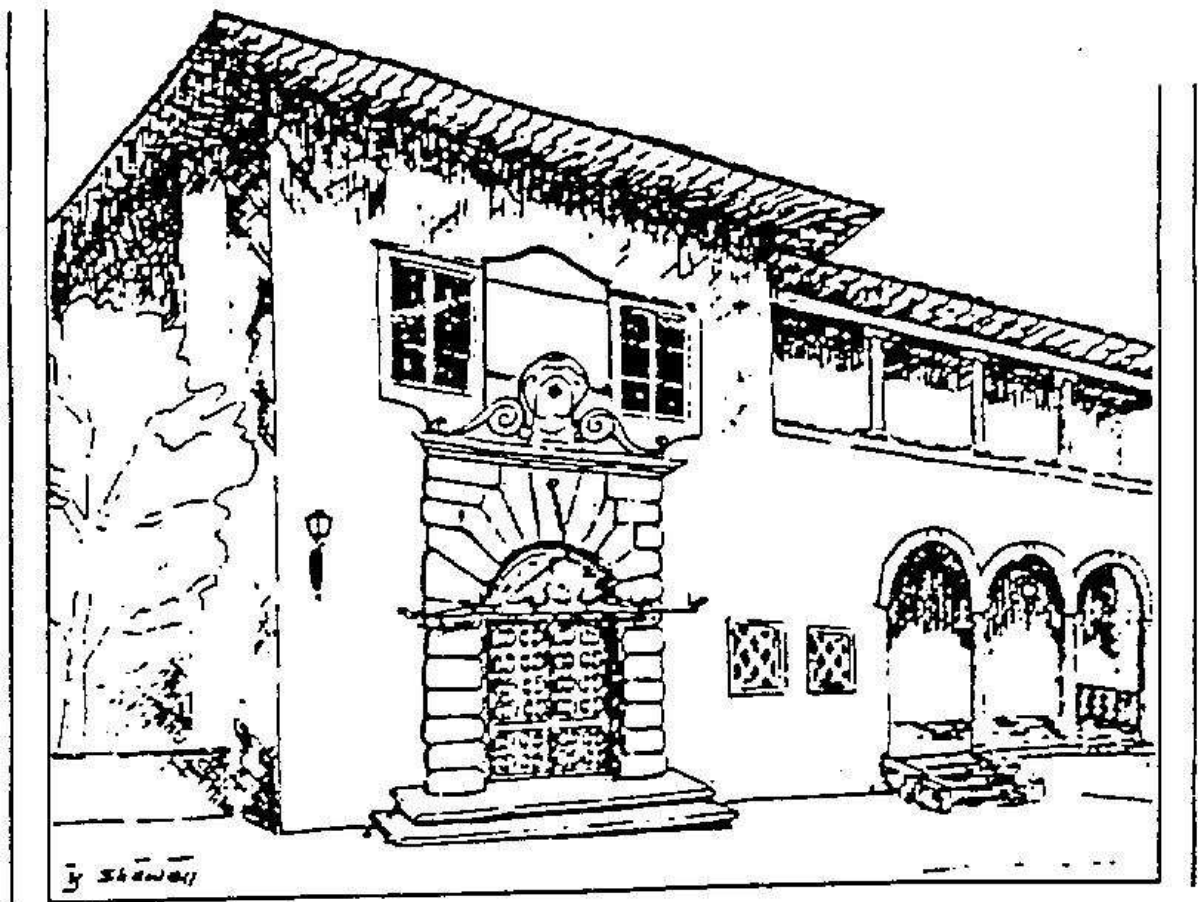


Villa del Sol d'Oro (House of the Golden Sun)

675 West Highland Avenue
Sierra Madre, California 91024



The Alverno Villa is a duplicate of the Villa Collazzi located on the outskirts of Florence Italy. Villa Collazzi has been occupied for several centuries by the Bombicci — Fomi family, and legend has it that the Villa is the only one ever designed by the immortal Michelangelo. The Villa del Sol d'Oro is one—quarter scale to the original.

Nestled at the foot of the beautiful San Gabriel Mountains in the picturesque City of Sierra Madre, the Villa was built in the “pure” Italian Renaissance Style in 1922 by the famous Pasadena architect Wallace Neff and was completed by 1928. The estate was

built by Dr. Jarvis Barlow for his wife, who had visited the Villa Collazzi and wanted a house just like it. This design was a radical departure from the Mediterranean style that Neff perfected in his other homes. He used entrance rotunda and iron work in several of his later homes.

Originally built on thirteen acres of trees and flowers overlooking the entire San Gabriel Valley, the Villa had five master bedrooms, four bathrooms, and ample help quarters, one of the first electric elevators in the area, porches on three sides, and spacious patios. On the grounds were garages, stables, caretaker's home, swimming pool, bath house, and tennis courts.

The building is comprised of two stories and a tower. It is said that the walls are made of two rows of hollow tile to keep the building cool in the summer and warm in the winter. The lower story houses the reception rooms, dining room, drawing room, and library. The upper floor includes the living quarters and a spacious ballroom. The tower was built to obtain a better view of the valley.

Dr. Barlow himself supervised the planting of the trees which included: orchids, tulip, Japanese Magnolia, strawberry tree, flaming eucalyptus, monkey tree, camphor, sapoitas, English Yew, coral, and carob. To frame the southern façade, a sunken garden was added, lined on either side by Italian cypress.

The Villa is now part of Alverno High School, a private Catholic girl's school, which has been educating young women since 1960.