

ATTACHMENT B:

Application & Supporting Documentation



PLANNING DIVISION MASTER APPLICATION FORM

Project Address: 760 S. Arroyo Boulevard, Pasadena, Ca 91105

Project Name: Application for Historic Designation

Project Description: (Please describe demolitions, alterations and any new construction) Application for Historic Designation and Application for Historic Property Contract

Zoning Designation: _____ **General Plan Designation:** _____

Valuation (Cost of Project): _____

APPLICANT / OWNER INFORMATION

APPLICANT NAME: Bradley N Hanson

Telephone: [626] 449-8548

Address: 760 S. Arroyo Blvd.

Fax: [] _____

City Pasadena State: Ca Zip: 91105

Email: bhanson91107@yahoo.com

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PROPERTY OWNER NAME: Bradley N Hanson

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Address: 760 S. Arroyo Blvd.

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Email: bhanson91107@yahoo.com

TYPE OF PLANNING REVIEW AND APPROVALS REQUIRED (Mark clearly the type of approval(s) required):

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ADJUSTMENT PERMIT | <input type="checkbox"/> HEIGHT AVERAGING | <input type="checkbox"/> PREDEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONCESSION OR WAIVER | <input type="checkbox"/> HILLSIDE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIEF FROM THE REPLACEMENT BUILDING PERMIT REQUIREMENT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HISTORIC DESIGNATION (MONUMENT, LANDMARK, TREE OR SIGN) | <input type="checkbox"/> SIGN EXCEPTION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CERTIFICATE OF EXCEPTION | <input type="checkbox"/> HISTORICAL RESEARCH/EVALUATION | <input type="checkbox"/> TENTATIVE PARCEL/TRACT MAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CHANGES TO APPROVED PROJECT | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDMARK TREE PRUNING | <input type="checkbox"/> TEMP. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT | <input type="checkbox"/> MASTER DEVELOPMENT PLAN | <input type="checkbox"/> TREE PROTECTION PLAN REVIEW |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DESIGN REVIEW | <input type="checkbox"/> MASTER SIGN PLAN | <input type="checkbox"/> TREE REMOVAL |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> MINOR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT | <input type="checkbox"/> VARIANCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> EXPRESSIVE USE PERMIT | <input type="checkbox"/> MINOR VARIANCE | <input type="checkbox"/> VARIANCE FOR HISTORIC RESOURCES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR) INCREASE | <input type="checkbox"/> PLANNED DEVELOPMENT ZONE | <input type="checkbox"/> ZONE CHANGE (MAP AMENDMENT) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PRELIMINARY PLAN CHECK | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: _____ |

Note: Space for signature is on reverse side

INDEMNIFICATION

Applicant agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the City and its officers, contractors, consultants, employees, and commission members (collectively, "City") from any and all liability, loss, suits, claims, damages, costs, judgments and expenses (including attorney's fees and costs of litigation), including any appeals thereto (collectively, "proceeding") brought against the City with regard to any approvals issued in connection with the application(s) by the City, including any action taken pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. If Applicant is required to defend the City in connection with such proceeding, the City shall have and retain the right to approve counsel to so defend the City; and all significant decisions concerning the manner in which the defense is conducted; and any and all settlements, which approval shall not be unreasonably withheld. The City shall also have and retain the right to not participate in the defense, except that the City agrees to reasonably cooperate with Applicant in the defense of the proceeding. If the City's Attorney's Office participates in the defense, all City Attorney fees and costs shall be paid by Applicant. Further, Applicant agrees to defend, indemnify and hold harmless the City from and for all costs and fees incurred in additional investigation or study of, or for supplementing, revising, or amending, any document if made necessary by said proceeding.

