

May 28, 2009

Altadena Historical Society From Our Files

Altadena People

Paul F. Johnson (1874-1946) expert on ventilation “made a name for himself in the realm of *temperature regulation*, the Johnson system being one of the best known in the country, and the company has offices in nearly every large city in the world.” (Pasadena Star News, November 14, 1917).

Johnson’s father “invented thermostat heat control but his son invented perfections of it, including important adjustments.” Johnson participated in early experiments in radio. “He owned the first wireless [radio] station west of the Atlantic Coast ... and later owned and operated a small station, KGO, in Altadena.” (Pasadena Star News, March 21, 1946)



SAGEMONT
Beautiful residence of Paul F. Johnson.

Photo above from pamphlet - *Altadena the Beautiful*, published by the Altadena Chamber of Commerce, 1926. Photo left from pamphlet *Altadena: Community of Poppies*, published by the Altadena Chamber of Commerce, no date.

Johnson set up KGO in 1922 and operated it from Sagemont, his Altadena home, located, according to a 1917 issue of the Pasadena Star News, “about as close to the Mount Lowe incline as it is possible to get.” The 12 room estate, now demolished, was situated on 14 acres near the south east corner of Maiden Lane and what is now Rubio Canyon Road. He built another house, still standing at the corner of Maiden Lane and Dolores Road, for his son Seymour Johnson, who subdivided the property sometime after 1934 (Los Angeles Times, May 19, 2002).

The elegant gates are all that remain along with giant trees that still shade the site of the historic “ranch,” now dotted with an array of mid-century homes.

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Above: Paul F. Johnson Home
2100 Maiden Lane

"Egon Martin," cruising
yacht of Paul F. Johnson