

THE WAY WE WERE

Still standing

Joers/Ketchum Store's ambience and charm remain after 75 years

By **Patty McCormac**

RANCHO SANTA FE — The Joers/Ketchum Store is considered the most photographed building in the village.

With its generous windows, romantic balconies and wrought iron decorations, it is truly a monument to architect Lillian Rice. The young visionary secured her place in history with her Spanish Colonial Revival designs.

The outside of the building has not changed much since it was built in 1927 at the corner of Paseo Delicias and La Grande by W.E. Joers and Harold Ketchum.

It was the first building erected in the village by independent property owners rather than the Rancho Santa Fe Land Development Co., said Fran Foley, archivist and curator for the Rancho Santa Fe Historical Society.

The ground floor was a grocery store, which Bob and Veva Francisco took over about 1930 before moving their business to the corner of Paseo Delicias and Via de Santa Fe a short time later.

In 1932 or 1933, the space was leased to a retired Marine captain,

Granville Frisbee. He opened a small drug store there, but it soon went out of business.

Col. Charles R. Nelson, 87, lived in the Ranch from 1923 until he went away to school.

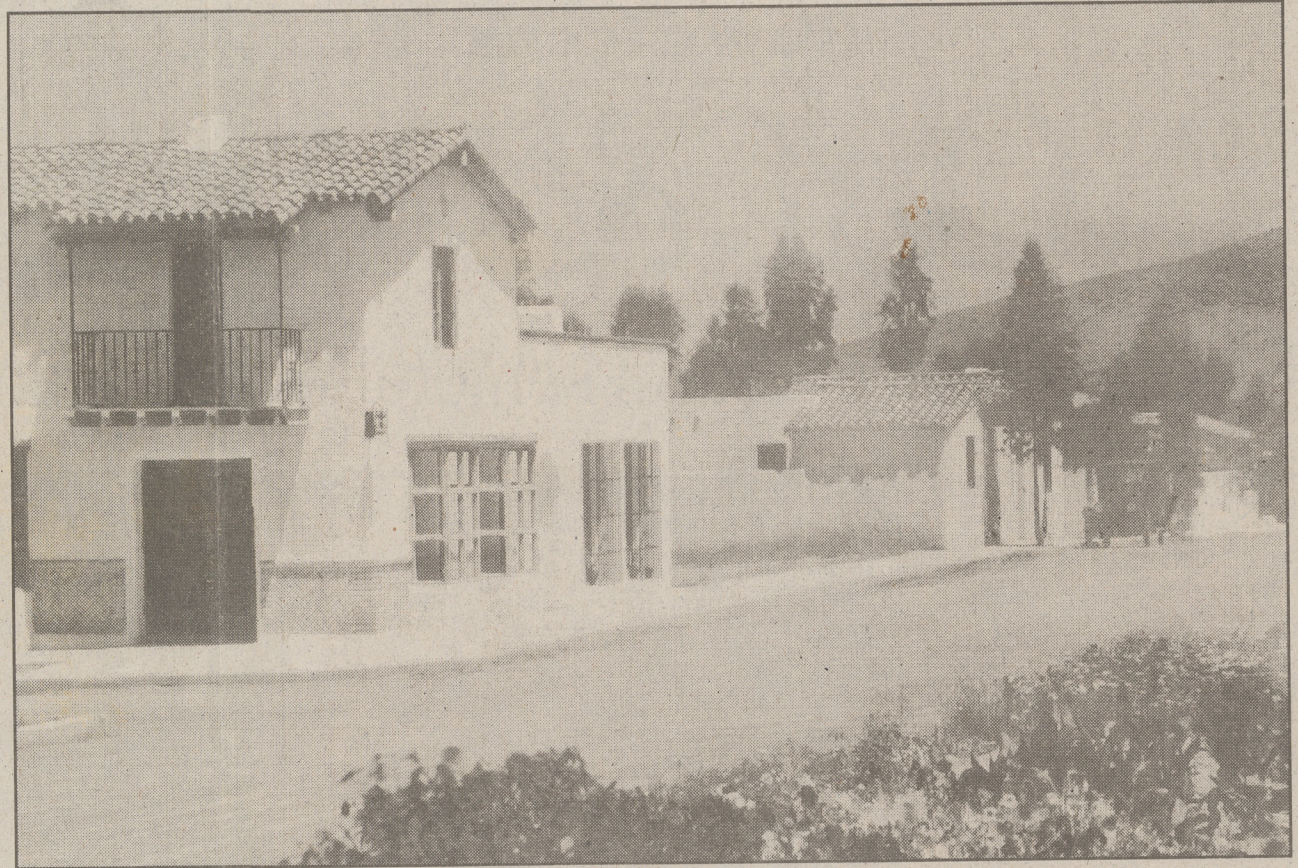
"I think I was in college when the Marine opened the drugstore," Nelson said. "It didn't prosper very well.

"The gift shop was later on, in the 1950s or '60s. There was a place in back that was a post office for a while. The upstairs had an apartment. When it was the post office, everyone in the village went in and out of it," he said.

Nelson said it was either while he was away at school or during World War II, he doesn't quite remember which, that the building caught fire during the early morning hours. Two men died of smoke inhalation. Damage was limited to the apartment's interior and it continued on as an apartment rental until 1951.

Today, the Joers/Ketchum Store building houses Beran's Estate Jewelry Store and, according to its employees, its ambience and charm remain.

"How it feels to work inside this building is hard to describe," said jew-



Rancho Santa Fe Historical Society



Scott Linnett / Union-Tribune

The Joers/Ketchum Store, shown in 1928 (above) and in present day (at left), was designed by architect Lillian Rice. The outside of the building has not changed much since it was built in 1927 at the corner of Paseo Delicias and La Grande by W.E. Joers and Harold Ketchum.

eler Kamyar Zarrabi.

"When you see the beams, it makes you feel like a lot of history and experience has taken place here — you know, if-these-walls-could-talk syndrome. It makes you think of all the

lives that have gone in and out and my time here," he said.

Zarrabi said he recently saw a photograph of the building dated 1928.

"You see the brickwork out front in the picture and realize it's the same

brickwork out front. It's not just any brickwork; it's nearly 100 years later," he said.

Patty McCormac is a free-lance writer from Vista.

2025.010.008

N-1489 Bx 17