

Idaho Modern Field Guide



BOISE FIRST EDITION

the history, care,
and keeping
of your
mid-century
home



PRESERVATION IDAHO

THE IDAHO HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL

A part of Preservation Idaho, Idaho Modern was founded in 2010 to promote the appreciation and awareness of mid-century, modernist, and recent past architecture and design in Idaho through education and advocacy. Created from an obvious need to study, survey and save our modern architectural and design jewels, Idaho Modern's focus is on educating the public on this important facet in art and architectural history, particularly celebrating art, architecture and design from the 1950s-70s. Preservation Idaho, Idaho Modern's parent organization and a 501c3, has a long and important history in Boise and Idaho. The Idaho Historic Preservation Council (IHPC) was established in 1972 by a group of Idahoans concerned with the alarming rate at which historic sites and resources in Idaho were being lost.

Designed & Illustrated by: Melanie Flitton Folwell

Written by: Stephanie Clarkson, Melanie Flitton Folwell, & Amy Pence-Brown

The Mod Squad: Stephanie Clarkson, Dan Everhart, Kelly Exline, Melanie Flitton Folwell, Byron Folwell, Tully Gerlach, Amy Pence-Brown, Cathy Sewell, & Shaun Weston



Hello Homeowner!

If you are the owner of a Boise mid-century modern (MCM) home, congratulations! You are the steward of a unique part of Idaho's architectural history. This is an exciting time to be an MCM enthusiast: mid-century residences in Idaho are rapidly gaining acceptance for their historical and architectural importance, and a new generation of home buyers are embracing the beauty and efficiency of modern homes.

These homes reflect American ideals and building technologies unique to a pivotal time in our history, and Idaho Modern believes that their presence is an integral part of the greater Boise landscape. As our city grows and evolves, architectural diversity -with examples from *all* eras- is the backdrop to a truly vital, livable community.

Though many of Boise's mid-century residences are now at or over 50 years old (the age at which the National Park Service considers buildings for listing in the National Register of Historic Places) they are not protected.

At the time of this writing, no Boise mid-century neighborhood has been listed in the National Register or as a local historic district, leaving these vital structures vulnerable to insensitive alterations or demolition. With mounting pressure from development and a continuously growing and changing population, it is now more necessary than ever to preserve historic and cultural resources, to promote the appreciation of historic homes, and to educate the community-at-large of the value of Idaho's heritage.

Through this guide, lovingly assembled by our team of historians, architects, and designers, we hope to enlist you in this cause, arming you with the knowledge to protect, enhance, and greatly increase the value of your biggest asset: your home.

Thanks for being part of this journey!

Cheers,
The Mod Squad, 2016

Boise mid-mod: a backstory

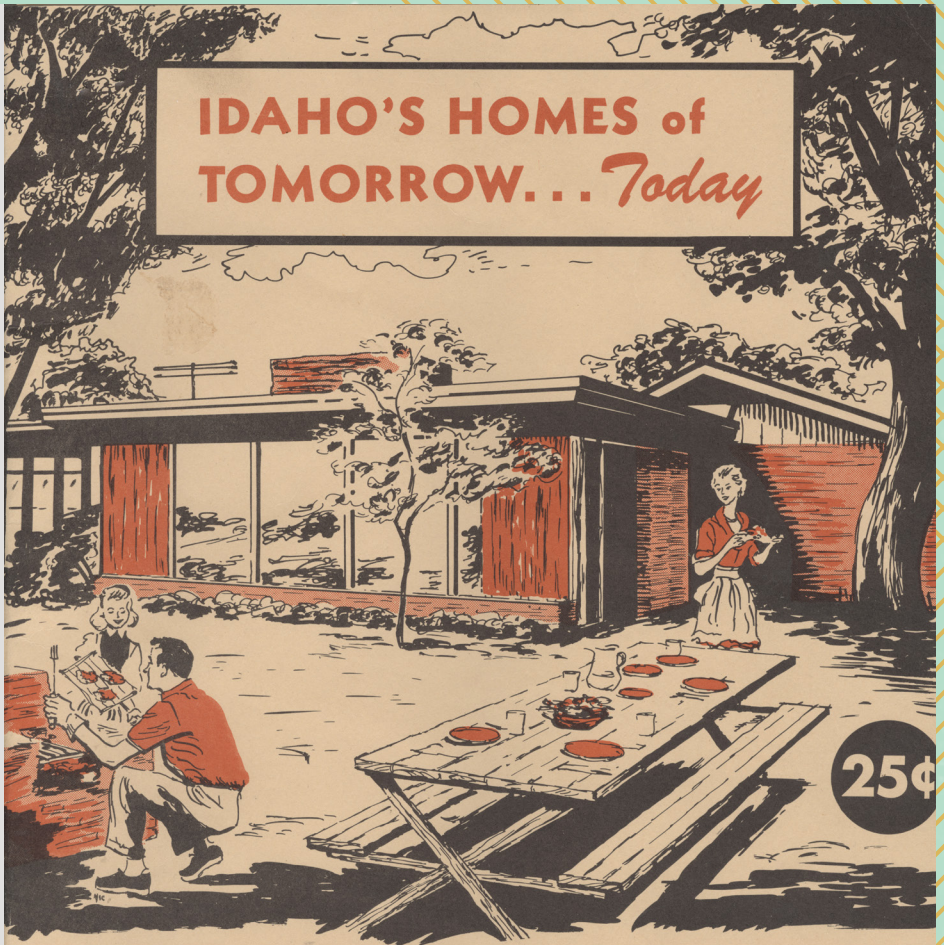
Following World War II, Idaho, and specifically Boise, boomed in population and size. The pattern of Boise's growth following the war was similar to other communities across America. Homeownership in the postwar period was equated with middle-class status, signifying attainment of the "American Dream" and a new beginning. Young families sought a safe, spacious, and comfortable place to raise children, even if it was a bit of a drive from town. Enter the rise of modern homes and suburban-style neighborhoods.

