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## Inventory of the Sign, Display and Allied Crafts Union - Local 510 Records, 1901-1969 (bulk 1956-1968)

**Accession number: 1986/008 & 1986/082**

Labor Archives & Research Center

San Francisco State University  
San Francisco, California

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### Descriptive Summary

**Title:** Sign, Display and Allied Crafts Union - Local 510 Records,

**Date (inclusive):** 1901-1969

**Date (bulk):** (bulk 1956-1968)

**Accession number:** 1986/008 & 1986/082

**Creator:** Display and Allied Crafts Union - Local 510

**Extent:** 1.0 cubic feet

**Repository:** San Francisco State University. Labor Archives & Research Center  
San Francisco, California 94132

**Shelf location:** For current information on the location of these materials, please consult the Center's online catalog.

**Language:** English

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## Preferred Citation

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## Abstract

This collection of records and miscellaneous materials from the Sign, Display and Allied Crafts Union, Local 510 was donated to the Labor Archives and Research Center through the courtesy of Michael Harderman of Local 510 in February 1986 and made available for research in June 1987. The collection was processed and arranged by Loren C. Pignolo, archives intern, Spring 1987.

## Historical Highlights

Organization of this union began in the winter of 1899-1900 when tradesman Peter J. Doyle became "greatly perturbed" over issues such as non-standard hours, shops working 9 or 10 hours days without formal overtime, and low wages which averaged \$3.00 per day for sign painters, and \$2.00 for helpers on a six day week basis. Doyle gathered "a dozen or so men who were willing to form a union and applied for a charter" which was granted March 10, 1900 by the Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers of America.

Upon arrival of the Charter, the first formal meeting was held in a rented hall on City Hall Avenue, San Francisco, March 27, 1900. The obligation was given and temporary officers were appointed. It was known as Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers of America, Local 132. (When first chartered, the parent Brotherhood was having difficulty with an Eastern faction which had seceded. That group later asked to rejoin on condition that their old charter numbers be returned, so the original charter was returned and Local Union Charter 510 was given in its place.)

1900, Tuesday, April 10: this marked the third meeting which set about to enforce the 8 hour day, and set a minimum wage for the various classes of painters and helpers. These proposals were all accepted by employers. The union continued to add members during 1900 to close with 54 members in good standing their first year.

Some further highlights of the early years of Local 510:

- 1902, March: the Union doubled dues and initiation fees, and a new higher scale of wages went into effect.
- 1902, March 10: Local Union 510 "had the distinction of being the first union in the Brotherhood to initiate a woman--Miss May Longest, a sign and pictorial artist who later opened a studio in San Jose."
- 1903: moved to Building Trades Temple, 927 Mission Street, San Francisco.
- 1904 saw the rise of the Citizens' Alliance which launched an open shop campaign, with no lasting success.
- 1906: the earthquake and fire managed to injure only one member. All the records of Local Union 510 remained intact except the books of 1900-1901 and the union seal.
- 1910: J.M. Mahaffey unsuccessfully attempted to have Local 510 secede from the Brotherhood (as they had in Los Angeles and Salt Lake City) to join his Sign and Pictorial Painters of America.
- 1915 proved a good year for Local Union 510 as many painters came from around the country to work in San Francisco during the Fair.
- 1930: the seven hour day was instituted with wages of \$12.00 per day.
- 1932: during the depression, a wage reduction of 10% was instituted. Several months later wages were lowered an additional 15%, provoking a 14 week long strike in 1933--Local 510's first.
- 1939: The scenic Artists of Northern California & Nevada (formerly Local 621) affiliated with Local 510. Show Card Writers and Displaymen, Local 319 were also absorbed into the membership of Local 510 the same year.
- Since World War II, "notable changes" have occurred under the guidance of Richard Wendelt, Business Representative for Local 510.

The current name of this union is Sign, Display and Allied Crafts Union, Local 510.

