

Salomon Apartments, 1959

(Originally marketed as Cecile Abbey)

3200 6th Avenue

Architect Henry Hester, Hester & Davis

The architect: Henry H. Hester, 1925-2006

- Henry Hester was born May 30, 1925 in Vinita, Oklahoma to Loraine Burgess Hester and Alford Vernon Hester. Henry attended Roosevelt Junior High and Brown Military Academy in San Diego then San Diego State College before serving in the Coast Guard during World War II.
- In 1947, he graduated from the University of Southern California with a bachelor's degree in architecture and moved to La Jolla.
- Between 1950-52, Mr. Hester worked for Kenneth N. Lind as a draftsman. He worked for Lloyd Ruocco before establishing Henry H. Hester, AIA in 1954. Designing two homes for himself in addition to a wide array of residential and commercial commissions, Hester had the good fortune of a small personal inheritance that allowed him to pick only the clients and projects he felt strongly about.
- Through the years, Henry Hester would join in partnership with Frederick Liebhardt, Ronald K. Davis, William F. Cody, fellow USC-grad Robert E. Jones, and Stanley Livingston.
- His projects, while mainly focused in the San Diego area, extended throughout California, and as far as Denver, Albuquerque, and Florida.
- As one of San Diego's premier modernist architects, Henry Hester designed buildings that are praised as "clean and straight."
- During a career spanning four decades, Hester received numerous local and national awards from the American Institute of Architects for his custom single-family homes and his commercial buildings.
- Henry Hester raced Formula cars nationally. He rode motorcycles, held a multi-engine pilot's license, and enjoyed windsurfing, water-skiing, and dominoes. Hester was also an avid golfer, often frequenting the La Jolla Country Club, Fairbanks Ranch Country Club, and Indian Ridge Country Club in Palm Desert.



The building: Salomon Apartments - 3200 6th Avenue, San Diego - Bankers Hill Neighborhood

- Henry Hester designed this apartment building for Industrialist Colonel Irving Salomon and his wife Cecile, who for decades occupied the building's penthouse.
- Selected by Salomon over John Lloyd Wright (architect-son of the legendary Frank Lloyd Wright), Mr. Hester created an airy and free-flowing atmosphere with floor-to-ceiling doors and windows to take advantage of the views. When the complex opened it was marketed as San Diego's "Most Distinguished Place to Live."
- The project was designed as a luxury apartment building with 30 spacious units and a posh penthouse
- Years later the project was refurbished and converted to condominiums. When asked to participate and advise in the work, Hester declined, feeling that "Once someone changed his work, it was no longer a Hester project." Still (or because of this), the developer worked diligently to preserve remaining fixtures, restore the garden, lobby, and pool areas.



Photo by Darren Bradley



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