

Schumacher Building

212-216 N. Harbor Boulevard

1905

Masonry Commercial

Status: Local Landmark



This two-story masonry structure was constructed in 1905, in two stages by builder Julian E. Thomas. The structure has ground level commercial storefronts and a second story façade of rough surfaced stone designed with a series of multi-paned windows under projecting lintels. As one of the oldest commercial buildings in Fullerton, it is remarkable for its stone and concrete block construction – a departure from the commonly used unreinforced brick.

The building was constructed for Fullerton pioneer Peter A. Schumacher, a German immigrant who came to America with his parents in 1857. Schumacher served a city building inspector, justice of the peace, notary public, and school superintendent while amassing a small fortune in the real estate business before retiring in 1919. Fancying himself an architect, Schumacher designed businesses and houses around the city, including this building. He reserved part of the second story specifically for his residence – a large six-room flat with modern improvements for its time. He lived in the building until 1933, when suffering from ill health, he committed suicide in his bedroom.

Over the years the building has been remodeled several times; in 1993, an extensive rehabilitation of the building returned it back to its original mixed-use. Three large residential units now occupy the second story, with their entry taken from the backside. The building, now in excellent condition after the work in 1993, is considered a successful rehabilitation, but not one fully restored. The storefront on the first story features piers that have been given a new veneer to simulate the original stonework. The decorative mansard at the top of the building was added with a remodel in 1967; the original parapet had an entablature feature, simple in design.