

56-1891

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Pomona Court and Apartments

Other names/site number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

Street & number: 314-320 North Pomona Avenue and 200-204 East Whiting Avenue

City or town: Fullerton State: CA County: Orange

Not For Publication:  N/A

Vicinity:  N/A

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,


I hereby certify that this x nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

    national          statewide        x   local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

  x   A          B        x   C          D

 _____ State Historic Preservation Officer	11/2/17
Signature of certifying official/Title: _____ Date	
<u>California State Office of Historic Preservation</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
_____ Signature of commenting official:	_____ Date
Title : _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

*Law Edson H. Beall* 12.14.17  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Craftsman

Spanish Colonial Revival

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: stucco, concrete, wood, terra-cotta tile, wrought iron

Foundation: concrete footings

Walls: stucco, plaster, glass

Roof: asphalt, terra-cotta tile

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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#### Summary Paragraph

Excellent representative examples of 1920s low-density multi-family housing construction in Fullerton, California, the Pomona Court and Apartments are situated on the north and south sides of the same flat 130- by 150-foot lot in the central core of the city. Constructed in 1922, the Pomona Court is the oldest extant bungalow court in the city, and the only Craftsman-style court in Fullerton. An extremely attractive example, the bungalow court is composed of two identical rows of four attached one-story bungalows and a rear two-story duplex arranged around a central courtyard. A fully articulated example of Craftsman design and construction – and one of the best examples of the U-shaped bungalow court form in Fullerton – the Pomona Court has an air of refinement and graciousness. The eight one-bedroom, one-bathroom attached bungalows are essentially identical in their exterior appearance, with the rear two-story duplex mirroring the Craftsman-era features of the bungalows, with similarly styled porches, columns, roofs, doors, and windows. Constructed in 1923, the adjacent two-story Spanish Colonial Revival Pomona Apartments consists of two units on each floor. Each of the two-bedroom, one-bathroom apartments runs the width of the building and is a mirror image of the other. The boxlike fourplex was designed to appear like a private residence in size and scale, and from the street, the Pomona Apartments look very much like a two-story home with a central front entrance, and a second-story balcony. To amplify interior space, each apartment is provided with either a private patio or balcony. The two apartments on North Pomona Avenue, both upper and lower, feature well-preserved Batchelder-tiled fireplaces. Automobile access is relegated to the perimeters of the court and apartment house with an alleyway and driveway providing access to garage units aligned along the east (rear) end of the lot.



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With the exception of minor changes, the Pomona Court and Apartments retain a high degree of historic integrity. The interiors retain their original layouts and details integral to the structures and retain character-defining finishes. The two housing complexes have changed very little since their completion and retain a high degree of integrity of location, setting, material, workmanship, feeling, and association. The district consists of five buildings: an apartment building, two separate rows of attached bungalows, a duplex, and a rear parking structure with twelve separate stalls.

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**Location/Setting**

Situated together on one parcel, the Pomona Court and Apartments are located in historic downtown Fullerton and are part of the central core laid out by town founders Edward Russell (1857-1915) and George Henry Amerige (1855-1947) in 1887. At the time of construction, the Pomona Court, like all other bungalow courts in the city, was nestled in a residential area, which also included three churches and a library. Over the years, a number of nearby residences, constructed between 1910 and 1930, were converted to commercial, cultural, or educational uses. The bungalow court and apartment house sit amongst an impressive collection of historic buildings, a number of which are now listed on the National Register of Historic Places: the Sullivanesque Chapman Building (100 East Wilshire Avenue); the Gothic Revival First Methodist Episcopal Church (117 North Pomona Avenue); the Mission Revival John Hetebrink House (315 East Chapman Avenue); and the Spanish Colonial Revival Dewella Apartments (234-236 East Wilshire Avenue). Also adjacent on North Pomona Avenue are a number of buildings that have been designated Significant Properties or Local Landmarks, including the Nenno House (321 North Pomona Avenue); Rutabagorz Restaurant (211 North Pomona Avenue); and the Fullerton Public Library (301 North Pomona Avenue), now the Fullerton Museum Center.

**Pomona Court and Apartments**

**Pomona Court - Exterior**

Facing west, the ten unit bungalow court at 314 North Pomona Avenue sits on the south side of a flat 130-by 150-foot lot. A cement walkway on the north side of the bungalow court separates it from the adjacent apartment house; a similar walkway and concrete wall on the south side sets the court apart from a neighboring Craftsman bungalow (310 North Pomona Avenue, ca. 1918), converted into a dental clinic. The bungalow court is painted a light green with sage green trim and rust accents.

Constructed in 1922, the Pomona Court is the oldest extant bungalow court in Fullerton and one of the best examples of the U-shaped bungalow court form. An extremely attractive example of a bungalow court, it is the only Craftsman-style court in the city, and it is a particularly late version of the type that flourished prior to World War I. The court is unified by material, scale, setback, design, and landscape setting, which combine to create a sense of refinement and graciousness.

The Pomona Court is composed of two identical rows of four attached one-story bungalows and a rear two-story duplex arranged around a central courtyard. The south bungalow units are numbered one through four; the north side, seven through ten; and the duplex, five and six. A central cement walkway leads to the rear two-story duplex, which serves as the terminus, resulting in a U-shaped configuration and creating a sense of enclosure. The walkway connects to each bungalow entrance and runs around each side of the rear two-story duplex, exiting at the rear alley and an eight-stall parking garage. The walkway defines planter beds along the primary facades of the bungalows and duplex. The court is landscaped with a variety of shrubbery and flowering plants – boxwood, roses, bougainvillea, Boston ferns, spider plants, etc. Entrance to the court commences at the sidewalk, with passage through a semi-detached pergola of exposed beams supported by ten Doric-style unfluted columns. The pergola, which serves as a screen between the street and the residences, unifies the overall visual impression of the housing complex.

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The eight attached bungalows are essentially identical in their exterior appearance. Of wood-frame construction, individual units consist of simple stucco boxes that feature defined porches, low-pitched gable roofs with wide exposed roof eaves, tapered wood columns supported by concrete bases – all typical features of Craftsman bungalow architecture. Accessed by two concrete steps, the individual raised porches enhance the appeal and accessibility of the courtyard by integrating exterior and interior spaces. Entrance into each bungalow is through wood-frame, clear ten-light doors and wooden screen doors. Two matching double-hung windows are positioned on each side of the doorways. The existing doors and casement and double-hung windows on all sides of the structure retain the original wood frames and plaster sills. Each of the eight bungalow's primary facades overlooks the courtyard.

The rear two-story duplex mirrors the Craftsman-era features of the bungalows, with similarly styled porches, columns, roofs, doors, sills and windows.

**Pomona Court – Interiors**

The eight one-bedroom, one-bathroom bungalows (550-square-feet) are identical in layout. Each is an "efficiency" unit consisting of a living/dining room, kitchen, bedroom, and bathroom. The living spaces orient toward the courtyard, while services, such as the kitchen and bathroom, line the rear and sides of the buildings. Residents enter into the living room with an alcove at the rear. A small hallway to the left of the living room fans out to a kitchen, bathroom, and bedroom, which includes a walk-in closet with built-in shelves and a wooden chest of drawers. French doors in the living room also lead to the bedroom. Bungalows four, five, seven, eight, nine, and ten have exit doors off service porches that lead to enclosed patios added in 1987. The rear wood and clear ten-light doors match the front doors. Constructed before air-conditioning, the bungalows are well lit by the careful positioning of double-hung and casement windows which allow breezes to move throughout the rooms.

Slightly larger than the bungalows, the two duplex units at the rear of the court (750-square-feet) – also one-bedroom, one-bathroom – have a similar interior layout. Occupants enter into a small sitting room containing a small closet, which leads into a living room, which, in turn, moves into the kitchen, bathroom, breakfast nook, and service porch. The service porch is now used to house a refrigerator. A door off the living room provides access to a small storage closet. Wooden stairs (15 steps) off the kitchen lead up to the second story bedroom and a walk-in closet with a built-in chest of drawers. Casement windows line the walls of the bedroom.

The interiors of all ten units retain a number of historic elements: fir wood floors, plastered walls and ceilings, built-in cabinetry in the kitchens and bathrooms, claw-foot bathtubs, kitchen tile countertops and back splash, farmhouse sinks, floor tiles, and original window and door hardware. Most of the changes to the interiors are concentrated in bungalows two, three, and four.

**Pomona Court – Alterations**

Over the last 94 years, there have been only minor modifications to the exterior and character-defining features of the interiors. The property has upgraded building systems throughout, including mechanical, electrical, and plumbing, in order to meet current code requirements. In 1987, when the current owner purchased the property, tenants were parking on unauthorized spots on the property, including a vacant strip of land between the bungalow court and apartments. To stop that practice, enclosed patios were added off the rear exits of bungalow court units four, five, seven, eight, nine, and ten, and a narrow cement walkway was installed between the two housing complexes. Rear doors were removed from units that had no exterior outdoor patios added. In a few of the bungalows, primarily units two, three, and four, minor changes were made to some of the interiors: wood floors have been replaced, along with claw-foot bathtubs, lighting fixtures, and ceramic floor tiles, and the French doors leading into the bedrooms have been removed to provide more wall space. The minor changes to the exterior and interiors are reversible and do not compromise the exceptionally high degree of integrity of the bungalow court. The original Craftsman-styled detailing is unobscured, and the court plan is still intact. Overall, the Pomona Court is in

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good condition. In April 2017, the owner made significant improvements to the property, including new exterior painting, new roofs, and the restoration of the wood pergola.

**Pomona Apartments – Exterior**

Constructed in 1923, the Pomona Apartments sit on the north side of the 130- by 150-foot lot, on the immediate southeast corner of Pomona and Whiting Avenues. The apartment unit that faces Pomona Avenue has the address 320 North Pomona Avenue; the three units with entrances facing Whiting Avenue (the north side) are listed as 200, 202, and 204 East Whiting Avenue. A narrow cement walkway on the south side of the building separates it from the adjacent bungalow court and leads to a four-stall rear garage and laundry room. The building is painted light green with sage green trim, matching the color scheme of the bungalow court. A public sidewalk and parkway along the street frontages of the property are graced with mature magnolia and bronze loquat trees (later city additions). Shallow planter beds containing various shrubs and plants are positioned in front (the west elevation) of the apartment house.

The Pomona Apartments were built at a time when Fullerton residents greatly preferred single-family homes over multi-family dwellings. Unlike nearby cities, such as Anaheim and Santa Ana, which had dozens of apartments, often with multiple units, Fullerton only had a handful of apartment buildings constructed before World War II. The boxlike structures, usually with four to eight units, were designed to look like houses, appearing very much like a private residence in size and scale. For this reason, the Pomona Apartments from the street look like a two-story home with a central front entrance, and a second-story balcony.

Each floor features two, 1,200-square-foot apartments. Each runs the width of the building and is a mirror image of the other. Of wood-frame and stucco construction, the apartment house retains nearly all of its original features characteristic of the Spanish Colonial Revival style. Although the Spanish Colonial Revival architectural elements are apparent, it is a somewhat simplified version of the style. Historic exterior features include a low pitched, stepped pantile roof, smooth stucco walls, plaster window sills, arched entryways, and the use of decorative iron work on balcony railings, air vent grilles, and a gate. A narrow, square-shaped chimney on the northeast corner of the building is topped with red barrel tile, as is a wood shed roof on the north side covering the two upstairs entrances.

The two tenants on the ground floor enter their apartment through 15-light wooden-frame doors on the west and north sides of the building. The two tenants on the upper level enter through matching doors on the north side, with separate stairs leading to each apartment. The four separate entrances provide a sense of privacy in what is essentially communal space. To amplify interior space, each of the apartments has a separate private outdoor space. The ground floor units have patios; the upstairs units have individual balconies. The balconies feature ogee-shaped arches and wrought-iron railings.

Fenestration consists of wood multi-light casement and double-hung windows which occupy original openings with original wood surrounds. The apartment on the west (front) façade features a set picture window with five-light double-hung windows positioned on each side. All of the windows are double-hung, with the exception of bathroom and kitchen casement windows.

As a cost-saving measure, fewer architectural details were provided on the south side – the least visible – of the structure. Unlike the multi-light windows on the other sides of the fourplex, all the windows are single pane. Similarly, the two exterior doors on the ground floor level are made of plain, solid wood, and the stoops are made of wood, not concrete.

A driveway at the rear of the property provides access to a four-stall parking garage. A small laundry room, added in 1987, is attached to the garage. Occupants of both the bungalow court and apartment house have use of the laundry room, but the apartments, unlike the bungalows, also have washer and dryer hook-ups.

**Pomona Apartments – Interiors**

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Each two-bedroom, one-bathroom apartment is identical in layout and design. The only exception is that the lower and upper apartments facing Pomona Avenue feature Batchelder-tiled fireplaces in the living rooms. The fireplaces, mantles, and hearths are tiled with glazed cinnamon-colored square tile using Batchelder Design 262.<sup>1</sup> Tile panels (18 inches x 6 inches) centered above the fireboxes feature two facing peacocks surrounded by vines (Tile No. 589), common Ernest Batchelder motifs.<sup>2</sup>

Entrance through the front door of each unit leads directly into the living room, which, in turn, opens into a dining room on the right, followed by a compact kitchen with a breakfast nook and service porch. The kitchen cabinets, which retain original hardware, are painted wood. The counters, which are original, are tiled. A small hallway off the living room, with a built-in linen cabinet, leads to separate bedrooms on both sides. A bathroom is positioned between the two bedrooms, each of which includes a small closet. Every room in the apartment has at least one window providing natural light. The walls and ceilings are painted plaster; the oak wood floors are uncarpeted. Historic interior features include oak hardwood flooring; plaster walls and ceilings; high wood baseboards and crown molding; wood window and door surrounds; single-panel wood doors with original hardware; wooden built-ins and cabinetry; and original tile kitchen countertops and back splash and farmhouse sinks.

**Pomona Apartments - Alterations**

Nearly all of the apartment house's exterior details, including doors, windows, and trim have been retained. The only change, made in 1987, was the removal of stairs on the south side of the structure, along with two plain wooden doors on the upper level which provided delivery access for blocks of ice. The two bottom doors remain, with one covered by an aluminum screen door, a later addition. The interiors retain their original layouts and details integral to the structure, and all retain character-defining features. Some of the ceiling lights have been replaced by fans; hardware has been painted; and the breakfast nooks, which had built-in seating and a table, have been removed and replaced with portable small tables and chairs. The minor changes are reversible and do not compromise the exceptionally high degree of integrity of the apartment house. Overall, the Pomona Apartments are in good condition. In April 2017, the owner made cosmetic improvements to the building, including new paint to the exterior to match that of the Pomona Court.

