

Heritage Square Audio Tour: The Silva House

(Albrecht Frederick) Conrad Kirchhoff was a German immigrant who emigrated to the United States in 1875. His wife, Bertha, was also from Germany and emigrated in 1885. The Kirchhoff family owned a store called Family Liquor Dealer on Washington Street, and they purchased this section of land on Block 14 from Flora Rosson in 1898. This house, now known as the Silva House, was built in 1900. Conrad passed away in 1904, and his widow Bertha eventually sold the house to the Silva Family.

Alejandro and Maria Silva purchased the house in 1906 to use as a rental property. Alejandro was originally from Portugal, and emigrated to the United States in 1882, working on and off in San Francisco and Mexico before moving to the Arizona Territory in 1884. Maria was born in Hermosillo, Mexico and emigrated to the United States in 1874. The couple owned a ranch in Glendale called the Orange Ranch, where they grew citrus and raised horses and livestock. The couple also raised their nieces Marian and Frances.

Alejandro died in 1925, and Maria and the girls moved into the house themselves. Maria continued to run the ranch until her death in 1948. In the 1970's, Frances sold the home to the City of Phoenix, and it has since been restored.

The building is a good example of a bungalow with neoclassical elements. The columns are Corinthian style, and the triangular gable on the roofline is reminiscent of pediments on Greek and Roman temples. The deep and long porch is a hallmark of the bungalow style.