



# FORREST RESIDENCE

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

FEBRUARY 2020

**DONALD LUXTON**  
AND ASSOCIATES INC 

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# 1. HISTORIC CONTEXT



**Address:** 1143 Eyremount Drive, West Vancouver

**Historic Name:** Forrest Residence

**Original Owner:** Terry and Anne Forrest

**Architect:** Ron Thom with Dick Mann, of Thompson, Berwick, Pratt & Partners

**Contractor:** Fred A. Hagell

**Date of Construction:** 1962-1963

## ***Modernism in West Vancouver***

The architecture of the post-World War II era rejected traditional historical ideas and reflected a relentless quest for new forms of expression. The Great Depression and war years had created a massive pent-up demand for new housing, engaging a new generation of architects in an exciting and liberating atmosphere that embraced the modern spirit. B.C. Binning, Robert Berwick, and Ned Pratt were local modernist pioneers and helped to spread a new, more relaxed style of architecture across British Columbia. Local designers were influenced strongly by the work and lectures of Richard Neutra, the aesthetics of traditional Japanese architecture, and the work of American architect Frank Lloyd Wright.

From 1945 to 1975, the Greater Vancouver region became a centre of innovative residential design that was recognized throughout North America. A quickly growing population and changes in traditional lifestyles opened the door for new housing concepts, some of which supported affordability for young families. Progressive and experimental architects developed the West Coast Style, also known as Post-and-Beam or West Coast Regionalism, based on the principles of modern architecture: functionalism, simplicity, and flexibility. The houses designed in this new style repudiated historical ornament, provided a transparent expression of internal and external structure, and embraced industrialized mass-production techniques. Heavy timber posts and beams, stone walls, and broad expanses of glazing were the preferred materials for these modern homes, maximizing views and natural light and seamlessly integrating interior and exterior spaces. Stone or brick fireplaces often dominated the open plan layout, with exposed structural timbers and sloping roofs.

On the North Shore, undeveloped and inexpensive land was often comprised of sloping and irregular sites, sometimes offering expansive vistas to the ocean, forests, and mountains. Challenging sites offered a welcome opportunity for young architects to respond to the rough topography and conditions

of lots considered to be “unbuildable” on the North Shore, through new approaches to design and evolving building technologies. Bench-cut sites were used to provide split-level floorplans and more interesting layouts. Entrance and parking areas were commonly placed facing the street to allow the living areas to open to rear yards. Walls were filled with modular windows and panels to create a rhythmic pattern of solid and voids. Natural light was considered a key design element, with floor-to-ceiling windows providing ample daylighting, while broad overhangs provided shading as well as passive solar heating in winter. Large windows and French doors connected the interior and exterior spaces in seamless fashion and provided easy access to outdoor decks, which extended the indoor living areas to the outside.

Traditional floor plans were replaced with flexible, multi-functional layouts to serve new, more informal lifestyles and casual entertaining. Interior spaces were clean and spare; contrasting natural materials such as wood, brick, stone and plaster were used to create interesting visual effects. In particular, timber structural were exposed and often stained. Interior and exterior spaces were integrated by creating lines of vision through transparent windows and doors to patios, private garden spaces, zones designed for special uses, and access to the surrounding environment. The arrangement of native plantings, hedges, shrubbery, and beds of low-growing plants formed abstract geometrical patterns that reinforced the horizontal and vertical planes of modern West Coast Style homes.

***Architect: Ron Thom***

Born in Penticton in 1923, Ron Thom was raised by a Scottish father, James Thom, and an Ontario-born mother, Elena Myrtle Fennel. Thom studied painting after serving in the RCAF during World War II, and graduated from the Vancouver School of Art in 1947. His interest in architecture was greatly influenced by his teacher, Bert Binning. Eventually, Thom began teaching architecture at the School of Art before being invited to teach design at the Architectural School of the University of British Columbia. He joined the architectural firm Thompson, Berwick & Pratt and later became a design partner at the firm. Though he lacked formal training, Thom would go on to become one of Canada’s most celebrated Modernist architects.

