

# Oregon Historic Site Record

LOCATION AND PROPERTY NAME					
<b>address:</b>	2643 SW Buena Vista Dr Portland, Multnomah County	<b>historic name:</b>	Jorgensen, Victor H & Marta, House		
<b>assoc addresses:</b>		<b>current/other names:</b>			
<b>location descr:</b>		<b>block/lot/tax lot:</b>			
		<b>twshp/rng/sect/qtr sect:</b>	1S 1E 4		
PROPERTY CHARACTERISTICS					
<b>resource type:</b>	Building	<b>height (stories):</b>	3.0	<b>total elig resources:</b>	1
<b>elig evaluation:</b>	eligible/significant			<b>total inelig resources:</b>	0
<b>prim constr date:</b>	c.1929	<b>second date:</b>		<b>NR Status:</b>	Individually Listed
				<b>date indiv listed:</b>	05/15/2008
<b>primary orig use:</b>	Single Dwelling		<b>orig use comments:</b>		
<b>second orig use:</b>			<b>prim style comments:</b>		
<b>primary style:</b>	Late 19th/20th Period Revivals: Other		<b>sec style comments:</b>		
<b>secondary style:</b>	Modern Period: Other		<b>siding comments:</b>		
<b>primary siding:</b>	Stucco		<b>architect:</b>		
<b>secondary siding:</b>			Herman Brookman		
<b>plan type:</b>			<b>builder:</b>		
<b>comments/notes:</b>					
GROUPINGS / ASSOCIATIONS					
Not associated with any surveys or groupings.					
SHPO INFORMATION FOR THIS PROPERTY					
<b>NR date listed:</b>	05/15/2008	Special Assessment		<b>106 Project(s):</b>	None
<b>ILS survey date:</b>		<b>Status</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>End Yr</b>	
<b>RLS survey date:</b>		Closed	1st	2024	<b>Federal Tax Project(s):</b>
					None
ARCHITECTURAL / PROPERTY DESCRIPTION					
<i>(Includes expanded description of the building/property, setting, significant landscape features, outbuildings and alterations)</i>					
<p><b>SUMMARY</b> The Jorgensen House is located at 2643 SW Buena Vista Drive in the Southwest Hills neighborhood of Portland. It was exactly designed by noted architect Herman Brookman. The asymmetrically arranged house is set on a very steep hillside lot overlooking the city of Portland. The house is hard to classify; the style is a mixture of Spanish Colonial Revival and Moderne, but distinctively Brookman in its impeccable design and detail. The main elevation is close to the street, with a welcoming entrance courtyard separated from the driveway by a well-integrated garage wing. The house appears to be only 1 ½ stories from the street, but in actuality it is a complex split-level assembly of six levels. Constructed of hand-troweled stucco with a cedar-shingle cross-gable roof, the house is understated from the front, but in the Brookman fashion, every detail was designed to work together seamlessly. The Jorgensen House has many of Herman Brookman's signature elements. Brookman was very skilled at designing houses on steep lots like that of the Jorgensen House. The entrance is recessed, like that of the Baruh-Zell House. The windows are casement. Ornamental iron work decorates the façade. The front elevation has a more traditional look while the rear is distinctly more modern. The bay window is crowned by a ram's head, a Brookman hallmark. Brookman is well known for his architectural skill, unique and well thought-out plans, attention to detail, and unique blend of traditional and modern elements. The Jorgensen House is an excellent example of this. Constructed in 1929, the Jorgensen House retains a very high degree of integrity. The house remains largely unchanged, with the exception of the kitchen and some bathrooms, and some other minor alterations. <b>SETTING</b> The Jorgensen House is located in the established and affluent neighborhood of Southwest Hills in Portland, Oregon. The neighborhood is characterized by its winding roads, lush green hills, and large, well-tended homes, many with spectacular views. Houses on Buena Vista Drive are set close together and close to the street, with narrow manicured gardens. There are no sidewalks. Lots on the east side of the street drop off precipitously to the east, affording a panoramic view of the city and the mountains beyond. The Jorgensen House is set at about 680 feet elevation and faces west. The house is set on a slight angle on the lot to take full advantage of the eastern views. The crest of the hill is just across Buena Vista Drive to the west. The front of the house is close to the street, with mature shrubs in the narrow garden between the garage and the street. (see exterior for description of the entrance court). The rear yard is very steep and has a naturalistic style. Brookman designed the original garden plan. A rounded terrace overlooks the yard. The garden level of the lot has a narrow grassy area bordered in shrubs. A path originally led down to a small pond at the foot of the slope. The current owner has reworked the stone steps and mulch paths that switch back down the hill, and added plantings. Stone retaining walls are located just below the garden level of the house. A large poured-concrete retaining wall is located about half way down the slope, anchored by steel tie bars. The north and south walls of the house are very close to the property lines. Concrete steps fill the space between the north wall and the property line. The south property line is marked by a concrete retaining