APPENDIX E

CULTURAL AND TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Appendix E1:
Campus Historical Resources Survey, Notre Dame de Namur University, Belmont, County of San Mateo, California

Stanford University Heritage Services

Campus Historical Resources Survey

Notre Dame de Namur University
Belmont, County of San Mateo, California



Prepared by

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3-25-2024

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Introduction

Project Summary

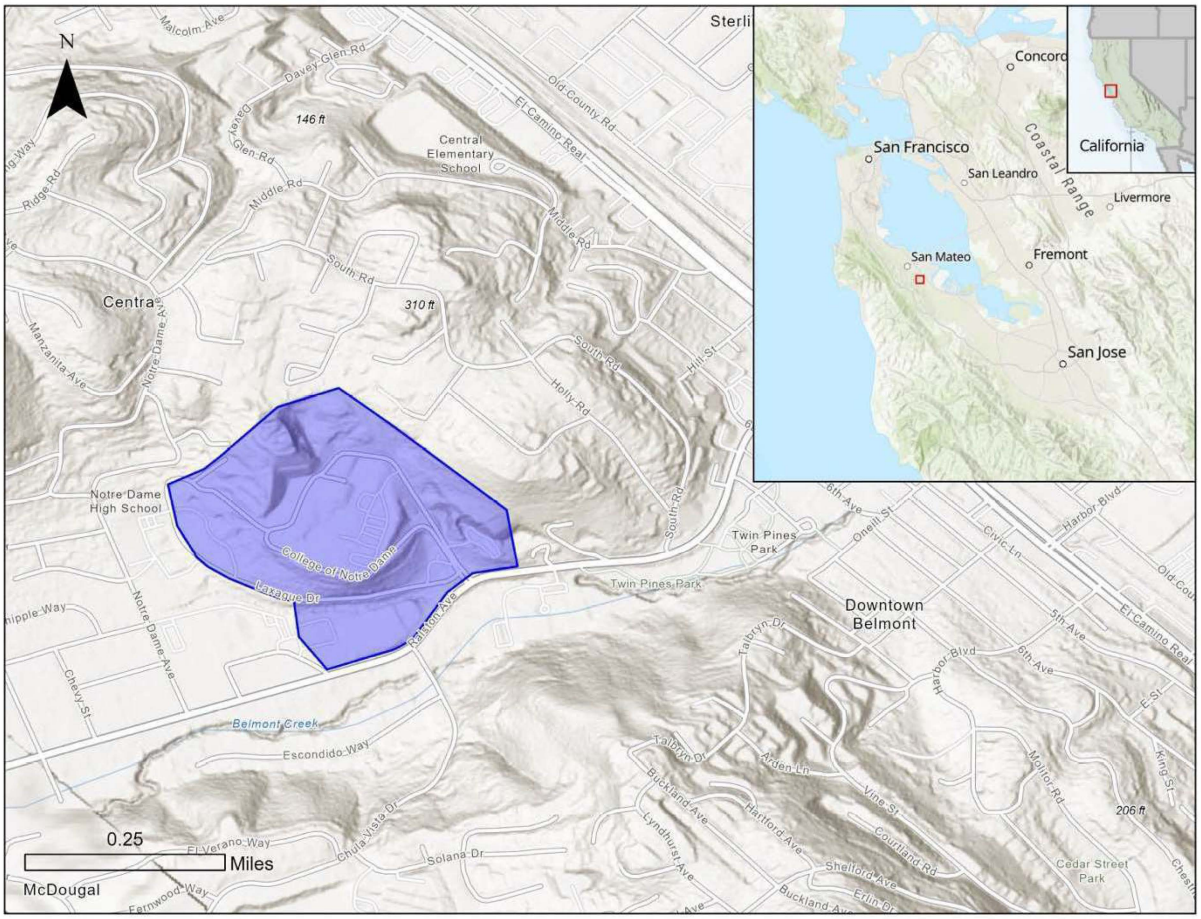
Notre Dame de Namur University (NDNU) in Belmont, CA is considering selling a portion of its campus land and buildings. Stanford University, headquartered approximately 10 miles to the south along the border of San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, is exploring purchasing the NDNU campus for academic use and has applied to the City of Belmont for a Conceptual Development Plan (CDP) to enable redevelopment of the campus buildings. This report was prepared for planning purposes to assist the City of Belmont in considering Stanford's CDP application by providing an analysis of the historic preservation issues associated with the current campus and buildings. Following historic preservation standards, the report provides a narrative history of the campus properties, descriptions of the existing properties, a framework for evaluating historical significance, and recommended findings regarding historic properties on the site.

Location and Setting

Notre Dame de Namur University is located on the San Francisco Peninsula in the City of Belmont, San Mateo County, California. The city describes itself as a "quiet residential community," and with a relatively small population of under 27,000 residents, drawing contrast with the neighboring technological hubs of San Francisco and San Jose.[1]

NDNU is situated at the eastern foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains, approximately 10 miles east of the Pacific Ocean, and a mile west of the bay shore. Its location at the edge of the foothills contributes to the varied topography of the NDNU campus, which sits at elevations between 83 and 250 feet above sea level[2]. The center of campus, known as the plateau, was graded during campus expansion in the 1950s and 60s and is relatively level; however, the areas surrounding the plateau retain steep slopes up to 30° in some parts. The campus landscape is composed of wooded areas along the perimeter, the plateau and main campus in the center, historic structures in the western and southeastern areas, and a creek on the southern edge. This waterway, an unnamed tributary of Belmont Creek, is most active during the rainy season when it funnels runoff into Belmont Creek and out to the San Francisco Bay.

[1] City of Belmont, California, https://www.belmont.gov/departments/administrative-services/economic-development/why-belmont (accessed 22 January 2024).
[2] U.S. Department of the Interior. U.S. Geological Survey. San Mateo Quadrangle. California – San Mateo County. 7.5-Minute Series; City of Belmont, Elevation Viewer, https://belmontca.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Profile/index.html?appid=21a7b555fc3547149d8a7ac853e719c6 (accessed 22 January 2024).



Location of NDNU on the San Francisco Peninsula in the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains and near the San Francisco Bay shore. Topographic map layer illustrates the steep slopes of portions of the NDNU campus (blue polygon).

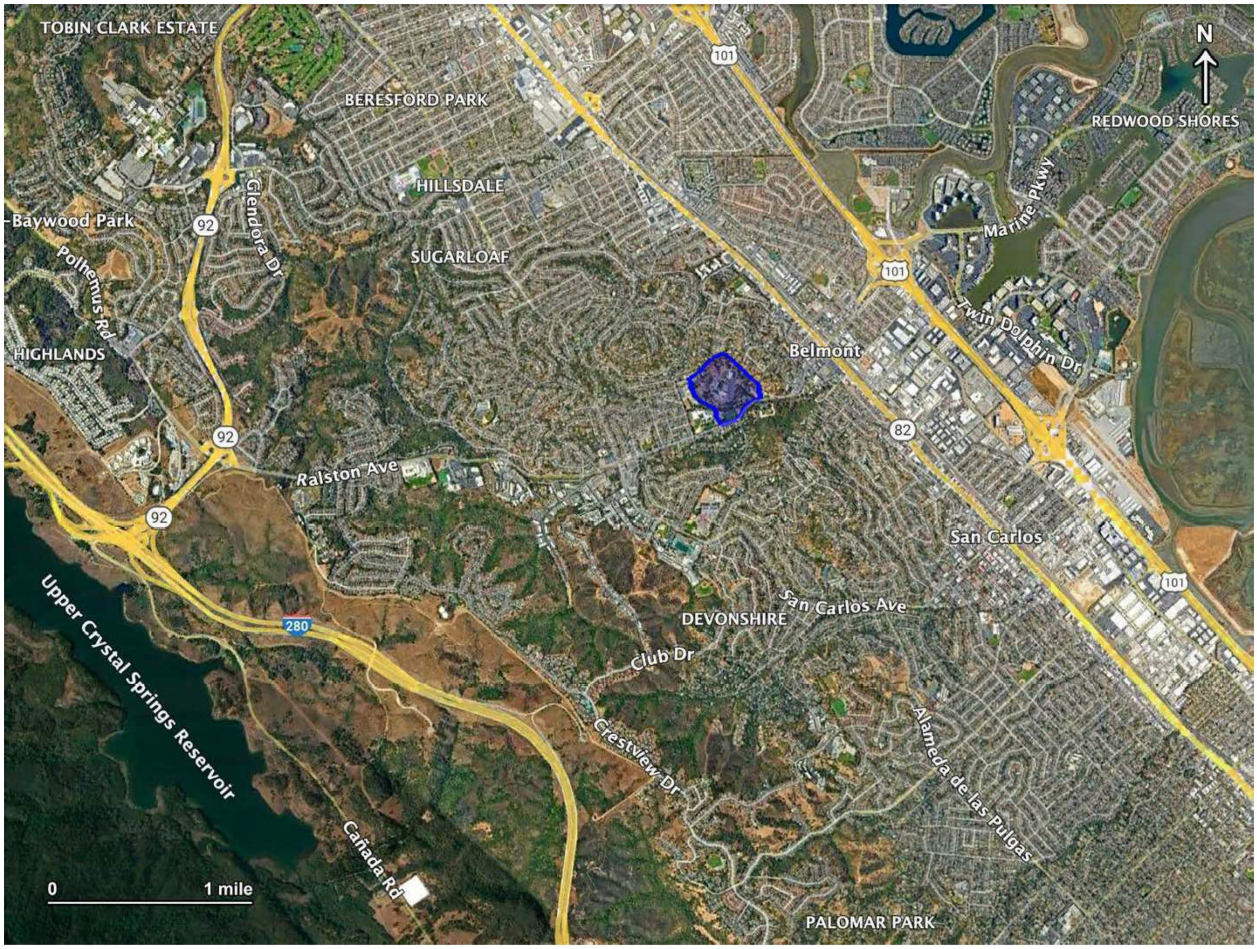
The primary NDNU campus entrance is at 1500 Ralston Ave, east of the historic Taube Center. The entrance road directs cars uphill to a large parking lot on the plateau and a perimeter roadway encircles the campus. Campus residential facilities are accessed through pedestrian walkways. A historic mansion and associated carriage house dating to the 19th century, Ralston Hall and Carriage House (now the Wiegand Gallery and Madison Art Center), are located at the western edge of the campus, accessible from Laxague Drive.



Layout of the NDNU campus

The NDNU campus is proximate to several diverse geographic regions—the San Francisco Bay shore, Pacific Ocean, and wooded mountains. A recent biological survey commissioned by Stanford identified nine ecological areas across the campus, including both developed and undeveloped areas.[3] The dominant landcover/habitat zones include developed/landscaped and non-native woodland areas, comprising approximately 62% and 20% of the campus area, respectively. Other smaller zones covering just under 10% of the campus area, are coast live oak and ruderal grassland areas. Smaller zones, occupying less than 1% of the campus area, include chaparral, intermittent stream, freshwater marsh, and seasonal wetland. Each of these zones is characterized by specific vegetation and provides suitable habitat for wildlife, including some rare animal and plant species.

[3] H.T. Harvey and Associates, "Belmont Stanford Campus Biological Resources Report." Prepared for Stanford University, November 7, 2023.



Location of NDNU campus (blue polygon) in the City of Belmont, California

Evaluation Contexts and Themes

The evaluation of potential historic resources is based on the resources' historic context with respect to relevant themes and patterns in history that provides frameworks for comparison among properties of similar types.[4] Stanford University's historic preservation planners have prepared a survey of the NDNU campus. The survey follows a similar framework to the survey of the Stanford campus completed in 2017, which developed a regional approach to analyzing collegiate buildings, with some supplemental material tailored to the history of the NDNU campus.[5] The 2017 survey describes the development of over seventy colleges and universities in the San Francisco Bay Area and identifies the major architectural styles for five historical periods. A tool is presented for comparing college buildings to determine which examples would be eligible for listing on the California Register as embodying a significant style of collegiate architecture. This context is employed below in evaluating the NDNU

[4] Office of Historic Preservation, State of California, https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=23317; Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Preservation Planning, https://www.nps.gov/articles/sec_stds_planning_standards.htm (accessed 18 July 2022).

[5] E. Angoloti, J. Cain, L. Jones, A. Kirk and S. Marfatia. "Historic Context and Survey Report." Prepared for Stanford University, 2017.

campus buildings. The tables presented for each major style represented at the NDNU campus compare the NDNU buildings to significant examples on other campuses in the region. This context guides the evaluation of the academic buildings on the NDNU campus for architectural significance.

For purposes of evaluating NDNU campus buildings for association with significant events or people, the contexts developed for the Stanford campus -- significant scientific discoveries and prize-winning scholarship – was not well suited to a smaller university. A new context, the development of education for women in California was developed to guide the evaluation of the campus buildings on the NDNU campus.

Methodology

Survey Methods

A literature search was performed for mentions of the NDNU college and university, and for its most important leaders in the period 1850–1975. Newspaper archives, scholarly books, and journals were searched. In addition, the Online Archive of California and the CA Digital Newspaper Collection, Ancestry.com, and Newspapers.com were consulted. There were very few mentions of the college in the pre-1975 era in non-Catholic scholarly publications. Local newspapers featured events at the institution. Histories of the campus, the Town of Belmont and San Mateo County were consulted as well.

The NDNU archives were explored and yielded some information on campus planning. The Belmont Historical Society also provided historical information and photographs.

Additional research was conducted to document the career of architect Vincent Raney, the designer of the campus center and chapel, as well as research into the master artist who created the stained glass windows in the chapel, Gabriel Loire.

Three of the campus buildings – Ralston Hall, the Carriage House, and the Taube Center – have previously been evaluated and listed. Those evaluations were reviewed and included in the survey. In addition, these properties are reviewed for integrity since the time of their listing to determine if they continue to convey their significance.

Site Visits

Stanford's Heritage Services staff made over a dozen site visits to the NDNU campus to document the condition of the buildings and the site. The focus of the work is on the exterior of the buildings, however, the site visits included inspection of the interior of Ralston Hall as some interior features were identified as character defining features in previous listings.

Previous Evaluations

Three buildings on the NDNU campus have been previously listed as significant historic resources: Ralston Hall, the Carriage House, and the Taube Center (formerly the Immaculate Heart of Mary church). These buildings were all built for nonacademic uses and did not fit cleanly into the context of regional collegiate architecture (although many colleges and universities have buildings converted from other uses, the context is best suited to building designed for academic use). These three buildings are considered to be significant in this survey based upon these previous evaluations and are examined further to determine whether they continue to possess integrity and convey the reasons for their significance.

The previous evaluations are summarized below; copies of the original nominations and listing documents are provided in Appendix A. A summary timeline of these events is presented below.

Previous Evaluation and Recordation Timeline

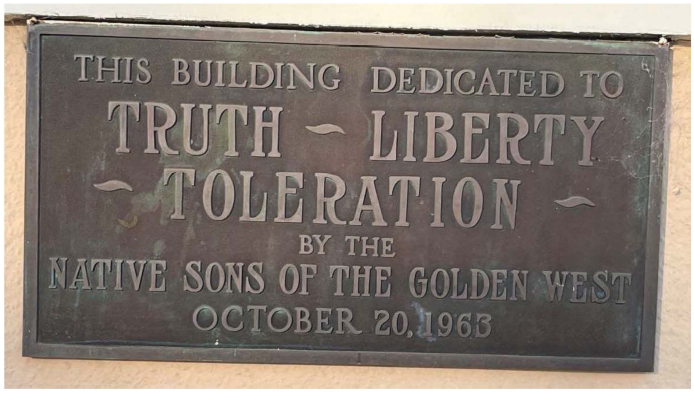
1963	Native Sons of the Golden West present a plaque for Ralston Hall
1966	Historic American Buildings Survey documentation filed with Library of Congress
1966	Ralston Hall designated a National Historic Landmark by US Department of the Interior
1972	Ralston Hall listed as California Historical Landmark No. 856 and on California Register
1974	Taube Center listed as Belmont City Landmark
1977	Ralston Hall listed on the National Register of Historic Places
1991	Ralston Hall, the Carriage House and Taube Center included on City of Belmont Historical Resource Inventory

Ralston Hall and Carriage House

Interest in recognizing the historic significance of Ralston Hall began in 1961 after the completion of the chapel allowed the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur to return the ballroom to its original look. They added period furniture to some of the first-floor rooms and began offering tours of the first and second floors of the mansion. The first recognition came from the Native Sons of the Golden West in 1963, a nativist group that organized in 1875 to honor the Gold Rush pioneers' accomplishments in regards to mining and agriculture while also campaigning against immigration into the state, initially focused on Chinese and Japanese immigrants.[6] The Ralston Hall plaque reads: "This building dedicated to Truth-

[6] "Admission Day," *Daily Alta California* (10 September 1878), 1.

Liberty-Toleration by the Native Sons of the Golden West October 20, 1963." Representatives of the NSGW would later take part in the subsequent national and state landmark ceremonies held at the mansion.



The 1963 Native Sons of the Golden West plaque mounted on the wall at Ralston Hall.

In January 1966 a Historic American Buildings Survey of Ralston Hall was written, with the mansion noted for architectural and historical significance:

> Ralston Hall is one of the grandiose creations of a grandiose personality – William Chapman Ralston. Utilizing a modest villa, property of Count Cipriani in the 1850s and early 1860s, Ralston created a veritable Victorian palace here after buying the property in 1865. Largely built in the late 1860s, the house and grounds were constantly embellished until Ralston's mysterious death in 1875… Ralston Hall was stylistically a modified Italian Villa; but its rambling growth and present stripped exterior make exact categorization difficult. Like its creator, Ralston, the house reflected a mercurial variety and additive opulence. Its interiors are remarkable on a national scale of values, and incorporate many unusual features of both construction and decoration.7

National Recognition

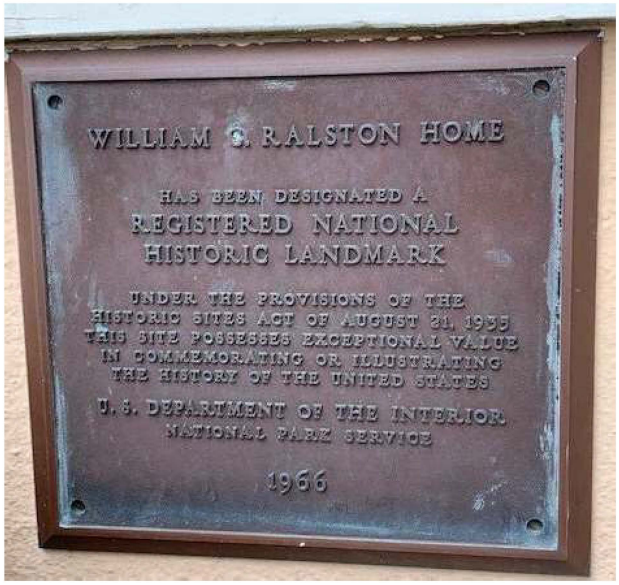
On 13 November 1966, the National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior released a report recommending fifty-seven sites within twenty-six states to be awarded Registered National Historic Landmark status, as each site "possessed exceptional value and are of national significance in commemorating and illustrating the history of the United States."[8] Number Six on the list was the William C. Ralston Home, with the following description:

> "Erected between 1866-68, this mansion was the residence of William C. Ralston (1826-1875), an eminent San Francisco financier. From 1864 until 1875 he played a major role in the exploitation of the Comstock Lode mines in Nevada and in developing and financing industry

[7] Joseph A. Baird Junior, "Ralston Hall," Historic American Building Survey (National Park Service, January 1966), 1.
[8] National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, "Fifty-Seven Sites Recommended for Historic Landmark Status by Parks Advisory Board," (November 1966), x.

and railroad construction in California. His activities helped make San Francisco the commercial, financial and industrial center of the Far West. The house is owned by the College of Notre Dame. Its first floor, which contains furnishings of the period, is open to the public upon request."[9]

The two themes were "Industry, Commerce and Agriculture" and "Architecture." On 16 December 1966 College of Notre Dame president Sister Catherine Julie as owner applied for both a certificate and a plaque. She was notified on 19 May 1967 that the bronze plaque had already been shipped to California and the certificate would arrive shortly thereafter. On 27 February 1968, some 160 people attended a ceremony marking the designation of Ralston Hall as a Registered National Historic Landmark. The plaque was placed on the exterior wall alongside the main entrance and the certificate was hung in the lobby.



This 1966 Registered National Historic Landmark plaque hangs near the main entrance of the mansion. A certificate was also hung in the lobby.

While the National Historic Landmark status qualified the mansion for automatic listing in the National Register of Historic Places, "formal designation required application by the owner."[10] On 8 September 1977, Sister Catherine Julie as owner submitted a nomination form for the William Ralston Home. The period of significance was identified as 1864-1875 and the areas of significance were noted as commerce, economics and social/humanitarian. The historic property boundaries were certified in 1977 but later came under question, with final certification taking place on 8 September 1983.

[9] Ibid., 2.
[10] Ibid., x.

State Recognition

In March 1972 Sister Catherine Julie submitted a nomination form for Ralston Hall to be designated a State Historic Landmark, with the following summary of significance:

> This building, now called Ralston Hall, played an important part in the early development of the State of California and of the City of San Francisco during the 1870s and although it was ostensibly Mr. Ralston's country residence, it really was the setting of Mr. Ralston's promotional activities and was designed and built expressly for this purpose, which it served perfectly, until his death in 1875. It was designed, and served, to entertain and perhaps awe and astonish from 50 to 100 important and useful guests every few days in his endeavor to promote San Francisco and California, his utilities and other interests. Obviously it did this very well, for Mr. Ralston has been properly called "The Man Who Built San Francisco." Ralston Hall was not just his country home but was the main tool in his many promotional activities. It was an important element in the growths of both the city and the state. As such it has importance to those interested in their histories.[11]

The application was approved with Ralston Hall being designated California State Historic Landmark #856. As a consequence, the property was automatically listed on the California Register of Historic Places. A ceremony was held on 5 November 1972, with some 350 guests in attendance.

In March 1976, the William Chapman Ralston House was included in the San Mateo County section of the California Inventory of Historic Resources under the theme of architecture.[12]

Local Recognition

The City of Belmont's Historic Resources Inventory was completed in June 1991. Ralston Hall, Taube Center and the Carriage House were all included, although only Ralston Hall and Taube Center had State Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) forms written for them. The Carriage House was included in the Ralston Hall DPR description. The theme used for evaluating Ralston Hall was the era of large estates with a period of significance ranging from 1850-1875. The survey lists Ralston Hall and the Carriage House as national and state landmarks but there is little mention of the Carriage House in the national and state documentation. The Carriage House appears to be included in the City's inventory as an associated feature to Ralston Hall and not as an individual property but this cannot be confirmed from the available records.[13]

[11] "Application for Registration of Historical Landmark," 6 (included in Appendix A).
[12] Department of Parks and Recreation, "California Inventory of Historic Resources" (State of California Resources Agency, March 1976), 263.
[13] Ibid., 4.

Taube Center

City of Belmont Landmark and Historic Resources

In 1974 the City of Belmont listed Taube Center as a city landmark in its previous role as a church, the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church (1930-1958).[14] The City of Belmont's Historic Resources Inventory was completed for the Taube Center in June 1991.[15] The theme for evaluating the Taube Center was organized religion with a period of significance ranging from the founding of the parish in 1928 to the completion of the church in 1930.

Existing Conditions

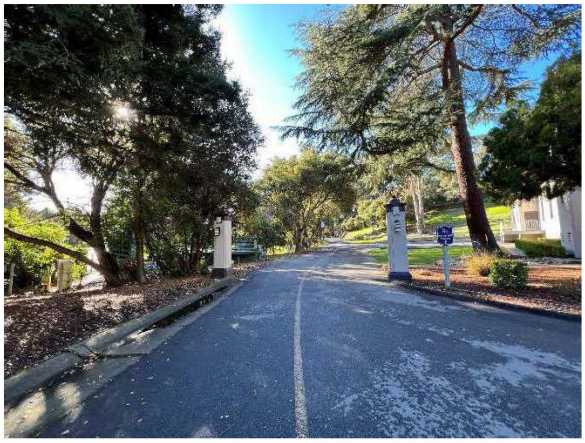


Campus map showing structures, roads, and parking lots.

Location

The forty-seven-acre Notre Dame de Namur University campus is located at 1500 Ralston Avenue in Belmont, California. The primary entrance to the campus is along Ralston Avenue, on a hillside located a little over one half mile from the downtown area of the City of Belmont.

[14] Kent L. Seavey, "Department of Parks and Recreation Historic Resources Inventory" (6 January 1991), 2, included in City of Belmont, "Historical Resources Inventory, City of Belmont, California" (June 1991).
[15] Ibid.

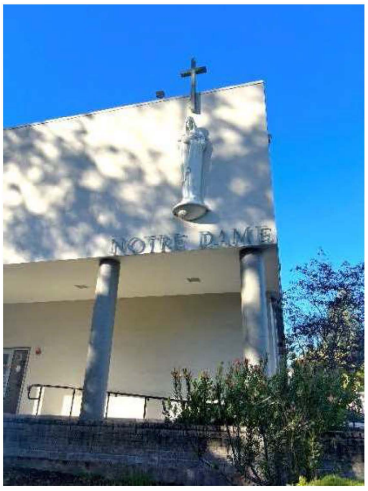
At the primary entrance to the campus (*left*) at Ralston Avenue. Driving straight upward past the pictured Taube Center takes you to the upper campus plateau. Turning left before the Taube Center (*right*) takes you to Laxague Drive. The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur added the Art Deco-style columns similar to the high school columns, likely at the same time in 1928.

Setting

The NDNU campus is planted with nearly 1,000 trees, giving much of it a bucolic effect. The campus has three distinct levels as it climbs from the valley floor up the hill. A creek runs through the lower section of the property, with a concrete staircase and bridge allowing access to the theater and athletic fields. Laxague Drive runs along the uphill side of the creek and just below Ralston Hall and the Carriage House. Steps mount the hill to the nest cluster of buildings, Cuvilly Hall and the Tabard Inn. The upper campus plateau, graded flat into the hillside, is dominated by a large parking lot and the more modern campus buildings. To the west of this upper plateau section are the New Hall and Toso residences. The overall property is surrounded on the east, north and west sides by offsite residential buildings, the high school, and the elementary school, with Ralston Avenue running along the southern side of the property.




A large parking lot on the upper campus plateau between the chapel (*left)* and St. Mary's Hall (*right*).

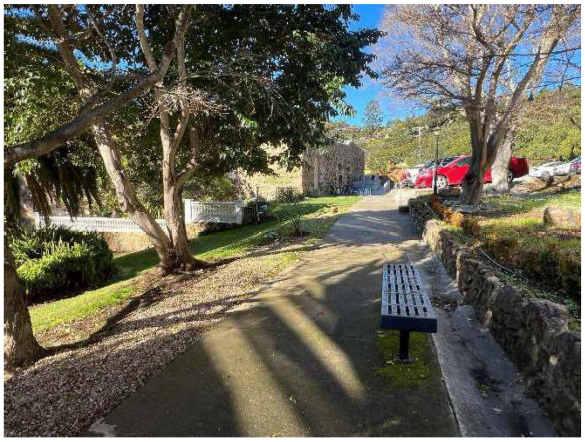




St. Mary's Hall (*left)* and forecourt leading to the central courtyard (*right*).




The upper campus plateau courtyard (*left*) and the pathway (*right*) leading between St. Julie Billiart Hall and St. Joseph's Hall

Ralston Hall is currently closed but still has a commanding presence (*left*). A pathway leads past Cuvilly Hall to the Carriage House, now acting as an art gallery and museum (*right*).



A grotto alongside the Carriage House (*left*); trees line the creek (*right*) that runs across the lower campus

Topography

The topography is largely hilly and woody with corresponding staircases allowing ease of circulation; some areas are also markedly flat. One flat area runs parallel to Ralston Avenue. A higher 11-acre plateau was graded in 1950-51 to what became the most developed portion of the NDNU campus.

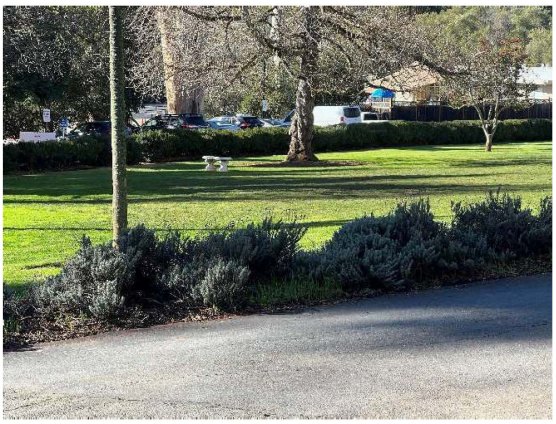


The Toso residences reside on a hilly section of the campus (*left*) next to the New Hall residences *(right*) which were sited on the flat edge of the plateau created in 1950-51.

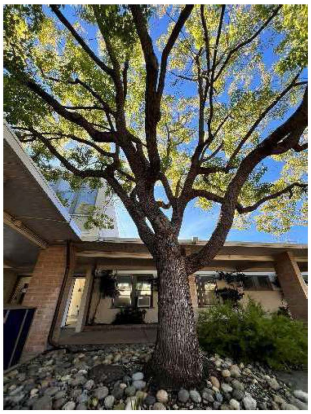
Landscaping

While some of the campus landscaping is marked by large swaths of lawn, both in front of Ralston Hall and on the plateau, the bulk of the overall landscaping consists of 991 trees representing 55 species. While most species only are represented by one or two trees, the native coast live oaks (423 trees), the exotic blue gums (324 trees) and the native coast redwoods (59 trees) dominate the landscape. Each of the academic buildings on the plateau has been landscaped with lawn of varying sizes, trees, shrubs and landscaping rocks. Much of the area around Ralston Hall and Carriage House and along Laxague Drive was terraced with stones quarried from the property, dating from Ralston's era and possibly

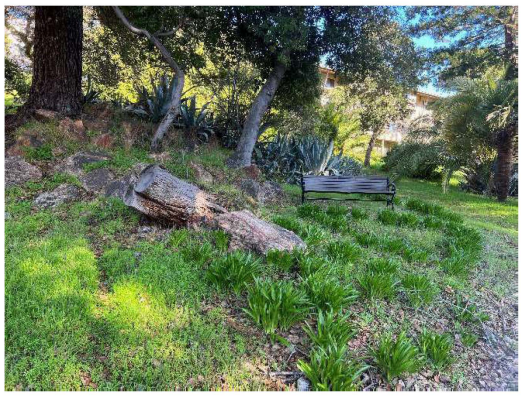
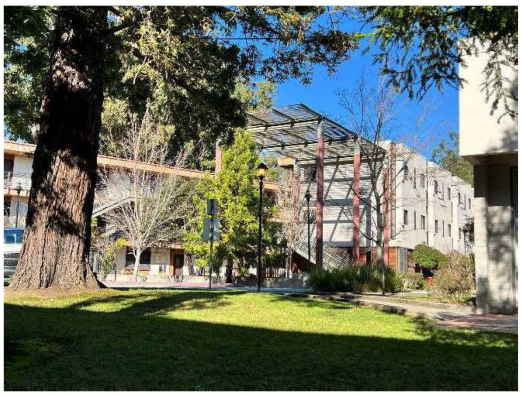
Cipriani (see below) as well. A mixture of religious and secular outdoor sculpture can be found on campus.



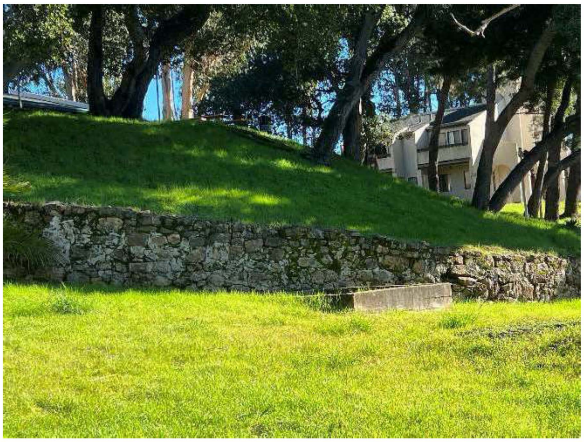

There is a large lawn in front of Ralston Hall (*left*) punctuated by trees. Another large lawn area, bisected by pathways, is found on the upper campus plateau between St. Joseph's Hall, the chapel and the library (*right*).




A tree planted in the upper plateau courtyard (*left*) and on the hill below the apartment buildings (*right*).

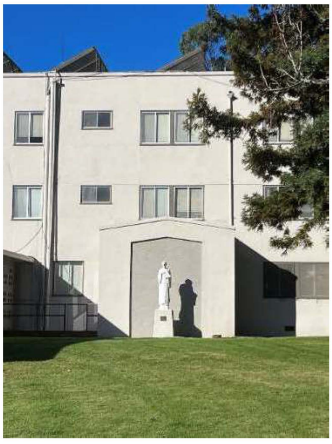
Native coast live oaks and a bench (*left*) east of Ralston Hall and a redwood (*right*) standing close to New Hall (*right*).



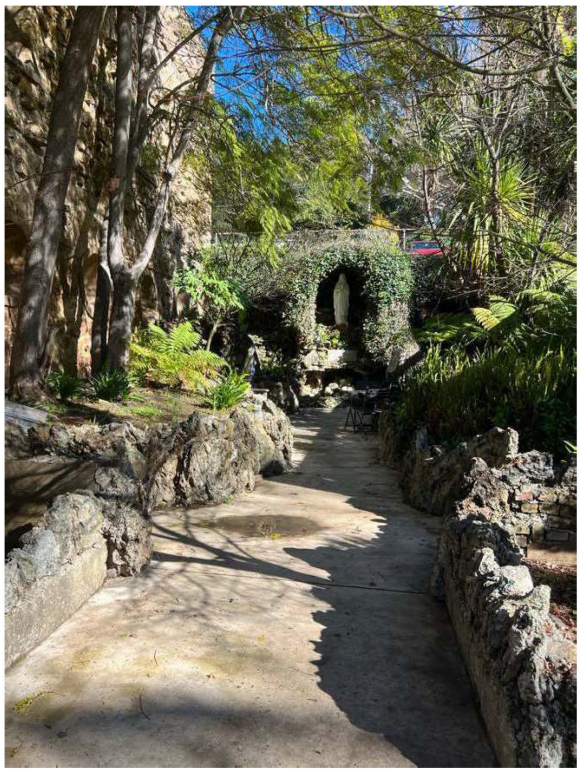

Terrace walls near the Toso residences (*left*) and the Carriage House (*right*).



Shrubs, a landscape rock, lawn and trees outside an arcade.




Religious statuary outside St. Joseph's Hall (*left*) and St. Julie Billiart Hall (*right*).



The grotto, built by Ralston in 1874, was also used by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur after they bought the property in 1922. They added the religious statuary seen today.



Secular art pieces installed outside the art gallery (*left*) and alongside the main entrance to the campus (*right*).

Circulation Patterns

The majority of today's campus buildings and a large parking lot are located on the "academic plateau," which is reached from driving straight uphill at the primary entrance; the road is not marked by columns or a gate but a center median some distance from Ralston Avenue. A left-hand turn just after the street entrance leads past Ralston Hall and the Carriage House. These are the two main roads of the existing campus. The unnamed street leading up to the upper campus plateau circles the parking lot and

connects to the spinal road that connects the upper and lower sections of the campus. The one-way and two-way sections of roadway are noted on the campus map seen at the beginning of this section. There is a network of sidewalks and asphalt pathways that connects the five buildings on the upper campus plateau. The 1950s-era sidewalks are colored pink under the arcades and bisected with brick bands in other areas.



Pink sidewalks found underneath the arcades (*left*) and sidewalks or patios with banded brick outside of St. Joseph's Hall (*right*).

A spinal street, also used by pedestrians, connects the upper campus plateau buildings and parking lot to the New Hall residences, the back of Ralston Hall, the front of the Toso residences and the Tabard Inn, and the back of Cuvilly Hall. The road is blocked at Cuvilly and Tabard with bollards to allow pedestrians access beyond this point but no vehicular traffic.



This road acts as a spine that bisects the upper campus plateau from the lower campus; it is used by both pedestrians and drivers. View is from the staircase on the east side of the mansion up to St. Joseph's Hall *(left)* and St. Julie Billiart Hall *(right*).

Laxague Drive, reached by taking the left-hand turn at the primary entrance, leads past The Oaks, Ralston Hall and the Carriage House, with turns leading up to the Toso residences and Gavin Hall.



Laxague Drive with the Art-Deco style columns built by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in 1928.

Three staircases have been built to facilitate access up and down the hilly topography. The concrete staircase on Laxague Drive leads down to a concrete bridge that crosses the creek down to the theater and athletic fields. A staircase and ramp section were built at the lower east entrance to Ralston Hall and leads upward to the spinal road that leads to the upper campus plateau. In 1984 a so-called pedestrian bridge was built to allow access to the upper floors at the back of Ralston Hall from the spinal road. A steep staircase and pathway were built at the top of the upper campus plateau near the end of St. Mary's Hall to allow pedestrian access down to the Taube Center and the parking lot located east of the primary entrance drive.



Staircases located on the east side of Ralston Hall (*left*) and from Laxague Drive down to the theater and athletic fields (right).



A pedestrian bridge facilitates entrance to the upper floor at the back of Ralston Hall.

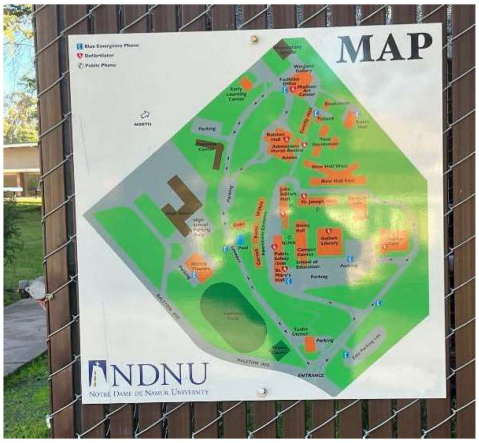
Much of the street area on campus is shared by pedestrians; many sections of street do not have any sidewalks or have a sidewalk on one side only.



No sidewalks heading up to Gavin Hall (*left*) and between New Hall and St. Joseph's (*right*).

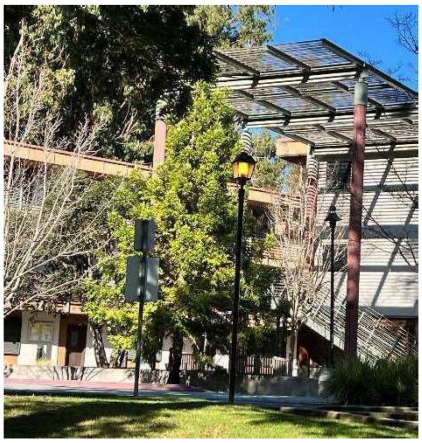
Small-Scale Features: Signage, Lighting and Outdoor Furniture

There are several small signs at the primary campus entrance, pointing people either upward to the upper campus plateau or leftward to the Taube Center and Laxague Drive. There are maps of the campus in different locations, plus signs showing current uses of individual facilities, e.g., Field for Gavin Hall and Compass High School for Cuvilly Hall. The campus lighting is a mix of pole lights and low-level lighting near the student residences. An assortment of outdoor tables and chairs and benches are placed outside each of the academic buildings and student residences, as well as in the upper plateau courtyard.





This map is posted in several places on campus (*left*) and a sign pointing to three campus buildings (*right*).




Most of the campus lighting is pole lighting (*left*) with some low-level ground lighting (*right*) as well.




There are tables and chairs set out in the upper plateau courtyard (*left*) and backless benches along the arcade (*right*) outside the campus center.

Buildings and Structures

The NDNU campus has some twenty buildings of varying architectural styles and dating from the mid-1860s to 2003.

Ralston Hall



Ralston Hall (*left*) in Ralston's day and today in 2024 (*right*).

Ralston Hall, named Belmont by owner William Chapman Ralston, was constructed in 1867 and 1868 with the right-side two-story wing a remnant of an 1854 Italian Villa-style house. Built in an eclectic Italianate style with Steamboat Gothic elements, the attributed architect is John Plant Gaynor. In 1879 a new room, the Grant Room, was either completed or built anew at the rear northeast corner. In 1901, nine dormer windows were added to the central roof gable. The two-story wing to the right of the portico was extended outward and raised by one story. That roof was changed from gable to flat and a fenced terrace was added to it. The original laundry was extended outward or a new laundry was built at the rear of the house. In 1906 chimneys were damaged by the San Francisco Earthquake; chimneys and fireplaces were closed off. The wood-frame building of 43,670 square feet (two attached rear additions bring the total up to 52,220 square feet) was covered with stucco in 1923.

The widow's walk on the central roof and the second roof terrace added in 1901 were possibly removed, along with ruined chimneys, in 1923. The original redwood exterior was painted white; in 1923 most of the exterior was covered with stucco and painted peach. The circular fountain was added in 1924. The house was reroofed and repainted in 1979, using roll roofing or built-up asphaltic roofing to replace flat-seamed metal roofing.

In 1993 brick piers and perimeter foundation walls were repaired and repointed, and the Office Addition at the rear of the house was renovated. In 1995 a new concrete landing with new wrought-iron railings was installed at the East entrance and was raised to align with the interior floor level. Octagonal basement ventilation louvers were also added to the exterior. The house has a combination of gabled

roofs, a mansard roof over the ballroom and flat roofs. It has wood sash windows. Three stories high with an attic and two towers providing four-story space along with a basement, this mansion was used respectively as a residence, an entertainment venue, a women's school, a sanitarium, a private women's college and a co-educational university.

Carriage House



Carriage House (1874)

Ralston built the 25,572 square foot two-story Carriage House in 1874 after his original wood stable burned down. The Carriage House was built in a vernacular style; no architect has been identified. The structure was built into the hill, has two stories on the lower side and a single floor on the upper side. Built of unreinforced hand-hewn rock quarried on the estate, the walls are two feet thick and a suspended ceiling hung by cables allowed for carriage maneuvering. After the Carriage House was damaged in the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, seismic and structural upgrades included a new steel frame, a steel floor structure supporting the second floor and a new roof structure in 2014. This building has been used to stable horses, garage cars, as academic space, as art gallery and museum space and as campus facilities. Windows are a combination of new aluminum and older wood-frame sash windows. A canopy held up by slim double columns was erected at some point and has since been removed. An ADA wheelchair ramp has been added at the museum entrance.

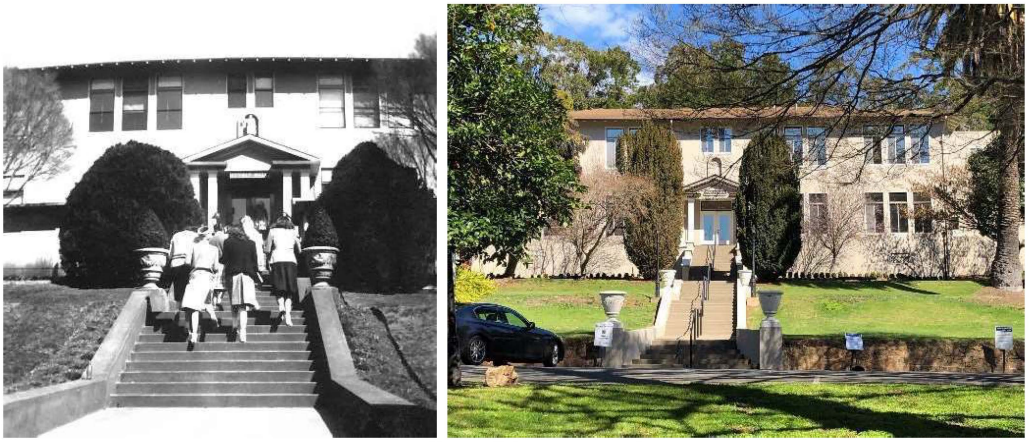
Music Hall



Music Hall (1923-6)

The Music Hall is a 1,000 square foot one-story building with a basement. It was a freestanding annex built by the College of Notre Dame between 1923 and 1926 with some of the materials salvaged from the San Jose campus. The architect is unknown. This vernacular style wood-frame building has a stucco exterior likely intended to match the new Ralston Hall stucco exterior. It has a hipped roof with a flat roof overhanging the porch, supported by simple round, classical wood columns. The windows are wood with double-hung sash. It was first used as academic space for the youngest of the elementary school children. It was later used by the Music Department.

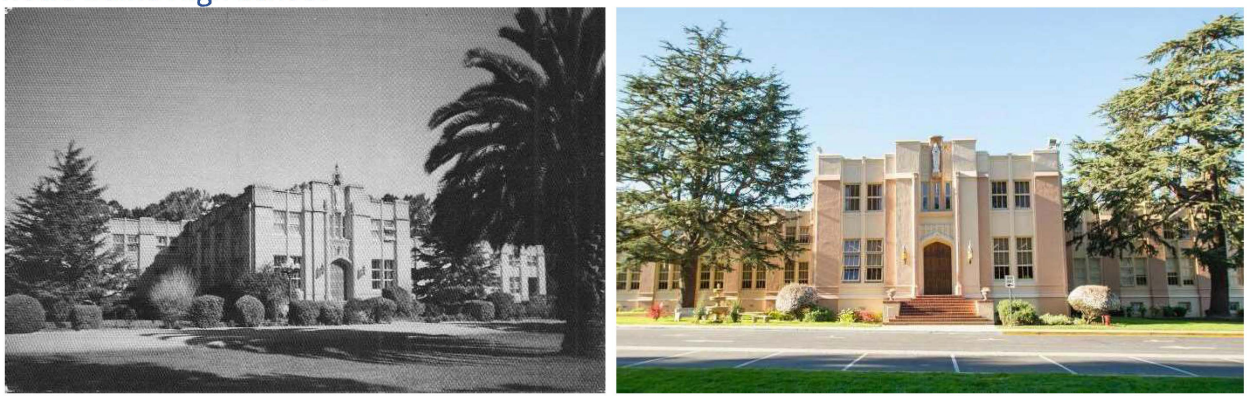
Cuvilly Hall



Cuvilly Hall (1924, 1935)

Cuvilly Hall, first called Blessed Julie Billiart Hall, is a two-story 8,224 square foot structure built in 1924. The entrance pillars and steps were added in 1928, with a 1934-1935 addition located to the right of the main entrance. The architect is unknown; the style of architecture is vernacular with Classical Revival influence. First used as a residence for postulants and novitiates and academic space, it was also used to house a library, the bookstore and student residence rooms. At an unknown date, wood framed triple-hung windows were replaced with aluminum sliders with transoms. Double columns and a broken pediment mark the main entrance with an arched niche placed above the pediment. The niche once contained a religious statue but is now empty. The roof is gently pitched on the original building and flat on the addition. A stairway flanked by low concrete walls and original urns climbs upward to the main entrance. It was repainted in 1951. A new roof of composition shingle and some tar and gravel sections was installed in 2012.

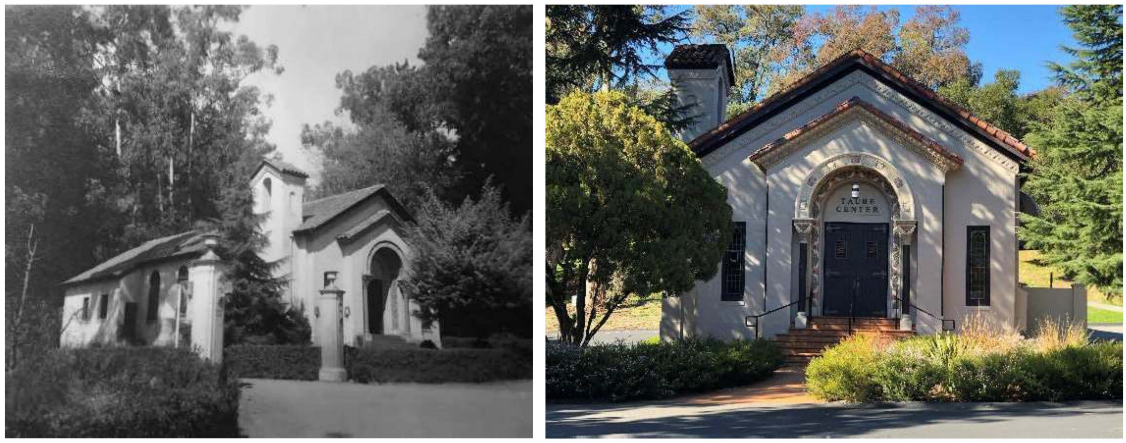
Notre Dame High School



Notre Dame High School (1928, 1930-31)

The two-story Art Deco College of Notre Dame High School is outside the project site but is included here because it respresents the College of Notre Dame's first ambitious building program and is a prominent feature in the setting of the lower campus. Designed by architect John Joseph Donohoe in the Art Deco style in 1927-1928, this building was constructed to provide space for all high school classes, residence for the boarding high school students, with some academic space devoted to the college (until 1952) and the elementary school (until 1957). The high school wing was added in 1930-31. The gymnasium and pool were used by high school and college students.

Taube Center



Taube Center (1930)

Built as the Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in 1930, this 3,268 square foot building was used as a church from 1930-1958. The architect is unknown; the architectural style is Spanish Colonial Revival. The land and building were given back to NDNU in 1958; the building was renovated inside to serve as academic space, performance space, conference space and art studio space over the years. Built with stucco walls and an S-curve clay tile roof, it has wood fixed and leaded glass windows. The main door is framed by pilasters and decorative tile. At some point two ADA ramps were added to the north wall; the wall of one ramp can be seen in the contemporary photograph on the right.

Tabard Inn



Tabard Inn (1948)

The 973 square-foot Tabard Inn reflected the College of Notre Dame's austerity of both budget and materials. In 1948 lumber was salvaged from a 1920s commencement stage to create the first campus snack bar. The architect is unknown and the style is vernacular. It has wood roof framing and siding. On the main façade are wood double-hung windows; other windows are wood framed but with metal windows. It has a gentle pitched roof. An ADA wheelchair accessible ramp has been added to the patio-side entrance.

Julie Billiart Hall



Julia Billiart Hall (1952)

Julie Billiart Hall is a 24,582 square foot three-story wood frame and stucco building built in 1952. The architect was Vincent Raney and the architectural style is International. A glass-enclosed exterior stairwell that flanks the second and third floors forms a focal point on one long facade. An ADA ramp was added at some point to the outer wall facing the courtyard. The building was repainted white ca. 2015. It is flanked by a one-story annex. The dormitory windows are aluminum. It has a flat roof. The ground floor has also been used for the housing office, campus ministry, health services and infirmary. The building was fully painted and reroofed circa 2014.

St. Mary's Hall



St Mary's Hall (1952)

St. Mary's Hall is a 21,614 square foot frame and stucco building that served as classrooms and lab spaces for the College of Notre Dame. It was designed by architect Vincent Raney in the International Style and built in 1952. It is two stories high, with rows of ribbon windows dominating the long side facades. The roof is flat and has a wood detail underneath the coping. A plywood detail runs along the second story underneath the windows. The statue of Mary was designed by Sister Marie of St. Joseph's Oddie. A crucifix was mounted above the statue. The building has a combination of wood and aluminum windows.

Campus Center



Campus Center (1952)

The Campus Center is a 11,421 square foot one-story building of wood frame construction with stucco walls, built in 1952. The architect was Vincent Raney and the architectural style was International. The south façade is flanked by a deep arcade. It has clerestory windows and a combination of aluminum and vinyl windows. The doors are wood and metal. The roof has an offset low pitch. This building still serves its original purpose of dining hall space and administrative offices. It was also once the campus library but that function has been supplanted by the construction of Gellert Library.

College of Notre Dame Theater



College of Notre Dame Theater (1955)

This 13,588 square foot one-story theater/auditorium is built of reinforced concrete with a flat roof and aluminum windows, built in 1955. It was designed by architect Vincent Raney in the International Style. The main entrance is marked by a flat porch with rounded columns. While most of the building is painted white, the porch wall with the metal entrance doors is painted dark green. The long front façade is marked by a frilled roof edge and decorative narrow embedded columns, similar to those found on the adjacent Art Deco style high school. It has 550 seats with an elevated performance stage. A mezzanine was added in 1978. It still serves its original purpose.

College of Notre Dame Elementary School



College of Notre Dame Elementary School (1957)

The elementary school is outside the subject property area. It is a visible feature in the setting of the campus. It was designed by architect Vincent Raney and built in 1957 in the Midcentury Modern style.

St. Joseph's Hall



St Joseph's Hall (1958)

St. Joseph's Hall is a 25,191 square foot three-story wood frame and stucco dormitory built in 1960. It is flanked by a one-story annex and has a connecting arcade. It was designed by architect Vincent Raney in the International Style. The roof is flat. A flat panel of numerous lights was substituted for the glass stairwell found on Julie Billiart Hall. The dormitory windows are aluminum. The first floor has space for classrooms and faculty offices. The roof was upgraded in 2014.

Cunningham Chapel and Campanile



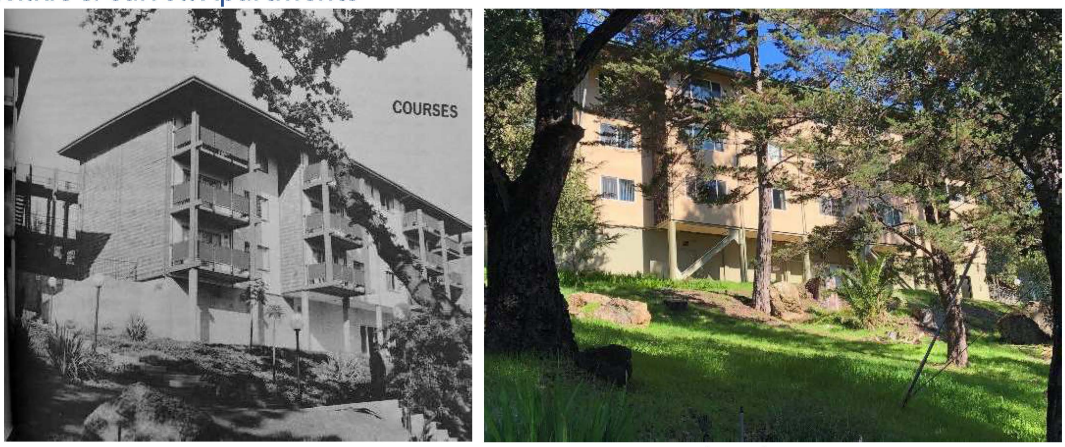
Cunningham Chapel and Campanile (1961)

Originally known as the Notre Dame Memorial Chapel, Cunningham Chapel is a one-story 10,146 square foot chapel with aluminum slab glass windows. It was designed by Vincent Raney in the Midcentury Modern style and built in 1961. It is of steel frame and masonry construction with concrete posts and exposed quartz aggregate concrete wall panels. The main and porch roofs are gently pitched. It has a floor-to-ceiling glass porch and a one-story annex on the east wall. The adjacent campanile is an intended campus focal point. The Chapel's slab colored glass windows were designed and built by noted artist Gabriel Loire. The glass panels depict important events in the life of Mary and women from the Old Testament. The brilliant colors of the windows cannot be experienced from the exterior of the

Chapel (except when illuminated from within at night) where only the dull unpainted metal cut-out backing of the windows can be seen.

The Campanile, or bell tower, is a tripod in form with a slightly concave front-facing panel supported by a bracing strut in the back and set in a circular fountain pool. The front panel is concrete with exposed quartz aggregate construction with pierced cut-outs and a variety of applied ornament of religious significance: a metal cross, six bells, three metal basins overflowing into the tiled fountain pool, and a cast concrete figure of Mary holding the Infant Jesus.

Kane, Wilkie & Carroll Apartments



Kane, Wilkie and Carroll Apartments (1966)

This apartment complex of three adjacent buildings (each comprised of 10,822 square feet) was designed by architect Hollis Logue Junior in the Second Bay Tradition and built in 1966. Seen from below the roofs appear flat but from above peaks meant to hide HVAC materials and mimic mountains are clearly visible. The walls are a combination of stucco and wood shingle. The windows are vinyl with new double panes added in 2013-14.The balconies were removed in 2015 (their sliding glass doors were replaced with smaller windows) and the original white paint was covered over with a deep peach color.

The Oaks



The Oaks (1966)

This 2,656 square foot one-story with above-ground basement is a Second Bay Tradition style building designed by Hollis Logue Junior and built in 1966. It has a low pitched roof with three peaks and a combination of peach stucco and wood shingle siding. The windows are vinyl. Once the recreation center for the adjacent apartment buildings, it has also served other campus uses. An adjoining swimming pool has been filled in with concrete, increasing the original terrace hardscape area.

Gavin Hall



Gavin Hall (1966)

Gavin Hall is 3,426 square foot one-story wood frame building with plywood siding on the long facades and four perpendicular stucco walls. It was designed by architect Hollis Logue Junior in the Second Bay Tradition and built in 1966. It has aluminum windows and a pitched gable roof. A 1994 addition at one end of the building has a flat roof. This building first served as a residence for NDNU staff, then was used as a biology lab. In 1983 it was converted into classroom use. Gavin Hall has a parking lot abutting one side of the building and no other landscape features.

Gellert Library



Gellert Library (1974)

Gellert Library is a 19,380 square foot two-story library designed by Reid and Tarics Associates (RTA) and completed in 1974 in a Contemporary style. It has steel frame construction and vertical scored plywood panels standing between concrete columns. It has a flat roof of corrugated steel. Deep eaves

overhang the building and bands of vertical windows encompass both floors. It has wood and vinyl windows. The main entrance has a broad overhang.

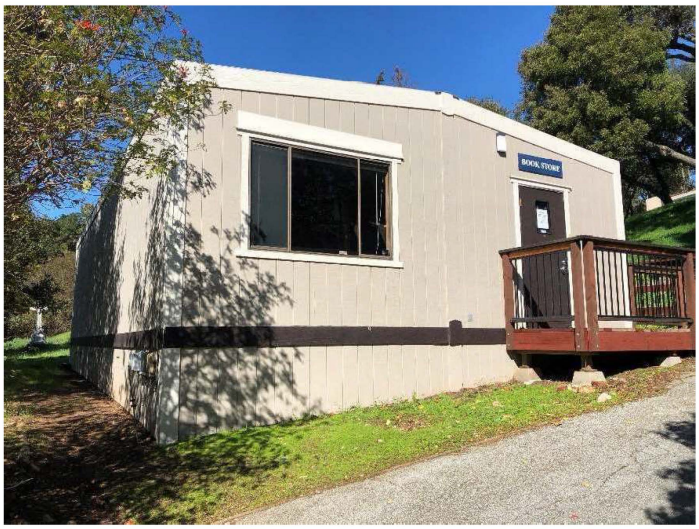
Toso Residences



The Coutrai building in the Toso Residences (1984.)

In 1984 the three two-story Toso Residences were built as residential quarters for the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur living in Ralston Hall. The architect was Gordon H. Chong, who designed the building in Post Modern style with Expressionist influences. The three buildings were named Compiègne, Courtrai and Namur. They are wood frame construction with stucco walls and a composition shingle roof. All three buildings were reroofed at an unspecified date. At some point, the balcony of Namur was removed for safety reasons; the balconies of the other two buildings remain but are closed for safety reasons.

The Bookstore



The Bookstore (1991)

In 1991, the Bookstore was built. The architect is unknown; it is a temporary modular building. It is of wood frame construction and very modest in appearance. An ADA wheelchair ramp leads to the single-door entrance and the roof is gently peaked. The walls are painted a buff color.

Gleason Gymnasium



The Gleason Gymnasium (1991)

The Gleason Gymnasium was built in 1991 in a Contemporary style. The architect was Gordon H. Chong and Associates. It was of concrete tilt up construction and reflective of Notre Dame's co-educational student population, with separate women's and men's locker rooms, in addition to a basketball court, athletic training and weight rooms, plus offices.

New Hall



The East Building of New Hall (2004)

In 2004 the three-story New Hall student residences were built; a complex of three buildings with the largest building designated East and two smaller flanking buildings called West 1 and West 2. The architectural firm was Gensler Architects. The upper floors of all three buildings are connected by

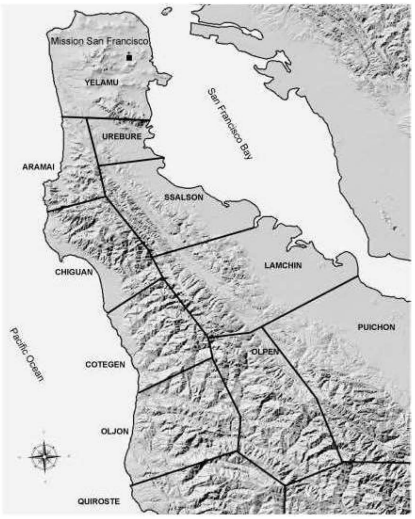
bridges. The three wood frame buildings provided housing for more than 200 students who lived in suites of four separate rooms supported each by a small common area and a bathroom. The design belongs to the Contemporary style but the rustic bands of horizontal and vertical wood set within masonry are reminiscent of the Third Bay Tradition style of Modern architecture.

Historic Setting

Early History of the Region

The Ancestral People (circa 5000 BC to Present)

At the time of European colonial settlement the Belmont area was near the border of two Ohlone political units: the Ssalson to the north and the Lamchin to the south.[16] These indigenous people, along with nine other politically independent groups, spoke a common dialect of the Ohlone-Costanoan language described by their neighbors as "Ramaytush."[17] Indigenous communities inhabited the area for more than seven thousand years, and indigenous tribes and organizations are still active in the region.[18]



Map showing political units on the San Francisco Peninsula circa 1800.[19]

Spain's conquest of Mexico (1519-1521) caused European explorers sailing under the Spanish crown to sight Monterey Bay twice over a period of sixty years; Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo in 1542 and Sebastian Vizcaíno in 1602. Another 160 years would go by before Spain took an interest in the prospective port

[16] Ria Elena MacCrisken, *Heritage of the Wooded Hills: A Belmont History* (Belmont, CA: City of Belmont, 1977, 2001), 1.
[17] The Association of the Ramaytush Ohlone, https://www.ramaytush.org/original-peoples.html (accessed 11 April 2022).
[18] There is one tribal government that enrolls descendants who can trace ancestors to Mission Dolores, Mission Santa Clara and Mission San Jose: the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe. There are also smaller Indigenous organizations and family groups who associate their heritage with this area and many Indigenous people who can document ancestry from more than one geographic area.
[19] Native Land Digital, https://i0.wp.com/native-land.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Ramaytush-Tribelets-map.png?fit=435%2C544&ssl=1 (accessed 11 April 2022).

Vizcaíno had named Monterey in honor of the viceroy who ruled from Acapulco. As reports of Russian and English encroachment in Alta California began to circulate in the 1760s, Spain sent Visitor-General José de Gálvez to New Spain to reform Acapulco's corrupt government. He was also responsible for strengthening the northern border and for establishing a colony in Alta California to forestall the Russians and the British. Spain as a colonizing force in the New World over the previous 200 years had developed a strategy for dealing with Native Americans while seizing their land. This approach consisted of a coordinated military, civilian and religious conquest by the building of a fort (presidio), an agricultural town (pueblo), a livestock enterprise (rancho) and/or a religio-economic mission.[20] The missions were tasked with pacifying and converting Native Americans to Roman Catholicism, while also teaching them European cultural skills and harnessing their labor for the colony.

Gálvez's plan was to establish presidios and missions at San Diego and at Monterey, with five additional missions and at least one more presidio set up among the coastal Native American tribelets. He chose Captain Gaspar de Portolá to lead and govern the new colony. Father Junipero Serra, a Franciscan Catholic priest, volunteered to minister at the new colony.[21] After a long and difficult journey, Portolá and Serra arrived in Monterey and the settlement was established on 3 June 1770.[22] Portolá founded a presidio and Mission San Carlos Borromeo as the mother mission and Father-President Serra's headquarters. Portolá declared Monterey the capital of Alta California, left the presidio in the charge of Lieutenant Pedro Fages, and returned to Mexico.

Six years later, in June 1776, Fathers Francisco Palou and Pedro Cambón traveled from Mexico to establish a mission near three Yelamu villages located in today's city of San Francisco. Construction of Mission San Francisco de Asís, more familiarly known as Mission Dolores, was well under way in August 1776 when some of the Ssalsons attacked the three Yelamu sites, intent on preventing the Yelamus from establishing beneficial trade and military or political ally partnerships with the missionaries.[23] The ploy worked, with the fleeing Yelamus crossing San Francisco Bay in tule rafts to friends and relatives to the north. Whatever short term benefits the Ssalsons might have created for themselves were eventually overshadowed as the devastating effects of the missions, presidios and pueblos on Indigenous autonomy began to play out.

While some Native Americans continued to live separately outside the missions after baptism the Franciscans largely relied on reduccion (reduction), forcing men, women and children to live in overcrowded adobe dormitories. The damp and enclosed conditions exposed them to contagious diseases that included typhus, measles, pneumonia, diphtheria, and typhoid, among others. Death

[20] Spain had already used this strategy in Florida, Texas, New Mexico, Sonora, Arizona and the Baja Peninsula. Richard B. Rice, William A. Bullough and Richard J. Orsi, *The Elusive Eden: A New History of California* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1988), 76.

[21] Serra had arrived in the New World in 1749 to convert Native Americans. He was put in charge of the fifteen Baja California missions the Spanish government had confiscated from the Jesuits in 1767.

[22] Kevin Starr, *California: A History* (New York: The Modern Library, 2005), 36.

[23] Damon Akins and William Bauer, Jr., *We Are the Land: A History of Native California* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2021), 67.

rates outpaced birth rates at the missions; between 1769 and 1800 the Native American population along the California coast declined by close to fifty percent.[24] While some Indigenous people received local land grants from the Mexican government, the majority had their claims denied and were forced to work for little or no wages on the ranchos that had once been their lands. There was a "rancheria" settlement on the former ranchlands of Mission Dolores in the Millbrae era where many Indigenous families lived on the Buri Buri Rancho before it was sold to Americans in the 1860s.[25]

By the 1780s the first Spanish name for the Belmont area was Cañada del Diablo (Devil's Canyon) for several possible reasons. Some think it was because passage through the chapparal-choked canyon was difficult, or that the Indigenous People who lived there feared evil spirits also dwelt in the area due to unexplained flashes of light that frequently appeared.[26] The Franciscans called the area Cañada de Saint Augustin, but this name did not stick. As late as the 1870s, well after the name Belmont first appeared in an 1853 newspaper ad, the area was more popularly known as Cañada del Diablo or Cañada Diablo.[27]

The Argüello Family and El Rancho de las Pulgas (1795-1852)

During the Spanish Period (1769-1822) and the subsequent Mexican Period (1822-1846) the respective governments gifted grants of land in Alta California to men who had prominent roles in either the pueblos or the military and to a few neophyte Native Americans. In 1795 the Spanish governor of California verbally granted some 35,000 acres on the San Francisco Peninsula, including the future site of the town of Belmont, to José Dario Argüello.[28] Argüello had spent his entire life in service to his country, first Spain and later Mexico. He founded the pueblo of Los Angeles in 1781, was commandant of the San Francisco, Monterey and Santa Barbara presidios between 1782 and 1806, then served as acting governor of Alta California from 1814-1815 and Baja California from 1815-1822.[29] He died in Mexico in 1828.

In 1835 the Mexican governor deeded a written grant to the Argüello heirs, daughter-in-law Maria de la Soledad Ortega de Argüello, and her two sons. Some four thousand head of cattle and two thousand horses were grazed on the property, with the cattle providing income derived from the sale of hides and tallow.[30] Labor was provided largely by Indigenous people living on the rancho—the Argüello family was

[24] Akins and Bauer, 72.
[25] Arellano, Monica V. Alan Leventhal, Sheila Guzman-Schmidt, Gloria E. Arellano Gomez and Charlene Njmeh 2021. An Ethnohistory of Santa Clara Valley and Adjacent Regions; Historic Ties of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area and Tribal Stewardship over the Human Remains Recovered on the Prometheus Project located at 575 Benton Street and Affiliated with the 3rd Mission Santa Clara de Thamien Indian Neophyte Cemetery and Indian Rancheria: Clareno Muwekma Ya Tunneste Nommo [Where the Clareno Indians are Buried] SiteCA-SCL-30/H. Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area.
[26] The phenomenon of the flashing lights has been attributed to sunlight hitting shell mounds. MacCrisken, 1.
[27] Cynthia Karpa McCarthy, *Belmont* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2014), 7.
[28] MacCrisken, 2; and McCarthy, 9.
[29] McCarthy, 11.
[30] Alan Brown, "Notes on Early Belmont," (unpublished manuscript, San Mateo County History Museum, 1954), 1.

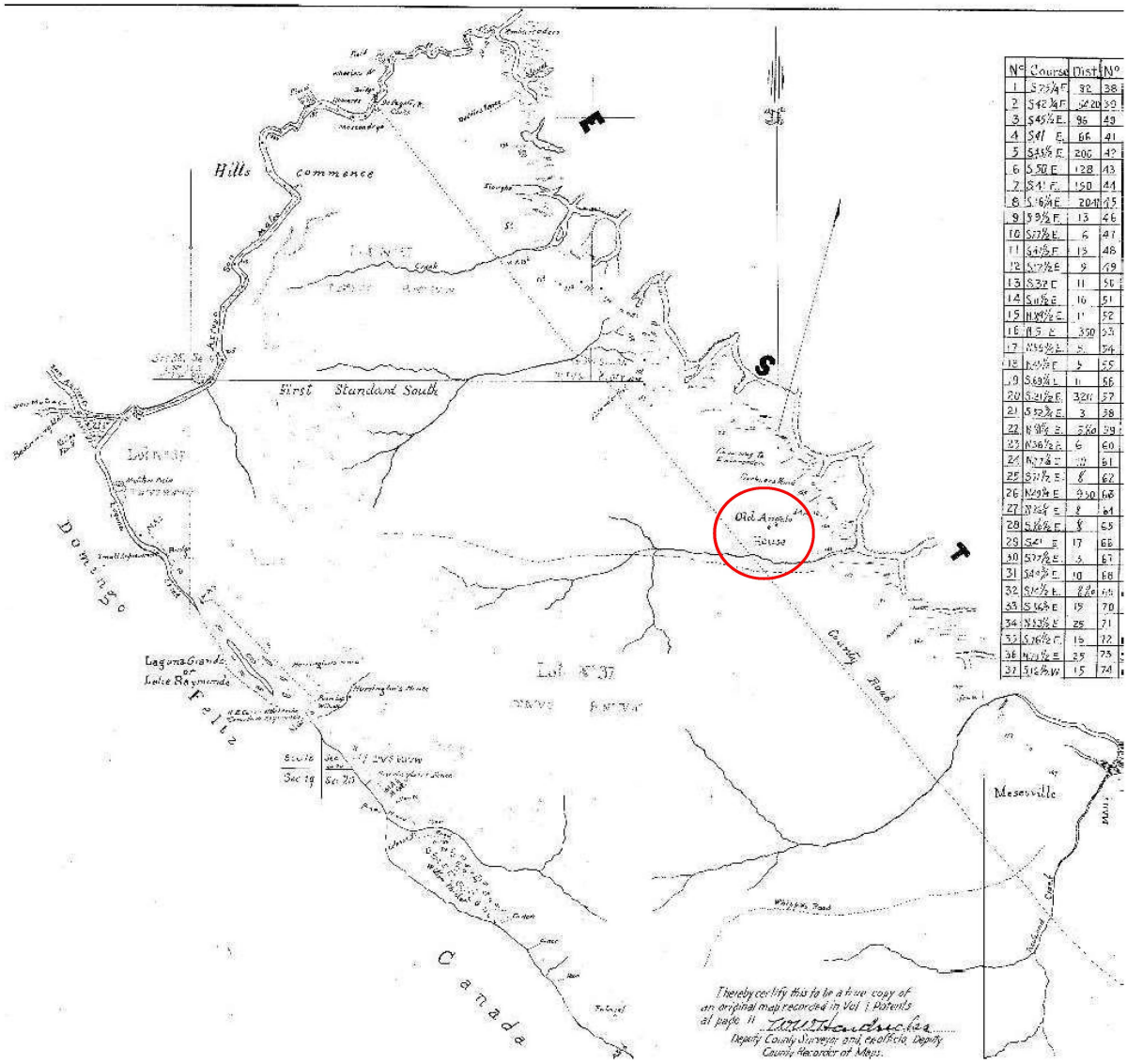
rarely in residence at their modest adobe home in San Carlos, preferring their other homes in San Francisco, Monterey and Santa Barbara.

When Alta California came under the control of the United States in 1848, all of the *Californios* holding land grants would subsequently need to defend their land titles against squatters and others anxious to claim the property as their own. Maria de la Soledad Ortega de Argüello filed her claim with the United States Land Commission in 1852 and her grant was confirmed in 1853.[31] It was appealed twice and finally, in 1856, the United States Supreme Court reviewed the case and upheld the Argüello claim for 35,240 acres.[32]



Maria de la Soledad Ortega de Argüello ran the Rancho de las Pulgas after her husband's death in 1830.

[31] When Mrs. Ortega de Argüello filed her claim in 1852 some 200 squatters moved on to her property in hopes it would end up being owned by the government and therefore open to homesteading. Those who still wanted to live there after her legal victory paid for their property via her land agent Simon Mezes. MacCrisken, 8.
[32] MacCrisken, 3.


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personal wealth at $20,000 and real estate holdings worth $50,000.[35] Mezes was paid by the Argüello family in land rather than cash; the 1856 decision confirmed his earned 15% of the *Rancho de las Pulgas* grant.[36] Mezes's portion included land that would one day make up all of Belmont and much of Redwood City, among other places. He would sell most of the land he owned to a mix of settlers, farmers, squatters and land speculators but in 1853 he moved into "a house formerly occupied by John Steinberger" in *Caňada del Diablo*.[37] Steinberger, agent for land speculator Elias Beard, would ultimately lay out and sell both "villa lots" and "town lots" in Belmont beginning in November 1853. Beard and Steinberger are presumed to have created the town name of Belmont, an Anglicized and combined version of two French phrases—*belle montagne* and *beau mont*—both meaning "beautiful mountain."[38] Mezes's new home was located alongside the *Caňada del Diablo* trail which climbed up the gorge over towards the Pacific coast; today that trail is the paved Ralston Avenue.

