

History of Hollywood Sign

A lesson in maintaining a clear message

The Hollywood sign first read “Hollywoodland”. The history of this sign reveals an emotional rollercoaster and teaches an important lesson. Amidst a national film craze, Hollywood became Tinseltown in 1915. Suddenly, starry-eyed actors and actresses walked the streets. And so the American Dream was repackaged, with hope for fame and glamour.



photo credit: Mark Fugarino

The sign didn't start off as an icon for entertainment. When first installed in 1923, its purpose was as an outdoor ad campaign for “Hollywoodland”, a suburban housing development. Home sales drove the area's economy; prime real estate was no secret. Adorned with flashing lights, the sign symbolized something much more than a feeling. The feeling lasted for many years to come, though the sign was at first only meant to remain for a year and a half. As Hollywood citizens rallied around the feeling of possibility and luxury, the feeling lasted.

Yet when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941, a different feeling engulfed Hollywood — the feeling of determination. They went to war, actually became a full-time war industry. Movie stars like Clark Gable, Jimmy Stewart and Victor Mature enlisted. Studio trucks didn't transport them to film sets anymore; instead, troops rode in the trucks to war.

Time passed and what is known as the Post-War Years came into play

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Archi-fact:

Many people attend architectural school and decide to move on to other careers.

The creative director of fashion house John Galliano, Bill Gaytten attended the Bartlett School of Architecture at University College London. Upon graduating, he was working for designer Victor Edelstein, followed by a 23-year stint at Dior before taking the helm at Galliano.

Iconic Building Of The Month



The Victor Rossetti Residence



all photos on this page are credited to : wikipedia

The Victor Rossetti Residence was designed by architect Paul R. Williams, known as “Hollywood’s architect” and “architect to the stars”. The client Rossetti was one of Los Angeles’ most prominent bankers. In 1928, he and his wife Irene hired Williams and contractor Donald F. Harrison to build this Spanish Colonial Revival-style home.

Rossetti wanted to make a statement. His L-shaped stucco house, topped with a hipped roof, symbolized his important role in the financial sector. The home’s construction began around World War I when a Mission Revival-style showcased the modern California lifestyle with the region’s Spanish past. The many arches, ornamental iron details and casement windows achieve this look. Luxurious details added to the experience: decorative doors, stenciled ceilings, even an intercom system and a wooden elevator car. Victor and Irene Rossetti lived a life of luxury, overlooking their views off several balconies.

During the Golden Age of Hollywood, Williams also designed homes for Frank Sinatra, Bill “Bojangles” Robinson, Lon Chaney, and Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz. The architect transformed LA’s bean fields and orange groves into a well-known lavish community for the stars. The Victor Rossetti Residence at 2188 N. Ponet Drive is listed on the City’s Historic-Cultural Monuments.



Archi-Quote

The Ionic Building of the Month, The Victor Rossetti Residence in Hollywood was designed by the architect Paul R. Williams. Mr. Williams was a African American and the first African American to be inducted into the American Institute of Architects in 1923. When asked about the challenges he faced because of his race his response was...

"If I allow the fact that I am a Negro to checkmate my will to do, now, I will inevitably form the habit of being defeated."

Paul R. Williams, AIA

History of Hollywood Sign

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and, with them, paranoia. The film industry was so powerful and well known that it became vulnerable in this climate of fear. Countless residents left Hollywood. Paramount stood as the only studio left in town by 1970.

The Hollywood Chamber of Commerce couldn't just sit back and let this happen; it dedicated a quarter million dollars to the Hollywood Sign's rebuilding. This feeling of rebirth permeated the town. Hollywood made a comeback. Preservation, structurally and emotionally, took on a whole new meaning and kept the sign in place for decades upon decades. The West Coast's most high-profile Y2K celebration involved the Hollywood Sign, ringing in the new millennium with high-tech special effects and light displays. Truly a sight

to be seen.

When the sign turned 80 (in 2003), musical legend Esther Williams hosted a "birthday party." And in 2010, the sign's #1 fan, Hugh Hefner, contributed the last of the funds needed to purchase the 138 endangered acres behind it. For its 90th birthday, the Sign received a "makeover" courtesy of the Hollywood Sign Trust and Sherwin Williams.

