



# LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT



## University Mound Old Ladies' Home 350 University Street

Initiated by the Historic Preservation Commission, May 20, 2015  
Approved by the Board of Supervisors, November 17, 2015  
Signed by Mayor Edwin M. Lee, November 25, 2015

City and County of San Francisco  
Edwin M. Lee, Mayor

Planning Department  
John Rahaim, Director

Landmark No.  
**269**

Cover: University Mound Old Ladies' Home, April 2015.

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is a seven-member body that makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors regarding the designation of landmark buildings and districts. The regulations governing landmarks and landmark districts are found in Article 10 of the Planning Code. The HPC is staffed by the San Francisco Planning Department.

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# University Mound Old Ladies' Home

## 350 University Street

**Built:** 1931-1932

**Architect:** Martin J. Rist and Alfred I. Coffey

### OVERVIEW

Constructed in 1931-1932, University Mound Old Ladies' Home at 350 University Street is a convalescent/nursing home that is architecturally significant as an embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, and method of construction and represents the work of two master architects. With its front door accentuated by a broken pediment, recessed tetrastyle portico supported by tall slender columns, numerous fanlights and multi-pane windows, and symmetrically composed façade, the University Mound Old Ladies' Home illustrates the distinctive characteristics of the Colonial Revival style that was popular following the restoration of Colonial Williamsburg in the late 1920s. Architects Martin J. Rist and Alfred I. Coffey, both separately and in partnership were well known for their designs of institutional buildings, such as schools and hospitals. Rist was known on a state level for his execution of revival style architecture. In September 1932 his body of work was featured in *The Architect & Engineer* and included a two page spread on the University Mound Old Ladies' Home. Alfred I. Coffey was well known locally for his work designing school buildings as City architect in 1910. Their best known work during the early 1930s is the Art Deco style Psychopathic Ward at San Francisco General Hospital (1932-1935) designed in partnership shortly before Coffey's death. Furthermore, the University Mound Old Ladies' Home is a rare property type as it is one of the few high style Colonial Revival institutional buildings in San Francisco that retains a high degree of physical integrity having undergone very few alterations since its construction.

## BUILDING DESCRIPTION



*Primary façade of main building, April 2015*

University Mound Old Ladies' Home (the Home) is located in a residential neighborhood of single family homes constructed in the 1950s through 1960s. Located on University Street between Burrows and Bacon streets, the Home is directly across the street from University Mound Reservoir. A vacant lot is located north of the building. The building is set back from the street and the primary façade faces east towards University Street. An asphalt circular driveway accesses the primary façade of the property. A second asphalt driveway is located at the northern property line and accesses the rear of the building and exits on Bacon Street. Landscaping consists of mature shrubs, trees and hedges.

Irregularly shaped in plan, the Colonial Revival style building has a two and half story main building flanked by two story L-shaped wings and a two story plus basement service wing perpendicular to the rear of the main building. The Home is constructed of reinforced concrete with a concrete foundation, brick veneer walls with brick quoins at the corners and painted wood decorative elements. The main building has a slate clad side gable roof and the wings have flat, asphalt clad roofs. The "L" of the northern wing has a one-and-a-half story front gable roof clad in slate. Fenestration generally consists of multi-lite, wood sash windows.

### **Primary Façade (East)**

#### *Main Building*

The primary, east façade of the main building is accessed by five brick steps flanked by brick walls. The façade of the main building is seven bays wide. The four center bays have a recessed, two story portico supported by four Doric columns. Fenestration at the first story consists of five multi-lite wood French doors with transoms. The center door is surmounted by a broken pediment indicating the main entrance. The second floor has six over six, double-hung, wood sash windows. The portico is illuminated by a large hanging metal pendant light. Outer bays of the main



building are brick and have a six over six, double-hung, wood sash window at the first story covered by decorative wrought iron grille work and a fixed oval window at the second story. The façade terminates in a wide frieze band decorated with pilasters and modillions, and a dentiled wood cornice. The building is topped with a side gabled roof with three, arched-top dormers containing six over six, double-hung, wood sash windows. A vented elevator penthouse with louvers is located on the south side of the roof.

#### *North Wing*

The primary façade of the north wing is seven bays wide and has a symmetrically composed fenestration pattern. Each bay has a wood spandrel panel surmounted by six over six, double-hung, wood sash window on the first story. The northern most bay is obscured by a flat roof, wood porch enclosed by multi lite wood windows. Six over six, double-hung, wood sash windows are in each bay of the second story. The north wing is topped by a wide wooden cornice and tall brick parapet pierced by wood balusters. The “L” on the north wing contains the chapel and primary façade features a large arched window.

#### *South Wing*

The primary façade of the south wing is six bays wide and has a similar symmetrically composed fenestration pattern. Each bay has a wood spandrel panel surmounted by six over six, double-hung, wood sash window on the first story and six over six, double-hung, wood sash window on the second story. The south wing is topped by a wide wooden cornice and tall brick parapet pierced by wood balusters. The primary façade of the southern “L” is three bays wide. The center bay has a multi-lite wood French door at the first story. A similar door is located at the second story and is surmounted by a wood pediment. Metal fire stairs exit from both doors.



*Primary (east) façade of south wing, April 2015*



*Primary (east) façade of north wing, April 2015*

### **Secondary Facades – South Elevation**

#### *Main Building*

The south elevation of the gable end of the main building is partially visible and contains a wood door surmounted by a fanlight and flanked by six over six, double-hung, wood sash windows. The gable end has a high parapet.

#### *North wing*

The south elevation of the north wing contains the chapel is three bays wide. One bay is obscured by a flat roof wood porch enclosed by multi lite wood windows. Remaining bays have a wood spandrel panel topped by a round fanlight window.

#### *South Wing*

The south elevation of the south wing is six bays wide and has a similar symmetrically composed fenestration pattern with a spandrel panel surmounted by six over six, double-hung, wood sash windows on first story and six over six, double-hung, wood sash windows on the second story. In the second bay from the west are wood and glass double doors with a transom sheltered by wood canopy supported by shaped brackets. A concrete ramp with metal railing leads from the doors to the sidewalk.

### *Service Wing*

The south elevation of the service wing is six bays and has a daylight basement with five multi-lite fixed wood sash windows. The first story has three contemporary sliding doors with original sidelights and fanlights in the east bays. Window openings in the western three bays have been infilled with painted plywood. The second story has six over six double-hung, wood sash windows in western bays and three smaller six over six, double-hung, wood sash windows in eastern two bays and one six over six, double-hung, wood sash window in the remaining bay. A utilitarian cornice tops the building.



*South elevation of chapel at north wing, April 2015*



*South elevation of south wing, April 2015*



*South elevation of service wing, April 2015*

### **Secondary Facades – West Elevation**

#### *Main Building*

Two bays of the main building are partially visible beyond each side of the service wing and are mirror images. Inner bays have multi-lite wood French doors with transoms at the first story and six over six double-hung, wood sash windows at the second story. The outer bays have multi-lite round fanlight windows between the first and second stories. The gable roof has a brick chimney at the center flanked by arched top dormers.

#### *North and South Wings*

The west elevations of the wings flanking the main building are also mirror images of each other. They are eight bays wide with a regularly spaced fenestration pattern with six over six double-hung, wood sash windows at the first and second stories. Center bays have a multi-lite wood door surmounted by an arched canopy and accessed by brick steps. The wings have a wide wood cornice and solid brick parapet. An addition of a one-story, glass sunroom with pent roof is located at the south wing.



### *Service Wing*

The rear or west elevation of the service wing is three bays wide. The first story has a wood paneled door with transom surmounted by a wood canopy at the center bay. There is a contemporary vinyl window in the northern bay and a glass and wood paneled door in southern bay. The second story has six over six, double-hung, wood sash windows in the north and center bays. A metal exhaust vent is also located in the north bay. A utilitarian cornice tops the building.



