

Monterey St.

THE MONDAY CLUB

HISTORY

Six determined women, headed by Stanford graduate and civic leader Grace Barneberg, decided that this city should become the civic and cultural center befitting the county seat.¹

By 1928, Monday Club had mushroomed from the original 25 charter members to over 350 and needed their own meeting place. Miss Barneberg had seen some of architect Julia Morgan's buildings in Berkeley and Oakland; she recruited Steve Zegar to interest Hearst's architect in designing and decorating a clubhouse appropriate to the area. Steve managed to take Julia Morgan past the proposed site on Monterey Street, and eventually, she did design the clubhouse without charge.²



THE MONDAY CLUB - SAN LUIS OBISPO

Architect's drawing 1933 - Julia Morgan, Architect

The Monday Club building located at 1815 Monterey Street, San Luis Obispo, was designed by Julia Morgan, architect, San Francisco. The original blueprints entitled "A Club Building For the Monday Club, San Luis Obispo, California, August 1933" are located in the Special Collections, University Archives, Robert E. Kennedy Library, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.



The Monday Club building under construction - 1934

Miss Grace E. Barneberg, a charter member of the Monday Club in 1925 and its President from 1926-28, spearheaded the construction of the Monday Club building and was present at the groundbreaking with the builder, Mr. Jepson. The accompanying photographs are from Miss Barneberg's records also located in the Special Collections University Archives, Cal Poly Library.

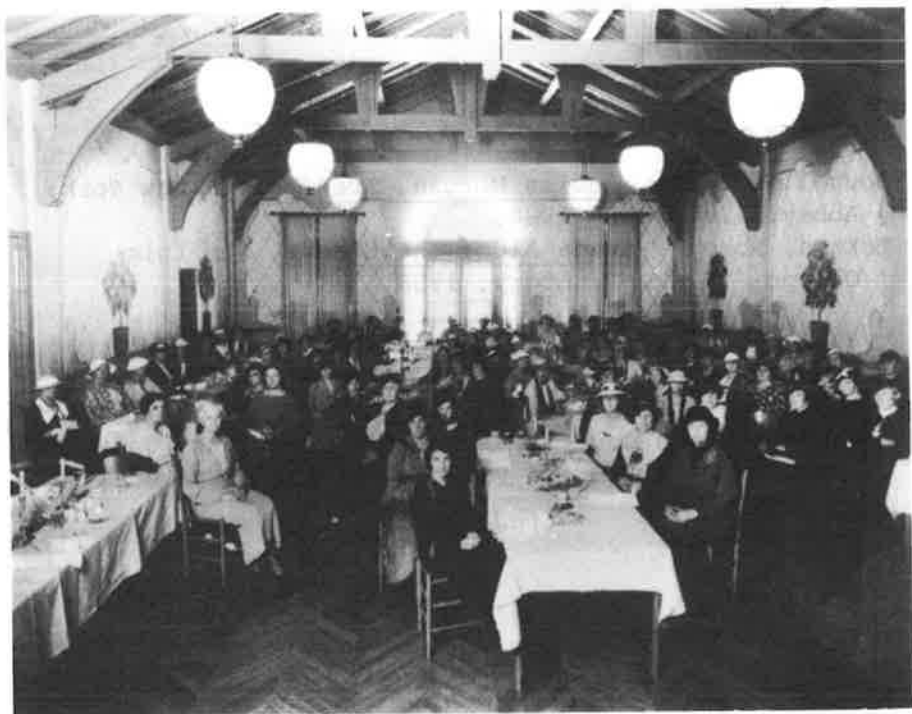
The building is described as a small crafts-style clubhouse. Julia Morgan designed several clubhouses in California from 1908 to 1934 to provide centers for recreational, educational and civic activities. The loquat frescoes called for in the Monday Club building blueprints were painted by Doris Day, one of several women artists employed by Julia Morgan. The Monday Club building was the last clubhouse Miss Morgan designed prior to closing her San Francisco office in 1951.