CERTIFICATION:

I hereby certify that I am the applicant or designated agent named herein and that I am familiar with the rules and regulations with respect to preparing and filing this petition for discretionary action, and that the statements and answers contained herein and the information attached are in all respects true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT OR AGENT: *Russell, G. Hansen* Date: 5-3-13

<p>For Office Use Only</p> <p>PLN # <u>2013-00195</u></p> <p>CASE # _____</p> <p>PRJ # _____</p> <p>DATE ACCEPTED: <u>5/3/13</u></p> <p>DATE SUBMITTALS RECEIVED: _____</p> <p>RECEIVED BY (INITIALS): <u>tes</u></p> <p>FEES:</p> <p>BASE FEE: \$ <u>0</u></p> <p>3% RECORDS FEE: \$ _____</p> <p>TOTAL: \$ _____</p> <p>HISTORIC ARCH. RESEARCH REQUIRED? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>PUBLIC ART REVIEW REQUIRED? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>TRANSPORTATION REVIEW REQUIRED? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>INCLUSIONARY HOUSING REQUIRED? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>REVIEW AUTHORITY:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> STAFF</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HEARING OFFICER</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> PLANNING COMMISSION/BZA</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> DESIGN COMMISSION</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> CITY COUNCIL</p> <p>TAXPAYER PROTECTION</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> DISCLOSURE REQUIRED</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NOT REQUIRED</p>	<p>CEQA REVIEW:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXEMPTION</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> INITIAL STUDY</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> EIR</p> <p>CEQA REVIEW STATUS:</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PENDING</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> COMPLETED</p>	<p>Design & Historic Preservation:</p> <p>TYPE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> CATEGORY 1 (DESIGNATED)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> CATEGORY 2 (ELIGIBLE)</p> <p>LANDMARK/HISTORIC DISTRICT NAME: _____</p> <p>TYPE OF DESIGN REVIEW:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> CONCEPT</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> FINAL</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> CONSOLIDATED</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION</p>
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NEW PLN: 2013-00509
Accepted: 10/24/13



Note: In addition to this application, a completed **Planning Division Master Application Form** is also required.

PROPERTY PROPOSED FOR DESIGNATION

1. Name of Property:	Residence for Mr. & Mrs. Lansing D. Beach
2. Property Address:	760 S. Arroyo Blvd. Pasadena, Ca 91105
3. Date of Original Construction	1927
4. Original Owner	Mr. Lansing D. Beach
5. Architect / Builder:	Witmer and Watson, architects George P. Rattenbury, contractor

DESIGNATION CATEGORY

(CHECK APPROPRIATE BOX—SEE CRITERIA ON PAGES 2 & 3 FOR MORE INFORMATION):

HISTORIC MONUMENT

LANDMARK

HISTORIC SIGN

LANDMARK TREE

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

Briefly describe the property proposed for designation, indicating whether the entire site or a portion of the site is the subject of the nomination (e.g., how many buildings or objects on the site are included in the nomination) or if the nomination is for an object, sign or tree. A map may be used for the description. Please also submit recent and, if available, historical photographs. Use additional sheets if necessary.

(see attached)

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION ON SIGNIFICANCE OF PROPERTY

With this application, please attach information that will assist staff with the preparation of a designation report. Books, photographs, articles, and other archival information will all be useful to document the significance of the nominated resource.

Refer to bibliography, historical photographs, chronology, and other supporting information.



CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATING A HISTORIC SIGN	
<input type="checkbox"/>	A. It is exemplary of technology, craftsmanship or design of the period when it was constructed, uses historic sign materials and means of illumination, and is not significantly altered from its historic period. Historic sign materials shall include metal or wood facings, or paint directly on the façade of a building. Historic means of illumination shall include incandescent light fixtures or neon tubing on the exterior of the sign. If the sign has been altered, it must be restorable to its historic function and appearance.
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. It is integrated with the architecture of the building.
<input type="checkbox"/>	C. It demonstrates extraordinary aesthetic quality, creativity, or innovation.

CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATING A LANDMARK TREE	
<input type="checkbox"/>	A. It is one of the largest or oldest trees of the species located in the City.
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. It has historical significance due to an association with a historic event, person, site, street, or structure.
<input type="checkbox"/>	C. It is a defining landmark or significant outstanding feature of a neighborhood.

