

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS
APRIL 3, 2024
PR-2024-008278; GF-2024-028837
2102 FOUR OAKS LANE

PROPOSAL

Demolish a ca. 1969 house.

ARCHITECTURE

Mid-century Modern house with Spanish Eclectic stylistic influences.

RESEARCH

The property at 2102 Four Oaks Lane was designed and constructed by developer Jack Browning for the 1969 Parade of Homes, hosted by the Austin Homebuilders' association in the growing Barton Hills neighborhood. "It is a home especially designed for a specific site," states Browning in a 1969 article celebrating the Parade's success at securing a buyer for the house, named "Bluffview." The new homeowner, Jack Magners, worked as an aeronautical engineer for Tracor and had relocated to Austin with his family two years prior.¹

Bluffview was heavily marketed as a showpiece and included interior design elements and furniture promoted by local firms and retail showrooms. In her National Register nomination for a Northwest Hills model home, Karen Twer discusses the importance of the Parade of Homes in Austin's development history:

By building model houses for events like the Parade of Homes, builders and developers could highlight the attractive and livable qualities of their volume-built houses and market new suburban developments to masses of potential homebuyers. As a kind of conceptual show window, their model houses needed to be centrally located...Not bounded by the existing urban landscape, developers could create the kind of neighborhoods second-time middle-class homebuyers were seeking. By hosting Parade of Homes events in outlying areas of growing cities, developers and builders were influential in shaping the suburban development of expanding cities like Austin. [...] Builders and developers relied on architects to design the kind of distinctive houses that would rival custom-built houses...Model houses built for the Parade of Homes were collaborative interpretations of the kind of modern domestic lifestyle homebuyers dreamt of...In the 1960s, [Austin's] Parade of Homes events continued focusing on largely undeveloped areas south and northwest of the city [...]. In addition to the spectacle the events provided Austinites, Austin builders and developers understood the mass-marketing opportunity the Parade of Homes offered.²

According to Realtor Michele Roi³, the property has been owned by the same family for thirty years; the massive stucco fireplace and mirrored accent wall described in the 1969 Barton Hills Parade of Homes advertisements remain in situ.

PROPERTY EVALUATION

Designation Criteria—Historic Landmark

- 1) The building is more than 50 years old.
- 2) The building appears to retain high to moderate integrity. The upper-floor railing has been replaced with a simpler wooden railing, and the paneling above the door has been replaced.
- 3) Properties must meet two criteria for landmark designation (LDC §25-2-352). Staff has evaluated the property and determined that it does not meet two criteria for landmark designation:
 - a. Architecture. The building is a good example of Contemporary mid-century design with Spanish Eclectic stylistic influences.
 - b. Historical association. The property does not appear to have significant historical associations with individual owners or events. However, the Commission may wish to consider its association with the development of the Barton Hills neighborhood, emblematic of the city's postwar changes in development patterns. The building

¹ Galvin, Lois. Home Editor. The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); 14 Dec 1969: D14.

² Twer, Karen. "National Register Nomination Form: 4022 Greenhill Place." 2019.

<https://www.thc.texas.gov/public/upload/Austin%2C%20The%20Hanako%20NR%20SBR%20Draft.pdf>

³ Roi, Michele. "2102 Four Oaks." 2023. <https://seetheproperty.com/story/439767/b>