Leonetto Cipriani (1853 – 1864)

Mezes soon acquired a new neighbor, Corsican-born Colonel Leonetto Cipriani, who purchased his first villa lot in Belmont in November 1853.[39] Cipriani was wealthy, well-traveled and had spent most of his adult life fighting for the unification of Italy. His family was also close to the Bonaparte family in France; they met when several members of that family lived in exile in Italy before Louis Napoleon became first president and then emperor of France.[40] In April 1850, while Cipriani was waiting impatiently for the current political conditions in Italy to improve, he read an article in the Parisian Journal de Dėbats extolling the virtues of California in terms of good weather, spectacular vegetation and unlimited mineral wealth, with the potential for investors to earn five to six percent interest a month.[41] The sole heir of his father's estate—Cipriani was the first of eleven children—he had money to invest and a projected ten-year timeframe before he planned to return home.

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[35] It is unclear if Mezes had any formal legal training. His 1870 occupation was listed as "capitalist", in 1880 "real estate agent". S.N. Mezes, 1860 U.S. Federal Census www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/13706171:7163 (accessed 14 April 2022); and Simon M. Mezes, 1870 U.S. Federal Census, www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/13706171:7163 (accessed 14 April 2022); and Simon M. Mezes, 1880 U.S. Federal Census, www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/43631403:6742 (accessed 14 April 2022).

[36] MacCrisken, 3.

[37] MacCrisken, 4.

[38] MacCrisken, 8.

[39] MacCrisken, 10.

[40] Falbo translated and edited a much briefer version of Cipriani's autobiographical *Avventure dell amia vita*, written in 1869. Cipriani wrote about his entire life but Falbo concentrated on Cipriani's time spent in America. Falbo, Ernest (translated and edited), *California and Overland Diaries of Count Leonetto Cipriani From 1853-1871* (Portland, OR: The Champoeg Press, 1962), 1, 12.

[41] Falbo, 23.



Count Leonetto Cipriani in 1859.

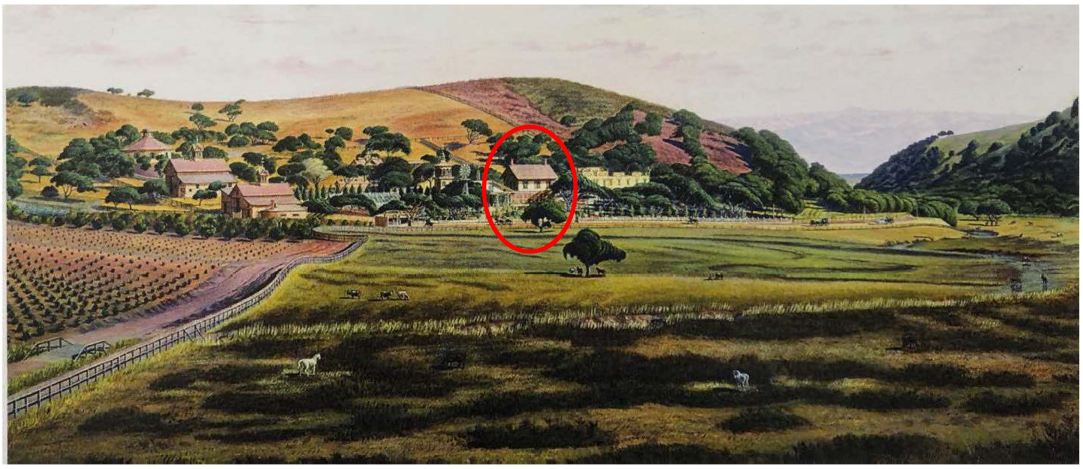
Cipriani spoke to several people about the veracity of the article before making his decision and one thing that struck him as problematic was the noted lack of housing in San Francisco. To that end, he designed a house wherein the 1,200 pieces of wood could be put together using 700 hooks and 26,000 screws, should he want to disassemble it and move it more than once.[42] He hired forty carpenters to saw out the pieces; it took them three days to assemble the house in Cipriani's garden. The house was then taken apart and each piece carefully numbered to allow for reassembly. Some 120 tons of house parts, tools and supplies left port in Genoa in March 1851. Cipriani, along with a group of companions and servants traveling with him, arrived in San Francisco in February 1852. Cipriani was serving as the Consul of Sardinia, a gratis post he accepted as rival Genoese were also heading to California and the Sardinians wanted their share of any potential commerce between California and Italy.[43]

Two of the first people Cipriani met after arrival were his second cousin, Ottavio Cipriani, who was a mercantile partner of Simon Mezes, and wealthy Italian merchant Nicolo Larco. Cipriani was chagrined to hear both men caution him about investing in property as they had done so themselves and lost money due to great land value fluctuations.[44] He listened to them, albeit grudgingly, and contented himself with buying one city lot at Sutter and Dupont for $1,000 to build the house on; once furnished, the house easily accommodated himself plus his three friends and three servants. Cipriani then spent much of the next year focused on traveling through northern California, looking at property and mining prospects.

[42] Falbo, 25.
[43] Falbo, 24.
[44] Cipriani was even more chagrined when the properties he was dissuaded from buying rose in great value and would have made him many thousands of dollars within a few short years. Falbo, 61.

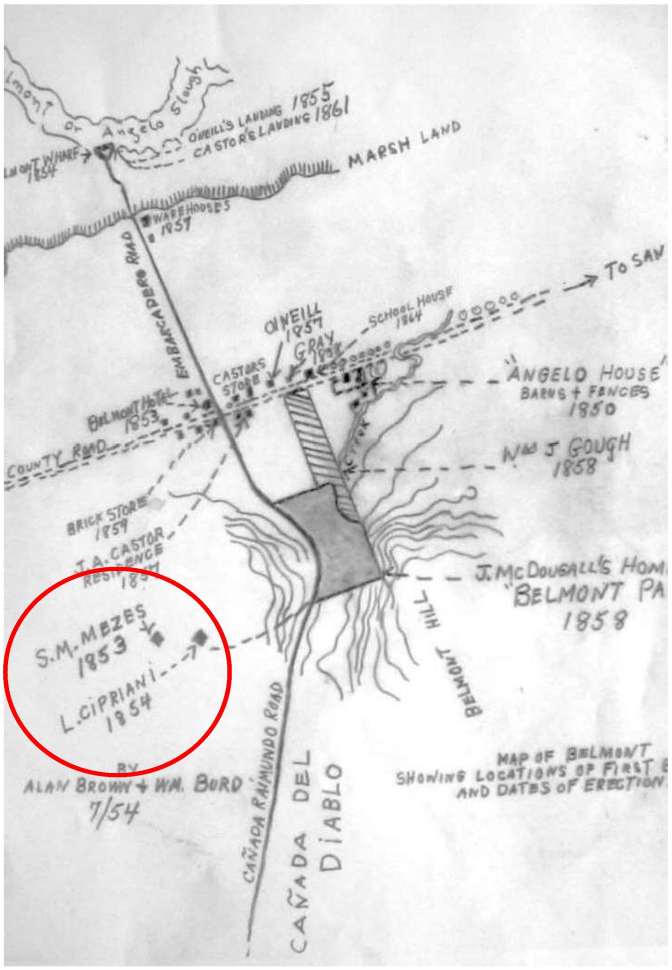
He grew bored with the consulship duties and resigned them in December 1852. He also ultimately invested the funds he had brought with him, earning eight percent interest per month, the legal limit at the time. In January 1853 he sold the San Francisco lot, house and furniture included, "at an excellent profit," and traveled to St. Louis via New York to try driving cattle across the country back to San Francisco as another potential investment.[45] The venture was a modest financial success; Cipriani and his party joined a wagon train in St. Louis and rode mules from there to Sacramento, where they caught a ferry to San Francisco.[46] The 40-year-old Cipriani was so tired he slept the entire twenty-hour trip; he arrived in San Francisco in late September 1853. Some two months later he bought the villa lot from Mezes; Cipriani always referred to the location as *Caňada del Diablo* in his memoirs.

Although Cipriani made it clear he sold the prefabricated house in early 1853, the title page of the *California and Overland Diaries of Count Leonetto Cipriani* claims to include an account of "the assembling of his elegant prefabricated home in Belmont."[47] This error has been carried forward online and repeated in an entry in the Pacific Coast Architecture Database (PCAD).[48] It can also be found on a blog page titled "Leonetto Cipriani" with an entry by Cynthia Karpa McCarthy.[49] However, the prefabricated house was never moved and reassembled in Belmont; Cipriani built a new house on the property in 1854 that he claimed was considered "magnificent" to local eyes.[50] He enlarged the property in 1857 and 1859.[51]



This detail of a painting believed to be Cipriani's "villa" showing the 40' x 60' two-story house and numerous other structures.

[45] Falbo, 71.
[46] The cattle were left behind for a hired man to continue to drive with the wagon train. Held up by winter snow, the wagon train and cattle arrived some months later.
[47] Falbo, unpaginated title page.
[48] "Cipriani, Leonetto, House, Belmont, CA," Pacific Coast Architecture Database, https://pcad.lib.washington.edu/buildings/5126/ (accessed 25 January 2022).
[49] Cynthia Karpa McCarthy, "Houses Leonetto Cipriani Built," https://leonettocipriani.wordpress.com/ (accessed 25 January 2022).
[50] Falbo, 15.
[51] MacCrisken, 10.



This 1954 sketch map shows the close proximity of the Mezes and Cipriani properties.

Cipriani spent relatively little time living there, making a trip to Europe (1855), an expedition to the Arctic (1856-1857), and getting married to a twenty-three-year-old American woman in Baltimore in 1859. His wife, Mary Tolley Worthington, enjoyed a two-week honeymoon with her new husband before he left her behind to sail for Italy to fight in a long-anticipated military campaign. She died nine months later giving birth to Cipriani's oldest son, whom he seldom saw, leaving the boy to be raised by his maternal grandparents. Cipriani returned to America in 1862.[52] From 1855-1858 his good friend Alessandro Garbi lived at and managed Cipriani's property, which was used for farming, most likely wheat, based on the four surviving millstones found on the property.[53] Cipriani also grew wine grapes and owned fruit trees. He was a gentleman farmer only; the *Daily Alta California* noted he was a "modest farmer in San Mateo County," in addition to being a soldier and diplomat.[54]

[52] Michel Vergé-Franceschi, Édition critique des mémoires du général comte Leonetto Cipriani (1812-1888) (Mont Blanc: Université Savoie Mont Blanc, 2017), 393, 431-432, 445; and Falbo, 17.
[53] Garbi, another military man, also served as San Mateo County's surveyor from 1856-1859. He returned to Italy and fought again from 1859-1861, earning military honors. He died in Florence, Italy, in 1902. Falbo, 30.
[54] Daily Alta California (12 March 1864).

In late 1863 Cipriani decided to sell his *Cañada del Diablo* property and to return permanently to Italy. He advertised for several weeks in the *Daily Alta California*:

> SATURDAY—February 20, 1864 at 12 o'clock Noon. AT SALESROOM. 406 MONTGOMERY STREET, WE WILL SELL, on Account of Departure, the Fine Residence of Col. Cipriani AT BELMONT, SAN MATEO CO., BEING FOURTEEN ACRES OF LAND, together with FINE DWELLING HOUSE, 40x60 feet; and the FURNITURE, BED and TABLE LINEN, CROCKERY, COOKING UTENSILS, etc. as per inventory. The Land is covered with Fine Trees, the Garden with Shrubbery, Grape Vines and Fruit Trees. The premises well-watered. Fine Outhouses, Etc. TERMS—Half Cash: balance on time. 1 per cent, per month interest. Premises may be examined from 12 o'clock P.M. to 2 P.M. every day. TITLE PERFECT.[55]

His 14.21-acre property was purchased on 29 February 1864 by Morton Cheeseman for $5,500.[56] Cheeseman was a business associate of William Chapman Ralston, a well-known San Franciscan who had moved there in August 1854 after spending the previous five years in Panama helping thousands of Gold Rush (1848-1853) Argonauts make their way to San Francisco. Cheeseman promptly signed the property over to Ralston for $6,500.[57] Clear title was an ongoing issue as numerous Spanish and Mexican land grants—in addition to properties purchased from rancho owners—were still in varying stages of the legal process of being recognized by the United States in 1864. Faulty land titles also impacted banking as contested real estate was often used as collateral for loans.[58]

William Chapman Ralston (1864 – 1875)

Ralston was born on an Ohio farm on 12 January 1826; he was finished with school by the age of fourteen and at age sixteen he secured his first position apprenticing as a steamboat clerk.[59] Ralston's father had adapted his carpentry skills to build both bridges and boats, teaching his sons the same skills. But Ralston had little interest in building or even piloting a steamship. He was more focused on the operational and financial side, learning cost accounting and keeping records. He dealt with bills of lading, loading, storing, and unloading goods, stocking provisions and arranging for fuel purchases along the Mississippi's riverbank wood lots. He spent the next seven years working on Ohio River and Mississippi River steamboats.

Between exploding boilers and reckless sailing undertaken in an attempt to beat a competitor's schedule, steamboating was a risky business, but Ralston enjoyed the challenge and met several men

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[55] Cipriani did return to California two more times; in 1867-1868 to Altaville, CA, where he earned $100,000 in a mining venture and to San Francisco in 1871 to check on waning investments. He also married a second time and fathered nine more children. He died in Italy in 1888, having been made a count and an honorary general. Advertisement, *Daily Alto California* (24 January 1864); and Falbo, 19, 20.

[56] George Lyman, Ralston's Ring: California Plunders the Comstock Lode (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), 335-336.

[57] Cheeseman paid John Parrott, a San Francisco banker, $1 to guarantee title; Parrott's certificate of title guarantee was for the $5,500 purchase price. MacCrisken, 83.

[58] David Lavender, Nothing Seemed Impossible: William C. Ralston and Early San Francisco (Palo Alto, CA: American West Publishing Company, 1975), 97.

[59] Lavender, 19-20.

who would remain both lifelong friends and short-term business partners in various ventures. He would also be inspired by luxurious steamboat décor, incorporating many steamboat motifs into his eventual new house in Belmont. But that was ten years off into the future. In 1849, Ralston was out of a job—the steamship Convoy he had been working on had exploded then been destroyed by fire in February—and widespread news of the California Gold Rush beckoned many men to take their chances in the gold fields. An impoverished Ralston headed to Panama in July, where he met up with one of his former captains, Cornelius Garrison. Garrison had set up services there which included banking, transportation and provisions for the thousands of Argonauts flooding through Panama on their way to San Francisco.[60] Rather than continuing north and searching for gold, Ralston expanded his organizational and financial acumen over the next five years in Panama, working on different ventures, first with Garrison and later with other partners.

While still living and working in Panama Ralston met Cornelius Vanderbilt, a very wealthy American tycoon who also had transportation interests that at times competed against Ralston's livelihood. Through knowing Vanderbilt, Ralston met and fell in love with one of his granddaughters, Louisa Thorne. The two were soon engaged after meeting in the spring of 1852. His financial situation had improved from broke in 1849 to the third highest taxpayer in Panama in 1853, having added shipping to his other services.[61] Living conditions in Panama were wretched even for those who could afford to live well and Ralston was considering either San Francisco or New York as a place to live once he was married. However, Louisa Thorne fell gravely ill in September 1852 and died soon thereafter with Ralston at her side. He was devastated and carried a miniature of her portrait in his pocket for years after her death; he would later name his first two daughters in honor of her memory.

The political and economic conditions of Panama fluctuated heavily and by mid-1854, while Leonetto Cipriani was likely putting the finishing touches on his new house in Belmont, Ralston's former boss Cornelius Garrison—then mayor of San Francisco—invited him to come work in the city. Garrison had proven to be a mentor—he was seventeen years older than Ralston—and Ralston learned from him both good and dubious lessons. Garrison was the prototype for the prevailing San Francisco attitude that "hazardous speculation is the body of our commercial system…We came to enjoy an exciting life and to make money rapidly…When men fail [in California] they do not despair."[62]

The hard-driving Garrison set an example of boldly pursuing multiple ways to earn money simultaneously, be it banking, mining, railroading, shipping and whatever else struck his interest. When Ralston arrived in California for good in August 1854, Garrison still had two more months to serve as mayor of San Francisco. While he was noted for many achievements, Garrison was also chased by rumors of embezzlement, fraud and stuffing the ballot box.[63] No charges ever stuck but Ralston certainly witnessed the ends justifying the means from someone he very much admired. Moreover, he

[60] Lavender, 26.
[61] Lavender, 63.
[62] John H. Hittel, *The Resources of California*, quoted in Lavender, 81.
[63] Lavender, 73.

saw Garrison ultimately triumph over critics and charges and emerge victorious. It was a formula of gambling on multiple high-risk ventures, turning a deaf ear to naysayers and critics, and believing the ends justified the means that Ralston would eventually live by, fueled in turn by his own vision, his boundless physical energy and his desire for his beloved adopted city of San Francisco to become the crown jewel of the Pacific Coast.

San Francisco in the mid-1850s was rife with corruption, violence and vice. The Gold Rush had accelerated California's path to statehood in 1850 and San Francisco's population of 2,000 in 1849 increased to 20,000 in 1850 and 55,000 in 1854.64 Infrastructure and civilized society were vastly outpaced by an influx of thousands of men from around the world; most left wives and families behind as they had no intention of remaining in California longer than it took to scoop a handful of gold nuggets out of a creek or river. While most Argonauts headed east to the gold fields many would-be or failed gold seekers instead set up shop in San Francisco, offering whatever goods and services might be in demand.

One business that could not be found in San Francisco was a bank, as the men who wrote the state constitution had all been impacted by the depreciation of paper money and the subsequent closure of hundreds of banks in the Midwest between the 1830s and 1840s.[65] Paper money was scorned in the Golden State, with first gold and then silver bullion, initially privately minted into coins and bars, or gold dust hidden in a small pouch, serving as currency. The inevitable outcome of this situation was the creation of "associations" to receive gold and silver bullion and refine it by private assayer or to ship it back east on regularly scheduled "steamer days."[66] In February 1855 nine of San Francisco's sixteen associations failed in one day due to a lack of regulations and safeguards; these initial failures had a domino effect and closed scores of San Francisco businesses, putting some 15,000 men out of work.

Ralston, who was not deterred by the bank failures, took sole responsibility for running the newly formed institution of Garrison, Morgan, Fretz and Ralston, which opened on 2 January 1856 with $700,000 of capital.[67] The local economy was still recuperating from the effects of 1855, and this bank did not prosper. Ralston still believed banking was a favorable profession and that conditions regarding gold mining were technically advancing, with agriculture and industrial prospects also yet untapped. Money was there to be made with banks investing in these future areas. Undaunted, he and Fretz opened a two-man bank on 15 July 1857 with $50,000 in capital.[68]

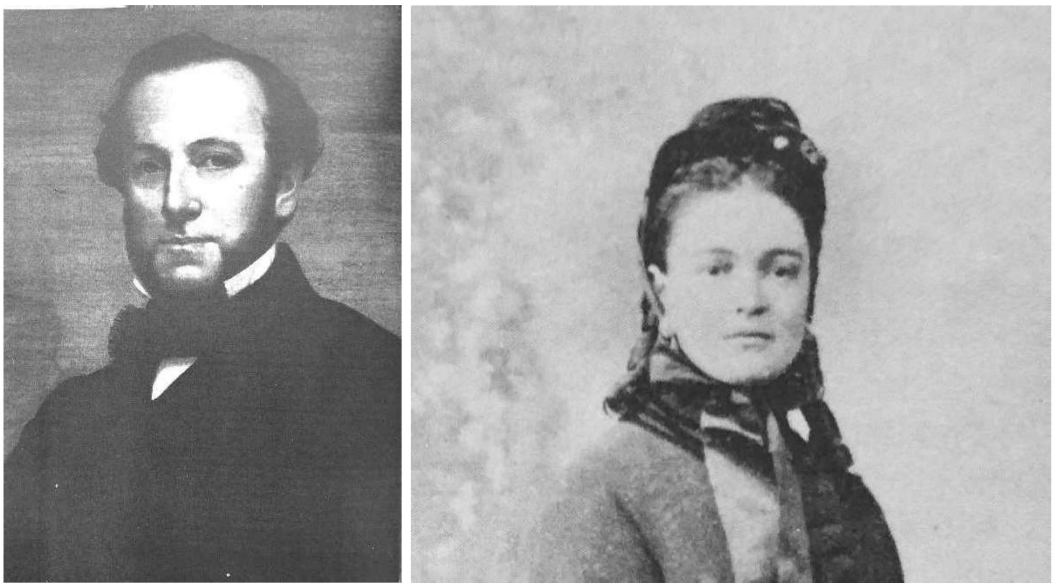
One of Ralston's practices was to aggressively pursue the acquisition of gold dust and bullion; to this end he regularly visited the mining camps and also walked daily throughout the financial district, despite working long hours at the bank. Charismatic and outgoing, Ralston again made many friends.

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[64] Michael Makley *The Infamous King of the Comstock: William Sharon and the Gilded Age in the West* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2006), 11, 12; and Lavender, 72.
[65] Lavender, 83.
[66] Ibid., 84.
[67] Ibid., 96.
[68] Ibid., 110.

This network of connections led to business deals or inside information about mining prospects, which was the chief interest of every man, woman and child in San Francisco. Anyone with two cents to spare speculated in mining stocks with more than one person going from pauper to prince overnight due to a lucky strike. At times there was more money to be made in stock shares than in the ore recovered. Ralston's banking practices included investments in the form of loans for mining shares, railroads, real estate and water development. He also sold insurance and speculated in money, more often making money than losing it. While steadily increasing his personal wealth, Ralston's biggest windfalls had not yet been achieved.

Ralston married Elizabeth "Lizzie" Fry on 21 May 1858; she accepted his proposal despite his telling her he did not feel as deeply for her as he still did for Louisa's memory.[69] After making the rugged trip to Yosemite and the Calaveras Big Trees with a small group of friends, the couple settled into the Tehama Hotel. Housing was still so scarce in San Francisco that many people resided in hotels on a regular basis, sometimes living in the same one for years or moving about from hotel to hotel as funds increased or dwindled. The Ralstons' first home was on a hilltop in Rincon Hill, the most fashionable neighborhood in San Francisco. Their first two children would be born there before Ralston's typical restlessness pushed him into hiring architects to build a grander home for the growing family.



William Ralston *(left)* and Lizzie Fry Ralston (*right*).

When the Civil War broke out in 1861, Ralston promptly dropped his Southern Democrat party affiliation and came down firmly on the side of the Union, a highly contentious issue even in far-off San Francisco. The Civil War did not slow down California's business prospects, which had expanded from gold in the Sierra Nevada to silver in Nevada's Comstock Lode. Ralston wanted to form a commercial bank to take advantage of these fortuitous conditions but it was still illegal. He and Fretz had entered a new

[69] Ibid., 118.

partnership called Donohoe, Ralston and Company, but when the law changed in 1862 and again in 1863, Ralston began to work secretly to establish the Bank of California, shedding new partners Joseph Donohoe and Eugene Kelly in the process. Ralston was taking a big risk as the law still did not allow specifically for commercial banks but he was hoping an incorporation act that passed in 1863 might serve as an umbrella.

He convinced twenty-two shareholders to purchase $100 each of banking shares in gold, amassed $2,000,000 in capital, and linked his bank to a bank in New York that also had connections with England.[70] The board of directors and first stockholders were all men of wealth who had invested successfully in numerous California ventures. Ralston asked the highly respected Darius Ogden Mills to act as bank president as banks flourished as much on reputation as they did in capital. When the Bank of California's doors opened on 5 July 1864, it broke the glass ceiling and opened the way for other commercial banks to follow although none could compete against what was then the third largest bank in the United States.[71] Although Mills was president, Ralston was the visionary who ran the bank and ultimately decided which investors deserved loans, often going against board recommendations, and following his own instincts. For example, when Leland Stanford, Mark Hopkins and Collis Huntington approached the Bank of California to cover payroll costs while building the Central Pacific Railroad, the board thought the venture too risky. Ralston loaned them $100,000 and made multiple subsequent loans to them until the Central Pacific end of the transcontinental railroad was successfully completed in 1869.[72] He was inclined to support any venture, big or small, he thought would benefit either San Francisco as a city or California as a state, and often made small loans to everyday working people through the bank or his own private account.

Ralston purchased the Cipriani house in February 1864 not as a primary residence—the Ralston family continued to live in the city and ultimately moved into a splendid mansion Ralston had built at Pine and Leavenworth on Nob Hill—but as a summer country home. Once remodeled, it would serve as a fine venue in which he could entertain and dazzle both important visitors to San Francisco and prospective business partners and investors looking to make money in California. While already wealthy, Ralston had yet to earn the millions of dollars that eventually poured in from his Comstock Lode investments. Initially he simply added on to Cipriani's house but as more money became available, he hired an architect in 1867 to design himself a new structure, demolishing most of the Cipriani villa in the process except for one 25' x 26' room that retained distinctly different building materials and decorative finishes.[73]

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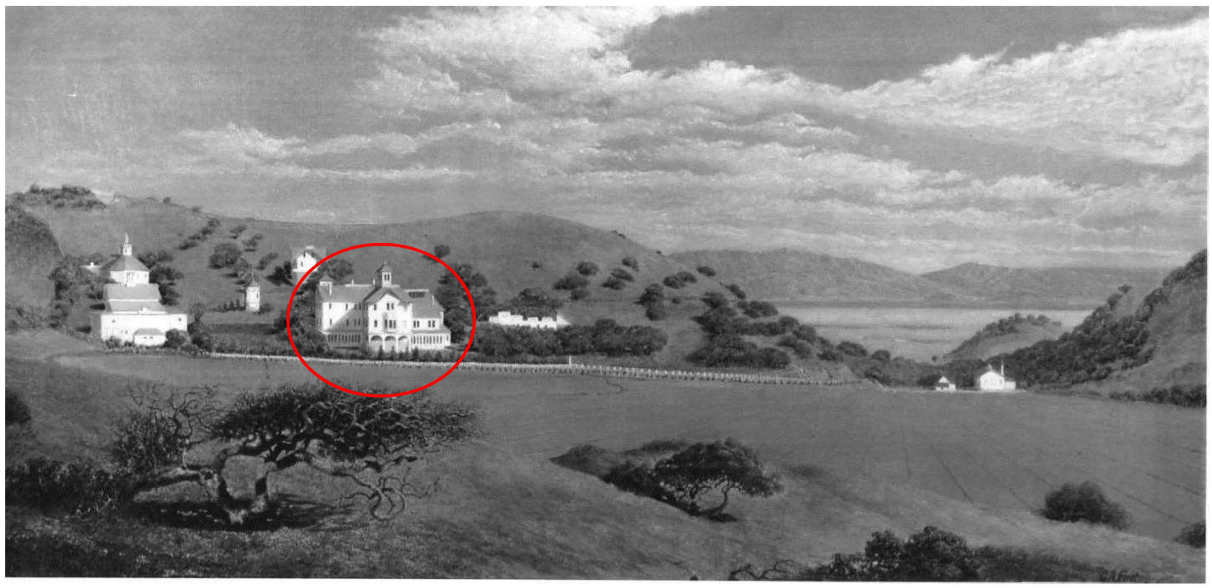
[70] Ibid., 179.

[71] In 1873 California's State Supreme Court ruled commercial banks were no longer unconstitutional institutions. Lavender, 181.

[72] Lavender, 190, 192.

[73] Julian Dana, *The Man Who Built San Francisco: A Study of Ralston's Journey with Banners* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1936), 213; and Lyman, 99; and Cecil Tilton, *William Chapman Ralston: Courageous Builder* (Boston: Christopher Publishing House, 1935), 186; and Lavender, 252.

Although no plans have survived—if Ralston kept them at his San Francisco home they were destroyed in the firestorm that followed the 1906 earthquake—the architect Ralston hired is believed to have been Irish-born John Plant Gaynor, who would also design for Ralston first the Grand Hotel in 1870 and then, across the street from it, the iconic Palace Hotel between 1873 and 1875.[74] Several of the innovative features of the Palace Hotel were first utilized at the new house, which Ralston christened "Belmont."[75]



Architect John Plant Gaynor is reputed to have designed Ralston's new summer home in Belmont. Note the enlarged new residence, the grand new stable (*far left*) and the Ralston gas house with a small residence located across the road (*far right*).

Gaynor was born in Dublin, Ireland, in 1833 and named for his father, a draughtsman and land surveyor who worked in Dublin.[76] The son emigrated to America in 1849 and practiced architecture in Brooklyn and New York City between 1851 and 1862. He designed both residential and commercial buildings, the most notable being the 1857 E.V. Haughwout Building, a five-story structure that boasted two cast iron facades—it was a corner building—and glass window walls that allowed full daylight illumination within the interior. It also included installation of the first safety passenger elevator, the success of which was

[74] The Belmont HABS report mistakenly identifies Henry William Cleaveland as the architect of the Palace Hotel and therefore the architect of the house in Belmont. However, Cleaveland was not associated with designing the Palace Hotel while Gaynor is the architect of record. Gaynor's body of work does not appear to be housed in any academic collection, but photographs of the Grand Hotel and the Palace Hotel are included within the ADC Study Collection at the University of Santa Barbara. Gaynor's signed plans for the Palace Hotel were replicated in an album created by Henry Lewis King, superintendent of work for the construction of the hotel; it is held at the Alice Phelan Sullivan Library of the Society of California Pioneers in San Francisco. Joseph A. Baird, Junior, "Ralston Hall," HABS No. Cal-1674 (1966), 3; and William Henry Cleaveland, PCAD; https://pcad.lib.washington.edu/person/5199/ (accessed 23 February 2022); and John Plant Gaynor, PCAD, https://pcad.lib.washington.edu/person/5603 (accessed 17 February 2022).

[75] Lavender, 252; and Esther Mipaas, "John Plant Gaynor, Architect-Civil Engineer, 1832-1888," paper presented to a thematic session of the 40th Annual Meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians (San Francisco: 22-26 April 1987), 1; and MacCrisken, 20.

[76] "Gaynor, John Plant," Dictionary of Irish Architects, 1720-1940, https://www.dia.ie/architects/view/2106/GAYNOR-JOHNPLANT (accessed 21 April 2022).

the catalyst for building beyond the then restricted stairwell-only five-story height.[77] Gaynor mitigated the heavy weight of the two cast iron frames, which were too heavy to hang from brick in the traditional manner, by creating metal frameworks that were a precursor to steel-framed skyscrapers. The Haughwout Building is extant today and was deemed a New York City landmark in 1965. It was added to the National Register in 1973.



Gaynor designed the innovative E. V. Haughwout Building, located in Manhattan, in 1856-1857.

Gaynor first worked as a surveyor mapping the Mountain Home Ranch in San Mateo County in 1862.78 His first office in San Francisco was located at 402 Montgomery Street in 1863. He placed an ad in the Daily Alta California promising to design "economical residences in several new styles with the latest conveniences."[79] Gaynor may have come to Ralston's attention when designing an 1867 addition to the famed Lick House, known for its spectacular dining room that influenced the design of the future Palace Hotel Garden Court.[80] Another possibility was Gaynor's "Oriental Block" at Montgomery and Battery, where a row of wholesale stores was built "with all modern improvements" for $130,000 in 1867.81 Ralston kept a sharp eye on any construction developments within the financial district, which he would later expand south of Market Street. However, the two men met, they were well matched in their mutual interest in technological advances that provided creature comforts and also inspired awe in guests anticipating both lavish hospitality and the various "contrivances" featured at Belmont.[82]

[77] Mipaas, 2.
[78] Mipass, 4.
[79] San Francisco Bulletin (21 December 1863); and Daily Alta California (25 April 1864, 8 May 1864).
[80] San Francisco Bulletin (21 February 1867).
81 The Oriental Hotel was torn down to make way for the new commercial buildings, hence the name. "Oriental Block," Daily Alta California (15 January 1868), 1.
[82] Mipaas, 5.

Ralston must have appreciated the Italian Villa style of architecture Cipriani had employed because the new house was designed in a similar Italianate style that eschewed the ubiquitous gingerbread embellishments found throughout the San Francisco Bay Area at the time.[83] The Italianate style was popular in America between 1840 and 1885; the identifying design characteristics were two to three stories in height, asymmetrical massing, a center gable on the front façade (this house was large enough to be cross-gabled) tall narrow windows, typically arched and/or with elaborated crowns, hipped roofs, cornices with large eave brackets and a square tower or cupola, of which this house had two.84 Built of redwood planks and painted white, a writer for the San Francisco Chronicle noted:

> Without boasting of anything grand or elaborate in architectural design, the building presents an outward appearance that is certainly pleasing…Best displayed…is the inside of the edifice. There is such an air of pleasant lightness pervading the whole of the place that to have the blues in such a house would seem impossible. The rooms are very conveniently arranged, and all the principal ones are so well lighted that there is not a shaded nook to be found in any of them.[85]

[83] Dana, 213, 214.
[84] Virginia Savage McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2019), 283-284.
[85] "Ralston: A California Money King and His Palace," San Francisco Chronicle (30 January 1870), 5.



The main façade of Belmont was fronted with a porte-cochere to protect arriving guests from rain. Note the flanking glass corridors, the bow window of the Ralstons' bedroom and one of the towers rising from behind the center bulk of the house. The two covered windows on the main central façade appeared to have been covered when the house was first built.

Belmont was eclectic in style as two "Steamboat Gothic" glass corridors flanked the main entrance. These corridors were designed to emulate promenades found on the finer Ohio and Mississippi River steamboats where Ralston had worked as a young man.[86] The interior also included other Steamboat Gothic features such as interior doors that swung in either direction, folding flat against the walls when open. Adjoining door panels slid into the walls like pocket doors. These doors all contained frosted etched lights, typically with flower motifs, and retractable handles that folded flat into grooves. Intricately carved ventilator covers also found on steamboats masked an innovative fresh-air ventilation system that ran throughout the house except for Ralston's billiard saloon, the lone surviving room from Cipriani's villa.[87] The "orange-peel" doors, named for their curvature, were also found on

[86] Lyman, 100.

[87] Ralston was credited with designing the innovative ventilation system. The Billiard Saloon, today's Cipriani Room, is the only room in the mansion to have a cedar wood floor, a painted ceiling, and the lone marble fireplace; the rest of the mantels were formed from California laurel. Lyman, 100; and MacCrisken, 23; and Mipaas, 8.

steamboats, as was the relative lack of door sills.[88] A decisive nod to Ralston's millions made on the Comstock Lode was found in the silver plating utilized in railings, doorknobs and other hardware found throughout the house, including silver-plated chandeliers shaped like ship's wheels.[89]





The promenade corridors at Belmont featured urns of flowers and plants rather than the spittoons seen here on board a steamboat *(left).* The splendor of this ladies' parlor inspired Ralston's luxurious décor choices for Belmont's interiors (*right*).

[88] MacCrisken, 19.
[89] Ibid.



A plan of the ground floor was published in the San Francisco Chronicle in 1870. The Billiard Saloon was once Cipriani's parlor. Large frosted-glass curtain walls could be raised and lowered between several of the ground floor rooms.

The “contrivances” that awed guests at Belmont included a mechanical gate that Ralston could open and close without climbing down from the vehicle he was driving to convey guests to the house.[90] He typically drove guests from San Francisco to Belmont at a breakneck pace, changing horses along the way. Ralston was aiming for a late twilight arrival when the entire house was lit from within by gas fixtures, a dazzling sight against the otherwise darkening countryside. Another curiosity was the crystal clock placed within a mirror in the State Dining Room.[91] A trap door underneath the grand staircase led down to a giant cistern where a tied rowboat floated, a failed remnant of Ralston’s first efforts to provide enough well water to simultaneously fill fifty guest porcelain bathtubs, among other uses.[92] One of the most awesome innovations, credited to Ralston, were the frosted-glass curtain walls found between several of the ground floor rooms as they could be raised or lowered at the touch of a finger, dividing or opening rooms as needed.[93] Finally, a passenger elevator that was manipulated by ropes was installed near the kitchen, allowing servants to more easily convey luggage and other items to the upper floors.[94]

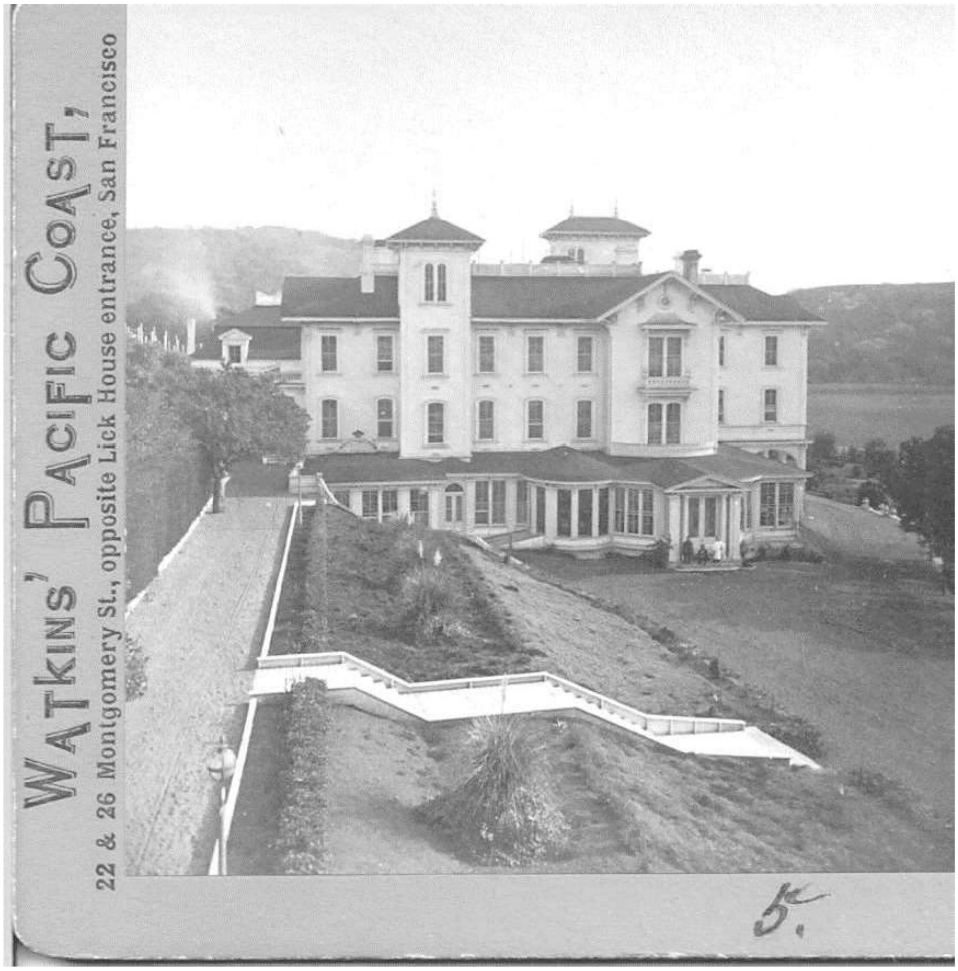
[90] Sister Barbara Engs revealed the secret of how the mechanical gate worked: There “was a gate, that, by an ingenious mechanism in the road, opened automatically when the wheels of the incoming vehicle touched it.” It worked for automobiles and trucks as well as horse-drawn vehicles. The Sisters eventually replaced the gate with new pillars. MacCrisken, 83; and Sister Barbara Engs, “I Live in A Palace,” 4-5, Manuscript Collection, Box 1, California Province Archives, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Belmont, California.

[91] The clockworks matched those found at the San Francisco Ferry Terminal. Dana, 213.

[92] Ralston ultimately purchased additional land and built a dam to capture water from an artificial lake that was piped to the house and grounds. Lyman, 100-101; and MacCrisken, 24.

[93] Lyman, 101; and Gertrude Atherton, *California: An Intimate History* (New York: Blue Ribbon Books, Inc., 1914, 1936), 274; and Tilton, 187.

[94] MacCrisken, 23-24.



This Watkins stereoview detail shows the south façade. Note both towers can be seen, and the railing at the rooftop terrace. The garden terrace was a particular favorite of Ralston and his guests when they spent time outside enjoying the grounds.



Detail of the north façade of the mansion. The edge of the porte-cochere can be seen at the far left. The two-story Cipriani remnant was flanked by the new glass corridors on two sides.

Lizzie Ralston had little to do with her husband's ambitious plans for Belmont; they had become estranged by early 1867. She packed up their three children along with two maids in March and sailed for Paris, where she spent the next ten months.[95] Once she arrived home and the couple reconciled, she had the upper lobby remodeled as a surprise for her husband while he was away on business.[96] Inspired by a Parisian opera house, Mrs. Ralston had the original gallery rebuilt to emulate six opera boxes with silver-plated railings overlooking the lobby. Ralston, who enjoyed hand-cranking a mechanical piano for his guests but was much less enthusiastic about dancing himself, loved the improvement and spent much of the time during their many balls sitting in his allotted seat holding court, watching guests arrive and dancers who spilled out of the ballroom swirl below him.[97]

[95] The Ralstons had lost their first daughter, Etna Louise, in March 1862 when she was twenty months old after she put a sulphur-laden match into her mouth. They had two boys, Samuel and William Junior, and two girls, Emelita and Bertha, who lived to adulthood. Bertha was born at Belmont in 1872. Tilton, 188; and Times Gazette (4 April 1872).
[96] Lavender, 259-260.
[97] Ibid.



Detail of the opera box gallery implemented by Lizzie Ralston as a surprise for her husband in 1868.



One of the frosted glass curtain walls partially raised between the library and the promenade corridor. Note the parquet floors found throughout the public rooms of the ground floor.

By 1867 there was room enough for thirty guests; the San Francisco *News-Letter* announced on 15 August 1868 the addition of "a new 120-foot wing" that would create a total of fifty bedrooms to accommodate 100 guests.[98] Other new features included tennis courts, a bowling alley, a dairy, a gymnasium with a large Turkish bath, a blacksmith shop, and a $50,000 gas house, which fed over 1,000 jet fixtures in the mansion.[99] While the hostlers slept in the carriage house, other servants lived up the road a half-mile away in a house purportedly built by Ralston; Lizzie Ralston would later refer to this house as "Little Belmont" when she resided there, to distinguish it from its grand counterpart.[100]



Little Belmont, located up the hill one-half mile from Belmont, served as either servants' quarters or a house for Belmont's superintendent's family before Lizzie Ralston and her children moved in in 1876. Note the multiple bay windows employed in a similar fashion to the Palace Hotel windows.

Rivaling the mansion in grandeur was Ralston's $80,000 redwood stable, distinguished by interior walls and stalls built of mahogany and inlaid with mother-of-pearl.[101] Large double doors allowed carriages and other rigs to be moved in and out easily, the harness room was enclosed by glass and solid silver

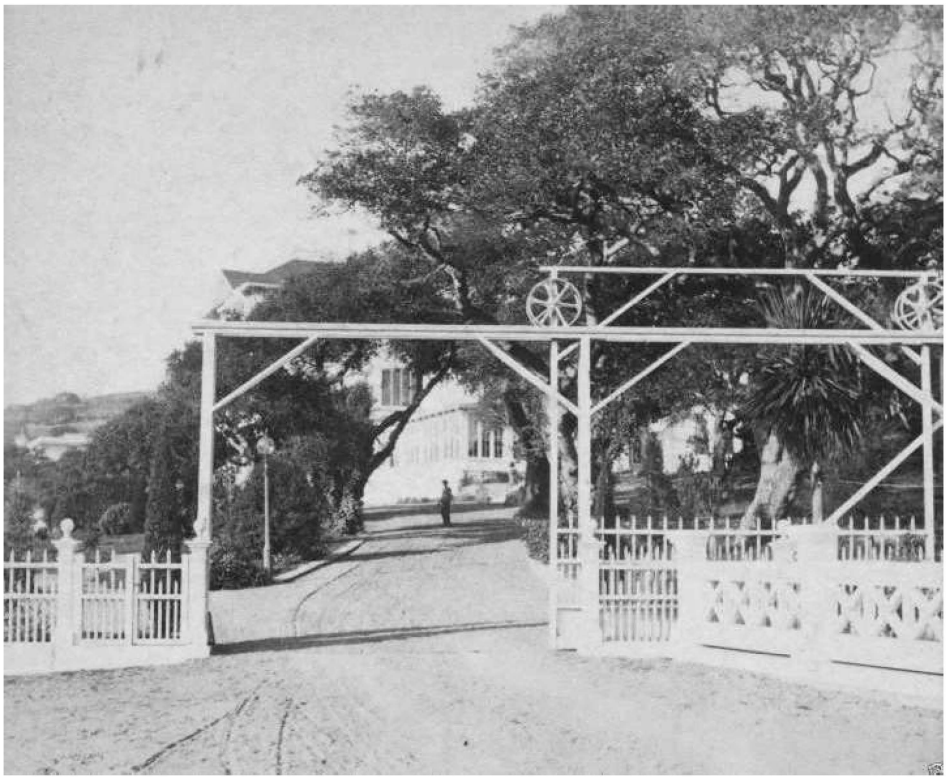
[98] Dana, 256; and MacCrisken, 19.

[99] Ralston allowed gas to be piped down from his private gas house to the burgeoning town of Belmont to utilize. "Gas Light," Times Gazette (24 August 1867); and MacCrisken, 21; and Tilton, 186.

[100] Historic accounts vary as to whether all of the servants, the white servants, the Chinese servants or merely the superintendent of Belmont, lived at Little Belmont. It is highly unlikely that Ralston's white and Chinese servants lived together during his lifetime. An 1876 newspaper article called it the Becker place, but that could have been a reference to the last supervisor to live there before Ralston's death in 1875. Times Gazette (26 January 1876); and Lyman, 214; and McCarthy, 19.

[101] Amelia Ransome Neville, The Fantastic City: Memoirs of the Social and Romantic Life of Old San Francisco (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1932), 198; and Dana, 214-215; and MacCrisken, 20-21.

pegs supported trappings that also sported Ralston's monogram in solid silver.[102] When the barn accidentally burned down in June 1874 several hostlers were able to rescue all of the horses and carriages and most of the harness, losing only the stored hay and grain.[103] The mansion was scorched but "by great exertions the house was saved," in part because the wind was blowing in the opposite direction.[104] The subsequent fireproof carriage house was built of rubblestone quarried from the estate grounds.[105]



One of the contrivances that mystified arriving guests was this mechanical gate which allowed Ralston to open and close the gate without getting down from the driver's seat of his favored four-in-hand rig.

In addition to the contrivances, guests were impressed by every facet of Belmont's interior. Six skylights, numerous windows and the interior frosted-glass curtain walls allowed natural light to stream into all of the rooms, including those within the center of the house. The plethora of mirrors along the walls, set at angles within corners and placed over numerous fireplace mantels created great depth of space in addition to reflecting light. Ralston showcased California woods—he opened his own cloth and furniture factories—in the parqueted floors, fireplace mantels, bookshelves, main staircase, commodes, chairs, tables and cabinets.[106] Other California products used consisted of silks, satins, broadcloths, blankets, wines, foodstuffs and art but much of the décor of the house also came from

[102] Dana, 215.
[103] "Destructive Fire," Times Gazette (27 June 1874), 3.
[104] "Ralston's Stables Burned," Weekly Colusa Sun (27 June 1874), 1.
[105] MacCrisken, 21.
[106] Lavender, 256; and Lyman, 90.

China, Japan and European countries.[107] Ralston built a wharf at Belmont and used his own steamboat, *Brisk*, to deliver materials and goods from the port of San Francisco to Belmont; a box label with Ralston's name and address can be seen today in the small museum set up within the Carriage House.[108]

Ralston's first notable gathering on 28 March 1868 that would eventually earn Belmont the sobriquet of the "White House of the West"—although at $1,200,000 Belmont cost considerably more to build and furnish—was held in honor of his friend Anson Burlingame, who was then serving as China's minister to the United States and Europe.[109] This banquet was Ralston's first chance to surprise guests with the retractable glass curtain walls; as guests milled around in the parlor, Ralston had the panel between the parlor and dining room raised:

> Suddenly the opposite wall gave a sort of shiver, then rose slowly like the curtain of a theater, revealing an immense banqueting-hall laden with the most splendid plate, china, and glass that had been brought to California at that period, and an almost limitless variety of flowers and fruits. As motionless as an army about to salute were the pigtailed Chinese [servants].[110]

The elaborate banquets—one young guest counted twenty-one courses—created by Chinese cook Ah Lung were followed by dancing in the ballroom, either to a player piano or to a live orchestra.[111] Guests slept over, were served a midnight supper and a hearty breakfast and then were either driven around the countryside, visited other estates on the peninsula, went to Half Moon Bay for a picnic or made their way back to San Francisco.[112] Notable guests between 1868 and 1875 included Mark Twain, Leland Stanford, James Flood, Admiral David Farragut and United States Vice-President Schuyler Colfax, who slept in "the-room-of-only-one-night" created just for him.[113] These successful parties smoothed the pathway for Bank of California business and allowed Ralston to showcase what sort of opulent lifestyle might be achieved in California.

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[107] MacCrisken, 24; and Lyman, 101-102.
[108] Tilton, 186.
[109] Burlingame had been serving as the United States minister in China since 1861. When he lost that position in 1867 the Chinese promptly hired him to be their envoy. Lavender, 257-258; and Lyman, 98; and Los Angeles *Herald* (3 October 1875).
[110] Atherton, 274.
[111] Tilton, 185.
[112] Lyman, 106; and Tilton, 193-194.
[113] Ralston once had a room added onto the back of one of his San Francisco residences for a one-night party and had workmen tear it down the following day. Lyman, 101.



In 1874 Eadweard Muybridge photographed the State Dining Room and the original ballroom, note the skylight from which three chandeliers were suspended.

Cipriani had first landscaped the property beginning in 1854, adding "a dense grove of trees" to the native oaks already growing on site.[114] In addition to the aforementioned fruit trees and grapes, Cipriani also "planted groves of lime and ilex and laid out box-bordered parterres of heliotrope, phlox and jasmine."[115] In 1867, while 100 workers sawed and hammered away on new construction, twenty gardeners also worked to expand the landscaping, adding "flower gardens and walks" to the terraces.[116] Ralston had planted "camellias, oleander, crape-myrtle, laurel and lilac, [which] billowed about the foundations like an evergreen sea."[117] "Rose-lined walks and great greeneries of many varieties" wound between the mansion and other outbuildings, including at least two greenhouses.[118]

Green vases of rare Chinese pottery planted with geraniums were placed on stairs leading from one terrace to another; vases within the interior promenades, the conservatory, the dining tables and the bedrooms overflowed with lilies, gardenias and rare begonias grown in the greenhouses.[119] Along the driveway running up from the road Ralston had a double row of pine and cedar trees planted for a quarter-mile to act as a wind break, along with a bamboo hedge.[120] Seeds and plants were grown on the estate and also imported along with the household goods: "Choice flowering shrubs from South

[114] Lyman, 98.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Tilton, 186; and Dana, 213.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Tilton, 191; and Lavender, 254.
[119] Ibid.; and Lyman, 101; and Florence Atherton Eyre, Reminiscences of Peninsula Gardens from 1860-1890, (San Francisco Garden Club, 1933), 5.
[120] Tilton, 182.

America and the tropic isles of the Pacific; bulbs from Holland, lilies from Rome and peacocks and swans from Oriental lands."[121] Turf, a rarity in Ralston's time due to the cost of providing irrigation in California's Mediterranean climate, was planted judiciously and, in the popular Gardenesque style, used to highlight rare specimens of trees and shrubs. Writer and gardener Florence Atherton Eyre later noted: "It was in a great measure due to Mr. Ralston's hospitality that the fame of California's fruits and flowers was first spread throughout the East."[122]



One of the twenty gardeners (*right*) mowing a patch of lawn at Belmont.

[121] Lyman, 101-102.
[122] Eyre, 5.



The glass lights of one of the greenhouses can be seen between the trees, south of the house.



Lizzie Ralston (*far left, upper step*) enjoying the sun with friends.

Gaynor designed the 400-room Grand Hotel, located on Market Street in San Francisco, for Ralston in 1870. It was a successful financial venture and Gaynor's ability to avoid the inevitable dark corridors and unventilated rooms darkened by gaslight use was noted: "Too much praise cannot be given to J.P. Gaynor, the architect, whose genius has raised this magnificent pile. There is not one room in which the

sun does not shine."[123] By 1872 Ralston had decided to build "the most beautiful hotel in the world; a hotel such as no other city could boast."[124] He was anxious to utilize Gaynor's experience with creating light-filled interiors and the addition of passenger elevators, allowing what would become the Palace Hotel to soar an unprecedented seven stories high west of the Rocky Mountains.[125] Some of the features Gaynor designed for Belmont were repeated with the Palace Hotel design, beginning with relatively "plain walls [that] were only the hard outer tegument of the Palace's inner glory."[126] Like Belmont, the Palace's best attributes were "inside of the edifice."[127]

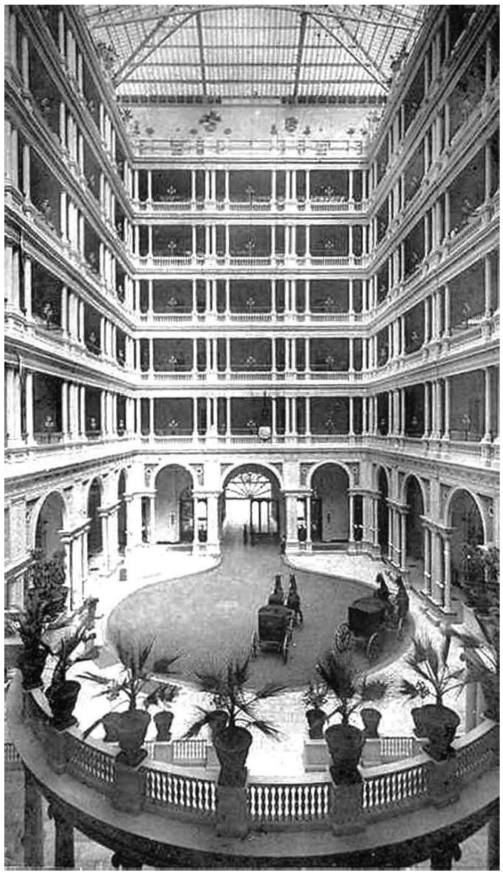


The Palace Hotel occupied one quarter of a city block with 700 guest rooms. Note the sky bridge (*far left*) that connected the second floor of the Palace with the second floor of the Grand, allowing guests to walk from one building to the other.

The strongest similarity was in Gaynor's use of skylights and bay windows for each room, allowing natural light to pour into the corridors and the guest rooms. The center of the building featured a courtyard with a turnaround, where horses and buggies dropped off and picked up passengers and

[123] Mipaas, 12.
[124] Lyman, 208.
[125] Mipaas, 16.
[126] The ubiquitous bay windows initially inspired unflattering comparisons to carbuncles before the hotel, much like today's Transamerica Pyramid, evolved over time from perceived eyesore to beloved icon status. Lyman, 222.
[127] Mipaas, 5.

luggage. It replicated the porte-cochere's function of sheltering passengers from heat or rain but was located inside the building so as not to block street traffic. A glass roof, or skylight, covered the court; it also allowed natural light to beam down into the center of the building. Some descriptions of Belmont describe the lobby and gallery as scaled-down copies of court and lobby features at the hotel but the mansion clearly was designed before Ralston conceived of building the Palace.[128] The promenades at Belmont were replicated in the Palace hallways, particularly the Maple Hall. The passenger elevators were more technically advanced and more resembled rooms, relying on a hydraulic system to transport thirty people at a time.[129] Gas was used at the Palace at it was at Belmont, traveling through 20 miles of pipe to main jets that each fed 100 single jets at a time.[130] Ralston had a telegraph installed between Belmont and the Bank of California; a telegraph was installed at the Palace to facilitate business calls. The luxurious décor found within the hotel had first been created at Belmont; Ralston spared no expense with either endeavor.



Natural light flooded through the Palace Hotel's glass roof and bay windows. Note the use of palms as décor, just as flowers and plants were integral to Belmont's interior. The Garden Palm Court replaced the turnaround as a dining area in 1904.

[128] MacCrisken, 19-20.
[129] Mipaas, 16.
[130] Ibid.

Another singularity was the failed cistern system located underneath Belmont.[131] Fire and earthquakes were already on San Francisco's radar with the 1868 temblor a recent reminder of how vital fire safety was. Belmont's cistern system did not work because not enough proximate water was available. Ralston drilled artesian wells located in the Palace's sub-basement that pumped 130,000 gallons of water into seven tanks. The water was used for plumbing and, if needed to fight fire, could be shot through jets mounted on the roof. While most of San Francisco had almost no access to water immediately after the 18 April 1906 earthquake struck at 5:13 a.m., the Palace Hotel stood undaunted as water cascaded through the roof jets for six hours. People stood in the streets and marveled at the available water and the Stars and Stripes floating above the roof through the smoke: "For hundreds of people, the water and the emblem symbolized the city's refusal to concede defeat."[132] Inevitably the water ran out and the interior caught on fire. The original shell of the building was razed in 1907 and the new Palace Hotel was designed by George W. Kelham; Gaynor had died in 1888. While considered a luxury hotel today and still beloved for Sunday brunches served in the "new" Garden Court, Kelham's design was more prosaic than Gaynor's and the new interiors did not reflect Ralston's original resplendent style and scale.

In early 1873 Ralston's father-in-law, John Fry, covered $3,500,000 of loan default owed to the Bank of California, taking on the securities for indemnifying the debt.[133] Ralston was not officially censured—even though some of the indebtedness came from his own investments—but Mills resigned as bank president, cautioning Ralston to curb his reckless spending and stock speculations. Ralston, no longer cashier but now president, was unperturbed and launched into building the Palace at the end of the year, as even more Comstock millions continued to flow. However, in early 1875 the stock market and California banks, including the Bank of California, suffered a cash drain.[134] Ralston's tide of good fortune relentlessly turned downward as both personal and bank losses began to exponentially rise.

The price of silver bullion had fallen, labor wages had risen, the San Francisco Stock and Exchange Board had enjoyed dazzling success in 1874 that began to decline that November and in May 1875 the Bank of Nevada of San Francisco filed papers to open with $5,000,000 in capital.[135] For the first time, the Bank of California faced a strong bank rival created by four men—John McKay, James Fair, James Flood and William O'Brien—one of whom was a significant Bank of California depositor. Two of San Francisco's newspapers, the *Call* and the *Bulletin*, had spent most of 1874 and 1875 bitterly calling Ralston out for his role as a monopolistic banker with powerful business ties—referred to as the Bank Crowd or, more directly, Ralston's Ring—and there was a growing desire among some Bank of California board members to pursue their own individual visions for the bank that did not include Ralston as president.[136] After two weeks of rumors the unthinkable happened; a severe San Francisco stock market

[131] Mipaas, 16.
[132] Gordon Thomas and Max Morgan Witts, *The San Francisco Earthquake* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1971), 113.
[133] Makley, 104.
[134] Makley, 111.
[135] Tilton, 324, 326, 338.
[136] Tilton, 338-339.

run sent local investors flocking to the Bank of California where only $1.4 million in coin resided in the vaults. The stock market run precipitated the bank run, forcing Ralston to order the Bank of California's iron doors closed on Thursday, 26 August 1875, at 2:35 pm with only $40,000 still in the bank's possession.[137] Police escorted customers out and had to disperse the crowd afterward while Ralston gave an interview to a *Daily Alta* reporter, telling him business was suspended.[138]



A San Francisco newspaper rendition of the fateful run on the Bank of California.

The following morning Ralston called a meeting of directors and admitted to owing the bank some four million dollars, along with another five and one-half million dollars due to other creditors. He asked for time to make good on his debts and put forward a plan for instant rehabilitation of the bank. The outraged directors, including Mills, instead demanded his resignation. Astonished that men he considered longtime personal friends and business partners were not willing to let him repair the damage, Ralston wrote a one-sentence note of resignation, pulled the bank keys out of his pocket to place them on his desk and walked out of the building.[139]

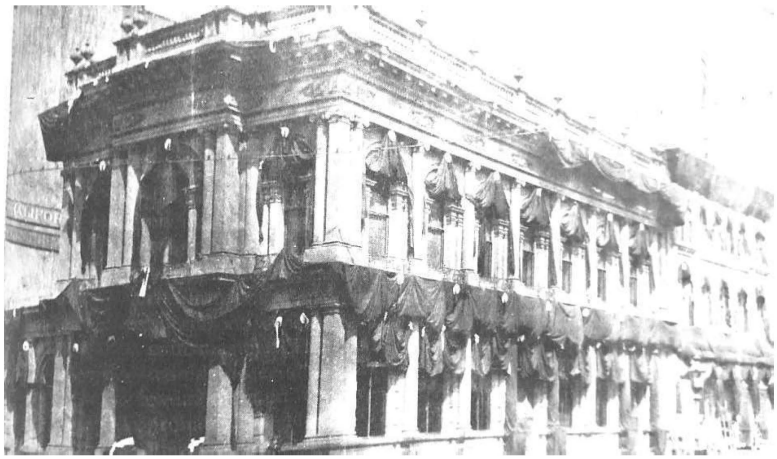
He soon ran into his personal physician, Dr. John Pitman, and asked him to join him in a swim off North Beach as the afternoon weather was swelteringly hot. Ralston had swum in the Bay on a regular basis to keep fit since he had moved to San Francisco some twenty-one years earlier. Alarmed at Ralston's

[137] Tilton, 342-342; and Lavender, 376.
[138] Tilton, 342-344.
[139] Lyman, 306.

extremely flushed appearance Pitman warned him against swimming in the cold Bay waters while so overheated. Ralston shrugged off his friend's concern, saying that he felt "like a schoolboy off for a holiday" since resigning his presidency.[140] Ralston had earlier assured friend George Dodge:

> I'm beginning at bedrock again…No depositor is going to lose a penny…I'm going to deed over my entire holdings to Sharon within the hour so that a disinterested party can realize as much as possible to protect our depositors. He's the man to handle it—and I know there will be a surplus after every obligation is met.[141]

Ralston continued walking the two miles to North Beach, resting when shade provided respite from the unusually hot weather. After changing clothes at the Neptune Bath House, he dove off the wharf and swam past the moored steamer Bullion. An idle engineer, Martin Clarke, watched him pass the boat, then became alarmed when Ralston ceased swimming and began struggling.[142] Clarke quickly lowered a painter but it took him five minutes to reach Ralston, who was by then floating face down. He pulled him into the boat by his hair and headed straight to shore. Several men on the beach performed CPR for forty-five minutes before they finally conceded defeat. As word spread a group of friends procured a pine coffin and carried Ralston's lifeless body to his Nob Hill mansion.



Directors had the Bank of California draped in black crepe following Ralston's death.

Rumors of suicide by either drowning or poison were rampant, if true the stunned Lizzie Ralston would not receive a $68,000 life insurance payout. The Coroner's Jury ruled accidental death due to apoplexy—what today would be called a stroke—as there was surprisingly little water in the lungs and congestion had swollen the brain.[143] The chemist Louis Falkenau found no poison in the stomach contents, which laid to rest the rumor Ralston had poisoned himself before diving into the Bay.[144] When

[140] Lyman, 308.
[141] Dana, 359.
[142] Dana, 361.
[143] Dana, 264.
[144] This same chemist would test the mineral water laced with commercial strychnine left on Jane Stanford's bedside table in January 1905. Lavender, 381.

he was buried at the Lone Mountain cemetery a procession six miles long trailed behind the cortege, made up of 50,000 people from every walk of life in San Francisco, many of them employees or beneficiaries of Ralston's generosity. Some 3,000 people spent the night at the graveside, walking back home after the sun rose the following morning.[145]

William Sharon and Family (1875 – 1895)

The man Ralston deeded his property to was longtime friend and business partner William Sharon. Sharon was a good friend of John Fry, Ralston's erstwhile father-in-law. When Sharon was swindled out of his entire earnings in 1863, the victim of an illegal stock manipulation, Ralston purchased what real estate he had, advanced him $250 per month to live on and ultimately hired him to run the Virginia City branch of the Bank of California.[146] The two men spent the next twelve years as partners on numerous ventures, deliberately creating "vertical monopolies of transportation, timber, mines and mills" in the Comstock Lode.[147] They were polar opposites; while the gregarious Ralston was tall, always elegantly dressed and greatly admired, Sharon was barely five foot six inches, wore drab black broadcloth and did not possess Ralston's natural affinity to impress others.[148] Ralston utterly trusted Sharon to deal squarely with his debts and assets when he signed them over on the morning of his death.[149]



William Sharon partnered with Ralston on numerous ventures that earned them millions of dollars.

Ralston's trust was sadly misplaced; Sharon had deliberately caused the stock manipulations that resulted in the subsequent run on the Bank of California, depositing his own windfall into Wells Fargo.[150] When he stood vigil with other Ralston cronies before the burial he told bank secretary Stephen Franklin, "Best thing he could have done."[151] When John McKay expressed sorrow Ralston couldn't be revived, Sharon had retorted, "For a few minutes I was afraid they would!"[152] The stunned and profane

[145] Dana, 368.
[146] Makley, 14-15.
[147] Makley, 55.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Makley, 123.
[150] Tilton, 392.
[151] Makley, 121.
[152] Lyman, 367.

McKay sputtered, "Why, the little son-of-a-bitch—he'd never have made a penny if not for Billy Ralston!"[153] While Sharon was also heard professing to spend every penny of his own fortune to make good on Ralston's debts, in reality he went to the Bank of California and destroyed their original partner agreement, hoping to avoid being financially liable for his legitimate share of Ralston's monetary obligations.[154] He offered varying amounts on the dollar to Ralston's creditors, including the Bank of California, then claimed nothing remained of the estate for Ralston's widow and children.[155]



Mills, Sharon and other Bank of California directors met in this parlor at Belmont to sort out if the Bank of California could be salvaged in the days following Ralston's unexpected death. They successfully reopened the bank in October 1875.

However, some of Ralston's friends and the widow herself did not believe him, as Sharon still held title to the Belmont estate, the Pine Street mansion, the Palace Hotel—nearly completed and ready to open—and numerous other Ralston properties, companies and mining stocks, both inside and outside of San Francisco. Another Ralston partner, Asbury Harpending, believed Ralston's total assets had amounted to some $15,000,000 while his debts totaled $9,500.00.[156] As for Lizzie Ralston, in December 1876 she hired Ralston's attorney, William Barnes, to work with Ralston's one surviving brother, A.J. Ralston, to settle her share of the estate with Sharon. He refused to show the account books and Mrs. Ralston was eventually persuaded by Fry and Ralston to sign over any claim to the estate in July 1877

[153] Dana, 366.
[154] Makley, 121.
[155] Makley, 131-132, 136-137.
[156] Makley, 131.

after Sharon gave her some $85,000 in cash and the thirty acres Little Belmont sat on.[157] Remodeling of Little Belmont had begun in January 1876 and a San Francisco newspaper reported in July 1876:

> The *Alta California* is happy to be able to announce to the many friends of the late William C. Ralston that his family are settled in a comfortable country home, situated in the lovely Belmont Valley, near the villa made famous by the former residence of the deceased gentleman. The princely liberality of Senator William Sharon has been the means of arranging the details of a step so gratifying to all the friends of the family.[158]

Sharon announced that Belmont—"the wonder of the West Coast" and one of three of "the most magnificently hospitable mansions in the United States"—would become an adjunct to the Palace Hotel.[159] But by the end of 1876 he instead moved son Frederick, aged nineteen, and daughter Flora, aged fifteen, there; his wife, Maria Malloy Sharon, had died on 14 May 1875.[160] Eldest daughter Clara had married in 1874 from her parent's opulent Sutter Street home, which Sharon sold to Comstock King William O'Brien in January 1876 for $212,500.[161]

Sharon moved into a top-floor suite at the Palace Hotel and continued to use Belmont for occasional weekend parties and daughter Flora's lavish 1880 wedding. However, socialite Amelia Ransome Neville was not impressed by Sharon's 1879 Belmont party held for ex-President Ulysses S. Grant despite a $40,000 price tag: "a grand banquet and ball with many extravagant details…but something was missing, some flourish or touch of romance which in Ralston's day had lent character to what might have been mere theatrical display. Belmont had become conventionally plutocratic."[162] Sharon reputedly added a room to Belmont's northeast corner to serve as a banquet hall for the Grant feast; it was later referred to as the "Grant Room."[163]

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[157] By November 1877 Mrs. Ralston was convinced Sharon, Barnes (once Ralston's attorney, he later became Sharon's attorney), Fry and A.J. Ralston had defrauded her. She sued Sharon and he finally settled out of court for an undisclosed amount in 1882, supposedly some $250,000 in cash and property. Further litigation ensued but Mrs. Ralston never received any additional money. The Odd Fellows sued Sharon in 1884 and a court-ordered examination of the books showed Ralston had indeed owned several millions in assets beyond his debt. Makley, 137-137, 140-141.

[158] Mrs. Ralston did not spend much time living at Little Belmont. She traveled abroad and was pilloried by the newspapers in late 1878 for squandering $120,000 of her inheritance, supposedly under the influence of a married con man. She moved to El Dorado County with her adult sons and teen-aged daughter in 1883. She lived there for decades, finally moving back to San Francisco and living in the residential Hotel Drisco before her death at age ninety-two in 1929. San Mateo *Times Gazette* (29 January 1876); and *Daily Alta California* (11 July 1876); and New York *Tribune* (13 December 1877, 5 January 1878); and "A Lady Spendthrift," Sacramento *Daily Union* (28 November 1878); and San Francisco *Morning Press* (22 October 1880); and Placer *Argus* (18 September 1883); and "Funeral Rites Held in S.F. for Mrs. Ralston," Oakland *Tribune* (30 November 1929).

[159] Makley, 137.

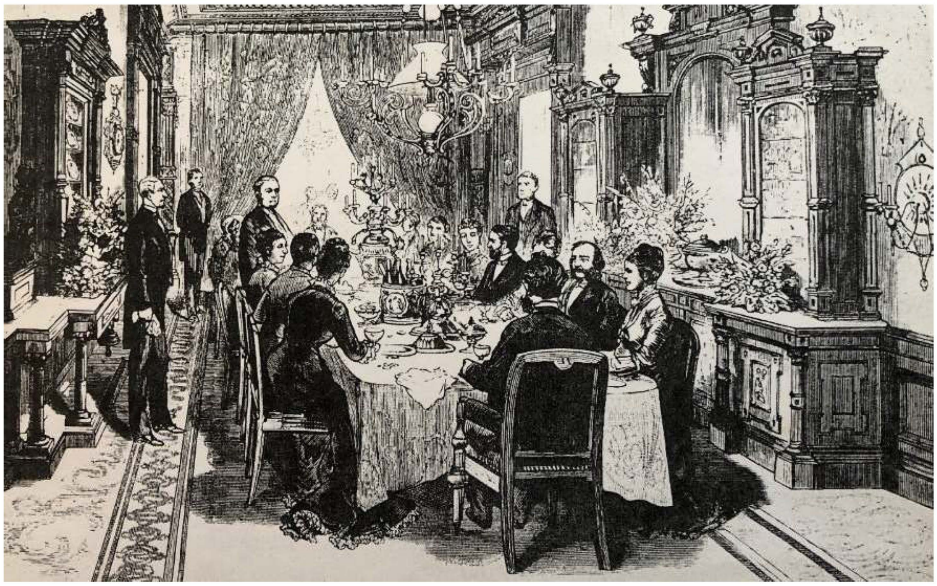
[160] Makley, 110, 137.

[161] San Francisco *Monitor* (29 January 1876).

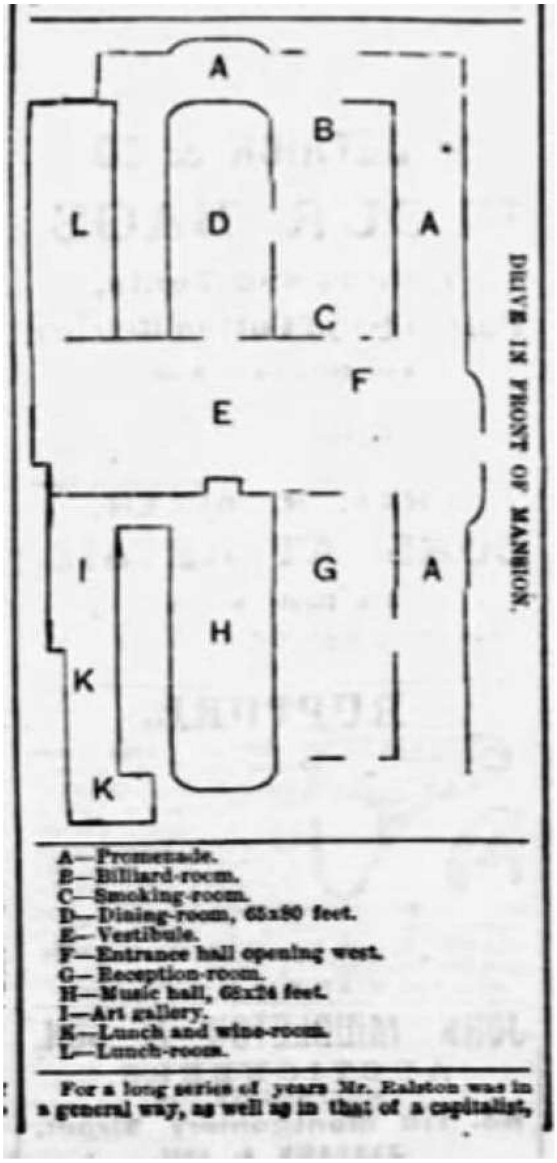
[162] Neville, 205; and MacCrisken, 27.

[163] A conservator's assessment of Belmont noted an 1879 addition they did not identify as Grant's banquet hall—"possibly to be used as an art gallery" —and they hypothesized Sharon merely finished a possibly incomplete construction project started during Ralston's lifetime due to "the quality of woodwork and detailing." Sister Anthony, "From San Jose to Belmont," unpublished memoir, Notre Dame de Namur Province House Archives; and Carey & Co., Ralston Hall, Belmont, CA: Historic Structure Report (2001), 10-11.

Sharon may have kept Ralston's properties and tried to emulate his role as an expansive host, but Sharon would never earn the public regard Ralston had enjoyed during his lifetime. Even when details of Ralston's practice of co-mingling funds and overissued bank stocks at the Bank of California were made public after his death—two illegal and scandalous practices even when regulations were still minimal—the people of San Francisco still admired Ralston's memory.



Ex-President Grant's banquet at Belmont in October 1879 was held in a room added on to the mansion for the occasion.



A ground floor plan in the 24 Dec 1880 San Francisco Examiner shows Sharon changed the functions of some of the rooms.