By 1960, substantially more of Boise's population lived outside the city limits than within. Boise boasts a few distinctly modern neighborhoods from this era, many of them located around the former outskirts of the city. Rim Crest, Randolph-Robertson, Country Club Manor, Sunset Rim, Glen Haven, Winstead Park, the Boise Heights and the Highlands are some of the neighborhoods developed by small real estate companies in the 50's and 60's.

Function was as important as form in mid-century designs, and residences specifically targeted the needs of the average American family. These developments advertised new homes on winding streets, with 2-4 bedrooms, fenced-in yards, front-loading garages, and close proximity to schools and new shopping centers like Vista Village and Hillcrest. Their design emphasized ample windows and open floor plans, with the intention of opening up interior spaces and bringing the outdoors in, as well as facilitating play, lounging, and TV-watching in the recently christened "family room."

While these period neighborhoods have a distinctive postwar pattern of design, you can also find modern gems dotted throughout Boise's older historic neighborhoods, including the East End just off Warm Springs Boulevard, where wonderful examples of contemporary and ranch style homes co-exist with grand Victorians and Queen Annes.

IDAHO'S HOMES of TOMORROW... *Today*



25¢

PARADE of HOMES

1956 SOUVENIR PLAN BOOK

A PROJECT OF THE

HOME BUILDERS ASSOC. of SOUTHWESTERN IDAHO

SPONSORED & PRODUCED IN COOPERATION WITH

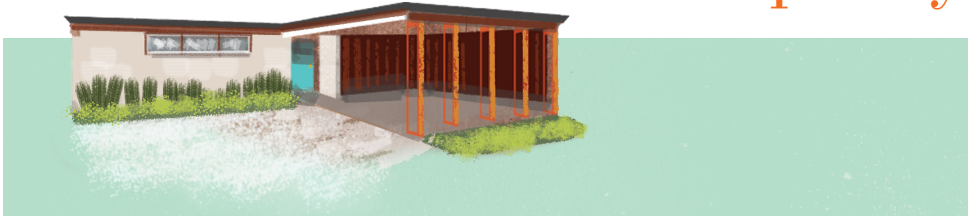
SNAKE RIVER VALLEY ELECTRICAL ASSOCIATION



know your style

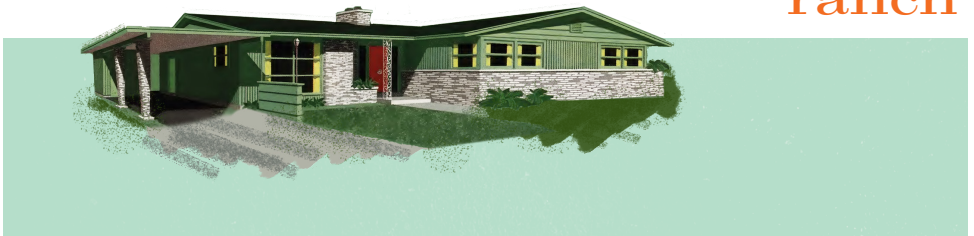
Though it's difficult to distill several decades of residential design into just a few categories, these terms are a helpful first step. When restoring or making new selections for your home, always consider the original style and try to honor and enhance its signature features.

contemporary



Contemporary style was favored by most American architects from 1945-1965 when it filled architectural journals and dominated award houses. Homes were characterized by exposed beams, natural materials, and broad expanses of uninterrupted surfaces, with front entrances downplayed, recessed, or sometimes hidden. The homes feature boxy shapes, often including a flat or shed roof, large planes of glass to better view the outdoors, and open floor plans that address interior-exterior connection and flow. These homes were often designed to feature natural wonders or views existing on the site, as exhibited in Boise's cliffside homes and the geothermal pool of the Klein House (the Art Troutner-designed home pictured above.)

ranch



Ranch-style houses are a uniquely American architectural home style. First built in the 1920s, the ranch style was extremely popular amongst the booming postwar middle class of the 1940s to 1970s and is common to Boise neighborhoods. It is noted for its long, close-to-the-ground profile, and minimal use of exterior and interior ornamentation. The ranch fuses modernist ideas and styles with notions of the American West and Mexican haciendas to create a casual living style for mid-century families.

minimal traditional



Minimal Traditional homes (or Builders Economic) were small and modestly built, sometimes from mail order plans, kits, and catalogs. Typically one-story homes with no overhanging eaves and simple gable roofs, they featured traditional forms (like colonials, Cape Cods, and Tudors) but simplified and with minimal decorative details. They are often built using wood, brick or stone and found in large tract housing developments or on small lots. These homes were built in great numbers to house returning GIs after the war, particularly before the ranch style soared in popularity.

A-frame



A-Frame houses are a triangle-shaped building design popularized by Austrian-born architect Rudolph Schindler, who designed a vacation cottage for a client. The design was quickly standardized and adopted as a vacation-type home from about 1934 through the 1960s. A-frame roofs were also seen in other building types such as churches, restaurants, motels, and gas stations. Its signature features include low hanging eaves, a steep A-shaped pitched roof, windows in gable ends, and interior ceilings often open to top rafters.