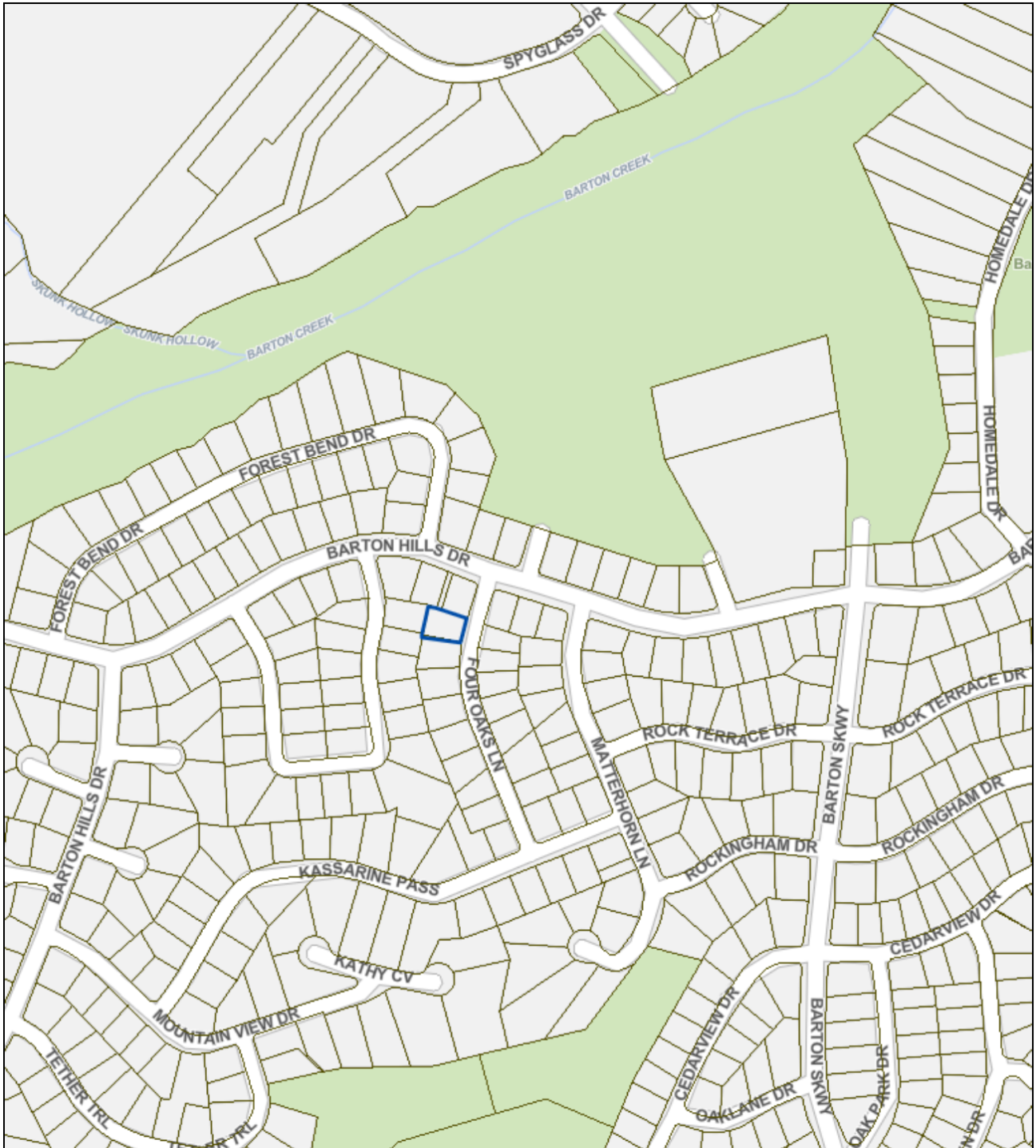
exemplifies the goals of the Parade of Homes: a site-specific design with unique finishes and features that represented an excellent marketing opportunity for Jack Browning's residential development endeavors.


- c.* Archaeology. The property was not evaluated for its potential to yield significant data concerning the human history or prehistory of the region.
- d.* Community value. The property was not evaluated for its ability to possess a unique location, physical characteristic, or significant feature that contributes to the character, image, or cultural identity of the city, the neighborhood, or a particular demographic group.
- e.* Landscape feature. The property does not appear to retain a significant natural or designed landscape with artistic, aesthetic, cultural, or historical value to the city.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Strongly encourage rehabilitation and adaptive reuse, but release the demolition permit upon completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package.

LOCATION MAP






1: 4800

3/19/2024

GF 24-028837

2102 FOUR OAKS LANE



This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey. This product has been produced by the City of Austin for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Photos



Demolition permit application, 2024





Michele Roi, 2023: <https://seetheproperty.com/story/439767/b>

Historical Information

Creativity 'Bluffview' Hallmark

Creativeness has become a hallmark of home builder John Browning's homes and the Parade of Homes "Bluffview" is no exception to this reputation.

Designed and built by John Browning, the two-story home is essentially Spanish contemporary in design, yet retains strong overtones of old Spain in hand carved Mexican furniture from Maximilian, selected by Selene Schroeder of Tuftwick Carpet, Inc.

Sitting majestically on a tree shaded homestead, the home's facade presents dominating two story panels of amber fixed glass and Mediterranean styled doors.