wall and a steep planted hillside along the house. <b>PLAN</b> The Jorgensen House has a split-level plan containing 4902 square feet of finished living space on six intersecting levels. The irregular plan consists of long side gable volume intersected with several cross-gables, the largest of which houses the garage and projects from the front of the main block of the house. The primary elevation of the house faces west-southwest toward the street. <b>EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION</b> The exterior of the Jorgensen house is sheathed in "natural texture" stucco with a prominent cedar shingle roof. The main (west) elevation is asymmetrical and understated, consisting of two front gables projecting from a flanking-gable main volume (Drawing 6). The larger of the projecting front gables, which houses the garage, essentially divides the façade into two sections, the main entrance and the auto entrance. The house is best approached coming up Buena Vista Drive from the south, where the gabled main entrance is visible, tucked in between the garage wing and the main block of the house. The front door is accessed from a sunken entrance courtyard to the south of the garage wing. From the street, semi-circular stone steps lead down into the courtyard that contains a Japanese style garden and a flagstone walk, which replaced the original deteriorated cast concrete stones. In an example of the control Brookman exerted over his projects, he created a plan of the stones for the front walk in which the exact dimensions of each stone to be laid are noted. However, the original specifications were changed, and the original walk was of cast concrete instead of natural stone. In typical Brookman fashion, the front door is recessed. Over the entrance is a rough carved wood lintel, decorated with a geometric diamond design. The courtyard is lit by a decorative wrought iron light fixture that is one of the distinctive elements of this house. The fixture consists of a delicate star-shaped escutcheon mounted over the door and holding an iron rod connected with brass finials to a filigree globe lantern. The lantern is not original. The front door is walnut, with an inlaid parquet pattern and a brass peephole. To the south of the entrance courtyard, the land drops away from the road steeply, showing the below-grade levels of the main block of the house. A projecting bay window extending into a wall dormer decorates this section of the facade. The bay has a curvilinear gable decorated with Brookman's signature ram's head and a garland. A set of six single-light casement windows marks the lower section of the cantilevered bay, surmounted by three blind panels and topped with a set of three more single-light casements. The windows and panels are divided by projecting molding. The projecting gabled garage extends from the main block of the house almost to the street. The gable end of the garage is unembellished save for the circular window covered in a custom designed cast iron grille, providing an understated focal point. The two-bay garage is accessed from the auto court on the north side of the garage wing, making it invisible from the main entrance of the house. The other houses on the street have very prominent and visible front-facing garages, seemingly inevitable given the steepness of the hillside lots. But in a display of truly thoughtful design, Brookman made the garage all but disappear, despite the fact that it projects from the main façade of the house. A secondary entrance is tucked into the corner of the auto court, under a bellcast conical roof topped with a tall, delicate wrought iron weathervane depicting two birds sitting on an arrow. This secondary entrance door has eight lights divided by narrow molded mullions and muntins. Behind the conical roof of the entrance, a massive stucco chimney rises from the north gable end of the main block of the house (Drawing 9).</p>					

Extending from the gable end is a smaller projecting gable, and extending from the end of this gable is a smaller gable still, which extends within approximately three feet of the north property line. A stairway along the north property line accesses the rear yard. The rear (east) elevation of the Jorgensen House offers a much more modern appearance than the street facade, characteristic of Brookman designs (Drawing 8). It has expansive ribbons of casement windows, clean, unembellished surfaces, and geometric forms. From this side, the house shows its true size, appearing to be three and one half stories. Its position at the crest of the steeply sloping lot makes it appear even more massive. Two cross-gables project from the south end of the main flanking-gable block of the house. The central portion of this elevation is recessed to the main volume of the building. It has a ribbon of five casement windows on the first and second floors, with another set of two casements to the north on each floor. The southernmost cross-gable is three-stories in height, and contains a central, vertical panel of windows. The windows in this bay are in sets of three single-light casements. The lowest level contains one set of windows, the