

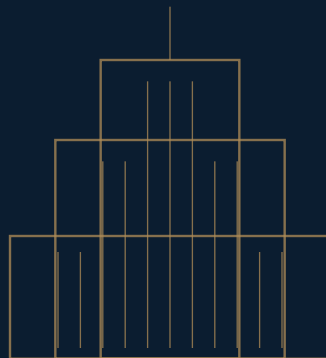
RESEARCH REPORT

THE LAFAYETTE

130-140 LINDEN AVENUE · LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA



The Lafayette Hotel and Lanais, Long Beach — 1950s postcard · Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division



NEWSPAPER ARCHIVES · PHOTOGRAPHS · TIMELINE · DOCUMENTED INCIDENTS

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OVERVIEW

At a glance

The Lafayette is not one building but a complex of three, built across two decades, run as one hotel for fifteen years and a condominium for more than fifty.

Address	130–140 Linden Avenue, East Village Arts District, Downtown Long Beach, California 90802
Complex	Campbell Apartments (130 Linden) · Lafayette Hotel (140 Linden) · International-style Broadway addition
Dates on the City marker	Campbell Apartments 1928 · Lafayette Hotel 1929 · Broadway addition 1948 [S1]
Architects	Campbell: Parker O. Wright and Francis Gentry (marker; confirmed by a 1927 terra-cotta order). Hotel: Cecil and Arthur Schilling (marker; a 1928 trade notice and a 1929 order book agree). Broadway addition: Theodore H. Criley (owners' timeline; not on the marker) [S1, S6, S9, S26, S27]
Hotel opened	Monday 28 October 1929 per the owners' timeline and newsletter REPORTED [S6, S7]
Hilton	Marker: a Hilton hotel "in 1952". Owners' timeline: bought for \$2 million on 3 Feb 1952. A March 1954 newspaper says Hilton "and his associates are interested in" the hotel; by March 1957 it says he "owns majority interest"; a 1967 <i>Press-Telegram</i> chronology says ownership passed in 1952 "to three executives of Hilton Hotels Corp., including Conrad N. Hilton". No deed found. CONFLICT [S1, S6, S14]
Hotel closed	Owners: operations suspended 8 August 1967. Press: hotel "scheduled to shut Sept. 3" (13 Aug 1967); airport-bus listing changed "from Commercial to Residential" 8 Oct 1967; banquets and the 51 Lanai rooms continued CONFLICT [S6, S14]
Condominiums	Surveyed for conversion Oct 1967; first sales ad 16 Jun 1968; furnished models Nov 1968; city ordinance and marker say 1969; PCAD "about 1980" CONFLICT [S1, S6, S8, S14, S24]
Landmark	Long Beach Historic Landmark: Municipal Code §16.52.270, added by Ordinance C-6314 in 1986 (the day is not known). Not on the National Register as of 2010 [S1, S3, S4, S24]
Today	The Lafayette Association of Homeowners: 173 units, studios to two-bedrooms; 11th-floor solarium; ground-floor shops and galleries [S6]

A note on "1928, Art Deco"

The City marker dates the **Spanish Baroque Campbell Apartments** to 1928 and the **Art Deco Lafayette Hotel** to 1929. The oft-quoted "1928 Art Deco landmark" blends the two. Rental listings repeat the blend, and one even calls the building a "1929 Spanish Baroque building". [S1, S21]

How to read the confidence tags

DOCUMENTED a primary source (marker, official record, newspaper text) was read directly. **REPORTED** a secondary or compiled source, not yet checked against a primary. **CONFLICT** sources disagree. **UNVERIFIED** lore, a single weak source or an uncertain identification. Bracketed codes such as [S6] refer to the Sources chapter.

Main findings

The hotel years are well documented in the press, the founding years are not. Almost everything about 1928–1951 comes from the owners' own timeline [S6], which cites no newspapers. The 1952–1962 record, by contrast, is read directly from the *Independent Press-Telegram* [S14].

The owners' timeline is useful but not always right. It dates the Grand Ballroom to 25 December 1956 and the themed rooms to January 1958; the newspaper shows the ballroom still under construction in December 1956 (opened 2 March 1957) and the Ivanhoe Room in use by September 1957 [S6, S14].

The Hilton date is not settled. The marker and owners' timeline say 1952, and a 1967 newspaper chronology agrees, but a March 1954 newsfeature describes Hilton as merely "interested" in the hotel and the 1957 ballroom coverage is the first plain statement of majority ownership [S14].

The condominium story is now much clearer. The newspaper shows a 1967 plan, a first sales advertisement on 16 June 1968 and move-in around December 1968; the city's 1969 date appears to mark the formal conversion. The hotel was not a clean 1967 shutdown: catering and the Lanai rooms continued, and documents of 1974–76 still call the building the Lafayette Hotel [S1, S6, S14, S30].

New primary evidence on the founding. A 1927 order book places the Campbell Apartments' terra cotta in May–June 1927, a December 1928 trade notice describes a Broadway Land Company hotel by Schilling & Schilling, and the landmark ordinance text itself gives the Campbell family history [S24, S26, S27].