DESIGNATION PROCESS (INFORMATION ONLY; NO ACTION REQUIRED)
§17.62.050 Pasadena Municipal Code:

1. A preliminary evaluation by staff to determine if the nominated property meets the applicable criteria and is eligible for designation.
2. If staff determines that the nominated property is eligible for designation, the nomination is scheduled for a public hearing before the Historic Preservation Commission. If not, the applicant may appeal the determination of ineligibility to the Historic Preservation Commission or it may be called for review by the Historic Preservation Commission or City Council.
3. If the Historic Preservation Commission finds that the nominated resource qualifies for designation, it forwards a recommendation on the designation to the City Council.
4. At a noticed public hearing, the Council then determines whether to approve or disapprove the application.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

The Lansing and Katharine Beach Residence is a French Eclectic style residence constructed in 1927 and designed by the noted architectural team of David Witmer and Loyall Watson. George P. Rattenbury was the contractor of record.

The Beach Residence is a two-story residence with an L-shaped plan, steeply-pitched hipped roof, and exhibiting an exterior clad in smooth-finish unpainted stucco. The home features many hallmark characteristics of the French Eclectic style—also sometimes referred to as French Norman Revival (referencing the area of France the original building tradition is borrowed from), including: tall and steeply pitched roof shape absent of dominant cross-gables, centered front entry and formal detailing (evidenced by the stone door surround with dentil molding of the Beach House).

The property is located just beyond the border of the Lower Arroyo Seco Historic District and is prominently visible from the street. An original low Arroyo stone wall provides some separation from the sidewalk. [The home is featured in the driving tour – Architecture Tour Guidebook]. The front façade is austere and reflects the architectural tradition of a small French Manor house, with restrained formal detailing and a rectilinear masonry grill to the left of the front entry. Windows consist of French doors at the first story and casements (some shed dormers through the cornice) on the second. The rear façade is characterized by an L-shape that frames an original Calabasas stone and brick terrace. A rounded oriel or half-tower marks the intersection of the L, with shed dormers through the cornice also found on this rear façade. Comparisons to historic photographs show slight changes to some of the rear windows/openings. Apart from an original brick and stone terrace along the back of the house, the rear of the property features a garden designed and installed in the 2000s by Cynthia Varsi. The garden is partially enclosed with formal hedge plantings. Measuring approximately 2,628 square-feet, the home's interior contains many original features including: plaster walls, built-in bookcases and fireplace in the living room, moldings, and window/door hardware.

The site measures approximately 12,925 square-feet and accommodates the main house and a garage. The exterior of the home and important elements of the garden/site are intact from the historical period. Known alterations to the site and exterior include:

- Gardens -- Removal of some plantings and garden features and the addition of new elements (garden walls, plantings, and ironwork) in creation of the Cynthia Varsi garden (c.2000). Original elements remaining include: low arroyo stone wall at front of lot, specimen oak in front yard, gravel drive, rear terrace of Calabasas stone and brick.
- Exterior – Iron screen/gate at front entry (c.2000), stained glass added to original wood casements (date unknown), and some openings changed on the rear extension of the L portion of the plan of the house (recent).

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Significance: The Beach Residence is significant as an intact representation of the residential work of Loyall Watson and Colonel David Witmer, master architect and chief architect of the Pentagon (Comer 1986: 99). While drawing on Medieval building traditions, the home also embodies the austere restraint and lack of ornamentation that could later be found in buildings of the Modern movement. In addition to its architectural lineage, the residence is also significant as the home of Mr. and Mrs. Lansing D. Beach. While not readily characterized under the traditional definition of an influential person, Katharine Beach could be considered influential and notable for her contribution to our country as an ambulance driver in the armed forces during the war. It was during her time in France that she met her husband, Lieutenant Colonel Lansing D. Beach.

The history of this home is filled with a rich tapestry of military connections. Lansing was the son of decorated Major General Lansing Beach, Chief of Engineers for the Corps of Engineers and member of the International Water Commission from 1924 to 1930. Lieutenant Colonel Lansing Beach served in World War I with his father. Katharine Beach traveled to France in her 'twenties to serve in the armed forces as an ambulance driver. When Katharine and Lansing chose an architect to design their home on the Arroyo they chose Witmer Watson (a Colonel and later chief architect of the Pentagon) to design a home in the French Eclectic-Norman Revival style to remind them of their meeting in France. (Biographical information on Witmer and Watson, Lansing and his father, and Katharine are included as attachments)

The Beach Residence has a long history with recognition as a significant architectural resource. The home was first recognized in 1929 when it received an award in a National Small-House competition for *House Beautiful*. It was also featured in *California Arts and Architecture*. March 25th of 2001 the home was included with a select few for Pasadena Heritage's Spring Home Tour "The Medieval Manor Houses of Pasadena." Included in a guided driving tour, it is published in *An Architecture Tour Guidebook*. In the early 2000s the Cynthia Varsi garden was featured in several garden tours.

