

RECEIVED  
APR 15 1985  
OHP

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received DEC 23 1985

date entered JAN 23 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name** \*(NOTE: Common name is preferred for this nomination)

historic Auditorium Theater/ Santa Ana Bath House and Athletic Club

and/or common Yost Theater/ Ritz Hotel \*

**2. Location**

street & number 301- 307 N. Spurgeon St.

N/A not for publication

city, town Santa Ana

N/A vicinity of

state California

code 06

county Orange

code 059

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> In process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name CM- Ritz, a California partnership (see continuation sheet for additional owners)

street & number 313 N. Birch St.

city, town Santa Ana

N/A vicinity of

state CA 92701

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Orange County Recorder's Office

street & number 630 N. Broadway

city, town Santa Ana

state CA 92701

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Santa Ana Historic Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date June 1980  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records California Office of Historic Preservation

Sacramento

(P. O. Box 2390

CA

95811

city, town

state

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>      N/A      </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Yost Theater and Ritz Hotel buildings were constructed in 1913 on two independent legal lots. These two strongly classical buildings were compositionally one large two story corner building located immediately southeast of the Downtown Santa Ana National Register Historic District. The buildings were of mixed brick and poured in place concrete construction, with the south and west facades of the Ritz building being concrete. These two story structures were designed by noted local architect Fred Eley in a classical pedimented format popular in the pre- WWI progressive era. The building was altered in 1919 with the addition of a flyloft and a larger stage on the rear of the theater half of the building. The existing theater marquee is a c.1935 design. The building has maintained its integrity over time with minor modifications to area below the theater marquee. The southerly Ritz building is unaltered on the exterior from its 1913 design.

The Spurgeon St and 3rd St. elevations are excellent examples of commercial Classical Revival architecture. The two fronts show a pedimented cornice line centered over each entryway atop four simple pilasters. Each building front is identical in design however the theater front is partially obscured by the later theater marquee. The upper story fenestration is formed by three sets of double hung windows. Each set contains three windows and each building has three sets. The windows in the theater are covered by a decorative metal grill of a non-permanent nature. The Ritz retains its original transom glass inserts and typical commercial storefronts from the period of significance.

The theater building was altered in 1919, c 1935, and with the addition of seismic reinforcement on the exterior north and rear elevations. The seismic reinforcement was accomplished in 1983. The 1919 alteration was the addition of 30 ft. of stage and flyloft above. The mid 1930's alteration was the theater marquee and box office on the Spurgeon St. elevation. The earlier alterations appear to be within the period of significance of the theater building and seismic reinforcement is designed to be compatible with moderne theater marquee.

The interior of the theater is currently and was historically simple and without elaborate embellishment. The stage area shows a decorative embellishment on its border that is significant. The Ritz interior was converted from a gym and pool building to a residential hotel in the 1920's. The interior wood work and design is plain, simple and in a decayed condition due to years of rooming house use. The major significance of the buildings lie in the exterior design. The interior basement of the hotel building is the original pool, however it has been out of use since the early 1920's and is in a degraded condition.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1912-1913

**Builder/Architect** T.H. Fowler Builder  
Fred Eley Architect

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The building constructed for the Auditorium Theater and the Santa Ana Athletic Club is significant for its architectural style and its use as Santa Ana's earliest extant theater building. The building contains the county's oldest continuous theater business predating the West End and West Coast Theaters by two and ten years respectively. The building was constructed in a prominent classical revival commercial style that is unrepresented by historically intact examples in downtown Santa Ana.

This symmetrical, double pedimented architectural composition was designed by noted architect Fred Eley, whose civic and cultural buildings were evidenced by the classical United Presbyterian Church, the Spanish Revival YMCA building, and Spanish influenced Ebell Clubhouse, all of Santa Ana.

The commercial Classical Revival style is evidenced by one other extant structure, the Orange County Savings and Trust building, which was compromised in 1949 by radical removal of the lower half of the structure. The Yost/Ritz building as it is commonly known remains intact with only minor cosmetic and seismic changes. A c. 1935 Moderne-styled marquee was added to the Theater half of the building.