middle level has a vertical stack of two sets, and the third level has one set and a semi-circular stucco balcony. Just to the north of this cross-gable is a projecting, gabled bay. This bay is cantilevered over the basement level, with a stepped base. The second and third stories have triple casements, separated by a blind panel. The second story windows have single light transoms, and the third story window is lancet-shaped. Beneath the bay on the basement level is a set of glazed French doors opening to the garden. Beside the doors is a large round window. A door on the center level of the north side of this bay accesses stairs leading down to the terrace. Extending from the north end of the main volume is a large side-gabled rear-projecting wing. It has three casements on the lower level, a ribbon of five casements on the second level, and a rectangular bay window on the third level with another ribbon of five casements. The rear terrace extends from the north end of the house in an arc to the central recessed portion of the elevation where it follows the line of the house. The entire terrace and the stairs to the porch are enclosed with a recently added wrought iron railing. Stairs lead from the terrace to the upper garden level. The south elevation of the house is fairly unembellished (Drawing 7). A large interior chimney rises from the center of the gable end. To the west of the chimney is a set of French doors located on the garden level, which is surmounted by a round balcony with a recessed door on the main level. Directly above this door is a lancet-shaped window on the top story. The north elevation of the house is similarly understated (Drawing 9). The gable-end wall has a set of two casement windows on the main story and a lancet window on the top story. A one-story gabled projection shelters the side entrance, with steps along the property line to the street and the garden below. **INTERIOR DESCRIPTION** The interior of the Jorgensen House showcases Brookman's innovative use of space and skill in design. Because of the slope of the lot, the house is constructed with several levels both above and below the grade of the street. The resulting layout of the house is charmingly complex. The interior details of the house show Brookman's obsessive attention to detail. The style of the interior is vaguely Spanish Colonial, with parabolic arches and vaulted ceilings. The walls in the public areas are mostly a hand troweled, "California" plaster, originally pigmented instead of painted. Woodwork is predominantly unpainted walnut. The baseboards and window and door surrounds are narrow. The doors are primarily three-panel in the public areas, while the bedrooms have single-panel doors. The rooms are heated by radiators enclosed in wood covers. The floors throughout the house are oak. **Entry Hall** The front door opens into a spacious foyer with a high vaulted ceiling rising to a point. Originally walls in the public rooms of the house were specified to have "California" plaster, which was pigmented and did not require painting. The hand-textured walls are now painted. The front door is a rich stained walnut in an inlaid parquet pattern. It is flanked by walnut closet doors, each with three recessed panels. On the south wall of the entry hall is a triple casement window. In the southeast corner of the room is a quarter-round built in cabinet. The light fixture in the entry hall, hanging from the center point of the ceiling, is not original but is compatible. Directly opposite the front door, stairs descend a half-story to the two-story living room. Over the living room entry is a small lancet-shaped opening giving a peek into the upper level hall. On the north wall of the entry hall, stairs rise a half-story to a lancet shaped opening to the main hall of the bedroom wing. **Living Room** From the entry hall one can look down the open stairs into the dramatic sunken living room. The staircase has a plastered knee-wall balustrade capped with walnut and topped with a curving walnut rail with an elliptical profile. Flanking the stairs in the northwest corner of the living room is a square, cantilevered turret with a quarter-round, conical base. The living room receives natural light from very large, stacked, single-light casement windows on the east and west walls. The south wall of the living room has a centered fireplace with a marble hearth. The fireplace is simple, set directly into the plaster wall with no tile surround. Instead, it has a Brookman designed brass frame with a brass valence. The walnut mantle has been recently added. It was designed by the homeowner to reflect the cantilevered turret in the corner of the living room. To the west of the fireplace is a set of single-light French doors opening to a small, half-round balcony. The high ceiling is marked by a wide plaster crown molding. **Enclosed Porch** Directly opposite the stairs a door opens to a small, enclosed sun porch with a red clay tile floor. This porch, overlooking the rear yard, has a door in the north wall with stairs leading down to the terrace. The door has a half-light and is surrounded by large single-light windows with unembellished, painted