

The Women's Faculty Club Newsletter

University of California, Berkeley

April 2013

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This message continues my brief account of the history of the Women's Faculty Club. It focuses on the atmosphere of the Club during its early years.

The twenty-four rooms in the second and third floors of the Club were rented to women Club members who were permanent residents, to visiting scholars from other universities, and to more short-term visitors to the Berkeley campus. Dinners, as well as breakfast and lunch, were served in the dining room. One former resident remembered that the breakfast table, about twenty people, "was always a discussion group... visitors and residents, local people, people with a great many different points of view ... it was always a nice melting pot."

At dinner, the permanent residents – faculty and administrators (many of them officers of the Club) – stuck together. There was a "Family Table" at which no one sat "except the residents and the people they chose." The residents, several of whom lived at the Club for more than twenty years, felt that it was "their home." They tried to keep the library room to themselves, and required staff to stay on duty until 9:00 pm to let them in the front door.

The Club's Annual Dinner was a fully formal affair; at Christmas, members formed a women's chorus and sang some carols in proper Latin wearing medieval headdresses; costume parties were held, then "hat" parties at which participants had to guess what book the hats represented; and at a Living Pictures party, members presented tableaux of famous works of art. As one member put it, "People didn't watch TV or have as many diversions; you made your own entertainment."

Efforts were also made to create a forum for the discussion of academic work. The "Learned Ladies" (as the faculty members were called) read papers. Scholarly papers were also read at "The Dinner Club" in the late '40s (one, for example, on the Anopheles mosquito). This generation of senior women faculty was described in the oral history as follows:

When World War I was over, there was a great openness to women professors. Women had been going to get Ph.D.'s while the men were overseas.... Then most of the women were advanced (promoted). So, they became a solid force, but a dated one. ... unfortunately, they did not recruit women. They themselves enjoyed being ... rather singular.

Next month, the '50s and '60s.
Eleanor Swift
President, Board of Directors

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- **Tuesday, April 16, 2013, 4 – 6 p.m. – "Arts in the Afternoon" – University Baroque Ensemble**
- **Wednesday, April 17, 2013, 12 noon – Member's Table**
- **Tuesday, April 30, 2013, 4 – 6 p.m. – Annual Open House
Featured Speaker – Professor Sally Fairfax – Wine Tastings,
Hotel Room Tours**

PROGRAM AND EVENTS

John Galen Howard Events in March



(John Galen Howard – 1923 Photograph)

Our John Galen Howard series continued in March with two fabulous events. Thank you to Gray Brechin, founder and Project Scholar of the Living New Deal project based in Berkeley's Department of Geography, for a wonderful presentation on Howard's architectural legacy at the University. Brechin's talk not only covered much of Howard's work but the politics involved in such an enterprise and the some of the social history of the time that supplied Howard and others with particular design ideas.

Brechin told an attentive audience of Phoebe Hearst's offer in 1896 to finance an international competition to create an 'ideal city of learning' and the political fallout after her death when William Randolph Hearst wanted to leave his own imprint on the architects of U.C. Her son commissioned the team of Maybeck and Morgan to create a counter campus south of Strawberry Creek. Brechin's talk provided fresh insights into both Howard's work and campus design.



(Gray Brechin)

In midmonth Club members and guests were treated to a tour at the Howard house that is now the home of David and Mary Alice Lowenthal. The Lowenthals graciously welcomed all to their home. We enjoyed good weather and so were able to appreciate the spectacular views of the Bay and enjoy a wine reception in the shelter of their back yard.

The home was designed by Howard for Warren Gregory who then leased the property to Howard for a nominal sum. After the Howard family moved Professor Walter Hart commissioned Julia Morgan to design a library addition. The house was designed in an L-shape to follow the lot line and was one of the few houses in the neighborhood to survive the 1923 fire.

The Lowenthals guided guests on tours of the home – pointing out original design and woodwork, the Morgan library addition and repairs necessitated by a fire. They were knowledgeable hosts and guests were delighted to see the display of original Howard blueprints for property. Thank you to both for their generous hospitality. Both took time out from busy schedules to host the event. David is a noted geographer and historian. Of his many publications, the most well known is *The Past is a Foreign Country*, a classic investigation of our multiple relationships to the past. (A new edition is currently in press with Cambridge University Press.)



(Mary Alice and David Lowenthal)

An exhibit on Howard's legacy is also planned to open at the Environmental Design Archives in early May. The opening reception for the exhibit will be held at the Club on Friday, May 3, 2013.

April "Arts in the Afternoon" – Tuesday, April 16, 2013



In what has become something of a Spring tradition the University Baroque Ensemble under the direction of Professor Davitt Moroney will once again grace our "stage" for the April "Arts in the Afternoon" program. This is a performance not to be missed. Moroney introduces the audience not just to each musical work, but also explains the period instruments the students use and the subtle and not – so – subtle differences with modern instruments and notation.

The program features music of Bach, Handel and Vivaldi. Come early for good seating as this is always a popular event. Concert begins at 4 p.m. and a reception follows.