Long before Sharon was widowed in 1875, he spent much of the previous ten years away from his family while working in Nevada's Comstock Lode, and never lacked for paid female companionship during that time.164 After he was elected a United States senator from Nevada in 1875—despite his primary home being located in San Francisco—much of the public was shocked when the widowed Sharon was arrested on adultery charges in San Francisco on 8 September 1883.[165] He had been charged by former paramour Sarah Althea Hill, who claimed they had married in 1880 and that Sharon had requested the

[164] Makley, 159.

[165] Sharon's career as a senator was notorious for being bought with mining stocks in the first place—although all senatorial seats seemed to have been earned in a similar fashion at the time—and because he spent almost no time attending Congress, much less voting in Congress, during his six-year tenure (1875-1881). Ibid.; and Makley, 156.

marriage be kept secret for two years.[166] The charge identified nine paid women Sharon was alleged to have been with over the past three years, including one Gertie Dietz who in 1880 had delivered a baby boy who "looked like a little 'Sen.'"[167]



Sarah Althea Hill was called the Rose of Sharon by the press during the Sharon vs. Sharon trial.

Hill had met Sharon outside the Bank of California in 1880; she claimed she asked him as a banker to invest $7,500 of inheritance money. He was soon paying her $500 per month and had installed her at the Grand Hotel, one of his Ralston properties.[168] She used the sky bridge—later dubbed the Bridge of Sighs during the trial—between the Grand and the Palace to spend her nights with Sharon but the relationship went sour in the fall of 1882. Hill refused to leave the Grand until Sharon ordered the carpets ripped up from the floors and the doors removed from the hinges.[169] The trial to establish whether they had married or not in 1880 began in 1884, with Sharon claiming the lawsuit had no merit. He acknowledged she was his mistress but was adamant they had never married.[170] Sharon's invitation to Hill to attend his daughter's wedding reception at Belmont, plus allowing Hill to act as his hostess at Belmont house parties was part of the reason the judge found in Hill's favor, in addition to her producing a written contract and a series of "Dear Wife" notes purportedly written and signed by Sharon.[171]

[166] Robert H. Kroninger, *Sarah and the Senator* (Berkeley: Howell-North, 1964), 20.
[167] Makley, 178.
[168] Makley, 180.
[169] Kroninger, 122.
[170] Kroninger, 19.
[171] Makley, 165, 183.

Sharon promptly filed an appeal, intent on proving the contract and notes were partial forgeries but he died at the Palace Hotel at the age of sixty-four on 13 November 1885.[172] Sharon had become estranged from his two surviving adult children during the trial, despite their coming to stay at Belmont during the summer of 1885, and neither had any interest in living in the United States.[173] His son, Frederick Sharon, moved to Paris with his wife for much of the next fifteen years and did not return to the Bay Area until 1910, when the couple moved into their Sharon Heights estate in Menlo Park.[174] Youngest daughter Flora—oldest daughter Clara had died in childbirth in 1882—was already living in England, married to British baronet Sir Thomas Fermor-Hesketh in 1880; she lived in England after her marriage for the rest of her life. The Belmont dairy had already been moved to nearby Burlingame in 1885; for the next ten years the house sat empty, cared for by a skeleton staff.[175] In January 1889, the San Mateo Times Gazette noted that the furniture of Belmont was to be sent to New York; a separate item claimed Belmont was to become "a young ladies seminary."[176] These decisions, if they were more than mere rumors, were made by Sharon's widowed son-in-law and sole executor, Francis Newlands, who brought his three daughters to the estate for an afternoon visit in June 1889.[177] Three months later, nearly four years after Sharon's death, the San Jose Mercury News wrote:

> Negotiations are about consummated for turning the Sharon place at Belmont into a female seminary and college. Homer S. Sprague, President of the University of Dakota, will be at the head of the new institution. The Sharon place is the one known as the old Ralston mansion.[178]

Belmont underwent renovations for a month or so when the deal collapsed and the Spragues chose instead an Oakland hotel as the site for their school.[179] The Belmont supervisor, a Mr. Bishop whose wife was related to Maria Sharon, and a handful of staff continued to maintain the estate; Bishop no doubt notified Newlands of plumbing problems because in 1893: "The Sharon estate is laying new water pipe

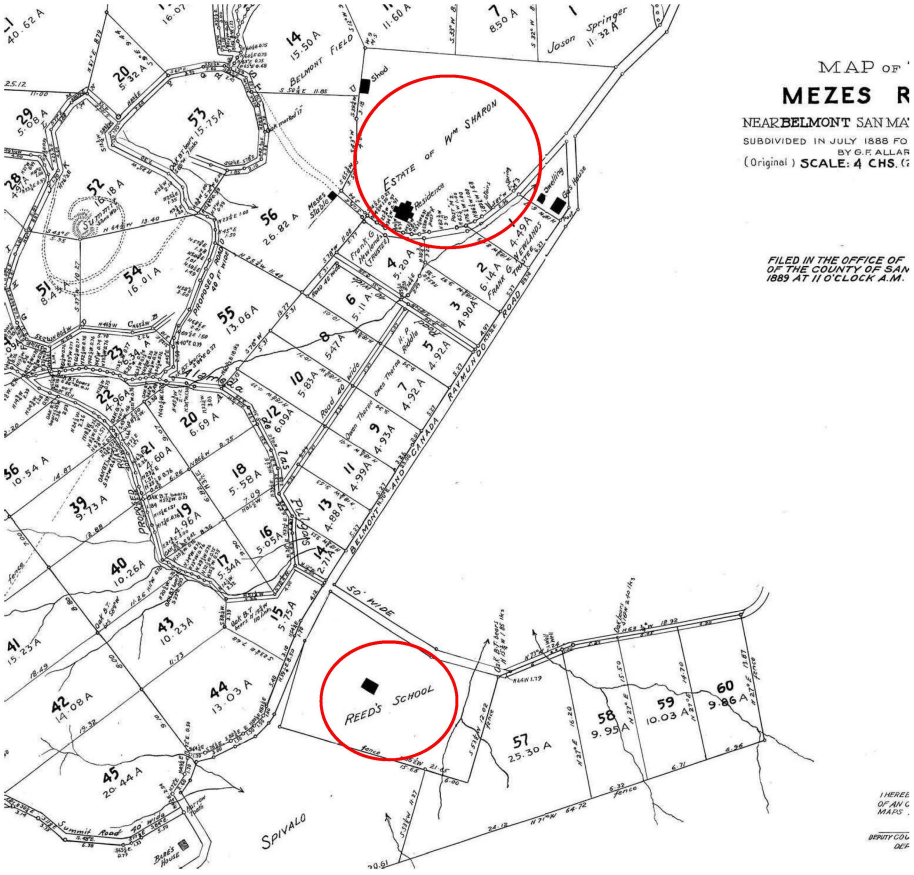
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[172] The appellate judge found for Sharon, claiming that even though she was escorted by him to public events at Belmont, something he had never done with any previous mistresses, neither was the fact that they lived in separate hotels, sky bridge or no, indicative of a married relationship. Hill ended up marrying her defense attorney in 1886, the notorious David Terry of San Francisco's illegal Broderick-Terry duel when the pro-South Terry killed Broderick over the issue of slavery in California in 1859. Terry's fearsome reputation would lead to his own death. He slapped the judge who ultimately found for Sharon in 1889 and the judge's bodyguard shot him dead, claiming he saw Terry reaching for his ever-present bowie knife. Terry was not carrying any weapon, but the bodyguard was ultimately found innocent of murder. The widowed Hill ended up living in a mental asylum for the rest of her life—she was diagnosed with schizophrenia—but she appears to have been treated well and to have coped better in a stable institutional setting that allowed her to freely roam the grounds. Makley, 199, 206-207.
[173] Sharon remained close with son-in-law Francis Newlands, who was listed as co-executor of the estate with son Frederick. Frederick soon officially dropped his responsibility as executor, leaving Newlands to deal with the estate on his own. San Mateo *Times Gazette* (25 April 1885, 16 May 1885, 18 July 1885).
[174] Makley, 200, 208.
[175] MacCrisken, 27.
[176] Ibid.
[177] San Mateo *Daily News Leader* (1 June 1889).
[178] San Jose *Mercury News* (22 September 1889).
[179] San Mateo *Times Gazette* (25 April 1891).

from the Ralston dam to the Sharon residence."[180] Finally, in 1895, Newlands made the decision to sell the estate rather than try to lease a white elephant that cost a great deal of money to properly maintain.

Mrs. Jennie C. Bull (and Family) and Radcliffe Hall (1895 – 1900)

Mrs. Bull, widow of financier Alpheus Bull who was once a business associate of both Ralston and Sharon, purchased Belmont with the intention of also turning the mansion with fifty bedrooms into a seminary for young ladies. Little Belmont, which Lizzie Ralston had sold back in May 1885, had already been turned into a boy's school. In August 1885 Professor William T. Reid, recently president of the University of California, opened the "Belmont School for Boys"—more familiarly referred to as "the Reid School" —an elite academy that boarded boys aged nine through eighteen.[181] As the school increased in size Reid put in a major sewer system; Mrs. Bull paid a $25 fee to connect Belmont's plumbing to it.[182]



Detail of a Mezes property map shows both Belmont and Little Belmont, identified as Reed's [sic=Reid's] School.

Mrs. Bull, the mother of one son and three daughters, intended for her school—Radcliffe Hall—to provide an excellent education for young women headed for college. The education of her own daughters was her impetus; she wished "to secure for her daughters the training which is afforded in

[180] San Mateo *Times Gazette* (13 May 1893); and San Mateo *Times Gazette* (18 March 1899).
[181] San Francisco *Call* (29 September 1895).
[182] San Mateo *Times Gazette* (27 September 1895).

the best preparatory schools in the East…"[183] She advertised in the San Francisco *Call* and offered an illustrated catalog of courses. In 1897 the *Jewish News of Northern California* noted:

> "Radcliffe Hall, a school for the education of girls and young women, was established in Belmont, California, several years ago by Mrs. Alpheus Bull of San Francisco. This beautiful educational institution is situated twenty-five miles south of San Francisco and is known as the Ralston place. Many still remember the great reception tendered Ulysses S. Grant in 1879 at the Ralston mansion on his return to the United States from his trip around the world. The cheerful home and delightful surroundings at this school combine to make it a pleasure for a daughter to take a course of study at Radcliffe Hall. Mrs. Bull has a corps of competent college women chosen for their ability in their particular departments. It is the aim of the school to provide such preparatory training as will fit students for any college now open to women in America. For those students who do not intend to go to college a course of study is carefully arranged to fit their individual needs. The grounds are strikingly beautiful, shaded by fine old oaks and pines, with magnolia and palm and handsomely terraced gardens. The climate of Belmont is delightfully mild, and free from penetrating winds and fogs which often make San Francisco so uncomfortable. It is the purpose of Radcliffe Hall to maintain a high standard of scholarship by establishing in the pupils the habit of correct, independent thinking, and the government of the school is designed to give the greatest freedom to the growth of the individual. Parents wishing to combine a first-class education for their daughters, coupled with healthful surroundings and home comforts, should investigate the merits of Radcliffe Hall and correspond with Mrs. Bull for further particulars."[184]



Radcliffe Hall students posing in front of one of the tunnels Ralston had built as part of his water system *(left)*. Radcliffe Hall students with the mansion standing behind the trees (*right*).

[183] McNamee, 320.
[184] "Radcliffe Hall," Jewish News of Northern California (6 August 1897).

Sister Mary Domenica noted in *Light in the Valley*:

> Here some forty girls were instructed by graduates of Radcliffe and other eastern colleges. Mrs. Bull insisted on a home atmosphere; classes were held under the trees or under the oaks, and the Chinese cook kept a cookie jar in readiness for hungry girls who knocked at the kitchen door. But the Radcliffe prospectus was far from casual. Its detailed high school program offered both college preparatory and final courses. Here is no slipping imperceptibly into more advanced work; this preparatory course led definitely to matriculation and a new beginning. Without college charter, and with no accepted public image, Mrs. Bull had set up a contemporary program, one certain of acceptance by the universities.[185]

Although the school only ran for two or three years, it would appear Mrs. Bull's ill health played a factor in its closure rather than a lack of success or funds. She died at the age of fifty-five in November 1898; the announcement in the newspaper inferred the school had already closed.[186] Having left an estate worth over $200,000 equally to her four children, the Belmont property was appraised for $33,710.00, with furniture and art appraised separately at $2,030.95, which indicates that much of the original Ralston furniture and artwork was no longer in the house.[187] The Bull heirs hung on to the property for nearly two years before selling it to Dr. Alden M. Gardner for $35,000 in August 1900 once clear title was established.[188]

The Gardner Sanitarium (1900 – 1921)

Dr. Gardner was a noted alienist, a Victorian term used to identify a psychiatrist who assisted patients in overcoming nervous disorders responsible for mental alienation. He was born in Watertown, New York in 1849, and studied at the St. Louis Medical College in Missouri before coming to California in 1877.[189] He first practiced medicine in Oakland and married wife Elizabeth there in 1885. The couple moved to Calistoga where Gardner practiced as a medical doctor and neurologist; he was later appointed superintendent to the Napa Insane Asylum in 1890.[190] He also taught as a full professor courses in legal medicine, mental and nervous diseases at the prestigious Cooper Medical College in San Francisco at the same time he purchased the Belmont property to open a private sanitarium.[191] He was determined to create a "great institution," a "hospital for the reception and treatment of persons

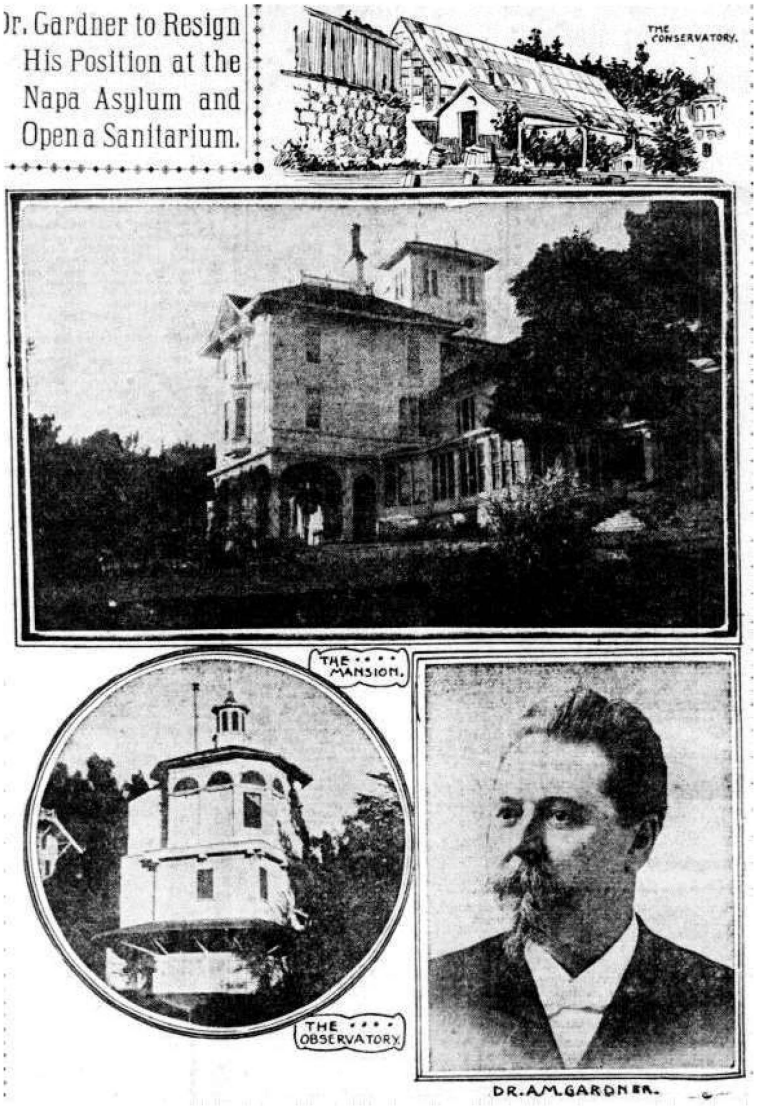
[185] McNamee, 233.
[186] San Mateo Times Gazette (19 November 1898).
[187] San Mateo Times Gazette (24 December 1898).
[188] MacCrisken, 28.
[189] "Prominent Doctor Dies," San Francisco Call (30 June 1913).
[190] Ibid.
[191] The Gardner Sanitarium inspired the creation of several sanitariums within the town of Belmont: the California Sanitarium in 1910, the Alexander Sanitarium and the Howard Sanitarium in 1924 and the Twin Pines Sanitarium in 1925. "Evaluation of Cooper Medical College 1901-1902," Stanford University School of Medicine and Predecessor Schools: An Historical Perspective, Stanford Medical History Center, https://lane.stanford.edu/med-history/wilson/chap27.html (accessed 17 May 2022); and MacCarthy, 64-66.

suffering from bodily, mental or nervous diseases; no chronic insane cases will be admitted to the sanitarium."[192] The latter claim would fall by the wayside.

Appalled at the horrible conditions at Napa, where staff were untrained and food for patients was budgeted at three cents per meal, Gardner envisaged patients living in a homelike setting rather than an institutional one, hence the creation of a sanitarium rather than an asylum.[193] Patients who needed to be confined would still have access to the billiards room, the bowling alley and the gymnasium. Others had free access to fresh air and extensively landscaped grounds, where "flowers, shrubs, trees, hedges, etc. abounded and fragrance permeated the air as heavily as beauty filled the sight."[194] Gourmet meals were served on fine china in the former Ralston dining room; all of the Gardner family members ate with their "guests" and a Victrola was set up in the lobby so that music spilled throughout the ground floor of the mansion.[195]

In September 1900, the local newspaper reported Gardner "has requested the company to make a survey of the premises with a view of wiring the buildings. An electric motor is to be used for pumping water, while electric sadirons will be used exclusively in the laundry which is to be attached to the institution…"[196]

[192] "Ralston's Belmont Palace Will Become a Madhouse," San Francisco Call (24 August 1900); and San Mateo Times Gazette (19 January 1901).
[193] Michael Svanevik and Shirley Burgett, *A Century of Medicine in San Mateo County* (San Mateo: San Mateo Medical Association, 2005), clipping in Gardner Sanitarium, Ownership and Biographical Research, Ralston Hall, Box 1, Notre Dame de Namur University Archives.
[194] Lorna Gardner Fosberg, untitled memoirs, Gardner Sanitarium, Ownership and Biographical Research, Ralston Hall, Box 1, Notre Dame de Namur University Archives.
[195] Svanevik and Burgett, unpaginated.
[196] San Mateo *Times Gazette* (15 September 1900).



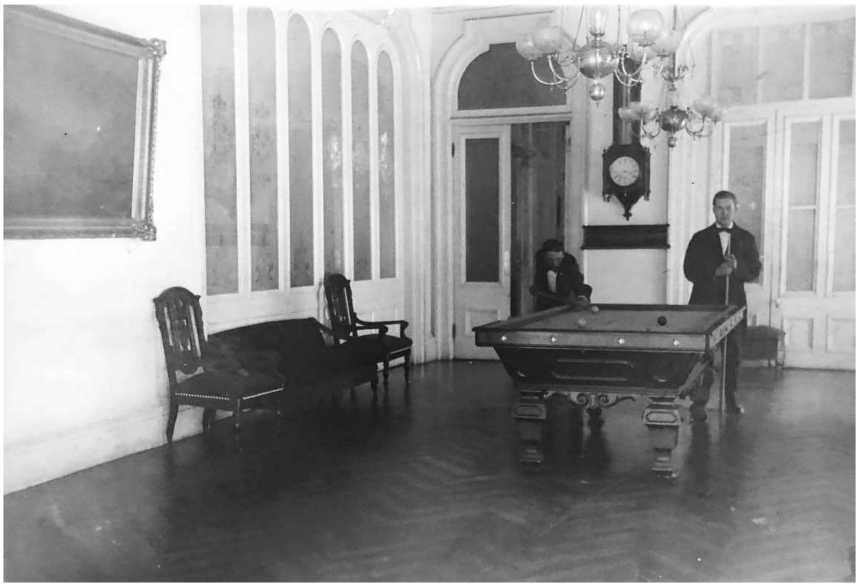
The Conservatory, the mansion, the Observatory and Dr. Gardner in 1900. Note the balustraded rooftop terrace. Access to this area was through a tower doorway. Dr. Gardner added nine dormer windows to this central roof.

Gardner had to house a large permanent staff to run the sanitarium where patients needed care twenty-four hours a day seven days a week. He added nine dormer windows—three on the north side and six on the south side of the central roof—to enable natural light to pour into bedrooms intended for either staff or patients. Gardner extended the original two-story Cipriani wing outward to the north and upward by one story.[197] He also added a second rooftop terrace on top of the new third floor. The date of these changes, assuming they took place at the same time, is unknown. The earliest possible construction would have been between the purchase date of August 1900 and the opening date of November 1901.

[197] Frank M. Stanger, *South From San Francisco* (San Mateo, CA: San Mateo County Historical Association, 1963), 99.



Note the new dormer windows, the Cipriani wing expansion with its third-floor addition, a second balustraded rooftop terrace and the change in landscaping with lawn replacing Ralston's parterres. Ralston's bowling alley is standing to the right of the mansion.



Inside the billiards room at the Gardner Sanitarium.

Patients were boarded for various maladies, including recuperation from surgery or illnesses, both mental and physical. The doctors on staff treated both physical and mental issues, including alcohol addiction. Dr. Gardner testified in court as to patients' conditions on a regular basis and also dealt with patients escaping, which caused the neighbors no little consternation.[198] A 1904 newspaper article claimed multiple staffing problems existed within three years of operation despite having a full

[198] San Mateo *Daily News Leader* (18 June 1902); and San Jose *Mercury News* (25 November 1908); and San Mateo *Daily News Leader* (29 July 1909).

complement of patients who paid $150/month for care. However, no cook stayed longer than six weeks and hash was being served three times per day to the nursing staff. Their only other food was leftovers eaten from patient's plates. Both Dr. and Mrs. Gardner were difficult employers. He had ordered her to reduce the staff to save costs; twelve male nurses quit after she told them to scrub the public room floors on their hands and knees, which they said was porter's work and diminished their authority over patients. Gardner allegedly refused to let them use the wagon to carry their luggage to the train station and ordered them to strap those patients needing confinement to their beds before they left.[199]

On 18 April 1906 much of northern California felt the effects of the San Francisco Earthquake; at the Gardner Sanitarium chimneys were damaged, putting numerous fireplaces out of use permanently.[200] In 1909 the San Mateo Medical Society held one of their many rotated meetings at Belmont, where several doctors read their papers before adjourning to the banquet room for dinner.[201] Gardner, who firmly believed in continuing education for physicians, had been a founding member and was president of the society in 1907 and 1908.[202] The Gardner Sanitarium was the most popular choice of the doctors as a meeting venue.

The 1910 United States Census devoted one full page to the Gardner Sanitarium, with Gardner and one Dr. Donald Smith identified as neurologists.[203] Prentice Sherman Gardner, identified in the 1900 census as Gardner's stepson, was listed as the secretary while daughter Ruby was still in school. Mrs. Gardner had no identified job, although other sources note she oversaw the staff at the sanitarium. There were also two male head nurses and twenty-three male nurses, three cooks, one dish washer, one porter, a coachman, a fireman (to run the boiler house), one laborer and one carpenter, with only six male patients listed.[204] Gardner's granddaughter, born at the sanitarium in 1906, remembered the staff with great fondness. Every Christmas she hand-delivered gifts to "the Chinese gardener, the Swedish stableman, the English coachman [who wore full livery when picking up patients at the train station], the Irish head waiter and waiters, the German head chef and the Welsh-American engineer, who lived with his wife in the tank house near the back terrace."[205] The following census page listed two female nurses and eight female patients with two Chinese servants, Ah Jim and Ah Say.[206] The Gardners owned

[199] "12 Nurses Refuse to Mop and Scrub Floors," San Francisco *Examiner* (8 April 1904); and *Weekly Calistogian* (15 April 1904).
[200] Richard Brandi, "Historic Resource Evaluation, Ralston Hall Renovation, Belmont, CA" (28 October 2016), 8.
[201] San Mateo *Daily News Leader* (2 September 1909).
[202] Svanevik and Burgett, unpaginated.
[203] "Alden M. Gardner," United States Census (1910), https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/1763742:7884?tid=&pid=&queryId=566eee7724b98f736c86acef3dc2197b&_phsrc=tNG35&_phstart=successSource (accessed 17 May 2022).
[204] Ibid.
[205] Gardner, untitled memoirs, unpaginated.
[206] Ibid., https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/1763742:7884?tid=&pid=&queryId=09bf8d7f3cf5f753683ce4dfdc5640d7&_phsrc=tNG36&_phstart=successSource (accessed 18 May 2022).

the property outright in 1910 so at least they were not paying a mortgage on top of their running expenses, which were considerable, despite their then charging $200/month for care.[207]



Dr. Gardner on the grounds of the sanitarium in 1910.

On 28 July 1912 daughter Ruby married in the Ralston ballroom in a ceremony markedly less elaborate than the famed Flora Sharon wedding of 1880.[208] Worn out by unrelenting responsibilities, her father suffered a nervous breakdown that year and spent the rest of his life living in a darkened bedroom, with the resident physician and his stepson running the facility.[209] In 1913 Dr. Gardner underwent brain surgery; three months later he died on 28 June 1913.[210] The sanitarium was licensed for sixty patients in 1915 but granddaughter Lorna remembered an average of twenty patients in residence at any one time.[211] She lived there from 1906 until she was twelve years of age.

The 1920 United States Census showed the Gardner Sanitarium greatly reduced in scope. It listed Mrs. A.M. Gardner as head and president of the sanitarium with her son Sherman acting as manager.[212] In addition, there was one medical doctor, Dr. W.C. Lynch, acting as superintendent, along with his mother and daughter. There were two male attendants, four female nurses, two cooks, a dish washer, a waiter, a stableman and an engineer.[213] No patients were listed, likely due to their temporary residency. In

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[207] "Claims She Owes $6554 for Care of Her Sister," San Jose *Mercury News* (24 March 1908).
[208] San Francisco *Call* (28 July 1912).
[209] Svanevik and Burgett, unpaginated.
[210] Gardner was spared his two children later divorcing. Daughter Ruby had married a bigamist with five previous wives; she was granted a divorce in 1918 while son Sherman was sued for divorce by wife Laura, citing he was an alcoholic, in 1919. San Mateo Daily News Leader (3 July 1913); and "Noted Alienist Dies After Long Illness," San Francisco Examiner (30 June 1913).
[211] Sacramento Daily Union (9 July 1915); and Gardner, untitled memoirs, unpaginated.
[212] "P.S. Gardner," United States Census (1920), Ancestry.com, https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/95401286:6061?tid=&pid=&queryId=a06e0c3fc361dff76527f29f0a4ad293&_phsrc=tNG42&_phstart=successSource (accessed 18 May 2022).
[213] Ibid.

February 1921, Sherman Gardner took out a $5,000 mortgage, putting up the property as collateral.[214] In October 1921 it was rumored the Sisters living at the Notre Dame de Namur convent in San Jose were considering buying the property from the Gardner family.[215]



Blooming agave plants flank a set of terraced stairs at the Gardner Sanitarium.

College of Notre Dame de Namur and Notre Dame de Namur University (1923 – Present)

The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur

The culturally diverse Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur had opened a girl's boarding and day school in San Jose in August 1851. The Roman Catholic congregation had been co-founded by Marie Rose Julie Billiart in Amiens, France, on 2 February 1804, when she and two other women "consecrated themselves to God and promised to devote their lives to the education of orphans and to the formation of teachers who were to go where they were needed—never fewer than two—to instruct the poor, free of charge."[216] They also then renewed their Act of Consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. They did so on the Feast of the Purification of Mary, so *Mère* Julie named the congregation the Sisters of Notre Dame (French for "Our Lady"). On 1 June 1804, she experienced a miraculous recovery from paralysis, when she walked again for the first time in twenty-two years, after praying a novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.[217]

[214] San Mateo *Daily News Leader* (24 February 1921).
[215] "Notre Dame Convent May Buy Sanitarium Property at Belmont," San Mateo Daily News Leader (29 October 1921).
216 Sister Roseanne Murphy, Julie Billiart: Woman of Courage (New York: Paulist Press, 1995), 50.
[217] Murphy, 53-55.



Saint Julie Billiart wearing her Sisters of Notre Dame habit.

Julie had been unusually devout as a child and loved nothing better than teaching other children parables and songs taught to her by her mother once her farm chores were done. She later helped support her parents by working in the fields and selling her father's cloths and lace to nearby cities. In 1774 a shot was fired through the window of her parents' home; thirty-year-old Julie was so traumatized by witnessing her father's near murder she suffered a severe shock that resulted in constant pain and weakened muscles. After suffering a fever in 1782, her feet were bled so much she was left paralyzed, often unable to speak and suffering from convulsions. Her faith only deepened despite being bedridden for years; she was visited regularly by children and others whom she continued to catechize.[218]

France was in the grip of violent upheaval leading up to the French Revolution (1789-1799) with the church under attack due to the wealth of the monasteries. When Julie's parish priest refused to sign an oath to the new government both he and she, due to her widespread reputation of Catholic piety, had to be hidden away.[219] A second escape to the city of Compiègne—Julie was accompanied by her niece Felicity, who took care of her—proved still dangerous as the city was filled with government troops. She had long been friends with the—armelite nuns who lived there; sixteen of them were sent to the guillotine in Paris. But Julie also had a vision while hiding within the city where she saw a group of women in habits clustered around a cross and heard God tell her "These are the daughters that I will give you, in an Institute which will be marked by my cross."[220] She experienced a second vision, back in Amiens in 1806, where these daughters traveled across the seas to distant lands.[221]

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[218] Ibid., 20.
[219] Sister Anne Stevenson, St. Julie Billiart, https://www.sndden.org/who-we-are/st-julie-billiart/ (accessed 27 May 2022).
[220] Ibid.
[221] Ibid.

The religious order ultimately became the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur when political circumstances forced the congregation to move from Amiens to Namur, Belgium in 1809. Despite dissension within the Catholic church and many hardships fueled by intense Catholic persecutions over the next twelve years before *Mère* Julie's death in 1816—her Sisters were forced to keep her burial place secret for fear of government desecration of her grave—there remained fifty-eight Sisters and twenty-five novices dedicated to continuing "God's work" wherever it was needed.[222] *Mère* Julie's successor, *Mère* Blin—the wealthy noblewoman Francoise Blin de Bourdan, who took the religious name of St. Joseph—who had co-founded the congregation with her, expanded the original concept of teaching reading, writing and arithmetic, in addition to catechism, to the poor to a model that embraced teaching both the poor and the wealthy by running a boarding school.[223] Both boarding and day students would pay tuition that would subsidize continued teaching of the poor at elementary, normal school and college levels.[224]

Belgian-born Father Peter de Smet had traveled to America and was known as the Apostle of the Rocky Mountains for his missionary work with Native Americans. He returned to Belgium and approached *Mère* Constantine at Notre Dame de Namur in 1843, asking that a delegation of Sisters come and teach the Cayuse Indians located in the Willamette Valley of the Oregon Territory.[225] She chose six Sisters to accompany him—Sisters Loyola Duquenne, Mary Cornelia, Mary Catherine, Mary Aloysia, Norbertine and Mary Albine—and after enduring great hardships on their way to Oregon, Mass was celebrated on the shore of the Columbia River on 15 August 1844.[226] These women would suffer even more hardships after their arrival in St. Paul, where they established a home and school for orphans and French-Indian children, and later in Oregon City, where they opened a boarding and day school for girls.[227]

In late March 1851 Sisters Loyola and Mary Catherine made the long trip down to San Francisco where they were to meet four Sisters being sent to their aid. While waiting for the delayed ship to arrive, Sister Loyola met with Bishop Joseph Alemany, who was then Bishop of Monterey, which included upper California, making him responsible for the development of a Roman Catholic presence in a new state then dominated by Protestants. He had been approached by Martin Murphy Jr. and his wife, Mary, Catholic Irish immigrants who were part of the first successful wagon train to cross the Sierra Nevada in 1844. The couple bought property from Mariano Castro in 1849 and founded what would later

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[222] Referred to as a saint before her death in 1816, Mère Julie Billiart was beatified in 1906 and canonized by Pope Paul VI in 1969. Murphy, 2, 192, 193.

[223] Published anonymously, Sister Anthony Quinlan was identified as the author of In Harvest Fields by Sister Mary Domenica. A Member of the Congregation, In Harvest Fields by Sunset Shores: The Work of the Sisters of Notre Dame on the Pacific Coast (San Francisco: Gilmartin Company, 1926), 33-34; and Sister Mary Domenica McNamee, Light in the Valley: The Story of California's College of Notre Dame (Berkeley, Howell-North Books, 1967), 291-292.

[224] A school taught primary and secondary education, an academy taught secondary and tertiary higher education, a normal school taught both children in class labs and teachers to teach and a college could offer an associate or a baccalaureate degree. Ibid.

225 In 1844 the Oregon Territory was held by squabbling American, British and Russian factions; the 1846 Oregon Treaty gave territory south of the 49th parallel to the United States and north of the 49th parallel to England.

[226] Ibid., 38, 41.

[227] McNamee, 2.

become Sunnyvale. Neither parent could read or write—the British had suppressed education in Ireland as one of many ways to subdue the native population—and wanted their children to be properly educated within Catholic institutions, thus they had a strong role in helping to create the Santa Clara College for Boys and what would eventually become the College of Notre Dame de Namur for Girls.[228] Bishop Alemany wanted Sister Loyola and her fellow Sisters to relocate from the Oregon Territory and undertake opening a Catholic girl's school somewhere outside San Francisco; the Sisters of Charity had already been promised a site within the City and there was not enough demand there to justify two schools.

Notre Dame de Namur Academy in San Jose (1851 – 1867)

Martin Murphy Jr. drove the two Sisters to various sites in San Jose, then the capital of California. It was still a rural area, with no more than thirty adobe buildings of "general drabness and disorder" in the vicinity of the old plaza and within the town limits.[229] The most promising location was out in the country, on Santa Clara Road, then a dirt road that ran between the pueblo-turned-city and the old Santa Clara Mission, where the Jesuit Father John Nobili had just started the Santa Clara College for Boys. Despite their ongoing commitment in Oregon and the comparatively high cost of living in California, not to mention making this momentous decision independent of *Mère* Constantine's knowledge, much less her permission, Sister Loyola soon purchased the first of several mustard-covered lots that would ultimately make up the ten-acre campus.[230] Some substantial financial relief soon came in the form of one small boy, an orphaned three-year-old named Jack Townsend, who with his governess and a Native American servant girl from the Townsend household, would board at the convent until he transferred to Santa Clara at the age of seven.[231]

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[228] "The Murphy Story," Sunnyvale Heritage Park Museum, https://heritageparkmuseum.org/sample-page/the-museum/murphy-story (accessed 2 June 2022).

[229] McNamee, 10; and Member, 153-155.

[230] Official approval did ultimately come from Namur based on three considerations: Could the Sisters support themselves in San Jose? Could they follow their rule and constitutions without interference from local ecclesiastical sources? Would San Jose emulate the spirit and mission of Namur? Jamila Jamison Sinlao, "Sisterhood on the Frontier: Catholic Women Religious in the San Francisco Bay Area," Ph.D. dissertation from the University of California, Santa Barbara (December 2018), 102-103.

[231] Jack Townsend's parents were Dr. John Townsend and Elizabeth Schallenberger Townsend; like the Murphys, they were also members of the Stephens-Murphy-Townsend Party who successfully crossed the High Sierra as part of a wagon train in 1844. Member, 155-156; and McNamee, 12.



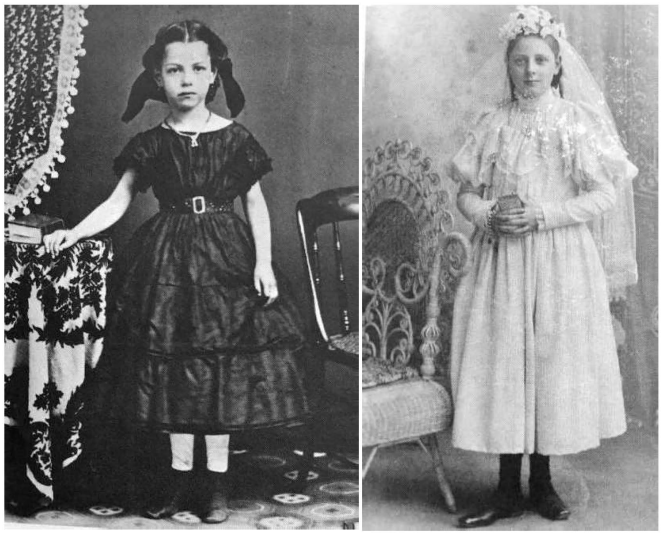
Santa Clara Avenue in San Jose when the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur first arrived in 1851.

Bertram Goodhue, then a carpenter and later a noted architect, volunteered his labor to improve the existing three-sided adobe house on the property by enclosing and expanding it. He, along with hard-working Sisters used to fending for themselves, scrabbled for scarce lumber and put up other modest frame buildings one by one. Limited in resources and funds, they soon learned that many of the initial financial pledges were nothing more than "the scraps of paper" they had been written on although the Murphys certainly came through for them repeatedly.[232] Undaunted by their very familiar state of poverty the Sisters opened an academy, a fee-paying school, intended for primarily residential and a few day students on 4 August 1851.[233]

As late registrants trickled in over the next few weeks, the Notre Dame Academy gained twenty-six boarders and twenty day-students, with classes being taught in three languages: Spanish, French and English. An emphasis on bilingualism, reflective of California's immigrant population, was part of the early curriculum.[234] This caused the Sisters, who tended to be strong in French and German, something of a challenge as they worked on increasing their ability to speak English and Spanish. Some of the other courses included mathematics, sacred and profane history, geography, astronomy, chemistry, physics, English, art, music and needlework; good conduct and diligence in catechism also earned recognition.[235] Only four women's colleges existed in the United States in 1851 and they were all back East; while the Sisters were committed to the highest standards possible, most of the girls they taught were being prepared to be good wives and mothers, pious women who would be pillars of society, with

[232] Member, 150.
[233] McNamee, 29.
[234] McNamee, 29, 31.
[235] The paying *Californio* students insisted on being taught in Spanish; while many courses overlapped in subject there was an additional emphasis for these girls in drawing, painting, instrumental music (the piano), and vocal music (singing). Member, i-v.

a few following a religious vocation.[236] The new school soon won a wide reputation; "everyone speaks of it all over California."[237]



These two students, Isabel Argüello, whose family owned *El Rancho de las Pulgas*, and Jennie Lathrop, niece of Jane and Leland Stanford, epitomized the evolving California culture encountered by the Sisters of Notre Dame.

Within two years, they had sixty boarders and forty day-students, limited to these numbers only because the Sisters and the girls were living in consistently overcrowded conditions. Sister Loyola and Sister Mary Cornelia, whom *Mère* Constantine appointed Superior at San Jose once she transferred down from Oregon, pressed forward with also opening a separate and free day school, staffed by separate teachers, for the local impoverished children from the pueblo and the outlying countryside.[238] As new Sisters were transferred to the convent and school, and as more and larger buildings went up, enrollment continued to increase and their "Poor School," later known as the "Day School," became a reality.[239] Part of the early success of the Notre Dame Academy, aside from the fact it filled a clamoring need of families who wished their daughters to be well educated, was the excellent and ever-broadening teaching skills of the various Sisters who were assigned to live and work at Notre Dame.[240]

Notre Dame de Namur College in San Jose (1868 – 1922)

Sister Mary Cornelia, with reluctant permission from Namur, sought successfully to have the school chartered by the state in June 1868. She followed shortly after William Chapman Ralston, who had helped found the University of California; he served a fourteen-year term as a non-governmental Regent and applied for the ability to issue college degrees in May 1868.[241] While both schools were granted

[236] McNamee, 41-42.
[237] McNamee, 42.
[238] Sister Mary Cornelia had been held and blessed when she was a baby by *Mère* Julie Billiart. Gavin, unpaginated.
[239] McNamee, 63.
[240] Since 1851 forty-seven additional Notre Dame communities were opened in twenty-eight locations throughout California, Oregon, Washington and Hawaii. McNamee, 70.
[241] Gavin, unpaginated.

charterships, making the College of Notre Dame the first higher educational institution for women in California, there are contradictory accounts of Notre Dame's history of actually awarding college vs. baccalaureate degrees from sources within the college itself.

Sister Rosemarie Julie Gavin, in her uncompleted manuscript of the history of the College of Notre Dame, noted that Namur issued only "limited encouragement…[being more] concerned about imparting basic religious knowledge" and skeptical of teaching higher studies. Money was in short supply to increase faculty to match an expanded program and it was more important for the Notre Dame Academy to uphold "the spiritual growth of the students and the maintaining of high standards of education."[242] In 1994, she wrote to Sister Mary Adele Griesacker, archivist of Notre Dame de Namur of Maryland, that the first baccalaureate degree at Notre Dame in San Jose was issued in 1891.[243] She thought granting baccalaureate degrees at San Jose was suspended in 1915 while Notre Dame de Namur University archivist Kathleen O'Connor wrote that issuance of baccalaureate degrees were suspended following the 18 April 1906 earthquake, with the exception of students already enrolled at the time of the regional disaster.[244]

In another section of her draft manuscript Sister Rosemarie Julie Gavin gave this accounting of college degrees issued at Notre Dame:

> "The entrance fee in 1868 was $15.00 and board and tuition was $250 per session; in 1998 it is $7488.00 per semester and this rate is almost the lowest in the Bay Area for private colleges. Before 1905 the college diploma included much college-level work. In 1868 two diplomas were awarded; from 1897 to 1905, thirty-eight diplomas were given. After 1905 and until 1916, when the junior college program was set up, distinct and apart from the high school, no diplomas were given. However, Notre Dame Conservatory of Music awarded fifty-four diplomas. They also gave nine Bachelor of Music degrees, the only bachelor's degrees given until 1953 when the first four-year class graduated from the present campus."

It appears she was making a distinction between attending four years of classes versus being awarded a college degree issued through individual tutoring. Sister Mary Domenica McNamee, author of *Light in the Valley*, a history of the Notre Dame's schools created throughout California, wrote:

> "In 1864 the first "Graduate Class" makes its appearance, though without candidates, in anticipation of the college charter of 1868. Two years later, the name Alice Lander appears beneath this new heading, and Alice goes down in Notre Dame history as first college graduate. From then on, the title "Notre Dame Academy" designates the select day school built in 1867 and the expressions "Boarding

[242] Gavin, 5.
[243] Notre Dame de Namur of Maryland claims to be the first Catholic institution to grant the baccalaureate degree to women; they were chartered in 1899. Use Laura's no. 10 footnote.
[244] O'Connor, NDNU Timeline.

school" and "College" become almost synonymous. Perhaps few Sisters of the last century thought the title "College" as more than one of distinction and excellence.""[245]

She also noted:

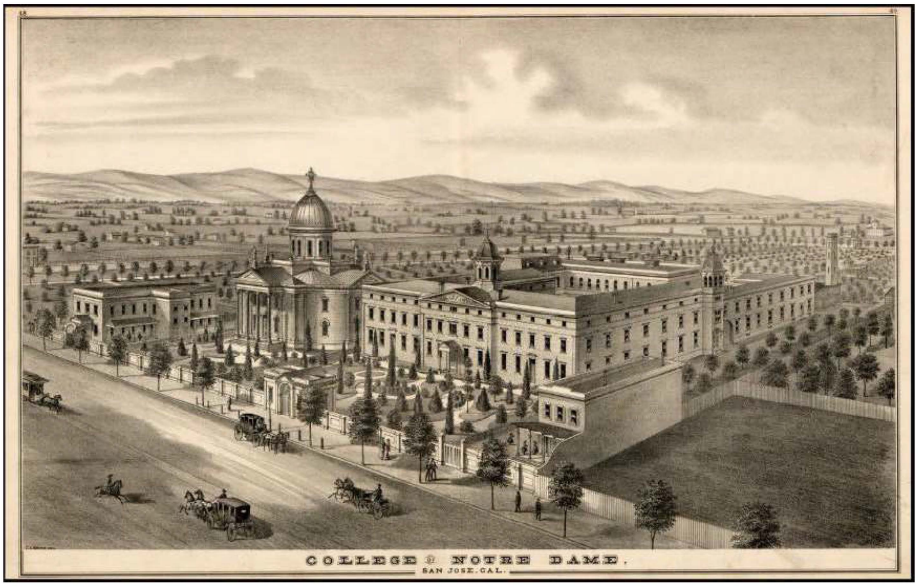
> Two other San Franciscans were Alice Lander and Sarah Webb, sole winners of the college diploma in 1866 and 1867. In both instances the honor was bestowed in anticipation of the charter, and this being the case it is safe to say that no others since that time had had to work so diligently for their achievement. All eyes, one might say, were upon them, as well as the Sisters, who would risk only their most likely to succeed."[246]

The college degree at Notre Dame Namur was awarded through an academic plan that "did not carry entire classes through" but was awarded to only one or two women per year, with seven in one year considered a "bumper crop."[247] All of their learning "on the higher levels was virtually tutorial" due to the low numbers of potential graduates.[248] Competing against American curriculums was an issue for a school founded on continental education principles and Notre Dame was aware of this as early as the 1860s.[249] They continued to be concerned with this aspect of their curriculum through 1885, when the word "collegiate" was removed from the course plan, although diplomas were still issued to a few students. Sister Mary Domenica believed they were "becoming aware of developments in American colleges, that they realized their inability as yet to establish parallels in structure and curricula, but that they hoped to maintain advanced work for the time as a link with a future full college course."[250] They continued to evolve and expand their curriculum, "with their eyes constantly on the college as a goal, nor did they wish to possess the title without the reality."[251]

Throughout the 1870s to the 1890s both the physical plant and the curriculum expanded with a Conservatory of Music built in 1899; the music programs assumed a new significance up through the 1920s. In 1906 college degrees were suspended as Notre Dame recuperated from the extensive damage caused by the San Francisco Earthquake of 18 April that year; before the earthquake the boarding school was earning $40,000 per year in fees with the Conservatory also pulling in considerable income.[252] In 1911 a new program conferring an Associate Arts degree was accredited in 1913 by the University of California and the Catholic University of America.[253]

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[245] McNamee, 133.
[246] Ibid, 100.
[247] Ibid., 135-136.
[248] McNamee, 135-136.
[249] Ibid., 145.
[250] Ibid., 136.
[251] Ibid., 145.
[252] Ibid., 268.
[253] Kathleen O'Connor, College of Note Dame de Namur Timeline, Notre Dame de Namur University Archives.



The College of Notre Dame de Namur in San Jose was ultimately surrounded by San Jose's commercial area.

Notre Dame de Namur College Moves to Belmont in 1923

By the turn of the century the Notre Dame campus had evolved from a rustic and remote country location to an urban commercial environment with increasing pressure for Notre Dame to sell due to the high value and location of their property. Long gone were the days of leading students out on nature hikes to observe the local flora and fauna or to paint *en plein air*. Several sites were considered, including Saratoga and Warm Springs, but Sister Berchmans Joseph, who was tasked with finding a new location, was immediately impressed with the "rural elegance" of the "historic Ralston Mansion" and the natural beauty of the surrounding bucolic grounds.[254] Equally important, the property had ready access to enough water to support a large community of Sisters and students due to Ralston's dam and 75,000,000-gallon-capacity artificial lake.[255] Additional visits soon informed the Sisters of the drawbacks of refurbishing the mansion but they felt the advantages far outweighed the disadvantages. In February 1922 they took out a $100,000 loan from the Hibernia Bank to purchase the Gardner property for $75,000 and a neighboring 52-acre property from the former Simon Mezes estate for $17,500; it was flatter and offered a better site for building opportunities than the steep hillside the Gardner Sanitarium perched on.[256] Once they sold the San Jose property, with its presumed million dollar price tag, they would easily pay off the debt and have plenty of money to erect new buildings to support the various elementary, high school and college schools that made up the College of Notre Dame. At least, that was the plan.

[254] McNamee, 282-284.
[255] Sister Anthony Quinlan, "From San Jose to Belmont," 9, Annals of Belmont Collection, California Province House, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur Archives, Belmont, California.
[256] McNamee, 284.



This photograph, entitled "Our New Home," emphasized the grounds and the south façade of the "historic Ralston Mansion" purchased by the College of Notre Dame de Namur in February 1922.

While the Gardners were anxious to sell the property—they had at most a dozen patients in residence in early 1922—perversely they were not in any hurry to move out. Neither were the Sisters in any particular rush to move in as they wanted to celebrate their 75th anniversary (1851-1926) in California while still in residence in San Jose. They were also hesitant to break up their community as there was only enough room at Belmont for some Sisters to come and live; other Sisters remained behind in San Jose and others transferred to Saratoga or elsewhere. However, an excellent bid to buy the San Jose property for $400,000—the anticipated bids of one to three to five million dollars notwithstanding—occurred in January 1923 and one of the terms was vacation of the property within six months.[257] It propelled the Sisters to begin cleaning out the Ralston mansion in May 1923. First, they had to gently ease out the Gardner family and the few remaining staff and patients. As Mrs. Gardner had been confined to her bed in a ground floor suite of rooms for several years and neither Sherman nor Ruby Gardner were up to the task of dismantling the facility, Mrs. Gardner's sister—Mrs. Lloyd from Petaluma—arrived; she was able to complete the arduous process of moving the hapless family and patients out.[258]

Sisters took turns making the twenty-seven-mile trek from San Jose to Belmont to begin cleaning the mansion; Sister Barbara Engs later wrote the "amount of cleaning, scrubbing, shoveling and digging required to restore order and neatness to the place beggared description."[259] The workmen began replacing the plumbing; despite this, leaks and hard-to-reach plumbing—"Well, she's gotta be dug up"—both within and outside the mansion were a regular occurrence for many years.[260] Renovations took the form of transforming several of the sunny bedrooms of varying sizes into "bathing and toilet apartments."[261] The two most derelict rooms were the Grant Room, which had been stripped down and completely closed off, and the kitchen, where every surface was covered in dirt and grease with dirty dishes left behind and the cook's note scrawled on the menu blackboard: "Goodbye, Paradise. Our beautiful home is broken up."[262] Wiring for electricity was installed with gas still used in the would-be

[257] Quinlan, 1.
[258] Ibid., 15-16.
[259] Engs, 2.
[260] Ibid.
[261] Quinlan, 13.
[262] Ibid., 15.

pharmacy, laundry, and kitchen.[263] Plumbing, wiring, repairing of floors, adding new linoleum flooring in strategic areas and painting the interior began in March 1923 and did not cease until the following October. Stucco was applied to the original redwood exterior in September 1923 and was painted a pale peach color; stucco scaffolding still surrounded the mansion when school started.[264] Overall, the Sisters spent $88,595.22 on "repairs and improvements, annexes, etc." that year.[265]

Many of the rooms would serve one purpose in 1923 before another later use presented itself; several rooms would become smaller or larger with walls added or removed. The derelict chicken coop, where today's Taube Center stands, had been built on leased property; this was torn down, as were the two greenhouses, the Turkish bath, several outhouses, a row of fuel sheds, one wood stable with circular stalls and at least one cottage previously lived in by staff.[266] As renovations progressed and the laborious moving process began, one truckload at a time, the original real estate transaction fell apart, leaving the Sisters with two mortgages and no immediate financial relief. They weathered the storm of criticism over the debacle and continued packing and loading up the "Black Maria" truck for yet another trip.[267]

Renovations were slow, partially due to the labyrinthine aspect of some eighty-two rooms spread between a basement, three floors and an attic; both the workmen and the Sisters had a hard time keeping their bearings straight as to which room they were in and which floor they were on. The surviving big mirrors added to the disorientation, with many a sister who had not looked into a mirror since taking her vows many years earlier not recognizing herself as she approached the glass. Sister Mary Rodriguez literally walked into the lobby mirror, thinking she was walking toward another sister also hauling her mattress in from the front lawn up to the "old servant's quarters" on the attic floor, where the Sisters slept.[268]

Registration began 17 September 1923 in Ralston's billiards room, with students making their way past piles of debris and bustling workmen still hammering, sawing, installing wiring and plumbing, and painting walls. This room, today's Cipriani Room, would also serve as a general assembly and recreational room "and the sole refuge of the high school students from wind and weather when out of class and out of bed."[269] The youngest girls were in a little room constructed from materials brought from San Jose, the elementary girls were temporarily taught in the Holy Family room, located off the newly consecrated chapel—the former ballroom, filled with pews, an alter from San Jose and mirrors covered with paper—while high school students were located in the new St. Joseph's Hall—the former Carriage House—and the nine enrolled college women were in Ralston's old library and parlor, with

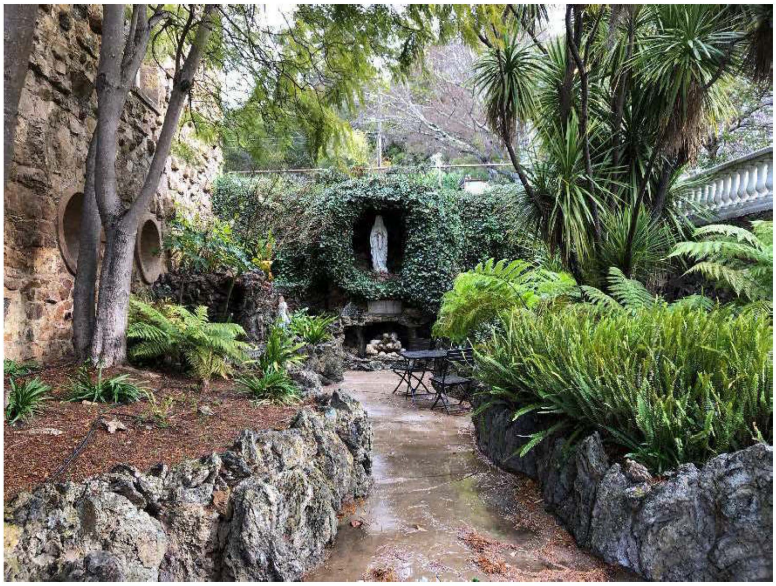
[263] Ibid., 13.
[264] Quinlan, 16.
[265] "Plant Funds," in Vincent Raney, "Summary of Growth Areas in Developed Plant," (1951), unpaginated, NDNU Archives.
[266] Ibid., 9, 11-13.
[267] The Sisters ended up selling the San Jose property piecemeal over the next twenty years, finally becoming debt-free, albeit briefly, in 1943. Quinlan, 18-24.
[268] Ibid., 27.
[269] Ibid., 30.

their frosted sliding glass panels.[270] The commercial department—secretarial and business skills—was located in one of the promenade walks, then called a sun porch.[271] One end of the Ralston bowling alley held a new science laboratory after it provided makeshift bedrooms for the Sisters before renovations were complete.[272] The bowling alley ultimately was used for staff housing until the 1960s.[273]



The old Ralston Carriage House was renamed St. Joseph's Hall and functioned as a partial garage and academic space for the high school students in 1923.

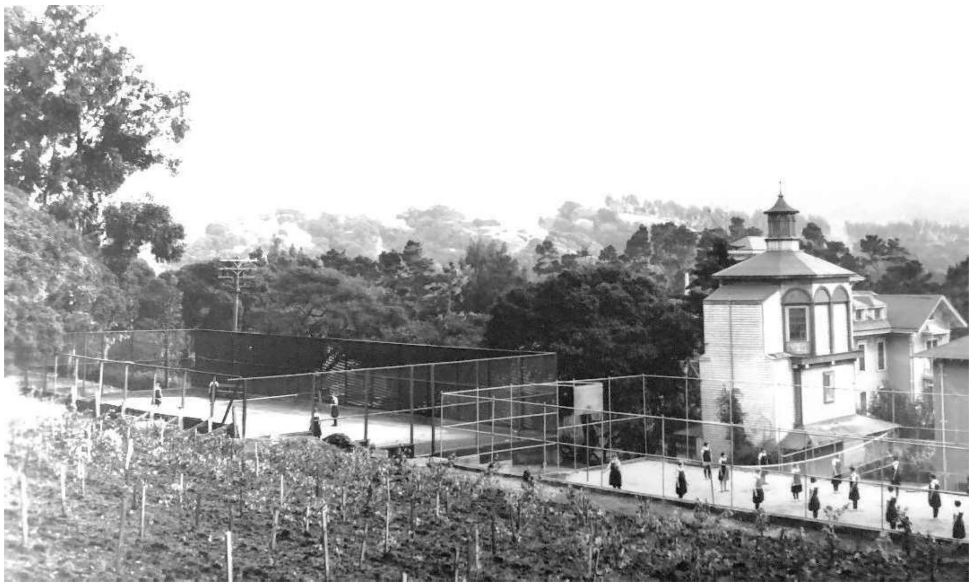
[270] The old high school at San Jose continued to operate for another year, reducing the "new" high school population at Belmont. In 1928 it continued in a new location but still in San Jose. Ibid., 29, 34; and McNamee, 289, 293.
[271] Quinlan, 29.
[272] McNamee, 293.
[273] Gavin, 8.



The Sisters had built a grotto at San Jose. They also built a grotto next to the Carriage House, taking advantage of the already existing waterworks constructed by Ralston.

The Grant Room, once the cistern below it was dried out and sealed off, was paneled with tongue and groove boards brought from the San Jose Conservatory and divided into practice and performance space by glass partitions also salvaged from San Jose. It is unclear if two new skylights and western-facing windows were added or merely then enabled to fulfill their original function; this space served the music department until 1928.[274] It was rechristened St. Cecilia's Hall. The two stories of the Carriage House provided the most versatility, with half of the lower floor serving as a garage while the upper floor housed two large classrooms—later turned into chemistry and biology labs—two recital rooms, an auditorium, a large storage room and several smaller rooms, initially used as a press room and a kiln room, among other things.[275] One building—the 1851 convent house built by Goodhue—was moved to the Belmont campus courtesy of the alumni; it remained there until 1937 when it was moved to Saratoga. A bus driven by one sister with another along "just in case," initially ran from Ralston Avenue to Broadway in Burlingame to pick up day students; a second bus was needed to travel up and down the Peninsula once the day student population increased.

[274] Quinlan, 12.
[275] Ibid., 10.



Volleyball courts, in addition to the original Ralston tennis courts, provided recreation during the 1920s.



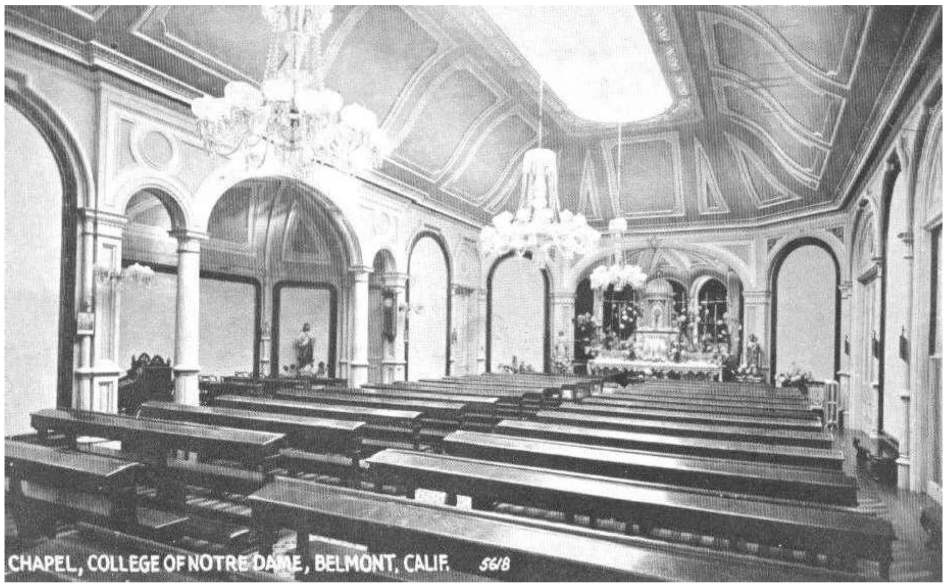
The Ralston mansion was renamed “Berchman’s Hall” in honor of Sister Berchams Joseph, who died shortly after the move to Belmont. The exterior of the mansion was covered with stucco and painted a pale peach color in 1923.



This Annex may have been constructed from materials salvaged from the San Jose campus in 1923.



This freestanding annex, today's Music Hall, was constructed of materials salvaged from the San Jose in 1926.



The ballroom was "temporarily" transformed into a chapel for thirty-eight years but was also sometimes used for school dances and other activities. Note the intact skylight.

The Sisters invited 500 guests to a grand Inaugural Tea on 7 October 1924, including Ralston's two grown daughters, Emelita Ralston Page and Bertha Ralston Bright.[276] This tea was the first of many Ralston Hall events that would take place over the ensuing decades, including many fund-raising events.

The first building put up after the College of Notre Dame opened in Belmont was Blessed Julie Billiart Hall, today's Cuvilly Hall. A vernacular building composed of two stories of wood frame and stucco construction, the building was completed in late 1924, with salvaged stair railings and newel posts from the novitiate in San Jose.[277] The Sisters had planted Japanese maples and dawn redwood trees in front of their new building.[278] Home to Belmont novices and postulants until 1937, the 1928 College of Notre Dame catalog claimed classes were also being taught in Billiart Hall.[279] In 1926, there were thirty-eight Sisters and 170 resident students at the College of Notre Dame.[280] Between 1925 and 1929, twenty-four Associate degrees were awarded.[281]

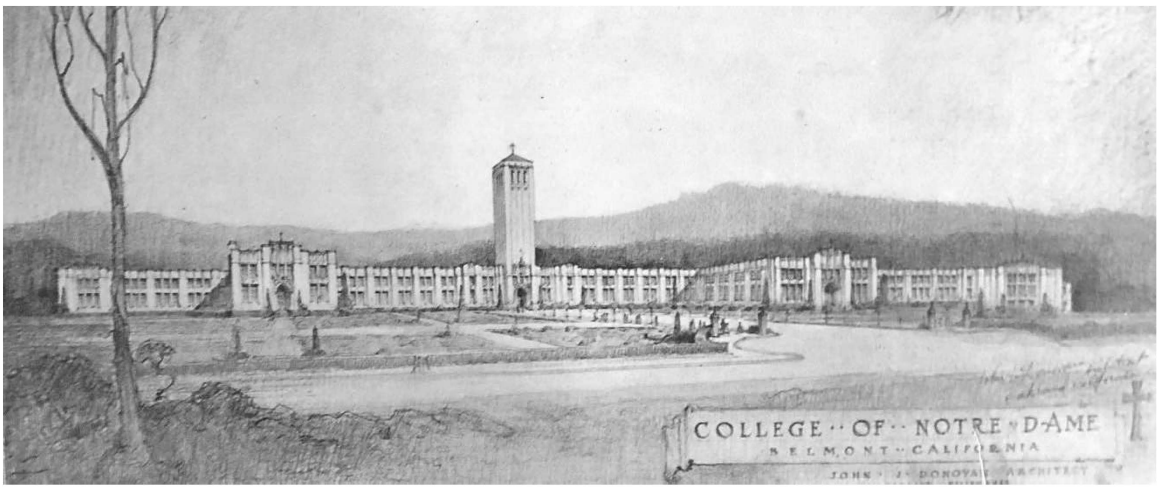
[276] McNamee, 295.
[277] McNamee, 294.
[278] Gavin, 11.
[279] College of Notre Dame de Namur catalog (1928), College Catalog Box 413, College of Notre Dame de Namur, 1890-1976, Stanford University Archives.
[280] Sister Rosemarie Julie Gavin, *History of College of Notre Dame*, 13, unpublished manuscript draft, California Province House Archives, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.
[281] Gavin, 13.



This photograph in the 1928 College of Notre Dame catalog was captioned "Blessed Julie Billiart Hall (classes) and Berchman's Hall (administration and dormitory). An addition was made to Billiart Hall in 1934-35. (The building is now called Cuvilly Hall.)

A much more ambitious building was that of the high school. Sister Anthony included a drawing of the building, designed by Oakland architect John Joseph Donohoe, in her book *In Harvest Fields*.[282] Donohoe graduated late from the Philips Academy at Andover, Massachusetts in 1903 and with a master's degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1906. He co-wrote an influential book entitled *School Architecture* in 1921: "A quarter of a century ago a young bricklayer [the young Donohoe] begged Professor Chandler to allow him to become a special student of architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In goodness of heart, Professor Chandler consented. He saw in the impetuous youth the qualities of leadership, but it is safe to say he did not expect him to become one of the leaders among schoolhouse architects of America."[283] The College of Notre Dame High School was built between 1927 and 1928 in the popular Art Deco style. Constructed on the flat part of the property purchased in 1922, the high school included a free-standing gymnasium and swimming pool. This new building relieved the pressure of trying to fit the entire College of Notre Dame academic program into Berchman's Hall and St. Joseph's Hall (respectively the mansion and Carriage House). Some college courses were taught in the high school and one wing contained the elementary school classes until 1957, when the elementary school was built.[284]

[282] Quinlan, unpaginated, 292-293.
[283] "John Joseph Donohoe," PCAD, https://pcad.lib.washington.edu/person/3415/ (accessed 16 June 2022).
[284] Gavin, 7.



The College of Notre Dame High School as originally conceived by school architect J.J. Donohoe.



The College of Notre Dame de Namur High School faced Ralston Avenue. A second wing was added in 1930-31.

There was no Catholic parish church in Belmont when the Sisters bought their property. In 1928 they gifted the newly formed Parish of the Immaculate Heart of Mary one quarter of an acre of land near the entrance gates—once the site of the chicken coop—to build a Spanish Colonial Revival-style church which was completed in 1930.[285] Once a second and larger church was built on Alameda de las Pulgas in July 1958 the parish deeded the property, as well as the building, back to the Institute of Notre Dame. Known today as Taube Center, it has been used by the College of Notre Dame in multiple ways: an art studio, theater space, musical performances, classroom space for art and adult education, and a conference center.[286]

[285] Gavin, 5.
[286] Gavin, unpaginated.



The church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary was completed in 1930.

The financial depredations of the Great Depression (1929-1939) and the materials shortage of World War Two (1939-1945) meant no new building took place on the Notre Dame de Namur campus until 1948. Incredibly, while the Depression closed many private schools relying on tuition impossible for struggling families to pay, the "academic, cultural, social and spiritual life of the College grew."[287] In 1936 the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur California Province incorporated as a separate entity. As a result, the novice and postulant programs were moved to Saratoga in 1937, freeing up Blessed Julie Billiart Hall. The college library and the bookstore were moved into the building's second floor while the remaining space was used as dormitory rooms; another source claims Billiart Hall was used as the library and junior college rooms.[288] One of the new social developments was the first College Ball held in Berchman's Hall in 1939; the subsequent annual College Balls took place at the "new" Palace Hotel in San Francisco.[289] 108 AA degrees were awarded between 1930 and 1939.[290]

[287] Sister Rosemarie Julie Gavin attributed the survival of the school during the Depression to the deep spirituality of the Sisters who worked selflessly and held fast their faith in God. Gavin, 9-11.
[288] Gavin, 7; and O'Connor, Timeline; and McNamee, 294.
[289] Ibid.
[290] Gavin, 14.



Noted San Francisco photographer Gabriel Moulin took this remarkable series of photographs of the College of Notre Dame for the 7 October 1934 edition of the San Francisco Chronicle.

During World War Two two of the hardest struggles at CND were the constant blackouts and the rationing. With fathers fighting overseas and mothers serving in factories, most working outside from the home for the first time ever, many children were sent to residential schools. Notre Dame's residential student population increased by 40% at all levels during WWII, with the Sisters hard pressed to keep everyone fed.[291] Many of the Sisters of German birth or extraction struggled with the pervasive anti-German feeling that had also permeated American society during World War I. The College of Notre Dame held a benefit luncheon for the Red Cross in 1942 and entertained soldiers, most from nearby

[291] One of the Camp Fremont personnel augmented the limited rations allotted CND during the war. Gavin, unpaginated; and O'Connor, Timeline.

Camp Fremont, throughout the war. The music program, important since its inception, continued to expand and contributed a great deal to Notre Dame's fine reputation.[292] Eighty-eight AA degrees were awarded during the wartime years.[293]

Campus Expansion after World War Two and the 1952 Masterplan



Four students perched on the fountain in 1946, a 1924 gift from Alfred Gump of Gump's Department Store in San Francisco.[294]

In 1948 a three-sided stage used for Commencement dating from the 1920s was dismantled; the scrap lumber was used to build the newly christened Tabard Inn, a popular snack bar built in the vernacular style.[295] (The stage had been located where the Toso Residences now stand.)



The Tabard Inn started life as a three-sided stage for Commencement during the 1920s.

[292] Ibid.
[293] Gavin, 14.
[294] Ibid., 13.
[295] Ibid, unpaginated.

By 1945 the Belmont mortgage had been paid off and almost all of the San Jose property finally sold.[296] The wartime increase of the resident student population and fire regulations made building a new dormitory imperative. Plans were made to locate it where an olive orchard stood but eventually the elementary school was built on that site in 1957.[297] By 1946 Sister Anna Voss was appointed to Belmont to organize the Biology Department and develop the curriculum to support a Bachelor's Degree in Biology.[298] In 1950 the wheels were in motion for the College of Notre Dame to apply for accreditation from the Western College Association to offer Baccalaureate Degrees and the State of California to offer teaching credentials.[299] Were these efforts to succeed, there needed to be a substantial expansion of the campus, in addition to Berchman's Hall, Billiart Hall, St. Joseph's Hall (the Carriage House) and the high school, which still included elementary school classes and some college classes.

San Francisco architect Vincent G. Raney, whose wife had attended Notre Dame in San Jose and daughter had attended at Belmont, submitted an initial minimal bid of $685,100.00 to construct one two-story building for administration, dining and plant services, a second three-story building to serve as a dormitory for 100 women and two Sisters, and a third one- and two-story building for classrooms and lab facilities.[300] The final bid came in at $875,405 which included $1,000 for grading and removal of trees as the new buildings were to be located immediately northwest of the mansion and the bowling alley.301 A total building cost of $1,444,391.21 included lined-out items for renovations to the old Julie Billiart Hall, now renamed Cuvilly Hall, new home to the Business, Home Economics and Art departments, landscaping, new water pipe lines and new fire extinguishers.[302]

[296] Gavin, 3.
[297] Ibid., unpaginated.
[298] Ibid., unpaginated.
[299] O'Connor, Timeline; and Gavin, unpaginated.
[300] Vincent G. Raney, Revised Preliminary Program (13 November 1950), President Sr CJC [Sister Catherine Julie], Box 10, Architect Folder, NDNU Archives.
[301] Vincent Raney, "Summary of Growth Areas in Developed Plant," (1951), unpaginated, NDNU Archives.
[302] Raney, New College Buildings (1950-1952), NDNU Archives.



Raney's presentation drawing of the new "upper campus" as viewed from the northwest. The mansion is represented above and behind the new dormitory (*upper center*) with the new classrooms/administration building (*left*) and the new library/cafeteria (*right*) in the foreground. A roofed walkway marks the new quadrangle.

Raney earned his architecture degree at the University of Illinois with postgraduate work at the University of Indiana and the University of Arizona regarding law and finance. He moved to California in the early 1930s and opened his own office after receiving his license in 1936. By the early 1960s Raney had designed some 1,000 projects throughout California, including planning, designing, engineering and supervising construction of industrial buildings, theaters, schools and churches. Raney believed:

> "The design and knowledge of the mechanical, electrical, structural and finishing trades are essential in every construction project. The well-conceived plans of architect and engineer insure efficient use of site, labor, material and methods in the economical construction of a building to better serve its owner."[303]

The original design for the College of Notre Dame was included within his "1,000 Projects" brochure; the caption read: "Artist's rendering of first units. Court areas serve dual purpose as student assembly area and recreational center. Other units to be added will then form similar quadrangles, completing plan as originally conceived."[304]

[303] Vincent Raney, "1,000 Projects," unpaginated, undated brochure published by his architectural firm Vincent Raney, Inc. NDNU Archives.
[304] Raney, "1,000 Projects," unpaginated.

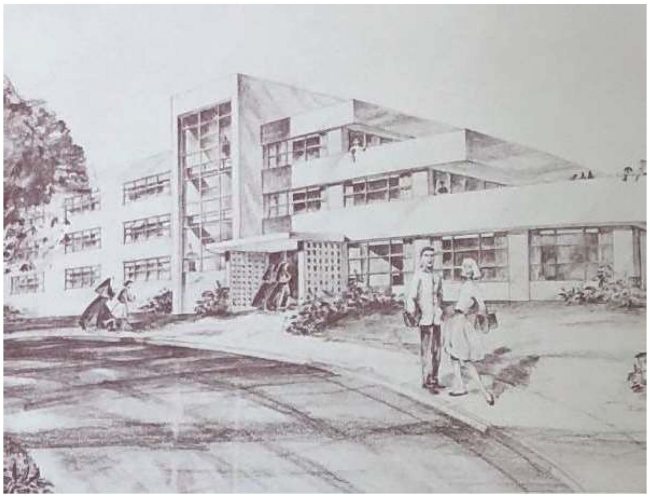


Raney captioned the courtyard: "Assembly court. Integrated planning combined with the warm tones of masonry and colored concrete make for a pleasant atmosphere. Court located in activity center in order not to disturb classroom instruction."[305]

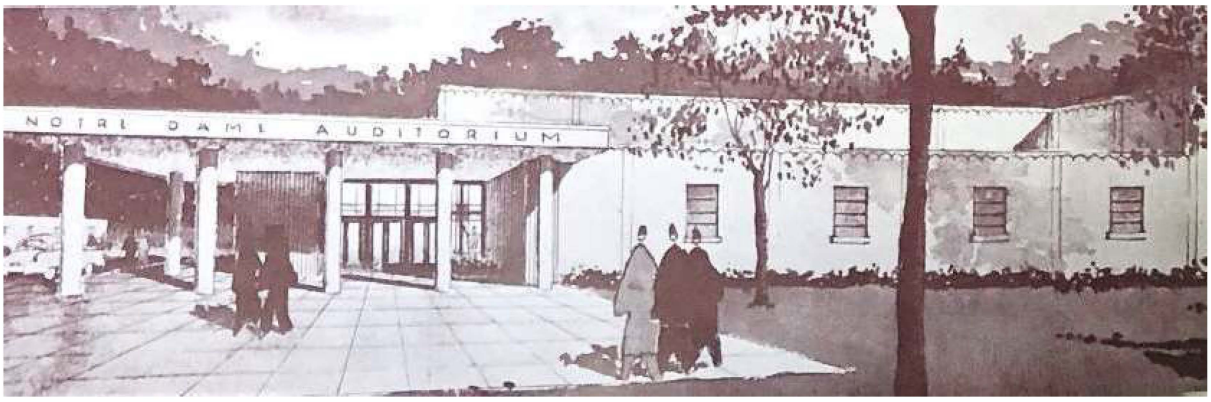


For Julie Billiart Hall, Raney wrote: "A frame and stucco building designed for economy. The glass enclosed stair area gives dramatic and desirable interest to the building; masonry adds permanence."[306] Sister Theresa Augustine Donnelly reminisced that students initially reluctant to move out of the mansion soon came to appreciate the modern amenities of the new dorm.[307]

[305] Ibid.
[306] Ibid.
[307] Sister Theresa Augustine Donnelly, "Memoir-College of Notre Dame with Mark Sullivan, 1949-1955" recorded oral history (1 October 1996), NDNU Archives.



