CLAVELITOS

LANDMARK NUMBER: Place of Historic Merit

KNOWN AS: Clavelitos or Lutah Maria Riggs Place

PHYSICAL ADDRESS: 280 Middle Road, Montecito

LOCATION: Middle Road between Hot Springs and Mesa Roads

TYPE OF SITE: Residence

RESOLUTION NUMBER: No Record

DESIGNATION DATE: Unknown

DESIGNATION OBTAINED BY: Nomination submitted by Gloria Calamar, member Santa Barbara County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission

PAST OWNERS: Lutah Maria Riggs
R.N. and S.A. Johns (1996)

CURRENT OWNER: Richard W. Hallberg, Jr. Living Trust
280 Middle Road, Santa Barbara 93108

CHANGES/ALTERATIONS: None that are visible from the street

CONDITION: Excellent

DESCRIPTION:
Clavelitos meaning Little Keys was designed and built by Lutah Maria Riggs in 1926. It was her first realized architectural design, projected and built by her. The house is a one and a half story rectangular building with an exterior staircase on the west wall which faces Middle Road. The stairs ascend from an arched door of solid paneled wood on the ground floor to the private upper bedroom entrance on the second floor.1

The thick white stucco walls are accented by a few shuttered windows protected by iron grillwork also painted white. The emerald green doors and

1 Nomination application
window frames contrast with the salmon pink band at the foundation line. The wood spindle balcony on the south side overlooks the garden.\textsuperscript{2}

Lutah was a graduate of UC Berkeley’s school of architecture who returned to Santa Barbara and worked as a draftsman for George Washington Smith. She became the chief draftsman and designer in late 1921 and finally received her state architect’s license in 1928. She took over Smith’s practice upon his death in 1930. During the 1940s, she left Santa Barbara and went to Hollywood to work for various movie studios designing sets. She returned to Santa Barbara and became involved with the American Institute of Architects. She also served on the County Historic Preservation Commission and the city of Santa Barbara’s Advisory Landmark Committee.\textsuperscript{3}

Lutah designed many homes and public buildings, most especially buildings on property known as the Vedanta Temple, a compound considered to be a 20\textsuperscript{th} century West Coast monument.\textsuperscript{4}

In 1967, she was selected to receive the Los Angeles Times 17\textsuperscript{th} Annual Woman of the Year Award. She closed her office in 1980 at the age of 80. She died in 1988.

RESOURCES:

Gloria Calamar, Nominations for Historical Landmarks or Places of Historical Merit (March 1995)

\textsuperscript{2} Ibid
\textsuperscript{3} Ibid
\textsuperscript{4} Ibid
(Fig. 46 and 47) Pencil sketches of early design for the Baron Maximilian von Romberg house, Montecito, 1937.

(Fig. 48 and 49, opposite) Pencil perspective drawings of early study for the Baron Maximilian von Romberg house, Montecito, 1937.