

HISTORIC RESOURCES EVALUATION REPORT

Peninsula School – Building 1 San Mateo County, California

Prepared for:
The Peninsula School

July 2024



First Group Building (Building 1), 1931
Source: Courtesy of the Peninsula School

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HISTORIC RESOURCES EVALUATION

Introduction

This Historic Resources Evaluation (HRE) report provides an historical and architectural analysis of a 1930 English Cottage Revival style classroom building located at the Peninsula School at 920 Peninsula Way in Menlo Park, California. The study evaluates the potential historic significance of the building using state evaluation criteria in anticipation of a proposed project which may demolish this building in the future. The evaluation presented in this report is based on an intensive-level field survey and a detailed records search on the history of the property. Brewster Historic Preservation, a consulting firm founded by professional architectural historian and preservation planner, Brad Brewster, was contracted to prepare this HRE report on behalf of the school administration.

Project Description

Located in unincorporated San Mateo County, the project site is occupied by Building 1, a single-story classroom building containing approximately 1,250 square feet of interior space that was built in 1930. It is the intention of the school to eventually demolish this building and replace it with another school building at some point in the future. As the building is more than 45 years old and is planned for demolition, the San Mateo County Planning Department has requested that it be evaluated by a qualified architectural historian for its potential historical significance against the criteria established by the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR).

Previous Surveys and Historical Status

Located at the center of the Peninsula School is the Coleman Mansion, an elaborate, Italianate style former residence that was completed in 1882 by James and Carmelita Coleman, and was converted to educational use in 1925 when the Peninsula School of Creative Education was founded. This building is listed in the California Register of Historical Places with a status code of '3S,' meaning that it was found to be individually eligible for listing in the California Register as a result of a survey and evaluation.¹ The *James Valentine Coleman House* is also a California Point of Historical Interest, designated as such in 1971.² None of the other 13 buildings or structures at the Peninsula School that were built between 1930 and 2001, including the subject

¹ Office of Historic Preservation, Built Environment Resource Directory (BERD), San Mateo County, *Coleman Mansion*, Primary # 41-4025-01, Accessed July 1, 2024.

² Office of Historic Preservation, California Historical Resources, California Points of Historical Interest, *James Valentine Coleman Home*, designated May 19, 1971. Accessed July 3, 2024.

building, have been the subject of any formal surveys or evaluations for their potential historic significance.

Location



Figure 1. Location Map - Aerial Photo
Google Earth, 2024

Methodology of this Study

This study is presented in a report format that addresses solely Building 1 at the Peninsula School. The report includes a detailed architectural description, historical and architectural context, regulatory context, evaluation of historical significance according to criteria of the CRHR, and assessment of integrity, CEQA considerations and recommended future evaluations, as well as a bibliography of primary and secondary sources of information.

The property was the subject of an intensive-level survey on June 25, 2024 by Brad Brewster of Brewster Historic Preservation. Digital photographs of the exterior and interior of Building 1 and surrounding site were taken at that time. Historical research was also conducted by Brad Brewster of Brewster Historic Preservation, and included review of published sources, building plans, building records, and historic photographs provided by the Peninsula School, historical

information provided by the San Mateo County Historical Museum, and numerous online sources. The research and historical investigation was prepared utilizing the methodology recommended by the National Park Service, as outlined in Preservation Briefs # 15, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (1995), #17 -*Architectural Character: Identifying the Visual Aspects of Historic Buildings as an Aid to Preserving Their Character* (1988), and #35 -*Understanding Old Buildings: The Process of Architectural Investigation* (1994).

Qualifications of the Consultant

The principal author of this report was Brad Brewster, Architectural Historian and Preservation Planner, who consults in the field of historic architecture and urban development. In addition to 29 years of consulting experience, Mr. Brewster has a master's degree in Urban Planning, with a master's certificate in Historic Preservation from the University of Washington, Seattle. Mr. Brewster is the principal and founder of Brewster Historic Preservation. Also see: <http://www.brewsterpreservation.com>

Brad Brewster is qualified to complete this work as a member of the historic resources services list of qualified consultants under the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), which is operated under authority of the California State Office of Historic Preservation. Mr. Brewster also meets the Secretary of the Interior's qualifications to perform identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment activities within the field of Architectural History in compliance with state and federal environmental laws. Mr. Brewster's professional qualifications can be found in **Appendix A**.

Summary of Findings

After an intensive-level survey and evaluation of Building 1 at the Peninsula School in Menlo Park by a qualified architectural historian, the 1930-era English Cottage Revival style classroom building is recommended ineligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) because it does not meet any of the State evaluation criteria for listing as an historical resource. As a building that would not qualify as an historical resource, its potential removal and replacement with a new educational building would result in no significant impacts to historic architectural resources as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Additional building and site evaluations are recommended for future projects that could demolish or substantially alter other campus buildings that are 45 years old or older, as well as potential direct and indirect project effects to the significance of the historic Coleman Mansion (i.e. Big Building) resulting from adjacent new construction.

Architectural Description

Building 1 at Peninsula School is located near the southeast corner of the 6.6-acre campus and approximately 220 feet to the southeast of the historic Big Building. Building 1 is accessed from Peninsula Way through a decorative wooden gate and is surrounded by open playground areas as well as mature Oaks and various shrubs. Provided below is a detailed description of the exterior and interior of the building, the site/landscape setting, the building's visible exterior and interior

alterations, as well as a discussion of its architectural style. Contemporary photos of the exterior and interior of the property and its general setting are provided below in **Figures 2 – 17**, beginning on page 5.

