

---

## **Guide to the Martha Padve Papers on the Crystal Cove Historic District**

Processed by Audrey Pearson; machine-readable finding aid created by Audrey Pearson

Special Collections and Archives

The UCI Libraries

P.O. Box 19557

University of California, Irvine

Irvine, California 92623-9557

Phone: (949) 824-3947

Fax: (949) 824-2472

Email: [spcoll@uci.edu](mailto:spcoll@uci.edu)

URL: <http://special.lib.uci.edu>

© 2007

The Regents of the University of California. All rights reserved.

---

## **Descriptive Summary**

**Title:** Martha Padve papers on the Crystal Cove Historic District

**Date:** 1940-2003,

**Date (bulk):** bulk 1978-1983

**Collection Number:** MS-R091

**Creator:** Padve, Martha

**Extent:** 1.4 linear feet (2 boxes)

**Languages:** The collection is in English.

**Repository:** University of California, Irvine. Library. Special Collections and Archives.  
Irvine, California 92623-9557

**Abstract:** This collection comprises the personal papers of Martha Padve, a former resident of Crystal Cove, California and member of the Crystal Cove Residents' Association Executive Committee. The collection includes correspondence, reports and proposals, leases, financial records, newsletters, memoranda, clippings, photographs, maps, questionnaires, and other materials related to Crystal Cove. The collection also includes records from the Crystal Cove Residents' Association and reflects Padve's involvement in the Association's efforts to build a case to add Crystal Cove to the National Register of Historic Places and its legal struggles with the State of California over tenancy of the Crystal Cove cottages. Of particular interest are the questionnaires Padve circulated that describe the residents of Crystal Cove and the leaseholder history of many of the cottages.

### **Access**

The collection is open for research.

### **Publication Rights**

Property rights reside with the University of California. Literary rights are retained by the creators of the records and their heirs. For permissions to reproduce or to publish, please contact the Head of Special Collections and Archives.

### **Preferred Citation**

Martha Padve papers on the Crystal Cove Historic District. MS-R091. Special Collections and Archives, The UC Irvine Libraries, Irvine, California. Date accessed.

For the benefit of current and future researchers, please cite any additional information about sources consulted in this collection, including permanent URLs, item or folder descriptions, and box/folder locations.

### **Acquisition Information**

Gift of Martha Padve, 2002-2004.

### **Processing History**

Processed by Audrey Pearson, 2007.

### **Historical Background**

Martha Padve was a weekend resident of Crystal Cove, California from 1957 until the 1990s and a longtime activist for preserving its 46 rustic cottages and the surrounding natural environment. Born on February 22, 1917 in Scobey, Montana as Martha Bertonneau, she later moved to Pasadena, California and married Jacob (Jack) Padve. Together they bought the lease for Crystal Cove cottage #16 in 1957 from Mrs. Helen Pharaoh following the death of Mr. Gerald Pharaoh. Padve retained sole ownership of the lease after her divorce in November 1980.

Padve was a member of the executive council of the Crystal Cove Residents' Association. Worried that the Irvine Company would sell the Cove to a developer who would destroy the cottages and natural ecology of the surrounding area, Padve successfully pursued measures to add Crystal Cove to the National Register of Historic Places. She was guided in these efforts by the experience she gained as chair of the Pasadena Planning Commission from 1973 to 1981. Together with another member of the Crystal Cove Residents' Association, Christine Shirley, Padve gathered information about the local history and leaseholder history of the cottages from the residents. Padve also briefly pursued an unrealized plan with Chancellor Daniel Aldrich of the University of California, Irvine, to have UCI purchase Crystal Cove for use as a biological study center and faculty housing. After the Irvine Company sold Crystal Cove to the State of California in 1979, Padve remained involved in the Crystal Cove Residents' Association as it filed lawsuits against the State to allow residents to remain in the cottages. The Association won several lease extensions for its residents, but the State finally evicted all residents in 2001.

Crystal Cove lies on the Pacific Coast between the Southern California cities of Newport Beach and Laguna Beach. The area was purchased by James Irvine I in 1864 and retained by the Irvine Company until 1979. Early in the twentieth century,

---

squatters began to live in the area, first erecting tents, then one-room cottages. More rooms were added to these structures as needed over time, often assembled from driftwood gathered along the beach. The cottages are one of the only remaining examples of California vernacular beach architecture, otherwise known as architecture without architects. Beginning in the 1920s, silent film productions used Crystal Cove as a set for movies set in the South Seas because, during this era, all of the cottages had palm-thatched roofs. Such movies included *Treasure Island* (1920), *Storm Tossed* (1921), *Sadie Thompson* (1928), *Half a Bride* (1928), *White Shadows in the South Seas* (1928), and, much later, *Beaches* (1988). Road traffic increased with the construction of Pacific Coast Highway in 1926, and Crystal Cove became easily accessible to the public. In the late 1930s the Irvine Company informed cottage owners that they must either move their cottages or agree to lease the property from the company. Many owners chose to remain.