Most "incidents" rest on one source. The 1986–1994 stories about Fender's Ballroom come almost entirely from the owners' timeline and punk-scene recollections [S6, S19]. Many newspaper hits for "Lafayette Hotel" are other hotels; see *Namesake hotels*.

ARCHITECTURE

The three buildings

What people call “the Lafayette” is three structures joined into one complex. Each has a different date, style and architect, which is why single-year summaries so often go wrong.

	Campbell Apartments	Lafayette Hotel	Broadway addition
Address	130 Linden Ave.	140 Linden Ave.	Broadway at Linden (500–540 E. Broadway frontage)
Date	1928	1929 (opened 28 Oct 1929 per owners)	1948
Style	Spanish Baroque / Spanish Renaissance	Art Deco	International (marker); “Streamline Moderne” (owners’ site)
Architects	Parker O. Wright and Francis Gentry (Wright & Gentry)	Cecil and Arthur Schilling	Theodore H. Criley, Los Angeles; Hugh Gibbs also credited by the 2009 contractor
Height	11 stories (LAPL, PCAD, <i>Long Beach Post</i>); 12 in two sources	“Five-story building plus mezzanine and solarium tower” (1928 plan)	Eight stories (<i>Long Beach Post</i>)
Origin	Built and owned by R. E. Campbell (the owners’ timeline says “E. R.”); about \$700,000; 82 units “with hotel service”; terra cotta ordered May–June 1927	Broadway Land Company; \$300,000 hotel announced 16 Dec 1928; sold 1931 to H. J. Tremain for \$350,000	Part of a \$1.5 million expansion with a supper club, grill, cocktail lounge and 75-car auto port

Sources: S1, S6, S8, S9, S11, S12, S20. Origin details are from the owners’ timeline **REPORTED**; the dates and architect credits for the first two buildings are from the City marker **DOCUMENTED**.

The architects

Wright & Gentry. PCAD describes the firm as a very busy Long Beach practice in the 1920s. Parker O. Wright Jr. (b. 1873, New York; d. 1952) and Francis Hudson Gentry (b. 1892, Lancaster, Calif.), a structural engineer, were the partners. PCAD’s project lists for the firm do *not* include the Campbell Apartments; the attribution rests on the City marker [S1, S8].

Schilling & Schilling. Cecil F. Schilling (1890–1940) and his brother Arthur are credited on the marker. PCAD lists the firm’s Art Theatre and Downey Theatre (both 1925), the Merrill Building (1932) and Carmelitos Housing (1938–39), but not the hotel [S1, S8]. At the building’s 82nd-anniversary event on 28 October 2011, Cecil Schilling’s son Bob attended, and Schilling-archive photographs of the original 1929 details, including the Art Deco entrance canopy since removed, were displayed; the City presented a proclamation **DOCUMENTED** [S7].

Theodore Criley. The owners’ timeline credits the 1948 addition to “Theodore H. Criley”. The AIA directory lists Theodore Criley (1905–1984) of Los Angeles and Claremont, partner of Fred W. McDowell and Paul S. Wheeler, which fits [S6, S9] **REPORTED**. Wikipedia’s article of the same name is a different person.

Unreliable biographies

A Long Beach condo-marketing page gives birth years and birthplaces for the architects that contradict PCAD and the AIA directory (for example Wright b. 1893 in Iowa, Gentry b. 1882 in Pennsylvania). Those biographies should not be used [S21].

What the Campbell looked like in 1928



Fig. 1 *Campbell Apartments, 130 Linden Avenue, 1928 (Winstead Photo).*

Los Angeles Public Library, via Wikimedia Commons. Public domain. A parking lot and alley occupy the site where the Lafayette Hotel would rise in 1929.

The Los Angeles Public Library photograph shows an eleven-story Spanish Renaissance building “providing deluxe apartments with hotel service”, with scroll and swag decoration from the second to fourth floors and an ornamental balcony on the ninth [S11].



Fig. 2 *The Lafayette Complex today, 130–140 Linden Avenue (photo dated 2009-09-12).*

Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0 (catalog creator field reads "Los Angeles"; confirm attribution on the file page before reuse).

1928 TO THE PRESENT

Chronology

Key dates, with the basis for each. Where the owners' timeline [S6] is the only source, the entry is tagged reported.