Exterior

Completed in 1930, Building 1 at Peninsula School is a small, 1,250-square-foot, single-story classroom building with an irregular cruciform plan constructed of wood framing over a raised, concrete perimeter foundation. The steeply-pitched, cross-gable roof with multiple dormers and close eaves is clad in gray asphalt shingles. The north gable end of the roof is flared in a decorative, picturesque manner. All gutters and downspouts are made of galvanized metal. Small, wood framed attic vents are found on all four gable ends of the building as well as on various peaked dormers. Exterior wall surfaces are clad primarily in stucco, with a portion of the west gable end clad in wood shingles. The spandrel wall area on this west gable end, as well as a small portion of the spandrel area on the north elevation, are clad in a carved wood paneling in the form of a decorative balustrade. The primary entry on the west elevation is deeply recessed within a decorative arched entryway and contains a replacement wood paneled half lite front door. Other doors on the south and west elevations are similar replacement wood paneled half lite doors. Windows are original wood frame, multi-pane units with casement sashes arranged in groups such as pairs, triples, quadruples, and quintuples, with a multi-pane transom located over the large window on the south elevation. Window trim and sills are wood. A concrete patio is located on the southwest corner of the building covered by a metal pipe and fabric awning. Another metal pipe and fabric awning is located over the large window on the south elevation. Both awnings and the patio were installed in 2000 (see discussion of alterations, below).

Interior

The interior of Building 1 consists of five primary rooms; 1) the main classroom with a high, chamfered ceiling and walls clad in stucco, linoleum flooring, wood bookcases on the south wall, and hanging florescent light fixtures, 2) a kitchen with remodeled wood cabinetry, Formica countertops, and newer appliances, 3) an entry vestibule with two separated toilet rooms, an enameled metal wall-mounted sink, and contemporary wood cabinetry, 4) a small office, and 5) a small sitting room – all with chamfered ceilings. All interior wall and floor surfaces consist of modern materials.

Site/Landscaping

The landscaping around Building 1 is minimal consisting primarily of sand and dirt play lots to the south and west of the building, as well as various play structures such as a swing set, two rope swings, two slides, and a wooden boat. A wood fence with an integrated entrance gate is located to the west along the driveway leading from Peninsula Way. Planting materials around the site consist of Coast Live Oak trees and various shrubs.



Figure 2. West elevation, view looking east



Figure 3. South and west elevations including exterior covered patio, view looking northeast



Figure 4. Detail view of covered patio area, view looking northeast



Figure 5. South elevation, view looking north



Figure 6. East and partial south elevations, view looking west



Figure 7. North elevation showing flared roofline, view looking generally south



Figure 8. Partial west and north elevations showing primary entry, view looking generally southeast



Figure 9. Interior of main classroom, view looking southeast



Figure 10. Interior of main classroom, view looking northwest



Figure 11. Interior of kitchen, view looking east



Figure 12. Interior of office, view looking north



Figure 13. Interior of sitting room, view looking west



Figure 14. Interior of entry vestibule and toilet rooms, view looking north



Figure 15. Adjacent play yard showing slides and swing sets, view looking southeast



Figure 16. Adjacent play yard showing wooden ship structure, view looking north



Figure 17. Fenced entry to Building 1 along Peninsula Way, view looking northeast

Alterations

Visible exterior alterations to the building include the metal pipe and fabric awnings located on the southwest corner and south elevation, the concrete patio on the southwest corner of the building, replacement wood paneled doors with half lites, newer asphalt shingle roof cladding, galvanized metal gutters and downspouts, and nearly all interior surfaces and fixtures. According to the Peninsula School, the asphalt shingle roof was replaced in 1992, and a substantial renovation occurred in 2000 that included termite tenting, dry rot repairs, plaster repairs, all new copper plumbing and substantial electrical wiring, lighting, windows, gutters and downspouts, finished flooring, complete repainting, and a kitchen remodel with new appliances.³ It is presumed that the exterior doors were replaced and the concrete patio was installed at this time as well.

Architectural Style

Completed in 1930, Building 1 at Peninsula School is an English Cottage Revival style classroom building, exhibited by its steeply-pitched cross-gable roof form with decoratively flared elements and close eaves, multiple dormers, stucco siding, wood shingle cladding on the west gable end, carved wood decorative balustrade along two spandrel panels, wood frame, multi-pane units windows with casement sashes arranged in groups, and the recessed entry beneath an arched entryway. The English Cottage Revival style of architecture was a modest subset of the Tudor Revival style, which was a popular style of residential construction in the United States between 1890 and 1940 (see discussion of the history of the style, below).

Historic Context

The following historic context has been adapted and summarized from four primary sources; *The Menlo Park General Plan Open Space, Conservation, Noise and Safety Elements* (City of Menlo Park, 2013), *The Coleman Mansion: Peninsula School's Big Building* (Bernard Young, 1982, Revised 2001), *Life on Two Levels: An Autobiography* (Josephine Whitney Duveneck, 1978), and *Peninsula School Long Range Facilities Plan, Final Working Draft*, (Frank Smithson, Jerry Hearn, Kathy Koo & David Quinn, May 14, 2010).

Brief History of Menlo Park

The City of Menlo Park was originally the home of Ohlone Indians. The Ohlone lived off the land and due to the abundance of food they did not practice agriculture. Evidence of their civilization are still being unearthed on the Filoli estate in Woodside, and along San Francisquito Creek.

