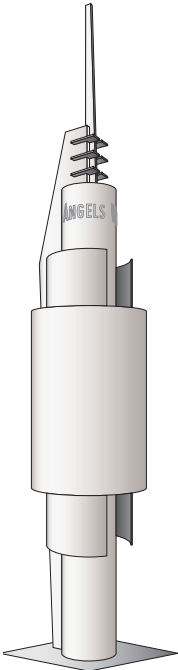


Angels Walk Wilshire Select Stanchions

- 1 MacArthur Park
- 2 MacArthur Park
- 3 The Bryson
- 4 Felipe de Neve Branch Library
- 5 Lafayette Park
- 6 Southwestern Law School
- 7 Wilshire Galleria
- 8 The Talmadge
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- 15 Wiltern Theatre



ANGELS WALK WILSHIRE



Westlake Park First

MacArthur Park and its scenic pond began to enchant visitors late in the 19th century. Then called Westlake Park, the *Los Angeles Times* observed in 1891 that it was “a pretty, breezy spot. The lake is well provided with boats, which are liberally patronized, and a band plays once a week.” The park marked the western edge of the Los Angeles city limits, separated from the town center by Crown Hill. Beyond to the Pacific lay 14 miles of mustard grass and wheat fields, wild barrancas and crumbling rancho adobes. Hard work and the cultivation of flowers and trees transformed an alkali mud hole and trash dump that the city had obtained from the father of World War II General George S. Patton.



Children preparing to sail model boats on the lake in Westlake Park.

Postcards from the turn of the century show the park in Victorian regalia, with formally dressed families enjoying the walking paths and gardens that circled the lake. Every year on July 4, crowds came by carriage and street car to watch fire-works launched over the water.



Westlake Park boathouse, 1896.



Open-air streetcar with its trailer and two operators on west 7th Street looking north from Alvarado Street, c. 1890.

Westlake Park was also where the queen of the annual Fiesta de Los Angeles would be ferried across the lake in a regatta of elaborately decorated gondolas. As Los Angeles grew, the park became an idyllic retreat from the stresses of urban life. It also attracted the colorful array of preachers, sybarites and eccentrics that the city was known to gather. “A vast amount of therapeutic lore was to be had for nothing in Westlake Park,” a 1920s

novel said. “The elderly men and women, hailing chiefly from the Mississippi watershed, who had made this pleasance their daily rendezvous... seem to have experienced all ailments, tried all cures.”

MacARTHUR PARK



Boaters at Westlake Park (MacArthur Park), c. 1930.

Bohemian Neighborhood

Around the park a lively district of hotels, professional offices and design studios formed. Leading Los Angeles architects such as John and Donald Parkinson and Stiles O. Clements introduced a variety of styles to the Westlake District, and several



West Coast Westlake Theatre, 1937.

of their buildings survive. Art schools such as the Otis Art Institute, the Chouinard Art Institute and Art Center created the city's

first somewhat Bohemian neighborhood and filled the area around the park with students. (The elite Westlake School for Girls was located for many years on Alvarado Street facing the park.) The 1926 West Coast Westlake Theatre at Alvarado and Wilshire, a city historic-cultural landmark, featured nearly 2,000 seats for plays and first-run movies and a brilliant rooftop sign. Ceiling artwork by renowned muralist Anthony Heinsbergen can still be glimpsed inside the converted theater.



Wilshire Boulevard cutting through Westlake Park, now MacArthur Park, c. 1930s.

MacArthur Park Second

Westlake Park's presence at the center of an artist district led to the placement of unusual sculptures across the acreage. Prometheus Bringing Fire to Earth, located where Wilshire Boulevard enters the park from the east, is a fine example of the works added during the Federal Art Project years of the Depression. Many others were installed during a revival of interest in the park in the 1980s that included relighting of neon signs on surrounding rooftops. By then the park had been split in two by the curving Wilshire Boulevard viaduct, which opened in 1934 as a traffic relief measure. Until then, cars and buses traveling on the city's main boulevard needed to detour around Westlake Park.