During the early 1960s, Thom gained national recognition when he captured his first major design commission for Massey College at the University of Toronto. In 1962, Trent University undertook a search for a master planning architect to design and construct new buildings on Trent’s Nassau Campus, located north of Peterborough; the contract was also awarded to Thom. Other renowned designs for which Thom has received national and international acclaim include several private homes, the Shaw Festival Theatre at Niagara-on-the-Lake, a project for the 60-story British Columbia Building in Vancouver, Sir Sandford Fleming College in Peterborough, the Civic Centre in Hamilton, and the arts and science complex at Queen’s University. Ron Thom received an honorary degree from Trent University in 1971. He died at his office in Toronto in 1986.

***Architect: Dick Mann***

A 1957 graduate of the University of British Columbia’s architecture program, Richard C. (Dick) Mann joined the firm of Thompson, Berwick, Pratt & Partners that same year. Promoted to the head of the Urban Planning division in 1966, Mann was involved with various high-profile projects throughout his career with the firm, which lasted until 1985. Mann was also active on the Vancouver Board of Trade as Chair, and as a member of the Civic Affairs Committee, and the Environmental Task Force. Following his time with Thompson, Berwick & Pratt, Mann founded his own consulting firm, under the moniker ‘abitat consultants’, which focused on the design, economic, and environmental issues related to construction projects. Dick Mann died in Vancouver in 1992.

***Architectural Partnership: Sharp & Thompson, Berwick & Pratt***

George Lister Thornton Sharp and Charles Joseph Thompson were born and trained in London, prior to moving to Vancouver and forming a partnership in 1908. The firm was responsible for the design of many major projects, and played an important role in the development of the built environment of Greater Vancouver. Sharp & Thompson won the 1912 competition to design the Point Grey campus for the University of British Columbia. The firm built the first four original campus buildings, and became the official architectural firm of the University, a position which it held until late into the 1950s. The company changed its name to Sharp & Thompson, Berwick, Pratt in 1945, when two new partners and pioneer Modernists, Robert Berwick and Ned Pratt, joined the firm.



Forrest Residence, 1987, District of West Vancouver Archives (WVA) 2585-03-01.106.09.DWV