Date	Event	Basis	Source
1927-05/06	Gladding, McBean order book lists terra cotta for "Campbell Apts., Linden Ave., Long Beach", architects Wright & Gentry.	DOCUMENTED	S26
1928	Campbell Apartments completed: 82 units, "hotel and maid services", built and owned by R. E. Campbell (Who's Who 1927-28: owner and operator of the Campbell Apartment Hotel).	REPORTED	S1, S6, S11, S25
1928-12	<i>Architect and Engineer</i> reports the Broadway Land Company planning a five-story concrete hotel at Long Beach to plans by Schilling & Schilling.	DOCUMENTED	S27
1928-12-16	Report that the Broadway Land Company will erect a \$300,000 hotel at Broadway and Linden: five stories plus mezzanine and solarium tower, 100 rooms, six stores.	REPORTED	S6
1929-04-28	Hotel first reported under the name "Hotel de Cota", to open 1 July 1929. <i>Longbeachize</i> also says it was originally named Hotel de Cota.	UNVERIFIED	S6, S13
1929-10-28	Hotel Lafayette opens at 7 am; breakfast served at the Cafe Lafayette. A 2019 blog says it opened days after the 29 Oct crash.	CONFLICT	S6, S7
1931-10-22	Broadway Land Company sells the hotel to H. J. Tremain for \$350,000; roof bungalows planned.	REPORTED	S6
1935-01/02	FBI file places a Bremer-case subject, an alias "C. J. Murphy", in Campbell Apartment Hotel Apt 710, 24 Jan-11 Feb 1935 (identification by a car dealer's photo ID).	REPORTED	S28
1946-05	National Canners Association holds a plant-sanitation conference at the Lafayette: first post-war convention found.	DOCUMENTED	S17
1948	Broadway addition (International style) built as part of a \$1.5 million expansion.	DOCUMENTED	S1, S6
1950-12-21	Long Beach firefighters' Ladies Auxiliary Christmas party at the hotel; Fire Chiefs meeting 19 Jan 1951.	DOCUMENTED	S15
1952	Hilton: marker says a Hilton hotel in 1952; owners say bought 3 Feb 1952 for \$2 million. A manager from the Hilton chain arrives Feb 1952.	CONFLICT	S1, S6, S14
1952-02	W. Ford Montgomery, a Hilton-chain manager, arrives to run the hotel; "Lafayette Hotel Apts. (formerly Campbell Apts.," appears in classified ads from Oct 1952.	DOCUMENTED	S14
1953-10	Architect Kenneth Wing opens bids for roof, floor and heating work.	DOCUMENTED	S14
1954-03-14	AP newsfeature: Conrad Hilton "and his associates are interested in the Lafayette Hotel here".	DOCUMENTED	S14

Date	Event	Basis	Source
1955-05	David Tallichet, 32, profiled as hotel manager; garage across the street leased to "Lafayette Hotel Co." for ten years.	DOCUMENTED	S14
1955-06	Cavalier Room (350 seats, \$25,000) opens in a former garage portion; further rooms and a Fife & Drum lounge finish about mid-November.	DOCUMENTED	S14
1956-06	Lanai wing and swimming pool open (plan dated 1 Mar 1956: 51 rooms, \$400,000; architects Killingsworth, Brady & Smith).	DOCUMENTED	S6, S14
1957-03-02	Grand Ballroom opens (Assistance League ball, Harry James). Hilton attends; paper says he owns majority interest.	DOCUMENTED	S14
1957-08/09	Letters to the editor dispute the City Council's closing of the hotel alley to the Lafayette.	DOCUMENTED	S14
1957-09	Ivanhoe Room in use; Gaslight Room advertised Feb 1958; Outrigger listed by June 1958.	DOCUMENTED	S14
1958-10-22	Jordan-Ortega fight televised nationally from the ballroom: first nationally televised ballroom boxing match west of Washington.	DOCUMENTED	S14
1959-06	Rod Serling and Ray Bradbury speak at a writers' conference at the hotel.	DOCUMENTED	S14
1960-04	\$100,000 redesign of lobby, foyer and dining rooms "in preparation for International Beauty Congress".	REPORTED	S6
1960-06-19	Paper first calls the Grand Ballroom the "International Ballroom (formerly the Grand Ballroom)".	DOCUMENTED	S14
1960-09-21	AP: hotel bills Fidel Castro \$73.80 run up by the father of Miss Cuba 1959.	DOCUMENTED	S16
1962-03-23	Richard Nixon addresses the Suburban Republicans Dinner at the hotel.	DOCUMENTED	S18
1962-07	California World's Fair uses the hotel as headquarters (15 offices on three floors) until Feb 1963.	DOCUMENTED	S14
1963-10-06	\$200,000 remodel of public rooms announced: Red Velvet Room becomes the Sans Souci Lounge; dining room becomes the Cafe Lafayette.	DOCUMENTED	S14
1966-07-13	Barry Goldwater campaigns at the hotel; Gov. Pat Brown speaks there to peace officers on 2 May 1966.	DOCUMENTED	S15
1967-08-08	Owners' date for suspension of hotel operations; Press-Telegram of 13 Aug says the hotel will shut 3 Sept and become a residential apartment hotel.	CONFLICT	S6, S14
1967-10-08	Airport-bus listing changes the hotel "from Commercial to Residential"; an ad says the Campbells "bought the place back from the Hilton chain".	DOCUMENTED	S14
1967-10-15	Surveyors measure rooms "for conversion into a condominium complex".	DOCUMENTED	S14
1968-06-16	Earliest condominium sales ad found: "Grand Opening of a grand new style in living", \$8,750 and up.	DOCUMENTED	S14
1968-12	Lanai wing reopens as the 48-room Vagabond Motor Hotel; furnished condominium models open.	DOCUMENTED	S14
1969	City ordinance and marker date the conversion to condominiums.	REPORTED	S1, S24