## Scope and Content

Except for the minutebook, Pension Trust records, printed price lists and misc. papers, the physical bulk of the material included in this collection concerns the technical training, methods, materials and styles studied and used by the members of Local 510. The formal training received by union members was regarded as being of high quality and gave Union membership an increased value as it also implied card carriers were skilled, thoroughly trained craftspeople.

In cases where they were more relevant to other organizations, subjects, or for proper storage, certain materials have been removed from the collection. These are listed at the end of the inventory section. In the collection proper will also be found sheets listing removed materials.

- Minutes excerpts regarding San Francisco General Strike
- Information regarding Pension Trust and amendments

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- Original Charter, Local 510
  - Photographs
  - Constitutions and By-Laws
  - Price lists for sign work, working rules, agreements, etc.
  - Technical material pertaining to training of sign painters, art and sign techniques
  - Roster of Painting & Decorating Contractors of SF operating under joint labor agreement of June 10, 1938
  - Dave Russ Painting Company
  - Richard Wendelt
  - May Longest

SERIES I: MINUTES, LOCAL 510, 1930-1935

**SERIES II: PENSION TRUST RECORDS, 1956-1969**

**Scope and Content Note**

Minutes, executive board; letters regarding pension trust by-laws changes & amendments; misc. payment authorizations, financial statements, documents relating to worker dues and benefits; Pension Trust quarterly report.

SERIES III: MISC. MANUSCRIPTS, EPHEMERA, PHOTOGRAPHS, c. 1900-c. 1945

**SERIES IV: PRINTED MATERIAL, 1900-1974**

**Scope and Content Note**

Constitutions, by-laws, price lists, working conditions, etc.; technical booklets, magazines; technical books.

REMOVED MATERIALS

**Series I: Minutes, 1930-1935**

Folder 1

**Minutes: Sign, Scene & Pictorial Painters, Local 510, July 3, 1930 - February 21, 1935**

**Additional Note**

Excerpts from Minutebook, July 5, 1934: "Moved and seconded that local send delegate to general strike meeting to be held at Eagles Hall, July 7, 1934. Bros. Bia and Quane appointed delegates. Passed."

**Series II: Pension Trust Records, 1956-1969.**

- Folder 2           **Minutes: Sign, Pictorial & Display Industry Pension Trust, July 3, 1956 - August 15, 1963. Was in 3-ring binder.**
- Folder 3           **Two letters addressed to Richard Wendelt regarding changes & amendments to by-laws of union pension trusts, dated March 21, 1969 and April 7, 1969 respectively. Formerly attached to 3-ring binder containing Pension Trust minutes.**
- Folder 4           **Misc. payment authorizations, financial statements, documents relating to worker dues and benefits, Sign, Pictorial & Display Industry Pension Trust, March 10, 1967 -Jan. 25, 1968. Was loose in 3-ring binder.**
- Folder 5           **Bank of California Trust Dept. Quarterly Report to Sign, Pictorial & Display Industry Pension Trust for period ending Jan. 31, 1967. Was loose in 3-ring binder.**

**Series III: Misc. Manuscripts, Ephemera, Photographs, c. 1900 - c. 1945**

**Additional Note**

See Removed Materials for listing of photographs.

Folder 6  
Folder 7

**Four manuscripts and one notebook containing lecture material on sign work techniques, N.D.  
Dues & Membership booklets, two notes on dues/wage relationship, N.D.**

**Series IV: Printed Material, 1900-1974**

- Folder 8            *Photo Copy: Souvenir Program: 50th Golden Anniversay - Sign, Scenic & Pictorial Painters of America, local 510, 1900-1950.*
- Folder 9            *Booklets: Constitution & By-Laws, Local 510 - Sign, Scene & Pictorial Painters. 1900, 1907 (2) with annotations, 1907 (other printing), 1921 (2 printings), 1938, 1940.*
- Folder 10          *Booklets: Constitution & By-Laws, Local 8 - District Council of Painters & By-Laws and Trade Rules of the District Council of Painters #8: 1908, 1916, 1925, 1935, 1937, 1944, 1959.*