Forrest Residence, 1987, WVA 2585-03-01.106.10.DWV



Forrest Residence, 1993, WVA 2585-03-02.33.10.DWV



Forrest Residence, 1994, WVA 2585-03-02.33.08.DWV



Forrest Residence, 1999, WVA 2585-03-02.33.22.DWV



Forrest Residence, 1999, WVA 2585-03-02.33.17.DWV



Forrest Residence, 1999, WVA 2585-03-02.33.18.DWV



Forrest Residence, 1999, WVA 2585-03-02.33.19.DWV



Forrest Residence, 1999, WVA 2585-03-02.33.21.DWV



Forrest Residence, 1999, WVA 2585-03-02.33.24.DWV

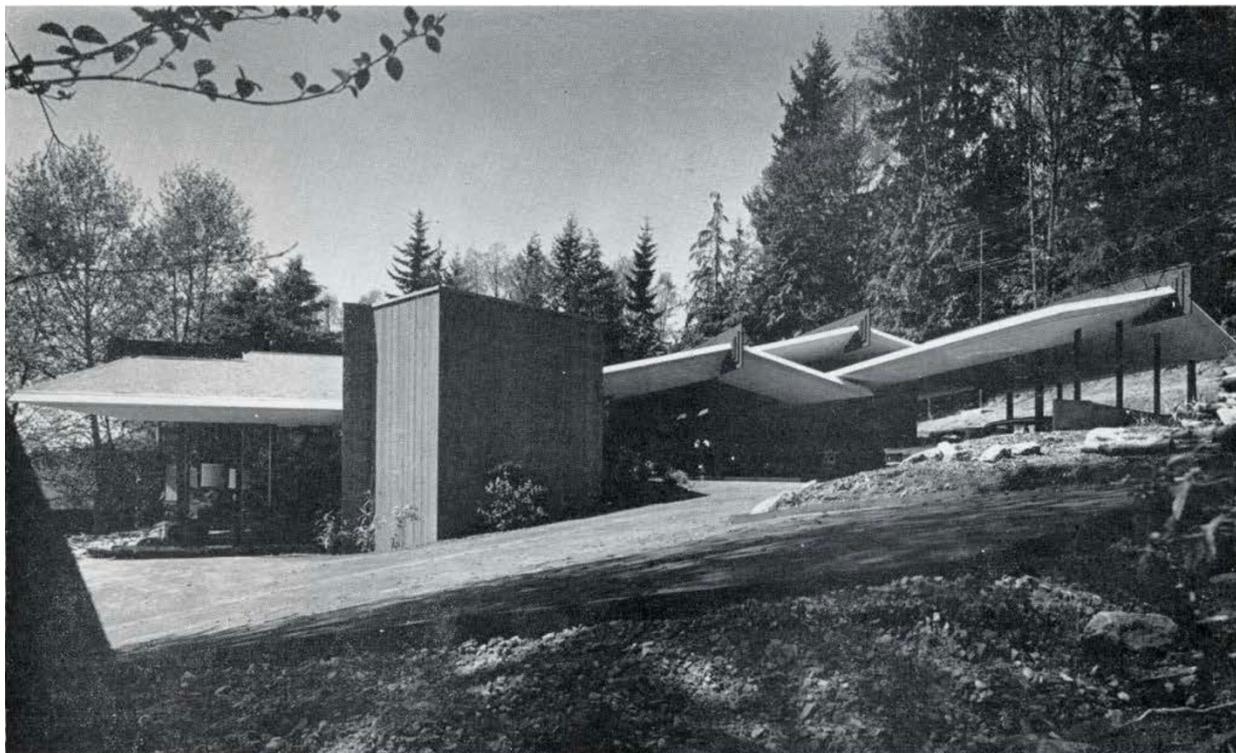


Forrest Residence, 1999, District of West Vancouver Archives 2585-03-02.33.26.DWV



Forrest Residence, 1999, WVA 2585-03-02.33.14.DWV

## 2. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: FORREST RESIDENCE



Forrest Residence. RAIC Journal 41, no.11 (Nov. 1964), page 63

**Address:** 1143 Eyremount Drive, West Vancouver

**Historic Name:** Forrest Residence

**Original Owner:** Terry and Anne Forrest

**Architect:** Ron Thom with Dick Mann, of Thompson, Berwick, Pratt & Partners

**Contractor:** Fred A. Hagell

**Date of Construction:** 1962-1963

### **Description of the Historic Place**

The Forrest Residence, located at 1143 Eyremount Drive in West Vancouver, is a one-storey, split-level house built into a steep and rugged cliffside. Designed in the West Coast Style of architecture, the house is characterized by its undulating form and unique geometric 'wing' roof structure with generous overhanging eaves and prominent dissecting central beams. Located on an elevated, tapering 3,100 square metre residential lot with south-facing views of Burrard Inlet and Vancouver, the Forrest Residence is distinguished by its unique low-sloped roof forms that cascade down the stepped site, and the integration of the built form with the environment.

### **Heritage Value of the Historic Place**

The Forrest Residence is significant for its West Coast Style of architecture; its integration with the natural environment; and its association with architects Ron Thom and Dick Mann of the firm Thompson, Berwick & Pratt.

