientation.*

*(See Continuation Sheet 3 of 4.)*

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) \_\_\_\_\_

\*B12. References:

*City of Rancho Mirage Building Permits*

*Alan Hess and Andrew Danish, Palm Springs Weekend, Chronicle Books, 2001.*

*Adele Cygelman, Palm Springs Modern, New York, Rizzoli International Publications, 1999. pp. 112-115.*

*William F. Cody building list.*

*1958 Palm Springs Directory.*

B13. Remarks:

Sketch Map

\*B14. Evaluator: *Peter Moruzzi, Teresa Grimes, Leslie Heumann*

\*Date of Evaluation: *September 23, 2002*

(This space reserved for official comments.)

**\*B10. Significance (continued):**

*This is one of William Cody's most important residential buildings in Rancho Mirage. Of the approximately 21 single-family Cody-designed residences identified as architecturally significant in Rancho Mirage, it is one of only six that appear eligible for listing in the National Register. The Gillin residence exemplifies the Desert Modern style that Cody helped develop and with which he, along with E. Stewart Williams, became most closely associated. The Desert Modern architectural style incorporates large expanses of floor to ceiling glass sheltered by deep overhangs extending from flat roofs in creating a powerful interaction between the indoors and outdoors. Desert Modern buildings appear light, often supported by thin steel or wood posts, with open interiors flowing from room to room. In addition to glass, exterior materials include stucco, wood, slumpstone, and natural rock. Street elevations are often shielded for privacy with only clerestories providing light. Rear elevations embrace desert views and outdoor access. The Desert Modern style grew out of local architects' desire to adapt Modern materials, techniques, and floor plans to the unique requirements of desert living.*

*William F. Cody FAIA (1916-1978) was born in Dayton, Ohio and raised in Los Angeles. While attending architecture school at the University of Southern California in the late 1930s and early 1940s, Cody was also working for architect Cliff May, gaining experience in the adaptation of ranch and hacienda style houses to modern floor plans and construction techniques. Suffering from asthma, and believing that the Palm Springs area offered opportunity and prominent clients, Cody moved to Palm Springs in 1944-45 and set up practice. One of his first projects, the Del Marcos Hotel of 1946, won an AIA "creditable mention" award as an example of new resort hotel architecture for its "ingenious plan, which appears complicated but is actually orderly and thoughtful." Author and critic Alan Hess writes, "Greater thinness and more striking elegance became the single-minded focus of his ongoing design." Despite a reputation for carousing, Cody was exceptionally focused on the details of his designs and pushing the boundaries of his materials. His well-known and innovative early buildings, along with friendships with influential members of the Thunderbird, Tamarisk, and Eldorado Country Clubs, resulted in commissions to design (or in the case of Thunderbird, remodel) the clubhouses of all three locations. In addition, Cody designed a large number of residences in the country club areas, many along the fairways of the new resort concept of golf course living, a concept that Cody himself helped devise.*

*Author Adele Cygelman writes, "Joints and door frames seemingly disappeared into walls. He merged living rooms into terraces and gardens. Roofs jutted out twelve feet to shield the walls of glass. Pattern and texture came from tile floors, carved wood panels, and concrete-block screens with geometric motifs, all of which were meticulously designed by Cody to match each other precisely at the seams and angles where the planes met." Like other Coachella Valley architects, Cody designed churches, gas stations, motels, restaurants, offices, a mobile home park, shopping centers, even a carwash. "Yet a distinct character can be seen in all of them," says Hess. "It is a restless energy that brings a liveliness to his plans, elevations and details. The radical thinness of Cody roofs or the daring reach of a cantilever are clearly the result of a wrestling match between the architect and the materials and the laws of physics; that energy and striving remains in the building." Hess concludes, "The fact that Cody could take an established vocabulary and style and reinterpret it so vividly ranks him among the best of mid-century California designers."*

*The Gillin House appears eligible for separate listing in the National Register of Historic Places for exceptional architectural significance under Criterion C as a virtually original and intact example of William Cody's Desert Modern design from 1958 (a "3S" National Register Status Code). It, along with the Jorgensen Residence, is one of the two best and most well-preserved examples of Cody's work within the Thunderbird Country Club. In addition, the property would be eligible for designation under an existing or proposed local ordinance.*

**P5b. Description/Date of Photo:** *View of north and east elevations, November 2002.*



**P5b. Description/Date of Photo:** *View of carport and main entrance, November 2002.*

