

PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # _____

HRI # _____

Trinomial _____

NRHP Status Code _____

Other Listings _____

Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____

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Resource name(s) or number (assigned by recorder) 214 Hillcrest Road

P1. Other Identifier: Claremont Club Building **DRAFT**

***P2. Location:** ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted

***a. County** Alameda

***b. USGS 7.5' Quad** Oakland East

Date 2021

***c. Address** 214 Hillcrest Road

City Berkeley

Zip 94705

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone _____ mE/ _____ mN

***e. Other Locational Data:** Assessor's Parcel No. 64-4252-53; Latitude 37.852197°, Longitude -122.242840°

***P3a. Description:** (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries.)
The subject building at 214 Hillcrest Road, known as the Claremont Club, was designed by Charles Kaiser Sumner in 1911 as a clubhouse for the Claremont Improvement Club (now known as the Claremont Club). It is three floors over a basement and was designed in an eclectic style combining elements of the First Bay Tradition with high-style Craftsman motifs. The irregularly shaped parcel is approximately 0.14 acres in size in the Claremont District of Berkeley, within an elevated hillside section of the neighborhood directly bordering Oakland to the south. The subject parcel fronts Hillcrest Road to the north and has a steep downhill grade to the south.

The building comprises two main clubhouse floors above a residential floor, built into an escarpment over a partial, unfinished basement. The subject building is constructed of wood frame with a reinforced concrete foundation and redwood shingle and timber cladding throughout. Stucco and brick trim are used on the exterior of the primary north façade and retaining walls. The roof is front-gabled with a low pitch and covered with composite shingles. The eaves are wide and overhanging, with paneled soffits throughout and decorative fascia at the gable ends. Most windows are original wood sash unless otherwise noted. For the sake of clarity, the description of floor levels will be organized from the upper floors downwards, with the upper clubhouse floor (at street level) as the first floor, the lower clubhouse floor as the second floor, the lower residential floor as the third floor, and the lowest floor as the basement. (Refer to continuation sheet, page 3)

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** HP13 Community Center/Social Hall

***P4. Resources Present:** ☒ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☐ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☐ Other

P5a. Photo



P5b. Photo: (view and date)

Primary façade, view southeast. Taken March 6, 2025.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and**

Sources: ☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric ☐ Both
1911; City of Berkeley permit records.

***P7. Owner and Address:**

Claremont Club
214 Hillcrest Road
Berkeley, CA 94705

***P8. Recorded by:**

Page & Turnbull, Inc.
170 Maiden Lane, 5th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94108

***P9. Date Recorded:** April 7, 2025

***P10. Survey Type:** California Register nomination

***P11. Report Citation:** None

***Attachments:** ☐ None ☐ Location Map ☒ Sketch Map ☒ Continuation Sheet ☒ Building, Structure, and Object Record
☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record
☐ Artifact Record ☒ Photograph Record ☐ Other (list)

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

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*NRHP Status Code 3CS

*Resource Name or # 214 Hillcrest Road

B1. Historic name: Claremont Improvement Club

B2. Common name: Claremont Club

B3. Original Use: Social Hall

B4. Present use: Social Hall

*B5. Architectural Style: Craftsman/First Bay Tradition

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

By September of 1911, the original building permit was filed for the construction of a clubhouse building, with Charles Kaiser Sumner (noted at the time as Charles Sumner Kaiser) as the architect and J.W. Buskirk as the contractor. Construction was completed in four months, and the Claremont Club opened on December 30, 1911 (**Figure 1**). Permit records from 1916 indicate that a one-story addition was added to the building, although without reference to original drawings, it is unclear where this addition was constructed.¹ In 1924, a permit was filed to construct another addition at the rear southern façade to extend the eastern side of the second floor to the extent of the upper hall space (**Figure 2**).² This addition can be seen reflected in the current interior configuration of the lower clubrooms, in which the original partition dividing the "dining room" from the "glazed veranda" was removed and replaced with an extended gathering space (**Figure 3 and Figure 4**). The exterior beams supporting the upper floors are original, however, it is not evident whether the wood frame staircase was constructed in 1924 at the same time as the porch or at a later date. (Refer to continuation sheet, page 4)

*B7. Moved? ☒ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unknown Date: _____ Original Location: _____

*B8. Related Features: None

B9a. Architect: Charles K. Sumner

b. Builder: J.W. Buskirk

*B10. Significance: Theme Craftsman/First Bay Architecture

Area Berkeley, CA

Period of Significance 1911

Property Type Social Hall

Social Hall

Applicable Criteria 3

Historic Context:

Berkeley Historic Context

in 1852, Francis Kittredge Shattuck, his brother-in-law George Blake, and two partners—William Hillegass and James Leonard—filed claims to a square mile of land in the central section of what is now Berkeley.³ The first schoolhouse in Berkeley was constructed in Ocean View (now West Berkeley) in the 1850s at San Pablo Avenue and Virginia Street. In 1860, the private College of California purchased a large tract of land on Strawberry Creek for a new campus. In 1866, the name "Berkeley" was officially adopted by the Trustees of the College for the residential academic community that they hoped would grow up around the school. In 1868, the financially troubled college deeded the campus site to the State of California. Shortly thereafter, under the provisions of the Morrill Act, Governor Henry H. Haight signed a law granting a charter to the University of California, and in 1873, the state's first public university moved from Oakland to Berkeley.⁴ (Refer to continuation sheet, page 4)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: N/A

*B12. References: Page 11

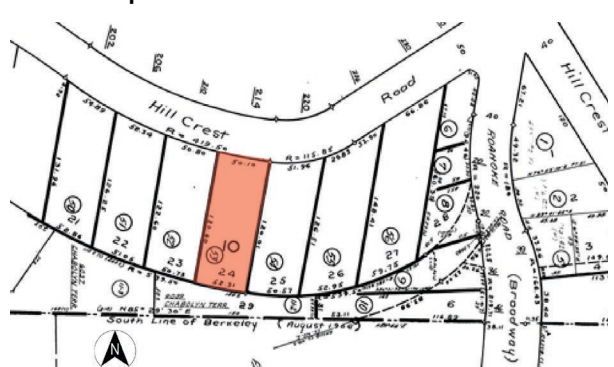
B13. Remarks: N/A

*B14. Evaluator: Samantha Purnell, Page & Turnbull, Inc.

*Date of Evaluation: April 7, 2025

(This space reserved for official comments.)

Sketch Map



The location of the subject property is shaded red.
Source: Alameda County Assessor's Office.
Edited by Page & Turnbull.

¹ City of Berkeley Department of Buildings and Inspections, building permit application #5575, 1916.

² City of Berkeley Department of Buildings and Inspections, building permit application #17927, 1924.

³ Susan Dinkelspiel Cerny, *Berkeley Landmarks* (Berkeley: Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, 1994), 64.

⁴ *A History of Berkeley: An Exhibit Commemorating the Centennial of the City of Berkeley* (Berkeley: Berkeley Art Center, 1978), 30.

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***P3a. Description (Continued)**

Primary (North) Façade

The primary north façade of the Claremont Club fronts Hillside Drive and is one story in height with asymmetrical massing and fenestration (**Photo 1**). From the street level, the building's low-pitched gable rooflines and one-story massing provide continuity with its residential surroundings (**Photo 2**). The primary entryway to the club consists of three identical wood doors aligned to the right (west) side of the building, each glazed with six lites (**Photo 3**). The entryway is covered by a wood frame portico with a low-pitched gable roof, redwood elliptical truss beams, and concrete piers clad with stucco and brick. Redwood lattice is used as spandrel panels beneath the portico and as a railing between the westernmost stucco piers (**Photo 4**). The gable ends of the roof and portico are deeply overhanging and feature a paneled soffit with a scalloped bargeboard and exposed decorative rafters carved with an undulating form. The primary façade is centered by a stepped stucco chimney with brick trim and a brick flue opening (**Photo 5**). The flue cap is gabled and features small lancet openings (**Photo 6**). The central chimney is flanked on either side by three multi-lite casement windows (**Photo 7**). At the gable end of the roof, the eave projects forward slightly and features a scalloped bargeboard, lattice spandrel panels, and decorative rafters (**Photo 8**). At the furthest east (left) side of the primary façade, there is a wood secondary entrance door that is glazed with six lites. The door is accessed from a concrete platform with metal railing (**Photo 9**).

East Façade

The east façade is built into the sloping hillside and is three stories over an unfinished basement. The lower levels are accessed by an attached wood-frame staircase that descends along the southern slope of the eastern façade (**Photo 10**). At the upper floor, there are three groupings of three multi-lite wood casement windows, with a larger multi-lite casement window at the southernmost end (**Photo 11**). The (lower) second floor of the east façade features a wood door with multi-lite glazing beneath a simple wood awning (**Photo 12**). On either side of the door, there is a six-over-one double-hung window and several multi-light casement windows. The (residential) third floor features a recessed entryway with wood paneling and two wood doors: one solid and one glazed with multi-lites (**Photo 13**). The doorway is covered by a simple wood frame awning. At the lowest (basement) level, there is a multi-lite casement and an eight-over-one double-hung sash window.