*West elevation of service wing at right, April 2015*



*West elevation of south wing, April 2015*



*Sunroom alteration at west elevation of south wing, April 2015*

### **Secondary Facades - North Elevation**

#### *Main Building*

The gable end of the main building is visible beyond the wing and contains a fanlight window at the center.

#### *North Wing*

The north elevation of the chapel is three bays with wood spandrel panels and round fanlight windows in each bay. The north elevation of the wing is three bays with a small multi lite fixed window and a six over six wood sash window in outer bays of the first story. The second story has a multi-lite round fanlight window in the center bay flanked by six over six wood sash windows.

#### *South Wing*

The north elevation of the south wing is three bays wide with a symmetrically composed fenestration pattern with a spandrel panel surmounted by six over six, double-hung, wood sash windows on first story and six over six, double-hung, wood sash windows on the second story.

### *Service Wing*

The service wing is six bays wide and has a partial daylight basement with multi-lite wood sash windows. The first story has three contemporary sliding doors with original sidelights and fanlights in the east bays and six over six double-hung, wood sash windows fill the western three bays. The second story has six over six double-hung, wood sash windows in western bays and three smaller six over six double-hung, wood sash windows in eastern two bays and one six over six double-hung, wood sash window in the remaining bay.



*North elevation of chapel, April 2015*



*North elevation of service wing, April 2015*

### **Interior**

#### *Living Room*

Significant features of the interior include the living room, dining room and chapel. The living room is located in the main building on the first floor. It is directly accessed from the front porch by five multi-lite wood French doors with transoms located on the east wall. The large rectangular room has two arched openings and one blind arch at the south wall while the north wall has three arched openings. Between the arches is a plaster picture rail and bas relief plaster pilasters topped by urns of flowers. The north wall features a centered fireplace with marble surround carved with a bas relief urn of flowers and a wood mantle supported by pilasters and frieze band reminiscent of the main building's primary façade. Arched openings are located on either side of the fireplace. The ceiling has board formed concrete beams with decorative painting. The floor is covered in contemporary ceramic tile with mosaic inlay. The two brass chandeliers that were original to the room according to historic photographs were removed in 2015 and replaced with contemporary light fixtures.



*Living room showing original chandeliers before removal, view south, April 2015*



*Living room showing original chandelier before removal, view north, April 2015*



### *Dining Room*

The dining room is located on the first floor of the service wing. Three sets of contemporary sliding doors with original sidelights and fanlights are located on the north and south walls. At the center of the west wall are double doors enframed by a blind arch. The doors are flanked by built-in sideboards that have leaded glass top cabinet fronts. The south wall features a projecting fireplace with similar decorative surround and mantle as the living room. A plaster wainscot molding encircles the room. The ceiling has board formed concrete beams with decorative painting. The floor is covered in contemporary ceramic tile. The two brass chandeliers that were likely original to the room were removed in 2015 and replaced with contemporary light fixtures.



*Dining room showing original brass chandeliers before removal, view east, April 2015*



*Dining room showing original brass chandeliers before removal, view west, April 2015*

### *Chapel*

The chapel has three sets of arched multi-pane double-hung-wood sash windows with arched operable wood shutters on the north and south walls. The east wall has a large multi-lite window with sidelights and fanlight. On the west wall is a raised, recessed half round chancel with decorative lintel and brackets that is reached by two steps with wrought iron railing. Rough sawn wood beams support the vaulted ceiling. The floor is covered in linoleum squares in a checkerboard pattern. The two brass carriage lamps that were likely original to the room were removed in 2015 and replaced with contemporary light fixtures.



*Chapel showing original brass carriage lamps before removal, view east, April 2015*



*Chapel showing original brass carriage lamps before removal, view west, April 2015*

## CONSTRUCTION HISTORY

The Home owes its existence to two people, James Lick and Mary Staples. James Lick was among the wealthiest men in California upon his death in 1876, with a fortune in real estate conservatively estimated at almost \$3 million. He left a substantial portion of his wealth to a variety of social and scientific causes. Lick's son and other distant relatives challenged the validity of the will, tying it up in probate for a number of years. Despite the challenges to the will, the trust was able to carry out Lick's philanthropic bequests. In addition to the \$100,000 to found an old ladies' home in San Francisco, Lick's final bequests included \$700,000 to establish the Lick Observatory on Mount Hamilton, \$25,000 each to the Protestant Orphan Asylum in San Francisco, Ladies Protection and Relief Society, and San Jose Orphan Asylum, \$10,000 to the Mechanics Institute to purchase scientific and mechanical books, \$10,000 to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, \$150,000 to building free baths in San Francisco, \$60,000 for a bronze monument in Golden Gate Park to Francis Scott Key, author of the Star Spangled Banner, \$100,000 for bronze monuments in front of City Hall, \$51,000 to establish a School of Mechanical Arts as well as endowments to the Society of Pioneers and the Academy of Sciences and gifts to various San Francisco schools and parks.<sup>12</sup>

Mary Staples's husband, David J. Staples, spent several months assisting James Lick in framing his will. As someone who was described as "constant in her efforts to relieve the distress of others,"<sup>3</sup> Mary was also the founder of Children's Hospital, and Crocker Old Peoples' Home. According to early San Francisco historian, poet and 28<sup>th</sup> mayor of San Francisco Edward Robeson Taylor, Lick asked Mary if there were any requests she would like to make before he signed the will. Mary asked him to "set aside a goodly sum of money for a home for aged women."<sup>4</sup> Lick originally proposed \$50,000, but Mary convinced him to double the amount. Lick's final will bequeathed \$100,000 to found the Lick Old Ladies' Home in San Francisco.<sup>5</sup>

Because of the challenges to Lick's will, the Home was not incorporated until 1884. At that time it was called Lick Old Ladies' Home in honor of Lick. The original articles of incorporation list the five trustees as A. B. Forbes, Robert McElroy, E. W. Newhall, Ira P. Rankin, and J. B. Roberts. This Board of Trustees managed the financial decisions for the Home. In May of that year, the trustees purchased 25 acres in the University Mound tract along with the former University Mound College building for \$30,000.<sup>6</sup> The three-story, plus basement, wood-frame Second Empire building was originally constructed by University Mound College, a Presbyterian boarding school for boys, in December 1875 after the first college building had burned down earlier that year.<sup>7</sup> The new building had cost the college over \$50,000 to rebuild, however the third floor was unfinished due to lack of funds.<sup>8</sup> An 1875 article described the building as having large day rooms on the ground floor, a chapel on the second floor, sunny bedrooms each with its own washstand, and landscaped grounds. The college ran out of money and closed, putting the building up for auction in 1879.<sup>9</sup> At the time of purchase, the Lick Old Ladies Home trustees planned to spend \$5,000 for furnishings and other improvements to the building and invest the remaining \$65,000 to support the Home.<sup>10</sup> The 25 acres surrounding the building was farmed. Residents of the Home worked in the vegetable garden and hay was grown to feed cows, chickens and pigs that were kept to provide milk, eggs, and bacon.<sup>11</sup> Because of this, fresh vegetables, chicken and egg dishes regularly appeared on the Home's menu.

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<sup>1</sup> "James Lick's Gifts: The New Deed of Trust Recorded." *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 11, 1875.

<sup>2</sup> "The Lick Estate Trust." *New York Times*, May 29, 1885.

<sup>3</sup> Edward Robeson Taylor. *On the Establishment of the Boundaries of the Pueblo Lands of San Francisco*. San Francisco: Overland Monthly Publishing Co., 1896.

<sup>4</sup> "Her Life work is Ended." *San Francisco Call*, April 29, 1895.