Witmer & Watson designed numerous structures during their partnership. A review of the architects' work was written in 2003 as part of a history of the Ramona School in the city of San Bernardino. This document has been attached, as it also includes a biography of both architects. The Beach Residence is an important piece in the story of Witmer's professional journey as it represents his contribution to French Eclectic style and serves as an example of his addition to the Lower Arroyo Seco neighborhood – well stocked with the works of skilled architects of the day. Coincidentally, or not coincidentally, Witmer won a certificate of honor from the Southern California Chapter of the AIA in 1927 – the same year the Beach house was completed.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION (attached – from Grant Deed)

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Note: This property is well-documented through historic photographs (there is even one showing the lot before the house was constructed). These photographs, along with scanned versions of the original blueprints, have been included in digital format on the accompanying CD.

✦ PASADENA HERITAGE PRESENTS ✦



*The Medieval
Manor Houses
of Pasadena*

2001 SPRING HOME TOUR

✦ SUNDAY, MARCH 25th ✦

SPONSORED BY GLABMAN'S



**The
Lansing and
Katharine
Beach Residence**

760 South Arroyo Blvd.

Built: 1927

Architect: David Witmer
& Loyall Watson

This award-winning French Norman revival manor has been home to only two owners; the first were Lansing and Katharine Beach. Lansing Beach was born in 1891 in New York. Due to his father's active career in the U.S. Army Engineers, his family moved frequently during his childhood. Both father and son were sent to Europe when the United States entered World War I. Katharine Beach was born in 1892 in Indiana. In her early twenties, she traveled to France to serve in the armed forces as an ambulance driver, and here the adventurous Katharine caught the eye of Lieutenant Colonel Lansing Beach. Upon returning to the United States, the two were married.

Settling in Pasadena, the couple commissioned the architectural firm of Witmer & Watson to design a home reminiscent of the domestic architecture found in the country of their courtship. David Witmer and Loyall Watson were then making a name for themselves in Southern California through their austere yet strikingly elegant architectural designs. The plans drawn for Lansing and Katharine Beach evoked a medieval French manor, and though scant ornamentation was added to the residence, the overall effect is one of grace and charm. Witmer & Watson's design for the home received an award in the *The House Beautiful's* Small-House Competition of 1929, and was afterwards featured in *California Arts & Architecture*.



Toad Hall

363 Anita Drive

Built: 1926

Architect: Donald Wilkinson

This remarkable home was built for William D. [unclear] partners of the real estate firm, Myers-Jones Co. [unclear] the subdivision of Cheviotdale Heights in the English Tudor Revival style of architecture, this home built on Anita Drive (the first was at 410.) Al Toad Hall after the manor home in the children's class *Willows*, the house was designed by architect Donald [unclear] At that time, Wilkinson was working as the chief architect for Meyer and Holler, where he took a major part in the design of the Chinese Theater and the Hollywood Athletic Club. [unclear] on commissions of his own, and one of those commissions

Magnificent in size and skill of design, Toad Hall appears out of a fairy-tale in its surrounding of post-war housing and brickwork, hand-adzed beams, mock half-timbered dormers give this home a unique charm. The interior is with large-scaled rooms decorated with wainscoting, beamed ceilings and tracery. The Depression ended the [unclear] in Pasadena; when the economy recovered after World [unclear] manors such as this were unfortunately no longer in v[unclear]

