

124 May Avenue

J.S. Keefer's Oak Grove Tract, a subdivision of fifty one residential lots, was placed on the market early in 1887. Nearly thirty years were to elapse, however, until substantial development of the tract was to take place. Prominent in the development of May Avenue in particular were the Tifal Brothers, Charles and Gustave. The firm specialized in the design and construction of fine homes in the Craftsman Style, and examples of their work are to be found throughout Monrovia, especially in the Wild Rose Tract. Early in 1913 the Tifals built the houses at 115 and 116 May Avenue. The following year they purchased two adjacent lots, and in 1915 they constructed 120 and 124 May Avenue.

124 May Avenue is a large two story residence displaying some distinctive exterior and interior design features. The first story and a portion of the second story are sheathed with shingles, while the remainder of the second floor is finished with highly textured stucco. Arched windows, not a typical Craftsman design feature, are featured on the second story. The interior has the usual built-ins of the period, but in addition to those there is a built-in clock in the partition between the living room and dining room. The central beam in the living room incorporates a Chinese motif that gives the room an Oriental flavor. Another distinctive feature of the house is the octagonal breakfast room, placed to catch the morning sun.

The first residents of record for 124 May Avenue were C.L. and Celia Keiser, who were living in the house in 1919 and who apparently rented it. By 1920, the house had become the property of the Argue family. Two generations of the family lived in the house for over twenty years. Circa 1945 the house was purchased by Charles O. and May Kilmer, who sold the house to the current owners. The Harrods have owned it for nearly forty years. Only three changes in ownership during the house's eighty six year history have resulted in no significant alterations. The house stands today almost unchanged since 1915.