Rear (South) Façade

The rear (south) façade is three stories in height over a basement, with portions that recess beneath the uppermost floor and are accessed through a wood-frame porch and staircase (**Photo 14**). At the uppermost level of the rear façade, there are four pairs of non-historic aluminum casement windows, each with a single lite beneath a connecting transom (**Photo 15**). At the furthest west (left) side of the rear façade, there is a pair of casement windows, each with eight lites. At the furthest east (right) side of the façade, a wood door opens to a shallow fire escape (door is not visible in the photograph) (**Photo 16**). The west (left) side of the second floor is recessed behind a wood-frame staircase and partial-width porch. There is a six-over-one double-hung, and series of non-historic multi-lite casement windows that continue to the eastern (right) side of the façade. At the third (residential) floor, viewing from west to east (left to right): there are a pair of casement windows with six lites each, two six-over-one double-hung windows, a French door with eight lites, a multi-lite fixed window, a pair of four-over-one double hung windows, and a multi-lite fixed window (**Photo 17 and Photo 18**). The basement level has one wood-paneled door and an attached potting bench (**Photo 19 and Photo 20**).

West Façade

The west façade is partially obscured from view and is not accessible from ground level within the property due to the steep grade, proximity to the neighboring building, and fences at the street level. At the upper floor, there are four groupings of multi-lite casement windows (**Photo 21**). At the second floor, there is a non-historic aluminum casement window, a multi-lite casement window, and a four-over-one double-hung window (**Photo 22**). At the third (residential) floor, there is a four-over-one double-hung and a multi-lite casement window.

Interior

The publicly accessible spaces of the Claremont Club's interior include a large meeting hall space on the upper floor and club rooms on the second floor. The meeting hall features large arched redwood trusses with lattice spandrel panels, wood-paneled open-stud walls, and a brick chimney with the club's insignia. The light fixtures and ceiling panels are not original (**Photo 23 and Photo 24**). The lower club rooms are accessed through a wood-paneled staircase that descends from the club's foyer (**Photo 25**). The lower club floor has been remodeled more extensively, but appears to have retained much of the original wall cladding in the primary gathering space (**Photo 26**).

Site Features

Site and landscape features include a wood frame planter box along a portion of the primary façade, and a non-historic wood frame staircase along the east façade (**Photo 27 and Photo 28**).

Surrounding Neighborhood

The surrounding neighborhood within the Claremont District consists mainly of large, single-family residential properties. Most residences in the surrounding area are between two to three stories in height and enjoy large lots built into the hillside, mature

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landscaping, and sweeping views of either the San Francisco Bay or downtown Oakland. Most of the neighborhood was developed in the first two decades of the 20th century, although there are a few examples of contemporary infill. The immediate surrounding neighborhood includes a range of styles from the First Bay Tradition, Tudor Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, and a variety of other Period Revival styles.

***B6. Construction History (continued):** In 1935, a wood frame staircase was constructed along the eastern façade of the building.⁵ During the 1950s, the club remodeled a room on the lower club floor into a women's dressing room and re-shingled a section of the rear façade. From comparison of the 1950 Sanborn map to a historic aerial photograph from 1965, it appears that the building footprint was infilled during this period along the southwestern corner (**Figure 5 and Figure 6**). The southern rear façade was re-shingled again in 1989, and the building was seismically upgraded in 1998. Much of the Claremont Club's interior remains intact, however, several alterations and larger remodels appear to have been made to the lower kitchen and bathrooms during the 1950s and later.⁶ Other alterations noted from visual analysis and comparison with historic photographs include the removal of a panel of upper windows at the gable end of the rear façade at an unknown date, and the replacement of a casement window at the eastern edge of the primary façade with a side door (**Figure 7 and Figure 8**). Aluminum casement windows were installed at the upper floor of the rear façade, likely during the 1950s or 1960s based on analysis of the material and style. Other alterations include acoustic panels installed on the ceiling of the main meeting hall, and original light fixtures have been removed and replaced (**Figure 9**).

Construction Chronology

The following table provides a timeline of construction activity at 214 Hillcrest Road, based on building permit applications on file with the City of Berkeley Department of Planning and Development, and the archival collections of the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association. Cancelled and expired permits are not included. As 214 Hillcrest Road has been owned and occupied continuously by the Claremont Club since its construction in 1911, an "owner" column is not included in the table.

Date Filed	Permit App. #	Contractor	Work
9/2/1911	1494	J.W. Buskirk	Construction of a clubhouse building for the Claremont Assembly Hall Association
6/14/1916	5575	F.E. Allen	One-story addition on half of the building
8/27/1924	17927	H.J.F. Satlin	Extend the lower clubroom to the extent of the southern edge of the upper hall. Install wood-paneled walls and plaster ceiling. Construct a porch outside of the bedroom
12/4/1935	40072	Day Labor	Construct wood frame stairs along the eastern exterior of the building
10/22/1951	70354	A.L. Ridout	Re-shingle part of southern facade
2/9/1956	79120	Hugo Muller Jr. Inc	Convert present room into ladies dressing room in addition to installing two new toilets and basins in the adjacent area
5/18/1989	0188925035	Richard Schwarz, (builder) and Ted Donaldson (architect)	Re-shingle parts of the exterior rear facade
11/3/1998	98-000004894	Jon A. Box	Seismic upgrade

*B10. Significance:

Historic Context (continued)

Berkeley Incorporates

The development of Berkeley proceeded very slowly prior to the establishment of regular rail service between the town and Oakland, where passengers could catch ferries to San Francisco. In 1873, several local investors formed the Berkeley Land and Town Improvement Association to spur development. This group organized land sales, built stores and wharves, and lobbied for a direct ferry connection to San Francisco. In 1874, the Berkeley Ferry and Railroad Company initiated regular service between San Francisco and Ocean View (now West Berkeley). During that same year, a horse-drawn transit line began operating along Telegraph Avenue between downtown Berkeley and Oakland.⁷ In 1878, the Town of Berkeley incorporated, encompassing both the bayside manufacturing settlement of Ocean View and the small academic village of Berkeley.⁸

⁵ City of Berkeley Department of Buildings and Inspections, building permit application #40072, 1935.

⁶ City of Berkeley Department of Buildings and Inspections, building permit application #79120, 1956.

⁷ *A History of Berkeley*, 30.

⁸ *A History of Berkeley*, 31.

Twentieth Century Growth

During the early 20th century—particularly in the years between the 1906 Earthquake and the Great Depression—both the University of California and the town of Berkeley grew rapidly. After 1906, Berkeley's population grew rapidly as thousands of earthquake refugees from San Francisco relocated across the bay. The construction of the Key System ferryboat and streetcar network made transportation between San Francisco and the East Bay quick and affordable, spurring on the development of numerous residential tracts in Berkeley and Oakland. This growth in turn brought in more customers, leading to more intensive commercial development in downtown Berkeley.⁹ Berkeley's commercial and civic core evolved during this period from a district of low-rise, wood-frame buildings into a substantial urban district, with numerous large masonry buildings and stately public facilities. Some of the new buildings completed included a new City Hall designed by architect Arthur Brown Jr., a new Berkeley Public Library, an elegant new downtown train station, and an expanded and rebuilt Berkeley High School.

Claremont District

The Claremont area (distinct from the Claremont residential subdivision) of Berkeley is composed of several distinct residential subdivisions. As early as 1882, the Claremont area was considered an affluent residential area. In the late 19th century, Claremont included large Victorian country estates and farms, but the area's steep terrain delayed development until the introduction and expansion of Berkeley's electric streetcar system in the 1890s. Many residential subdivisions in the East Bay are linked to the consolidation of independent railroad and streetcar lines facilitated by local developer and businessman Francis Marion "Borax" Smith. In 1905, the Claremont Park Company purchased an undeveloped 125-acre ranch east of Claremont Avenue.¹⁰ This area was developed by the Claremont Park Company, a development company with the same owners and officers as the Mason-McDuffie Company.¹¹ Prior to the construction of 214 Hillcrest Road in 1911, the surrounding blocks within the Claremont Park subdivision had been platted but remained mostly undeveloped (**Figure 10**).

