OMB Control No. 1024-0018
expiration date 03/31/2026

**United States Department of the Interior**
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

## 1. Name of Property

DRAFT

Historic name: _Wintersburg_____

Other names/site number: _Japanese Presbyterian Mission, Japanese Presbyterian Church, Furuta Farm _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

_*Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California, 1850-1995*_____

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

## 2. Location

Street & number: _7622-7642 Warner Avenue, 17102 South Nichols Lane_____

City or town: _Huntington Beach_ State: _California____ County: _Orange_____

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

**___national ___statewide ___local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

**___A ___B ___C ___D**

**Signature of certifying official/Title:** **Date**

**State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

In my opinion, the property __ meets __ does not meet the National Register criteria.

**Signature of commenting official:** **Date**

**Title:** **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

_____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Private: | [X] |
| Public – Local | [ ] |
| Public – State | [ ] |
| Public – Federal | [ ] |

### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Building(s) | [ ] |
| District | [X] |
| Site | [ ] |
| Structure | [ ] |
| Object | [ ] |

**Number of Resources within Property**
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|---|---|---|
| 4 | | buildings |
| | | sites |
| | 1 | structures |
| | | objects |
| 4 | 1 | Total |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**
**Historic Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)
RELIGION: religious facility
DOMESTIC: single dwelling
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE: agricultural outbuilding

**Current Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)
VACANT/NOT IN USE

## 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**
(Enter categories from instructions.)
LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS
__Spanish Colonial Revival
LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS
__Bungalow/Craftsman
Minimal Traditional__
NO STYLE_____
_____

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: _Foundation: concrete, wood; Walls: stucco, wood board-and-batten, wood shingle, wood plank, wood channel siding; Roof: asphalt composition shingle, wood shake

**Narrative Description**
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

**Summary Paragraph**

Wintersburg is a historic district on approximately four and a half acres in Huntington Beach, representing the surviving remnant of the former farming community of Wintersburg historically associated with Japanese settlement in the area in the early twentieth century and after World War II. Four contributing buildings include the Spanish Colonial Revival style Japanese Presbyterian Church of Wintersburg, constructed in 1934, and three buildings associated with the C.M. Furuta farm that previously occupied the property—the Craftsman style Furuta House #1 and adjacent Furuta Barn, both constructed in 1912, and the Minimal Traditional style Furuta House #2, constructed in 1947. The noncontributing structure is a post-period of significance utilitarian steel shed constructed circa 1990. Although the buildings are in poor condition, in particular Furuta House #1 and the Furuta Barn, they collectively retain sufficient character-defining features from the period of significance to convey their association with Japanese settlement in Orange County. The district meets the integrity thresholds established in the *Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California* MPS for resources associated with Migration and Community Formation. Due to the rarity of these resources, a historic district may be as small

as a few buildings in proximity to each other, and "retention of location, feeling, association, and sometimes setting… may be more important than design, workmanship, and materials," to convey significance. The district's extant buildings represent the sole remnants of the former community of Wintersburg, and individually and collectively retain integrity of location, feeling, and association. In addition, although compromised, the buildings also retain integrity of design, workmanship, and materials. The district retains its original rural character, although there are no visible remnant site or landscape features associated with the former agricultural uses of the property, and the wider setting surrounding the property was transformed in the period after World War II.

## Narrative Description

Setting

The rectangular district is bounded on the north by Warner Avenue, on the west by Nichols Lane, on the south by Belsito Drive, on the east by Emerald Lane, and on the northeast by an adjacent single-family residential property. The property is covered mostly in scrub, prickly pear cactus, and weeds, with dense stands of mature trees clustered around the buildings and along the perimeter.

### 1. Japanese Presbyterian Church of Wintersburg (1934) Contributing Building

The former Japanese Presbyterian Church of Wintersburg is located in the northwest corner of the district, at the intersection of Warner Avenue and Nichols Lane. It has narrow setbacks on both streets. The church is a one-story Spanish Colonial Revival style building with a rectangular plan, simple massing, and asymmetrical composition. It has a moderately pitched side gable roof with a prominent secondary gable over the primary entrance on the north façade. The roof has tight eaves and rakes, a simple wood cornice, and severely deteriorated asphalt composition shingles with wood shakes visible below. The chancel at the east end has a shorter gable. Exterior walls are veneered in textured cement plaster.

The primary entrance is asymmetrically located in a projecting pavilion on the north façade, on Warner Avenue. It is recessed in a round arched opening under the secondary gable and is accessed by concrete steps flanked by simple *parastedes*.[1] The entrance, blocked with plywood, originally consisted of a pair of paneled wood doors beneath a paneled wood tympanum, which is still visible above the plywood. There are four tall, recessed, rectangular windows in the long expanse of wall east of the entrance to light the nave. The windows are blocked with plywood; each consists of coupled, divided light, wood sash casements with transom lights. A shorter, coupled, wood sash casement, also blocked with plywood, is in the chancel wall further east.

The west elevation on Nichols Lane has a balanced, though not strictly symmetrical, composition, with a central grouping of two windows and a door flanked to each side by a

[1] *Parastedes,* the plural of *parastas*, defined as a pedestal-like wall creating an abutment at the end of a stairway.

slightly lower window. All openings are blocked with plywood. The door is accessed by a concrete stoop with two flights of steps. There is a circular, louvered attic vent in the gable.

The south elevation is asymmetrically composed with two large doors, two small doors, four large, coupled wood sash casement windows with transom lights, and two small windows. The door furthest west is a single, flush wood door; the next consists of a pair of flush wood doors. The two remaining doors and all windows are partially or completely blocked with plywood. All four doors are accessed by concrete stoops and steps.

The east façade is symmetrically composed with three small, recessed, wood sash casement windows. All are partially blocked with plywood. There is a circular, louvered attic vent in the gable.

Exterior character-defining features include:

- Rectangular plan, simple one-story massing, and asymmetrical composition
- Moderately pitched side gable roof with a prominent secondary gable over the primary entrance; tight eaves and rakes; and a simple wood cornice
- Exterior walls veneered in textured cement plaster
- Recessed primary entrance in a round arched opening with concrete steps and a paneled wood tympanum
- Coupled, divided light, wood sash casement windows, some with transom lights
- Circular, louvered gable vents

**2. Furuta House #1 (1912) Contributing Building**

Furuta House #1 is located southeast of the Japanese Presbyterian Church, roughly centered on the Warner Avenue frontage and set back from the street with a deep front yard. The house is a one-story, Craftsman style dwelling of single-wall wood construction, with a rectangular plan and simple massing. It has a moderately pitched front gable roof with open eaves, exposed rafter tails, and overhanging rakes supported on wood knee braces. The bargeboards meet at a simple wood pendill. The roof is clad in asphalt composition shingles. The exterior walls are of wood board-and-batten construction; the gables are clad in wood shingle siding, with triangular attic vents at the apex. Fenestration consisted primarily of one-over-one, double hung, wood sash windows. All windows are blocked with plywood, retaining their exterior wood casings including lintels with beveled ends.

The primary (north) façade has a balanced, not strictly symmetrical composition, with the off-center primary entrance flanked to each side by a window. The entrance opening is blocked with plywood; the five-panel wood door, with its frame and casings, lies in the yard. A triangular "ghost" above the entrance reveals the outline of the front-gable porch, no longer extant. The south façade is asymmetrically composed. There is a projecting shed at the west end, with a five-panel wood door opening to a wood deck.

Exterior character-defining features include:

- Rectangular plan, simple one-story massing, and balanced composition
- Moderately pitched front gable roof with open eaves, exposed rafter tails, overhanging rakes, wood knee braces, and wood pendills
- Wood board-and-batten exterior walls
- Wood shingle siding in gables, with triangular attic vents
- One-over-one, double hung, wood sash windows with exterior wood casings including lintels with beveled ends
- Five-panel wood doors

**3. Furuta Barn (1912) Contributing Building**

Furuta Barn is located southeast of Furuta House #1. It is a one-story, utilitarian building of single-wall and wood frame construction with a rectangular plan and simple massing. It has a dual-sloped roof consisting of a moderately pitched front gable over the central aisle extending into low-sloped roofs over the flanking sheds. The walls are vertical wood planks. The primary entrance is symmetrically located on the north façade and consists of a pair of rectangular openings separated by a wood post. The doors are missing; the metal track and mounting board remain attached to the header. An addition at the southwest corner of the barn has a shed roof with open eaves, and exterior walls of plywood and board-and-batten siding.

Exterior character-defining features of the Furuta Barn include:

- Expressed single-wall and wood frame construction
- Rectangular plan and simple one-story massing
- Dual-sloped front gable roof
- Vertical wood plank walls
- Pair of rectangular door openings with metal track and mounting board
- Central aisle with flanking sheds

**4. Furuta House #2 (1947) Contributing Building**

Furuta House #2 is located in the southwest corner of the property, at the intersection of Nichols Lane and Belsito Drive, and is set back from both streets with deep yards. It is a one-story Minimal Traditional style dwelling with an irregular plan, simple massing, and asymmetrical composition. It has a low-pitched hipped roof with open eaves and asphalt composition shingle roofing. The upper portions of the exterior walls are veneered in float finish cement plaster, with horizontal wood channel siding cladding the lower portions. Fenestration consists primarily of steel sash casement windows, some in horizontal groupings. All windows are boarded with plywood; those visible are one-over-one, double hung wood sash windows. The primary entrance is located on the west façade, in a recessed porch paneled with vertical wood channel siding; the door is concealed by a metal security screen. A secondary entrance on the east elevation consists

of a three-panel wood door behind a metal security screen. An attached garage at the north end of the house has a tilt up wood auto door on the west façade.

Exterior character-defining features of Furuta House #2 include:

- Irregular plan, simple one-story massing, and asymmetrical composition
- Low-pitched hipped roof with open eaves
- Exterior walls veneered in float finish cement plaster at upper portions with horizontal wood channel siding at lower portions
- Steel sash casement windows, some in horizontal groupings; and one-over-one, double hung wood sash windows
- Recessed porch with vertical wood channel siding
- Attached garage with a tilt up wood auto door

**5. Shed (c. 1990) Noncontributing Structure**

The open-sided shed is located northeast of Furuta House #2. It is one-story with a rectangular plan and a steel-framed gable roof supported on steel posts. The roof is clad in corrugated metal panels. The shed is surrounded by a fence of standing seam metal panels.

Alterations

The property has been altered since the end of the period of significance in 1965. The metal shed was constructed northeast of Furuta House #2 when the property was still being used for agricultural purposes. The agricultural fields, originally used for goldfish farming before World War II and later converted for other purposes, were abandoned altogether in the mid-1990s. The two oldest buildings, the Mission (1909-1910) and Manse/parsonage (1910) were destroyed in a fire in February 2022.

Most of the changes to the surviving buildings are the result of deterioration due to lack of maintenance. All four contributing buildings are in poor condition, and some have lost features and materials. The front porch and foundation of Furuta House #1 have collapsed, a portion of the roof has buckled, and the primary entrance door has been removed. Furuta Barn has lost all of its roofing, some siding, and its doors. Most of the windows of the church and the two houses have been blocked with plywood for security purposes, although it appears that the sash and frames may remain largely intact.

**Integrity**

The four contributing buildings are in generally poor condition and are severely deteriorated. Each of the four buildings does retain significant character-defining features and the district collectively retains sufficient integrity to convey the direct link to Japanese settlement in Orange County in the early twentieth century, particularly given the rarity of resources associated with Japanese American history in the area.

*Location*: All four contributing buildings remain in their original placement on the property and therefore retain integrity of location.

*Design*: The four contributing buildings are in generally poor condition; two are failing and have lost features and materials due to deterioration. Each of the four contributors retains sufficient character-defining features from the period of significance to convey their significance. The Japanese Presbyterian Church retains its rectangular plan, simple one-story massing, and asymmetrical composition; moderately pitched side gable roof with a prominent secondary gable over the primary entrance; tight eaves and rakes with a simple wood cornice; exterior walls veneered in textured cement plaster; recessed primary entrance in a round arched opening with concrete steps and a paneled wood tympanum; coupled, divided light, wood sash casement windows, some with transom lights; and circular, louvered gable vents.

The foundation and front porch of Furuta House #1 have collapsed; however, the building still retains its rectangular plan, simple one-story massing, balanced composition, moderately pitched front gable roof, open eaves, exposed rafter tails, overhanging rakes, wood knee braces and pendills, wood board-and-batten exterior walls, wood shingle siding in the gables, triangular attic vents, wood sash windows with exterior wood casings, and five-panel wood doors. Furuta Barn has lost all of its roofing, some siding, and its doors, retaining its dual-sloped front gable roof structure, its internal configuration of a central aisle with flanking stalls, and most of its wood framing and vertical wood plank walls.

Furuta House #2 retains its irregular plan, simple one-story massing, asymmetrical composition, low-pitched hipped roof with open eaves, exterior walls veneered in float finish cement plaster and horizontal wood channel siding, fenestration, recessed porch with vertical wood channel siding, and attached garage with a tilt up wood auto door. Therefore, each of the four contributing buildings retains sufficient integrity of design to convey its appearance during the property's period of significance.

*Setting*: The wider setting has been compromised by later development, as the agricultural character of the area was transformed after World War II. The historic district retains the open space and rural character surrounding the four contributing buildings, even though active agricultural use has ceased. The property retains sufficient integrity of setting to convey its historic character as an early twentieth century settlement associated with the Japanese American community.