The Forrest Residence represents the pinnacle of creativity and elegance of mid-century design in West Vancouver. Completed in 1963, it is an outstanding representation of the West Coast Style of

modern architecture. Exemplified by design innovation, advanced architectural technologies, the use of natural materials, and its sensitive integration with the environment, the West Coast Style was prevalent between 1945 and 1970. This was an era of postwar optimism, prosperity, growth and pent-up demand for new housing. The Forrest Residence was designed to carry the undulating lines of its surrounding topography, to step down the mountain with expansive overhangs, and open up towards exquisite views to the water and city beyond. Utilizing high-quality materials and progressive techniques, the house features sophisticated lines that give it an organic sense of flow while differentiating it from earlier, simplistic post-and-beam structures. The interior features floor-to-ceiling windows that offer unobstructed views, as well as ceilings that follow the slopes of the unique roofline; the living area additionally features an *avant-garde* sunken conversation pit. Original owners Terry and Anne Forrest commissioned the construction of the impressive dwelling, though remained only two years due to Terry's untimely death at the age of 34. Following the Forrests, the longest occupants and caretakers, Mr. and Mrs. Archie Baker, moved into the residence.

Built on a trapezoidal, sloping residential lot, the Forrest Residence is significant for its seamless split-level integration with its site, a hallmark feature of the West Coast Style. Architects Ron Thom and Dick Mann devised the Forrest Residence as a taut geometric abstraction of the knolls and hillocks of the slope on which it stood. From the street below, the house itself is barely visible as the rhythmically pitched roofline seems to hover just above the rock ridge that serves as its plinth. The design responds directly to the topography with roofs parallel to the ground, yet flared at the eaves to allow maximum views and natural light without sacrificing the sense of shelter. With south-facing views to Burrard Inlet and Vancouver throughout the interior of the house and from the exterior patios and pool, the Forrest Residence was designed as a secure urban retreat within a forest clearing.

The Forrest Residence was designed by Ron Thom with Dick Mann, while both were working with Thompson, Berwick, Pratt and Partners. Exhibiting his genius in the manipulation of geometric forms, the Forrest Residence reflects Thom's admiration for the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, as well as his teachers, Bert Binning, Fred Amess, and Jack Shadbolt. Thom freely adapted the design concepts of Modernism to the Pacific Northwest climate and geography. While Thom is best known in the West as a major influence in the development of the West Coast Style of residential architecture, he was also recognized in Eastern Canada as the master designer of Massey College, Trent University, Shaw Festival Theatre, and the Toronto Zoo. The Forrest Residence remains one of the most significant examples of Thom's residential work and was the recipient of a 1964 Massey Medal for Architecture.

### **Character-Defining Elements**

Elements that define the heritage character of the Forrest Residence are its:

#### *Exterior Elements*

- setting amongst mature vegetation on a large lot, with expansive and unobstructed views south to Burrard Inlet and Vancouver;
- continuous residential use since 1963;
- residential form, scale and massing as expressed by its one-storey, split-level plan;
- geometric winged roof structure with gabled peaks, exposed beams, and horizontal, asymmetrical massing;
- wood-frame construction on radiant heated slab with 2.5cm by 10cm rough vertical cedar cladding on all walls, and sand-float plaster on ceilings and soffits, and roof structure supported on large steel beams (not visible) over walls of windows;

- West Coast Style details such as the use of local materials, the large wooden front door, undulating geometric forms with wide flaring eaves, formed by joists over steel beams (not visible) fanned radially at the corners to create large overhangs, and exposed and raised central wooden beams along the gable peaks, and the interconnected relationship between the interior and exterior spaces;
- original windows such as its fixed walls of windows and jalousie panels; and
- associated landscape features such as the mature trees and plants.

*Interior Elements*

- open floor plan with split-level concept;
- variety of wall and ceiling heights throughout;
- full-height wood panelling;
- skylights; and
- sunken conversation pit with curved ceiling, flagstone wall and built-in furniture.

### 3. COMPATIBILITY STUDY

#### A. Zoning

1143 Eyremount Drive is located on zoning map 8 of 28, part of Zoning Bylaw No. 4662, 2010. The house is situated in an **RS3**, Single Family Dwelling Zone 3.

