

The writer (Sam W. Hamill) was employed for several months in 1923 as a junior draftsman in the office of Miss Rice. Later, through my employment with Requa and Jackson, Architects, and continuous residence in San Diego I maintained a pleasant friendship with Miss Rice and had opportunity to observe her very fine work, assisting in minor ways from time to time and gaining an appreciation of the professional contribution, as well as the civic and social contributions, of this splendid woman.

Examples of the work of Lilian J. Rice:

Participated with Requa and Jackson in the design of the village center of Rancho Santa Fe, Calif. for the Santa Fe Land Co. (Sinnard, Resident manager)

This work consisted of -

Layout of Civic Center plan (Many of those buildings of adobe construction)

Rancho Santa Fe Inn

Rancho Santa Fe School and Library

Commercial and office building, Service Station, etc.

Many fine residences were designed for Rancho Santa Fe, La Jolla and San Diego independently of Requa and Jackson. The residences are so numerous as to defy my memory. Miss Rice also designed the Zlac Rowing Clubhouse, headquarters for a women's rowing club on Mission Bay. This building, Zlac Clubhouse, is noted for it's sensitive treatment of wood exposed as structural and finish material, achieving architectural forms developed on the Pacific coast and in the Pacific northwest. This building showed much the same feeling developed in the San Francisco bay region by William Wilson Wurster F.A.I.A. who was also a graduate of Berkeley.

However, the majority of Miss Rice's residential designs (in so far as I know) followed the Southern California tradition of forms common to the period. The village center structures at Rancho Santa Fe derived from the Mission period of California and the southwest. Adobe wall construction (reinforced with concrete lintels and belt courses) resulted in delightfully authentic recalls of the historic Spanish colonial and Mexican period. Pursuing the demand for a more comprehensive dictionary of architectural forms and a free palette, required for residential work, Miss Rice developed many forms which became part of the architectural fabric of the period. Their imitation by others was sincerest flattery.

The thing I remember most about Miss Rice was the wholesome, sympathetic and sensitive understanding she brought to student, employee or client. Her residential designs, the major portion of her work, seemed to reflect the personality and life-style of the client. Miss Rice was devoid of the autocratic ego so common to many gifted designers. As a result of this empathy between architect and client, I would venture that the summation of clients paralleled the equal summation of permanent friendships.

It was a privilege to know Lilian Rice from an early age and to recall her friendship.

Signed, Sam W. Hamill

Other work by Lilian J. Rice - listed by Olive Chadeayne

Residences on Luddington Lane, La Jolla, Calif. for:

Marguerite M. Robinson and Martha Kinsey. Both of these were on difficult, steep sites. Both owners are now deceased and I do not know the present owners.

San Dieguito Union High School - Encinitas, Calif.

Garden Club House at Rancho Santa Fe (another example of exposed structural / wood) Restoration, and some additions, to the original Osuna adobe for Bing Crosby, Rancho Santa Fe.

Work mentioned by Elinor Frazer:

Several schools in San Diego County, one of which was named for Miss Rice
Ranch house for Rear-Adm. (Ret) C.T. Sinnard, La Mesa, Calif.

Information about LILIAN J. RICE, Architect as gathered by S.W. HAMILL, Architect with some additions from Olive Chadeayne, Architect and Elinor Frazer.

RICE, LILIAN J. (Miss) Architect and member of the San Diego Chapter A.I.A. she became a member in 1931

Born 1888 in National City, Calif.
Died Dec. 22, 1938 La Jolla, Calif.

Parents: I knew her mother but did not know the given name of either parent. Her father was an educator. Her mother, when I knew her was quite old but she was interested in painting and did small ones very well. (O.C)
Mrs. Rice outlived Lillian and died in the house where she had lived all her married life.

Education: Elementary and high schools in San Diego County
University of California, Berkeley, School of Architecture, graduated 1910
At Berkeley she studied under:
John Galen Howard F.A.I.A. (Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris)
Warren Charles Perry F.A.I.A. " " " "
William C. Hayes F.A.I.A. " " " and Am. Academy, Rome
In addition she made a close friend and sponsor of Miss Bessie Sprague, Secretary of the Dept. Of Architecture, U.C. Berkeley

Professional Experience:

Teaching - architecture and preparatory subjects
San Diego High School about school year 1920-21
mechanical drawing and architectural drawing
San Diego State Teachers College (now Cal. State University, San Diego)
mechanical drawing and descriptive geometry - school year 1921-22

Architectural draftsman in the employ of Requa and Jackson, Architects, of San Diego, on a full time basis about 1922. Miss Rice had previously had part time work in that office.

Miss Rice was put in charge of the branch office of Requa and Jackson at Rancho Santa Fe, Calif. and assumed it's operation under her own name in 1923. The date of receipt of her own license to practice architecture is unknown to me. Miss Rice maintained her office in Rancho Santa Fe (so far as I know) until her death. (If I, Olive Chadeayne, remember correctly, Lillian had semi-retired about a year before her death as she had been ill. At the time of her death she was sorting her drawings in preparation for complete retirement.)

Miss Rice had many devoted employees some of whom might furnish more data. Persons whom I know were at one time employed by Lillian J. Rice as draftsmen :

Miss Olive Chadeayne A.I.A.-E.
141 Flora Ave. #16
Walnut Creek, Calif. 94595

Miss Elinor Frazier, retired instructor in Architectural Drawing and Design, San Diego City College and Mesa College, San Diego, Calif. now residing at: 4361 Kite Street
San Diego, Calif. 92103

(Information from both of the above is included in this letter)