◆ The Medieval Manor Houses of Pasadena ◆

It may be surprising to some that America has its own "medieval" architecture, built by the early colonists in Massachusetts, Connecticut and Virginia. Though constructed after the Medieval period (500 – 1500 A.D.) the colonists built homes that reflected the conventional housing styles of their native countries which spanned back several centuries. Examples such as Bacon's Castle (1655, Surry County, Virginia), and the more widely known House of the Seven Gables (1668, Salem, Massachusetts), were built utilizing the architectural traditions of the Middle Ages. As with the American colonists' housing patterns, the inspiration for the architecture that we now refer to as "English Tudor" or "French Norman" can be traced back to medieval Anglo and Gallic building traditions. What is generally referred to in America as "English Tudor" is historically inaccurate, as the style is actually based on a variety of late Medieval English models, ranging from thatch-roofed cottages to grand manor houses. Likewise, the "French Norman" style has its own medieval French prototypes, and examples of this historic building type are found primarily in Normandy.

Around the beginning of the twentieth century, a large number of grand houses sprang up in Pasadena in the "English Tudor" style. The English Tudor homes built between 1890 and 1915 tended to have rather box-like facades with applied ornamentation. What was lacking in aesthetics, however, was made up in the enormous size of these houses, often three stories in height and containing over twenty rooms. Most of these structures, unfortunately, did not survive past the 1950s.

In the 1920s, an architectural phenomenon occurred that has yet to be rivaled. The Period Revival trend of this decade created some of the most magnificent and inspired work by local architects, most of which have withstood the test of time. Spanish *haciendas*, Italian *palazzos*, English Manors, and French Norman *petites maisons* were designed for affluent Pasadenans who desired the permanence and tradition that historic European architecture represented. The English Tudor Revival house, perhaps the most fanciful of them all, soon ornamented every prosperous neighborhood in Pasadena. Smaller, less decorative English Tudor homes quickly became the rage for middle class subdivisions, a trend that was also mimicked by the Spanish Colonial Revival style. The French Norman style, less ornamental than its English Tudor cousin, nevertheless witnessed great popularity in Pasadena for those wishing to bestow a more sedate appearance. Generally, this style included a tower in its design, which lent a whimsical aspect to the unadorned façade. Though never a popular middle class style, Norwic Place in Altadena contains delightful examples of the more modest French Norman home.

**THE ARCHITECTURE & HISTORY OF
WITMER & WATSON'S
RAMONA SCHOOL, CITY OF SAN BERNARDINO, CALIFORNIA**

by

David M. Van Horn, Laurie S. White, & Robert S. White

March 2003



View of cloister flanking southern courtyard.

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Growth of the Latino Community

History of the Ramona School

REFERENCES CITED

APPENDIX A: Partial List of the Works of Witmer & Watson

Editor's Note:

This paper comprises a brief version of an earlier, much lengthier assessment of the City of San Bernardino's Ramona School which was built in 1926 (Van Horn et al. 1999). The long-lost original blueprints for the school were discovered during the course of that study. These plans include every imaginable detail of the school's construction, even down to the manufacturer of the flagpole and the species used in landscaping. The plans also identified the firm of Witmer & Watson as the school's architects, a fact which had somehow become lost over the years. We concluded that the Ramona School was an important piece of public architecture executed by masterful, if poorly known, architects. For these reasons, we present the information which follows.

ARCHITECTS OF THE RAMONA SCHOOL

David J. Witmer

David Julius Witmer was the son of Joseph Myer Witmer and Josephine Sullivan Witmer. Joseph (J.M.) Witmer and his brother, Henry Clayton (H.C. Witmer) were two important entrepreneurs of late 19th century Los Angeles. Together, they owned 650 acres on Crown Hill and, in 1885, they built Los Angeles' first cable car line (Second Street Cable Co.; Comer 1988). In 1887, J.M. and H.C. founded the California Bank at Second and Broadway (later to become the Interstate Bank). Unfortunately, both brothers died at a very early age, apparently due to an inherited heart problem. David J. Witmer was only nine when his father passed away (Comer 1986:77).