History of the Claremont Club

The Claremont Improvement Club was founded on January 7, 1908, as a fraternal club at the home of R.H. Van Sant. The purpose of the club was to improve and maintain the newly developing Claremont Park subdivision. After meeting at the homes of members for several years, a group of five club members including Charles E. Hale, William F. Kett, Stephen E. Kieffer, Ernest S. Tanner and R.H. Van Sant gathered on February 21, 1911 to form a corporation to fund the construction of a permanent clubhouse building. The corporation, known as the Claremont Assembly Hall Company, was funded through the sale of stock to the members of the club and other residents of the Claremont Park subdivision.¹² The club's founders intended to purchase land and build a community gathering place, and to serve the influx of middle- to upper-class residents who were building new residences in the Claremont Park district of Berkeley. This clubhouse would become the meeting place of the Claremont Club. The "Claremont Club" is noted in early newspaper records as a social organization formed by the wives of the male founders belonging to the Claremont Improvement Club. The names of the individual organizations were combined formally into the "Claremont Club" and membership became open to both men and women upon the opening of the clubhouse in 1911. The club originally served members within the rough boundaries of Claremont Avenue and eastward into the foothills towards Tunnel Road.¹³

The following excerpt from a brochure produced in 2011 to celebrate the Claremont Club's Centennial describes the organization's history:

Articles of Incorporation were filed with the California Secretary of State on February 21, 1911. A certificate was issued authorizing the organization of the Claremont Assembly Hall Company, with an aggregate share value not to exceed \$10,000. These men called the first stockholders' meeting on February 27 and held two elections. During the first meeting they unanimously elected themselves directors of the company. Then, acting as the Board of Directors, they unanimously elected themselves the officers. In this role, they adopted a code of by-laws, a corporate seal and a form for stock certificates. Among them they owned all of the capital stock, each man holding five shares. The remaining 975 shares of capital stock were to be sold at \$10 per share.

Sufficient stock had been subscribed by March 20 to engage an architect, Charles Sumner Kaiser, to prepare plans for a building. A month later they arranged with Duncan McDuffie and the Claremont Park Company to purchase Lot 24 in Block 10, Berkeley- now 214 Hillcrest Road- for the sum of \$1,375. Tentative sketches of the building were submitted by Mr. Kaiser at that time.

It was soon apparent that the cost of constructing a convenient building, attractive to renters and suitable for social gatherings, would cost more than the amount first anticipated. In June, after consultation with

⁹ *A History of Berkeley*, 64.

¹⁰ Cerny, *Berkeley Landmarks*, 214-217.

¹¹ Berkeley Historical Society. Quick Index to the Origin of Berkeley's Names. Berkeley, CA: Berkeley Historical Society, 2004.

¹² "Claremont Club to Hold House-Warming on December 30: \$10,000 Building for Organization Is Completed," *The Oakland Tribune*, December 1, 1911.

¹³ "Hold Banquet in Club House," *The Berkeley Gazette*, February 19, 1912, 1.

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stockholders, the Board decided to take out a loan of \$3,500 with the Oakland Bank of Savings. To justify this decision, they cited the fact that subscriptions to the capital stock were constantly being received and that many of the new people moving into Claremont Park would certainly wish to become members of the Association.

Four bids for building the hall were submitted in June; the Board accepted a bid for \$7,578 from contractor J.W. Buskirk. He proposed to begin construction on July 31 with completion in ninety days. In October the Board authorized purchase of lot #23 Block 10, Claremont Park, at a price not to exceed \$1,100. It is assumed that this is the adjacent lot, downhill from lot #24.

Committees were formed and plans made to furnish the hall and to interview potential caretakers. They also contacted the Town and Gown Club and the Hillside Club, both active in Berkeley, for a schedule of their rental charges. The Berkeley Electric Light Company was persuaded to move the light pole on Hillcrest Road away from the front entrance to the Assembly Hall.

Late in November the first caretaker couple was hired. They would live in the lower level apartment free from rent and receive \$15 per month until club receipts justified payment of a larger sum. The prepared schedule of rental charges was presented to the board and adopted. See page 6.

On December 16 the architect, Mr. Kaiser, issued a certificate of completion for the building. After a final inspection on December 21, a formal notice of acceptance was filed by the board. The new hall was formally opened under the auspices of the Claremont Club, The Claremont Improvement Club and the Claremont Assembly Hall Company.¹⁴

The Claremont Club has continued to own and occupy the original clubhouse at 214 Hillcrest Road since the building's construction in 1911. The lower residential floor is still used as a residential unit; however, the tenant is no longer a caretaker of the club.

Social Clubs

Social clubs and organizations gained widespread popularity in the United States during the mid-19th century through the Progressive Era of the late 1800s and into the early 20th century. At that time, clubs and organizations were typically gendered and separated by class and race. Clubs catering to the upper echelons were members-only for those within elite circles and required a certain pedigree for admittance: either familial name, status, religion, wealth, or a combination. Gentlemen's clubs provided a place for businessmen to network outside of the household, which was traditionally a feminine domain. Within the upper class, private women's clubs were founded by educated and elite members of society who were typically the wives of high-powered men. Membership was centered around literary, artistic, or other social elements that were usually strictly apolitical. Women's social clubs were also centered around the improvement of the self or neighborhood or charitable causes, and these clubs were sometimes open to both genders.

Within Berkeley, the Claremont Club was the first club formed within the Claremont neighborhood and the southeastern area of the city, which was newly developing into the southwestern hillside and somewhat isolated from other parts of Berkeley.¹⁵ Overall, clubs and social organizations were widely popular amongst the general population, and there were likely other prominent elite clubs throughout the East Bay within areas of Oakland, Piedmont, and Alameda. Contemporary newspapers throughout Alameda County document the presence of a variety of improvement clubs and neighborhood associations. The Hillside Club, located in North Berkeley's foothills, was founded in 1895 and would be the most comparable upper-middle-class social club operating within Berkeley during the same period. The Hillside Club was notable for its early feminist history as a women-only club, (eventually allowing men to join in the early 1900s).¹⁶

Ownership and Occupancy Summary

214 Hillcrest Road has been owned and occupied continuously by the Claremont Club since its construction in 1911.

Architectural Style of the Claremont Club

The Claremont Club is eclectic in style, and many of its elements allude to Swiss chalet forms and Arts and Crafts principles that emerged as tenets of the early American Craftsman style. Charles K. Sumner's use of large redwood shingles, intricate joinery, stucco, and medieval elliptical arches nod to the design methods and materials of the First Bay Tradition, which was implemented

¹⁴ "The Claremont Club: 100 Years of Congeniality" (The Claremont Club, 2011).

¹⁵ "Claremont Club House Planned," The Berkeley Gazette, February 2, 1911, 1.

¹⁶ Lee M.A. Simpson, *National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: Berkeley Hillside Club* (Sacramento: California State University Sacramento, January 5, 2003).

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throughout Berkeley and championed by architect of merit Bernard Maybeck and his nearby Hillside Club in North Berkeley. The Hillside Club, built in 1906 and rebuilt in 1924, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2004.¹⁷

Arts and Crafts Movement/ Craftsman Style

The Craftsman style emerged at the turn of the 20th century from Southern California as a regional interpretation of the broader English Arts and Crafts Movement. The Arts and Crafts Movement, beginning in the late Victorian period, developed as rapid industrialization and the disbanding of the guild system fueled a renewed appreciation of handcraftsmanship and pre-capitalist forms of cultural expression centered in nature. Arts and Crafts designers feared the loss of traditional decorative methods in the wake of mechanization and industrial labor practices and thus sought to revitalize older methods of craft and artistry.¹⁸ The British Arts and Crafts Movement derived its philosophical underpinnings from two important sources: first, the designer A. W. N. Pugin (1812–1852), whose early writings promoting the Gothic Revival style presaged English apprehension about industrialization, and second, theorist and art critic John Ruskin (1819–1900), who advocated medieval architecture as a model for honest craftsmanship and quality materials.¹⁹ Ruskin's persuasive rhetoric influenced the Arts and Crafts Movement's figurehead William Morris (1834–1896), who strove to unite all the arts within the decoration of the home, emphasizing nature and simplicity of form. The American Arts and Crafts movement was inextricably linked to the British movement: British ideals were disseminated in America through journal and newspaper writing, as well as through societies that sponsored lectures and programs. National publications including *House Beautiful*, *Ladies Home Journal*, and *The Craftsman* magazine, published in America from 1901 to 1917, helped to disseminate the ideas associated with craftsmanship and interior design that would inspire the popularity of the larger architectural Craftsman style in residential building practices.

The architectural expression of the Arts and Crafts movement, evolving into the Craftsman style in the United States, resulted in buildings that had open-planned interiors shaped by a color palette reflective of the natural environment. Interior ornament and furniture were integral to this expression, including the use of colors, decorative accessories such as rugs and pottery, and lighting, with the use of stained glass around newly emerging electric lighting options. Architects including Frank Lloyd Wright (1867–1959), working initially in Chicago; Charles Sumner Greene (1868–1957) and Henry Mather Greene (1870–1954), working primarily in Southern California; and Bernard Maybeck (1862–1957) and Julia Morgan (1872–1957) working primarily in Berkeley; approached residential design as total works of art, incorporating local and exotic materials, handcrafted finishes, and built-in furnishings. This approach was exemplified by the “ultimate bungalow,” a high-style residential typology of the newly emerging Craftsman style characterized by complex massing, broad overhanging eaves, articulated woodwork, and flow between indoor and outdoor spaces. Coupled with influences of Wright's preceding Prairie School and the Shingle Style of New England, the Craftsman style also incorporated elements of Japanese and Indian architecture, Swiss chalets, and the indoor/outdoor traditions of the Spanish and Mexican homes of the region.²⁰

First Bay Tradition

The First Bay Tradition, also known as the Shingle Style, is a design approach first employed in the final years of the 19th century and can be most commonly connected amongst works for its use of simple shingles, often redwood, on all surfaces creating a skin for the structure. Architectural historian Richard Longstreth has described the First Bay Tradition as an attempt to create the “rustic city house” at a time when the native landscape of the west was becoming highly romanticized and venerated.²¹ The obsession with the simple life in nature and the appeal of rustic simplicity was reflected in the architecture of the period, particularly through the work of Willis Polk and Ernest Coxhead in the Pacific Heights and Russian Hill neighborhoods of San Francisco, and the work of Bernard Maybeck in Berkeley.²²

Polk and Coxhead combined the rustic Shingle style used by H.H. Richardson and McKim, Mead & White for their well-known mid-Atlantic cottages and seaside homes, with a number of vernacular residential design precedents from France (particularly the regions of Normandy and Brittany) and England from the post-medieval period.²³ In Berkeley, works by Bernard Maybeck and Julia Morgan in the First Bay Tradition have a clear connection to the Arts and Crafts movement and medieval precursors.