In 1769 Spanish rule was introduced to the area when the exploration party led by Don Gaspar de Portola camped near “El Palo Alto” after their momentous discovery of San Francisco Bay. The colonizing of the Peninsula began after the expedition of Juan Bautista DeAnza passed through Menlo Park on its way to establishing Mission Dolores and the Presidio of San Francisco in 1776.

³ *Peninsula School Long Range Facilities Plan, Final Working Draft*, Prepared by Frank Smithson, Jerry Hearn, Kathy Koo & David Quinn, May 14, 2010,

The mission padres, explorers, military personnel, travelers and settlers occupied certain areas, developing and populating the land.

In 1854 Dennis J. Oliver and Daniel McGlynn purchased 1,700 acres from the Don Jose Dario Arguello family that had legally obtained the title to the land in 1853. Around this time Menlo Park received its official name when Oliver and McGlynn erected an arch with the words “Menlo Park” on it to honor their former home in Menlough, County, Galway, Ireland.

In 1863, the Southern Pacific Railroad was extended to the community of Menlo Park. During this same period, the downtown area of Menlo Park began to develop along Oak Grove Avenue between the railroad station and El Camino Real. By 1870, twelve buildings situated between the railroad station and El Camino Real in the vicinity of Oak Grove Avenue were constructed, consisting of two general stores, three hotels, livery stables, saloons, and three blacksmith shops. The first store in Menlo Park was on the corner of Oak Grove Avenue and El Camino Real.

On March 23, 1874, Menlo Park became the second incorporated city in San Mateo County, although only for a short time. The purpose was to provide a quick way to raise money for road repairs. This incorporation, including Fair Oaks (later Atherton) and Ravenswood (later East Palo Alto), lasted only until 1876. Churches were founded, schools were opened, and businesses were established. Menlo Park’s population increased slowly until World War I. In 1917, 27,000 soldiers were stationed at Camp Fremont in Menlo Park. Menlo Park’s first gas and water services, its first paved streets, and an increase in businesses were a direct result of the transient military population.

The original Dumbarton Bridge opened in 1927, connecting the South Bay and East Bay. In 1931, the Bayshore Highway (now Highway 101) linked Menlo Park and San Francisco. In 1940, Menlo Park’s population was 3,258. World War II brought about many changes in the small town. Between 1943 and 1946 another military installation, Dibble General Hospital, was built on the old Timothy Hopkins estate to care for the thousands of soldiers injured in the South Pacific in World War II. Following World War II, in the 1950s, the hospital campus became the site of the Menlo Park Civic Center, Stanford Research Institute (today’s SRI International), and the United States Geological Survey. Today Menlo Park is a suburban residential community with a variety of businesses, including high-tech industries.

Brief History of the Peninsula School

Founded in 1925 as the of Peninsula School of Creative Education by its first director, Josephine Duveneck, and her husband, Frank Duveneck, along with other local educators and leaders, the school had been searching for two years for a property where children could be educated with direct, ‘learn by doing’ experiences, exposing them to the ‘full richness of human culture from the arts, sciences, history, literature, and practical arts and crafts while allowing them to follow their own inclinations for play, experimentation, and contemplation.’⁴ The founders came upon the old Coleman Mansion in Menlo Park, which had been completed in 1882, but had been

⁴ Bernard Young, *The Coleman Mansion: Peninsula School’s Big Building*, 1982, Revised 2001.

abandoned for many years and was owned by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of San Francisco which used it as a seminary beginning in 1923.⁵ When the founders heard the Coleman Mansion including 10 acres of surrounding land was available to rent for only \$100 per month, they agreed to move the school to the property which was far too large for their needs but was too inexpensive to pass up. The founders formed a non-profit corporation named the Peninsula School for Creative Education, and with only \$2,500 for equipment and supplies, the school opened up in September 1925 to 45 children divided into five groups covering eight grade levels. Many of the first teachers were parents of the school children. The school was such an initial success that in the next few weeks after opening, and before the end of the first school year, there were nearly 70 students.⁶

The former Coleman Mansion, which became known as the Big Building, was adapted for use as a school with some of the larger rooms divided into two rooms to accommodate the growing student body, and playing fields took over areas where once been formal gardens had flourished. Large areas surrounding the Big Building were left in a semi-wild state to that children could play, make forts, or study nature.

By 1928 enthusiasm and support for the young school was growing and enrollment grew to 102 students. It is in this context that the school purchased the property from the Catholic Archdiocese in 1929 for \$26,500, with a downpayment of \$10,000, the majority of which came from the parents of the children enrolled in the school. Buoyed by their success and enthusiasm, the parents and staff began to make a number of changes to the school's physical plant. Interior changes were made to the Big Building and an old barn was moved from the nearby Schwabacher estate onto the school and remodeled to become additional learning space.

Through the proceeds raised by selling off two acres of land and through the generous donations of school benefactors, two new school buildings modeled after English cottages were built in 1930-1931, in addition to a woodshop building and a ceramics work room.⁷ One of these new buildings was Building 1 which was designed as a Kindergarten classroom, and was completed in 1930 (see Site Specific History, below). The other was Building 5 which was designed as a nursery building, and was completed in 1931.