<sup>5</sup> "James Lick's Gifts." *San Francisco Call*, November 11, 1875.

<sup>6</sup> "Old Ladies Home." *Daily Alta California*, Volume 36, Number 12457, May 25, 1884.

<sup>7</sup> "A College Building Burned." *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 6, 1875.

<sup>8</sup> University Mound: The New College Thereon." *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 15, 1875.

<sup>9</sup> Pacific Presbyterian Union." *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 10, 1879.

<sup>10</sup> "Old Ladies Home." *Daily Alta California*, Volume 36, Number 12457, May 25, 1884.

<sup>11</sup> Roberts, Percy. *University Mound Ladies Home*, 1939.



*Original building of the University Mound Old Ladies' Home (San Francisco Public Library, March 10, 1926)*



*Original building of the University Mound Old Ladies' Home (San Francisco Public Library, March 6, 1930)*

The trustees appointed an advisory board of four women, called the Board of Lady Managers, who were in charge of the daily affairs of the Home, including admissions and hiring staff. A matron ran the Home on a daily basis. If the matron was married, her husband cared for the garden and livestock. Additional staff employed by the Home included a chief nurse, nurse's aids, maids, chef, kitchen helpers, a laundress, handyman and waitresses. Many of the staff members lived on site. A physician visited weekly and a reverend performed services in the Chapel every Sunday.<sup>12</sup>

Admission to the Home was open to women who were 65 years old, or in some special cases 63 years old, had lived in California for five years and were in good health. Women were admitted on either a life care contract or a room and board basis. The life care application process was rigorous. It required the applicant to disclose money, real estate, securities and any other property owned; age, birthplace, previous residences; illnesses and medical care received in the last ten years; and a medical examination as well as two interviews with the Board of Lady Managers. If admitted on a life care contract, there was a mandatory probationary period. Those with terminal illnesses were not accepted. Life care residents were provided with board, lodging, clothing, medical care, and funeral arrangements. Life care costs ranged from a one-time fee of \$500 to \$3,000 depending on the year the resident was admitted. If a life care resident left the home, a refund was given less a charge of \$50 a month for the time she spent in the home. The Home also accepted residents on a board and care basis if they could not afford to pay the life care fee, but still had a regular dependable source of income such as a government pension or annuity. Board and care residents did not have to undergo a physical examination and were charged \$30-50 a month. Guests were also welcome at the Home. They were charged twenty-five cents for breakfast, fifty cents for dinner, and fifty cents to stay overnight.<sup>13</sup>

In 1896 the trustees of the Lick Old Ladies Home filed an application to change the name of the Home to the University Mound Old Ladies' Home. The name change was prompted by the fact that the institution was in financial distress. The trustees felt the current name interfered with and prevented many charitable bequests to the Home and that a more general name would promote the interests of the Home. At the time the current income of the Home was insufficient to meet expenses. The original \$100,000 endowment had dwindled to \$60,000 and the return on this investment was only \$300 a month. Contributing to the lack of funds was the discontinuance of money received by the state. The Home had received \$100 a month from the state for each resident because it cared for more than ten elderly women and its property was worth less than \$15,000. In 1893 the Home received \$3,867.37 from the state; however the law that made this type of subsidy possible was repealed in 1895.<sup>14</sup> According to a 1939 report the staff were underpaid and overworked, resulting in the hiring of underqualified staff and high turnover. In addition, there were never sufficient funds to properly retrofit the old school building as a home for elderly women; as late as 1929 blackboards were reportedly still hanging on the walls. Although the number of residents had dropped from 85

<sup>12</sup> Roberts, Percy.

<sup>13</sup> Roberts, Percy

<sup>14</sup> Roberts, Percy



to 30, the Home was unable to take in any more residents. Trustees had deliberately set admission fees low in order to provide affordable care for elderly women of modest means, but because of the low admission fee and lack of income, there were no funds to care for additional residents.<sup>15</sup> It wasn't until 1913 that the Home began accepting new residents. An advertisement in the *San Francisco Call* shows that the Home was now offering board to "elderly ladies with an excellent table in a pleasant home with large grounds" for \$30 a month.<sup>16</sup> The residents even helped to support themselves by holding an annual charity benefit where they sold handmade shawls, tablecloths and rugs at a bazaar for extra funds.<sup>17</sup> The Home would struggle with financial issues for most of its existence.

In 1922 a merger with the San Francisco Ladies' Protection and Relief Society, another charitable institution, was proposed, likely to help the Home's financial situation. The Society had been founded in 1853 during the Gold Rush to shelter young women. It operated a home on Franklin Street at Geary Street for school age children who had lost a parent, as well as cared for indigent and elderly women. The Society had recently purchased the block bounded by Francisco, Laguna, Bay and Octavia streets. Tentative plans called for the two institutions to join their resources and build two large modern buildings, one for women and one for children with playgrounds and other associated facilities.<sup>18</sup> Ultimately, however, the two institutions chose to remain independent.

### **Alteration History**

The Home once sat on 25 acres of property. Prior to 1931, the Home sold the western half of the original 25 acres to Convent of the Good Shepard.<sup>19</sup> Likely in the late 1940s or early 1950s the southwest corner fronting Bacon and Princeton streets was sold. Additional land to the west, fronting Princeton Street, and the northwest corner fronting Burrows streets was sold likely in the early 1960s, leaving the property with 2.2 acres today.

A report notes that an application for a license to operate the home was submitted to the state licensing board on October 22, 1925. However the board took no action because the wood frame building was considered unsafe, particularly in case of fire. The land sale in 1931 was likely to fund demolition of the wood frame building and construction of the present fireproof building on the remaining 13 acres. A building permit was filed July 15, 1931 to construct the three-story, reinforced concrete brick building. Interestingly, the permit notes there were several deficiencies in the proposed plans to prevent fire and egress in case of a fire. A secondary egress stair from attic to ground floor, incinerator and dumbwaiter enclosed in a fireproof box and hose reels were urgently recommended. It is unclear whether these modifications were made to the plans. In 1955 fire escape stairways were installed on the front façade of the south wing at the first story. A window and bulkhead were removed and multi-pane French doors were added to match the existing doors above. A new set of metal stairs were installed below existing stairs from second story. Fire sprinklers were installed in 1967.<sup>20</sup> In 1960 a building permit was filed to raise the entrance deck to the chapel in order to eliminate a step, and construct a wood and glass porch enclosure.<sup>21</sup> The building was originally constructed without an elevator and in 1963 a permit was filed to build an elevator shaft and install an elevator in the southeast corner of the main building off of the living room.<sup>22</sup> An elevator penthouse was added to the roof at that time. In 1981 a sun deck was constructed at the southwest corner of the building.<sup>23</sup> The deck was covered and enclosed in 1989.<sup>24</sup> The parapets were also braced that year and again in 1991.<sup>25</sup> A complete fire alarm system was installed in 1995.<sup>26</sup> Sliding glass doors and single lite sidelights replaced original multi-lite wood French doors and multi-light sidelights in the dining room at an unknown date. The building was included in the 1990 Unreinforced Masonry Building Survey. In 2014 the Home was sold to AgeSong Genesis LLC, an assisted living provider. They

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<sup>15</sup> "Tis But a Memory Now." *San Francisco Call*, June 13, 1896.

<sup>16</sup> *San Francisco Call*, Volume 114, Number 137, October 22, 1913.

<sup>17</sup> "The Happy Old Ladies." *San Francisco Call*, June 7, 1896.

<sup>18</sup> "Charity Bodies to Unite to Build Two Big Homes." *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 23, 1922.

<sup>19</sup> Percy Roberts.