In 1910, Witmer received his bachelor's degree from Harvard and in 1912, he graduated from that college's Graduate School of Architecture. During graduate school, he worked as a draftsman for the Boston firm of C.H. Blackall. After graduation, he returned to southern California where he married Helen Elizabeth Williams. The couple had two sons, David and Peter, and a daughter Elizabeth (Marquis 1976:444). In 1919, he formed a partnership with Loyall F. Watson--a partnership which was destined to last nearly forty years. He began WW I as a first lieutenant in the aviation section of the Signal Corp (1917-18). He subsequently became a captain in the Air Service Reserve Corps (1918-19).

During the booming twenties, Witmer and Watson designed many houses in addition to public structures such as the Ramona School. But during the Great Depression, contracts were fewer and further between. Between 1934 and 1938, David Witmer served as the Architectural Supervisor for the Southern California District of the Federal Housing Authority (ibid.). It may be this government connection which eventually led Witmer to the Pentagon design team. In any event, he served as the War Department's co-chief architect (with Edwin Bergstrom) for the Pentagon in 1941-42 and as chief architect for the Pentagon between 1942 and 1943.

After 1943, Witmer appears to have served in Europe where he became a Colonel and earned many decorations including the Bronze Star and Legion of Merit (US), and decorations from the French, Belgian, and Luxembourg governments. Between 1948 and

1950, David Witmer served as Chief Control Officer, Civil Affairs Division, at Headquarters of the European Command (under Gen. Eisenhower).

In spite of Witmer's deep military involvement, he also managed to remain active in architectural affairs. No doubt, this was partly thanks to his partner, Watson, who kept things going at their firm in southern California while Witmer was away. But Witmer also maintained his relations with California architecture by holding various offices. From 1925 to 1941, he was chairman of the Advisory Committee on College Architecture for the University of Southern California. He was Director of Library Architecture and Allied Arts in Los Angeles from 1938 and became President of the Board of Directors in 1952. He was a member of the commission of architects for the Associated Colleges of Claremont and was a member of the Advisory Council on College Architecture to the University of California, Berkeley.

Mr. Witmer first joined the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1922 and, in 1934, he was made a fellow of that organization "for design and service to the institute" (Koyl 1962:773). He served as an officer in the Southern California Chapter of the AIA for many years and was President in 1926-27 and 1938.

Clearly an individual of great energy and vision, David J. Witmer won a number of architectural awards including certificates of honor from the Southern California Chapter of the AIA for residential architecture (1923-24, 1926, 1927) and apartment architecture (1926). In 1933, he won a certificate of honor from the San Diego Chapter for his design of the 46th Street School (ibid.).

Loyall F. Watson

Aside from a small newspaper photograph (Los Angeles Times 7/7/29 pt.5, p.4), our research revealed little about the life of Loyall F. Watson. He served as a 1st Lieutenant in the Army during WWI but the armistice was signed before his scheduled departure for France (SWBC 1919:8). In 1920, Watson received a certificate to practice architecture in California in 1920 (SWBC 1920:12). Mr. Watson was apparently married twice, first to Florence Watson (through the 1930's), then to Mildred A. Watson (after 1940). From 1926 into the 1930's, the Los Angeles City Directory indicated the Watsons resided at 263 S. Carondelet, just north of Beverly Blvd. (LACD 1930). They later moved to 532 S. Gramercy Place in Hancock Park, just north of Wilshire Blvd. (LACD 1940).

Unlike his partner, Watson seems to have been a rather private person who did not appear to be particularly active in the AIA or other professional or community organizations. Watson ran the firm in Witmer's absence but we know of no structures which can be attributed to these periods. It seems probable that Watson performed most of the engineering duties connected with the firm's design projects.

In 1951, Witmer and Watson became Witmer, Watson, and Pidgeon, Lowell Walter Pidgeon having risen within the firm (ibid.; Witmer 1999:pers.comm.). In 1960, the firm became Witmer and Pidgeon, Loyall Watson apparently having retired. David J. Witmer

died on May 5, 1973 at the age of 84; a week after having become ill at a banquet of the American Institute of Architects (Los Angeles Times 1973). Although he had traveled, he had always maintained his residence at 210 Witmer Street on Crown Hill; a house which he had designed himself back in 1921.

The Architecture of Witmer & Watson

The partnership of Witmer & Watson began in 1919 and the firm continued to design structures for forty years. Insofar as we are aware, no one has compiled a complete list of the buildings designed by Witmer & Watson but many are known. A partial list, based on the research conducted for this report may be found in Appendix A.