For this future dormitory, Raney wrote: "This project will be in similar materials and styling to harmonize with other buildings on the Notre Dame College campus."[308]



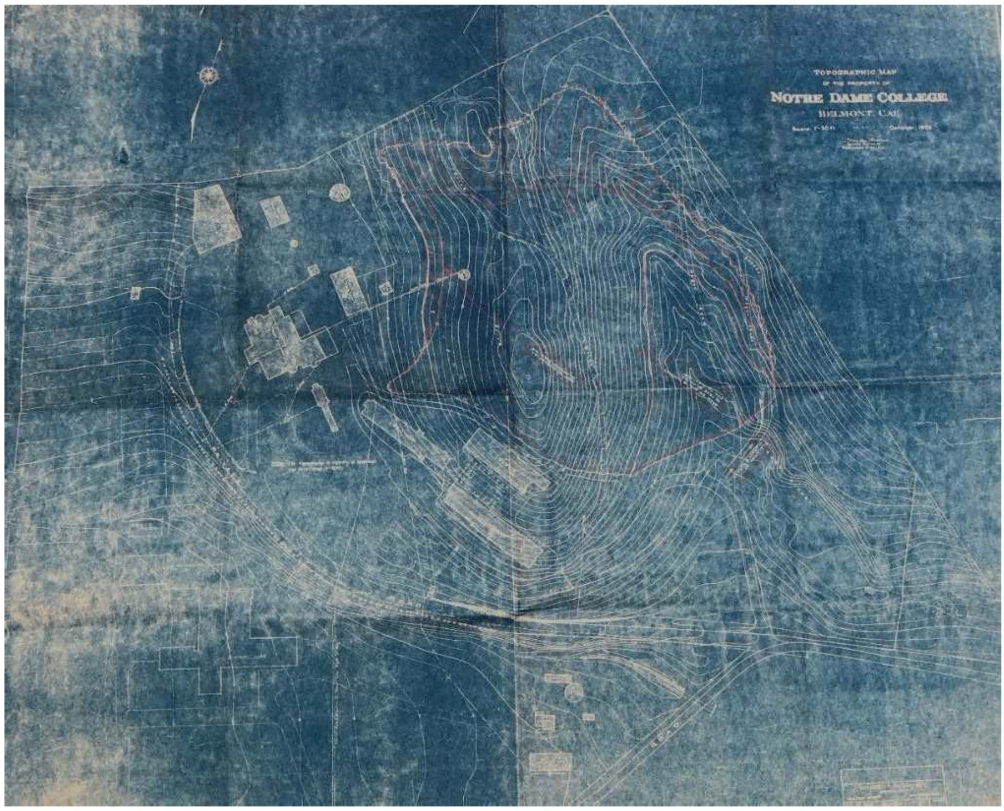
Raney captioned the future auditorium: "The unadorned columns, covered court ways and long horizontals that mark individual buildings in [the] master plan of this campus have been repeated in this structure soon to be built."[309]

Raney designed the new buildings in a spare Modern style, reflective of the times and of the modest College of Notre Dame budget. However, St. Mary's Hall was graced with a statue of Mary, designed by Sister Marie of St. Joseph's Oddie, high on an upper façade.[310] The relative lack of ornamentation made expansion of the campus simple in terms of aesthetics. All three buildings were of wood frame and stucco construction on top of a reinforced concrete slab foundation. When the College of Notre Dame was successfully surveyed for accreditation by the Joint Committee of Western College Association and the California State Board of Education on 20-21 October 1954, the expected increase of students from the current 150 could now be easily accommodated.[311]

[308] Ibid.
[309] Ibid.
[310] O'Connor, Timeline.
[311] Gavin, unpaginated.

While no "masterplan" document was found in the NDNU archives, the cluster of four buildings surrounding a courtyard may have been inspired by Ernest Kump's "finger plan" schools, several of which were located in nearby San Mateo (Laurel Creek Elementary, 1947) and San Carlos (White Oaks Elementary, 1944). Kump's plan called for long, single story buildings with large windows facing north to capture natural light without heat or glare (sometimes adding high clerestory windows on the opposite wall), roofs extending over the outdoor walkway and outdoor classroom areas, and low-roofed connecting walkways between the "finger" wings.[312] (Kump's model did allow for multistory fingers for older students.) The interiors were designed on a modular grid for low-cost construction and flexibility in programming. Kump's concepts were widely adopted and influential even as new school planning concepts emerged and Kump abandoned the finger plan by 1955 as the "cluster" approach came into fashion: small buildings ("houses") clustered around a central large multipurpose space.[313]

Raney's 1952 four building plan represents a late example of a "finger school": the St Mary's classroom building has large windows facing north (smaller windows on the south elevation), the buildings are narrow and long and connected by covered walkways.



Raney added the first three new buildings to this 1923 map. Note the orange outline denoting where much of the remaining hilltop needed to be graded for additional buildings constructed after 1953.

[312] Philip Goad. The classroom is another place? Ernest J. Kump's 'ideal' learning environments for Californian schools 1937-1962. In Designing School: Space, Place and Pedagogy edited by. New York: Routledge. 2016.
[313] Ibid.



Raney's 1955 campus master plan showed extensive grading and tree removal, in addition to the Notre Dame Theater (*foreground*), located adjacent to the high school, and the second dormitory, St. Joseph's Hall (*center*).

Raney's prospective one-story reinforced concrete auditorium, renamed the Notre Dame Theater, was built in 1955. The construction of three-story St. Joseph's Hall as a second dormitory with fifty-five dorm rooms took place in 1958.[314] It was connected, as planned, with the first three buildings that went up in 1952. The style of both new buildings was also a spare Modern style, with St. Joseph's Hall looking much like Julie Billiart Hall but with a flat glass panel replacing the glass stairwell. The dining hall was also expanded at this time and featured a separate faculty dining room.[315]

[314] Gavin, unpaginated.
[315] Gavin, unpaginated.



The Notre Dame Theater was built in 1955, adjacent to the high school.

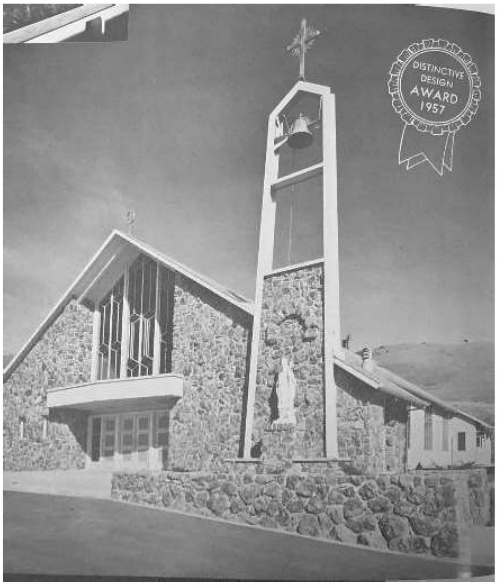


St. Joseph's Hall was reminiscent in style of Julie Billiart Hall.

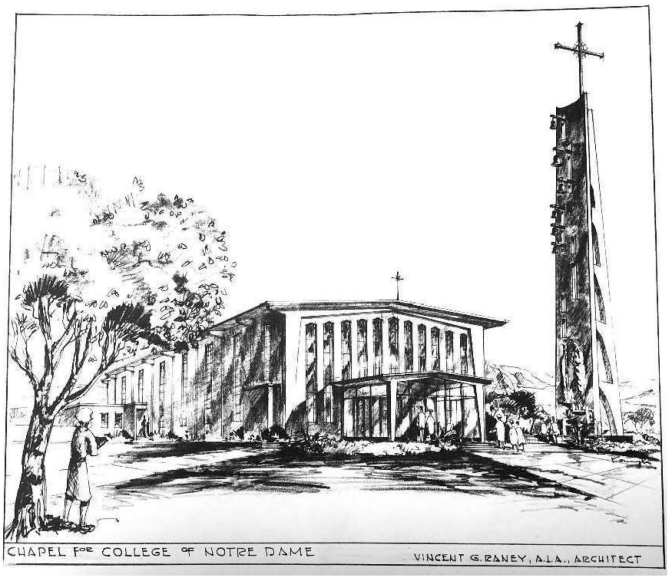
Raney's final design for the campus was the long-anticipated chapel. The first money available for its construction began with a $150,000 bequest by William McCarthy in 1958, doting uncle of the then College of Notre Dame president, Sister Catherine Jean Cunningham.[316] Once additional funds were raised, Raney was tasked with designing the new chapel in March 1960; the chapel committee wanted him to "carry out in simple, broad, spacious vistas a noble edifice that draws the eyes of the observer straight to the magnificent marble altar, with its golden bronze tabernacle, liturgical candlesticks, and

[316] "Notre Dame Memorial Chapel," undated and unpublished manuscript, NDNU Archives, 1.

above a rose quartz mosaic cross bearing the carved Corpus of a dead Christ."[317] He had included several church designs within his "1,000 Projects" brochure—winning a Distinguished Design Award in 1957 for a hillside church that overlooked the Golden Gate—so was well experienced in designing this type of building.[318] The Notre Dame Memorial Chapel was Midcentury Modern in style.

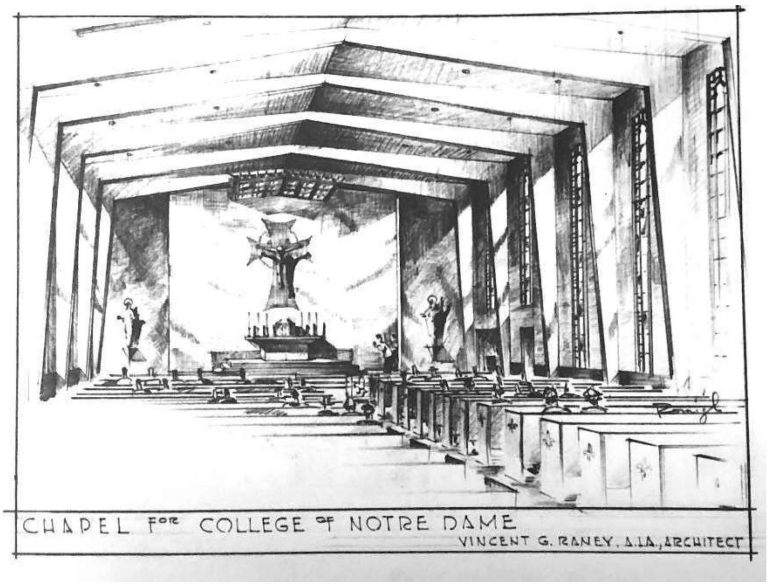


Raney was awarded a Distinguished Design Award for this fieldstone church with metal windows meant for stained-glass panes.



The exterior of the Chapel for the College of Notre Dame and campanile with fountain.

[317] Ibid., 8-9.
[318] Raney, "1,000 Projects," unpaginated.



The interior, showing large stained-glass windows along each long façade of the building.

Unlike the academic and residential buildings, the chapel assumed a deeper significance for the Sisters, who wanted to add their own personal touches to the final design. Sister Margaret Mary Hoffman, founding Chair of the Art Department, designed the twelve-foot sanctuary cross to hang on the sanctuary wall, with individual rose quartz stones placed inside the frame by all members of the community, including staff, as well as the builders.[319] The deliberate inclusion of everyone putting in a stone represented community. She also designed the fourteen-foot-high statue of Mary for the campanile; it was executed by Carlo Talibue and cast by Lafayette Studio of San Francisco; at three tons it was the largest free-standing cast made in the City at the time.[320]

Sister Margaret Mary, who wrote her Master's thesis on Marian iconography at Stanford University, also organized the themes for the desired stained-glass windows set along the long facades and nave, "following a theme of Christian womanhood as exemplified by Our Lady and by the holy women in the Old Testament."[321] Her list of women and their meanings was sent as inspiration to Gabriel Loire, a noted French glass artist based at Chartres, France. Inspired by the glowing windows of the Notre Dame de Chartres Cathedral, in 1927 he became interested in a new glass called slab glass, which was five times thicker than old glass and held brilliant color emphasized by deliberately chipped edges. By the time he received Sister Margaret Mary's list of themes Loire had designed close to 1,000 sets of windows for churches throughout the world, including 500 churches in France and 200 churches in the United States, including a rose window for the Grace Episcopal Cathedral in San Francisco.[322] He preferred an Impressionistic style and working with blue glass, the color of peace to him; the windows for the chapel

[319] "Notre Dame Memorial Chapel," 3-4.
[320] Ibid., 4.
[321] Ibid., 9; and Gavin, 10.
[322] Walter S. Ross, "Glass by a Modern Master," *Reader's Digest* (December 1969), 47-48.

were intended to bathe the interior in multiple shades of blue that change as the sun travels over the building.

Sister Marie Therese of the Chemistry Department designed and made the candlesticks and flower stands with interchangeable mosaics for different liturgical seasons, as well as the holy water fonts. She also designed the mosaic Stations of the Cross, which "show in the motif of hands the sorrow of Our Lord as He made His last journey," and six additional mosaic plaques that flanked the back doors of the church.[323] All of her creations exhibited a symbolic use of color—red for pain, white for hope and purple for obedience—"with the same regard for simplicity and effectiveness" sought in Raney's architectural design.[324]

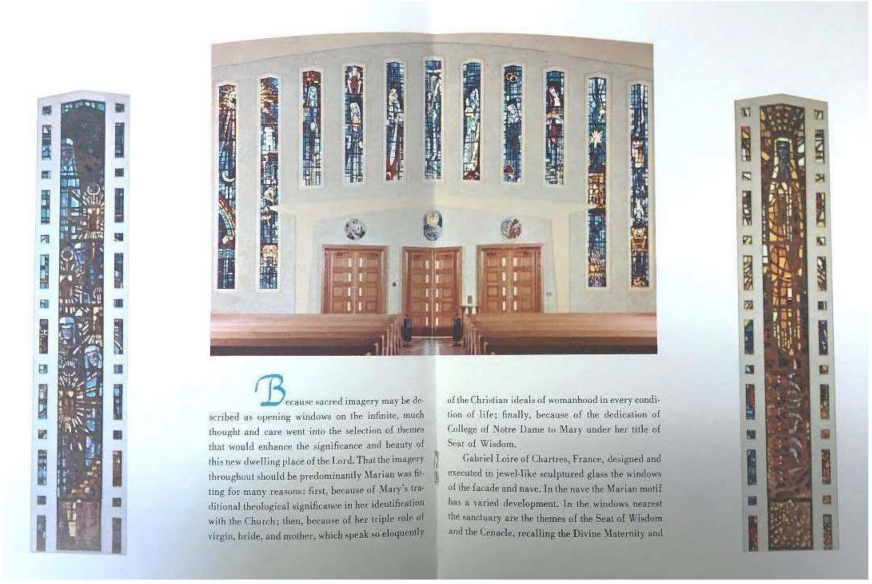


The Note Dame Memorial Chapel and campanile was completed in August 1961. The campanile was a deliberate focal point for the campus, at that time reflective of the religious philosophy that was the foundation of the College of Notre Dame.

[323] "Notre Dame Memorial Chapel," 9.
[324] Ibid.; and "Notre Dame Memorial Chapel," pamphlet, NDNU Archives.



The marble altar and the sanctuary cross.



Detail of some of the Loire windows based on Mary and other Old Testament women conceived by Sister Margaret Mary.

The completion of the Notre Dame Memorial Chapel in 1961 prompted a restoration of the ground floor in the mansion, by this time renamed Ralston Hall. The ballroom was restored to its original appearance and a gala party was held with over 1,800 attendants.[325]

By 1964 the total enrollment for the College of Notre Dame had reached 1,000 students, creating a pressing need for more student housing.[326] In 1965 the Trustees voted to construct three three-story

[325] O'Connor, Timeline.
[326] The student population was 614 in 1960. Gavin, 10, 14.

apartment residences and one single-story building, all buildings contiguous and adjacent to each other for a total capacity of 108 single women or thirty-six married women with spouses; they were ultimately lived in largely by upper-division undergraduate students.[327]

The apartments—named Carroll, Kane and Wilkie—and the smaller building called The Oaks, a recreation center for the apartment residents, were designed by San Jose architect Hollis Logue Junior. He graduated from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana with a bachelor's degree in architecture; he was also awarded a Rome prize medal for an Island Airbase design in 1942. Hollis later obtained his Master's degree in Urban Planning from San Jose State University.[328] Best known for designing Terminal C at the Mineta San Jose International Airport, he was "a devotee of Frank Lloyd Wright and a believer in simple, workmanlike buildings that served their function without fuss."[329] His design ethos was a perfect match for the cash-strapped College of Notre Dame and the rustic Second Bay Tradition style would harmonize well with the existing Raney buildings. The four buildings were built of wood frame construction with stucco and wood exteriors standing on perimeter concrete foundations. Some bedrooms originally had small balconies but they were removed after the fatal balcony failure at UC Berkeley in 2015. A swimming pool located near The Oaks has since been filled in.



Detail of one of the three apartment buildings built by Logue in 1966.

[327] Ibid., 10-11.
[328] Hollis Logue Obituary, Mercury.com, https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/mercurynews/name/hollis-logue-obituary?id=21364450 (accessed 23 June 2022).
[329] "Designer of San Jose Airport's Terminal C Dies at 90," *San Jose Mercury News* (23 September 2010).



The Oaks (front on *left*, rear on *right*) was built as a recreation center for the new apartment buildings by Logue in 1966. It was built as two stories rather than the proposed one story.

Logue also designed the single-story Gavin Hall in 1966 but this building, located at some distance from the rest of the upper campus, was not an academic building but used for male staff housing.[330] Built of frame and stucco construction on a concrete slab with a pitched gable roof, the structure was eventually used first as a science laboratory—the Marine Resources Center—and ultimately as a classroom in 1983.[331] The bowling alley, in use for staff housing until 1966, was then demolished.

Notre Dame de Namur becomes Coeducational in 1967 with new Masterplan

In 1967 regulations assisting minority students saw Carl Rainey, in pursuit of a social welfare major, transfer to the College of Notre Dame as the first matriculated male student, although male students were allowed to attend non-matriculated Evening Division classes beginning in 1955. He was "part of the CND plan to evolve gradually into coeducation by admitting male students in a few majors."[332] He enjoyed being the lone man on campus until 1969, when the college went officially co-educational, although women still greatly outnumbered the men for the next few years. 1967 also saw the beginning of a matriculated Evening Division.[333] Evening Division students were not residential but drove to and from campus for class.

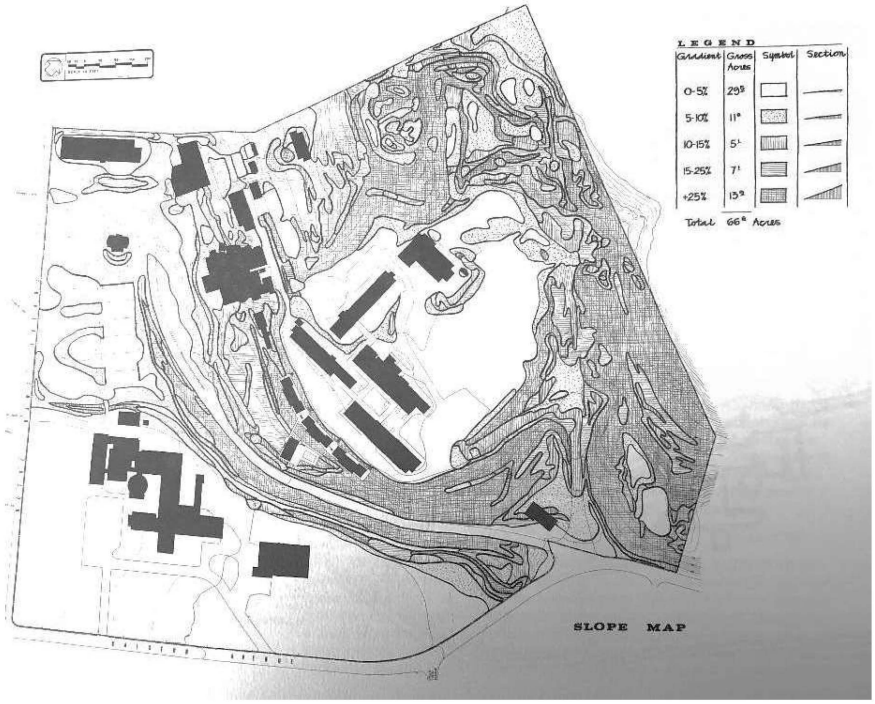
Logue helped formulate a 1967 campus master plan, along with a campus planning group called Lackey, Hamilton, Blewett Associates.[334] The university was planning to grow the College Division up to 1,000 students and the Evening Division up to 1,000 students over the next decade.[335] Additional quadrangles were planned on the remaining five acres of land that had been severely graded in 1953, creating an eleven-acre "upper campus" site. In addition to new academic buildings and new student

[330] Gavin, 8.
[331] Gavin Hall was named for Sister Rosemarie Julie Gavin, who wrote the draft of the history of the College of Notre Dame that included much of the information regarding the development of the Belmont campus. Ibid.
[332] Gavin, 16.
[333] O'Connor, Timeline.
[334] Lawrence Lackey, "The Long Range Campus Plan for the College of Notre Dame," (1967), NDNU Archives.
[335] Ibid., 6.

residences, circulation, parking and landscaping were all under consideration, especially as the remaining graded area was still a large, flattened vista denuded of trees and shrubbery; this desolate area was in the viewshed of the existing campus buildings and detracted from the desired aesthetics of the campus.[336]

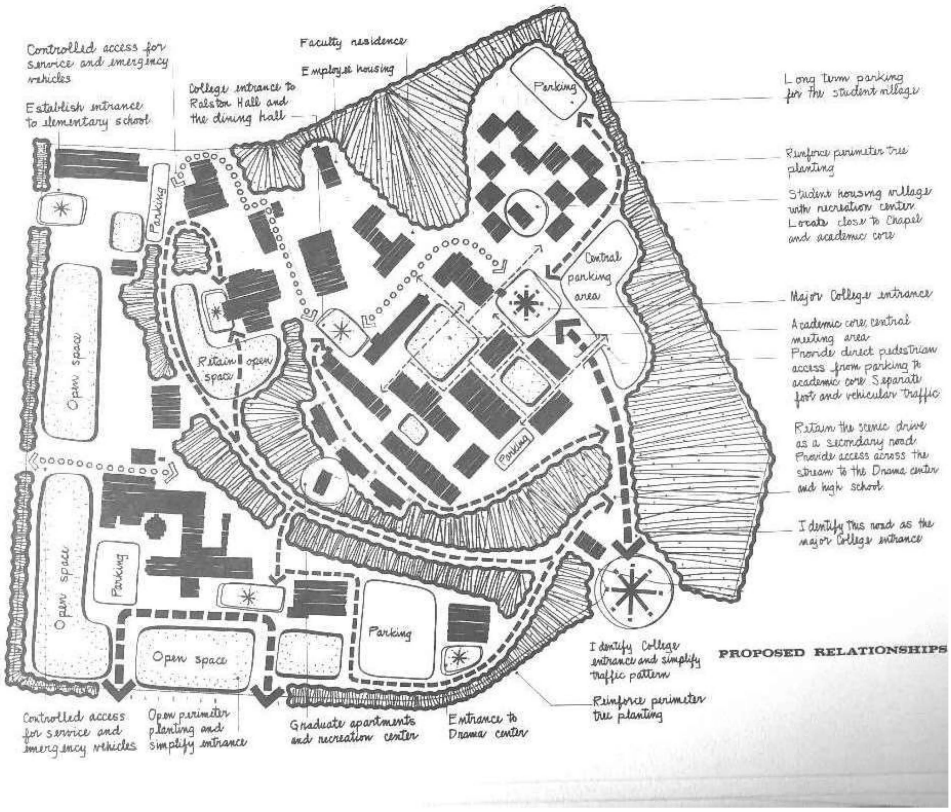


The "upper campus" still had some five acres available for expansion in 1972.



The campus as built in 1967.

[336] Ibid., 15.



The master plan for 1967 showed additional quadrangles, and a village of student housing that were never built.

Additional Campus Development (1975 – 2004)

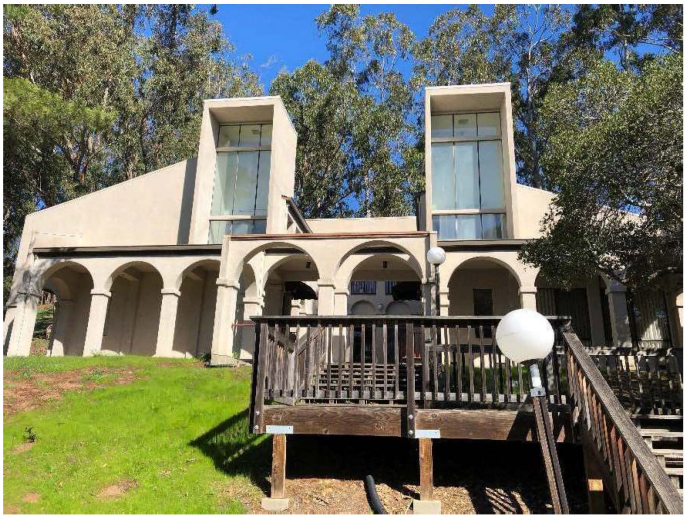
While much of the 1967 master plan never came to fruition additional buildings did go up between 1975 and 2004. All of these buildings are less than fifty years old. The first was Gellert Library, which was sited as originally intended to anchor a new quadrangle flanked by a new administration building, a new Fine Arts building and a new classroom building.[337] The library, designed by Reid and Tarics Associates, was built by 1974 in a Contemporary in design, with a steel frame structure standing on a concrete pad with a second-story mezzanine.

[337] Ibid., 7.



The Gellert Library was built next to the Campus Center building.

In 1984 the three two-story Toso Residences, designed by Gordon H. Chong in Post Modern style with Expressionist influences, was built as residential quarters for the Sisters then living in Ralston Hall. The fire department deemed the attic floor of Ralston Hall unsafe for sleeping at night—they could not guarantee rescue if a fire broke out—so the Sisters needed new living quarters. The three buildings were named Compiègne, Courtrai and Namur. They are wood frame construction with stucco walls and a composition shingle roof.



Courtrai building in the Toso Residences complex, now used as office space.

In 1991, the Bookstore was built. Located between the Tabard Inn and Gavin Hall, it is of wood frame construction and very modest in appearance; it looks like a modular, prefabricated building in vernacular style.



The Bookstore is one of the rare buildings on campus to have air conditioning.

The Gleason Gymnasium, designed by Gordon H. Chong, was built in 1991 in a Contemporary style. It was of concrete tilt up construction and reflective of Notre Dame's co-educational student population, with separate women's and men's locker rooms, in addition to a basketball court, athletic training and weight rooms, plus offices.



The Gleason Gym was built next to the chapel.

In 2004 the three-story New Hall student residence complex was built. Designed by Gensler Architects. The largest building was designated East and two smaller flanking buildings were called West 1 and West 2. The three wood frame buildings provided housing for 204 students who lived in suites of four separate rooms supported each by a small common area and a bathroom. The building is Post Modern in style.



The East Building of New Hall.

NDNU Plans for the Future

Facing declining undergraduate enrollments and high operating costs for the campus, Notre Dame de Namur University decided to take its programs fully online in 2021, focusing on their highly regarded education and teaching credentialing, business and clinical psychology graduate programs. NDNU has entered into agreements with Stanford University for a potential sale of the campus; NDNU is expected to remain as a tenant in some buildings even after the sale is complete.[338]

Contributions to Local History

William Ralston's projects in Belmont were important in the early development of the town. The construction and occupation of a hotel-sized estate home created over 100 jobs in the community for skilled artisans, manual laborers, maids, gardeners and stable hands.[339] In addition to employment, Ralston paid for improved roads in the area, allowed townspeople to connect to his private gas works and developed real estate in the area. The estate hosted hundreds of guests at frequent social events, many including social and political luminaries during Ralston's lifetime and that of his partner and heir, William Sharon. While Sharon hosted a notable dinner for ex-President Ulysses S. Grant and his younger daughter's wedding there, the house was essentially closed for a decade after his death with a handful of staff on site for maintenance and security.

The conversion of the estate to new uses after William Sharon's death, and the transition from rural retreat to suburban residential community, diminished the visibility and importance of the property to the town's economic and social life. Private schools and health sanitaria were numerous in Belmont and its vicinity in the early 20th Century. At least five private sanitaria were established in large estate homes in Belmont: Gardner Sanitarium in Ralston Hall , the California Sanitarium in the Splivalo estate

[338] The New NDNU https://www.ndnu.edu/new-ndnu/ Accessed 21 July 2022.
[339] MacCrisken

(Miramonte), the Alexander Sanitarium at the Hutchings estate, the Nerve Rest Sanitarium (later known as the Hillwell Sanitarium and the Buena Campbell Sanitarium) at the Hansen property and the Twin Pines Sanitarium at the former George L. Center home.[340] During this period the Gardner Sanitarium was a closed private facility employing a handful of staff. Its local economic and social impact was greatly reduced from the Ralston and Sharon years. It had less than a dozen patients living onsite when the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur purchased the property in 1922.

Similarly, the conversion of the estate to a private school by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in 1923 was not an unusual event for large estate properties. "Little Belmont," one of Ralston's outbuildings on his estate, became the Belmont School for Boys in 1885 (later renamed St Joseph's Military Academy), and Ralston Hall operated as a private school for girls, Radcliffe Hall, including college courses, from circa 1896-1898. A number of other estates on the San Francisco Peninsula were converted to private schools and universities as well, including: the Catholic school for girls Sacred Heart Academy in Atherton founded in 1898 on lands formerly held by the Faxon Atherton estate (they established a college curriculum in 1921)[341], Stanford University opened on the Stanford estate in Palo Alto in 1891, Crystal Springs Uplands School opened in the former Crocker mansion in Hillsborough in 1953 as a nonsectarian school for girls[342], and Nueva School moved to another former Crocker mansion, Skylands, in Hillsborough in 1970.[343] One impact the Sisters did have on the town of Belmont was to give a gift of land to allow organization of a local Catholic parish. The local parish subsequently built the Immaculate Heart of Mary parish church, which served the local Catholic community from 1930-1958. That building reverted to the university in 1958 and assumed an academic use.

The Notre Dame de Namur facilities were located one-half mile outside of the town; the campus had a limited impact on the local economy. Belmont did not develop around the campus as a "college town" with businesses focused on its students and faculty. As a private Catholic institution managed by resident nuns, the college, later the university, had a limited social footprint in the town as well. As the campus became coeducational and expanded its programs in the 1960s and 1970s the majority of students commuted to evening classes by automobile and spent little time in Belmont outside of the campus. While the Notre Dame de Namur schools and university are valued institutions in Belmont, the presence of the university campus does not appear to have contributed significantly to the development of the town.

Ralston Hall, the Ralston Carriage House and the Taube Center (the former Immaculate Heart of Mary parish church) have all been included on the 1991 City of Belmont Historic Resources Survey. The two Ralston buildings were associated with the era of large estates with a period of significance ranging from 1850-1875. The theme for Taube Center as a parish church was organized religion with a period of

[340] Ibid. Pages 65-69.
[341] https://www.shschools.org/about/history-and-heritage
[342] https://www.crystal.org/about/history
[343] https://www.nuevaschool.org/about/history

significance given as 1928-1930, although its use as a church continued until 1958.[344] The remaining college buildings do not appear to be significant in a local context.

[344] The survey dated the church's period of significance from the founding of the parish through construction of the church building: 1928-1930; it might be more appropriate to extend this period to encompass the period of its use as a church, 1930-1958.

Evolution of the Campus over Time

Selected Timeline for the NDNU Campus

1853	Leonetto Cipriani purchased the property.
1864	William Ralston purchased the Cipriani home.
1875	Ralston signed over the property to William Sharon just before his death.
1895	Jennie Bull purchased the estate and opened the Radcliffe Hall school for girls the following year.
1901	Dr. Alden Gardner established the Gardner Sanitarium.
1922	The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur purchased the property and moved the College of Notre Dame de Namur into Ralston Hall.
1928	The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur built the Notre Dame High School on a portion of the estate near Ralston Avenue.
1928	The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur provided land for the first Catholic parish church in Belmont. The Immaculate Heart of Mary church was completed in 1930 near Ralston Avenue.
1952	The campus expanded into the hillside by creating an academic plateau and added four new buildings.
1952	The College of Notre Dame de Namur began offering four-year college degree programs.
1956	The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur built the Notre Dame Elementary School on a portion of the estate.
1958	The Catholic parish church moved to a new site and returned the church building to the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.
1961	The new college chapel was completed on the academic plateau.
1967	The college becomes fully coeducational.
1967	A new Master Plan was created.
1975	Gellert Library, the last major academic building to be constructed on the campus was completed.

Evolution of the Campus and the 1967 Master Plan

The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur bought the former Ralston estate of some 65 acres, plus an additional ten-acre site, in Belmont in February 1922, another property known as the Reservoir tract (forty-one acres) in September 1924 and the Korbel tract (3 acres) in December 1948.345 When they opened the new College of Notre Dame in the fall of 1923 they utilized several of the estate buildings—most notably Ralston Hall, the Carriage House and the bowling alley—as their campus, along with the roads and pathways already in place. The existing buildings and roads determined the campus; no master plan was formed when the property was purchased and improved. The combined designed and natural landscaping already in place, dominated by hundreds of coast live oak trees, presented a bucolic environment that the nuns considered a major asset of the site, especially in comparison to the highly urban setting they were moving from in San Jose. Another vital consideration was the availability of water, piped down from the artificial lake created by Ralston.

The original campus was centered within and around the mansion, which stood partway up the hill. The nuns and residential students lived in the mansion and the college-level classes were initially taught there, in addition to high school and elementary school classes also taught in the Carriage House and other outbuildings. The nuns spent $88,595.22 in repairs, improvements and annexes in 1923 to enable the college to open.[346] In 1924 they built Cuvilly Hall for $20,306.55, located on the west side of the mansion and kitty corner to the Carriage House. In 1925 they built Notre Dame Hall (location unknown and now demolished) and in 1926 St. Teresita Hall, now the old Music Department building. This building was located parallel to Cuvilly Hall and behind the mansion. The two latter buildings were comparatively modest and cost respectively $5,739.40 and $3,985.12.



The then Blessed Julie Billiart Hall (now Cuvilly Hall) was sited parallel with the back of Ralston Hall (then Berchman's Hall) in 1924. The steps that led up to Cuvilly Hall were added in 1928. The free-standing Observatory was separated from Cuvilly by the Ralston tennis courts, sited above and behind the mansion.

345 "Plant Funds," President Sr CJC, Facilities, Architect, Chapel, Notre Dame Auditorium, Box 10, Notre Dame de Namur Library Archives.
346 Ibid.

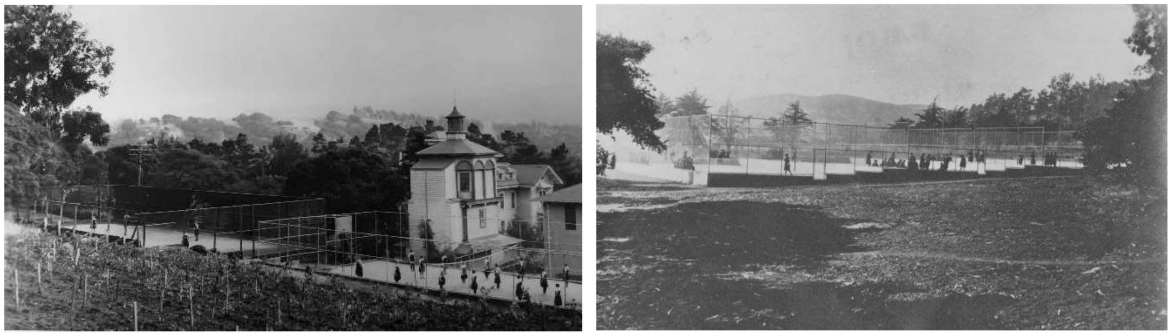
The high school was built on the flat lowest level of the property in 1928; this action created a primary campus location for the high school students, with the elementary students and some of the college students also using the facility. While Ralston Hall remained the focal point of the college students, both in terms of residence and classroom space, the construction of the high school created a new road with a gated entrance located at Ralston Avenue, plus the addition of an adjacent new swimming pool and new tennis courts to the east. They were all located below the creek that bisected the lower section of the property. A new set of concrete stairs and a concrete bridge for foot traffic was built across the creek between the mansion and the high school, allowing easy pedestrian access for the entire community of nuns, resident students and day students between the mansion and the high school.



The new high school required a new entrance from Ralston Avenue for day students. Residential students who lived in the mansion reached the high school from a new staircase and bridge that crossed the creek.



The new concrete bridge that spanned the creek with students walking down the concrete staircase, making their way from the mansion down to the high school in 1928. Both are still in use.



The original Ralston tennis courts (*left)* located above and behind the mansion adjacent to the Observatory and the new tennis courts (*right*) located below the mansion from 1928 onwards.

The financial and material vagaries of the Great Depression and World War Two allowed for constructed additions to both Cuvilly and the high school but no new structures were built. Once World War Two ended in 1945 the pressing need to accommodate an expanding student population caused the Sisters to hire architect Vincent G. Raney to design their new campus, which would be located on a higher level of terrain above and to the east of the mansion. It was extremely hilly, however, and Raney directed the excavation of some eleven acres to form the "academic plateau," which would create a new campus center apart and away from Ralston Hall and the high school. The nuns remained living in Ralston Hall but fifty of the one hundred residential students moved into the new dormitory, Saint Julie Billiart Hall, along with two nuns who acted as house mothers. Most, if not all, of the classroom space within the mansion was transferred to the new Saint Mary's building, composed of classrooms and laboratories.



The College of Notre Dame campus in 1946 was still concentrated on the mid-level and lower sections of the property, bisected by the creek. The road running along the back of Cuvilly Hall and past the back of the mansion was already in place. The bulk of the undeveloped property remained hilly and wooded. The star indicates Ralston Hall.[347]

The Notre Dame de Namur University archives do not hold a master plan for this new expansion as such and intent must be gleaned from the end result, the 1923 survey map that Raney amended in 1953, and from what Raney said in a magazine interview:

> "The basic structure consists of classrooms, library, dormitory and cafeteria; these units are tied together with a central court which serves also as a general assembly. Frame and stucco, brick and concrete are the materials to be utilized in the structure. Provisions were made in the plan for future expansion as the college grows. For the building is designed to maximum efficiency of

[347] Historic aerial photos were provided by the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment report prepared by EBI Consulting for the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in May 2020.

use, to fit the curriculum rather than the necessity of fitting the curriculum to the accommodations available."[348]

One evident result was that Raney cleared a much larger area than was needed in 1951-52 when the three new structures were built. A courtyard located between the three new buildings became the new focal point of this upper campus, providing space for students to congregate outside. The three buildings were all connected by new sidewalks, pathways and arcades. This plan resembled the "finger plan" popularized by Ernest Kump in his 1940s school designs.

A new road was extended straight upward from the main entrance at Ralston Avenue to the new academic plateau. It veered to the left and the driver made a sharp hairpin turn to the right to enter the plateau near St. Mary's Hall. At this level the driver turned right to park near St. Mary's Hall or left to drive past St. Mary's Hall and St. Julie Billiart Hall towards the back of the mansion and the back of Cuvilly Hall. A staircase along the lower east side of the mansion was built and connected with the road above that led to the new upper campus. The areas immediately surrounding the three new buildings were landscaped but the remaining unsightly flat space of the plateau was left untouched for over two decades.



Raney, noted for his draftsman's ability, depicted the new campus sited on the freshly graded academic plateau. St. Mary's Hall, made up of administration offices and classrooms (*left*) stood across from the new library/cafeteria (*right*) and St. Julie Billiart dormitory (*far center*) stood parallel to the courtyard.

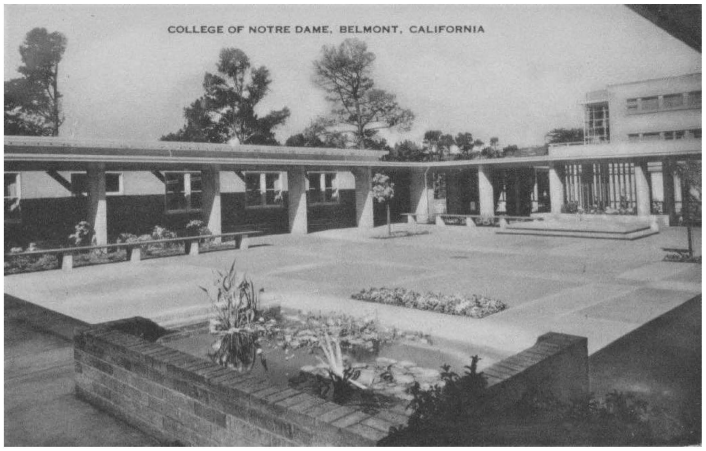
In 1954, with plans for a new theater/auditorium already in place to be built near the high school, the nuns asked Raney to draw up a campus master plan in anticipation of coming accreditation as a college and the expected rise in enrollment.[349] No such plan has yet been found in the archives. The request noted that Raney had asked the nuns for input on the new planned buildings. Due to lack of archival materials, it is impossible to understand how much design input was made by the nuns and how much

[348] Partridge, "Architect Vincent G. Raney," *The Trumpeteer*, 16, 32.
[349] Sister Mary Lorette to Vincent G. Raney (23 June 1954), President Sr CJC, Facilities, Architect, Chapel, Notre Dame Auditorium, Box 10, Notre Dame de Namur Library Archives.

by Raney in the creation of the new upper campus in 1951-52. A large parking lot was not created at this time as most students did not own cars and most of the faculty was still composed of nuns living on campus. Parking spaces were provided along the long sides of St. Mary's Hall, along the back of Julie Billiart Hall and eventually along the back of St. Joseph's Hall.



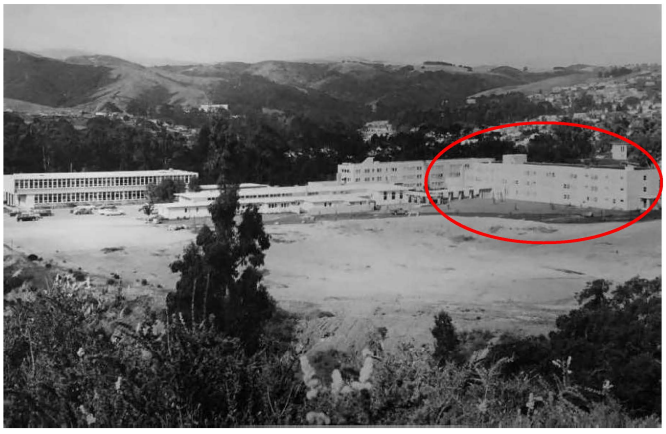
A new road was extended upward from the main entrance and headed up the hill, bypassing the left-hand turn to the original estate road that led to the mansion and carriage house. Note the section of hill still standing where St. Joseph's dormitory would later be built.



The arcaded courtyard with a small stage was the focal point of the new campus.



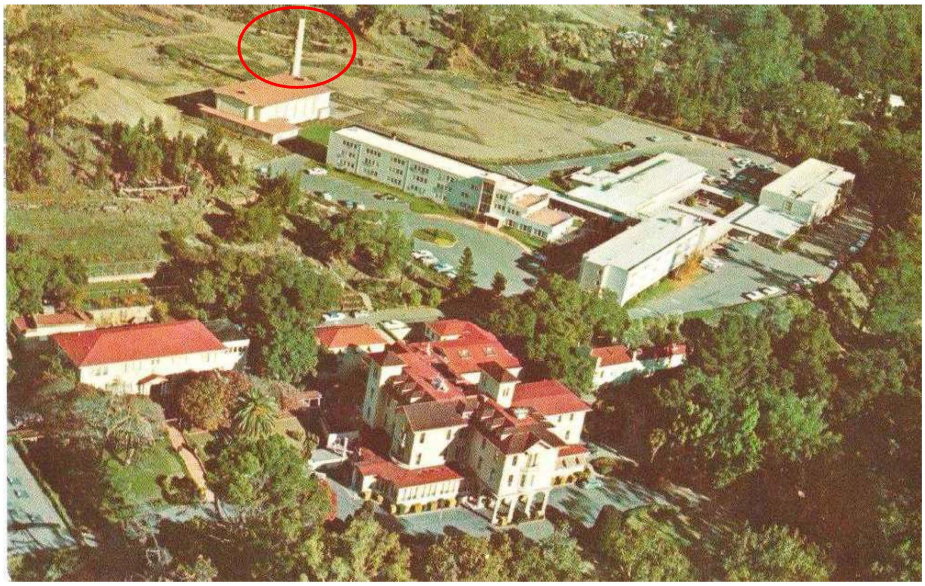
This 1956 aerial clearly shows the creation of the new dirt road leading to the new upper campus and the connection to the road running along the back of Cuvilly Hall and the mansion that now led to the backs of St. Julie Billiart Hall and St. Mary's Hall. Star indicates location of Ralston Hall.



The construction of a second dormitory, St. Joseph's Hall, in 1958 allowed the rest of the residential students to move from the mansion. The remaining seven acres stood out in stark contrast with the rest of the hilly and wooded campus.



The road that ran from the back of Cuvilly Hall's northern wall *(left)* along the back of the mansion and eastward to the back sides of St. Julie Billiart Hall and St. Mary's Hall was considered the "spine" that divided the new upper 1950s campus and the original lower campus of the mansion and the carriage house.



The construction of the bell tower in 1961 created a new focal point on the campus. The parking circle seen on the west side of St. Joseph's Hall was removed when New Hall was built in 2003.

Two more Raney-designed structures would be added to the upper campus. In 1958, the second dormitory, St. Joseph's Hall, was built. Raney sited it perpendicular to St. Julie Billiart Hall. The relative lack of ornamentation, at this point limited to a large statue of Mary and a crucifix on St. Mary's Hall and readily seen as one drove up the road to the upper plateau, made expansion of the campus simple in terms of aesthetics. Of St. Julie Billiart Hall, Raney had written: "A frame and stucco building designed

for economy. The glass enclosed stair area [located on the back of the building facing away from the courtyard] gives dramatic and desirable interest to the building; masonry adds permanence."[350] Of St. Joseph's Hall he noted: "This project will be in similar materials and styling to harmonize with other buildings on the Notre Dame College campus."[351] St. Joseph's dramatic window façade, like St. Julie Billiart's stairwell, faced away from the campus courtyard. Sidewalks and landscaping connected the new addition to the existing buildings. A new road was paved at the academic plateau entry point that passed the campus dining room/library and wound past and around St. Joseph's Hall to continue along its western façade. There a large parking circle was located outside St. Joseph's Hall, which connected to the spinal road at the corners of St. Joseph's and St. Julie Billiart that led to the back of the mansion.

In 1960 Raney designed the long-anticipated chapel. It was completed in 1961, sited at the back of the graded plateau with the road now running between it and nearby St. Joseph's Hall. The tall bell tower was considered to be the new focal point of the campus, as it easily towered above the existing two-story and three-story buildings and Raney's original courtyard. It, along with the new chapel, purposely also reflected the religious nature of the institution.

[350] Raney, "1000 Projects," unpaginated.
[351] Ibid.



This 1963 aerial shows the addition of St. Joseph's Hall and the new chapel. Note the only paved sections of roadway surrounded the upper campus buildings. The chapel had not yet been assigned dedicated parking. Star indicates Ralston Hall.

In 1965 the Board voted approval for more student housing, which was built along the lower edge of the road that ran along the backs of St. Julie Billiart Hall and St. Mary's Hall. Architect Hollis Logue Junior took advantage of the steep hillside to terrace the three apartment buildings—Carroll, Kane and Wilkie—and its freestanding recreational center—The Oaks—which was located along the original estate road that led to the mansion. At the same time Logue designed Gavin Hall, a small building set apart from the upper campus and intended for staff living quarters that would later be put to academic use. This allowed for the demolition of Ralston's bowling alley, which had been housing staff, east of the mansion.

The 1967 campus master plan was written by a campus planning group, Lackey, Hamilton, Blewitt Associates, who consulted with Logue and the nuns to formulate a long-range plan that encompassed the academic plateau and beyond. The ultimate goal was to have 1,000 daytime students and 1,000 evening students, with 300 parking spaces to accommodate both groups, plus additional faculty and

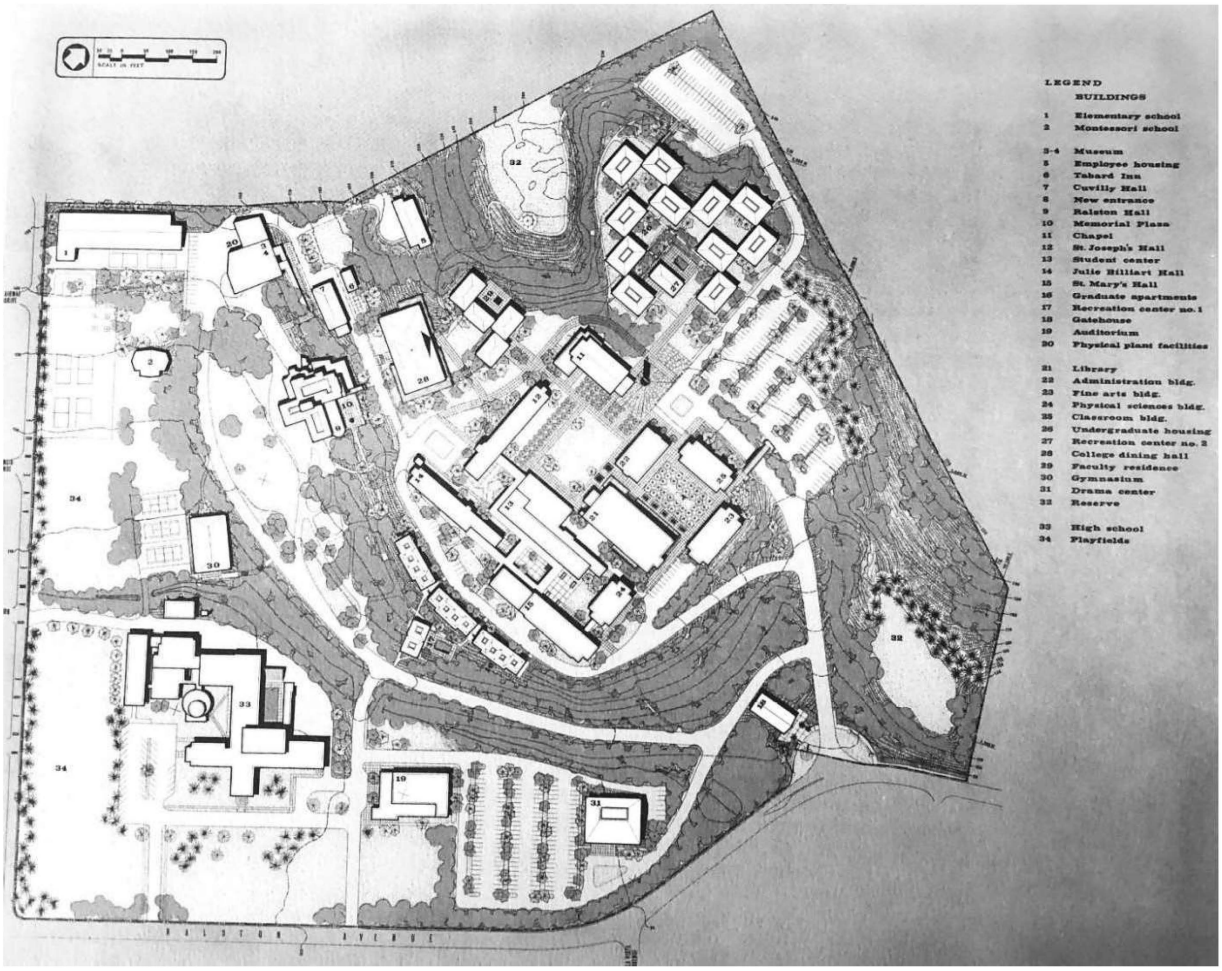
staff parking. In 1967 the college students numbered 432, with a projected added enrollment of 10% per year.[352]

Acknowledged problems included the limited flat area available, likely requiring the use of future three-story and four-story buildings, the utilization of steep hillsides as Logue had already done with the new apartment buildings, landscaping the raw flat plain that had existed for the past sixteen years, and the inadequate main entrance, with its hazardous entry and exit point, especially during heavily trafficked hours, and its confusing choice of roads leading to the mansion or to the upper campus.[353] Parking lots, rather than parking spaces, would be needed due to the developing and relatively heavy influx of commuter students.

A new and larger dining hall was to be erected directly behind the mansion, where the Ralston tennis courts had once stood. Faculty housing would be located above the dining hall and feature a small courtyard. Small units of student residences and residential student parking would be located above and to the west of the chapel. Pedestrian access would be given top priority between the existing five buildings on the academic plateau and the creation of four new structures that would be placed to create a mall and another courtyard, with the mall running between St. Joseph's Hall and the chapel, with the new library and administration buildings built on the opposite side. The bell tower would now literally be the focal point within the campus rather than just a metaphorical one standing at the far edge. A smaller courtyard would exist between the new library, the new administration building, a new fine arts building and a new classroom building. A new physical sciences building would be located near St. Mary's Hall and the old dining room. A new drama center would be located on the lower part of the campus across from a parking lot next to the existing theater/auditorium.

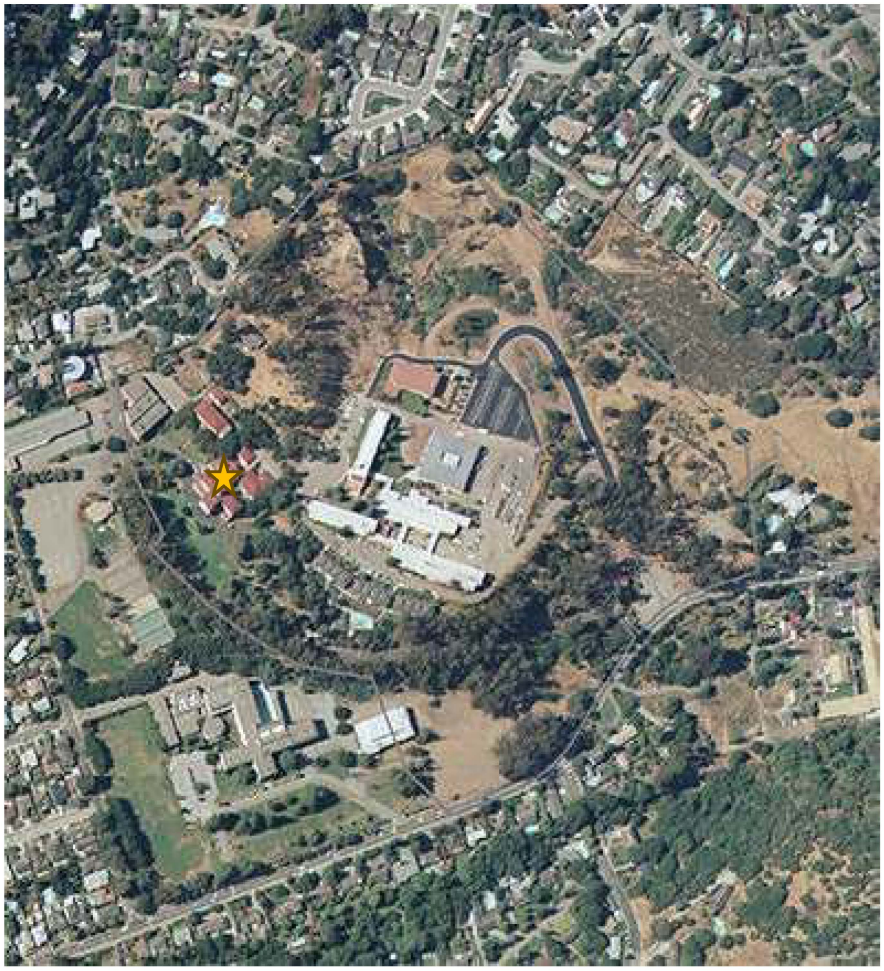
The new courtyards would contain new landscaping and some sculpture, with the existing lawns freshly hillocked and new grouped trees providing shade and visual interest.[354] It was an incredibly ambitious plan that would require extensive funding, with an expectation that buildings would go up one at a time as finances permitted.

[352] Lackey, et al, 16, 17.
[353] Lackey, et al, "The Long Range Campus Plan for the College of Notre Dame," (1967), 15, Box 10 or Box 36, College of Notre Dame Library Archives.
[354] Lackey, et al, 22, 23.



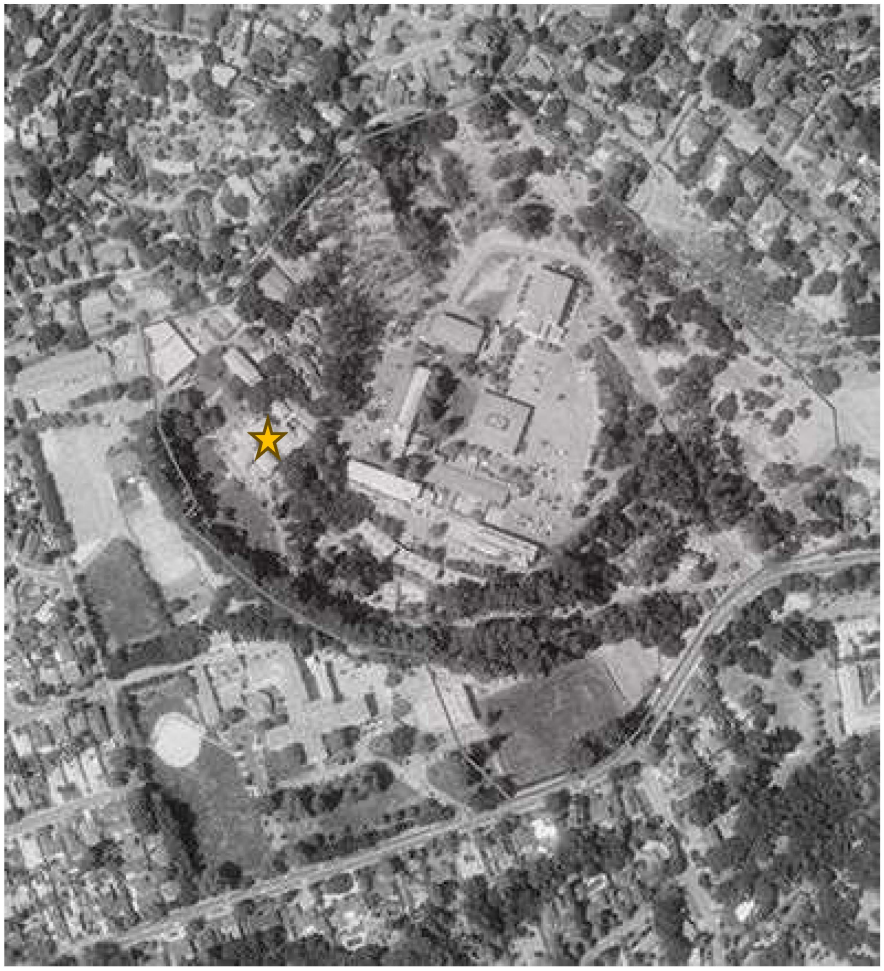
This 1967 master plan shows the projected layout of numerous new buildings, both residential and academic. Pedestrian access within the campus core was a key component.

By 1974 only one building had been built—the library—and it was ultimately located on top of the proposed mall, rather than flanking the edge as planned. The rest of the space was devoted to parking lots. Another ten years went by before the Toso residences were built above and behind the mansion; they were located where the new dining hall was to have been. The fire department had determined they could not guarantee rescue of the nuns living on upper floors of the mansion during the night and so the Sisters had to build new quarters not envisioned in 1967.

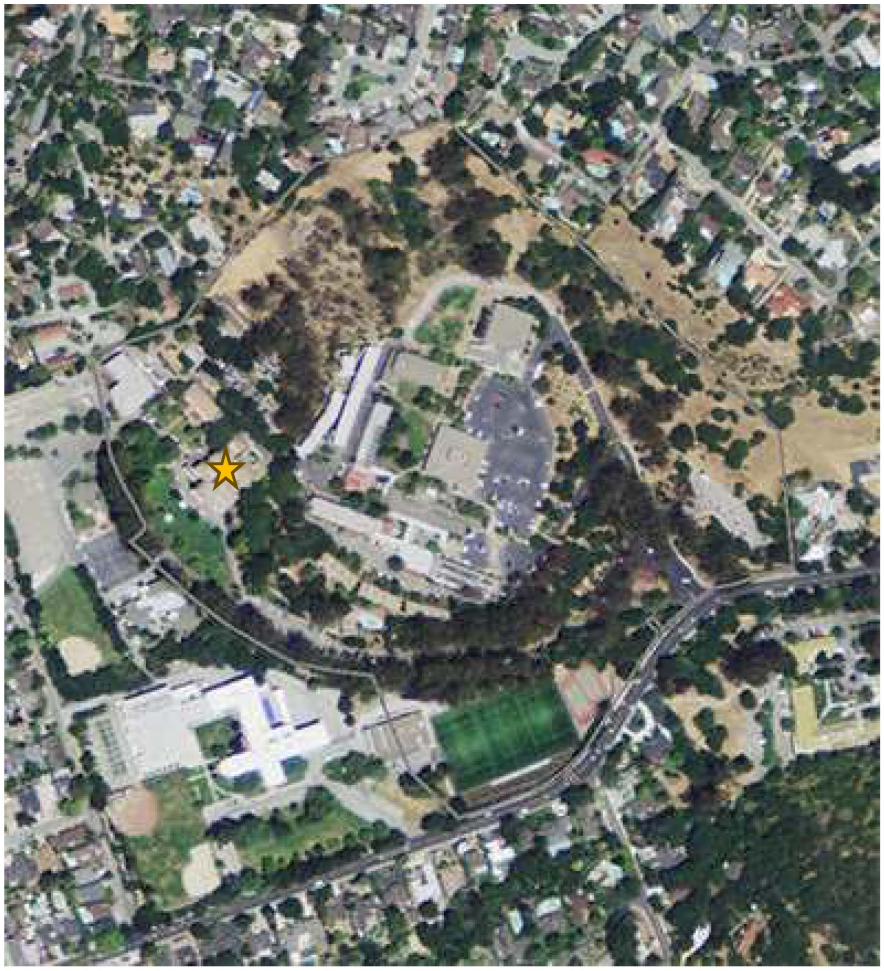


This 1974 aerial shows the extended paving of the former dirt road that led up from Ralston Ave., continuing straight upward before making a sharp turn to the left that doubled back toward the academic plateau. Note the addition of the new library, which was located on top of the intended pedestrian mall, and the new parking lot across from the chapel. Star indicates Ralston Hall.

The second building to be built on the expanded academic plateau was the gymnasium, located adjacent to the chapel and behind the parking lot, in 1991. The road running up from the main entrance was rerouted northward, allowing entrance at the side of the gym or around the gym and chapel to the road alongside St. Joseph's Hall. The gym's original planned location was at the opposite end of the plateau, near St. Mary's Hall. Two successive campus master plans, created in 1995 and in 2015, are outside the scope of the timeframe of study.



This 1998 aerial shows the gymnasium built seven years earlier and the resultant rerouting of the road around the gym and the chapel to connect to the road running alongside St. Joseph's Hall. The rooftops of the Toso residences built in 1984 can be glimpsed among the trees on the hillside above and behind the mansion. Star indicates Ralston Hall.



This 2009 aerial shows completed construction of the three New Hall residences, located across the road from St. Joseph's Hall. The parking circle was removed to make way for the new buildings. Star indicates Ralston Hall.

The expense of construction in California was always challenging for the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, who persevered despite an ongoing lack of funds. Money that might have gone into new buildings after the creation of the 1967 master plan was instead used to maintain existing buildings, with the library, the Toso Residences, the gymnasium and New Hall residences being the exceptions.

The Development of Education for Women in California

The earliest school facilities in California were constructed in the Spanish colonial era in the Pueblo settlements. Pueblo San Jose built its first school building in 1802 and hired its first full-time teacher, retired Corporal Rafael Villavicenio, in 1811.[355] School was open to "all children," which suggests that girls were able to attend school. (The Franciscan missions tutored a small number of boys to read in Spanish so that they could assist priests in their duties, but no general educational program was developed within the missions during this period and no girls were taught to read or write in the

[355] Index to the Pueblo Papers. History San Jose. Viewed at https://sites.google.com/historysanjose.org/spanishmexicanarchives/documents. (Accessed 18 July 2022.)

missions in this early period.[356]) A private English-language school was opened at Mission Santa Clara for a few months in 1847 but moved to Monterey in 1848.[357]

Building public schools was a priority for the American colonial enterprise and a School Fund was established by the Constitutional Convention held in Monterey in September of 1849. The first American colonial era public school operated in Monterey in Colton Hall (also the Town Hall) from 1849-1851. [358] By 1851 San Francisco had three public schools and five church-operated private schools.[359] Santa Clara County had four schools in 1851, including the Young Ladies Seminary operated by the Sisters of Charity at San Jose.[360] The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur opened two schools in San Jose: a fee-paying private school for girls opened in August of 1851 and a free "Poor School" shortly thereafter.

Higher education for women was limited in the United States in this period: a handful of private women's' colleges were founded on the East Coast in the 1830s and only a few public colleges were coeducational. Only five coeducational colleges admitted women prior to the American Civil War.[361] Of the fifty "colleges" established for women in the United States between 1836 and 1875 only a handful—concentrated in New England (the "Seven Sisters" colleges—Barnard, Smith, Mount Holyoke, Vassar, Bryn Mawr, Wellesley and Radcliffe)— were offering high quality academic programs.[362] The first four year degree comparable to those offered by men's colleges was offered by Mary Sharp College in Tennessee beginning in 1851.[363] The College of Notre Dame of Maryland, granting their first degree in 1899, has been identified as the first Catholic women's college.[364] This postdates the granting of college diplomas by Notre Dame de Namur College in San Jose in 1866 by over thirty years. The small size of Notre Dame de Namur's college class (1-2 graduates a year) may have obscured its pioneering leadership in this area.

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[356] Hackel, Steven W. Native Insurgent Literacy in Colonial California. California History 96(4):4. 2019.
[357] Clark, Shannon: The Alameda, the beautiful way, page 50. BR Printers, 2006
[358] Ibid.
[359] "Historical Sketch of the Public School System of California," in First Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of California for the School Years 1864 and 1865. State of California. (Special Collections, Monroe C. Gutman Library, Harvard Graduate School of Education). Page 246. Viewed at https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/79/Appendix_to_the_Journals_of_the_Senate_and_Assembly_of_the_..._session_of_the_Legislature_of_the_State_of_California_%28IA_appendixtojourna18662cali%29.pdf (Accessed 18 July 2022.)
[360] Ibid. Page 246.
[361] DeBra, Elizabeth. Women's Colleges in the United States, A Historical Context. In Women's Colleges in the United States: History, Issues and Challenges edited by Irene Harwarth, Mini Maline and Elizabeth DeBra. National Institute on Postsecondary Education, Libraries, and Lifelong Learning. Government Printing Office. June 1997.
[362] Parker, Patsy. The Historical Role of Women in Higher Education. Administrative Issues Journal: Connecting Education, Practice and Research 5(1):7. 2015.
[363] DeBra 1997: 3.
[364] Ibid: page 10. See also Harwarth 1997:10.

In California, the first women were admitted to UC Berkeley in 1871.[365] USC offered admission to women from its founding in 1880.[366] Mills College claims to be the first four-year women's college in California, founded in 1852 as a "seminary" for girls, Mills was chartered as a college in 1885 and has claimed to be the oldest women's college in the western United States.[367] While there is no question that Notre Dame de Namur College was granting college degrees from 1866 onward—two were granted pending their 1868 California state charter as the first higher educational institution for women in California—various NDNU archival resources differ over whether these were "collegiate" degrees differentiated from either Associate or Baccalaureate Degrees. The College of Notre Dame did not begin a formal four-year program until the early 1950s; the earlier degrees were granted through individual tutoring due to the small number of graduates, which averaged only one or two per year.

In the post-Civil War era through the 1920s, women's enrollment in college increased steadily, only to fall back during the Great Depression. A brief resurgence during World War Two was following by a steep decline in the 1950s as returning veterans flooded onto college campuses under the GI Bill and negative attitudes towards women taking places at crowded colleges deterred women from enrolling.[368] Women's' colleges struggled to sustain financial support during this period as well.[369] Following passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 and Title IX of the Education Amendments in 1972, college enrollment of women increased and since 1979, women have earned over half of all bachelor's and master's degrees and one-third of the doctorates granted in the United States.[370]

To be eligible for listing on the California Register under criterion 1 (events) or 2 (persons) in this context, a property should be associated with events identified by scholars as important in the history of education for women in California, and/or associated with leading figures who influenced these events.

Regional Collegiate Architecture and Design, 1868-1975

The term "collegiate architecture" refers to buildings found at stand-alone colleges that provide a liberal education or a specialized technical degree and universities organized into colleges (or schools) that confer undergraduate and graduate degrees. Some seventy institutions of higher learning are located within the San Francisco Bay Area, comprised of San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Alameda, Contra Costa, Solano, Napa, Sonoma and Marin Counties. These sister institutions, which include Notre Dame de Namur University at Belmont in San Mateo County, share common academic missions and common property types.

[365] A History of Women at Cal. Viewed at https://cejce.berkeley.edu/gender-equity-resource-center/resources. (Accessed 18 July 2022.)
[366] Women's history of USC stretches back to the university's beginnings. Viewed at https://news.usc.edu/13406/usc-womens-history-started-early/. (Accessed 18 July 2022.)
[360] https://mills.northeastern.edu/about/ (Accessed 18 July 2022.)
[368] Parker 2015:9.
[369] DeBra 1997: 10.
[370] Parker 2015:9.

Santa Clara College (now Santa Clara University) and the Academy of Notre Dame (later College of Notre Dame and Notre Dame de Namur University) were founded almost simultaneously in 1851 and served boys/men and girls/women respectively; both were private Roman Catholic institutions. Of the ten schools founded in the Bay Area between 1850 and 1874—the Pioneering Campuses period—the regional style of architecture tended to be the Second Empire or Italianate in style. However, Santa Clara and Notre Dame were both begun in adobe buildings. Ralston Hall, built in Belmont in 1868, was built in the Italianate Style but as a private residence. It would not become a college building until 1923, when the Notre Dame campus transferred from San Jose to Belmont.

The Late Victorian Era (1875-1899)

The Late Victorian era saw many buildings designed in a wide variety of eclectic styles, with the Shingle style, Neoclassical and Richardsonian Romanesque with Mission Influence. Collegiate buildings of this period are rare; many were lost to earthquake, fire or demolition. Two fine examples of eclectic Italianate collegiate architecture, of the Second Empire Style variant, have survived in the San Francisco Bay Area: South Hall at UC Berkeley and Mills Hall at Mills College (now Mills College at Northeastern University). Both buildings are listed on the National Register. Neoclassical buildings were found on the Notre Dame de Namur campus in San Jose; buildings there and elsewhere throughout the Bay Area were damaged extensively in the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake. Some colleges rebuilt in the same place while others relocated to entirely new properties.



Left: South Hall, UC Berkeley (1873). Right: Mills Hall, Mills College (1871)

The Arts and Crafts Period (1900-1924)

The Arts and Crafts Period favored medieval and rustic styles of architecture that vied with the also prominent Beaux-Arts style that was eclectic and formal, drawing from the designs of European palaces, cathedrals and cloister houses. The College of Notre Dame moved from San Jose to Belmont in 1923, where Ralston Hall and an adjacent Carriage House provided residence and academic space for the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur with day and resident girls/women attending elementary school, high school and college classes.

The Romance of the West Era (1925-1949)

The Romance of the West era was a time when romantic notions and images of the American West emerged for a second time; this had also happened during the 1880s and 1890s. The Pan-Pacific expositions at San Francisco and San Diego (1915-1917) were strong influencers of both civic and collegiate architecture, with San Francisco promoting Beaux-Arts eclecticism and San Diego Spanish Baroque architecture in the form of Spanish Colonial Revival. The Taube Center, which started life as the Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, was built in the Spanish Colonial Revival style in 1930 on a quarter acre of Notre Dame de Namur property donated to the newly formed local parish.

The Modern Period (1950-1975)

The Modern period saw the introduction of often controversial Modern designs that respectively included the International Style, Modern or Midcentury Modern, Second Bay Tradition and Brutalism. The prevalent use of grey concrete, flat roofs and large expanses of glass often clashed, to critic's eyes, with more traditional and often beloved styles of architecture closely held by campus community members, especially alumni.

International Style

The International Style was developed in Europe and the United States in the 1920s and 1930s. This style relied heavily on new technologies using iron and steel that made masonry and stone obsolete. The style was characterized using rectilinear forms, light surfaces devoid of ornamentation and visual weightlessness through the use of cantilevers.[371]



Left: Nelson Memorial Library, Pacific Union College (1958). Right: Fine Arts Center, College of San Mateo (1963)

Midcentury Modern style (1945-1969)

The Midcentury Modern style relied on incorporating large expanses of glass that provided a transparent indoor-outdoor transition, exposed structural systems and geometric forms. This style is ubiquitous in the Bay Area, as represented by thousands of Joseph Eichler homes.

[371] "International Style," Encyclopedia Britannica, https://www.britannica.com/art/International-Style-architecture (accessed 12 July 2022).