Using a rich green stain on rough sawn cedar, then combining it with stone and darker stains of traditional Mediterranean styling, the Bluffview instills a charm and warmth all of its own.

Visitors to the John Browning model will enter on a D'Harnis foyer where a double coat closet disperses traffic, on either side, into a large living room that is dominated by a massive oval fireplace of white plaster that, in turn, has a carpeted wrap-around stairway leading to the second floor.

The second story is truly a masterpiece of construction creativity. Visitors enter into what could be described as a living room, den or party room, for there is skillful blending of both formal and informal living in a second circular fireplace, broad areas of glass and balcony that lead around three sides of the home. A special entertainment convenience of this room is the snack bar area with built-in bar sink and undercounter refrigerator. Upstairs, also, is the impressively vaulted master bedroom suite, with bath dressing vanity and a study foyer.

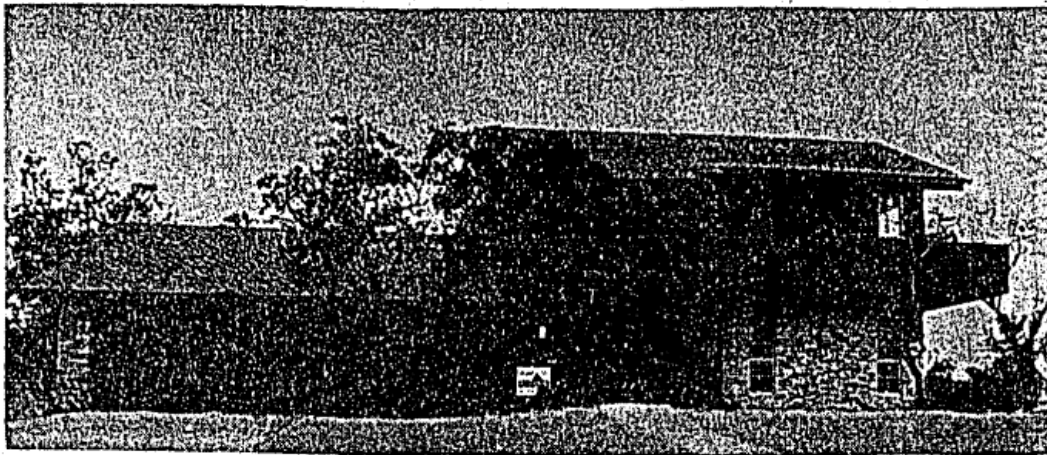
wing leading to two bedrooms and bath. And, in the east wing there's a separate dining room overlooking an enclosed formal courtyard.

There's a step down to the breakfast room and the adjoining kitchen with all the "most wanted" appliances and built-ins . . . including a laundry closet and pass-thru to serving bar at rear patio.

The Bluffview, no doubt, will be "the talk of the Parade" for its exceptional appeal.

Returning to the first floor, there's a short hall in the west

The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Austin, Tex.. 21 Sep 1969: 10.



"BLUFFVIEW"
BY JOHN BROWNING

Four Types of Kitchens Are Displayed

As a housewife, the shape of range and back to refrigerator. are familiar with the one-wall, include time for long, thoughtful consideration of the relative merits of the various kitchen designs because of their direct bearing on the housewife's overall efficiency.

your kitchen has a lot to do with L-shaped kitchens are kitchen. In any situation where kitchen space is long and narrow, it provides an ideal solution. However, the one-wall scheme generally sacrifices some storage space.

the shape your life is in. extremely versatile, an asset in kitchen. In any situation where kitchen space is long and narrow, it provides an ideal solution. However, the one-wall scheme generally sacrifices some storage space.

This is why home builders are remodeling as well as new construction. Convenience in moving from refrigerator to sink to cooking-serving area rivals the efficiency of the U-shape's work triangle.

paying more attention than ever before to the American housewife's need for an operating base that will help simplify her life and that of her family.

The name of this base is "kitchen." In the Parade of Homes four basic types of kitchens will be on view: U-shaped, L-shaped, one-wall and the corridor kitchen.

Popularity of the U shape derives from its adaptability to the open planning of today's homes. It is considered one of the most convenient plans, because it results in the shortest possible work-triangle, distance between refrigerator, sink,


If you have ever lived in an efficiency apartment or a vacation cabin, you probably

The corridor or galley-type kitchen offers a work pattern that combines characteristics of both L and U shapes.

New home shopping should

The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Austin, Tex.. 21 Sep 1969: 10.