<sup>20</sup> Building permit 807778, June 7, 1967

<sup>21</sup> Building permit 210219, April 18, 1960

<sup>22</sup> Building permit 256017, August 19, 1963

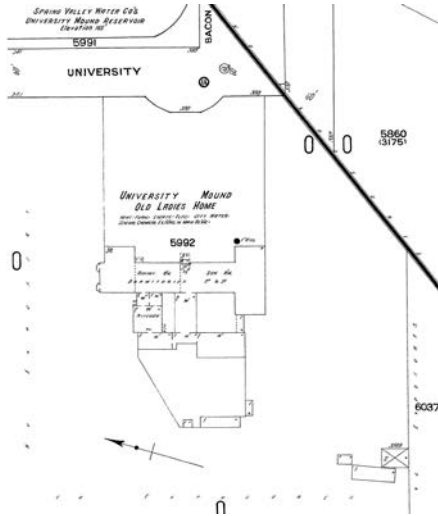
<sup>23</sup> Building permit 473743, July 8, 1981.

<sup>24</sup> Building permit 634938, July 26, 1989.

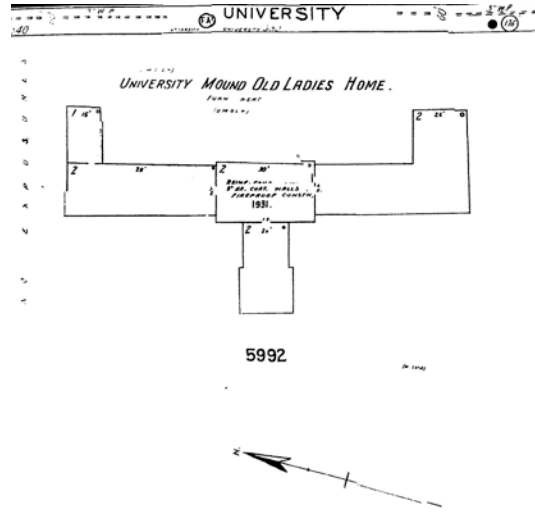
<sup>25</sup> Building permit 208602, December 6, 1989 and building permit 677306, June 27, 1991..

<sup>26</sup> Building permit 778209, September 14, 1995.

laid the contemporary tile floors in the living room and dining room, and removed original light fixtures in the living room, dining room and chapel and replaced them with contemporary fixtures 2015. Remodeling of the communal bathrooms on the first and second floors of the north and south wings began in January 2015. AgeSong also plans to remodel several bedrooms in the south wing for memory care residents.



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map updated to 1914 showing the footprint of the original building. (San Francisco Public Library)



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map updated to 1950 showing the footprint of the current building. (San Francisco Public Library)



University Mound Old Ladies' Home shortly after construction (San Francisco Public Library, June 16, 1932)



University Mound Old Ladies' Home shortly after construction (San Francisco Public Library, June 16, 1932)



*Living room of University Mound Old Ladies' Home shortly after construction  
(San Francisco Public Library, June 16, 1932)*



### Architectural Influences

The University Mound Old Ladies' Home is rendered in the Colonial Revival style. Colonial Revival was a stylistic trend that started in the 1880s on the east coast. It was the first architectural movement to celebrate America's origins by referencing colonial-era building and design traditions. Interest in the style began after the 1876 Centennial when the nation was caught up in a wave of patriotism. With its clean lines and minimal use of applied decoration, it was a reaction to what was perceived to be the excessive qualities of the Queen Anne style of the Gilded Age. The style took off after nationally prominent firm McKim, Mead & White made a widely publicized tour of New England to study original Georgian and Adam buildings first hand. By 1886 the firm had designed large summer homes that incorporated Georgian, Federal and even First Period proportions and detailing, the Appleton House (1883-1884) in Lennox, Massachusetts and the Taylor House (1885-1886) in Newport, Rhode Island. Like the rest of the nation, the early examples of the style in San Francisco were rarely historically correct copies, but inspired by 18th century precedent, with borrowed colonial details applied to Victorian houses. These houses were much larger than their prototypes and were only reminiscent of the earlier Colonial style.

During the 1920s, Colonial Revival began to be often mixed and matched elements from Georgian and Federal styles. 18<sup>th</sup> century Georgian was typically used for larger commercial and public buildings while smaller buildings used a more broad range of early 18<sup>th</sup> century up through the federal style after 1800.<sup>27</sup> Despite the remoteness of California from New England, the Colonial Revival became popular in San Francisco and the rest of California between 1895 and 1910, partly due to the New England origins of many of the state's leading families and recently arrived architects from New England, New York, and Chicago, including Willis Polk and others. Although the style first took hold in the City's wealthier neighborhoods such as Pacific Heights, the style was not confined to homes for the rich. Much of the destroyed residential fabric of San Francisco replaced after 1906 was rebuilt in the simple, elegant and flexible vocabulary of the Colonial Revival.

The restoration of colonial Williamsburg in the late 1920s reenergized the popularity of the style. The progress of the restoration of Williamsburg in the late 1920s and early 1930s was closely followed in national newspapers, professional architectural journals and in home magazines for the upper and middle-class. Measured drawings and photographs of American colonial architecture were published in architectural journals, magazines such as *Good Housekeeping*, *Ladies' Home Journal* and *Town and Country* and a number of picture books and historical studies.<sup>28</sup> These colonial inserts were used directly as source material for architects during the design process. As a result architects began to produce more correct interpretations of historical models. While homes designed during this time period were more authentic interpretation of Colonial, public buildings, churches and educational buildings continued to reflect the 18th century American Georgian style constructed in the 1920s.

The clean lines and minimal use of applied decoration of the Colonial Revival style had the added bonus of being inexpensive to construct and the building materials were readily available. As the Home was continually struggling financially, the Colonial Revival style likely fit their budget.

Colonial Revival style is characterized by a brick and white-painted wood trim symmetrical façade often three or five bays in width with the entrance located in the center bay. Prominent classical elements, such as an accentuated front door with decorative pediment, fanlights and multi-paned double-hung, sash windows, dormers and classically detailed cornices are also distinctive features. Small round windows on the primary façade and gable ends were widely used in the 1930s, 40s and early 50s.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Gebhard, David. "The American Colonial Revival in the 1930s." *Winterthur Portfolio*, Vol 22, no 2/3 (Summer-Autumn, 1987): 109-148.

<sup>28</sup> Gebhard, David.

<sup>29</sup> McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997: 332.

**Martin J. Rist (1888-1956) & Alfred I. Coffey (1866-1931), Architects**

Master architects Martin J. Rist and Alfred I. Coffey partnered on the design of the University Mound Old Ladies' Home. Martin J. Rist and Alfred I. Coffey, both separately and in partnership were well known for their designs of institutional buildings, such as schools and hospitals. Rist was known on a state level for his execution of revival style architecture. In September 1932 his recent body of work was featured in *The Architect & Engineer* and included a two page spread on the University Mound Old Ladies' Home. Alfred I. Coffey was well known locally for his work designing school buildings as City architect in 1910.



Taraval Police Station designed by Martin J. Rist and Alfred I. Coffey and completed ca. 1930. (San Francisco Public Library, n.d.)