Charles K. Sumner, Architect (1874-1948)

Charles Sumner Kaiser was born in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania in 1874. Due to anti-German sentiment during World War I, he changed the order of his middle and surname to Charles Kaiser Sumner. Sumner received his architectural education at Columbia University, traveled through Europe and the Middle East after graduation on a Perkins Traveling Fellowship, and then returned to

¹⁷ Simpson, *Berkeley Hillside Club*.

¹⁸ Monica Obniski, “The Arts and Crafts Movement in America” Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000, online at http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/acam/hd_acam.htm, accessed June 2024.

¹⁹ Monica Obniski, “The Arts and Crafts Movement in America.”

²⁰ Rodney Douglas Parker, “The California Bungalow and the Tyrolean Chalet: The Ill-Fated Life of an American Vernacular,” *Journal of American Culture* 15, vol. 4 (1992): 1.

²¹ Richard Longstreth, *On the Edge of the World: Four Architects in San Francisco at the Turn of the Century*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 111.

²² Longstreth, *On the Edge of the World*, 117, 127.

²³ Longstreth, *On the Edge of the World*.

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New York to work in the offices of McKim, Mead & White.²⁴ In 1906, Sumner moved to Berkeley, California, where he opened an architectural practice and completed commissions for about 15 houses, before eventually moving with his family to Palo Alto in 1916.

Sumner's works in Berkeley illustrate his awareness of the prevailing local design languages, and it is likely that he was influenced by other high-style architects operating in the First Bay Tradition and other eclectic revival styles. Several of his works were in direct proximity to the works of well-known architects of the day including Greene & Greene, Julia Morgan, Ernest Coxhead, and Bernard Maybeck. Sumner's works in Berkeley mostly all operate within the First Bay Tradition and reflect these influences through use of shingle cladding, rustic and intricate woodworking, variations in roof pitch and massing, and stucco (to a lesser degree). Sumner's works in Berkeley include a personal residence at 60 The Uplands, Berkeley, built 1907; a residence at 2735-2737 Benvenue Avenue, built 1908; the former Thomas Wrampelmeier residence at 2324 Piedmont Avenue, Berkeley, built 1911 (now the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity house); and a residence at 900 Arlington Avenue, built 1912. None of Sumner's works are listed as Berkeley Landmarks or in the California Register or National Register.

In 1916, Sumner moved to Palo Alto where he lived on University Avenue and opened an office in San Francisco at 57 Post Street.²⁵ Despite operating an office in San Francisco, Sumner's work appears to have been concentrated in Palo Alto where his earliest works continued within the Eclectic Movement and he produced several notable designs in the Tudor Revival and English Cottage styles.²⁶ By the 1920s, he began to design largely in the Spanish Colonial Revival style as it became increasingly popular along the Peninsula. Sumner passed away after a long illness in 1948 at the age of 74.

Statement of Significance:

California Register of Historical Resources Criterion 3 (Architecture): Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values.

214 Hillcrest Road appears to be individually eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 3 (Architecture) as a building that embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values. 214 Hillcrest Road is an exemplary work that blends elements of high-style Craftsman architecture with the First Bay Tradition. It is also the work of Architect of merit Charles Kaiser Sumner and an early artistic expression of Sumner's eclectic approach to design, an approach that would eventually become more prominent during his career in Palo Alto in the following decades. The Claremont Club's low-pitched rooflines, single-story horizontality at the street level, and Swiss-Chalet style form allow the clubhouse to emulate and mesh with its residential surroundings. Other notable architectural elements of the clubhouse include elaborately carved redwood bargeboards, rafters, elliptical redwood arches, and large redwood shingle panels throughout. The Claremont Club reflects the artistry and eclecticism within Berkeley's architectural community at the turn of the century and is a full expression of its amalgamation of the Arts & Crafts movement and the First Bay Tradition through its material, siting, and stylistic languages. Sumner was working in Berkeley contemporaneously with other prolific architects who came to define and pioneer new design approaches, such as Bernard Maybeck, Julia Morgan, and Greene & Greene. These influences can be seen in the massing, form, and ornamentation of the Claremont Club's design, albeit through Sumner's artistic interpretation. For these reasons, the Claremont Club does appear to be individually eligible for listing under Criterion 3 with a period of significance of 1911, the year of construction.

Integrity

To evaluate whether the subject property retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance, Page & Turnbull used established integrity standards outlined by the *National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. Seven variables, or aspects, which define integrity are used to evaluate a resource's integrity—location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. A property must possess most, or all, of these aspects to retain overall integrity. If a property does not retain integrity, it can no longer convey its significance and is therefore not eligible for listing in local, state, or national registers.

The subject property retains integrity of location. The subject building has remained situated at its location of original construction since 1911.

The Claremont Club retains integrity of setting. The subject building retains its original retaining wall, its historic setback, and relationship with the street. The Claremont Club was built with south-facing views from the rear facade, and though the city has grown and changed, the clubhouse's original viewsheds of downtown Oakland remain intact. Lastly, the subject building retains integrity of residential setting. While there have been several nearby properties replaced with newer infill since the construction of

²⁴ Biographical information primarily sourced from "Charles Sumner, Architect," Palo Alto Stanford Heritage, 2007, <https://www.pastheritage.org/Sumner.html>

²⁵ "Legal: To Plumbing Contractors," *Daily Palo Alto Times*, July 15, 1921, 7.

²⁶ Palo Alto Stanford Heritage, "Charles Sumner, Architect," 2015, <https://www.pastheritage.org/Sumner.html>.

the subject building in 1911, the Claremont District overall retains a high density of early 20th-century First Bay Tradition, Tudor Revival, and Eclectic Movement two-to three-story architect-designed residences that provide a cohesive sense of architectural character, massing, and materiality. For these reasons, the subject building retains integrity of setting regarding landscape character, viewsheds, and residential setting.

The Claremont Club retains integrity of design. The Claremont Club was designed by architect of merit Charles K. Sumner in an eclectic style combining American Craftsman, the First Bay Tradition, and the Arts and Crafts movement. Minor alterations to the public-facing facades include the installation of a secondary entryway at the primary facade, construction of a staircase along the eastern façade, and replacement of windows at the western façade. The overall composition of the design including the fenestration pattern, roofline, primary entryway, and decorative detailing all remain intact and contribute to the First Bay Tradition and Craftsman stylistic elements designed by Sumner.

The Claremont Club retains integrity of materials, as very few of the original features have been altered, removed, or replaced over the years. The primary exterior building materials including original redwood shingles, redwood timber framing, wood sash windows, stucco, and masonry are largely intact and retain integrity. The only windows that have been replaced on two main visible facades are the windows at the rear south façade and the west façade.

The Claremont Club retains integrity of workmanship. Features providing evidence of period workmanship and construction methods include ornately carved redwood rafters and bargeboards, redwood arched trusses at the entry portico and interior meeting hall, original wood-sash windows with multi-light panes and ogee lugs, stucco cladding, and masonry detailing at the chimney. The high level of workmanship in the decorative detailing of the subject building reflects early 20th-century construction methods in prominent residential neighborhoods and architect-designed buildings.

The Claremont Club retains integrity of feeling. The subject building retains the feeling of its original design by Charles K. Sumner as constructed in 1911, as its design, materiality, and workmanship remain highly representative of its original Craftsman and First Bay Tradition aesthetics. Alterations to the primary facade, fenestration of secondary facades, and interior configurations have been minor and have not diminished the building's form, height, massing, or materiality such that its feeling is impaired.

The Claremont Club retains integrity of association. The subject building's association to Architect of merit Charles K. Sumner continues to be represented through its retention of original Craftsman and First Bay Tradition materials and design characteristics.

Overall, the Claremont Club retains all seven aspects of integrity.

Character-Defining Features

For a property to be eligible for national or state designation under criteria related to type, period, or method of construction, the essential physical features (or character-defining features) that enable the property to convey its historic identity must be evident. These distinctive character-defining features are the physical traits that commonly recur in property types and/or architectural styles. To be eligible, a property must clearly contain enough of those characteristics to be considered a true representative of a particular type, period, or method of construction, and these features must also retain a sufficient degree of integrity. Characteristics can be expressed in terms such as form, proportion, structure, plan, style, or materials.