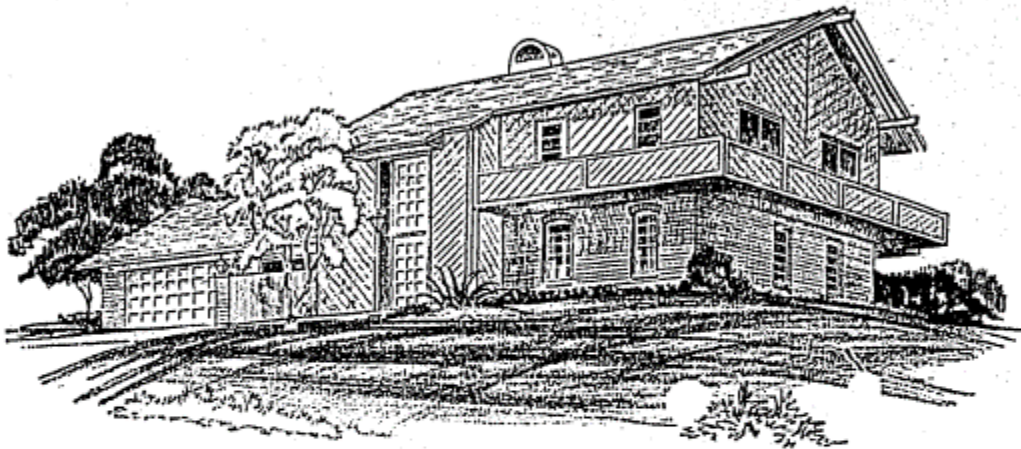


The Name of the Game is Living. Explore a New Address Today. 

50¢ ADMISSION

CHILDREN ADMITTED FREE

FREE SHUTTLE BUS



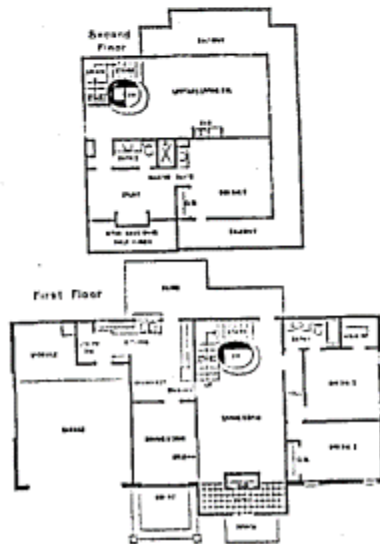
"BLUFFVIEW"

BY JOHN BROWNING/BUILDER

Furniture: Maximilian's

Decorator: Selena Schroeder of

Tuftwick Carpets, Inc.



With characteristic inventiveness, John Browning's "Bluffview" model home provides esthetic innovations and practical planning for contemporary living.

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LAST DAY

FOR THE 1969

PARADE of HOMES

IN

BARTON HILLS WEST

DEVELOPED BY KIRKWOOD DEVELOPMENT CO. • LOT SALES BY BUFORD STEWART AGENCY

OPEN 1-9 P.M.

BUILT, FURNISHED AND DECORATED MODELS BY...

"THE OAKHAVEN" TRIGG FORISTER Furniture: Village Interiors • Decorator: Mrs. Trigg Forister	"THE RICHMOND" WEST & ASSOCIATES Furniture: Village Interiors • Decorator: Margot Ford
"MADRIGAL" NASH PHILLIPS-COPUS Furniture and Decor by Nancy Poovy Interior Design Consultants	"THE COLONNADE" C. L. REEVES Furniture: Gage • Decorated by Gage Interior Design Staff
"THE SANTA MONICA" L. A. FELDER Furniture by Cabanis-Brown Wayside Store Decorators: Genevieve Bidgood, AID	"THE CONTEMPO" BILL MILBURN Furnishings By Louie Shanks of Austin Decorators: Leon Pelk and Mrs. Sharon Silver
"BLUFFVIEW" JOHN BROWNING Furniture: Maximilian • Decorators: Selene Schroeder, Richard Shelley	"THE MADRID" STAN RODGERS Furniture: The Carriage House • Decorator: Jean Fryer

50¢ ADMISSION
CHILDREN ADMITTED FREE

FREE SHUTTLE BUS

FREE PLAN BOOK

REFRESHMENT TENT

FREE PARKING

SPONSORED BY
AUSTIN ASSOCIATION HOME BUILDERS




DIRECTIONS: Go to the 28-Hundred Block of South Lamar and turn on Barton Skyway, then to Barton Hills Drive and turn left.