PAGE EIGHT

Electri-Living Home Display Set in Boise

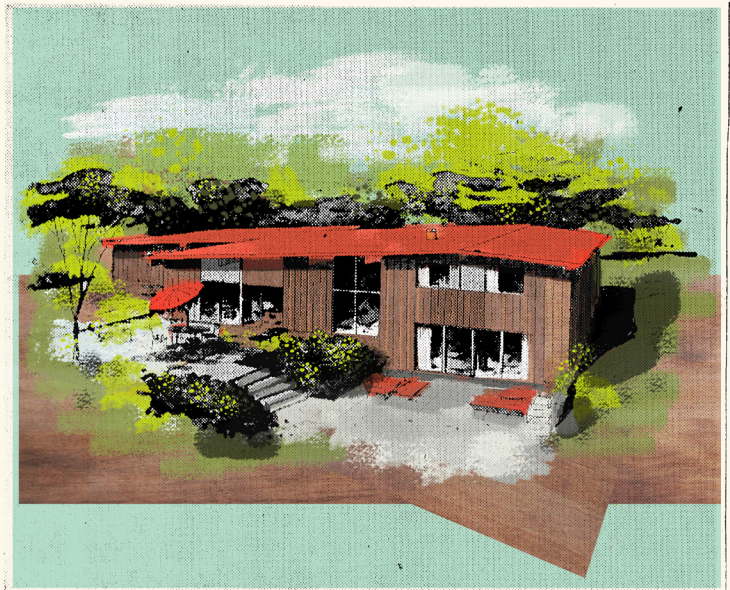
Opening for the public Oct. 5, under co-sponsorship of Living for Young Homemakers magazine and Idaho Power company is the Electri-Living show home.

Located on Crane Creek road in the Highlands subdivision, the Electri-Living home has been designed by Joseph M. LaMarche and Nat J. Adams, built by Ralph E. Sherman and decorated and furnished by Sherm Perry Furniture, all of Boise.

In Boise for the opening is Caroline Cooldge, Chicago, of the Living for Young Homemakers' architecture and design department. Arriving early in the week will be G. Hugh Tsuruoka, AFA, also of Chicago.

"The Boise show home is one of 12 similar promotions in the nation," Miss Cooldge said. "In each community an architect, builder and decorator are chosen and presented with the challenge of designing, erecting and furnishing an outstanding home, staying within a moderate price range for the average young homemaker family."

"The Boise home was featured with others in the September issue of our publication. Further detailed pictures will be used in the January, 1958, issue."



THE ELECTRI-LIVING house on Crane creek road in the Highlands, shown above in an architect's drawing, will be opened to the public for inspection Oct. 5. The house was designed by Joseph M. LaMarche, built by Ralph E. Sherman and will be decorated and furnished by Sherm Perry Furniture. The project is under co-sponsorship of Living for Young Homemakers magazine and Idaho Power Co

"Boise's Electri-Living show home is a three bedroom two bathroom split level unit of contemporary design. It is completely landscaped and furnished. The 175-ampere electric service entrance makes possible full use of today's new appliances and lighting conveniences plus room for expansion. The unique all-electric kitchen and homemaking center includes a snack bar and a desk for writing notes for figuring the family budget. Adjoining the homemaking center is a family room and dining area, which open on the top level of a terraced patio. The lower level is reached from the step-down living room.

Furnishings in the home are predominantly Scandinavian with the popular Swedish lines in evidence. A sand painting designed for the home by Boise painter Luther Douglas holds a center of interest at the living room entry. Other accessories have been created for the Electri-Living home by Peter Pepper, San Francisco artist and designer. Colors of citron, Attilan blue, greige (grey and beige) and carnival red have been carried from the exterior throughout the house."

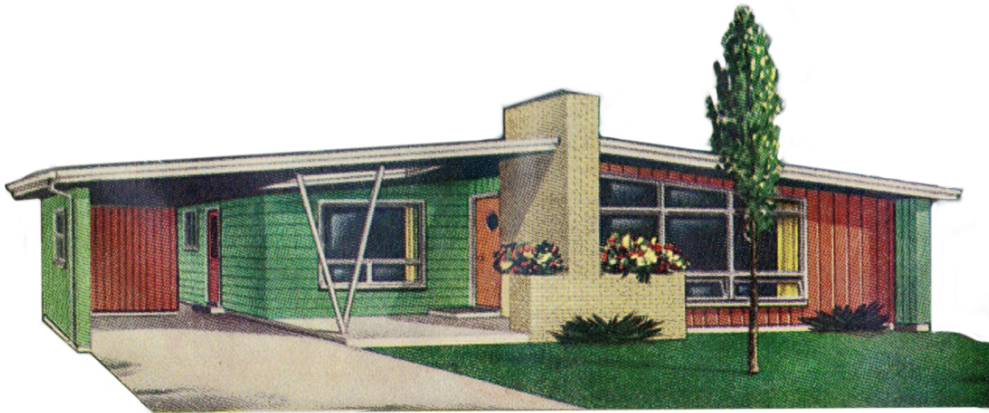
modern living

Mid-century modern homes were designed as machines to support living with ease and efficiency, and as a hub for Americans suddenly enjoying an unprecedented amount of leisure and family time. Rooms now flowed from one to another, kitchens were more inviting and amenable to dining-in, spacious family rooms looked out onto backyards through sliding glass doors, and modern conveniences were around every corner.

The central attitude of MCM was forward-looking: an architectural celebration of science, innovation, and hope for the future. These domestic technological marvels were on full display in 1957's *Electri-Living Home*, designed "for young homemakers" by Boise architects Joseph LaMarche and Nat Adams in the still-new Highlands. At left, you'll find an excerpt from the *Idaho Statesman's* detailed account of the house and its many charms, right down to the color scheme. As of this writing, the *Electri-Living* home is still standing on Crane Creek Road.

modern legacy

So what does all of this history and context mean for *your* mid-century home? We're so glad you asked! Recognizing the signature characteristics of an MCM home will help you identify what makes your home uniquely modern. For example: in the ranch pictured below, the low-pitched roof, prominent stone chimney wall with built-in planters, wood siding, original picture windows, and carport with chevron support are distinctly modern touches. Preserving and celebrating these types of features serves the dual purpose of saving your home for posterity AND greatly contributing to its overall financial value. Given the current high demand for mid-century homes and increasingly scarce supply, original features and smart enhancements will add thousands to the value of your home. The next several sections will cover in detail the nuts and bolts (and gentle do's and don'ts) of upkeep, inside and out.