Midcentury Modern Style was a popularized form of Modern architecture that allowed for more ornamentation, a wider variety of roof forms, expressive shapes, and shade-creating overhangs. Within the regional collegiate architecture context there are many examples of this popular style. The College of the Holy Names (now Holy Names University) in Oakland built an entire new Midcentury Modern campus in 1957.



Holy Names University (1957).

UC Berkeley, perhaps better known for its Brutalist Modern buildings, also built a number of important Midcentury Modern buildings.



Left: Unit 3 Housing, UC Berkeley (1964). Right: Hildebrand Hall, UC Berkeley (1966).

Some campuses experimented with expressionist forms of Midcentury Modern and distinctive round buildings were popular.



Left: Music Building, CSU East Bay (1965). Right: Chabot College Library (1965).

Second Bay Tradition

Second Bay Tradition is a regional form of Modernism that celebrates the natural beauty, mild climate, and vernacular traditions of the San Francisco Bay Area. The style originated with specific architects of the San Francisco Bay Area, such as William Wurster and Gardiner Dailey.[372] The Second Bay Tradition was an important "softer" counterpoint to the glass and concrete formalism of Modernism. While displaying large amounts of glass, Second Bay incorporates rustic textures with uses of wood and rock singly or combined, reflecting an Arts and Crafts combined with Modernism ethos. Blurring of the indoor and outdoor is encouraged through sloped roofs with wide eaves and large expanses of glass and pergolas, balconies, patios, etc. Notre Dame de Namur, where all four of these styles of buildings exist, found that students reluctant to leave the residence rooms of Ralston Hall behind soon delighted in their brand-new quarters.



Left: Pelican Building, UC Berkeley. Right: Foothill College Campus.

Brutalism (1950-1980)

The Brutalism style became popular in the 1960s and 1970s in the United States but originated with French architect and painter Le Corbusier's design of a housing complex. He termed the style "breton brut" (raw concrete) as the use of concrete on exterior walls was riddled with texture provided by holes and seams formed as the concrete settled.[373]

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[372] "Second Bay Tradition," Wikipedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Bay_Tradition (accessed 12 July 2022).
[373] "Brutalist Architecture," The Art Story, https://www.theartstory.org/movement/brutalism/ (accessed 12 July 2022).

Brutalism became widespread on college campuses for many years, in spite of its lack of popularity with many members of the public. The two iconic examples of Brutalism in regional collegiate architecture are Wurster Hall and the Art Museum at UC Berkeley.



Left: Art Museum (now BioEnginuity Hub), UC Berkeley (1970). Right: Wurster Hall, UC Berkeley (1962).

Architect Vincent G. Raney (1905-2001)

Vincent Raney was born in Indiana in 1905, graduated from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana in 1930 and after serving for five years as a draftsman in two architectural practices in San Francisco established his architectural practice in San Francisco in 1935.[374] In 1952 he purchased 1.5 acres from the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur and built his family home on Ralston Avenue in Belmont.

Raney had a long association with two major building types: he designed more than 600 gas stations ("Flying A" stations for Associated Oil Company), and more than 40 movie theaters.[375] Raney also designed Catholic schools, churches and college buildings including the Church of the Visitacion in San Francisco (1952), St Ann Chapel in Palo Alto (1953) Holy Cross High School in Mountain View (1957), Serra High School in San Mateo (1955) and academic buildings and the chapel at Notre Dame de Namur University in Belmont (1961). Raney's promotional pamphlet, "1000 Building Projects Since 1936," showcased "efficient," "low cost" and "low maintenance" design for his institutional projects.[376]

[374] Pacific Coast Architecture Database https://pcad.lib.washington.edu/person/4537/
[375] obit
[376] Vincent Raney, "1000 Projects," unpaginated, undated brochure published by Vincent Raney, Inc. NDNU Archives. Appears to date to circa 1960.



Rendering by Raney of a Service Station. [377]

Raney's early work is Streamline Moderne in character, typified by the Round House Café at the Golden Gate Bridge (1938) and the Bal Theatre in San Leandro (1945). His institutional buildings, largely built in the 1950s and early 1960s – medical offices and schools – are simple, flat (or very low pitched) roofed, horizontal boxes with ribbon windows and "stacked" volumes for vestibules and stair towers. By the late 1960s Raney was largely occupied – for the remainder of his career -- with his series of domed "Cinerama" movie theaters for the Syufy cinema company which were constructed across the western United States.[378] Raney built several cinemas for Syufy on land owned by his family in San Jose.[379] The Notre Dame de Namur buildings belong to the efficient and economical institutional portfolio Raney developed in the Postwar period. The Century 21 Theater has been listed as a local landmark by the City of San Jose.

[377] Rendering captured from https://formfunctionart.com/product/tidewater-oil/
[378] Archives & Architecture. Historical Evaluation and Assessment, Santana West Development Project, San Jose, California. 2016. Garavaglia Architecture. Dome Theater: Final Historic Resource Evaluation Report, Pleasant Hill, California. 2013.
[379] Ibid.

Table 1. Selected buildings designed by Vincent Raney

	
Round House Café, Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco (1938)	Kuhio Theater, Honolulu (1945) (demolished)
	
Flying A Service Station, Truckee (1936)	Bal Theater, San Leandro (1948)
	
Serra High School, San Mateo (1954)	St Francis High School (1957)



Holy Angels Elementary school, Colma (1952)



St Lucy's Elementary School, Campbell



Century 21 Theater, San Jose (1964)[380]



Century 23 Theater, San Jose (1968, demolished)



Century 25, Saratoga (1969, demolished)



Century 16 Theater, Tucson, Arizona (1989, demolished)

[380] Cinema images from Cinema Tour, Cinema History Around the World. https://www.cinematour.com/about.php

Vincent Raney was not included among notable architects in the San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design Historic Context Statement, nor is he mentioned in the San Jose Modernism Historic Context Statement.[381] Each of these documents lists dozens of his contemporaries. Several of his local cinema buildings have been evaluated. The Dome Theater at Pleasant Hill was found not to qualify as a historic resource in 2013.[382] In 2014 the City of San Jose listed the Century 21 Theater as a local landmark.[383] The large size and distinctive profile of the domed cinemas has attracted preservation attention that has not identified his more utilitarian school and college buildings as important examples of Post World War 2 architecture.

Architect Hollis Logue, Jr.

Hollis Logue, Jr. was also a Midwesterner, born in Indiana in 1920. Logue decided to remain in the San Jose area after his World War Two service in the US Navy ended with a posting at Moffett Field in Sunnyvale. He completed his undergraduate degree in architecture at the University of Illinois just before enlisting in the Navy in 1941 and earned a master's degree in urban planning at San Jose State after the war.[384] Logue's practice was centered in San Jose, where he served on the Planning Commission and the Redevelopment Agency board for many years.

Logue is best known as the architect of the San Jose Airport Terminal C building completed in 1965. He was also the designer of the City of San Jose Health Services Building at the Civic Center in San Jose (his portion was completed in 1958), and as a member of the design team for the Santa Clara County Administration Building at 70 West Hedding Street in the same Civic Center area (completed in 1959).[385]While Logue enjoyed a long and productive career he has not been identified as an important design architect in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Midcentury Modern Church Architecture: Comparative Framework

Many church builders, facing financial constraints and concerned about attracting younger churchgoers in a rapidly modernizing country, adopted new construction methods and forms. While early examples of Modern churches in the United States embraced minimalism and flat roofed, boxlike churches by the late 1940s new church construction adopted a variety of taller roof forms, including parabolic arches, and the "A-frame."[386] Interiors were generally limited in ornamentation, with focal

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[381] Mary Brown. San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935 – 1970 Historic Context Statement. Prepared for City and County of San Francisco. 2010. PAST Consultants. San Jose Modernism Historic Context Statement. Prepared for Preservation Action Council of San Jose. 2009.

[382] Garavaglia Architecture. 2013. Dome Theater Final Historic Resource Evaluation Report.

[383] Archives & Architecture. 2016. Historical Evaluation and Assessment, Santana West Development Project, 449 S. Winchester Blvd, 3161,3162 and 3164 Olsen Dr and a portion of 525 S. Winchester Blvd San Jose, Santa Clara County, California. Page 7.

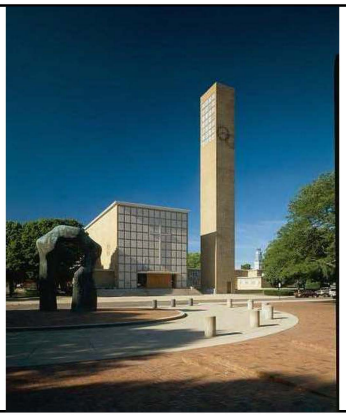
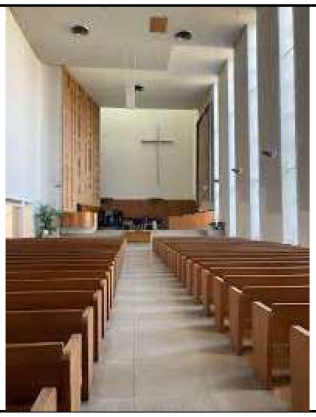
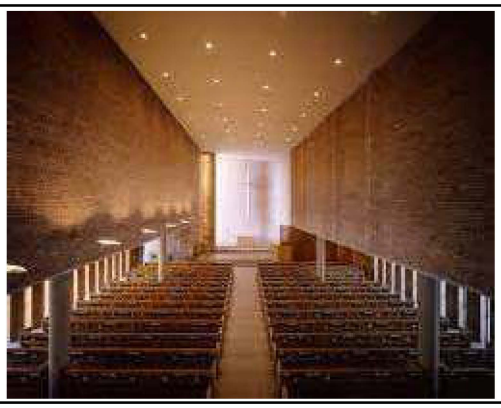
[384] Scott Herhold. Designer of S.J. Airport's Terminal C Dies at 90 – Hollis Logue Jr: 1920-2010. September 24, 2010. San Jose Mercury News. Page 7B.

[385] Knapp & VerPlanck Preservation Architects. 2011. Historic Resource Evaluation, Former San Jose City Hall, City Hall Annex, and Health Services Building, San Jose, California.

[386] Jay M. Price. *Temples for a Modern God: Religious Architecture in Postwar America* (Oxford University Press, 2013); Gretchen Buggelin. *The Suburban Church: Modernism and Community in Postwar America* (University of Minnesota Press, 2015).

points of light directed towards the altar.[387] Exposed brick and natural wood surfaces were also important features.[388]

Table 2. Noted Postwar Modern Churches

	
First Christian Church, Columbus, Indiana by Eero Saarinen (1939-42)	
	
Christ Church Lutheran, Minneapolis, Minnesota by Eliel Saarinen (1948-49)	

[387] Buggelin 2015, p.131; Price 2013, p.134.
[388] Buggelin, 2015, p.131.





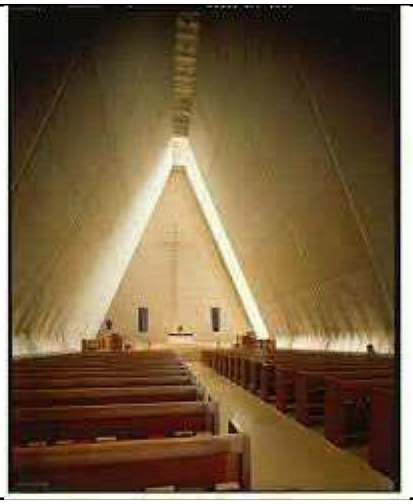
MIT Chapel, Cambridge, Massachusetts by Eero Saarinen (1955)





Carr Memorial Chapel, Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, Illinois by Mies van der Rohe (1949-52)



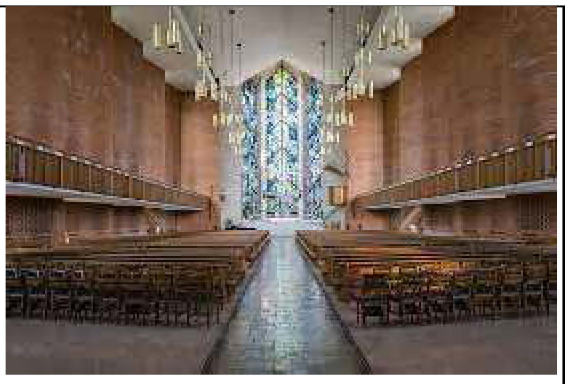
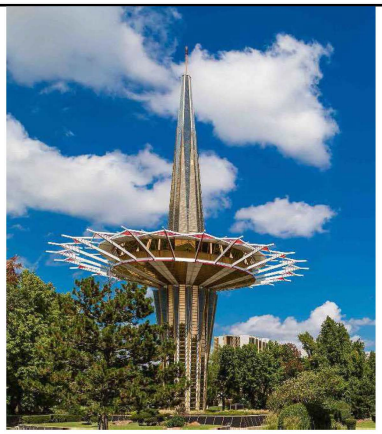
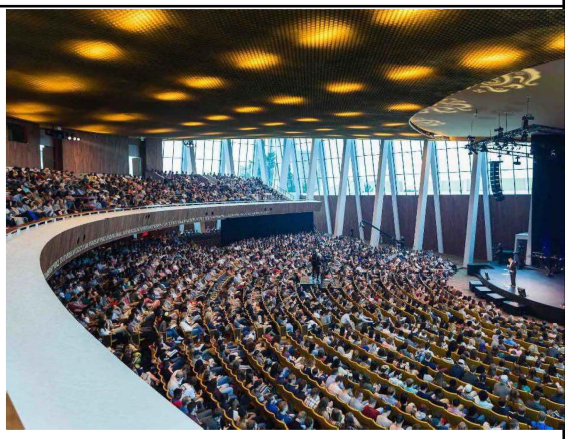


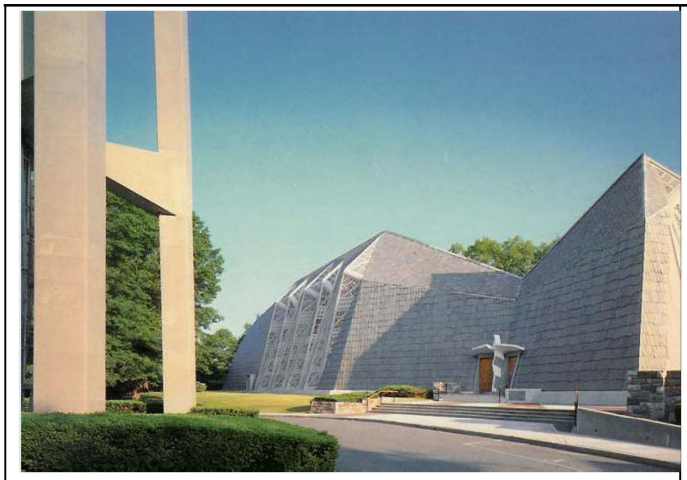
Concordia Theological Seminary Chapel Fort Wayne, Indiana by Eero Saarinen (1958)

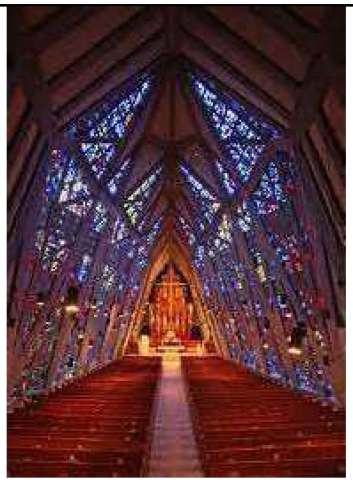
	
Tuskegee University Chapel, Tuskegee, Alabama by Paul Rudolph (1960-67)	

However, some churches adopted Expressionist forms with eccentric eye-catching features to attract and inspire worshippers.

Table 3. Unique Postwar Modern Churches of Note

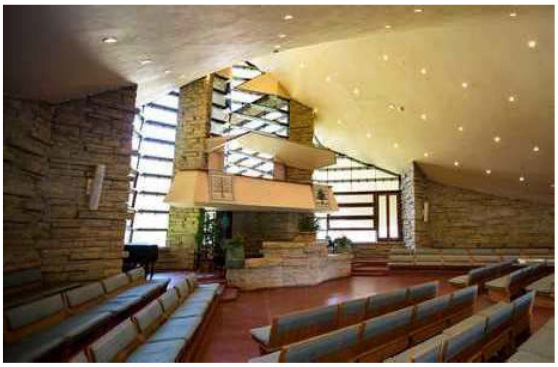
	
Chapel of the Resurrection, Valparaiso University, Indiana by Charles Stade (1959)	
	
Prayer Tower, Oral Roberts University, Tulsa Oklahoma by Frank Wallace (1967)	
	
Priory Chapel at St Louis Abbey, St Louis, Missouri by Gyo Obata (1962)	





First Presbyterian Church, Stamford, Connecticut by Wallace Harrison (1958)





First Unitarian Meeting House, Madison, Wisconsin by Frank Lloyd Wright (1951)

Hundreds of new churches were constructed in the rapidly expanding suburbs of California in the new Midcentury Modern style.389 Some examples noted in the scholarly literature are illustrated below. Many exhibit large expanses of natural wood in the interiors, another characteristic feature of Postwar Modern churches.[390]

[389] The website Roadside Architecture exhibits over 200 examples. https://www.roadarch.com/roadside.html.
[390] Buggelin 2015, p.131.

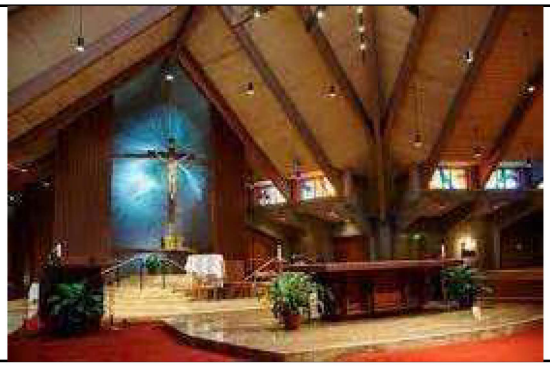
Table 4. Midcentury Modern Churches in California





Central United Methodist Church, Stockton by Anshen & Allen (1964)



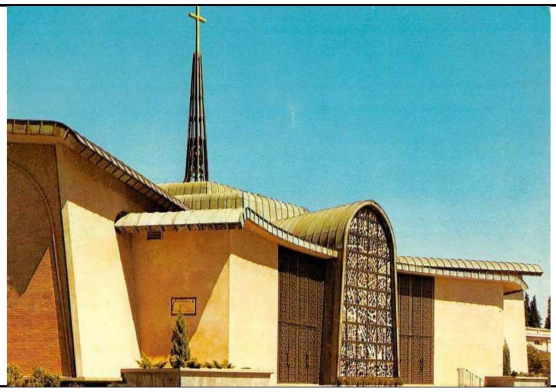


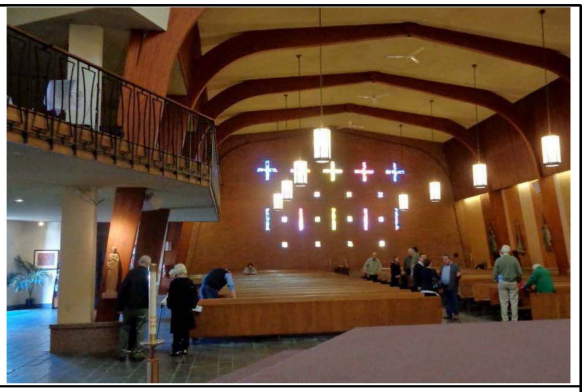
St John the Baptist Catholic Church, Napa by Henry Schubart and Germano Milano (1966)



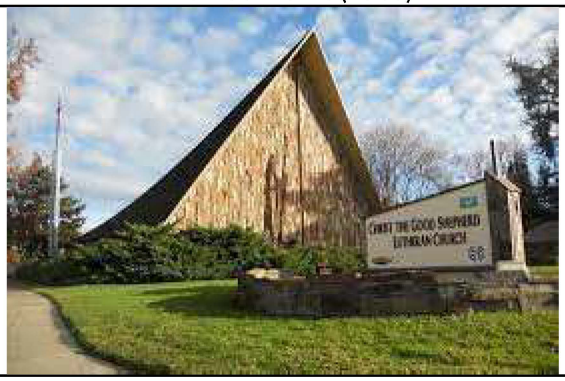


Seventh Day Adventist Church, Pacific Union College, Angwin (1968)





St John the Baptist Catholic Church, Healdsburg by Thomas Fruiht (1965)





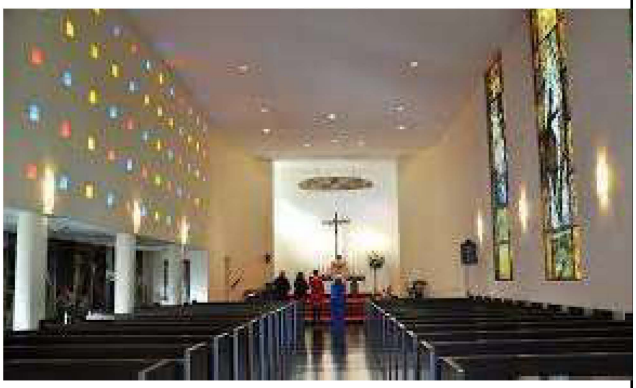
Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, San Jose by Warren Gilbert (1965)

Vincent Raney designed a number of churches and some of these displayed the typical features of Midcentury Modern church design described in architectural histories for this period. St. Ann's Chapel in Palo Alto (1951) for example exhibits the minimalist approach to decoration and light focused on the altar (note the similarities with the Saarinen churches shown above), while the A-frame church at St Hilary Catholic school in Marin, designed by Raney in 1954, displays the A-frame approach with a "Neogothic" interior and light focused on the altar. These two churches have received some notice for architectural merit.[391]

[391] Saint Ann's Chapel was included on a travel itinerary of sacred architecture in Northern California presented by Docomomo (https://www.docomomo-noca.org/news/sacred-architecture); the St Hilary School Chapel received a design award in 1957.

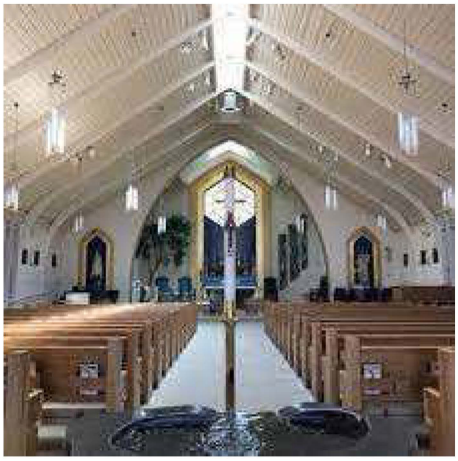
Table 5. Three Midcentury Churches Designed by Vincent Raney





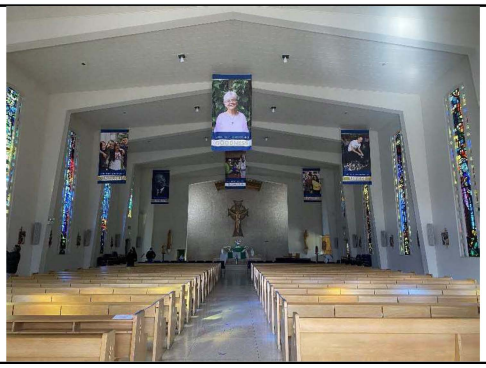
Saint Ann Chapel, Palo Alto (1951)





St Hilary School Chapel, Marin (1954)





Cunningham Chapel, NDNU

Glass Artist Gabriel Loire (1904-1996)

Gabriel Loire was a prolific and innovative creator of glass windows in hundreds of churches, chapels, mosques, and other buildings around the world in the post-World War Two era. Loire popularized a new technique for creating colored glass windows (*dalle de verre*) where thick slabs of colored glass are broken into pieces that are mounted in frames of unpainted concrete or epoxy resin reinforced with fibers.[392] Loire worked in abstract, geometric and figurative designs and is widely acknowledged as a master craftsman and important Modernist designer.[393] A selection of his best-known work is illustrated below.

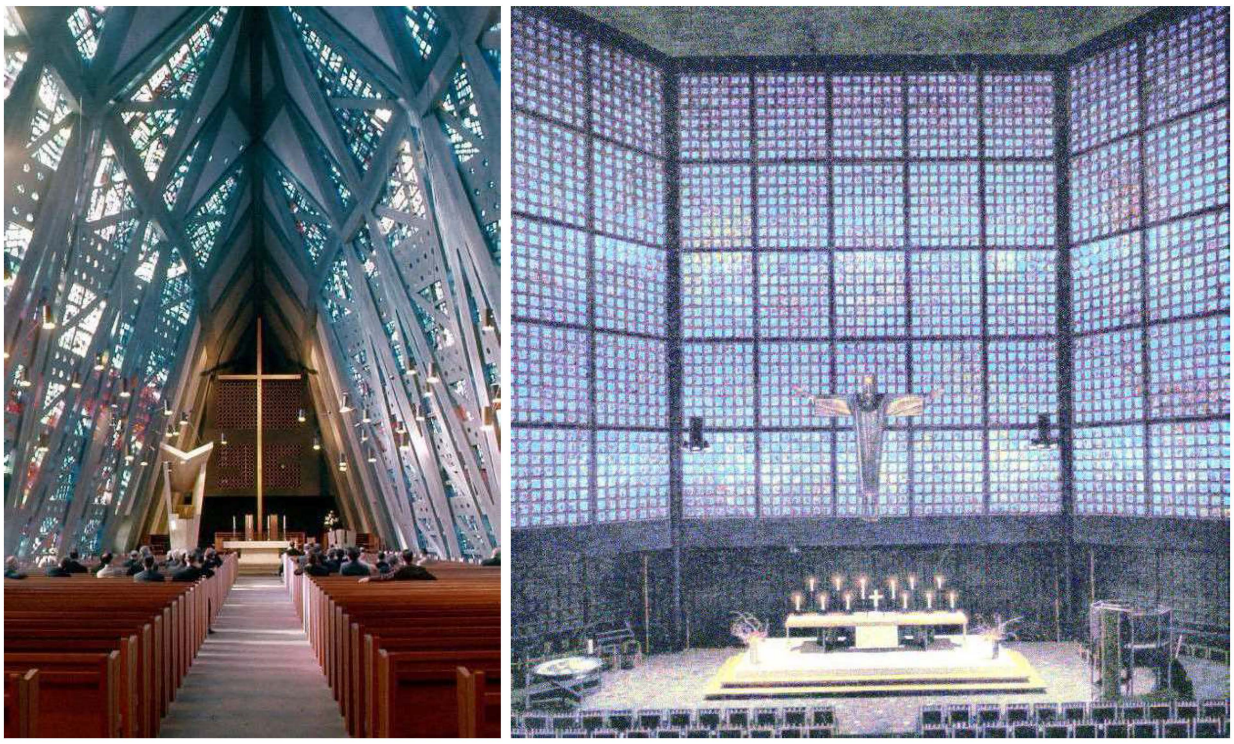


Left: Thanks-Giving Square Chapel, Dallas, TX. Right: Hakone Open Air Museum, Japan.[394]

[392] Michael Hebbert. "Old Modernism, New Urbanism." IX Congreso DOCOMOMO Iberico, 440-447. Viewed at https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10071138/1/Old%20Modernism%20New%20Urbanism%202018.pdf.

[393] Jane Brocket. *How to Look at Stained Glass, A Guide to the Church Windows of Britain* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018.); John Grindrod. *How to Love Brutalism* (London: Batsford, 2018); Niall McLaughlin. "Incarnations, Bishop Edward King Chapel Cuddeson," In Lisa Godson and Kathleen James-Chakrabrty, eds. *Modern Religious Architecture in Germany, Ireland and Beyond: Influence, Process and Afterlife Since 1945* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019); Jan Laurens Siesling. *Art is More* (Arte Libro, 2015).

[394] Photos of windows shown here at other sites are by Ateliers Loire.



Left: First Presbyterian Church, Stamford, CT. Right: Kaiser Wilhem Gedachtniskirche, Berlin, Germany.

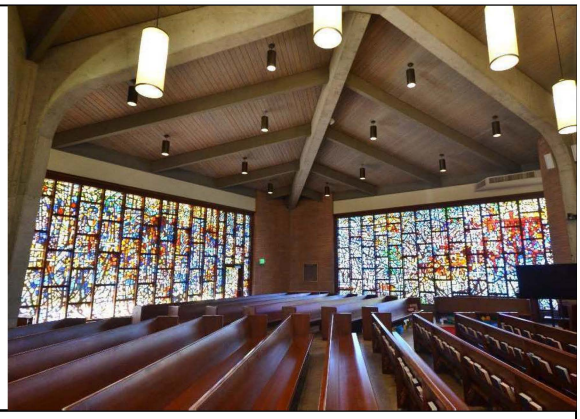
Loire's most famous work was designed in collaboration with architects working in Expressionist Modern forms. The windows are very large and the experience is immersive: the viewer is surrounded by and bathed in the light of the windows.

Gabriel Loire Works in the Bay Area

Gabriel Loire completed over 750 projects around the world in his long career, including more than thirty located in California. Eight of these projects are located on the San Francisco Peninsula.

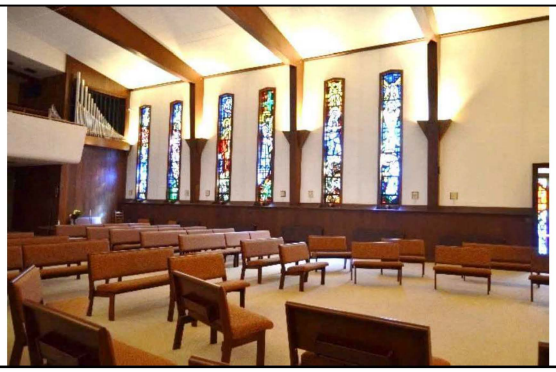
Table 6. Bay Area Church Windows Designed by Gabriel Loire





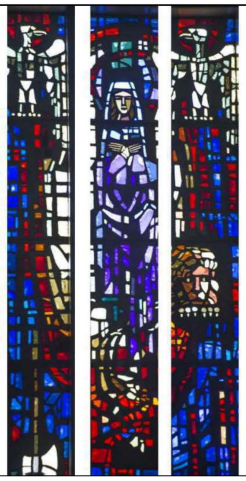
Christ Episcopal Church, Los Altos, California.





St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Redwood City, California.

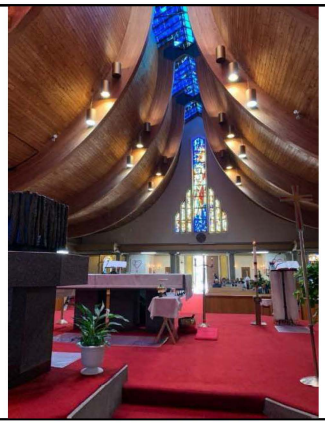




Left: St. Charles Parish Catholic Church, San Carlos, California Right: St. Martina window.[395]

[395] Photos by St. Charles Parish.





St. Michael's Catholic Church, San Francisco, California[396]

Of the more than 60 stained glass windows at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, Gabriel Loire created the Canticle of the Sun rose window and a series of Human Endeavour windows depicting Albert Einstein, John Glenn, Thurgood Marshall, Franklin D. Roosevelt and other leaders of the 20th Century.[397]



John Glenn (Exploration), rose window and Thurgood Marshall (Law) at Grace Cathedral.

These local examples are used for comparative purposes in the evaluation below. It is clear that the Cunningham Chapel windows are not significant at a national or international level as examples of Loire's work. The evaluation therefore focuses on significance at the state or local level.

[396] Photos from Foursquare.

[397] Atelier Loire, https://www.ateliers-loire.fr/fr/gabriel-loire-usa-californie-san-francisco-grace-cathedral.php; Grace Cathedral https://gracecathedral.org/stained-glass-windows/ (accessed 12 July 2022).

Evaluative Framework

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is a list of historic resources in the United States that are deemed significant to the nation's history. It was established in 1966 with passage of the National Historic Preservation Act to encourage the preservation of America's heritage. A property of national importance contributes to our comprehension of the country's history by demonstrating the influence of events or individuals connected to the property, its architectural type or style, or its potential to provide information.

To establish significance, a property must fulfill one or more established criteria and must also retain integrity (defined below) such that it can demonstrate its significance. National Register Criteria, established in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, Part 60.4, and outlined in National Register Bulletin 15 (NRB 15), are as follows:

A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or

B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or

C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

D. That have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important prehistory or history.

The National Register excludes some properties from consideration (with some exceptions):

> "Ordinarily cemeteries, birthplaces, or graves of historic figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, properties primarily commemorative in nature, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years shall not be considered eligible for the National Register."[398]

A property from these excluded categories may be considered for listing if it (1) is eligible under one of the four National Register Criteria, (2) possesses integrity, and (3) meets special requirements called Criteria Considerations. Seven established criteria (Criteria Considerations A through G) relate to religious properties, properties that have been moved birthplaces and graves cemeteries, properties that have been reconstructed, commemorative properties, and recent properties. Criteria

[398] National Park Service, "National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation," 1997. Viewed at https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB-15_web508.pdf (accessed 21 July 2022).

Consideration A: Religious Properties and Criteria Consideration G: Properties that have Achieved Significance Within the Past 50 Years are considered below.

As discussed above, Ralston Hall at Notre Dame de Namur University, has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Integrity

To be eligible for listing on the National Register, in addition to fulfilling one or more of the four National Register Criteria, the resource must also have integrity, that is, it must retain key features of its original identity and characteristics sufficient to convey its significance.

In National Register Bulletin 15, the National Park Service defines seven "aspects of integrity" that are relevant to evaluation: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, association.

- *Location* is defined as "the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred." Generally, integrity of location is compromised if a property is moved from its original location.
- *Design* is defined as "the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property." Design originates through conscious decision-making during construction and reflects historic functions, technologies, and aesthetics. It is related to "organization of space, proportion, scale, technology, ornamentation, and materials." When applied to districts, design relates to "the way in which buildings, sites, or structures are related."
- *Setting* is defined as "the physical environment of a historic property," and includes both natural and manmade (anthropogenic) features such as topography, vegetation, paths and fences, and relationships between structures and open space. Setting is more nuanced than location as it relates not just to where the property was situated, but to the "character" of the place and how the property is situated in relation to features and open space. It can reflect a design concept about nature and aesthetics. Setting is particularly important consideration for evaluating historic districts.
- *Materials* are defined as the "physical elements" of a historic property—the types of materials and the combination in which they were used that are reflective of a particular historic context. Integrity of materials requires retention of key exterior building materials. Reconstructions are usually not eligible.
- *Workmanship* is defined as "physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people" in a particular historic time and place, including evidence of artisanal labor and skill. Workmanship can reveal technology and aesthetic concepts from a particular time and place.

- *Feeling* is defined as "a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time." It relates to the combination of physical properties that, when taken together, convey the historic character of the property. Feeling is somewhat subjective and is not sufficient alone to support eligibility for the National Register.

- *Association* is defined as "the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property." Integrity of association is fulfilled in cases where a property retains its "historic character" and is a place where an important historic event or activity occurred. Like feeling, association is somewhat subjective and is not sufficient alone to support eligibility for the National Register.

Criteria Consideration A: Religious Properties

The National Register of Historic Places specifically excludes properties owned by religious organizations or used for religious purposes from eligibility as historic resources, with few exceptions. These exceptions (Criteria Consideration A) are limited to "a religious property deriving primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance."[399]

Many religious properties have been listed for architectural merit or association with non-religious events: there are at least 91 churches, three synagogues and sixteen other religious properties in California that have been listed on the National Register.[400] Accordingly, buildings on the Notre Dame de Namur campus are analyzed for their potential architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance, and not for their religious attributes.

Criteria Consideration G: Recent Properties

Properties that have achieved significance in the past fifty years are not eligible for the National Register unless they are of "exceptional importance," which must be justified through a thorough analysis of the historic context in which the resource is situated.[401] National Register Bulletin 22 outlines the following guidelines for evaluating recent properties. Exceptional importance for a resource less than fifty years old may be justified if:

- The type of resource or its historic circumstances have been the focus of scholarly work.
- In circumstances where the resource type is threatened and may be viewed as exceptional.
- Enough time has passed for analytical perspective to form.
- Through comparative evaluation in a particular geographical extent (local or regional).

[399] Ibid.
[400] Wikipedia, Properties of religious function on the National Register of Historic Places in California, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Properties_of_religious_function_on_the_National_Register_of_Historic_Places_in_California (accessed 18 July 2022).
[401] National Park Service, "National Register Bulletin 15"

- The resource is associated with important living persons (rarely).
- The resource is an integral part of a historic district where most of the properties are over 50 years old.[402]

Historic Districts

- The definition of historic district is provided in the Code of Federal Regulations:
- A district is a geographically definable area, urban or rural, possessing a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development. A district may also comprise individual elements separated geographically but linked by association or history.[403]
- The following guidelines for evaluating resources as historic districts are given in National Register Bulletin 15: [404]
- Nature of districts. A historic district has "concentration, linkage, and continuity of features." It is a "unified entity." Although often composed of various resources, a historic district conveys a sense of time and place.
- Significance of a district. A historic district must be significant and identifiable with importance relating to historical, architectural, archaeological, engineering, or cultural values.
- Features of a district. A historic district may lack features with individual distinction as well as possess individually distinct features that act as focal points. Or a historic district may have no individually distinct features provided the group of features is significant as a whole. A district may also contain features within its boundary that do not contribute to its significance, such as structures, buildings, objects, sites, and open spaces, depending on how these properties affect the district's integrity.
- Geographical boundary of a district. A historic district must have definable geographical area that distinguishes it from surrounding properties. A district is usually a single defined area containing contiguous properties. However, it can also have two or more significant areas separated by nonsignificant areas.

[402] National Park Service, "National Register Bulletin 22: Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties that have Achieved Significance within the Past 50 Years," 1990.
[403] Code of Federal Regulations Title 36, Part 60. https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-36/chapter-I/part-60 (accessed 18 January 2024).
[404] National Park Service, "National Register Bulletin 15," 5-6.

- Integrity of a district. For a historic district to retain integrity, a majority of the components that compose its "historic character" must have integrity. Furthermore, relationships among these components must be substantially unchanged since the period of significance."[405]

National Historic Landmarks

National historic landmark criteria are standards for national significant properties found in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR Title 36, Part 65) and summarized in NRB 15.[406] National Historical Landmarks Criteria are defined for evaluation of properties for potential design as a national historic landmark:

1. Association with events that are made to significant contribution the broad national patterns of United States history
2. Important association with the lives of nationally significant persons
3. Represent a "great idea, or ideal of the American people"
4. Embody distinguishing characteristics of architecture type that is exceptionally valuable for the study of a time and place, construction method, or is a significant, distinctive, and exceptional entity
5. Composed of integral parts of the environment that collectively compose an entity of exceptional historical, art, artistic significance, or commemorate or illustrate in an outstanding way, a lifeway or culture
6. Yield or likely to yield information about major scientific importance, reveal new cultures or shedding light on occupation over large areas of the United States.

Certain types of properties are excluded (with exceptions) from the National Historic Landmarks list. These include cemeteries, birth places, graves, religious properties, religious sites, structures that have been moved, reconstructed, buildings, and recent buildings. However, exceptions include (1) religious properties that derive primary national significance from architectural/artistic distinction or historical importance; (2) structures that have been moved from their original location but yet nationally significant; and (3) structures no longer standing but association with a person or event of transcendent importance in the nation's history.

As discussed above, Ralston Hall at Norte Dame de Namur University has been listed as California Historic Landmark #856.

[405] Ibid, 46.
[406] Ibid, 50-52.

California Register of Historical Resources

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) recognizes that a property that meets one or more of these criteria, following a survey by a qualified professional, is a historic resource whether or not the property has been formally listed at the local, state or national level.[407] These criteria are used in the evaluation of the Notre Dame de Namur University buildings. Criterion 4 is generally reserved for archaeological resources and will be addressed in a separate report.

1. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States (Criterion 1).
2. Associated with the lives of persons important to local, California or national history (Criterion 2).
3. 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 (Criterion 3).
4. Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation (Criterion 4).

California Historical Landmarks

California Historical Landmarks include various places, structures, features, or events that hold significant importance at the state level and embody values in areas such as anthropology, culture, military, politics, architecture, economics, science and technology, and religion, among others.

A set of standards was developed and first applied in the designation of Landmark #770, a 19th century Chinese Temple in Oroville, California. Landmark status results in automatic inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources, and a bronze plaque placed on site.

To be eligible for landmark status, a resource must meet at least one of the following three criteria:

1. The resource must be the first, last, or sole example of its type in the state or within a geographical region of California.
2. The resource must relate to a person or group that has had a significant impact on California's history.
3. The resource must be an exemplary or prototypical example of a historic period, style, architectural trend, or method of construction. Or it must be a distinguished or best-preserved work of an early architect, designer, or builder of merit in a particular region.

As discussed above, Ralston Hall has been listed as California Historic Landmark #856.

[407] CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5. Viewed at https://www.califaep.org/docs/2022_CEQA_Statue_and_Guidelines.pdf, 184. (accessed 21 July 2022).

City of Belmont Historic Preservation Programs

Article 7 of the City Code establishes definitions for historic resources, historic districts and landmarks as follows:

- Landmark: a building or structure being the first, last, only or most significant of a type in a region, over fifty (50) years old, possessing tangible elements of important historical periods, persons, architecture, or use.
- Historic resource: a building or structure over fifty (50) years old representative of a historic period or building type but does not meet landmark standards. A historic resource is significant because it was present during the period of significance, and possesses historic integrity, architecture, or historic association reflecting its character at that time or is capable or yielding important information about the period.
- Historic district: a geographically definable area with a concentration of historic resources and/or landmarks.[408]

As discussed above, Ralston Hall, the Carriage House, and the Taube Center were listed on the City of Belmont Historic Resources Survey in 1991.

Contexts and Themes for Evaluation

Historic resources are evaluated for significance within frameworks that identify significant themes and patterns in history and provide for comparison among properties of similar types.[409] For purposes of evaluating campus buildings for association with significant events (Criterion 1) or people (Criterion 2), the context of development of education for women in California is presented below. To evaluate the academic buildings on the campus under Criterion 3, this report uses a context developed by Stanford University for its campus-wide survey: collegiate architecture of the San Francisco Bay Area.[410] The Stanford survey also developed a context for signicant scientific discoveries and prize-winning scholarship that was appropriate for major research institution but less well-suited to the smaller Notre Dame de Namur University.

Buildings constructed on the campus before 1975 are evaluated below using the California Register criteria within two historic contexts, a context for association with significant events and people and a context for assessing architectural significance.

[408] Belmont Code of Ordinances. Viewed at https://www.belmont.gov/our-city/city-government/city-code (accessed 18 July 2022).
[409] Office of Historic Preservation, State of California, https://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=23317; Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Preservation Planning https://www.nps.gov/articles/sec_stds_planning_standards.htm (accessed 18 July 2022).
[410] Angoloti et al.

Evaluation for Association with the Development of Education for Women in California (Criteria 1 and 2)

Criterion 1: Association with Significant Events

There are histories that discuss the importance of Catholic colleges founded by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in providing a Catholic education to serve a growing population of Catholic immigrants to the United States from Europe in the mid-nineteenth century as famine, revolution and war swept through Europe.[411] Anti-Catholic and anti-immigrant prejudice were important factors leading to the development of Catholic serving educational institutions.[412] The founding of the schools in San Jose in the early 1850s is sometimes noted in these historical surveys.[413] Other surveys of women's colleges, while discussing the importance of Catholic institutions and other Notre Dame de Namur campuses, did not mention the California Notre Dame de Namur college or university.[414]

The scholarly record suggests that the early establishment of a school and then college for women and girls by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur was significant in the early years of American colonial expansion into California as a flood of immigrants sought education for their daughters. Notre Dame de Namur College appears to have a strong claim as the first women's college in California and the oldest Catholic women's college in the United States. These significant events took place at the Sisters' first campus in San Jose.

By the 1920s when the Sisters moved their educational mission to Belmont, there were at least twenty-eight colleges and universities in the San Francisco Bay Area; six Catholic colleges were operating in the region by 1924 as well as another six schools operated by religious institutions.415 There are few if any references in histories of education in California or the United States of the Belmont campus in the period under study (which ends in 1975). There is no scholarly record to support that any of the properties at the Notre Dame de Namur University campus in Belmont would be eligible under Criterion 1 for association with significant events in the development of education for women in California.

Criterion 2: Association with Significant Persons

While some Catholic college founders have received historical notice—Sister Julia McGroarty and Sister Mary Euphrasia at Trinity College for example[416]—a search for the names of the Sisters who led the college, then the university, after its move to Belmont did not yield any mentions in scholarly sources on the history of higher education. The buildings on the Belmont campus do not appear to be eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 2 for association with significant people. It is

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[411] Bosler, Rosemarie. *The Preparation of Sister Teachers for Selected Schools Sponsored by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.* Ed.D. Dissertation. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 1992).
[412] Ibid, 63.
[413] Ibid, 77.
[414] Harwarth 1997, DeBra 2015, Kathleen Sprows Cummings, "'We owe it to our Sex as Well as our Religion': The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, the Ladies Auxiliary, and the Founding of Trinity College, 1898-1904." *American Catholic Studies* 115(4):21-36. 2004.
[415] Angoloti et al., 106-7
[416] Cummings 2004.

important to note here that the religious service and impact of these women and their ministry is not subject to question or evaluation.

Evaluation for Regional Collegiate Architecture (Criterion 3)

Stanford University planners developed the historic context for evaluating collegiate architecture in 2016 for the survey of Stanford's main campus.[417] The survey describes the development of over seventy colleges and universities in the San Francisco Bay Area and identifies the major architectural styles for five historical periods. A tool is presented for comparing college buildings to determine which examples would be eligible for listing on the California Register as embodying a significant style of collegiate architecture. This context is employed below in evaluating the Notre Dame de Namur campus buildings. The tables presented for each major style represented at the Notre Dame de Namur University campus compare the buildings to significant examples on other campuses in the region.

The Notre Dame de Namur University campus includes Italianate and Spanish Colonial Revival buildings but is clearly dominated by the various Modern styles, with most of the campus growth taking place between 1952 and 1975. Four additional buildings or complexes of buildings were constructed between 1975 and 2004, falling outside the period of evaluation.

To be eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 3 (architecture), a property should embody one of the styles of collegiate architecture identified as significant during each period, assessed by comparison to significant examples on colleges and universities in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Pioneering Campuses (1850 – 1874) Ralston Hall and the Carriage House were built in the "Pioneering Campuses" phase (1850-1874) but were not designed as collegiate buildings. By contrast, many other campuses in the region have older buildings from this period that were converted to academic uses.[418] Ralston Hall and the Carriage House are clearly well established as historical resources at national, state, and local levels and are not reevaluated here. A review of alterations to since the time of their listings is presented below to assess whether these properties retain integrity.

Arts and Crafts (1900 – 1924) Within the context of regional collegiate architecture many fine buildings were built on campuses in the region in this period in Beaux Arts and Craftsman styles. The Music Hall and Cuvilly Hall fall within the Arts and Crafts period (1900-1924) but they are simple vernacular buildings, reflective of Notre Dame's typically austere budget.

Romance of the West (1925 – 1949) The Taube Center and Tabard Inn fall within the Romance of the West period (1925-1949). The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur continued to repay the loan they received to purchase the Belmont campus during this period and concentrated their efforts on the building on the High School and other modest improvements.

[417] Angoloti et al.
[418] Ibid.

Regional Modernism and the Post-War Campus (1950 -1974) The bulk of the campus buildings at Notre Dame de Namur University fall into the Modernism/Post-War Campus phase (1950-1975). Modernism has several variants in style, including the International Style, Midcentury Modern, Second Bay Tradition and Brutalism.

Table 7. Collegiate Architecture at Notre Dame de Namur University

Collegiate Architecture Context Period & Style	Construction Date	Building Name	Architect
1850 – 1874 (Pioneering Campuses)			
Italianate	1868	Ralston Hall	John Plant Gaynor
Vernacular	1874	Carriage House	None identified
1875 – 1899 (Late Victorian Era)			
		(none)	
1900 – 1924 (Arts and Crafts)			
Vernacular	1923-1926	Music Hall	None identified
Vernacular, Classical Revival influence	1924	Cuvilly Hall	None identified
1925 – 1949 (Romance of the West)			
Spanish Colonial Revival	1930	Taube Center (Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary)	Unknown
Vernacular	1948	Tabard Inn	None identified
1950 -1975 (Modernism and the Post-War Campus)			
Midcentury Modern	1952	Campus Center	Vincent Raney
International Style	1952	Julie Billiart Hall	Vincent Raney
International Style	1952	St. Mary's Hall	Vincent Raney
International Style	1955	Notre Dame Theater	Vincent Raney
International Style	1960	St. Joseph's Hall	Vincent Raney
Midcentury Modern	1961	Notre Dame Memorial Chapel (Cunningham Chapel)	Vincent Raney
Second Bay Tradition	1966	Carroll, Kane and Wilkie Apartments	Hollis Logue, Jr.
Second Bay Tradition	1966	The Oaks	Hollis Logue, Jr.
Second Bay Tradition	1966	Gavin Hall	Hollis Logue, Jr.
Contemporary	1975	Gellert Library	Reid & Tarics Associates

Evaluation of Significance

All properties on the NDNU campus over 45 years old are evaluated below. (No properties built after 1975 were found to qualify for review for "Exceptional Significance.") The previously listed buildings, Ralston Hall, the Carriage House and the Taube Center are not reevaluated for significance. A review of alterations since the time of their listings is presented to assess whether the properties retain integrity.

Generally, the evaluations apply the California Register criteria, followed by a brief discussion of potential eligibility as City of Belmont landmarks or historic resources. The previously unevaluated buildings, constructed for use as academic facilities, are evaluated under the themes of the Development of Education for Women in California and Regional Collegiate Architecture of the San Francisco Bay Area.

Previously Listed Properties

Ralston Hall, the Carriage House, and the Taube Center have all been found to be historical resources, as outlined above. An examination of the integrity displayed by each building now in 2024, compared to the integrity assumed in 1991 when the City of Belmont listed the three properties on the inventory, confirms that each building still possesses the ability to /convey the reasons for its significance. The National Register's seven aspects of integrity were used to perform this analysis, beginning with a summary of the distinctive characteristics of each building that should be visible to retain integrity. Brief discussion of alterations to the buildings and their settings are presented below, and analysis of integrity.

Ralston Hall

Ralston Hall strongly exemplifies the design characteristics of Italianate architecture: two to three stories in height, asymmetrical massing, a center gable on the front façade—this house was large enough to be cross-gabled—tall narrow windows, typically arched and/or with elaborated crowns, hipped roofs, cornices with large eave brackets and a square tower or cupola, of which this house has two.[419] Additional significant design characteristics for Ralston Hall include the flanking promenades (sun porches), the porte-cochere, the stucco exterior painted a peach color, the urns on the front steps and the fountain in front of the mansion. (Some of the later additions to the rear of the building do not contribute to its significance and might be considered for removal.)

The interior design characteristics for the first two floors are: the parquet floors, remaining silver-plated hardware, the laurel staircase and fireplaces, the marble fireplace, the painted ceiling in the Cipriani room, the sliding frosted glass panels, the orange peel doors, the doors with etched glass that fold back against the walls, the chandeliers, the fresh air vents, the mirrors and the skylights. The interior of the first two floors contains the elements that convey the "Steamboat Gothic" flavor and contribute to the significance of the building.

[419] Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2019), 283-4.

Integrity for Ralston Hall

The exterior changes between 1991 and 2024 for Ralston Hall include: In 1993 brick piers and perimeter foundation walls were repaired and repointed. The Office Addition (the Grant Room annex) was modified in 1993 but was likely built in 1923 as an annex added to the rear of the house, attached to the Herzo Recital Room (originally the Grant Room). In 1995 a new concrete landing with new wrought-iron railings was installed at the East entrance and was raised to align with the interior floor level. Octagonal basement ventilation louvers were also added to the exterior.

The Historic American Buildings Survey photographs, taken in 1975, provide a visual basis for examining the impact of these alterations on the distinctive characteristics of the building. Comparison to recent photographs of the same elevations is presented below.



Northwest side – Ralston Hall. Historic American Buildings Survey, 1975.[420]



Northwest side, existing conditions (2021). No alterations.

[420] Historic American Buildings Survey, http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/res/114_habs.html (accessed 15 March 2024).



Southwest front and southeast side – Ralston Hall. Historic American Buildings Survey, 1975.[421]



Southwest front and southeast side, existing conditions (2021). Note change on second floor: conversion of window to door and addition of balcony.

[421] Ibid.



Southwest front – Ralston Hall. Historic American Buildings Survey, 1975.[422]



Existing condition.

The location is unchanged. The design, a composition of elements that constitute the form, plan, space, structure and style of the property, remains strong, as do materials and workmanship. The setting around the mansion has not changed since 1991, with a large sweeping lawn located in front, Cuvilly Hall to the west, the road running behind the mansion—that has existed since the house was built—and the stairs and ramps located to the east. The feeling created by Ralston Hall of an aesthetic or historic sense of a past period of time remains strong, with the eclectic Italianate architectural style of the mid-19th-century and the *porte cochere* being particularly evocative. The association with William Chapman

[422] Ibid.

Ralston is evident in the name assigned to the building—Ralston Hall—and in the historic preservation plaques affixed to and near the mansion.

Site and Setting: Ralston Hall

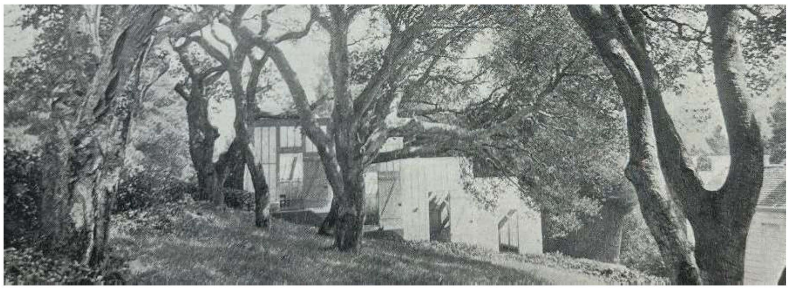
Landscape Characteristics During the Ralston Era Period of Significance, 1864-1875

Belmont, as William Chapman Ralston called his property, was naturally wooded with Coast live oaks and other native trees, in addition to exotics planted by former owner Leonetto Cipriani and Ralston himself. An entrance and unpaved driveway began at Ralston Avenue with a mechanical gate located near the large country house. The driveway was lined on the upper hillside with rock walls quarried from the estate and an ornate Victorian-style fence line. Ralston planted pines and oaks along the side of the driveway where it cut downward to a creek below. Two large trees stood on either side of the driveway as one approached the house, obscuring the view until coming close to the east façade.



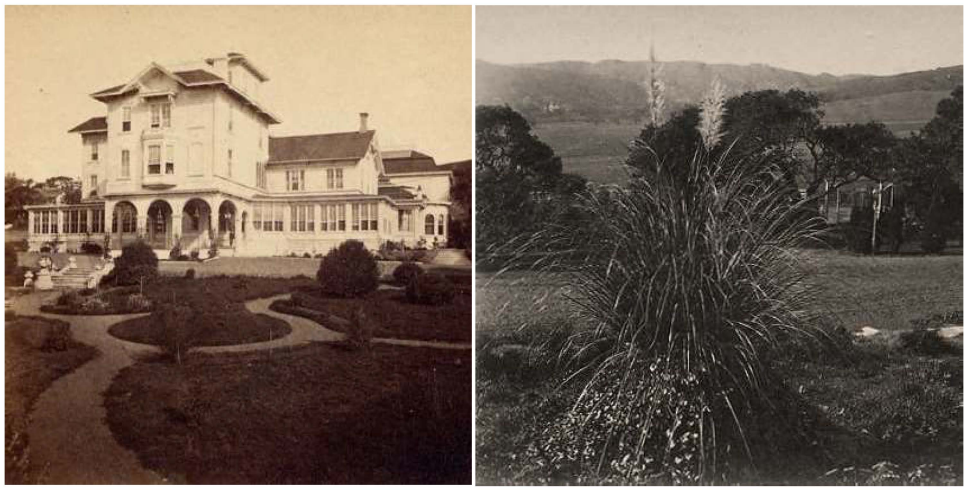
Trees and a bend in the driveway obscured the view of the mansion when approaching.

When Ralston was renovating the mansion in 1867 and 1868, he hired some twenty gardeners to landscape around all four sides of the house while keeping the area immediately along the east and west sides and the front area along the porte cochere relatively open. A dense cluster of Coast live oaks ran along the east side of the house and back towards the estate entrance. A large circular raised bed of ornamental planting was located at the southeast corner of the east façade, lined with rock quarried from the estate. To the east of the mansion stood a bowling alley, ensconced in trees. This east hillside was terraced with stone walls near the house and further out among the trees.



The lower end of the bowling alley; the east façade of the mansion can be seen in the background. (Bowling alley building was later demolished.)

The unpaved driveway split with the upper road leading past the porte cochere and main façade of the mansion, heading west toward the Carriage House. The lower road led towards the back of the Carriage House. In front of the mansion, across from the upper driveway, pathways meandered between raised mounds that featured small lawns and rare, favored or popular plant and tree specimens. Turf, a status symbol during Ralston's era, was kept minimal due to the Mediterranean climate that required irrigation to keep lawn looking green during the dry months; the large front lawn that exists today was planted sometime after Ralston's death in 1875 and 1895, when photographs show a large lawn studded with oaks and specimen trees. In Ralston's time much of the lower lawn area (across the driveway) was used as a field or pasture turnout for the estate horses.

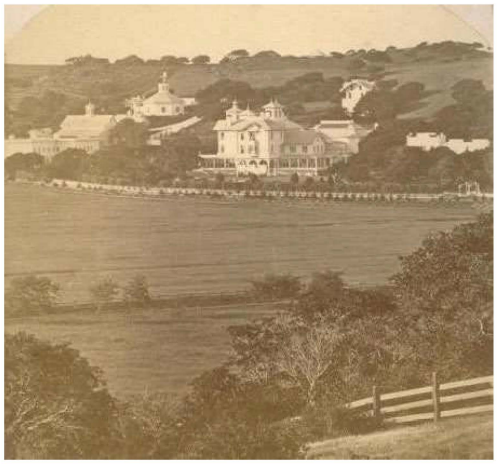


The front of the mansion was landscaped with pathways and raised mounds of specimen plants (*left*) and a specimen plant on display in the east terrace garden alongside Ralston Hall (*right*). Note the large urn placed at the center of the base of the stairs.

On the west side of the house was a terraced promenade lined at the bottom with a low stone wall and bisected by a stairway that led upward to a broad promenade that echoed the sun corridors that ran along the mansion. Sloping lawn and more plant and tree specimens were planted on the promenade hillside with a very high hedge running along the back. A tree was planted at each end of this upper promenade, which led to the greenhouse and the Carriage House, as did a large open space that ran from the west façade of the mansion to the greenhouse, Carriage House and other outbuildings. Another grove of trees stood at a diagonal to the southwest corner of the main façade. The house was bracketed with dense tree canopies when seen from across the valley but the view to the front of the mansion remained largely open.

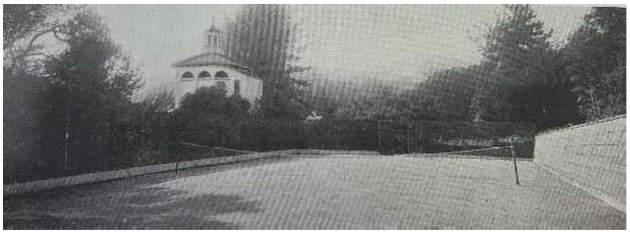


The terraced promenade on the west side of the mansion (*left*) and the open space standing between the mansion and the carriage house (*right*).



The mansion was embowered to the left, the right and behind with native coast live oak trees.

Behind the house were more pathways and planted mounds, similar to the front of house and accessed from the second story as the hill sloped upward. A natural grove of oaks stood above and behind the house, beyond the tennis court which was located above and parallel to the back of the house. Stone retaining walls were built to edge the hillside along the driveway and terrace various levels of the hillside alongside and above the mansion, as well as along the west wall of the Carriage House.



The Ralston tennis court with the Observatory in the background. The back of the mansion was off to the left, screened from view by a hedge and trees.

Current Conditions

Today what remains is the original driveway to Ralston Hall (Laxague Drive), and remnants of rock retaining wall on the hill side of the drive. One cave-like aperture that held one of Ralston's watering troughs for his horses is still extant. The ornate Ralston-era fencing that paralleled the rock wall on the creek side of the drive is long gone, as is the gate built by Ralston. The once dirt driveway was paved in 1947.

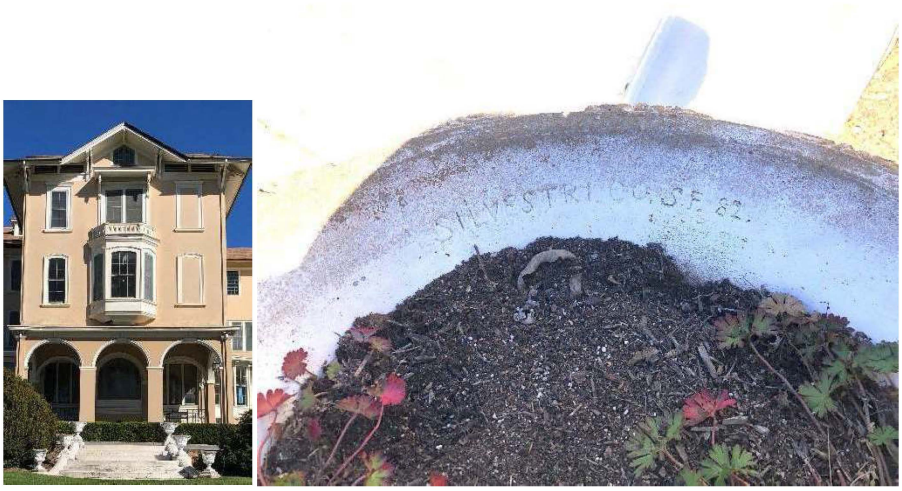


Ralston's water trough along the driveway (*right*).

The front lawn still exhibits some trees and shrubs, and a set of stairs and urns leading up to the open area in front of the porte cochere. While a Ralston-era photo shows small urns and an additional large urn standing at the center of the base of those stairs, the current urns appear to date to 1882, after the period of significance, when William Sharon owned the property. The large urn once placed at the bottom of the staircase by Ralston appears to have been moved east across the lawn to stand at the lawn's edge where the driveway splits.



The front lawn with some trees, shrubs and hedge (*left*) and the urn (*right*) that appears to have been moved from the base of the staircase. The cluster of trees at the east side of the house are still extant.



A detail of the front stairs and urns (*left*) and an urn rim marked "Silvestri Co. S.F. 82." (*right*).

A hedge still lines the lower edge of the lawn and a remnant of a rock wall with original estate fencing on top stands parallel to the east façade of the Carriage House. A small conservatory stood between that remnant of wall and the Carriage House, where the grotto now stands. Although the grotto dates from the Ralston era, the religious statuary standing within it today and the large circular fountain located on the front lawn below the stairs date from after the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur purchased the property in 1922.



The rock wall and fence alongside the small conservatory (*left*) and standing today alongside the grotto (*right*).

Part of the Ralston-era upper promenade still runs from the west side of the mansion, past Cuvilly Hall and to the Carriage House, parallel to the open space that also still exists between the west façade of the mansion and the Carriage House. The original stairway of the promenade still leads up to where Cuvilly Hall stands today but the extant ornamental urns at the stairs date to after 1922. It is unknown if the small pair of gate posts standing alongside the road that leads up to the Toso residences date from the Ralston era, although the nearby rock wall terracing does. It is also unknown if the marble bench placed on the front lawn dates back to the Ralston era. All of the statuary and sculpture located near the mansion and the Carriage House today date after the Ralston era (1864-1875).



The promenade stairway leads up to Cuvilly Hall (*left*) and the upper promenade leads past Cuvilly Hall to the Carriage House (*right*). The stairway side walls and urns date after the Ralston era.



It is unknown if these gate posts date back to the Ralston era (*left*) but the nearby stone terrace walls do (*right*).



Trees still screen the back of the mansion where the tennis court used to be (*left*) and it is unknown if the marble bench dates to the Ralston era (*right*).

In conclusion, the Ralston country house landscape was characterized by an oak woodland with open space deliberately created around the immediate areas surrounding the mansion. Landscaping around the house consisted of foundation shrubs with native trees being utilized at the east and the back of the house. Both native and exotic trees were planted in various places. The front of the house and the space

between the mansion and the Carriage House was left open with low-level landscaping or landscaping along the edges of the space.

Landscape features include the rock walls built from stone quarried on the estate, the Ralston-era water trough along the driveway and the split of the driveway, the upper portion of which ran past the port cochere to the east wall of the Carriage House and downward portion ran to the back of the Carriage House. Parts of the west terrace promenade and staircase are extant, as is the wall that ran parallel to the east side of the Carriage House. The views to the front of the mansion and between the mansion and the Carriage House remain open with landscaping along each side. The east side of the mansion remains relatively wooded and is also terraced.



The eastside terracing has had a walkway added to it (*left*). The cluster of trees extends back to the main entrance (*right*). Kane, Wilkie and Carroll can be seen above in the background.

The essential features that define the historic character of the site and setting at Ralston Hall are:

- The Carriage House and the open space that connects the Carriage House to Ralston Hall.
- Unobstructed views of the front of the house, framed by trees at the sides and rear of the house.
- The use of rustic stone retaining walls to create terraces on the sloping site.
- Ornamental landscaping close to the house transitioning to groves of trees at the edges.

Ornamental features – e.g. urns and benches – concentrated in front of Ralston Mansion and between the house and the Carriage House.

Carriage House

The Carriage House is included as an associated feature in the listings of Ralston Hall and is located within the boundary of its National Register site. However, there is little detail given in the listings about the building and its significance other than its association with William Ralston.

The Carriage House was built in a vernacular style. Vernacular architecture typically reflects local materials and culture, most often designed by an owner or builder rather than a schooled architect. Features include: use of local materials, local technology, climate, and sensitivity to local culture,

environment, economic conditions and historical influences.[423] Vernacular buildings tend to be simple, utilitarian and cost-effective rather than a particular architectural style with specific design features but the best examples show a regional influence.

Ralston built the 25,572 square foot two-story Carriage House in 1874 after his original wood stable burned down. Built of unreinforced hand-hewn rock quarried on the estate in a rustic style, the walls are two feet thick and a suspended ceiling hung by cables allowed for carriage maneuvering. Damaged in the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, seismic and structural upgrades included a new steel frame, a steel floor structure supporting the second floor and a new roof structure in 2014.

Other undated alterations include the replacement of the upper-level doors with modern doors and the replacement of two lower-level carriage doors with modern metal roll-up doors There may also been some additional cement plaster added at the round window openings.

Integrity for the Carriage House

The exterior changes between 1991 and 2024 for the Carriage House include: Damaged in the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, seismic and structural upgrades included a new steel frame, a steel floor structure supporting the second floor and a new roof structure in 2014.

Unfortunately, there are few historic photographs of the structure to help with a visual comparison. Here are two views for comparative purposes. The building appears to have had a parapet on the uphill side that was covered in board siding. This siding was replaced with new stonework presumably during the seismic retrofit work.



Carriage House circa 1898, elevation facing Ralston Hall.

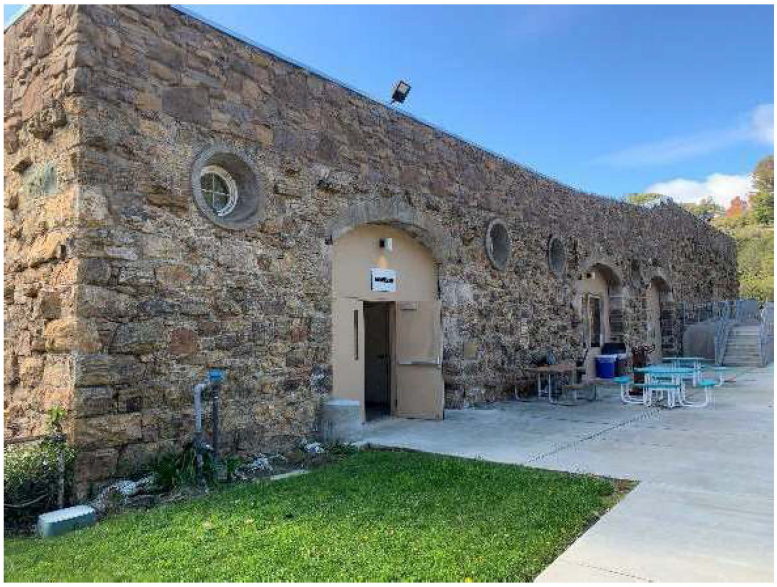
[423] Designing Buildings, "Vernacular Architecture," https://www.designingbuildings.co.uk/wiki/Vernacular_architecture (accessed 12 July 2022).



Existing conditions (2021).



Uphill elevation of Carriage House, circa 1960s. Note parapet.



Existing conditions (2022).

The location is unchanged. The design, materials and workmanship remain strong despite the changes made in the building in 2014. While new stones were undoubtedly used, along with as many original stones as were salvageable in 1988 and 2014, the Carriage House exterior walls retain their distinctive look. The setting has not changed since 1991, with the stone wall originally built in 1874 still running along the southern wall. The parking area and elementary school at the rear of the building is still the same and the grotto with its remnant of estate wall still stands on the east wall. The addition of three relatively small pieces of sculpture that were likely not in place in 1991 along the main façade are subservient in appearance and size due to the massive stone wall they are placed near. The feeling remains extremely strong due to the imposing nature of the wall material; the Carriage House looks like a mid-19th-century building. The association of this building as Ralston's Carriage House remains strong despite its modern use as art gallery and museum. The strong visual texture of the stonework, the punched round windows, and the surviving metal doors and shutters allow this building to retain integrity and to convey the reasons for its significance.

Non-contributing Additions and Alterations: Ralston Hall and Carriage House

Ralston Era Period of Significance, 1864-1875

William Chapman Ralston built the bulk of the new mansion attached to one remaining section of Leonetto Cipriani's house between 1867 and 1869, in the process adding "a new 120-foot wing" that would add twenty new bedrooms to the existing thirty-bedroom house in 1868.

Two photographs dating before Ralston's death in 1875 show a large wing of the house standing behind the ballroom. According to the 1870 Ralston floorplan published in the newspaper, this wing held the kitchen, two servant-related rooms and the laundry. It is also possible that this is the "Grant Room" detached annex. No original drawings of the mansion have ever been found. Historic photographs show the front and two sides of the mansion but not the rear façade.



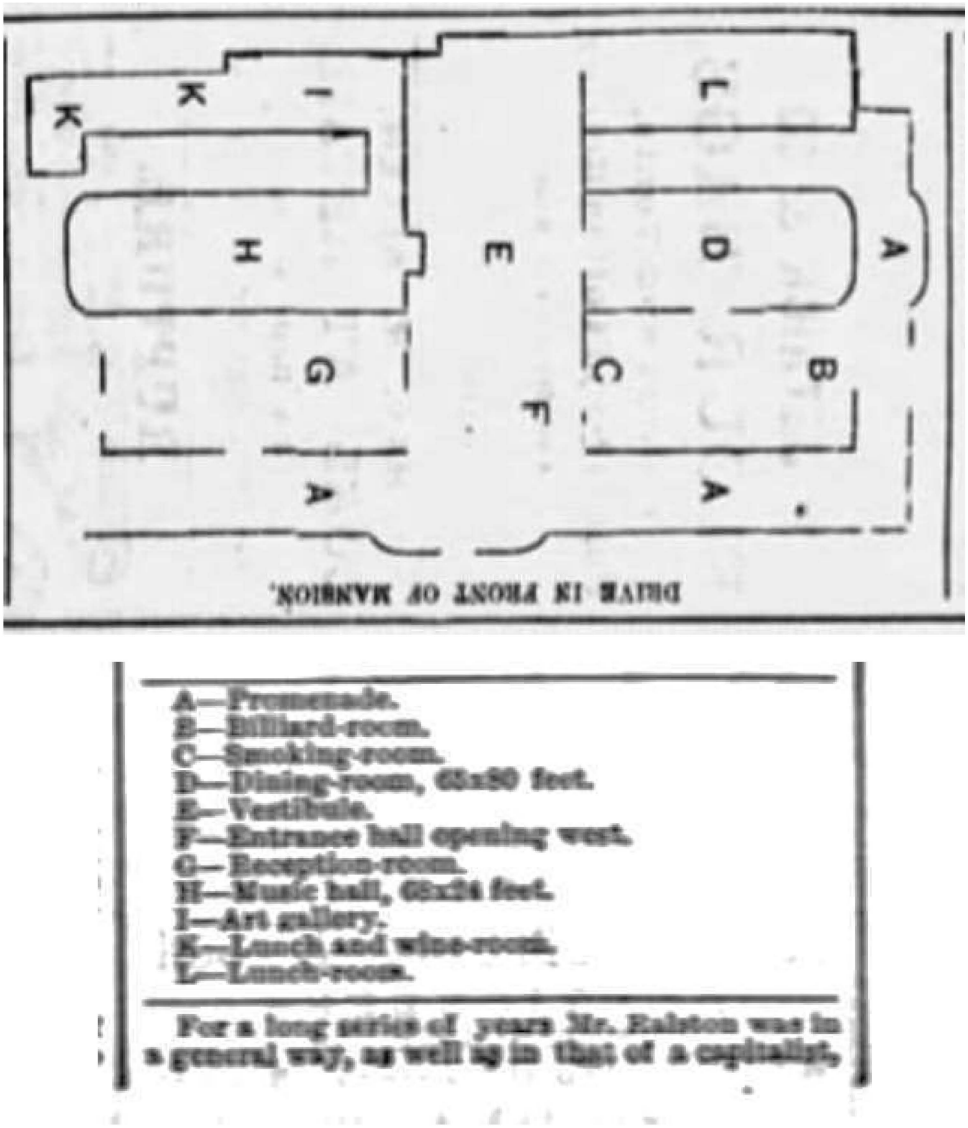
This Watkins photograph was taken circa 1872 (*left*) and the Muybridge photograph in 1874 (*right*) before Ralston's death in 1875. They clearly indicate a tall rear wing located next to the one-story ballroom.



This 1870 Ralston floorplan includes additions to three sides of the Cipriani house. The Cipriani house likely comprised only the front right corner of this plan, indicated as "Billiard Room" on the first floor. The additions above the "Music Hall" are no longer identifiable in the floorplan and may have been displaced by the Grant Room. This is the only floorplan that survives from the period of significance and is clearly schematic and only roughly proportional.

