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Historic Context Assessment

July 2016

ARTEXCHANGE

July 19, 2016

Jay Hong
Interim Director
Art Exchange
356 E. 3rd Street
Long Beach, CA 90802

Dear Jay and the Art Exchange Board,

I early June 2016 I was asked to submit a proposal for historic research on the Art Exchange buildings (340-356 E. Third Street). The research would be used to support stabilizing historic documentation for this development. We agreed that these options would attempt to include:

1. Development of a context statement that ties the buildings to the historic Wayside Colony, Long Beach's original artists colony, and the greater East Village Arts District.
2. Documentation that could be used for the reconstruction, renovation, rehabilitation, and preservation of the original buildings, especially recently re-discovered windows;
3. Current connections to potential funding sources that might be part of the historical use of these buildings;

I have addressed these options in the following report. Documentation and source citations are included.

Based on my experience additional data and documents will be uncovered and produced. I will continue to be involved with helping to establish a contextual connection between these buildings and the future of the Art Exchange.

Maureen Neeley

Context for the Art Exchange Development:

Early East Village c1900 - 1921

The three buildings that sit on the southwest corner of 3rd and Elm in Long Beach were all erected between 1924-1925.¹ They replaced homes that had been erected prior to 1914.² During the first two decades of the 20th century, Elm was outside of the commercial center of Long Beach. Indeed, aside from dwellings (individual homes and apartment buildings) the closest non-residential activities were those serving cars and congregants: Garages on American Avenue (now Long Beach Boulevard) and churches such as the Friends / Quakers (on 4th and Elm) and the Southern Methodist-Episcopal Church on 3rd and Linden were mostly surrounded by housing. Just to the south, along Second Street (now Broadway) one could find small storefronts lining the railroad tracks that connected downtown to the burgeoning neighborhoods to the east like Belmont Heights and Naples (there was no Belmont Shore in 1914).

Once the Great War was over, however, Long Beach was swept up in the booster culture that permeated all of Southern California. The Sunshine! The Weather! The Water! The Wealth! The Health! Of course, these attributes alone would have grown the city, but Long Beach hit the jackpot when exploratory oil wells paid off. In 1921, a big gusher on Signal Hill heralded a new era. It is no coincidence that the houses on Third and Elm made way for commercial structures.

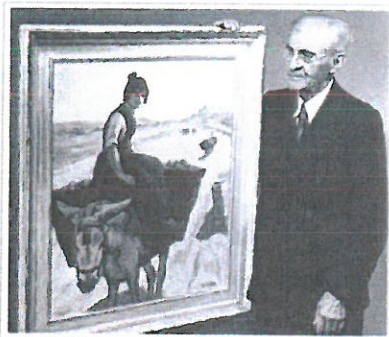
Wayside Colony: An experiment in happiness

The Great War also paved the way for an appreciation of other cultures and as well as a backlash against the anonymity of automation. Many servicemen returned from overseas with widened views about art, food, education, handicrafts, and even flora and fauna. Their travels broadened their horizons. An effort to bring that European culture to Long Beach was led by an ex-serviceman named James Savery.

¹ City of Long Beach building permits for 340-342, 344, and 352-356 E. Third Street.

² The 1914 Sanborn map shows dwellings at 340 and 342 E. Third, as well as on the corner at 253 Elm. This latter home was quite large, with a full wrap-around porch. It was owned by J.M. Wares, of Napier, Ware and Suessmilch, a ship company.

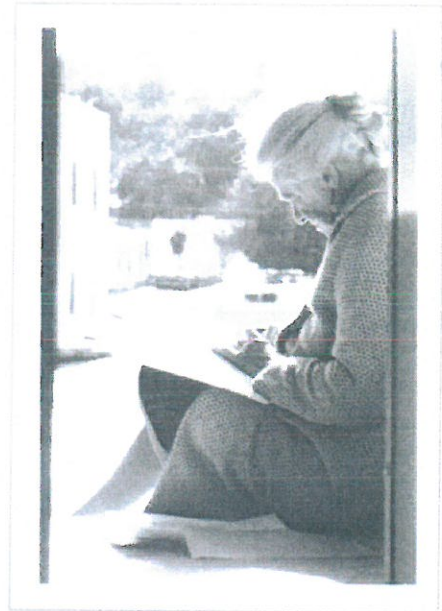
Artists' studios abounded, with many offering lessons. Henry and Catherine Richter shared a studio with watercolorist Grace Miller. China painter, Florence Gendron, also designed the Long Beach entrants for the Rose Parade. Textile artist, Sophie



GALLERY EXHIBITOR—Henry L. Richter, dean of Long Beach artists, will display his paintings in the next P.C.E. exhibition. The Richter has shown in many parts of the country. He is a charter member of the Long Beach Art Association and Spectrum Club, and a life member of the Laguna Art Association. Members and friends are invited to this easel-painting exhibition.

