Title: Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Board Collection
Identifier/Call Number: MS.570
Contributing Institution: Autry National Center, Braun Research Library
Language of Material: English
Physical Description: 0.25 linear feet (7 folders)
Date (inclusive): 1962-1972
Abstract: Contains correspondence on the Cultural Heritage Board (now the Cultural Heritage Commission), municipal art patrons, lectures, walking tours, and a fact sheet on houses from 1962-1972.
Processing history
Processed by Glenna Schroeder, circa 1977-1981. Final processing and finding aid completed by Holly Rose Larson, NHPRC Processing Archivist, 2012 October 8, made possible through grant funding from the National Historical Publications and Records Commissions (NHPRC).
Scope and contents
Contains correspondence on the Cultural Heritage Board (now the Cultural Heritage Commission), municipal art patrons, lectures, walking tours, a fact sheet on houses, and other papers from 1962-1972.
Acquisition
Preferred citation
Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Board Collection, 1962-1972, Braun Research Library Collection, Autry National Center, Los Angeles; MS.570; [folder number] [folder title][date].
Use
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Access
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Historical note
In 1958, a small group of volunteers, as members of the Los Angeles chapter of the American Institute of Architects' (AIA) Historic Building Committee, became alarmed by the destruction of historic landmarks created by the explosion of growth in post-World War II Los Angeles. The AIA Committee and the City's Municipal Art Commission began working on an ordinance that would create a citizens board to survey, identify and protect historic sites throughout the city.
This early work culminated in the passage of the City's Cultural Heritage Ordinance in 1962. Los Angeles' ordinance was one of the earliest pieces of historic preservation legislation in a major urban center, predating by three years the 1965 passage of New York City's renowned Landmarks Preservation Law. The Cultural Heritage Ordinance created a five-member Cultural Heritage Board, giving the Board the responsibility to designate as Historic-Cultural Monuments any building, structure, or site important to the development and preservation of the history of Los Angeles, the state, and the nation.
The first five Historic-Cultural Monuments declared were sites that were all considered threatened to some extent. The Leonis Adobe, located on the border of Calabasas, was under immediate threat of demolition. Immediately upon the Board's designation, a stop work order was issued to stay the demolition of this significant landmark. The Adobe was ultimately saved, and has the honor of being designated as Historic-Cultural Monument #1. Bolton Hall in Tujunga, the Plaza Church at El Pueblo, Angels Flight, and the “Salt Box” on Bunker Hill (later destroyed by fire) were also designated at the first meeting.
William Woolett, FAIA, was the first elected President of the Cultural Heritage Board. Carl Dentzel, longtime director of the Southwest Museum, was an original Board member, later served as the Board President, and remained on the Board until 1980. Prominent architectural historian and author Robert Winter also served on the Board, from 1972 to 1984.
Originally, the Cultural Heritage Board had the unilateral power to declare Historic-Cultural Monuments. In 1980, a code amendment required that the City Council confirm the Board's action before a property becomes an Historic-Cultural Monument. In 1985, the Cultural Heritage Board became a full-fledged City Commission. The five-member Cultural Heritage Commission is the mayoral-appointed body that oversees the designation and protection of local landmarks.
Inventory
1. Information about Angels Flight, Los Encinos, Leonis Adobe
2. Announcements and solicitations for membership
3. Annual Report 1963
4. Clippings that mention the Cultural Heritage Board (1966-1967)
5. Fact Sheets on Historic Cultural Monuments of Los Angeles and area
6. Letters and news releases
7. Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Landmarks (2 copies illustrated booklet)

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Cultural Heritage Commission.
Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Board.
Art, Municipal
Correspondence
Historic buildings -- California
Lectures and lecturing
Los Angeles (Calif.) -- History -- Sources
Manuscripts
Walking tours