Following the Period of Significance, 1876-2024

When William Sharon took possession of the house in 1875, he made some internal changes to the uses of some of the first-floor rooms.



This truncated1880 Sharon floorplan shows changes in use and does not identify a kitchen or a laundry. The Grant Room does not appear on this plan (it lies above the "L" "Lunch-room").

According to the Carey & Co. 2001 "Historic Structure Report" Sharon built an addition at the mansion's northeast corner, the "Grant Room."424 The Ralston-era photographs show a wing already standing at the northeast corner. The author of the report goes on to speculate that Sharon's addition was actually already "begun" by Ralston due to the quality of the Victorian woodwork and detailing. It seems likely that Sharon simply remodeled an existing Ralston room or rooms within the wing, which was constructed on top of one of Ralston's cisterns.

Another possibility is that Sharon tore down an existing wing and built a new one. Sharon used the room to host a dinner for United States president Ulysses S. Grant on 9 October 1879; the room was thereafter

[424] Carey & Co., 10-11.

known as the “Grant Room” (today’s Herzo Recital Hall). Based on the 1880 floorplan published in the newspaper, Sharon changed the use of some rooms but did not appear to construct any new additions or wings on to the house. There is no surviving historic evidence that Mrs. Bull, the next owner, built any new additions between 1895, when she bought the house, and 1900, when her heirs sold the property to Dr. Gardner.

Dr. Gardner made numerous changes to the mansion beginning in 1900 in his pursuit of using the house as a sanitarium. He appears to have built a new laundry “which is to be attached to the institution.”[425] He extended Ralston’s billiard room (today’s Cipriani Room), which Sharon had divided into a smaller billiard room and a smoking room, eastward and added a third story to the original two-story remnant. The third story was intended to house patients. Gardner added a roof terrace on to the top of the third floor, similar to Ralston’s rooftop terrace located on the middle of the central roof. He also added twelve dormer windows to the central roof, converting attic space into additional fourth-floor bedrooms. The roof chimneys damaged in the 1906 San Francisco earthquake remained on the roof but were no longer used.

After Gardner’s death in 1913, his widow and stepson continued to run the sanitarium but struggled to make ends meet, caring for an average of ten to twenty patients in a house capable of hosting sixty patients. Most of the house was closed off and unused, including the Grant Room. Mrs. Gardner had stripped off the blue and gold “beaverboard” paneling which had covered the walls, fearing it was flammable, and the stagnant water in the cistern below the room had loosened and rotted the floorboards, making walking hazardous and producing a permeative musty smell.

The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur purchased the property from Mrs. Gardner in February 1922. They intended to use every square inch of the mansion as living space for themselves and their residential students while also using some of the mansion rooms as academic space. Between March to October 1923, they spent $88,595.22 on unspecified “repairs and improvements, annexes, etc.”[426] The Grant Room was restored and served as “Saint Cecilia’s Hall,” or the Music Department, between 1923 and 1928. They emptied and sealed the cistern, added bracing underneath the floor and restored the interior walls with tongue and groove wood brought from their San Jose campus. They also added two skylights and windows to the space, plus a false ceiling and glass partitions (later removed) to create small practice rooms.[427]

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[425] *San Mateo Times Gazette* (15 September 1900).

[426] “Summary of Gross Areas in Developed Plant,” (ledger), unpaginated.

[427] Additional information about the Grant Room describes a short exterior “staircase leading to the third story by way of a sort of bridge, a picturesque feature but rendered ugly by clapboards and evidence of dire neglect. From this bridge the upper story of a side section of the old banquet hall could be entered, and here off a narrow corridor opened a number of small rooms, the lodging quarters of the ‘help.’ Below on the first story was an abandoned laundry and bakery.” All of these rooms were restored to use in 1923, albeit for different purposes. Quinlan, 11-12.



The house was photographed in February 1922 when the sisters bought the property. A boiler house with a smokestack can be seen at the northwest corner and an unidentified structure beyond it appears to stand separate from the mansion.



This detail of an October 1923 survey of the property shows the mansion, the carriage house, the bowling alley, the greenhouse across from it and the Ralston tennis courts located parallel to and above the rear of the mansion. Note the two empty rectangular spaces and pedestrian bridge located at the rear of the house. It is unclear if the lack of shading that marks the rest of the house denotes the Gardner laundry or two new annexes built by the sisters in 1923 or later. The partial outlines of Saint Julie Billiart Hall and the campus center were added to this 1923 survey by architect Vincent Raney in 1953.



1923 Plan rotated to provide building footprint for comparative purposes.

The only remaining primary sources of the changes the sisters made to the mansion after they purchased it are listed in the forementioned ledger and/or are recounted in memoirs known as "Annals," written by each sister at the end of every year. The only known map of the property dating to 1923 answers some questions but not all of them. The two large rectangles denoted at the rear of the mansion are unlabeled. Were they drawn on in 1923 to represent the new annexes identified in the College of Notre Dame ledger, or added later by Raney in 1953 to represent additions/annexes made at some point between 1923 and 1953? There is also a 1936 entry that reads "Refectory addition, Ralston" for $1,132.18.[428]

The physical relationship between the mansion, the carriage house, the large Ralston greenhouse and the Ralston tennis courts is clear. The bowling alley stood across from where the ballroom's curved window and the Grant Room were located; the covered entry porch attached to the Grant Room seen on the map is still standing today.

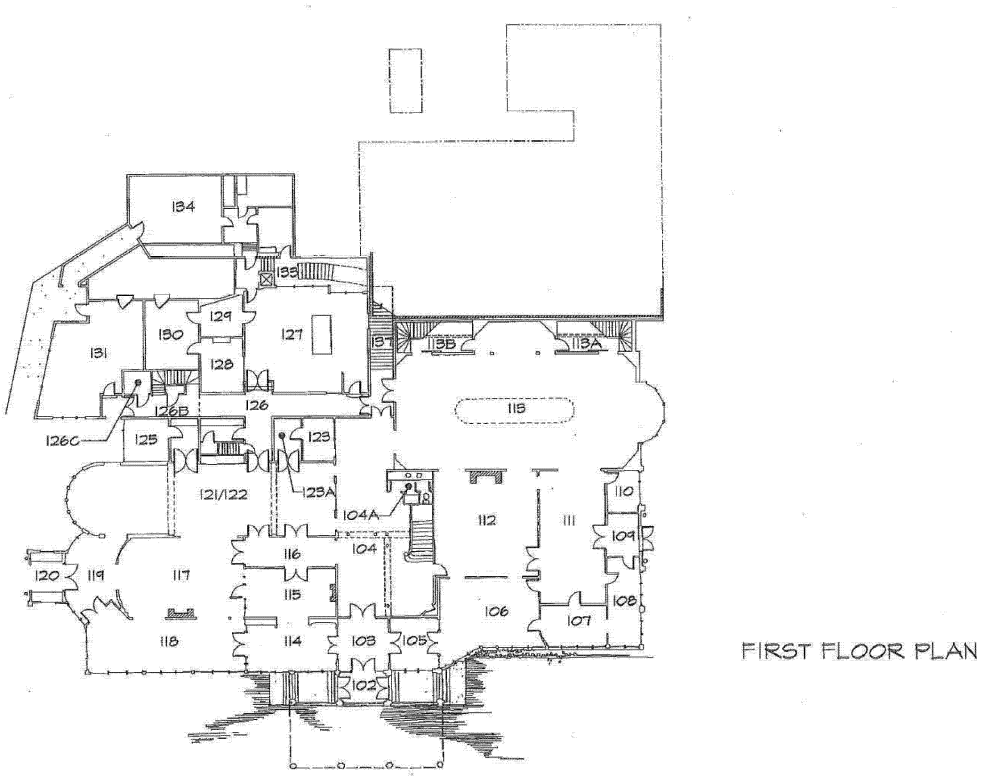
Sister Anthony Quinlan, who was one of the nuns to first visit and promote buying the property, wrote an undated lengthy memoir entitled "From San Jose to Belmont." She wrote that the boiler or engine room seen in the February 1922 photograph was "transformed into a laundry and provision room and the boilers were erected in a temporary galvanized-iron shack across the road." It is unclear if the roof of the old laundry now standing parallel to the northwest rear corner of the mansion is the Gardner

[428] "Summary of Gross Areas in Developed Plant," (ledger), unpaginated.

laundry or the new College of Notre Dame laundry but it is on the opposite side of the mansion from Ralston's laundry.

She also noted a row of fuel sheds and Ralston's Turkish bath "marred the rear," without specifying if they were attached or freestanding; once razed "the rear of the mansion took quite another appearance" and "the fine proport dearions of the old house became much more evident."429 Other buildings or structures that were razed included the two greenhouses, "the famous race-horse stable with its circular stalls" built over one of several cisterns, a cottage once lived in by one of Lizzie Ralston's relatives that stood near the tennis courts, the chicken coops that stood near the estate entrance, and other unspecified outbuildings.[430]

Sister Anthony wrote about the use of salvaged materials at Belmont brought from the San Jose campus, specifically used in the Grant Room, Cuvilly Hall and "a little room constructed from the former juvenile 'bungalow' located in the courtyard at San Jose."[431]



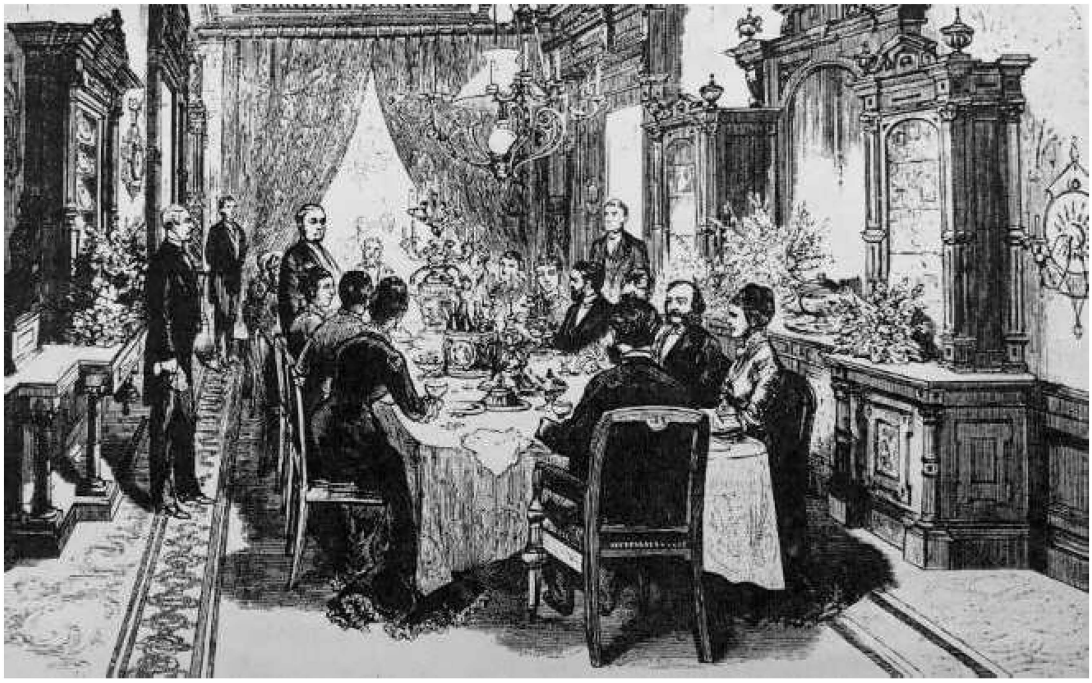
First floor plan by Carey & Co., 2001.

[429] Ibid., 9, 11.
[430] Ibid., 6, 9, 14.
[431] Ibid., 12, 23, 30.

See Appendix B for exhibits illustrating the non-contributing additions and alterations to Ralston Hall and the Carriage House.

Integrity of the Grant Room

Historic photos show that this detached annex to the Ralston house was added by Ralston during the period of significance (likely shortly before his death in 1875). However, the building was remodeled by William Sharon in 1879, four years after Ralston's death. Used by Sharon as a large formal dining room to host dignitaries, the room was reportedly remodeled in a hurry with the walls covered with blue and gold beaverboard, a material composed of wood pulp and pressed into sheets. A sketch of the room when the dinner served there in honor of US president Ulysses S. Grant shows elaborate finishes – wood wainscot and door surrounds for example -- and furniture with a glimpse of a second room through a curtained partition.



A sketch of the Grant Room in 1879.

Very little of the interior materials has survived. Mrs. Gardner had the beaverboard removed sometime between 1900 and 1922, fearing it was flammable, and had the room boarded off. A cistern holding stagnant water was located beneath the Grant Room and the dampness caused the floor and adjacent staircase to deteriorate with the Gardners shutting off the room. When the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur bought the property in 1922 the only remaining artifact in the room was a huge bronze candelabra, which was later sold.

The Sisters used the Grant Room to create the new Music Department. They covered the bare walls with tongue and groove paneling salvaged from their San Jose campus. It is unclear if they repaired or replaced the afflicted floor and staircase. They cut two skylights into the roof, added windows, a false ceiling and glass partitions also salvaged from San Jose to create practice cubicles. An additional two skylights have been added more recently.

The Sisters added new additions and entrances connecting the building to Ralston Hall and from other additions and replaced the front entry door. While there are no known photographs of the interior or the front façade of the building from the period of significance, the quality, style and worksmanship of these alterations clearly date to a later period.

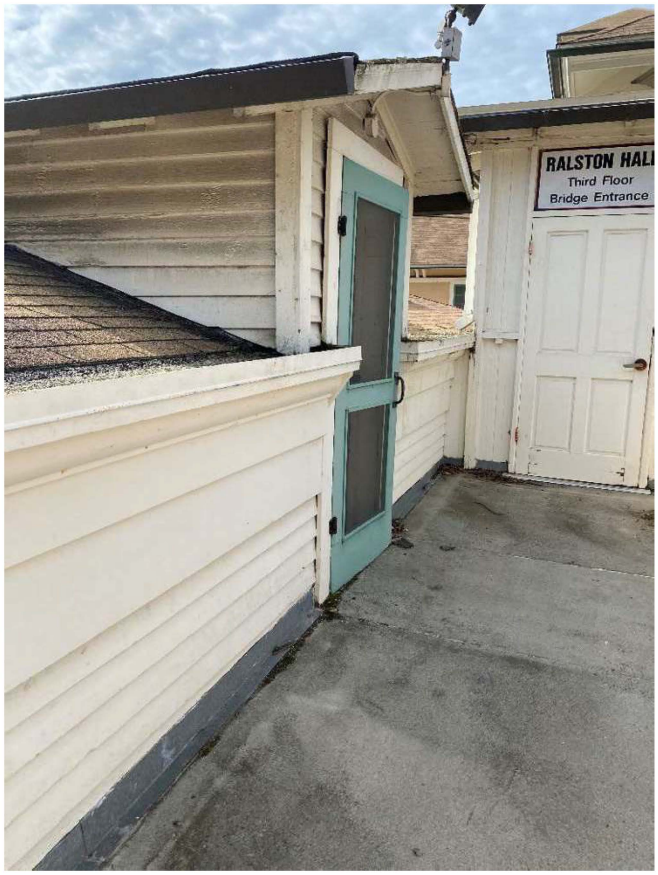
The room no longer retains integrity from the Ralston era from either the exterior or the interior. It is not a contributor to the Ralston Hall property.



Interior showing wood paneling added by Sisters.



Attached addition added circa 1923.



Bridge addition and entrance to Ralston Hall added after 1922.



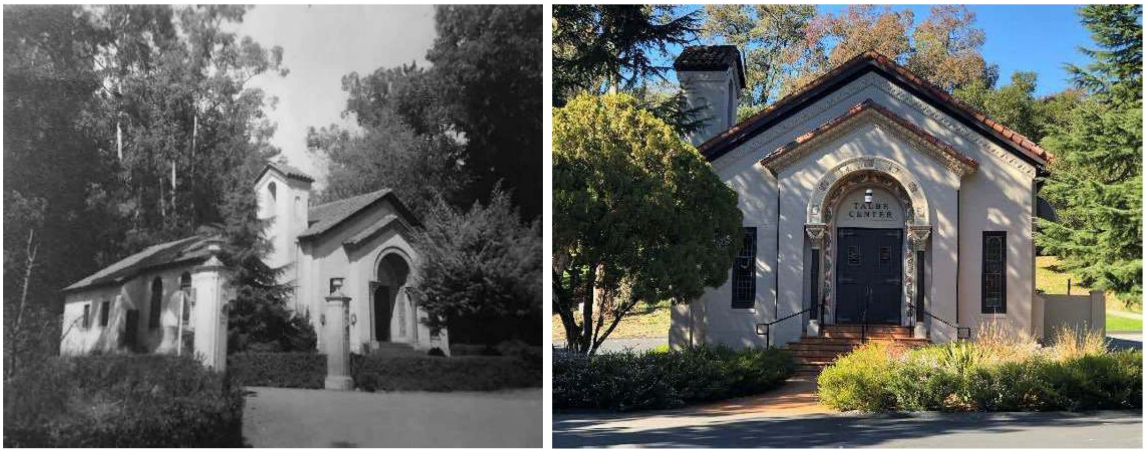
Attached addition to front façade, circa 1923, at right.



Front door replaced, unknown date.

The Grant Room annex has lost integrity. The majority of its materials – exterior and interior – have been replaced, and some of them more than once since the period of significance. Only the pedimented vestibule entry and its flanking double hung windows may date from that period, and the alterations to the vestibule are considerable. The additions to the building obscure its design and compromise the workmanship of the original building. The design of the original detached annex is difficult to reconstruct lacking documentation, however the original design is largely obscured by later attached additions. The site and setting are also altered and the building lacks the feeling of grandeur associated with hosting dignitaries such as the President of the United States.

Taube Center



Taube Center (1930)

Built as the Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary on a quarter acre of land given by NDNU to the newly formed local Catholic parish, this 3,268 square foot building was used as a church from 1930-1958. The land and building were given back to NDNU; the building was renovated inside to serve as academic space, performance space, conference space and art studio space over the years. Built with stucco walls and an S-curve clay tile roof, it has wood fixed and leaded glass windows. The main door is framed by pilasters and decorative tile. The building no longer hosts religious observances, and functions today as an academic facility.

Taube Center is in the Spanish Colonial Revival style, a very popular style during the 1920s and 30s. The Spanish Colonial Revival style is indicated by pink, buff or tan stucco walls, a moderately pitched gable or hipped terracotta tile roof and round headed windows. It is a later derivative style from the Spanish Colonial style, as seen in the elaborated chimney, entry door emphasized with pilasters, carved or tile ornament, little or no eave overhang, decorative wrought iron, and decorative vents.

Integrity for the Taube Center

There are no known exterior changes made to the Taube Center between 1991 and 2024.

The location is unchanged. The design, materials and workmanship remain extremely strong. The ADA ramps added to the wall nearest the parking lot were already in place by 1991. The setting has not changed, with Laxague Drive already in place before this structure was built in 1930. The parking lot has not changed, nor has the hillside leading up to St. Mary's Hall. It is unknown if the sculpture across the road has been in place since 1991 but the three red columns standing there do not compare in mass and volume to the building and do not detract attention from it. The feeling of a small Catholic church remains strong due to the ecclesiastical architecture, despite the building now serving an academic use. The association with its role in the past of the Immaculate Heart of Mary parish church from 1930-1958 is stronger than the academic role played since 1991, again due to its unmistakable ecclesiastical architectural style. The Taube Center has integrity to the period of its listing on the Belmont Inventory in 1991.

All three of the previously listed historic buildings retain integrity and are qualified for protection as historic resources.

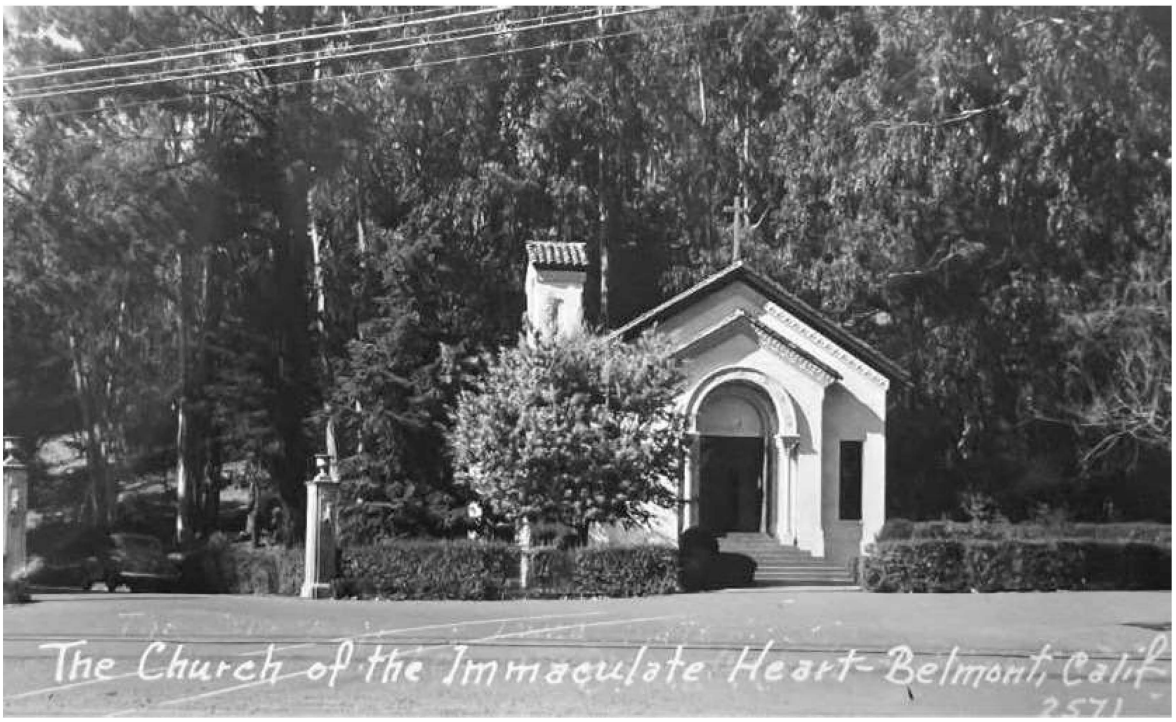
Site and Setting: Taube Center

Landscape Characteristics During the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church Era Period of Significance, 1928-1930

Taube Center was built as the Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic parish church in 1930. Situated close to the original estate driveway entrance, the new church was built at the site where the Gardner family had leased a small section of the property to someone who raised chickens. The dilapidated coops were still standing when the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur bought the property in 1922. They gave one acre of land to the newly created parish in 1928. The original church was landscaped with trees on either side in front of the building and low hedges defining the boundaries of the tiny churchyard.

The church was in use from 1930 until 1958, after the period of significance. The main entrance and driveway were paved in 1947; it is unknown whether the church parking lot was paved then or later; the paved lot shows clearly in a 1963 aerial of the site.

When a new parish church was built on Alameda de las Pulgas in 1958 the parish gave the property and building back to the College of Notre Dame. The college, later the Notre Dame de Namur University, renamed and remodeled the interior of the building for various academic uses, including art instruction and conference space.



The Immaculate Heart of Mary parish church, after 1947.



The Taube Center circa 2017.

Current Conditions

The site today is embedded in the overall circulation network at the main campus entrance. The landscape has a clear "back and front" hierarchy with ornamental planting framing the elaborate front entrance, while the back of the site is now dominated by paved parking and service access. The planting area in front of the Taube Center separates the building from the roadways and screens the parking areas from the main entrance.



The front entrance is framed by trees and ornamental planting, 2021.



The accessible entry ramp dominates, one side of the building, with adjacent parking. Note tree canopy in background.



The rear of the building is a driveway linking the two parking areas.

Despite being surrounded by the paved main entrance driveway, Laxague Drive, and a parking lot, the tall trees that virtually surround the Taube Center create a bucolic and rustic setting. Although the hillside behind Taube has fewer trees today than in 1947, those that remain contribute to the characteristic setting. By contrast, the concrete pillars marking the entrance to Laxague Drive and the contemporary red metal sculptures that flank the main entrance drive to the upper campus plateau do not contribute to maintaining the historic character of the site.



The pillars stand at Laxague Drive and were constructed by the College of Notre Dame De Namur in the late 1920s to mark their campus entry.

The pillars have no historical connection to the parish church and have been modified since their original construction. They are not signifcant contributing features to the setting of the Taube Center.



Contemporary sculptures across main entry drive from Taube Center; note forested hillside.

Similarly, the contemporary art piece across the main entry drive from the Taube Center has no historical connection to the building and is not an essential feature of the setting.

The features that define the historic character of the site and setting at the Taube Center are:

- Ornamental planting and trees that frame the elaborate main entrance to the building and create separation from the roadway and screening for the parking areas; the type of plantings can change but the framework of ornamental plantings in front of the building should be preserved.
- Planting islands and hedges that isolate Taube Center from adjacent roadways.
- Forested hillsides and stands of trees surrounding the building, with tree canopies that frame the building

These features help to retain the “chapel in the woods” feeling of the setting when the building was built over 90 years ago and are essential to softening the visual impact of the parking and circulation elements in the setting. Other features, such as parking areas and roadways have changed over time, as has the overall setting of being located within a college campus rather than on a more isolated property.

Previously Unevaluated Properties

The remaining buildings more than 45 years old were evaluated for eligibility for the California Register and City of Belmont Historic Inventory. These are all buildings constructed for academic or academic support uses (staff and student housing) and were evaluated under the themes of the development of education for women in California and regional collegiate architecture. None of the buildings were found to meet the criteria for listing. Summaries of the evaluations for each building are presented below.

Music Hall (Vernacular Style)



Music Hall (1923-6)

This is a 1,000 square foot one-story building with a basement. It was a freestanding annex built by the College of Notre Dame between 1923 and 1926 with materials salvaged from the San Jose campus. This vernacular wood-frame building has a stucco exterior likely intended to match the new Ralston Hall stucco exterior. It has a hipped roof with a flat roof overhanging the porch, supported by simple round, classical wood columns. The windows are wood with double-hung sash. It was first used as academic space for the youngest of the elementary school children, And later used by the Music Department for offices and practice rooms.

California Register Criterion 1 (events)

The Music Hall is not associated with important events in the development of education for women in California or other important events in state or regional history. It does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 1.

California Register Criterion 2 (persons)

The Music Hall is not associated with important persons and does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 2.

California Register Criterion 3 (architecture, architect of merit)

The Music Hall lacks distinction as collegiate architecture and lacks interest as vernacular architecture as its craftmanship is not distinctive. The architect is unknown. The Music Hall does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 3.

City of Belmont Landmark Criteria

The Music Hall, a small vernacular school building, is not the first, last, only or most significant classroom/office building in the region. It does appear to qualify as a local landmark.

City of Belmont Historic Resource Criteria

The Music Hall was not present during the period of significance for the adjacent Ralston Hall, which ends in 1899 (National Historic Landmark listing). It does appear to qualify as a local historic resource.

Cuvilly Hall (Vernacular Style)



Cuvilly Hall (1924, 1935)

Cuvilly Hall, originally called Blessed Julie Billiart Hall, is a two-story 8,224 square foot structure built in 1924 with a 1934-1935 addition. First used as a residence for postulants and novitiates and academic space, it was also used to house a library, the bookstore and student residence rooms. This building has aluminum slider windows surmounted by transoms. Double columns and a broken pediment mark the main entrance with an arched niche placed above the pediment. The roof is gently pitched on the original building and flat on the addition.

California Register Criterion 1 (events)

Cuvilly Hall is not associated with important events in the development of education for women in California or other important events in state or regional history. It does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 1.

California Register Criterion 2 (persons)

Cuvilly Hall is not associated with important persons and does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 2.

California Register Criterion 3 (architecture, architect of merit)

Cuvilly Hall is described as Vernacular with Classical Revival influences because it is a relatively plain, utilitarian building with an Italianate roof and eaves, Classical Revival columns and pediment, and Modern windows. No architect has been identified. The main entrance with its broken pediment and columns, and the steep stairway approach, are the only strong design features on the building. In comparison to the regional examples of Beaux Arts and Craftsman collegiate architecture Cuvilly Hall is undistinguished. It does not convey the focus on fine craftsmanship, elaborate detailing and European influence of the Arts and Crafts period. Its original triple-hung wood windows have all been replaced with aluminum sliders, decreasing its fidelity to its period. The architect is unknown. Cuvilly Hall does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 3.

City of Belmont Landmark Criteria

Cuvilly Hall, a small vernacular school building, is not the first, last, only or most significant classroom/office building in the region. It does appear to qualify as a local landmark.

City of Belmont Historic Resource Criteria

Cuvilly Hall was not present during the period of significance for the adjacent Ralston Hall, which ends in 1899 (National Historic Landmark listing). It does appear to qualify as a local historic resource.

Tabard Inn (Vernacular Style)



Tabard Inn (1948)

The 973 square foot vernacular Tabard Inn reflected the College of Notre Dame's austerity of both budget and materials. In 1948 lumber was salvaged from a 1920s commencement stage to create the first campus snack bar. It has wood roof framing and siding. On the main façade are wood double-hung windows; other windows are wood framed but with metal windows. It has a gentle pitched roof.

California Register Criterion 1 (events)

Tabard Inn is not associated with important events in the development of education for women in California or other important events in state or regional history. It does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 1.

California Register Criterion 2 (persons)

Tabard Inn is not associated with important persons and does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 2.

California Register Criterion 3 (architecture, architect of merit)

Tabard Inn is another example of simple vernacular architecture and again reflective of the college's tight budget. It evokes a romantic "western" heritage but does not appear to be eligible for listing on the California Register. No similar examples were identified as historic resources in the regional survey of collegiate architecture. The architect is unknown. Tabard Inn does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 3.

City of Belmont Landmark Criteria

Tabard Inn, a small vernacular school building, is not the first, last, only or most significant food service building in the region. It does appear to qualify as a local landmark.

City of Belmont Historic Resource Criteria

The Tabard Inn was not present during the period of significance for the adjacent Ralston Hall, which ends in 1899 (National Historic Landmark listing). It does appear to qualify as a local historic resource.

Julia Billiart Hall (International Style)



Julia Billart Hall (1952)

Julie Billiart Hall is a 24,582 square foot three-story wood frame and stucco. A glass-enclosed exterior stairwell that flanks the second and third floors forms a focal point on one long facade. The building was repainted white ca. 2015. It is flanked by a one-story annex. The dormitory windows are aluminum. It has a flat roof. The ground floor has also been used for the housing office, campus ministry, health services and infirmary.

California Register Criterion 1 (events)

Julie Billiart Hall is not associated with important events in the development of education for women in California or other important events in state or regional history. It reflects the expansion of college campuses to serve a growing population in the region following World War 2 but does not represent an important aspect of that trend. It does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 1.

California Register Criterion 2 (persons)

Julie Billiart Hall is not associated with important persons and does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 2.

California Register Criterion 3 (architecture, architect of merit)

Julie Billiart Hall displays some of the features of International Style—the flat roof, light color, and assymetrical façade—but lacks many of the important characteristics of this style such as continuous bands of windows, cantilevered extensions and windows flush with the wall surface. It also lacks the impression of "weightlessness" displayed by better examples on campuses in the region.

Designed by architect Vincent Raney in a utilitarian style typical of his institutional projects, Julie Billiart Hall does not represent an important example of Raney's work. His eye-catching art deco and roadside commercial projects have received some preservation attention and scholarly notice; his school and college buildings have not been awarded prizes or attention by architectural historians. There is not sufficient scholarship to support finding that Raney was a "master" or architect of merit. Julia Billart Hall does not appear to be eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 3.

City of Belmont Landmark Criteria

Julie Billiart Hall, a fairly plain example of a post-World War Two educational building, is not the first, last, only or most significant classroom/office building in the region. It does appear to qualify as a local landmark.

City of Belmont Historic Resource Criteria

The Julie Billiart Hall was not present during the period of significance for the adjacent Ralston Hall, which ends in 1899 (National Historic Landmark listing), or the Taube Center (1930). It does appear to qualify as a local historic resource.

St Mary's Hall (International Style)



St. Mary's Hall (1952)

St. Mary's Hall is a 21,614 square foot frame and stucco building that served as classrooms and lab spaces for the College of Notre Dame. Two stories, it is in the International Style of Modernism, with rows of ribbon windows dominating the long side facades. The roof is flat and has a wood detail underneath the coping. A plywood wood detail runs along the second story underneath the windows. The statue of Mary was designed by Sister Marie of St. Joseph's Oddie. It has a combination of wood and aluminum windows.

California Register Criterion 1 (events)

St. Mary's Hall is not associated with significant events in the development of education for women in California or other important events in state or regional history. It does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 1.

California Register Criterion 2 (persons)

St. Mary's Hall is not associated with important persons and does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 2.

California Register Criterion 3 (architecture, architect of merit)

While the continuous "ribbon" of windows on the long façades of the building are a nice International Style feature, the treatment of the windows is not truly International Style as the windows are framed with sills. The competing textures of the stacked brick and vertically grooved wood siding are also inconsistent with the smooth white surfaces that epitomize International Style.

Designed by architect Vincent Raney in a utilitarian style typical of his institutional projects, St Mary's Hall does not represent an important example of Raney's work. His eye-catching art deco and roadside commercial projects have received some preservation attention and scholarly notice; his school and college buildings have not been awarded prizes or attention by architectural historians. There is not sufficient scholarship to support finding that Raney was a "master" or architect of merit. St Mary's Hall does not appear to be eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 3 as an example of International Style collegiate architecture.

City of Belmont Landmark Criteria

St Mary's Hall, a fairly plain example of a post-World War Two educational building, is not the first, last, only or most significant classroom/office building in the region. It does appear to qualify as a local landmark.

City of Belmont Historic Resource Criteria

St Mary's Hall was not present during the period of significance for the adjacent Ralston Hall, which ends in 1899 (National Historic Landmark listing), or the Taube Center (1930). It does appear to qualify as a local historic resource.

College of Notre Dame Theater (International Style)



College of Notre Dame Theater (1955)

This 13,588 square foot one-story theater/auditorium is built of reinforced concrete with a flat roof and aluminum windows. The main entrance is marked by a flat porch with rounded columns. While most of the building is painted white, the porch wall with the metal entrance doors is painted dark green. The long front façade is marked by a frilled roof edge and decorative narrow embedded columns, similar to those found on the adjacent Art Deco style high school. It has 550 seats with an elevated performance stage. A mezzanine was added in 1978. It still serves its original purpose.

California Register Criterion 1 (events)

The College of Notre Dame Theater is not associated with important events in the development of education for women in California or other important events in state or regional history. It does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 1.

California Register Criterion 2 (persons)

The College of Notre Dame Theater is not associated with important persons and does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 2.

California Register Criterion 3 (architecture, architect of merit)

The Theater does not appear to be eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 3 as an example of International Style collegiate architecture. This is due in large part to the ornamental features of the building: the eccentric crenulated frill at the roof edge, the embedded columns with pointed ends, and the complicated grid of windows at the lobby are not consistent with strong International Style design. The historicist visual reference of the decorative pilasters to the adjacent Art Deco building is also inconsistent with this style.

Designed by architect Vincent Raney in a utilitarian style typical of his institutional projects, the Theater does not represent an important example of Raney's work. His eye-catching art deco and roadside commercial projects have received some preservation attention and scholarly notice; his school and college buildings have not been awarded prizes or attention by architectural historians. This theater is a particularly plain example compared to the many other theaters designed by Raney in art deco and "googie" dome styles. There is not sufficient scholarship to support finding that Raney was a "master" or architect of merit. The Theater does not appear eligible for the California Register under Criterion 3.

City of Belmont Landmark Criteria

The College of Notre Dame Theater, a fairly plain example of a post-World War Two educational building, is not the first, last, only or most significant theater building in the region. It does appear to qualify as a local landmark.

City of Belmont Historic Resource Criteria

The Theater was not present during the period of significance for the adjacent Ralston Hall, which ends in 1899 (National Historic Landmark listing), or the Taube Center (1930). It does appear to qualify as a local historic resource.

St Joseph's Hall (International Style)



St. Joseph's Hall (1960)

St. Joseph's Hall is a 25,191 square foot three-story wood frame and stucco dormitory. It is flanked by a one-story annex and has a connecting arcade. The roof is flat. A flat panel of numerous lights was substituted for the glass stairwell found on Julie Billiart Hall. The dormitory windows are aluminum. The first floor has space for classrooms and faculty offices.

California Register Criterion 1 (events)

St. Joseph's Hall was not associated with important events in the development of education for women in California or other important events in state or regional history. It does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 1.

California Register Criterion 2 (persons)

St. Joseph's Hall was not associated with important persons and does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 2.

California Register Criterion 3 (architecture, architect of merit)

St Joseph's Hall displays some features of International Style: it has some cantilevered projections for example. The building massing is awkward with many roof heights and a lack of coordination between roof height and the building's entrances (the entrances should be more prominently indicated). St Joseph's Hall does not appear to be eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 3 as an example of International Style collegiate architecture.

Designed by architect Vincent Raney in a utilitarian style typical of his institutional projects, St Joseph's Hall does not represent an important example of Raney's work. His eye-catching art deco and roadside commercial projects have received some preservation attention and scholarly notice; his school and college buildings have not been awarded prizes or attention by architectural historians. There is not sufficient scholarship to support finding that Raney was a "master" or architect of merit. St Joseph's Hall does not appear eligible for the California Register under Criterion 3.

City of Belmont Landmark Criteria

St Joseph's Hall, a fairly plain example of a post-World War Two educational building, is not the first, last, only or most significant college dormitory building in the region. It does appear to qualify as a local landmark.

City of Belmont Historic Resource Criteria

St Joseph's Hall was not present during the period of significance for the adjacent Ralston Hall, which ends in 1899 (National Historic Landmark listing), or the Taube Center (1930). It does appear to qualify as a local historic resource.

The summary table below presents a comparison of the NDNU International Style buildings with other examples from the San Francisco Bay area, as discussed in the Regional Collegiate Architecture historic context. The comparison underscores that the NDNU buildings do not represent significant examples of this style in the region.

Table 8. International Style Collegiate Architecture Comparison

Distinctive Characteristics: International Style	Julie Billiart Hall, NDNU	St. Mary's Hall, NDNU	St. Joseph's Hall, NDNU	NDNU Theater	Nelson Memorial Library, Pacific Union College	Music Center, College of San Mateo
Flat roof with no coping at roofline	+	+	+	+	+	+
Expanses of windowless wall surface	-	+	-	+	+	+
Horizontal bands of windows	+	+	+	+	+	+
Floor to ceiling windows	-	+	+	+	+	+
Metal windows set flush to walls	-	-	-	-	+	+
Corner windows	-	-	-	-	-	-
Masonry exterior of white stucco	+	-	-	+	-	+
Lack of applied ornament	-	-	-	-	-	+
Cantilevered projections	-	-	+	-	+	+
Asymmetrical facade	+	+	+	+	+	-
Total	5/10	5/10	5/10	6/10	7/10	8/10

Campus Center (Midcentury Modern Style)



Campus Center (1952)

The Campus Center is a 11,421 square foot one-story building of wood frame construction with stucco walls. The south façade is flanked by a deep arcade. It has clerestory windows and a combination of aluminum and vinyl windows. The doors are wood and metal. The roof has an offset low pitch. This building still serves its original purpose of dining hall space and administrative offices. It was also once the campus library but that function has been supplanted by the construction of Gellert Library.

California Register Criterion 1 (events)

The Campus Center was not associated with important events in the development of education for women in California or other important events in state or regional history. It does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 1.

California Register Criterion 2 (persons)

The Campus Center was not associated with important persons and does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 2.

California Register Criterion 3 (architecture, architect of merit)

The Campus Center building is largely obscured at ground level by a covered arcade surrounding three sides of the building. This arcade, supported by pink stacked roman brick columns, passes in front of the large windows at the dining hall. The Campus Center has some characteristics of Midcentury Modern collegiate architecture—the stacked roman brick, projecting eaves and shallow pitched roof—but is not a strong example of the style in comparison to strong examples at other campuses in the region.

Designed by architect Vincent Raney in a utilitarian style typical of his institutional projects, the Campus Center does not represent an important example of Raney's work. His eye-catching art deco and roadside commercial projects have received some preservation attention and scholarly notice; his school and college buildings have not been awarded prizes or attention by architectural historians. The

Campus Center does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 3 as an example of Midcentury Modern collegiate architecture or as the work of a "master" or architect of merit.

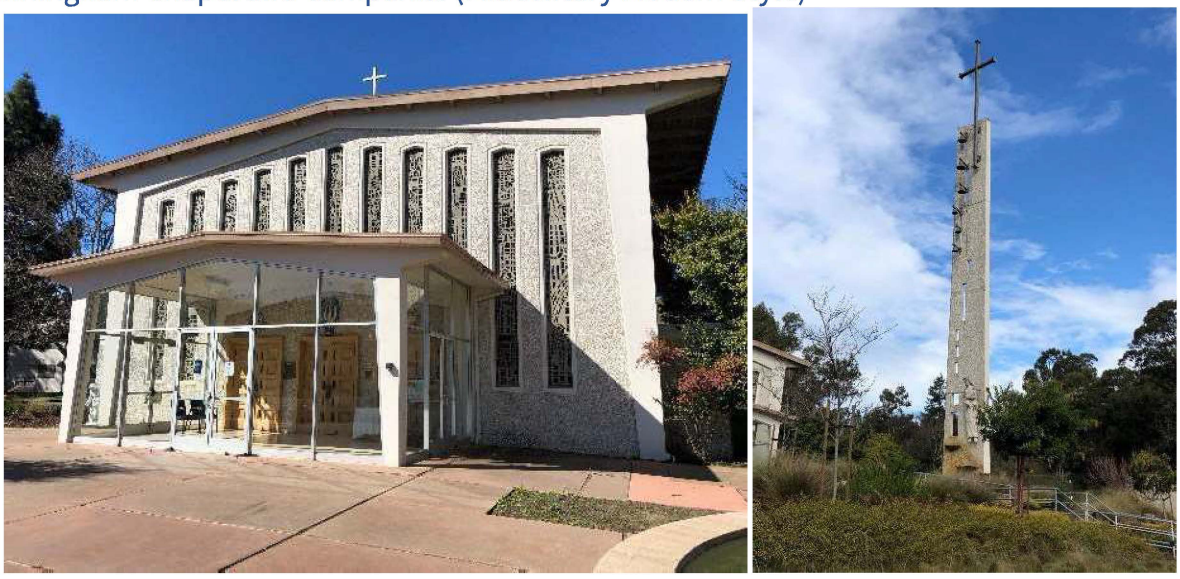
City of Belmont Landmark Criteria

The Campus Center, a fairly plain example of a post-World War Two educational building, is not the first, last, only or most significant college dining hall and administrative office building in the region. It does appear to qualify as a local landmark.

City of Belmont Historic Resource Criteria

The Campus Center was not present during the period of significance for the adjacent Ralston Hall, which ends in 1899 (National Historic Landmark listing), or the Taube Center (1930). It does appear to qualify as a local historic resource.

Cunningham Chapel and Campanile (Midcentury Modern Style)



Cunningham Chapel and Campanile (1961)

Originally known as the Notre Dame Memorial Chapel, Cunningham Chapel is a one-story 10,146 square foot chapel with aluminum slab glass windows. It is of steel frame and masonry construction with concrete posts and exposed quartz aggregate concrete wall panels. The main and porch roofs are gently pitched. It has a floor-to-ceiling glass porch and a one-story annex on the east wall. The adjacent campanile is an intended campus focal point. The Chapel's slab glass-colored windows were designed and built by noted artist Gabriel Loire. The glass panels depict important events in the life of Mary and women from the Old Testament. The brilliant colors of the windows cannot be experienced from the exterior of the Chapel (except when illuminated from within at night) where only the dull unpainted metal cut-out backing of the windows can be seen.

The Campanile is a tripod in form: a slightly concave front-facing panel supported by a bracing strut in the back and set in a circular fountain pool. The front panel is concrete with exposed quartz aggregate construction with pierced cut-outs and a variety of applied ornament of religious significance: a metal cross, six bells, three metal basins overflowing into the tiled fountain pool, and a cast concrete figure of Mary holding the infant Jesus.

The Cunningham Chapel Windows

The chapel at the Notre Dame de Namur campus has a total of twenty-one windows by Loire: ten narrow vertical windows on the sides flanking the pews and the Stations of the Cross, and a series of eleven tall narrow windows surrounding the entrance doors.



Cunningham Chapel windows

California Register Criterion 1 (events)

The Cunningham Chapel and Campanile were not associated with important events in the development of education for women in California or other important events in state or regional history. It does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 1.

California Register Criterion 2 (persons)

The Cunningham Chapel and Campanile were not associated with important persons and does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 2.

California Register Criterion 3 (architecture, architect of merit)

The Chapel building and its Campanile are evaluated here as an example of Midcentury Modern architecture; its religious symbols and features are not evaluated, following the National Register guidance on religious properties. The focus here is on the exterior features of the building. The Chapel and Campanile display a number of the characteristics of Midcentury Modern style but by comparison to examples on other campuses in the region do not strongly represent the style. Cunningham Chapel and Campanile do not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 3 as examples of Midcentury Modern collegiate architecture.

To be eligible, "a property must clearly contain enough of those (distinctive) characteristics to be considered a true representative of a particular type, period, or method of construction."[432] The Chapel at Notre Dame de Namur University exhibits some popular features of Midcentury Modern church style: a glass nartex (vestibule) entry, a shallow-pitched roof and exposed structural beams. This is a relatively conservative expression of Modernism and appears to take its cues from the shallow end-gabled roof of the earlier Chapel (now the Taube Center). It does not exhibit the flat roof, parabolic arch roof, or A-frame that exemplify better known examples. The stained glass windows are also Modern in style. However, the extensive decoration of the interior with religious art and the placement of the stained glass windows along the length and back of the Chapel depart from the trend towards simplicity

[432] National Register Bulletin 15, 18.

and light focused on the altar as a single focal point that characterized this period of church architecture, and yet does not achieve the dramatic effects of the more elaborate expressionist examples.

To be eligible for listing as an important example of Midcentury Modern church architecture, the building should be an "important example (within its context) of building practices of a particular time in history."[433] The Cunningham Chapel at Notre Dame de Namur University is not cited as an important example of Midcentury Modern architecture in any of the scholarship on Postwar churches. Within a comparative framework, the Cunningham Chapel does not appear to embody Midcentury Modern church architecture to the extent that it would be eligible for listing on the California Register. There is not sufficient scholarship to support finding that Raney was a "master" or architect of merit, therefore the Cunningham Chapel does not meet Criterion 3 for the California Register as the work of an architect of merit.

Cunningham Chapel and the Work of a Master/High Artistic Values

The Cunningham Chapel was also evaluated under criterion 3 as "the work of a master" for its stained glass windows by Gabriel Loire. (No significant events or persons have been identified in association with the Belmont campus so criteria 1 and 2 are not considered here.) Religious properties can be eligible under criterion 3 for artistic distinction but their significance "must be judged in purely secular terms."[434]

To be eligible for the California Register as the work of a master, the windows at Cunningham Chapel must represent "a particular phase in the development of the master's career, and aspect of his or her work, or a particular idea or theme in his or her craft."[435]

Key features of Loire's most highly regarded work include:

- integration with expressive architecture,
- large expanses of glass creating an immersive experience,
- and the "capacity to create wonder and delight and surprise."[436]

Gabriel Loire was deeply spiritual and deliberate in creating a spiritual experience for viewers of his work. Loire wrote of his work at the Thanks-Giving Square Chapel:

> "The stained glass is the final experience of a visitor to Thanks-Giving Square. Arriving over the bridge into the Chapel under the symbol of the spirit, you glimpse the beginning of the stained glass colors 20 feet above your head before going under the choir loft. Then you turn sharply to the left toward the altar and you see the stained glass spiraling upward 60 feet over your head.

[433] Ibid., 18.
[434] Ibid., 26.
[435] Ibid., 20.
[436] Jane Brocket, *How to Look at Stained Glass: A Guide to the Church Windows of England* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018).

> A person looks up briefly. With head up he would strain to look to the summit and would back up from time to time. Looking straight ahead you would see the glow of light created above the altar and on the walls. You would feel the unity of heaven and earth under the glory of God…We are still but the spiral is moving – picking itself up – curving inward and upward from the earthly to the heavenly axis, spiraling outward to eternity."[437]

The windows at Cunningham Chapel were commissioned in 1960 through an agent in Paris who provided the content for each window and a description of the colors preferred by the Sisters:

> "Colors: Pink-lavender, lilac, amber, pale green, very little red; white and blue for the robes of the central figures. The Sisters love blue. The windows should be colorful but very light so that the chapel is not dark inside. They love the general effect of the windows at St. Peters in Redwood City, but they find those windows darker than they would like for their chapel."[438]

The subject of each window was provided to Loire, with a relevant Bible verse. An accompanying description provided by the Sisters explained that "We are trying to elevate valiant women for these troubled times when the place of women and the characteristic virtues of women are poorly represented" and added that: "Our windows should be above all very beautiful as beauty itself raises the spirit to God."[439]

The windows at the Cunningham Chapel are small in the context of Loire's works, even in the local context where a number of churches display large windows by Loire, like the Christ Episcopal Church in Los Altos and the St Charles Parish Church in San Carlos for example as well as Grace Cathedral in San Francisco. The Chapel is a modest representation of "expressive" architecture by comparison even to local examples in Los Altos and San Francisco's St Michaels. The installation contains a small surprise, a device used often by Loire, where the visitor turns at the end of the service and facing the rear of the Chapel is greeted by a glowing frame of windows surrounding the doors. This simple technique is comparatively common and less dramatic than the split in the swooping ceiling at St Michaels with its seam of blue leading to a focal, shaped multicolored window. The Cunningham Chapel windows do not strongly represent Gabriel Loire's work as a master artist and therefore the building does not appear eligible for listing as an important example of his work.

Consideration was also given to the aspect of Criteria 3 described as "high artistic values" for the Cunningham Chapel. The National Register guidance explains:

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[437] Gabriel Loire, "Theme of the Stained Glass Ceiling – 'The Glory of God'," Sept. 16, 1975. Viewed at https://www.ateliers-loire.fr/en/gabriel-loire-usa-texas-dallas-thanks-giving-square-chapel.php (accessed 12 July 2022).
[438] Edouard Gordes to Gabriel Loire. November 15, 1960 (translated from French). Viewed at https://www.ateliers-loire.fr/fr/gabriel-loire-usa-californie-belmont-college-notre-dame-memorial-chapel-.php (accessed 12 July 2022).
[439] Chapelle de Notre Dame (translated from French). Viewed at https://www.ateliers-loire.fr/fr/gabriel-loire-usa-californie-belmont-college-notre-dame-memorial-chapel-.php (accessed 12 July 2022,).

> "A property is eligible for its high artistic values if it so fully articulates a particular concept of design that it expresses an aesthetic ideal. A property is not eligible, however, if it does not express aesthetic ideals or design concepts more fully than other properties of its type."[440]

While its windows, mosaic panels and other decorative arts display artistic values they are fundamentally religious in content and purpose "raising the spirit to God." Each window and mosaic panel tells a story of religious importance – an agnostic visitor can admire the beauty and craftsmanship but cannot fully experience the intentions of the artists. Because the religious content cannot be considered in the evaluation of significance, the Cunningham Chapel does not appear to meet Criteria 3 for its high artistic values.

City of Belmont Landmark Criteria

The Cunningham Chapel is not the first, last, only or most significant post-World War Two church in the region. It does appear to qualify as a local landmark.

City of Belmont Historic Resource Criteria

The Cunningham Chapel was not present during the period of significance for the adjacent Ralston Hall, which ends in 1899 (National Historic Landmark listing), or the Taube Center (1930). It does appear to qualify as a local historic resource.

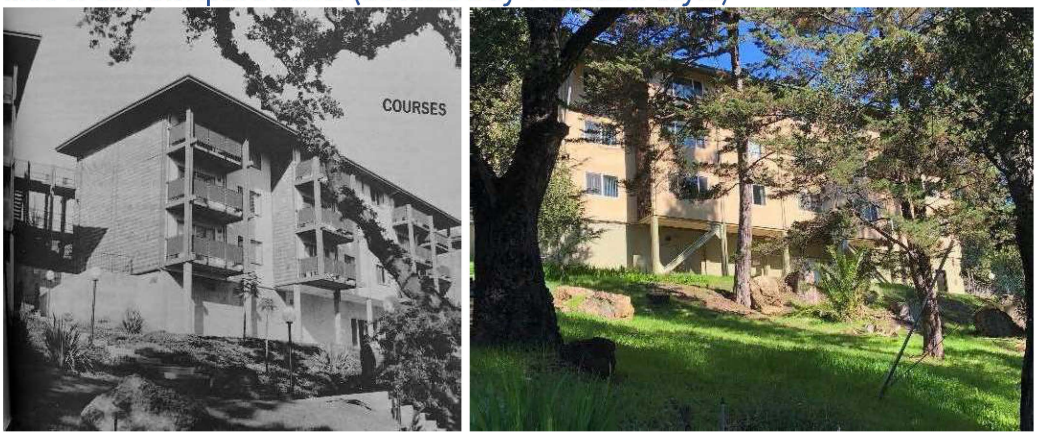
The summary table below presents a comparison of the NDNU Midcentury Modern style buildings with other examples from the San Francisco Bay area, as discussed in the Regional Collegiate Architecture historic context. The comparison underscores that the NDNU buildings do not represent significant examples of this style in the region.

[440] National Register Bulletin 15, 20.

Table 9. Midcentury Modern Collegiate Architecture

Distinctive Characteristics: Midcentury Modern	Campus Center, NDNU	Cunningham Chapel, NDNU	Unit 3, UC Berkeley	Chapel, Holy Names University	Hildebrand Hall, UC Berkeley
Flat or low-pitched roof	+	+	+	+	+
Projecting eaves with exposed rafters	+	+	-	-	-
Expressed structural system	-	+	+	+	+
Metal windows	-	+	+	+	+
Cantilevered overhangs	-	+	+	+	+
Stucco, wood or corrugated siding	+	-	-	+	-
Textile block screens	-	-	+	+	+
Brightly colored or earthtone	-	-	+	-	-
Stacked roman brick as accent	+	-	-	-	-
Colored glass spandrels	-	-	+	-	+
Articulated facade	-	+	+	+	+
TOTAL	4/11	6/11	8/11	7/11	7/11

Kane, Wilkie & Carroll Apartments (Second Bay Tradition Style)



Kane, Wilkie and Caroll Apartments (1966)

This apartment complex of three adjacent buildings (each comprised of 10,822 square feet) was built in the Second Bay Tradition style. Seen from below the roofs appear flat but from above peaks meant to hide HVAC materials and mimic mountains are clearly visible. The walls are a combination of stucco and wood shingle. The balconies were removed in 2015 (their sliding glass doors were replaced with smaller windows) and the original white paint was covered over with a deep peach color. The windows are vinyl.

California Register Criterion 1 (events)

The Kane, Wilkie and Carroll Apartments are not associated with significant events in the development of education for women in California or other important events in state or regional history. The property does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 1.

California Register Criterion 2 (persons)

The Kane, Wilkie and Carroll Apartments are not associated with important persons and the property does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 2.

California Register Criterion 3 (architecture, architect of merit)

These apartment buildings display some of the features of Second Bay Tradition: the shingled end walls are particularly representative of this style. However, the complex is dominated by extensive unpainted steel bridges and railings that detract from the woodsy, natural feeling associated with the style. The apartment buildings have little relationship to their setting; the minimal connection originally created by small balconies on the rear of the apartments was lost when the balconies were later removed. The Kane, Wilkie and Carroll Apartments do not appear eligible for listing on the California Register as examples of Second Bay Tradition collegiate architecture.

Architect Hollis Logue, Jr. has not been noted as a prominent designer in the Second Bay Tradition. He is best known for institutional buildings in Midcentury Modern style. These apartments are not mentioned in the regional architectural histories of this widespread style and do not appear to qualify for listing as important examples by an architect of merit.

City of Belmont Landmark Criteria

The Kane, Wilkie and Carroll Apartments are not the first, last, only or most significant post-World War Two apartment buildings in the region. The property does appear to qualify as a local landmark.

City of Belmont Historic Resource Criteria

The Kane, Wilkie and Carroll Apartments were not present during the period of significance for the adjacent Ralston Hall, which ends in 1899 (National Historic Landmark listing), or the Taube Center (1930). The property does appear to qualify as a local historic resource.

The Oaks (Second Bay Tradition Style)




The Oaks (1966)

This 2,656 square foot one-story with above-ground basement is a Second Bay Tradition style building. It has a low-pitched roof with three peaks and a combination of peach stucco and wood shingle siding. The windows are vinyl. Once the recreation center for the adjacent apartment buildings, it has also served other campus uses. An adjoining swimming pool has been filled in.

California Register Criterion 1 (events)

The Oaks building is not associated with important events in the development of education for women in California or other important events in state or regional history. It does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 1.

California Register Criterion 2 (persons)

The Oaks building is not associated with important persons and does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 2.

California Register Criterion 3 (architecture, architect of merit)

The connection between the building and its pool terrace was important but weakly expressed—lacking a larger expanse of glass or a shade trellis—and has been compromised by the removal of the swimming pool. The Oaks building does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register as a significant example of Second Bay Tradition collegiate architecture. Designed by Hollis Logue, Jr. in tandem with the Kane, Wilkie and Carroll Apartments, the property does not appear to qualify as a significant work by an architect of merit.

City of Belmont Landmark Criteria

The Oaks is not the first, last, only or most significant post-World War Two recreation center in the region. The property does appear to qualify as a local landmark.

City of Belmont Historic Resource Criteria

The Oaks was not present during the period of significance for the adjacent Ralston Hall, which ends in 1899 (National Historic Landmark listing), or the Taube Center (1930). The property does appear to qualify as a local historic resource.

Gavin Hall (Second Bay Tradition Style)



Gavin Hall (1966)

Gavin Hall is 3,426 square foot one-story wood frame building with plywood siding on the long facades and four perpendicular stucco walls. It has aluminum windows and a pitched gable roof. A 1994 addition at one end of the building has a flat roof. Built in the Second Bay Tradition style, this building first served as a residence for NDNU staff, then was used as a biology lab. In 1983 it was converted into classroom use. Gavin Hall has a parking lot abutting one side of the building and no other landscape features.

California Register Criterion 1 (events)

Gavin Hall is not associated with important events in the development of education for women in California or other important events in state or regional history. It does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 1.

California Register Criterion 2 (persons)

Gavin Hall is not associated with important persons and does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 2.

California Register Criterion 3 (architecture, architect of merit)

Gavin Hall is a modest example of Second Bay Tradition style. The lack of any connection to the setting or any landscape features is a major absence for a Second Bay Tradition property. Gavin Hall does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register as an important example of Second Bay Tradition collegiate architecture. Architect Hollis Logue, Jr. has not been noted as a prominent designer in the Second Bay Tradition. He is best known for institutional buildings in Midcentury Modern style. These apartments are not mentioned in the regional architectural histories of this widespread style and do not appear to qualify for listing as important examples by an architect of merit.

City of Belmont Landmark Criteria

Gavin Hall is not the first, last, only or most significant post-World War Two apartment building in the region. The property does appear to qualify as a local landmark.

City of Belmont Historic Resource Criteria

Gavin Hall was not present during the period of significance for the adjacent Ralston Hall, which ends in 1899 (National Historic Landmark listing), or the Taube Center (1930). The property does appear to qualify as a local historic resource.

The summary table below presents a comparison of the NDNU Second Bay Tradition style buildings with other examples from the San Francisco Bay area, as discussed in the Regional Collegiate Architecture historic context. The comparison underscores that the NDNU buildings do not represent significant examples of this style in the region.

Table 10. Second Bay tradition Collegiate Architecture

Distinctive Characteristics of Second Bay Tradition style	The Oaks, NDNU	Wilkie, Carrol & Barnes Apts, NDNU	Gavin Hall, NDNU	Pelican Bldg., UC Berkeley	Foothill College	CASBS, Stanford University
Low pitched roof	+	+	+	+	+	+
Post and beam construction	-	+	-	+	+	-
Wood cladding	+	+	+	-	+	+
Overhanging eaves	+	+	+	+	+	+
Exposed rafters	-	-	+	+	+	+
Horizontal massing	+	+	+	+	+	+
Large expanses of glass	+	-	+	+	+	+
Ribbon windows	-	-	-	-	+	-
Japanese influence	-	-	-	-	-	-
Plain, simple or vernacular	-	+	-	+	-	+
Woodsy texture	+	+	+	+	+	+
Linked to landscape through pergola, atrium or trellis	+	-	-	+	+	+
TOTAL	7/12	7/12	7/12	9/12	10/12	9/12

Gellert Library (Contemporary)



Gellert Library (1974)

Gellert Library is a 19,380 square foot two-story library with steel frame construction and vertical scored plywood panels standing between concrete columns. It has a flat roof of corrugated steel. Deep eaves overhang the building and bands of vertical windows encompass both floors. It has wood and vinyl windows. The main entrance has a broad overhang.

California Register Criterion 1 (events)

Gellert Library is not associated with significant events in the development of education for women in California or other important events in state or regional history. It does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 1.

California Register Criterion 2 (persons)

Gellert Library is not associated with important persons and does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 2.

California Register Criterion 3 (architecture, architect of merit)

Gellert Library, designed by Reid & Tarics Associates (RTA) and constructed in 1974, is a modest example of Contemporary style, an eclectic response to the boxy restrictions of Modernism that mixes materials, angles and curves, and exaggerated proportions. Good examples of Contemporary style exhibit free-form lines and curves—this is a major feature of the style and absent here at Gellert Library. Gellert Library does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register as an important example of Contemporary collegiate architecture. Few examples of this style were identified in the regional collegiate architecture survey as Contemporary style became more common after 1975.

Reid & Tarics Associates had won a major award in 1965 for a chapel they designed for a private school in Pebble Beach in Second Bay Tradition Style.[441] The firm also designed collegiate building at UC Santa

[441] The Eleanor Donnelly Erdman Memorial Chapel, AIA Award. Viewed at https://usmodernist.org/AJ/AJ-1965-07.pdf (accessed 12 July 2022).

Cruz and UC San Francisco.[442] Gellert Library is not identified in the architectural literature as a significant work in their design portfolio. There is not sufficient scholarship to support finding that Reid & Tarics qualify as "masters" or architects of merit. Gellert Library does not appear eligible for listing on the California Register under Criterion 3.

City of Belmont Landmark Criteria

Gellert Library is not the first, last, only or most significant post-World War Two library in the region. The property does appear to qualify as a local landmark.

City of Belmont Historic Resource Criteria

Gellert Library was not present during the period of significance for the adjacent Ralston Hall, which ends in 1899 (National Historic Landmark listing), or the Taube Center (1930). The property does appear to qualify as a local historic resource.

Summary of Evaluation of Individual Properties

Three buildings at Notre Dame de Namur University appear to merit treatment as historic resources: Ralston Hall, the Carriage House, and the Taube Center. These buildings have been previously listed and retain integrity. The early additions to the campus, constructed between 1924 and 1948, do not appear to have been designed by architects—they appear to have been built on tight budgets to accommodate functional needs and in some cases adorned with minor decorative features to tie them to the appearance of Ralston Hall. The post-World War Two campus buildings were designed by skilled professional architects but lack distinction in comparison to examples of post-War collegiate architecture in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Evaluation of the Post-World War Two Campus as a Historic District

The NDNU campus contains a cluster of buildings designed by architect Vincent Raney on the upper academic plateau. These buildings are not individually eligible however as a concentration of buildings united by plan and physical development they were further analyzed as a potential historic district. The Raney campus buildings on the academic plateau are evaluated under Criterion 3 to assess whether they represent an important example of campus planning in the post-World War Two period.

Vincent G. Raney designed the new upper campus in 1952; it was rendered by him as three buildings connected by arcades and sidewalks. The location, although relatively close to the back of Ralston Hall, was sited at the edge of an eleven-acre plateau newly graded for the new upper campus. St. Mary's Hall and St. Julie Billiart Hall were designed in the International Style while the dining room/library was designed in a compatible Midcentury Modern style. The three buildings were constructed simultaneously; the presentation drawing does not reflect any additional future buildings. Surprisingly, no campus master plan was created at the time; Raney was asked in 1954 to create a master plan when

[442] Reid and Tarics Associates (RTA). Viewed at https://pcad.lib.washington.edu/firm/2697/ (accessed 12 July 2022).

the college was applying for accreditation. No 1954 master plan has been located in the Notre Dame de Namur library archives.



Raney's presentation drawing of the new College of Notre Dame de Namur campus featured a bird's eye view looking southward with Ralston Hall in the background.

Raney's published thoughts about the College of Notre Dame campus design:

> "The basic structure consists of classrooms, library, dormitory and cafeteria; these units are tied together with a central court which serves also as a general assembly. Frame and stucco, brick and concrete are the materials to be utilized in the structure. Provisions were made in the plan for future expansion as the college grows. For the building is designed to maximum efficiency of use, to fit the curriculum rather than the necessity of fitting the curriculum to the accomodations available."[443]

The creation of the three buildings—St. Mary's Hall for administration, classrooms and laboratories, St. Julie Billiart Hall for fifty residential students and the dining room/library—were tied together by one-story level arcades and pink-colored concrete sidewalks, plus a central courtyard located between the three structures. This courtyard was the focal point of the new upper campus.

While Raney's building cluster borrowed concepts from the "finger plan" popularized by Ernest Kump in the 1940s, the NDNU buildings lack many key concepts of Kump's "ideal school": outdoor learning spaces connected to classrooms under the same roof, single loaded corridors in classroom buildings,

[443] Partridge, "Architect Vincent G. Raney," *The Trumpeteer*, 16, 32.

extensive glazing on the north elevations of all the "fingers." Kump's plans feature a series of long rectangular buildings placed parallel to each other with a long north elevation -- Raney's plan rotates the four buildings around small courtyards. While Raney's buildings are long rectangles, the different programs (one classroom building, two dormitories and one support building) are accommodated differently and only St Mary's Hall features the important elements of Kump's finger plan buildings. The dormitories lack the extensive glazing and single loaded corridor, the Campus Center building's glazed walls face south and west – bisected by the outdoor covered walkway roof, and there is no adoption of a modular unit for efficient construction.

Raney designed two additional buildings on the upper campus: St Joseph's Hall in 1958 and the Cunningham Chapel completed in 1961. The placement and design of these buildings did not represent a strengthening of the finger plan, nor a shift to the cluster plan that was gaining popularity at the time.

Vincent Raney designed many school campuses in the post-World War Two period before devoting the later part of his career to cinema projects. None of these plans is noted in the literature on campus planning. In contrast, Kump's masterplan (with Masters & Hurd and Sasaki, Walker & Associates) for Foothill College in Los Altos Hills, on a similar hillside site, completed in 1961 won several major national awards including a national AIA First Honor Award (1962).[444] The cluster of buildings designed by Raney on NDNU's academic plateau do not appear to represent an important example of campus master planning in the post-War era. Lacking individual eligibility, and significance as a master planned district, the Raney buildings on the academic plateau do not appear eligible for listing under Criterion 3 as a historic district.

Survey Findings

The survey effort confirmed that the three previously listed buildings retain integrity and are historic resources.

The literature review did not uncover significant events in the development of education for women in California on the NDNU campus in Belmont. (The Sister of Notre Dame de Namur's establishment of a school for girls in San Jose in 1851 was a significant event in this context.) While the leader of NDNU were locally known and respected, the literature search yielded no mentions of them in the history of education for women. A review of local histories did not support finding that the campus made a significant contribution to the development of the City of Belmont. (William Ralston did make such a contribution.)

The educational and residential buildings constructed for the campus prioritized economy over design as NDNU struggled to raise sufficient funds to fully realize their vision and meet the costs of new construction while maintaining their older buildings. These buildings fall short in the comparative

[444] Architectural Resources Group, "Foothill College Historic Resource Evaluation, Foothill College Facilities Master Plan," 2008.

analysis with other college buildings in the region. None of these buildings appear eligible for listing as important examples of architecture or as important designs by architects of merit.

Table 11. Survey Results

Collegiate Architecture Context **Period & Style**	**Building Name**	**Eligible for Listing on the California Register**
1850 – 1874 (Pioneering Campuses)		
Italianate	**Ralston Hall**	**Previously Listed; Retains Integrity**
Vernacular	**Carriage House**	**Previously Listed; Retains Integrity**
1875 – 1899 (Late Victorian Era)		
	(none)	
1900 – 1924 (Arts and Crafts)		
Vernacular	Music Hall	No
Vernacular, Classical Revival influence	Cuvilly Hall	No
1925 – 1949 (Romance of the West)		
Spanish Colonial Revival	**Taube Center**	**Previously Listed; Retains Integrity**
Vernacular	Tabard Inn	No
1950 -1975 (Modernism and the Post-War Campus)		
Midcentury Modern	Campus Center	No
International Style	Julie Billiart Hall	No
International Style	St. Mary's Hall	No
International Style	Notre Dame Theater	No
International Style	St. Joseph's Hall	No
Midcentury Modern	Cunningham Chapel and Campanile	No

Second Bay Tradition	Carroll, Kane and Wilkie Apartments	No
Second Bay Tradition	The Oaks	No
Second Bay Tradition	Gavin Hall	No
Contemporary	Gellert Library	No
Finger Plan	Vincent Raney Masterplan Potential District	No

Preparer Qualifications

Julie Cain holds a BA and an MA in history with two particular interests in 19th-century California and landscape history. She has also completed a semester-long course in historical architectural styles. Ms. Cain has published over 25 articles and one book on history and landscape history. She has worked at Stanford University's libraries since 1978 and with Heritage Services since 1999, becoming a full-time historic preservation planner in 2008. Her current responsibilities focus on historical research and writing, historic evaluations and historic preservation. Julie Cain serves on the City of Fremont Historical Resources Board.

Laura Jones earned a BA, MA and Ph.D. in Anthropology. Dr. Jones has more than 30 years of experience in the practice of prehistoric and historic archaeology, history, historic preservation and collections management in California. She has served as Stanford's University Archaeologist since 1993, and Director of Heritage Services since 2000. She also supervises staff archaeologists, historians and collections managers. Laura Jones is the author and coauthor of over 40 articles and books, teaches heritage management courses at Stanford University, and advises local cities on historic preservation planning.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Registration Documents

Appendix B. Exhibit of Non-Contributing Additions and Alterations (Ralston Hall and Carriage House)

Appendix C. Chronology of Landscape Features at Ralston Hall

Appendix D. Assessment of Potential Impacts

Appendix A. Registration Documents

Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
William Ralston Home

AND/OR COMMON
Berchman's Hall

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
College of Notre Dame — NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN
Belmont — VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Mul

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
California	06	San Mateo County	081

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	__OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	__PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	__YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Sisters of the College of Notre Dame: Sister Catherine Julie, President

STREET & NUMBER
College of Notre Dame

CITY, TOWN
Belmont — VICINITY OF

STATE
California

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
San Mateo County Court House

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
San Mateo

STATE
California

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	X UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
X GOOD	__RUINS	__ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

HISTORY

Ralston Hall was the country estate of William Chapman Ralston, San Francisco financier, founder of the Bank of California, and builder of the California Theater and the Palace Hotel in San Francisco.

Located in the ruggedly beautiful Canada del Diablo twenty miles south of San Francisco, Belmont, as the estate was called, was purchased by Mr. Ralston in 1864. He utilized a modest villa built by Count Leonetto Cipriani in the 1850's as the core of his great house which ultimately boasted over eighty rooms. It was a Victorian palace with extensive outbuildings, one of which--a magnificent stone carriage house--is also standing and in use today.

The house and grounds, although largely completed by 1868, were constantly embellished until Ralston's death in 1875, when the estate passed to his former partner, Senator William Sharon. Senator Sharon lived in the house until his death in 1884. Subsequently the house was sold to Mrs. Alpheus Bull who established a girls' finishing school, Radcliffe Hall, in the mansion. Following her death it was sold in 1900 to Dr. A. M. Gardner, superintendent of the State Hospital in Napa, for use as a private "nerve" sanitarium. After Dr. Gardner's death in 1913 the sanitarium waned in reputation and finally closed after World War I.

In 1922 the house and property were purchased by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur who were searching for a suitable place to relocate their college which was then in San Jose. In the many years since they acquired the sadly-deteriorated mansion the Sisters have restored it to much of its original magnificence and furnished it with antiques of Ralston's period. Because of the many changes of ownership, very few of Mr. Ralston's furnishings remained in the house but a few have been given back to the college by subsequent owners who felt that the pieces belonged in Ralston Hall again.

In style Ralston Hall is a modified Italian villa. The interior incorporates many features of nineteenth century "steamboat Gothic" construction and design, reminiscent of Ralston's early days on the river boats of the Ohio and Mississippi before he came to California.

FOYER

The foyer is characterized by classic columns, crystal chandeliers, magnificent mirrors and a grand staircase leading up to a gallery of opera boxes overlooking the skylighted entrance to the ballroom. In design it anticipated the court entrance of the Palace Hotel which Ralston was to build later. The fifteen-foot high doors are hung on double hinges to swing in two directions and all hardware--door knobs, railings, hinges and door plates--was silver-plated in Ralston's day. Much of this original hardware remains today, echoing the days of the silver barons who backed development of the Comstock lode.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION	
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE	
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	X ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE	
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	X SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER	
X 1800-1899	X COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION	
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		__INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1864 - 1875 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

WILLIAM CHAPMAN RALSTON
(1826 - 1875)

William Chapman Ralston was born January 12, 1826, in Plymouth, Ohio. He came to San Francisco as a young man. Often called "the man who built San Francisco," Ralston was an imaginative, aggressive businessman and financier. He loved his adopted State and worked to attract industries and Eastern capital to the West. He built the Palace Hotel and founded the Bank of California.

He amassed much of his fortune through financing of the Comstock Lode silver mines. Like many of his contemporaries he wanted a large country estate. In 1864 he purchased a modest villa and surrounding properties which belonged to Count Leonetto Cipriani and spent the next four years enlarging the villa by some 80 additional rooms. He built his own water and gas works and supplied these utilities to the few straggling homes of the infant village of Belmont.

