

03. 533 E Street The Arnold Home

compiled by John Lofland

- Built 1938, an “English Revival Cottage.”
- From the late 1940s to his death at 82 in 1994, this was the home of Hubert Arnold, a multi-talented and wealthy eccentric and UCD professor of mathematics.
- Over a period of 65 years Arnold collected some 1,800 artistically crafted ceramic pieces from almost 200 artists in several countries. These and his large antique camera and other collections were stuffed into this house and garage.
- Valued at several million dollars, Arnold donated his ceramics collection to the Sacramento Crocker Art Museum, which made it a major exhibit in 1989.
- Now owned by Michael S. Brown, 533 E, Davis.




533 E. Arnold Home



2003 Historic Surveyor Photo

2 -- 03. 533 E Street

- 1940 owner: Francis J. & Bertha Meyer
- '42 voter registration: Mrs. Ella Schmierer, housewife, Democrat & Mr. Henry J. Schmierer, bank clerk, Democrat.
- '49 phone book: Minges, P. A.
- '55 Phone book: Arnold, H. A.

State of California — The Resources Agency DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION PRIMARY RECORD		Primary #: _____ HRI # _____ Trinomial _____ NRHP Status Code: <u>3D/3CD</u> Other Listings _____ Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____
*Resource Name or Address 533 E Street		
P1. Other Identifier: None		
*P2. Location: *a. County Yolo		
b. Address 533 E Street		
*c. City Davis Zip 95616		
d. UTM: N/A		
e. USGS Quad: Davis Quadrangle		
*f. Other Locational Data (APN #): 070 184-013		
*P3a. Description: This small English Revival Cottage has an L-shape plan with a cross gable roof. The treatment of the front projecting gable wing does much to establish the style of the building. The asymmetrical gable swoops across the north side of the front façade to cover the small, north oriented entry porch. The porch features two arched openings, enclosed on the east side by a metal rail. On the gable wall a vertically emphasized central window is flanked by narrow, multi-light double hung sidelights. To the north of the entry porch there are paired double hung windows similar in design to the sidelights of the gable end window. An interior brick chimney is found on the rear slope of the principal roof. The house is clad in stucco. The building was constructed in 1938 by UC Davis mathematics professor, Hubert Arnold who lived there until his death in 1994 (Lofland, Old North Davis, p. 110). The house retains its integrity of design, materials, workmanship, setting, location, feeling and association. It appears to be unaltered and it contributes to a district eligible for the California Register.		
*P3b. Resource Attributes: HP2		
*P4. Resources Present: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Element of District		
P5b. Description of Photo: View west		
P5. Photograph or Drawing (Photograph required for buildings, structures, and objects.)		*P6. Date Constructed/Age: 1938 years old documented <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic <input type="checkbox"/> Both
		*P7. Owner and Address: Michael Brown 533 E Street Davis, CA 95616
		*P8. Recorded by: Carol Roland Roland-Navi Associates 4829 Crestwood Way Sacramento, CA 95822
		*P9. Date Recorded: 04/07-10/2003
		*P10. Type of Survey: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intensive <input type="checkbox"/> Reconnaissance <input type="checkbox"/> Other Describe: Determination of Local District Eligibility
		*P11. Report Citation: none
		*Attachments: <input type="checkbox"/> NONE <input type="checkbox"/> Map Sheet <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation Sheet <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building, Structure, and Object Record <input type="checkbox"/> Linear Resource Record <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeological Record <input type="checkbox"/> District Record <input type="checkbox"/> Milling Station Record <input type="checkbox"/> Rock Art Record <input type="checkbox"/> Artifact Record <input type="checkbox"/> Photograph Record <input type="checkbox"/> Other (List):