In 1942 the name itself was changed to honor Army General Douglas MacArthur, commander of Allied forces in the Pacific during World War II. William Randolph Hearst, publisher of the *Los Angeles Examiner* and many other newspapers across the country, thought the tribute could help



Early view of Westlake Park, 1892.

his crusade to run MacArthur for president against Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Hearst's political operative in City Hall pushed the change through before the neighborhood knew it was even up for discussion. For many decades after, long-time residents clung to the old name. The area around the park is still officially the Westlake District.



Fountain in Westlake Park, c. 1890s.



Bottom Photo: Women washing linens in the water at Westlake Park.

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For more information about Angels Walk or for a copy of the Map/Guidebook, please contact the MTA Public Information Office at (213) 922-5000.
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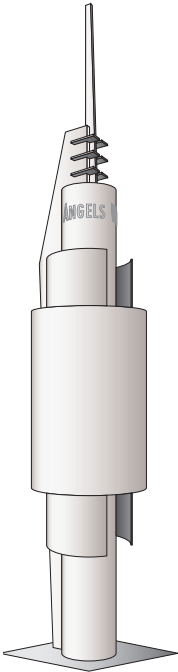
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Wilshire Colonnade
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Wiltern Theatre



ANGELS WALK WILSHIRE



SOUTHWESTERN
LAW SCHOOL

SOUTHWESTERN LAW SCHOOL

Los Angeles in the
Art Deco Age

Los Angeles leapt into the modern era on September 26, 1929. At nine o'clock that morning, the doors of Bullock's Wilshire opened to gasps of amazement. Here was the first department store in the country to be designed as an opulent art piece, filled with elegant sculptures and fine touches, its terra cotta exterior adorned with copper spandrels and lush verdigris. The topper was a 241-foot-tall tower, lit at night with violet beacons, that soared above the city and shouted that the future had arrived on Wilshire Boulevard.

Bullock's Wilshire symbolized everything that was new and exciting about Los Angeles in the Art Deco age. "Every detail, from drinking fountain to clock, ventilator grille to mirror hinge, has been creatively evoked from the future and not from the past," observed *California Arts and Architecture* magazine. Bullock's Wilshire represented a break out of the old downtown, where shoppers rode Pacific Electric trolleys and negotiated crowded sidewalks to jam into dark, traditional stores. There was nothing conventional about Bullock's Wilshire. It fit nicely into a quiet residential

neighborhood and appealed to the new breed of Angelenos who traveled by automobile. The main entrance was in the rear,



The porte cochere (motor court entrance), circa 1929.

under a porte cochere where uniformed valets welcomed patrons and parked their cars. On the ceiling of the porte cochere, a fresco secco by Romanian artist Herman Sachs paid tribute to Mercury, the ancient god of travel, surrounded by the most modern symbols of mobility: an ocean liner, locomotive, airliner and the famous Graf Zeppelin.

"Cathedral of Commerce"

Inside, customers enjoyed doting attention from coiffed sales associates whose ranks included future First Lady Patricia Nixon and young actresses-to-be Angela Lansbury and June Lockhart. Live mannequins modeled for shoppers, who could take in a fashion show or luncheon in the penthouse Tea Room, get their hair done, and then stroll downstairs to find their purchases already stowed in waiting cars. Los Angeles had never basked in such luxuriant service. It was the idea of John G. Bullock, a Canadian who came to Los Angeles at the age of 25 and talked his way into



Aerial view of department store Bullock's Wilshire looking west.



Several groups of people are seen enjoying a sunny day atop the Bullock's roof garden.

a job at The Broadway store downtown. He started the first Bullock's at the corner of Seventh and Broadway, then jumped at the chance to invent a new genre of upscale shopping on the emerging Wilshire Boulevard. He chose the father-and-son team of John and Donald Parkinson, architects of the



The Central Hall (Perfume Hall, first floor), circa 1929.



The Bullock's Wilshire building under construction, 1929.

Wilshire Boulevard became the city's most fashion-conscious avenue, a role that only waned with the popularity of suburban shopping malls in the 1970s and '80s. After briefly being renamed I. Magnin, and suffering riot damage, the

National Register of Historic Places landmark closed its doors on April 13, 1993.