Exterior Basics

The exterior of your home may be strongest indicator that you are the caretaker of a mid-century classic. Preservationists sometimes liken a facade to a human face: features like eyes (windows), nose (doors), skin (siding), and hair (roof line) makes a person (or home) distinctly recognizable, and each of those features exists in balance with the others. Proceed with care when altering your home's defining features, and consider enlisting the help of a designer if a major change needs to happen.



landscaping

While wide swaths of irrigated green turf were preferred in the past, today we understand that more minimal and native drought-tolerant landscaping is ideal. If you crave expanses of lawn, there are some wonderful low-water, low-mow turf grass varieties available. (Buffalograss, Idaho Fescue, Blue Grama, and Prairie Junegrass are a few varieties worth investigating.) Try mixing flat areas of lawn with hardscapes and vertical plantings. Tall, xeric wild grasses, especially when planted in linear groupings, can lend a very modern touch. Keep in mind that when your home was designed, the natural setting may have had a large influence on the layout of your home. Consider what natural features may have been unique or original to the property (especially invaluable old-growth trees) and make those the centerpiece of your landscaping plan.

roofing

We strongly advocate for maintaining the original roof structure/line/pitch, as the roof line of a modern home is a character-defining feature. Should the roofing materials need replacement, seek a comparable modern product. If properly installed and maintained, your roof (even if flat) should not leak. Consult an experienced and reliable roofer familiar with the drainage required for your style of roof. Improving the thermal performance of the roof to be more suitable for Idaho's climate can sometimes be tricky: employing a design pro will help you to prioritize and strategize insulation options.

windows

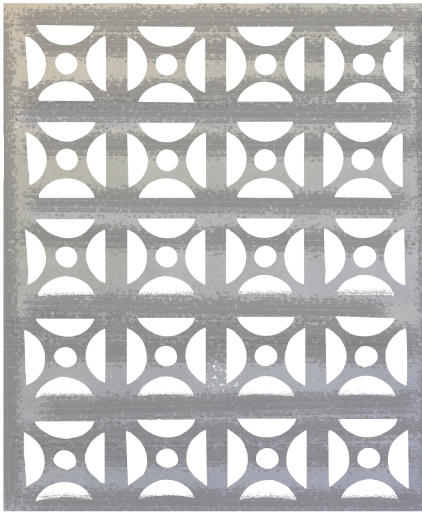
Often made of custom wood, aluminum or metal framing, it's not unusual to find large expanses of glass in modern homes, frequently with operable panes like casement, awning, or hopper windows. If your home has original windows and you're concerned about energy efficiency, there are some excellent alternatives that can maintain the original detail of your period windows. Windows may be retrofitted or replaced in kind to contain high efficiency double-pane glass. Look for windows with a thermal break for maximum performance. You may need to ask around: vinyl is frequently the go-to choice for window replacement professionals. Don't be shy about asking for a period-appropriate material. New aluminum or wood windows will preserve the aesthetic integrity of your home (while still meeting all efficiency standards) in a way that widely-used vinyl simply can't.



doors

An attractive modern door sets the tone for the rest of your home and can add enormously to curb appeal. If your home boasts the original doors, keep them and refinish or paint as necessary. Front doors are an ideal spot for a pop of bold or saturated color. (See page 16 for color ideas.) Brass door hardware can be revitalized with brass polish or a simple solution of vinegar and baking soda. If you need to replace doors and/or hardware, check local salvage shops, as they will often have some good, inexpensive options. New reproductions are also now widely available online or can be commissioned from a local woodworker or craftsman.





THOUGH ONCE AVAILABLE IN NEARLY A HUNDRED DIFFERENT PATTERNS, ONLY A FEW SOURCES FOR BREEZE BLOCK REMAIN. CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR CURRENT VENDOR OPTIONS.

rock&brick

Natural masonry materials are a hallmark of modern homes. Many of Idaho's mid-century homes feature locally sourced pumice, basaltite and Oakley stone, all quality materials that can be difficult to source today. Brick, stone, tile, and other period masonry is extremely durable and, even if damaged, can frequently be repaired or patched. (Tip: when re-pointing or repairing masonry, don't forget to match original grout color.) Painting these materials is not recommended, as paint obscures the unique, natural color variation and frequently cannot be undone. Moreover, painting masonry diminishes the ability for moisture to evaporate away from the home, compromising the functional integrity of the materials.

concrete

This low-cost material, requiring relatively simple technology and installation, was a natural fit for the post-war housing boom, and many residential designs utilize the unique potential of concrete. In most mid-century homes, concrete foundations and flatwork like patios, pavers, walkways, and driveways are common. A uniquely mid-century application and expression of concrete was breeze block, decorative cement blocks with open geometric patterns commonly used for garden walls, privacy screens, and carports. Though not able to function as a load-bearing wall, breeze block allows air and light to circulate into outdoor spaces, and provides a powerful, graphic hit of MCM character. Breeze block was frequently painted, and this is the rare material we endorse possibly painting or tinting with concrete stain.

aluminum siding

No matter the material of your original siding, there are easy solutions to keep it looking its best. Aluminum siding was favored as an inexpensive building material beginning in the late 1940's. It was easy to install and maintain, only requiring a light spray off with water a couple of times a year. If the original baked-on enamel or vinyl coating is intact but chalky or faded, you may be able to use products such as EVERBRITE to restore the siding's original color and appearance. Dents can be carefully removed and patched if your metal has blemishes in only a few areas and should only be replaced if damaged beyond repair.

garages&carports

Ownership of an automobile (or two) or a boat was a sign of prosperity in postwar America and people didn't mind showing them off. Even though it's tempting to enclose or modify, we suggest letting your carport be covered parking and your garage remain a garage. Trading the visual lightness of a carport's open sides for solid walls can drastically change your home's appearance. If you do need to enclose, hire an experienced residential architect who can preserve the exterior look of your home.

