



NAME	YMCA			REF. NO.	6
ADDRESS	203-205 West Civic Center Drive				
CITY	Santa Ana	ZIP	92701	ORANGE COUNTY	
YEAR BUILT	1923	LOCAL REGISTER CATEGORY: Landmark			
HISTORIC DISTRICT		NEIGHBORHOOD	N/A		
NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION	A, C	NATIONAL REGISTER STATUS CODE	1S		

Location:  Not for Publication  Unrestricted

USGS 7.5" Quad \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ T \_\_\_\_\_ R \_\_\_\_\_ ¼ of \_\_\_\_\_ ¼ of Sec \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ B.M.

Prehistoric  Historic  Both

**ARCHITECTURAL STYLE:** Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival

**DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND RELATED TO PERIOD ARCHITECTURE:**

The Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival style, as its name implies, encompasses two major subcategories. The Mission Revival vocabulary, popular between 1890 and 1920, drew its inspiration from the missions of the Southwest. Identifying features include curved parapets (or *espadana*); red tiled roofs and coping; low-pitched roofs, often with overhanging eaves; porch roofs supported by large, square piers; arches; and wall surfaces commonly covered in smooth stucco. The Spanish Colonial Revival flourished between 1915 and 1940, reaching its apex during the 1920s and 1930s. The movement received widespread attention after the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego in 1915, where lavish interpretations of Spanish and Mexican prototypes were showcased. Easily recognizable hallmarks of the Spanish Colonial Revival are low-pitched roofs, usually with little or no overhangs and red tile roof coverings, flat roofs surrounded by tiled parapets, and stuccoed walls. The Spanish vocabulary also includes arches, asymmetry, balconies and patios, window grilles, and wood, wrought iron, tile, or stone decorative elements.

**CONSTRUCTION HISTORY:** (Construction data, alterations, and date of alterations)

March 1923:	YMCA Building.	August 26, 1953:	Addition and alteration within YMCA.
May 10, 1927:	Alterations.	October 6, 1953:	Plastering.
August 6, 1937:	Hardball court.	April 7, 1958:	Hand ball court.
September 12, 1941:	Repairs to office building.	March 25, 1959:	Plastering.
March 6, 1942:	Alterations.	May 5, 1959:	Interior alteration and air conditioning.
August 26, 1952:	Plastering.	March 26, 1971:	Interior alterations.
January 11, 1951:	Repair floors and roof.	August 27, 1984:	Refurbishment, remodel, addition.
August 25, 1952:	Alteration to YMCA.	January 29, 1985:	New block building , 12 x 36.
		August 3, 1985:	Spa.

**RELATED FEATURES:** (Other important features such as barns, sheds, fences, prominent or unusual trees, or landscape)

Two mature camphor trees, although not original according to historic photographs, complement the south elevation of the building.

**DESCRIPTION:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, settings, and boundaries.)

Located on the northwest corner of West Civic Center Drive (the former Church Street) and Sycamore Street, the YMCA is a three-story plus basement building in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. Of concrete construction with a plastered exterior, the building has a rectangular plan oriented around a central, enclosed patio. A tiled hip roof, detailed with enclosed soffits, surmounts the building. The roof overhang, coupled with a plain frieze and a belt course which wraps the building below the third floor openings, impart a horizontal emphasis to the design. These horizontal divisions in combination with a symmetrical composition suggest the influence of the Italian Renaissance Revival. The principal (south) elevation consists of a central recessed block framed by slightly projecting wings. An attached one-story arcade finished in terracotta and topped by a tiled roof announces the central entry. Piers and pilasters with bases and capitals, impost moldings, ornamental roundels, alternating large and small round-headed openings, and a frieze with "YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION" incised into it characterize the arcade. Paired casement windows define the three bays above the arcade on the second and third floors. The focal point of each side wing is the third story, where three arched windows are set into terracotta surrounds and separated by engaged, spiraled columns standing on pedestals. The pedestals sit on a corbeled ledge and are linked by wrought iron railings. Also symmetrical in arrangement, the east elevation features a central, terracotta entrance of Baroque design and a third floor arcade. Although boarded up, the building is substantially intact on the exterior. Alterations include a non-original entrance in the west wing of the south elevation and construction of outbuildings.

Historic photographs indicate that numerous significant interior spaces, materials, and features were part of the original design of the building. However, the interior was not inspected during the preparation of this document and therefore is not described.

**HISTORIC HIGHLIGHTS:**

The Santa Ana branch of the YMCA was organized in 1907 by E. E. Wilson and Warren Douglas. It operated in rented quarters until Ralph Smedley, appointed secretary in 1922, initiated a building campaign that culminated in the construction of this facility at the corner of then Church and Sycamore Streets. Designed by Santa Ana's premier architect, Frederick Eley, the building cost \$185,000. Incorporating a two large lobbies, a dining room, central patio, swimming pool, locker room, meeting rooms, and 83 dormitory rooms, the permanent home of the YMCA was dedicated on April 25, 1924. By that year, the organization was serving 700 or 800 boys in programs intended to foster the physical, moral, intellectual, and spiritual development of young men.