*Materials*: The Japanese Presbyterian Church retains its simple wood cornice, textured cement plaster veneer, concrete stoop and steps, paneled wood tympanum, and wood sash windows. Furuta House #1 retains its wood rafter tails, rake rafters, knee braces, pendills, board-and-batten exterior walls, gable shingle siding, exterior casings, and five-panel doors. Furuta Barn retains its dual-sloped front gable roof framework, its internal configuration of a central aisle with flanking stalls, and most of its wood framing and vertical wood plank walls.

Furuta House #2 retains its irregular plan, simple one-story massing, asymmetrical composition, low-pitched hipped roof with open eaves, exterior walls veneered in float finish cement plaster and horizontal wood channel siding, fenestration, recessed porch with vertical wood channel siding, and attached garage with a tilt up wood auto door. All four buildings retain enough of the physical elements that were present during the property's period of significance and reflect the types of materials and technologies available in the area in the early twentieth century. Therefore, the property retains sufficient integrity of materials to convey its historic significance.

*Workmanship*: The four contributing buildings retain sufficient integrity of design and materials to convey their appearance during the period of significance. They are evidence of the vernacular methods of construction and plain finishes that were available to the residents of Wintersburg and convey the rural, agricultural character of the community in the early twentieth century. Therefore, the property retains integrity of workmanship.

*Feeling*: The Japanese Presbyterian Church, Furuta House #1, Furuta Barn, and Furuta House #2 retain sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, and workmanship to express the historic and aesthetic sense of the Japanese Presbyterian Mission and the Furuta farm in the early twentieth century. Therefore, the property retains integrity of feeling.

*Association*: The four contributing buildings of Wintersburg collectively retain sufficient integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling to convey the property's direct link to Japanese settlement in Orange County, and the community of Wintersburg in particular, in the early twentieth century. Therefore, the property retains integrity of association.

## 8. Statement of Significance

**Applicable National Register Criteria**
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [x] A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [ ] C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**
(Mark “x” in all the boxes that apply.)

- [ ] A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- [ ] B. Removed from its original location
- [ ] C. A birthplace or grave
- [ ] D. A cemetery
- [ ] E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- [ ] F. A commemorative property
- [ ] G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

**Areas of Significance**
(Enter categories from instructions.)
ETHNIC HERITAGE: ASIAN (Japanese)
AGRICULTURE

**Period of Significance**
1908-1965

**Significant Dates**
1908
1912
1934
1942
1965

**Significant Person**
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**
N/A

**Architect/Builder**
Unknown

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Wintersburg is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A at the local level of significance in the areas of Ethnic Heritage: Asian (Japanese) and Agriculture for its association with a thriving agricultural community with a significant concentration of Japanese residents in the early decades of the twentieth century. The growth of the local Japanese community led to the foundation of the Japanese Presbyterian Mission in 1904, which by the 1930s had become a full-fledged congregation and was officially renamed the Japanese Presbyterian Church; it remained a spiritual and social center of the community until the church relocated to Garden Grove in 1965. A portion of the Mission land was sold to Charles Mitsuji Furuta prior to the passage of the 1913 Alien Land Act, making Furuta one of the few *Issei* to own property in California. Furuta was a leading figure in the Mission and the community, and his farm was a social and cultural hub in Wintersburg before the Second World War. As the surviving remnant of the town of Wintersburg, the property meets the registration requirements for *Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California, 1850-1995*, in the context of Migration and Community Formation. The period of significance begins in 1908 when land was purchased to construct the Japanese Presbyterian Mission's first permanent facilities. Although many of the town's residents returned after incarceration, in the decades after World War II the Japanese American population dispersed throughout the region. In 1957, Wintersburg was annexed by the City of Huntington Beach, and the agricultural character of the area was replaced with suburban development. In 1965, the Japanese Presbyterian Church relocated to Garden Grove, marking the end of the period of significance, as Wintersburg was no longer a significant hub for Japanese American life and culture in Orange County.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

*Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California, 1850-1995 MPS*

As outlined in the Multiple Property Documentation Form, a significant concentration of commercial, residential, and/or institutional buildings associated with AAPI communities in California in a defined geographic area may constitute a historic district. Districts may be as small as a few buildings in proximity to each other and may include religious buildings, community serving organizations, and political or civic organizations; residential buildings occupied primarily by AAPI persons during the period of significance may be adjacent. The district may be eligible if it represents an intact grouping of commercial, residential, and/or institutional buildings that has a strong cultural association with one or more AAPI communities; conveys a strong sense of overall historic environment from the period of significance; its development was influenced by significant business/civic leaders in AAPI communities; and it retains integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, and association. The former Japanese Presbyterian Church and the buildings associated with the adjacent Furuta Farm, which comprise the historic district, together represent the last significant concentration of institutional and

residential buildings associated with the Japanese American community of Wintersburg. The property conveys a strong sense of the historic environment and collectively retains sufficient integrity to convey its direct association with the formation of the Japanese community in Wintersburg in the early twentieth century.

Wintersburg was named in recognition of Luther Winters' contributions to the settlement of the community.[2] The economy in Wintersburg was largely based on agriculture, and as a result, in the first decade of the twentieth century, the population of Wintersburg dramatically increased with large numbers of Japanese farmers settling in the area.[3] Charles Mitsuji Furuta and Henry Kiyomi Akiyama were two Japanese men who immigrated to the area and began working as farmers in and around Wintersburg in the early twentieth century. Reverend Hisakichi Terasawa, another Japanese settler to Orange County who worked as a missionary, purchased a five-acre parcel off Wintersburg Avenue and Nichols Lane in 1908. In 1912, Furuta purchased the land from Terasawa.[4] It is this property, utilized for farming (originally goldfish farming and later flowers), worship, and other social and cultural activities, that became a significant gathering place for the local Japanese community.[5]

The remnants of the Wintersburg settlement are deeply rooted in the history of Japanese Americans in Orange County in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the property is directly connected to community building in the Japanese American community in the early twentieth century. In addition to providing a religious outlet for the community, the mission also supported social and cultural organizations to help develop a sense of community and ethnic identity in Orange County. Due to its proximity to the mission (and later the church), and Charles M. Furuta's connection with the church, the Furuta Farm also became an important hub for the local Japanese American community. Wintersburg remained a center of Japanese American life after World War II, until the Japanese diaspora and the relocation of the Japanese Presbyterian Church to Garden Grove in the mid-1960s.[6]

Founding of Wintersburg, Japanese Immigration, and Agriculture, 1880-1910

Wintersburg is located on the northwest side of what became the City of Huntington Beach. The early history of Wintersburg is tied largely to the development of ranches along the bluffs overlooking swamp lands and river channels in present-day Huntington Beach.[7] In the late nineteenth century, settlers were drawn to the region because of its potential for agricultural development.

[2] Samuel Armor, *History of Orange County, California with Biographical Sketches* (Los Angeles, CA: Historic Record Company, 1921), 874.
[3] Galvin Preservation Associates, Inc., *City of Huntington Beach Historic Context & Survey Report* (Huntington Beach, CA: City of Huntington Beach Planning and Building Department, 2014), 51.
[4] Mary F. Adams Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2014), 25-27.
[5] Ibid, 35, 37-38.
[6] Newspaper records from 1965 list the address for the Japanese Presbyterian Church as Garden Grove. Located on the border of Garden Grove and Santa Ana, the address is registered as Santa Ana.
[7] Galvin Preservation Associates, Inc., *City of Huntington Beach Historic Context & Survey Report,* 42.

Luther Henry Winters was born in Warren, Ohio on July 12, 1855.[8] He relocated to California circa 1890 and settled in the northwest area of Orange County where he purchased twenty acres of land in the Oceanview area of what would become Huntington Beach, near the intersection of present-day Warner Avenue and Beach Boulevard, growing celery, potatoes, and corn. As a result of the success of his agricultural pursuits, Winters purchased several more acres for farming, including twenty in what would become Wintersburg and twenty acres in Fountain Valley.[9]

In 1897, Winters donated the right-of-way for the construction of a train station and railyard to serve the Wintersburg community.[10] Winters also donated land for the Methodist Church (later known as the Warner Avenue Baptist Church), and installed a clay pipe to drain the peat bogs to facilitate farming.[11] The town was officially called Wintersburg by 1900, in recognition of Winters' contributions to the community.[12] On November 7, 1906, the official subdivision map for Wintersburg was filed by S.H. Finely, Orange County Surveyor.[13] The plat map depicts a rectangular, four-block area bounded by Main Street (later Warner Avenue) to the north, Cedar Drive to the south, Church Street (later Gothard Avenue) to the west, and the Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way to the east.

Winters was among the earliest celery raisers in Orange County, and for several years grew and marketed, on average, twenty acres of celery annually.[14] Winters is also credited as the first person in Orange County to promote the agricultural value of peatlands, previously believed unsuitable for cultivation.[15] By 1902, there were over two thousand acres of celery being raised in the peatlands of Wintersburg.[16]

Farmers began raising sugar beets in the Wintersburg area after a blight in the celery fields destroyed more than half the crop in 1908.[17] The sugar beets thrived and farmers were shipping

[8] U.S. Census, 1880, "Henry Winters," Ancestry.com, accessed August 2024.; *Marriage Records, Trumbull County, Ohio, 1774-1993,* "Henry Winters," Ancestry.com, accessed August 2024.
[9] Armor, *History of Orange County,* 874.
[10] Ibid*,* 874.
[11] "Early Orange County Family Member Feted," *Los Angeles Times*, January 9, 1956, B11, as cited in Galvin Preservation Associates, Inc., *City of Huntington Beach Historic Context & Survey Report,* 48.
[12] Armor, *History of Orange County,* 874.
[13] S.H. Finley, *Map of Wintersburg*, County Surveyor, filed November 8, 1906, Orange County Archives.
[14] Armor, *History of Orange County,* 874.
[15] Galvin Preservation Associates, Inc., *City of Huntington Beach Historic Context & Survey Report,* 48.
[16] Galvin Preservation Associates, Inc., *City of Huntington Beach Historic Context & Survey Report,* 48; "Huntington Beach Events," *Los Angeles Times*, November 23, 1906, II11, as cited in Galvin Preservation Associates, Inc. *City of Huntington Beach Historic Context & Survey Report*, 51.
[17] Stephanie George and Carlota F. Haider, *Sowing Dreams, Cultivating Lives: Nikkei Farmers in Pre-World War II Orange County* (Fullerton, CA: Center for Oral History and Public History, California State University, Fullerton, 2009), 83; Galvin Preservation Associates, Inc., *City of Huntington Beach Historic Context & Survey Report,* 48.

full trains of beets to sugar refineries in Anaheim and Santa Ana daily.[18] At least 1,000 acres were planted in Wintersburg alone.[19]

Chili peppers were grown in the surrounding area of Talbert (later Fountain Valley) and Anaheim, with Garden Grove as the center of the chili pepper industry from 1920 through World War II. Japanese Americans, including the Murata, Osaka, Saki, Nagamatsu, and Kenegae families, raised fifty percent of the chili crops, and operated sixty percent of the drying houses in the county by the mid-1920s.[20] In Wintersburg, Charles M. Furuta and other Japanese farmers such as Masami Sasaki were instrumental in the transition from celery and beet crops to chili pepper crops. Sasaki was part of a large chili pepper growers' association that farmed thousands of acres and ran their own dehydrator and warehouses. By the 1920s, *Nikkei* (individuals of Japanese ancestry born in the United States, regardless of generation) farms were producing more than half the nation's supply of chili peppers.[21]

The agricultural industry in Wintersburg was largely supported by Japanese immigrants. The surge in Japanese immigration and their strength as an agricultural labor force is linked to two major factors. The Meiji Restoration of Japan beginning in 1868 opened Japan's border to foreign trade and immigration after two centuries of deadlock under the Tokugawa shogun rule.[22] This resulted in the rapid modernization and industrialization of Japan, which in turn left many farmers and workers jobless. Many would seek work in the United States, predominately in California, Oregon, and Washington, with the earliest immigration beginning in 1868, and increasing in the 1880s as laws affecting Japanese immigrants became less restrictive. Additionally, the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act signed by President Chester A. Arthur, restricted Chinese immigration and prevented any Chinese residents from becoming United States citizens. The law was extended for another ten years under the Geary Act and extended indefinitely beginning in 1902 until it was repealed in the 1960s.[23] As a result, there was a labor shortage in the agricultural industry which created opportunities for newly emigrated Japanese, who were unaffected by this law.[24]

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[18] Huntington Beach Historical Society, "Holly Sugar Company," June 17, 1975, as cited in Galvin Preservation Associates, Inc., *City of Huntington Beach Historic Context & Survey Report,* 48.
[19] "Numerous Wealthy Farmers in Orange County," *Los Angeles Times*, January 1, 1912, IV111, as cited in Galvin Preservation Associates, Inc., *City of Huntington Beach Historic Context & Survey Report,* 48.
[20] George and Haider, *Sowing Dreams, Cultivating Lives,* 76.
[21] The Japanese farmers grew such a large portion of the nation's chili peppers that between 1941 and 1942, when the Japanese Americans were incarcerated during World War II, production dropped by seventy-five percent. Donna Graves, "Orange County," Preserving California's Japantowns, accessed November 2024, http://www.californiajapantowns.org/orange.html, as cited in Galvin Preservation Associates, Inc., *City of Huntington Beach Historic Context & Survey Report*, 49.
[22] "The Meiji Restoration and Modernization," Weatherhead East Asian Institute at Columbia University, Asia for Educators (AFE), accessed July 2024, https://afe.easia.columbia.edu/special/japan_1750_meiji.htm.
[23] "Chinese Exclusion Act (1882)," Aspiration, Acculturation, and Impact: Immigration to the United States, 1789-1930, Harvard University Library Open Collections Program, http://ocp.hul.harvard.edu/immigration/exclusion.html, as cited in Galvin Preservation Associates, Inc., *City of Huntington Beach Historic Context & Survey Report*, 50.
[24] Galvin Preservation Associates, Inc., *City of Huntington Beach Historic Context & Survey Report*, 50.