The character-defining features of 214 Hillcrest Road include, but are not limited to:

Exterior:

- Three-story massing over a partially exposed basement
- Overall scale sympathetic to the surrounding residential area with one story at the street frontage
- Asymmetrical fenestration and massing
- Use of redwood timber framing throughout
- Redwood shingle cladding throughout, with large, vertically layered original redwood shingles along the primary, east, and west facades
- Front-gabled low-pitched rooflines with wide, overhanging eaves and exposed rafters
- Elaborately carved rafters, scalloped bargeboards, and paneled soffits
- Lattice paneling at the spandrels of the primary façade
- Wood sash casement windows with divided lites
- Wood double-hung windows with divided-lite upper sash and ogee lugs
- Elliptical arched trusses
- Stucco piers and chimney with brick trim
- Brick chimney flue cap with lancet openings

Interior:

- Open stud redwood paneling and redwood trusswork in the entry lobby, upper meeting hall, and main staircase

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- Elliptical redwood arches and lattice spandrel panels in the upper meeting hall
- Open meeting hall configuration on the upper floor
- Wood-paneled walls in the lower clubhouse meeting space

Conclusion

The Claremont Club at 214 Hillcrest Road does appear to be individually eligible for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources under Criterion 3 (Architecture) as a good example of an institutional work of Architect of merit Charles K. Sumner and as a distinctive local example of the First Bay Tradition/Craftsman style architecture in Berkeley, with a period of significance of 1911, the year of its construction.

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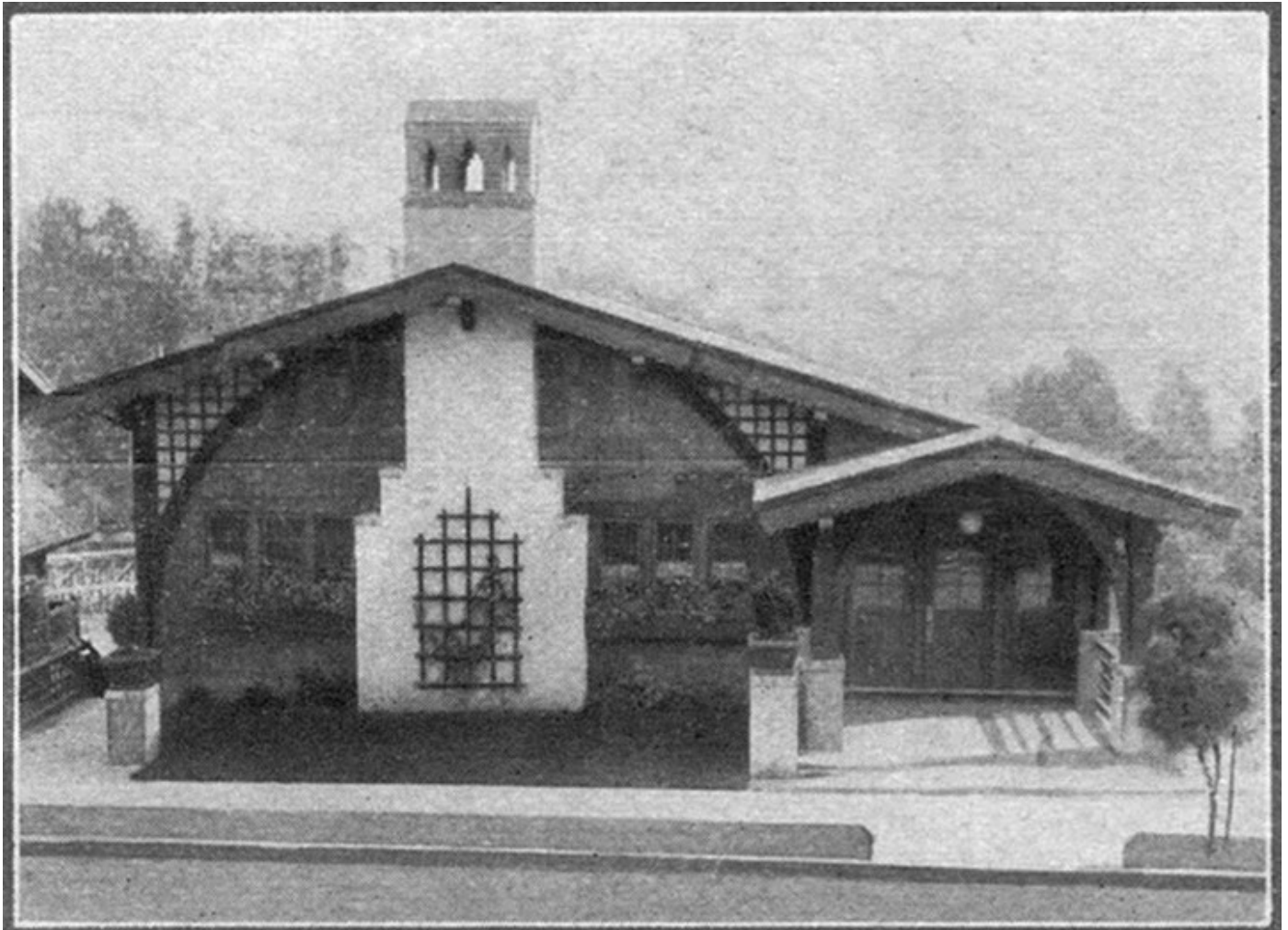


Figure 1: Early photograph of the Claremont Club, likely from a club bulletin advertising the completion of the new building, undated. Source: archival collection of the Claremont Club.

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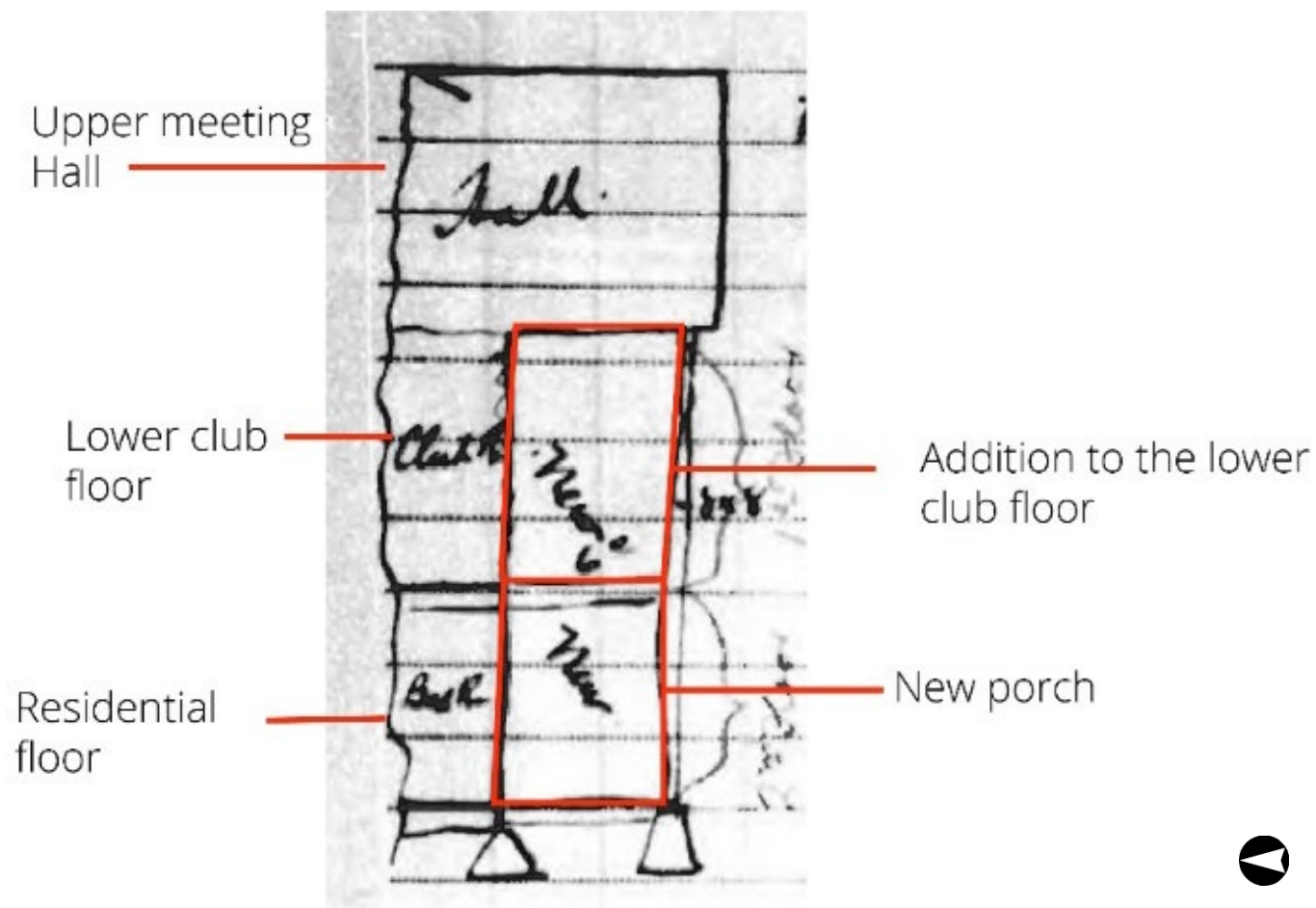


Figure 2: Section drawing detailing alterations to the south façade, including an addition to lower clubroom spaces on the second floor and construction of a new porch at the exterior of the residential unit, 1924. Source: Permit #17927. Edited by Page & Turnbull.