No critical review of Witmer & Watson's work exists and development of such a review is beyond the scope of this study. Nonetheless, certain observations may be in order, particularly insofar as they ultimately relate to the architecture of the Ramona School. According to his son Peter, David Witmer was an admirer of Myron Hunt, an architect who usually worked in partnership with Elmer Grey or, later, with H.C. Chambers (Witmer 1999:pers.comm.). Arriving from the mid-west shortly after the turn-of-the-century, Hunt and Grey became the chief competition of Greene and Greene for residential architecture. But unlike Greene and Greene, whose Craftsman style was ill-suited for public structures, Hunt and Grey could design major public buildings (Clark 1983:25).

Hunt had traveled extensively in Italy during the 1890's and "later published a photographic study of Italian peasant architecture" (ibid.). Although he introduced certain Spanish Colonial Revival elements to his buildings (e.g. canales) in an apparent attempt to accommodate southern California hispanic traditions, an Italian or "Mediterranean" feel usually pervades his work (e.g., the Wattles house in Hollywood [1907]; ibid. fig. 11). This combination of Italian and Spanish elements, which is sometimes referred to as the Mediterranean/Spanish style, became increasingly simplified as time went on. By the 30's, Hunt's work had become so simplified in its treatment of fenestration and details "that its volumes and surfaces come close to Moderne (ref. Hunt & Chambers, Dr. O.C. Welbourn residence, Encino [1940]; Gebhard & Von Breton 1989:98).

This tendency toward simplification, particularly in details, of the traditional "orthodox" architectural styles, can be seen in some of Witmer's and Witmer & Watson's early work. Perhaps the house Witmer designed for himself at 210 Witmer Street (1921) is among the best examples. One's first impression of this two-story residence is that its style represents simplified Spanish Colonial Revival. But the building totally lacks the usual Spanish Colonial Revival decoration. The balconies are guarded with simple straight wrought iron rails. The strongly showing form board marks convey an impression of adobe as opposed to stucco. There are no flower boxes under the casement windows nor engaged spindles around the doors. In fact, the only element approaching decoration is a prominent circular barred vent in the gable. The Mediterranean/ Spanish style as practiced by Witmer, was Spanish Colonial Revival without the frills.

Poured concrete walls with prominent form marks showing is a trademark which appears in a number of Witmer & Watson structures. These include his family residences at 208 and 210 Witmer Street (1920-1921), the Tudor home at 2020 Edgemont (ca. 1925; fig. 1), and the Ramona School (1926; doubtless there are other examples). While decoration is generally sparse in Witmer & Watson buildings, their Mediterranean/Spanish style structures may feature a rectilinear masonry grill. These appear to either side of the courtyard proscenium (stage) at the Ramona School. They also occur at the Venice Branch Library and to the left of the main entry of the Lansing D. Beach residence (1928) in Pasadena. The latter home won honorable mention in a national architectural contest (Comer 1986:83). Finally, the prominent circular vent, particularly in gables, is often found in Witmer & Watson structures.



Figure 1. Tutor influenced concrete residence on Edgemont Street near Los Feliz, Los Angeles County

In summary, Witmer & Watson designed buildings in a number of different styles, one of which was Mediterranean/Spanish. Typically, their Mediterranean/Spanish designs exhibit relatively little decoration, preferring to let the structural elements such as the concrete, roof tiles, and casement windows speak for themselves. These designs harken to the style of Myron Hunt, whom David Witmer admired, and also probably represent acknowledgment of the current trend toward practicality in architecture.

But the talents of Witmer & Watson were not restricted to tasteful adaptation of reinforced concrete construction to traditional architectural styles. It was their clever use of seismically resilient reinforced concrete elements at a relatively early date which makes Witmer & Watson stand out. Most of these elements, including reinforced sheer walls, bond beams, arched buttress/passageways, and earthquake joints are incorporated into the Ramona School building. By designing public buildings, and particularly schools, which were inexpensive to build, seismically sound, and long-lasting, Witmer & Watson were responding to a growing public need (Hill 1929).