The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Austin, Tex.. 28 Sep 1969: C1.

MAXIMILIAN'S

801 RIO GRANDE HOURS 10 A.M. TO 8 P.M.

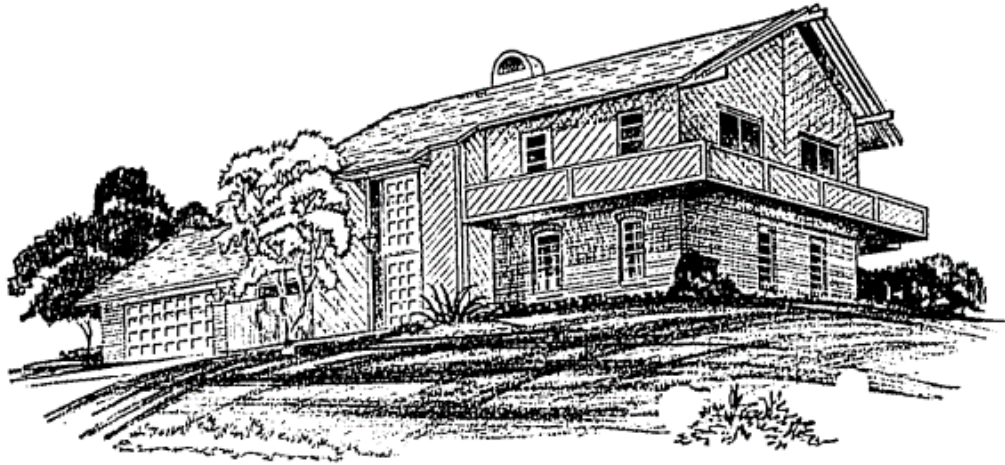
AN INVITATION FOR YOU . . .
the sophisticated viewer of the
1969 Parade of Homes
MAXIMILIAN'S OF AUSTIN
is offering a special sale of
fine furniture and accessories
on display now at the
John Browning "Bluffview" Home
2102 Four Oaks Lane
Today through Sunday 1-9 P.M.

You are cordially invited to visit
the "Bluffview" to make your
selection of fine furnishings
at substantially reduced prices.

FINE SPANISH FURNITURE

The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Austin, Tex.. 01 Oct 1969: A8.

John Browning invites you...



to revisit the Parade of Homes "Bluffview", 2102 Four Oaks Lane, today, 1-9. This is a special opportunity for the discriminating buyer to discover John Browning Originals - homes that are creative, distinctive, personal. Meet John Browning's representative at The "Bluffview" today and make an appointment for consultation on your individual needs.

And . . . Maximilian's of Austin will offer a sale of fine furniture and accessories on display now at the "Bluffview." Visit The "Bluffview" to make your selection of fine furnishings at greatly reduced prices.

On S. Lamar, turn west on Barton Skyway, left at Barton Hills Drive.

John Browning • builder • designer

452-2577

The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Austin, Tex.. 05 Oct 1969: C6.

So They Buy It

House Reminds Jack Magners of Boston Home

By LOIS GALVIN
Home Editor

"Daddy, you can buy this house for me!"

Perhaps it was intended just as an expression of how much she liked this particular house — or, perhaps it was the nostalgic memory of the home near Boston that Mary Ellen Magners had loved.

Whatever prompted the remark as they passed by, Mary Ellen Magners and her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jack L. Magners, now own and live in this handsome Parade of Homes house: "Bluffview," located at 2102 Four Oaks Lane.

The Magners came to

Austin from Boston a little over two years ago. Mr. Magners is manager of the Project Development, Military Products, Division of Tracor. He was born in Louisville, Ky., and Mrs. Magners' hometown is St. Louis. Mary Ellen, 12, is a seventh grader at Porter Junior High School.

The house they bought is a contemporary home but it has a lot of warmth and charm that appeals to traditionally-minded people like the Magners. It reminded them of the 100-year-old house outside Boston that they had bought and restored. And, with which they could not bear to part.

Sitting majestically on a

tree-shaded homesite, the two-story home is essentially Spanish contemporary in style. It was designed and built by John Browning, who says, "It is a home especially designed for a specific site." Advantage was taken of the uneven terrain and the magnificent views. A balcony across one end and on two sides captures the view for miles around.