Gault School in Santa Cruz designed by Martin J. Rist and Alfred I. Coffey and completed 1931. (Google Street View)

Martin Rist was born to German parents in Columbus, Ohio in 1888. His family arrived in San Francisco in 1906, and Rist soon found employment as a draftsman working for the architect William Curlett. He continued to work for Curlett until 1914, and then as a designer for Charles Gottschalk and Carl Werner. One year after being granted a certificate to practice architecture in California by the State Board of Architecture in 1922<sup>30</sup>, Rist opened his own practice, and a year later joined Charles Gottschalk in partnership with offices in the Phelan Building. In August 1928 *The Architect and Engineer* observed that Gottschalk and Rist had “one of the busiest offices in San Francisco.”<sup>31</sup> Among their projects at that time was the construction of estates in Hillsborough and San Mateo, as well as an apartment building on Filbert Street in San Francisco. Several of these buildings were subsequently photographed for the September 1932 edition of *The Architect and Engineer*, which said of Rist:

... We find him detailing everything, moldings, window frames, cupboards, leaving nothing to the mills' withering concept of economy. Buildings are designed on all sides—nothing is left to chance even on kitchen entrances. We do not find expanses of repeated ornament, but necessary things are deftly done, with a full blooded sense of well-being.<sup>32</sup>

As with many architects during the building boom in the 1930s, Rist's work favored Period Revival influences, including Mediterranean Revival, Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival style designs. During this period Rist also completed designs in association with architect Alfred I. Coffey, including the McKinley School in Redwood City, California, Taraval Police Station (ca. 1930) and the Gault School in Santa Cruz (1931), as well as Rist's own house—a Storybook style residence at 136 Yerba Buena Avenue (1928). Their best known work during the early 1930s is the Art Deco style Psychopathic Ward at San Francisco General Hospital (1932-1935).

<sup>30</sup> “Granted Certificates to Practice.” *The Architect and Engineer*, Vol. 71, No.1 (October 1922); 106.

<sup>31</sup> “With the Architects,” *The Architect and Engineer*, Vol. 94, No. 2 (August, 1928), 105.

<sup>32</sup> Julian C. Mesic, “Architectural Practice and the Work of Martin J. Rist,” *The Architect and Engineer*, Vol. 110, No. 3 (September, 1932): 24-25.

During the latter 1930s, Rist's work increasingly showed Arte Moderne influences. These included an exuberant commercial building at 470 Columbus Avenue (1936), as well as three stripped-down Streamline apartment buildings located at 1963 to 1981 Clay Street. Other Public Works Administration projects involving Rist included the Coffin-Reddington Building at 301 Folsom Street (1936-1937); and Abraham Lincoln High School in association with Timothy Pflueger, Frederick Meyer and W. P. Peugh (1938-1940).<sup>33</sup> Rist also collaborated with architects Albert Schroeffer, Charles F. Strothoff, and Smith O'Brien on the Sunshine School at (1937) and Buena Vista Elementary School (replaced by a new building in 1968).

Following World War II, Rist completed several large institutional projects in San Francisco, all of them concentrated in the city's western neighborhoods. These included the West Portal Lutheran Church (1947), Mercy High School (1952), and St. Cecilia Catholic Church (1954-1956). Of interest, both the West Portal Lutheran Church and St. Cecilia's were designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style, while Mercy High School is more Modernist in orientation. During this period Rist maintained an office in the Sunset District in the Henry Doelger building at 320 Judah Street. Rist died in 1956 and is buried at St. Mary's Cemetery in Oakland.



1961-1936 Clay Street designed by Martin J. Rist and completed 1936. (Google Street View)



470 Columbus Avenue designed by Martin J. Rist and completed in 1936. (Google Street View)

Alfred I. Coffey was born in San Francisco in 1866. He was a graduate of Saint Mary's College in Moraga, California. Coffey married Gladys Coulter in Santa Clara in 1915. In 1917 he lived at 1390 Washington Street. Later he lived in Redwood City and maintained his own practice in San Francisco. He is most well-known for his school and hospital designs. In 1910 he was selected as city architect for San Francisco for his special experience in designing school buildings which was opportune because the city was then in the process of designing a large number of school buildings.<sup>34</sup> He was the fifth person to be named to the office in the past four years.<sup>35</sup> His school building designs include McKinley School and Sequoia High School, Redwood City (1904, additions 1928-1929), Mission Revival style Gault School in Santa Cruz (1931) in partnership with Rist. His hospital designs include the Neo-Classical Southern Pacific Railroad Company Hospital (1906-1908), a Second Empire building for St. Joseph's Hospital (1889) and an addition to St. Francis Hospital (1911)<sup>36</sup> all in San Francisco and St. Agnes Hospital, Fresno (1929).<sup>37</sup> Besides school and hospital buildings, he designed a domed, Renaissance Revival style, two-story building for the Bank of San Mateo County in 1906<sup>38</sup> and in 1913 he designed the Roxie Theater on 16<sup>th</sup> Street as two storefronts each with a

<sup>33</sup> Therese Poletti. *Art Deco San Francisco: The Architecture of Timothy Pflueger*. (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2008), 225.

<sup>34</sup> "Alfred I. Coffey." *San Francisco Call*, Volume 109, Number 83, February 21, 1911.

<sup>35</sup> "City Architect No. 5." *Architect and Engineer*, Volume 19, Issue 2.

<sup>36</sup> *Domestic Engineering and the Journal of Mechanical Contracting*, Volume 87, 1919.

<sup>37</sup> *Architect and Engineer*, Volume 97-98 Apr.-Sept. 1929, page 15.

<sup>38</sup> Regnery, Dorothy F. *An Enduring Heritage: Historic Buildings of the San Francisco Peninsula*.



curved parapet and is one of the last “storefront” movie theaters.<sup>39</sup> Coffey partnered with architect Carl Werner in 1919 to design city hall for South San Francisco<sup>40</sup> and again in 1921 to prepare plans for additions to the Sequoia Union High School in Redwood City.<sup>41</sup> Coffey, working with Rist designed two additions of the San Francisco General Hospital, the Cancer Unit and the Psychopathic Building, before his death from a stroke on November 10, 1931.<sup>42</sup>



*Southern Pacific Railway Hospital designed by Alfred I. Coffey and completed 1906-1908. (San Francisco Public Library, August 19, 1964)*



*Psychopathic Ward at San Francisco General Hospital designed by Alfred I. Coffey and completed ca. 1932-35.<sup>43</sup> (San Francisco Public Library, February 23, 1950)*

## PORTOLA NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY

The Home is located in what was originally part of the Rincon de las Salinas y Potrero Viejo rancho. H.S. Brown, Esq. acquired the land at an unknown date. Brown first had the area surveyed in 1862 and the survey was recorded May 1, 1863. The University Mound Survey map from that time shows that the area bounded by Oxford, San Bruno Avenue, Olmstead and Silver Avenue was laid out in linear blocks with eight lots per block. Most streets were named after universities and colleges on the east coast: Oxford, Harvard, Yale, Amherst, Princeton, Dartmouth, Holyoke, and Bowdoin streets. A four block by two block area between University and Cambridge streets and mid-block between Wayland and Henry (now Felton Street) streets was dedicated to “University College Grounds.”<sup>44</sup> In 1867 a survey for the University Homestead Association expanded the neighborhood west to Harvard Street. The 1867 map shows owner’s names on some lots, however the majority of lots remained unsold. The Homestead Association was first extended in 1868. In 1870 the University Extension Homestead Association filed a map to extend the tract west to by up to four blocks; however it appears that the extension never took place, as today this area has a different street grid than University Mound and is known as the Excelsior. Although the 1870 map shows that more lots had been sold, newspapers reported cattle still roamed freely in the neighborhood, even attacking and killing a resident of the Home in 1895.<sup>45</sup> In 1872 plans were made to construct a railroad to University Mound terminating in Bay View at a cost of \$40,000.<sup>46</sup> In 1904 the area received electric arc lights on the corner of Dwight, Woolsey, Wayland, Holyoke

<sup>39</sup> Dinkelspiel, Susan Cerny and Beth A. Armstrong. *An Architectural Guidebook to San Francisco and the Bay Area*. Utah: Gibbs Smith, 2007.

<sup>40</sup> *Architect and Engineer*, Volumes 57-58, 1919.

<sup>41</sup> *Western Architect and Engineer*, Volumes 66-67, 1921.