Miss Grace Barneberg, second from left, and Monday Club Board members in the new clubhouse - 1935

At the Fiftieth Anniversary of Clubhouse celebration held at the Monday Club in 1983, the following "Monday Club Accomplishments" were cited:³

Lighted entrance signs to city on 101 - '26
Request milk and meat inspection - '27
Lobby for stop signs - '27
Support children's retaining home
Sunny Acres - '27
Current Facility - '82
Beautify city by planting nasturtiums in
vacant lots - '27
Support historical landmarks
Painted Rock - '27
Dinosaur Caves - '27
Fremont's campsite - '30
Planting of city trees - '27
Meadow Park - '78
Purchase of Mitchell Park - '28
Lobby for Southern Pacific passenger depot - '27
Brochure and walking tour for tourists - '30



Monday Club members meet in the new Clubhouse - 1935

Raised \$15,022 for war bonds at Victory Tea - '42
Scanned daily in lookout for Japanese planes - '42-45
Collected 30 tons of scrap metal - '43
Flower show attended by 800 with 460 entries - '50
Raised money for high school band uniforms - '49
Benefit bridge dessert for Nuss Pool - '51
Donated fountain at Marsh and Higuera - '68
Support Women's Shelter - '83
Annual High Jinx - just for fun
Etc., etc., etc.

Notes

1. McKeen, Rose, 39.
2. Ibid., 40, 41.
3. Accomplishments researched and compiled by
Rosemarie McKeen.

Bibliography

Boutelle, Sarah. Julia Morgan, Architect. New York:
Abbeyville Press, 1988.
McKeen, Rose. Parade Along The Creek. San Luis
Obispo: Blake Printery, 1988.

All photographs courtesy Special Collections, University
Archives, California Polytechnic State University

BRIEF HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION (Corresponding to one or more items under I, II, or III of the Statement of Policy.)

BRIEF HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION

The Monday Club is regionally significant to the Central Coast primarily because of its sphere of social and cultural impact on San Luis Obispo and neighboring areas. Highly influential on education, the arts, and community services, the Monday Club was organized in 1925 for the purpose of promoting civic welfare (15). It is a women's club.

Of secondary merit is the fact that the delicate Spanish colonial revival clubhouse, which since 1933 has harbored the club's constituency, was designed by Julia Morgan (14). Morgan, whom many scholars rank as possibly America's and certainly California's most successful woman architect, also designed other structures in the Central Coast (13). Most noteworthy, her fame is inextricably linked with the creation of Hearst's castle at San Simeon. In addition, she drafted the plans for a center for the Minerva Club, a women's reading group in Santa Maria (2).

The Monday Club is thus neither the prototypic nor paramount example of a Morgan work in the Central Coast. However, in light of the fact that San Luis Obispo County emerged as a distinct community, geographically, culturally, and economically from Santa Barbara, Ventura and Monterey counties (1); the Monday Club edifice stands as the exclusive representative of a Morgan-inspired clubhouse in the Central California coastal range area of the Santa Lucia Mountains. Furthermore, if there is any validity in the assumption that the Hearst monument signifies a one-of-a-kind structure, one which defies emulation and comparison; then it becomes justifiable to view the Monday Clubhouse as the only example of a Morgan-designed community center within the entire 3,250 square miles of San Luis Obispo County.

The overall stylistic effect of the small, red-tiled clubhouse is conspicuously Spanish Colonial Revival although the proportions are elegantly Neoclassic in design. Barn-like rafters on the inside, conveying a sense of "closeness to nature", and other interior detailing reveal Craftsman motifs. The architectural eclecticism that has so typically characterized the products of Morgan is quite evident in the "lively" Monday Club building (12).

The scope, uniqueness, and importance of the varietal social and cultural activities in which for over fifty years the Monday Club has been diligently involved make it a landmark organization in the community. Many prominent individuals have been associated with the club; among them, Grace Barneberg, daughter of one of San Luis Obispo's first millionaires (3). The second president of the Monday Club, she became a nationally-recognized spokesperson for prison reform.