The Yost/Ritz building is significant for its entertainment use in Orange County. The Auditorium theater opened in 1913 and soon thereafter became the Clunes theater. In 1919 Ed Yost purchased the building and a new larger stage and flyloft. The Yost Theater was known county wide for its first run films, Broadway productions and top acts from the Pantages and Orpheum circuits. Yost was a prominent Santa Ana business man and owned the West End Theater.

In 1952, the Yost began showing Spanish language movies and occasional live performances. The theater was the first theater to show Spanish language movies in Orange County and has continued in that use for 33 years.

The Santa Ana Athletic Club and Bath House opened in 1913 with a pool on the first floor and a gymnasium upstairs. The venture was backed and organized by Elton E. Remsberg the brother-in-law of President Warren G. Harding. Remsberg, a local machinery manufacturer, was joined by C.D. Ball, the president of the Orange County Title Company, Director of the First National Bank and two-term state assemblyman.

The venture was intended to provide a first rate athletic and swimming facility but was unsuccessful after the untimely death of a local swimmer. The club closed in 1919 and was converted to hotel and retail use in the 1920's and early 1930's. The gymnasium area was converted to hotel rooms

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Santa Ana Daily Evening Blade Newspaper 4/25/13, 6/16/13, 7/11/13, 9/20/13, 10/3/13, 11/1/13, 8/25/21, 2/22/22, 3/24/22 1/31/24.  
 The Santa Ana Register Newspaper 8/1/81  
 The Los Angeles Times Newspaper 6/30/68, 5/1/83

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .35 acres

Quadrangle name Tustin

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A 

1	1	4	1	9	3	0	3	7	3	4	2	8	0
Zone			Easting				Northing						

B 

Zone			Easting				Northing					

C 

Zone			Easting				Northing					

D 

Zone			Easting				Northing					

E 

Zone			Easting				Northing					

F 

Zone			Easting				Northing					

G 

Zone			Easting				Northing					

H 

Zone			Easting				Northing					

**Verbal boundary description and justification** Lots 1 and 2 of Blee's Addition to the town of Santa Ana, the northerly 61.17 feet of lot 3, and the westerly 6 feet of the southerly 58 ft. of lot 3, block 3. Justification: The building occupies the entire area of the described legal parcels.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Harold M. Thomas

organization Heritage Orange County Inc. date Oct. 1, 1984

street & number 106 W. 4th St. Suite 505 telephone 714-835-7287

city or town Santa Ana state CA 92701

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Kathryn Thattien

title \_\_\_\_\_ date 12/11/85

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

[Signature]  
 Keeper of the National Register

Registered in the  
 National Register

date 1-23-86

Attest:

C I I

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
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Continuation sheet

Item number 4

Page 1

Owners of Property

Auditorium Theater 307 N. Spurgeon St.

Al and Lewis Olivos  
2224 Greenleaf  
Santa Ana CA 92706

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

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Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 1

Significance continued-

and the pool was planked over in the 1920's.

The structure, legally subdivided into two halves, forms a single harmonious unit which is located immediately southeast of the Downtown Santa Ana Historic District. The Yost Theater and the Ritz hotel building form an important element of the eastern portion of the downtown commercial core. The intact architectural design and integrity of use renders the building unique among the remaining downtown commercial buildings.

YOST THEATER/RITZ HOTEL  
 301-307 N. Spurgeon St.  
 Santa Ana, Orange County, CA

398-26



MARCH 1948

RE-SUB. BLK. 7 T. OF S.A.  
 TOWN OF SANTA ANA  
 BLEE'S ADD.

M.M. 5-46  
 L.A. 1-8  
 L.A. 1-61

04

NOTE-ASSESSOR'S BLOCK 8  
 PARCEL NUMBERS  
 SHOWN IN CIRCLES

ASSESSOR'S MAP  
 BOOK 9 PAGE 03  
 COUNTY OF ORANGE