2003 Historic Surveyor Write up.

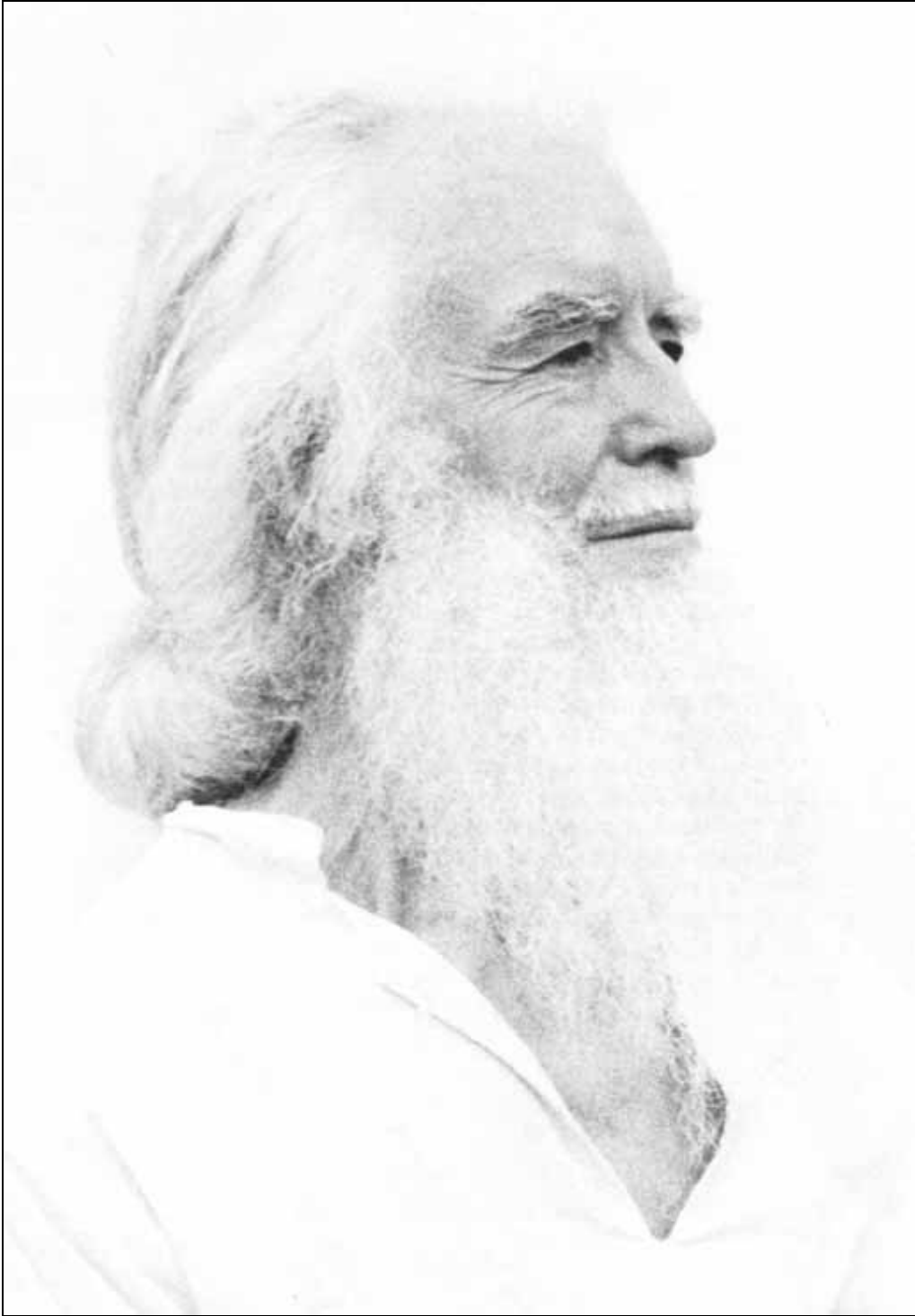
- From the early 1950s to his death at 82 in 1994, this was the home of Hubert Arnold, a multi-talented and wealthy eccentric and UCD professor of mathematics.
- Over a period of 65 years Arnold collected some 1,800 artistically crafted ceramic pieces from almost 200 artists in several countries. These and his large antique camera and other collections were stuffed into this house and garage.
- Valued at several million dollars, Arnold donated his ceramics collection to the Sacramento Crocker Art Museum, which made it a major exhibit in 1989.
- Davis water is not fluoridated in good part because Arnold was a major figure in a citizen campaign that stopped City officials from executing such a plan.
- There is no City-planted Hackberry tree in the City-owned strip in front of 533 E because Arnold disliked trees that were not “native” and “natural” and that bore edible fruit. Over some years, he treated his city tree in ways that resulted in its death. City officials acceded to his wish to plant the trees currently seen in the 533 planting strip.