In the late 1920's and early 1930's, Barneberg served as State Chairman of Institutional Relations for the California Federation of Women's Clubs (7). She proved a pivotal force in fostering the first conference of governors and prison authorities from fourteen western states, whose principal goal was to address the issue of prison labor. That Barneberg and the Monday Club petitioned for the social rehabilitation of criminals in society as a long-term means of achieving maximal protection for the public attests the fact that the Monday Club since its incipience has been deeply imbued with a firm moral and social conscience. In the two decades that preceded World War II, no other women's group in the Central Coast was publically recognized to have accomplished more than the Monday Club in terms of expanding civic welfare.

Even one year after the club's formation, the local newspaper in San Luis Obispo concluded that "...the Monday Club... (has) already achieved an enviable record among the civic bodies of California, and ranks high in community effort"(10).

The early years of the club witnessed a host of public services and events. Exemplary of their original goals, the members promoted tourism, assisted in creating the first city park sponsored enumerable cultural events such as musical concerts and art shows; fought for improved sanitation laws in the county; supported construction of a railroad depot to also encourage tourist stay-overs; helped to establish a children's home; furnished free-rental space for a bloodbank; and launched drug abuse programs (11).

In 1926, the Monday Club purchased and presented to the City of San Luis Obispo two electric welcoming signs. Erected as a "civic improvement welcoming tourists", the signs were placed at strategic hilltop sites along the highway to attract traveling motorists (10). Moneys for the signs which totaled \$1800.00, were generated from fund-raising events such as a rummage sale, an apron sale, and the like; as well as from individual members such as Grace Barneberg and Annie Morrison, the latter a respected historian in the county.

The club also embarked on a beautification program for the city in 1928 (8). Trees and shrubs were planted throughout the community and nasturtiums were placed in vacant lots along the highway. The beautification campaign was designed to enhance favorable visibility of the city. The women's group donated funds for a special city election which eventuated in the designation of the first City Park, now known as Mitchell Park (9). Historic preservation has been a continual interest of this organization and, in 1924, they raised funds to help restore San Miguel Mission. In 1930, the club became an active voice for preserving Painted Rock, a prehistoric Native American relic (8, 5). During that year they also set the stage for organizing the first county museum to safeguard souvenirs of the early settlers (5).

Forever enterprising in a number of diverse responsibilities in the 1920's and 1930's the women initiated a general fall clean-up throughout the city, delivered Christmas cheers to prison inmates, and sponsored a community artist series for promising musicians (8). In order to assure proficiency in meeting their objectives, the organization was partitioned into several general areas which included, in addition to music, art, preservation and education, a business and protective law section and a drama section. Public health likewise became a critical matter for the Monday Club. The group compiled statistics for a public health survey and assisted undernourished youth (6). Concerned with hygiene standards, they took an assertive stand in demanding adoption of new municipal inspection laws for meat and milk in 1929 (6).

Within sixteen months after its founding, the women's organization had burgeoned from an active membership of twenty-six to one hundred and by 1928 there were three hundred and fifty members (8). That the Monday Club from its early years grew steadily is a direct reflection of its success as a visible, viable, and vivacious service center. Since 1925 it has afforded women in this community the opportunity to volitionally fulfil their needs for both altruistic service and social congregation.

The Monday Club was officially incorporated under state law in 1930 (16). Two years later Julia Morgan met with the club's board members to finalize plans for the design of a clubhouse suitable to the tastes of a women's group dedicated to civic welfare (4). Morgan rendered her services completely free of charge. Although, as records indicate, the Monday Club lacked the funds to pay a professional, let alone a renowned architect, it is intuitively appealing to speculate that Julia Morgan may have donated her master skills because of some common belief that she shared in the ideology and goals of the Monday Club. (For instance, by comparison, it is worth noting that in 1927, Julia Morgan was paid \$630.00 for designing the Minerva Club in Santa Maria (2). Although also a women's club, the Minerva Club was primarily a reading group and not oriented to providing a wide range of social services.)