frames. **Dining Room** In the north wall of the living room a wide arched opening leads to the formal dining room. This room has an expansive ribbon of five casement windows in the west wall. The east wall has a dramatic recessed arch richly paneled with mahogany. The panels are divided by stylized fluted pilasters and a simple chair rail. Cabinets are built into the end walls of the arch. The north wall of the dining room has two three-paneled mahogany doors. The east door leads to the butler's pantry, while the west door leads to the service hall. **Butler's Pantry** The butler's pantry is a narrow room between the dining room and the kitchen with cabinetry lining the east and west walls. The room has white octagonal tile countertops with black tile edging, and white subway tile backsplash with a narrow green accent tile. The east wall has a double sink under a casement window flanked by glass cabinets. The west wall has a narrow u-shaped counter topped with glass front cabinets. All the woodwork is painted. **Kitchen** The kitchen has been completely remodeled and contains no original fabric. The sink is located in along the east wall under a ribbon of four casement windows. An island with a cook top is located in the center of the room, with a large ventilation hood over it. A small eating area is located in the west end of the kitchen. A door in the north wall of the room leads to the side entrance, while another leads to an original storage pantry. **Service Hall/Powder Room** A door in the southwest corner of the kitchen leads to the service hall. The walls and ceiling of this room are completely paneled in pale blue translucent melamine, most likely in the 1950s. This room accesses an original dumbwaiter and a small quarter-round shaped powder room. The powder room has a single below-grade window, an original toilet and a new sink. A door in the south wall of the service hall leads back into the dining room. **Den** Just to the north of the staircase on the main level is a half-flight of stairs down to the den (located beneath the entrance hall). This comfortable room is completely paneled in vertical mahogany board paneling. The ceiling is covered in acoustical tiles. The east wall has convex curving walls leading to a center accordion door leading to stairs to the basement play room. A triple casement window is centered on the south wall of the den, while the north wall has a narrow built in bookcase. This bookcase is the secret door to a hidden room, the use of which is unknown. It is finished in concrete with no windows or fixtures. It is not noted on the original plans for the house. **Basement/Play Room** The basement level of the house contains a large, bright playroom and bar. This room, which occupies the south end of the house, has knotty wood paneling, which is not original, and an acoustic tile ceiling. A fireplace with a brick surround is centered on the south wall, under a narrow mantel shelf. A set of French doors located in the southwest corner of the room open to the garden level. The east wall has a set of three casement windows and a set of French doors to the rear garden. To the north of the play room is the large boiler room/laundry room, which is utilitarian in nature, except for the large round window over the laundry area overlooking the garden. To the north of the boiler room is a service hall with access to a darkroom, the dumbwaiter, a storage area, and in the northeast corner of the house, the former maid's room, and bathroom. Just north of the stairs to the den is another half flight of stairs leading to the work room, a utilitarian area beneath the den with windows looking out toward the south. **Upper Hall** Up the short staircase from the entry hall is the main hall accessing the bedrooms for the Jorgensen family. Accessed through a lancet-arch opening, this hall is just as dramatic as the rest of the house. It is rounded at the north end, and has a continuous barrel vaulted ceiling. Stained walnut cabinetry runs the length of the west wall of the hall. Two doors are set into the curving north end of the hall, one eight-light glazed door accesses the car court, and the other accesses the master bedroom. The east wall of the hall has two doors, one accessing the dumbwaiter and the other accessing a bedroom. The south end of the hall has a pair of lancet shaped openings, one leading to the entry hall, another up a half-flight to the girls' bedroom wing. **Master Suite** The master suite is located at the north end of the main hall. It has rounded-vault ceiling and picture molding. The east wall has a rectangular bay with a ribbon of seven casements. The master bath, accessed from a door in the southeast corner of the room, has been completely remodeled and contains no historic fabric. **Victor's Room** The second bedroom on this level is labeled "Victor's Room" on the plans, for the Jorgensen's son, Victor Jr. It is most notable for the ribbon of five casement windows with the spectacular view of the valley below. This room also has a private full bath, which has original tile walls but new tile floor and fixtures. **Marita's and Pollyann's Rooms and Bathroom** Up