Henry Richter had a studio at Wayside Colony. He taught at Poly H.S. and was a member of Long Beach Arts. (<http://hlr.org/>)

Knagenhjelm, taught weaving as well as sold her pieces from her shop in the Wayside Colony. The Spectrum Club, comprised of only male painters, exhibited in an upstairs gallery. Long Beach Arts Association (which is still in existence) exhibited at the Colony for free.



Catherine Richter was a prolific artist, not only a painter, but wood carver, lithographer, illustrator and weaver. (<http://hlr.org/CMR/CMR%20Main.html>)

Helping Veterans was also of great importance to Savery. For them, he had an old log cabin moved from Cherry and Wardlow onto the property for use by the Disabled American Veterans. Savery also allocated space for odd bits of Long Beach and American history.

After his death in 1931, the Colony ran its course and become more of a shopping center. It was demolished in 1962 for the construction of the Travelodge.³



Location of the old Wayside Colony on Atlantic and First.

³ "The Wayside Colony" by Loretta Berner. *Shades of the Past*. HSLB:Long Beach, 1995 pp. 32-34.

The Artist Colony Tradition Continues

So, we know that by 1922, the East Village had established itself as an Artist Colony. Today, the architectural landscape of today's East Village - bounded by Long Beach Boulevard, 7th Street, Alamitos and Ocean - has managed to adapt its historic buildings to modern uses. Being outside of the oft-redeveloped downtown core has helped maintain the mystique of Savery's vision. Brick flats sit atop small business bays. A mix of authentic Romanesque, Beaux-Arts, Art Deco and Streamline Moderne styles contribute to the community intrigue. The current Art Exchange is poised to capitalize on this interest and connectivity to both historic architecture and historic use.

352-356 E. Third Street Development

The buildings, which house today's Art Exchange, were erected at a time of Long Beach's most robust period. The oil boom, begun in 1921, resulted in a huge building campaign. Long Beach was on the map! Banks, schools, factories, and mills quickly moved in to the city. More important, ancillary businesses followed: laundries, architecture and construction firms, restaurants, and shops. The National Cash



Register Company, founded in Dayton, Ohio in 1884, certainly took notice. All these businesses opening at a fast clip would need cash registers. The Los Angeles office was hours away. They would need a Long Beach presence.

The company charged Los Angeles manager, Calvin U. Whiffen, to oversee the erection of a company office and storefront in Long Beach. Whiffen chose a prestigious L.A. architectural firm to design the flagship building: Dodd and Richards were given the commission in 1924. G.M. Fletcher was tapped for the construction. All together, the imposing structure was to cost \$19,000. The entry in *Southwest Builder and Contractor* described it thus:

G.M. Fletcher, 909 N. Hobart Blvd., L.A., will build a 2-room brick store building at 352 E. 3rd Street, L.B., for C.N. (sic) Whiffen, 1623 Crenshaw Blvd., L.A. comp. roof. \$19,000. Dodd and Richards, archt, L.A.⁴

⁴ "Long Beach News Notes," *Southwest Builder and Contractor*, October 24, 1924, p. 59.

This design, by the architectural team of Dodd & Richards, was truly a statement. Commercial buildings now replaced those three single-family homes on Elm Avenue and Third Street, one by a major L.A. architectural firm. Complete with false gables, imbedded with tri-paned windows accented with a drip mold over detailed muntins, the mezzanine-level windows drew the eye upward. Dodd & Richards were well-known for their Beaux-Arts and Romanesque architecture in downtown L.A. They had previously designed the Pacific Mutual Insurance Building, the Brock and Company Jewelry Store, the Boyle Heights branch library, and the Heron Building. The National Cash Register Company's Long Beach office would instill confidence and excitement in the future of the city's commerce, this time using a Gothic Revival influence.



*This photo depicts the 1924 Dodd & Richards design for National Cash Register Co. . Oriel windows inserted into the false gables make this building a fanciful statement
[c1925. Historical Society of Long Beach archives]*

For nearly 50 years, some version of the National Cash Register reigned on this corner. When it closed its doors at Elm and Third in the 1970s, the Jensen family took over the buildings with their rubber stamp business, moving from their original location across the street. Begun by Uffe O. Jensen (b1900 Minnesota) and his wife, Edna, the company had been a family operation for decades. Jensen Rubber Stamps operated at 356 E. Third until the property was bought

out by the city's redevelopment association in anticipation first as a mixed use project, then as today's non-profit Art Exchange Community Arts Center.