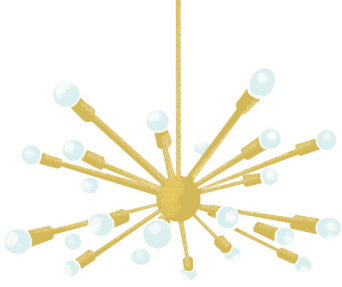
wood siding

Although it requires a bit more maintenance than other sidings, wood siding is a beautiful and prized original exterior material. As your wood siding ages, it will require more frequent coats of paint, stain, or sealant. It should be washed annually with warm, soapy water and a soft brush. Exposed (ie: unpainted) wood needs to be refinished and maintained every one to two years. Unpainted siding that has discolored with age can be restored by applying a wood cleaner or brightener, products that are usually intended for wood decking but very effective for siding. If a section of wood is cracked or damaged beyond repair, have a carpenter selectively replace boards, possibly utilizing wood reclaimed from other, lesser-seen areas of your home.

details

Exterior elements like shutters, awnings, mailboxes, columns, screen walls, and built-in planters are decorative and functional. If your home has retained these great details over the years, cleaning, repairing, and only selectively replacing is best. If your home is missing these charming features, check our website for some helpful resources and vendors. Reproductions are more widely available than ever before.





Interior Basics

Decking out a mid-century home can go far beyond purchasing space age light fixtures and furniture with clean lines. Attention to detail in maintaining the following features will set your home authentically apart and frequently save you a great deal of money in the process. Please always remember: there can be safety and environmental hazards in the products, materials and surfaces of any older home. When remodeling, we recommend first seeking the advice of a properly licensed professional who can test for lead and asbestos and provide abatement services as necessary.



fixtures

Details like light fixtures, doorbells, intercom systems, built-in radios, knobs, handles, switchplates are little jewels of the mid-century home, and should be preserved whenever possible. If something isn't working properly, hire an electrician to trouble-shoot: there may be life in it yet. If your home has been modified with more recent or stylistically inappropriate fixtures, know that there are plenty of options from many vendors. From sputnik chandeliers to bullet lights to simple white globes, possibilities abound. Switchplates can also be swapped out for stainless or other metal options that look exactly like their mid-century predecessors, and the same goes for door hardware. Salvage shops are a great resource for authentic fixtures of every kind.

built-ins

A textbook MCM design element, wood built-ins like room dividers, shelves, desks, and buffets utilize small spaces efficiently, freeing up rooms of excess furniture. Placed and scaled thoughtfully to maximize storage and space, they are architectural features to be honored. We strongly encourage a gentle sanding and refinishing in place of painting: let the beauty of aged wood shine through. And resist the urge to tear them out: these are irreplaceable originals that add authentic value and function to your space.

kitchens

If you're lucky enough to have the original fixtures and elements of your retro kitchen, and they are still functioning, do your best to preserve them. They are increasingly scarce and may highlight innovative or experimental ideas that were employed in kitchen design at the time. Given the current cost of replacement cabinetry, original solid wood cabinets are invaluable and may be brought back to life with an application of natural stain, keeping the tone as close to the original as possible. Even though certain finishes (like knotty pine) have fallen out of vogue, they can be an incredibly charming component of a period kitchen. Steel cabinets were also common in post-war homes, and are a rare treat today. Fresh powder-coating and treatment of dents by a pro can extend the life of these durable cabinets. Countertops can be replaced with similar material if they're damaged and gouged. (More about counters on the following page.) Be cautious when using currently trendy materials in your remodel: it can date your house in the wrong period. If all your original kitchen details are gone, consider remodeling with compact, flat-fronted cabinets of fir/walnut/beechn, laminate counters, period-appropriate flooring (see next page) and sourcing vintage pulls and handles from salvage shops and eBay. You can bring the character back and make it period-appropriate with clever modern look-alikes and second-hand finds.

bathrooms

One of the most distinctive (and endangered) elements of any mid-century home is a brightly hued bathroom. This rainbow of pastel ceramic tile (like pink, blue, yellow, green, bisque, aqua) plus colorful porcelain enamel tubs, sinks, and toilets are charming and increasingly prized by home buyers. Best of all: there are lots of affordable options for gently repairing and enhancing a vintage bathroom. Ceramic tiles in a retro palette are readily available and downright cheap (check our blog for vendors) and chipped bathroom fixtures can easily be recoated and sealed in place to look brand new. If your bathroom has already been stripped of period details, don't despair. Many homeowners are piecing together a vintage feel with new and salvaged materials. Above all: avoid installing a bathroom that doesn't support the style and feel of your home, and recognize the value in what you've already got!