Zoning Section	1143 Eyremount Drive	Compatibility
<p><b>203.01 Permitted Uses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) accessory buildings and uses</li> <li>b) child care</li> <li>c) community care</li> <li>d) detached secondary suite</li> <li>e) golf courses excluding commercial driving ranges and miniature golf courses</li> <li>f) home based business</li> <li>g) keeping of chickens</li> <li>h) lodgers</li> <li>i) secondary suites</li> <li>j) single family dwellings</li> </ul>	(j) single family dwellings	Compatible. 1143 Eyremount Drive is a single family home in a single family home zone.
<p><b>203.02 Conditions of Use</b></p> <p>The keeping of not more than 2 lodgers within a single family dwelling.</p>	No lodgers currently listed	Compatible. 1143 Eyremount Drive does not currently keep more than 2 lodgers.
<p><b>203.03 Site Area</b></p> <p>1,115 square metres minimum</p>	~3,122 square meters	Compatible. The site area of this property is larger than the minimum requirement.
<p><b>203.04 Site Width and Depth</b></p> <p><b>Width</b> 24.4 metres minimum; except 29 metres minimum for a flanking lot</p> <p><b>Depth</b> shall not exceed 4 times the site width</p>	<p><b>Width:</b> ~49.1 metres at lot frontage, ~18.4 metres at rear (average ~33.8 metres)</p> <p><b>Depth:</b> ~106.5 metres deep on the east side and ~90.9 metres on the west side (average ~98.7 metres)</p>	<p><b>Width:</b> Compatible; the lot is trapezoidal and meets the minimum requirements of width at the front but not at the rear. However, the average width of ~33.8 metres exceeds the minimum requirement.</p> <p><b>Depth:</b> Compatible. The site depth does not exceed 4 times the site width.</p>
<p><b>203.05 Site Coverage</b></p> <p>Either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) 30% of site area maximum, if site area is greater than 885 square metres; or</li> <li>(2) 266 square metres maximum, if site area is between 664 square metres and 885 square metres; or</li> <li>(3) 40% of site area maximum, if site area is less than 664 square metres</li> </ul>		Compatible. The house covers less than the 30% maximum requirement.

<p><b>203.06 Floor Area Ratio</b> Either:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) 0.35 of site area maximum, if site area is greater than 677 square metres; or</li> <li>(2) 237 square metres maximum, if site area is between 474 and 677 square metres; or</li> <li>(3) 0.5 of site area maximum, if site area is less than 474 square metres</li> </ol>		Compatible. The FAR is below the maximum FAR of 0.35.
<p><b>203.07 Front Yard</b> 9.1 metres minimum</p>		Compatible. The front yard of 1143 Eyremount Drive is larger than the 9.1 metre minimum.
<p><b>203.08 Rear Yard</b> 9.1 metres minimum</p>		Compatible. The rear yard of 1143 Eyremount Drive is larger than the 9.1 metre minimum.

**B. Official Community Plan: OCP Bylaw 4985 2018**

Section 2A, 2.1, page 23:

**Key OCP actions**

As a land use planning document, an OCP is legislatively required to guide housing development throughout a community. To address the needs of the present and future generations in our community, this OCP seeks to:

- regenerate our primarily detached, single-family home oriented neighbourhoods with sensitive infill options, such as smaller houses on smaller lots, coach houses and duplexes;
- expand “missing middle” housing options, like triplex, townhouse and mixed-use, in locations close to transit, shops, and amenities;
- **respect our neighbourhood character and encourage long-term protection of valued heritage properties with stronger incentives;**
- strengthen our centres and key corridors through local area plans, with separate, detailed and collaborative planning processes to determine area-specific visions, objectives and suitable built-form, heights and densities; and
- advance housing affordability, accessibility and sustainability through available policy levers.

Together, these combined OCP actions seek to fill missing gaps for housing and housing choices in existing neighbourhoods and centres, and to provide for more and ongoing seniors and rental housing options.