<sup>42</sup> *Architect and Engineer* Volume 107-108, October 1931- March 1932. November 1931: 76.

<sup>43</sup> “Builders’ Contracts.” *San Francisco Call*. November 11, 1903.

<sup>44</sup> The San Francisco Block Book. Vol. II, *Homesteads: University Mound Homestead Ass’n*. San Francisco: Hicks-Judd Co., 1907: 21.

<sup>45</sup> “Alleged Measure to Prevent Extension of the Pound Limits.” *San Francisco Call*, December 9, 1895

<sup>46</sup> “University Mound Railroad.” *Daily Alta California*, Volume 24, Number 8034, March 25, 1872

and Crane streets because so many new homes had been constructed in the district.<sup>47</sup> Despite these improvements, growth of the Portola district was still slow, until after the 1906 fire and earthquake.



University Mound Survey, recorded 1863. (San Francisco Public Library) University Mound area shown fully built out in Sanborn Fire Insurance Map updated to 1983. (San Francisco Public Library)

In 1913 the neighborhood surrounding the Home was purchased by the Brown Estate, which began advertising that all 300 lots all had a view of the ocean and boasted that the neighborhood was perfect for salaried men who wanted to keep in touch with their downtown offices, as it was located just off Mission Street on Silver Avenue and only 20 minutes from Third and Market streets with 5 different street cars lines only two minutes away.<sup>48</sup> The Brown Estate said that no expense had been spared in improving the tract – streets had curbs and electric street lights and water and sewer service was available.<sup>49</sup> Apparently the roads were still unpaved and there were no sidewalks in some areas, because a 1939 report describes the difficulty residents of the Home had in navigating the unpaved road from the Home to Silver Avenue.<sup>50</sup> As further incentive, the lots had low opening prices of \$400 and homes could be built for new owners on easy terms with payments of only \$10 a month, claiming that was amount was within what was usually paid as rent money.<sup>51</sup> Despite this advertising, the neighborhood was not fully built out until the 1960s.

With its eastern slope and southern exposure, the Portola neighborhood was a good site for farming. In the 1920s, it became home to at least 19 nurseries, many owned by Italian-American families. They grew the majority of flowers sold in San Francisco for decades.<sup>52</sup> A 1938 aerial photograph shows that there were numerous greenhouses north of the Home. A 1939 report notes that a resident of the Home had asked one of the nurseries for 10 cents worth of flowers and they filled her arms with a huge bunch of pink roses.<sup>53</sup> During World War II many of the families stopped growing flowers and instead grew vegetables or raised chickens to feed and support themselves. In the late 1930s some of the nurseries were closed when landowners lost their property to the city for the creation of McLaren Park and the University Mound Reservoir system.<sup>54</sup> Today, the lone block of greenhouses remains along Hamilton Street, east of the reservoir.

<sup>47</sup> "Residents Want Light." *San Francisco Call*, Volume 97, Number 15, 15 December 1904

<sup>48</sup> "University Mound is Selling Fast." *San Francisco Call*, August 2, 1913.

<sup>49</sup> "Good Improvements in New Subdivision." *San Francisco Call*, May 24, 1913.

<sup>50</sup> Roberts, Percy.

<sup>51</sup> "University Mound is Being Appreciated." *San Francisco Call*, July 19, 1913.

<sup>52</sup> Garibaldi, Rayna. *San Francisco's Portola*. Arcadia: Mount Pleasant, S.C., 2007.

<sup>53</sup> Roberts, Percy.

<sup>54</sup> Garibaldi, Rayna



*Aerial view of the University Mound area. University Mound Old Ladies' Home outlined in red. University Mound Reservoir is to the east, Convent of the Good Shepard buildings can be seen to the west and greenhouses to the north (David Rumsey, 1938)*

Immediately east of the Home is the University Mound Reservoir. The north basin of the reservoir, directly across the street from the Home, was brought into service in 1885. At that time the area around the reservoir was a windswept, little known section of the city that was sparsely populated with street car service a mile away.<sup>55</sup> The south basin of the reservoir was constructed in 1937.

Like other San Francisco neighborhoods, the Portola was home to waves of new people and cultures in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The first settlers were Jewish and Portola was sometimes called "Little Jerusalem" because of its two temples, Kosher delis on unpaved San Bruno Road, and a settlement house run by the Council of Jewish Women. The Portola is one of the few neighborhoods in the United States that has a Maltese presence. Immigrants from the island of Malta in the Mediterranean came to San Francisco in the 1920s and formed a small ethnic community around San Bruno Avenue. The 2010 census found that roughly three-quarters of the neighbors are of Asian or Hispanic descent.

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<sup>55</sup> Spring Valley Water Company, *San Francisco Water*, Vol. 1, No. 1, January 1922.



## APPENDIX: RETIREMENT AND OLD AGE HOMES

### *The Problem of the Aged*

Retirement as it currently exists today is a relatively new phenomenon brought about by changing social and economic conditions and social reform legislation. When farming dominated the economy in the 1700s, the ageing farmer was likely to be employed as long as his health held out and then could expect to be cared for by his many children. As factories began to replace farms in economic importance in the 1800s, the ageing in cities had few modern vocational skills to work in them. In addition, people in the urban industrial areas had smaller families which left fewer children to provide care for the elderly. In many cases children were unable to support their aged parents since many workers could barely support their own families. And as for those aged without children, this had no relevance at all. This problem of security for the aged was described by Social Security Administration historian Abe Bortz,

The problem of the aged became a more important one in the industrial age because, among other things, the capacity of the aged for self-support was being undermined. Changes in economic organization and family structure had relegated them to a marginal status in the modern industrial society. Modern industrial techniques had hastened economic superannuation by using up human energy at greater speed within a shorter period of time. No longer was there this patriarchal family, as in the primitive agricultural community when one large family existed and where all starved or prospered together. Lacking both authority and a significant economic function, the aged were also affected by the spatial mobility of the modern nucleated family. For the economic system depended on this mobility, but it loosened home ties and family solidarity in the process. Thus the aged could no longer rely upon the institution of the family as a buffer which had protected them against dependency in pre-industrial societies.<sup>56</sup>

### *Almshouses to Retirement Homes*

While on a farm, the elderly could help with simple chores and help increase family income. In the city, the elderly were only additional burdens for the wage earner. At the same time, high land costs meant smaller dwelling units and less physical capacity to give care in the home to persons outside the immediate family group. Thus the elderly were forced to live in an almshouse or other public or charitable institution such as an infirmary, asylum, poorhouse, poor farm, county farm, or county home. For many years, it was the first and sometimes the only public charitable institution to provide care and a place to live. However, the institutions housed not only the elderly, but petty criminals, the infirm, orphans and the insane. By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century welfare workers and charity experts saw a direct relationship between old age and poverty and advocated for separate institutionalization of elderly paupers from these other needy persons. According to Bortz, "in the decades after 1820, America turned with unprecedented enthusiasm and energy to the construction of [separate] custodial institutions for the poor, the insane, the orphan and the criminal."<sup>57</sup>

However, while late 19<sup>th</sup> century social workers endorsed the idea of sending lower-class elderly to a publically run institution, many questioned the propriety of sending the middle class to the same place. Thus many private old-age homes were founded around this time period. By the end of the century, most of the residents in private old-age homes were white, middle-class women who had paid to enter. By the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were scores of old-age homes in every large American city.<sup>58</sup>

The University Mound Old Ladies' Home, founded in 1884, appears to have been modeled after the first old age home for ladies in Philadelphia, the Indigent Widows' and Single Women's Society (Society) opened in 1817. The Society declined to accept any applicant who had been raised in poverty. Instead they only accepted respectable women who came from refined walks of life and were used to certain comforts. The Society wanted the women to see

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<sup>56</sup> Bortz, Abe, *Old Age Pensions: A Brief History*. The Social Welfare History Project, [www.socialwelfarehistory.com](http://www.socialwelfarehistory.com). Accessed 16 June 2015.