Permits are summarized below:

- 1924 – Erected. [Fletcher, contractor; C.U. Whiffen, owner] Permit #4500, dated 10/21/1924. 50' x 75'. \$19,000 value.
- 1925 – Alteration of store. July 1925. Permit unreadable.
- 1937 – Store building: Alteration and repair. [Atkins & Wiggins, builder; C.U. Whiffen, owner]. Permit C-1394, dated 7/12/1937. \$3,000 value.
- 1947 – Remove 36" wall display cases, replace in new location. Add 54' wood and glass office partitions. Ceiling alteration. [Atkins & Wiggins, builder; National Cash Register Co., owner]. Permit dated 2/21/1947. \$880? value.
- 1952 – Office renovations using brick and steel. [Remington Rand Corp., owner]. Permit dated 4/23/1952. \$750 value.
- 1952 – Partitions, plumbing, electrical and heating. Interior only. [Remington Rand, leasee; Oliver W. Speraw, contractor]. Permit dated 8/4/1952. \$6,000 value.
- 1953 – Suspended furnace install. [W.M. Sandian, owner; Heat Control Co., contractor]. Permit dated 1/20/1953. \$350 value.
- 1974 – Install 3 gas, heat, electric a/c cooling units. [Jensen Rubber Stamp Co., Owner]. Permit dated 8/20/1974. \$4,715 value.
- 1975 – Install aluminum awning. [Jensen, owner; T.H. Liken and Sons, contractor]. Permit dated 6/11/1975. \$300 value.
- 1992 – Complete earthquake repair. [Edna Jensen, owner; Ali Manssauri, contractor]. Permit #115289 dated 11/27/1991. \$40,000 value.

Two additional buildings shared this corner – a two-story apartment with shop below (344-348), and a single story restaurant (340-342) off the alley. They are discussed on the following pages.

Sandell Two Story Flat at 344 – 350 E. Third Street

(Apartment above, commercial below)

- 1924 – Erected. [Shutt Brothers, builder; F.G. Mosey, owner] Permit C-2231, dated 4/17/1924. 45' x 25' x 17'. \$3,600 value.
- 1954 – Partitions installed for addressograph business. [Guy H. Barton, builder]. Permit dated 3/25/1954. \$700 value.
- 1961 – Parapet anchors [H.J. Sandell, contractor and owner]. Permit dated 11/22/1961. \$300 value.
- 1986 – Renovate apartment, windows, heater. [Mr. Build the Whole Thing, builder; Dorothy Counter (Sandell's niece), owner]. Permit dated 7/21/1986. \$7,000 value.
- 1991 – Full earthquake repair. [J.A. Furr Painting and Decorating; David Ward, owner]. Permit C0083424, dated 1/8/1991. \$15,000.



This two-story unit was started in April 1924. The contractor was Shutt Brothers, a well-known and busy construction firm in Long Beach at the time. The owner was F.G. Mosey, though he immediately sold the building to Harry John and Lori Sandell from Minneapolis. They had a young 9-year-old son with them, Harry, Jr., who grew up in the apartment.

The Sandell family were the first and longest occupants of the 2-story mixed use flat at 344 E. Third since it was erected in 1924. Of Swedish heritage, Sandell was born in 1881 in Minnesota. Sandell and his wife, Lora (var. Laura, Lori, nee Larson b. 1882 MN, German heritage) moved to Long Beach post World War I after the birth of their son, Harry, Jr., (b. 1916). Sandell worked in sales for a buggy company while in Minneapolis. He also enjoyed beer, it seems, as he patented two devices for beer kegs: one was a "tap and bush" for beer kegs (filed 1907) and another for a "beer cooling apparatus" (filed in 1913).

The 1930 census notes that the flat was worth \$23,000. Harry and Lori had some wealth and sent their only child to USC. He married Irene Cornelius while still at USC's Dental School. After only a year of marriage, he died of a burst appendix.⁵

⁵ Telephone conversation with Bonnie Boswell, daughter of Irene Cornelius Sandell Arnold, widow of Harry J. Sandell, Jr. [7/26/1016]

They never had children, though his widow remarried and had three children with her new husband. She remained in touch with the elder Sandells until they both died in the mid-1960s.⁶

City Directories noted that various businesses occupied the ground floor space, several of which catered to office needs (typewriters, register repair, addressograph company, accountants, etc.). The apartment stayed in the Sandell family through the mid-1980s when Harry Sr.'s niece, Dorothy Counter, sold it.⁷

340-342 E. Third Street

(Restaurant Space)