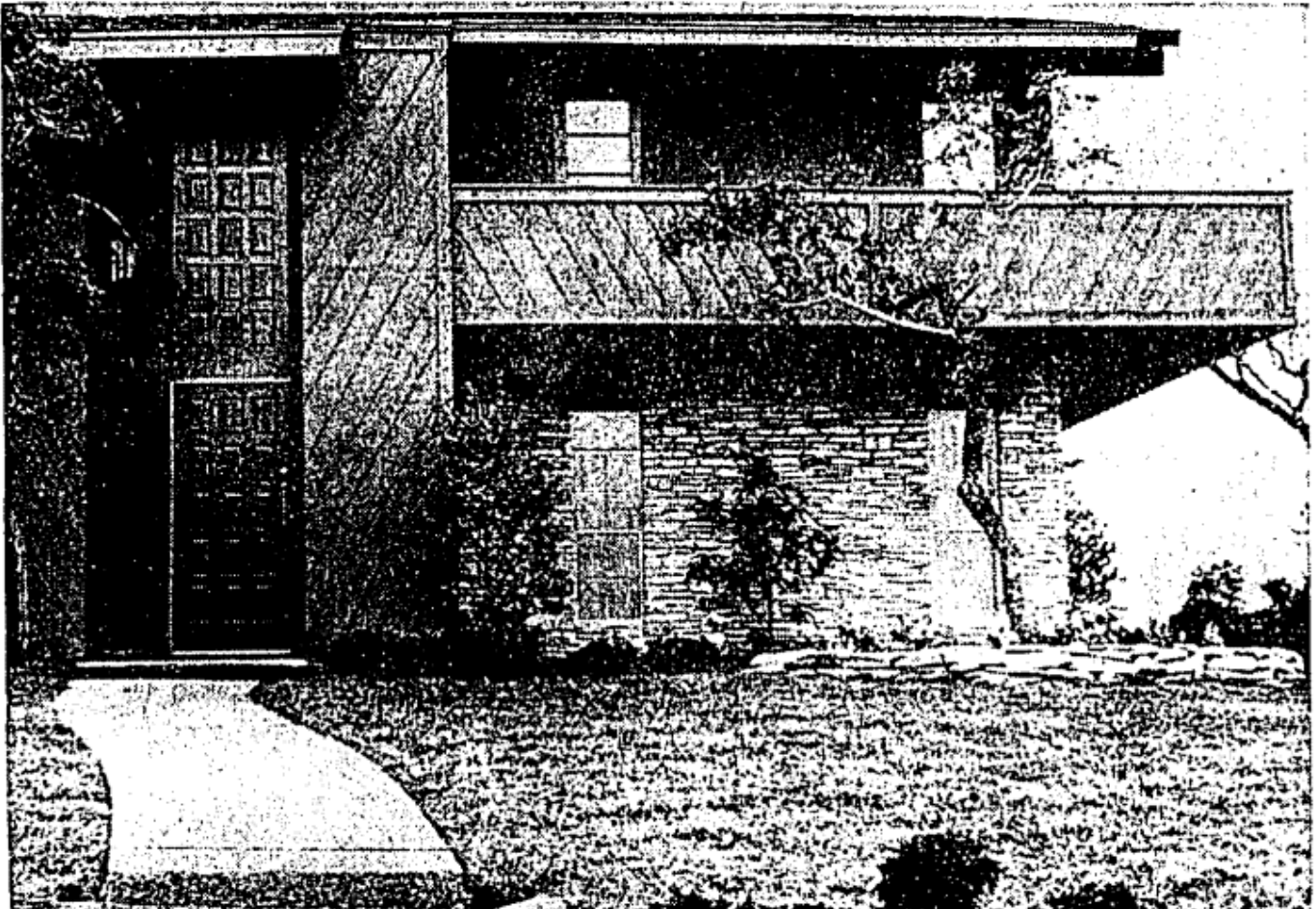
The exterior is of diagonal rough sawn cedar stained a rich green and combined with field stone and darker green trim.

Two-story panels of amber fixed glass and Mediterranean styled doors dominate the

facade with a clump of gnarled cedars retained for their natural enhancement. They lend an inviting effect to the entry.