**Onsite Parking**

When the Pomona Court and Apartments opened, parking was relegated to the rear (east) side of the property. Tenants in the bungalow court accessed an eight-stall garage from a rear alleyway; occupants of the apartment building used a driveway at the back of the lot to enter an attached four-stall garage. The incorporation of the automobile into a multi-family housing complex was a new departure in Fullerton. The positioning of the garage units at the rear of the property recognized the growing importance of the automobile in Fullerton, but also de-emphasized it by placing it out of sight. Although only twelve of the fourteen units were provided with a garage, the large number of stalls indicated that most of the tenants had automobiles. In 1987, the current owner stuccoed the original board and batten parking garages and added wooden doors to this contributing structure. Tenants in bungalow court units one and ten were also provided with onsite parking spots to ensure that each occupant had one parking space. Additional street parking, some limited to two hours, is also available, including angled parking in front of the property.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

SOCIAL HISTORY

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1922 - 1924

**Significant Dates**

1922

1923

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

n/a

**Architect/Builder**

Benchley, Frank K.

Coon, Herbert D.

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

**Summary Paragraph**

The Pomona Court and Apartments are significant under Criterion A, at the local level, for their association with the Fullerton Improvement Company (1904-1945), a real estate and building firm devoted to the construction of buildings that enhanced the financial, social, and cultural networks of Fullerton. The Fullerton Improvement Company was one of the most important building companies in the city's early history, taking on projects that other businessmen and government officials were unwilling or financially unable to tackle. The bungalow court and apartment reflect the alternative efforts of the company to meet housing demands during the prolonged post-World War I slowdown in house construction. The housing units are the most historically intact examples of buildings constructed by the firm. In addition, the Pomona Court and Apartments are significant locally under Criterion C in the area of architecture as notably well-preserved exemplary examples of a bungalow court and apartment house constructed in the 1920s. The buildings are an outstanding example in the body of work of master architect Frank K. Benchley, and mark the only time he prepared plans for a bungalow court and fourplex. Frank K. Benchley is the most significant local architect in Fullerton history. In the 1920s, he was the city's only licensed architect and one of the few in Orange County. He designed some of the most striking and impressive buildings in Fullerton and Orange County, a number of which are still recognizable landmarks to residents. Four of Benchley's buildings – three in Fullerton and one in Portland, Oregon – are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Four of Benchley's other projects, including the Pomona Court and Apartments, are designated Fullerton Local Landmarks. The period of significance, 1922 to 1924, spans the years of construction of the Court and Apartments and the death of Edward K. Benchley, one of the partners of the Fullerton Improvement Company, who lived at the property during the last two years of his life.



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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

**Criterion A: Role of the Fullerton Improvement Company in the area of Community Planning and Development**

On April 10, 1919, Edward K. Benchley, president of the Fullerton Improvement Company, announced in the *Fullerton News Tribune* that the realty company would be constructing an apartment house and bungalow court on the southeast corner of Whiting and Pomona Avenues.<sup>3</sup> Although the reverse would take place, the apartment house was to be constructed first, with the bungalow court to quickly follow on the immediate corner. Fullerton's other bungalow courts were situated on single rectangular lots, and the Pomona Court and Apartments marked the only time that an apartment house and bungalow court were constructed on the same parcel. (The parcel is and always has been under single ownership.) Multi-family rental units were rare in Fullerton, and the uniqueness of the project merited a significant amount of coverage in local newspapers. The development was hailed as an example of good, affordable housing design and construction, "modern in every particular," and, when completed, the units were expected to be the "most complete and attractive to be found anywhere in southern California."<sup>4</sup>

Expected to cost \$40,000, the project entailed purchasing lots from Edith E. Campbell and Guy C. and Ethel Walton, the relocation of three dwellings, land clearance, and the construction of the apartments and bungalow court. The board of directors of the Fullerton Improvement Company made trips to Riverside, Long Beach, and other cities "with the view of getting ideas regarding the very latest styles of modern bungalows."<sup>5</sup> Edward K. Benchley's youngest son, Frank K. Benchley, who lived directly opposite the site, was selected to design the bungalow court and apartment house, one of a number of projects he would complete for the Fullerton Improvement Company from 1917 to 1924.<sup>6</sup>

When the housing project was announced in 1919, Fullerton's population had doubled in three years to 6,000, and residents had become concerned with "indiscriminate building" and a lack of "architectural harmony" within the city.<sup>7</sup> In early 1919, the Board of Trustees of Fullerton Union High School hired notable architect Carleton Monroe Winslow (1876-1946) to design classrooms for the campus. A leading proponent of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture, Winslow had shot to fame as the chief architect of the 1915 San Diego Panama-California Exposition.<sup>8</sup> At the request of the City Planning Committee of the highly influential Fullerton Board of Trade (later the Fullerton Chamber of Commerce), Winslow gave a series of talks, with color slides, espousing the Spanish Colonial Revival style of architecture. With much fanfare from the *Fullerton News*, the *Orange County Daily Tribune*, and the *Los Angeles Times*, the Fullerton Board of Trade established, on July 19, 1919, Spanish Colonial Revival as the "uniform style for all public buildings" within the city, making Fullerton the first city in California to establish an architectural policy.<sup>9</sup> At the July 19, 1919 meeting, held in the Biology Building of Fullerton Union High School, various groups pledged that all future buildings would be designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style, with Edward K. Benchley promising that the Fullerton Improvement Company's new apartment house would be designed in the same style.<sup>10</sup> Architect Frank K. Benchley was then instructed to design the two-story structure in the new Spanish Colonial Revival style. Benchley, however, who had been constructing Craftsman bungalows around town (e.g., 128 West Brookdale Place, 134 West Malvern Avenue, etc.), made a different decision in the design the Pomona Court, using the Craftsman style reminiscent of architectural designs current around 1914/15 in Fullerton.

The Fullerton Improvement Company concentrated solely on constructing much needed buildings around town. After World War I, Fullerton, like many cities in the nation, was suffering from a severe housing crisis, and the hope was that the new units would alleviate some of the pent-up demand for homes. It was estimated that the city's housing shortage resulted in an annual loss of 400 to 500 families to nearby cities.<sup>11</sup> For a number of reasons, the construction of the Pomona Court and Apartments would be delayed for three years. At the time of the project's announcement, architect Frank K. Benchley – attempting to restart his career after military service – was already working on a number of projects. Edward K. Benchley was under pressure to build more office space, and the Southern California Edison Company, which was threatening to move and establish a district office in Anaheim, wanted larger quarters as well.<sup>12</sup> The Fullerton Improvement Company lacked the funds to complete multiple projects at the same time, and Edward K. Benchley made the decision to delay the housing units in favor of more

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office space, instructing his son to develop plans for a two-story brick building on North Spadra Road (now Harbor Boulevard), which was expected to provide space for sixteen offices.<sup>13</sup>

In August 1919, the *Fullerton News* began publishing a series of articles and editorials on the front page of the newspaper exhorting residents to do something about the housing shortage: “The Three Great Needs of Fullerton are Houses, Houses, Houses”; “Eighty Men Last Night Talked City Growth but Forgot Houses”; “Tie the Ford Outside and Rent the Garage to a Good Family,” etc.<sup>14</sup> On September 10, 1919, at the monthly meeting of the Fullerton Board of Trade, attorney Emerson J. Marks stood up, telling fellow members that it was time “to put up or shut up” about the housing problem and to stop all boosterism unless more homes were constructed. Members in attendance immediately put forth \$10,500 to start subscriptions to a stock company that would fund the Fullerton Improvement Company’s housing projects on North Pomona Avenue. Notices and announcements went out, meetings were held, and \$21,500 was raised for the Pomona Court and Apartments.<sup>15</sup> Confident that the housing units would be built, Edward K. Benchley began clearing the land to make way for the new units. However, a number of subscribers balked at becoming landlords, and members of the newly formed Fullerton Home Builders voted to build single-family homes instead of rental units.<sup>16</sup> To raise needed money, the Fullerton Improvement Company then offered \$30,000 worth of its stock to attract new shareholders in June 1921.<sup>17</sup>

The Pomona Court was eventually constructed in 1922, opening in August, with rents starting at \$50 a month.<sup>18</sup> The Pomona Apartments were completed in 1923. The first occupant of the Pomona Apartments was Edward K. Benchley, who passed away at 320 North Pomona Avenue of pneumonia on July 31, 1924. In 1941, the bungalow court and apartments were sold to Karl E. Hollingsworth (745 North Euclid Avenue), a former secretary-manager of the Benchley Fruit Company, who held on to them until 1985.<sup>19</sup> The bungalow court and apartments appear to have had only four owners, a contributing factor in the property’s preservation.

Impressed with the new modern housing, the Fullerton Chamber of Commerce featured the court and apartment house in its promotional brochure, *Fullerton: Where, What and Why* (1927), mailed out across the nation.<sup>20</sup> In 1982, the Pomona Court was included in David Gebhard and Robert Winter’s classic *A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California*.<sup>21</sup> In 1988, the Pomona Court (as the Elm Wood Apartments) was the setting for the film *Purple People Eater*, starring Neil Patrick Harris, Shelley Winters, and Ned Beatty.<sup>22</sup>

**Criterion A: Community Planning and Development – Fullerton Improvement Company (1904-1945)**

On January 17, 1900, Placentia and Fullerton property owners met and formed an Improvement Club to enhance Placentia Avenue, the road connecting the two towns. Charles C. Chapman (1853-1944), who would become Fullerton’s first mayor in 1904, was elected president, and William McFadden (1842-1902), the second white settler to arrive in Placentia in 1870, and the first Superintendent of Schools in Orange County, served as secretary. Several thousands of dollars were spent “in macadamizing the road and in setting out plants and other ornamental and shade trees on each side of the avenue its full length of about three miles.”<sup>23</sup>

Chapman hoped that the Improvement Club would continue to address other community needs, but the organization was short-lived.<sup>24</sup> A strong supporter of the use of private funds for public good, Chapman formed the Fullerton Improvement Company as a replacement for the club. Incorporated on November 12, 1904, nine months after the city incorporated, the Fullerton Improvement Company would stay in business until June 4, 1945.<sup>25</sup> Chapman would remain the realty company’s one constant, serving on the board of directors until his death in April 1944.<sup>26</sup> Fullerton’s second mayor, Edward K. Benchley, would serve as a founding member, and in the early decades of the firm, the two men would alternately serve as president of the company. Both men would have a distinct and lasting impact on the community and also Orange County. Other Fullerton movers and shakers would later join the board of directors, including two more mayors: Richard S. Gregory (1876-1958)<sup>27</sup> and James R. Carhart (1876-1956).<sup>28</sup> All of the men who served on the board of directors were prominent citizens who were established and financially well-off, but they were also risk takers, dedicated “to making Fullerton a greater city.”<sup>29</sup>

While the Fullerton Improvement Company hoped to break even, the goal was never to make a profit. As Charles C. Chapman was to note in his autobiography: “My motive in doing all this was not so much seeking investments for I could have found others more profitable, but actually to help the city. The financial returns have not been generous. But I have the satisfaction of believing that the money and effort were not all wasted.”<sup>30</sup> Company

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officials were also sensitive to economic downturns and would adjust rents to assist merchants. In April 1925, when Fullerton was experiencing a slight economic decline, company officers reduced rents sixteen to twenty percent, noting that the firm recognized “that the welfare of a community depends directly upon the general prosperity of its citizens and regards as a very short-sighted policy that of the landlord who takes excessive toll of a merchant in times of depression.”<sup>31</sup>

The Fullerton Improvement Company would become one of the most important building companies in the city’s early history, tackling projects that other businessmen and government officials were unwilling or financially unable to tackle. The board of directors was aware that they were building a city, and the firm’s buildings helped to create a sense of local identity and belonging and encouraged strong social networks.

The company’s first project was the construction of the Farmers and Merchants Bank of Fullerton (122 North Harbor Blvd.) in 1905, which also included planned space for the Fullerton Post Office and the *Fullerton News*, a local newspaper founded by Charles C. Chapman in 1902. The bank building, designed and constructed by Los Angeles contractor Arthur S. Heineman, would serve as the headquarters and meeting place for the Fullerton Improvement Company for the next forty years.<sup>32</sup> In 1916, when Edward K. Benchley was president, the company increased its capital stock and embarked on a building spurt that would last until his death in 1924. During this significant period – the most prolific in the firm’s history – most of the building projects would be concentrated on Harbor Boulevard (then Spadra Road), the city’s major thoroughfare. Edward K. Benchley would decide what building would be constructed; his son, Frank K. Benchley, would furnish the architectural plans; and Charles C. Chapman would supply the “major amount of capital to carry them out.”<sup>33</sup> On occasion, businesses or organizations needing office or meeting space would approach Edward K. Benchley directly, but he also picked up building ideas at Fullerton Board of Trade meetings or just by general engagement in the financial, social, and economic activities of Fullerton.

During these early formative years, the city of Fullerton had no planning or development department, and the Fullerton Improvement Company filled the gap by providing a number of civic improvements. As needs presented themselves, the firm tried to provide buildings, offices, and meeting spaces that were desired or needed in the rapidly growing town. When Fullerton residents clamored for a formal moving picture theater to watch silent films, the Fullerton Improvement Company built the Rialto Theater (219 North Harbor Blvd.) in 1917.<sup>34</sup> A severe shortage of medical offices led to construction of the Fullerton Improvement Building (219½ North Harbor Blvd.), which provided medical facilities for dentists, physicians, and specialists. A growing desire for a downtown market led to the opening of the Fullerton Groceteria (221 North Harbor Blvd.), the city first self-service market. Lacking adequate space for government services, the Fullerton City Council requested specially designed quarters, and the city’s administration and fire department leased space (223 North Harbor Blvd.) from the company until a permanent building was constructed.<sup>35</sup> When the Fullerton Club, a booster and social club for top businessmen, outgrew its meeting space, the company built a separate clubhouse for the group, complete with a dancehall, billiards room, and reading room.<sup>36</sup> Other local groups and organizations would also use the Fullerton Club building for meetings, dances, and other activities.<sup>37</sup> The company also leased office space to a number of notable associations and companies, including the Fullerton Board of Trade and the Fullerton Community Hotel Company, a subscription firm that constructed the nearby California Hotel (302 North Harbor Blvd.), now Villa del Sol.<sup>38</sup>

An “absolute necessity for homes” led the Fullerton Improvement Company to build the Pomona Court and Apartments, the only time the firm invested in a housing project.<sup>39</sup> The two housing projects demonstrated the company’s willingness to provide low-density multi-family housing in a town that greatly preferred single-family homes and reflected an alternative effort to meet housing demands during a prolonged post-World War I slowdown in house construction. Edward K. Benchley was aware that the fourteen rental units provided by the North Pomona Avenue project were not enough to solve Fullerton’s housing problem, but he hoped that the new bungalow court and apartment house would encourage others builders and investors to follow suit. An article in the April 10, 1919 issue of the *Fullerton News Tribune* echoed Benchley’s views: “E. K. Benchley, president of the company, says that the demand for apartments and houses is so great that his company feels it necessary to do all in its power to relieve the situation, and he hopes that others who are in the city who are in a position to do all they can to relieve the situation and thereby build up the city.”<sup>40</sup> Over the decades, the company’s buildings would be razed or modified, and the bungalow court and apartment house remain the most historically intact of the firm’s structures.