Regardless of the degree of personal or philosophical interest that Morgan may have held for the Monday Club, one thing is certain: the charm of this elegant, California structure, complete with interior murals, draped stage, and matching hand-decorated china, illustrate the architect's deep professional allegiance to the project.

The innovative leadership of the Monday Club, particularly within the context of its period in history, is intertwined with its foresightful intentness to deal with a broad spectrum of contemporary social themes, from the innocuous to the reformatinal. This trend for ushering in civic pride and betterment was especially pronounced in view of the fact that San Luis Obispo in the 1920's remained a relatively isolated, rural community.

The club educated the public about a number of emminent social issues. Perhaps more significantly, their ability to move categorically and methodically toward concrete, efficacious, and harmonious solutions is truly a tribute to their quintessential committment to the democratic spirit. They simultaneously exhibited the sophistication and cultural awareness of a metropolitan citizenry and the innocence and empathy of a small town populace. The Monday Club was the first civic organization of such magnitude, specifically for women and run by women, in the central, central coast. Since its birth, it has persisted in an unrelenting tradition devoted to community service. It is therefore proposed that because of its unequivocal merit as an organization for civic improvement that has affected the lives of people throughout California, the Monday Club warrants designation as a State Historical Landmark.

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

Ser. No. 0137-03C
HABS HAER NR 3 SHL Loc
UTM: A10/713700/5907400 B
C D

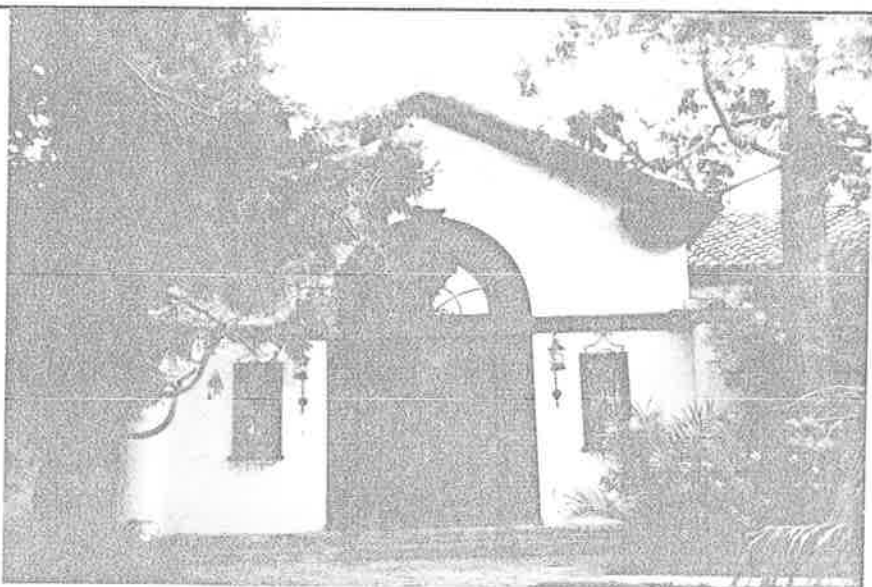
IDENTIFICATION

1. Common name: Monday Club
2. Historic name: Monday Club
3. Street or rural address: 1815 Monterey
City San Luis Obispo Zip 93401 County San Luis Obispo
4. Parcel number: 01-152-01
5. Present Owner: Monday Club of San Luis Obispo Address: P.O. Box 167
City San Luis Obispo Zip 93401 Ownership is: Public ☐ Private ☒
6. Present Use: Civic Center Original use: Civic Center

DESCRIPTION

- 7a. Architectural style: Mediterranean
- 7b. Briefly describe the present *physical description* of the site or structure and describe any major alterations from its original condition:

The Monday Club is a stucco clad building which is a composite of Classical and California (Mediterranean) detailing. The entry is centered with gabled ends with a Classical entry of the Federalist style, but the side lights have been covered by louvers. It is flanked by balanced facade with two-over-two windows and decorative metal grates protecting the window. Outside of this are two simple columns with heavy timber crossing acting as beaming members for two large horizontal members. The basic plan is a cross shape with red tile roofing and one and one-half stories.