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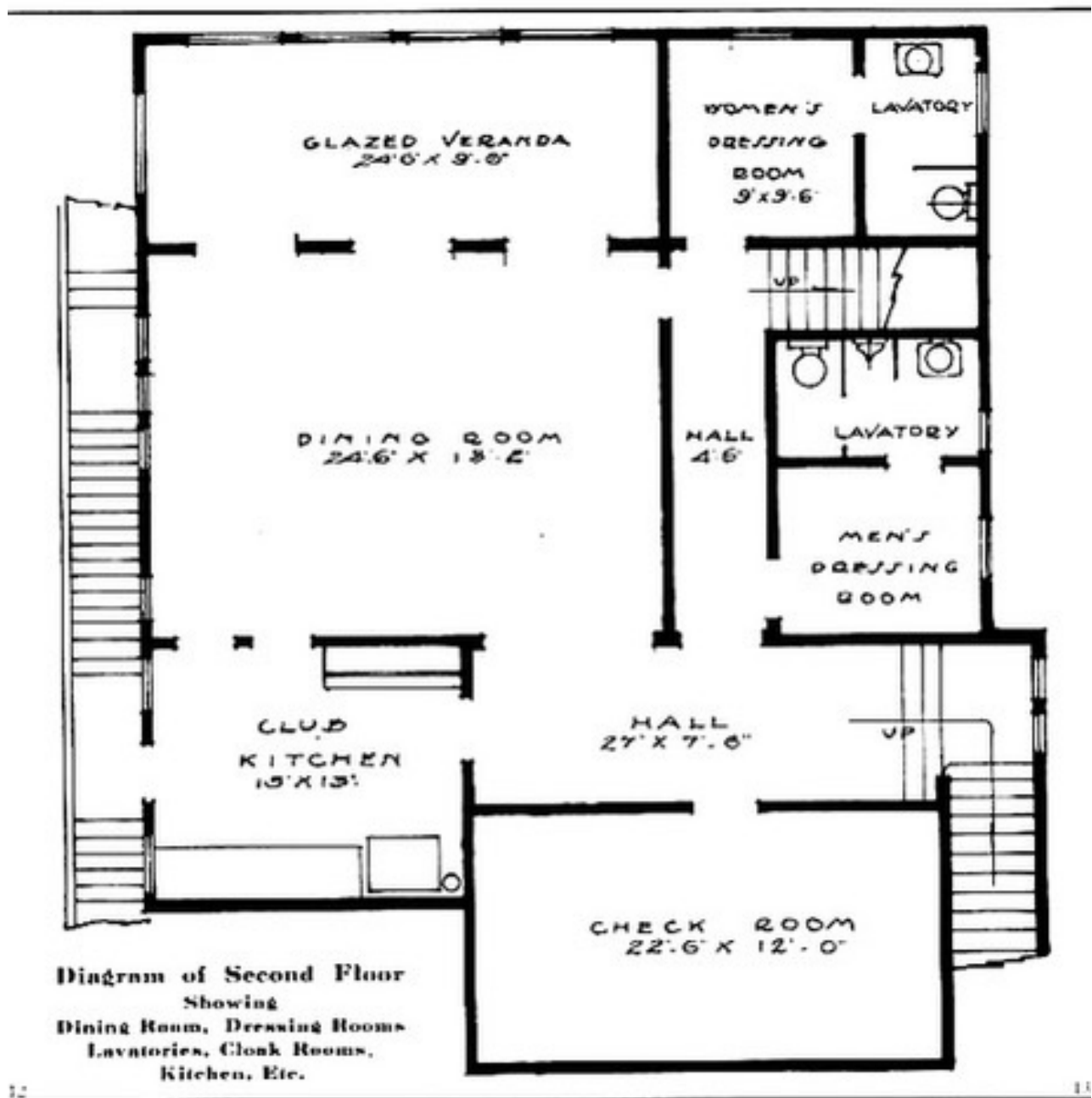


Figure 3: Early plan of the second floor of the Claremont Club, likely from a club bulletin advertising the completion of the new building (undated). Source: archival collection of the Claremont Club.

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Figure 4: Early photograph of the Claremont Club "Dining Room" on the second floor, likely from a club bulletin advertising the completion of the new building (undated). Source: archival collection of the Claremont Club.

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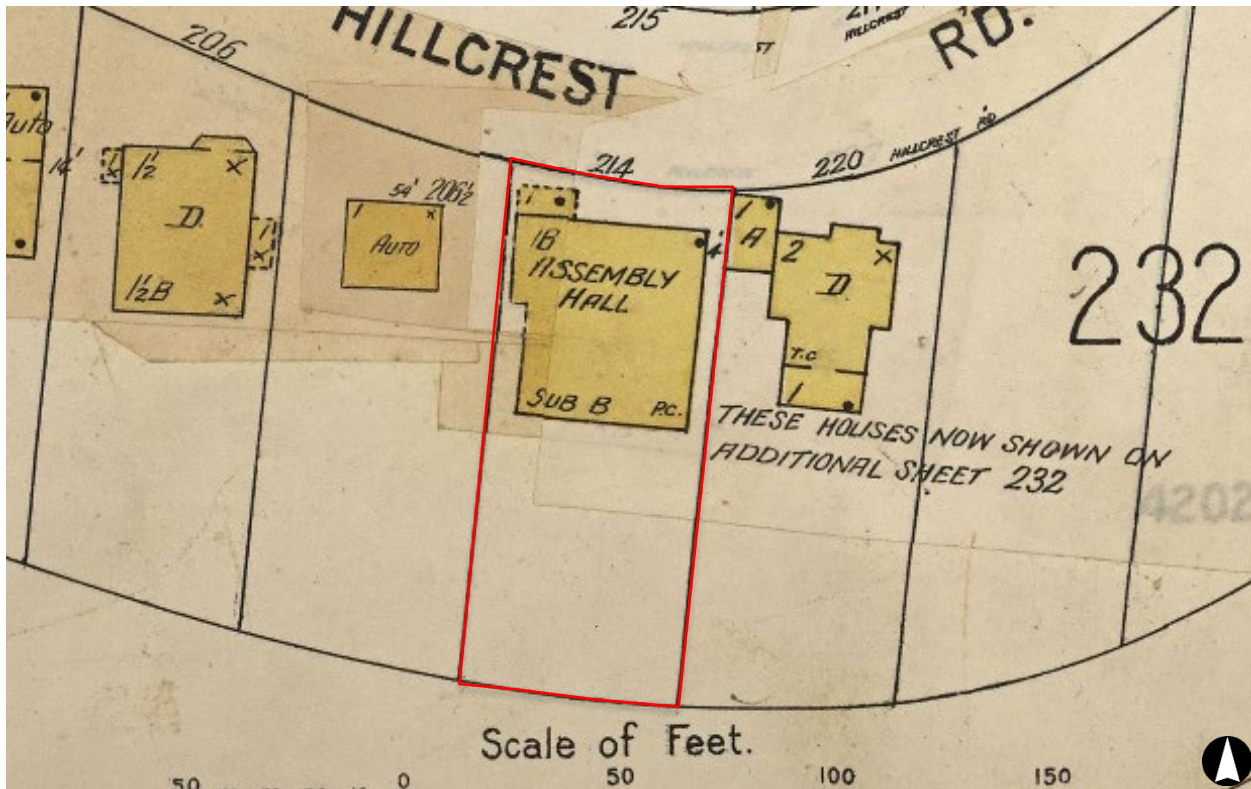


Figure 5: Sanborn Map Company fire insurance map of Berkeley, 1950. Volume 2, Page 226. The location of the subject property is outlined in red. Source: San Francisco Public Library. Edited by Page & Turnbull.



Figure 6: Aerial photograph of the Claremont Club, 1965. Cartwright Aerial Surveys Flight CAS_65_130, Frame 6-116. The location of the subject property is outlined in red. Source: University of California, Santa Barbara Special Collections. Edited by Page & Turnbull.