An enclosed formal courtyard, joining the front of the house and the garage, opens through glass walls into the formal dining room. The small, but inviting, courtyard is one of Mrs. Magners' favorite areas of the house.

The two-story foyer, with D'Hannis tile floor, has a double coat closet with dark stained louvred doors. Serving as divider-wall, it disperses traffic on either side into the living room. Facing the living room is a mirrored wall.



A round antique oak china cabinet in the foyer is filled with Mary Ellen's collection of dolls from many places, including two Indian dolls bought in Alamogordo, N.M. before she was born. Included are many United Nations Brides that her aunt in St. Louis has sent to her from New York each year.

The spacious living room is dominated by a massive oval fireplace of white plaster. A carpeted wrap-around stairway leads to the upstairs living room, variously called den or family room, where a second circular fireplace is located adjacent to the stairs.

This huge room provides the adult Magners with maximum privacy and an additional place to entertain when the teenagers have taken over the downstairs area. A special entertainment convenience of this room is the snack bar area with built-in bar sink and under-counter refrigerator.

The walls will have multiple shelves at left of the bar to hold Mr. Magners' model airplane collection — made-to-scale fighter planes. He is an aeronautical engineer and has

a private pilot license. Broad areas of glass and the balcony provide a breathtaking view of trees and hills nearby.

The impressively vaulted master bedroom suite, with bath, dressing vanity and a study foyer, is also located upstairs adjoining the den. The study foyer is designed with open areas overlooking the downstairs living room.

There is a handsome Deacon's bench in the study and above it a picture of John Alden and Priscilla, copyrighted in 1900, which Mrs. Magners found in the cellar of their Boston house.

The built-in dressing vanity with its marble basin is an added convenience to the bedroom, which faces the front of the home and the balcony on two sides. Mrs. Magners favors handsome antique quilts as bedspreads, with complimentary flounces.

Wall-to-wall gold-and-green shag carpeting is used throughout the upstairs. Downstairs the floors are all covered in gold carpeting with the step-down breakfast room and adjoining kitchen done in tile. Dark paneled walls of

this area are complemented with one wall done in pale yellow, green and orange, and the built-in stove countertop is orange. There's a small built-in desk with portable typewriter. There is also a pass-thru to serving bar at rear patio.

A stylized mural on one dining room wall picks up the orange, green and gold in its design.

An elongated sofa of crushed velvet dominates one wall of the living room, where antique and traditional furnishings include a carved chair of solid walnut with tapestry upholstery that belonged to Mrs. Magners' father. A magnificent French figurine lamp called "Commerce and Prosperity" gets double exposure in the mirror wall. There is also a small piano where Mary Ellen spends many hours practicing her music lessons.

A short hall in the west wing leads to Mary Ellen's suite: bedroom, bath and study. White French Provincial furniture includes a four-poster bed with canopy of white eyelet embroidery. A



MRS. JACK MAGNERS ENJOYS HER PRIVATE COURTYARD
A glass wall with sliding doors gives dining room an outdoor atmosphere
(Staff Photos by Jack Wait)

belt-and-buckle design wallcovering in yellow-and-

green covers the wall behind the bed headboard, with windows on either side done in matching draperies and framed in dark stained raw cedar.

Walls in a paler shade of the misty jasmine used in the foyer prevail through most of the house.



MASSIVE OVAL FIREPLACE OF WHITE PLASTER DOMINATES THE SPACIOUS LIVINGS ROOM
 Opposite mirror wall reflects carpeted wrap-round stairway leading to second floor
LOIS GALVIN, Home Editor. The Austin Statesman (1921-1973); Austin, Tex.. 14 Dec 1969: D14.

Permits

OWNER	John Browning		ADDRESS	2102 Four Oaks Lane	
PLAT	632 File	LOT	9	BLK	E
SUBDIVISION	Barton Hills West Sec 1				
OCCUPANCY	Residence				
BLD PERMIT #	113398	DATE	6-23-69	OWNERS ESTIMATE	\$32,000.00
CONTRACTOR	owner		NO. OF FIXTURES	10	
WATER TAP REC #	E59195	SEWER TAP REC #	53935		
2 story frm res w/ brk ven and att gar and balcony					
3215 sq. ft.					
#	142609	DATE	5-20-74	BY	Joseph Miener
DESCRIPTION	Frm. Addn. to Res. & Remodel				
SQ. FT.	585	ESTIMATE	10,000.00		