Fullerton Library

301 N. Pomona Avenue

1941

Spanish Colonial Revival

Status: Local Landmark

The building now being used as the Fullerton Museum Center was originally constructed as the city's fourth library and served in that capacity until 1973. William Starbuck started the community's first library in 1888, in his Gem Pharmacy on the 100 block of East Commonwealth Avenue. The second library was placed in the Chadbourne Building at the northwest corner of Commonwealth Avenue and Spadra Road (now Harbor Boulevard) in 1902. The third, a Carnegie Library obtained through the efforts of Mr. Starbuck, was constructed on this site in 1907. The present building replaced the Carnegie Library in 1941.

This concrete building consists of a main one-and-a-half story structure with two wings and two courtyards.   It was a WPA project, designed by Harry Vaughan. Mr. Vaughan was a prominent architect in the area who also designed the five initial buildings of the Fullerton College campus. The Spanish Colonial style is typical for him, and this building features such exceptional details as the fine moldings over the doorways, tile work and the stained-glass windows. Detailing is subtle and becomes evident only if the building is given more than a passing glance; for example, the copper gutter and downspout system has been incorporated as a design feature.

The building has been used as a museum since 1974. In 1986, the building was renovated and upgraded to accommodate large exhibitions within its three galleries. This public facility also features a gift shop as well as a lecture room with stage. The Museum's premises were enlarged in 1999, as part of a master plan to provide a large public plaza on its west side to stage community events.