

ENTRADA COURT SUNDIAL  
(Ingleside Terraces Sundial)  
Cul-de-sac at west end of Entrada Court  
San Francisco  
San Francisco County  
California

HALS CA-99  
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
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# HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY

## ENTRADA COURT SUNDIAL (Ingleside Terraces Sundial)

HALS NO. CA-99

**Location:** Cul-de-sac at west end of Entrada Court, San Francisco, San Francisco County, California  
37.72469, -122.46876 (Approximate center of Entrada Court cul-de-sac circle, National Map, WGS84 Web Mercator (Auxiliary Sphere))

**Significance:** The Entrada Court Sundial is an important physical connection to the development of the land area in the city of San Francisco known as West of Twin Peaks, particularly the neighborhood named Ingleside Terraces.<sup>1</sup>

The Entrada Court Sundial was built as a marketing device used to attract home buyers to the newly constructed residential area of Ingleside Terraces in San Francisco. In the fashion of the City Beautiful movement, post the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire, the Sundial and its associated park was designed in the Beaux-Art style, promising a healthier lifestyle outside the crowded city confines of the downtown area. The Sundial not only served as an advertising gimmick but also as an area of triangulation for the people of the Ingleside Terraces neighborhood. Nearly 100 years later, the Entrada Court Sundial still stands majestically in its garden park and functions, quite literally, as was originally intended. The neighborhood home owners association helps to maintain the site and honors the Sundial as a symbol of their community.

**Description:** The Entrada Court Sundial is a 26 foot tall white granite gnomon: the triangular portion of the device which casts a shadow, set atop a large 34 foot wide circular disc of concrete marked with large Roman numerals like that of a clock face. The sundial originally rested upon a circular reflecting pool, with a fountain, two bronze seals, colored lights and a ringlet of carpet bedding. The reflecting pool has since been filled with concrete and the seals and lights have been removed. The garden park is also circular, set within the center of the Entrada Court cul-de-sac. The park itself is designed as a large compass, styled in the Franco-Italian grand manner. Cardinal points were represented as large heart-shaped lawns which once displayed carpet beds indicating the true directions of North, South, East, and West. At intermediate points in the park, four columns are strategically placed in the center of four-pointed star shaped gardens encompassed by mini-parks with three small garden benches each. The benches are positioned to view inwards toward the Sundial or associated column. The star shaped gardens were also once decorated with carpet beds but have since

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<sup>1</sup> Ingleside Terraces is bounded by Ocean Avenue, Ashton Avenue, Holloway Avenue, and Junipero Serra Boulevard.

become only lawn. Concrete paths move throughout the space, leading to the Sundial, around and through the mini-parks; from one column to the other. In true Beaux-Arts fashion, the columns are designed to represent the four classic periods of architecture: Doric, Ionic, Corinthian and Tuscan. The columns were topped with urns adorned with various plants and flowers, and embellished with classical human figures. Each column was meant to symbolize a phase of life, a season, and time itself. The original Beaux-Arts design still exists today. The four-pointed star mini-parks, benches, columns, and urns are also still present. However, the carpet beds are no longer present and the lawns mostly consist of *Bellis perennis*. Existing planting material has transitioned to a somewhat more native or bay-friendly palette. The carpet beds that once encircled the Sundial have now been replaced with *Artemisia californica*, *Pennisetum setaceum*, *Salvia leucantha*, and *Iris douglasiana*. The four urns on top of the columns are now each planted with the same specie of *Phormium tenax*. The perimeter of the park is now planted with a ring of twelve *Metrosideros excelsa*, slightly disrupting the balance and symmetry of the park's other design elements represented in groupings of four.

History: Prior to the 1906 Earthquake and Fire, the Ingleside Terraces neighborhood was a functioning 1.0 mile long oval race track which operated between the years 1895 and 1905. The racetrack boasted several firsts, including automobiles, “loco-mobiles”, and “auto-bike” races, in addition to horses. The racetrack later served as a shelter site for the 1906 Earthquake and Fire victims. In 1910, the site was purchased by Joseph A. Leonard's Urban Realty Development Company and was planned to become a residence park in the fashion of the City Beautiful movement; an attempt to keep people living in San Francisco post Earthquake and Fire. The site allowed Leonard, a Texan trained as an architect in New York and later a successful San Franciscan developer, to create a residential community of irregular lot sizes, wide curving streets suited for automobiles, and a landscape filled with architectural follies. The racetrack remained and Urbano Drive, named after Leonard's company, was developed on the exact track course.