**Section 2A, 2.1.9, page 27:**

*Respecting character and protecting heritage*

2.1.9 Protect buildings, structures and landscapes on the District’s Heritage Register by:

- a. Allowing the conversion of single-family homes into multi-family use (e.g., duplex, triplex);

- b. Allowing fee-simple subdivisions or infill options (such as cottages or coach houses) on the same lot;**
- c. Varying siting to protect valued trees and landscapes;
- d. Encouraging protection through bonus density and considering density transfer;**
- e. Considering financial incentives (e.g., the reduction of development fees or charges, tax incentives);**
- f. Reducing off-street parking requirements;**
- g. Securing protection through Heritage Designation Bylaws;**
- h. Supporting restoration through Heritage Revitalization Agreements; and**
- i. Expediting the review process for the retention of heritage properties.**

### **C. Arts & Culture Strategy**

*Strategy 2.4, page 20*

#### **Expand heritage programming**

2.4.1 Expand the interpretation and sharing of West Vancouver's heritage

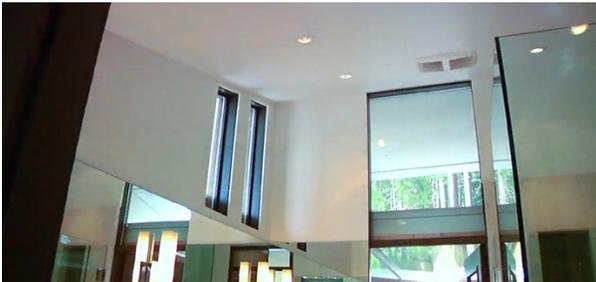
- Work with Heritage groups and agencies to improve and expand heritage programming that reflects the diverse nature of the community and its rich history including collections, programming and services.

### **D. Conclusion**

The Forrest Residence at 1143 Eyremount Drive is compatible with its current zoning regulations. Additionally, the house reinforces the key actions identified in the District's *Official Community Plan* and aligns with the strategies identified in the District's *Arts & Culture Strategy*. Since its completion in 1963, the Forrest Residence has been recognized through the following official and unofficial means:

- Winner of Massey Medal for Architecture, 1964
- Primary Building in *West Vancouver Survey of Significant Architecture* (1945-75)
- Listed on the West Vancouver Community Heritage Register
- Featured in the 2013-15 travelling exhibition *Ron Thom and the Allied Arts* and accompanying publication
- Featured in the West Coast Modern Home Tour

### 4. INTERIOR IMAGES



## 5. RESEARCH SOURCES

- 1143 Eyremount Drive, West Vancouver
- Built 1962-1963
- Designed by Ron Thom with Dick Mann, of Thompson, Berwick, Pratt & Partners
- General Contracting by Fred Hagell

### UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA ARCHIVES:

Thompson, Berwick, Pratt & Partners fonds

- Box 49 (Residences sub-series)
  - File 46: Terry Forrest Residence - 1143 Eyremount Blvd., W. Van. March 9, 1962 - April 13, 1963.
  - File 47: Terry Forrest Residence - 1143 Eyremount Blvd., W. Van. Dec. 10, 1963 - Sept. 28, 1965.

### CANADIAN ARCHITECTURAL ARCHIVES:

Thompson, Berwick, Pratt & Partners fonds

- Forrest Residence (1954)
  - 45A/78.35; TOP r/54F65 ; PH 22 File 34
    - Circular house. Client: Mr. and Mrs. Terry Forrest; 5 sheets of architectural drawings; flat

### PUBLISHED WORKS:

- Bellerby, G. *The West Coast Modern House: Vancouver Residential Architecture*. Figure 1 Publishing, 2014.
- F.G. Architecture & Planning Consultants. *West Vancouver Survey of Significant Architecture 1945-1975*. 1994.
- Massey Medals for Architecture 1964. *RAIC Journal November 1964*.
- Robins, T., Brigitte Shim, Thomas Symons, Adele Weder. *Ron Thom and the Allied Arts*. West Vancouver Museum, 2013.
- Shadbolt, Douglas. *Ron Thom: The Shaping of an Architect*. Douglas & McIntyre, 1995.
- Weder, A., Kiriko Watanabe, Donald Luxton, Barry Downs. *Selwyn Pullan: Photographing Mid-Century West Coast Modernism*. Douglas & McIntyre, 2012.
- West Vancouver Art Museum. *Design for Living: West Coast Modern Homes Revisited*. District of West Vancouver, 2019.



