

South Curtis Oaks Beginings....

This walking tour map features highlights of South Curtis Oaks subdivision #1, where J.C. Carly realized his long term dream of incorporating architectural character with natural surroundings and a major park. The subdivision is bounded by William Curtis Park east to Franklin Boulevard, and from Donner Way south to Sixth Avenue.

The land had been part of the Curtis family farm, dating from the 1850’s. In 1919 the eastern portion was sold to the South Curtis Oaks Company, controlled by J.C. Carly and his son-in-law, Curtis Cutter. Carly was a prominent local realtor and developer who earlier had developed several streetcar bungalow subdivisions in Curtis Park. Carly and Cutter formed a novel integrated operation to develop the land: a real estate firm, a building company, and a lumber mill. They began developing Curtis Oaks subdivision #1 in January of 1920.

Carly and Cutter hired architects Charles and James Dean to design the first houses, a pleasing row of 16 modest English and Colonial style homes on south Donner Way, opened for sale in May of 1920. In June of that year, Carly staged a grand real estate promotion, an aero circus, featuring planes from the South Curtis Oaks airfield located between the park and 24th St.

Profits from the smaller homes on Donner Way funded further building southward, street by street, and the Dean and Dean designs flourished. Carrie Curtis (daughter of William Curtis) and her husband George commissioned a French Revival style home on the east end of Curtis Way, taking full advantage of the mature trees of the Curtis farmstead. By 1923 Carly's long time dream of showpiece homes on Montgomery Way was well into development. Carly moved into to his landmark Spanish Mediterranean Revival home at the east end of the street in 1922. Curtis Cutter and his wife Leita took the home next door to the west.

In 1923 the Better Homes contest week came to Curtis Park for the first time. The Anne Hathaway Cottage on Montgomery Way and the Better Electrical Home on Sixth Avenue were two of Sacramento's contest homes. The Anne Hathaway Cottage won sixth-place honors nationwide.

Walking Tour Begins at the Entrance of 1920’s Donner Way

Side Notes
At the entrance to 1920s Donner Way, look south down Franklin Blvd. to notice the older houses, including some dating to the 19th Century Victorian era. Look North to the 1920s commercial segment.

Although not part of Carly’s subdivision, the stately 1924 brick house at 2765 makes for a grand entrance to Donner Way.



from an old farm road, popular for use as a windbreak.

Side Note
Walking west along Donner Way, note that the north side of the street is part of the original 1907 Curtis Oaks subdivision, and has many early Bungalow style houses reflective of the pre-WWII era.



2666 Donner Way

This was J.C. Carly’s first SCO residence, where he lived until he was able to build his showcase house at the East grand entrance to Montgomery Way (see walking tour #6).

Side Note
The Streamline Moderne house at the end of the row (2632) was built in 1939 in a style of the era that exemplified the clean shapes of modernity, and evoked the fast machine age with bands of horizontal lines and rounded corners.

3 Curtis Way
Curtis Way is dominated by English Revival style houses interspersed with a number of Colonial Revival and Spanish Revival dwellings.



2773 Curtis Way

The Southwest influence of this design is apparent in its composition of squared elements, with Pueblo stepped roofs and a Spanish courtyard at the front. It also features thick arched recessed windows (implying thick adobe walls), a balcony with wrought iron railing, and a central chimney.

1
J.C. Carly’s Donner Way row of houses, looking west toward the park. The Eucalyptus trees remained

2
Tudor style, built 1921
Original owner: 1921 - J.C. Carly, President, J.C. Carly Co.

Side Note
In the 1920s and earlier, it was prestigious for grand houses to be built along major streets such as Franklin Blvd., to be seen and to create grand entrances to their respective streets.



ca. 1920s photo

2760 Curtis Way

This house sits on the north half of the Curtis farm homesite. Titled "Coeur de Rue," it was built for Carrie (nee Curtis) Cutter and her husband George by the Carly building company. Designed by Dean and Dean, the home was featured in House Beautiful magazine in March of 1923. This house features elements of the French Revival style in the quoins (stonework) surrounding the entry, the small leaded glass windows, and the prominent chimneys. With the low-hanging roof and one-story projection, the design evokes a French farmhouse

Side Note
The Eucalyptus trees behind the Donner Way row and at 2660 Curtis Way are remnants of the Curtis farm. They were used as windbreak and shade trees, as their touted potential as a lumber source did not pan out.

Side Note
Montgomery Way’s East entry off of Franklin Blvd., dominated by J.C. Carly’s own home, was the grand entry to his showcase street of South Curtis Oaks.



2761 Montgomery Way

Inspired by the Panama Exposition of 1915, this Spanish Mediterranean Revival style incorporates the characteristics of simple massing with clean lines and details reminiscent of earlier Spanish settlements. The massing of the structure is symmetrical, as is characteristic of the Italian influence in the Mediterranean, but the detailing and asymmetrical

5
French Revival, built 1922
Architect: Dean & Dean
Original owner: 1922 - George H. & Carrie Cutter, President, Calif. Fruit Exchange.