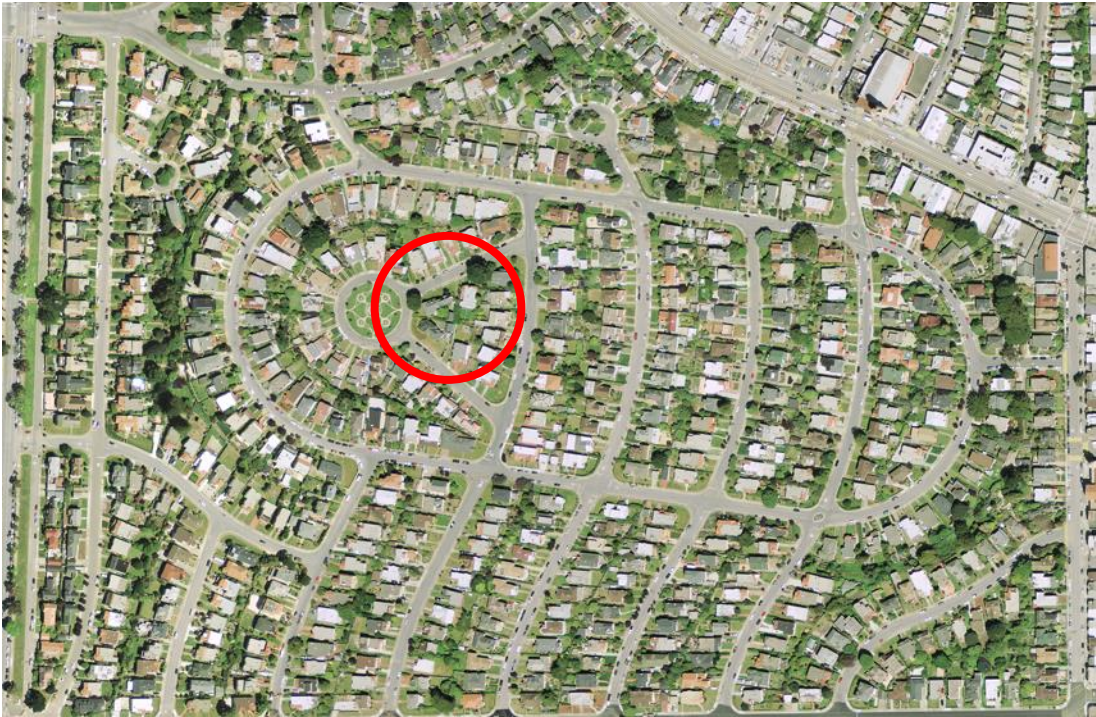
By 1913 the neighborhood development was complete and Ingleside Terraces was open for business. Like the promises of the City Beautiful movement, the Entrada Court Sundial was designed as lure to draw residents into the newly developed area of the city. The Sundial was a marketing tool intended to attract new home buyers into the area. It was prominently featured in the sales brochure as providing an unmatched sophistication to any other area of San Francisco. Championed as the largest sundial in the world, the opening ceremonies for the sundial and neighborhood were held on October 10th, 1913 the same day as the completion Panama Canal and the planned opening of San Francisco's Twin Peaks Tunnel.

The Ingleside Terraces sundial still stands majestically in its own park of original

design on Entrada Court. It is still considered a symbol of pride for the residents of Ingleside Terraces. The Ingleside Terraces Home Association issues a seasonal newsletter under its name and holds an annual neighborhood picnic gathering complete with “official chariot races” around the Sundial.

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Context Map of Ingleside Terraces San Francisco, CA. Entrada Court indicated with red circle. Urbano Drive, once the Ingleside Racetrack can be seen as the large oval roadway. (Photographed for U.S. Geological Survey, Apr 2011; delineated by Derek A. Cinpak, 2011)



Detail of Context Map. Entrada Court Sundial Park seen central to Entrada Court. Cardinal Points lawns and Mini-parks with benches also visible. (U.S. Geological Survey, Apr 2011)



The Ingleside Terraces Sundial in Entrada Court. (Derek A. Cinpak, 5 Apr 2011)



Entrada Court Sundial. (Derek A. Cinpak, 5 Apr 2011)



Corinthian column. Northeast view. (Derek A. Cinpak, 26 Jun 2013)



Ionic column. Northwest view. (Derek A. Cinpak, 26 Jun 2013)



Doric column. Southwest view. (Derek A. Cinpak, 26 Jun 2013)



Tuscan column. Southeast view. (Derek A. Cinpak, 26 Jun 2013)





Marble plaque at the Sundial's base with dedication date of October 10th, 1913, the same day of the completion of the Panama Canal and planned opening of San Francisco's Twin Peaks Tunnel. (Derek A. Cinpak, 5 Apr 2011)



A cement filled drain cover: one of the few remaining records of the Urban Realty Improvement Company (URICO) at the site. Four can be found near where the reflecting pool used to exist and one other nearest the southern entrance of Entrada Court. (Derek A. Cinpak, 5 Apr 2011)