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After Edward K. Benchley's death in 1924, Frank K. Benchley continued with a number of planned undertakings; the firm's buildings were maintained, but the Fullerton Improvement Company was never as active again. In 1926, Frank K. Benchley moved to Los Angeles. Charles C. Chapman took over again as president, invested in other projects, but the 1929 Depression and World War II stopped city growth, and after Chapman's death in 1944, the company was dissolved in 1945.

**Criterion C: Association with a Master Architect – Frank K. Benchley**

Frank Keith Benchley was the most significant architect in Fullerton's history. The influence of Benchley's architecture in Fullerton during the first quarter of the twentieth century cannot be overstated. For most of the 1920s, he was the city's only licensed architect and one of the few in Orange County. He designed some of the most impressive buildings in Fullerton, many of them instantly recognizable to residents. Four of Benchley's buildings – three in Fullerton and one in Portland, Oregon – are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Other structures designed by Benchley have also been designated Fullerton Local Landmarks, including the Edward K. Benchley House, the Shepardson House, the California Hotel (now Villa del Sol), and the Pomona Court and Apartments.

Benchley worked in a variety of architectural styles, designing an astonishing number of building types, including businesses, fraternal lodges, hotels, a movie theater, a grammar school, a grocery store, a reservoir, a jail, a packing plant, bridges, and both modest and expansive homes. The Pomona Court and Apartments marked the only time he designed high-density units in Fullerton. The oldest bungalow court in Fullerton, the Pomona Court is the only Craftsman style court in the city, and the only one Benchley ever designed and constructed. An exemplary example of a 1920s apartment building in the city, the Pomona Apartments remain one of the few fourplexes in Fullerton. The Pomona Court and Apartments are unique to Fullerton and easily distinguished by their characteristic style and quality from other multi-housing units constructed during this era.

In his early work, Benchley worked largely within the traditional confines of the styles popular in the era, primarily Colonial Revival and Arts and Crafts, reflected in the Pomona Court, but toward the end of his architectural career, he embraced styles more associated with Southern California, including Spanish Colonial Revival and Pueblo Revival. Benchley had a work crew, who most likely constructed the Pomona Court, but often worked with local and Los Angeles building contractors. The Pomona Court and Apartments were built by local contractor Herbert Daniel (known as Dan) Coon, who arrived in Fullerton in 1919. Benchley and Coon worked together on projects both before and after the apartments, and at one point, the two men had adjacent offices on the second floor of the E. K. Benchley Building in downtown Fullerton. Both men were also members of the Business Methods Committee of the newly formed Fullerton Kiwanis Club in 1921.

**Frank Keith Benchley (1884-1962)**

While Edward K. Benchley's eldest son, William Leonidas Benchley,<sup>41</sup> would be a disappointment, his second son, Frank K. Benchley, was very much the golden child of the family and community. He was an excellent pitcher in a town wild about baseball; loved to perform in dramatic productions; excelled at a wide variety of outdoor sports, including fishing; and was especially noted for his marksmanship. His later involvement in the Julian Petroleum Scandal, and subsequent fall from grace, was particularly poignant, because he had spent years developing a solid reputation in Fullerton and Orange County. He was born in Ventura County on January 25, 1884, spending his early years in Los Angeles, before his family moved to Fullerton in 1894, where he received his education in the grammar and high schools. His wealthy father, Edward K. Benchley (1854-1924), established the prosperous Benchley Fruit Company, served as president of the Farmers and Merchants Bank of Fullerton, and was elected Fullerton's second mayor, serving from 1906 to 1908. Along with Charles C. Chapman, Edward K. Benchley helped initiate and promote the orange packing industry in Orange County.<sup>42</sup>

After graduating from Fullerton Union High School in 1903, Frank Benchley enrolled in the Throop Polytechnic Institute (now the California Institute of Technology) in Pasadena for a two-year course of study.<sup>43</sup> His first professional position was as a draftsman for the notable Los Angeles architectural firm Hunt & Eager,<sup>44</sup> after which he started his own building construction firm, the Frank K. Benchley Company, establishing a Los Angeles office in

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the Stimson Building (256 South Spring Street, Room 407) and then the O. T. Johnson Building (365 South Broadway, Room 408). He designed a number of modest Craftsman bungalows, including his own residence (2319 West 30th Street), in what is now known as the Jefferson Park neighborhood of Los Angeles.<sup>45</sup> He took a number of Los Angeles contracting jobs, including a brick addition to the Pacific Wire Rope Company (1840 East 15th Street).<sup>46</sup> He also prepared plans for what appears to be his first residential project in Fullerton: a home for dentist Jessie Clinton, a family friend (124 East Wilshire Avenue, razed).<sup>47</sup> On April 3, 1906, Benchley married Ruby Waggy (1886-1964),<sup>48</sup> and the couple had one daughter, Jane Dorothy (Farley), born in Fullerton on December 18, 1906.

In 1909, Benchley experienced financial difficulties, and in 1910, left Los Angeles and took up independent practice in Portland, Oregon, where his wife had been raised, staying until 1913.<sup>49</sup> While in Portland, he designed the Tillamook County Bank<sup>50</sup> and the luxury Villa St. Clara Apartments (909 West 12th Avenue, 1911), now the Gentry Apartments, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2000.<sup>51</sup> He also served as the building contractor for a four-story brick apartment building/hotel designed by MacNaughton & Raymond, located at the southeast corner of Seventh and Taylor Streets.<sup>52</sup> In 1913, he returned to Fullerton, establishing himself as a general building contractor. He first worked out of his homes (317 North Pomona Avenue, 708 North Harbor Blvd.), then opened an office on the second floor of the E. K. Benchley Building (310½ North Harbor Blvd.). He took on modest residential projects, as well as some remarkable Craftsman bungalows, including the Edward K. Benchley House (604 North Harbor Blvd.), a Fullerton Local Landmark; the Herman Stern House (521 North Zeyn Street) in Anaheim, constructed for businessman and civic booster Herman Stern in 1915;<sup>53</sup> and a two-story, \$7,000 home for former banker John Edmund Jones, situated one mile south of Fullerton in unincorporated Orangethorpe.<sup>54</sup> During this period, he took on a number of engineering projects, including contracts to construct a pump house and reservoir for the Fullerton water system,<sup>55</sup> and was one of a number of builders hired to design plans for station buildings and a reservoir in Riverside in 1914.<sup>56</sup> He constructed six concrete bridges in Santa Ana Canyon, as well as concrete bridges across Trabuco Creek near San Juan Capistrano and Coyote Creek in what is now La Mirada.<sup>57</sup> Despite having a wife and small daughter, Benchley volunteered for military service in World War I in 1918,<sup>58</sup> and after his return, was elected commander of the American Legion, Fullerton Chapter, in 1923.<sup>59</sup>

After his war service, Benchley would be at the peak of his architectural career, designing dozens of impressive buildings in Fullerton and Orange and Los Angeles Counties. He was one of only a few licensed architects in Orange County, and the only active one in Fullerton.<sup>60</sup> He worked in a variety of architectural styles, designing an astonishing number of building types, including businesses, apartment houses, fraternal lodges, hotels, a movie theater, a grocery store, a fire station, a hospital ward, a grammar school, a jail, a citrus packing plant, a clubhouse, and both modest and expansive homes. In his early work, Benchley worked largely within the traditional confines of the styles popular in the era, primarily Colonial Revival and Arts and Crafts, but toward the end of his architectural career he embraced styles more associated with Southern California, including Spanish Colonial Revival and Pueblo Revival. He could quickly draw up plans for utilitarian brick buildings, but would also spend months on more elaborate designs. Benchley had a work crew, but often worked with local and Los Angeles building contractors, including James F. Kobler, Chris McNeill, Frank Hudson, Evan J. Herbert, and the Ridenhour Brothers.

In 1919, he was commissioned to design the second Fullerton Masonic Temple (501 North Harbor Blvd.), listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1995.<sup>61</sup> With its striking building design in the Spanish Colonial Revival style, the project brought him to the attention of Orange County residents, and led to a commission to draw up plans for the Buena Park Masonic Temple (1001 South Grand Avenue) in 1919,<sup>62</sup> followed by the Anaheim Elks Lodge (423 North Los Angeles Street) in 1920 for \$150,000.<sup>63</sup> In late 1919, he designed and constructed an L-shaped, 10,000-square-foot Dodge Brothers Motor Car Dealership and Garage (400 North Harbor Blvd., razed) for Lillian Yeager, Orange County's first female automotive dealer.<sup>64</sup> In 1922, Benchley, along with architect M. Eugene Durfee (1885-1941), designed the California Hotel (now Villa del Sol), a three-story building containing twenty-two apartments and fifty-five rooms with some shops on the ground floor. A Fullerton Local Landmark, the California Hotel was *the place* to stay when visiting the area, and the *Fullerton News Tribune* published regular reports on who was registered there.<sup>65</sup> In 1923, he was hired by the Fullerton school board to design Maple Elementary School, an Italian Renaissance two-story building expected to cost \$80,000.<sup>66</sup> In 1923, Benchley's brother asked him to prepare plans for a \$30,000 modern citrus packing plant for the Anaheim Valencia Growers' Association (805 East Center Street, razed).<sup>67</sup> In 1925, he was commissioned by the City of Fullerton to prepare plans for a new brick

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Fullerton fire station and city hall (100 West Wilshire Avenue, razed).<sup>68</sup> He was often called upon to design brick stores and offices for local businessmen, including the James P. Glenn Furniture Store (124-126 West Wilshire Avenue) in Fullerton;<sup>69</sup> the Ralph G. Adams automobile dealership (201 South Harbor Blvd., razed) in Fullerton;<sup>70</sup> the Sam Seeling Grocery Store (139 West Center Street) in Anaheim; and a medical office for Walter L. Bigham (449 West Center Street) in Anaheim.<sup>71</sup>

In 1922, the Orange County Board of Supervisors hired Benchley to design a new Hall of Records, a two-story, yellow-brick building which provided a new home for the county records, the tax collector, the superintendent of schools, the road department, the county surveyor, the probation office, the law library, health department, and headquarters for the county free public library.<sup>72</sup> Pleased with the results, the supervisors commissioned Benchley to draw up plans for a new \$200,000 jail across from the Orange County Courthouse on the east side of Sycamore Street in Santa Ana. Before constructing the facility, Benchley made a trip to Cincinnati with members of the Orange County Board of Supervisors to inspect the latest locking systems in modern jails. The new jail opened in 1924, with room for 260 prisoners as well as offices for the sheriff and his staff.<sup>73</sup> Benchley would also complete plans for a third county building between the new Hall of Records and the Orange County Courthouse, but the project was never started. In 1923, Benchley would again be hired by Orange County to develop plans and specifications for an addition of a Psychopathic Ward to the Orange County Hospital, with a bridge connecting the ward with the main building.<sup>74</sup> His last commission for Orange County would be a six-room caretaker's bungalow in Fullerton (800 East Walnut Avenue), situated near garages and an equipment yard, for the Orange County Division of Highways in 1923.<sup>75</sup>

After his World War I service, Benchley continued to design modest homes for middle-class families – 126 and 224 West Malvern Avenue, 438 East Chapman Avenue, 128, 132 and 137 Brookdale Place, etc. – but as he became better known, he was able to use his social connections to obtain commissions from prominent clients. He quickly became known for his residential designs and developed a reputation for designing elegant, stately homes, including a Mission Revival residence for Mayor Richard S. Gregory (130 Hillcrest Drive); a similarly styled home for school administrator Anita Shepardson (155 Hillcrest Drive), a Fullerton Local Landmark; and a home for his brother William L. Benchley (321 North Pomona Avenue, razed or moved). In 1923, Benchley was hired by Walter M. Muckenthaler (1894-1955) to design a Mediterranean villa (1201 West Malvern Avenue) in the Golden Hills area of Fullerton. Constructed for \$35,000, the eighteen-room mansion, noted for its spectacular architectural details, is situated on 8.5 acres atop a hill that was selected for its picturesque view of orchards to the south. In 1965, the Muckenthaler Family gifted the home and gardens to the City of Fullerton, and the Muckenthaler Cultural Center was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.<sup>76</sup>

In addition to homes in Fullerton, Benchley also completed elaborate and extravagant residences in Anaheim, Placentia, and Santa Ana. Working with Los Angeles architect Alfred F. Priest on a percentage basis, Benchley constructed the Charles Wagner House (902 East Yorba Linda Blvd.) in Placentia in 1920 for \$22,500. Wagner insisted that only the highest quality materials be used, and the stately white 5,000-square-foot Colonial Revival mansion quickly became a showcase in Placentia.<sup>77</sup> In 1925, Benchley designed a lavish Pueblo Revival dwelling (500 North Clementine Street) for Charles Boege, Anaheim City Treasurer and vice-president of the First National Bank. At the time of construction, the Boege residence, which cost \$8,000, was one of Anaheim's costliest homes.<sup>78</sup>

From 1917 to 1924, Benchley served as the exclusive architect for the Fullerton Improvement Company. Under the direction of his father, businessman Edward K. Benchley, he would design a number of buildings for the firm. In his first major project, Benchley completed plans for a \$62,000, two-story reinforced concrete business block on the southwest corner of Wilshire Avenue and Harbor Boulevard in downtown Fullerton. Trying to meet several demands, Edward K. Benchley requested that a number of separate spaces be carved out of the business block, and the two-story building included the Rialto Theatre; Fullerton Club offices, as well as a dancehall and billiards room; a Fullerton Improvement Company building for medical offices; and room for businesses and local organizations.<sup>79</sup> In 1921, Benchley erected a second business block for the Fullerton Improvement Company. Constructed for \$55,000, the two-story brick building, named the E. K. Benchley Building, was located on the east side of Harbor Boulevard between Wilshire and Whiting Avenues. The building provided additional business and office space, as well as meeting rooms, and Benchley would also move into an office on the second floor (310½ North Harbor Blvd.).<sup>80</sup>



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After completing the two business buildings, tenants and uses for the business blocks changed, and Benchley would often be asked to remodel or rebuild sections of the two complexes to accommodate needed changes. In addition, he was asked to completely redo the façade of the unembellished Farmers and Merchants Bank of Fullerton, an earlier Fullerton Improvement Company project. In 1922, he added a beautifully detailed Beaux Arts façade to the 1905 bank. Accented with ornate terra cotta and granite classical motifs, the two-story brick structure is the only remaining example of a Beaux Arts commercial building in Fullerton. In 1923, Benchley remodeled the interior of the bank, doubling the lobby space, vault accommodation, and teller stations (wickets), and adding six offices on the second floor. He also completed plans for a rear addition to the Farmers and Merchants Bank. The entire second floor of the addition was a suite of offices for the notable Orange County law firm of Marks & Launer.<sup>81</sup> Now the Landmark Plaza Building, the former bank building was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1994.