⁵ Built in 1882, the Coleman Mansion is likely the largest and oldest Victorian-era residence on the lower part of the San Francisco Peninsula. Built at a then-astronomical cost of over \$100,000 and designed by San Francisco architect Augustus Laver (who also designed the Flood Mansion in San Francisco, now the Pacific Union Club), it is considered a prime example of the Italianate style of architecture which was popular in the 1870s and 1880s. The mansion was built as a wedding gift for Carmelita Nuttall Coleman (1861 - 1885), the wife of James Valentine Coleman (1852 - 1919). After the untimely death of Carmelita Coleman in 1885, the mansion was abandoned by James Coleman, suffering many years of neglect as well as intentional vandalism. Its original 22 rooms were reduced to 14 when the back of the building was removed in the early 20th Century, and it was stripped of many of its finer interior architectural elements. Having been bought and sold numerous times but rarely occupied, the property was finally occupied by the Peninsula School of Creative Education in 1925, where the 'Big Building' has been used ever since for instructional and administrative purposes (Young, 1982/2001).

⁶ Bernard Young, *The Coleman Mansion: Peninsula School's Big Building*, 1982, Revised 2001.

⁷ Duvencek, 1978, and Young, 1982/2001. In 1930-31, Building 1 was originally called 'Group Building 1,' and the nursery building (Building 5) was called 'Group Building 2.' The benefactors included Mrs. Matthew Harris, Mrs. Chauncy Goodrich, Mrs. Edward Heller, and others. The woodshop was converted for use as a classroom in the late-1960s, then as a small gymnasium in the late-1970s, was further altered in 1996, and is now known as 'The Garage.'

Distinguished visitors began coming to the school including Diego Rivera, the Mexican muralist, who was impressed by the children's art and particularly by their murals which covered several walls inside the Big Building. By this time, however, the Great Depression of the early 1930s began to disrupt the economic and social life of the country, and for the next 10 years, the young school struggled to meet its expenses. Parents found it difficult to pay tuition, income dwindled, and foreclosure on the mortgage became a possibility. The school was able to survive the difficult years of the 1930s and the war years which followed through a 'combination of romantic vision, grit, commitment to basic principles and willingness to make things work.'⁸ After serving as the school's director and head mistress for some 15 years, Josephine Duveneck retired in 1940.

To relieve a heavy financial deficit, an additional two acres of the school's land was sold for \$9,300 in 1945. In that same year a small fire broke out inside the crafts shed which alerted the Fire Department to the precarious and potentially unsafe condition of the school buildings. The Fire Marshal demanded a number of changes be made to the Big Building for fire safety purposes including a new ceiling to be installed over the central assembly room which cut it off from the skylight above, the covering of all fireplaces, and the removal of the second floor balcony and the entire third or attic floor, all of which were completed by the end of 1946.

The school flourished in the Post-War Period (1945 – 1970) and beyond with additional enrollment and the introduction of many new educational ideas, practices, and programs. Additional buildings were added to the campus during this period to accommodate the growing student body, including four new classrooms for third through eighth grades that were built in 1960 on the west side of the campus (Buildings 6, 7, 8 and 9), and two new classrooms that were built in 1965 on the east side of the campus (Buildings 3 and 4).⁹ The classrooms added in the 1960s were necessitated by the condemnation of classrooms located on the second floor of the Big Building for fire safety purposes, as well as the result of a 1960 Master Plan which proposed demolition of the Big Building in favor a modern school structure, which thankfully never came to pass due to a lack of funds. Regardless, nearly \$300,000 had been raised to pay for the six new classroom buildings during this period. In 1965 the decision was made to retain and restore the Big Building, and after two years of mostly volunteer effort and the expenditure of an additional \$80,000, the restoration and life-safety upgrades to the historic Big Building were completed by September, 1967.¹⁰

The Peninsula school continued to flourish through the 1970s, and by 1972, enrollment had reached 230 students. To accommodate additional junior high students, a new 2,000-square-foot Jr. High Building was completed on the west side of the campus for the 1974-1975 school year.¹¹

⁸ Bernard Young, *The Coleman Mansion: Peninsula School's Big Building*, 1982, Revised 2001.

⁹ Frank Smithson, Jerry Hearn, Kathy Koo & David Quinn, *Peninsula School Long Range Facilities Plan, Final Working Draft*, 2010. Classroom Buildings 3 and 4 were originally portable structures built over a decade earlier and made available by the Redwood City schools at a cost of \$200 each, and relocated/reassembled at the Peninsula School in in 1965. The classroom buildings, which were intended to house a nursery group and a primary group, were disassembled and relocated to the Peninsula school with the help of students and parent volunteers (Young, 1982/2001). It is unknown when the old Schwabacher barn was demolished, but it was likely in the 1960s to make way for the new classroom buildings.

¹⁰ Bernard Young, *The Coleman Mansion: Peninsula School's Big Building*, 1982, Revised 2001.

¹¹ *Ibid.* For a week in the fall of 1974, the Big Building and surrounding yard were used as backdrops for the Disney film *Escape to Witch Mountain*, using students as paid extras in the film (Young, 1982/2001).

The following year in 1976, a new Kindergarten building (Building 2), was constructed on the east side of the campus to house the afternoon Kindergarten class. This modern, single-story, 1,350-square-foot building with redwood siding was built by volunteer efforts by Peninsula School staff, parents, and students.

Two new buildings were added to the west side of the campus in the mid-1990s to provide needed space for a continuously growing student body, including a new 1,750-square-foot Gymnasium (previously, the former woodshop had served as a small gymnasium), and a 998-square-foot Campus Cottage, both of which were completed in 1997. Finally, Building 1 received a substantial interior renovation as well as the addition of exterior canopies in 2000, and Building 5 was substantially remodeled and expanded in 2001, which included the removal and the reconstruction/expansion of an earlier addition on its east elevation.