"MAMIE PINK", A COMMON MID-CENTURY KITCHEN AND BATH COLOR, IS NAMED FOR FIRST LADY MAMIE EISENHOWER, WHO FAMOUSLY DECORATED THE FAMILY QUARTERS OF THE WHITE HOUSE IN THIS ROSY HUE.

fireplaces

Our advice is simple: clean it, use it, don't paint it. Stone and brick fireplaces are often a wonderful centerpiece of mid-century homes: embrace the color variation of natural materials and don't underestimate the power of a deep clean. To remove soot stains and years of dirt try brush-scrubbing the brick with a small bit of dish soap diluted with hot water, applying a paste of salt or baking soda for resistant stains. If your fireplace has already been painted, it is sometimes possible to restore the brick, but it can be a painstaking process involving heavy-duty paint stripping chemicals (like Peel Away) and lots of elbow grease. Some professionals employ a special, gentler style of sand-blasting, but regular power-washers or sand-blasters should never be used on vintage brick.

ceilings

Mid-century home ceilings were often unique, including diverse applications like acoustic tile, popcorn, exposed wood beams and decking. If you have natural wood details on your ceilings, resist the urge to paint them - they can not easily be unpainted. If the wood overhead feels too heavy or visually dark, try balancing with white or very light wall colors, floor coverings, furniture, and window coverings. The architectural interest, warmth, and luxury of wood ceilings is worth preserving!

counters

In the 50's and 60's plastic laminates were in use everywhere, and designers were hired to create new patterns and applications. Formica and Wilsonart companies developed entire houses (inspired by the California Case study houses) that used laminate for virtually every surface: walls, floors, cabinets, and countertops. Fifty years later in hard-working rooms, many of these surfaces may be showing signs of wear and tear, or have already been scrapped. Good news: there is a literal rainbow of laminate options available, and the aforementioned Formica and Wilsonart both offer reproductions of their popular mid-century prints and solids. Laminate is among the most affordable of counter materials, so replacing your kitchen and bathroom counters with authentic materials won't break your budget. Many solid-surface and quartz counters can also pass as believably mid-century, but other, trendier finishes (like granite and some glass tile backsplashes) should be avoided. Concrete countertops are another great option, particularly in contemporary homes.



flooring

Flooring is often a daunting (and expensive) project for mid-century homeowners. Authentic flooring materials can include natural hardwoods, natural stone, vinyl composition tile (VCT), cork, linoleum, terrazzo, concrete, and wool carpeting. If you have the original flooring materials in your home, replace or repair as needed with similar products and materials. There are no lack of great, period-appropriate replacements on the market, many of which are virtually identical to their predecessors. But keep in mind before replacing: well-worn flooring lends a great deal of character to a home that can be refreshed with new wax and urethane coatings. Modern-day carpet tiles are also an excellent way to work with existing floors, and are available in many colors and patterns that feel true to the period. Check our website for links to manufacturers and flooring suppliers, including pros, cons, and installation tips for specific flooring types.

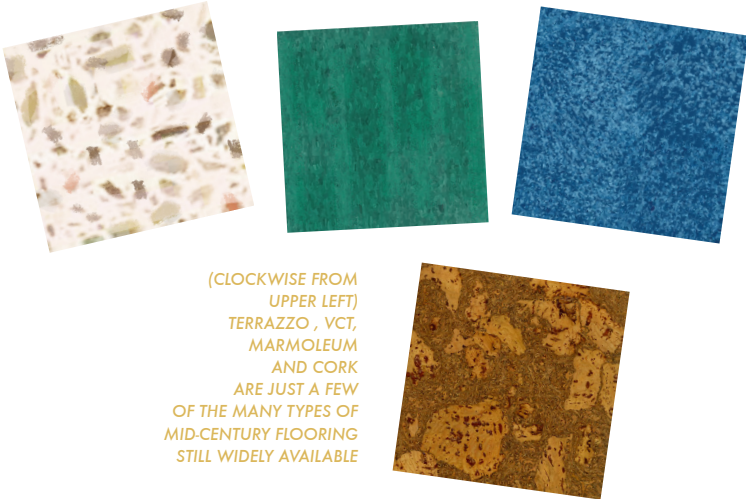
NEW VINYL FLOOR TILE
38 go-together colors—3 styles

Introducing the new color which is Kenflex Floor—over 38 beautiful colors with an easy-to-follow color-matching system that sets your Kenflex Floor. There's new excitement in Kenflex Floor—new, beautiful, to blend with new styles in household floor tile. New colors in the natural mark of Kenflex Floor—new colors in vinyl and epoxy floors. New, big glazing, guaranteed, from its use in the new tile. The new color sets with 100% Phosphoric Acid treatment to set and seal—saves a 1/2" coat each about \$15.00. Perfect for tile, concrete, and more.

KENFLEX
VINYL-FLOOR-TILE TILE
by the MAERS OF
KENTILE FLOORS

COME TO THE BIG KENFLEX NEW COLOR JUBILEE
with the Kenflex Floor Color Chart and Color Chart for
KENTILE • KENFLEX • KENFLEX • KENFLEX • KENTILE • KENTILE

ADVERTISEMENT FOR KENFLEX VINYL TILES // 1953



(CLOCKWISE FROM
UPPER LEFT)
TERRAZZO, VCT,
MARMOLEUM
AND CORK
ARE JUST A FEW
OF THE MANY TYPES OF
MID-CENTURY FLOORING
STILL WIDELY AVAILABLE