the stairs at the south end of the main hall is a secondary hall with access to the rooms that originally belonged to the Jorgensen's daughters, Marita and Pollyann. Both rooms are charming for their quaint irregular dormered ceilings. Pollyann's room, in the southeast corner of the house, has French doors to a half-round balcony on the east wall of the room. Marita's room has a lancet shaped window in a bay on the south wall. The two girls shared a bathroom at the east end of the hall. This bathroom is in nearly original condition and it is particularly beautiful. It has a vaulted ceiling following the shape of the large three-part lancet-shaped window overlooking the valley. The walls are covered in square celadon tiles, and the floor is tiled in tiny square celadon-mosaic tiles. The porcelain sink, toilet and tub match the celadon-green tiles. **ALTERATIONS** The Jorgensen House has a very high level of integrity. It retains a high degree of character defining elements with the usually expected alterations. The kitchen and master bathroom have been completely renovated and contain little historic fabric. The current owner is in the process of correcting some deferred maintenance issues. A new cedar shingle roof has been installed. The entrance court has been renovated to repair damage caused by settling, but the character and style of the original courtyard was maintained. A new railing has been added along the street for safety. The original windows on the house have been replaced with exact matching wood casement windows with energy-efficient double-pane glass. The original retractable screens have been replaced in kind wherever feasible. The rear terrace has new wrought-iron railings for safety. The rear garden has been rehabilitated and the original stone stairs rebuilt with existing material. Changes which likely occurred in the 1950s -60s include the paneling of the den and play room and the addition of the acoustical tile ceilings, and the melamine paneling in the service hall on the main level.

## HISTORY

*(Chronological, descriptive history of the property from its construction through at least the historic period - preferably to the present)*

SUMMARY The Victor H. and Marta Jorgensen House is significant under Criterion C as an excellent example of the masterful work of Herman Brookman. Constructed in 1929, the asymmetrical, split level house is set into a steep hillside lot on a narrow winding hillside road overlooking the city. The house exhibits many of the hallmarks of Brookman's work, including curving walls, ornamental ironwork, and extraordinary attention to detail. Brookman is well-known for his architectural skill, unique and well thought out plans, and seamless blend of traditional and modern elements. The Jorgensen House is an excellent example of Herman Brookman's residential design, and has many of the signature elements that are reflective of his attention to detail and fine craftsmanship. HERMAN BROOKMAN Herman Brookman was born July 2, 1891 in Brooklyn New York, the son of Russian Jewish immigrants, Joseph and Dora Brookman. Brookman's first job after high school was as an office boy with the New York architecture firm of Albro and Lindeberg, a prestigious firm that specialized in building estates and mansions for wealthy Long Islanders. Brookman worked for the firm from 1909-1914, learning the practice of architecture along the way. After the firm dissolved in 1914, Brookman continued to design fine houses and estates with Harrie T. Lindeberg until 1922. Lindeberg was known to use only the best of materials and artisans in his work. He epitomized the emphasis on craftsmanship that was the hallmark of the Arts & Crafts and Beaux Arts philosophies of his time. Lindeberg was skilled at integrating the interior and exterior spaces of a building through patios, gardens, and vistas relating directly to his interiors. Undoubtedly, Brookman was greatly influenced by his early training with Lindeberg. Brookman married his wife, Sophie, in 1911, and had three children, Bernard, Emanuel, and Dorothy. The family moved to White Plains, New York, in 1917, and Brookman commuted by train to Lindeberg's office in New York City. After a disagreement, Brookman left Lindeberg's office around 1919 and began working on his own. In 1921 Brookman and his family embarked on a two-year tour of Europe, where Brookman spent much of his time observing architecture. He was touring Europe when he was contacted by Lloyd Frank, an owner of Meier and Frank, to design his house on a 60-acre property south of Portland. Brookman was recommended to Frank by Oscar B. Bach, a fine metal artist who Frank, a department store magnate, was acquainted with through his many connections in the decorative arts world in New York. Brookman completed the M. Lloyd Frank house, named Fir Acres, on Palatine Hill in 1924. Many of his colleagues believed that the Frank house was a masterpiece of design. Portland architect Saul Zaik calls the Frank estate a small masterpiece: "All architects have the quest for making something perfect. I think Brookman came close to that with Frank's house." Fir Acres is now the centerpiece of the