Amidst the Fullerton Improvement Company's business projects, Benchley finished plans for the Craftsman-era Pomona Court in 1920, then completed designs for the Spanish Colonial Revival Pomona Apartments. The project marked the only time in his architectural career that he designed a bungalow court and a fourplex. The Pomona Court is the only Craftsman bungalow in Fullerton, and the Pomona Apartments remain one of the few apartment houses constructed in the city in the 1920s. At the time of the project's announcement, Benchley was constructing a 30-unit Spanish Colonial Revival apartment building, the Colonial Apartments (149 North Lemon Street, razed), in Anaheim,<sup>82</sup> and he would later design a number of large apartment complexes. The compact fourplex is the smallest apartment house Benchley ever designed.

In 1926, Benchley left Fullerton for Los Angeles, setting up his architectural practice in the prestigious downtown William M. Garland Building (117 West Ninth Street, Room 1023). He designed and constructed a two-story (3,268-square-foot) Spanish Colonial Revival mansion for his family in the Hollywood Hills (6315 Longview Avenue). He and his family would move to a number of locations, including Alhambra (1203 South Fourth Street) and San Gabriel (1203 South Fourth Street), but remain in Los Angeles County for the remainder of his life. He took on sizable and impressive projects, including a \$154,000, sixty-eight room apartment building in Glendale (522 South Glendale Avenue, razed) for realtors Galvin & Woods,<sup>83</sup> and the California Hotel and Apartments, located at Fifth and E Streets in downtown San Bernardino. Constructed for \$500,000, the four-story Mission Revival structure consisted of one hundred guest rooms and twenty-one apartments, and a roof garden. The hotel quickly became one of the most popular spots in town, and it became *the* place for dignitaries and celebrities to stay when they were in San Bernardino.<sup>84</sup>

In 1927, Benchley made a dramatic career switch, becoming a stockbroker, and on January 18, 1927, he was elected to membership in the Los Angeles Stock Exchange (LASE), establishing a brokerage firm, Wagy & Benchley, with his brother-in-law, Wallace P. Wagy (1897-1970), who had worked as an assistant in his uncle's dishonest brokerage firm, A. C. Wagy & Company.<sup>85</sup> In February 1928, Wagy & Benchley also joined the newly formed Los Angeles Curb Exchange, a forerunner to the Los Angeles Exchange, with Wallace Wagy serving as treasurer.<sup>86</sup> Throughout 1927 and 1928, Wagy and Benchley advertised steadily in the *Los Angeles Times*, selling bonds and listed and unlisted stocks, and published a weekly market letter. After the Julian Petroleum crash, the collapse of A. C. Wagy & Company, and the indictment of Albert C. Wagy in 1927,<sup>87</sup> Wallace P. Wagy and Frank Benchley renamed their brokerage firm Frank Benchley & Company, and moved into larger quarters in the Stock Exchange Building (639 South Spring Street). Frank Benchley also began investing in oil fields in Los Angeles and Orange County.<sup>88</sup>

Because LASE officials incinerated all incriminating records, it is difficult to determine the full extent of the involvement of Frank Benchley & Company, but Benchley and members of his wife's family became embroiled in the massive Julian Petroleum Scandal, a stock swindle that presaged the Depression. The Julian Petroleum scandal was one of a number of get-rich-schemes that oil men perpetrated on Southern California residents in the 1920s. On the surface, Julian Petroleum was one of California's most prosperous oil companies, claiming to have discovered "the deepest well in Southern California" and producing millions of dollars in profits for its investors in a short time span. In reality, the company's profits were based upon two simultaneous illegal schemes of historic and destructive magnitude. The first was an elaborate Ponzi scheme in which the company introduced five million illegal shares into the marketplace. To control distribution of the worthless stock and keep prices high, Texas shyster Sheridan C. Lewis, general manager of Julian Petroleum, transferred a large block of stock to A. C. Wagy & Company, which

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catered to small investors and served 4,000 customers, the largest clientele of any local brokerage. President Albert C. Waggy, the uncle of Frank Benchley's wife, accepted the bribes, but then double-crossed Lewis by weakening the stock price to make a bigger profit. Lewis responded by secretly buying the Waggy investment firm, which made manipulation of the market easier. The second scheme created a handful of investment pools which purchased massive amounts of Julian stock in order to inflate prices and to attract new investors, all the while allowing its members to collect illegal usurious rates of interest. The most prominent of those pools was known as the Million Dollar Club, which comprised many pillars of society in the Los Angeles community, including movie magnates Cecil B. DeMille and Louis B. Mayer. When the bubble burst on March 5, 1927, thousands of investors lost their life's savings. Los Angeles residents were stunned when Lewis, Waggy, and Julian officials were found not guilty by a jury, then angered when it was discovered that the district attorney and jurors had been bribed. One investor, who had lost all of his savings, shot and killed the head of the Million Dollar Club, banker Motley H. Flint.<sup>89</sup> In a well-publicized case, shareholders, hoping to recoup their lost money, filed a \$12 million lawsuit on October 8, 1929, against the Los Angeles Stock Exchange and forty-six brokers, including Wallace Waggy and Frank Benchley (only \$374,000 was recovered).<sup>90</sup> No one directly participating in the Julian collapse ever went to jail. The LASE, which had looked the other way during the oil stock sales, made face-saving procedural changes, then moved from oil into bank speculation which led to the stock market crash in October 1929.

Wallace Waggy and Frank Benchley managed to survive the Julian Petroleum Scandal but continued to sell speculative stock, and the company quickly collapsed during the 1929 market crash. On January 2, 1930, the Los Angeles Stock Exchange expelled Frank Benchley and Wallace Waggy for failing to adhere to the new procedural changes and for "violation of the constitution and by-laws" of the LASE.<sup>91</sup> Frank Benchley & Company was quickly sold to lawyer Lyndol L. Young on February 18, 1930.

After his expulsion from the stock exchange, Benchley experienced a reversal of fortune. He returned to architecture, designing and constructing buildings in Los Angeles, including a Colonial Revival apartment building (4019-4021 West Los Feliz, 1936),<sup>92</sup> but failed to renew his architectural license (B-1209). By the late 1930s, the Los Angeles City Directories list him as a draftsman or carpenter. By the 1940s, he was working as a construction engineer for Work Progress Administration (WPA) school projects in Alhambra.<sup>93</sup> During World War II, he worked for the Federal Housing Administration in Los Angeles (12th Street and Maple Avenue). Benchley passed away in 1962, at the age of 78, while living in an apartment (424 Catalina Street, #1), and he, along with his wife, are buried in the Loma Vista Cemetery in Fullerton.<sup>94</sup>

**Herbert Daniel (Dan) Coon (1887-1969)**

The Pomona Apartments were designed and constructed by Herbert D. Coon in 1923. Perhaps because of the itinerant nature of his carpentry and building work, Coon lived in a number of places besides Fullerton throughout the state of California, including Pasadena, Santa Maria, Tracy, Carmel, Marina, Felton, Burlingame, Ben Lomond, and Yellowstone National Park.

Coon was born in Soquel, California, on December 23, 1887, the youngest of six children (and the only male) born to Herbert William Coon (1848-1924) and Julia Etta Stewart Coon (1859-1934). Born in Ohio, Herbert W. Coon came to California in 1870, when he married Julia Stewart. Dan Coon spent the first seventeen years of his life in Ben Lomond, attended schools in Santa Cruz, and completed his high school education in North Chicago, Illinois. He served an apprenticeship with Oakland contractor Frank Irvine, then worked with his father, a lumberman, on the family timber claim, Coon Heights, in Ben Lomond. The two men "cut madrone wood and hauled it with a four-horse team" to Powder Mill Flats, made "barrel staves" for the Cowell Lime Works kiln, and "furnished bark" for the Ansley K. Salz Tannery.<sup>95</sup> In 1904, the Coon Family moved to Los Angeles where Dan Coon met Sylvia Hanes (1886-1973), a native of Darke County, Ohio, and the couple would wed on November 25, 1908.

Starting in 1906, Coon worked on the construction of the Carnegie Brick and Pottery Company factory near Tracy, a plant set up by industrialist Andrew Carnegie to manufacture bricks for his donated libraries. In 1908, he was employed by the Stone Canyon Coal in Monterey County. He relocated to Pasadena in 1910, where he "engaged in the construction of high-class residences in the Orange Grove Avenue and Oak Park Section, the first residential section of the city."<sup>96</sup> He then spent two years (1913-1915) in Yellowstone National Park, where he helped to construct an extension to Old Faithful Inn for the Great Northern Railroad. In 1917, Coon returned to Pasadena

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(2009 North Marengo Avenue, 2028 Summit Avenue) where he built homes for leading real estate firms, worked briefly in Fullerton, then after registering for the military draft, worked in the San Pedro Shipyards for two years, doing his bit for World War I.<sup>97</sup>

In April 1919, Coon returned to Fullerton, announcing that as a newcomer he was dedicated to helping the town in its “efforts to build a real city.”<sup>98</sup> By 1921, he had set up offices (306½ and 310½ North Harbor Blvd.) and was advertising weekly in the *Fullerton News Tribune*.<sup>99</sup> He concentrated on building bungalows and duplexes, including residences at 238 East Whiting Avenue, 240 Jacaranda Place, 538 and 542 West Wilshire Avenue, and 541-543 West Amerige Avenue. He worked with a few local developers – Willis Maple, Reeve & Mulrien, and William E. Westland – constructing “spec” homes on vacant lots around Fullerton.<sup>100</sup> In May 1923, Coon won the contract to construct a \$30,000 four-room addition to the Ford Grammar School.<sup>101</sup>

Prior to constructing the Pomona Apartments, Coon built a fourplex in 1919, which was used as his personal residence, at 233-235 West Wilshire Avenue, followed by an identical fourplex on the adjacent lot at 237-239 West Wilshire in 1923. The two matching buildings were known locally as the Coon Apartments. In 1921, Coon also designed and built the George Treher Apartments (619 W. Third Street) in Long Beach, which bear an architectural resemblance to the Pomona Apartments. Edward K. Benchley was obviously pleased with the Pomona Apartments, because shortly before the residences opened, he awarded a contract to Coon to build a \$30,000 packing house for the Anaheim Valencia Growers’ Association (805 E. Center Street, razed).<sup>102</sup> The packing house would be Coon’s last project with Frank Benchley.

In 1923, Coon left Fullerton for Northern California,<sup>103</sup> and in 1938, returned to his hometown of Ben Lomond where he lived with his wife on Glen Arbor Road. He continued in construction work until 1946, when he moved into the business of developing springs and erecting water tanks. Coon died in Wender, Arizona, in 1969. Sylvia Coon, who survived him by a few years, passed away in 1973, in Los Angeles. During their 61 years of marriage, the couple kept a record of their travels and daily life. The Coon Family Diaries Collection, which consists of 15 diaries, is on file in the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History in Santa Cruz, California.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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<sup>1</sup>*The Batchelder Tiles: A Catalog of Designs for Fireplaces with a Color Plate for Reference.* 3rd ed. Los Angeles: Batchelder-Wilson Company, 1927: 416. Reproduced catalog. On file, Local History Room, Fullerton Public Library. When Ernest A. Batchelder was head of the art department at Throop Polytechnic Institute, Frank K. Benchley was one of his students. Benchley used Batchelder tiles in a number of his buildings, most spectacularly in the Muckenthaler Cultural Center, which contains the most prolific use of the tile in Fullerton. *Images of America: Muckenthaler Cultural Center.* Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011.

<sup>2</sup>*The Batchelder Tiles: A Catalog of Tile Products Made in Los Angeles by the Batchelder-Wilson Company.* 4th ed. Los Angeles: Batchelder-Wilson Company, 1923: 21. Reproduced catalog. On file, Local History Room, Fullerton Public Library.

<sup>3</sup>"Apartment and Bungalow Court." *Fullerton News Tribune* April 10, 1919. Announcements were also published in the *Santa Ana Register*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Southwest Builder and Contractor*: "Fullerton Company to Build Bungalow Court, Apartments." *Santa Ana Register* April 14, 1919; "Fullerton Homes." *Los Angeles Times* April 27, 1919, p. VI3; "Fullerton." *Southwest Builder and Contractor* May 2, 1919, p. 18. As the project lagged, other announcements were made: "Residences: Fullerton." *Southwest Builder and Contractor* April 23, 1920, p. 21; "Bungalow Court Soon." *Fullerton News Tribune* May 11, 1920.

<sup>4</sup>"Court of 14 Bungalows; Fullerton Improvement Association to Start Work at Once." *Fullerton News Tribune* April 14, 1920.

<sup>5</sup>"Court of 14 Bungalows; Fullerton Improvement Association to Start Work at Once." *Fullerton News Tribune* April 14, 1920; "Clearing Ground for New Bungalow Court." *Santa Ana Register* May 15, 1920.

<sup>6</sup>"Fullerton." *Southwest Builder and Contractor* April 23, 1920, p. 21; "Bungalow Court Soon." *Fullerton News Tribune* May 11, 1920.

<sup>7</sup>Marsden, Raleigh A. "Choosing an Architecture for a Town." *California Southland* December 1919-January 1920, p. 7-8.

<sup>8</sup>"C. M. Winslow, Architect, Dies." *Los Angeles Times* October 17, 1946, p. 12; Winslow, Carleton M., et al. *The Architecture and Gardens of the San Diego Exposition; A Pictorial Survey of the Aesthetic Features of the Panama California International Exposition.* San Francisco: P. Elder, 1916; Winslow, Carleton M. "The Fullerton Plan." *The Orange County Review* vol. 5, no. 1 (November 1921), p. 23-24.

<sup>9</sup>"Spanish Style Architecture for City: Fullerton's Chance for National Fame is Knocking at the Door." *Fullerton News* July 22, 1919, p. 1; "Plan City Beautiful: Uniform Style of Architecture is Object of Planning Committee; City Trustees Will Heartily Co-operate with Board of Trade." *Orange County Daily Tribune* July 16, 1919, p. 1; "Uniform Style Architecture is Planned; Fullerton Bodies Discuss Project of Uniform Public Buildings." *Santa Ana Register* July 17, 1919, p. 17; "City Beauty is Now Regarded as a Definite Commercial Asset." *Fullerton News* July 17, 1919, p. 1; "Fullerton to Advance; Spanish Colonial Uniform Style of Architecture Adopted." *Orange County Daily Tribune* July 19, 1919, p. 1; "Vision Comes to Fullerton." *Los Angeles Times* July 27, 1919, p. II8.

<sup>10</sup>"Spanish Style Picked for City: Fullerton's Chance for National Fame is Knocking at the Door." *Fullerton News* July 22, 1919, p. 1; "Many Helping in City Planning, Says Marsden; Board of Trade Committee Finds Universal Co-operation in Work for City Beautiful." *Fullerton News* August 14, 1919, p. 1. Other Spanish Colonial

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Revival buildings that resulted from the meeting included the Masonic Temple, the Christian Science Church, and the Ebell Club.

