

**The Snell Arcade
405 Central Avenue
HPC #86-08 - Designated June 1986**



Built in 1928, the Snell Arcade is a fine example of Mediterranean Revival architecture and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982. The property is significant for its association with C. Perry Snell, who was instrumental in the development of St. Petersburg in the early part of the twentieth century and Richard Kiehnel, a noteworthy architect who is reputed to have inaugurated the Mediterranean Revival style in Florida.

C Perry Snell was an important early figure in the development of the community. Born in Kentucky in 1869, and working as a druggist, Snell would vacation to St. Petersburg, where he would continuously purchase property, eventually moving to the city full time in 1904. In 1905 he began his second profession – that of a real estate developer – and his list achievements in the field are indeed impressive. Generally, Snell developed most of the property east of Fourth Street and Fifth Avenue North to the northern limit of Snell Isle. In addition, he and his associates developed much of the land around Mirror Lake and Crescent Lake. Quickly establishing his properties as premier status residential areas, Snell gave them prestigious names such as Bayfront, North Shore and Granada Terrace. In 1925, amidst the boom period, he began Snell Isle – one of his most significant developments in St. Petersburg – an impressive series of homes in Spanish and Italian architectural style.

The Snell Arcade is also significant for its association with the Mediterranean Revival style and with Richard Kiehnel its architect through whose work on El Jardin (National Register, 1974) in Miami in 1917 Mediterranean Revival first emerged in Florida. Designing the mansion for a Pittsburgh steel tycoon, Kiehnel departed from the Mission style that had only recently made its appearance in Florida in Homestead's 1914 Public School and wrought an elaborate antiquity into the house using aging techniques to get the desired effect. Kiehnel would elevate Pinellas County's association with Mediterranean Revival through his designs of the Rolyat Hotel in Gulfport (now Stetson College of Law) and of course the Snell Arcade.

Significant exterior features reflective of the style on the Snell Arcade include polychromatic architectural terra cotta, the copper canopy which shades the first floor, and the use of Florida keystone as an exterior fabric. The terra-cotta skin begins at the second floor with a band of detailing that includes Italianate rounders with a foliated design on each side of the window sill. Windows on the south, east and north are paired with a twisted column pilaster and foliated capital between. Below the window sill at the third floor, there is a bas-relief detail continued on all three sides of the building interrupted only by the thickened wall of the tower. This same detail is repeated on the copper canopy fascia. On each side of the south Arcade entry are terra-cotta pilasters that further reinforce and celebrate the entry. All this is topped off with an ornately designed parapet in blues and yellows and finials in blue and yellow.