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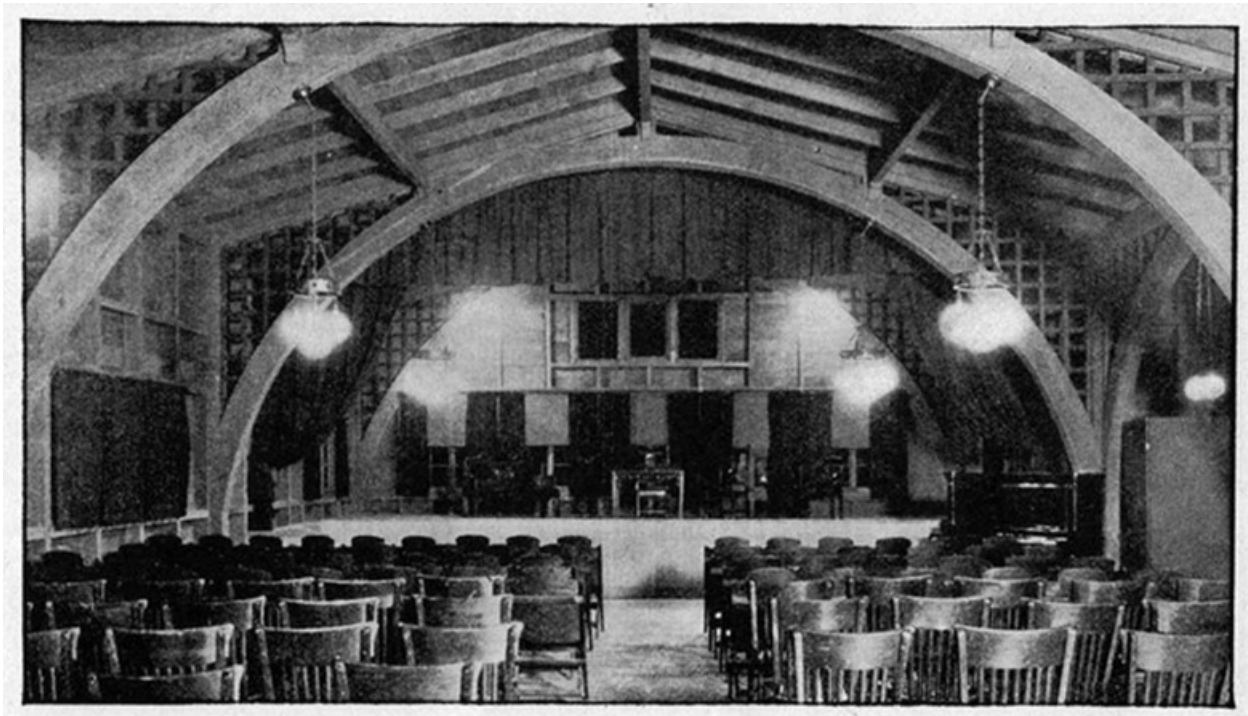


Figure 7: Early photograph of the southern facade of the upper meeting hall, likely from a club bulletin advertising the completion of the new building (undated). Source: archival collection of the Claremont Club.

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FRONT AND FIREPLACE -- INTERIOR VIEW

Figure 8: Early photograph of the northern facade of the upper meeting hall, likely from a club bulletin advertising the completion of the new building (undated). Source: archival collection of the Claremont Club.

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Figure 9: Interior of the Claremont Club, (undated). Source: Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association via Facebook.

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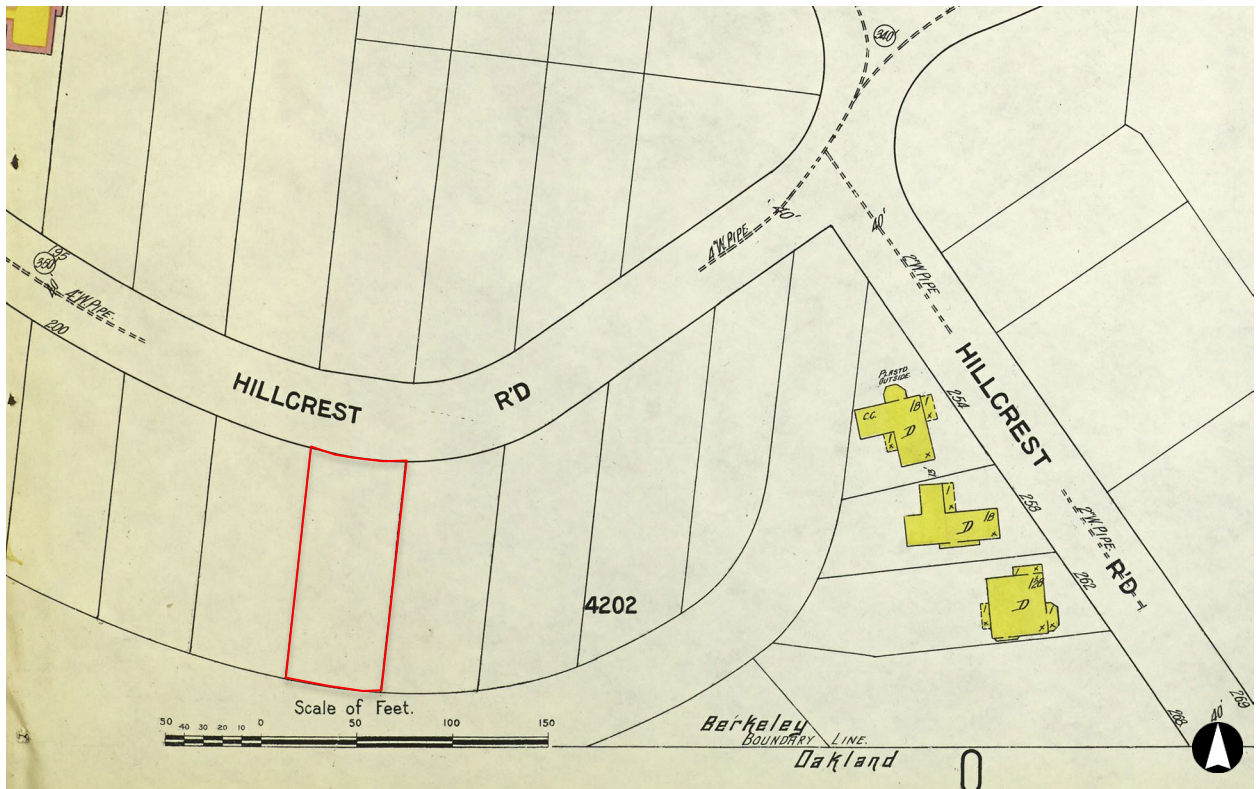


Figure 10: Sanborn Map Company fire insurance map of Berkeley, 1911. Volume 2, Page 226. The future location of the subject property is outlined in red. Source: San Francisco Public Library. Edited by Page & Turnbull.

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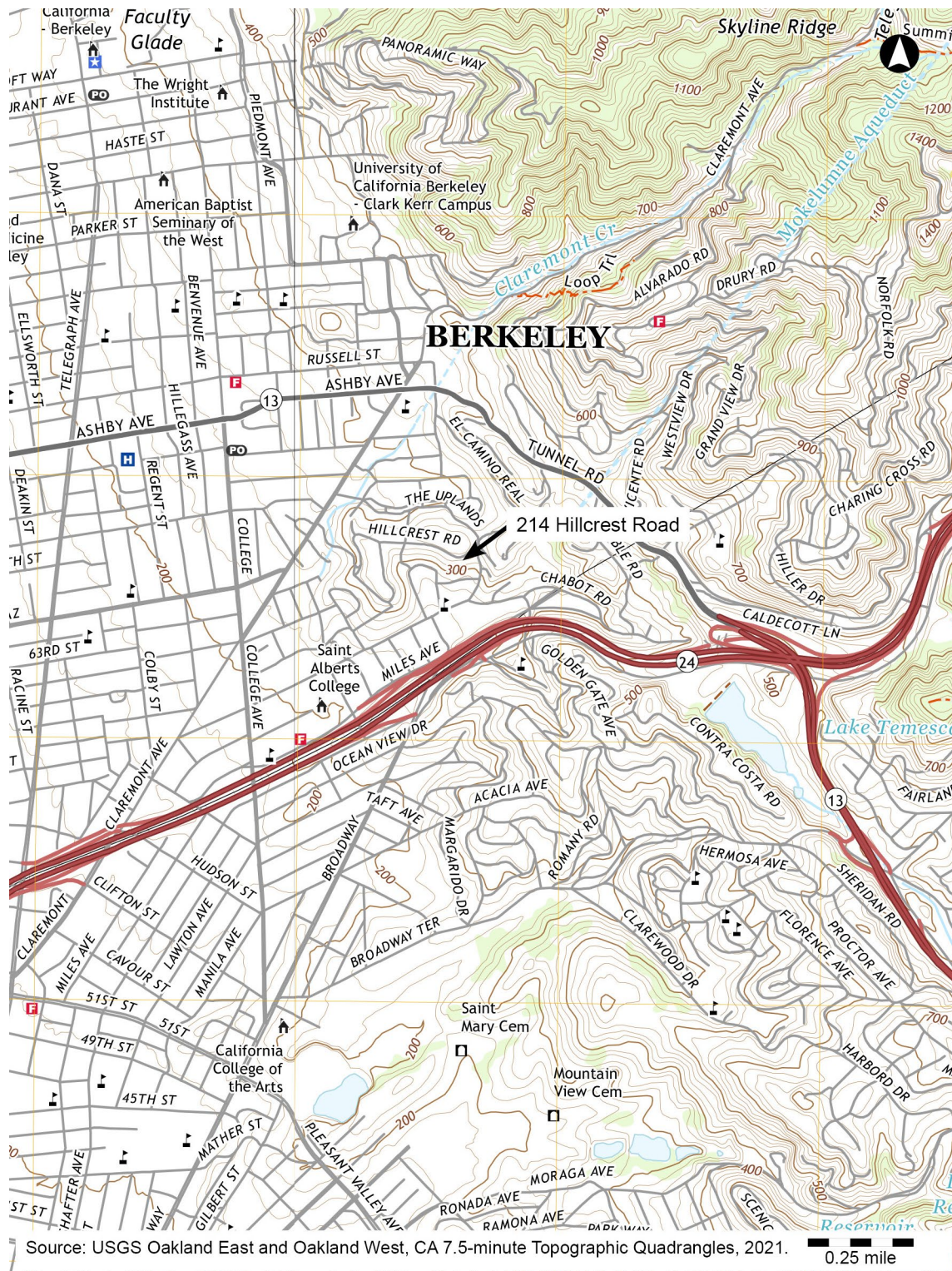
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*Map Name: Oakland East and Oakland West, CA