Site Specific History

As described above, Building 1 was completed in 1930 in the first effort to expand the school's facilities to accommodate growing enrollment for Kindergarten through eighth grade classes following its founding in 1925. Having secured the necessary funds through the sale of two acres of land, as well as through generous donations from various benefactors, the school hired San Francisco architect Charles K. Sumner to design two English Cottage Revival style buildings known as Group Building 1 (Building 1) and Group Building 2 (Building 5), the latter completed in 1931. See Brief Biography of Charles K. Sumner, below.¹²

In an agreement dated July 23, 1930, the Peninsula School of Creative Education hired Peninsula contractor Edward J. Schmaling to build the 'Group 1 Building' in accordance with the plans provided by architect Charles K. Sumner, in no more than 90 days and at a cost of \$3,460.¹³ The agreement specified that the fireplace and chimney in Sumner's design be omitted, and the 'exterior walls to be covered with stucco instead of shingles except in small portions as may be directed.'¹⁴ Sumner's original hand-drawn plans for Group Building 1 on file at the Peninsula School have been reproduced in **Figures 18** through **20**, on the following page. Photos taken of Building 1 in the early 1930s and supplied by the Peninsula School are provided in **Figures 21** through **23** on pages 19 and 20.

Building 1 has been used almost continuously since its completion in 1930 for Kindergarten education. In 1976, a new Kindergarten building (Building 2) was added immediately to the north, which provided for afternoon Kindergarten instruction in the context of growing student enrollment during this period. In 1992, Building 1 received a new asphalt shingle roof, and in 2000, the interior was substantially remodeled, three exterior doors were replaced, a concrete

¹² Bernard Young, *The Coleman Mansion: Peninsula School's Big Building*, 1982, Revised 2001. This reference mentions that Buildings 1 and 2 were designed 'under the skilled direction of the architect, Ernest Kump, a Peninsula parent.' Although Ernest Kump (1911 – 1999) designed over 100 schools in California and resided in Palo Alto, it seems very unlikely he had any involvement with the design as he would have been only 19-20 years old when Buildings 1 and 5 were designed and built in 1930-1931. In addition, he is not known to have collaborated with Sumner on any projects nor was he known to have designed any buildings on the Peninsula School campus. Charles K. Sumner is identified as the architect on all building plans and contracts associated with the construction of Building 1.

¹³ *Articles of Agreement*, Group Building 1, July 23, 1930.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

patio was installed, and the exterior canopies on the south and southwest elevations were installed. The building remains essentially unchanged since the 2000 remodeling effort.

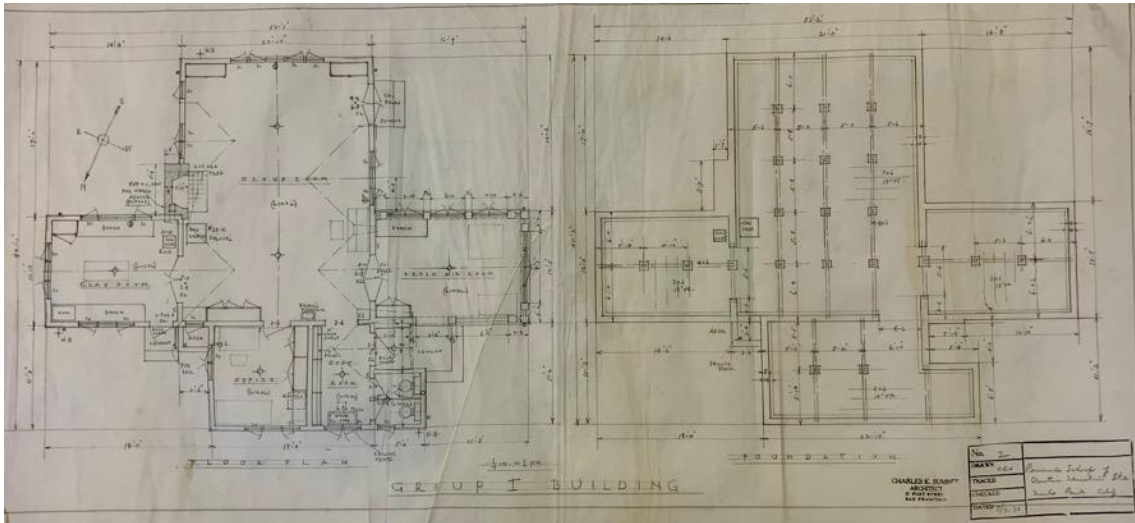


Figure 18. Group 1 (Building 1) Floor Plan and Foundation Plan, Charles K. Sumner, 1930
 Source: Courtesy of the Peninsula School



Figure 19. Group 1 (Building 1) Section Drawings, Charles K. Sumner, 1930
 Source: Courtesy of the Peninsula School



Figure 20. Group 1 (Building 1) Elevation Drawings, Charles K. Sumner, 1930

Source: Courtesy of the Peninsula School



Figure 21. First Group Building (Building 1), 1931

Source: Courtesy of the Peninsula School



Figure 22. First Group Building (Building 1), 1931
Source: Courtesy of the Peninsula School



Figure 22. First Group Building Interior (Building 1), 1934
Source: Courtesy of the Peninsula School