As discussed in the *Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California* Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF):

> Unlike European immigrants who could journey as nuclear families, restrictive U.S. laws meant that the first immigrants from Japan were overwhelmingly male. Most Japanese immigrants entered the United States through San Francisco, with other significant ports-of-entry in Los Angeles; Portland, Oregon; and Seattle, Washington. As a result, the first large settlement of Japanese in California was in San Francisco. From port cities, many immigrants were drawn to rural areas up and down the coast and the Central Valley for agricultural jobs.[25]

In the first decade of the twentieth century, the population of Wintersburg dramatically increased with large numbers of Japanese farmers settling in the area. By 1911, there were at least 800 Japanese men and women working in the peatlands surrounding Huntington Beach.[26] Most worked as tenant farmers, leasing farmland from white landlords or companies. By 1930, Huntington Beach hosted a diverse ethnic composition of laborers, including Japanese and Mexican farmers, particularly in the rural areas outside the central city.[27] The U.S. census records enumerate several locations that appear to have a high concentration of farmers or farm laborers, including the Santa Ana River Bottom, North Township Line, Wintersburg, and Talbert Townsite areas.[28]

Japanese Settlement in Orange County in the Early Twentieth Century

Most *Issei* (first-generation Japanese immigrants) laborers arrived in Orange County at the turn of the twentieth century with the goal of earning money and returning to Japan. Early Japanese farm laborers, referred to as *Issei buranke-katsugi,* or blanket carriers, were transient laborers following California's harvest calendar with few possessions. These laborers usually worked for low wages, food, and shelter, living in nearby labor camps, in small houses on the farmer's property, or in local boarding houses, usually sleeping on the ground with nothing more than the blanket they carried.[29] In northwest Orange County, the known labor camps were located near Warner Avenue and Springdale Street, and along Smeltzer Avenue (later Edinger Avenue) in what is now Huntington Beach.[30] By the early twentieth century, commercial farming shifted from produce for local consumption to a large-scale industry. Crops were grown locally and

[25] Flora Chou, Stephanie Cisneros, Deepeaka Dhaliwal, Stephanie Hodal, and Donna Graves for Page & Turnbull, Inc., *Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California, 1850-1995*, National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, amended 2023), Section E, 33.
[26] "Japanese Women's Club," *Los Angeles Times*, September 25, 1911, I11, as cited in Galvin Preservation Associates, Inc., *City of Huntington Beach Historic Context & Survey Report*, 51.
[27] Galvin Preservation Associates, Inc., *City of Huntington Beach Historic Context & Survey Report*, 49.
[28] *United States Census, 1930*, Huntington Beach Township, 1920, as cited in Galvin Preservation Associates, Inc., *City of Huntington Beach Historic Context & Survey Report*, 49.
[29] George and Haider, *Sowing Dreams, Cultivating Lives,* 74.
[30] Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach,* 24.

transported great distances to markets throughout California and as far as the East coast with the expansion of the transcontinental railroad. This type of truck farming, in which tenants leased and farmed lands owned by others and trucked their produce to nearby markets, was the primary form of work available to Japanese laborers in Orange County. By 1910, Japanese laborers quickly established themselves as the predominant work force, alongside Mexican farm laborers and to a lesser extent, Filipino farm laborers.[31]

Truck farming was a successful pursuit for Japanese laborers in Orange County, and much of their produce was transported directly to the Seventh Street wholesale market in Los Angeles' Little Tokyo neighborhood. Other farmers built produce stands on their property, selling their crops directly to local residents. They offered a variety of vegetables and fruits, including beans, cabbage, tomatoes, corn, and strawberries.[32] Contract labor systems like truck farming were common to most of California's agricultural areas in the twentieth century. These Japanese laborers were supported by independent labor contractors, known as *keiyakunin*, who helped settle disputes and negotiated wages with American landowners.[33]

As Japanese Americans moved from workers to producers, tensions between Anglo Americans and the Japanese increased regarding unionization, accommodating existing growers' associations, and fixing prices. By 1907, there were 144 *Issei* in Orange County, operating 5,160 acres of farmland.[34] In 1913, the State of California passed the Alien Land Law, which prevented Japanese immigrants from becoming U.S. citizens and barring those "ineligible for citizenship" from owning property. Only a few *Issei* farmers, the Furutas among them, had purchased their own property by the time this law was passed. It remained legal for *Nisei* and *Sansei* (third-generation Japanese Americans), as American citizens, to buy and lease land, leaving farmers to adapt by having their children, or other nominees, hold the deeds in their names. In 1920, this was addressed in California's second Alien Land Law, which prevented Asian immigrants, their American-born children, and even corporations run by Asian immigrants from leasing and owning land. In the early 1920s, these restrictions had been largely limited to state policy; they were enshrined at the federal level through the Immigration Act of 1924.

These increasingly restrictive laws against the ownership of land by "aliens ineligible to citizenship," included all *Issei, Nisei,* and *Sansei*. In 1923, the Supreme Court upheld California's second Alien Land Law, forcing Japanese Americans to relinquish their farms and move elsewhere, a practice that became formal U.S. policy with incarceration during World War II. Although few court cases were able to invalidate California's law, including *Oyama v, California* (1948) and *Fuji Sei v. State of California* (1952), it wasn't until 1956 that the Supreme Court declared the Alien Land Law unconstitutional, in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment. As a result of these racists land laws, approximately 95% of the Japanese American farmers in Orange County were tenant farmers prior to World War II.[35]

[31] George and Haider, *Sowing Dreams, Cultivating Lives,* 17, 61.
[32] Ibid*,* 72.
[33] Galvin Preservation Associates, Inc., *City of Huntington Beach Historic Context & Survey Report*, 52.
[34] George and Haider, *Sowing Dreams, Cultivating Lives,* 17.
[35] Ibid*,* 64.

As outlined in the *Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California* MPDF:

> Japanese farmers throughout the West Coast utilized a graduated strategy to move from being labor-for hire into securing land to cultivate. Japanese immigrants entered an agricultural employment ladder of ascending agricultural rungs beginning with contract labor, and rising through sharecropping, tenant farming, and ultimately landowning status for a small percentage. The ascent was limited after 1907 when owning property became illegal for Japanese immigrants, who sometimes circumvented the law by purchasing property in the name of their American-born children or sympathetic citizens. By 1910, Japanese immigrants cultivated crops on 194,742 acres of California soil.[36]

Wintersburg Japanese Presbyterian Mission

Japanese Americans established religious, social, and cultural organizations that helped them to develop a sense of community and ethnic identity in Orange County. Buddhist temples and Christian churches provided a spiritual core for newly arrived immigrants, as well as for established *Nikkei* families. Group activities, athletic organizations, youth groups, and Japanese language schools were typically supported by *Nikkei* churches, providing a social element that brought the geographically dispersed community together. Japanese businesses and farming organizations also allowed the men to exchange ideas, while the women participated in sewing clubs and formed *fujinka* (women's associations) within their communities.[37]

In Wintersburg, the growing Japanese agricultural community created a demand for these social and religious institutions. In 1904, a community meeting in Wintersburg Village regarding the need for places of worship resulted in the construction of two churches, the Wintersburg Methodist Church (later the Warner Avenue Baptist Church), and the Japanese Presbyterian Mission (later Church), a denomination of the Protestant church.[38] As discussed in the *Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California* MPDF:

> The Protestant church movement among Japanese Americans began in 1877 when eight young men who had been baptized in San Francisco formed a *fukuin kai* (gospel circle). According to The Eighty-fifth Anniversary of Protestant Work Among Japanese in North America, "When Kanichi Miyami was baptized by Dr. Gibson in San Francisco in 1877, he became the first Japanese Christian in America." Services for Japanese immigrants were first conducted by Protestant ministers who led missions among newly arrived immigrants and helped lay the foundation for new *Nikkei* congregations. The American Missionary Association helped organize these efforts through their "California Oriental Mission," which received contributions

[36] Chou et al., *Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California, 1850-1995*, Section E, 37.
[37] George and Haider, *Sowing Dreams, Cultivating Lives,* 89.
[38] Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach*, 25, as cited in Galvin Preservation Associates, Inc., *City of Huntington Beach Historic Context & Survey Report*, 52.

> from over half of the member churches to work with Chinese and Japanese immigrant communities. Methodist and Presbyterian denominations were the most common among Japanese American Christians, and Congregational, Episcopal, Holiness, and other Protestant sects were represented in cities and towns across California.[39]

In 1902, members of the Presbyterian and M.E. churches in nearby Westminster sought to conduct missionary work in the Wintersburg community. Clergy members J.W. Miller and Joseph K. Inazawa arrived in Wintersburg in the spring of 1904 to inspect the countryside of Orange County. Finding the area promising, they secured the services of Episcopalian minister Hisakichi Terasawa, an established clergy member and teacher in the San Francisco Bay area.[40] Reverend Terasawa established the mission effort at Wintersburg in December 1904 and started a night school to teach English language to Japanese laborers.[41] Many *Issei* and *Nisei* were attracted to the area by the work of Reverend Terasawa who often ministered in Orange County.[42] The community and the missionaries initiated a fundraising effort to build Orange County's first Japanese Mission after the Los Angeles Presbytery did not have sufficient funds for the effort.[43] In an interfaith effort, nearby Presbyterian and Methodist congregations contributed to the mission building fund, as did the Christian Endeavor Union of Orange County, and several prominent pioneer families from Huntington Beach and Westminster.

Community members circulated a prospectus entitled "Reasons to Build A Church," written in Japanese, throughout the countryside to explain their desire to build a mission and request donations. The text spoke to anti-Asian sentiment of the period faced by the Japanese community, and the fact that white Americans did not understand their culture or spirituality. Overall, the prospectus detailed three main reasons to build a mission: to challenge the racial prejudice against the Japanese people by building a social system around a church, such as was customary for white American communities; to reassure white Americans that there was common ground, similar aspirations, and a desire for Japanese immigrants to assimilate into American culture; and to build a spiritual and community center for the Japanese community. The prospectus concluded with a call to action to anyone who supported the Japanese struggle, with a fundraising goal of $1,500, signed by representatives of the Japanese community from Orange County's small, rural towns.[44]

Along with the local Japanese community, the construction of the mission building was financially supported by other pioneering families and businesses in Orange County, including George W. Moore, M.C. Cole, E.H. Darling, S.J. Burgess, the Crane family, the Clemons family, the Chaffees, the Woodingtons, the Farrars, the Hearns, the Nicholses, the Blaylocks, the Shaffers, and the Reeds. Early businesses that supported the Japanese Mission fund included the

[39] Chou et al., "Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California, 1850-1995," Section E, 136-137.
[40] Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach,* 71.
[41] Galvin Preservation Associates, Inc., *City of Huntington Beach Historic Context & Survey Report*, 73; "A Japanese Missionary Removed to San Francisco," *Santa Ana Register,* December 28, 1907.
[42] Galvin Preservation Associates, Inc., *City of Huntington Beach Historic Context & Survey Report*, 52.
[43] Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach,* 72.
[44] Ibid., 72-75.