The facility was closed in 1989 and is currently (2001) owned by the City of Santa Ana.

**RESOURCE ATTRIBUTES:** (List attributes and codes from Appendix 4 of Instructions for Recording Historical Resources, Office of Historic Preservation.)

HP 13: Community Center / Social Hall

**RESOURCES PRESENT:**

Building     Structure     Object     Site     District     Element of District     Other

**MOVED?**  No     Yes     Unknown    Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Original Location: \_\_\_\_\_

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:** (Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, geographic scope, and integrity.)

Santa Ana was founded by William Spurgeon in 1869 as a speculative townsite on part of the Spanish land grant known as Rancho Santiago de Santa Ana. Early growth and development was stimulated by the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1878 and the Santa Fe Railroad in 1886. By the end of the 1880s, Santa Ana’s downtown business district was defined by five city blocks of brick commercial buildings on Fourth Street, with the heart of the city at the intersection of Fourth and Main Streets. Following its incorporation as a city in 1886, Santa Ana was recognized as one of the leading communities in the area in 1889 when it became the seat of the newly created County of Orange.

From the beginning, social and fraternal organizations played an important role in the history of the town. The Masons and the Oddfellows both organized in 1875, and were followed before the close of the decade by the Good Templars Lodge and the Workmen Lodge. Dedicated to community service and fellowship, such organizations sponsored community events, often held in halls constructed for the purpose. Spurred by the growth the community experienced during the 1920s, several new associations were founded, and many older groups constructed new homes. The YMCA embodies this trend, having been founded locally in 1907. The new facility was due, in large part, to the energy and vision of Ralph Smedley, the organization’s secretary, who also served as construction superintendent.

The YMCA is historically significant as an important community institution that has, over its existence, positively affected the lives of thousands of young men. It is also architecturally significant, as a fine example of the Spanish Colonial Revival style and as an illustration of the skill of its architect, Frederick Eley. Born and educated in England, Eley came to Southern California via Canada. He opened his office in Santa Ana in 1911 and over the next quarter century was responsible for more public and institutional buildings in Santa Ana, as well as numerous residences, than any other local architect. The YMCA was reputedly one of the commissions of which Eley was the most proud (Richardson, 19).

Character-defining features of the YMCA which should be preserved include, but may not be limited to: building configuration and massing; roof shape, materials, and treatment; primary and secondary exterior materials including terracotta and wrought iron; symmetrical design; original public entries; original fenestration; and significant interior spaces and materials where extant.

**SUMMARY/CONCLUSION:**

This building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places as an individual resource in 1993. Under the regulations implementing the California Register of Historical Resources, the building is also listed in the California Register. The YMCA was the sixth resource to be included in the Santa Ana Register of Historical Property. The property has been categorized as “Landmark” because it “is on the national register,” “is on the state register,” “has historical/cultural significance to the City of Santa Ana,” and “has a unique architectural significance” (Municipal Code, Section 30-2.2).

**OWNER AND ADDRESS:** City of Santa Ana  
P.O. Box 1988  
Santa Ana, CA 92702

**RECORDED BY:** (Name, affiliation, and address)  
Leslie Heumann  
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35 S. Raymond Avenue, Suite 204, Pasadena, CA 91105

**DATE RECORDED:** May 7, 2001

**SURVEY TYPE:** (Intensive, reconnaissance, or other)  
Intensive Survey Update

**REPORT CITATION:** (Cite survey report and other sources)  
Les, Kathleen. "Santa Ana Historic Survey, Final Resources Inventory: Downtown." May 1980.

**REFERENCES:** (List documents, date of publication, and page numbers. May also include oral interviews.)  
Harris, Cyril M. *American Architecture: An Illustrated Encyclopedia*. New York, WW Norton, 1998.  
Marsh, Diann. *Santa Ana, An Illustrated History*. Encinitas, Heritage Publishing, 1994.  
McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984.  
National Register Bulletin 16A. "How to Complete the National Register Registration Form."  
Washington DC: National Register Branch, National Park Service, US Department of the Interior, 1991.  
Richardson, Robert. *Orange County's Premier Architect: Frederick Eley*. Santa Ana Historical Preservation Society, 2001.  
Whiffen, Marcus. *American Architecture Since 1780*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1969.

**EVALUATOR:** Leslie J. Heumann **DATE OF EVALUATION:** May 7, 2001

**EXPLANATION OF CODES:**

- National Register Criteria for Evaluation: (From Appendix 7 of Instructions for Recording Historical Resources, Office of Historic Preservation)
  - A:** that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
  - C:** that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
  
- National Register Status Code: (From Appendix 2 of Instructions for Recording Historical Resources, Office of Historic Preservation)
  - 1S:** Separately listed in the National Register.