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.ssa.gov/history/bortz.html>. Accessed 16 June 2015.

<sup>58</sup> Haber, Carole, *Beyond Sixty-Five: The Dilemma of Old Age in America's Past*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

the institution as their home and the other inmates as their family. Women were provided private rooms, and meals were taken at a general table to ensure a feeling of family unity. Admission requirements were strict. Each applicant was required to give proof of her character and provide recommendations. Once admitted to the Society, women were given a one-year probationary period and expected to donate their labor, sewing, knitting and quilting to help raise money for the institution.<sup>59</sup>

### *Old Age Economic Assistance*

While the middle class could afford to pay to enter a retirement home, the working poor did not have that option. For them, saving for old age was often impractical. Since old age was a long term rather than a transitory condition, the amount of savings required was more than most workers could afford. Nor could anyone time, or predict, the duration of old age. Besides, the very remoteness of the risk tended to discourage saving. By the end of the 19th century, the increasing number of industrial workers left without an income in old age had been a matter of growing public concern. In the 1890's a number of trade unions established homes for their aged members and shortly afterwards began to experiment with retirement benefit systems. At the same time, railroads set up private pension plans for their employees. By the 1920's, old age pensions for a wider group of people became a leading issue.

In response to this concern, states began enacting old age pension legislation. Between 1923 and 1933, the majority of States had enacted some type of legislation providing for old age pensions financed solely by either the state or the counties, with many counties choosing not to participate. The plans were quite limited and inconsistent from state to state, and they often had restrictive eligibility conditions, such as long residency requirements. By 1932, only 102,000 persons were receiving state pensions with \$22,000,000 the annual cost of assistance.<sup>60</sup> California was the first to enact a mandatory law with state financial aid to counties in 1929. On January 1, 1930 the California Old-Age Pension Law, which was mandatory and statewide in its application, became effective.

The Social Security Act of 1935 included a program called Old Age Assistance (OAA). Unlike Old Age Insurance in which a worker paid into a reserve in order to receive benefits later, OAA gave cash payments to poor elderly people regardless of their work record. OAA was fabricated out of 28 state old-age assistance programs. Each state was allowed to set its own standards for determining eligibility and payments, with the federal government providing cash for a 50% match of up to \$30 a month in aid. OAA had few federal requirements, but the one of the most relevant is that payments to anyone living in a "public institution" were prohibited.

With the passage of the Social Security Act in 1935 and its prohibition on care in public institutions, the number of for-profit facilities began to quickly multiply. Although the Social Security payments were not generous, some recipients needed to find shared quarters in order to get by while others needed a level of care or supervision that they couldn't get at home. They couldn't go to a poorhouse without losing their benefits, but they did have some money to pay for their care. Most of the nonprofit old age homes restricted access to members of their own organizations, and, since they were dependent on donations and contributions for survival, they had a limited ability to expand quickly. That left private nursing homes as the only facilities with an unlimited potential to grow to fill the emerging need. As a result, the nursing home industry became primarily a for-profit industry.

### *Architectural Design of Old Age Homes*

The evolution in the design of retirement homes likely mirrors that of hospitals. Early hospitals provided healthcare in large, open wards. The wards housed multiple patients and continued to be expanded until the ward system became the standard for public hospitals for hundreds of years. Early almshouses and public institutions were often constructed in a similar fashion. Private retirement homes built in the early 1800s more nearly resembled the household, with private rooms for those who could afford them.

As mentioned above, in the decades after 1820, America enthusiastically constructed separate custodial institutions for the elderly, poor, insane, orphans and criminals. Institutionalization now became the first rather than the last resort. The institution and not the household became the preferred setting. Americans during these years had a

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<sup>59</sup> Haber, Carole.

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.ssa.gov/history/bortz.html>. Accessed 16 June 2105.

confidence in the ability to design an environment and construct a setting in which poverty, crime and insanity could be eliminated and the causes of dependency thus eradicated. Understandably, with the beginnings of a factory system, the institutions built after 1820 were more influenced by and more nearly resembled the factory.<sup>61</sup> They provided cheap, efficient care and attended to elderly inmates who were not only destitute but likely to be infirm as well.

The modern nursing home dates back to the 1930s and the passage of the Social Security Act when the elderly began receiving financial assistance to pay for care in a private retirement or nursing home. The new private facilities were no longer constructed with large wards that housed numerous beds, but were now constructed with smaller wards that had fewer beds, or even private rooms. After the creation of the Medicare and Medicaid programs in the 1960s, Medicaid established a licensing system for nursing facilities and a reimbursement program for residents with limited resources. With an emphasis on delivering health care efficiently, the look and feel of most facilities mirrored that of modern hospitals – with nursing stations and double-loaded corridors.

### ***Retirement Homes in San Francisco***

In 1932, when the Home was completed, the San Francisco city directory listed 25 “Homes and Asylums” including seven orphanages and five asylums specifically for women or girls. Of those, only four, including the University Mound Old Ladies Home are extant and in operation as convalescent/nursing homes. Designed in period revival styles, all four reflect the architectural influences of the period. They include the Hebrew Home for the Aged and Disabled (Jewish Home San Francisco) located at 302 Silver Avenue designed by Samuel Lightner Hyman in the Georgian Revival style and completed in 1923 with two wings added in 1945 and 1959, extensively altered and today derives its significance from the 1969 Brutalist Goodman Building designed by Howard Friedman and 1970 courtyard and fountain designed by Lawrence Halprin; the San Francisco Ladies’ Protection and Relief Society (The Heritage) located at 3400 Laguna Street, designed by Julia Morgan in the Tudor Revival style in 1924; and the Christian Science Benevolent Association on the Pacific Coast (Arden Wood), located at 445 Wawona Street, designed by Henry Gutterson in the Chateausque style and completed in 1930. Based on this review, the University Mound Old Ladies Home can be considered a rare property type. It is one of the few high style Colonial Revival institutional buildings in San Francisco.



*Christian Science Benevolent Association on the Pacific Coast (Arden Wood), located at 445 Wawona Street, designed by Henry Gutterson in the Chateausque style 1930 (www.ardenwood.org)*



*San Francisco Ladies’ Protection and Relief Society (The Heritage) located at 3400 Laguna Street, designed by Julia Morgan in the Tudor Revival style in 1924 (Google Street View).*

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<sup>61</sup> <http://www.ssa.gov/history/bortz.html>. Accessed 16 June 2105





*Jewish Home of San Francisco located at 302 Silver Avenue designed by Samuel Lightner Hyman in the Georgian Revival style and completed in 1923 with two wings added in 1945 and 1959, n.d. ([www.jhsf.org](http://www.jhsf.org))*



*Jewish Home of San Francisco Goodman Building designed by Howard Friedman in the Brutalist style and completed in 1969 ([www.jhsf.org](http://www.jhsf.org)).*

# ARTICLE 10 LANDMARK DESIGNATION

This section of the report is an analysis and summary of the applicable criteria for designation, integrity, period of significance, significance statement, character-defining features, and additional Article 10 requirements.

## Criteria for Designation

Check all criteria applicable to the significance of the property that are documented in the report. The criteria checked is (are) the basic justification for *why* the resource is important.

- ☐ Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ Association with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ X Embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- ☐ Has yielded or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory.