Holly Sugar Factory, Huntington Beach National Bank, California Vegetable Union, Pacific Vegetable Company, and the Halsell Drug Company. Additional financial supporters include the Wintersburg M.E. Church, opened in 1907, the Women's Missionary Society of Orange County, the First Presbyterian Church of Santa Ana, and the Westminster Presbyterian Church.[45]

Reverend Terasawa led the mission effort in Wintersburg until December 1907, when he was called back to San Francisco to continue his work there. He was succeeded by Reverend Kobeashi.[46] Following his departure, on March 2, 1908, Teresawa and his wife, Fuku, acquired a 4.5-acre parcel on the southeast corner of Wintersburg Avenue (later Warner Avenue) and Nichols Lane for the construction of a mission building, located just east of the official boundary of the Wintersburg subdivision.[47] According to Orange County Assessor records, the land was acquired from John Dubuis, Forest Dubuis, and Wallace and Emma Blaylock, and included an artesian water well.[48]

Reverend John Junzo Nakamura arrived in 1909 to head the mission-building committee and oversee the construction of the mission and manse in Wintersburg.[49] The itinerant mission work by Reverend Nakamura included the growing village of Wintersburg, Bolsa, Garden Grove, Old Newport, and Talbert. Nakamura reported traveling 225 miles throughout Orange County to visit Japanese laborers and their families on farms and in labor camps as part of his regular circuit. At the time, there were over 300 Japanese immigrants living year-round in Orange County, and at least 400 more during seasonal crop work.[50] On December 25, 1909, the mission conducted its first service overseen by Reverend Nakamura. The celebratory service included scripture readings, choir signers, prayer, and congratulatory speeches by clergymen from throughout the region.[51] The mission ministered to over 150 families, mostly dry chili pepper and vegetable farmers, as well as strawberry, celery, and bean farmers from the surrounding communities.[52] Shortly after the inauguration of the Wintersburg Mission, congregational churches in Santa Ana, the Baptist Church in Garden Grove, and El Modena Friends Church each opened their own mission work for the Japanese community; the Anaheim Free Methodist Church joined the cohort in 1921.[53] Reverend Nakamura led the congregation from 1909 to 1913, when he was succeeded by Reverend David Y. Oikawa, who served until 1917.[54]

In July 1910, articles of incorporation for the Japanese Presbyterian Mission of Wintersburg were filed with the county clerk. The purpose of incorporation was to enable the church to own

[45] Ibid*,* 79-80.
[46] "A Japanese Missionary Removed to San Francisco," *Santa Ana Register,* December 28, 1907.
[47] *Chain of Title for 7622 Warner Ave. and 7642 Warner Ave*., Deeds 149/298, Orange County Archives.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach,* 76.
[50] Ibid*,* 51.
[51] "Opening of New Japanese Chapel," *Santa Ana Daily Register,* December 21, 1909.
[52] George and Haider, *Sowing Dreams, Cultivating Lives,* 102.
[53] "Japanese Presbyterian Church Celebrates 50th Anniversary," *Santa Ana Register,* October 5, 1954.
[54] "Wintersburg News Budget," *Santa Ana Daily Register,* June 9, 1917.

its own property and conduct mission work in Wintersburg. The signatories were Reverend H.C. Cockrum, Hensler Larter, Reverend J.J. Nakamura, M. Furuta, I. Tawa, and T.M. Asari.[55]

On March 11, 1912, Reverend Teresawa sold most of the 4.5-acre parcel to Charles M. Furuta and Reverend Nakamura, except for the northwest corner lot measuring 50' x 150', which was deeded to the Japanese Presbyterian Mission of Wintersburg.[56] Nakamura deeded his share of the lot to Furuta on February 27, 1913, shortly before the California Alien Land Law of 1913 was passed on May 3 of that year.[57]

The mission welcomed Japanese immigrants from all over Orange County, providing a haven to practice Japanese culture, language, and the Christian religion. By 1920, the mission became a natural gathering place for the Japanese community due to its growing importance to the local Japanese population, which was also influenced by its proximity to the Tashima Market across Wintersburg Avenue near Lyndon Lane; the Wintersburg-Seltzer Depot of the Southern Pacific Railroad on Warner Avenue near Gothard Street, where farmers loaded their produce; the McIntosh Meat Market on the east side of Nichols Lane; Orange County's first Buddhist church above the Tashima Market; and the services and social functions associated with the Wintersburg Mission.[58]

The mission played a significant role in the development of other services for the Japanese community in Wintersburg and in neighboring cities. The Wintersburg Mission helped establish four Japanese Language Schools in Orange County, in Garden Grove, Talbert (later Fountain Valley), Costa Mesa, and Laguna Beach.[59] Many *Issei* parents felt it important to teach Japanese to their *Nisei* children, as well as to instill in them their cultural heritage. Classes were conducted after regular school or on Saturdays. Though some children attended reluctantly, at the appeal of their parents, others welcomed it as an opportunity to play sports or participate in social events sponsored by the language schools. Parents paid tuition directly to the teachers, who were generally local *Nikkei* ministers, their wives, or overseas Japanese students, with additional financial support provided by churches and community associations.[60] The schools also functioned as community centers for other Japanese organizations, along with hosting civic events, weddings, and funerals.

The Wintersburg community also established other religious, commercial, and civic organizations with the support of the mission or fellow congregants. The Asari Market (later the Tashima Market), opened by Tsurumatsu Asari in 1907 was the first Japanese market in Wintersburg. Asari was a crop and goldfish farmer in Wintersburg, a member of Orange County's first Buddhist church, and a founding supporter of the Wintersburg Presbyterian Mission, signing the 1904 prospectus for the mission effort. The Japanese Buddhist community

[55] "Japanese Mission Has Incorporated," *Santa Ana Daily Register,* July 7, 1910.
[56] *Chain of Title for 7622 Warner Ave. and 7642 Warner Ave.*, Deeds 207/89 and 207/90, Orange County Archives.
[57] *Chain of Title for 7622 Warner Ave. and 7642 Warner Ave.*, Deeds 227/165, Orange County Archives.
[58] Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach,* 33, 163.
[59] Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach,* 163.
[60] George and Haider, *Sowing Dreams, Cultivating Lives,* 92; "Japanese Give Check To School", *Santa Ana Register,* December 18, 1927.

supported and contributed to the mission-building effort at Wintersburg, and in 1936, mission congregants in turn supported the building efforts of the Buddhist church in Talbert. This civic and interfaith community support continued when Gunjiro Tashima, who started as a stock boy in the market, bought the commercial enterprise from Asari around 1915. The second story of the Tashima Market building was used as a community meeting place, including as the first gathering place for the Orange County Buddhist church; and for the *Bonen Kai* celebrations (New Year's events), with included signing, Japanese plays, and samurai *kembu* performances.[61]

The Smeltzer Japanese Association served the local Japanese communities of Wintersburg, Smeltzer, Bolsa, Talbert, Garden Grove, and the surrounding areas. The association was based in Wintersburg and held its meetings on the second floor of the Tashima Market. Founded in 1905, the association helped with local community issues, coordination of produce to market, and civic activities. The annual picnics of the Smeltzer Japanese Association were held in Huntington Beach parks, and at the beach. The association also supported youth sports, with baseball, track and field, basketball, and *judo* teams. Charles M. Furuta became president of the association in 1940, ultimately leading to his arrest in 1941.[62]

While Japanese business and farming associations provided an opportunity for men to exchange ideas, women participated in sewing clubs and in *ikebana* (floral arranging), and formed *fujinka* (women's associations), within the community. In 1911, Japanese women who resided in Wintersburg, Talbert, and Smeltzer, banded together to form the first Japanese ladies' society in the nation for the purpose of having a religious and social outlet.[63]

Charles M. Furuta became an active leader in the Japanese mission and the Japanese community, leading church youth groups, organizing community events at the Talbert Language School, providing financial support for the Hiroshima *kenjinkai* (prefectural organization) in Los Angeles, and in 1940, serving as the president of the Smeltzer Japanese Association.[64] Due to its central location Wintersburg, and Charles M. Furuta's active involvement in the mission, the Furuta Farm also became a significant gathering place for the Japanese American community.

Reverend Kenji Kikuchi became the pastor of the Wintersburg Mission in 1926, and, by 1930, noted that the community had outgrown the original wood church building. In 1930, the mission was described as the "only center for the Japanese community in the vicinity." Part of Kikuchi's work involved reorganizing and officially re-naming the church as the Japanese Presbyterian Church of Wintersburg. By this time, they no longer needed to operate as a mission, as the Japanese community in the area was settled and raising their children and grandchildren in the church. In May 1930, the leaders of the Presbyterian church gathered to decide if the mission had

[61] Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach,* 164.
[62] Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach,* 35; "20 Aliens are Nabbed by FBI in County Raid," *Santa Ana Register*, February 23, 1942.
[63] "Huntington Beach, Sept 25," *Santa Ana Register,* September 25, 1911.
[64] Yukiko Furuta, interview with Arthur A. Hansen and Yasko Gamo, June 17 and July 6, 1982, *Issei Experience in Orange County California*, O.H. 1752, Honorable Stephen K. Tamura Orange County Japanese American Oral History Project, California State University, Fullerton, http://texts.cdlib.org/view?docId=ft7p3006z0&doc.view=entire_text, 72, 74, 76.

sufficiently grown to merit re-naming and construction of a new church building. On May 16, 1930, the secretary of the Presbyterian board of church expansion in Los Angeles announced approval to reorganize the Wintersburg Mission as the Japanese Presbyterian Church of Wintersburg.[65] Reverend Kikuchi was officially chosen as pastor at the first ceremony of the reorganized church on May 18, 1930.[66]

Soon after the reorganization was accomplished, Reverend Kikuchi continued his advocacy for a new building for the congregation. On January 30, 1931, it was announced that specifications for buildings on the property of the Wintersburg Japanese Presbyterian Church were moving forward, with groundbreaking set to being within a month. Contemporary news accounts noted that the new church would be built on the site of original mission building, which would be moved to another location on the site and repurposed as a "young people's building."[67] Charles M. Furuta, who by this time was a church elder, donated land from his adjoining lot to make room for the church.

Due to the Great Depression, funds for the construction of the church were frozen, resulting in the delay of the plans. By 1934, the financial setback had been resolved due to the continued efforts of Reverend Kikuchi, and it was announced that the plans had been submitted to the Presbyterian Church Board for approval, which was granted in August 1934. The plans specified moving the original mission building "to the rear of the property," to serve as a Sunday school room and education building. The new church would measure 30 x 80 feet and was designed to seat 300 congregants.[68]

On October 13, 1934, the congregation gathered at the original mission building to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the Japanese Presbyterian Church in Wintersburg.[69] It was a joyous occasion both for the history of the church and to celebrate that work was well underway on the construction of the new building. Reverend Kikuchi had successfully led the financial campaign over the previous four years, which enabled the congregation to realize this important milestone.

On October 29, 1934, the cornerstone of the new church was laid, which included both English and Japanese text, a scroll bearing the name of all the donors, and a history of the church from 1904 to 1934.[70] Following the laying of the cornerstone, Reverend Kikuchi hosted a tea ceremony. Construction was completed and the new church was dedicated on December 9, 1934.[71] Reverend Terasawa returned as a special guest speaker, and Charles M. Furuta also spoke at the event. By this time, more than 2,500 Japanese Americans resided in Orange County,

[65] "Mission to be Organized as Church Sunday," *Santa Ana Register*, May 16, 1930.
[66] "Launch Japanese Church in Wintersburg Sunday," *Santa Ana Register*, May 19, 1930.
[67] "Work on New Church Begins in February," *Santa Ana Register*, January 30, 1931.
[68] "Japanese Church Work Begins Soon," *Santa Ana Register*, August 31, 1934; "Church Work Completed by Thanksgiving," *Santa Ana Register,* October 15, 1934.
[69] "Church Work Completed by Thanksgiving," *Santa Ana Register*, October 15, 1934.
[70] "Wintersburg Japanese in Church Rites," *Santa Ana Register*, October 30, 1934.
[71] "Japanese Church Service on Dec. 9," *Santa Ana Register*, November 24, 1934.

and more than 700 came to celebrate the opening of the new church.[72] Reverend Kikuchi remained as pastor until 1936. He was responsible for the daily activities of the church, and assisted the community with religious, social, or legal issues.[73] Following Kikuchi's departure, Reverend Sohei Kowta served as minister from 1938 until the 1942 forced removal of Japanese Americans under Executive Order 9066.[74]

Furuta Farm

Charles M. Furuta (1882-1953) was among the mission's strongest supporters. He was one of the mission's first trustees, and later became an elder.[75] Furuta was born into a family of farmers on April 7, 1882, in the rural countryside of Hiroshima-ken, Japan.[76] Furuta's father passed away when he was five years old, and his older brother, Soichi Furuta, relocated to Hawaii to find work. In 1900, Furuta emigrated at the age of 18 to join Soichi. Onboard the *SS Glenogle*, Furuta was destined for Hawaii and was diverted to Tacoma, Washington following an outbreak of plague on the island. Furuta arrived at Tacoma on May 24, 1900, with $32 in hand and sought work at a local sawmill and in railroad construction.[77] By 1906, Furuta relocated to Orange County with the prospect of working in the celery fields. When he arrived in Wintersburg, Furuta met Reverend Teresawa, who had begun conducting missionary work among the Japanese laborers and teaching night school. Reverend Teresawa taught Furuta to speak English and introduced him to the Christian faith; Furuta was the first Japanese immigrant baptized in Orange County.[78]

Prior to establishing his own farm and becoming a congregant of the mission, Furuta was employed at the nearby Cole Ranch, working with the horses and cultivating celery and sugar beets. He also established a cooperative farm with four other Japanese men, called a *goshinsha*. The cooperative venture ultimately failed, and Furuta was left paying off the debt, while he simultaneously studied English with Reverend Teresawa after working long hours in the fields.[79] In 1912, Furuta acquired a major portion of the mission property, on the advice of Reverend Teresawa, who encouraged him to settle down and start a family. Later that year, Furuta returned to Japan for an arranged marriage to Yukiko Yajima.