From Lady Shoppers
to Law Students

Southwestern Law School, located across Westmoreland Avenue to the west, purchased the building a year later and embarked on a ten-year, \$29-million restoration. The school earned a National Preservation Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation for recovering much of the original artwork and reclaiming the timeless beauty of Bullock's Wilshire. The old store now forms the heart of the law school campus.

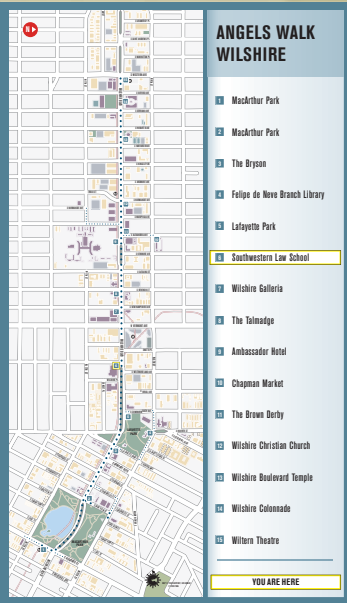
Bullock's Wilshire drinking fountain, 1929.



Visible through the ground floor windows is the state-of-the-art Julian C. Dixon Courtroom and Advocacy Center, and the 86,000 sq. ft. Leigh H. Taylor Law Library, named for the dean who oversaw the restoration and transformation of the landmark. Above the store's former front door on Wilshire, the bas relief with the inscription "To Build a Business That Will Never Know Completion" is by George Stanley, who sculpted the first Oscar statuette for the Academy Awards.



Looking south on Broadway from 8th Street with Bullock's in the background.

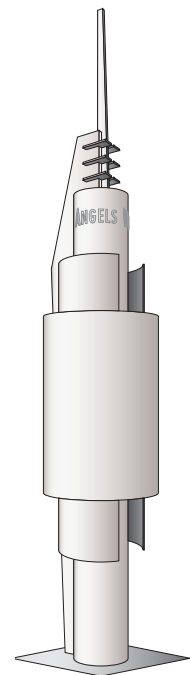


Below: Bullock's looking west on Wilshire Boulevard from Westmoreland Avenue. 1929. Bullock's is on the left edge of the frame with I. Magnin on the right background.

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ANGELS WALK WILSHIRE



WILTERN THEATRE

The Busiest Intersection in the Country

In 1928 a count of passing cars, trucks and buses revealed the corner of Wilshire Boulevard and Western Avenue to be the busiest intersection in the country. Boosters seized on the news to promote the idea that Wilshire's destiny was to become the Fifth Avenue of the West, the premier shopping street and business address in fast-growing Los Angeles. It was an overly hopeful notion, but it nonetheless changed the way people looked into the future.

Henry de Roulet didn't need a traffic count to know something big was brewing. He sold real estate out of a wood-frame house on the southeast corner of Wilshire and Western, not far from the childhood home of actor Jackie Coogan. De Roulet's Pellissier Tract—named for his grandfather German shepherd and land investor who had acquired 140 acres from the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1882—attracted plenty of buyers. Los Angeles was adding

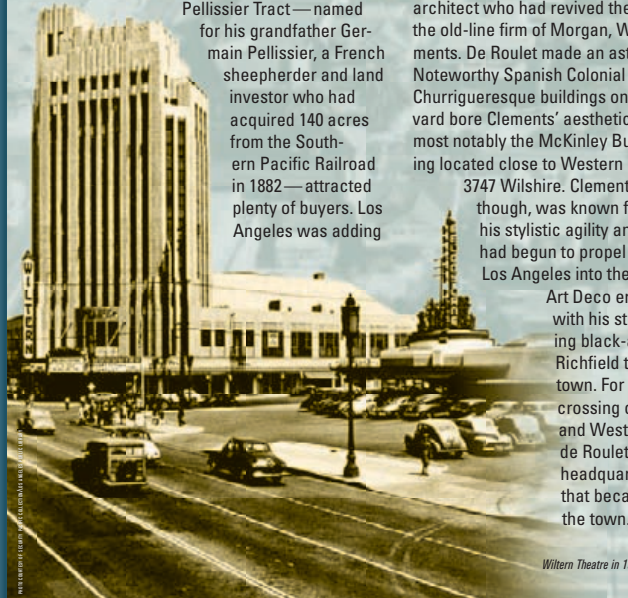
thousands of people a year and migrating west along Wilshire Boulevard. To fulfill its role as the grand concourse of the future, though, de Roulet figured that his corner of Wilshire should be elevated in stature with an eye-catching landmark structure that would exemplify the era's optimism.