The last of the cottages was built in the late 1940s. The exteriors of the structures have remained nearly unchanged since the 1950s, although many interiors have been remodeled. Between 2001 and 2006, the State of California restored 22 of the 46 cottages to their vintage 1935-1955 interior and exterior condition. Additional restoration will occur as funds are raised. Beginning in 2001, the Crystal Cove Alliance, a non-profit organization formed in 1999 to preserve and protect the Crystal Cove State Historic District, became the concessionaire for the district.

### **Biography/Organization History**

- 1954 Martha Bertonneau married Jack Padve.
- 1957 Martha and Jack Padve purchased lease to Cottage 16 from Helen Pharaoh.
- 1979 June 16 Crystal Cove Historic District placed on National Register of Historic Places.
- 1979 December State of California purchased 1,898 acres of Crystal Cove State Park from the Irvine Company for \$32,600,000.
- 1981-1983 *First Development and Public Use Plan* was created. Crystal Cove Residents' Association took action against the State of California to win the right to remain in their cottages.
- 1982 April 14 Crystal Cove residents were given notice to vacate by 1982 July 31.
- 1983 Crystal Cove lease period was extended by ten years.
- 1991-1994 *Second Development and Public Use Plan* was created to establish some of the cottages as a hostel. The plan was blocked by legislation that required the California Department of Parks and Recreation to prepare a legislative report on alternative uses for the Historic District.
- 1993-1995 Tenant leases were extended two years.
- 1994-2001 *Third Development and Public Use Plan* was created which planned to build a seaside resort on the Historic District. Implementation of the plan was cancelled by the California Department of Parks and Recreation following public concern about the project.
- 1995 December 29 Crystal Cove Residents' Association filed lawsuit against the State of California, Parks and Recreation to prevent eviction.
- 1996 Crystal Cove Preservation Partners was selected concessionaire of the Historic District.
- 1996-2001 Tenant leases were extended month-to-month.
- 1999 Crystal Cove Alliance formed to resist the State of California's plans to build a luxury hotel and modify the Crystal Cove cottages.
- 2001 Crystal Cove Preservation Partners' contract was cancelled.
- 2001 February 9 The California Department of Parks and Recreation issued 30-day eviction notice to residents. Residents filed lawsuit claiming non-compliance of agreement.
- 2001 July 8 Crystal Cove residents vacated their properties.
- 2001-2006 State of California Department of Parks and Recreation began to renovate cottages and implement fourth *Plan for Public Use and Preservation*.
- 2006 June Crystal Cove cottages were made available for public use.

### **Collection Scope and Content Summary**

This collection comprises the personal papers of Martha Padve, a former resident of Crystal Cove, California and member of the Crystal Cove Residents' Association Executive Committee. The collection includes correspondence, reports and proposals, leases, financial records, newsletters, memoranda, clippings, photographs, maps, questionnaires, and other materials related to Crystal Cove. The collection also includes records from the Crystal Cove Residents' Association and reflects Padve's involvement in the Association's efforts to build a case to add Crystal Cove to the National Register of Historic Places and its legal struggles with the State of California over tenancy of the Crystal Cove cottages. Of particular interest are the questionnaires Padve circulated that describe the residents of Crystal Cove and the leaseholder history of

---

many of the cottages.

#### **Collection Arrangement**

This collection is arranged in alphabetical order by type of material.

#### **Separation Note**

The following publication was removed from this collection and integrated into the Special Collections and Archives' holdings:

*Coaster Magazine* 2, no. 15 (June 19, 1993).

#### **Related Collections**

Related papers of Martha Padve's involvement with the Pasadena Art Museum and the Southern California art community can be found in the following collection: Martha Padve Papers (Collection 1584). Department of Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

#### **Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

#### **Subjects**

Padve, Martha -- Archives.

Historic buildings -- California -- Crystal Cove State Park.

Cottages -- California -- Crystal Cove State Park.

Crystal Cove Historic District (Calif.).

#### **Genres and Formats of Materials**

Letters -- California -- Orange County -- 20th century.

Photographic prints -- California -- Orange County -- 20th century.