Lewis and Clark College campus. After completing Fir Acres, the Brookmans decided to stay in Portland where Herman Brookman easily procured many more wealthy clients. Lloyd Frank helped Brookman obtain another prestigious commission, Temple Beth Israel, completed in 1927. The congregation also hired the firm of M.H. Whitehouse and Associates and the architect Harry Herzog, a member of the congregation, although Brookman was the chief designer. This arrangement was especially difficult for Brookman, who preferred to work alone. Brookman began to gain a reputation for being difficult to work with. He insisted on control, and he would make corrections and ask for re-orders of materials if he didn't get precisely what he was looking for. Despite these difficulties with his temperament, Brookman developed a reputation for having a remarkable sensitivity to detail and craftsmanship. Robert Wilmsen worked on several projects with Brookman, including the Pharmacy Building at Oregon State University and consulted with Brookman on the long-range master plan for the formal mall of the state capitol building. Wilmsen said of Brookman: "I'll bet you that if there was a bird house on the Frank Estate, it was designed by Herman Brookman. Herman Brookman designed." Throughout his career, Brookman relied on his reputation and referrals from his wealthy clients to procure new projects. He was a perfectionist who preferred working alone in order to maintain control over his designs. As a result, his practice remained small. Gene Westberg, an architect who worked as a draftsman for Brookman for two years, stated that in forty years of practice, he (Westberg) was the only draftsman who lasted more than 6 months. Brookman was an intimidating and critical master and offered very little in the way of encouragement or praise. Yet, Westberg felt that his time with Brookman was beneficial. "If your blood-pressure could stand it, it was a marvelous way to learn." Brookman did not like to base his designs on a budget, preferring instead to design as he saw fit without being encumbered by financial restraints. He felt that if a client sought him out in the first place, they would have sufficient finances for a commission. He viewed each of his commissions as his project, not his clients. Not surprisingly, this furthered his reputation as difficult to work with. Westberg states that Brookman maintained that he regarded only two of his many clients as ideal, undoubtedly meaning that they gave him free reign to do as he pleased. This frequently meant redoing elements of the construction repeatedly until it was perfect. "Rip it out" was Brookman's favorite phrase. The Great Depression of the 1930s was a difficult time for Brookman, as clients were few. His income declined to the point that he almost lost the home he had designed for himself. He was forced to market himself for the first time, and took whatever small commission came his way. His business picked up again after the economy recovered, and he again relied on referrals for his large residential commissions. Brookman did not work on many high profile architectural projects, focusing instead on detailed, intimate house designs for his clients. Focusing on residential architecture did not, however, prevent him from exploring new design and forms. As Hawkins and Willingham stated: "By the mid-1930's, Herman Brookman, of all the Portland architects, had explored the furthest in developing new forms of architectural expression." Gene Westberg, who worked for Brookman from 1953-55 recalls: "Everything was designed in those days. They didn't have catalogues then. Much of his sources were from the East but he had a style with some Northwest flavor, though always more elaborate. Basically, he worked in a Georgian style, but with innovations." Brookman had an office downtown until about 1940 when he decided to work out of his home, which he designed himself. The Brookmans sold this home in 1941 and bought a two-story Queen Anne house in the Westover Terrace development of Southwest Portland. The Southwest Hills neighborhood grew rapidly after WWII, and Brookman had many commissions there. Brookman went on to practice from his home studio until 1965, when he closed his practice. Brookman served as Treasurer of the Oregon Chapter of the American Institute of Architects from 1933-1935. He became Vice President in 1937, then Director in 1941. He was elected Director again from 1944-46, and from 1951-53. In 1950 he was elected Chapter President of the local AIA. Brookman became a Fellow of the AIA in 1951. He retired to California in 1965, where he died November 6, 1973, at the age of 82. VICTOR H. JORGENSEN Victor Hugo Jorgensen was born in 1884 to Emil C. Jorgensen, a Danish immigrant, and his wife, Pauline. Emil Jorgensen was a self-made businessman in wholesale liquor. In 1907, he built the Hotel Lenox, an 80-room first-class hotel at Southwest Third Avenue and Main Street. Jorgensen's sons, Edwin D. and Victor H., managed the hotel beginning in 1909. The successful and popular hotel was billed as a "select family hotel." It boasted hot and cold water, long-distance phone every room, private baths, steam