<sup>11</sup>“Three Rousing Cheers for Major Marks and His Housing Plan: Make Effort to House People or Stop Boost Talk, Says Marks.” *Fullerton News* September 12, 1919, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup>In 1906, Edison built one of the largest substations in Southern California in Fullerton, and the Fullerton Improvement Company was eager to keep the company and jobs in the city. Edison eventually signed a ten-year lease, setting up a new office in the E. K. Benchley Building. “Work on Substation: Edison Company Begins Erection of a Large Distributing Plant at City of Fullerton.” *Los Angeles Times* July 21, 1906, p. II11.

<sup>13</sup>“New Block No. Spadra; Two Story Brick Construction with Offices on Second Floor.” *Fullerton News Tribune* May 6, 1921; “Business Buildings: Fullerton.” *Southwest Builder and Contractor* May 13, 1921, p. 23.

<sup>14</sup>“The Three Great Needs of Fullerton Are Houses, Houses, Houses.” *Fullerton News* August 8, 1919, p. 1; “Eighty Men Last Night Talked City Growth but Forgot Houses.” *Fullerton News* August 14, 1919, p. 1; “Tie the Ford Outside and Rent the Garage to a Good Family.” *Fullerton News* September 10, 1919, p. 1, etc.

<sup>15</sup>“Three Rousing Cheers for Major Marks and His Housing Plan: Make Effort to House People or Stop Boost Talk, Says Marks.” *Fullerton News* September 12, 1919, p. 1; “Committee Hopes Apartment House Will Be Assured Before Tonight.” *Fullerton News* September 15, 1919, p. 1; “Have You Taken Any of the Housing Stock Yet; Committee Says Don’t Wait To Be Called On – Drop in And Subscribe Today.” *Fullerton News* September 19, 1919, p. 1; “Housing Meeting to Be Called First of Week.” *Fullerton News* September 24, 1919, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup>“House Building Plans Are Maturing Rapidly; Work of Building New Bungalows for Sale to New Residents Begins Soon.” *Fullerton News* October 1, 1919, p.1; “Fullerton Home Builders Select Good Officials: Well Known Business Men Will Have Charge of Its Affairs.” *Fullerton News* October 13, 1919, p. 1. Fullerton Home Builders hired Los Angeles architect Edwin Charles Thorne to help construct the first five bungalows.

<sup>17</sup>“Fullerton Improvement Company [Advertisement].” *Fullerton News Tribune* June 22, 1921.

<sup>18</sup>Strauss, Fred. *Early Days of the Stern and Goodman Store*. Interview with Esther Katz on June 10, 1976. Oral History 1485. Fullerton: California State University, Fullerton, Oral History Program, 1976: 10. Rents at the Pomona Court are now \$1,250 a month. Rents at the Pomona Apartments are \$1,650 a month.

<sup>19</sup>“Deeds.” *Santa Ana Register* February 6, 1941, p. 15; “Benchley Fruit Company Joins Mutual Orange Distributors Recently.” *Citrus Leaves* vol. 1, no. 6 (November 1921), p. 11.

<sup>20</sup>Fullerton Chamber of Commerce. “Modern Apartment and Courts Hold the Approval of Many of Our Families.” In *Fullerton: Where, What and Why*. Fullerton: Fullerton Chamber of Commerce, 1927: 30. Includes black and white photographs of both the bungalow court and apartment house.

<sup>21</sup>Gebhard, David and Robert Winter. *A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles & Southern California*. Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, 1982: 419.

<sup>22</sup>*Purple People Eater*. A K. Tel International Release of Motion Picture Corp. of America presentation. Writer-director Linda Shayne. 1988. “Home Girl Directs First Film in Fullerton.” *Fullerton Observer* August 1988, p. 1, 11; Brown, Jackie. “*Purple People Eater* in Fullerton Rescue.” *Daily Star Progress* July 14, 1988; Brown, Jackie. “Fullerton Becomes Popular with Movie-Makers.” *Daily Star Progress* June 28, 1988.

<sup>23</sup>“Fullerton: Improvement Club.” *Los Angeles Times* January 18, 1900, p. II5.

<sup>24</sup>In this period, there were a number of short-lived associations devoted to city improvement: the Fullerton Improvement Association (1910), the Commonwealth Avenue Improvement Association (1922), and the South Side Improvement Association (1922).

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<sup>25</sup>Fullerton Improvement Company, Articles of Incorporation, November 12, 1904. The articles and other records are on file in the California State Archives, Sacramento, California. The first members of the Board of Directors were: Charles C. Chapman, Edward K. Benchley, John C. Braly, William McEndree, and Pierre Nicholas. Also: "San Bernardino, Orange and Riverside Counties: Santa Ana Briefs." *Los Angeles Times* November 18, 1904, p. A10. The capital stock for the company was \$30,000, of which \$9,350 was subscribed.

<sup>26</sup>Charles Clarke Chapman was born in Macomb, Illinois in 1853. After a series of jobs, Chapman and his brother Frank founded Chapman Brothers, Printers and Publishers, making a small fortune in the writing and publishing of local histories. His fortunes were further advanced with the construction of several hotels built to take advantage of the crowds attending the 1893 World's Columbia Exposition in Chicago, but he would later lose a significant amount of money during the 1893 economic depression. His wife's illness forced Chapman to move to Fullerton in 1894, where he purchased 177 acres on the outskirts of town and began a second career as an orange grower. From his Santa Ysabel Ranch, Chapman created innovative production and marketing methods that established the Valencia brand. Under Chapman's direction, the estate, which grew to 350 acres, developed into one of the most valuable orange properties in California, and he was given the monikers of "Father of the Valencia Orange" and "Orange King of the World." The Old Mission brand, the name his fruit was packed under, had a reputation of being second to none in the finest stores in the country. He turned down an offer from the Republican Party to run for California governor, and also declined Calvin Coolidge's invitation to serve as his running mate in the 1924 presidential election. He endowed Chapman University in Orange, California, which now houses his papers. "Charles C. Chapman." *History of Orange County California by Mrs. J. E. Pleasants. Vol. III: Biographical*. Los Angeles: J. R. Finnell & Sons, 1931: 316-323; "Charles C. Chapman." *History of Orange County, California, with Biographical Sketches of the Leading Men and Women of the County Who Have Been Identified with Its Growth and Development from the Early Days to the Present*. Ed. Samuel Armor. Los Angeles: Historic Record, 1921: 211-215; Burrell, Molly. "Chapman Family in City's History." *Fullerton News Tribune* December 18, 1955, p. 6.

<sup>27</sup>Richard S. Gregory was Fullerton mayor from 1914 to 1916, while also serving as postmaster and running his own real estate and insurance business (118 North Harbor Blvd.). A progressive Democrat, Gregory served in an era that marked the beginning of public improvements in Fullerton. The streets were paved, the city sewer and water plants were constructed, and the first fire department was established. Gregory, who had come to Fullerton in 1893, working as a barley farmer, was very popular, receiving more votes than any candidate on the 1914 ballot. Until his brother's suicide in 1933, Gregory would purchase large tracts of land for development in Fullerton, and his brother, Ernest S. Gregory, would then design and construct homes on lots within the subdivisions. "Richard Spenser Gregory." *History of Orange County, California, with Biographical Sketches of the Leading Men and Women of the County Who Have Been Identified with Its Growth and Development from the Early Days to the Present*. Ed. Samuel Armor. Los Angeles: Historic Record, 1921: 675; "R. S. Gregory, Civic Leader, Dies at Age 82." *Fullerton Daily News Tribune* December 24, 1958, p. 1.

<sup>28</sup>James Ralph Carhart was Fullerton mayor from 1916 to 1920. He married Edward K. Benchley's daughter, Helen. Born in New York City, Carhart was a rancher, specializing in cattle breeding, but later became a land developer, responsible for the Carhart Subdivision. "J. Ralph Carhart." *The Pictorial American and Town Talk* vol. 9, no. 4 (May 1909), p. 24; "Carhart, J. R." *History of Orange County, California, with Biographical Sketches of the Leading Men and Women of the County Who Have Been Identified with Its Growth and Development from the Early Days to the Present*. Ed. Samuel Armor. Los Angeles: Historic Record, 1921: 566; "City Accepts the Carhart Subdivision." *Fullerton Daily Tribune* May 4, 1921.

<sup>29</sup>"Fullerton Improvement Company [Advertisement]." *Fullerton News Tribune* June 22, 1921.

<sup>30</sup>Chapman, Charles C. *Charles C. Chapman: The Career of a Creative Californian, 1853-1944*. Ed. Donald Pflueger. Los Angeles: Anderson, Ritchie & Simon, 1976: 107.

<sup>31</sup>"Reduces Rents for Merchants." *Santa Ana Register* April 1, 1925, p. 1.

<sup>32</sup>"Farmers and Merchants Bank of Fullerton [Advertisement]." *Fullerton News Tribune* October 26, 1905, p. 4; "Fullerton Authority Anticipates Only Light Walnut Crop but One of Excellent Quality." *Los Angeles Herald* May



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26, 1905. Charles C. Chapman was president of the bank, which was also a shareholder in the Fullerton Improvement Company. The bank changed its name in 1905, from the Fullerton State Bank to the Farmers and Merchants Bank of Fullerton.

<sup>33</sup>Chapman, Charles C. *Charles C. Chapman: The Career of a Creative Californian, 1853-1944*. Ed. Donald Pflueger. Los Angeles: Anderson, Ritchie & Simon, 1976: 107.

<sup>34</sup>“Business Buildings: Fullerton.” *Southwest Contractor* March 3, 1917, p. 18 and April 28, 1917, p. 18; “To Build Theatre in New Building.” *Fullerton News Tribune* March 1, 1917; “Rialto Theater Opened Monday Night.” *Fullerton News* October 4, 1917. Fullerton’s first silent movie theaters were either converted traditional theaters, such as the Fullerton Theater, or make-shift affairs. The Rialto Theater, with its Photoplayer organ and reserved seating, was the height of luxury until the Alician Court Theatre, now the Fox Fullerton Theatre, was constructed in 1925. In 1930, the Rialto Theater was transformed into the First National Trust Bank, and the façade redesigned into a Zigzag Moderne style by Walker and Eisen.

<sup>35</sup>“North Spadra Building Purchased by Chapman.” *Fullerton News Tribune* December 28, 1929.

<sup>36</sup>“Bigger Quarters Planned by Club.” *Fullerton News Tribune* February 1, 1917; “2-Story Building to Go up Soon.” *Fullerton News Tribune* February 8, 1917; “Fullerton.” *Southwest Contractor* February 10, 1917, p. 19. The Fullerton Club (1911-1925) started with forty members, but quickly grew to over 200. Edward K. Benchley was a four-time president of the club. “Fullerton Club Is Formed.” *Los Angeles Times* April 5, 1911, p. I15; “Booster Club Holds Meeting.” *Fullerton News Tribune* March 29, 1911, p. 1.

<sup>37</sup>Despite the best efforts of the Fullerton Improvement Company to provide meeting space for organizations, it was not enough. Frank Benchley was elected president of Community Service of Fullerton in January 1923, an organization which hoped to build an auditorium to serve as a permanent home for many of the town’s civic and fraternal organizations. The auditorium and convention center projects, however, were never completed. “Auditorium in City is Goal of Boosters; Community Service Workers Band Together to Bring About Erection of Building.” *Fullerton News Tribune* January 4, 1923, p. 1.

<sup>38</sup>The offices for the planned hotel were located at 221½ North Harbor Blvd., and listed as the “California Hotel” in Fullerton city directories. The hotel company incorporated in 1922. Incorporators included Charles C. Chapman and Edward K. Benchley. “Hotels and Apartments: Fullerton.” *Southwest Builder and Contractor* June 24, 1921, p. 10.

<sup>39</sup>“Fullerton Improvement Company [Advertisement].” *Fullerton News Tribune* June 22, 1921.

<sup>40</sup>“Apartments and Bungalow Court.” *Fullerton News Tribune* April 10, 1919. Charles C. Chapman was a member of the Commission on Immigration and Housing, established by the State of California in 1912 to deal with mounting concerns about population influx and housing shortages in growing metropolitan areas. Like Benchley, he was concerned with the city’s housing shortfall, but aware of the growing problem of slums in larger urban areas, a complication he wished to avoid in Fullerton.

<sup>41</sup>William Leonidas Benchley (1880-1966) served as secretary in the Benchley Fruit Company, and then purchased the company from his father in 1911. He was initially enthusiastic about the citrus packing industry but lost interest and sold the company back to his father. In 1925, he scandalized the community by deserting his wife and son and moving into the California Hotel. He left Fullerton shortly thereafter, moved to Los Angeles, and finally settled in Escondido. After her divorce from William Benchley in 1925, Belle Benchley (1882-1973), who was the first woman elected to the Fullerton school board, was left with sole support of their son, Edward Jennings Benchley (1907-1996). Mrs. Benchley moved back to her hometown of San Diego, quickly took a bookkeeping course, and accepted a position with the San Diego Zoo. She assumed the directorship two years later when the zoo had only a few hundred animals housed on 150 acres with ten employees. At her retirement nearly 26 years later, it had grown to 3,000 animals on 200 acres with 200 employees. The author of several books, Belle Benchley became renowned as an expert in animal behavior and zoo strategies. “William L. Benchley.” *History of Orange County, California, with Biographical Sketches of the Leading Men and Women of the County Who Have Been Identified*

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<sup>42</sup>Born in San Francisco, Edward Kellogg Benchley moved to Ventura County, four miles northeast of Hueneme, in 1876, where he purchased and cultivated 320 acres. He then moved to Los Angeles where he started a Japanese and Chinese import business, before moving to Fullerton in 1894. While in Fullerton, he organized the Benchley Fruit Company and also purchased 97 acres that he would cultivate and later subdivide for housing. In 1911, he sold the Benchley Fruit Company to his son William and purchased controlling interest in the Farmers and Merchants Bank of Fullerton. After his death, the Benchley Fruit Company was sold to Thomas Eadington, a former secretary and manager of the company from 1917 to 1921. "Edward Kellogg Benchley." *History of Ventura County, California, with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Its Prominent Men and Pioneers*. Oakland, CA: Thompson & West, 1883: 384; "Folks Worth Knowing: Edward Kellogg Benchley." *Fullerton News Tribune* April 29, 1924; "Edward K. Benchley Dies at Fullerton: Pioneer Broker; Service as City's Second Mayor." *Los Angeles Times* August 1, 1924, p. A11; "Last Tribute to Be Paid Saturday; Prominent Figure in Civic Affairs Breathes Last as Twilight Closes." *Fullerton News Tribune* August 1, 1924, p. 1; "Orange County Pioneer Dies at Fullerton After Illness Brought on By Slight Cold." *Santa Ana Register* August 1, 1924, p. 12.

<sup>43</sup>*Throop Polytechnic Institute: Thirteenth Annual Catalogue, 1904-1905*. Pasadena: The Institute, 1905: 60.