Newsletters -- California -- Orange County -- 20th century.

Legal documents -- 20th century.

Proposals -- 20th century.

Clippings -- 20th century.

#### **Contributors**

Crystal Cove Residents' Association.

California. Dept. of Parks and Recreation.

#### **Titles**

*Crystal Cove State Park general plan.*

---

Box : Folder 1 : 1	<b>California Coastal Commission agendas, reports, and other materials 1978-1982</b>
Box : Folder 1 : 4	<b>Clippings circa 1978-2001</b>
	<b>Correspondence</b>
Box : Folder 1 : 5-9	<b>Incoming 1968-2003 undated</b>
Box : Folder 1 : 10-16	<b>Outgoing 1968 1978-2002 undated</b>
	<b>Crystal Cove Residents' Association</b>
Box : Folder 1 : 17-20	<b>Correspondence 1960 1978-1984 1993-1998 undated</b>
Box : Folder 1 : 21	<b>Histories and summaries 1977-1980 undated</b>
Box : Folder 1 : 22-23	<b>Housing and demographic questionnaires 1978</b>
Box : Folder 1 : 24-27	<b>Legal documents 1981-1982 1996</b>
Box : Folder 1 : 28-35	<b>Newsletters, memoranda, and other materials 1978-1996 undated</b>
	<b>Scope and Content Note</b>
	Arranged chronologically.

---

Box : Folder 1 : 36	<b>Settlement agreement with the State of California 1994-1996</b>
Box : Folder 1 : 37-39	<b>Department of Parks and Recreation Correspondence 1978-1995</b>
Box : Folder 1 : 40	<b>Reports, invitations, and other materials 1980-1986 2001 undated</b>
Box : Folder 1 : 41	<b>Financial records of cottage expenses 1970-1984 1997</b>
Box : Folder 1 : 42	<b>Invitations, postcards, and greeting cards 1975-1979 2001-2002 undated</b>
Box : Folder 1 : 43	<b>Landmark District bylaws and ordinances 1977 undated</b>
Box : Folder 1 : 44-45	<b>Leases for Crystal Cove cottages 1940-1966 1979-1994</b>
Box : Folder 1 : 46	<b>Maps of Crystal Cove State Park and Crystal Cove Historic District undated National Register of Historic Places</b>
Box : Folder 1 : 47	<b>Application materials, correspondence, and other materials 1978-1980</b>
Box : Folder 2 : 1	<b>Applications 1978</b>
Box : Folder 2 : 2	<b>Newsletters</b>
Box : Folder 2 : 3	<b><i>California Art Club 2001</i></b>
Box : Folder 2 : 4	<b><i>Crystal Cove Historic District 2001</i></b>
Box : Folder 2 : 5	<b><i>Crystal Cove State Park 1981-1982</i></b>
Box : Folder 2 : 6	<b><i>Friends of the Irvine Coast 1980-1982</i></b>
Box : Folder 2 : 7	<b><i>Laguna Greenbelt, Inc. 1979</i></b>
Box : Folder 2 : 8	<b>Notes undated</b>
	<b>Pamphlets 1977-1979 undated</b>
	<b>Scope and Content Note</b>
	Includes pamphlets regarding management of historic districts, an exhibition at the Laguna Beach Museum of Art, Crystal Cove State Park, the California Coastal Act of 1976, and relocation assistance.
Box : Folder 2 : 9	<b>Photocopies of Crystal Cove photographs undated</b>
Box : Folder 2 : 10	<b>Photographs of Crystal Cove 1980 2001 undated</b>
	<b>Scope and Content Note</b>
	Contains 10 photographs, including aerial shots of Crystal Cove Historic District circa 1920s-1930s that show palm-thatched roofs and beach tents, various shots of the coastline from circa 1920-1985, and a photograph of Martha Padve with Laura Davick from 2001.
Box : Folder FRAG-2	<b>Five negatives of prints described above undated</b>
	<b>Access Information</b>
	Access to negatives is restricted.
	<b>Proposals and reports</b>
Box : Folder 2 : 11-12	<b><i>Crystal Cove Historic District 1994</i></b>
Box : Folder 2 : 13-14	<b><i>Crystal Cove Historic District Preservation and Public Use Plan 2002</i></b>
Box : Folder 2 : 15	<b>Preliminary estimate of improvements for Crystal Cove cottages 1982</b>
Box : Folder 2 : 16-17	<b><i>The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation Projects 1979</i></b>
Box : Folder 2 : 18	<b><i>Study of Alternatives: New Area; Irvine Coast/Laguna, California 1979</i></b>