*Scale: 1:24,000

*Date of map: 2021



*Drawn by: Samantha Purnell, Page & Turnbull, Inc.

*Date of map: March 19, 2025



Parcel addressed 214 Hillcrest Road is outlined in red. Base Image Source: Google Earth 2024.

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The following digital photographs were taken by Samantha Purnell during site visits on June 5th, 2024 and March 6th, 2025.

Photo #	Subject/Description	View Toward
0001	Primary north façade	Southeast
0002	Primary north façade	South
0003	Detail view of primary entry portico	South
0004	Oblique view of lattice spandrels and banister along the entry portico	Southeast
0005	Oblique view of the central chimney	Southeast
0006	Detail view of the chimney flue opening	Southeast
0007	Detail view of wood sash casement windows on the primary façade	South
0008	Detail view of spandrels, paneled soffit, and decorative rafters at the primary gable end	Southwest
0009	Detail view of non-historic side entry door at the primary façade.	South
0010	Oblique view of northern side of the east façade	South
0011	Oblique view of the east façade	South
0012	Oblique view of the lower two floors of the east façade	South
0013	Detail view of the recessed entryway to the residential unit at the lowest level of the east façade	West
0014	Rear façade	North
0015	Oblique view of the uppermost floor of the rear south façade	East
0016	Oblique view of the fire escape accessed from the upper floor of the rear façade	West
0017	View of the (residential) third floor on the rear south façade	North
0018	View of the external staircase and (residential) third floor on the rear south façade	West
0019	View of the basement level of the rear south façade	North
0020	View of the basement level of the rear south façade	Northwest
0021	Oblique view of the west façade	Southeast
0022	Oblique view of the west façade	Southeast
0023	Interior view of the main meeting hall space	South
0024	Interior view of the main meeting hall space	North
0025	Interior view of the staircase leading from the foyer to the lower clubhouse floor.	South
0026	Interior view of the main meeting space on the lower clubhouse floor.	South
0027	Planter box along the primary façade	East
0028	Wood-frame staircase along the eastern façade	South



Photo 1. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0001. SITE VIEW: Primary north façade, view southeast.



Photo 2. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0002. SITE VIEW: Primary north façade, view south.



Photo 3. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0003. SITE VIEW: Detail view south of the primary entry portico.



Photo 4. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0004. SITE VIEW: Oblique view to the southeast of lattice spandrels and banister along the entry portico.

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Photo 5. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0005. SITE VIEW: Oblique view southeast of the central chimney.



Photo 6. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0006. SITE VIEW: Detail view southeast of the chimney flue opening.



Photo 7. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0007. SITE VIEW: Detail view south of wood sash casement windows on the primary façade.



Photo 8. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0008. SITE VIEW: Detail view to the southwest of spandrels, paneled soffit, and decorative rafters at the primary gable end.

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Photo 9. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0009. SITE VIEW: Detail view south of non-historic side entry door at the primary façade.



Photo 10. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0010. SITE VIEW: Oblique view south of the northern side of the east façade



Photo 11. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0011. SITE VIEW: Oblique view of the east façade, looking south.



Photo 12. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0012. SITE VIEW: Oblique view of the lower two floors of the east façade, looking south.



Photo 13. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0013. SITE VIEW: Detail view of the recessed entryway to the residential unit at the lowest level of the east façade, view west.



Photo 14. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0014. SITE VIEW: Rear façade, view north.



Photo 15. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0015. SITE VIEW: Oblique view of the uppermost floor of the rear south façade, looking east.



Photo 16. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0016. SITE VIEW: Oblique view of the fire escape accessed from the upper floor of the rear façade, view west.



Photo 17. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0017. SITE VIEW: View of the (residential) third floor on the rear south façade, looking north.



Photo 18. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0018. SITE VIEW: View of the external staircase and (residential) third floor on the rear south façade, looking west.



Photo 19. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0019. SITE VIEW: View of the basement level of the rear south façade, looking north



Photo 20. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0020. SITE VIEW: View of the basement level of the rear south façade, looking northwest.



Photo 21. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0021. SITE VIEW: Oblique view of the west façade, looking southeast.

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Photo 22. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0022. SITE VIEW: Oblique view of the west façade, looking southeast.



Photo 23. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0023. SITE VIEW: Interior view of the main meeting hall space, looking south

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Photo 24. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0024. SITE VIEW: Interior view of the main meeting hall space, looking north.

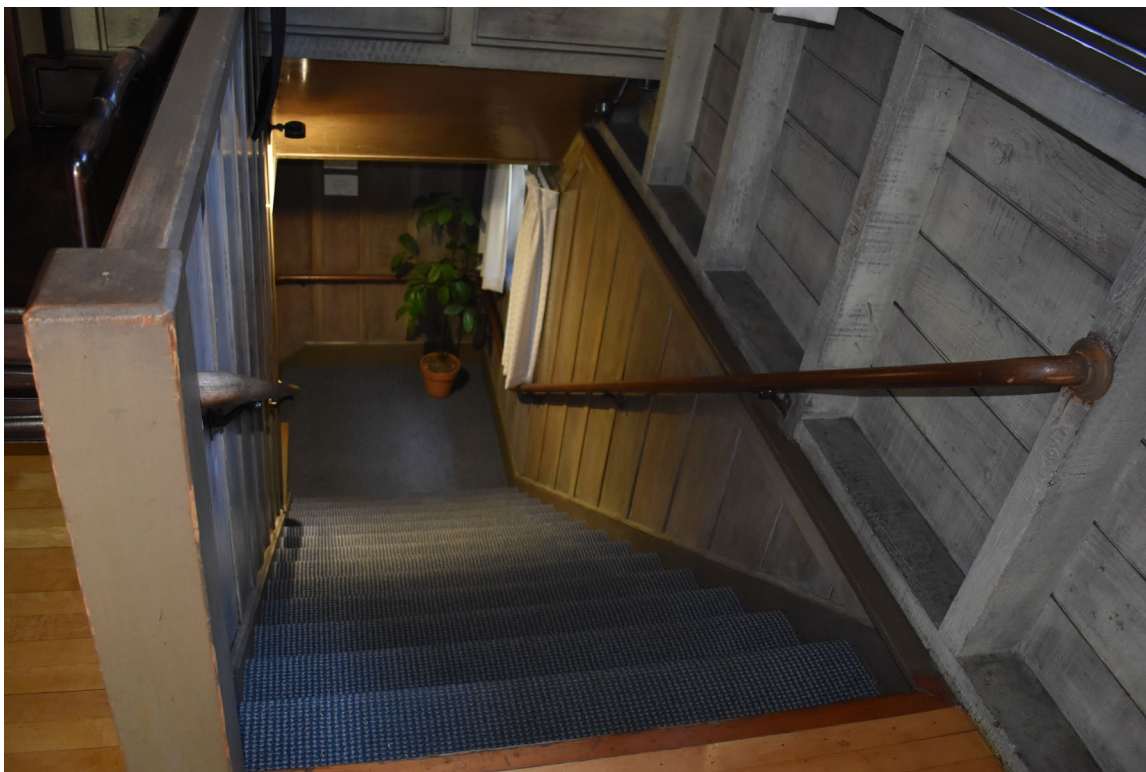


Photo 25. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0025. SITE VIEW: Interior view of the staircase leading from the foyer to the lower clubhouse floor, view south.



Photo 26. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0026. SITE VIEW: Interior view of the main meeting space on the lower clubhouse floor, view south.



Photo 27. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0027. SITE VIEW: Planter box along the primary façade, view east.



Photo 28. 214 Hillcrest Road - Claremont Club_Berkeley_CA_Photo_0028. SITE VIEW: Wood-frame staircase along the eastern façade, view south.