



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

7407 La Jolla Boulevard
La Jolla, CA 92037

www.raremaps.com

(858) 551-8500
blr@raremaps.com

Bel-Air Allotments 1 to 5 Including Golf Course

Stock#: 52408bb
Map Maker: Frank Meline Co.
Date:
Place: Los Angeles
Color: Color
Condition: VG
Size:
Price: SOLD



Description:

Remarkable Early Bel Air Real Estate Subdivision Map

Fine large format subdivision map, showing community of Bel-Air.

The map includes annotations from an early real estate sales company, almost certainly in the hand of Karl B. Schurz, one of the earliest real estate agents in Beverly Hills, including some lot sales prices. To the west of the Training Track, a number of lots are marked with the name Bell, almost certainly a reference to the residential lots retained by the founder, Alphonzo Bell.

The present map shows the lower part of Bel Air, including the Bel Air Country Club, Horse Track and Stables (which would become the future site of the Bel Air Hotel). The map extends north to Stradella Road, Nimes Road and the future site of the Bel Air Hotel.

The residence of the founder, Alphonzo Bell, appears north of Bel Air Road in the north part of the map.

The map is embellished with illustrations showing the Front Elevation of the Bel-Air Country Club, along with golf, tennis and equestrian images. This would appear to be the earlier of two maps of the Bel-Air Subdivision, with a slightly later map showing additional subdivision and replacing the illustrations with photographs.

- Bel Air Administration Building
- Entrance Gate to Bel Air



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- A Golf Course Scene
- Bel Air Country Club
- Scene on the Brida Trail

Bel Air

The community was founded in 1923 by Alphonzo Bell. Bell owned farm property in Santa Fe Springs, California, where oil was discovered. He bought a large ranch with a home on what is now Bel Air Road. He subdivided and developed the property with large residential lots. He also built the Bel-Air Beach Club in Santa Monica and the Bel-Air Country Club. His wife chose Italian names for the streets.

Bell, known for his almost puritanical morality and honesty, used portions of his initial profits to develop upscale real estate communities in West Los Angeles, including parts of Westwood, Beverly Hills, and Pacific Palisades. He became a real estate developer, anticipating the influx of Hollywood elite and other wealthy residents who would be lured by the burgeoning film industry. In 1922, building on over 600 acres that he had acquired, Bell founded Bel Air Estates, an exclusive and upscale neighborhood now known as Bel-Air, enhancing the surrounding area with lush vegetation, new roads, and utilities.

Bell designed, laid out and developed the Bel Air Country Club and the Bel Air Bay Club; and was a key player in the group that developed the Riviera Country Club. While many such clubs thrived on sales of bootleg liquor during the years of Prohibition, Bell refused to allow the sale of illegal alcohol, which lost him some membership. William Randolph Hearst's longstanding vendetta with Bell had started when Bell refused to sell a homesite to Hearst for his silent-film-star mistress, Marion Davies in the Bell's Bel-Air Estates development.

Bell and his wife Minnewa in 1921 built a showplace 42-room house on 1,760 acres in portions of the areas that are now Bel Air and Pacific Palisades which they called Capo Di Monte. Today nothing of the house remains, except for some of the terraced gardens and rock walls, and their former horse riding stables, which now constitute a portion of the Bel-Air Hotel.

Rarity

The map is extremely rare. OCLC locates 1 copy (Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley). We have never seen the map on the market.



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Detailed Condition:

Includes contemporary pencil annotations. Several small tears, expertly repaired on verso. Minor soiling.