<sup>44</sup>Abraham Wesley Eager (1864-1930) and Sumner P. Hunt (1865-1938) formed a partnership in 1889, which ended when Silas R. Burns joined the firm in December 1907, and the firm was renamed Hunt, Eager & Burns. Hunt and Eager were known for their stately Los Angeles mansions, a number of which are listed as Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments, including the Kerkhoff House (734 West Adams Blvd.), the O'Melveny House (501 South Plymouth Blvd.), and the Raphael Residence (1352 Alvarado Terrace). In 1906, Hunt and Eager were given the commission to design the new Carnegie library in Fullerton. "Some of the Works of Sumner P. Hunt and A. Wesley Eager, Architects." *The Architect and Engineer of California* vol. 11, no. 1 (November 1907): 35-47; "Hunt, Sumner P." *Press Reference Library Notables of the West; Being the Portraits and Biographies of Progressive Men of the West Who Have Helped in the Development and History Making of This Wonderful Country*. Vol. II. New York: International News Service, 1915: 596; "Abraham Wesley Eager." *Men of the State of California: Architects, 1900-1902*. San Francisco: Pacific Art Company, 1901: 425; "Fullerton Library." *Los Angeles Times* March 17, 1907, p. V22.

<sup>45</sup>"New Permits Issued." *Los Angeles Times* October 20, 1907, p. V21. Photographs of Benchley's home on 30th Street are on file in the Local History Room, Fullerton Public Library.

<sup>46</sup>"Additions." *Southwest Contractor and Manufacturer* June 12, 1909, p. 5 and 19.

<sup>47</sup>"More Water for La Habra." *Los Angeles Times* July 27, 1905, p. II6. Dr. Chilton later leased medical office space in the Fullerton Improvement Building.

<sup>48</sup>"Marriage Licenses." *Los Angeles Herald* April 4, 1906, p. 4.

<sup>49</sup>Prior to leaving for Portland, Oregon, Benchley had liens filed on his business by the National Lumber Company, the Southern California Edison Company, the Dixon Art Glass Company, the Los Angeles Brick Company, the Pico Heights Lumber Company, and the Cass-Smurr-Damerel Company. The liens were released in December 1909. "Liens Released." *Southwest Builder and Manufacturer* February 12, 1910, p. 25. Benchley's partner, Jacob Kelch, a brick contractor, also announced that their partnership had ended and that he would not "be responsible for any action or transaction of said Frank K. Benchley." "Notice." *Los Angeles Times* December 9, 1909, p. 8.

<sup>50</sup>"Bank Building for Tillamook Planned." *Oregon Daily Journal* July 28, 1912, p. 22.

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<sup>51</sup> Frank K. Benchley is incorrectly identified in the National Register nomination as Frank K. Benchly.

<sup>52</sup>“Breske Ready to Build.” *Sunday Oregonian* May 8, 1910, Section 4, p. 5; “Number of Permits Show Builders Active.” *Oregon Daily Journal* May 18, 1910, p. 4.

<sup>53</sup>Faessel, Stephen J. *Images of America: Early Anaheim*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2006: 44. Includes a black and white photograph of the Stern residence, also known as the Daigel House.

<sup>54</sup>“Residence: Fullerton.” *Southwest Contractor* February 24, 1917, p. 26.

<sup>55</sup>“Water Works, Pipe Lines: Fullerton.” *Southwest Contractor and Manufacturer* April 5, 1913, p. 28 and May 3, 1913, p. 28; “Trustees Hold Short Session; Benchley is Lowest Bidder for Construction of Reservoir.” *Orange County Tribune* April 24, 1913, p. 1.

<sup>56</sup>“Irrigation and Water Supply.” *Engineering News* vol. 4, no. 1 (January 1, 1914), p. 77.

<sup>57</sup>“Bids Received.” *Santa Ana Register* October 7, 1914, p. 8; “Contract Is Let.” *Santa Ana Register* October 20, 1914, p. 2; “Bids.” *Santa Ana Register* December 9, 1914, p. 6 and December 10, 1914, p. 20.

<sup>58</sup>“To the Colors.” *Fullerton News* March 21, 1918; “Orange County’s Soldiers.” *History of Orange County, California, with Biographical Sketches of the Leading Men and Women of the County Who Have Been Identified with Its Growth and Development from the Early Days to the Present*. Ed. Samuel Armor. Los Angeles: Historic Record, 1921: 116.

<sup>59</sup>“Local Legion Installs Its New Officials for Season.” *Fullerton News Tribune* January 10, 1923. Benchley also served on the board of directors of the Fullerton Rotary Club. “Nominate Officers for Rotary Club.” *Santa Ana Register* March 5, 1925, p. 18.

<sup>60</sup>For a very brief period, architect Morien Eugene Durfee lived in Fullerton (124 East Brookdale Place), then moved to Anaheim where he concentrated on buildings within that city. Meyer, Vicki. Email Regarding Frank Benchley’s Architectural License. December 12, 2014. California Architects Board. On file, Local History Room, Fullerton Public Library.

<sup>61</sup>“Masons Will Build Fine New Temple.” *Fullerton News* May 15, 1919; “Hall and Society Buildings.” *Building and Engineering News* September 24, 1919, p. 7; *Dedication: Fullerton Masonic Temple, Fullerton, California [Program]*. December 8, 1920. On file, Local History Room, Fullerton Public Library.

<sup>62</sup>“Lodges and Club: Anaheim.” *Southwest Builder and Contractor* October 8, 1920, p. 43; “Plans Being Figured: Advance News, Official Proposals, Etc.” *Building and Engineering News* July 2, 1919, p. 5.

<sup>63</sup>“Lodges and Clubs.” *Southwest Builder and Contractor* June 11, 1920, p. 17.

<sup>64</sup>“Garages: Fullerton.” *Southwest Builder and Contractor* October 21, 1919, p. 17.

<sup>65</sup>“Fullerton Hotel.” *Southwest Builder and Contractor* February 24, 1922, p. 32; “Hotels: Fullerton.” *Building and Engineering News* January 28, 1922, p. 15 and February 11, 1922, p. 10; “The New Hotel and the Big Business Block Are Now Assured; Deal Closes at Big Meeting of Board of Trade.” *Fullerton News Tribune* October 25, 1921, p. 1; “‘The California,’ Beautiful \$250,000 Hotel, Opens Today; Thousands Throng to City as Fitting Dedication to Venture; Event is Epochal.” *Fullerton News Tribune* January 15, 1923, p. 1; Smith, Don. “California Hotel.” *Architecture: A Window on the Past*. Ed. Richard Voelkel. Santa Ana: Orange County Historical Society, 1989: 61-66.

<sup>66</sup>“Benchley Chosen As Architect; Grammar School Trustees Commission Local Man for South Side School.” *Fullerton News Tribune* May 18, 1923; “Contract for School Is Let; Fullerton Structure to Cost Eighty Thousand.” *Los Angeles Times* October 28, 1923, p. V2. The 1933 Long Beach earthquake destroyed much of the school, which was rebuilt in 1936 in a WPA Moderne style.

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<sup>67</sup>“Construction News.” *Journal of Electricity and Western Industry* vol. 50, no. 3 (February 1, 1923), p. 120; “Contract for Plant Awarded; Fullerton Contractor to Build New Packing-House for Growers Association.” *Los Angeles Times* January 21, 1923, p. V2. The building contractor for the project was Daniel H. Coon.

<sup>68</sup>“Plan Fire Building.” *Los Angeles Times* December 27, 1925, p. E1; *A Tradition of Service: The Story of the Fullerton Fire Department*. Fullerton: Public Information Office, 2003. On file, Local History Room, Fullerton Public Library. The city hall and employee offices, expected to be temporary, were located on the second floor for the fire house. Fullerton did not have a permanent city hall until 1942.

<sup>69</sup>“Break Ground for New Block; Building for John P. Glenn, Furniture Man, Starts Early Next Week.” *Fullerton News Tribune* September 23, 1922. The building contractor for the project was Herbert D. Coon.

<sup>70</sup>“Business Buildings: Fullerton.” *Southwest Builder and Contractor* July 8, 1921, p. 22 and July 29, 1921, p. 21.

<sup>71</sup>“Business Buildings: Fullerton.” *Southwest Builder and Contractor* December 16, 1921, p. 19.

<sup>72</sup>Brigandi, Phil. *Old County Courthouse: A Centennial History*. San Antonio, TX: Historical Publishing Network, 2001; Sleeper, Jim. *Portrait from the Past 1901-1979: A Historical Profile of Orange County's Old County Courthouse*. Trabuco Canyon, CA: California Classics, 1979: 18. On file, Special Collections, California State University, Fullerton Library; “Public Buildings: Santa Ana.” *Building and Engineering News* November 4, 1923, p. 13 and November 26, 1922, p. 11; “New Hall of Records to Add to Dignity of Court Square.” *Santa Ana Register* April 19, 1923, p. 7. Includes a copy of Benchley's rendering of the building.

<sup>73</sup>“Benchley Will Design Jail for County, Supervisors Authorize Well Known Fullerton Architect to Prepare Plans.” *Fullerton News Tribune* July 18, 1923; “Preliminary Jail Plans Accepted; Plans of Architect Benchley Approved by Board; Will Cost \$200,000.” *Fullerton News Tribune* August 17, 1923; “Fullerton Builder Returns from Trip of Investigation.” *Fullerton News Tribune* March 15, 1924; “New Jail Plans Are Being Drawn.” *Santa Ana Register* July 19, 1923, p. 3; “Inspect Jails in Icy East; Trio Home.” *Santa Ana Register* March 14, 1924, p. 4; “Sketch of New County Jail.” *Santa Ana Register* August 30, 1923, p. 9.

<sup>74</sup>“Hospital Addition.” *Southwest Builder and Contractor* January 27, 1922, p. 17 and February 17, 1922, p. 33; “Orange Has Heavy Year in Finances; Report of Auditor Shows County Did \$7,000,000 in Business.” *Los Angeles Times* August 15, 1923, p. I7.

<sup>75</sup>“County to Construct House in Fullerton.” *Fullerton News Tribune* June 27, 1923. Benchley was also asked to draw up plans for a pavilion in Orange County Park in 1923, but the building was never constructed.

<sup>76</sup>“Beautiful Home on Local Tract.” *Fullerton News Tribune* August 30, 1923; *Images of America: Muckenthaler Cultural Center*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011; Terry, Keith. *Walter M. Muckenthaler*. Commissioned by Harold M. Muckenthaler. Fullerton: California State University, Fullerton, Oral History Program, 1974. On file, Local History Room, Fullerton Public Library.

<sup>77</sup>Marsh, Diane. *Placentia Historic Resources Survey: The Doorway to the City's Rich Historic Past*. Placentia: City of Placentia, 1989: 47; “Frame and Plaster Residence.” *Southwest Builder and Contractor* August 22, 1919, p. 16; “Charles Wagner Sees Area Grow: 93-Year Resident.” *Daily News Tribune* June 15, 1966, p. B-2; Cano, Debra. “Landmark Restoration Completed.” *Los Angeles Times* September 17, 1997. Charles Wagner, Jr. lived in the home until 1978, when it was turned into the Wagner House Wedding Center. It was restored by new owners Gwendolyn and Mark Fandel in 1997.

<sup>78</sup>Faessel, Stephen J. *Images of America: Early Anaheim*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2006: 43. Includes a black and white photograph of the Boege House.

<sup>79</sup>“Business Buildings: Fullerton.” *Southwest Contractor* March 17, 1917, p. 17.

<sup>80</sup>“Business Buildings: Fullerton.” *Southwest Builder and Contractor* May 13, 1921; “New Block No. Spadra: Two Story Brick Construction with Offices on Second Floor.” *Fullerton News Tribune* May 6, 1921. In 1946, the

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Orange, CA  
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building was completely remodeled into a different architectural style, winning the second highest honor in a National Modernization Contest, then later razed. "Face-Lifting Wins Local Store National Honors." *Daily News Tribune* October 6, 1946.

<sup>81</sup>\$55,000 Spent in Improving Bank." *Santa Ana Register* December 14, 1923; p. 23; "Law Firm to Occupy New Suite of Rooms." *Fullerton News Tribune* May 1, 1923.

<sup>82</sup>"Hotels and Apartments: Anaheim." *Southwest Builder and Contractor* April 18, 1919, p. 18. A photograph of the Colonial Apartments is available on the Anaheim Public Library website.

<sup>83</sup>"Glendale." *Building and Engineering News* January 9, 1926. Online.

<sup>84</sup>"San Bernardino." *Building and Engineering News* February 2, 1926. Online; "Hotel Liens on Market Here Today." *Los Angeles Times* February 23, 1926, p. 13; "Surroundings of Tropical Beauty: San Bernardino Uses Pioneer Park for Hotel Setting" *Los Angeles Times* December 3, 1926, p. 10. Includes a black and white photograph; *City of San Bernardino – Pioneer Park*. city of San Bernardino, 2000. Online. Includes color postcard of the hotel and apartments. The facility ran into financial difficulties and Frank and William L. Benchley joined the board of directors of the controlling company.

<sup>85</sup>"Benchley Voted to Membership on Local Mart." *Los Angeles Times* January 20, 1927, p. 10; "Wallace P. Waggy." *Los Angeles Times* October 14, 1926, p. 16. Wallace P. Waggy severed connections with A. C. Waggy & Company on October 14, 1926.

<sup>86</sup>"Grant to Head Curb Exchange: Choice Announced Following Organization Meeting." *Los Angeles Times* February 18, 1928, p. 12.

<sup>87</sup>Albert C. Waggy, who had been a pioneer in the Los Angeles Stock Exchange, died of a heart attack on July 23, 1929, without a will, leaving numerous lawsuits unsettled. "Friends Render Final Tribute to A. C. Waggy." *Los Angeles Times* July 27, 1928, p. A3.

<sup>88</sup>Regley, Howard G. "Oil News." *Los Angeles Times* October 10, 1926, p. 23; "2,000-barrel Gusher Comes in with Roar at Yorba Linda as Huge New Oil Boom." *Fullerton News Tribune* January 25, 1927.

<sup>89</sup>Finney, Guy W. *The Great Los Angeles Bubble*. Los Angeles: Forbes, 1929; Tugiel, Jules. *The Great Los Angeles Swindle: Oil, Stocks, and Scandal during the Roaring Twenties*. New York: Oxford Press, 1994; Baker, Lorin L. *That Imperiled Freedom*. Los Angeles: Graphic Press Publishing, 1932.

<sup>90</sup>"Julian Debacle Echoes in Suit: Action for \$12,000,000 Files by Shareholders Group." *Los Angeles Times* October 9, 1929, p. A5.

<sup>91</sup>"Mart Expels Broker House." *Los Angeles Times* January 3, 1930, p. 11; "Los Angeles Stock Exchange Expels Frank K. Benchley." *Commercial and Financial Chronicle* January 11, 1930, p. 221.

<sup>92</sup>Los Feliz Improvement Association. Historical Survey. Vol. VI. 2014. Online. Includes a black and white photograph of the apartment complex.

<sup>93</sup>*Living New Deal, States and Cities: Alhambra*. University of California, Berkeley. Dept. of Geography. Online.

<sup>94</sup>"Frank K. Benchley [Obituary]." *Los Angeles Times* September 5, 1962, p. B15.