He turned to Stiles O. Clements, the young architect who had revived the fortunes of the old-line firm of Morgan, Walls and Clements. De Roulet made an astute choice. Noteworthy Spanish Colonial Revival and Churrigueresque buildings on the boulevard bore Clements' aesthetic stamp, most notably the McKinley Building located close to Western at 3747 Wilshire. Clements, though, was known for his stylistic agility and had begun to propel Los Angeles into the

Art Deco era with his striking black-and-gold Richfield tower downtown. For the important crossing of Wilshire and Western, he gave de Roulet a stunning headquarters building that became the talk of the town.



Traffic at the intersection of Wilshire Boulevard and Western Avenue looking east, 1931.



Wiltern Theatre in 1932.

WILTERN THEATRE



Warner Bros. Western Theatre at the time of its opening in 1931.

Zigzag Moderne

A gently rounded base filled an entire block of the boulevard, with display windows on the first and second floors to catch the eye of riders on the open top deck of Wilshire buses.

Rising out of the base was a Zigzag Moderne tower clad in "Pellissier Green" ceramic tiles, aligned in chevrons that angled toward the sky. "Just 12 stories high but with enough apparent soar to entice King Kong," the

architect and critic Charles Moore marveled decades later. De Roulet moved his offices in, doctors and dentists filled the tower, and the ground level belonged to a movie house designed by G. Albert Lansburgh with a dazzling terrazzo entryway, large pipe organ and a ceiling by Anthony Heinsbergen.



Jackie Coogan.

Demolition Delayed – Building Saved

Originally called the Warner Bros. Western, the Wiltern Theatre opened October 7, 1931 with a gala premier of *Alexander Hamilton* attended by stars like James Cagney,



Interior view of the Wiltern Theatre with detail of seating and stage.

Clark Gable and Jean Harlow. The theatre closed temporarily during the Depression, but the tower remained a visual landmark

Premiere at Wiltern Theatre.

on the Wilshire skyline. Insurance company Franklin Life bought the property in 1956 for its Los Angeles headquarters, then in 1979 shuttered the theatre again and made plans to raze the entire block for a parking lot. The newly formed Los Angeles Conservancy joined with city leaders to delay demolition and have the Pellissier Tower listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Aerial view of Wilshire & Western, 1928. Bottom right corner is the current site of the Wiltern Theatre.



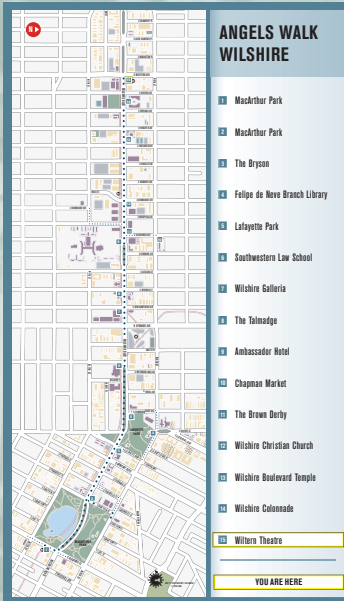
Wilshire looking east, 1948.

Brenda Levin. The theatre, known now as the Wiltern, remains a popular live performance venue and the upper floors are popular with architects and designers.



Western Avenue looking north from 9th Street with the Pellissier Square 24-hour service garage in the background, 1937.

Developer Wayne Ratkovich stepped up to save the Pellissier and commission extensive renovation by preservation architect



WILTERN THEATRE

ANGELS WALK WILSHIRE



Bottom Photo: Severe ice-banded fence near Wilshire Boulevard & Western Avenue ca. 1930