**1143 EYREMOUNT DRIVE, WEST VANCOUVER, B.C.**

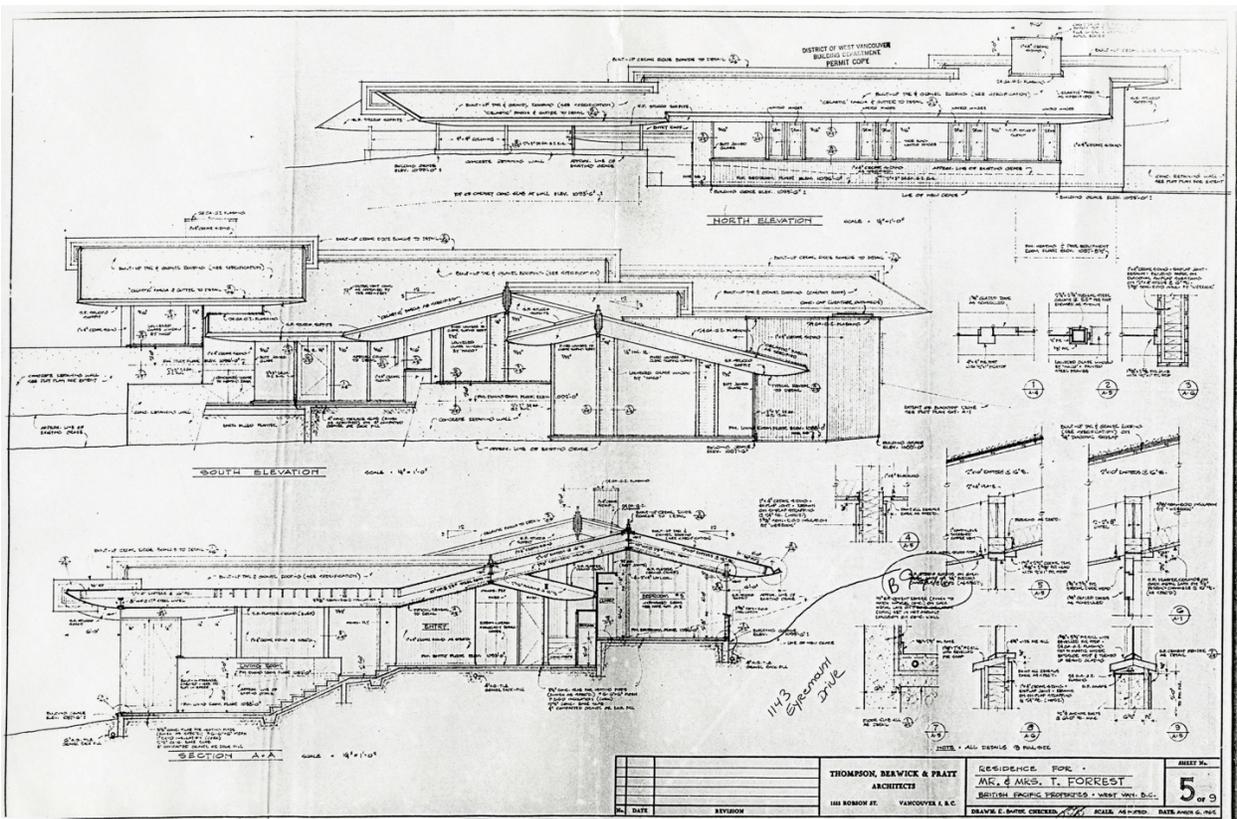
- ARCHITECT - RON THOM
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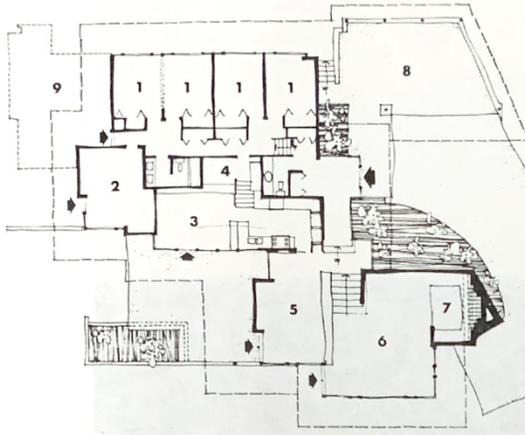
National Post, February 21, 1992, page 13