<sup>95</sup>"Ben Lomond Couple Wed 50 Years." *Santa Cruz Sentinel* November 25, 1958, p. 3. Includes photograph of the couple.

<sup>96</sup>"Coon, Herbert D." *History of Orange County, California, with Biographical Sketches of the Leading Men and Women of the County Who Have Been Identified with Its Growth and Development from the Early Days to the Present*. Ed. Samuel Armor. Los Angeles: Historic Record, 1921: 1663.

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<sup>97</sup>“Completed Draft Registry of Four Supervisorial Districts of County Printed Herewith by Precincts, Names of Those Who Registered on Tuesday, June 5, Are Given for All but North End of the County.” *Santa Ana Register* July 11, 1917, p. 7.

<sup>98</sup>“H. D. Coon Backs Up His Belief in the City.” *The Orange County Review* November 1921: 53.

<sup>99</sup>“H. D. Coon [Advertisement].” *Fullerton News Tribune* August 7, 1921.

<sup>100</sup>Homes constructed for Willis Maple include 301, 310, and 312 W. Chapman. “Four Bungalows under Way on West Chapman.” *Fullerton News Tribune* April 22, 1922. Homes constructed for Reeve & Mulrien include 542 and 544 W. Wilshire Avenue, 315 W. Jacaranda Place, and 538 W. Wilshire Avenue. Curtis W. Reeve and Franklin P. Mulrien also formed a long-lived plumbing company in the 1920s, installing hundreds of plumbing systems in new Fullerton homes. “Last Rites Held for Curtis W. Reeve, 80.” *Fullerton News Tribune* December 11, 1950, p. 6. Residences built for William E. Westland include 541 and 547 West Amerige Avenue and 206 North Drake Avenue.

<sup>101</sup>“Let Contract for Fullerton School.” *Santa Ana Register* May 28, 1923, p. 10.

<sup>102</sup>“Contract for Plant Awarded: Fullerton Contractor to Build New Packing-house for Growers Association.” *Los Angeles Times* January 21, 1923, p. 12.

<sup>103</sup>“Buys New Home.” *Fullerton News Tribune* April 24, 1923. Coon’s last residence in Fullerton (325 W. Whiting Avenue) was sold to Chester L. Parks, an oil worker from Pennsylvania.

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“Sixty New Homes Being Built: Demand for Houses Far Exceeds Supply Although Much New Building is Now under Way – Other Structures Planned.” *Fullerton News* May 29, 1919.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested  
 previously listed in the National Register  
 previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other

Name of repository: California State Achieves; California Architects Board; Santa Cruz Art Museum; Local History Room, Fullerton Main Library

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acree of Property** .45 acre (19,500 sq. ft.)

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Pomona Court and Apartments  
Name of Property

Orange, CA  
County and State

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                          |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 32.873108 N | Longitude: 117.921814 W |
| 2. Latitude:             | Longitude:              |
| 3. Latitude:             | Longitude:              |
| 4. Latitude:             | Longitude:              |

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

A .45-acre parcel at the southeast corner of N. Pomona Avenue and E. Whiting Avenue in central Fullerton; the property is 150 ft. along Pomona Avenue and 130 ft. along Whiting Avenue.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary defines the legal lot where the Pomona Court and Apartments are situated.

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Debora Richey  
email: drichey@fullerton.edu  
organization: Fullerton Heritage  
street & number: 1233 Luanne Avenue  
city or town: Fullerton State: CA zip code: 92831  
telephone: (714) 525-6411 (H)  
date: June 20, 2017



Pomona Court and Apartments  
Name of Property

Orange, CA  
County and State

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## Additional Documentation

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Pomona Court and Apartments

City or Vicinity: Fullerton

County: Orange

State: CA

Photographer: Bob Linnell, Fullerton Heritage

Date Photographed: May-July, 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, including description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0001

West elevation of Pomona Court taken from Pomona Avenue, 2017; camera facing east

2 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0002

View of entry pergola along Pomona Avenue of Pomona Court, 2017; camera facing east

3 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0003

View of entry pergola along Pomona Avenue of Pomona Court, 2017; camera facing north

4 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0004

View of court of the Pomona Court, 2017; camera facing east

5 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0005

South elevation of a row of bungalows in the Pomona Court, 2017; camera facing northeast

6 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0006

North elevation of a row of bungalows in the Pomona Court, 2017; camera facing southwest

7 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0007

South elevation (side) of a row of bungalows in the Pomona Court, 2017; camera facing northeast

8 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0008

Partial north elevation (side) of a row of bungalows in the Pomona Court, 2017; camera facing south

9 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0009

South elevation of entrance to Unit 9 of the Pomona Court, 2017; camera facing north

Pomona Court and Apartments

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- 10 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0010  
Porch column, typical, for entries of units at the Pomona Court, 2017; camera facing northwest
- 11 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0011  
Interior view of entrance of Unit 9 of the Pomona Court, 2017; camera facing south
- 12 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0012  
Interior view of window in living area of Unit 9 of the Pomona Court, 2017; camera facing south
- 13 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0013  
West elevation of two-story duplex of the Pomona Court, 2017; camera facing east
- 14 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0014  
East elevation of two-story duplex of the Pomona Court, 2017; camera facing southwest
- 15 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0015  
South elevation of the two-story duplex of the Pomona Court, 2017; camera facing north
- 16 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0016  
Close-up of a window in the two-story duplex of the Pomona Court, 2017; camera facing east
- 17 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0017  
Porch column at the entry of the two-story duplex of the Pomona Court, 2017; camera facing south
- 18 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0018  
Built-in storage cabinet of a unit in the two-story duplex of the Pomona Court, 2017
- 19 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0019  
Kitchen area and sink of a unit in the two-story duplex of the Pomona Court, 2017
- 20 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0020  
Bathroom cabinet of a unit in the two-story duplex of the Pomona Court, 2017
- 21 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0021  
Downward view of staircase of a unit in the two-story duplex of the Pomona Court, 2017
- 22 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0022  
Interior view of windows in the upstairs bedroom of a unit in the two-story duplex of the Pomona Court, 2017; camera facing west
- 23 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0023  
West elevation of the Pomona Apartments, 2017; camera facing east
- 24 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0024  
North elevation of the Pomona Apartments, 2017; camera facing south
- 25 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0025  
South elevation of the Pomona Apartments, 2017; camera facing northwest

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Name of Property

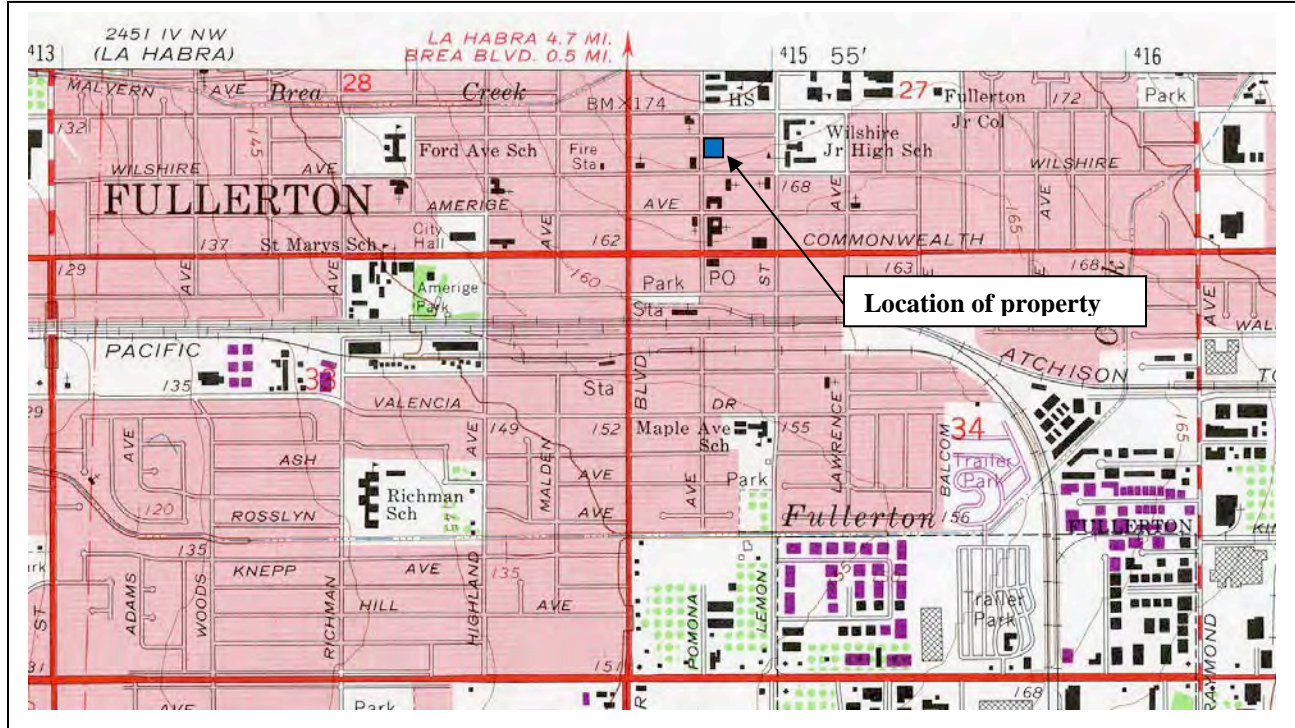
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- 26 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0026  
East elevation of the Pomona Apartments, 2017; camera facing southwest
- 27 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0027  
View of entry of the upstairs units in the Pomona Apartments, 2017; camera facing southeast
- 28 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0028  
Detail of chimney structure of the Pomona Apartments, 2017; camera facing southeast, upward
- 29 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0029  
Fireplace hearth with Batchelder tile in a downstairs unit of the Pomona Apartments, 2017; camera facing north
- 30 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0030  
Detail of a Batchelder tile in the hearth of the fireplace in a unit of the Pomona Apartments, 2017
- 31 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0031  
Kitchen area in unit of the Pomona Apartments, 2017
- 32 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0032  
Staircase for an upstairs unit in the Pomona Apartments, 2017; camera facing south, upward
- 33 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0033  
Interior living area of an upstairs unit in the Pomona Apartments, 2017; camera facing north
- 34 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0034  
Built-in cabinet in an upstairs unit in the Pomona Apartments, 2017
- 35 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0035  
Balcony area of an upstairs unit in the Pomona Apartments, 2017; camera facing east
- 36 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0036  
East (alley) elevation of the garages for the units in the Pomona Court, 2017; camera facing southwest
- 37 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0037  
West elevation of the garages for the units in the Pomona Apartments, 2017; camera facing southeast
- 38 of 38: CA\_Orange County\_Pomona Court and Apartments\_0038  
West elevation of the attached laundry room to the garages for the units in the Pomona Apartments, 2017; camera facing east

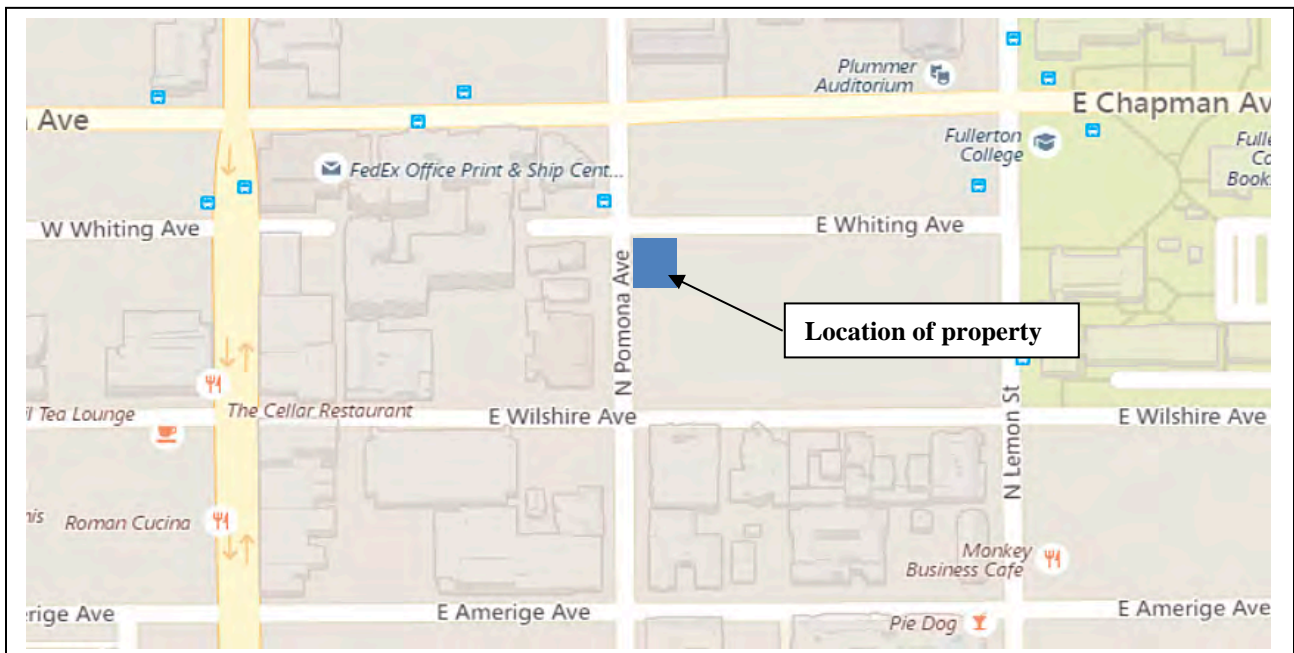
Pomona Court and Apartments  
Name of Property

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**Location Map 1: Fullerton Topographic Map, 1965, photo-revised 1972**  
Source: U.S.G.S.