Yukiko Yajima (1895-1989) was born into a samurai family in Hiroshima-ken, Japan on March 23,1895. Like most samurai families, during the Meiji Restoration of Japan, the Yajima family lost wealth and status. Due to her father's business selling safes, she was afforded an eighth-grade public school education. Yajima met Furuta at the age of 17. They were married in a civil

[72] "Wintersburg Church to Observe Anniversary Sunday Afternoon," *Santa Ana Register*, December 7, 1934.
[73] George and Haider, *Sowing Dreams, Cultivating Lives,* 99.
[74] Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach,* 137.
Unless otherwise noted, biographical information about Charles Furuta, Yukiko Yajima, and other family members outlined in this section is derived from Yukiko Furuta, *Oral History 1752*, 8.
[76] *U.S., World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918*, "Mitsuji Furuta," Ancestry.com, accessed August 2024.
[77] *U.S., Arriving and Departing Passenger and Crew Lists, 1882-1965*, "M. Furuta," Ancestry.com, accessed August 23, 2024; Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach,* 21.
[78] Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach,* 25.
[79] Ibid*,* 26; Furuta, *Oral History 1752*, 11.

ceremony in the countryside on October 15, 1912. On December 6, 1912, they both departed for San Francisco from Yokohama onboard the *Shinyo Maru.* They were met by Reverend Teresawa and his wife Fuku in San Francisco, then departed for Los Angeles' Little Tokyo, where they stayed at the Miyako Hotel. While in Los Angeles, Furuta made arrangements for the construction of their home in Wintersburg. He acquired a loan from the Huntington Beach bank using the land as equity and contracted with a white builder to construct the one-story residence.[80] Charles commuted back and forth between Little Tokyo and Wintersburg via the Pacific Electric railway to work and oversee construction of the house.

When the Furutas were finally able to relocate to Wintersburg, the property included a small house (circa 1900) built for the Terahata family who leased the land from Charles circa 1912, the Mission (1910), and the Manse (1910), in addition to the one-story house (1912) and accompanying barn (1912).[81] At the time, the Furuta's home was one of three new homes in the area owned by Japanese immigrants; the others were owned by the Asari and Terada families. Most immigrants in the area rented older homes with the intention of returning to Japan after saving enough money. The Furuta house included a living room, a kitchen, and two bedrooms. There was no electricity, no city gas, and they originally had a traditional outdoor Japanese bathroom that was heated with firewood collected from the gum trees planted on the property. The Furutas did not reside in the house immediately. They rented out their small bungalow and leased land and a larger house on the Cole Ranch, where Charles had worked prior to marrying Yukiko.

Charles and fellow congregant Henry Kiyomi Akiyama (1888-1988) worked on the leased land growing celery. Akiyama lived with the Furutas on the second floor of the rented house. Akiyama married Yukiko's sister, Masuko Yajima (1897-1978), on November 11, 1915. Their celery farming venture ultimately failed after accruing over $10,000 in debt. In approximately 1919, after living on the Cole Ranch for seven years, the Furutas returned to their property in Wintersburg and expanded the bungalow with additional rooms and indoor plumbing. The Furutas' six children, Raymond (1914-1995), Toshiko (1916-2002), Nobuko (1918-1933), Kazuko (1920-2004), Etsuko (1922-2010), and Grace (1928-2018) were all raised on the farm, playing with their cousins and with other children from the surrounding area, most of whom were congregants of the mission. Akiyama and Masuko also relocated to the Furuta property; they lived in the Terahata house, and Akiyama eventually started a goldfish farm on the property.

*Goldfish Farming*

Following the forced opening of Japan to trade relationships with foreign countries in 1858, Westerners became fascinated with Japanese art, design, and culture, resulting in a demand for

[80] There are no original building records for the residence, so the exact date of construction and name of the contractor cannot be confirmed.

[81] According to Yukiko Furuta's oral history, the Terehata family leased a portion of the farmland from Charles Furuta circa 1912. Koichi Terahata moved a small house unto the land. After Mrs. Terahata died from tuberculosis, Koichi left Wintersburg and returned to Japan. The house was likely demolished to make way for the goldfish ponds in the 1920s.

Japanese-style goods that did not dissipate until World War II.[82] Western artists such as Van Gogh, Degas, and Cassat were primarily responsible for popularizing Japanese aesthetics in art, however, by the turn of the century, consumers could purchase their own participation in Japanese culture by buying Japanese style prints, attending Japanese influenced theater productions, or even building their own Japanese style gardens. Goldfish, though originating in China, were synonymous with Japanese aesthetics and a market demand arose for their purchase in the United States in this period.

Goldfish are native to China and early on were selectively bred to produce the yellow-orange color that lends the fish its common name. It is believed that they were first exported to Japan in 1502 and sold to members of the nobility as status symbols of wealth and good fortune and became associated with unique and beautiful aesthetics.[83] Their official introduction to the United States is dated to 1878 when Rear Admiral Daniel Ammen of the United States Navy presented "a number of specimens of the choicest varieties" to the United States Fish Commission upon his return from a deployment to Japan.[84] The popularity of goldfish quickly grew with an 1896 publication estimating that the "annual sale of goldfish in this country…[is] estimated at two millions, and of a value of $300,000."[85] In 2024 dollars, the goldfish industry would be worth approximately eleven million dollars, testifying to the popularity and demand for the fish at the turn of the century.

In California, the goldfish entered the popular imagination as early as the 1870s, evidenced by an article published in the *San Luis Obispo Tribune* in August 1873 that details the author's ideas about a Japanese hotel: "In imagining a Japanese hotel dismiss all architectural ideas… [We] are led…along the smooth corridors, across an arched bridge which spans an open space in which is a rookery, garden and pond stocked with goldfish, turtles and marine plants."[86] In San Francisco in 1874, an article detailed the treatment of goldfish as pets, demonstrating their availability prior to their official introduction to the United States.[87] In Los Angeles in 1877, goldfish were being sold at the Davis & Bridger's Preserved Fruit Emporium on Spring Street as part of their "Garden Ornamentation" section.[88] Both the goldfish for sale in San Francisco and Los Angeles were likely being imported directly from Japan for individual sale. The Davis and Bridger Emporium on Spring Street in Los Angeles opened in 1877 with the intention to "establish a depot where… they will import a great variety of curiosities from the South Pacific Islands, including goldfish, corals, etc."[89]

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[82] "Commodore Perry and Japan (1853-1854)," Weatherhead East Asian Institute at Columbia University, Asia for Educators (AFE), https://afe.easia.columbia.edu/special/japan_1750_perry.htm (accessed August 1, 2024).
[83] "Old Gold: An enduring love of a humble fish in Japanese art," *BBC*, October 28, 2019, https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20191028-old-gold-an-enduring-love-of-a-humble-fish-in-japanese-art.
[84] Hugo Mulertt, *The Goldfish and Its Systematic Culture with a View to Profit* (Brookyln, NY, 1896), 7; William A. Dill and Almo J. Cordone, *Fish Bulletin 178: History and Status of Introduced Fishes in California, 1871-1996*, California Department of Fish and Game, Inland Fisheries Division, 1997, 44-45.
[85] Mulertt, *The Goldfish and Its Systematic Culture with a View to Profit.*
[86] "A Japanese Hotel," *San Luis Obispo Tribune*, August 16, 1873.
[87] "Treatment of Gold Fish," *The San Francisco Examiner*, June 17, 1874.
[88] "Davis & Bridger's Preserved Fruit Emporium," *Los Angeles Evening Express*, June 30, 1877.
[89] "Our Old friend, Mr. George B. Davis," *Los Angeles Evening Express*, June 28, 1877.

Between 1878 and 1893, the United States' Government raised and distributed goldfish across the nation under the United States Fish Commission as part of the commercial pet trade industry.[90] The hatchery, located in Washington D.C., distributed "millions of goldfish" to "every state in the Union."[91] The fish were raised in "carp ponds near the Washington monument" and were used primarily as ornamental gifts given by the U.S. government or distributed to cities to "adorn public parks."[92] Shipping the fish across the nation via train cars popularized the goldfish and inspired private citizens to try their hand at raising, selling, and distributing the fish as part of goldfish farm enterprises.

In 1903, William Shoup of Waldron, Indiana, turned his goldfish hobby into a business. When tilling the soil on his farm did not yield desired results, Shoup began sending his quickly multiplying pet goldfish to the East and thus "sprang the biggest goldfish industry in the world," producing "about $20,000" a year from his 150,000 goldfish.[93] By 1907, the Indiana goldfish farm was estimated to be "the largest of its kind in the world" totaling one hundred acres and containing sixty-five ponds of varying size.

In Southern California, goldfish farming as a commercial industry was documented in Huntington Beach in the early twentieth century. In an article detailing the "opportunities and attractions" of the recently incorporated Orange County city in 1909, goldfish farming was listed as one of the "original" industries of the area in addition to "the propagation of frogs, catfish…turtles, etc."[94] In Los Angeles County, goldfish farming was listed in 1917 as one of the new "home" industries to arise "as a result of the war [WWI] creating unusual demands" on the economy.

*Goldfish Farming in Wintersburg*

Henry Kiyomi Akiyama recalled that around 1919, "he was a little tired of farming," and, at the same time, "started to have some goldfish as a hobby." Seeing as they "multiplied a lot… he thought goldfish farming might be a good business."[95] Akiyama had learned to raise *koi* (carp) from his relatives in Japan prior to leaving for America. Akiyama's hobby soon became the first of three commercial goldfish farming businesses in Orange County owned and operated by Japanese Americans.[96] It was known as the C.M. Furuta Gold Fish Farm and was originally

[90] "Carassius Auratus," Environmental Research Center's National Estuarine and Marine Exotic Species Information System (NEMESIS), https://invasions.si.edu/nemesis/species_summary/163350, Accessed August 2024.
[91] "Talk About Goldfish," *Los Angeles Evening Express*, November 10, 1893.
[92] Ibid.
[93] "Getting Rich from a Goldfish Farm," *The Los Angeles Times*, May 28, 1903.
[94] "Opportunities and Attractions at Beautiful Huntington Beach," *The Los Angeles Times*, July 11, 1915.
[95] Henry Kiyomi Akiyama, interviewed by Aruthur A. Hansen and Yasko Gamo, June 10, June 29, July 27, 1982, Issei Experience in Orange County, California, O.H. 1751, Honorable Stephen K. Tamura Orange County Japanese American Oral History Project, California State University, Fullerton, CA, https://oac.cdlib.org/view?docId=ft4b69n873&brand=oac4&doc.view=entire_text.
[96] The second goldfish farm was founded by Akiyama. In 1928, he established the Pacific Goldfish Farm, and in 1934, expanded to a forty-acre site in Westminster. The third goldfish farm in the area was started by Tsurumatsu

operated by Furuta and Akiyama, until Akiyama started his own enterprise in the 1920s. The goldfish ponds covered three acres of the five-acre property. A variety of species of goldfish including Comets, Black Moors, Fantails, Shubunkin, and Nymphs were cultivated by Furuta on his farm and shipped in barrels by truck to Orange and Los Angeles Counties.[97] The remaining two acres were dedicated to the Furuta House, the Wintersburg Japanese Presbyterian Mission complex, food and flower crops, and some small livestock. Outside of the goldfish farm, most of Charles and Yukiko's activities revolved around the Wintersburg Japanese Presbyterian Mission. The Furutas socialized with the clergy and their families, attended services and events, and helped maintain the church property.

Furuta found success as a goldfish farmer and was even chosen as a representative for Huntington Beach for a "goodwill visit" from Consul Shintaro Fukushima of the Southern California Association for the Preservation of Japanese History in 1940. Fukushima's visit to Huntington Beach was arranged to express his "appreciation of the friendly treatment given Japanese residents of this area by city administration." At the event, Furuta was touted as "manager of a goldfish farm at Wintersburg."[98]

The reported "friendly treatment" from the City of Huntington Beach toward the Japanese community was not representative of the treatment of Japanese and Japanese Americans by the state and federal governments, dating back to the Alien Land Laws established in the early twentieth century. By 1940, xenophobia and anti-Japanese sentiment had continued to increase. Yukiko Furuta spoke of an incident in Long Beach where she was denied service at a restaurant likely due to her ethnicity, and her daughter, Etsuko, wasn't allowed to swim in a pool with her friends.[99] Reverend Kikuchi recalls an incident where a Japanese student awarded valedictorian honors faced opposition from other American parents. These incidents were reported in local media outlets like the *Santa Ana Register*, fueling anti-Japanese sentiment.[100]

World War II and Japanese Incarceration

Prior to 1941, the rising discrimination was felt by the *Issei* and *Nisei* of Wintersburg, and the western United States at large, through immigration quotas and increased scrutiny. The attack on Pearl Harbor escalated the hostility, and the U.S. government officially declared war on Japan. Despite living in the United States for decades, Japanese Americans were accused of traitorous activity. Lee Chamness, Jr., the son of the civilian defense coordinator assisting the FBI in

Asari, who arrived in Orange County in the late 1800s and was one of the founding members of the Japanese Presbyterian Mission at Wintersburg. The Asari Goldfish Hatchery was founded in 1924, and, by 1958, was considered the largest of its kind in the West.

[97] Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach*, 92.

[98] "Official on Goodwill Tour of City," *Press-Telegram*, November 22, 1940 http://www.mansell.com/eo9066/1942/ROJA/Report_on_Japanese_Activities_1942.html.

[99] Furuta, *Oral History 1752*, 91-92.

