



The Arneal home — 1001 John Street

After World War II, interest in reproducing American two-story homes diminished. And the Contemporary style of architecture was extremely in vogue during the period from 1950-70. Although the Korean War still raged and the Civil Defense was in full operation, the building industry was not curtailed in the same manner as it had been during WW II. Residential and commercial construction in Manhattan Beach actively increased at a very steady pace.

The one-story ranch style became more popular and much favored by many architects. “Notably, it was Mr. Cliff May more than any other architect who developed and perfected the style known as the California ranch home, which blossomed in the 1950s to become the quintessential suburban home,” LA Times Oct 1989.

The flat roof style is often referred to as “contemporary” or “American International”. This contemporary home built in 1950, is located in the Hill Section of town and owned by the Arneal family, who had lived here for the past 50 years. This home is an excellent example of a single story house having a low flat roof which has an exposed four foot overhang, with covered copper raft-ends. The exterior walls, built of redwood, encase large single pane windows and clerestory windows under the top roof line with no other decorative detailing added.

As the hillside developed, it became quite clear that this home retained its original integrity and proved its design characteristics to be a lasting element of the landscape. As Cliff May stated, “Good architecture is something that fits in the neighborhood, but nowadays many architects are building monuments to their clients, and the homes look like castles and mausoleums.”