



THE CENTINELA SPRINGS (1937)

Archibald Garner carved mahogany panels for the Post Office under the federal Works Progress Administration art program, more specifically the Treasury Section of the Fine Arts (TRAP). The program was an early example of reserving a percent of the construction budget for art.

When commissioned, the mural artists were given a series of guidelines for their selection of themes. Typically, the subjects finally selected were local. Here Garner chooses the Centinela Springs, which was the very reason that the Inglewood area developed. The scene depicts early California residents getting water from Centinela Springs, a valued source of local spring water in coastal Southern California.

Inglewood Historian, Anne Cheek LaRose said that “Garner’s original design was larger than the WPA commission was awarding for the work. Rather than compromise his vision, Garner purchased the additional material cost out of his own pocket. Additionally, his studio was not large enough to house the panels as he worked, so the carving was done in his friend, Gordon Newell’s studio.”

Artist:

Archibald Garner

Collection:

US Post Office

Material:

Carved Mahogany

Inglewood Post Office
300 East Hillcrest Boulevard
Inglewood, CA.



Archibald Garner

Archibald Garner was born in Onida, South Dakota in 1904. During the 1930s Garner was a pupil of Stackpole and Cravath in San Francisco followed by study at Chouinard Art School in Los Angeles. During the Depression he fulfilled commissions for the Federal Art Project and was a sculpture designer for 20th Century Fox. An exponent of modern art, his style was termed "hard edge." He died in 1969.

He, too sculpted reliefs for other post offices including Transportation of the Mall in the San Diego Post Office with glazed terra cotta relief panels, Justice in Fresno, Law in Los Angeles. He was also one of the artists who worked on the Astronomer's Monument in Griffith Park.