

Edward K. Benchley House

604 N. Harbor Boulevard

1915

Craftsman Bungalow

Status: Local Landmark



This impressive Craftsman style bungalow was built in 1915 for Edward K. Benchley, a prominent businessman and Fullerton's second mayor. Edward Benchley, along with Charles Chapman, helped initiate and promote the orange packing industry. He was also active in banking concerns, in particular starting the Farmers and Merchants Bank

The design of this house has been attributed to Benchley's son, Frank, a local architect who worked primarily in Fullerton and Anaheim. In addition to this house, Frank Benchley is credited with designing several other landmark properties in Fullerton: the Pomona Court at 314 North Pomona Avenue; the original California Hotel, now Villa del Sol; the former Masonic Temple, now the Spring Field Conference Center; and the Muckenthaler Estate, now the Muckenthaler Cultural Center.

Although now situated in the midst of a busy commercial area, the house retains its original ambience with its attractive grounds and harmony of building and environment. The house remains essentially unaltered from its original construction, even with its conversion as a group home in 1991. The conversion, however, required the construction of a new exterior staircase at the rear of the house.

This Craftsman design is representative of Frank Benchley's early work in Fullerton. Later on in the early 1920s, he developed a minimalist bungalow architecture for residences before transitioning to more impressive Mission Revival designs for larger buildings.