color stories

technicolor

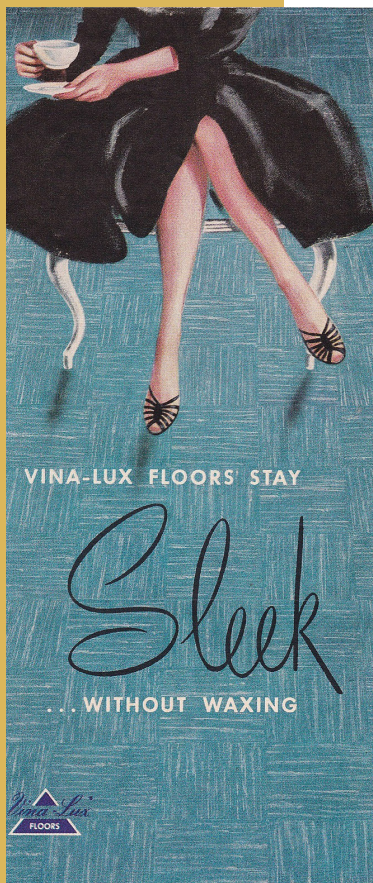
Thanks to technological breakthroughs in plastics and pigments, the color palette of the American home greatly expanded in the postwar era. Paint retailed in brand new shades. Floors and countertops were suddenly available in a rainbow of colors and patterns, and in new “space-age” materials. Once austere and minimal, kitchens and bathrooms were now designed with streamlined, candy-hued appliances, fixtures, and tile. These brightly colored finishes remained popular well into the 1970s, when pastels and pop colors gave way to earthier avocado, harvest gold, and rust. Though, in our current age of builder beige and greige, these finish colors can be seen as too busy, undesirable or “bad for resale”, we encourage you to consider all the chromatic possibilities when restoring or renovating.

white walls

Though a fresh coat of color on the wall is fun, there’s also a strong case to be made for clean white or light-neutral walls, especially if your home is more contemporary or classically mid-century. Pristine white pairs well with warm wood and stone and makes the perfect background canvas for the beautiful lines of good-quality furniture, a vibrant art collection, or colorful ceramics. But remember: if you’re yearning for wall-to-wall white, spare the stone and wood...

a word about wood

...because wood is perhaps the ultimate mid-century color. When refinishing built-ins, cabinets, and floors, remember that the original stain is a good clue towards the correct tone. Stick with clear coats and natural, vintage wood tones like walnut, teak, birch, and oak that let the wood grain shine through, and steer clear of highly pigmented present-day stains like dark espresso or red cherry.



PRODUCT BROCHURE FOR VINA-LUX FLOORING // 1958

Use this **NEW 1953 "COLOR CARD"** in your planning

You'll head the style parade with these beautiful new colors—
selected by leading authorities to make your choice easier!

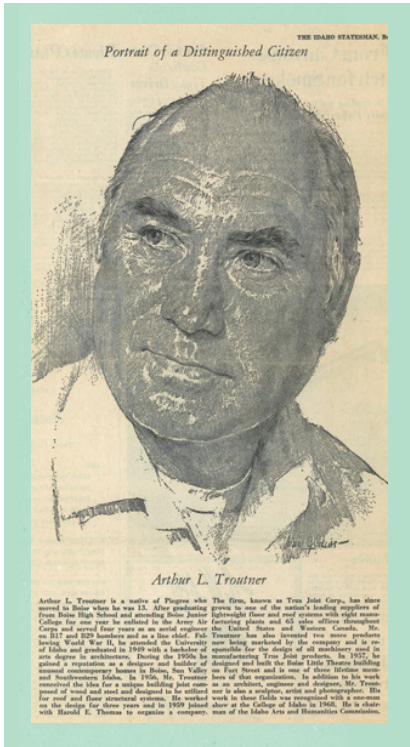
Colors of the Year—
Every year O'Brien presents a new palette of selected Colors of the Year. This "card" shows some of these for 1953. Use it in your planning! Then see actual full-page swatches of all 114, in the New Manual of your dealer's!

O'BRIEN'S PAINT "COLOR CARD" ADVERTISEMENT // 1953



notable Boise architects

If you'd like to deepen your mid-mod street cred, acquaint yourself with just a few of Boise's notable home designers, all worthy of further examination beyond these pages. (For the purposes of this field guide, we have undoubtedly left a few out, but are always researching and discovering new stories of Idaho's unsung modern architects.)



IDAHO STATESMAN CLIPPING
BOISE, IDAHO // SEPTEMBER 12, 1971

Art Troutner

An architect, engineer, inventor, industrial designer, businessman, and Idaho native, Troutner is arguably the most important single figure in the history of the development of wood technology for architecture. As a part of Boise's Trus Joist Incorporated, he developed and marketed unique engineered wood and plywood products, capable of out-performing traditional lumber and opening up new possibilities in home design. As an architect, Troutner was commissioned for numerous homes and cabins across the state of Idaho, and Boise is home to a treasured handful of these. An admirer of Frank Lloyd Wright but known for a contemporary style that was uniquely his own, Troutner designed sophisticated high-end homes with swimming pools in the Boise Foothills and along Warm Springs Ave, as well as more modest single-family homes in the Depot Bench neighborhood. His own family home, designed in 1955, is perched high on the cliffs near Tablerock.

Joe LaMarche

Joseph LaMarche was (along with Nat Adams) the award-winning architect for the Electric-Living Home (page 6) and in 1958 was selected by Architectural Record as one of twenty of the year's finest house designers for his "Ming Joy" Medallion home. The house was also featured in the Living For Young Homemakers Magazine. LaMarche was associated with many architects, including his partners Grider, Dropping, Kelley, Hosford, and Hummel, and designed several notable mid-century office buildings and banks.

Nat Adams

Nat Adams attended Boise High School, Boise Junior College and University of Oregon. He designed the homes for the Glen Haven Subdivision near Owyhee, Latah, and Kootenai, not to mention several elementary schools, hospitals, and churches throughout Southern Idaho. In 1951, an Idaho Statesman article detailed some of the design features he chose for his own home located on the Boise Bench. Noteworthy features included exterior siding of Philippine mahogany and pink Nevada stone, a patio enclosed on three sides by the walls of the house and garage, a front door with brass starburst backplates, and a sunken living room (Dec. 9, 1951.)