[100] Kenji Kikuchi, interview by Arthur Hansen, August 26, 1981, *Issei Experience in Orange County California*, O.H. 1758, Honorable Stephen K. Tamura Orange County Japanese American Oral History Project, California State University, Fullerton, CA, http://texts.cdlib.org/view?docId=ft7d5nb3gn&chunk.id=d0e138&brand=calisphere&doc.view=entire_text.

arresting Japanese Americans in Huntington Beach and Wintersburg, recalled in a 1968 interview a rumor that the netting covering the many goldfish farms in the area were strung with radio antennas to transmit messages to mainland Japan.[101] This type of misinformation called into question every aspect of the lives of Japanese Americans, from their work to their home life. Travel was limited to within five miles of home, and everyone of Japanese descent had a curfew requiring them to be home by dark.[102] These types of restrictions were acutely felt in farming communities such as Wintersburg, as produce haulers were severely limited in where they could sell their crops.[103] Even amidst these restrictions the idea of a mass evacuation of Japanese Americans was not seen as inevitable by residents of Wintersburg. James Kanno, the son of *Issei* immigrants in Talbert, recalled debating in his high school civics class the impossibility of an evacuation, citing America's founding democratic values.[104]

During this period, the Japanese Presbyterian Church remained an important center of community life, and Reverend Sohei Kowta took on new responsibilities with the advent of war. With the men in the community being questioned and detained by the FBI, it was the church that stepped in to help care for the families left behind. When the FBI eventually came for Reverend Kowta, he explained that without him all the wives and families who had seen their husbands and fathers taken away would have no one left to care for them. As a result of his pleas, Reverend Kowta was not immediately detained, and he was able to continue ministering to the Japanese community in Wintersburg.[105]

On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 that initiated the forced removal of Japanese Americans to incarceration camps across the United States.[106] Charles M. Furuta's prominence in Wintersburg's *Nikkei* community as president of the Smeltzer Japanese Association and as one of the few Japanese landowners in the area, made him a particular target of the U.S. government, and on February 23, 1942, Charles was arrested and detained. His name was listed under the "Arrests" in *The Santa Ana Register*, in an article entitled, "20 Aliens Are Nabbed by FBI in County Raid."[107] After four decades of living, working, and raising his family in the United States, Charles M. Furuta was forced from his home and first taken to the detention center at La Tuna Canyon in Tujunga, in Los Angeles County. He was then taken to a military detention center in Lordsburg, New Mexico. While incarcerated in New Mexico, Charles registered for the military draft at the age of 60.[108] Soon

[101] Lee Chamness Jr., interview by John Sprout, November 25, 1968, *Japanese American Evacuation*, O.H. 78, Japanese American Oral History Project, California State College, Fullerton, CA, http://texts.cdlib.org/view?docId=ft8z09p16t&doc.view=entire_text.
[102] Yoshiyuki Tashima, interview by Pat Tashima, February 20, 1974, *Japanese American Evacuation*, O.H. 1362, Japanese American Oral History Project, California State University, Fullerton, CA. http://texts.cdlib.org/view?docId=ft809nb3zk&chunk.id=d0e119&toc.id=.
[103] Ibid, 1.
[104] Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach*,159.
[105] Furuta, *Oral History 1752*, 108.
[106] *Executive Order 9066: Resulting in Japanese-American Incarceration* (1942), National Archives, accessed August 2024, https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/executive-order-9066.
[107] "20 Aliens are Nabbed by FBI in County Raid," *Santa Ana Register*, February 23, 1942.
[108] *U.S. World War II Draft Registration Cards, 1942*, "Mitsuji Furuta," Ancestry.com, accessed August 2024.

thereafter, Furuta's wife, Yukiko, and their entire family were forced from their home in Wintersburg and sent to the Colorado River Relocation Center in Poston, Arizona where they were incarcerated for being "potential national security threat[s]."[109] Nearly all of the detainees hailing from Orange County were incarcerated at Poston. Yukiko recalled that many people from the Wintersburg and Talbert areas resided in Poston in blocks 5, 21, 22, and 32.[110] Reverend Kowta also arrived in Poston in May 1942, and while incarcerated helped organize the various denominations of clergy into an interfaith support for the displaced community, and served on Poston's interfaith council.[111] As a result, there was a sense of continued community within the camp as most of the families knew each other.

On July 14, 1942, Charles Furuta was relocated to Poston where he spent the remainder of his incarceration with his family.[112] The family made arrangements for their property before they were forcibly removed. The goldfish were sold off and the house was rented to a white family. They took only clothes to Poston and placed their collective belongings in the Akiyama residence, which was then sealed.[113] The Furutas were released on September 13, 1945, and returned to their home in Wintersburg to rebuild their lives.[114]

Prior to being released from Poston in 1945, Reverend Kowta secured housing for his wife and children as well as members of his congregation. Together with assistance from the Presbyterian Church and Esther Rhodes of the American Friends organization, Reverend Kowta secured the National Register-listed former Forsyth Memorial School for Girls in Boyle Heights (506 N. Evergreen Street, #15000359) as a hostel for Japanese Americans. Reverend Kowta returned to Los Angeles' Little Tokyo district in 1945 to assist the Japanese Union Church.[115] As church members returned to Los Angeles, a core group found a place to stay at the Evergreen Hostel in Boyle Heights. Reverend Kowta and Esther Rhodes managed the hostel, which received no funding from the War Relocation Authority.[116]

*Resettlement of Japanese Americans in Southern California (1943-1946)*[117]

The relocation of the incarcerated Japanese community began in 1943 in a series of six stages prior to the end of World War II, which was determined in part by age, work, and educational

[109] Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach*, 35, 134-135.
[110] Furuta, *Oral History 1752,* 125.
[111] Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach*, 142.
[112] *U.S. Final Accountability Rosters of Evacuees at Relocation Centers, 1942-1946*, "Mitsuji Charles Furuta," Ancestry.com, accessed August 2024.
[113] Furuta, *Oral History 1752,* 121.
[114] *U.S. Final Accountability Rosters of Evacuees at Relocation Centers, 1942-1946*, "Mitsuji Charles Furuta," Ancestry.com.
[115] Kristen Tamiko Hayashi, "Making Home Again: Japanese American Resettlement in Post-World War II Los Angeles,1945-1955" (PhD diss., University of California, Riverside, 2019), 193, https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9vn7n94x.
[116] Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach*, 143.
[117] Information in this section on the resettlement of the Japanese community after incarceration is derived from the United States Department of the Interior, *People in Motion: The Postwar Adjustment of the Evacuated Japanese Americans*, (Washington, D.C: US Government Printing Office, 1946).

experience, and in part by the sections of the country open to resettlement. The first few stages of relocation took place across midwestern and eastern states, including Colorado, Illinois, Ohio, and New York. Some of the first people who were relocated included college and university students; skilled tradesmen for work in war related industries; young men drafted to the War; and agricultural workers who helped harvest intermountain sugar beet crops. As part of securing selective release, Japanese people were certified by the War Relocation Authority (WRA) after passing a loyalty test and/or by local church or civic groups who could vouch for them as respectable citizens. It wasn't until January 1, 1945, when the West Coast was "reopened" to the Japanese community.

Of the 126,947 persons of Japanese descent enumerated in the 1940 census, 88.5% lived in Washington, Oregon, and California. When the closing of the incarceration camps had been completed, WRA records showed that 57,251 persons had returned to the three West coast states.[118] During the entire relocation period, 54,254 persons relocated to the Midwest and East coast, with over 900 in Alaska and Hawaii. Approximately, 5,500 people ultimately returned to the West coast before March 1946. By this time, the WRA estimated that slightly more than 60% of the incarcerated people returned to their former homes, or other parts of the evacuated area, and slightly less than 40% remained east of the evacuation boundary.

During and immediately following incarceration, the West coast agricultural industry was severely impacted. All but a very few agricultural leases held by Japanese farmers were given up, and land ownership decreased by about 11,000 acres. Japanese wholesale and retail establishments passed into other hands or were closed. Nearly three-quarters of Japanese farm acreage, including leased land, was lost and the entire market organization was destroyed.

In Los Angeles and surrounding counties, little farming activity had resumed by 1946. In 1940, Los Angeles County contained nearly one-quarter of all Japanese operated farms in the West Coast. However, of the 1,477 Los Angeles County farms, only 133 were owned and 1,364 were leased. After the war, much of the land formerly farmed was either subdivided for residential purposes or developed for new industries. Moreover, the relationship between the production of these farms and the Japanese wholesale produce operations in the city of Los Angeles and other areas was closed, and the lack of support formerly given by the wholesale structure provided an additional handicap. By 1946, there was only one fully Japanese-owned commission house, and fourteen produce companies had been reestablished in Los Angeles' wholesale market, of which eleven were yard operators and three were merchant houses in partnership with Caucasian operators. Between 150 and 160 Japanese Americans were employed there at the time. Among problems which made return to wholesale market difficult were the lack of Japanese farmers who could be depended upon for produce; the lack of Japanese controlled retail outlets; and the difficulty with securing farm leases which had been sold cheaply at the outset of war, which by 1946 doubled or tripled in price.

[118] United States Department of the Interior, *People in Motion,* 11.

In Orange County, where 95% of the prewar Japanese American population of 1,800 lived in rural areas, about 70% had returned by 1946. In contrast to approximately 12,000 acres farmed before the war, only about 10% of that total was under cultivation by Japanese American farmers in 1946. Of the 245 prewar farm operators, forty-eight were owners of approximately 500 acres. The acreage of owned property was about the same postwar; leased land has fallen from 11,500 to approximately 700 acres. This was also attributed to the high prices of lima beans in 1946, and to the reluctancy of landlords to lease farmland and instead make a larger profit growing beans.

Prior to the war, Japanese operated farms were scattered throughout Orange County. By 1946, however, ten to fifteen families were concentrated in each of the three local hostels and in an abandoned dehydrating plant, in addition to 200 people housed at the temporary housing camp at the Santa Ana Air base.[119] Employment was sought through local farms, with family members working on individual or joint pieces of land. Notably, the WRA reported a high number of graduates from agricultural colleges in Orange County, with advanced techniques of farm management and operations noted on Japanese farms.

While farm operators indicated that more money was passing through their hands than before the war, their net return was much lower. High operating costs, high taxes, and higher labor costs, in addition to the changed market conditions in Los Angeles, were the main reasons for failing farms.

In addition to securing employment, the housing disparity on the West Coast was another obstacle for Japanese Americans returning to Southern California. Upon the closing of incarceration camps, the Federal government was unable to offer any guarantee of housing. Racial discrimination, lack of employment, and loss of financial resources made it extremely difficult to secure housing after incarceration. In some western cities, like Los Angeles, racially restrictive covenants were written to apply to persons of Asian descent. Return to the west also came at a time when an influx of new workers supporting the industrial war effort relocated to the Pacific and discharged veterans were returning in the thousands to set up homes with the support of the GI bill.

To help remediate some of the stress with finding housing, efforts were put forth by civic and religious groups in California to establish hostels and to provide temporary housing for Japanese Americans. Although the WRA did not fund these private efforts, it did assign WRA staff to assist and arranged to loan needed equipment such as cots, mattresses, blankets, China, and cooking equipment.

In addition to hostels, the WRA set up temporary housing camps throughout the west coast in conjunction with the Western Defense Command and later the Federal Public Housing Authority. In Southern California, the Lomita Air Strip in Los Angeles County housed 500 persons, in addition to five other installations in the county. In Orange County, the Santa Ana Air Base provided barrack housing for over 250 people. By October 1945, Japanese incarcerated at

[119] "Jap[sic]-Americans Being Housed In Orange County FHA Project," *Anaheim Gazette,* November 8, 1945.

Poston were returning to Orange County at the rate of twenty-five per week. At the time, 235 out of 1,800 incarcerated had returned to Orange County and reestablished permanent residence there.[120] Most were people who owned property or who were able to obtain housing for themselves. To afford temporary housing for those who needed it, three hostels were setup, including one at the former Japanese language school in the Talbert district which accommodated forty people.[121] The army barracks at the Santa Ana Air Base, included approximately thirty framed buildings with partitioned rooms measuring 12 x 20 feet.[122] Monthly rent ranged from $10 to $20 depending on the size of the family residing there. Each person received an iron cot, mattress, and two blankets supplied by the FPHA, while a heating stove was the only household amenity provided. Meals were prepared in a communal mess hall, with wash and laundry rooms, showers, and toilets as shared amenities.[123]

Due to the acute housing situation in Los Angeles County, the FPHA also agreed to loan more than 450 unused trailers to be used to supplement housing at five of the existing Army installations. When WRA closed its national office in June 1946, all the people in WRA temporary housing had been moved to other locations; between 2,500 and 3,000 in Los Angeles County were still living in transient quarters, about evenly distributed between hostels and trailer camps. At the end of 1946, there were still an estimated 800 to 900 in hostels, and 1,700 to 1,800 in trailer camps at Burbank and Long Beach, reminiscent of incarceration camps with a high concentration of Japanese people, cramped quarters, and limited facilities.

