

Marcia Van Leun *3/84*
LILIAN RICE, ARCHITECT *Fun. Annet. Duckerson*

From the very beginning, planning and respect for the environment governed the design of the community of Rancho Santa Fe. Lilian Rice, architect for the subdivision, sought to preserve and enhance the beauty of the Rancho through her design of the public and residential architecture in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. She carefully and deliberately transformed the Rancho from a eucalyptus forest owned by the Rancho Santa Fe railroad into a community famed for its steady, consistent growth and unified architectural theme—a total design concept.

A native of National City, Rice chose to attend the University of California at Berkeley and was one of its first female graduates in architecture. Upon graduation in 1910, she returned to the Southland to pursue a career in her chosen field. She began by teaching and working part-time as a draftsman. One of her drafting jobs was for Hazel Waterman, a locally prominent designer. Waterman trained with one of San Diego's most prominent architects, Irving J. Gill, and had earned quite a reputation in her own right as a talented and creative designer. Rice worked well with Waterman and gained much useful experience, and knowledge about southern California, its history, landscape and topography. She eventually left Waterman's office but continued to practice and hone her skills.

In 1921, Lilian Rice joined the prestigious firm of Richard S. Requa and Herbert L. Jackson. The firm was well known for its design of several structures in Balboa Park in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. Requa admired Rice's design style; it reflected her knowledge and respect for southern California's history and traditions.

Upon receiving the commission in 1922 from W.E. Hodges, Santa Fe Railroad's Vice-President, to design an exclusive residential development for Rancho Santa Fe, Requa gave the job to Rice. She worked closely with L.G. Sinnard, project manager and kindred spirit, to produce a landmark community. Sinnard purposely planned winding roads throughout the Rancho to slow down speeding drivers to ensure their enjoyment of the breathtaking vistas around every turn. He also planned large lots and saw to it that deed restrictions guaranteed favorable improvements to each one. Rice's designs were, of course, a large part of those "favorable improvements."

Rice immediately began work in her office on the corner of Paseo Delicias and La Granada. She believed that Paseo Delicias, the Civic Center, should be the foundation of the development and a resource for subsequent building throughout the community. Lilian Rice served as supervisory architect for Rancho Santa Fe from 1922-28. She designed the school, the library, La Morada (now the Inn), the Civic Center and a number of private residences. Rice also served as the architectural reviewer, a function of the present day Art Jury.