Ralston entertained all the great and near great who came to San Francisco in his palatial home. He used the beauty of the natural setting and the opulence of his home and entertainment to impress visitors with the potential of California. He had a private telegraph line from San Francisco to his home and would telegraph his wife he was bringing fifty or more guests for dinner that evening. However, there were also formal occasions with engraved invitations and much preparation, such as the dinner for 110 guests when the Ralstons entertained the Japanese Ambassador Extraordinary, Sinu Iwakura, and members of the Japanese Embassy who were on a formal mission to the United States.

Among prominent visitors to the home during Ralston's days were Admiral David Farragut, Vice-President Schuyler Calfax, Leland Stanford, Mark Hopkins, Anson Burlingame, James Flood, and General Ulysses S. Grant, later President.

Unfortunately, although Ralston was a brilliant promoter and a man of large capabilities in many areas, he overextended himself. His involvements in a legion of financial projects led to dangerous use of funds from the Bank of California of which he was both President and Cashier. In 1875 the Bank closed its doors temporarily. The panic toppled all of his dreams. He signed over his estate and properties to his partner, Senator William Sharon, to cover any losses.

In the afternoon of the day he resigned as President of the Bank of California Ralston went swimming in the Bay off Aquatic Park, as was his custom. It was a very hot August day and he had been under tremendous strain. Whether he suffered a heart

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 4 acres

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	10	5 6 3 2 0 0	4 1 5 2 3 0 0
B	10	5 6 3 1 2 0	4 1 5 2 2 5 0
C	10	5 6 2 9 7 0	4 1 5 2 3 7 0
D	10	5 6 3 0 2 0	4 1 5 2 4 2 0

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

At the intersection of the first paved sidewalk with the paved access road, proceed north along the eastern curb of the access road 425' to a point, thence east parallel with the brick wall 175', thence 150' south along the eastern curb of the sidewalk to a point, thence east 75' parallel with south end of Cuvilly Hall to a point, thence 150' south along the brick wall to the northern end of Wilkie Apartments, thence in a curve along the northern curb of the sidewalk 250' west to the point of origin.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Cecil N. McKithan, Historian

ORGANIZATION
National Park Service - Historic Sites Survey

DATE
September 8, 1977

STREET & NUMBER
1100 L Street, N.W.

TELEPHONE
202-523-5466

CITY OR TOWN
Washington,

STATE
D. C. 20240

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE ___ LOCAL ___

Landmark Designated Nov. 13, 1960
date

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

Boundary Certified:

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Sept 27, 1977

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 9/8/82

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

((NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

((NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

((NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

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The chandeliers were originally lit by gas from a gas works built by Ralston. The Sisters had them electrified. The beautiful plasterwork designs on the ceiling at the top of each chandelier are examples of a lost art of the nineteenth century called pargeting. The chandeliers were imported from the part of central Europe which is now Czechoslovakia.

The lattice work openings around each room just below the ceiling are part of an ingenious ventilating system which draws air in through louvres under the eaves and circulates it through the walls, keeping them dry, cool, and free of termites and dry rot.

BALLROOM

This Hall of Mirrors furnished the setting for what were known as the host's "lavish nights," occasions which were frequently used to transact much business both before or after extravagant midnight suppers.

The three chandeliers are suspended from an oval frosted glass skylight. Each fixture is different but all are harmonious. The fourteen large mirrors create an illusion of space and elegance. The floor is patterned with alternating boards of maple and walnut butted so closely that they are still tight a century later. The original square nails were counter-sunk and capped with matching plugs of wood. Floor patterns vary from room to room.

In the manner of a riverboat all doors in the guest area of the mansion slide sideways or up into the walls or open flat against the walls to permit an unimpeded flow of guests. The use of skylights throughout the house gives a light airiness to the inner rooms.

CIPRIANI ROOM

Adjoining the ballroom is a drawing room believed to be the central room of the original Cipriani villa which Ralston incorporated into his home. To support this theory are three deviations from the general pattern throughout the rest of the house: 1) the fireplace is Italian marble instead of the laurel wood of the other fireplaces; 2) the ceiling is painted and there is no ventilating system around the top; 3) the floor is narrow-sawed cedar.

In this room is the original Ralston piano. Made of koa wood from the Sandwich Islands (now Hawaii) by the Jacob Zech Company of San Francisco, the piano was unusual in its day because it was made in the harp-shape rather than the square grands which were popular at that time. It is one of three identical pianos made for Mr. Ralston. One was in the Palace Hotel and was destroyed in the earthquake-fire. One was in his San Francisco home and is now owned by descendants of the Zech family.

BREAKFAST ROOM

Opening off the Cipriani Room is a light, airy room with a complete wall of windows. Presently used as a small dining room, the room was probably either a music room or a billiard room, as a visitor to Belmont in Ralston's day writes that "surrounding the ballroom were the library, billiard room, music room and banquet hall." The beautiful fireplace is of laurel wood, as are the other fireplaces on the main floor. However this fireplace is the only one that is completely decorative as there is no chimney.

SUN PARLOR

The same writer observed, "Another feature was a glassed-in promenade, decorated with potted vines and flowering trees just like those found on elaborately equipped river steamers. Everywhere about the reconstructed villa were gadgets reminiscent of Ralston's river year. The covers of ventilators were intricately carved; the doors swing both in and out; their glazed panels were as handsomely etched with conventionalized flower designs as any found on the Mississippi's floating palaces."

LIBRARY

This charming small room with its laurel wood book cupboards and large laurel fireplace afforded a quiet retreat for a reader. Even in so small a room there is a pretty chandelier as well as an interesting pattern in the floor. Two sets of double doors and an archway provide access from the inner hall, the drawing room, and the sun parlor, to this room.

DRAWING ROOM

In this room the influence of "steamboat Gothic" is most evident. The curved "prow" and the orange peel doors moving smoothly in a curved metal track are certainly copied from the riverboats. In her book, California, An Intimate History, Gertrude Atherton, a contemporary of Ralston, reminisces about a visit of Anson Burlingame, then Secretary of State, to Belmont as a guest of Mr. Ralston. Mr. Burlingame was escorted into this room where a large company was gathered in his honor. To quote, "All the guests faced one way. A few moments passed. All knew that some sort of a surprise was in store, and felt that Ralston's originality could be relied upon. Suddenly the opposite wall gave a sort of shiver, then rose slowly like the curtain of a theater, revealing an immense banqueting-hall laden with the most splendid plate, china, and glass that had been brought to California at that period, and an almost limitless variety of flowers and fruits. As motionless as an army about to salute were the pigtailed Chinese."

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DINING ROOM

The focal point of this magnificent banquet hall is the strikingly modern clock in the mirror over the buffet. The herringbone pattern of the floor and the tripartite ceiling with its pargeting and candle-style chandeliers (rather than the globes of the foyer and ballroom) are noteworthy. Three sets of double doors lead to two pantries and the hall to the kitchen while a fourth set of doors in the corner conceals a massive, hand-forged safe.

STAIRCASE

The grand staircase mounts from the foyer to the second floor and the gallery overlooking the entrance to the ballroom. On the stair walls opposite each other are pictures from Ralston's own collection. In a massive carved frame, reputedly executed by the grandfather of the present Mr. Gump of San Francisco, is an oil painting by Gilbert Munger, dated 1868, of Minnehaha Falls in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Opposite this picture is an oil painting, artist unknown, of the Duke of Wellington.

GALLERY

Reminiscent of an opera house is the gallery with its six semi-circular "opera boxes" overlooking the entrance and the ballroom. Silver-plated railings and marble balustrades carry the elegance of the main floor upstairs. The sliding door at the entrance to the gallery has two beautiful panels of etched glass with mythological goddesses, fruits and flowers as the theme. In the gallery will be found Mr. Ralston's personal desk, a gift to the Sisters in 1974 from the present-day owner; the Hazeltine statue of Freedom which was in the ballroom in Ralston's time and remained in the house through its various owners. In the gallery, as throughout the home, are fine pieces of furniture and objets d'art.

CARRIAGE HOUSE

Of the extensive outbuildings around Ralston Hall in the 1860's (turkish bath, bowling alley, barns, water tower, gas works, greenhouses, servants' quarters) only the carriage house remains. Built in about 1874 to replace an earlier wooden barn which burned, the carriage house walls are four-feet thick, built of native stone quarried in the area. A unique feature is the suspended ceiling of 1 x 10 planks on edge, hung by cables, to permit an unobstructed area for carriages to maneuver.

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attack, or whether he intended suicide as many detractors say, he died in the Bay. The coroner's report showed no water in the lungs, however, so the probably cause was a heart attack, induced by the combination of emotional strain, heat, and the cold waters of the Bay. He was 49 years old. After his death an examination of his correspondence revealed the extent of his philanthropies, and his extraordinary help to the needy of the City he loved. An estimated 50,000 people attended his funeral.

Subsequently Senator Sharon took over Ralston Hall. In the alcove of the ballroom his daughter, Flora, became the bride of Lord Fermor-Hesketh. After Sharon's death the house was sold to Mrs. Alpheus Bull who established a school, Radcliffe Hall, for young ladies. In 1900 the house was sold to Dr. A. M. Gardner, Superintendent of the Napa State Hospital, who established a private sanitarium for the mentally ill. After his death in 1913 the Sanitarium declined and closed about 1918. The Sisters of Notre Dame purchased the property in 1922 as a site for the relocation of their San Jose college. Under their care the house has been restored to much of its original elegance.

Form No. 10-300a
(Rev. 10-74)

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William Ralston Home

Verbal Boundary Description - (Continued)

This boundary includes an extensive carriage house constructed by Ralston ~~and~~ which is of historical significance.

41-000533

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION OF HISTORICAL LANDMARK

Name of Proposed Landmark Ralston Hall

Location Campus of College of Notre Dame

Belmont, California 94002

County San Mateo

Name and Address of Landowner upon Whose Property Landmark is Proposed

College of Notre Dame, Belmont, California 94002

Name and Address of Applicant Sister Catharine J. Cunningham Phone No. 593-7674

President, College of Notre Dame, Belmont, Ca. 94002 Bus. Phone No. same

Is this landmark of statewide significance as described in the Statement of Policy?

Explain (use extra sheet if necessary):

Ralston Hall was the last, and most magnificent, home of William Chapman Ralston, San Francisco financier. Located in the ruggedly beautiful Cañada del Diablo twenty miles south of San Francisco, Belmont (as the estate was called) was purchased by Mr. Ralston in 1864. He utilized a modest villa, built by Count Leonetto Cipriani in the 1850's, as the core of his great house which ultimately boasted over 80 rooms. It was a Victorian palace with extensive outbuildings, one of which--a magnificent stone carriage house--is also standing and in use today.

The house and grounds, although largely completed by the late 1860's, were constantly embellished until Ralston's death in 1875, when the estate passed to his former partner, Senator William Sharon. Subsequently the house was sold to Mrs. Alpheus Bull who used it for a girls' school, Radcliffe Hall. Following this use, it became a private "nerve" sanitarium under the aegis of E. M. and P. S. Gardner. The sanitarium closed in 1910 and the property was unoccupied until 1922 when it was purchased by the Sisters of Notre Dame for relocation of the College of Notre Dame from its original campus in San Jose. (more)

Is bibliography complete? (To enable verification of statements and claims made herein.) Yes

Is permission of property owner for registration attached? Yes

Is approval of property owner to place a plaque attached? Yes

Is proof of reasonable protection for requested landmark attached? Yes

Are photographs, prints, or drawings (two views) attached? Yes

DPR-26 (7-70)

b.

Significance (Continued)

Under the careful management of the Sisters the mansion has been restored to much of its original magnificence and furnished with antiques of Ralston's period, gifts of friends of the College. A half dozen of Mr. Ralston's own pieces remain in the house, also.

In style Ralston Hall is a modified Italian villa. Its interiors are remarkable on a national scale of values and incorporate many unusual features of both construction and decoration. In 1966 Ralston Hall was declared a registered National Historic Landmark by the Department of the Interior. Many surrounding schools include a tour of the building as part of the curriculum study of California history.

b.

41-000533

BRIEF HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION (Corresponding to one or more items under I, II, or III of the Statement of Policy.)

This wooded land in the foothills of the Coast Range had attracted the eye of Captain George Vancouver near the turn of the 19th century.[1] Later it was in the hands of S. M. Mezes, a patentee of the Pulgas Ranch. In 1854 Count Leonetto Cipriani bought the property from Mezes and established his home, a modest villa, in what had been known as the Canyon or Canada del Diablo (because of strong local winds). Ralston purchased the property in 1864, when Count Cipriani returned to Italy.[2]

William Chapman Ralston, called the "man who built San Francisco," was born January 12, 1826, in Plymouth, Ohio. After several trips to San Francisco he settled permanently there in 1854, where he embarked on a number of business ventures, particularly in the field of finance. He amassed much of his fortune in the silver mining bonanzas of the 1860's. Like many of his contemporaries he desired not only an opulent city mansion but a large country estate, which in Ralston's case became his real home. Like his contemporaries (Mills, Flood, etc.), he bought on the Peninsula, south of San Francisco, in a setting of sun and tranquility, away from the cosmopolitan but chill charms of San Francisco. After acquisition of the property, Ralston immediately began construction of an increasingly grand house, incorporating the modest villa of Cipriani. By 1867 there was accommodation for thirty guests; by 1868, for over a hundred. Ralston embarked on ambitious water and gas projects.[3] At the time of his death, the appraised value of the estate was $250,000; but the actual cost must have been considerably above this.

Always a regal host, Ralston delighted in driving his guests to Belmont at break-neck speeds, in four-horse char-a-bancs that attempted to beat rail time with strategic relay systems, for evening or week-end parties.[4] Arriving at the estate, as many as fifty or more guests were met by Mrs. Ralston and the servants. As with so many of the later Victorians, Ralston had an immense appetite for the good things of life, and wanted friends and acquaintances to share (and be impressed by) them. Unsoubtedly there was also an astute promotional side to this, to acquaint them with California's mangificence of scenery, excellent natural products, and hopefully entice them to invest in California. The "Lovely Lizzie" (Elizabeth Fry) Ralston apparently longed for occasional evenings en famille, but Ralston considered the Belmont house a kind of outpost of his great new Palace Hotel in San Francisco, in construction in the mid-1870's.
New and more luxurious features were added constantly to building and grounds at Belmont.[5] A dining room for a hundred, a great mirrored ballroom, lavishly-appointed stables and carriage house, superb lawns and planting, a fine row of trees lining the entrance drive and abating afternoon winds of the area - all flowed with freedom from the apparently endless Ralston purse. Design of the house is traditionally attributed to Henry Cleaveland of San Francisco (architect of the Palace Hotel), but many features undoubtedly reflect Ralston's own ideas and innovations.

Unfortunately, although Ralston was a brilliant promoter and a man of large capabilities in many areas, he overextended himself. His involvements in a legion of financial schemes and projects such as the Palace Hotel led to dangerous use of funds from his Bank of California. The Bank of California had to close its doors temporarily; the panic toppled all of Ralston's dreams. Swimming off what is now Aquatic Park, San Francisco, Ralston drowned on August 27, 1875.

HISTORY (Continued)

William Sharon, his partner and closest business associate, inherited all liabilities and assets. Senator Sharon always claimed that Ralston's liabilities erased assets, but Sharon emerged from the "adjustment" an even wealthier man than before, as well as the owner of the Belmont estate, the Palace Hotel, etc.

Mrs. Ralston and her two daughters moved out of the great house at Belmont, and Sharon occupied it in the late 1870's with his daughter, Flora. Her wedding to Lord Fermor-Hesketh of England was the last great social event at Belmont.[6]

Eventually the property went to Mrs. Alpheus Bull, widow of another Ralston associate. She made it into a girls' school, Radcliffe Hall. Later, it was converted into a private sanitarium ("nerve asylum") by E.M. and P.S. Gardner.[7] From 1910 on, it was in the care of a custodian and stood empty. In 1922 The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur purchased the house and surrounding properties to relocate their San Jose college, College of Notre Dame. During their ownership Ralston Hall has gradually became an amiable replica of its former self. Slowly and carefully the Sisters have attempted to recreate something of the glory of Ralston's times. Many of the house's interior fittings were unspoiled in its various transformations of use; by judicious rehabilitation and some restoration, the effect now is approximately what it might have been on a "quiet day" in Ralston's era of glory.[8]

NOTES (Historical Information)

1. See Federal Writers Project, California, pp. 371-372, and its source - Hoover and Rensch, p. 319.

2. Cipriani was a Corsican. His first name is sometimes given as Lussetti or Aconetto, although Leonetto is correct. For his many journeys to and from California, and an account of his varied accomplishments in Europe and the United States, see Ernest Falbo's translation of Cipriani's Diaries. The book's title page refers to the Belmont house, but there is nothing in the presently "chopped" text about it.

3. Ralston constructed a dam nearby, and had numerous cisterns on his estate for fire protection. (One such cistern, under the house, undoubtedly gave rise to the story of an underground lake, a la Ludwig of Bavaria's Wagnerian cave-lake, for special guests at Belmont.) The gas works, costing originally about $50,000, were as early instance of a private utility utilized by the public (of Belmont town), as well.

4. Atherton, California, p. 273, calls it "an immense, rambling French-looking structure" but its character is distinctly Italianate, not Second Empire French, on the exterior; the grand stair vaguely suggests the Paris Opera.

5. The name of Belmont is variously ascribed to Portia's villa (Merchant of Venice) or Belmont, New York. It may have also received the name of Belmonte from Cipriani.

HISTORY (Continued)

6. Some sources say that Mrs. Ralston and her children moved to "Little" Belmont - formerly, in part, a servants' residence. The families of both Ralston and Sharon are understandably vague about this period in the property's history.

7. Variously spelled Gardener, Gardiner and Gardner, the latter is correct, as verified from the Deed of Gardner Sanitarium, a corporation, dated Feb. 2, 1922, and signed by two Gardners, E.M. and P.S. Deed # 89401, San Mateo County Records.

8. Only a few pieces of furniture survived (including an elegant Hawaiian koa wood grand piano), but most of the chandeliers, a few of the door knobs, and almost all of the hardware and glass of the innumerable doors, etc., are original.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: CITE THE BOOKS, RECORDS, AND OTHER AUTHORITIES SUSTAINING THESE FACTS.

41-000533

Text used to make application is from a manuscript prepared by Dr. Joseph A. Baird, Jr. dated January, 1966: PHOTOGRAPH-DATA BOOK REPORT "Historic American Buildings Survey, CAL-1674, with additions and corrections where prime sources have given new information (i.e., correct spelling of Gardner name; Historic Note 7.).

Bibliography is that appended to Dr. Baird's manuscript.

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Cloud, Roy W. History of San Mateo County, California, 2 Vols., Chicago, S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1928; Vol. 1, pp. 164-165.

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Falbo, Ernest. (Trans. and ed.), California and Overland Diaries of Count Leonetto Cipriani from 1853 through 1871, Portland, Champoeg Press, 1962.

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Sister Barbara, College of Notre Dame. "Information on Ralston Hall" and "The White House of the West", Belmont, 1961.

(more)

Sister

Signature Sister Barbara Julie Cunning Lore

Date March, 1972

This form and all related correspondence is to be sent to the California Historical Landmarks Advisory Committee, Post Office Box 2390, Sacramento, California 95811.

An application must be considered solely on its historic or architectural merits and not for commercial gain, political benefits, or other non-historical reasons.

An individual committee member can advise and counsel an applicant, but all applications must be considered by the full committee meeting in regular session.

BIBLIOGRAPHY (Continued)

Sister Barbara and Robert Titlow. "Ralston Hall", a TV program,Transcribed on 16 mm. film, Belmont, 1965.

Stanger, Frank M. South From San Francisco, San Mateo Historical Society, 1963.

Tilton, Cecil G. William Chapman Ralston: Courageous Builder, Boston, Christopher Publishing House, 1935, pp. 179-208 (esp. 186-187)

Writers' Program, San Francisco (American Guide Series), New York, Hastings House, 1957, p. 467.

Robinson, Elmo Arnold. "Alpheus Bull - Minister, Miner, Merchant." The Pacific Historian, Fall, 1970 and Spring, 1971.

b.

41-000533

AUTHORIZATION FROM PROPERTY OWNER OF PROPOSED LANDMARK SITE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION FOR NUMBER, REGISTRATION, AND ERECTION OF A HISTORICAL LANDMARK.

Authorization is hereby granted by College of Notre Dame, owner of the property, for number, registration, and erection of a historical landmark designating Ralston Hall, on the College of Notre Dame Campus in Belmont, California, as a registered California Historical Landmark.

Signed:

Date: March 21, 1972

Sister Catharine Julie Cunningham

Sister Catharine Julie Cunningham
President, College of Notre Dame

b.

PROOF OF REASONABLE PROTECTION FOR REQUESTED LANDMARK

Ralston Hall is an integral and functioning part of the College of Notre Dame campus and is fully maintained, occupied and protected. Guides accompany groups touring the building.

Signed:

Date: March 21, 1972

Sister Catharine Julie Cunningham

Sister Catharine Julie Cunningham
President, College of Notre Dame

b.

ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

Ralston Hall was built of redwood, on a stone foundation; the entire structure was carefully engineered to avoid earthquake damage. The stone was quarried locally, and was also used in the structurally progressive carriage house and stable building, as well as in many other parts of the estate for various retaining walls, etc. The house was painted white during Ralston's era. When the Sisters of Notre Dame purchased the property in 1922, they decided to remove much of the wooden trim on the exterior and stucco the entire building for easier maintenance; the stucco is now painted a warm rose-tan.

The entrance drive leads up to a porte-cochere in front of the main entrance. (This porte-cochere is continued into a kind of Italian Villa tower in the upper stories.) Almost all of the characteristic wooden decorative detail has been removed from the exterior, and since the house was built in an additive, rambling fashion, the total effect is not distinctly indicative of any specific 19th century style. On the side facing the carriage house and stables a few details of the late Italianate, early Eastlake style still remain on porches or windows. But it is the interior of Belmont which merits most attention today.

The interior is of extraordinary ingenuity and decorative richness. The plan is centered on a foyer and stair hall, which lie directly inside the main door of the porte-cochere.[1] (Placed on a high basement, the first or main level is reached by a considerable flight of stairs from the driveway at front; in the rear, the level of the land places rooms at that side more directly on "ground level".) The principal features of the first floor are a long double-sun-parlor to the left of the entrance, which was modeled on the promenade deck of a Mississippi River boat, with a long narrow dining room and reception rooms to the left of the stair hall and various parlors, sun-parlors, etc., and a massive ballroom to the right of the foyer and stair hall. All of the floors (with the exception of one parlor, floored in cedar) are of walnut, maple and mahogany, and are remarkably well preserved in all their patterned vibration of "color".

Henry Cleaveland may have seen photographs of the Paris Opera House (in construction at the same time as Belmont); but the stair hall at Ralston's estate is said to have owed its form to Mrs. Ralston - notably the opera box mezzanine-balcony which encircles the top of the stairs at the second floor. Throughout, also, there are reminiscences of the spacious movement of interiors on the great stern-wheel river boats. Much of the flow of space, made possible at Belmont by a truly prodigal use of glass doors and curtain walls, not to mention the equally extensive use of mirror, recalls the unimpeded interiors of those floating palaces which marked a new high in American structural brilliance and a new low in decorative confusion.

All of the decorative door and window glass is said to have been imported from Italy; and the chandeliers are traditionally ascribed to Central European craftsmen (of what is now Czechoslovakia). Whatever the specific source, the glass is prodigiously rich and, even more surprisingly, perfectly preserved with the exception of one great pier glass - cracked irregularly. The lofty

Architectural Information (Continued)

wooden doors with their large cut and etched glass panels open from room to room; between Ralston's reception room and the dining room there is a complete wall of glass which slides up into a recess between the walls of two rooms on the second floor. It was Ralston's pleasure to receive his guests (Mrs. Ralston received at the top of the main stair hall, on the guests' arrival, and assigned them to their rooms) before dinner and then dramatically cause this curtain wall to be elevated like some florious theater set to reveal the sumptuously laid table and serried servants, ready to serve.[2]

Between the dining room and the stair hall, all of the "windows" could be raised to open the dining hall out into this intermediate space before the dancing began in the mirrored ballroom on the far side of the stair hall. (There is only one major floor sill on the first floor - directly to the right of the entrance; it was obviously Ralston's intention to make his house completely "open", in both the social and structural sense of that word.)

No verbal description can do justice to the glass doors, particularly to the curved doors which divide Ralston's reception room from the so-called "half-moon" room - that leads out to the side entrance and the carriage house. These curved doors (sometimes called "orange peel" doors, popularly) were again a suggestion from the river boats; they were made in a special steam room on the front lawn at Belmont, and their fitting is as precise today as when they were first installed. All of the metal parts of the principal reception rooms at Belmont were silverplated, including hinges for regular doors and those that open two ways (dated as patented in 1867).

In the ballroom there are fourteen mirrors (nine large pier glasses, and five wall mirrors in the musicians' alcove) to carry on the glassy openness of effect. Three great chandeliers, originally made for gas but now converted to electricity, illuminated the ballroom.[3] On this side of the house, toward the front, are additional parlors and sun-parlors (possibly a breakfast room). The elaborate pargetted ceilings are untouched by time; and one parlor still has its attractive hand-painted frescoes. Belmont's main stair rises to a second floor mezzanine-balcony which overlooks the stairs and hall below; the balcony is designed to resemble a set of opera boxes with silver plated railings abd was used for discerning study of the guests. Paired Ionic columns support the ingenious sky-light and "perforated" ceiling. (Both the stair hall, dining room and other main gathering areas, where temperatures might rise, are ventilated with pierced wood panels inserted strategically into the ceiling.)

Originally there were some eighty-two rooms at Belmont. The necessities of new uses have caused some conversion and a constant change of interior furnishings.[4] Linoleum covers the former areas of carpeting on the upper floors; and fire doors have reduced the open effect of the lofty staircases rising three or four floors, interiorly, to service bedrooms and other upper spaces. Ralston had intended an art gallery for the area above the ballroom; two curving stairs lead up behind the ballroom itself. The exigencies of time and his premature death kept this from fruition. At the upper levels in the rear, balustraded gangplanks used to lead (beneath variegated awning coverings) to attractive garden terraces on the hillside behind the house. For guests of the period, it must have seemed like some cross between a Saratoga hotel and Xanadu, for Ralston had created effects which were extraordinarily dramatic and socially "self-enhancing". As a symbol of a time of ardent egotism, nothing

Architectural Information (Continued)

could more persuasively render homage to the artificial image of nouveau-riche American society than the coruscating fligker of light and flow of space, with endless reduplication of that image in mirrors, unique to Belmont in all the great California homes of the silver age.

The carriage house and stable is the most impressive building on the estate today, beyond the house proper. Its unusually open interior was made possible by a suspended ceiling of edge-laid oak, held up by cables; the shell of the building was largely of fine local stone, laid random for the walls and more carefully cut and fitted for major openings. This was reputed to have cost $80,000, with its inlaid mahogany stables (enriched with mother of pearl, solid silver pegs and monogrammed horse trappings of silver.)

NOTES (Architectural Information)

1. The arched entrance is somewhat related to the entrance of the Palace Hotel; and the stair hall with its curious opera-like balconies is obviously a pre-figuration of the tiered splendors of the Palace Courtyard.

2. Two minor but interesting features of the dining room are a large wall safe for the silver and an arrestingly modern-looking clock on the great mirror of the main side-board (here built-in on the long side of the room opposite the glass curtain wall). The kitchens have been completely changed; but storage areas and a stair to the cellar (and old wine cellar) remain between dining room and present kitchen area.

3. Their survival is one of the minor miracles of Ralston Hall. A curved alcove seat, intended for the far end of the ballroom, was discovered in storage in the carriage house and is now again in its original location. There are handsome wood consoles beneath the pier glasses; and the patterned dance floor remains eloquent today. (It is similar to the floor in the main reception and ballroom of the Crocker Art Gallery in Sacramento.) Square nails in the hand-laid floors were capped with wood pegs. Motifs on the cut and etched doors are generally foliate or fruit, with occasional mythical subjects.

4. By as judicious editing of gifts as possible, the Sisters of Notre Dame have furnished the main floor in a high proportion of Victorian pieces appropriate to the house's period. Most of the coverings are modern, as is true on the second floor mezzanine-balcony, also. A period bedroom is now being planned.

SITE

Ralston Hall occupies an elevated site at the end of a long drive lined with cedars, pines and eucalypti - and backs up against the side of a hill. Much of the former Ralston property is now covered with the College of Notre Dame's academic buildings, but the area around the former home is handsomely maintained with old and new plantings to enhance the building.

Prepared by Joseph A. Baird, Jr., Ph.D.
University of California

CAL-1674
January 1966

State of California - The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

IDENTIFICATION AND LOCATION

1. Historic name: Belmont

*2. Common or current name: College of Notre Dame

Ser. No. ____ - ____ - ____
National Register status ____
Local designation ____

*3. Number & street: 1500 Ralston Avenue Cross-corridor ____
City: Belmont Vicinity only ____ Zip ____ County ____

4. UTM zone 10 A 563200/4152300 B 563120/4152250 C 562970/4152370 D 563020/4152420

5. Quad map No. 4002 Parcel No. 044-360-070 Other ____

DESCRIPTION

6. Property category: Building If district, number of documented resources: 2

*7. Briefly describe the present physical appearance of the property, including condition, boundaries, related features, surroundings, and (if appropriate) architectural style.

Stuccoed wood frame, large rambling structure, three-and-a-half stories, on a stone foundation, hipped roof with cross gables and hipped dormers, four story tower, one story enclosed porches, porte-cochere; rich interior, stairhall has opera boxes at mezzanine level, skylight above, generous use of etched glass and mirrors. Built 1853, heavily remodeled and enlarged 1864 by John P. Gaynor, for William Chapman Ralston, a San Francisco financier. Now serves as College of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. Of the extensive outbuildings around Ralston Hall in the 1860's, only the carriage house remains. Built about 1874, its walls are about four feet thick, built of native stone quarried in the area. A unique feature is the suspended ceiling of one-by-ten planks on edge, hung by cables, to permit an unobstructed area for carriages to maneuver. These features are sited in a park-like setting with well-maintained grounds surrounded by mature groves of trees of varying types.



8. Planning agency: City Planning Department

9. Owner & address:
College of Notre Dame
1500 Ralston Avenue
Belmont, CA 94002

10. Type of ownership: Private

11. Present use: Noncommercial

12. Zoning: PD/A

13. Threats: Private Development

94296-0001

* Complete these items for historic preservation compliance projects under Section 106 (36 CFR 800). All items must be completed for historical resources survey information.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

*14. Construction date(s) 1864-1875F Original location Same Date moved

15. Alterations & date Numerous over time

16. Architect John P. Gaynor Builder

17. Historic attributes (with number from list) 06 Building

SIGNIFICANCE AND EVALUATION

18. Context for evaluation: Theme Era of Large Estates Area Belmont
Period 1850-1875 Property type Building Context formally developed? Yes

*19. Briefly discuss the property's importance within the context. Use historical and architectural analysis as appropriate. Compare with similar properties.

Ralston Hall is one of the grandiose creations of a grandiose personality - William Chapman Ralston. Utilizing a modest villa, property of Colonel Cipriani in the 1850's and early 1860's, Ralston created a veritable Victorian palace here after buying the property in 1865. Largely built in the late 1860's, the house and grounds were constantly embellished until Ralston's mysterious death in 1875. Passing to his former partner, Senator William Sharon, house was later sold to Mrs. Alpheus Bull who made it into a girls' school. It then became private sanitarium run by Dr. Gardner. In 1922, the sisters of Notre Dame purchased the property for the college of Notre Dame, one of the first colleges in the state to grant the baccalaureate degree. They began conversion of the house to their uses. Carefully, they ha gradually rehabilitated the mansion. Ralston Hall is stylistically a modified Italian villa. Like its creator, the house reflected a mercurial variety and additive opulence. Its interic are remarkable on a national scale of values, and incorporate many unusual features of both construction and decoration. Ralston Hall is a National Historic Landmark, a State Historic Landmark, and is listed in the National Register and the Historic American Building Survey.

20. Sources
National Register Nomination Form, September 8, 1977
HABS Registration Form, January 1966

21. Applicable National Register criteria 1S 1D

22. Other recognition NHL/SHL/HABS
State Landmark No. (if applicable) 856

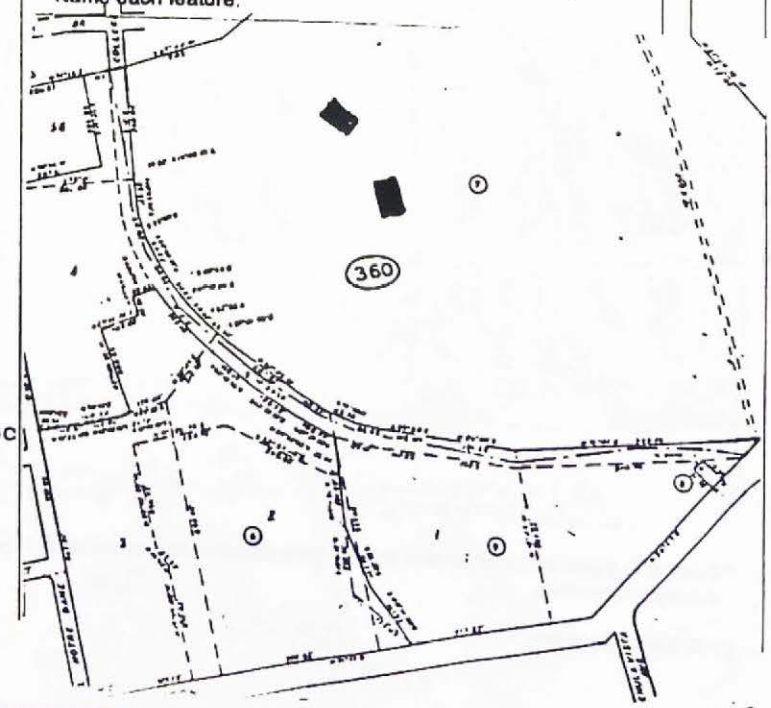
23. Evaluator Kent L. Seavey
Date of evaluation 1/9/91

24. Survey type C

25. Survey name Belmont Historic Resources Inventory

*26. Year form prepared 1991
By (name) Kent L. Seavey
Organization San Mateo County Historical Assoc
Address 1700 West Hillsdale Boulevard
City & Zip San Mateo, CA 94402
Phone (415) 574-6441

* Sketch map. Show location and boundaries of property in relation to nearby streets, railways, natural landmarks, etc. Name each feature.



State of California – The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

IDENTIFICATION AND LOCATION

1. Historic name: Immaculate Heart of Mary Church

*2. Common or current name:

Ser. No. ____ - ____ - ____
National Register status:
Local designation:

*3. Number & street: 1500 Ralston Avenue — Cross-corridor:
City: Belmont — Vicinity only: — Zip: 94002 — County: SMA

4. UTM zone: 10 A: 563460/4152240 B: C: D:

5. Quad map No.: 4002 — Parcel No.: 044-360-070 — Other:

DESCRIPTION

6. Property category: Building — If district, number of documented resources:

*7. Briefly describe the present physical appearance of the property, including condition, boundaries, related features, surroundings, and (if appropriate) architectural style.

A one story parish church of wood frame construction basically rectangular in plan resting on a concrete foundation. The exterior wall cladding is stucco scored to suggest coursed stone. The side walls project slightly about one bay deep at the rear (west) of the building. The chapel roof is gabled and medium pitch. It is covered with red Spanish tile. A rectangular campanile with a single pierced arch projects from the south (side) elevation. It is capped with a tiled gable roof similar to that of the main building but perpendicular to it. The church is Spanish eclectic in style. Its decorative vocabulary appears to draw from Venetian models of the Romanesque mode. The east (façade) elevation is characterized by a lower and a slightly projecting gabled portico with a tiled roof. Entry is through a compound arch springing from slender stone or concrete columns with Byzantine capitals. The arches are enriched with flowers and animal figures in stucco relief. The eave moldings of the portico carry a similar motif while the eave moldings of the main church roof have geometric patterns. The entry is flanked by two, tall fixed wood framed stained glass windows. Fenestration is otherwise symmetrical with large arched windows along the side walls. The church is sited at the base of a hill in a setting of mature trees and shrubs.



A 94296-0001

8. Planning agency: City Planning Department

9. Owner & address:
College of Notre Dame
1500 Ralston Avenue
Belmont, CA 94002

10. Type of ownership: Private

11. Present use: Noncommercial

12. Zoning: PD/A

13. Threats: Private Development

* Complete these items for historic preservation compliance projects under Section 106 (36 CFR 800). All items must be completed for historical resources survey information.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

*14. Construction date(s) 1930F Original location Same Date moved

15. Alterations & date

16. Architect HENRY A. MINTON Builder H. MACDONALD

17. Historic attributes (with number from list) 16 Church

SIGNIFICANCE AND EVALUATION

18. Context for evaluation: Theme Organized Religion Area Belmont
Period 1928-1930 Property type Church Context formally developed? Yes

*19. Briefly discuss the property's importance within the context. Use historical and architectural analysis as appropriate. Compare with similar properties.

Immaculate Heart of Mary was the first Catholic parish church to be constructed in Belmont. It is an excellent example of a ecclesiastical architecture in the Spanish Eclectic architectural tyle. The church was constructed at the entrance to the College of Holy Names along Ralston Avenue in 1930 for a cost of $10,000. In 1928, Saint Charles Parish was formed in San Carlos and included Belmont. On September 19, 1947, Belmont was declared a separate parish. Immaculate Heart of Mary continued as the Parish church until 1956 when it transferred to Sain Michael's while a new church was constructed on Alameda de las Pulgas. This complex was completed in 1958. Of particular interest in the design of the small chapel is its incorporation of a rectangular campanile which follows the building traditions of the Californ Missions, rather than those of southern Europe on which the other decorative features of the church rely. The combining of elements from a variety of historical sources in this instance has produced a particularly pleasing ensemble with high artistic merit. The church was declare a Belmont City Landmark in 1974.

20. Sources

Kenny, John J., History of the Parish of Immaculate Heart of Mary, Belmont, CA, unpublished manuscript, 1976, p.4

21. Applicable National Register criteria 5S1

22. Other recognition City Landmark
State Landmark No. (if applicable)

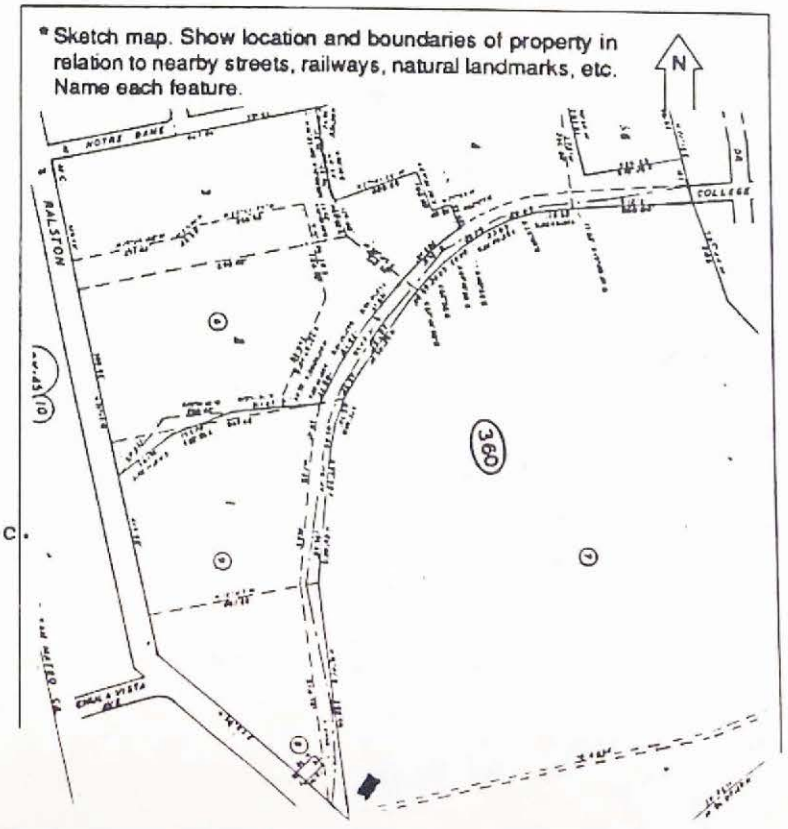
23. Evaluator Kent L. Seavey
Date of evaluation 1/6/91

24. Survey type C

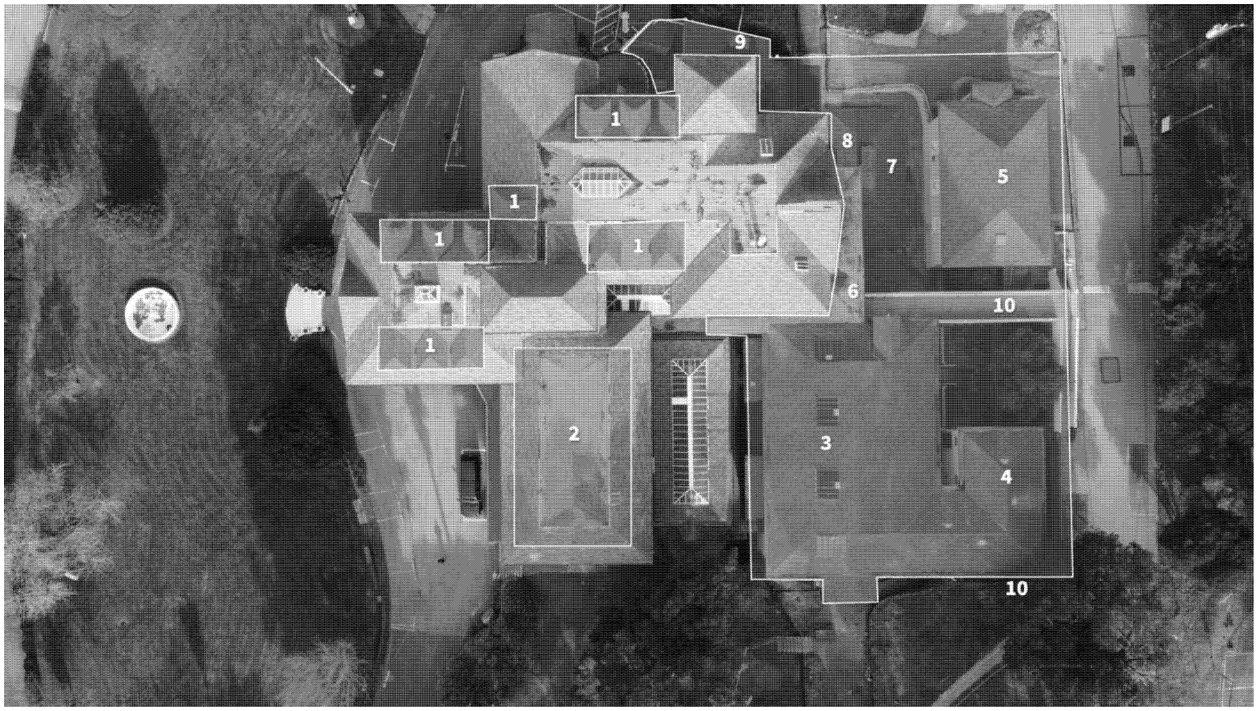
25. Survey name Belmont Historic Resource Inventory

*26. Year form prepared 1991
By (name) Kent L. Seavey
Organization San Mateo County Historical Assoc.
Address 1700 West Hillsdale Boulevard
City & Zip San Mateo, CA 94402
Phone (415) 574-6441

* Sketch map. Show location and boundaries of property in relation to nearby streets, railways, natural landmarks, etc. Name each feature.

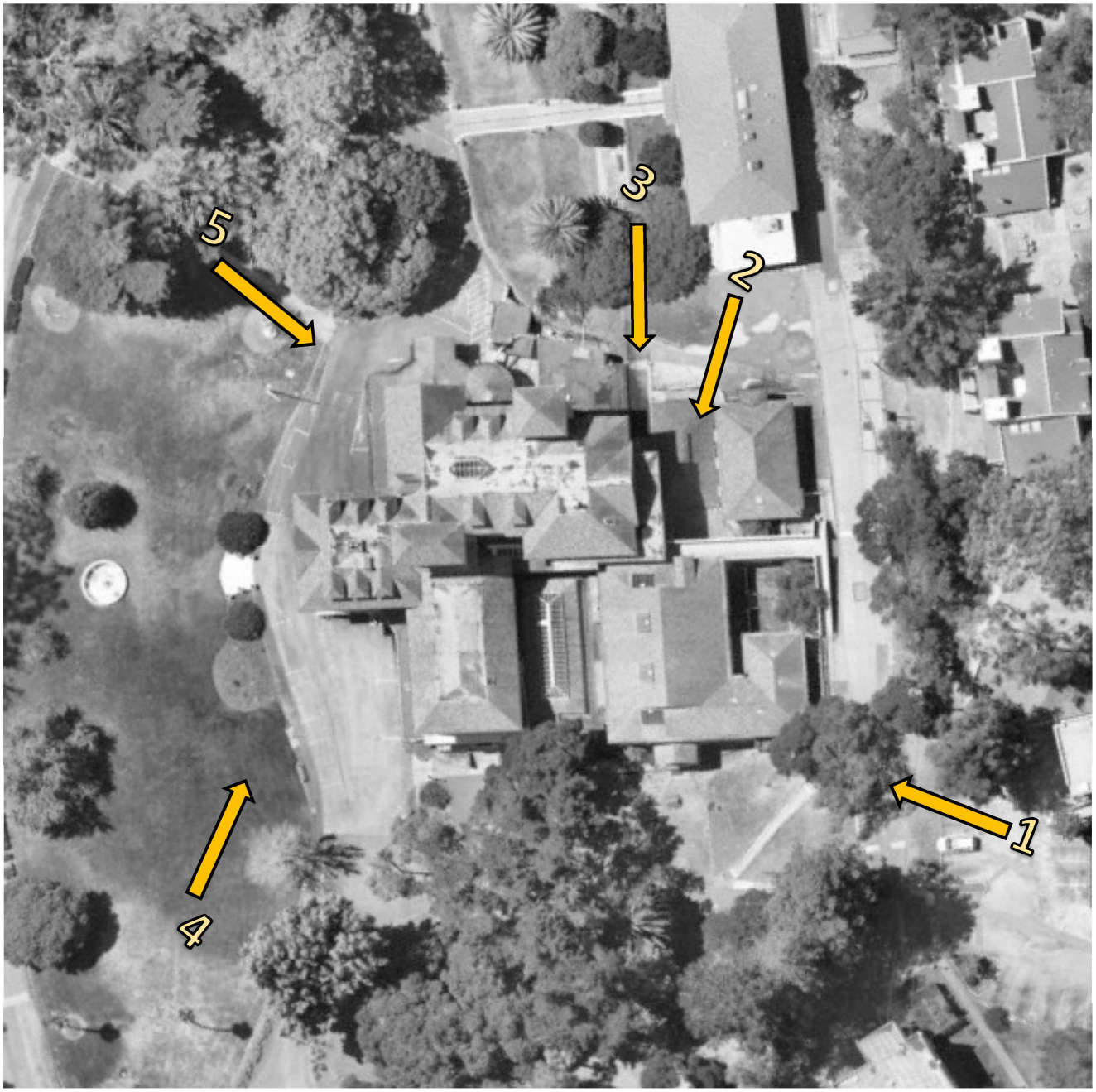


Appendix B. Exhibit of Non-Contributing Additions and Alterations (Ralston Hall and Carriage House)



Vertical view

1. Twelve roof dormers
2. Addition of 3rd floor to Cipriani Wing
3. Grant Room addition (Loss of Integrity)
4. Grant Room Annex
5. Music Addition
6. Rear enclosed porches
7. Laundry
8. Kitchen entry porch
9. Mechanical additions
10. Pedestrian bridges



Key to Additional Photographs Below



1. Oblique aerial view from rear: Grant Room addition, Grant Room Annex, Music Addition, enclosed porches, laundry, 3rd floor addition, dormers, pedestrian bridges.



2. Rear: Enclosed porches, kitchen entry porch, laundry, Grant Room Annex.



3. Corner: Enclosed porches, kitchen entry porch, mechanical additions.



4. Front corner: Dormers, 3rd floor addition, Grant Room addition



5. Front corner: Roof dormers, mechanical additions

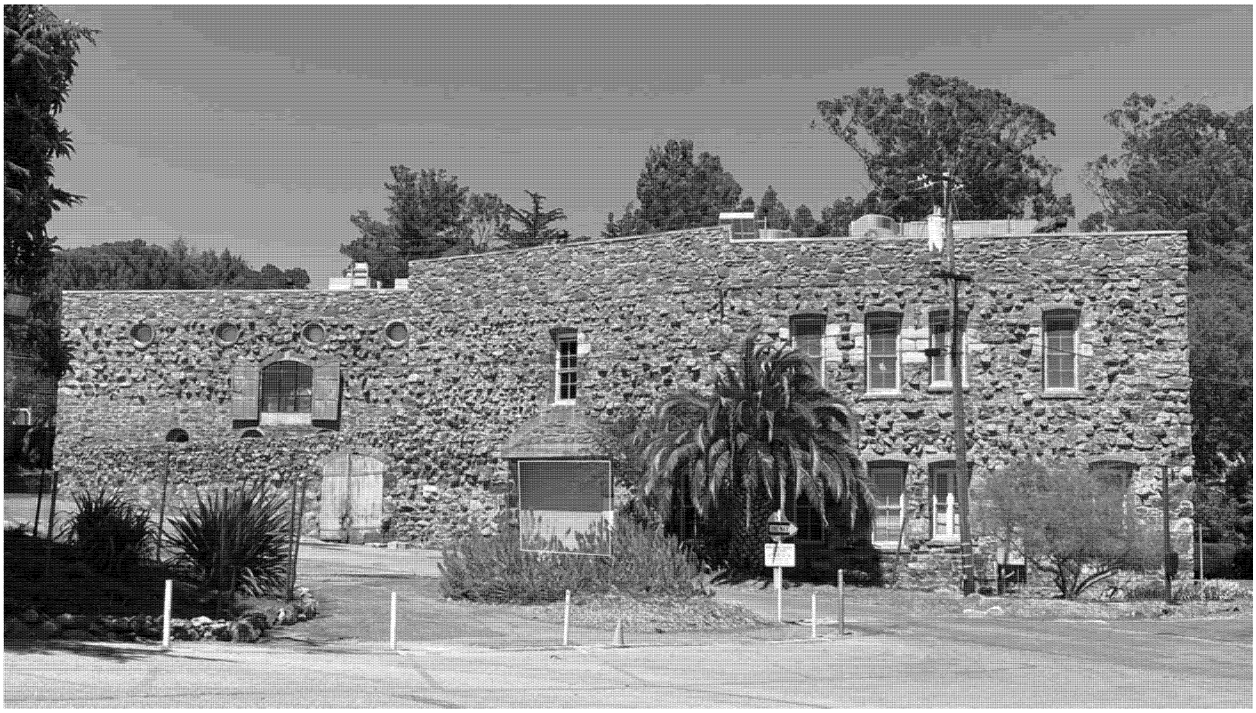
The Carriage House has also had a number of alterations. The building has even less historical documentation but review of plans from the seismic repair and visual inspection of the building suggests that some elements date after 1875 and are non-contributing. These are primarily modern doors inserted into historic openings.



Doors and ADA ramp are non-contributing. Arched door openings are contributing.



Elevation, facing Ralston Hall. Modern door, inserted into historic opening.



Elevation facing Notre Dame Elementary School. Metal rollup door inserted into historic opening.

Appendix C. Chronology of Landscape Features at Ralston Hall

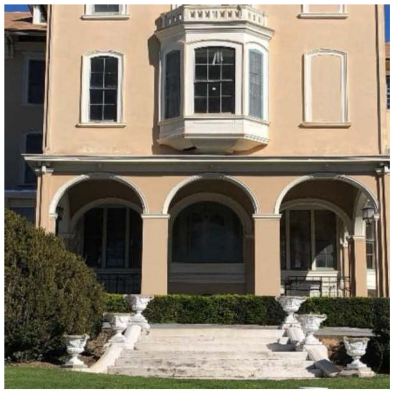
Chronology of Landscape Features

Cipriani Era (1853-1864)



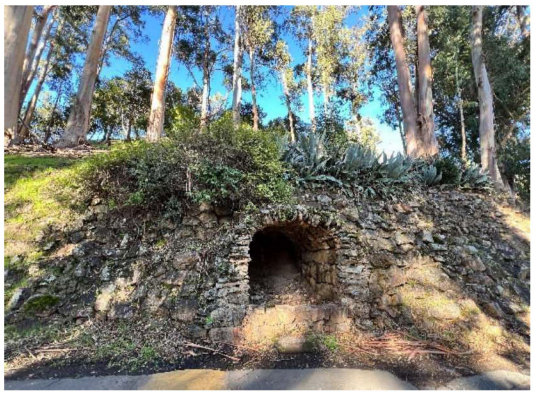
Millstones, near Theater parking lot.

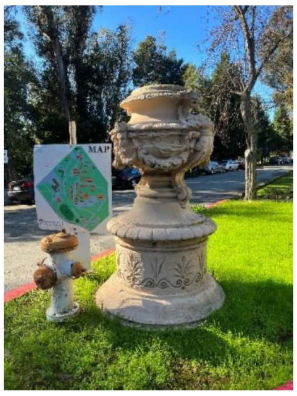
Ralston Era (1864-1875)





Steps are Ralston-era, Urns are Sharon-era (*left*). Raised planting bed using rock quarried on estate (*right*).

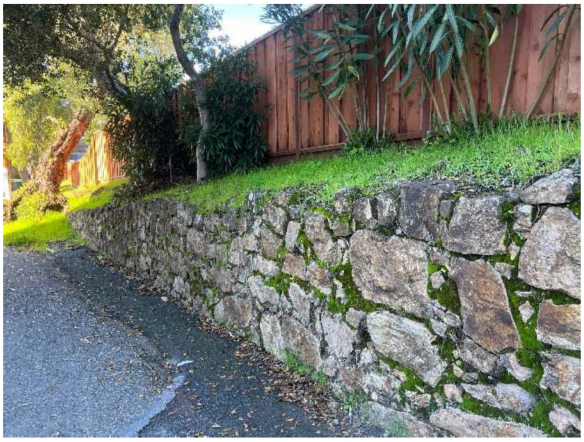




Water trough and rock wall (*left*) along driveway. Urn moved from front stairs (*right*).



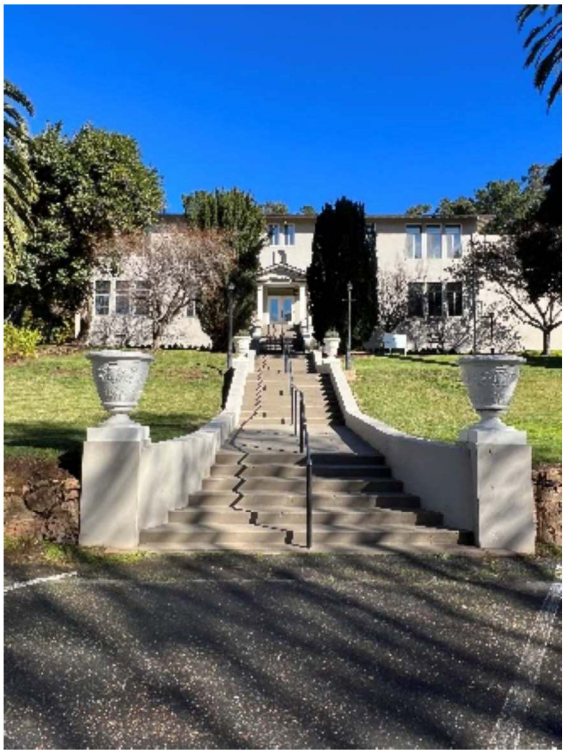

Currently stored in the museum (*left*). Rock wall terraces on east side of mansion (*right*).

Rock wall terrace on west side of mansion (*left*) and alongside Carriage House (*right*).




Grotto is Ralston but religious statuary is NDNU (*left*). Wall and remnant of estate fence near grotto (*right*).



Stairs to Cuvilly Hall are Ralston-era, but the railings, concrete walls and urns are NDNU-era.

Sharon Era (1875-1895)



Sharon-era urns replaced Ralston urns (*left*). Urns, dated 1882, replaced Ralston-era urns (*right*).

College of Notre Dame de Namur Era (1922-2024)



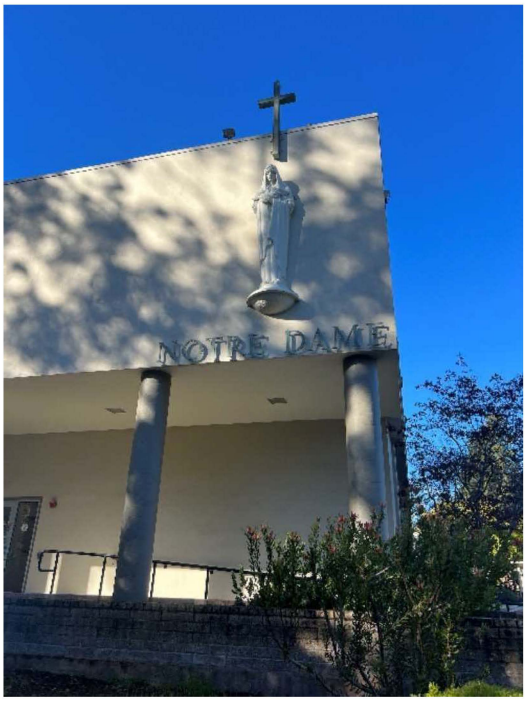
Fountain, gift of Gump Family in 1924 (*left*). Memorial cross (*right*).



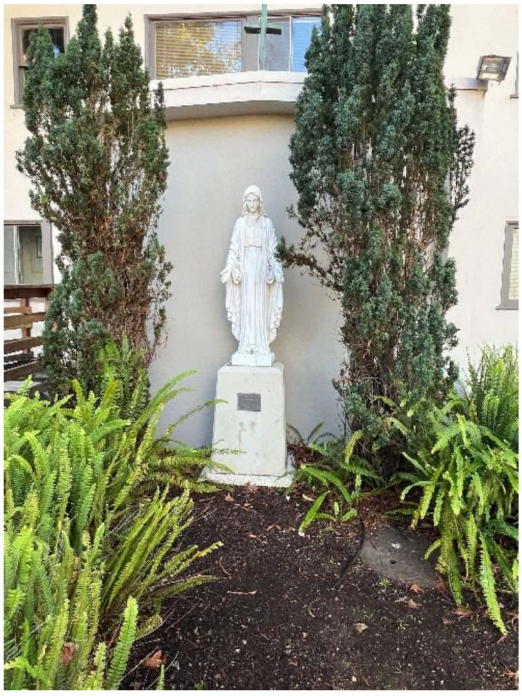
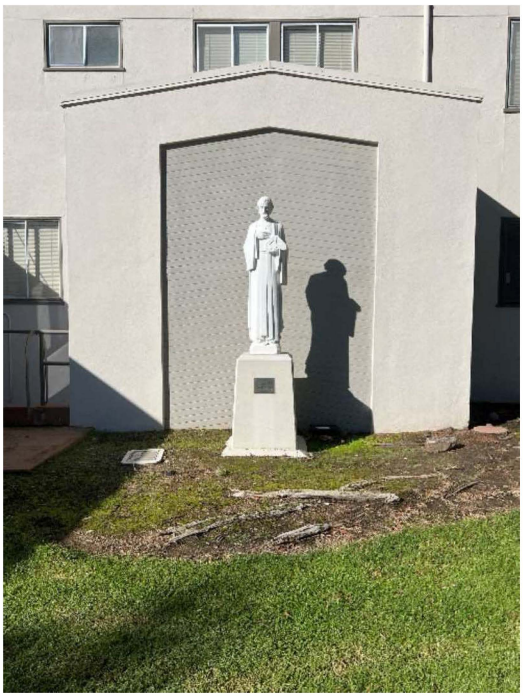
Statue on Campinile (*left*). Urns, railings and concrete walls are NDNU-era but the steps are Ralston-era (*right*).



Grotto is Ralston-era (*left*) but the statuary is NDNU-era (*right*).

Statue of Mary in grotto (*left*). Statue of Mary and cross on St. Mary's Hall (*right*).

Statue outside St. Julie Billiart Hall (*left*) and St. Joseph's Hall (*right*).



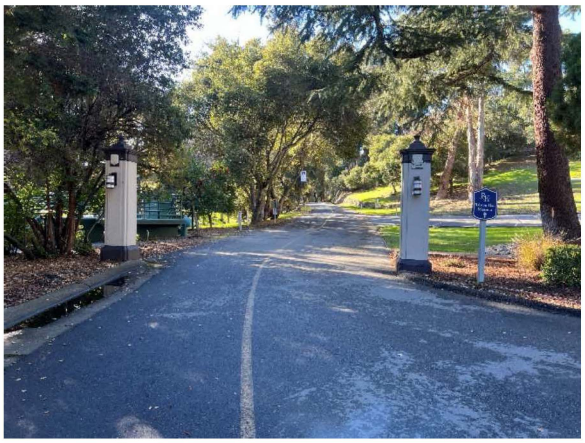
Three sculptures outside the Carriage House (*left*) and detail of one sculpture (*right*).



Bufano statue, gift of the artist, of St. Francis of Assissi (*left*) in terraced garden east of the mansion, and statue outside the Memorial Chapel (*right*).




Sculptures near the primary entrance (*left*) and along road leading up to Gavin Hall (*right*).



Columns on Laxague Drive.

Unknown Era




Wellhead and mechanical equipment (*left*) and gateposts near the Memorial Cross (*right*).



Marble bench located on front lawn.

Appendix D. Assessment of Potential Impacts

Assessment of Potential Impacts of the Stanford Belmont Campus Project on Historical Resources

This document addresses impacts to above-ground historical structures and properties. This document does not address potential impacts to archaeological resources, including archaeological resources that are potentially historical resources under CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5.

Background

Stanford University submitted a Conceptual Development Plan (CDP) and Development Agreement application for the Stanford Belmont Campus in October 2022. The CDP envisions potential demolition and replacement over time of most of the buildings currently located on the campus, while the CDP also provides for three buildings to be preserved, without relocation: Taube Center, Ralston Hall, and the Carriage House. Table 1.4 from the CDP describes the proposed disposition of the existing facilities and is summarized below:

Building	**Preservation**
Taube Center	Yes
Gleason Gymnasium	No
Notre Dame de Namur Memorial Chapel	No
Gellert Library	No
St. Joseph's Hall	No
Campus Center	No
St. Mary's Hall	No
St. Julie Billiart Hall	No
Wilkie, Kane, Carroll Apartments	No
The Oaks	No
New Hall	No
Toso (Compeigne, Courtrai, Namur)	No
Tabard Inn	No
Gavin Hall	No
Bookstore	No
Cuvilly Hall	No
Madison Hall (Carriage House)	Yes
Ralston Hall	Yes
Notre Dame Theatre	No

Specific footprints, architectural styles and materials, and designs for new or renovated buildings are not specified in the proposed CDP. However, the CDP depicts areas proposed for redevelopment at a conceptual level and specifies height limits for each development area.

The proposed CDP also contemplates the potential installation on the Project site of new roadway and utility infrastructure to facilitate circulation, emergency vehicle access, stormwater capture and treatment, water supply, utility connections, and other Project objectives. Conceptual locations for certain infrastructure improvements, some of which are near the three buildings that would be preserved, are depicted on Project application site plans. Among other new roadway and utility infrastructure that may be installed, the proposed CDP contemplates rerouting Laxague Drive behind the Taube Center to intersect the primary campus entry road at a modified location. This roadway modification may be located, in part, within existing paved areas behind the Taube Center.

Regulatory Framework

California Environmental Quality Act

Consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, a significant impact to an historical resource would occur if a project would cause a "substantial adverse change" in the significance of an "historical resource" as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a) defines an "historical resource" as a resource that meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. Resources listed in, or determined to be eligible by the State Historical Resources Commission for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources;

2. Resources included in a local register of historical resources as defined in section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code or identified in an historical resources survey meeting the requirements of section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code, shall be presumed to be historically or culturally significant. Public agencies must treat any such resource as significant unless the preponderance of the evidence demonstrates that the resource is not historically or culturally significant; or

3. Any resource that a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military, or cultural annals of California may be considered to be an historical resource, provided the lead agency's determination is supported by substantial evidence in light of the whole record. Generally, a resource shall be considered by the lead agency to be "historically significant" if the resource meets the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources, including the following:

    a. Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage;

    b. Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;

    c. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important create individual, or possesses high artistic values; or

d. (For archaeological resources) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Step 1

The first step in any CEQA analysis is to determine whether resources are located on or near a Project site that meet criteria 1 or 2, above. The lead agency may then determine whether, based on its discretion, any other resources on or near the Project site are significant historical resources. Such a determination by the lead agency (whether positive or negative) will be upheld in a judicial proceeding as long as there is evidentiary support for it, even in the face of other evidence to the contrary.

Step 2

Next, once a resource has been identified as a significant historical resource, the lead agency then must determine whether the impacts of the Project would "cause a substantial adverse change in the significance" of the resource (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)).

A substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource means "physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(1)).

Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(2), the significance of an historical resource is considered "materially impaired" when a project demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resource that:

- Convey its historical significance and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for inclusion in, the California Register of Historical Resources;
- Account for its inclusion in a local register of historical resources pursuant to section 5021.1(k) of the Public Resources Code or its identification in an historical resources survey meeting the requirements of section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code; or
- Convey its historical significance and that justify its eligibility for inclusion in the California Register as determined by a lead agency for purposes of CEQA.

Step 3

If the lead agency identifies one or more significant impacts to a significant historical resource, the lead agency must identify and impose feasible measures to mitigate or avoid any significant adverse changes in the significance of an historical resource (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(4)). Generally, a project that follows the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* or the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* (together, the "Secretary of the Interior's Standards") shall be considered mitigated to a level of a less-than-significant impact on the historical resource (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b)(3)).

Threshold of Significance

Based on the regulatory framework outlined above, a significant impact to a significant historic resource would occur if the project would cause a "substantial adverse change" in the significance of an "historical resource", defined to mean: "physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired."

Impact Evaluation

Development of the Project could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource, defined to mean: "physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired." (Potentially Significant Impact)

Step 1: Identification of Significant Historical Resources

Ralston Hall is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources. The associated Carriage House is included in the listing of Ralston Hall. Therefore, those structures are significant historical resources.

The Taube Center is identified as a historical resource in the City of Belmont's 1991 historical resources survey. The Taube Center is presumed to be a significant historical resource.

No other resources on or near the Project site are listed or determined to be eligible for listing by the State Historical Resources Commission; nor are any other resources identified on the City's survey as significant historical resources.

For purposes of this CEQA analysis, Stanford's historic resources experts prepared, and the City of Belmont's historic resources experts peer reviewed, a Campus Historical Resources Survey. Based on the criteria used to determine eligibility for listing on the California Register of Historical Places, the Campus Historical Resources Survey identifies the three significant historical resources located on the Project site and finds the remainder of the buildings on the site are not significant historical resources, as follows:

Building	**Historical Resource**
Taube Center	**Yes**
Gleason Gymnasium	No
Notre Dame de Namur Memorial Chapel	No
Gellert Library	No
St. Joseph's Hall	No
Campus Center	No
St. Mary's Hall	No
St. Julie Billiart Hall	No
Wilkie, Kane, Carroll Apartments	No

Building	**Historical Resource**
The Oaks	No
New Hall	No
Toso (Compeigne, Courtrai, Namur)	No
Tabard Inn	No
Gavin Hall	No
Bookstore	No
Cuvilly Hall	No
Madison Hall (Carriage House)	**Yes**
Ralston Hall	**Yes**
Notre Dame Theatre	No

As described in the Campus Historical Resources Survey, the features that convey each of the three significant historic resource's significance and justify its inclusion in the California Register of Historical Places (character-defining features) are as follows:

- Ralston Hall:
  - Exterior features: Height and massing of the main building, center gable on the front façade, tall narrow windows, hipped roofs, cornices, square towers or cupolas, flanking promenades (sun porches), porte-cochere, light-colored exterior surface.
  - Interior features in public spaces: Parquet floors, remaining silver-plated hardware, laurel staircase and fireplaces, marble fireplace, painted ceiling in the Cipriani room, sliding frosted glass panels, orange peel doors, doors with etched glass that fold back against the walls, chandeliers, fresh air vents, mirrors, and skylights.
  - Features and characteristics of its site and setting: rustic stone retaining walls, ornamental garden features, groves of trees to sides and rear, open space in front of Ralston Hall and between Ralston Hall and Carriage House.
  - Carriage House: stone walls, punched round windows, and surviving original metal doors and shutters; uninterrupted relationship to Ralston Hall.
- Taube Center: exterior stucco walls, tile roof, elaborated chimney, main door framed by pilasters, and decorative exterior wrought iron, vents, and tilework. Historic character of the site and setting includes landscaping at the front of the building that separates Taube Center from adjacent roadways, trees on either side of the building entrance, and forested hillside behind the building as a backdrop.

Step 2: Determination whether the Project would significantly affect a historic resource

The Project has the potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of each of the three historical resources on the Project site as follows:

1. Demolition or alteration of each of the three significant historical resources could materially impair the significance of the resource if such demolition or alteration would adversely affect the resource's character-defining features ("direct effects").

2. New construction of structures within the immediate surroundings of each of the three significant historical resources could adversely affect the characteristics of the resource that cause it to be eligible for listing ("setting effects").

Direct effects:

In its CDP application, Stanford has committed to preserve each of the three significant historical resources on the Project site. The Project would not result in demolition or relocation of these resources. Stanford could, however, alter each of the three significant historical resources. Alterations would have the potential to materially impair the significance of the resource such that a significant adverse effect would occur.

Demolition or alterations to non-contributing additions to or non-character-defining features of the significant historical resources would not result in a significant adverse effect to the historical resources if such alterations are designed to be compatible with the character-defining features of the significant historical resources. To take one example, non-character-defining additions to Ralston Hall and the Carriage House may be removed if the resulting appearance is consistent with the historic appearance of the building, or lacking detailed evidence for reconstruction, the resulting design is compatible with the historic building's design and materials. While the front and sides of Ralston Hall retain integrity to its period of significance (1864-1875), removal of later additions (particularly to the rear of the building) would be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines. Very little documentation has been discovered for the original appearance of the back of Ralston Hall – it was also a service area during the period of significance – therefore removal of non-contributing additions here would likely require replacement with newly designed components compatible with the size, scale, color and materials of the original house.

The mitigation measures presented below will ensure that alterations to the three significant historical resources on the Project site do not result in significant adverse effects to the resources.

Setting effects:

The Ralston Hall National Historic Landmark boundary encompasses Ralston Hall, the Carriage House, and their immediate surroundings. This boundary, which is shown in Figure 1, below, as well as a 50-foot buffer area, defines the immediate surroundings for these resources. Taube Center does not have a defined boundary, and its immediate surroundings for purposes of CEQA analyses are adjacent parking lots and a modest landscape area in front of the building, as well as a 50-foot buffer area, as shown in Figure 2, below.

Under Stanford's CDP application, Stanford may construct infrastructure improvements within the immediate surroundings of the three historical resources, including new and modified landscaping, roadway and utility infrastructure to facilitate circulation, emergency vehicle access, stormwater capture and treatment, water supply, and utility connections. Generally, these types of infrastructure improvements are unlikely to alter the resources' settings such that a significant adverse impact would occur. Similar types of infrastructure improvements have been made within the immediate surroundings of these significant historical resources over time, yet the resources have retained their eligibility for listing on the California Register of Historical Places or identification as historic resources in the City's survey.

Nevertheless, it is possible that a large scale or visually prominent infrastructure improvement within the immediate surroundings of each of the three significant historic resources could alter the setting of the resource such that it would materially affect the features of the resource that convey its significance. The mitigation measures presented below will ensure that such improvements do not result in significant adverse effects to the resources.

Under the proposed CDP, Stanford may also construct new buildings within the immediate surroundings of each of the three significant historical resources. The proposed CDP's 45-foot height limit for the Legacy district would ensure that new buildings within the immediate surroundings of Ralston Hall and the Carriage House would be compatible in scale and massing with the historic resources.

While the proposed CDP's 45-foot height limit would reduce the likelihood of significant effects, it remains possible that new buildings in the immediate surroundings of the three significant buildings could alter the setting of the resource such that it would materially affect the features of the resource that convey its significance. The mitigation measures presented below will ensure that such new buildings do not result in significant adverse effects to the resources.

New buildings and building replacements within other development areas on the Project site, outside the immediate surroundings of the three significant historic resources, would not materially impair the features of the three significant historical resources that convey their historical significance and that justify their eligibility for inclusion in the California Register. First, the historic character of the site and setting for each building would be maintained, consistent with the mitigation measures described below. The campus has developed over time with many modern buildings appearing in the vicinity of these resources without material adverse effects on their historic significance, due to the preservation of the buildings themselves and the features of their settings described in the Campus Historic Resources Survey.

While future buildings on the Plateau may be taller than the current buildings, such buildings would be located outside the boundaries of the sites of the three historic buildings, a minimum of 100 feet from any significant building. The new buildings would not be visually dominant features in the settings of these historic resources due to this distance, topographic changes and vegetation. The visual presence of academic and housing buildings in the backgrounds of the three significant historical resources would not result in a significant adverse effect to the historical buildings.

Landscape and setting change over time as plants mature and are replaced, as technology and social preferences change, and as communities grow. In the Historic Survey Report care is taken to describe not only specific features of the historic building sites, but the overall character of their setting, for example: the framing of Ralston Hall and the Taube Center with trees, the style of the landscaping accenting the ornament of the building entrance at Taube Center and the gardens adjacent to Ralston Hall. Change can be accommodated in these settings, following historic standards, while the character of the setting is maintained.

Step 3

CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5(b)(3)) provides that a project that follows the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating,*

Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings or the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* (together, the "Secretary of the Interior's Standards") shall be considered mitigated to a level of a less-than-significant impact on the historical resource. The Standards and Guidelines provide recommendations for preserving character-defining features of site and setting as well as the buildings themselves.

The mitigation measures proposed below would provide a comprehensive, formal framework for protection of significant historical resources under the proposed CDP and would reduce any impacts on historical resources beneath the level of significance.