Jedd Jones

Known for his artistic touches and Japanese influences, Jedd Jones was a skilled designer and interior decorator. After studying architecture at the University of Idaho, he received his graduate degrees in architecture and art from the University of Pennsylvania. He is responsible for several house designs in the Boise Highlands and Warm Springs Avenue, he contributed to work on the Boise Junior College Campus and also provided interior design and architectural services for many downtown department and retail stores.

Charles Hummel

Renowned architect Charles Hummel only designed one home - his own! However, Hummel's name is synonymous with modern architecture in Boise: he was the designer of the Idaho Transportation Department offices and Boise Junior College's Business Building and campus library.

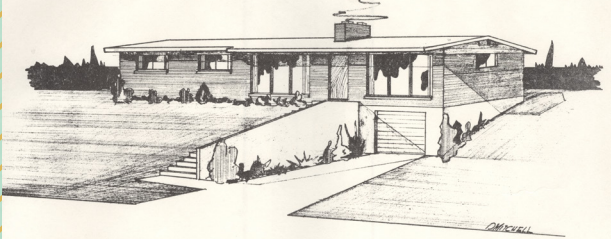


LAST MINUTE CHECK of counter - to - awning measurements is made (below) by Architect Nat Adams and Mrs. Philip Dufford, women's auxiliary president.

“LAST MINUTE CHECK OF COUNTER - TO - AWNING MEASUREMENTS IS MADE BY ARCHITECT NAT ADAMS AND MRS. PHILIP DUFFORD, WOMEN'S AUXILIARY PRESIDENT.” IDAHO STATESMAN CLIPPING BOISE, IDAHO // 1958

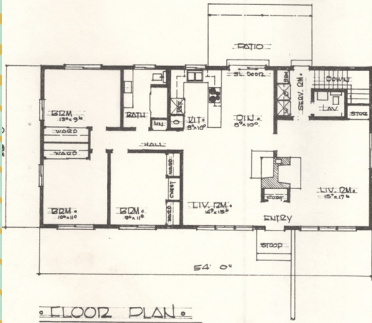
RICHARD B. SMITH AGENCY

Real Estate
and
Insurance
1310 State St. Phone 3-3606



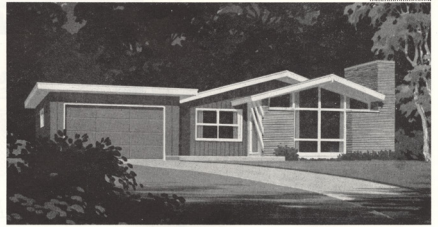
ELTON N. THORNTON
HIGHLANDS HOME BUILDER

3 Bedrooms

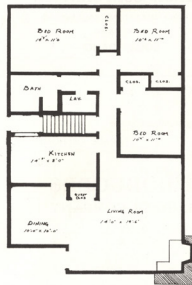


The Personality Home

No. 2



PRICE - \$19,500



Entirely different in appearance, the Personality house is finished with vertical siding and pink pumice brick. The combination flat and gable roof and unique floor-to-ceiling picture window add a distinctive note to the exterior of this three-bedroom design. The contemporary modern living plan includes a bath and half, a studio ceiling in the living-dining area and breakfast nook in the efficient kitchen.

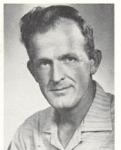
Inside trim of doors, casings and cabinets is all in bleached mahogany. Large basement can be finished into additional rooms. Doors from the basement open onto a large patio which slopes off to the stream. If your home must be beautiful, but entirely different in appearance, here's the house for you.

SUPPLIES:
Elvin Albiston, Landscaping
Enterprise Electric, Wiring
Chris Charon, Plumbing

Reynolds Hardwood Floor Company
McCaslin Lumber Company
Grigsby-Fitzgerald Company
A-I Heating Company

The Builder . . . **S. C. McWilliams**

S. C. McWilliams has been building in Boise for four years, mostly homes in the \$12,000 to \$20,000 bracket. A native of Pennsylvania, he found Idaho's climate, mountains and people friendly to his tastes, and decided to settle. "I am not trying to be a BIG BUILDER," says Mr. McWilliams, "but prefer to work with customers individually, giving personal attention to details and preferences."



further reading & resources

If you're mad for modern and ready to dig deeper, here's a selection of books and websites we think you'll find helpful. Please visit our website (idahomodern.org) for links to specific materials and vendors.

Howe, Jeffrey. *Houses We Live In: An Identification Guide to the History and Style of American Domestic Architecture*. Thunder Bay Press, 2002.

Hubka, Thomas. *Houses Without Names Architectural Nomenclature and the Classification of America's Common Houses (Vernacular Architecture Studies)*. Univ Tennessee Press, 2013.

Lambin, Jeanne. *Preserving Resources from the Recent Past*. A National Trust Publication, 2007.

May, Cliff. *Western Ranch Houses by Cliff May*. Hennessey & Ingalls, 1997.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses (Revised edition)*. Knopf, 2015.

Prudon, Theodore. *Preservation of Modern Architecture*. John Wiley and Sons, 2008.

Atomic Ranch Magazine www.atomic-ranch.com

DOCOMOMO www.docomomo.com

The Eichler Network www.eichlernetwork.com

Midcentury Home Magazine www.midcenturyhome.com

National Trust for Historic Places www.savingplaces.org

Retro Renovation www.retrorenovation.com

Preservation Idaho www.preservationidaho.org



PRESERVATION IDAHO
THE IDAHO HISTORIC PRESERVATION COUNCIL

Researched/written/produced by



For more info visit www.idahomodern.org
Preservation Idaho//P.O. Box 1495//Boise//Idaho//83701

Made possible with the generous support of