## Statement of Significance

### Characteristics of the Landmark that justify its designation:

Constructed in 1931-1932, University Mound Old Ladies' Home at 350 University Street is a convalescent/nursing home that is architecturally significant as an embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, and method of construction and represents the work of master architects Martin J. Rist and Alfred I. Coffey. With its front door accentuated by a broken pediment, recessed tetrastyle portico supported by tall slender columns, numerous fanlights and multi-pane windows, and symmetrically composed façade, the University Mound Old Ladies' Home illustrates the distinctive characteristics of the Colonial Revival style that was popular following the restoration or Colonial Williamsburg in the late 1920s. Rist and Coffey, both separately and in partnership were well known for their designs of institutional buildings, such as schools and hospitals. Their best known work during the early 1930s is the Art Deco style Psychopathic Ward at San Francisco General Hospital (1932-1935). Furthermore, the University Mound Old Ladies' Home is one of the only extant Colonial Revival style convalescent/nursing homes in San Francisco that retains a high degree of physical integrity having undergone few alterations since its construction.

## Period of Significance

The period of significance is 1931 to 1980 representing the construction date of the current building to alterations made in 1981.

## Integrity

The seven aspects of integrity are location, design, materials, workmanship, setting, feeling, and association in relation to the period of significance established above. Cumulatively, the building at 350 University Street retains high degree of integrity to convey its architectural significance. The building retains integrity of association, as it has remained in continual use as a convalescent/nursing home since its construction. It likewise retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship and feeling. Based on a review of the building permit history and visual inspection, known exterior alterations are relatively limited in scope and remain subordinate to the building's overall design and ornamentation. Similarly, interior spaces including the living room, dining room and chapel have experienced few alterations and readily convey their association with the building's historic use. The Home's original large park like setting of 25 acres has diminished to just 2.5 acres, however, with its set back from the street, mature trees and shrubs, and as the only building on the west side of University Street, it retains the feeling of a much larger property.

Overall, the Department has determined that the building's primary character defining features, both exterior and interior, are largely unaltered since the building's construction in 1931-1932 and 350 University Street retains a high degree of integrity to convey its historical significance.

## ARTICLE 10 REQUIREMENTS SECTION 1004 (b)

### Boundaries of the Landmark Site

Encompassing all of and limited to Lot 1 in Assessor's Block 5992 on the west side of University Street between Burrows and Bacon Streets.

### Character-Defining Features

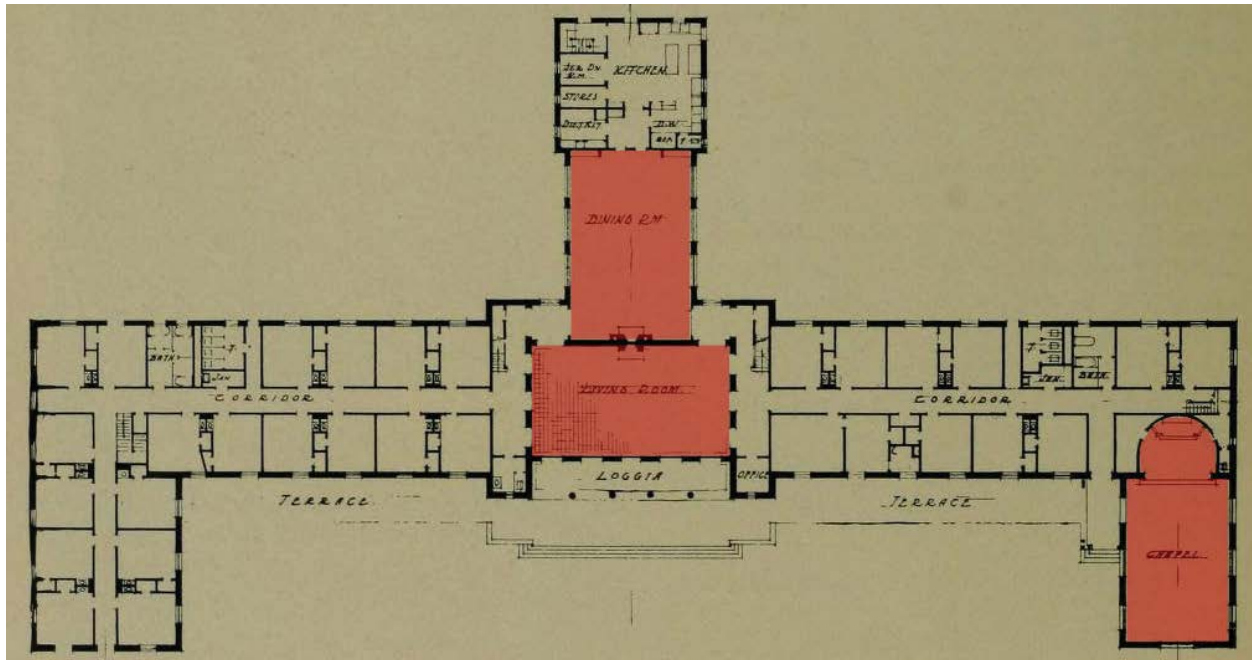
Whenever a building, site, object, or landscape is under consideration for Article 10 Landmark designation, the Historic Preservation Commission is required to identify character-defining features of the property. This is done to enable owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

- All primary exterior elevations, form, massing, structure, architectural ornament and materials identified as:
  - Form and massing, including rectangular, two and a half story, side-gabled roof with arched dormers of main building flanked by two story L-shaped, flat roofed wings
  - Symmetrically balanced façade with centered door and regular fenestration pattern with six-over-six, double-hung windows and arched fanlight windows.
  - Architectural ornamentation including broken pediment at the main entry, recessed tetrastyle portico supported by tall slender columns, decorative frieze and dentil molding, spandrel panels below first story windows, and balusters at the parapet of the wings
  - Materials including Flemish bond red face brick, slate roof tiles on main building and chapel and painted wood ornamentation

The character-defining *interior* features of the building are identified as:

- Living room
  - Arched openings at north, south, and west walls. Multi lite wood French doors and transoms at east wall
  - Fireplace with marble surround and wood mantle
  - Decorative plaster pilasters with urns of flowers and plaster molding
  - Board formed concrete beamed ceiling with decorative painting
- Dining room
  - Windows with fanlights at north and south walls
  - Fireplace with marble surround and wood mantle
  - Built-in sideboards with leaded glass top cabinet fronts
  - Plaster wainscot molding
  - Board formed concrete beamed ceiling with decorative painting
- Chapel
  - Arched windows and shutters at north and south walls
  - Multi lite window with sidelights and fanlight on east wall
  - Raised, recessed half round chancel with decorative lintel and brackets
  - Peaked ceiling with rough sawn beams





First floor plan of University Mound Old Ladies' Home with living room, dining room and chapel shaded to show character defining interior spaces (First floor plan, *The Architect and Engineer*, September 1932).

### Interior Landmark Designation

According to Article 10, Section 1004(c) of the Planning Code, only those interiors that were historically publicly accessible are eligible for listing in Article 10. Article 10, Section 1004(c) of the Planning Code states,

(c) The property included in any such designation shall upon designation be subject to the controls and standards set forth in this Article 10. In addition, the said property shall be subject to the following further controls and standards if imposed by the designating ordinance:

1. For a publicly-owned landmark, review of proposed changes to significant interior architectural features.
2. For a privately-owned landmark, review of proposed changes requiring a permit to significant interior architectural features in those areas of the landmark that are or historically have been accessible to members of the public. The designating ordinance must clearly describe each significant interior architectural feature subject to this restriction.

The living room, dining room and chapel historically have been accessible to members of the public.

## PROPERTY INFORMATION

**Historic Name:** University Mound Old Ladies' Home

**Popular Name:** n/a

**Address:** 350 University Street

**Block and Lot:** 5992/001

**Owner:** AgeSong Genesis LLC

**Original Use:** Retirement home

**Current Use:** Convalescent/nursing home

**Zoning:** RH-1 Residential-House, One Family

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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