"Arts in the Afternoon" programs and receptions are complimentary and open to the campus community. (Jean Mary Dickinson)

April Member's Table

Plan to come and enjoy lively conversation and great food at our next Member's Table on Wednesday, April 17, 12:15 p.m. Board members Judy Sykes and Eva Rivas will co-host. Please feel free to join for a delightful dining experience. Member Pamela Miller suggested the reinstatement of the Members Table and she has found that the conversation

was both "intellectually and aesthetically stimulating." (Benjamin Hermalin)



(Judy Sykes)

Board Member Judy Sykes has recently retired from the University after long service primarily for the Department of Mechanical Engineering. Judy has been profiled in a previous newsletter. She joined the staff of the Department of Mechanical Engineering in June of 1980. Eventually serving as Manager for Administration for the department and recently also served as manager for the Etcheverry Business Service Unit which encompasses the Departments of Mechanical Engineering, Nuclear Engineering and Industrial Engineering and Operations Research. For fun, she enjoys good friends, family, skiing, sailing, and traveling abroad whenever possible.

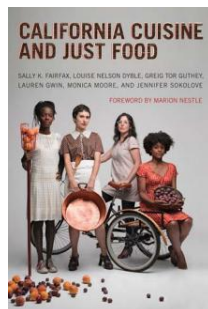


(Eva Rivas)

Board Member Eva Rivas' over forty year career at Cal has been in the field of student services and has included professional experience and education in the areas of administration, advising, and management. Her first eleven years were spent at UC Extension and concluded when she "decided to take on the rank of full-time mother with the birth of my third daughter."

About a year later she returned to the workforce in the College of Letters and Science. During the next 21 years she held a variety of positions and ended her tenure as Associate Director of the Office of Undergraduate Advising. Eva completed a Masters in Public Administration while working full-time and is currently Executive Director of the Centers for Educational Equity and Excellence, which includes both the Transfer, Re-entry, and Student Parent Center as well as the EOP Center.

April Open House



Invite friends and colleagues to our Annual Open House scheduled for Tuesday, April 30, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. Long-time Club member and Henry J. Vaux Distinguished Professor Emerita Sally Fairfax will be the featured speaker. Fairfax has long done research focused on public resources particularly those managed by the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. She has focused on water law and management, minerals leasing and public lands policy and history.

While studying these policy issues, Fairfax became interested in the role of artisanal agricultural production as an element of land conservation in transforming rural economy.

This was the springboard for her latest book. Fairfax and colleagues have just published *California Cuisine and Just Food*, which poses many questions and explores the challenges facing the Bay Area's diverse alternative food proponents. "*California Cuisine and Just Food* traces how a broader food quality agenda emerged over time – from land protection, to sustainable growing practice, to food quality and taste, to public health concerns, to equity and justice."

As always - we will be offering appetizers, wine tastings and tours of the hotel rooms. This is an excellent opportunity to invite potential members to the Club! (Marian Merrill)

HISTORICAL NOTES

In honor of the 90th opening of the Club we are featuring a series of short biographies of our "leading ladies" – the women whose foresight and vision first established the Club. The early life of Jessica Peixotto was featured in February and will be continued here. It was in Peixotto's Cloyne Court apartment that the first organizing meeting for the Club was held on September 22, 1919. Later she was elected the first Vice-President of the fledgling organization.



(Jessica Peixotto)

Career Path

After Peixotto spent a year in Paris pursuing independent research at the Sorbonne, she returned to Berkeley and received her Ph.D. in 1900, the second doctorate awarded to any woman at the University of California. Her year of research in Paris formed the basis for her thesis *The French Revolution and Modern French Socialism* which was published in 1901. Her interests in socialism may have been spurred in part by her friendship with Frank Norris (who

would later write *The Octopus*) while at Berkeley.

President Benjamin Ide Wheeler offered her a position as a lecturer in Sociology in 1904 and her career took off from there. Her appointment soon shifted to Economics where she taught until retirement in 1935. She attained the rank of full Professor in 1918 and chaired the department for a time. Though she wrote popular articles on child welfare and coeducation, her major scholarly work was in the field of cost-of living studies. Peixotto was the founder and chairman of the Heller Committee for Research in Social Economics.

She was profoundly influenced toward social service by her brother Sidney who was the Founder and director of the Columbia Park Boys Club in San Francisco. Gov. Hiram Johnson appointed her to the California State Board of Charities and Correction in 1912.

Peixotto clearly believed in sound research as the basis for policy decisions. In 1917 she developed a special course for the Red Cross and home service workers.

The following year she was called to Washington D.C. to serve as Executive Chair to the Child Welfare Department of the Women's Committee of the Council of National Defense. It was at approximately this same time that Peixotto developed a special program within Economics that became the separate professional program and academic discipline of Social Welfare. Those who knew her felt that her interests in social welfare stemmed not from a particular sense of compassion but from a clear analysis of the social costs of poverty.

Peixotto retired from Berkeley in 1935 and was awarded an honorary doctorate of law in 1937. Along the way this impressive woman also was a prime instigator of The Women's Faculty Club.

DINING ROOM NEWS –APRIL 2013



- **April Dining Room Special – Any “Women of the Vines” wine – by the glass or by the bottle – Half Price**
- **“Tasting Tuesdays” - Join us for lunch on each Tuesday in April – We continue a tradition of small tastings each week. Tastings change each week.**
- **Thank you program for individual members – Receive a complimentary coupon for the Salad Buffet after every eight luncheons within either six month period: January – June or July - December**
- **Find your (name) within the body of the newsletter and win a \$20 gift certificate**