(It is a sign of changing times that the level of neighborhood consciousness and concern makes it unlikely that anyone could any longer get away with Arnold’s brazen and public illegal behavior in killing City street tree. But in that period, no one seemed to care—or at least to think they had a right to object to what he was doing.)

- After Arnold’s death, 533 was bought, I am told, for 18.6K by a young couple who loved the home and were rumored to have spent some 60K over several years in the 1990s in upgrading it.



Arnold was an iconic Davis figure who attracted attention, even in the form of artistic representation. Here is a photo of well-known local artist Donna Billick's sculpture of him titled "Portrait of Hubert A. Arnold." It shows Arnold as the bemused skeptic. (This piece is in the Crocker Museum collection.)



Jeffrey Briggs took this formal portrait of him that appeared in the 1989 catalog of the Crocker exhibition. This show him as the Ethereal Reflective Elder.

Gallery exhibition reflects evolution in Billick's style

Satirical ceramic sculptures being shown with works of Roy DeForest are bold, lively and humorous

By MARILYN MOYLE
Enterprise art critic

ART REVIEW JOHN NATSOULAS GALLERY

Thanksgiving is here, and this year I am thankful for our wonderful local art community, for the color and spirit which it brings to Davis, for its idealism and support of cultural diversity, and for its high standards of excellence.

Donna Billick is a Davis artist known for her "rock art." Inspired by Robert Arneson and Hubert Arnold at UC Davis, she became a ceramic artist. She earned her master's in fine arts from UC Davis in 1977 and has been producing ceramic art since then. Her selected list of shows and corporate and public installations is more than three pages long.

Billick's public art sculptures are all over Davis—at the Marketplace shopping center, in front of Lucky's grocery store and near the West Davis ponds—and in the private and corporate collections of many Davis and Sacramento homes and office buildings.

Her current work at John Nat-soulas Gallery will be on display through Monday. It includes examples of her fine sand-blasted wall sculptures, but its main focus is a series of satirical ceramic portraits of women. This is a bold, risky venture for Billick, especially since she is showing her work along with paintings, prints, and furniture by Roy DeForest, former UC Davis professor of art.

De Forest's work is full of color and energy. Last month some of his early works were included in an exhibit of Beat Era art of the 1950s. His abstract drawings and mixed media works in that show were energetic but relatively disorganized, even for that era.

His mature style, which features wild-eyed dogs, loosely drawn, is commercially successful. De Forest's style seems casual, almost scribbly, but it is also humorous and full of joy.

The fact that it emerged from the fragmented, war-weary '50s gives me hope for a better world

in the 21st century.

Billick is also an artist who inspires hope and confidence, partly by encouraging us to take ourselves less seriously. Her ceramic portraits explore many feminine stereotypes — from Pele, the Hawaiian volcano goddess, to Princess Leia of the "Star Wars" films.

But the strongest portraits are the ones which come from her own self-image. "Fool Woman," a laughing court jester with large, unfeminine legs and feet, and "Brat," an unglazed, white ceramic woman in ponytail and baseball cap, gazing up at the sky, have real appeal. The other works are only mildly interesting, with the exception of "Holy Woman," a small sculpture in the small gallery, unglazed and pierced all over with neat round holes.

