

"A RESTAURANT FOR SHERMAN ANDERSON"

Sherman Anderson was a restaurateur. It's Sherm, the short version of his name that might ring a (dinner) bell for any long-time Albuquerque residents. It was Sherm who opened Sherm's coffee shop (and later Chinese kitchen) in 1958 at the corner of Adams and Central Avenue SE. **Loyola's**, which operates from the building today, has been in business at the **address** since 1984.



Sherm's was constructed to replace Mr. Anderson's aging establishment, the El Sombrero, one of two sombrero-shaped restaurants in the city, both designed by architect Gordon Ferguson in 1947. As the name suggests, the El Sombreros were shaped like a great Mexican hat. These mimetic restaurants (seen below in the photograph courtesy the Nancy Tucker Collection at Historic Albuquerque Incorporated) were novelties that appealed to travelers headed west along Route 66. Sherm's too would eventually be called an 'advertising gimmick' in a 1961 issue of *New Mexico Architect*.



The question of who designed Sherm's vexed us for a few weeks last summer, even leading to a call to the California-based architectural firm of Armet, Davis, and Newlove. Eventually, we located the documents needed to reveal Sherm's design and architects in a file marked 'A Restaurant for Sherman Anderson' in the **SMPC Architects** inventory. In it were drawings attributed to Ferguson, Stevens, and Associates. Armet and Davis, the architects most

associated with the Southern California Googie-look, are noted on the plans as consultants although neither firm has a record of the collaboration.

Mr. Anderson must have been savvy about the trends that made customers hungry to enter an establishment. Sherm's restaurant with its folded eave and Googie provenance is worthy of its own article were it not a feature on our **walking tour** (and a story many of our readers have already heard, if not a restaurant they've visited). Loyola's, in its place, is a local favorite, a

landmark still beckoning tourists and residents today, now with New Mexican flavors. What we did not expect to find was another restaurant for Sherman Anderson.

Standing at 1112 San Pedro NE is another Googie building. Opened as Taco Sombbrero in 1965, the designers created a more modernist interpretation of the iconic Mexican hat; we wouldn't have made the connection without the name but once named, it's easy to see it. After photographing the building, we looked up the address in a digital newspaper archive to determine any associated details we might employ in further research, hoping for a client name. And there it was in black and white: Mr. Sherman Anderson, who had previously owned two other sombrero-shaped buildings, was pleased to announce the opening of the Taco Sombbrero.



Oh, no. We knew there wasn't another drawing waiting for us at the Center for Southwest Research. Our first instinct was to speculate that Ferguson, Stevens, and Associates (by 1965, Ferguson, Stevens, Mallory, and Pearl) had a hand in its design due to their previous commission (and friendship between the Ferguson and Anderson families), but the records, or rather the lack thereof, didn't support that idea. Since our early introduction to Mr. Anderson's legacy last summer we'd learned that one of Albuquerque's most memorable Googie buildings, the now-demolished Larry's Drive-In, **had been designed by its owner and not by an architect**. Was this the case with the modern Sombbrero? As with Sherm's, we may never know the full story. But after relaying our suspicions to a colleague, it was whispered to us that Bob Mallory, then a principal architect at Ferguson, Stevens, Mallory, and Pearl, may have been responsible for the Taco Sombbrero's design. Such a suggestion would line up with our hunch, though more evidence is required to confirm it.

SMPC Architects, the firm which grew from Gordon Ferguson's work in the 1940's, is celebrating 75 years in operation this year. Its acronym honors former principal architects Don Stevens, Bob Mallory, George Pearl, and Bob Campbell.



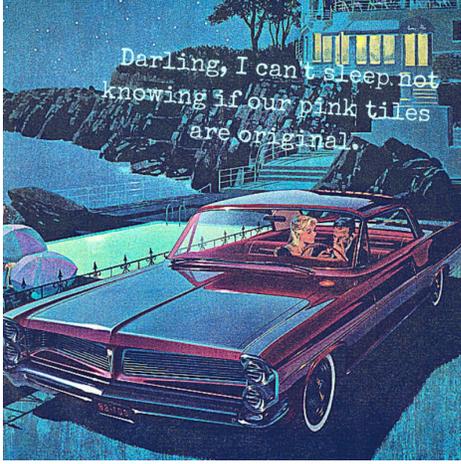
UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY 23rd: Researching Your Atomic Age Home

75-minute sessions at 10 AM, 12 PM, and 2 PM
\$22 per person

We're taking the guess work out of the mid-century home research process in this workshop designed especially for the residents of Albuquerque's 1950's and 60's era homes. Whether your interest is in style or history, this workshop will illuminate the pathways and process to answering your questions and becoming the authority on

your atomic age abode.



*This event is made possible thanks to the generous support of sponsor **Realtor Talia Freedman** and hosting location, the **National Museum of Nuclear Science & History**.*

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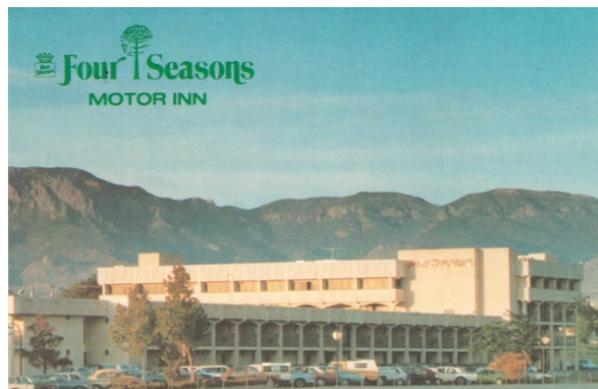
WYNDHAM ALBUQUERQUE HOTEL CLOSES

Reported yesterday in the **Albuquerque Journal** and **ABQ Biz Journal** was the closure and pending renovation of the Wyndham Albuquerque Hotel and Conference Center, located at 2500 Carlisle Boulevard. The hotel was opened in 1971 as the Four Seasons Motor Inn by Albuquerque developer Dale Bellamah.

Designed by modernist architect Jorge de la Torre then working for the architectural firm of Flatow, Moore, Bryan, and Fairburn, the hotel has changed hands multiple times since its construction. Many city residents still refer to it as the Hotel Cascada, the operation the Wyndham brand took over in 2017. The second building, which hotel staff last summer revealed to us had been struggling with occupancy, opened in 1973. Renovations to that section are already underway; the Journal report suggests that existing elements will be reused where possible to conserve costs in the conversion to apartments.



Above: The arched windows overlooking the interior courtyard of the hotel's second building. Below: A postcard of the second building from our collection.



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