Brief History of the English Cottage Revival Style

English Cottage Revival style, a more modest subset of the Tudor Revival style, is loosely adapted from a variety of Medieval and early Renaissance English prototypes, ranging from thatch-roofed folk houses to grand manors. This broad variety provided the basis for a well-publicized English domestic architecture revival that began around 1850 and lasted until 1930 in Great Britain, and lasted between 1890 and 1940 in the U.S. British architects such as Phillip S. Webb, C.F.A. Voysey, M.H. Baillie Scott, and Sir Edwin Lutyens produced homes that were imitated both in the U.S. and Great Britain. Beginning around 1880, the publisher B.T. Batsford of London advanced this revival by publishing numerous books containing photographs, measured drawings, and drawings of old English homes, which were distributed in the U.S. In 1911, they published *The Domestic Architecture of England During the Tudor Period* by Thomas Garner and Arthur Stratton. The earliest American houses in the style date from the late 19th Century. These tended to be architect-designed landmarks that might closely copy English models. The Tudor landmarks of the 1890s were joined in the decades from 1900 to 1920 by less pretentious Tudor houses. The style exploded in popularity in the 1920s as masonry veneering techniques allowed even the most modest examples to mimic brick or stone exteriors seen on English prototypes. In addition to the variety in materials and detailing, the picturesque and asymmetrical style offered architects great versatility in floor planning. Respected local architects and their preferred approach to the design have affected the typical appearance of the style in a neighborhood or an entire town.¹⁵

Brief Biography of Charles K. Sumner, Architect

Charles Kaiser Sumner was born March 21, 1874 in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.¹⁶ He was originally named Charles Sumner Kaiser, but he reversed his middle and last names during World War I in response to anti-German hysteria. Charles studied architecture at Columbia University. Upon graduating c.1901, he received a Perkins Traveling Fellowship and completed a grand tour through Italy, Egypt, and the Middle East. Upon returning to the U.S., he went to work for the prestigious New York-based architectural firm of McKim, Mead and White. In 1906, he visited the West Coast. Liking what he saw, Sumner immediately settled in Berkeley, where over the course of a decade he designed the Claremont Club and about 15 houses, as well as several buildings in Sacramento, including the Farmers and Merchants Bank.¹⁷

In 1916, Charles Sumner and his family moved to Palo Alto.¹⁸ Charles, his wife Alice Holly Sumner, and their five children lived at 760 University Avenue.¹⁹ For many years, Sumner's office was in the Mechanic's Institute at 57 Post Street in San Francisco.²⁰ Nevertheless, Sumner completed the bulk of his work in and around Palo Alto. Several notable projects in the area include the Walter Hays Elementary School at 1525 Middlefield Road (1923 – demolished 1970), a Spanish Colonial Revival house at 1370 Lincoln Avenue (1927), Trinity Lutheran Church at

¹⁵ Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, Second Edition, 2013.

¹⁶ California Death Index, 1940-1997, for Charles K. Sumner.

¹⁷ "Charles Sumner, Architect," *Palo Alto Stanford Heritage*: <https://www.pastheritage.org/Sumner.html>, accessed July 2, 2024.

¹⁸ "Charles K. Sumner, local architect and city planner, succumbs at 74," *Palo Alto Times* (May 26, 1948).

¹⁹ 1930 U.S. Census for Palo Alto, California, Enumeration District 43-18, Sheet 4A.

²⁰ U.S. World War I Draft Registration Card, 1917-1918, for Charles K. Sumner.

1295 Middlefield Road (1928), a Tudor Revival house at 535 Lowell Avenue (1935), the College Terrace Library at 2300 Wellesley Street (1936), and the Japanese Methodist Church at 306 Page Mill Road (1939 – demolished). Sumner designed at least 50 residences in Palo Alto and about 34 buildings on the Stanford campus between 1908 and 1940, nearly all of which remain today.²¹

Charles Sumner is best-known for his Tudor Revival and other Period Revival work. Most of his Tudor Revival houses are composed of two or more gable-roofed volumes arranged end-to-end to suggest that they were built in phases over a long period of time. Although some of Sumner's Tudor Revival houses feature half-timber detailing, many do not.

Although his office was in San Francisco for most of his career, Sumner designed relatively few projects in the City. Nevertheless, he did take on San Francisco projects (all residential) from time to time. His most famous non-Palo Alto/Stanford project is certainly the Rangers' Club at Yosemite National Park. Built in 1924 in Yosemite Valley, this Swiss Chalet-style social club is a National Historic Landmark. The exterior shares some features in common with Sumner's Tudor Revival houses, including its steeply pitched gable roofs, multiple dormers, and paired casement windows.

In addition to his architectural practice, Charles was a charter members of the Palo Alto Art Club, along with his wife Alice. He was also a member of the Palo Alto Planning Commission during the 1920s and 1930s. In the late 1930s, Charles Sumner moved his office from San Francisco to the Deckeroak Building at 502 Waverley Street in Palo Alto.²² Although the 1910s and 1920s were the heyday of Sumner's career, he remained busy well into the 1930s. Although the Depression had been hard for nearly all architects, by the mid-1930s Sumner was doing work for the Works Progress Administration. By the late 1930s, he was quite busy again, briefly partnering with Morgan Stedman in a short-lived firm called Sumner and Stedman. Private construction virtually came to an end in 1941 when the U.S. entered World War II and the federal government imposed severe restrictions on the use of most construction materials. In 1943, Sumner's firm disappeared from city directories, which is about when he retired.²³ Nonetheless, Sumner remained active in local civic planning for the rest of his life. He died on May 25, 1948 at the age of 74.²⁴

Policy and Regulatory Context

California Environmental Quality Act and the California Register of Historical Resources

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires regulatory compliance in regard to projects involving historic resources throughout the state. Under CEQA, public agencies must

²¹ "A Sampler of Architect Charles Sumner's Work in Palo Alto," (Palo Alto: 2007 tour brochure), and "Works by Charles K. Sumner," *Palo Alto Stanford Heritage*, available online at: <https://www.pastheritage.org/Sumner.html#PAREs> Accessed July 2, 2024.