The Hollywood Sign's purpose has evolved, but its message remains constant:

"This is a place where magic is possible, where dreams can come true". While the story may have come full circle, in that sense, it has had its ups and downs. Likewise, when we are tested, our purpose may change but we can hope our message remains the same.

Archi-Speak

Can you find these names of Hollywood Golden Age celebrities?

Arnaz Ball Bojangles Chaney Sinatra

O	U	G	X	T	J	Y	G	R	B	O	M	R	B	S
N	R	Z	I	M	E	W	V	A	H	Y	M	Y	E	J
F	E	I	W	S	A	F	J	W	P	P	T	W	G	L
D	H	T	Q	F	K	A	L	R	T	O	S	F	X	P
X	B	H	A	P	R	O	J	Q	C	B	J	Q	I	R
B	N	M	H	T	V	O	C	B	S	J	Y	M	N	E
N	A	S	A	N	D	P	S	O	D	E	K	Z	Z	A
H	Q	N	J	B	R	F	A	J	N	S	Z	A	Y	Y
C	I	Y	R	A	U	M	A	A	P	A	N	T	L	L
S	O	K	V	L	M	U	H	N	V	R	V	C	G	X
E	I	W	Z	L	U	C	B	G	A	H	C	C	O	H
Q	P	D	F	H	T	W	K	L	Q	J	Y	I	M	I
O	J	B	C	V	V	S	K	E	D	W	U	Y	U	O
V	E	E	Y	N	M	U	J	S	S	F	X	N	S	H
R	C	J	T	N	S	Y	U	U	X	D	N	M	B	Y

Ask M

In the James Bond books and movies the character "M" heads the Secret British Intelligence Service known as MI 6, of which James Bond is Agent 007. When contemplating adding on to your home or building, renovating or building a new home or building you should have someone like "M" on your side. Each month the "Ask M" column will answer a reader's question to place more information at your finger tips. **This month's question is...**

When interviewing a prospective architect how can I know he is right for me?

Andy D

Andy,

You should listen for key words in their presentation. If they speak of "creating a sculpture" or "creating their vision" I would say run away as fast as you can. I believe an architect should CARE about what makes their client happy and works with the community the client will be living it. Beauty may be in the eye of the beholder, but your home as I like to say should move YOU emotionally just like your favorite song does.

Marcus Marino "M"

Email your questions to info@designMgroup.com, and in the subject line type in "Ask M". We look forward to hearing from you and hope we can answer the questions to everyone's satisfaction.

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About

Marcus Marino, RA, AIA, NCARB
President



photo credit: Jenna Glatzer

Marcus Marino, RA, AIA, NCARB is a leading architect in New York City. He received a Bachelors of Architecture from the prestigious Pratt Institute and a Masters in the Science of Architecture and Urban Design from Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation. He received his license to practice architecture in New York State in 1981 and is licensed in a number of other States. Marcus Marino has served on numerous Governmental Panels and serves as an expert consultant to other architectural firms and legal firms. He is the former Vice President of Public Advocacy of the New York State American Institute of Architects.

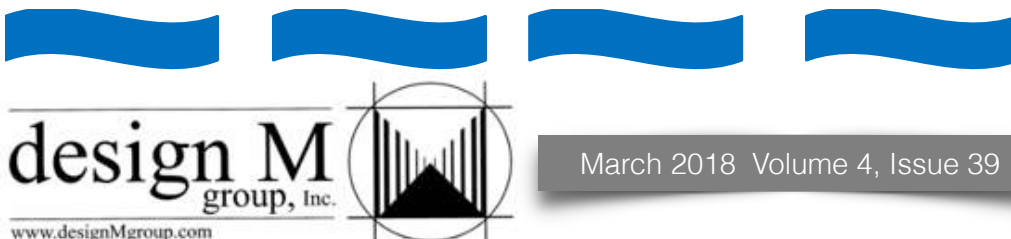
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Your Home should move you emotionally like your favorite song does.

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