

Julius Bradford House

545 W. Whiting Avenue

ca. 1924

Craftsman Bungalow

Status: Local Landmark



This wood-frame, one-story Craftsman bungalow was the home of Julius S. Bradford, a key person in the development of the local oil industry of the 1920s and 30s. In 1923-24, Bradford had this 1,640-sq.-ft. house and detached garage constructed for his family, situated on a corner lot. There is no building permit on file for the house, but given the date, its custom-built elements, and architectural features, the house was mostly likely built by Arthur M. Thompson, a well-known local builder and contractor.

Typical Craftsman elements include horizontal clapboard siding, a symmetrical façade, grouped windows, wood slat vents, a sheltered front porch, and a brick fireplace that has an outside loading wood box. A cellar is accessible on the north (rear) side.

Julius Bradford established and managed the Chiksan Oil company (later the Chiksan Tool company), the longest-lived and most important oil company in Fullerton's history. A successful independent oil producer, Chiksan also developed many tools and pieces of machinery that brought about great advances in the drilling of oil wells. The company produced drilling and manufacturing parts, including the renowned Chiksan swivel valve and marine loading arm, still used today. The Chiksan Oil Company remained in the oil producing business until 1939, making it the longest-running oil firm in Fullerton's history. Because Chiksan was a local company, the Fullerton newspapers would often proudly point out the exploits of the company, noting that the owners and workers were city residences.

From 1924, until his death in 1960, Bradford resided here; his widow, Anna, continued to live in the house until her death in 1980. In 2006, the current owner demolished the 1923-24 detached garage at the rear of the property and constructed a detached two-story garage and office. Sensitive designed, the new garage/office does not detract from the historic integrity of the Bradford house proper.