6
A National Register Property
Spanish Mediterranean Revival, built 1922
Architect: Dean & Dean
Original owner: J.C. & May Carly - President, J.C. Carly Co.

placement of windows and features are indicative of the Spanish influence both in the Mediterranean style and in earlier precedents set by Spanish settlements in California and Latin America. The successful adaptation of all of these influences is what made revival architects of the period, particularly Dean & Dean, so well noted. This house has been listed in the National Registrar of Historic Places.



2770 Montgomery Way

This large-scale residence includes elements of the Federalist American Colonial style. It features symmetrical placement of the windows and chimneys around a center entry; a roof with end “gable returns” (the trim that comes back toward the center of the house); and the use of brick.



2757 Montgomery Way

This home was built for J.C. Carly’s daughter and son-in-law, in a style that features many French Revival elements in its steep “jerkin-head” (or “clipped gable”) slate roof with shed dormers; small multi-lite, casement windows and overall asymmetrical massing.



2751 Montgomery Way

Designed by the firm of Dean & Dean, this house is in the Dutch Colonial Revival style, which is characterized by a double-pitched “gambrel” roof,

7
American Colonial Style, built ca. 1923
First listing: 1925 - Mitchell J. Ballard, Distributor, Lincoln Motor Cars

8
French Revival, built 1922
Original owner: 1922 - Curtis H. & Leita (Carley) Cutter; Manager, Cutter Mill & Supply Co.

9
Dutch Colonial Revival, built 1922
Architect: Dean & Dean
Earliest listing: 1922 - Fred S. Peck, Accident Health & Life Insurance

clapboard siding, and a symmetrical façade. This example also features an ornate door surround and prominent dormers anchored by gable ends with pediments.



10

Southern Spain Revival,
built ca. 1923
First listing: 1926 - Frederick
S. & Alice Grau, Farmer

2730 Montgomery Way

This style of this house can be seen more commonly in Santa Barbara and coastal Southern California. Its austere street facade would have an intended focus on rear courtyards, gardens, or ocean views. Detailed decorative iron work on the balconies and small front window are notable, as well as decorative stucco window screen/vents.



11

Spanish Streamline/Deco,
built ca. 1930
First listing: 1930 - John M. &
Mary L. Roberts, Treasurer,
Carly Investment Co.

2710 Montgomery Way

This very unusual style incorporates “modern” elements of the streamline era with the overall form of Spanish Revival. It features a wide Streamline arched entry, steps, and plaster scoring.



12

English Revival, built 1923
Original owner: George &
Mabel Barr, owner &
proprietor of “George W.
Barr’s Super Service Station

2672 Montgomery Way

Likely designed by Dean & Dean Architects, this English Revival house includes asymmetrical massing; a steep, prominent roof; small-scale diamond-shaped leaded glass casement windows; and a bit of half-timber decoration alongside the Tudor arch entry door. The house also features two large chimneys and a bay window.



13

Spanish Rancho with
Pueblo Design Influence,
built ca. 1923
Earliest listing: 1924 - Louis
S. Marks, Manager, Rialto
Theatre

2666 Montgomery Way

This house is “U” shaped in plan and entered through an exterior courtyard. Its many design features include triple arched windows, decorative ironwork over vents, extensive decorative woodwork for vent covers, and an original floor fixed iron Spanish light fixture.



14

Italian Renaissance Revival,
built ca. 1927

2657 Montgomery Way

This grand house greets visitors with a triple-arched arcade flanked by Bachelder Tile fountains with peacocks, flowers, and Viking ships. Its spiraled terra-cotta porch columns and shield are made by Gladding McBean Co. Twin chimneys with house shaped crowns are located at each end of the house.



15

English Cottage,
built ca. 1921
Earliest listing: 1924 - Ernest
M. Kimberlin, Manager, Owl
Drug Co.

2640 Montgomery Way

A winner of the nationwide Better Homes Movement contest in 1923, the “Anne Hathaway Cottage” (aptly-named for Shakespeare’s wife) is the essence of the English Cottage style. Intended to resemble thatch, the shingled roof has two “eyebrows” over two of the upper story casement windows. Originally, the house had a symmetrical, half-timbered façade but a skillful addition near the driveway gives the house its current appearance. The entry door, sheltered by a shingled “awning”, includes heavy wrought-iron strapwork and is flanked by small windows.



16

Spanish Revival, built
ca 1929

2641 Montgomery Way

This Spanish Revival is built around an Andalusia style L-shape footprint. It has a balcony under its twin-gabled roofline, an arched carport, and decorative ironwork.



17

French Revival,
built ca. 1927
Earliest listing: 1930 - Philip
A. & Margaret S. Wigin

3071 E. Curtis Drive

Anchoring the park side of Montgomery Way is this large, two-story French Revival style house. “L” shaped, the house has two angled “towers”; a prominent entry with a shaped, wooden door surrounded by quoins; windows designed to resemble French doors; and wrought iron railings. The large roof vents give the impression of third story dormers, which emphasizes the French style.

18 *Curtis Park*

In July 1919 J.C. Carly and the Hickman-Coleman Company, who had received the west half of the Curtis farm lands from Edna Sproul (nee Curtis), offered the city the land for William Curtis Park. After a lot of wrangling, the city agreed to develop and landscape the park. The dedication was held in November of that year.