²² 1930 to 1939 Palo Alto City Directories.

²³ 1943 Palo Alto City Directory.

²⁴ "Charles K. Sumner, local architect and city planner, succumbs at 74," *Palo Alto Times* (May 26, 1948).

consider the effects of their actions on historic resources — a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment (Public Resources Code, Section 21084.1).

The CEQA Guidelines define a significant resource as any resource listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (California Register) (see Public Resources Code, Section 21084.1 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 (a) and (b)).

The California Register of Historical Resources was created to identify resources deemed worthy of preservation and was modeled closely after the National Register of Historic Places. The criteria are nearly identical to those of the National Register, which includes resources of local, state, and regional and/or national levels of significance.

Under California Code of Regulation Section 4852(b) and Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, an historical resource generally must be greater than 50 years old and must be significant at the local, state, or national level under one or more of the following four criteria:

1. It is 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.
2. It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master or important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.
4. It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

Properties of local significance that have been designated under a local preservation ordinance (local landmarks register or landmark districts) or that have been identified in a local historical resources inventory may be eligible for listing in the California Register and are presumed to be historical resources for the purposes of CEQA unless a preponderance of evidence indicates otherwise (Public Resources Code, Section 5024.1g; California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 4850).

Integrity

California Code of Regulations Section 4852(c) addresses the issue of ‘integrity’ which is necessary for eligibility for the California Register. Integrity is defined as ‘the authenticity of an historical resource’s physical identity evidenced by the survival of characteristics that existed during the resource’s period of significance.’ Section 4852(c) provides that historical resources eligible for listing in the California Register must meet] one of the criteria for significance defined by 4852(b)(1 through 4), and retain enough of their historic character of appearance to be recognizable as historical resources and to convey the reasons for their significance. Integrity is evaluated with regard to the retention of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. It must also be judged with reference to the particular criteria under

which a resource is proposed for eligibility. Alterations over time to a resource or historic changes in its use may themselves have historical, cultural, or architectural significance.

Evaluation of Historical Significance

Provided below is an evaluation of the potential historical significance of the subject property at Peninsula School, by applying the criteria set forth by the California Register of Historical Resources, along with considerations of integrity.

CRHR Criterion 1 - Events

It is 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.

Completed in 1930 and built to serve as a Kindergarten classroom, Building 1 was the first of a handful of new buildings constructed at the Peninsula School to accommodate a growing student body after the school's opening in 1925. The construction of this classroom building, as well as the nursery building, a woodshop building, and a ceramics work room were funded through the proceeds raised by selling off two acres of land and through the generous donations of school benefactors. Building 1 has been used continuously as a Kindergarten classroom since its completion in 1930, while a second Kindergarten classroom was added in 1976 (Building 2) to accommodate growing student enrollment in the 1970s. Including Building 1, a total of 13 buildings were added to the Peninsula School campus between 1930 and 1996 to accommodate additional enrollment and the introduction of many new educational ideas, practices, and programs. While Building 1 was the first of the new buildings to be completed on the Peninsula School campus in 1930 during a period of growing student enrollment and has been used continuously as a Kindergarten classroom since this time, it does not appear to be individually associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history. Historical research revealed no other historic events occurred on the subject property. For these reasons, the subject property at Peninsula School would not meet CRHR Criterion 1.

CRHR Criterion 2 – People

It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history

The Peninsula School is most closely associated with Josephine Duvneck (1891-1978), who was one of its primary founders, its first director, and was the head mistress of the school for some 15 years until her retirement in 1940. While Josephine Duvneck was known locally for her efforts in establishing and running the Peninsula School, it cannot be said that she would be considered a person important to local, state, or national history to the extent that the school or any of its buildings would qualify under CRHR Criterion 2. The Peninsula School as an institution has been associated with a number of directors, board members, benefactors, and educators since its inception in 1925.

Completed in 1930 to serve as a Kindergarten classroom on the Peninsula School campus, Building 1 was originally named ‘Group Building 1’ to differentiate it from ‘Group Building 2’ which was designed and built around the same time, and was used as a nursery. Aside from its association with various Kindergarten teachers, some of whom taught in the building for many years, there is no single individual associated with the building who would be considered particularly important to local, state, or national history. Historical research revealed no other important persons associated with the subject property. For these reasons, the subject property at Peninsula School would not meet CRHR Criterion 2.

CRHR Criterion 3 – Architecture/Design

It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a design-type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values.

Completed in 1930, Building 1 at Peninsula School is an English Cottage Revival style classroom building, exhibited by its steeply-pitched cross-gable roof form with decoratively flared elements and close eaves, multiple dormers, stucco siding, wood shingle cladding on the west gable end, carved wood decorative balustrade along two spandrel panels, multi-pane casement windows arranged in groups, and the recessed entry beneath an arched entryway. Building 1 was one of two similar buildings completed on the east side of the school campus, the other being Building 5 finished in 1931 and used as a nursery building. Both buildings were designed by architect Charles K. Sumner and built by contractor Edward J. Schmaling (see discussion of Sumner, below).

Based on Medieval and early Renaissance English precedents, the English Cottage Revival style of architecture was a subset of the Tudor Revival style, which was a popular style of residential construction in the United States between 1890 and 1940. The subject building would be considered a relatively modest version of the style intended for a more institutional and cost-conscious use such as a Kindergarten building, and while it retains many elements of the style, it would not be considered one that strongly embodies the distinctive characteristics of its design type, period, region, or method of construction. For example, many other more elaborate or ‘high-style’ versions of the English Cottage/Tudor Revival style of residential architecture built around the same time are known to exist in San Mateo County, and in Palo Alto in particular.

