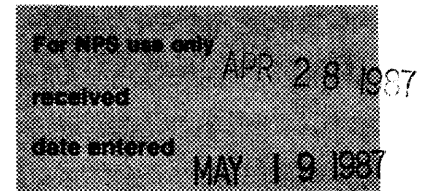


**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 8

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10. Washington Irving Branch Library
1802 S. Arlington Avenue

Significance:

The Washington Irving Branch Library is significant both for its architecture and its history. The formal dedication on January 10, 1927, was attended by 300 people, including community leaders and the Mount Vernon Junior High School Band. Architect David Allison spoke on the development of architectural style, its influence on our lives, and aesthetic pleasure. Althea Warren, then assistant librarian of the Los Angeles Public Library, spoke of the large family of branch libraries which reach from San Fernando Valley to San Pedro.

The branch had its beginning in 1922 with the West Washington Improvement Association. This organization lobbied the City to establish a branch in the West Washington area and in late 1922 a lot was purchased at Arlington and 18th Street. The firm of Allison and Allison was commissioned to design the building, which cost \$37,000 plus interior furnishings. The name of the library was suggested by Guy Bowerman, an association member, and honors the 19th century American writer. This name was adopted by the Improvement Association and was, in turn, accepted by the library board.

The firm which designed this building, Allison and Allison, was one of the most prominent in Southern California during the first decades of the 20th century. They specialized in the design of churches, schools, and various types of public buildings. Some of their notable works include Santa Maria High School, First Congregational Church of Los Angeles, Edison Building (now One Bunker Hill), Pacific Palisades Elementary School, Friday Morning Supper Club, and many of the original buildings on the UCLA campus.

The building is an outstanding example of public architecture. Its brick and stucco exterior are reminiscent of Lombardy and Tuscany. Its leaded glass windows are unique. The bay window on the east is a distinctive element in the building's design. The library is one of the few buildings of landmark stature in this neighborhood. It was built on a residential scale on the edge of the City to blend with the surrounding Craftsman neighborhood. It has responded to each ethnic group as it became prominent in this area. From the original Irish and Italian residents to Black residents and now a growing Hispanic community, the library has provided a diversity of services. It is part of a thematic grouping of City libraries which has been nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

BRANCH LIBRARIES, LOS ANGELES, CA
#10 Washington Irving Branch, 1803 S.
Arlington Ave.
1 inch=60 feet

