

Legendary Home Of Connie Wald, The Barnett House, Listed By Bret Parsons

By Victoria Talbot

Rarely does a home so eloquently speak to the legacy of a legendary hostess as the Barnett House speaks of Connie Wald, widow of producer-writer Jerry Wald.

Built in 1939 by renowned architect Gerard Colcord, the couple purchased the majestic estate at 615 No. Beverly Dr. in 1943 from W.B. Barnett, a retired Pennsylvania businessman.

It was then that she started entertaining, bringing simple food and company together with warmth and hospitality.

They hired Loretta Young's mother, Gladys Belzer, the day's most stylish decorator, for the interior spaces, and



THE BARNETT HOUSE BY ARCHITECT GERARD COLCORD

the results remained nearly unchanged until her death in 2012.

She began her famed dinners to entertain the stars that worked hard, six days a week, offering a casual, warm venue to relax and dine in comfort.

The Pennsylvania Dutch-style farmhouse was large but not pretentious, a

perfect backdrop to a skilled hostess who really knew how to throw a party.

"When I think about going to dinner at Connie's . . . I feel a great sense that the world is about to be corrected," said Joan Didion in Vogue magazine.

"It was just cozy," said Betsy Bloomingdale, philanthropist and long-time friend. "And they don't do cozy anymore." Bloomingdale, Nancy Reagan and Audrey Hepburn became Connie Wald's close companions.

Jerry Wald's credits include *From Here To Eternity*, *Peyton Place*, *Sons And Lovers*, *Key Largo* and many other films. Wald produced *Mildred Pierce*, the film noir about a mother and her ungrateful daughter, for which Joan Crawford won her Oscar for Best Actress. Crawford was a frequent guest.

Their late son Robbie recalled returning home from school one day to find his parents watching a screening with Joanne Woodward, Paul Newman, Marilyn Monroe and Cary Grant. Such were their social circle.

In 1952, Columbia Studios offered

the house.

Jerry Wald died of a heart attack in 1962 at the age of 50. But Connie continued her tradition of opening her home and her heart to Hollywood's stars. Dinners prevailed with Connie bringing her sons Robbie and Andrew into the kitchen with her.

Eventually, Colcord was called back to the house to convert the garage into a guest room for Audrey Hepburn. Hepburn always stayed at the house when she was in town.

But it was the art of making people comfortable, bringing them out, offering her special brand of entertaining that made her so special. "She had a sunny disposition," said John Goldwyn, producer grandson of Sam Goldwyn. "She drew people to her."

When she passed away George Christy wrote: "Everyone went to Connie's. None better than an invitation



HOMELY HEARTH--With her characteristic mix of warmth and casual, Connie Wald spent many hours entertaining before the Colcord signature fireplaces, with heads of state and heads of studios.



NOTED LIBRARY--conversations on which books were written

from Connie Wald to dine at her residence, where she lived for 70 years. . . her white picket fence welcomed the world's illuminati, culturati and literati. Guests came happily. And came again . . . At Connie's we all dined royally."

Says Realtor Bret Parsons, author of the book *Colcord Home*, "The Barnett House is one of Colcord's finest Colonial Revival homes, the style for which he is best known. It embraces many of Colcord's favorite motifs, preeminently the field-stone masonry façade," said Parsons.

Now, the famed home is on the market for only its second time. Like all of Colcord houses, they rarely come on the market.

The home is approximately 5,500-square feet on an 18,000-square foot lot. It has five bedrooms and six baths plus a cabana, pool and guest house. The magnificent

and historic theatre has a separate projection room. Designed by Master Architect Colcord, the home is being offered by realtor Bret Parsons, director of the Architectural Division of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage.



POOL AND CABANA

to build Jerry Wald an at-home screening room. They brought Colcard back, where he met the couple for the first time.

The room had been a Morning Room, but Colcord expanded it to appear to have always been a theatre in



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Leonard Rabinowitz

310.552.8200

LeonardR@TheAgencyRE.com

CalBRE# 01496421

www.LeonardR.com



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