Wintersburg after World War II

Upon their return to their Wintersburg home, the Furutas found their house in a state of disrepair, and the goldfish ponds and the entire property unkempt. The Furutas suspected that the property had been sublet by the original tenants, who were supposed to keep the ponds filled with water.[124] Yukiko Furuta recalled that upon their return, it was impossible to tell where the fishponds were, and that it took them almost two and a half years to clean up the property.[125] Though the operations of the C.M. Furuta Gold Fish Farm at Wintersburg ceased with the incarceration of the Furuta family, the other two goldfish farming companies with roots in Wintersburg continued after World War II. The Asari Hatchery was in operation until at least 1962, and the Pacific Goldfish Farm until at least 1991.[126]

Though their goldfish were gone and the property in ruins, the Furuta family managed to salvage some of the water lilies that once flourished in the ponds, and they began to cultivate water lilies and sweet peas.[127] The Furutas became one of the "only known providers of cut water lilies to

[120] "Sentiment Changes as Additional Jap[sic]-Americans Return to Homes," *Santa Ana Register,* October 1, 1945.
[121] Ibid.
[122] "200 Nisei To Be Housed in Barracks at Air Base," *Santa Ana Register,* October 26, 1945.
[123] "Jap[sic]-Americans Being Housed In Orange County FHA Project," *Anaheim Gazette,* November 8, 1945.
[124] Furuta, *Oral History 1752*, 121, 133.
[125] Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach*, 37.
[126] "Court Record," *Santa Ana Register*, December 4, 1962; Janice Jones, "Clipboard: Pacific Goldfish Farm," *Los Angeles Times*, February 13, 1991.
[127] "Furuta Family Farm," Walk the Farm, accessed August 2024, https://www.walkthefarm.org/furuta-family-farm.

florists in the United States during the last half of the twentieth century."[128] During this period, the Furuta farm became a family business with Charles and Yukiko's son Raymond joining the endeavor. In 1947, the Furutas constructed a home on the property for Raymond and his wife.[129] Charles Furuta died in 1953, though his family continued to operate the farm until 1995, before selling the property in 2004.[130]

The Japanese Presbyterian Church reopened in October 1945 and reactivated its cultural and spiritual role in the Japanese community. Reverend Noji became the minister at Wintersburg, serving from 1948 to 1951.[131] During this time, the Japanese Presbyterian Church participated in interchurch services across Orange and Los Angeles Counties and supported local civic groups. In 1954, the church celebrated its 50th anniversary under Reverend George N. Greer of Santa Ana, who took on the role of interim minister in 1951. The celebration welcomed previous ministers and elder members of the church including Reverend Kenji Kikuchi, elder T. Chino, and Reverend Sohei Kowta, and hosted more than 125 congregants and friends.[132] In 1957, Reverent Tetsu Saito became the new minister, initiating the annual benefit bazaar to raise funds for the church, its youth activities, and its overseas mission.[133] During this time, the church was actively sponsoring *Nikkei* sport leagues including basketball, volleyball, and softball teams. By 1964, Reverend S. Kent Ikeda took over ministering duties at Wintersburg where he represented the congregation at interchurch services; attended the annual Japanese Presbyterian Church Work Conference; participated in civic panel discussions; and expanded the youth church programs including a choir group and softball team to encourage membership of the growing *Sensei* community.

After World War II, Southern California experienced a population boom, as new and returning GIs and their families settled in the area after the war. With the surge in population came new industries and commercial enterprises, and the redevelopment of large swaths of agricultural lands for new residential subdivisions. In 1957, Wintersburg was annexed by the City of Huntington Beach, and by 1960, the population of Huntington Beach doubled to 11,492 residents, from 5,237 in 1950.[134] Japanese Americans had deep roots in Orange County due to the significance of the region's prewar agricultural industries. After incarceration, many Japanese Americans returned or moved to the developing suburbs in the area from other parts of California and the country. As the Cold War developed in Asia in the 1950s, the social and political positioning of Asian Americans began to shift. Confrontations with communist China

[128] Urashima, *Historic Wintersburg in Huntington Beach*, 37-38.
[129] U.S. Census, 1950, "Raymond Furuta," Ancestry.com, accessed August 2024.
[130] "Furuta Family Farm," Walk the Farm.
[131] "Jap[sic] Minister Speaks," *Santa Ana Register,* December 16, 1948; "Japanese Presbyterian Church Celebrates 50th Anniversary," *Santa Ana Register,* October 5, 1954.
[132] "Japanese Presbyterian Church Celebrates 50th Anniversary," *Santa Ana Register,* October 5, 1954.
[133] "New Minister To Be Installed," *Santa Ana Register,* May 11, 1957; "Wintersburg Church Sponsors Benefit Bazaar," *Rafu Shimpo,* October 10, 1957; "Wintersburg Readies Two-Fold Festivities," *Rafu Shimpo,* August 31, 1968.
[134] Bureau of the Census, *Census of The Population: 1960, Volume 1: Characteristics of the Population, Part 6 California* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1960), 6-18, https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1960/population-volume-1/vol-01-06-c.pdf.

over Taiwan, the Korean Peninsula, and Southeast Asia drove a shift in the racial positioning of Japanese Americans during this period.[135] The same perceived foreignness and association with a foreign power that led to Japanese American mass incarceration during World War II became an asset during the Cold War and afforded an expansion of domestic rights and opportunities. The shifting position of Japan in Cold War geopolitics enabled Japanese Americans to gain residence in predominantly white neighborhoods; neighborhoods that continued to deny residence to other racial minorities through racially restrictive covenants and redlining practices. Between 1950 and 1960, the Japanese American population in Orange County more than tripled, from 1,186 to 3,890. Despite the growing size of the Japanese American population in Orange County in the decades after World War II, residential clusters of Japanese Americans did not develop as they had prior to the war. Movement into the suburbs resulted in the dispersal of the Japanese American community into predominately middle-class and white neighborhoods, and occasionally into neighborhoods with significant Latino and other Asian American populations.

This residential dispersal and the realities and structures of post-World War II suburban development shaped the practices and community building for *Sansei* and *Yonsei* (fourth generation Japanese Americans) across Orange County. Many Japanese Americans traveled considerable distances to join other Japanese Americans in ethnic organizations and civic institutions. Most prominent among these organizations were Japanese American religious institutions such as the Anaheim Free Methodist Church, Wintersburg Presbyterian Church, and Orange County Buddhist Church, and community organizations such as the Southeast Youth Organization (SEYO) basketball league, local Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) chapters, Suburban Optimists Club, and Orange Coast Optimists. While ethnic institutions existed in the suburbs of Orange County after the war, their service areas became much wider than their urban counterparts due to their more geographically dispersed memberships.

In 1965, citing a need to accommodate the growing congregation, the Japanese Presbyterian Church in Wintersburg relocated to Garden Grove on Fairview Street, where the church remains.[136] After the relocation of the church, the Synod of Southern California (previously the Presbytery of Los Angeles of the Presbyterian Church of the United State of America) deeded the Wintersburg church property to Raymond H. Furuta and his wife, Martha M. Furuta, in 1968.[137] The 1934 Church building on Warner Avenue was leased for use by other congregations from 1968 to 1997, including the Rainbow Christian Fellowship, the Church of God Sabbatarian, and most recently, *Casa De Oracion Monte Sanai*, a Hispanic congregation.[138]

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[135] Unless noted otherwise, information about Japanese resettlement in this section derived from Dana Y. Nakano, *Japanese Americans and the Racial Uniform: Citizenship, Belonging, and the Limits of Assimilation* (New York, NY: NYU Press, 2023).
[136] "Our History," Wintersburg Presbyterian Church, accessed August 2024, https://www.wintersburg.org/our-history.
[137] *Chain of Title for 7622 Warner Ave. and 7642 Warner Ave., Deed 8719/447*, Orange County Archives.
[138] "The Politics of Race, Place, and Waste in Huntington Beach," Preserve Orange County, accessed August 2024, https://www.preserveorangecounty.org/tracts/2022/5/30/the-politics-of-place-race-and-waste-in-huntington-beach#:~:text=The%20Japanese%20Presbyterian%20Church%20%E2%80%93%20a,vandals%20onto%20the%20property%20 (figs; "Church of God Sabbatarian," *Santa Ana Register,* November 30, 1968.

By 1967, there were forty-three Japanese Christian and Buddhist churches serving the dispersed Japanese American community in the region, including the Buddhist Church in Anaheim, the Anaheim Free Methodist Church, the Japanese Baptist Church in Westminster, the Buddhist Church in Huntington Beach, the Presbyterian Church in Garden Grove, and the San Diego Buddhist Church in San Diego County. With the continued diaspora of the Japanese American population in the decades after the war, the Japanese Presbyterian Church in Wintersburg, and therefore the Furuta Farm, no longer served as a center of the community, and instead joined a collective of Japanese churches connecting the *Sensei* and *Yonsei* generation across a wider geographic region throughout Southern California.

**Conclusion**

Wintersburg is the only surviving remnant of the town of Wintersburg, which in the early decades of the twentieth century was a thriving agricultural community with a significant concentration of Japanese residents. The growth of the local Japanese community led to the formation of the Japanese Presbyterian Mission in 1904, which by the 1930s had become a full-fledged congregation and was officially renamed the Japanese Presbyterian Church; it remained a spiritual and social center of the community until it relocated to Garden Grove in 1965. A large portion of the mission land was sold to Charles M. Furuta prior to the passage of the 1913 Alien Land Act, making Furuta one of the few *Issei* to own property in California. Furuta was a leading figure in the mission and the community, and his farm was a social and cultural hub for the Japanese community before World War II. The Japanese Presbyterian Church and the Furuta Farm, which comprise the Wintersburg Historic District, are the only surviving remnants of the Wintersburg community linked to the development of the Japanese American community in Orange County and its agricultural roots prior to World War II; to the Southern California Japanese Christian missionary efforts and community building of the early twentieth century; and to the return and rebuilding of the Japanese community after World War II. Wintersburg is therefore significant within the context of Migration and Community Formation, under cover of the *Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in California, 1850-1995* MPS, and was identified as an eligible property in the Multiple Property Documentation Form.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
____ previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

**Primary location of additional data:**

____ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
__X__ Local government
____ University
____ Other
Name of repository: City of Huntington Beach_____

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____**

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** __4.4_____

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

Latitude: 33.714679; Longitude: -117.995104

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The legal parcel boundary of the rectangular district is the W ½ of the NE ¼ of the NW ¼ of the NE ¼ of S26, T5S, R11W.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary encompasses the original parcels for the Wintersburg Presbyterian Church and the Furuta Farm, the only remaining extant portion of the settlement of Wintersburg.

---

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: _Mariana Ruiz, Architectural Historian, Christine Lazzaretto, Managing Principal, and John LoCascio, AIA, Principal Architect_____
organization: _Historic Resources Group_____
street & number: _12 South Fair Oaks Avenue, Suite 200_____
city or town: _Pasadena_____ state: _CA_____ zip code: _91105____
e-mail: _christine@historicresourcesgroup.com_____
telephone: _(626) 793-2400_____
date: _October 2024; Revised November 2024_____

---

**Additional Documentation**
Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

**Photographs**
Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo

date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photo Log**

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of Property: | Wintersburg |
| City or Vicinity: | Huntington Beach |
| County: | Orange County |
| State: | California |
| Photographer: | Laura Janssen, Ryan Holcomb (Historic Resources Group) |
| Date Photographed: | July 15, 2024 |

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 20 Wintersburg, facing north towards church, Furuta House #1, and Furuta Barn south elevations