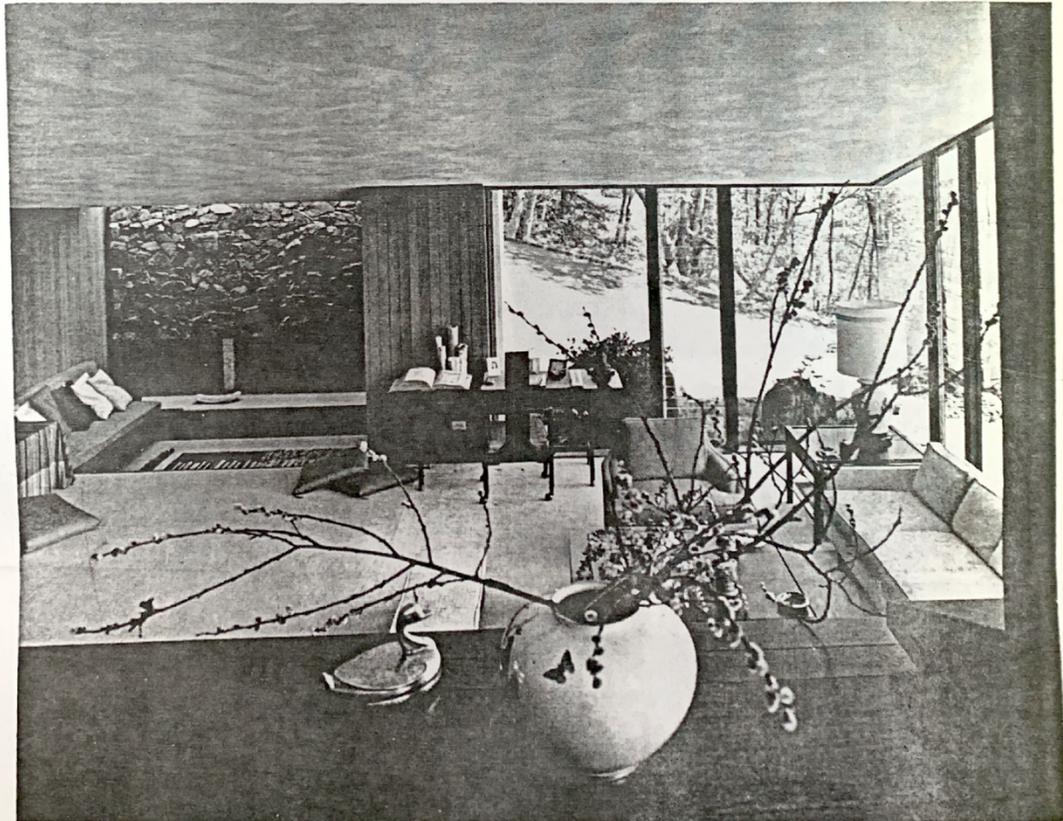
1962. Sheet 5, Elevations. Forrest Residence. Thompson, Berwick and Pratt, WVA 2585-03-02.33

MASSEY MEDAL AWARD:  
FORREST RESIDENCE, W. VANCOUVER

Architects: Thompson, Berwick, Pratt & Partners



3 MAIN FLOOR: 1 bedrooms. 2 study. 3 family room. 4 laundry. 5 dining. 6 living. 7 conversation pit. 8 carport. 9 future master bedroom addition.



58 The Canadian Architect/February 1965

Forrest Residence, *The Canadian Architect*, February 1965, 1143 Eyremount Drive Building File, WVA 2585-03-02.33