Impact Assessment after Mitigation: Less Than Significant after Mitigation

Proposed Mitigation Measures:

A. For any proposed alterations to (i) the character-defining features of the exteriors and/or the site or setting of Ralston Hall, the Carriage House, or the Taube Center, or (ii) one or more of the character-defining publicly accessible interior features of Ralston Hall, the alterations shall meet the following requirements:

1. The proposed alterations shall comply with the applicable Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Stanford shall submit documentation to the City prepared by a qualified professional to demonstrate consistency of the proposed alterations with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. If the work to be performed constitutes basic maintenance, repair, or replacement in kind, Stanford shall mark the project plans with text stating: "Exterior work is limited to replacement of deteriorated materials with in-kind materials that match the old. Project plans have been reviewed by [Name of qualified professional], who has determined the work would comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards." If the work to be performed is more extensive than basic maintenance, repair, or replacement in kind, Stanford shall submit a letter along with the project plans explaining the basis for the determination that the work would comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. The City's Planning Division will review the marked plans or letter, and may require additional documentation.

2. The requirement that the alterations must be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards shall be primarily limited to alterations to the exterior or the immediate setting of the historic buildings. Building interiors will be exempt from such a consistency requirement, except for public interior spaces identified above as character-defining features of an historical resource.

3. The City's Planning Division may require a peer review of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards consistency analysis by a qualified professional (an architect with preservation experience or an architectural historian) at Stanford's expense.

4. If it is not feasible for the alterations to be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, a project-specific analysis of the impact to historical resources and any feasible alternatives and mitigation measures shall be prepared as part of the building project's environmental review under CEQA.

5. Prior to the commencement of any alterations to Ralston Hall or the Carriage House, the affected building shall be photographically recorded to Historic American Buildings Survey standards.

B. Proposed infrastructure improvements located within the immediate surroundings of Ralston Hall, the Carriage House or the Taube Center, as shown in Figures 1 and 2, shall be reviewed by a qualified professional to ensure that the design and location is consistent with the applicable Secretary of Interior's Standards for compatibility. This requirement does not apply to landscape maintenance activities, installation and operation of underground utilities or infrastructure, and visually unobtrusive modifications for stormwater collection, conveyance and treatment. For other infrastructure improvements within the immediate vicinity of the three significant historic resources Stanford shall submit a letter to the City's Planning Division confirming that the new construction has been reviewed by a qualified professional and is compatible with any historical resources within the immediate surroundings. The City's Community Development Director (or designated representative) will review the letter prior to City approval of the infrastructure improvements. The City's Planning Division may require a peer review of the assessment prior to approval of the improvements.

C. Proposed new buildings located within the immediate surroundings of Ralston Hall, the Carriage House or the Taube Center, as shown in Figures 1 and 2, shall be reviewed by a qualified professional to ensure that the new building's design or location is consistent with the applicable Secretary of the Interior's Standards for compatibility. Stanford shall submit a letter to the City's Planning Division confirming that the new construction has been reviewed by a qualified professional and is compatible with any historical resources located within the immediate surroundings. The City's Community Development Director (or designated representative) will review the letter prior to City approval of the new improvements. The City's Planning Division may require a peer review of the assessment prior to approval of the improvements.



Stanford LBRE

Land Use and Environmental Planning

STANFORD UNIVERSITY
RALSTON HOUSE
BELMONT, CA

Legend

- Boundary Line
- Buffer - 50 Feet

Map created by Land Use and Environmental Planning Office, August 2023. GIS data files were compiled from various sources. While deemed realiable, LUEP office assumes no

1 inch = 100 feet

0 Feet 100

Figure 1



Stanford LBRE

Land Use and Environmental Planning

STANFORD UNIVERSITY
TAUBE CENTER
BELMONT, CA

Legend

- Boundary Line
- Buffer - 50 Feet

Map created by Land Use and Environmental Planning Office, August 2023. GIS data files were compiled from various sources. While deemed realiable, LUEP office assumes no

1 inch = 42 feet

0 Feet 40

Figure 2

Appendix E2:
Peer Review of Revised Notre Dame de Namur University Campus Historical Resources Survey

Forget Me Not History

Memorandum

To:	Steve Noack, Principal PlaceWorks
Project:	City of Belmont/Stanford University Belmont Campus Conceptual Development Plan and Development Agreement EIR
Project No.:	22221
Date:	April 23, 2024
From:	Erica Schultz, Principal
RE:	Peer Review of Revised Notre Dame de Namur University Campus Historical Resources Survey

INTRODUCTION

At the request of the PlaceWorks, Forget Me Not History has completed a peer review of the revised "Notre Dame de Namur University Campus Historical Resources Survey," completed by Stanford University Heritage Studies on March 25, 2024.[1]

Forget Me Not History reviewed the revised Historical Resources Survey to determine if the report adequately responds to the October 2023 peer review of the draft Historical Resources Survey (dated January 23, 2023) and Assessment of Potential Impacts (dated August 23, 2023).[2] In addition to reviewing the revised report, a reconnaissance level (windshield) survey of the campus was completed in February 2024 to understand the layout, topography, and architecture of the campus. Supplemental research on architect Vincent Raney also was undertaken.

Overall, the revised Historical Resources Survey has been significantly reorganized and expanded to address professional standards and to address the recommendations presented in the October 2023 peer review. The document is thorough and would not require additional research or analysis beyond the recommendations discussed below.

A summary of supplemental research on architect Vincent Raney and recommendations to revise the evaluation of historical resources and the impacts analysis are provided below. Editorial comments for reorganizing or inserting cross references in select sections have been submitted separately in the pdf of

[1] Julia A. Cain and Laura Jones, "Notre Dame de Namur University Campus Historical Resources Survey, Belmont, County of San Mateo, California," prepared by Stanford University Heritage Studies, January 23, 2023, revised March 25, 2024.

[2] Julia A. Cain and Laura Jones, "Notre Dame de Namur University Campus Historical Resources Survey, Belmont, County of San Mateo, California," prepared by Stanford University Heritage Studies, January 23, 2023; Stanford University Heritage Studies, "Assessment of Potential Impacts of the Stanford Belmont Campus Project on Historical Resources, Addendum to Notre Dame de Namur University Campus Historical Resources Survey, Belmont, County of San Mateo, California," August 23, 2023.

the revised report. These recommendations for minor edits would improve the clarity and flow of the document.

SUPPLEMENTAL RESEARCH OF VINCENT RANEY

Overall, the revised Historical Resources Survey has been expanded to provide more information on Vincent Raney's education and career and a summary of his architectural designs and building typologies. Forget Me Not History conducted supplemental research to better understand the depth and range of his religious architectural designs. The revised report presently includes St. Anne Chapel (Palo Alto, 1951), St. Hilary School Chapel (Tiburon, 1954), and Cunningham Chapel and Campanile (subject property, 1961) as representative examples of his church projects. Additional examples of his church architecture, along with other key projects that support the categorization of Raney as an architect of merit, are provided in chronological order below.

Sunshine House (San Francisco, 1939, extant)
In 1939, Vincent Raney and Loy Chamberlain designed the Sunshine House as a model home displayed at the Golden Gate International Exposition held on Treasure Island from 1939 to 1941. The architects aimed to design a modestly sized, affordable, all-gas house. The model home was named the "Sunshine House" after its "high ceilings, floor-to-ceiling windows and a garden entry from almost every room in the light-filled house."[3] The residence was awarded as a raffle prize at the conclusion of the fair and relocated to 201 Crestlake Drive in San Francisco.[4]



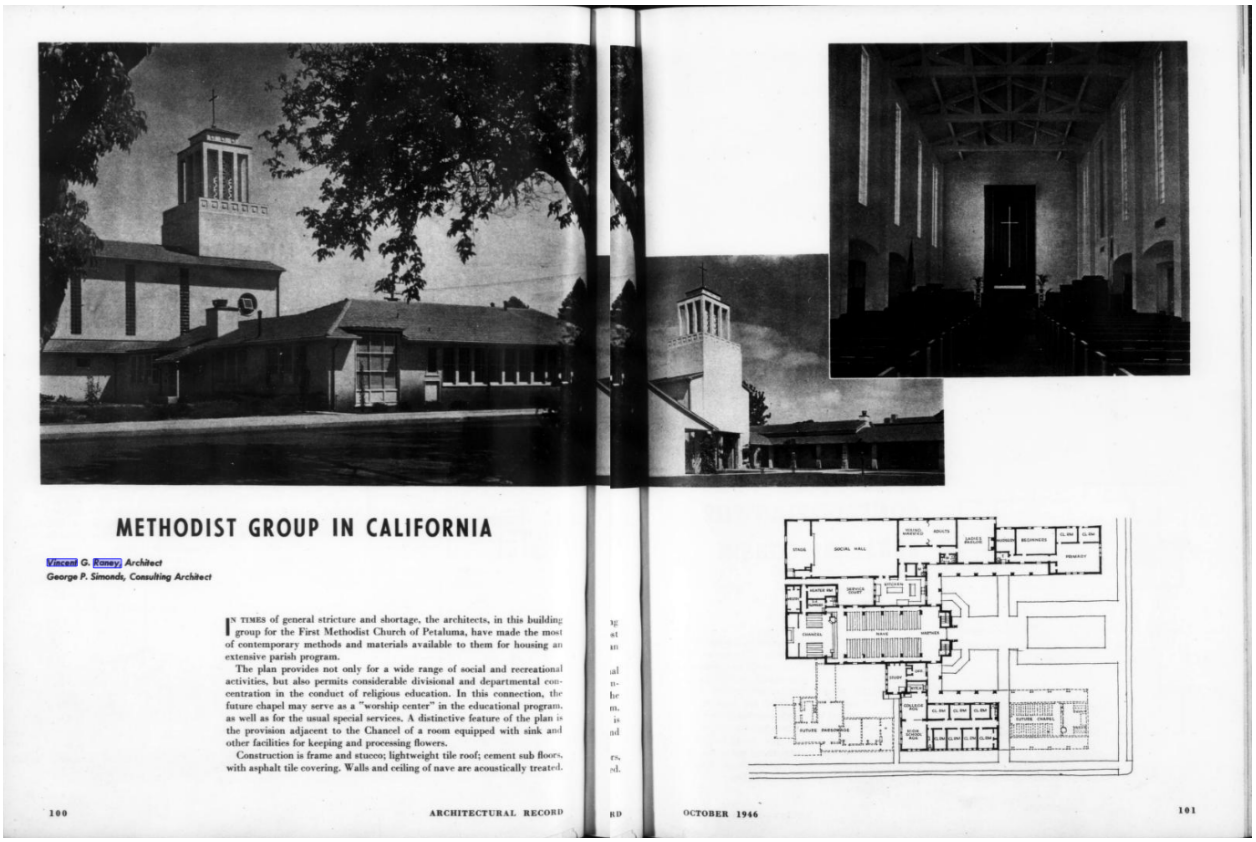
Advertisement for the Sunshine House in the October 1939 edition of *Architect and Engineer*.

[3] Marsha Ginsburg, "Home of today/Built in 1939, it has stood the test of time," *SFGate*, January 11, 2004, accessed April 18, 2024, https://www.sfgate.com/realestate/article/home-of-today-built-in-1939-it-has-stood-test-2813886.php.
[4] "Sunshine House, Treasure Island," *Architect and Engineer* (October 1939): 52; Ginsburg, "Home of today."

First Methodist Church of Petaluma (1941, extant)
Vincent Raney's design for the First Methodist Church (present-day United Methodist Church) in Petaluma was featured in a special edition of *Architectural Record* highlighting notable church architecture.[5]



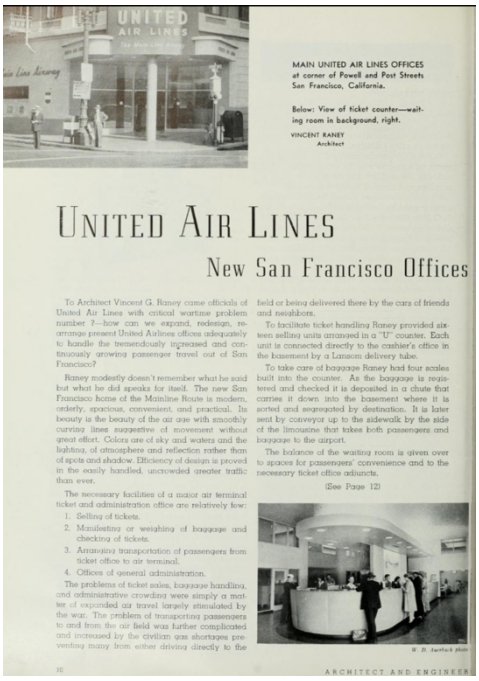
Left: Undated photograph of the First Methodist Church of Petaluma; right: current photograph of the church property (Google Earth).[6]



Magazine spread on the First Methodist Church of Petaluma in the October 1946 edition *Architectural Record*; this issue of the magazine was dedicated to notable church architecture.

[5] "Methodist Group in California," *Architectural Record,* October 1946, 100, no. 4: 100-101; "Plans Committee for Church to Meet Tonight," *Petaluma Argus-Courier,* October 6, 1940.
[6] Alice van Emmeren and KC Greaney, *Petaluma in Vintage Postcards* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2020), 106.

United Airlines San Francisco Office (1945, altered)
In 1945, Vincent Raney's design for the United Airlines office at the northwest corner of Powell and Post streets in San Francisco was featured in *Architect and Engineer*.[7] The first-story office with a corner entrance has been extensively altered.


MAIN UNITED AIR LINES OFFICES
at corner of Powell and Post Streets
San Francisco, California.

Below: View of ticket counter—waiting room in background, right.

VINCENT RANEY
Architect

UNITED AIR LINES

New San Francisco Offices

To Architect Vincent G. Raney came officials of United Air Lines with critical wartime problem number 7—how can we expand, redesign, rearrange present United Airlines offices adequately to handle the tremendously increased and continuously growing passenger travel out of San Francisco?

Raney modestly doesn't remember what he said but what he did speaks for itself. The new San Francisco home of the Mainline Route is modern, orderly, spacious, convenient, and practical. Its beauty is the beauty of the air age with smoothly curving lines suggestive of movement without great effort. Colors are of sky and waters and the lighting, of atmosphere and reflection rather than of spots and shadow. Efficiency of design is proved in the easily handled, uncrowded greater traffic than ever.

The necessary facilities of a major air terminal ticket and administration office are relatively few:

1. Selling of tickets.
2. Manifesting or weighing of baggage and checking of tickets.
3. Arranging transportation of passengers from ticket office to air terminal.
4. Offices of general administration.

The problems of ticket sales, baggage handling, and administrative crowding were simply a matter of expanded air travel largely stimulated by the war. The problem of transporting passengers to and from the air field was further complicated and increased by the civilian gas shortages preventing many from either driving directly to the field or being delivered there by the cars of friends and neighbors.

To facilitate ticket handling Raney provided sixteen selling units arranged in a "U" counter. Each unit is connected directly to the cashier's office in the basement by a Lamson delivery tube.

To take care of baggage Raney had four scales built into the counter. As the baggage is registered and checked it is deposited in a chute that carries it down into the basement where it is sorted and segregated by destination. It is later sent by conveyor up to the sidewalk by the side of the limousine that takes both passengers and baggage to the airport.

The balance of the waiting room is given over to spaces for passengers' convenience and to the necessary ticket office adjuncts.

(See Page 12)



Left: Feature article on the United Air Lines San Francisco office in the January 1945 edition of *Architect and Engineer*; right: current photograph of the corner office (Google Earth).

Porterville Lutheran Church (1948, altered)
In 1948, Vincent Raney designed the Porterville Lutheran Church (present-day First Lutheran Church) at 914 N. E Street in Porterville, Tulare County.[8] The building was described as conveying a "modern Georgian design."[9] While the 1948 newspaper photograph of the building is of poor quality, the original church building, including the steeple and northern wing with dormer windows, appears to be extant; the gabled wing extending west toward the street appears to be an addition.

[7] "United Airlines New San Francisco Offices," *Architect and Engineer* 180, no. 1 (January 1945): 10, 12.
[8] "New Lutheran Church of Porterville," *Porterville Evening Recorder* (Porterville, CA), September 10, 1948.
[9] "Lutherans to Dedicate New Church," *Porterville Evening Recorder* (Porterville, CA), September 11, 1948.



Left: 1948 photograph of the Porterville Lutheran Church published in the *Porterville Evening Recorder*; right: current photograph of the church property (Google Earth).

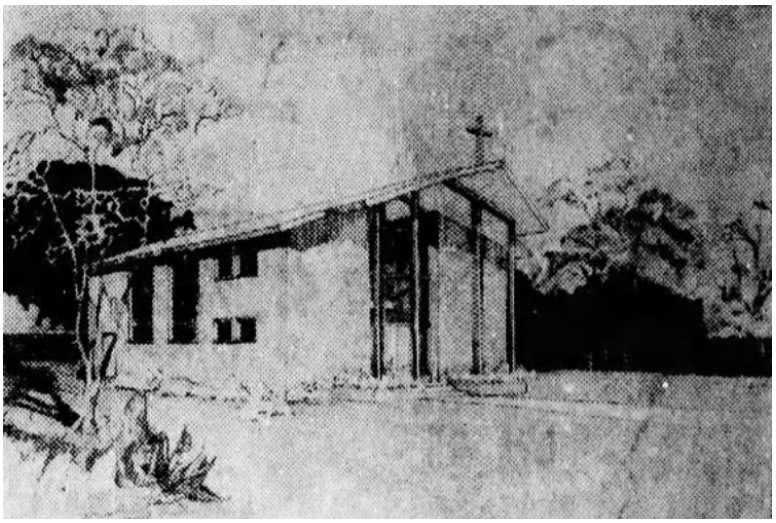
Grace Lutheran Church (San Mateo, 1948, demolished)
The church designed by Vincent Raney and located at the northeast intersection of Alameda de Las Pulgas and 29th Avenue was described as evoking California colonial architecture.[10] In 1967, the building was demolished and replaced with a new church building designed by architect Alfred Johnson.[11]



Left: 1960s photograph of the Grace Lutheran Church designed by Vincent Raney (San Mateo Public Library); right: current photograph of the church property (Google Earth).

Gregory Gardens Lutheran Church (Pleasant Hill, 1951, unknown)
In 1951, Vincent Raney designed a small, modest church described as being located south of the Gregory Village Shopping Center and opposite the Motor-In Theater in Pleasant Hill.[12] Its exact location and condition remain unknown.

[10] "New Church to be Dedicated," *San Mateo Times*, December 10, 1948; "Dedication at Grace Lutheran Church," *San Mateo Times*, December 4, 1948.
[11] "A Brief History of Grace Lutheran Church & School," in *Grace Notes* 62, no. 10 (December 2017/January 2018), accessed April 18, 2024, http://gracelutheransanmateo.org/pdf/GraceNotes_Dec2017Jan2018.pdf.
[12] "New Lutheran Church to be Dedicated Sun. Afternoon," *Concord Transcript* (Concord, CA), June 22, 1951.



1951 drawing of the building published in the *Concord Transcript*.

Vincent Raney House (1300 Ralston Road, Belmont, early 1950s, extant)
In the early 1950s, Vincent Raney and his family moved to Belmont after their house was purchased by the City and County of San Francisco for a new junior high school. He designed a new family residence on Ralston Avenue just east of the College of Notre Dame campus. He cheekily described it as his favorite house in a feature article he wrote for the *San Francisco Examiner*. In the article, he highlighted the building's openness, expansive glazing, flexible interior space with retractable dividers, and indoor-outdoor connection. His favorite features included the private patios at each bedroom and "sliding glass walls [that] open the living room to [the] patio pool and vista of pine trees and hills." Additionally, he stated that the "living room has a complete open expanse to the southwest with a high ceiling . . . Entire walls slide back so that it becomes a part of the large patio and outdoor barbecue."[13]

Contemporary documentation on Vincent Raney states that he also designed tract housing marketed to GIs after World War II. However, supplemental research has not revealed information on his residential architecture beyond the Sunshine House and his personal residence.[14]

[13] Vincent G. Raney, "One of My Favorite Houses," *San Francisco Examiner*, March 28, 1954; "Features of Raney Home," *San Francisco Examiner*, March 28, 1954.
[14] See reference to "Vincent G. Raney, FCSI," published online at the Fellows of the Construction Specifications Institute, accessed December 3, 2021 at http://www.fcsinet.org/bios/RaneyV.pdf (article no longer accessible) in San Francisco Planning Department, Clay Theatre, 2261 Fillmore Street Article 10 Landmark Designation Fact Sheet, Record No. 2021-009311DES, January 12, 2021, accessed April 18, 2024, https://sfplanninggis.org/docs/landmarks_and_districts/LM302.pdf.



Left: Photograph of the Vincent Raney House published in the *San Francisco Examiner* article; right: contemporary photograph of the residence.[15]

In a 1982 oral history interview, Sister Catharine Julie Cunningham stated that Vincent Raney was selected as the architect for the 1952-1961 campus buildings because he was already living adjacent to the campus. Sister Cunningham also provides her perspective on the design of the Cunningham Chapel and its stained-glass windows; excerpts from the interview are provided below, and the entire interview may provide additional context on the postwar expansion of the campus.

> Suzanne B. Riess: How was he [Vincent Raney] chosen?
>
> Sister Catharine Julie Cunningham: He happened to live right here in Belmont, in fact near the college. He had a daughter who went to the high school and so he was invited by the then administration of the college to serve as architect for the initial buildings. (Again, that was something that I wasn't connected with directly.) When it was my turn to begin a second building program, I just turned to Mr. Raney and worked with him for the construction of St. Joseph Hall and the enlargement of the dining room.
>
> Riess: The fact he was connected with the campus, or the Church, does that mean anything?
>
> Cunningham: True, he was a Catholic, but that was not any reason for the choice. He had been the architect and was already kind of on call.[16]
> ---
>
> Riess: I wondered, when [Cunningham Chapel] was being designed, how much care and thought and expense was devoted to that chance to really do something lasting.
>
> Cunningham: When we knew that we had an initial gift that was going to make it possible for us to build a chapel — which we needed badly because we were still in the ballroom "temporarily" since 1923 — then we wanted it to be in a central place on the campus and we wanted all to participate in its development. We used the same architect whom we had for some of the other buildings with whom I had had occasion to work, Vincent Raney. I know the present design is

[15] Susan Lucas, 1300 Ralston Avenue, accessed April 18, 2024, https://www.1300ralstonavenue.com/.
[16] Sister Catharine Julie Cunningham, "A Native Daughter's Leadership in Education: College of Notre Dame, Belmont, California," interview by Suzanne B. Riess, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft, University of California, Berkeley, interview conducted in January1982 (Regents of the University of California, 1984), 128, accessed April 18, 2024, https://archive.org/details/cabeuroh_000248.

the seventh of those that he presented to us that we finally accepted. In other words, we didn't take the first one. We didn't say, yes, yes; we thought it through.

We wanted it to hold about five hundred, which it does. We wanted it to be light. I don't like the oppression of Gothic structures in today's world on today's campus. So we wanted something that did not have a lot of arches and that sort of design, just clear and clean in that sense, and light. Our group that talked about it agreed and liked what we were planning.

Then the art department because vitally concerned, because at that time the chairman of our art department was a sister, Sister Margaret Mary, who is very interested in the liturgical movement. Also we had another sister who wasn't in the art department but was very creative in art, Sister Marie Therese O'Brien.[17]

Cunningham: A company that I liked, which I had seen in New York, an international group who had done work in Europe, the vestments and the vessels that are used in the Mass and so forth. I chose a company whose work I saw that was doing very modern things then to design those things that were used in the chapel on the altar itself, other than things that were permanent. The windows were going to be permanent.

In thinking about what kind of windows, of course we wanted glass windows. One of the styles was shown locally to me, and I went to Seattle and I went to Arizona to see some of them in place. They were the Gabriel Loire windows, out of Chartres, France, which utilized sculptured glass rather than a flat colored glass. So I found the representative in America who, interestingly enough, happened to live next door in San Carlos! He himself was French and he was a representative in the United States for the Loire studio.

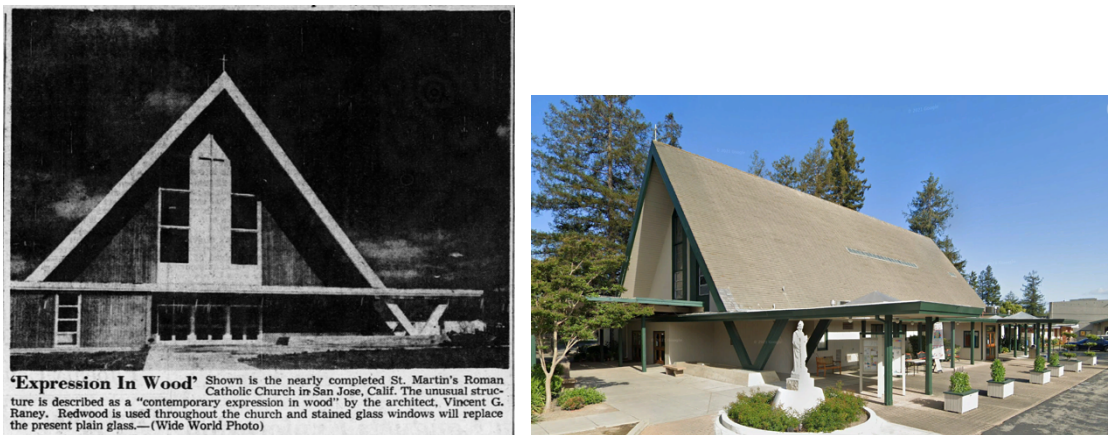
The planning of the windows was an all-campus kind of involvement on what would be the theme, and how we were going to work out the theme of windows. Vincent Raney, the architect, had drawn the windows just as you see them today, but without anything in them. In the study of the windows, we finally decided that we would like above all the Loire type of window. It was going to be a pretty involved kind of negotiation, in French, too, from Belmont to Chartres and back again. What would be the theme? We chose the theme of woman. Now, if you remember, in this time, because this was in the early sixties, we were still a woman's college. Now, it would seem we were being very "womanish" [laughs] in doing it today. That's fine and, of course, it is true, we still can be quite valid in the fact that that's part of our history and it is in the history of the church and this church is dedicated to Our Lady of Notre Dame.[18]

Cunningham: Sister Margaret Mary worked on biblical themes from scriptures that could be visualized, and presented these quotations to us, and we studied them. She did not present a design at all, but she could see that an artist, being an artist herself, could do this, and it would be a scene representing Mary in scripture all around the chapel, and the scriptural quotation that the artist could use as his taking off spot for its development. We were having to do all of the communication with somebody in France through a bilingual Frenchman, so we needed to have a pretty good understanding of what we were going to do.

[17] Cunningham, "A Native Daughter's Leadership," 207.
[18] Cunningham, "A Native Daughter's Leadership," 208.

> Mr. Raney had no objection, of course, to what we were going to do with the chapel, and he certainly approved of that. Everybody felt it was marvelous, as long as I felt I could get the money. So we sent the ideas. in the scriptural passages to Loire, who had to translate those into a design to fit the window.
>
> He sent the drawings back months later. They came on black sheets with the colors and the designs, and then we reviewed them. I remember we opened them up on the dining room table down here in Ralston Hall, with all of the sisters, and they were there for everybody to see what Loire had designed for the windows. We were ecstatic! There were two minor changes. I wanted one window for St. Julie, because she represented us, and that was the only window that was not scripture per se, and the habit was wrong — it is nonsensical when you think of it now because we don't even wear that same habit — but I tried to correct it.
>
> Then, in another one, where Martha was serving — we wanted to show something of service — Martha had a broom, and I didn't like the idea of this old funny witchy-type broom up in the chapel window, and I said, "No, she can serve by holding a tray." Those are the only artistic changes.
>
> From the technical point of view it was a triumph. When those eight hundred odd pieces of sculptured glass within their miniature frames came to be installed, there wasn't one iota of deviation for insertion. The special contractor we got to install that didn't have to chip off the glass or the frame or knock out the concrete.
>
> The statues, like the pictures, all of those were submitted to our whole college group. The Stations of the Cross which Sister Marie Therese designed — [she] worked right up in the chemistry studio and everybody had a chance to see the artist work. We used the theme of hands, which would be less controversial than a face that could have had a stark design in it, for the manner in which she was going to do it, in sculptured mosaic, was rather angular.[19]

St. Martin of Tours Church (San Jose, 1953, extant)
In 1953, Vincent Raney designed an A-frame church building at 200 O'Connor Drive in San Jose.[20]



Left: 1953 photograph of the church building published in the *Arizona Republic*; right: current photograph of the building (Google Earth).

[19] Cunningham, "A Native Daughter's Leadership," 209.
[20] "Expression in Wood," *Arizona Republic* (Phoenix, AZ), January 24, 1953.

Christ the King Catholic Church (Pleasant Hill, 1953, likely demolished)
In 1953, Vincent Raney designed the Christ the King Catholic Church, which was described as "a compromise between modern functional design and early California Mission styling." It also featured a "modern bell tower" and a "long covered cloister of traditional mission design."[21] In 1965, the Oakland Diocese sued Vincent Raney claiming the tower lacked an adequate foundation and would not survive a major earthquake. The outcome of the lawsuit remains unknown.[22] The building appears to have been demolished and replaced with another church complex.



Photograph of the building published in the *Contra Costa Times.*

Serra High School (San Mateo, 1954, extant)
While Vincent Raney's design for Serra High School in San Mateo is featured in the revised Historical Resources Survey, supplemental research indicates that he experimented with the lift-slab construction technique for this building. A newspaper article describes the construction method, which had been developed several years prior and was being used in building construction nationwide:

> Floors and the roof of the new building, being constructed by the Catholic Archdiocese of San Francisco will be hoisted into place by gigantic hydraulic lifts.
>
> . . . Raney describes "Lift-Slab" as an advanced cement construction process which saves time and money by pouring of roofs and floors on the ground and then hoisting them into position. The method is economical because it eliminates duplication of cement forms, which have to be torn down when structures erected under more orthodox methods are completed.
>
> . . . The jacks will hoist cement slabs into place on steel columns.[23]

Raney planned to use this construction technique at five other projects, including St. John the Baptist School (El Cerrito), St. Theresa School (Oakland), Holy Cross High School (Mountain View), Novitiate

[21] Ruth Boots, "Christ the King Catholic Church," *Contra Costa Times* (Walnut Creek, CA), March 8, 1961; "Work Under Way on P.H. Church," *Contra Costa Gazette* (Martinez, CA), January 2, 1952.
[22] "Diocese Sues S.F. Architect For $22,000," *Oakland Tribune*, October 30, 1965.
[23] "'Lift-Slab' Building Technique To Be Used for New Serra School," *Redwood City Tribune*, July 12, 1954.

of Notre Dame (Saratoga), and Our Lady of Mercy School (Daly City).[24] The experimental construction method at Serra High School resulted in the injuries to four onlookers when the 250-ton slab for the roof fell as it was being lifted into place. Other than the Our Lady of Mercy School (see below), it remains unknown if Raney continued to use this construction technique at subsequent school projects.[25]



Current photograph of the school building facing north toward W. 20th Avenue (Google Earth).

Our Lady of Mercy Church and School (Daly City, 1955-1956, extant)
In the mid-1950s, Vincent Raney designed the Our Lady of Mercy complex, which included a church, school, convent, and rectory in the Westlake district in Daly City. An announcement for the project in *Architect and Engineer* states that the buildings would be constructed with tilt-up and lift-slab concrete panels.[26]

[24] "'Lift-Slab' Building Technique To Be Used for New Serra School," *Redwood City Tribune*, July 12, 1954.
[25] "Lift-Slab Damages," *Engineering News-Record,* November 29, 1956, 27.
[26] Vincent G. Raney, "One of My Favorite Houses," *San Francisco Examiner*, March 28, 1954; "110,000 Feet of Slab Going Up at Serra," *San Mateo Times*, July 7, 1954; Our Lady of Mercy School, "School History," accessed April 18, 2024, https://www.olmbulldogs.com/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=527567&type=d&pREC_ID=1042244; Our Lady of Mercy Parish, "History," accessed April 18, 2024, https://www.olmcath.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=453372&type=d&pREC_ID=978626; "New Church and School," *Architect and Engineer* 199, no. 1 (October 1954): 34.



Current photograph of the church and school complex (Google Earth).

Eitel-McCullough (Eimac) Corporate Headquarters (San Carlos, 1958, demolished)
In 1958, Vincent Raney designed the new headquarters for the Eitel-McCullough (Eimac) corporation at 301 Industrial Road in San Carlos, California. The building was featured in an April 1959 edition of *Architect and Engineer* and described as a 150,000-square-foot plant to manufacture electron power tubes. The plant included a two-story office space with a one-story manufacturing plant and was constructed with a steel frame and tilt-up concrete walls. It featured a Midcentury Modern design with long sculptural ribbon windows that projected from the building at each story.[27]





Left: 1959 photograph of the Eitel-McCullough headquarters featured in *Architect and Engineer*; right: another 1959 view of the building complex (History San Jose).

[27] "Williams and Burrows, General Contractors," *Architect and Engineer* 217, no. 1 (April 1959): 14-15, 17; "Work to Start on Eimac Plant," *San Mateo Times,* August 6, 1958.

Marywood High School (Orange, 1964, demolished)
In 1964, Vincent Raney designed the Marywood High School, an all-girls college prep high school in Orange, California.[28] A description of the New Formalist buildings is provided below. The school closed in 1980, and the campus became the offices and retreat center for the Diocese of Orange. The complex was demolished in 2016 to construct new housing. In the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the housing project, the school property was found to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register), California Register of Historical Resources (California Register), and City of Orange Historic Inventory in part for its architectural significance. Thus, it was found to be a historical resource under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and its demolition constituted a significant and unavoidable impact. As part of the mitigation for the demolition of this historical resource, an interpretive plaque documenting the history of the property was developed; the text specifically refers to Vincent Raney as a "prolific master architect":

> The all-girls, Catholic high school that once graced this peaceful Nohl Ranch hilltop was active in the last years of a unique era of influence and involvement by Catholic nuns in American education, which began in the latter 19th century. Constructed by the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana, the order was one of over 400 who collectively contributed more than 10,000 schools to the American landscape. Dedicated December 5, 1964, the buildings were designed in the New Formalism style by prolific master architect, Vincent G. Raney, site design, structural engineering, and architectural style coalesced in Marywood's comprehensive, symmetrical plan, which was laid on an axial orientation and executed on a grand scale. A hierarchical complex of intersecting buildings, structures, and open space, the campus utilized concrete, brick, and glass in flat-roofed, singular volumes and included a main entrance and quad, auditorium, three-story dormitory, convent, and chapel. Character-defining features included repeated undulating arches on stylized full-height columns, exposed structural elements, large screen walls, and the innovative modern recreation of stained glass in the chapel's Dalle de Verre paneled windows. Sold to the newly-formed Diocese of Orange in 1979, after final commencement in 1981, the complex became a diocesan retreat and pastoral center until vacated in 2013. Marywood's closure stemmed primarily from a significant shift in the number and community of Catholic nuns in the 1960s and 1970s. Although no longer a presence in Orange County, the Sisters of Providence continue to maintain a widespread, active congregation and ministry.[29]

[28] "Marywood School Construction Slated," *Bulletin* (Anaheim, CA), September 26, 1962; Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, "Marywood High School, California," accessed April 18, 2024, https://spsmw.org/about/alumni/marywood-high-school-california/.
[29] VCS Environmental, Marywood Residential Development Project Final Environmental Impact Report SCH No. 2015041033, prepared for City of Orange, California, September 2015, 13, accessed April 18, 2023, https://cityoforange.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=3&clip_id=252&meta_id=19711.



Undated photograph of Marywood High School (Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods).

PEER REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

The following section provides a list of recommendations to revise the Evaluative Framework and Evaluation of Significance sections in the report body and the Assessment of Potential Impacts included as Appendix D.

Vincent Raney – Architect of Merit

In the Evaluation of Significance section, the revised Historical Resources Survey concludes that Vincent Raney does not qualify as an architect of merit; thus, none of the buildings designed by the architect at the Notre Dame de Namur University (NDMU) campus are eligible for listing in the California Register:

> His eye-catching art deco and roadside commercial projects have received some preservation attention and scholarly notice; his school and college buildings have not been awarded prizes or attention by architectural historians. There is not sufficient scholarship to support finding that Raney was a "master" or architect of merit.[30]

Based on the expanded biography of Vincent Raney and list of selected works included in the revised report and the supplemental list of his projects presented above, Forget Me Not History finds that he qualifies as an architect of merit.

The following evaluation of Vincent Raney as an architect of merit incorporates the evaluative framework developed by the San Francisco Planning Department:

> An architect, builder, developer, landscape architect, firm, and other professional or creative may be considered significant for their contributions to the field of architecture, planning, and preservation. According to the National Register Criteria for Evaluation, "master architects" are distinct in their field and may be significant for their contributions to the built environment

[30] Cain and Jones, "Notre Dame de Namur University Campus Historical Resources Survey," revised March 25, 2024, 212.

> either through the employment of innovative building materials, command of traditional or groundbreaking design, and/or superior skill. In this document, we use the updated term "Architect of Merit" in place of "master architect." In some cases, an Architect of Merit's work influenced trends in the built environment either locally, nationally, or internationally. A work of an Architect of Merit may be high-profile, reflect distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or show high artistic value. A practitioner also may rise to the level of Architect of Merit for contributing to the history of a particular cultural, ethnic, or racial group in San Francisco or for working in the field as a rare member from their cultural, ethnic, or racial group. Properties may be identified as significant for their direct association with the productive life of a professional who made important contributions to local, state, or national history. However, if an architect is identified as significant, all properties constructed by the architect do not automatically qualify as significant. Each property associated with the architect will be evaluated individually and in comparison, to the architect's body of work and in consultation with related architectural theme documents.[31]
>
> Significant projects constructed by an Architect of Merit shall exhibit one, or a combination of the following qualifiers: show a high level of artistic craft, show proficient use of a building material, be a notable example of a specific design/style, or showcase an influential design or development either locally or on a broader scale.

Vincent Raney had a long and prosperous architectural career, designing "600 service stations, over 100 movie theaters, shopping centers, industrial buildings, churches and schools."[32] He appears to have been most active from the 1930s through the late 1960s and in California, although his work can be found in the Western region and in Hawai'i. Throughout his decades-long career, Raney transcended multiple architectural styles and eras of design, including Streamline Moderne (Round House Café); Art Deco (multiple theaters); Midcentury Modern (numerous churches, schools, and industrial buildings); New Formalism (Marywood High School); and his futuristic, avant-garde domed theaters. He was extremely adept at working on building types at all scales, from single-family residences, to industrial and commercial buildings, theaters, churches, and schools, that have made a lasting impact on the World War II-era and postwar landscape of the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. The breadth of his career in terms of building typology, architectural style, and geographic location is remarkable. His work was featured numerous times in architectural publications such as *Architectural Record* and *Architect and Engineer* and frequently in local newspapers. His design for St. Hilary School Chapel in Tiburon won an unspecified award, and Docomomo US/NOCA has described the St. Ann Chapel in Palo Alto as a "touching and impressive example of modernist design in the Bay Area."[33] Lastly, his New Formalist design for the Marywood High School was found to be eligible for listing in the National Register, California Register, and local register, and he was recognized as a "master architect" in the environmental review for the redevelopment of that project site. For these reasons, Vincent Raney qualifies as an architect of merit.

Cunningham Chapel and Campanile – Historical Resource

Forget Me Not History agrees with the findings presented in the revised Historical Resources Survey that Ralston Hall, the Carriage House, and Taube Center have been previously identified as historical

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[31] San Francisco Planning Department, Evaluative Framework for "Preservation Professionals: A Collection of Biographies," February 6, 2024, accessed April 18, 2024, https://sfplanning.org/project/architecture-planning-and-preservation-professionals-collection-biographies#info.
[32] Vincent G. Raney obituary, *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 8, 2002, accessed April 18, 2024, https://www.sfchronicle.com/news/article/RANEY-Vincent-G-2885768.php.
[33] Bastiaan de Vries, "Travel and Leisure: Sacred Architecture Edition," *Docomomo US/NOCA*, November 17, 2021, accessed April 18, 2024, https://www.docomomo-noca.org/news/sacred-architecture.

resources and retain integrity. Forget Me Not History also agrees that except for the Cunningham Chapel and Campanile, the remainder of the buildings within the NDNU campus are ineligible for individual listing in the California Register and thus, they are not historical resources under CEQA.

Forget Me Not History finds that the Cunningham Chapel and Campanile is eligible for listing in the California Register under Criterion 3 as the representative work of architect of merit Vincent Raney. Raney's church designs feature an impressive array of styles and detailing, from traditional designs that incorporate a central steeple, stucco cladding, and arcades evoking California Mission architecture (e.g., Grace Lutheran Church in San Mateo, First Methodist Church in Petaluma), to Midcentury Modern designs featuring clean lines, simplicity of form, and striking yet complementary campaniles or bell towers (e.g., Cunningham Chapel and Campanile at the NDNU campus, St. Ann Chapel in Palo Alto), to the bold geometric form of the New Formalist church within the Marywood High School campus. He was also adept at designing A-frame churches, which were a popular and affordable choice for congregations nationwide. Within his church architecture, the Cunningham Chapel stands out for its refined design that responded to the Sisters' goal of constructing a clear, clean, and light building (as recalled by Sister Catharine Julie Cunningham). Although Raney frequently used natural material, including brick, stone, and wood cladding in his Midcentury Modern church designs, his use of light colored concrete and quartz aggregate on the exterior of this building is distinctive. The band of concrete enframing the exterior walls and church porch is angled below the roofline to complement the gently pitched gable roofs, and the corners taper toward the bottom, visually lightening this design feature. The shape of the concrete frame on the main façade is carried through in the interior of the church forming a series of parallel ribs that elegantly connect the exterior and interior design of the building. The fully glazed church porch – a singular feature within Raney's church designs – function both to provide shelter during inclement weather and to provide lightness and transparency with direct views of the main church doors. While the Cunningham Chapel slab glass windows designed by Gabriel Loire may not be in the top tier of his iconic designs, they still provide beauty and refinement to the building as an integrated design feature. Thus, the Cunningham Chapel and Campanile is a significant project designed by an architect of merit with a high level of design, and it is found to qualify as a historical resource under CEQA.

By comparison, some of Raney's other churches would not be significant examples of his religious work. These buildings include the Gregory Gardens Lutheran Church (Pleasant Hill), which featured a modest, unremarkable design; the St. Martin of Tours Church (San Jose), which is not regarded as a skillful application of the A-frame form; and the Our Lady of Mercy Church in Daly City, which features a clunky arrangement of stained-glass windows shaped as crosses and diamonds above the main entrances. The thick projecting concrete band enframing the main façade also lacks the elegance of this design feature found on the Cunningham Chapel.

The Cunningham Chapel and Campanile's period of significance dates to 1961 when it was constructed.

The Cunningham Chapel appears to have never been extensively altered and retains its original form, massing, cladding, fenestration, and roof configuration. Likewise, the campanile appears to have never been altered and retains its original design, construction material, and visual connection with the chapel. The building and campanile remain in their original location and setting amongst the other postwar academic and residential buildings on the plateau of the campus. Thus, the Cunningham Chapel and Campanile retains integrity.

Its character-defining features include:

- Steel frame and masonry construction with exposed quartz aggregate concrete wall panels

- Taller-in-height central massing with one-story church porch at the east façade and one-story rear annex
- Band of concrete with tapered ends enframing the building and church porch
- Low-pitched gable roofs with wide eave overhangs
- Fully glazed church porch
- Paired wood double doors at the east (main) façade
- Tall, narrow slab colored glass windows designed and built by Gabriel Loire
- Concrete campanile with exposed quartz aggregate cladding, tripod form, pierced cutouts, religious ornamentation, and circular fountain pool

Evaluation of Notre Dame de Namur University Historic District

The evaluation of the "Post-World War Two Campus" as a historic district should be expanded to encompass the period from 1923 when the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur purchased the property to 1975 when the evaluation of individual buildings concludes. The sections evaluating the campus buildings for an "Association with the Development of Education for Women in California" (Criterion 1), "Association with Significant Persons" (Criterion 2), and "Evaluation of Regional Collegiate Architecture" (Criterion 3) could be incorporated into the expanded historic district analysis. Forget Me Not History agrees that the campus does not appear to be eligible as a historic district even if the period of analysis is extended as recommended.

Boundary of Ralston Hall and Carriage House

A description, map, and justification for the boundary for Ralston Hall and the Carriage House should be included in the Evaluation of Significance section. This analysis should state why the other extant Ralston-era features, including Lexague Drive lined with a stone retaining wall with water trough, quarry, and vegetation outside the boundary are non-contributing to the historic property. It should also be noted that the boundary of this historical resource may be expanded following subsequent archaeological testing and analysis in the area of the reported gas line extending along the creek. The boundary description and justification for Ralston Hall and the Carriage House should be coordinated with the results of this archaeological analysis.

Boundary of Taube Hall

A description, map, and justification for the boundary for Taube Hall should be included in the Evaluation of Significance section.

Impacts Analysis

The revised Assessment of Potential Impacts concludes that the City of Belmont/Stanford University Belmont Campus Conceptual Development Plan (CDP) and Development Agreement would have a less than significant impact on three historical resources, Ralston Hall, the Carriage House, and Taube Center, with the implementation of mitigation measures. Forget Me Not History provides the following recommendations to revise the impacts analysis to address the evaluation of Cunningham Chapel and Campanile as a historical resource and to ensure that potential impacts and mitigation measures are thoroughly and accurately identified.

- An expanded summary of the CDP, including height limits within the development areas and architectural and site character, and map of the development areas should be added to the "Background" section to support the impacts analysis.

- The analysis that the CDP's proposed height limit of 45 feet within the Legacy district should be refined to address the site's topography. For example, the 45-foot limit should be compared to

the existing height of Ralston Hall and the Carriage House. Additionally, the impact of the 45-foot height limit in the West district and 75-foot height limit in the Plateau district should be addressed as these buildings will be located at a higher elevation.

- The analysis under "Proposed Mitigation Measures," should be updated to conclude that alterations to historical resources that are not consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards would result in a significant impact and that Historic American Building Survey (HABS)-level documentation shall be implemented as a mitigation measure. While implementation of this mitigation measure would reduce or mitigate impacts to the maximum extent feasible, the impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

- The Impacts Analysis section should be updated to conclude that the demolition of Cunningham Chapel and Campanile, which is found to be a historical resource under CEQA, would be a significant impact. Mitigation measures shall be implemented and could include HABS-level documentation, salvage of significant features such as the stained-glass windows, and public interpretation such as an interpretive plaque, display, exhibit, or website documenting the history and significance of the building. While implementation of this mitigation measure would reduce or mitigate impacts to the maximum extent feasible, the impact would remain significant and unavoidable.

APPENDIX E3:
HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF CUNNINGHAM CHAPEL

Stanford University

June 12, 2024

To: Laura Russell, Planning Department, City of Belmont
From: Laura Jones, Executive Director of Heritage Services, Stanford University

Subject: **Historical Significance of Cunningham Chapel**

INTRODUCTION

The memo from Forget Me Not History, dated April 23, 2024, proposed that the Cunnigham Chapel on the Notre Dame de Namur campus in Belmont, California, might be eligible for listing on the California Register as "the representative work of architect of merit Vincent Raney." After reviewing and considering the research and findings presented, we have not changed our original conclusions submitted in the revised Historic Resource Evaluation dated March 27, 2024.

Our detailed response to the CEQA questions raised by the Forget Me Not History memo is provided below.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The CEQA Guidelines provide the framework for determining whether a property is a historical resource. Guideline 15064.5 explains that a property is a historical resource if it (a) has been listed in or formally determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register; (b) has been listed in a qualified local register or survey; or (c) the lead agency in its discretion finds the resource to meet one or more of the criteria for listing in the California Register.

The Cunningham Chapel has not been listed in or formally determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register, nor has it been listed in a qualified local register or survey.[1] The City of Belmont, should make a determination, based on the available evidence, whether or not the Cunningham chapel is a historical resource under the California Register criteria.

The relevant criterion identified by both Stanford and Forget Me Not History is as follows:

> Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.

Many buildings are historical resources under this criterion because those resources embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, regional or method of construction, or because they possess high artistic value (regardless of the importance of the architect). Stanford and Forget Me Not History concluded the Cunningham Chapel and associated campanile do not qualify under these

[1] By contrast, prior City of Belmont historic surveys identified Ralston Hall, the Carriage House and the Taube Center as historic buildings on the NDNU campus.

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standards. We are in agreement that the Cunningham Chapel is not a distinctive example of modern architecture, a period of time, or a method of construction, nor does it possess high artistic value.

The only open question is whether the Cunningham Chapel is a historical resource because it "represents the work of an important creative individual." Both the California and National listing criteria previously referred to this criterion as work that represents the "work of a master." While the nomenclature has changed, the underlying definition has not.

The definition given by National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation is as follows:

> Works of a Master: A master is a **figure of generally recognized greatness in a field**, a known craftsman of consummate skill[2], or an anonymous craftsman whose work is distinguishable by its characteristic style and quality. The property must express a particular phase of the master's career, an aspect of his or her work, or a particular idea or theme in his or her craft. A property is not eligible as the work of a master, however, simply because it was designed by a prominent architect. For example, not every building designed by Frank Lloyd Wright is eligible under this portion of Criterion C, although it might meet other portions of the Criterion, for instance as a representative of the Prairie style.[3]

ASSESSMENT OF VINCENT RANEY BY FORGET ME NOT HISTORY

We have reviewed Forget Me Not History's information titled the "Supplemental Research of Vincent Raney". While the stated objective for presenting this information is "to better understand the depth and range of his religious architectural designs" (page 2), we note that the analysis does not focus upon Raney's religious designs. Eight of Raney's eleven church projects are briefly noted. Then six examples are given that are not church buildings: Sunshine House, United Airlines Office, Vincent Raney's home, Serra High School, Eimac Corporate Headquarters and Marywood High School (he also designed the chapel at Marywood). Further, no analysis of religious architecture is presented.

After months of research into Vincent Raney and Midcentury Modern church design, we did not find evidence to support the opinion that Raney is an "architect of merit." That does not mean that none of Raney's buildings are architecturally important. Several of his early career downtown movie theaters have been identified in popular sources as fine examples of art deco architecture (although we could not find any that are listed on a local, state or national register). Century 21 is a San Jose City Landmark and listed on the National Register as a rare surviving example of a suburban dome theater. (Century 21 is not listed however for its connection to Raney as a "master" or "architect of merit.") The Round House Café building at the Golden Gate Bridge was designed by Raney very early in his

[2] Stanford's Campus Historic Resources Survey evaluated the windows in the Cunningham Chapel to determine whether they best represent the work of Gabriel Loire, a craftsman of consummate skill. We found the windows did not best represent Loire's work and the City's peer reviewer has not disagreed with that conclusion.
[3] How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation (nps.gov) page 20 (emphasis added).

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career, it was completed in 1938, and has been found potentially eligible for listing as an element of the Golden Gate Bridge complex.[4]

The finding that the Chapel is significant as an important example of Raney's design work requires evidence that Raney was recognized by his peers and by architectural historians for greatness in his field as an influential and important designer. This recognition can be local or regional – an architect does not have to be world famous to achieve this standing. But they do need to meet some basic standards: recognition during their lifetime by their colleagues of their high skill and influence through awards and honors, and recognition in retrospect by architectural historians in published books and survey reports. Our research only found a single, local award for his work during his lifetime. A single project was featured in Architectural Record magazine. [5] Vincent Raney has not been recognized for greatness in his field on a national, statewide, regional or local level. One EIR preparer found the Marywood High School eligible for listing as the work of "master" architect Vincent Raney; this was not a decision by the State Historical Resources Commission. One building he designed has been listed as a local landmark and on the National Register, but not in association with Vincent Raney. Many local surveys and architectural histories have analyzed Midcentury Modern architecture in the San Francisco Bay Area – Raney is not featured in these reports. For a more than 55-year career designing hundreds of buildings these three achievements are not sufficient to place Vincent Raney in the status where a building should be preserved simply because he designed it and it represents his work.

The Chapel can be recorded and commemorated on a voluntary basis. The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur will receive the stained-glass windows into their care, and Stanford is prepared to record the entire structure with Historic American Buildings Survey photography, to be provided to the Belmont Historical Society. We believe this is the appropriate treatment for the property. Stanford's focus will be on the restoration of Ralston Hall and the Carriage House.

To support a conclusion that the Cunningham Chapel's architect, Vincent Raney, is an important creative individual (or in the peer reviewer's phrasing an "architect of merit"), Forget Me Not History references: (a) guidance published by the City and County of San Francisco for determining the relative importance of an architect; (b) use of "lift-slab" construction on some of Raney's projects; (c) an Environmental Impact Report prepared by a different lead agency; (d) a few articles highlighting some of his work; and (e) the description of the quantity and scope of Raney's projects found in his brief obituary. None of these items demonstrates Raney is a "figure of generally recognized greatness in the field" such that he meets the standard for an important creative individual under CEQA.

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[4] The Round House Gift Shop (previously the Round House Café) was determined eligible for listing on the National Register by the State Office of Historic Preservation in 1995 under Criterion A (Events). Letter from Cherilyn Widell, State Historic Preservation Officer to Fred Hempel, Federal Highway Administration. Included in the Historical Resources Evaluation Report for the Golden Gate Bridge Physical Suicide Deterrent System Project prepared by JRP Consulting for the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District. May 2008. A Historic Architectural Survey Report prepared by Caspar Mol for a 1995 seismic retrofit project and included as an appendix to the JRP Consulting document identified Vincent Raney as the architect for the Round House Cafe based on architectural drawings held by the Golden Gate Bridge District and an interview with Raney in 1993.

[5] "Methodist Group in California." *Architectural Record*, October 1946. Pages 100-101.

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A. City of San Francisco Guidance

Forget Me Not History has not cited or applied the best available guidance in determining whether an architect qualifies as "an important creative individual" for purposes of determining whether a structure is eligible for listing. The peer reviewer has cited and used a newly crafted definition for "architect of merit" presented in a draft form by the City of San Francisco. City of San Francisco draft guidance is not the applicable guidance for the City of Belmont's determination.

By contrast, official National Register Bulletins and criteria are used in interpreting and applying California Register criteria. National Register Bulletins are the best guidance documents available. The National Register definition of a "master architect" quoted in the regulatory background section of this memorandum, above, is the standard that should be applied by the City of Belmont. Under that standard, the evidence must demonstrate that Vincent Raney is a figure of generally recognized greatness in a field.

(It is notable that the City and County of San Francisco does not appear to consider Vincent Raney to be an important local architect. In 2011, the San Francisco Planning Office published a final context statement to be used in assessing San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935-1970.[6] The context statement provides biographies for those architects who had an active role in the development of modern design in San Francisco. Vincent Raney's biography is not among those included in the City's context statement. Further, San Francisco's website for its currently active survey project identifies 350 architects, landscape architects and builders as "notable" and/or "architects of merit."[7] Raney is not included in the 350 biographies prepared for this effort. Raney's practice was based in San Francisco for over 50 years, yet he is not considered by the City of San Francisco to be one of its top 350 architects.)

B. Use of Lift-Slab Construction

The peer reviewer's identification of "lift slab" concrete construction as "experimental" in assessing whether Vincent Raney is an important architect does not support the peer reviewer's conclusion.[8] This technique was not developed by Vincent Raney. Rather, this technique was first developed in 1950 in Texas to reduce form work and speed construction. (After a major accident in Bridgeport, Connecticut killed 28 construction workers in 1987 its use rapidly declined.) The peer reviewer notes that Raney's project at Serra High School (in 1954) injured four people when a slab fell as it was lifted into place. Being sued by a client for structural deficiencies (Christ the King Catholic Church) and having an industrial accident during construction of the Serra High School do not support the finding that Raney was an "architect of merit." These incidents seem instead to cast doubt on his work.

[6] https://sfplanninggis.org/docs/Historical_Context_Statements/Modern%20Architecture%20Context%20adopted%20Jan%202011.pdf

[7] https://sfplanning.org/project/architecture-planning-and-preservation-professionals-collection-biographies#info

[8] The City of San Francisco Draft Evaluation Framework cites "employment of innovative building materials" as a possible contribution to the "built environment." This technique does not appear to have been employed at Cunningham Chapel.

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Stanford's experts found these and other anecdotes during our research on Vincent Raney and did not present them in the Survey Report because they were not relevant to our analysis.

C. City of Orange EIR

An EIR prepared for the City of Orange for the Marywood Residential Development Project in 2015 identified the Marywood High School, and its Chapel, as potential historic resources.[9] The high school was not listed on the City of Orange's Historic Resources Inventory, or any other state or federal register or inventory. The historical preservation report for the project found the high school eligible for listing at the state and federal level for design quality and association with Vincent Raney as a "master" architect. [10] The City of Orange approved the project and the high school and chapel were demolished.

An EIR published by a different City (the City of Orange) is not binding on decisions by the City of Belmont. CEQA provides a presumption that a property is a historical resource if it has been determined eligible for listing on the California Register *by the State Historical Resources Commission.* (Guidelines section 15064.5(a)(1).) No such presumption applies to a discretionary determination by another city.

C. Articles

Articles highlighting an architect's work can be relevant, but most architects will have been highlighted by at least some publications. Standing alone, they do not indicate whether an architect is a figure of generally recognized greatness in the field. Forget Me Not History cites three articles as evidence of Raney's work being published: one in "Architectural Record", one in "Architect and Engineer", and in the "Travel and Leisure: Sacred Architecture Edition." These three articles do not constitute a systematic application of the standards used to assess the relative importance of an architect's skills and work.[11]

D. Volume of Work

Forget Me Not History cites a brief obituary of Vincent Raney as evidence of the number of types of projects that Raney designed. We were unable to confirm how many gas stations Raney designed – the peer reviewer uses the obituary to state that the number was 600. Other well-documented sources attribute 40 movie theater buildings to Raney; the City's peer reviewer uses the obituary figure of "over 100." Art collector Frederic Sharf interviewed Raney in connection with an exhibition of architectural renderings (by Raney and others) Sharf sponsored at the Heritage Plantation in Sandwich, Massachusetts in 2001. The exhibition catalog includes a five page biography of Raney

[9] Final Environmental Impact Report SCH No. 2015041033 Marywood Residential Development Project. Prepared for City of Orange by VCS Environmental, September 2015.
[10] Cultural and Paleontological Resources Survey, Marywood High School, City of Orange, Orange County, California. Prepared for VCS Consulting by JM Research and Consulting, September 2014. The report presents a summary of Raney's career but cites no scholarly sources for the finding that Raney is a recognized "master" architect apart from the National Register listing for the Century 21 Cinema.
[11] The *Travel and Leisure* article, providing a tour of San Francisco Bay Area Modern church buildings, does not include Cunningham Chapel.

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based on interview that took place at Raney's home in 1999 (Raney was 93 years old at the time of the interview). Raney shared his "job book" with Sharf, and it listed over 1000 "jobs."[12]

Vincent Raney had a long and varied career, but the evidence cited by the peer reviewer does not establish that it encompassed "building types at all scales." The types of buildings designed by Raney are more limited in scope than has been suggested: gas stations, movie theaters, school and church buildings and a smaller number of commercial buildings and homes. Similarly, the geographic breadth of his portfolio is mentioned as a reason for his significance but is not supported by any citations. Nor is the statement that his work "made a lasting impact on the World War II-era and postwar landscape of the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond." As discussed throughout this memo, we reviewed many sources identifying dozens of influential architects in the region during the post-War period and Vincent Raney was not featured in these architectural histories.[13]

The sheer number of projects and scope of work designed by an architect does not indicate the architect is a figure of generally recognized greatness in a field. This can merely indicate that an architect took on many assignments.

The brief analysis and evidence provided by Forget Me Not History does not change the opinion of Stanford's historic resources experts that Vincent Raney does not meet the standard for an important creative individual as used in the context of a CEQA determination whether a property is a historical resource.

FORGET ME NOT'S ASSESSMENT OF CUNNINGHAM CHAPEL AS REPRESENTATIVE OF VINCENT RANEY'S WORK

To be eligible as the work of a "master" under the established guidance provided by the National Register, a building "must express a particular phase in the development of the master's career, an aspect of his or her work, or a particular idea or theme in his or her craft." In evaluating whether Cunningham Chapel is eligible under this criterion, the City's peer reviewer lists an "array of styles and detailing" used by Raney in his church designs. These styles are not linked to a particular phase of Raney's work or to a specific idea or theme that is attributed to Vincent Raney. Rather, in discussing Cunningham Chapel, the peer reviewer links the design of Cunningham Chapel to the ideas proposed by Raney's clients, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur: a clear, clean and light building. The peer reviewer further cites the structural beams of the roof as being visible on the interior of the church. However, this attribute is an extremely common feature in churches, as are vestibules sheltering congregants before entering the sanctuary. At bottom, the peer reviewer's assessment seems to rely

[12] *Suburban America 1930-1970: an Architectural Perspective* by Fredric A. Sharf. Exhibition catalog. Heritage Plantation, Sandwich, Massachusetts. 2001.

[13] See for example *NorCalMod: Icons of Northen California Modernism*, by Pierluigi Serraino (2006). Also Cerny, Susan Dinkelspiel, Armstrong, Beth A. *An Architectural Guidebook to San Francisco and the Bay Area*. United States: Gibbs Smith, 2007. Weinstein, Dave. *Signature architects of the San Francisco Bay area*. Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith, 2006. Crowe, Michael F. *Deco by the Bay: Art Deco Architecture in the San Francisco Bay Area*. United Kingdom: Viking Studio Books, 1995.

upon a subjective opinion that the church is "refined" and exhibits a "high level of design" from the perspective of the peer reviewer, as no other sources are cited.[14]

As explained below, if Vincent Raney were to be considered an important creative individual as defined by the applicable guidance publications, no publication or other scholarly work cites the Cunningham Chapel at NDNU as an important building within Vincent Raney's portfolio of work. Rather, the works identified in surveys are the Century 21 theater in San Jose and Marywood High School in the City of Orange.

EVIDENCE SUPPORTING STANFORD'S CONCLUSION THAT VINCENT RANEY IS NOT A FIGURE OF GENERALLY RECOGNIZED GREATNESS IN THE FIELD

We provided a biography of Vincent Raney in the Campus Historic Resources survey prepared for this project, and further explained the conclusion that Vincent Raney does not meet the standard for an "important creative individual" in our submittal dated March 28, 2024. The following summarizes this previously submitted information.

Architect Vincent Raney was born in Indiana in 1905. His father was a builder. Vincent graduated from architecture school in 1930 and moved to San Francisco the same year, beginning his career as a draftsman and then opening his own practice in San Francisco in 1936. Raney's architecture office remained in San Francisco at 233 Post Street until his retirement in 1990. Raney lived in San Francisco as well between 1932 and 1955 and maintained an apartment there even after building a home in Belmont.

Vincent Raney and his wife Edna May Brown Raney built a home on Ralston Avenue in about 1955 on land purchased from the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur for whom he had already designed several buildings. Edna Raney was a NDNU alumna and their daughter attended the Notre Dame de Namur High School. While Raney was active in local social and civic affairs in Belmont, he does not appear to have designed buildings or homes in Belmont apart from his work for the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur and his personal residence.

Vincent Raney's career fell into three distinct periods:

1. Gas stations and downtown cinemas (1936-1947)
2. Schools and churches (1948-1962)
3. Large cinema complexes (1964-1995)

He also designed a handful of commercial buildings and private homes. Sharf's interview with Raney included references to apartments for workers during World War 2 and model homes as well. [15]Raney was a talented draftsman, and his illustrations of his building projects are collectible today. However, these facts do not establish him as a figure of generally recognized greatness in a field.

The status of "master" architect requires evidence that Raney was recognized by his peers and by architectural historians as an influential and important designer. This recognition can be local or

[14] The reviewer notes that Raney's First Methodist Church was included in the 1946 edition of Architectural Record featuring church architecture.
[15] Sharf, 2001.

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regional – an architect does not have to be world famous to achieve this standing. But they do need to meet some basic standards: for example, election by their colleagues to the College of Fellows of the Architecture Institute of American is a test that thousands of architects have met. Raney was a member of the AIA but was not honored with the election to Fellow. There are also thousands of architects who have received design awards for individual projects and/or their entire body of work. Dozens of these award-winning architects have practiced in the San Francisco Bay Area. As far as we could find, Raney received perhaps one or two local awards over a half century of architectural practice. The City of San Francisco, where Raney practiced for over 50 years, recently identified 350 architects, landscape architects and builders who "contributed to the built environment."[16] Raney is not included. There is not sufficient evidence to support finding Raney a "master" architect of such importance that a building would be significant simply because he designed it or that it is representative of a particular aspect of his work.

We provided the following explanation as to why Vincent Raney does not meet the applicable criteria for a figure of generally recognized greatness in our March 28 submittal:

Evidence for "generally recognized greatness" can include honors and awards during their lifetime and contemporary publication of their projects. Vincent Raney's work produced a few mentions of projects in trade publications and a few local awards. "Greatness" requires a higher level of recognition – for example, the American Institute of Architects Gold Medal awarded annually to recognize "individuals whose work has had a lasting influence on the theory and practice of architecture." [17]The AIA Gold Medal is undoubtably the most reliable source of evidence for "greatness" in architects, and while it is a "high bar" there are multiple San Francisco Bay Area architects among the winners. Vincent Raney is not among them.

Another key indicator is whether an architect was elected by their peers to the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects (FAIA) for "exceptional work and contributions to architecture and society."[18] This is a strong threshold for further exploration of whether an architect might be a "figure of generally recognized greatness." Raney was a member of the AIA but was not elected to the College of Fellows.

Evidence of recognition during an architect's career is important but evidence for significance as a "master" should ALSO include recognition in scholarly sources (books, articles, dissertations) that take a retrospective and comparative view of the work in the context of its time and geographic region. This is consistent with guidance that "sufficient time must have passed to gain a scholarly perspective." (See National Register reference cited above.) This approach also addresses potential biases in contemporary sources created by architectural firms' marketing efforts and political influence held by architects serving on public review boards, as Raney did in Belmont and San Mateo.

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[16] "Architecture, Planning, and Preservation Professionals: A Collection of Biographies," adopted by the City's Historic Preservation Commission in 2023. City of San Francisco, viewed at https://sfplanning.org/project/architecture-planning-and-preservation-professionals-collection-biographies

[17] https://www.aia.org/design-excellence/awards/gold-medal. 80 architects have been awarded the Gold Medal.

[18] https://www.aia.org/design-excellence/college-of-fellows .

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For example, a search in Google Scholar for "Frank Lloyd Wright" yields over 36,000 scholarly sources. Wright was clearly a "figure of generally recognized greatness." (Wright was also an AIA Gold Medal recipient.) Searching for local architect Joseph Esherick, Raney's contemporary (also a Fellow of the AIA and an AIA Gold Medal winner), yielded dozens of scholarly articles discussing his work in transcendent philosophical language ("The Panopticon of Childhood…", "Utopia by the Sea," "Anatomy Against Composition…"). A search for "Vincent Raney architect" yielded a handful of references to Raney in popular publications (Petaluma: A History in Architecture, Petaluma in Vintage Postcards), but no publications focusing on his work exclusively or addressing important aesthetic or social themes in his work. This is not evidence to support a finding that Raney was a "figure of generally recognized greatness." A national database of theses and dissertations was searched and no works on Vincent Raney were present.

There are a number of scholarly publications that identify important Modern architects in the Post World War II era in the region. For example, the widely cited NorCalMod: Icons of Northen California Modernism book, by Pierluigi Serraino (2006) presents 288 pages of projects and biographies of 35 important architects in the region. Raney was not included.

Raney's office was in San Francisco and he designed a number of projects in that city. the San Francisco Modern Architecture and Landscape Design 1935-1970 Historic Context Statement references over 60 architects identified by the authors as "Master Architect" and over 100 additional architects as "influential." Vincent Raney does not appear in this publication.[19]

Vincent Raney designed a handful of showy cinemas in San Jose. The San Jose Modernism Historic Context Statement identified 109 architects/firms with "major accomplishments" in the city.[20] Vincent Raney does not appear in this publication.

EVIDENCE SUPPORTING STANFORD'S CONCLUSION THAT, EVEN IF VINCENT RANEY WERE A FIGURE OF GENERALLY RECOGNIZED GREATNESS IN THE FIELD, THE CUNNINGHAM CHAPEL WOULD NOT BEST REPRESENT A PHASE OF HIS WORK

As noted above, the National Park Service guidance on how to assess the work of a "master architect" explains:

> The property must express a particular phase of the master's career, an aspect of his or her work, or a particular idea or theme in his or her craft.

Vincent Raney is best known for roadside architecture and in particular movie theaters.[21] His art deco gas stations and downtown movie theaters had eye-catching neon signs and streamline modern striping and porthole elements, as well as glassed in storefront lobbies. Raney designed over thirty large cinema projects – the Century, Cinemark, and Cinedome theaters – for Syufy Enterprises across

[19] http://sfplanninggis.org/docs/Historical_Context_Statements/Modern%20Architecture%20Context%20adopted%20Jan%202011.pdf (Page 207, also Appendix B.)
[20] https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showdocument?id=77217 (Page 107).
[21] https://formfunctionart.com/vincent-raney/

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the western United States including the first Century Theater (Century 21) on property purchased from the (Sarah) Winchester Mystery House in San Jose (in 1964).

These large cinemas, and the dome cinemas in particular, were deliberately designed to be eye-catching and futuristic and epitomize "roadside architecture" in expanding post-war suburban cities. Century 21 was the second "dome" theater built to showcase widescreen technology. The first, the Hollywood Cinerama Dome, was designed by Welton Becket and opened in 1963.[22] The dome designs were inspired by Buckminster Fuller's geodesic domes developed in the late 1940s and 1950s, that enabled extremely large interior volumes without support columns that blocked views. Raney borrowed the dome concept and ran with it, creating a portfolio of ever expanding Cinedome properties that became local roadside landmarks in the heyday of American cinema.

Several of his early career downtown movie theaters have been identified in popular sources as fine examples of art deco architecture (although we could not find any that are listed on a local, state or national register). His later design for Century 21 is a San Jose City Landmark and listed on the National Register as a rare surviving example of a suburban dome theater.

If Raney were to be considered a figure of generally recognized greatness in the field, the Century 21 theater in San Jose likely would be considered the best example of his work.

Raney is not as well known for the second phase of his career. Raney advertised his institutional work as "economical and low maintenance."[23] He used textured materials (brick, stone veneer, and exposed aggregate) and tower elements to mark the front entries of otherwise plain buildings.

There is no comprehensive list of Raney's projects – he published a brochure in 1960 that lists some projects and we found others by searching newspaper archives. Our research identified eleven church projects, designed between 1948 and 1961. The Cunningham Chapel at NDNU, completed in 1961, was one of the last church projects in his portfolio. The textured surface and bell tower are typical of Raney's work during this period. One of his earliest churches, Saint Ann Anglican Chapel in Palo Alto, completed in 1951, has a similar low-pitched roof and flanking bell tower but used brick to create visual texture. Raney's design for St Gregory School Chapel in Tiburon, also completed in 1951, used rustic stone veneer and a flanking bell tower at its front entry. (None of Raney's churches appear to have been listed as local landmarks.)

None of Vincent Raney's churches appear to be important examples in the scholarly literature. Hundreds of new churches were constructed in the rapidly expanding suburbs of California in the new Midcentury Modern style. Our Campus Historic Resources Survey published for this project provides some examples of modern churches noted in the scholarly literature.

Our Campus Historic Resources Survey further explains why the Cunningham Chapel and associated campanile are not strong examples of modern architecture:

[22] https://www.laconservancy.org/learn/historic-places/cinerama-dome/

[23] Vincent Raney, "1000 Projects," unpaginated, undated brochure published by Vincent Raney, Inc. NDNU Archives. Appears to date to circa 1960.

> To be eligible, "a property must clearly contain enough of those (distinctive) characteristics to be considered a true representative of a particular type, period, or method of construction." The Chapel at Notre Dame de Namur University exhibits some popular features of Midcentury Modern church style: a glass nartex (vestibule) entry, a shallow-pitched roof and exposed structural beams. This is a relatively conservative expression of Modernism and appears to take its cues from the shallow end-gabled roof of the earlier Chapel (now the Taube Center). It does not exhibit the flat roof, parabolic arch roof, or A-frame that exemplify better known examples. The colored stained glass windows are also Modern in style. However, the extensive decoration of the interior with religious art and the placement of the colored stained glass windows along the length and back of the Chapel depart from the trend towards simplicity and light focused on the altar as a single focal point that characterized this period of church architecture, and yet does not achieve the dramatic effects of the more elaborate expressionist examples.
>
> To be eligible for listing as an important example of Midcentury Modern church architecture, the building should be an "important example (within its context) of building practices of a particular time in history." The Cunningham Chapel at Notre Dame de Namur University is not cited as an important example of Midcentury Modern architecture in any of the scholarship on Postwar churches. Within a comparative framework, the Cunningham Chapel does not appear to embody Midcentury Modern church architecture to the extent that it would be eligible for listing on the California Register.
>
> (Footnotes omitted)

To the extent the second phase of Vincent Raney's work is notable, the AIA's 1970 Directory of Architects identifies Marywood High School as an important example from this phase of his career.[24] None of his churches are identified as important examples of his work.

The Cunningham Chapel at NDNU is an attractive building and many members of the community have had important life experiences there. We evaluated the qualifications of its architect, Vincent Raney, and also compared the chapel to other Modern churches in California and to other examples of Vincent Raney's work. Based on the applicable criteria and the entire body of evidence, the Cunningham Chapel and associated campanile are not architecturally significant at the level that would qualify them to be historical resources under CEQA.

[24] https://content.aia.org/sites/default/files/2018-09/Bowker_1970_R.pdf.

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APPENDIX E4:
CULTURAL RESOURCE SERVICES – CEQA LEVEL
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

As described in Chapter 4.4, *Cultural Resources*, of this Draft EIR, the archaeological resources report, listed below, that was prepared for the proposed project is not included in Appendix E because it contains confidential information on the location of archaeological resources, and is therefore not available for public review:

Cultural Resource Services: CEQA Level Archaeological Resources Assessment Belmont Notre Dame de Namur Campus, prepared by Colin I. Busby, Ph.D., RPA, Basin Research Associates.

Appendix E5: Appendix to Archaeological Assessment Report, Notre Dame de Namur University Campus

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

As described in Chapter 4.4, Cultural Resources, of this Draft EIR, the archaeological resources report, listed below, that was prepared for the proposed project is not included in Appendix E because it contains confidential information on the location of archaeological resources, and is therefore not available for public review:

Appendix to Archaeological Assessment Report, Notre Dame de Namur University Campus Prepared by Stanford University Heritage Services.