2 of 20 Wintersburg, farmland east of the house, facing east

3 of 20 Japanese Presbyterian Church, north façade, facing south

4 of 20 Japanese Presbyterian Church, detail of north façade, facing south

5 of 20 Japanese Presbyterian Church, west elevation, facing east

6 of 20 Japanese Presbyterian Church, south elevation, facing north

7 of 20 Furuta House #1, north façade, facing south

8 of 20 Furuta House #1, east detail of north façade, facing west

9 of 20 Furuta House #1, south elevation, facing north

10 of 20 Furuta House #1, east elevation, facing west

11 of 20 Furuta House #1, west elevation, facing southeast

12 of 20 Furuta Barn, north façade, facing southeast

13 of 20 Furuta Barn, perspective view of south elevation, facing north

14 of 20 Furuta Barn, interior, facing south

15 of 20 Furuta House #2, west façade, facing east

16 of 20 Furuta House #2, west façade, facing northeast

17 of 20 Furuta House #2, east elevation, facing southwest

18 of 20 Shed, facing west towards shed and Furata House #2, east elevation

19 of 20 Shed, north elevation and interior, facing south

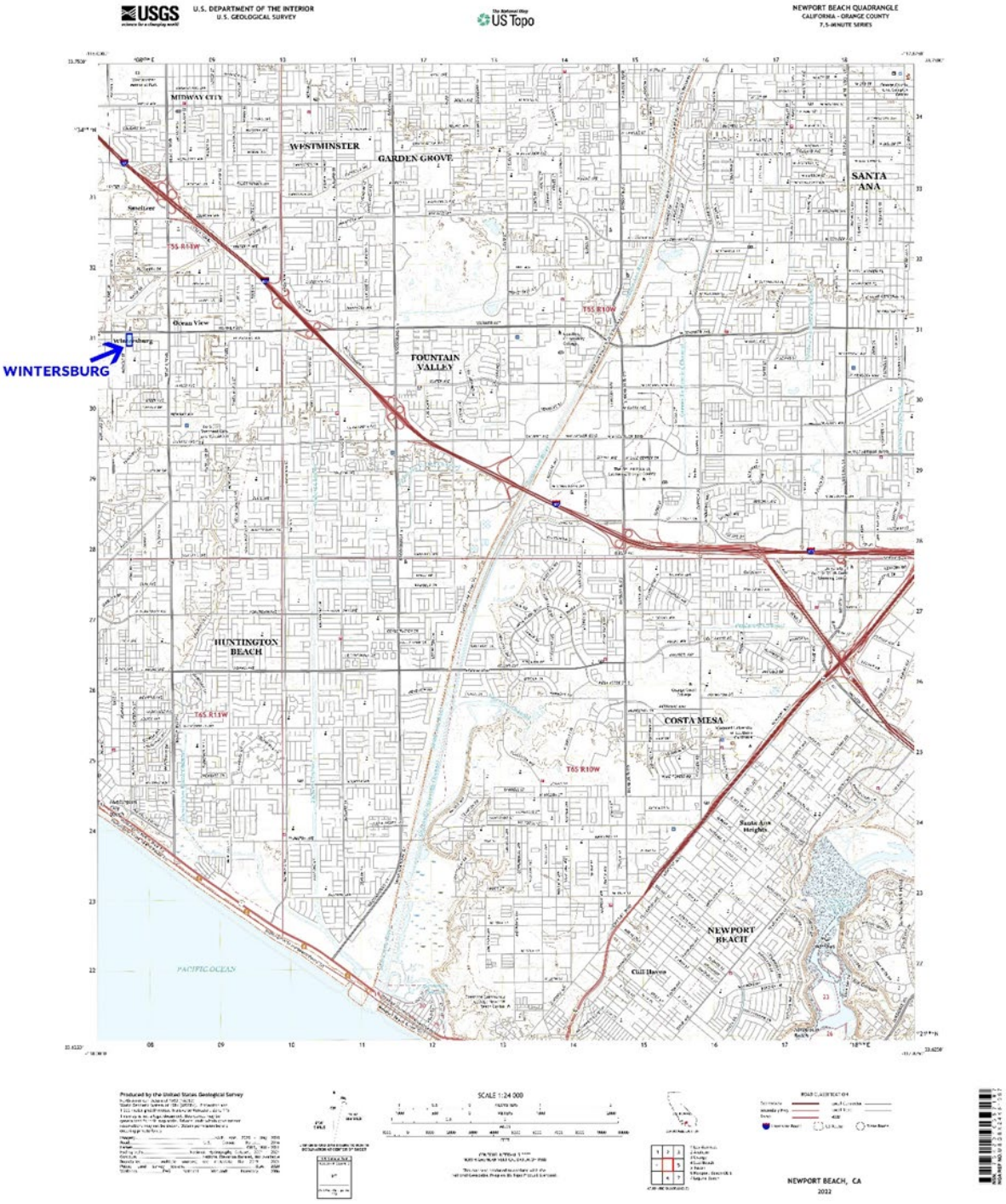
20 of 20 Shed, east elevation and landscape, facing southwest

Wintersburg
Name of Property

Orange, California
County and State

## Location Map

Latitude: 33.714679 Longitude: -117.995104



Wintersburg
Name of Property

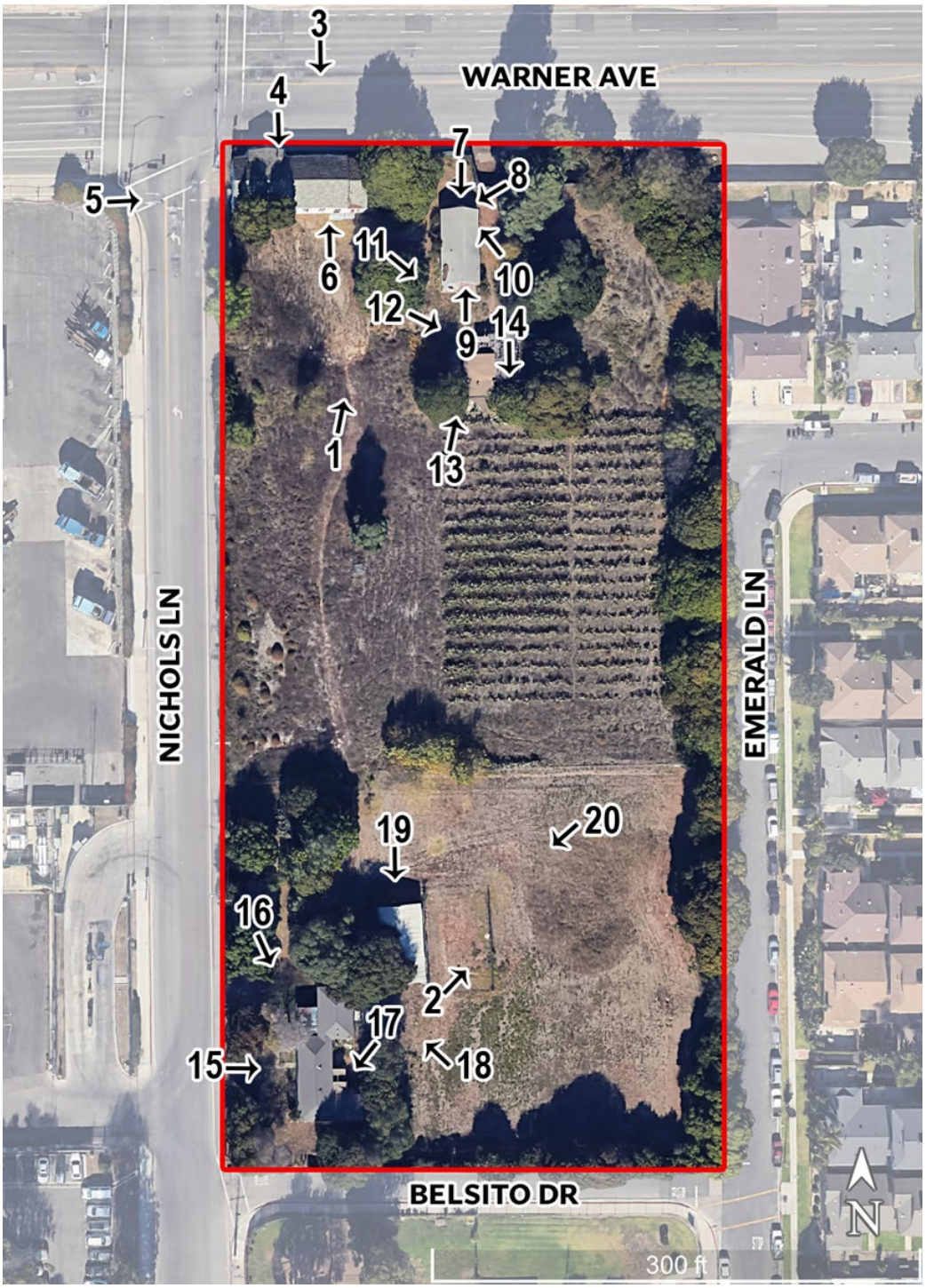
Orange, California
County and State

## Sketch Map

Wintersburg
Name of Property

Orange, California
County and State

## Photo Key



## Index of Figures

**Figure 1** 1906 Tract Map

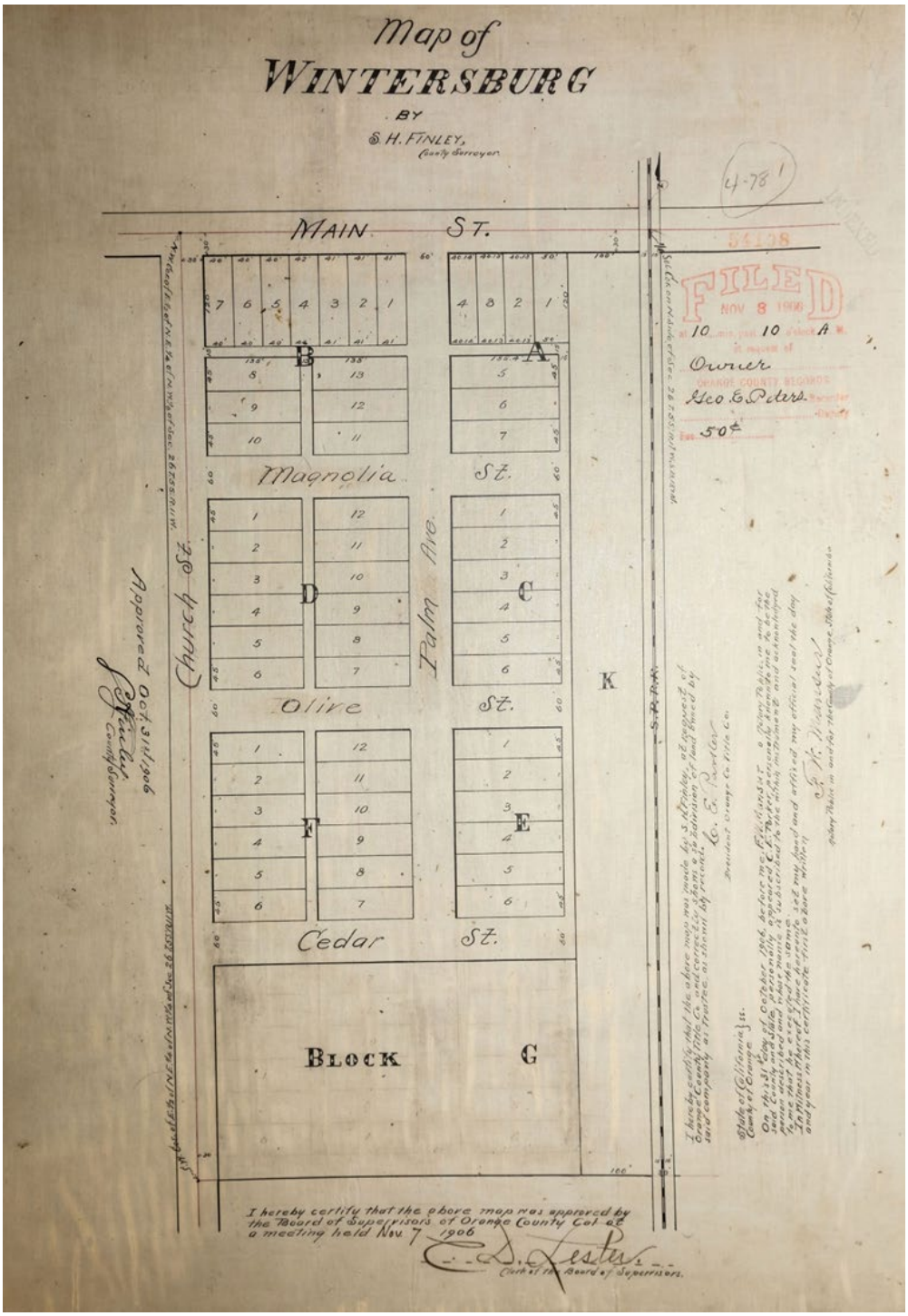


**Figure 2** Japanese Presbyterian mission congregation, circa 1909

**Figure 3** Wintersburg Japanese Presbyterian Mission, circa 1910

**Figure 4** Yukiko and Charles M. Furuta at their new home on Wintersburg (Warner) Avenue, circa 1912

**Figure 5** A game of tennis on the Furuta farm, shaded by the lush grove of gum trees that surrounded the property, circa 1913

**Figure 6** Toshiko Furuta holds her sister, Grace, with Kazuko and Etsuko Furuta, standing next to the goldfish ponds, circa 1928


**Figure 7** A postcard image of the Wintersburg Japanese Presbyterian Church, circa 1934

**Figure 8** Wintersburg Japanese Presbyterian Church, December 9, 1934

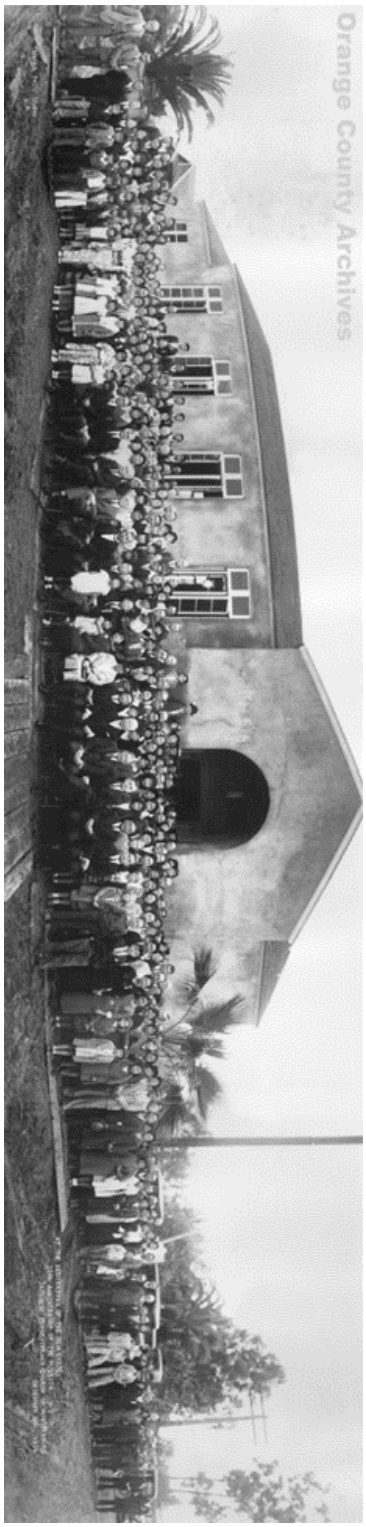


**Photo 1** Wintersburg, facing north towards church, Furuta House #1, and Furuta Barn south elevations

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**Photo 6** Japanese Presbyterian Church, south elevation, facing north

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