- 1924 – Erected. [C.H. Cole, owner and builder] Permit C-1034, dated 4/17/1924. 25' x 45'. \$4,000 value.
- 1951 – Renovate for café, paint and walls. [Smith & Brown, owners; W. Jay Burgin, contractor]. Permit dated 8/9/1951. 20' x 120' building for a restaurant: The Federal Café.
- 1958 – Renovation for café, equipment, ventilation [Jensen and White, contractor and owner]. Permit dated 5/29/1958. \$2,000 value.
- 1964 – Install partitions and paneling for barber shop. [Robert H. Herring, owner and builder. Permit dated 5/8/1964. \$300 value.
- 1974 – Panel walls install. [Joe E. Perez, owner, 220 Elm]. Permit 6806, dated 6/19/1974. \$150 value.
- 1984 – Seismic repair per LB Sub-80. [Mrs. Edna M. Jensen, owner; The Dennis Co, contractor]. Permit 7706, dated 4/16/1984. \$4,000 value.
- 1992 – Complete earthquake repair. [Edna M. Jensen, owner; United Structural Services, contractor]. Permit #115291 dated 2/5/1992. \$27,060 value.



⁶ Lori V. Sandell died 22 Nov 1964 [California Death Index] and Harry J. Sandell died 23 Oct 1965, Obituary, *Long Beach Press Telegram* 10/25/1965.

⁷ Ibid., More Sandell-family lore: Irene, Harry Jr.'s widow of one year, stayed in touch with the senior Sandells, and though Harry Sr. never wanted to see her, Lori Sandell visited during the holidays and hosted Irene and her new family as well. Irene received $\frac{1}{4}$ of the Sandell estate, with the niece, Dorothy Counter, getting $\frac{3}{4}$. Irene always felt she should have received a larger share, since she was married to their only son.

A search of early City Directories indicate that one or both of the bays at 340 and 342 E. Third operated as a restaurant over the past 90 years:

1933 - 1940s – C.H. Perring Restaurant
1950s – Federal Café, Ann Kalich, owner
1960s – The Green Hut Café

Additionally, these storefronts housed such varied local businesses as: Long Beach Filter Co., Foot Comfort Service Co., Brunswig Wholesale Drug Co., Electric Service Shop, Cole Real Estate, Payne Furnace & Supply Co., Bob's Trim Look Barbershop.

California Historical Resource Survey

It is worth noting that all three of these buildings were surveyed in preparation of the Downtown Plan EIR (published December 2010). In an October 2009 survey, Historic Resources Consultants, Jones & Stokes, assigned the following categories to these buildings on Third Street,⁸ breaking them into four addresses:

352 E. Third: Commercial retail building, c1933 (sic) in a commercial vernacular style. Status: 6Z
348 E. Third: Commercial retail building, c1924 in a commercial vernacular style. Status: 6L
344 E. Third: Commercial, c1924 in a commercial vernacular style. Status: 5S3
340 E. Third: Commercial Retail Building, c1924 in a commercial vernacular style. Status: 5S3.

Historical Resource Status Codes (defined):

5S3: Appears to be individually eligible for local listing or designation through survey evaluation.
6L: Determined ineligible for local listing or designation through local government review process; may warrant special consideration in local planning.
6Z: Found ineligible for National, California or Local designation through survey evaluation.

Note: The consultants did not appear to identify the Dodd and Richards connection for 352-356 E. Third.

⁸ "Survey of Historic Properties within Downtown Long Beach: Final Report." ICF Jones & Stokes, October 2009. Appendices A and C.

Funding Approaches

National Cash Register Company – This company was an important economic supplier for businesses in Long Beach. The Dayton corporate office commissioned major Los Angeles architects, Dodd and Richards, to design this Long Beach branch. NCR does maintain a corporate archive. The contact there is Curt Dalton; he can be reached at CDalton@DaytonHistory.org. A brief history of the company is attached to this report. It may be worth pursuing a naming opportunity available either through the [NCR Foundation](#) or directly through the corporate marketing department.

Preservation and Restoration Capital Grants – Foundations such as the [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#) and California's [Office of Historic Preservation](#) list grants on their sites for preservation of historic buildings. These foundations, along with the [Long Beach Navy Memorial Heritage Association](#), usually require the buildings to be registered landmarks.

Naming opportunities: Historic Long Beach Private Grants – Telling the story of the Wayside Colony and relating the Art Exchange/East Village to that historic context may lead to some ancillary funding through local companies and arts groups. These connections may lead to unique naming opportunities. For example, descendants of Jensen Rubber Stamps may be interested in supporting the transformation to the Art Exchange, as might the families of the those artists who worked in the Wayside Colony or owners of the Colonial School. Many of them still live in Long Beach and could be tapped for support or interest in raising funds among peers.

Joining [Long Beach Non-Profit Partnership](#) may prove useful. The center maintains access to the [Foundation Directory](#)⁹ and also assists in grants research, contacts, outreach and education.

⁹ Online access to this directory can cost up to \$200/month.