

Palm Beach homes for sale: Renovated condo with wraparound balcony captures sea views

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An extensive update was completed in 2019 at No. 602S in Enclave, 3170 S. Ocean Blvd. in Palm Beach.

Christine Davis

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It was science that brought the late Gilbert and Karen Levin to Palm Beach years ago, their son Henry recalls.

Gilbert Levin was an engineer who founded a company named Biospherics Inc. and had worked with NASA as a chief investigator on the 1976 Viking lander mission to Mars — specifically pioneering an experiment known as “Labeled Release” to collect and analyze soil samples on the planet.

“Generoso Pope, owner of the National Enquirer, invited him and a couple of chief NASA scientists to Palm Beach (to discuss) a (proposed) conference. My parents were living in Chevy Chase, Maryland, at that time,” says their son, Henry Levin.

The experiment overseen by Levin was among several carried out by the Viking lander in 1976 to measure whether Mars could support life. Levin’s experiment employed a 9-foot arm to scoop up, box and treat Martian soil. After analysis, Levin concluded that Mars could support some form of life.

Levin and the other scientists decided not to go forward with the conference. But the Levins’ visit to the Palm Beach area impacted the couple.

“They loved Palm Beach, and from 1975, they came to the island regularly,” their son says.

The Levins bought their apartment — No. 602S at the Enclave, 3170 S Ocean Blvd. — in June 2002. An extensive renovation was completed a couple of years ago.

It was the third condo they owned during their years in Palm Beach, Henry says, noting that his father died at 97 in July, and his mother in December 2019, just shy of her 100th birthday.

And now the time has come for the Levins’ children to sell their parents’ three-bedroom, three-bath condo, with 3,577 square feet of living space inside and out. Listed with Douglas Elliman agent Joan Wenzel and co-listing agent Pamela Gottfried, the unit is priced at \$3.25 million. The furnishings, excluding the art, are available through separate negotiations. The unit will be sold with garage parking for two cars.

While shopping for their condo, Gilbert Levin’s “must-have” list included it being oceanfront, Henry Levin says, as his father had an affinity for the ocean, the result of serving in the Merchant Marines during World War II.

The condo’s position on a prime southeast corner fit the beachfront prerequisite.

His parents also wanted three bedrooms to host their children and grandchildren. And when Karen saw the red-marble floors in the condo, “she fell in love,” her son recalls. One wonders if perhaps that attraction was influenced by her husband’s work with Mars, the red planet.

On the market:Modern-style house that caused stir during its review lists at \$12.5 million in Palm Beach

Married for 67 years, his parents had a romantic relationship, says Levin, and even though they were in their 90s, Gilbert decided to renovate their condo in 2019.

“Mom was in decline, and my dad wanted something nice for her.”

Gilbert redid everything except those red-marble floors, because they were important to his wife, their son says.

Gilbert worked with Maryland-based Jeanette Filderman, an interior designer who had overseen projects at their other homes. Crews moved walls, renovated the bathrooms, and opened up and expanded the kitchen.

“All the blinds are operated by remote control, and my dad was always interested in recessed lighting, and so the condo has an unbelievable number of recessed lights. And Jeanette is really creative. She incorporated (lighting) motion detectors, so there are lights that turn on (automatically) under the counter in the bathrooms.

“Her custom painter, who we flew down, painted the entry ceiling and walls, where there is also custom cabinetry and a wet bar.”

The entry foyer leads to a center hallway that ends in an octagonal hub — an area the Levins used as a game room. This space opens to a great room, which incorporates the living and dining areas. Sliding glass doors in the great room open to a wraparound ocean-view balcony, which also captures vistas of the Intracoastal Waterway.

To the east, from the center hallway, a doorway leads to the primary bedroom suite as well as the laundry room. The primary bathroom, finished in glass tile, features a large walk-in shower with multiple shower heads. The floor and counters are stone.

From access points to the west are two guest-bedroom suites. All the bedrooms open to the balcony.

The hall has another entry that opens to the kitchen. Enlarged when the doorway to the game room was removed, the kitchen has a pass-through that accommodates service to the great room.

The Levins' condo is in the southernmost of the two 36-unit buildings at Enclave, which is just south of the bridge to Lake Worth Beach. The development offers private access to the shore.

Amenities include a 24-hour-staffed gatehouse, door staff, on-site management, a fitness center, a club room and two Har-Tru tennis courts. The recently revamped pool and spa area was designed by Mario Nievera.

The pet-friendly building also features a two-bedroom guest apartment that residents can reserve for their guests.

Henry Levin says his father loved Palm Beach's dining scene and its proximity to the Kravis Center for the Performing Arts and the Palm Beach Yacht Club & Marina.

“He was a self-made man who grew up during the (Great) Depression, whose father couldn’t afford a candy bar. He got himself into John Hopkins University and got the money to pay the tuition,” his son recalls.

One other thing appealed to him life in Palm Beach.

“He loved the grandeur of the mansions as he and my mother drove up the coast.”