heat, and a bus that picked up guests at the train station. Edwin and Victor inherited the hotel from their father after Emil Jorgensen's death in 1923. The brothers continued to cater to families, and the hotel prospered. The Jorgensens ran the hotel from an office in the NE corner of the first floor until 1937. That year the name of the hotel changed to the "New Lenox Hotel," and the Jorgensens turned over management to Peter Kosturos. After the Jorgensens ceased to actively manage the hotel, it gradually declined in quality and reputation, eventually becoming a low cost residential hotel. The Lenox finally closed in 1970, although the first floor was used for retail stores until 1980. Upon Victor Jorgensen's death in 1977, his son, Victor H. Jr., inherited the building. Victor Jr. sold the building to the Portland Development Commission in 1979, ending 73 years of family ownership. The Portland Development Commission demolished the building in 1980. The Justice Center is now located where the Lenox once stood. Victor H. Jorgensen and his first wife, Marta, had three children, Victor, Jr., Marita, and Polly Ann, who grew up in the house. Marta died in 1941 from complications of abdominal surgery at the age of 54. Victor remarried and moved to Santa Cruz California in 1947, where he lived the rest of his life. He died at the age of 93 in 1977. THE JORGENSEN HOUSE: UNIQUELY BROOKMAN In Classic Houses of Portland, Hawkins and Willingham describe a trend in the 1920's and 1930's which ultimately led to the Moderne, International and Northwest styles. They describe this as a transitional period, where Portland's residential architects like Herman Brookman, Morris H. Whitehouse, Richard Sundleaf and Sutton, Whitney and Aandahl explored simplified traditional architectural forms with minimal ornamentation. The Jorgensen House reflects this transitional period. It is a unique house that is difficult to fit into a single stylistic classification. Instead, it reflects the confidence with which Brookman melded various styles to create a unique design of his own vision. Even among his own designs, the Jorgensen House is a unique expression of a mix of revival and forward thinking design, and a relaxed and comfortable adaptation to a very difficult site. Although it does not fit into any single style, references to several styles can be seen in the Jorgensen House, including Arts and Crafts, Spanish Eclectic, and Moderne. The fine materials and impeccable craftsmanship reflect the Arts and Crafts style. The stucco, carved wood lintel, interior plasterwork, and parabolic interior arches reflect the Spanish Eclectic style. The rear of the house has a definite Moderne feeling. It has several intersecting geometric forms, a cantilevered bay, banks of single-light casement windows, and half-round balconies. The overall impression from this side is quite contemporary, especially for a house designed in 1929. The interior of the Jorgensen House is a unique arrangement of varying levels rarely seen in a house of this vintage. The entry is at mid-level, between the sunken living room and the private upper hall leading to the bedrooms. The public spaces convey Brookman's attention to detail, with the vaulted ceilings, subtly textured plaster walls, and the finely crafted mahogany paneled niche in the dining room. Expansive windows take in the valley view. The private spaces also reflect Brookman's touch, from the walnut cabinetry in the hall to the rounded vaulting ceiling in the master bedroom and the pointed arch window in the celadon tiled bathroom. Like so many Brookman designs, the Jorgensen House seamlessly integrates many unique design elements to create a fresh, contemporary architectural masterpiece. Herman Brookman was a prolific designer of houses in Portland, primarily for affluent clients. His designs are scattered throughout Portland, but the largest concentration of his houses are in the Southwest Hills area of the city. There are currently five Brookman designed structures on the National Register of Historic Places: Fir Acres (Lewis and Clark College), the Commodore Hotel, Temple Beth Israel, the Baruh-Zell House (3131 SW Talbot Rd), and the Alan and Barbara Goldsmith House (4140 SW Greenleaf Ct). Additionally, nineteen of his structures are on the Portland Cultural Resource Inventory. Brookman was known for his artistry and attention to detail, and he designed buildings in a number of styles popular when he practiced. Each of Brookman's designs was entirely unique and a work of art in its own right, so comparing them to each other is challenging, but there were certain elements that Brookman frequently used. From 1924, when he designed his first house in Portland, Fir Acres, the huge estate of M. Lloyd Frank, until about 1940, Brookman designed primarily in traditional revival styles such as Colonial, Tudor and Mediterranean, with his characteristic attention to detail and propensity for stripping his designs down. After 1940, he began designing in more contemporary styles, such as Early Modern and Northwest Regional variations. Whatever style he worked in, no two Brookman designs were the same. Each was designed