"Holy Woman" is hollow, and I have held it in my hands and felt its presence, when Billick passed it around to a group gathered to hear her speak at the Crocker Art Museum last spring. She was talking about Hubert Arnold and the gift of his collection of fine pottery to the museum.

Billick traveled with Arnold on many of his collecting trips, organized his travel, and carried heavy bags of pots for him. Like a devoted daughter, she took care of him during his last days, making it possible for him to stay in his small Davis home until he died.

In return, he taught her a great deal about collecting and encouraged her own art. He didn't think much of the "Funk Art" movement, but he believed in Billick's talent and energy. I think Arnold would have liked "Holy Woman," too.



"Roots" is one of several ceramic sculptures of women by Davis artist Donna Billick, which will be on display through Monday at the John Nat-soulas Gallery in downtown Davis.

Courtesy

Billick is having fun in this exhibit, gently satirizing herself and all forms of women on pedestals. "Big Blue," a larger than life-size sculpture of an uptight woman with nose in the air and the same heavy legs and feet which appear in several of Billick's sculptures, is very funny.

Something is going on here, a change in Billick's focus, which is worth watching. Trees and leaves are also emerging as a strong image in Billick's works. "Roots," a small sculpture which has no clear gender but an African face, transcends the contemporary images and brings us back to our common origin and our fundamental connection to nature. □

OBITUARY



Hubert A. Arnold

Hubert A. Arnold died Oct. 20, 1994, at his home in Davis. He was 82 years old.

Arnold was professor emeritus of mathematics at UC Davis. He was born in Chicago and received his A.B. in mathematics from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, in 1933. He studied at the University of Paris (Sorbonne) and received his Ph.D. in mathematics from the California Institute of Technology in 1939.

While studying at Caltech, he became friends with mathematician E.T. Bell, and later helped author Constance Reid write Bell's biography "The Search for E.T. Bell."

Arnold entered the U.S. Navy in 1942, after serving as instructor of mathematics at the University of Minnesota, as a visiting research scholar at the University of Virginia and an instructor in mathematics and assistant to Professor Lefschetz at Princeton University. While in the Navy, Arnold rose from lieutenant (j.g.) to lieutenant commander. He served as officer in charge of Princeton's computer development program.

He joined the department of mathematics at UCD in 1948 and remained until his retirement in 1980. His research interests were differentials in abstract spaces and the topological structure of limits sets. He taught a variety of courses and was known for his statistics classes and vocal support for greater public awareness of the pitfalls of faulty statistical data.

Arnold was a person of many talents and interests. He was an accomplished piano player and he danced with the Martha Graham Dance Troupe in New York from 1946 to 1948.

He also collected ceramics from all over the world during his many overseas trips. He donated a collection of more than 1,800 ceramics to the Crocker Art Museum, including outstanding pieces by British, Japanese and American artists, in addition to samples from Mexico and Africa. His donations helped to make the museum's collection one of the best of its kind.

Arnold is survived by his brother-in-law, Thomas M. Davies Sr. of Lincoln, Neb.; his nephew, Dr. Thomas M. Davies Jr. and great-niece Jennifer Davies of San Diego; his nephew, Charles Arnold Davies; his niece, Joanie Davies-Killenger; and his great-nephews, Patrick and Timothy Killenger.

A memorial gathering will be held Saturday, Nov. 19, at 2 p.m. in the back yard of his home, 533 E St., Davis.

Donations may be made to the Davis Friends Meeting, 345 L St., Davis, CA 95616.

Hubert A. Arnold

The location for the memorial service for Hubert A. Arnold has changed. The service will be held in the Davis Friends Meeting House at 345 L St., on Saturday at 2 p.m.

Arnold, a professor at UC Davis, died Oct. 20, 1994.