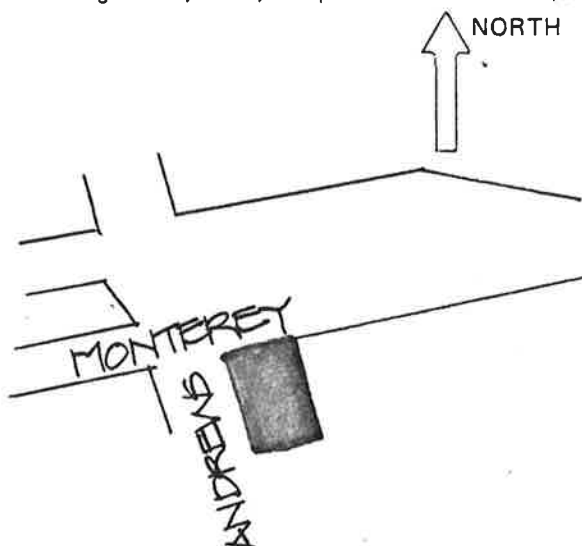
8. Construction date:
Estimated _____ Factual 1932
9. Architect Julia Morgan
10. Builder James Jepson
11. Approx. property size (in feet)
Frontage 100' Depth 570'
or approx. acreage _____
12. Date(s) of enclosed photograph(s)
May 1982

13. Condition: Excellent ____ Good X Fair ____ Deteriorated ____ No longer in existence ____
14. Alterations: Kitchen addition
15. Surroundings: (Check more than one if necessary) Open land ____ Scattered buildings ____ Densely built-up ____
Residential ____ Industrial ____ Commercial X Other: ____
16. Threats to site: None known X Private development ____ Zoning ____ Vandalism ____
Public Works project ____ Other: ____
17. Is the structure: On its original site? Yes Moved? ____ Unknown? ____
18. Related features: ____

SIGNIFICANCE

19. Briefly state historical and/or architectural importance (include dates, events, and persons associated with the site.)
The Monday Club was built in 1932-33 for the then young, burgeoning civic-minded womens organization, The Monday Club. Designed by the famous California architect, Julia Morgan, Jim Jepson, a local contractor, constructed the edifice at a cost of about \$12,000. Morgan, who designed some 500 buildings in her career, was the principle architect for Hearst Castle. In the Monday Club, she followed her productivity toward architectural eclecticism in producing a balanced interplay between the Spanish Colonial Revival style, Craftsman form and simple classic detailing. Today the structure represents the only major Morgan work in the City of San Luis Obispo. Formed in 1925, the womens group was federated with State and district womens organizations in 1926. The second president of the Monday Club, Grace Barnebery, was State Chairman of Institutional Relations for the California Federation of Womens Clubs in 1928. Barnebery and the Monday Club petitioned for prison reform laws throughout California in the late 1920's and early 1930's. Since its founding the Monday Club has been dedicated to civic welfare, eminently concerned with historic preservation. The club made a study of California landmarks in 1928. Through its history and landmark section, the persistence and agitation of this womens organization in 1930 led to the designation of Painted Rock, a relic of pre-historic American Indians in the Carrisa Mesa, as a State monument. In 1924, the
20. Main theme of the historic resource: (If more than one is checked, number in order of importance.)
Architecture 2 Arts & Leisure 3
Economic/Industrial ____ Exploration/Settlement ____
Government ____ Military ____
Religion ____ Social/Education 1
21. Sources (List books, documents, surveys, personal interviews and their dates).
City of San Luis Obispo Building Permits (1932)
Monday Club Charter
22. Date form prepared June 15, 1983
By (name) Historic Res. Survey Staff
Organization City of San Luis Obispo
Address: P.O. Box 321
City San Luis Obispo Zip 93401
Phone: (805) 541-1000

Locational sketch map (draw and label site and surrounding streets, roads, and prominent landmarks):



Monday Club raised funds to help with the restoration of Mission San Miguel,
now a State landmark.