Building 1 has also suffered some loss of integrity to its design, materials, and workmanship in recent years. In 1992, Building 1 received a new asphalt shingle roof, and in 2000, the interior was substantially remodeled, three exterior doors were replaced, a concrete patio was installed, and the exterior canopies on the south and southwest elevations were installed.

Both Buildings 1 and 5 were initially similar in design, featuring the English Cottage Revival style, designed by architect Charles K. Sumner, and built by contractor Edward J. Schmaling. Charles K. Sumner (1874-1948) was a well-known local architect who designed at least 50 residences and other buildings in Palo Alto and about 34 on the Stanford University campus between 1908 and 1940, many in the English Cottage/Tudor Revival style, and nearly all of which remain today. Building 1 is not mentioned among Sumner’s more well-known works of architecture in the region and would be considered one of his more modest design efforts which

reflected the needs of a cost-conscious, non-profit educational institution during a time of worsening economic conditions at the beginning of the Great Depression. While Building 1 was certainly designed by a prolific ‘master designer,’ it would not be considered one of his best works, his only work at the Peninsula School or in the region, or one for which he is particularly well-known. For these reasons, Building 1 at Peninsula School would not meet CRHR Criterion 3.

CRHR Criterion 4 - Archaeology

It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information about the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

While an evaluation of the site’s potential to contain archaeological information is beyond the scope of this report, historical research identified no information that would indicate the project site appears to be important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California, or the nation.

CEQA Considerations and Recommendations

After an intensive-level survey and evaluation of Building 1 at the Peninsula School in Menlo Park by a qualified architectural historian, the 1930-era English Cottage Revival style classroom building is recommended ineligible for listing in the CRHR because it does not meet any of the State evaluation criteria for listing as an historical resource. As a building that does not qualify as an historical resource, its potential removal and replacement with a new educational building would result in no significant impacts to historic architectural resources as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Additional building and site evaluations are recommended for future projects that could demolish or substantially alter other campus buildings that are 45 years old or older (pre-1979 as of 2024). As future as plans and programs are refined, and as directed by San Mateo County planning officials, it is further recommended that the construction of any new educational building/s on the Peninsula School campus be evaluated for its potential direct and indirect effects to the historic significance of the Big Building.

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ATTACHMENT A

Professional Qualifications

Brad Brewster

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SUMMARY OF PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Brewster Historic Preservation, San Francisco, CA
Principal and Founder

January 2017 - Present

- Consulting architectural historian and preservation planner, preparing historic architectural evaluations and multi-property surveys under CEQA and NEPA/Section 106 for public and private clients in the Bay Area.

Environmental Science Associates (ESA), San Francisco, CA
Senior Architectural Historian, Manager

September 2004- August 2016

- ESA's Senior Architectural Historian and Manager within the Bay Area Cultural Resources Group
- Specializing in historic architectural resource surveys and evaluations under CEQA and NEPA/Section 106
- HABS/HAER documentation specialist
- Significant marketing goals and management responsibilities

Carey & Co. Inc., Architects, San Francisco, CA
Senior Project Manager, Preservation Planning

February 2003 – September 2004

- Senior Project Manager for historic preservation products under CEQA and NEPA
- Specializing in historic building surveys and evaluations, as well as cultural resource sections under CEQA and NEPA/Section 106
- Experience with implementing mitigation measures, such as historic documentation (HABS/HAER) and public interpretation efforts
- Experience managing architects, architectural historians and materials conservators
- Significant marketing responsibilities

EIP Associates, San Francisco, CA
Senior Project Manager, Environmental Planning

March 2001 - February 2003

- Senior Project Manager for environmental review documents under CEQA and NEPA
- Specializing in EIRs for large and complex urban in-fill projects in San Francisco and the Bay Area
- Experienced in managing large project teams with numerous subconsultants and accelerated schedules
- Specific expertise in historic-architectural resources
- Extensive marketing experience, including managing and writing proposals, attending interviews

EDAW, Inc. San Francisco, CA and Seattle, WA
Project Manager, Environmental Planning

July 1996 – January 2001

- Managed numerous EIRs under CEQA for various municipalities and private developers, as well as EISs under NEPA for various federal agencies (DoD, BLM, FERC, etc.)
- Specializing in historic architectural resource surveys and management/treatment plans, Section 106 review
- Directly involved with proposal writing and other major marketing efforts

W. Brad Brewster

The Bentley Company, Moffett Field, CA
Environmental Planner

March 1993 – June 1994

- Contract Planner for NASA Ames Research Center (now NASA Research Park) at the former Moffett Naval Air Station
- Co-author of the *Moffett Field Comprehensive Use Plan* to guide NASA development at Moffett Field

Brady and Associates (now LSA), Berkeley, CA
Environmental Planner

July 1992 – March 1993

- Contributed significantly to numerous Initial Studies and EIRs for California cities and counties
- Wrote various general plan elements for California communities

EDUCATION

1994- 1996 Master of Urban Design and Planning, with Certificates in Urban Design and Historic Preservation,
University of Washington, Seattle, WA
1987-1992 Bachelor of Science in City and Regional Planning
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, CA

AFFILIATIONS

California Preservation Foundation (CPF)
National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP)
Society of Architectural Historians (SAH)