to suit the particular client and site he was working with. The Jorgensen House is difficult to categorize architecturally. It was constructed during Brookman's revival period, but its split-level plan and artful, relaxed blend of stylistic elements do not necessarily fit in any revival style. The house must have appeared very modern for its time, when split-levels were uncommon and traditional styles were the norm. Brookman had a number of signature elements which appear on many of his designs including the Jorgensen House. These include designing houses perfectly situated on difficult sites, recessed entrances, curving design elements, casement and leaded glass windows, and masterful wrought iron work. Many Brookman-designed houses are set on difficult or awkward sites, which tend to provide spectacular views. But as with the Jorgensen House, Brookman managed to not only fit the house to the setting but site it in such a way as to take maximum advantage of both the view and the lot. The Lee S. Elliot House, at 1475 Vista Avenue, while a masterpiece of design, is set on a difficult site, which required that the façade face inward toward a private lane. The lot of the Eliot House slopes steeply down to the rear, a situation that is remedied with a massive retaining wall. The Grace Kern House, on SW Westpoint

Court, is also sited on an awkward sloping lot. In that case, a massive concrete retaining wall on the rear of the lot raised the entire lot to a more workable level. Like many Brookman houses, the Jorgensen has a recessed entrance. Other houses with this element include the Baruh-Zell House, and the much more Moderne Keith Gilbert Powers House (287 NW Cumberland Rd) built in 1947. Brookman's unique use of curving elements lent a modern air to his more traditionally styled houses. Throughout his career, curves played a major part in many of his designs, from traditional to contemporary style houses. Curves do not play as prominent a role on the exterior of the Jorgensen House as on some other Brookman houses, but they are present. A round tower entrance with a bellcast roof is tucked into the corner of the auto court. On the rear and south side elevations, half-round balconies contribute to the Moderne feel, and foretold of Brookman's evolution towards that style. The Moderne Keith Gilbert Powers House, located at 287 NW Cumberland Road, has several curving walls reflective of Brookman's earlier work. The interior of the Jorgensen house has soft and subtle curves, from the rounded edges of the walls to the rounded vault ceilings in many rooms. Other Brookman houses are less subtle in their use of curves; the 1955 Kern House is unique in that the entire façade is a single concave curve. Another signature Brookman element was his use of decorative wrought iron. He worked frequently with the noted metal artist Oscar B. Bach, of New York, whose work adorns the Empire State Building and the Chrysler Building, among many others. Nowhere is Brookman's use of decorative wrought iron more evident than in the Mediterranean style Harry A. Green House, at 3316 SE Ankeny, which has an over-the-top wrought iron entrance gate complete with a peacock, and a gracefully curving interior staircase. Most of his other commissions had more restrained wrought iron elements, such as those on the Jorgensen House. The Jorgensen House has a beautiful decorative wrought iron light fixture over the front door, a tall, delicate rooftop weathervane, and a cast iron decorative screen over the round window in the east wall of the garage. All of these elements are understated, but are also important character defining elements of the façade of the house. Brookman was partial to casement windows and used them on most of his designs regardless of style. In some cases, such as on the Baruh-Zell House, the Green House, and the Adrienne Arnsberg House (1136 SW Davenport Street), three-light casements leant an air of modernity to traditional designs. Indeed, banks of casement windows are one element that can be seen on almost every Brookman house from the Frank House all the way through to the Grace Kern House. The Jorgensen house has primarily single light casement windows set in banks of two to five.

**CONCLUSION** In summary, the Jorgensen House is a hard to categorize but masterfully designed house. It is perfectly situated on its lot to take advantage of the view and allow for an intimate and elegant entrance from the street. The interior is a forward-thinking split level plan with exceptionally detailed spaces featuring fine finishes, vaulted ceilings, banks of windows, and seamless transitions. It is unmistakably the work of a skilled artist.

## RESEARCH INFORMATION

✓ Title Records	Census Records	✓ Property Tax Records	Local Histories
Sanborn Maps	Biographical Sources	✓ SHPO Files	Interviews
Obituaries	✓ Newspapers	State Archives	Historic Photographs
City Directories	Building Permits	State Library	

**Local Library:** \_\_\_\_\_ **University Library:** \_\_\_\_\_ University of Oregon  
**Historical Society:** \_\_\_\_\_ Oregon Historical Society **Other Respository:** \_\_\_\_\_

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