



Villa Monterey: 10 years old and growing gracefully, without any commercial installations

*Villa Monterey an asset to Scottsdale*

By HENRY FULLER

Ten years ago David Friedman, head of Butler Homes, Inc., opened his Villa Monterey subdivision on what then was the northeast outskirts of Scottsdale.

Locally, it was a pioneer effort in quality cluster housing. The succeeding decade has seen construction of close to 1,000 units in Villa Monterey colony. It has several imitators of this type housing throughout the Metropolitan Phoenix area. There are variations, of course, on the original idea; but it's there still.

Now Friedman has opened another unit of his subdivision along 78th Street and north of Medlock. This might not deserve special mention, save that these 1971 "casitas" mark a departure in arrangement from those of previous years.

To explain that, we go back in the history of a residential tract that has become a multi-million dollar asset on the Scottsdale tax rolls.

Friedman, former Philadelphian, introduced his first group of casita homes in March, 1961. These were habitations sharing a common wall with widely varying and attractive architectural designs.

The front yard depth was reduced to give a larger rear yard as an outdoor living room. He did not have retirees in mind when he started.

It since has developed that one-half of the owners are in that category. He wanted to offer city living conveniences with a country-club atmosphere.

On this basis he built the first housing units at Mariposa Drive and 76th Street. These sold so rapidly he was off on Unit No. 2 before he had completed the first cluster. In the second one he erected more split-level homes and provided more with two-car garages.

The years passed. Villa Monterey spread northward between 76th and 78th Streets. Each spring was marked with new models involving changes in the environmental arrangement.

Friedman's idea was that a group of owners would find it convenient and enjoyable to have a mutual recreation area. The casitas were sold on that basis.

To emphasize the country-club atmosphere, he developed a

fine golf course on the flood control spillway, extending south from Indian Bend Wash. This is the east flank of the subdivision.

In each unit he installed a central recreation area with landscaped park, pool, sauna bath and other like facilities. Such served the surrounding 100 or more home owners.

But this year models have a more intimate concept of the neighborhood recreation idea. Instead of a park shared by more than 100 owners, the new arrangement includes only 22 casitas edging the four sides of a mutual mini-park.

In this arrangement, each casita has two windows that look out over the recreation area. From the roofed patio, one may step across the rear yard and follow a walled pathway with gate to the park. Individual privacy is preserved; yet the recreation area is just a step away.

Why this change in design, we asked Developer Friedman?

"Just about everything we have changed in past years has come from the expressed desires of the women," he explained. "We discovered where the large group of casita owners shared a bigger park, many had to walk down the streets to get there.

"This did not appeal to the women. On the new arrangement a home owner may step into his park without using the front sidewalk. Or he may sit in his house and enjoy the landscape without leaving.

"What we are doing is creating a more intimate surrounding for each of 22 casita owners. We have two units under construction now and the land marked off for four more. We do not build ahead of demand."

If you have visited Villa Monterey, probably you were struck with the absence of any commercial venture within its limits. Early in the game Friedman came to the conclusion such would be a mistake. He turned down a considerable financial inducement to allow a shopping center at 76th Street and Chaparral; although he had zoned it for business initially.

"The more I considered the subject, the more convinced I became that one of our primary attractions was the absence of such activity in the heart of our residential area," he said.

"We're just a couple of minutes away from a shopping center and only five from the heart of Scottsdale. Why spoil our home environment? It's one way to remain exclusive."



Fuller