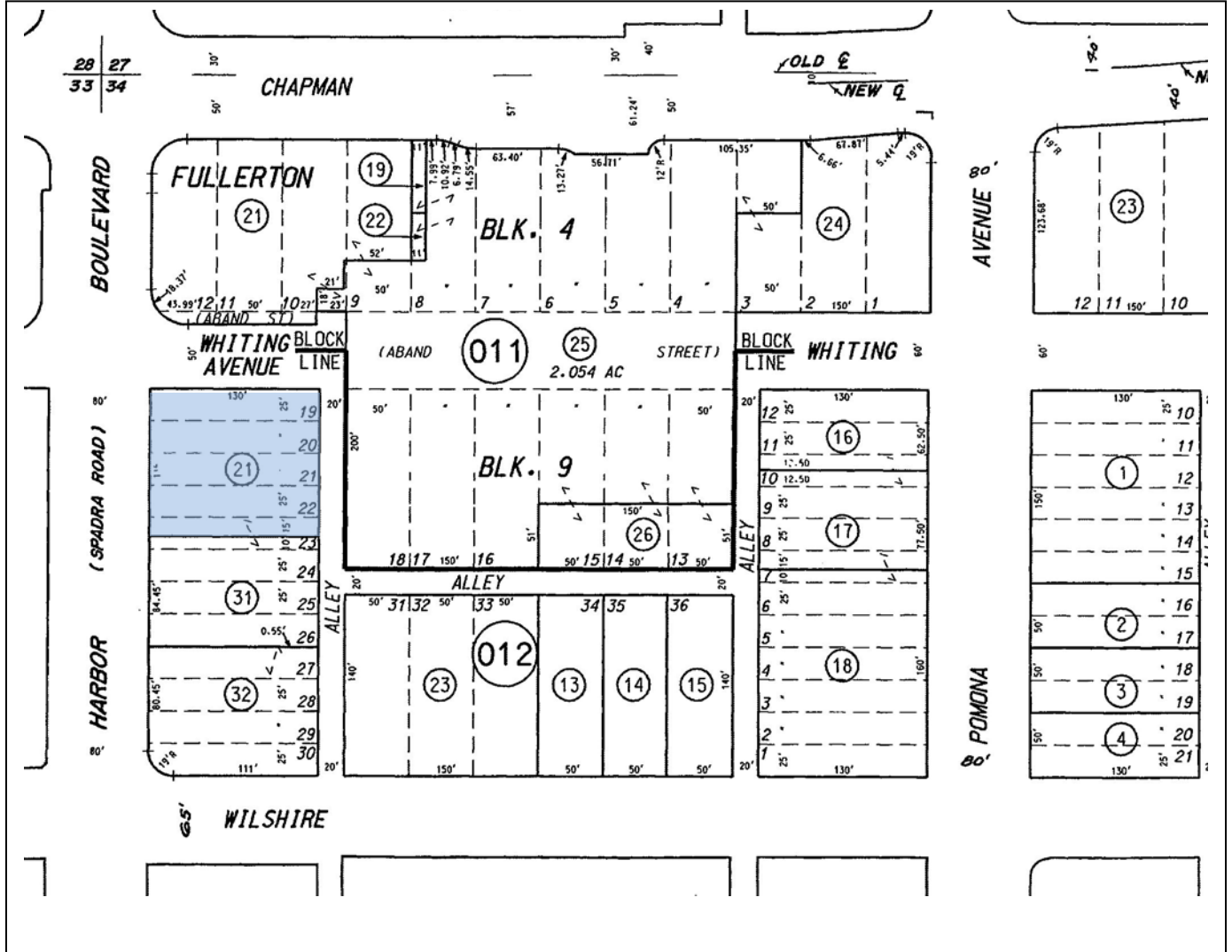
**Location Map 2: Fullerton Street Map, 2017**  
Source: Bing Maps



Pomona Court and Apartments  
Name of Property

Orange, CA  
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**Location Map 3: Assessor Parcel Map, showing property of Pomona Court and Apartments**  
Source: County of Orange, CA



.45-acre property of the Pomona Court & Apartments



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**Location Map 4: Annotated Aerial Photo of Pomona Court & Apartments property**  
Source: Google Earth, photo taken 2017; annotated by Bob Linnell



**————— .45-acre property boundary**

**Property coordinates: 33.873096 latitude; 117.921808 longitude**

Pomona Court and Apartments  
Name of Property

Orange, CA  
County and State

### Additional Information

Figure 1: Sanborn Map of 1927; subject property shaded in light blue

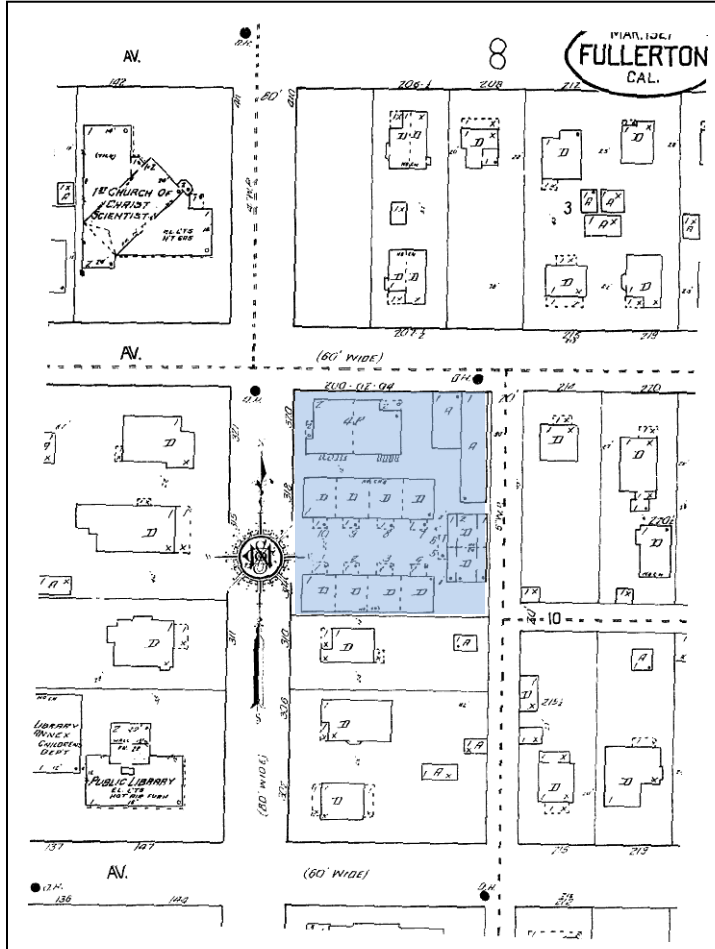


Figure 2: 1927 photo of Pomona Court looking east from Pomona Avenue  
Source: *Fullerton: Where, What, and Why*, Fullerton Chamber of Commerce publication, 1927



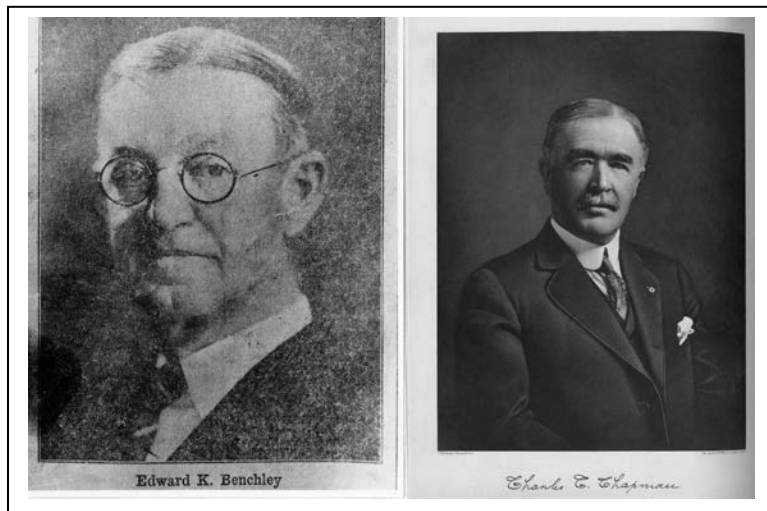
Pomona Court and Apartments  
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**Figure 3: 1927 photo of Pomona Apartments looking east from Pomona Avenue**  
Source: *Fullerton: Where, What, and Why*, Fullerton Chamber of Commerce publication, 1927

**Figure 4: Portrait photos of Edward K. Benchley (left) and Charles C. Chapman**  
Source: Fullerton Public Library, Local History Room



**Figure 5: 1946 photo of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert D. Coon**





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Figure 6: Advertisement by the Fullerton Improvement Company  
Source: Fullerton New Tribune, June 22, 1921

*A Sound Investment and an Opportunity to Assist in  
Making Fullerton a Greater City*

# FULLERTON IMPROVEMENT CO.

FARMERS AND MERCHANTS NATIONAL BANK BUILDING

*Offers \$30,000 of Their Stock  
To be Sold at Par, viz: \$50.00 per Share*

*The Stock will pay between 8 and 10 Per Cent. with  
every reason to believe that this rate of interest  
will increase as the city grows*

The Fullerton Improvement Company, organized 12 years ago, for the purpose of building business blocks, dwellings, etc., in our city, first built the building now occupied by the Farmers & Merchants National bank, which was afterwards sold to the said bank. Next they built the building on the corner of Spadra and Wilshire occupied by the City Hall, Radio Theater, Groceteria, Fullerton Club and Dr. Chilton. Last year the absolute necessity for homes caused them to build the Bungalow Courts on North Pomona.

All of these improvements have been very successful financially, and as you will admit, a great improvement to Fullerton.

A short time ago we were approached by the Southern California Edison Company to provide them with offices on a ten-year lease, also by another reliable firm for store accommodation. We then purchased 52 feet frontage on North Spadra directly north of the Christian Church, and have plans drawn for the construction of a two-story brick building providing two storerooms below and 15 office rooms above. This building will be modern in every respect and a much needed improvement for our city.

The Company is now offering to the citizens of Fullerton and District \$30,000.00 of their stock to be sold at par viz: \$50.00 per share. A conservative appraisalment of the present holdings of the company shows this stock to be easily worth \$60.00 per share. Present investors will get the benefit of this surplus.

Under present rentals the stock will pay between eight and ten per cent, with every reason to believe that this rate of interest will increase as the city grows.

We offer you a sound investment and also give you an opportunity of assisting in this very worthy enterprise.

Full information and a financial statement will be given by the Secretary, at above address.

**MAIL THIS COUPON TODAY**

Fullerton Improvement Co.,  
Room 12, Farmers & Merchants Nat'l. Bank Building,  
Fullerton, California.  
Please furnish me with full information regarding the  
stock to be sold by the Fullerton Improvement Company.

Signed .....

Address .....

City and State .....

Pomona Court and Apartments  
 Name of Property

Orange, CA  
 County and State

**Figure 7: Advertisement**  
 Source: *Fullerton News Tribune*, August 7, 1921

**Figure 8: Advertisement**  
 Source: *Fullerton News Tribune*, July 25, 1923

**Figure 9: Advertisement**  
 Source: *Fullerton News Tribune*, August 11, 1921

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**Figure 10: 1978 photo of Pomona Court, looking east from Pomona Avenue**  
Source: Fullerton Public Library, Local History Room



**Figure 11: 1978 photo of Pomona Apartments, looking southeast from Pomona Avenue**  
Source: Fullerton Public Library, Local History Room



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**Figure 12: 2012 photo of Pomona Court, looking east inside entrance on Pomona Avenue**  
Source: Fullerton Public Library, Local History Room



**Figure 13: Undated photo of Pomona Apartments, looking south from Whiting Avenue**  
Source: Fullerton Public Library, Local History Room















Whiting

WELCOME

10





















# 1 + 10  
**PARKING** *Only*  
VIOLATING VEHICLES  
WILL BE TOWED AWAY AT  
VIOLATOR'S EXPENSE  
THE PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA





9

















6

5





NO  
PARKING  
IN  
ALLEY













5























































































UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 11/3/2017      Date of Pending List: 11/27/2017      Date of 16th Day: 12/12/2017      Date of 45th Day: 12/18/2017      Date of Weekly List: 12/14/2017

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept       Return       Reject      12/14/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Edson Beall      Discipline Historian

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_      Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



**Pomona Court and Apartments**  
**Fullerton, Orange County, California**  
**National Register of Historic Places**

The Pomona Court and Apartments includes two identical rows of four attached one-story bungalows and a rear two-story duplex, built in 1922 in the Craftsman style, and a two-story Spanish Colonial Revival apartment building, located in Fullerton, California. Built for the Fullerton Improvement Company and designed by Frank Benchley, the two complementary components on a single lot represent a design solution intended to allow multi-unit housing to fit harmoniously into a district of predominantly single-family homes.

Situated together on one parcel, the Pomona Court and Apartments are located in downtown Fullerton, part of the original city core. The arrangement of the ten-unit bungalow court is U-shaped, creating a sense of enclosure. A walkway connects to each bungalow entrance and around each side of the duplex. The bungalows are wood-framed and coated with stucco, with large porches supported by rectangular battered piers, below a low-pitched gable roof with exposed roof eaves. The main entrances are wood-framed ten-light doors, flanked by double-hung wooden sash windows with plaster sills. The rear duplex mirrors the Craftsman features of the single bungalows, and are slightly larger in size. An eight-stall parking garage sits behind the bungalows. A pergola supported by circular pillars is located at the entrance to the U-shaped bungalow court.

The Pomona Apartments, located on the north side of the property, on the corner of Pomona and Whiting Avenues, with some entrances facing each street. Just as the bungalows were designed to resemble single-family Craftsman homes, the apartment building was designed to resemble a two-story Spanish Colonial Revival home, with a central front entrance and a second-story balcony. The two-story wooden frame building has a stucco exterior, with a low-pitched pantile roof of hollow clay tile. A narrow, square chimney, covered in stucco, is located on the northeastern side of the building, topped with red barrel tile. Entrances to the upstairs apartments are topped with a pent roof above two matching 15-light wooden frame doors. Fenestration consists of wooden multi-light casement and double-hung windows. The building's overall style utilizes simplified elements of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture. Decorative ironwork on balcony railings, air vent grilles, and gate reflect the Spanish Colonial Revival motif. A driveway at the rear of the property provides access to a detached four-stall parking garage.

The property is eligible under Criteria A and C at the local level of significance, for their association with the Fullerton Improvement Company, a real estate and building firm active in Pomona during the first half of the twentieth century. The firm was founded by Edward K. Benchley, who resided at the Pomona Apartments during the last years of his life. The property is also eligible under Criterion C as the work of locally significant master architect Frank Keith Benchley, son of Edward. In the 1920s, he was the city of Fullerton's only licensed architect. The period of significance is 1922 until 1924, from construction of the bungalow courts until the death of Edward K. Benchley.

The nomination is submitted on behalf of the property owner. No letters of support or objection have been received.



Staff supports the nomination as written and recommends that the State Historical Resources Commission recommend that the Pomona Court and Apartments is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance, under Criteria A and C at the local level of significance, with a period of significance of 1922-1924. Staff recommends the State Historic Preservation Officer approve the nomination for forwarding to the National Park Service for listing in the National Register.

William Burg  
State Historian II  
October 4, 2017.





**DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

Lisa Ann L. Mangat, Director

Julianne Polanco, State Historic Preservation Officer  
1725 23rd Street, Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95816-7100  
Telephone: (916) 445-7000 FAX: (916) 445-7053  
calshpo.ohp@parks.ca.gov www.ohp.parks.ca.gov



November 2, 2017

J. Paul Loether  
Deputy Keeper and Chief, National Register and National Historic Landmark Program  
National Register of Historic Places  
Mail Stop 7228  
1849 C St., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Subject: **Pomona Court and Apartments  
Pomona, Orange County, California  
National Register of Historic Places**

Dear Mr. Loether:

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of nomination for the Pomona Court and Apartments to the National Register of Historic Places. This property is located in Pomona, Orange County, California. On October 27, 2017, the State Historical Resources Commission unanimously found the property eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C at the local level of significance, with a period of significance of 1922-1924.

The property is nominated on behalf of the property owner. No public comment in support or objection was received.

If you have any questions regarding this nomination, please contact William Burg of my staff at 916-445-7004.

Sincerely,

*lp* Julianne Polanco  
State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures