

FOUNDATIONAL GROWTH:  
THE ROLE OF CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S CLUBS IN COMMUNITY BUILDING,  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

by

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## Terminal Project Approval Page

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Taking a circuitous route to graduate school, let's just say "later in life," has grounded me in the value of connection between people and place. Always and forever, I acknowledge that the power of community is the place from which I draw my wisdom and insights from. Thank you all for that privilege.

*Dedicated in memory of Kimberly Dawn Polete Russ,  
forever my big sister, protector, and #1 supporter.*

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## Chapter 1 - Introduction



**Figure 1. Highland Park Ebell Club women in front of their Clubhouse, circa 1920s and 2013.**  
(Image: Left - Security Pacific National Bank Collection-Los Angeles Public Library; Right - Martha Benedict)

Starting in the late 1980s, I lived in the Highland Park community of Los Angeles for nearly thirty years. Over half of that time, I helped infuse new energy into the landmark Highland Park Ebell Club (HPEC), one of the oldest surviving women’s clubs in Los Angeles. (Figure 1.) That two-decade journey of service, continuing the legacy of many previous generations of local women who envisioned, built, and sustained their community, led me to this research. The gendered space of the HPEC’s “Clubhouse” and its distinct and lasting presence in Highland Park piqued my interest in the unexplored role of women in society and how they shaped community both physically and socially. The work and contribution of these women, through their club and in collaboration with other women, can be experienced in the built environment well beyond the clubhouse they built. They shaped their community’s landscape by preserving nature as parkland, creating playgrounds, libraries, museums, building their

own residences and landscaping, and actively working to preserve and conserve places in and beyond their locale in the name of community service. Today these advocacy actions are considered historic preservation and environmental conservation activities and fall within the broader umbrella of place making/ keeping.

These women and their accomplishments within the women's club ecosystem are relatively unknown and certainly undervalued in today's academic and professional discourse about the important role of women in community building, historic preservation, and environmental conservation. In this terminal project, I expand the knowledge and importance of these untold histories by uncovering and shedding new light on the contributions of women's clubs in California.

### **Statement of Problem and Research Question**

The role of Western United States, and more specifically California, women's clubs in the development of new communities that burst into existence with Westward expansion that has not been explored. Equally unexplored is their role in the early blossoming of the national historic preservation and environmental conservation movements. The history and interconnection of the role of women and women's clubs in creating or preserving places through their collective work has been passed by and rendered invisible. Sadly, this continues to the present day.

There are several interrelated issues. First, contemporary professional fields of historic preservation and environmental conservation ignore and/or insufficiently understand the contributions these women made to their respective histories. Today, these fields are distinct from one another but historically were intertwined as simply

preservation and conservation. Second, public historians, including those engaging in women or gender studies, rightly focus on bringing forth social and cultural history but rarely include place or the built environments as important sources to document, interpret and showcase that history. Third, everyone, including women and women's clubs, has glossed over the significant contributions local clubs made in building and shaping their communities during settlement and major growth phases, including acts of preservation and conservation. Clubs played an important role, directly and indirectly, in developing the community infrastructure, arts and culture and of course the physical manifestation of place — both the natural and built environment. This included parks, libraries, museums, orphanages, schools, the women's clubhouses as well as their newly built homes. Today, those places contribute to community identity and are now considered historic and cultural resources. Finally, the cumulative stories and impacts made by the women's club ecosystem, organized within structures, like regional, state or national federations has not been adequately studied.

Not enough has been done to link the early achievements of women's clubs to the history and significance of the professional fields of historic preservation and environmental conservation. My research reveals there is a large body of accomplished work that is relevant to both fields today. Local engagement, often by amateur community members or "volunteer activists," plays an important role in the success of both fields and this history and contribution should be better understood, valued, and given more prominence within the histories of both movements.<sup>1</sup> There is insufficient

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<sup>1</sup> Karen J. Blair, *The History of American Women's Voluntary Organizations, 1810-1960: A Guide to Sources*, G.K. Hall Women's Studies Publications (Boston, Mass: G.K. Hall & Co., 1989). x.

research at the local level, where the activities occurred, to illuminate and interpret the achievements of these important players and leaders.

Therefore, my research question is: how did California women's clubs shape their emerging towns and cities through their bold actions of creating place or preserving the natural and built environments of the places they now called home?

## **Study Area**

This study focuses on California women's clubs, predominantly formed between 1890-1930s. Just after California established statehood, the expansion of the transcontinental railroad brought explosive migration from the East to the West creating new towns and cities at a frenzied pace. Since there are many types of women's clubs, this study narrows the research to women's literary clubs formed independently at a local level in these new or rapidly expanding communities that also collectively organized with other clubs at the regional, state, and national levels through federations. The General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC) served as the national federation to bring together local clubs and state federations like the California Federation of Women's Clubs (CFWC). The women who established each local club did not operate in isolation. Often collaboration extended beyond the CFWC or GFWC federations and engaged with other parts of the greater women's club movement including the Garden Club of America (GCA), Audubon Society, and patriotic clubs like Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) or Native Daughters of the Golden West. These will not be my primary area of study but likely will intersect and be included when active with a CFWC- or GFWC-member club.

## **Objective**

This research expands the histories and the historic record by broadening the knowledge of women's contributions to community building and the early fields of historic preservation and environmental conservation in California. It provides a foundation upon which to share the collective work of advancing the role of women and women's clubs beyond the insignificant or worse yet erased, role often portrayed in the contemporary histories. Reducing the history of these movements to a narrow or singular story, such as the oft-repeated trope that began with Hosmer's positing that the campaign to save Mount Vernon by the Mount Vernon Ladies Association began the historic preservation movement, disenfranchises, and undervalues the vast range of contributions made by women, individually or collectively on behalf of Women's Clubs. There are many other women's histories worthy of inclusion in the larger historiography waiting to be incorporated into the important history of these two contemporary fields.<sup>2</sup>

## **Audience**

The terminal project is written for a few different audiences. The primary audience is professionals, academics, advocates, and volunteers in the current fields of historic preservation and environmental conservation. Another audience is the members of today's women's clubs who may not know or understand this important history and the significance of the work that their predecessors accomplished. Women's clubs generally frame their work as being grounded in community service, mutual education, and support; they do not frame their work from a professional field. They may not consider

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<sup>2</sup> Charles B Hosmer Jr, *Preservation Comes of Age, From Williamsburg to the National Trust, 1926-1949* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1981); Michael A Tomlan, *Historic Preservation, Caring for Our Expanding Legacy* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2014).

themselves “preservationists” or “environmentalists.” Many may not even know the history of their own club and its role in local history or the role it may have played with other clubs in addressing regional, state, or national issues. Many clubs own and operate their historic clubhouses that should be stewarded as such. For these reasons, this project aims to enlighten and inspire new journeys of discovery and connection for club members. A final audience is historians, especially those who research women or gender, to inspire their active engagement with the interpretation of physical sites and places to tell the untold stories of these remarkable women and the women’s clubs. Better integrating historic preservation with those who specialize in the public history sphere can be a powerful way to expand the reach of this important history.<sup>3</sup>

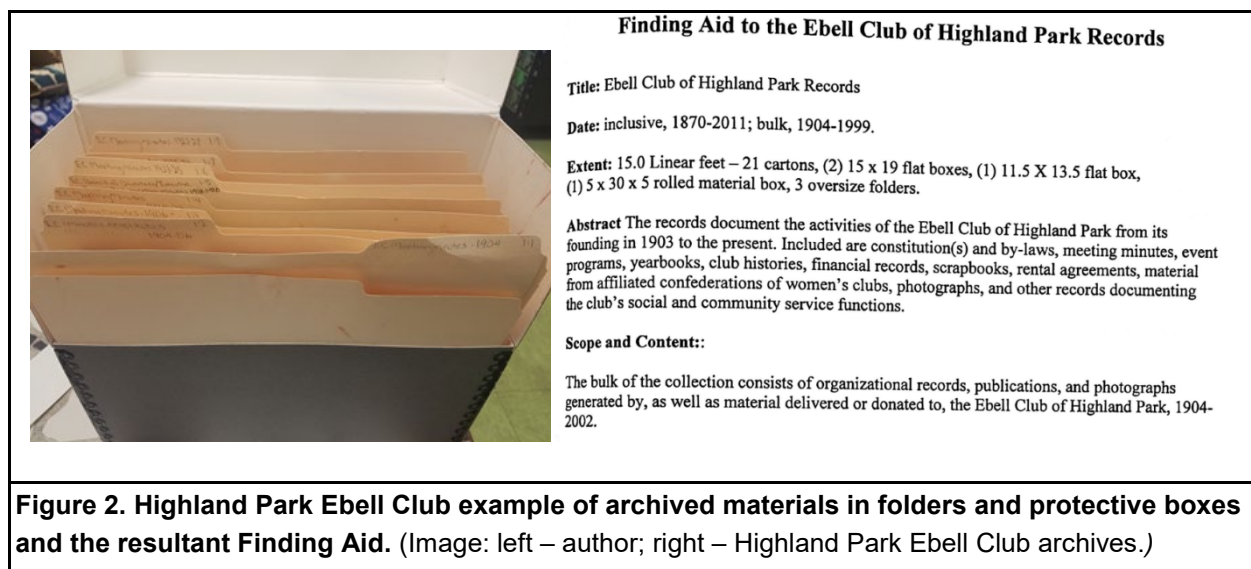
## **Methodology**

Using primarily an illustrative case study methodology, this terminal project focuses on the HPEC in Los Angeles, California. The club serves as a lens to peer into the intertwined system of how women organized through the national and state federations, while remaining independently chartered organizations. This local club has an extensive archive including annual meeting minutes, membership yearbooks, scrapbooks with press clippings and other materials, stored in a small upstairs room in the Clubhouse. In 2012-13, in partnership with the professional collections staff at the library of nearby Occidental College, Ebell volunteers and Marc LaRoque, a library science intern, assessed these archive materials and created a collections conservation plan. The team spent considerable time to implement the project including overall sorting and creating an archive organizational structure, re-housing the materials into archival

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<sup>3</sup> Gail Lee Dubrow, “Women and Community,” in *Reclaiming the Past, Landmarks of Women’s History*, ed. Page Putnam Miller (Indiana University Press, 1992). 110.

folders with protective boxes, cataloguing the organized materials making future research access easier with a newly created finding aid, available as part of the Online Archive of California. (Figure 2.)



Unfortunately, the collections conservation project stopped there and none of this original material was digitized or made publicly accessible. As part of this terminal project, I obtained special access to the collection and provided over 120 volunteer hours to digitize as much material as possible so that my research would not further compromise their physical condition. Many one-of-a-kind items, such as the annual yearbooks, are disintegrating and some are water damaged and still need conservation. These newly digitized source materials are now part of the HPEC's archive to be used and made more widely accessible to other researchers in the future.

After completing a case study for the HPEC, I conducted supplemental research on other women's clubs to understand if they undertook actions like HPEC. In addition to work specifically focused on saving or preserving the natural or built environment, the research examined community-making activities such as the building of clubhouses and



other civic institutions like libraries, schools or museums that still exist today and may have become recognized historic resources themselves. This method revealed layers of context and new meaning as the case studies informed the research question, my analysis, and my conclusions.

## **Previous Research**

Over 20 years ago, a door into the world of Women's Clubs opened after I accepted an invitation to lunch by the president of the HPEC. I loved the architecture of their property affectionately called "the Clubhouse," a designated Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument (#284) consisting of the original 1913 Clubhouse building and a separate "Annex" built in 1938 to accommodate the growth of the club. Just two blocks from my home in the heart of downtown Highland Park, this local women's club anchors an original streetcar suburb community in the northeast region of Los Angeles, bordering Pasadena. After that first lunch, I became an active member and, along with a fellow community leader, started to revive the dwindling membership by bringing new and younger members into the organization. At that time, there wasn't much knowledge about the club's history.

For instance, no one could tell me the origins of the name "Ebell." But upstairs a small closet room contained a bunch of old records and archives. I agreed to volunteer time to create a keynote presentation for the 100th building anniversary luncheon happening in 2013. Starting in 2012, I began researching and realized that the storage conditions and state of this fragile archive needed attention and care. I and another club member brought in Occidental College librarians to assist in a collections conservation project to organize this surprisingly large archival collection documenting HPEC's long

history. That preliminary research about the Ebell Club and Clubhouse led me to explore more about my own club and its role as a club member in the larger ecosystem of Women's Clubs that collaborated, organized, and worked together through the federation membership structures of CFWC and GFWC.

In the late 1990s, the National Audubon Society undertook an urban educational initiative that included building a flagship nature center in the community of Highland Park, now heavily urbanized with some remarkable open space protected as parkland. As the Deputy Director for this project, I researched and discovered the historic linkage of early Audubon's environmental conservation to Highland Park. Harriet Williams Myers was the founder and longtime leader of both the local chapter (Audubon Los Angeles) and the statewide California organization. She was also an active leader of the HPEC. This research helped to better understand the way in which women and women's clubs were intertwined in the communities and places where they flourished.

## **Scope and Limitations**

The work included in this terminal project consists of three distinct, yet interrelated activities undertaken by the author. First, substantial time was spent to digitize approximately one-quarter of Highland Park Ebell Club's inaccessible physical archive. Digitization protects the original fragile paper materials, allows ongoing research by others, and creates lasting value to the research community by improving accessibility. Second, using original source materials about California women's clubs, I developed a database. By aggregating data about local clubs, I was able to visualize through mapping software the size and scope of clubs graphically in California for the first time. Lastly, the primary research completed for this terminal project includes one illustrative

case study of the HPEC and comparative examples of similar work done by other Women's Clubs in California.

This research focuses on California between 1890-1930s when most women's clubs formed and exponentially grew in size and strength, from four clubs in 1892 to 531 clubs in 1922.<sup>4</sup> The initial contributions made by the women and their clubs' actions related to creating place, historic preservation and environmental conservation appear to be more concentrated in the first decades of the twentieth century when club membership and power were growing then peaking. Today, active women's clubs are still contributing to these movements, but such contemporary efforts are beyond the scope of this terminal project.

As a center of Western growth and development in our nation, California is a logical place to begin a study of this kind. With over 530 women's clubs formed and active during this period, California had an abundance of subjects to study. The existing research on women's clubs is dominated by East Coast bias and therefore the history of West Coast clubs has been limited or insufficiently studied. With women's clubs in all fifty states representing 13,195 clubs, California was the only Western state in the national top ten, ranked by club count in 1922.<sup>5</sup> While every other state has its own contribution to this research topic, that research is beyond the scope of this project.

The larger umbrella of the women's club movement includes many types of women's clubs like the Garden Club of American, the Audubon Society or the National Association of Colored Women. For the most part, this terminal project focuses on

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<sup>4</sup> Jane Cunningham Croly and General Federation of Women's Clubs, *The History of the Woman's Club Movement in America* (New York: Henry G. Allen & Co., 1898); Helen M. Winslow, *Official Register and Directory of Women's Clubs in America*, Vol. XXIV (Shirley, Mass., 1922).

<sup>5</sup> Winslow, *Official Register and Directory of Women's Clubs in America*. 10.

women's clubs in the GFWC or CFWC organized structure unless there is a key collaboration and coordination on a project or campaign that included another category of women's clubs. Contemporary criticism that white women's clubs during this time period were linked to racism and classicism because of their exclusion of African American women's participation in their clubs needs to be brought forth. That is a major weakness of these clubs during this time period. A fascinating parallel structure and body of work by African American women's clubs (and there were many in California) is not included in this research due to time limitations and the need to give this part of history its full deserved attention. But everyone must acknowledge, as Brent Leggs appropriately describes in *Essence* magazine: "Over a century ago, the National Association of Colored Women launched a national campaign to save Frederick Douglass' home...thereby inaugurating the Black preservation movement. As a people and a nation, we simply have not done enough to amplify the diverse voices, stories, and places that helped shape our present. This deficit carries consequences."<sup>6</sup> These women were working to protect and preserve their culture and heritage and yet they are still not included in any serious manner in the historic record. And this effort has been completely cut out of the historiography of the historic preservation movement.

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<sup>6</sup> Brent Leggs, "Historic Preservation: Saving African American Spaces Is the New Black Activism," *Essence*, December 2020, <https://www.essence.com/culture/saving-african-american-places-history/>. (accessed Nov 2022.)

## Chapter 2 - Background

### Context of Women Organizing

Community service takes various forms. The larger world of women, gathering and working collectively, to address issues or to bring education and resources to women and community, is a far wider world than the scope of this project. I acknowledge all the other work and priorities women were individually and collectively undertaking – chief among them suffrage and the rights of women. Organized women acted and engaged in many aspects of community life. Often, they focused on building and improving their community including the libraries, parks, schools, paved streets, fire and police, and of course, a space to gather as women – their own Clubhouse. Today, the legacy of their contributions and influence in these community places can still be seen; those spaces are now themselves historic resources in the many towns and cities where a local club formed.

Women's clubs didn't just appear. They evolved from a longer history of women organizing in a variety of ways and purposes. From the nation's founding, volunteerism generally started with church and philanthropic activities. According to historian Karen Blair, "after the Civil War, when the rash of patriotic women's groups emerged, secular societies truly began to flourish. Until the Great Depression, women's organizations served as a singularly vital force for personal and political change."<sup>7</sup>

Blair's 1989 research analyzed women's voluntary groups by creating thirteen basic categories. "They are: benevolence (including charity, philanthropy), culture (arts,

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<sup>7</sup> Karen J. Blair, *The History of American Women's Voluntary Organizations, 1810-1960: A Guide to Sources*, G.K. Hall Women's Studies Publications (Boston, Mass: G.K. Hall & Co., 1989). ix.

civics, mothers clubs, recreation), sororities (fraternal organizations, secret societies), peace, race, patriotic, religion (missionary), suffrage, temperance, work, youth (including scouts) politics and miscellaneous.”<sup>8</sup>

In the 1800s, clubs began as mutual aid societies or benevolent organizations with reform clubs for anti-slavery, clubs providing early platforms for women’s rights and clubs relating to issues of day like temperance. This activity was not limited to white women. African American women spearheaded their own organizing, especially for mutual aid for basic needs and to service their own communities. By 1896, the National Association of Colored Women’s Clubs formed as an umbrella to organize regional women’s clubs working on issues inhibiting the social mobility of black people. There are many parallels between Black and white women organizing; the resources available and the priorities of these groups reveal the differences in the way they contributed to their communities. It was white women’s clubs that specifically excluded Black women. In California, Spanish-Mexican women were accepted as “women in families descended from Californio or Californio-Americano families expected to be considered as white and as Spanish.” If these women were white in appearance, this means they could not be easily excluded from club membership.<sup>9</sup>

Preservation and conservation were embraced by many categories of women’s clubs. Patriotic clubs were early to undertake historic preservation activities including the Daughters of American Revolution (DAR), the Mount Vernon Ladies Association (MVLVA) or in California the Society of California Pioneers formed in 1850 and the Native Daughters of the Golden West (the women’s auxiliary to the Native Sons of the Golden

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., x.

<sup>9</sup> Eileen V. Wallis, “Keeping Alive the Old Tradition: Spanish-Mexican Club Women in Southern California, 1880-1940,” *Southern California Quarterly* Vol. 91, No. 2 (Summer 2009): 133–54.

West) in 1886. Garden clubs owe their unique identity within the ranks of Progressive Era reformers to women's interest in flora and its "fate at the hands of urban-industrial expansion."<sup>10</sup> Although it took until 1913 to start a national organization, Garden Clubs of America (GCA), local garden clubs flourished many years prior focusing on gardens, conservation and horticulture interests. Once organized, GCA often worked in coordination with the GFWC for the cause of conservation through letter writing and lobbying elected representatives. The same can be said for the National Audubon Society, which often is not associated with the women's club movement. "In 1898, a 'score of ladies' established the Audubon Society of the State of Connecticut" and with other women in Washington D.C. the National Audubon Society emerged in 1905 with the organizational structure of independent local chapters in federation together through a national organization.<sup>11</sup>

Culture clubs, or literary clubs, formed by women initially to get together to read and discuss literature, history, fine arts and to elevate and advance its members this cultural exchange of knowing what was going on in the world around them. This provided women with not only a support network but created the space for learning and awareness that led to actions of community service or "improvement projects, including social reform and environmental conservation."<sup>12</sup> In 1868, white middle-class women founded Sorosis (New York City) and the New England Women's Club (Boston) as the first two well-organized literary clubs and provided "women with a point of entry into the

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<sup>10</sup> Shana Miriam Cohen, "American Garden Clubs and the Fight for Nature Preservation, 1890-1980" (University of California, Berkeley, 2005). 24-25.

<sup>11</sup> Carolyn. Merchant, *American Environmental History: An Introduction*, *American Environmental History: An Introduction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007). 142.

<sup>12</sup> Glenda Riley, *Women and Nature: Saving the "Wild" West*, *Women and Nature Women in the West* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999). 99.

public domain.”<sup>13</sup> Not the first of their kind, these two clubs were the most influential forerunners of the widespread culture club movement because “women everywhere could emulate their format and copy their programs as they tried to inspire American womanhood to abolish the constraints on the growth of women’s talent.”<sup>14</sup> Many more clubs formed and membership increased as these early clubwomen traveled across the nation lecturing and promoting self-improvement and voluntary community service.<sup>15</sup>

In California, before 1890, there were at least six women’s literary clubs: the Ebell Society of Oakland (founded 1876), Guidon Club of San Francisco (founded 1884), the Eothen Club of East Oakland (founded 1887), and the Century Club of San Francisco and Ruskin Art Club in Los Angeles (both founded 1888). The Los Angeles Women’s Club was founded in 1875 by Caroline Severance (founder of the New England Woman’s Club) after she moved West. This club didn’t last long. It was the predecessor to Severance’s founding in 1891 the Friday Morning Club (FMC), which would become the largest women’s club in Los Angeles. “Many club women were migrants from other cities throughout the nation where many had their earliest experiences with organized womanhood.”<sup>16</sup> The leadership and founders were bringing the tools of organizing to their new and growing cities and towns in California.

## **The Women’s Club Movement**

In 1890, Jane Cunningham Croly invited independently formed women’s clubs across the nation to attend a New York City convention to pursue the organizing of a national

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<sup>13</sup> Dubrow, “Women and Community.” 90.

<sup>14</sup> Karen J. Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist, True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1980). 15.

<sup>15</sup> Diana Martha Louis, “Women’s Clubs,” *Women in American History: An Encyclopedia*, 2013.

<sup>16</sup> Anastasia J Christman, “The Best Laid Plans: Women’s Clubs and City Planning in Los Angeles, 1890-1930,” *The Best Laid Plans* (University of California Los Angeles, 2000). 5.



federation. The General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC) formed with concurrence and ratification by sixty three clubs.<sup>17</sup> Croly believed this national association would provide a "collective response to problems (and) would carry weight with legislators."<sup>18</sup> There were several successful women's national organizations already formed (both the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Association for the Advancement of Women in 1873 and the National Council of Women in 1888) that Croly borrowed from the "structure of a central organization built hierarchically on local branches that carried out the policy of leaders through different departments."<sup>19</sup> Mrs. Phoebe Hearst, representing the Century Club of San Francisco, helped ratify the GFWC and became the organization's first treasurer.<sup>20</sup> "The General Federation soon acquired a fashionable, society like reputation because many of its leaders were newsworthy, wealthy women."<sup>21</sup> Club formation and activity surged nationwide. By 1900, memberships in clubs became a status symbol and newspapers had regular sections to cover club activities and their growing stature and influence in society.<sup>22</sup> GFWC held biennial conventions and the first one in 1892 in Chicago had delegations from four California clubs. The enormous network facilitated the transmission of national policy to local and state federation and, from there, to all clubwomen."<sup>23</sup> Communication and networking on issues occurred at both annual and biennial conventions with delegates from local clubs sent to participate. "Club women defined

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<sup>17</sup> Jane Cunningham Croly and General Federation of Women's Clubs, *The History of the Woman's Club Movement in America*. "General Federation of Women's Clubs."249.

<sup>18</sup> Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist, True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914*. 93.

<sup>19</sup> Blair. 93-94.

<sup>20</sup> Croly and General Federation of Women's Clubs, *The History of the Woman's Club Movement in America*. 250.

<sup>21</sup> Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist, True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914*. 95.

<sup>22</sup> Gayle Ann Gullett, *Becoming Citizens: The Emergence and Development of the California Women's Movement, 1880-1911*, *Women in American History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000). 117-118.

<sup>23</sup> Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist, True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914*. 97.

conservation in its broadest sense: children, family, schools, at risk peoples, historic sites, and the physical environment.”<sup>24</sup>

### State Federations and the California Federation of Women’s Clubs

Around the same time that GFWC formed, many women’s club joined together to form state federations with the purpose to collaborate and cooperate, support one another through reciprocity, and to have collective strength and power when advocating for issues or coordinating civic projects of regional or statewide importance. The California Federation of Women’s Clubs was founded on January 17, 1900, with forty clubs that represented six thousand women. Clara Burdette, also a founding member of the Ebell of Los Angeles, became the first president. In May 1900 the CFWC became the thirty-seventh state to join the GFWC.<sup>25</sup> Burdette “explicitly connected federation to empowerment...and envisioned city mothers as engaging in a policy of separate but equal: they would expand and empower women’s sphere in politics.”<sup>26</sup> Within twenty years of founding, the CFWC represented six hundred and three clubs and around sixty-three thousand women.<sup>27</sup> This growth was statewide and included many smaller clubs and as such “the club life of women in California.... differs from the club life of the East in being almost wholly centered in towns and cities. Small clubs are being formed in remote districts.”<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Riley, *Women and Nature: Saving the “Wild” West*. 99.

<sup>25</sup> Gullett, *Becoming Citizens: The Emergence and Development of the California Women’s Movement, 1880-1911*. 114; “California Federation of Women’s Clubs,” <https://www.cfwc.org/wp-content/uploads/Federation-Facts.website2023.pdf>. (accessed May 9, 2023).

<sup>26</sup> Gullett, *Becoming Citizens: The Emergence and Development of the California Women’s Movement, 1880-1911*. 117.

<sup>27</sup> Amelia Crary, “Women’s Clubs in California: Architecture and Organization, 1880-1940” (University of California Berkeley, 2016). 6.

<sup>28</sup> Croly and General Federation of Women’s Clubs, *The History of the Woman’s Club Movement in America*. 240-259.

During the early 1900s, the CFWC launched a campaign to save natural and historic sites across the state. Many women agreed that historic aspects of the built environment must be saved. The public's growing thirst for knowledge of its past abetted their efforts. "Women proved critical in the emerging crusade to save the American West. Women put the West into an accessible, nonthreatening format. Women argued eloquently for such concepts as living with nature rather than controlling it" and that part of the western landscape included historic structures.<sup>29</sup> By 1920, tourist information would list historic sites along with national parks and Spanish missions beside notable parks and mountains.<sup>30</sup>

Clubwomen also understood the symbolic and literal significance of the built environment and they claimed physical space in their cities, legibly imprinting their influence upon the landscape. "California led the nation in clubhouse construction—one tenth of the national total in 1908— where dense urban areas made gathering and establishing social networks easier, and where property laws allowed women to own real estate. Also in California many clubs were started in towns that were themselves just starting, making for fewer physical and entrenched ideological barriers to building."<sup>31</sup> Because of the right to land ownership, women all over California could define their cities financially and culturally through their clubhouses and as part of their community building endeavors.

In conclusion, the culture, self-education and awareness aspects of early literary clubs fairly quickly morphed into clubs with a broader mission of civic work, community service and bringing the influence that they could collectively bear upon any issue they

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<sup>29</sup> Riley, *Women and Nature: Saving the "Wild" West*. 165.

<sup>30</sup> Riley. 157.

<sup>31</sup> Crary, "Women's Clubs in California: Architecture and Organization, 1880-1940." 1,8.

deemed important. This was possible due to the organized, collective power of the federations, both state and national, that most local women's clubs belonged.<sup>32</sup>

Women's clubs were multi-faceted, the collective work and influence by sheers numbers was amplified when working in tandem with other local clubs and especially effective when clubs worked under the banner of a state federation or the national GFWC.

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<sup>32</sup> Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist, True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914*. 119.

### Chapter 3 - Literature Review

The focus of this research — the intersection of the fields of historic preservation and environmental conservation with the history of women and their role in shaping community and preserving the built and natural environments — requires a broad literature review. To address my research question, this review assessed how the major histories of the two fields have either included or excluded the contribution of women to each field, as well as their contributions within the framework of organized Women’s Clubs. I also included women’s history and if, where and to what extent the existing research highlighted their roles and contributions to historic preservation or environmental conservation.

Melosi and Scarpino’s 2004 book, *Public History and the Environment*, sheds light on the convergence of public history with environmentalism in an attempt to bring better alignment and crossover to discourse and work in both fields.<sup>33</sup> Conard’s chapter “Spading Common Ground: Reconciling the Built and Natural Environments” astutely acknowledges “for the most part, practitioners in all three camps work with their own kind” while acknowledging the great need to collaborate more, especially where the built environment is really part of the natural environment.<sup>34</sup> Why is this important? Conard cites McMahon and Watson’s work: “the resources at stake for both historic preservationists and environmentalists are often irreplaceable. Historic structures and

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<sup>33</sup> Martin V. Melosi and Philip V. Scarpino, *Public History and the Environment*, (Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Co., 2004).

<sup>34</sup> Rebecca Conard, “Spading Common Ground: Reconciling the Built and Natural Environments,” in *Public History and the Environment*, ed. Martin V. Melosi and Philip V. Scarpino (Krieger Publishing Co., 2004). 5.

endangered species, once gone, are lost forever.”<sup>35</sup> This argument helps frame and provide a public history context for the ways in which women and women’s clubs shaped their communities through the important work accomplished by their collective efforts.

## Historic Preservation

Sources for the history of historic preservation, starting with it as a social movement and then its expansion into a professional field of work and study, are surprisingly limited.<sup>36</sup> Architectural historians in general seem to be trained or centered on the physical built environment and tend not to be historians of the field of historic preservation.

Published in 1893, one of the earliest books to capture a “preservationists” appeal to save history and take action in California is *The Story of the Old Missions of California* by Laura Bride Powers, a leader in both the early preservation movement and the Women’s Club movement. Powers states: “This little volume might well have gone forth to its destiny, known as ‘A Pleas for the Missions.’ They should live – they must live, not only in memories and histories, but in proud reality.”<sup>37</sup> Her contribution to historic preservation went unnoticed until Michael Tomlan’s 2015 book, *Historic Preservation, Caring for our Expanding Legacy*, cited the children’s version of her Mission book as an example of the power of libraries and books to accelerate learning in society.<sup>38</sup> She did more for historic preservation in California than write children’s

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<sup>35</sup> Edward T. McMahon and A. Elizabeth Watson, “In Search of Collaboration: Historic Preservation and the Environmental Movement,” *Information*, No. 71 (1992): 1, 10.

<sup>36</sup> Tomlan, *Historic Preservation, Caring for Our Expanding Legacy*. (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2014). ix. “The purpose of this book is to redefine historic preservation as a course of action, incorporating more explicitly the socially progressive goals that have come to characterize the movement.”

<sup>37</sup> Laura Bride Powers, *The Story of the Old Missions of California, Their Establishment, Progress and Decay* (San Francisco: William Doxey, 1893).v-vi.

<sup>38</sup> Tomlan, *Historic Preservation, Caring for Our Expanding Legacy*. 6.

books! Bride Powers organized the California Historic Landmarks League in 1902 and a founding member of the California Historical Society from its 1922 beginning in addition to many years of preserving California missions and the history and landmarks in Monterey, California.<sup>39</sup>

Charles Hosmer's 1981 two-volume encyclopedia *Preservation Comes of Age: From Williamsburg to the National Trust, 1926-1949* asserts that before 1926, local amateur activity drove the efforts to save sites with a handful of efforts that utilized substantial organization for a sustained campaign like Mount Vernon in the 1850s.<sup>40</sup> Hosmer's comprehensive work to detail the field's history hinges entirely on the change from a social movement into a professionalized field, with his main focus on the latter, subjugating the full history and in particular the role of women, amateurs or voluntary contributions. This one seminal work, with good intentions to capture the incredible history of historic preservation from the viewpoint of government regulation and as a professional field, unjustly created the disconnected narrative, truncated history, and tension that still exist today between professionals and dedicated volunteers, amateurs, and advocates. Hosmer's history ignored and helped erase the broader and long history of historic preservation that came before professionalization and upon which the field was built. Hosmer's history also diminished the often parallel important efforts that advocates and volunteers contributed to both the social movement and the field.

In the first volume, Hosmer briefly acknowledges the early work of the Mount Vernon Ladies Association, Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Colonial Dames of America as well as the efforts of the Wisconsin State Federation of Women's

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<sup>39</sup> Ted Durein, [mayohayeslibrary.org/laura-bride-powers.html](http://mayohayeslibrary.org/laura-bride-powers.html). (accessed 5/1/2023).

<sup>40</sup> Hosmer Jr, *Preservation Comes of Age, From Williamsburg to the National Trust, 1926-1949*. Vol 1. 1.

Clubs. Hosmer does sprinkle some circuitous mentions of the role of either women or organized women's clubs in shaping the identity of various historic communities around the nation and how preservation work was achieved, but mostly focuses on his chosen leading actors — men or governments, or men in government. He argues that California's state preservation program stemmed from one man, Joseph Knowland. The other figure of note Hosmer includes is Newton Drury who is often cited as the man who saved the Redwoods, amongst other roles nationally and in California.<sup>41</sup> Hosmer does not acknowledge that Laura Bride Powers co-founded the California Historic Landmarks League (the group closely associated with what would become the state preservation program) *with* Knowland. Nor does Hosmer share the full story of the many decades of preservation effort that came *before* Drury that made 'his' success possible, namely the work of women of the GFWC, Garden Clubs of America and other local, state and national women's groups. *That* history took until 2019 to be unveiled in *Who Saved the Redwoods?* a comprehensive history of this early preservation and conservation effort in California, led by women, volunteers, amateurs, and preservationists that have gone unnoticed for over a century.<sup>42</sup> Yes, Knowland and Drury have a significant place in California's history in preservation and conservation efforts but they were not acting in isolation and their success depended upon the support, organization and power of the women, working alongside them or who invited them to the table in the first place.

Looking at the historiography of historic preservation, the time of publication correlates to how inclusive or expansive the topic is addressed. Hosmer in 1981 is very out dated from the 2023 view of historic preservation. John Cooper's 1990 book *Pivotal*

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid. 184-189.

<sup>42</sup> James Wasserman and Laura Wasserman, *Who Saved the Redwoods? The Unsung Heroines of the 1920s Who Fought for Our Redwood Forests* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2019).



*Decades, The United States, 1900-1920* looked at these two decades for our country and gives little ink to women, yet gender-labels the section about women and the exclusion of blacks as “Excitement and Irritation.”<sup>43</sup> Two years later Page Putnam Miller issues a groundbreaking book *Reclaiming the Past, Landmarks of Women’s History*. While not a history of historic preservation, this compilation of work starts with ‘Landmarks of Women’s History’ and links women’s history to the physical representation of that history in the built environment. Putnam overtly “attempts to challenge two rapidly expanding fields – historic preservation and women’s history – to work together in promoting a more comprehensive understanding of women’s past.”<sup>44</sup>

In 1995, Delores Hayden’s *Power of Place* set a different path to look beyond just architecture; her work illuminates the intersection of public history with historic preservation, landscape architecture, arts, and environmental conservation. Her writing offers a refreshing perspective on the need to be inclusive of gender, race, and ethnicity to broaden the practices.<sup>45</sup> While this work was based in California, it did not address the women’s club movement.

Robert Stipe’s 2003 book *A Richer Heritage, Historic Preservation in the Twenty-First Century*, does not serve as a re-think of history but gains perspective and understanding of the efforts of the more recent past and updating the field’s historiography. It broadens how preservation’s realm matters to include cultural landscapes, environmental, and the social aspects of history; it does not add to the

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<sup>43</sup> John Milton Cooper Jr, *Pivotal Decades, The United States, 1900-1920* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1990). 62-63

<sup>44</sup> Page Putnam Miller, *Reclaiming the Past, Landmarks of Women’s History*, ed. Putnam Miller (Indiana University Press, 1992). 7.

<sup>45</sup> Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1995).

history of the early historic preservation movement.<sup>46</sup> Page and Mason's 2004 book *Giving Preservation a History* does call for a rethink of the movement's history with their stated intention to ask a simple question: "How might preservation look different in the future if practitioners examined critically their movement's history?"<sup>47</sup> Their introductory chapter bursts open the floodgates on why a reconsideration is critically needed, lending support to my assertion that preservation isn't something that blossomed out of nowhere or was founded on only one effort by the Mount Vernon Ladies Association. They also acknowledge that Hosmer's traditional history work held a very narrow view of the movement: "This institutional history... skips lightly over vast social and cultural shifts that shaped historic preservation."<sup>48</sup> The effort aims high with essays that begin to build up a fuller record of the movement's roots. Most essays, however, concentrate on the eastern United States with no contributions illuminating any preservation history in California or the West Coast.

Also in 2003, Dubrow and Goodman's edited book *Restoring Women's History through Historic Preservation* starts to broaden the discourse on the contributions of women, stating: "women's history has yet to be represented in an accurate and complete way at the vast majority of designated landmarks."<sup>49</sup> This groundbreaking research begins to update Hosmer's superficial coverage of women. Barbara Howe's chapter opens the door to women's roles in historic preservation in the nineteenth century. The rest of the essays are wide ranging on topics of women's influence and

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<sup>46</sup> Robert E. Stipe, *A Richer Heritage: Historic Preservation in the Twenty-First Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

<sup>47</sup> Randall F. Mason and Max Page, *Giving Preservation a History: Histories of Historic Preservation in the United States* (New York: Routledge, 2004). 13.

<sup>48</sup> Mason and Page. 7.

<sup>49</sup> Gail Lee Dubrow and Jennifer B. Goodman, *Restoring Women's History through Historic Preservation* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2003). 3.

contribution to various histories, not just suffrage; many touch on the role of various women's clubs from white to African American and from literary clubs to garden clubs. While none specifically look at the club movement and its cumulative impact on the built environment, the authors did acknowledge the addition of the General Federation of Women's Club's headquarters building to the National Historic Landmarks program.

Jump forward more than a decade to 2015 and a lot of change has occurred in the thinking and actions of the field of historic preservation. Tomlan's *Historic Preservation, Caring for our Expanded Legacy* broadens the scope of the movement to more fully address a history of gender. Tomlan provides a more authentic inclusion of women and people who did the work, starting on page 1: "In reviewing historic preservation activity, it becomes clear that women have always been coequal in the field, even though not always recognized by historians."<sup>50</sup> There are more examples of women who were not credited in prior histories. Tomlan also addresses the important role California played in the early shaping of the preservation movement based initially around the California Missions. By going back as early as the 1880s and continuing on through the early 1900s, women and women's clubs had a significant role, Tomlan gives parity to the role played by both John Knowland *and* clubwoman Laura Bride Powers.<sup>51</sup> With a stated goal to "redefine historic preservation activity as a course of action, incorporating more explicitly the socially progressive goals that have come to characterize the movement" the book provides a more inclusive history and brings the field back around to its roots as a social campaign and movement that "enlists and

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<sup>50</sup> Tomlan, *Historic Preservation, Caring for Our Expanding Legacy*. 1.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.* 6.

engages people who are dedicated to extending the legacy and usefulness of” the physical world.<sup>52</sup>

Max Page’s 2016 book *Why Preservation Matters* states the need to expand the history of historic preservation most succinctly: “Often the most profound way to encounter — and to confront — history is in historic places.”<sup>53</sup> While there is no information specific to the women and women’s clubs movement in the book, it reinforces my assertion of the undervalued and under-told contribution of women in historic preservation, especially the history of the General and State Federation of Women’s Clubs. Finally, in 2020, Whitney Martinko upended the traditional applecart of history in both historic preservation and environmental conservation in her *Historic Real Estate, Market Morality and Politics of Preservation*. The book intentionally ends where the myth and trope of historic preservation history typically starts (the Mount Vernon Ladies Association) to reposition the author’s work in the broader continuum of history. She asserts that “preservation itself is a crucial component of the history of capitalism in the early United States.”<sup>54</sup> Martinko discusses much earlier efforts by women such as Sarah Hale who in the 1830s advocated through her magazine writings and raised money for various historic sites. Martinko concludes “U.S. residents made preservation a tool of nation building by designing architectural permanence in diverse environmental conditions and landscapes where architecture made visible local particularities and regional distinctiveness.”<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Tomlan, *Historic Preservation, Caring for Our Expanding Legacy*. v,ix.

<sup>53</sup> Max Page, “Why Preservation Matters” (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016). 53.

<sup>54</sup> Whitney Martinko, *Historic Real Estate: Market Morality and the Politics of Preservation in the Early United States*, Early American Studies (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020). 11.

<sup>55</sup> Martinko, 7.

Building off Martinko's conclusion, California during this time period was the last big step of nation building in the United States and women's clubs would be the easiest architectural markers to capture the place from which women built and preserved their local communities. The National Trust for Historic Preservation's 2020 "Where Women Made History" nicely captures a new way of telling the story and expanding the documentation through a crowdsourcing campaign to collect and highlight women's history. Limiting my review to the entries from California, this interactive web-based platform hosted ninety-three entries based on a specific women or places where women made history. Seven of those entries featured Women's Clubhouses. Another sixteen entries likely had strong connections to a women's club or other women's organizations like the YWCA, National Council of Negro Women, or featured women who were strongly associated with the women's club movement like Harrye Forbes, Caroline Severance or Pearl Chase. This women's history initiative is an important step to "reshape the historical narrative to include women."<sup>56</sup>

## **Environmental Conservation**

Since there is an academic field dedicated to "environmental history," whereas there's no similar field for the history of historic preservation, sources are more wide ranging in both topics and approaches. However, I was still unable to find abundant evidence directly linking the role of women and the women's club movement to many overall histories of environmental conservation beyond recent scholarship, authored primarily by women. Early work by Roderick Nash and Hans Huth provides a male-

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<sup>56</sup> National Trust for Historic Preservation, "Where Women Made History," [savingplaces.org/where-women-made-history](https://savingplaces.org/where-women-made-history). (accessed May 9, 2023).

biased narrative on the rise of environmentalism.<sup>57</sup> Or John Opie's chronicling the value of national parks through the lens of male-led or dominated interviews.<sup>58</sup> There may be a little nod to "the women" but essentially the dominate narratives exclude and dismiss the agency of women, especially organized women.

Carolyn Merchant's 2007 *American Environmental History, an Introduction*, serves as a concise overview of environmental history and illustrates that "the history of the conservation and preservation movements of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries... can be delineated in terms of political struggles,... the role of citizen movements in pressing for the preservation of natural areas, and the creation of government and state agencies to manage and conserve natural resources."<sup>59</sup> Merchant begins to bring forward the role that women and women's clubs played in and the impact they had on the early development of our nation's environmental consciousness. Merchant puts in print that George Grinnell's attempt to create the Audubon Society failed in three years but women founded Massachusetts Audubon, Connecticut Audubon and "from these efforts, the National Audubon Society was reestablished in 1905."<sup>60</sup> Merchant elaborates that the founding of other women's clubs such as the General Federation of Women's Clubs (1890), Daughters of the American Revolution (1896), and the Garden Club of America (1913) happened and they all became actively involved in the conservation cause. Therefore, the movement didn't just spontaneously happen; the women actually organized the rise of the conservation

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<sup>57</sup> Roderick Nash, "Wilderness and the American Mind" (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1967); Hans Huth, "Nature and the American: Three Centuries of Changing Attitudes" (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957).

<sup>58</sup> John Opie, *Nature's Nation: An Environmental History of the United States* (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1998).

<sup>59</sup> Carolyn Merchant, *American Environmental History: An Introduction, American Environmental History: An Introduction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007). xvii.

<sup>60</sup> Merchant, 142.

and preservation movements, and they played a role in professionalizing the work that men would quickly dominate (all while still relying upon women's ongoing collaboration and organizing in building the men's success).

Laura and James Wassermann's 2019 *Who Saved the Redwoods? The Unsung Heroines of the 1920s Who Fought for Our Redwood Forests* assert that the story of women saving the California Redwoods is so significant to the nation's history that "This is how a great environmental movement began."<sup>61</sup> The women in their book, and women in general, were organizing and leading conservation campaigns for both nature and historical sites even if history has not recognized their contributions. The authors cite historian Cameron Binkley's conclusion that "conservation was a defining feature of progressivism and particularly important in the arid West. Such club leaders...recognized the advantages that conservation had in enabling them to garner woman's support for increased involvement in public life."<sup>62</sup> This interpretation supports my arguments as to the value of preservation and conservation activities within the women's club movement.

Glenda Riley's *Women and Nature: Saving the "Wild" West (1999)* forcefully illustrates how the early environmental movement was shaped by active involvement of women and the book is foundational to a more inclusive historiography. She asserts that women held a broader interpretation of environmentalism and "as 'social conservators' women typically believed they should safeguard not only landscapes but also native

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<sup>61</sup> James Wasserman, Laura Wasserman, *Who Saved the Redwoods? The Unsung Heroines of the 1920s Who Fought for Our Redwood Forests*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019). 1.

<sup>62</sup> Cameron Binkley, "Saving Redwoods: Clubwomen and Conservation, 1900–1925," in *California Women and Politics: From the Gold Rush to the Great Depression*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011). 168.; James Wasserman, Laura Wasserman, *Who Saved the Redwoods? The Unsung Heroines of the 1920s Who Fought for Our Redwood Forests*. 34.

peoples and historic structures.”<sup>63</sup> Riley posits that because women were not professionals they were easily overlooked, and their roles trivialized. Male leaders took credit but were acting on public support that had been created through grassroots organizing by women. The author devotes an entire chapter to club women and frames their organizing savvy within the organizing structure of federations (both state and national) as the way they created continuous work on behalf of environmental issues. “In a circular movement across the entire West, local and state groups fed ideas upward to the national federation, while the national organization communicated initiatives downward.”<sup>64</sup> Riley is the first to document the way many women, activist, artist, writer, scientist, etc. came from clubs where they learned about themselves and also how to do effective work, even if the work was not done in the name of a club. Without the emergence and strength of women’s clubs, Riley wonders “would environmentalism have ever gotten off the ground?”<sup>65</sup> A rethinking of the conventional interpretation of environmental history is critical.

Shana Cohen’s 2005 dissertation “American Garden Clubs and the Fight for Nature Preservation, 1890-1980” posits that literature excludes women’s contributions and asserts a top-down voice coming from men, labeling it “Women as Invisible Environmentalists.”<sup>66</sup> Men are the professionals deemed worthy of ink; women’s role is reduced to simply the soft stuff around the men – education, activism, doing the work, creating the groundswell. Carolyn Merchant’s 1996 book *Earthcare, Women and the Environment* illustrates an example of this erasure of women’s work and voices in the

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<sup>63</sup> Glenda Riley, *Women and Nature: Saving the “Wild” West*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999). xiii.

<sup>64</sup> Riley, 107.

<sup>65</sup> Riley, 192-193.

<sup>66</sup> Cohen, “American Garden Clubs and the Fight for Nature Preservation, 1890-1980.” 6.



early 1900s as forestry and conservation become male dominated due to their professionalization, turning the tables of power to exclude their contributions from our collective history.<sup>67</sup>

## Public History — Women and Gender

Public historians and those who specialize in women's history, and women and gender studies have made significant in-roads in elevating the role of women in history. While much has been written about the women's club movement, few have focused on selective aspects of my research.

A logical entry into the subject is Karen Blair's 1989 book *The History of American Women's Voluntary Organizations, 1810-1960: A Guide to Sources*. This book documents over 700 articles and books (but does not include archive material) relating to the history of women's organizations from 1810-1960. Just seventeen entries cover women in California and a mere nine each for the subjects of historic preservation and environmental conservation.<sup>68</sup>

Blair's 1980 book, *The Clubwoman as Feminist, True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914*, provides an overall context for the formation and trajectory of the club movement including how collective organizing would attain "a new and vital influence upon American life" that had been previously denied to women.<sup>69</sup> Insight on the evolution of women's role in society, from a viewpoint of Domestic Feminism, is central

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<sup>67</sup> Carolyn Merchant, *Earthcare: Women and the Environment, Earthcare* (New York: Routledge, 1996). 130-136.

<sup>68</sup> Karen Blair, *The History of American Women's Voluntary Organizations, 1810-1960: A Guide to Sources*. (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co, 1989).

<sup>69</sup> Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist, True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914*. (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1980). 93.

to this work and helps frame why clubs created the spaces and places where women learned individual skills in organization, speaking and leadership and the “more important result of club life was that women learned to support other women.”<sup>70</sup> This work also elevates literary clubs, specifically, as being ignored by academics and showcases their vital role in the flourishing of the club movement nationally.

In 1980, Darlene Roth argued that the built environment reveals women as bearers and preservers of culture: “there are structures on the landscape which are the result of collective female efforts and testimony to what women’s organizations think of their communities and how they perceived their role in them – schools, orphanages, libraries, parks, clinics, gardens, social and recreational centers, monuments, memorials, clubhouses, headquarter buildings and similar institutions.”<sup>71</sup> Roth’s study inventories and documents these sites in Atlanta with a sad conclusion that there are few physical sites left to tell their story. Even more depressing, the larger story of female city-building on any scale - at the local, state or national level – is continually overlooked by historians and practitioners.

Susan Ware’s *A Modern American Women, a Documentary History* (2002) provides national context affirming that by the 1890s, the explosion in the number of women’s organizations made them a striking characteristic of American society. Through these organizational bodies, women (Black and white) “strove to fuse politics with their domestic ideals”<sup>72</sup> to make lasting impacts on community life. Her interpretation reinforces Roth’s conclusion that the physical representation of this wide

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<sup>70</sup> Blair, 69.

<sup>71</sup> Darlene Roth, “Feminine Marks on the Landscape: An Atlanta Inventory,” *Journal of American Culture* 3, no. Winter (1980); Putnam Miller, *Reclaiming Past, Landmarks Women’s Hist.* 10.

<sup>72</sup> Susan Ware, *Modern American Women: A Documentary History*, 2nd ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2002).5.

community impact should be reflected in the broader notion of the entire landscape of the built environment.

Women's work is the unique lens deployed by author Gayle Ann Gullett in telling the history of the California women's movement in *Becoming Citizens: The Emergence and Development of the California Women's Movement, 1880-1911* (2002). The research focuses on suffrage, a priority political topic for women during this era, providing a groundbreaking history on the vital role California played in the nation's struggle. The leaders and people involved were also active in many women's organizations and Gullett's research offers insights into how women perceived their roles in civic engagement for any cause, including suffrage. It showcases how the ecosystem of the club movement could simultaneously affect or assist the work of clubs in various cities. Club members understood that enhancing their cities aesthetically (through parks, playgrounds, civic works, or clubhouses) and providing services would boost their interests as women and their collective voice and power. Gullett quotes a woman from 1898 who stated "Nothing so reveals the possibilities of our sex to our sex as [our] concerted action."<sup>73</sup>

While surprisingly few books have adequately covered women, women's clubs and the West, especially California's profound role in our nation's history, a number of student thesis and dissertations have covered aspects of this key group over the last twenty years. Three works intersect with my research topic. In 2000, Anastasia Christman's history dissertation, "The Best Laid Plans: Women's Clubs and City Planning in Los Angeles, 1890-1930" provides a wonderful roadmap specific to the

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<sup>73</sup> Gayle Ann Gullett, *Becoming Citizens: The Emergence and Development of the California Women's Movement, 1880-1911*, *Women in American History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000). 133.

larger clubs in the City of Los Angeles. It touches on aspects of preservation and conservation activities as part of the development of city planning. The study goes into greater detail about the history and ecosystem of the leading women's clubs and their role to define and create the myths of this new burgeoning city in our nation. The author states, "Los Angeles was not only the setting for these women's activities, it was also the trophy. The emphasis they placed on the physical condition of Los Angeles – what it should look like, what behaviors and cultures it should contain, how it should be interpreted – indicates that club women understood that power is made manifest in the built environment."<sup>74</sup> The club movement and sheer size of the collective memberships gave them a platform for their power in an inherently political process.

"As communities developed, it was clear that it was women's organizations (who) helped to pave the way for change."<sup>75</sup> Kimberly Voss focuses on a larger timeframe of actions by women in Florida where their activities in conservation have gone unsung and underappreciated in her 2014 "Club Women & Garden Clubs: Well Behaved Women Making Environmental History." This research provides yet another example of a relatively recent work that values and uplifts the contribution of women to this field. A few years prior to Voss, Cohen's 2005 dissertation "American Garden Clubs and the Fight for Nature Preservation, 1890-1980" provides a laser-focused study of how women organized and federated by the Garden Club of America, another aspect of the women's club movement like Audubon, played a key role in our nation's environmental movement over a ninety year timeframe. Forgotten or purposefully erased histories of

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<sup>74</sup> Anastasia J. Christman, "The Best Laid Plans: Women's Clubs and City Planning in Los Angeles, 1890-1930." (University of California Los Angeles, n.d.). 2000. 20.

<sup>75</sup> Kimberly Wilmot Voss, "Club Women & Garden Clubs: Well Behaved Women Making Environmental History" (University of Central Florida, 2014). 5.

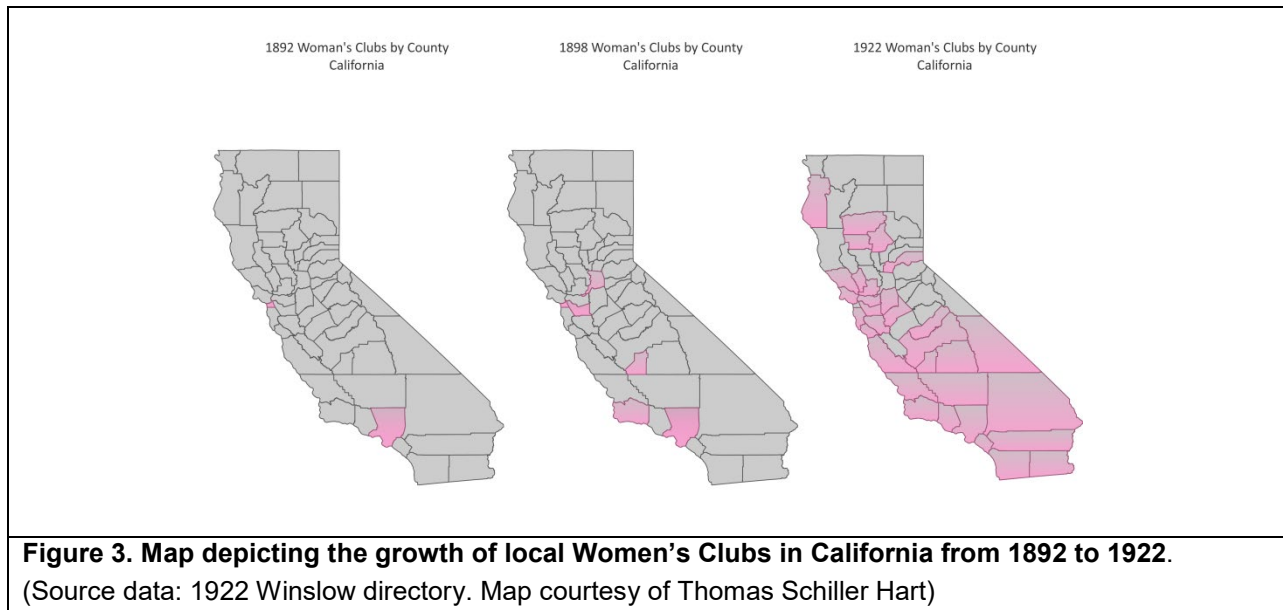
these women and their importance to the founding of environmentalism in the nation are expressed and carefully brought to light.<sup>76</sup>

In conclusion, there is insufficient coverage of the role that women and women's clubs have contributed to the fields of historic preservation and environmental conservation. I concur with researchers and authors who articulated arguments for why women have been left out of the full record including erasure, lack of focus on women's history until the more recent past, and giving credit more to the professionalism (held by men) versus the voluntary community service (dominated by women). Connecting the many dots of the histories of each local women's club, including the significant contribution from Western states and in particular California, can show conclusively the strong contribution women had in shaping their communities and their role in the fields of historic preservation and environmental conservation.

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<sup>76</sup> Shana Miriam Cohen, "American Garden Clubs and the Fight for Nature Preservation, 1890-1980." (University of California, Berkeley, 2005).

## Chapter 4 – Context Mapping Women’s Clubs in California

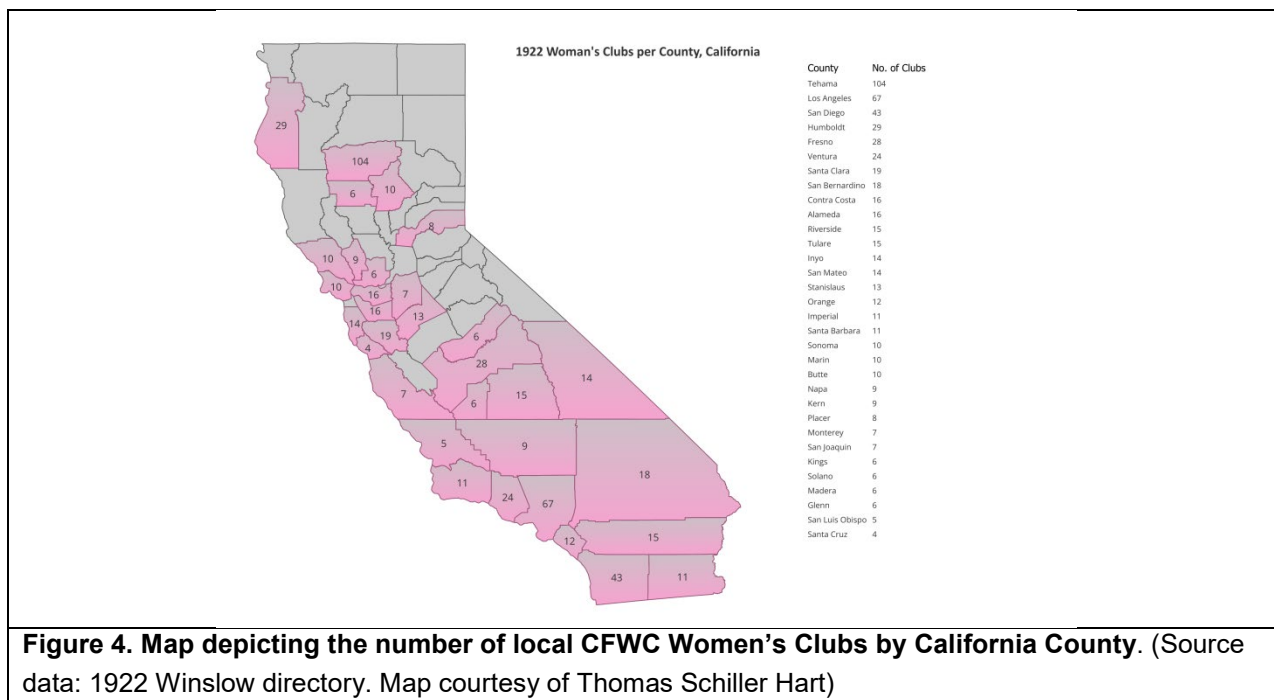


Research for this project identified source data from 1892, 1898, and 1922 that helps better understand the size of the women’s club movement in California and the active network created by the state federation, CFWC.<sup>77</sup> (Figure 3.) These early club histories and directories illustrated the exponential growth and geographic diversity of women’s clubs in California. This original research provides baseline data and evidence to support the assertion that local women’s clubs existed in significant numbers throughout the state. Research shows where California ranked in the nation against much more established states and indicates how women’s clubs flourished with a populace swelled by national migration westward. The total national membership of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs stood at just under 1.17 million members in 13,195 clubs across fifty state federations in 1922.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Croly and General Federation of Women’s Clubs, *The History of the Woman’s Club Movement in America*. 240-260., Winslow, *Official Register and Directory of Women’s Clubs in America*. 68-74.

<sup>78</sup> Winslow, *Official Register and Directory of Women’s Clubs in America*. 10-235.

In 1892, four clubs existed in California. Just six years later, that number almost tripled to eleven clubs. The exponential growth occurred from 1898-1922. The 1922 *Official Register and Directory of Women's Clubs in America*, a national women's club directory, first categorized information by each state federation followed by the names of all clubs with over seventy-five members. The California Federation of Women's Clubs reported a membership of 55,624 women in 531 clubs. (Figure 4.)



**Figure 4. Map depicting the number of local CFWC Women's Clubs by California County.** (Source data: 1922 Winslow directory. Map courtesy of Thomas Schiller Hart)

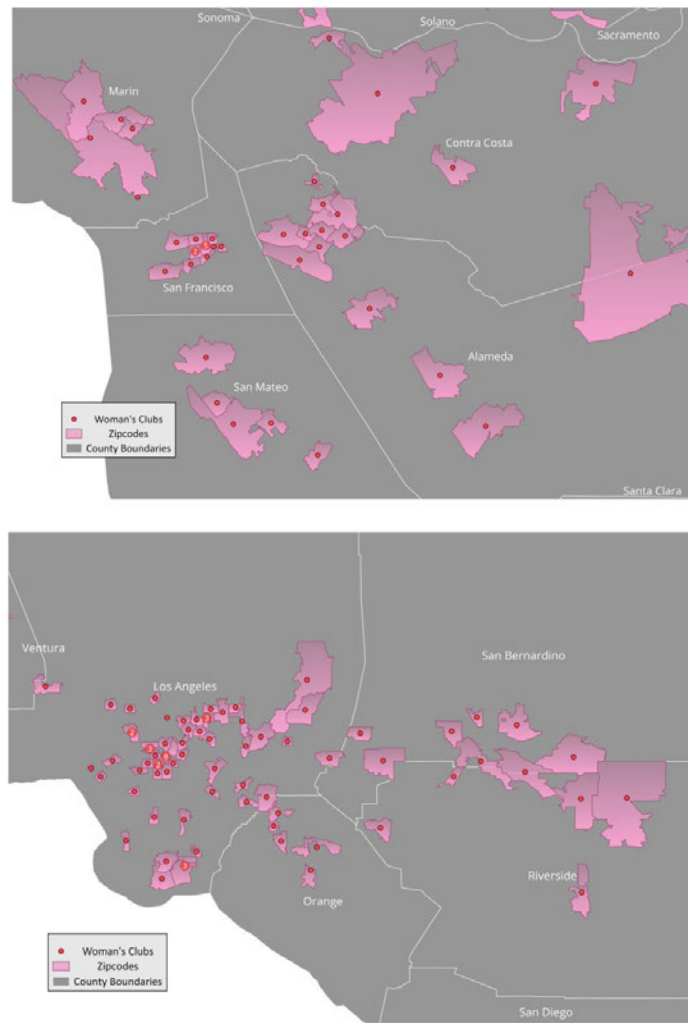
With Ohio counting 603 clubs and 584 in Illinois, California ranked third in the nation for the number of individual active clubs. In terms of total number of women members, California ranked as the sixth largest state, not far behind Ohio, Illinois, and Pennsylvania, and not as dense as first place New York (300,000 members) and second place Massachusetts (126,718 members). A rapidly growing California population readily participated in and significantly helped create the national women's club movement. (Figure 5.)

<b>State Federation</b>	<b>No. of Clubs</b>	<b>Membership</b>
New York	500	300,000
Massachusetts	324	126,718
Ohio	603	85,000
Illinois	584	66,963
Pennsylvania	233	57,180
California	531	55,624
Michigan	423	50,567
<b>General Federation (nationwide totals)</b>	13,195	1,170,000

**Figure 5. Membership and club counts for the largest state federations.**  
(Source data: 1922 Winslow directory.)

In Los Angeles County sixty-seven clubs existed. The three dominant Los Angeles clubs reported memberships each over one thousand with the largest, Friday Morning Club, reporting membership at 1,998. Outside of those three downtown clubs, the smaller but more plentiful women's clubs sprouted and grew as their communities formed or greatly expanded with train and streetcar lines that spurred suburban real estate and economic growth. (Figure 6.)





**Figure 6. Women’s Clubs of California 1922. Top: San Francisco Bay area club locations. Bottom: Southern California area club locations.** (Source data: 1922 Winslow directory and augmented research by author. Map courtesy of Thomas Schiller Hart)

A subset of this investigation included a more intensive search for information on women’s clubs who named themselves in honor of German immigrant Dr. Adrian John Ebell, a doctor and proponent of women’s education. After a visit to Oakland, California in 1876 where he taught a class, the local women’s club re-named their club in his honor after his early death at age of thirty-seven.<sup>79</sup> The Ebell Society of Oakland

<sup>79</sup> Highland Park Ebell Club archives. “Club History” undated.

founded in 1876 was also one of the first women’s clubs in California who made the educational development of its members a primary goal.<sup>80</sup> The Ebell of Los Angeles became one of the earliest flagship women’s clubs in Southern California with a variety of Ebell clubs to follow. I discovered a total of eighteen clubs utilizing the Ebell name in California (Figure 7.)

<b>Name</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Year Founded</b>
The Ebell Society of Oakland	Oakland	1876
The Ebell of Los Angeles	Los Angeles	1894
Ebell Society of Santa Ana Valley	Santa Ana	1894
Long Beach Ebell Club	Long Beach	1896
Pomona Ebell Club	Pomona	1902
Fullerton Ebell	Fullerton	1902
Highland Park Ebell Club	Los Angeles	1903
Signal Hill Ebell	Signal Hill (LA)	1904
West Los Angeles Ebell	Los Angeles	1905
Ebell Club of Anaheim	Anaheim	1907
Southside Los Angeles Ebell	Los Angeles	1909
Ebell Club of Santa Paula	Santa Paula	1913
Fillmore Ebell	Fillmore	1914
Ebell Club East Newport	Newport Beach	1915
San Fernando Ebell	San Fernando (LA)	1929
Verdugo Hills Ebell Club	Tujunga	Pre-1961 <sup>81</sup>
Ebell Club of Irvine	Irvine	1974
Ebell Club of Canyon Hills	Anaheim	1992

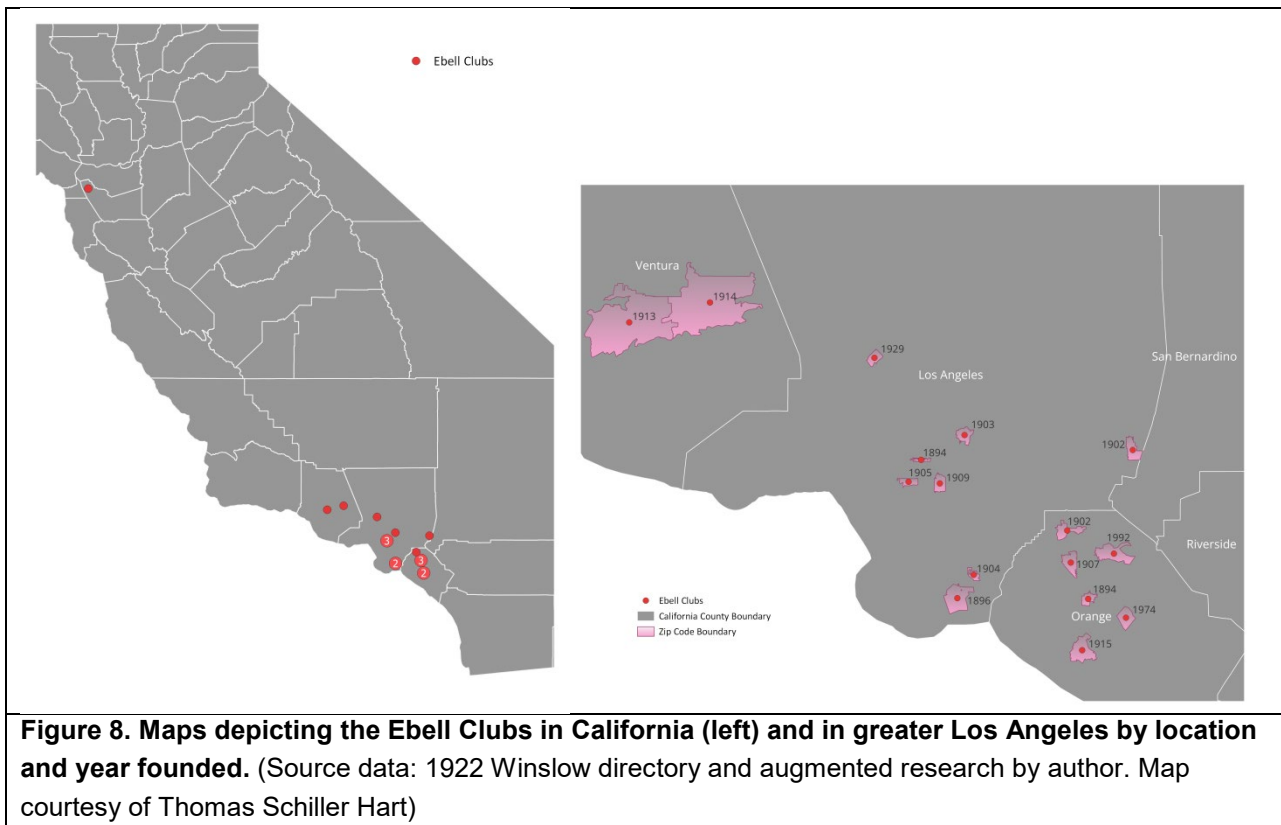
**Figure 7. Women’s Clubs named in honor of Dr. Adrian Ebell in California.** (Source: author research)

Twelve Ebell clubs, eleven geographically located in the greater Los Angeles area, represented 5,848 women in California in 1922. (Figure 8.) Ebell clubs had significant representation in terms of membership, ranging from 175 members in the

<sup>80</sup> Wallis, “Keeping Alive the Old Tradition: Spanish-Mexican Club Women in Southern California, 1880-1940.” 136.

<sup>81</sup> Valley Times Photo Collection/Los Angeles Public Library, photo caption dated May 17, 1961 for No. 00123113, subject tags include Verdugo Hills Ebell Club

West Ebell to the second largest women's club in California, the Ebell of Los Angeles, with 1,981 members. Membership in Highland Park Ebell stood at 334 members.<sup>82</sup>



**Figure 8. Maps depicting the Ebell Clubs in California (left) and in greater Los Angeles by location and year founded.** (Source data: 1922 Winslow directory and augmented research by author. Map courtesy of Thomas Schiller Hart)

The 1922 directory is a good source of data, even with some typos and inconsistency in the data. For instance, a county in Northern California lists 104 clubs in the directory but only names three in Biggs, Chico, and Oroville. I chose to leave the source data as presented.<sup>83</sup> After populating a database with the three main historical sources of data, I added data, like addresses of clubs and clubhouses and other data points that might be useful to illustrate various connections between clubs in the future. (The Appendix includes a chart of California clubs and Ebell clubs.) Utilizing QGIS software, visualizations and maps of the data helped create the context to illustrate just

<sup>82</sup> Winslow, *Official Register and Directory of Women's Clubs in America*. 68-74.

<sup>83</sup> More time would have been necessary to research and validate the few places where inconsistencies in the data were found and there was insufficient time to undertake that for this project.

how prevalent and pervasive women's clubs were in California during this time. It is also a convincing way to portray the evidence that the most notable activities of women's clubs in growing communities in California have a significant overlap between club formation and population gains.

The research sets the statewide context for California playing a key role in the women's club movement in our nation as the data illustrates the sheer numbers of local clubs. It helps to understand why the CFWC was a significant state federation within the GFWC and that the numbers of women engaged in a statewide issue that was backed by CFWC, could make a difference to an issue or policy or candidate for elected office. This confirms that the organizing ecosystem and infrastructure itself was a key factor in women having an effective platform for issues at any level. This research uncovers the state federation network itself was meaningful and useful to every local club who participated by connecting clubs together, including community building, environmental conservation and historic preservation.

The data and mapping place the HPEC in context to the rest of the local clubs in California showing each local club had influence within its own community but also working within the statewide federation to address larger statewide issues. This data show that HPEC was typical and representative of all these similar local women's clubs. While each club was different in the mix of activities it felt most important to its local community, it took on those issues as an act of community improvement and in service to building community. The cumulative impact of the work and role of women's clubs in shaping not only the women's club movement but the important role of grassroots and community level activities is quickly grasped when you simply multiple the work of one

club by 531 clubs. That volume of collective work can no longer be marginalized.

California had a groundswell of support that fostered the social movements and early histories of historic preservation and environmental conservation.

## **Chapter 5 - Illustrative Case Study: Highland Park Ebell Club**

Because of my personal past connection as a board member of the Highland Park Ebell Club and prior research completed as a volunteer, I believe that the untold stories and history of this one local women's club can add to the local and regional history of California by bringing new research to light about its role in the development of the community of Highland Park and its role in preserving the built and natural environment. With unique access to its publicly inaccessible archives, the value of uncovering its history and how this one club worked in collaboration with the large network of other women's clubs within both the state and national federations was of prime interest. Most available research on women's clubs in California have focused on the larger established clubs in San Francisco and Los Angeles even though California boasted a roster of over five hundred and thirty CFWC clubs by 1922. These bountiful clubs all have a story to tell, and my interest is focused on bringing forth the role and impact these women's clubs had in the early social movements of historic preservation and environment conservation in California.

Los Angeles' population boom of the 1880-1890s was spurred by national migration to the West that was made easier by the recently completed transcontinental railroads. This brought significant change and urbanization to the existing small towns or "pueblo" and created early suburban communities along the rail where train stations spurred development and economic opportunities. By the early 1900s, a streetcar network had blossomed, providing increased mobility in and between the towns of greater Los Angeles. Many women who migrated to California had previously been involved with or helped form women's clubs in their former hometowns and wanted to

improve their political, social, and economic standing in their newly adopted home. The Friday Morning Club (FMC) “arguably became the most important and certainly the longest-lived women’s club in the city’s history. The southern California branches of the Ebell Club, ran a close second in significance.”<sup>84</sup> The Ebell of Los Angeles was the largest and considered one of the leading voices for southern California alongside FMC. Many women were members of multiple clubs, often their local club, one of the large Los Angeles Clubs and often a special interest club like the Ruskin Art Club. This had an impact on collective work, as women were meeting and networking not just in their local community but regionally. It must have strengthened their ability to do work locally, as women were able to learn from other women and cross-pollinate ideas and actions to take on any particular issue. This network became larger and more powerful when the CFWC began in 1900. Local clubwomen were elected to serve in the federation’s work at the district and state levels in addition to networking and collaborating done at annual CFWC conventions and reciprocity days with other clubs. Finally, clubwomen were also elected through the state federations to serve in capacities with the GFWC, on issue committees or as part of the officer structure. Many California women held important roles at GFWC that would bring national attention to issues in the State, especially those in the environmental conservation arena.

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<sup>84</sup> Wallis, “Keeping Alive the Old Tradition: Spanish-Mexican Club Women in Southern California, 1880-1940.” 136.

## Case Study - Highland Park Ebell Club

### Contextual Overview

The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway made its transcontinental connection from Chicago to Los Angeles in 1887 bringing the means for the Los Angeles region's population boom. The train traversed the Arroyo Seco valley with passenger stations in Pasadena, Garvanza, and Los Angeles. By 1903, Los Angeles had exponentially grown to 100,000 people. By 1895, through annexation of Garvanza followed by Highland Park, Los Angeles greatly expanded its geographic boundaries to include this mostly rural area northeast of downtown Los Angeles with a new border with South Pasadena and Pasadena. The bucolic hills and valleys of the Arroyo Seco, a major tributary to the Los Angeles River, were poised for real estate interests to develop this area that now boasted a train station, the new Pacific Electric interurban streetcar system and the unpaved road called Pasadena Avenue (today's North Figueroa Street). Everything was being developed and built – the commercial district, homes, schools, parks, and library. The area was rapidly becoming a more populated community while nature and history were ever present.

“As Highland Park began to be more thickly populated, women coming in from other sections, missing the clubs which they had been accustomed to attend, wondered as to the possibility of organizing one here. One Afternoon in December 1903 Mrs. (Ella G.) Lunt, a co-founder in 1896 of the Long Beach Ebell Club, called a meeting of the resident women.”<sup>85</sup> After a program from Emma Greenleaf, lecturer and clubwoman with the Long Beach Ebell Club, the women agreed to meet twice a month in the home

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<sup>85</sup> Highland Park Ebell Club, Journal from Archive. History\_Box9-1 J1903-11. 1.



of Mrs. John M. (Isabella) Grant for ongoing learning.<sup>86</sup> In February 1904, fifty woman and eighteen charter members met and formed a club, with Mrs. Robert H. (Martha) Tripp elected as President.<sup>87</sup> “The object of this Society is advancement in all lives of general culture and promotion of the well being of the community in which we live.”<sup>88</sup> The women decided to name themselves the Highland Park Ebell Club at the suggestion of Mrs. Howard (Ella G.) Lunt. Meeting minutes document ways they immediately started to fulfill their mission with advocacy and actions on local topics like “where Mr. Newberry shall place his store” or “upon motion, it was decided that we signify our desire to help in beautifying the school grounds” to national issues like “a vote was taken on the Presidential Candidate, also Equal Suffrage.”<sup>89</sup> “Through the decades, club secretaries recorded constant appeals to the membership for support of various causes. We have proof in the way they were courted, both before and after woman gained the vote, that their opinions and support were considered vital to the success of many civic endeavors.”<sup>90</sup>

Their first year in existence, they paid Emma Greenleaf to hold an education series on California history and culture. They listened to lectures on Arbor Day, Old Spanish families, and “Fiction based on Facts in California History.” The women held a picnic at the San Gabriel Mission and went on excursions to other notable local places

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<sup>86</sup> Women’s names were typically referenced by their husband’s names or initials; any reference to a person using that nomenclature, “Mrs J.M. Grant” indicates the author is using this as presented in the archive materials and may not have any source material for their actual first name. Where both married and first name is available, author will put first name in parenthesis if in a direct quote or use that name in general reference.

<sup>87</sup> “Highland Park Ebell Club: A Cultural Landmark since 1913,” *Highland Park Journal*, March 16, 1984. A2.

<sup>88</sup> Highland Park Ebell Club, 1904 Meeting Minutes in archive box:1904\_06 MeetingNotes\_Box 1-2. 24.

<sup>89</sup> Highland Park Ebell Club, 1904 Meeting Minutes in archive box:1904\_06 MeetingNotes\_Box 1-2. 27, 31

<sup>90</sup> Carol Colin, *Women of the Highland Park Ebell Club 1903-1945* (Los Angeles: Highland Park Ebell Club, 2021). 18-19.

of historic note including the home of Charles Fletcher Lummis. By 1906, the women intended to buy prominent land in the heart of the burgeoning commercial district along Pasadena Avenue and build a clubhouse. They purchased a lot on East Avenue 57, just one parcel away from the intersection with Pasadena Avenue, the main road through the community and in the heart of the emerging commercial center for Highland Park. They chose a spot right in the center of powerful new business interests: the new Bank of Highland Park, newspaper office, Masonic's lodge and other local businesses of note. This location spoke to the women's club strategy of locating a Clubhouse in proximity to business interests of men in a highly visible location. In less than a decade from this land purchase, the Ebell Clubhouse opened in 1913 to great fanfare of over 20,000 people, as reported in newspaper clippings.<sup>91</sup> The club leaders selected well known Los Angeles architect Sumner P. Hunt of the firm of Hunt & Burns, laid the cornerstone in 1912, and opened their new "home" the following year. Club year 1921-1922 had many positive milestones. January 31, 1922 hosted a burning of the clubhouse mortgage with the "prediction that we must look forward to enlarging our clubhouse or building a new one."<sup>92</sup> Mrs. William (Harriet) Myers became president and the club hit 376 members. Myers was also serving as chairman of the Birds and Flowers of the GFWC, vice-president of California Audubon Society, which years earlier she had founded along with the first local club, Garvanza Audubon (later named Los Angeles Audubon).<sup>93</sup> Growth of the club membership was fast and by late 1920s, the membership was beyond the capacity of the Clubhouse. The Clubhouse Annex was built adjacent to the original building on another lot they purchased. The architect, Synder Clifton, the contractor E.L.

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<sup>91</sup> "Highland Park Ebell Club: A Cultural Landmark since 1913." A2.

<sup>92</sup> Highland Park Ebell Club, Meeting minutes from 1921-22.

<sup>93</sup> Highland Park Ebell Club, Meeting minutes from 1921-22.

Rockenback and the building committee were joined by three hundred guests at a dedication ceremony on September 13, 1938.<sup>94</sup> (Figure 9.)



**Figure 9. Black and white images of Highland Park Ebell Clubhouse (1913) and Clubhouse and Annex (1938) from a scrapbook in the club archives. (Image Courtesy of HPEC archives.)**

By Board vote in January 1905, HPEC officially joined the CFWC. The meeting minutes from 1923 indicate that they renewed membership in the GFWC even though their membership had lapsed for a period of time. It's unknown when they had previously joined GFWC, although Annual Yearbooks since they began publishing them in 1907 always stated on the inside cover page "Founded 1903, Federated 1905" which assumed was with both the GFWC and CFWC.<sup>95</sup> Ebell clubs used "sections" and departments under Sections as the way in which they structured their work and meetings to learn, share, work in collaboration with its members. The first annual Yearbook was published for the 1907-08 club year which ran from Fall of 1907 to May of 1908. The Yearbook shares that "Civics" was one of the four Sections of the club

<sup>94</sup> Highland Park Ebell Club, Meeting minutes 1938-1939. Annual Yearbook 1907-08.

<sup>95</sup> Highland Park Ebell Club, Meeting minutes 1905, 1923.

and where most of their community improvement and conservation activities radiated from. By 1909, an Outdoor Section was added and included a department called “The Ramblers” who adventured into nature and explored historical locations and missions. 1924-25 Yearbook lists a “History and Landmark Section” although the clubwomen had been interested and active in these topics since their founding. HPEC had a Legislation Committee that was active, but meeting minutes are not detailed on their activity. “From the beginning, the club devoted one Tuesday per month to current events. They reviewed upcoming elections and learned about candidates and legislation.”<sup>96</sup>

### **Community Building, Conservation and Preservation of the Built Environment**

From their founding in 1903, they were deeply involved in almost every aspect of community life in Highland Park. The official motto, adopted in 1909: “To Our Club—Loyalty; To the Community—Wise Service” supported the overall women’s club culture of unity, service and reciprocity. They participated in the creation of the first regional branch library in Los Angeles, recommending the name “Arroyo Seco Regional Library,” which opened in 1914 as one of many Carnegie libraries.<sup>97</sup> Members went to city council to ask for more funding and got it. HPEC supported the creation of the founding of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. They financially supported the effort to develop the first museum in Los Angeles, the Southwest Museum, with “ten dollars were given to the Archeological Society.”<sup>98</sup> The women were also creating community in the homes

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<sup>96</sup> Colin, *Women of the Highland Park Ebell Club 1903-1945*. 36.

<sup>97</sup> “Between 1886 -1919, (Andrew) Carnegie’s donations of more than \$40 million paid for 1,679 new library buildings in communities large and small across America. Many still serve as civic centers, continuing in their original roles or fulfilling new ones as museums, offices, or restaurants.” National Park Service, “Carnegie Libraries: The Future Made Bright”. <https://www.nps.gov/articles/carnegie-libraries-the-future-made-bright-teaching-with-historic-places.htm> (accessed June 4, 2023)

<sup>98</sup> Highland Park Ebell Club, Meeting Minutes 1904-05.

and gardens of their personal residences they bought or had built, many members lived in what would become known as the California Bungalow.

HPEC worked in various capacities to protect, preserve and conserve the natural environment through their viewpoint of service to the community. They worked with the local Improvement Association on a new school playground. “In 1916, club members went to city council to request Arroyo Seco improvements and took a leadership role in the establishment of Sycamore Grove Park.”<sup>99</sup> This blighted area turned nature park became a major civic attraction for both the local community and the region hosting enormous group picnics, including state reunions.<sup>100</sup> Meeting minutes and Colin’s book call out many actions over the years for local park creation or improvement, removing industry like rock crushers or not allowing the City to place a major trash incinerator plant in the natural area of the Arroyo Seco region. This work likely happened through HPEC’s Civics Section, consisting of eleven departments including the Arroyo Park Committee.<sup>101</sup> Beyond the local work in Highland Park or the city of Los Angeles, HPEC was involved in environmental preservation issues as a member of the CFWC and GFWC. The 1924-25 meeting notes provide insight in the active work of all clubs in California to save the Redwoods in Northern California. “Four trees at one hundred dollars each were purchased in the Memorial Redwood Grove in Humboldt County,” with one tree dedicated to the Highland Park Ebell Club.<sup>102</sup>

Many women’s clubs across the State were active in the preservation of the California Missions in the late 1890s. A national figure, Charles Fletcher Lummis, lived

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<sup>99</sup> Colin, *Women of the Highland Park Ebell Club 1903-1945*. 29

<sup>100</sup> Colin. 25-47.

<sup>101</sup> Highland Park Ebell Club, “Highland Park Ebell Club Yearbook, 1908-09.” 8.

<sup>102</sup> Highland Park Ebell Club, Meeting minutes 1924-25.

in Highland Park and had many causes including preservation of the missions, preservation of Southwest culture, the founding of the Southwest Museum, and preservation of the Arroyo Seco. Many times, Lummis would be welcomed at the HPEC to speak and ask for support of these efforts that today are considered historic preservation and environmental conservation. Accounts of Lummis' role and success of these efforts to-date have given him most of the credit when there's evidence that others like Laura Bride Powers and the active advocacy and letter writing by women's clubs were also a factor in the success of these efforts. In addition to the preservation of the missions themselves, the CFWC led a campaign to create "mission bells" as mile markers along the El Camino Real, the travel route between the missions under the leadership of clubwoman Mrs. A.C. Forbes. As an active member of the CFWC, this effort was supported by HPEC.

Many of the civic improvements HPEC worked on or advocated for were new at the time and their role in getting those projects going, funded or improved has had little to no recognition in the historic record. Today, over 100 years later, these places are now the communities historic treasures, many of which are either individually landmarked or they are contributing resources to Los Angeles' largest historic district, the Highland Park-Garvanza Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ). Many of the members' homes are residential resources included in the HPOZ. The Clubhouse is a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument. Sycamore Grove Park and the Arroyo Seco region are contributing resources to the Arroyo Seco Parkway National Scenic Byway designation. These places now define the historic identity and values of today's Highland Park and are part of the historic preservation ethic of greater Los Angeles. The

role of the women of HPEC in creating and preserving their community has lasting value.

## **California Women's Clubs - Comparative Examples**

The following examples help illustrate that when a local active women's club was established, their collaborative work to shape their communities or preserve the places of value, whether those be local, state or national had a significant impact. The women often made the sounding initial cry of assistance and organized to effect change they felt was best for their community. This was baked into the DNA of these clubs through their founding purpose of community service, collective unity and support for one another. The local club's work was amplified when it rose up and became an official program or initiative of the CFWC or GFWC bringing more organizational strength and sheers numbers of women to provide overwhelming support (or opposition) to an issue. The strength of the federation's worked in both directions, national issues getting support down to the local level and vice versa when a local issue rose to importance.

### **Community Building**

Women's clubs helped define or build the emerging or growing towns and cities in which they lived and organized. Women's club meeting places or clubhouses, are the first physical manifestation of community building that comes to mind. Women in California could legally own property, making it one of the top states in the nation for clubhouse construction. With the large number of local clubs in California, this aspect of community building alone makes the California women's club movement nationally significant.

HPEC was not alone and was part of the rush to form and quickly lay claim to creating a

presence in the heart of downtown Highland Park, literally next to the local bank and newspaper. Ebell clubs built clubhouses and in the case of the Ebell of Los Angeles, more than one! Ebell Clubs in Long Beach, Santa Ana, Pomona, Anaheim, Southside, Fillmore, and Fullerton all built clubhouses. Many others built as well with the CFWC and GFWC providing education and encouragement to women about these important matters. Geographically near HPEC, women's clubhouses were erected for the Women's Twentieth Century Club in Eagle Rock and the South Pasadena Woman's Improvement Association.<sup>103</sup> In other parts of the State, some women's clubs adopted historic structures for the clubhouse including the Woman's Club of Santa Clara, who acquired and restored the only remaining adobe in the valley.<sup>104</sup> Smaller clubs had difficulty in raising sufficient funds but still found ways to create their space. The Reseda Woman's Club was given an old train depot that they converted into their clubhouse.<sup>105</sup> The local clubhouses are tangible evidence that the women's club movement quickly spread in California and created not only a place for women but a lasting mark of their contributions to the identity and prosperity of their town.

Libraries are an early institutional need for emerging towns and the women's clubs actively engaged in their creation. In 1933, the American Library Association reportedly credited women's clubs with "the responsibility for initiating seventy-five percent of the public libraries in existence in the United States."<sup>106</sup> Most California women's clubs histories include their earliest achievements the establishment of a library in their community.

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<sup>103</sup> Author's personal knowledge and research located in Appendix 1 from author-researched database.

<sup>104</sup> Dubrow, "Women and Community." 92.

<sup>105</sup> Christman, "The Best Laid Plans: Women's Clubs and City Planning in Los Angeles, 1890-1930." 139.

<sup>106</sup> Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist, True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914*. 100-101, citing Sophonsiba P. Breckinridge, *Women in the Twentieth Century* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1933). 93.



There are many other community building activities by women's clubs that are examples of the long lasting impact made on the development and sustaining of community by women's clubs. For instance, the Vallejo Woman's Club took the initiative to acquire and maintain a fire engine until the town acquired its own.<sup>107</sup> They stepped forward in community service to solve or be involved with solving a need for their small rural community. Maybe it was a fire truck, maybe it was electricity, paved roads or waste collection, nothing was too small and these things were addressed through their organized club activities and interests.

### **Environmental Conservation**

The roots of the early environmental conservation movement are deeply entangled with the rise and success of the women's club movement. Many women's clubs were founded because of a local environmental issue. The founding of the Outdoor Art Club in Mill Valley and the Sausalito Women's Clubs happened after collective organizing by local women and their actions to save trees. The Outdoor Club's original mission addressed environmental conservation and civic engagement. Both local clubs also built clubhouses; Sausalito's designed by architect Julia Morgan and Outdoor Art Club's by Bernard Maybeck.<sup>108</sup> In Los Angeles, the Los Feliz Woman's Club and Improvement Associations planted cedar trees on the main thoroughfare, Los Feliz Boulevard. These trees, today, are designated a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument.<sup>109</sup> And, like libraries, women's clubs were very prolific to spur the creation of parks and playgrounds.

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<sup>107</sup> Margaret A. Wineland, "To Answer a Need: The History, Significance, and Future of the Women's Club House" (University of Southern California, 2015). 33.

<sup>108</sup> National Trust for Historic Preservation, "Where Women Made History." <https://savingplaces.org/womens-history> (Accessed May 20, 2023).

<sup>109</sup> Dubrow, "Women and Community." 93.

In California, women's clubs and the CFWC took on conservation activities immediately as a way to collectively work on larger statewide issues like the Hetch Hetchy Valley and water needs for the growing needs of San Francisco. Or the Colorado River and water rights for California. This is where the power of reciprocity, and working together made a difference in the federation structure, especially when CFWC and GFWC combined forces. For Hetch Hetchy, John "Muir described the valley in a number of articles, and women's clubs throughout the country rallied to his side, denouncing Pinchot, whom they had supported on most conservation issues."<sup>110</sup>

Another example of women and women's clubs working together would be the decade's long campaign to save the California Redwoods. Laura and James Wasserman's research puts into focus the overwhelming role women's clubs played in saving and preserving the acres and acres of Redwoods in various parts of the State, the formation of state and national parks. The role of the Humboldt County women's clubs persistence was magnified by the time and attention that came with having both the CFWC and the GFWC alongside this effort. Going back to the early 1900s, the California Club of San Francisco, led by Laura Lyon White, worked to pass a Congressional resolution to purchase 8,000 acres of the Sierra's known as the Calaveras Big Trees. Using that campaign as a model, the women of Humboldt County found a receptive partner with the CFWC. "In 1900, Los Angeles women's club leader Clara Burdette made the fate of the redwoods a rallying cry in organizing the new CFWC under the motto, 'Strength United is Stronger.'<sup>111</sup> At the very first statewide conference of the CFWC, Burdette addressed the crowd of ninety-five women's clubs

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<sup>110</sup> Merchant, *Am. Environ. Hist. an Introd.* 151.

<sup>111</sup> Wasserman and Wasserman, *Who Saved the Redwoods? The Unsung Heroines of the 1920s Who Fought for Our Redwood Forests.* 17.

with a “soaring appeal to match the deeds of women elsewhere in the United States... calling defiantly for an alternate future: ‘better one living tree in California than fifty acres of lumberyard.’”<sup>112</sup> CFWC brought in new energy for the redwoods campaign and new national allies like the GFWC and the GCA. Had the Eureka Women’s Club not attended a CFWC convention and learn about other women’s clubs effort to preserve sequoias and redwoods elsewhere, they may never have heeded the call to save those big trees in their own backyard.<sup>113</sup> The 2019 Wasserman and Wasserman book devotes 170 pages to tell this one nationally-significant story of the women who began, persisted and had not received recognition or due credit for their role in this national effort in close to one hundred years. “Across more than two decades no single organization had done more to sustain the idea of saving the redwoods in Humboldt County than the CFWC. From President Orr’s first trip in 1912 to visits by every federation president, the women of California never faltered.”<sup>114</sup> While these examples are from women’s clubs in the CFWC and GFWC, there are many more efforts led by the Garden Club of America, Audubon Society, and other types of organized efforts from other women’s work, which is outside of the scope of this but is left for future research.

## **Historic Preservation**

Saving and preserving the built environment in California by the hands of women and women’s clubs dates back to the 1890s. “Women’s clubs provided a readily available pool of educated, organized women who could be mobilized easily.”<sup>115</sup> In fact, Clara Burdette in her President’s Message to the CFWC in 1902 makes a clear connection to

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<sup>112</sup> Wasserman and Wasserman. 17.

<sup>113</sup> Wasserman and Wasserman, 19.

<sup>114</sup> Wasserman and Wasserman. 149.

<sup>115</sup> Barbara Howe, “Women and Architecture,” in *Reclaiming the Past, Landmarks of Women’s History*, ed. Page Putnam Miller (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992).32.

the importance of this work “Most of the towns of California have a thread of romance woven into the fabric of their history and the individual club would confer a boon upon travelers by editing a booklet-history of its town.”<sup>116</sup>

and need The call to preserve the California Missions starts with Laura Bride Powers, San Francisco clubwoman and the co-founder of the California Historical Landmarks League, who publishes a history book about the missions and a call to save them in 1893.<sup>117</sup> In 1895 in Southern California, Charles Fletcher Lummis founded the Landmarks Club “dedicated to the preservation of historical sites throughout California, starting with the Spanish missions.”<sup>118</sup> The *Clubwoman GFWC* magazine recounts that California clubwomen have always been active with the Spanish missions: “In 1903, the first movement began to restore the once beautiful mission” at Mission La Concepcion Purisima in Lompoc, California.<sup>119</sup>

The CFWC, under the leadership of Mrs. ACS Forbes developed an entire decade-long campaign for the “Mission Bells” of the historic El Camino Real that preserve, mark, celebrate and promote the historic travel way between the missions. Today that would approximate Highway 101 and the bells themselves became itself a tourist attraction. This was organized through the History and Landmarks Section of the

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<sup>116</sup> Christman, “The Best Laid Plans: Women’s Clubs and City Planning in Los Angeles, 1890-1930.” 348. citing “President’s Address, California Federation of Women’s Clubs, San Francisco, February 4-7, 1902,” Clara Burdette Papers, Huntington Library, Box 29.

<sup>117</sup> Powers, *The Story of the Old Missions of California, Their Establishment, Progress and Decay*; Tomlan, *Historic Preservation, Caring for Our Expanding Legacy*.

<sup>118</sup> California Office of Historic Preservation, [www.ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=21748](http://www.ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=21748). (accessed May 20, 2023.)

<sup>119</sup> “Old California Mission Restored,” *The Clubwoman GFWC*, September 1939. 26.

CFWC which meant that a lot of the local clubs were participating in this effort, helping to fund and advocate for the campaign behind the leadership of the CFWC.<sup>120</sup>

Other women's clubs took up the cause as part of the clubs original mission or acquired a historic building to serve as their Clubhouse. The Sonoma Valley Woman's Club formed in 1901 with historic preservation as its first cause – the preservation of the town's 1835 Mexican-era plaza, followed by other historic structures in the town in addition to the creation of its Carnegie Library.<sup>121</sup> The Woman's Club of Santa Clara acquired and restored the only remaining adobe in the valley for use as its Clubhouse instead of building a new one.<sup>122</sup>

The illustrative case study of the Highland Park Ebell Club highlights their work and actions taken in the movements of historic preservation and environmental conservation as well as community building at the local level. Other women's clubs in California undertook similar actions for their communities. And, finally the federations at the state and national level conducted campaigns that reflected these same areas of concern and brought the collective power of harnessing women's effort together in mutually beneficial ways.

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<sup>120</sup> Christman, "The Best Laid Plans: Women's Clubs and City Planning in Los Angeles, 1890-1930." 348-355.

<sup>121</sup> National Trust for Historic Preservation, "Where Women Made History." <https://savingplaces.org/womens-history>. (accessed May 20, 2023).

<sup>122</sup> Dubrow, "Women and Community." 92.

## Chapter 6 – Findings and Conclusion

### Findings

The Highland Park Ebell Club illustrates how one local women's club influenced the building of their local community. Their organizing, support and actions produced the first regional library, first museum in Los Angeles, the creation of Sycamore Grove Park as an early regional nature park and gathering place for reunion picnics and big gatherings, saved the nature and landscape of the Arroyo Seco river valley and created a linear park, contributed to the Redwoods campaign, and supported the preservation of the California missions. They also bought property and built a Clubhouse complex, starting with a large prime real estate parcel in the center of HP downtown, main building in 1913 and the Annex in 1938. Many of these places still exist, are listed on National Register of Historic Places and/or as Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monuments. The Arroyo Seco parkland is now part of a designated National Scenic Byway based on history, nature, and cultural values of the region. The women of the community stepping forward to create so many of the places that still define the community today. While this research focused only on those actions that would fit more broadly into the realm of community building, preservation and conservation, their collective work on behalf of children, healthcare, movies, war efforts, prohibition, suffrage, etc. also deserves notice. The breadth of active women's clubs was expansive and wide ranging.

In comparing HPEC to other local clubs, it's easy to compare the actions and interests were similar for the broad issues of community building, historic preservation and environmental conservation. Therefore HPEC was a typical local woman's club.

And it can help illustrative and represent how a local club and the women of the community played a significant role in these activities. In fact, the federation structure helped each local club do this work and amplify the issues to a larger audience and network when the federation had a role to play. The structure of being locally independent yet federated with other women's clubs across the district, state and nation added significance and importance to the work being done collectively at the local level.

## **Conclusion**

The answer to the research question is a strong affirmative YES. The California women's clubs played an important role in the development of their emerging communities and contributed significantly to the early successes of preservation and conservation of both the natural and built environments. The research on the Highland Park Ebell Club brings forth a new and deeper story of one local women's club, of the over 530 clubs in California, that represents what local impact the club had as an independent organization and the impact they contributed to by lending their voice, time, advocacy and collective actions en masse within the organizing structure of the federation of Women's Clubs. The context mapping of the CFWC network, the HPEC case study, and examples of similar efforts from other Women's Clubs, all illustrate that the role of California clubs in the national movement was substantial and those contributions are largely missing from the historic record of local communities and the two contemporary fields of historic preservation and environmental conservation. Historians and academics need to look more closely at this body of collective work. While this study limited the research to the Women's Clubs under the General

Federation of Women's Club umbrella, much would be missed if that was the only organizing structure researched. These women also collaborated with women organized through other women-based association structures such as the Garden Club of America, National Audubon Society, Jr. League, Daughters of the American Revolution, American Association of College Women, Young Women's Christian Association, Woman's Christian Temperance Union and in California the Native Sons and Daughter of the Golden West. This is an amazingly rich and deep pool of untapped study.

Each individual club was like a small square of a much larger quilt and all the squares together would be made into this national quilt bound together as the Federation of Women's Clubs. Women's Clubs succeeded on their own AND succeeded in leveraging and achieving more when working together, in reciprocity, and with a common agenda.

Both underrepresented parts of history are on display in this study to help illustrate how the historic record can be improved by an expansion of and more inclusion by group efforts. Telling the story from one viewpoint – architect of the building or a dominant white male who gets credit for everyone's collective work – limits and inaccurately represents the full story, breadth and value. The circle should be widened and this important history and contribution needs to not only be told but appropriately recognized as integral to the future fields of historic preservation and environmental conservation.



As Page Putnam Miller states “historians have often failed to explore the use of buildings, the largest tangible artifacts, as a research and educational tool.”<sup>123</sup> Also, “there is a tremendous gulf between scholars who focus primarily on words for their research and those who use material culture, with buildings being the largest of tangible artifacts, as research tools.”<sup>124</sup> It is about time to look at all levels of the the women’s club movement and elevate its value to the history of our nation.

## **Recommendations**

Based on this research, the following ideas and recommendations are made for future research or endeavor to shine a light on these important women and the women’s clubs. This study just cracked the surface to shed a bit of light on the role of women and women’s clubs in community building, historic preservation and environmental conservation. Further research would be warranted on two parallel tracks. First, researching the depth of history for each local club (or quilt square) for their individual contributions to their local community and potential contributions to regional, state or national histories as well. Second, researching the impact of the collective work of these clubs at the various organizing levels of the federations— district, state and national—to bring forth the larger and more inclusive story about the women’s club movement would elevate this aspect of general women’s history in a more meaningful manner.

This research project identified three distinct audiences and I will make specific recommendations suited for each audience but it is just as important to see and

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<sup>123</sup> Page Putnam Miller, “Reflections on Federal Policy and Its Impact on Understanding Women’s Past at Historic Sites,” in *Restoring Women’s History through Historic Preservation*, ed. Gail Lee Dubrow and Jennifer B. Goodman (The John Hopkins University Press, 2003). 319.

<sup>124</sup> Putnam Miller. 331.

embrace collaboration and collective action, much like women's clubs operate. To remove the silos and to understand that everyone has a role to play, experience and expertise to bring into the work and a stronger fuller history will result. There is combined value that a historian, architectural historian, environmental historian and a local lived-experience historian and community advocate can achieve by bringing all your perspectives and wisdom together, instead of keeping it separate. This would help celebrate telling a full story, help deepen the value of our collective heritage in the built and natural environment at all levels – local, regional, state, and national. For specific audiences, I make the following recommendations:

### **Contemporary Club Women**

- Learn and embrace the club's history. The role it plays in "serving community" has a greater role in women's history and needs to be told.
- Find, protect and cherish any archival materials from the Club about its women and collectively history. Start a project to find and work with collection experts to properly archive, assess and scan these materials to eventually make available to the public and researchers.
- Start conversations with other clubs, the CFWC and GFWC about the larger untold history of the collective work and how to help each other tell the larger untold story for the entire women's club movement, starting in California but in every state.
- Connect with the historic preservation community, especially those clubs who still own their Clubhouse to help tell the full story of the Clubhouse, both its

architecture but also the cultural history of the role of local women in history that happened while inhabiting their physical space.

- Work to keep the Clubhouse a viable part of the community's built environment and protected through historic designation at the local, state or national level.

### **Professionals in Historic Preservation and Environmental Conservation**

- Recognize, value and embrace the contribution made by the volunteer advocate, the citizen scientist, or a club member who have that authentic lived experience and passion for their community, its history and the role played. The arm-chair environmentalist or the community member saving history would never call themselves a "preservationist" is actually a part of the founding history of these movements and contributes significantly to the work, today as well as all throughout the history.
- Acknowledge that this history of/by/for women has been ignored or excluded from the sound-bites of the movements' early histories and begin to rectify that by building a more inclusive record.
- Get back to the roots of both movements and start viewing these fields as one; there's more to gain by working more closely together.
- Acknowledge that people who steward historic resources are "preservationists" even if they do not have the technical or academic credentials and are a vital part of the historic preservation field. Same is true for environmentalists.
- Advance women's history initiatives and statewide context statements should be done to include the totality of work produced by women's clubs including the

physical places their work embodies beyond their Clubhouse – the library, the park, the orphanage, etc.

- Create a Multiple Property Documentation Form for Women's Clubs of California focused at a minimum the Clubhouses they prolifically built and the cultural history of the women's club movement that they embody.

### **Academics/Historians**

- Work with each other and build a better cohesive history of both the people and the built/natural environment that represent women and the women's club movement.
- Stop unintentionally erasing part of history by selecting an individual as the focus instead of collective efforts. This oversimplifies and then underrepresents the full history.
- Set up technical assistance or programs to collaborate with local women's clubs to provide support and expertise with the local archives, like Occidental College did for HPEC. Find resources, together with local clubs, to find, save and preserve these treasure-trove archives. This is primary research that might be sitting and decaying in non-archival folders just waiting for preservation and use by researchers in academia and beyond.

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## Appendix: A-1

### Top 20 State Federations by Membership Totals in 1922

State Federation	Number of Members	Number of Clubs
New York	300,000	500
Massachusetts	126,718	324
Ohio	85,000	603
Illinois	66,963	584
Pennsylvania	57,180	233
California	55,624	531
Michigan	50,567	423
Iowa	40,485	806
New Jersey	35,000	232
Georgia	33,000	350
Washington	27,000	241
Texas	25,000	450
Maryland	12,000	84
New Hampshire	11,730	126
Nevada	10,000	32
Oregon	8,000	119
Connecticut	7,000	80
Maine	6,500	147
Vermont	6,383	67
Idaho	5,000	109

Source:

Helen M. Winslow, *Official Register and Directory of Women's Clubs in America*, Vol. XXIV (Shirley, Mass., 1922).

## Appendix: A-2

### California Clubs in the General Federation of Women's Clubs in 1892 and 1898

Club Name	City	Federated with GFWC in 1892	Federated with GFWC in 1898	Street Address	Zip Code
Century Club	San Francisco	Y	Y	1355 Franklin St	94109
Pacific Coast Woman's Press Assoc	San Francisco	Y	Y		94103
Ruskin Art Club	Los Angeles	Y	Y	142 1/2 S Broadway	90012
Friday Morning Club	Los Angeles	Y	Y	223 1/2 S Broadway	90012
Ebell Society of Oakland	Oakland		Y	1440 Harrison St	94612
Lemoore Woman's Club	Lemoore		Y		93245
Guidon Club of San Francisco	San Francisco		Y		94109
Kingsley Art Club	Sacramento		Y	216 O St	95814
Southern California Women's Press Association	Los Angeles		Y		90014
Woman's Club of Santa Barbara	Santa Barbara		Y	670 Mission Canyon Rd	93105
Eothen Club	Oakland		Y		94501

Source:

Jane Croly Cunningham and General Federation of Women's Clubs, *The History of the Woman's Club Movement in America* (New York: Henry G. Allen & Co., 1898)

## Appendix: A-3

### California Clubs by County in 1922

California District	County	No. of Clubs (as printed)	Notes
Northern	Butte	10	
Northern	Glenn	6	
Northern	Placer	8	
Northern	Sutter-Yuba	8	
Northern	Tehama	104	<i>(assume typo in publication)</i>
San Francisco	Humboldt	29	
San Francisco	Lake	6	
San Francisco	Marin	10	
San Francisco	Monterey	7	
San Francisco	Napa	9	
San Francisco	San Francisco	89	
San Francisco	San Mateo	14	
San Francisco	Santa Clara	19	
San Francisco	Santa Cruz	4	
San Francisco	Solano	6	
San Francisco	Sonoma	10	
Alameda	Alameda	16	
Alameda	Contra Costa	16	
Alameda	San Joaquin	7	
Alameda	Tuolumne -Calaveras	4	
San Joaquin Valley	Fresno	28	
San Joaquin Valley	Kern	9	
San Joaquin Valley	Kings	6	
San Joaquin Valley	Madera	6	
San Joaquin Valley	Stanislaus	13	
San Joaquin Valley	Tulare	15	
Los Angeles	Inyo	14	
Los Angeles	San Luis Obispo	5	
Los Angeles	Santa Barbara	11	
Los Angeles	Ventura	24	
Los Angeles	Los Angeles	67	<i>(No listed number; author hand-count of clubs listed)</i>
Southern	Imperial	11	
Southern	Orange	12	
Southern	Riverside	15	
Southern	San Diego	43	
Southern	San Bernardino	18	
<b>Total</b>		<b>679</b>	<b>vs. 531</b> (actual listed number used in the Directory - page 68)

Source:

Helen M. Winslow, *Official Register and Directory of Women's Clubs in America*, Vol. XXIV (Shirley, Mass., 1922).

## Appendix: A-4

### California Ebell Clubs

Club Name	Formation Date	Date of Closure	Clubhouse (y/n)	City	ZIP CODE	Address	Year Clubhouse Constructed	Architect
Ebell Society of Oakland	1876	2011	Y (1907-59)	Oakland	94612	1440 Harrison St	1907	
Ebell of Los Angeles	1894		Y	Los Angeles	90005	743 S Lucerne Blvd	1927	Sumner Hunt
Ebell Society of Santa Ana Valley	1894		Y	Santa Ana	92701	625 N. French St	1924	Frederick Eley
Long Beach Ebell Club	1896	2013	Y	Long Beach	90802	290 Cerritos Ave	1924	Clark Philip
Pomona Ebell Club	1902	2004	Y	Pomona	91767	585 E. Holt Ave.	1910/1922	Hunt & Burns (1922)
Fullerton Ebell	1902		Y (until '22)	Fullerton	92835	313 Laguna Rd		
Highland Park Ebell Club	1903		Y	Los Angeles	90042	131 S Avenue 57	1913/1937	Hunt & Burns/S. Clifton
Signal Hill Ebell	1904			Long Beach	90755			
West Los Angeles Ebell	1905			Los Angeles	90008			
Ebell Club of Anaheim	1907		Y	Anaheim	92805	226 N. Helena St	1937	
Southside Los Angeles Ebell	1909		Y	Los Angeles	90044	7101 S. Menlo St		
Ebell Club of Santa Paula	1913		Y	Santa Paula	93060	125 S Seventh St	1917/1928	Hunt & Burns
Fillmore Ebell	1914	2014	Y(sold in 2000)	Fillmore	93015	407 Second Street	1931	R.S. Raymond
Ebell Club East Newport	1915		Y	Newport Beach	92660			
San Fernando Ebell (SF Women's Club)	1929			San Fernando	91340			
Ebell Club of Irvine	1974			Irvine	92620			
Ebell Club of Canyon Hills	1992			Anaheim	92807			
Verdugo Hills Ebell Club				Tujunga				

Source: Author's research

## Appendix: A-5

### California Clubs in 1922

Club Name	1922 Member-ship Count	City	County	Address	Zip Code
Wednesday Afternoon Club	250	Alhambra	Los Angeles		91801
Azuza Woman's Club	90	Azuza	Los Angeles		91702
Baldwin Park Woman's Club	75	Baldwin Park	Los Angeles		91706
Burbank Woman's Club	192	Burbank	Los Angeles	703 E. Olive	91501
Compton Woman's Club	75	Compton	Los Angeles		90221
Monday Afternoon Club	361	Covina	Los Angeles		91723
Saturday Afternoon Club	150	Downey	Los Angeles	9813 Paramount Blvd	90240
Woman's Twentieth Century Club	172	Eagle Rock	Los Angeles		90041
East Whittier Woman's Improvement Club	75	East Whittier	Los Angeles		90604
Mountain View Shakespeare Club	85	El Monte	Los Angeles		91732
Wednesday Progressive Club	100	Gardena	Los Angeles		90247
Tuesday Afternoon Club	500	Glendale	Los Angeles		91210
Glendora Woman's Club	150	Glendora	Los Angeles		91741
Inglewood Woman's Club	304	Inglewood	Los Angeles		90301
Lamanda Park Woman's Club (became Pasadena Women's Club)	100	Pasadena	Los Angeles		91106
Lankershim Woman's Club	100	Lankershim	Los Angeles		91601
Long Beach Woman's City Club	842	Long Beach	Los Angeles		90844
College Woman's Club	107	Long Beach	Los Angeles		90831
Long Beach Ebell	914	Long Beach	Los Angeles	290 Cerritos Ave	90802
Woman's Music Study Club	95	Long Beach	Los Angeles		90813
Signal Hill Civic League	78	Long Beach	Los Angeles		90755
American Music Optimists	75	Los Angeles	Los Angeles		90004
Averill Study Club	75	Los Angeles	Los Angeles	1500 S. Figueroa St	90015
Boyle Heights Woman's Club	140	Los Angeles	Los Angeles		90033
Business Women's Civic League	120	Los Angeles	Los Angeles		90089
California Badger Club	91	Los Angeles	Los Angeles	1719 S. Figueroa St	90015
Catholic Women's Club	750	Los Angeles	Los Angeles		90006
Cosmos Club	103	Los Angeles	Los Angeles	1719 S Figueroa St	90015
Council of Jewish Women	550	Los Angeles	Los Angeles		90018
Los Angeles Ebell	1981	Los Angeles	Los Angeles	4400 Wilshire Blvd.	90010
Echo Park Mothers' Club	119	Los Angeles	Los Angeles		90026
Friday Morning Club	1998	Los Angeles	Los Angeles	940 S Figueroa St	90015
Golden State Division No. 104	75	Los Angeles	Los Angeles		90090
Highland Park Ebell Club	334	Los Angeles	Los Angeles	131 S Avenue 57	90042
Kate Tupper Galpin Shakespeare Club	120	Los Angeles	Los Angeles	1500 S. Figueroa St	90015
Los Angeles Audubon Society	163	Los Angeles	Los Angeles	7377 Santa Monica Blvd	90046
Los Angeles Teacher' Club	1758	Los Angeles	Los Angeles		90005
Travel Club	80	Los Angeles	Los Angeles	1201 W 48th St	90037
Philanthropy and Civics Club	600	Los Angeles	Los Angeles		90071
Professional Woman's Club	92	Los Angeles	Los Angeles		90012
Ruskin Art Club	98	Los Angeles	Los Angeles	357 S Hill	90081

## Appendix: A-5

### California Clubs in 1922

Club Name	1922 Membership Count	City	County	Address	Zip Code
South Side Ebell Club	182	Los Angeles	Los Angeles		90011
Southern California Woman's Press Club	190	Los Angeles	Los Angeles	851 S Grand Ave	90017
WaWan Club	781	Los Angeles	Los Angeles		90021
Wednesday Morning Club	307	Los Angeles	Los Angeles	220 East Avenue 28	90031
West Ebell Club	175	Los Angeles	Los Angeles		90008
Woman's Club of Hollywood	1053	Los Angeles	Los Angeles	1749 N La Brea Ave	90046
Woman's Club, University of S. California	75	Los Angeles	Los Angeles		90007
Monrovia Woman's Club	245	Monrovia	Los Angeles		91006
Montebello Woman's Club	85	Montebello	Los Angeles		90640
Owensmouth Woman's Club	92	Los Angeles	Los Angeles		91304
Elementary Teachers' Club	175	Pasadena	Los Angeles		91107
Pasadena Hospital Alumnae Association	100	Pasadena	Los Angeles		91105
Pasadena Shakespeare Club	975	Pasadena	Los Angeles	220 S Los Robles Ave	91101
Washington Heights Club	75	Pasadena	Los Angeles		91104
Woman's Civic League	375	Pasadena	Los Angeles		91101
Pomona Ebell Club	450	Pomona	Los Angeles		91766
Redondo Beach Woman's Club	156	Redondo Beach	Los Angeles		90277
San Pedro Woman's Club	215	San Pedro	Los Angeles		90731
Santa Monica Bay Women's Club	400	Santa Monica	Los Angeles		90401
Sawtelle Woman's Club	150	Los Angeles	Los Angeles		90064
Sierra Madre Woman's Club	161	Sierra Madre	Los Angeles		91024
South Pasadena Woman's Improvement Assoc	398	South Pasadena	Los Angeles		91030
Van Nuys Woman's Improvement Assoc	195	Los Angeles	Los Angeles		91401
Vacation Home League	160	Venice	Los Angeles		90291
Whittier Woman's Club	300	Whittier	Los Angeles		90602
Wilmington Woman's Club	83	Wilmington	Los Angeles		90744
Atascadero Woman's Club	125	Atascadero	San Luis Obispo		93422
Paso Robles Woman's Club	87	Paso Robles	San Luis Obispo		93447
San Luis Obispo Woman's Civic Club	130	San Luis Obispo	San Luis Obispo		93408
Santa Barbara Woman's Club	320	Santa Barbara	Santa Barbara	670 Mission Canyon Rd	93105
Santa Maria Minerva Library Club	88	Santa Maria	Santa Barbara		93454
Fillmore Ebell Club	160	Fillmore	Ventura	407 Second St	93015
Ojai Valley Women's Club	89	Ojai	Ventura	441 E Ojai Ave	93024
Santa Paula Ebell Club	292	Santa Paula	Ventura	125 S Seventh St	93060
Bishop Woman's Improvement Club	100	Bishop	Inyo		93514
Brawley Woman's Club	85	Brawley	Imperial		92227
Calexico Woman's Improvement Co	95	Calexico	Imperial		92231
Woman's Ten Thousand Club	256	El Centro	Imperial		92243
Anaheim Ebell Club	169	Anaheim	Orange	226 N. Helena St	92805
Fullerton Ebell Club	260	Fullerton	Orange		92835
Fullerton Woman's Club	83	Fullerton	Orange		92832



## Appendix: A-5

### California Clubs in 1922

Club Name	1922 Membership Count	City	County	Address	Zip Code
La Habra Woman's Improvement Club	85	La Habra	Orange		90631
Orange Woman's Club	151	Orange	Orange		92867
Ebell Society of Santa Ana	406	Santa Ana	Orange		92705
Saturday Afternoon Club	75	Banning	Riverside		92220
Beaumont Woman's Club	135	Beaumont	Riverside		92223
Blythe Woman's Improvement Club	75	Blythe	Riverside		92225
Corona Woman's Improvement Club	160	Corona	Riverside		92882
Hemet Woman's Club	150	Hemet	Riverside		92543
Indio Woman's Club	75	Indio	Riverside		92201
Riverside Woman's Club	250	Riverside	Riverside		92501
Colton Woman's Club	112	Colton	San Bernardino		92324
Highland Woman's Club	115	Highland	San Bernardino		92346
Current Events Club	177	Ontario	San Bernardino		91761
Contemporary Club	350	Redlands	San Bernardino		92373
Rialto Woman's Club	126	Rialto	San Bernardino		92376
San Bernardino Woman's Club	271	San Bernardino	San Bernardino		92405
Upland Woman's Club	75	Upland	San Bernardino		91786
Yucaipa Woman's Club	140	Yucaipa	San Bernardino		92399
Escondido Woman's Club	80	Escondido	San Diego		92026
La Jolla Woman's Club	160	La Jolla	San Diego		92037
La Mesa Woman's Club	100	La Mesa	San Diego		91941
Forward Club	75	Lemon Grove	San Diego		91946
Olivewood Club	79	National City	San Diego		91950
American Assoc of University Women	237	San Diego	San Diego		92102
Business and Professional Women's Club	95	San Diego	San Diego		92101
San Diego Club	400	San Diego	San Diego	2557 3rd Ave	92103
San Diego County Nurses Assoc	104	San Diego	San Diego		92134
Wednesday Club	160	San Diego	San Diego	540 Ivy Ln	92103
Clovis Woman's Club	75	Clovis	Fresno		93611
Coalinga Woman's Club	101	Coalinga	Fresno		93210
Folwer Improvement Association	80	Fowler	Fresno		93625
American Assoc of University Women	102	Fresno	Fresno		93740
Parlor Lecture Club	426	Fresno	Fresno		93650
Oilfields Woman's Club	77	Oilfield	Fresno	4550 N Van Ness Blvd	93704
Woman's Study and Civic Club	85	Reedley	Fresno		93654
Selman Woman's Improvement Club	110	Selma	Fresno		93662
Bakersfield Woman's Club	507	Bakersfield	Kern		93301
Taft Woman's Improvement Club	225	Taft	Kern		93268
Thursday Club	140	Corcoran	Kings		93212
Hanford Woman's Club	130	Hanford	Kings		93230
Madera Woman's Improvement Club	104	Madera	Madera		93637
Modesto Woman's Improvement Club	175	Modesto	Stanislaus		95350

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### California Clubs in 1922

Club Name	1922 Membership Count	City	County	Address	Zip Code
Newman Woman's Improvement Club	75	Newman	Stanislaus		95360
Oakdale Woman's Improvement Club	80	Oakdale	Stanislaus		95361
Turlock Woman's Club	90	Turlock	Stanislaus		95380
Dinuba Woman's Club	100	Dinuba	Tulare		93618
Exeter Woman's Club	84	Exeter	Tulare		93221
Tuesday Club	139	Lindsay	Tulare		93247
Porterville Ladies' Improvement Club	184	Porterville	Tulare		93257
Strathmore Town and Country Club	111	Strathmore	Tulare		93267
Tulare Woman's Club	167	Tulare	Tulare		93274
Antioch Woman's Club	88	Antioch	Contra Costa		94509
Carquinez Woman's Club	100	Crockett	Contra Costa		94525
Martinez Woman's Club	133	Martinez	Contra Costa		94553
Walnut Creek Woman's Improvement Club	84	Walnut Creek	Contra Costa		94596
Northside Neighborhood Club	75	Lodi	San Joaquin		95242
Lodi Woman's Club	410	Lodi	San Joaquin	325 W Pine St	95240
Philomathean	410	Stockton	San Joaquin		95203
Stockton School Woman's Club	155	Stockton	San Joaquin		95202
Adelphian Club	210	Alameda	Alameda		94501
Twentieth Century Club	294	Berkeley	Alameda		94720
Country Club of Washington Township	116	Fremont	Alameda		94536
Hill and Valley Club	112	Hayward	Alameda		94544
Livermore Woman's Improvement Club	75	Livermore	Alameda		94551
Ebell Society of Oakland	525	Oakland	Alameda	1440 Harrison Street	94612
Glenview Woman's Club	162	Oakland	Alameda	1318 Glenfield Ave	94602
Lakeview Club	145	Oakland	Alameda		94610
Mills Club	75	Oakland	Alameda		94611
Oakland Club	325	Oakland	Alameda		94607
Park Boulevard Woman's Club	90	Oakland	Alameda		94606
Rockridge Woman's Club	170	Oakland	Alameda	5862 Keith Ave	94618
Alta Mira Club	98	San Leandro	Alameda		94577
Dixon Woman's Improvement Club	100	Dixon	Solano		95620
Wednesday Club	157	Suisun	Solano		94585
Saturday Club of Vacaville	238	Vacaville	Solano		95687
Vallejo Woman's Improvement Club	80	Vallejo	Solano		94590
Petaluma Woman's Club	200	Petaluma	Sonoma		94952
Saturday Afternoon Club	167	Santa Rosa	Sonoma		95401
Sonoma Valley Woman's Club	92	Sonoma	Sonoma		95476
Saturday Afternoon Club	136	Santa Cruz	Santa Cruz		95060
Watsonville Woman's Club	300	Watsonville	Santa Cruz		95076
Los Gatos History Club	75	Los Gatos	Santa Clara		95032
Mountain View Woman's Club	120	Mountain View	Santa Clara		94040

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### California Clubs in 1922

Club Name	1922 Member- ship Count	City	County	Address	Zip Code
Palo Alto Woman's Club	113	Palo Alto	Santa Clara		94301
San Jose Woman's Club	165	San Jose	Santa Clara		95113
Saratoga Foothill Club	107	Saratoga	Santa Clara		95070
Burlingame Woman's Club	204	Burlingame	San Mateo		94010
North Burlingame Woman's Club	75	North Burlingame	San Mateo		94030
Redwood City Woman's Club	75	Redwood City	San Mateo		94065
San Mateo Woman's Club	161	San Mateo	San Mateo		94401
South San Francisco Woman's Club	75	South San Francisco	San Mateo		94080
Fairfax Woman's Club	84	Fairfax	Marin		94930
Tamalpais Center Woman's Club	161	Kentfield	Marin		94904
Larkspur Woman's Improvement Club	75	Larkspur	Marin		94939
Out Door Art Club	95	Mill Valley	Marin		94941
Sausalito Woman's Club	112	Sausalito	Marin		94965
King City Woman's Club	75	King City	Monterey		93930
Monterey Civic Club	75	Monterey	Monterey		93940
Pacific Grove Woman's Civic Club	81	Pacific Grove	Monterey		93950
Salinas Civic Club	218	Salinas	Monterey		93901
Calistoga Civic Club	80	Calistoga	Napa		94515
Napa New Century Club	400	Napa	Napa		94558
St. Helena Woman's Improvement Club	92	St. Helena	Napa		94574
Hollister Woman's Club	140	Hollister	San Benito		95023
American Assoc of University Women	425	San Francisco	San Francisco		94115
Bertola Assembly of California Women	135	San Francisco	San Francisco	1630 26th Ave	94122
California Club	600	San Francisco	San Francisco	1355 Franklin St	94109
Corona Club	275	San Francisco	San Francisco		94117
Forum Club	196	San Francisco	San Francisco	525 Sutter St	94102
La Mesa Redonda	95	San Francisco	San Francisco		94123
Laurel Hall Club	210	San Francisco	San Francisco	1750 Clay St	94109
Mills Club	118	San Francisco	San Francisco	536 Sutter St	94108
Philomath Club	161	San Francisco	San Francisco	538 Sutter St	94105
President's Assembly	180	San Francisco	San Francisco		94133
San Francisco Colony of New England Women	75	San Francisco	San Francisco	1750 Clay St	94109
Association of Pioneer Women	135	San Francisco	San Francisco		94129
Pacific Coast Women's Press Association	85	San Francisco	San Francisco	1725 Washington	94109
To Kalon	250	San Francisco	San Francisco	2515 Fillmore St	94115
Vittoria Colonna Club	145	San Francisco	San Francisco	1750 Clay St	94109
Esparto Home Improvement Club	90	Esparto	Yolo		95627
Town and Country Club	120	Woodland	Yolo		95695
Marysville Art Club	281	Marysville	Yolo		95901
Maywood Woman's Club	130	Corning	Tehama		96021
Los Molinos Woman's Club	75	Los Molinos	Tehama		96055

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### California Clubs in 1922

Club Name	1922 Membership Count	City	County	Address	Zip Code
Red Bluff Woman's Improvement Club	150	Red Bluff	Tehama		96080
Sutter County Tuesday Club	650	Live Oak	Sutter		95953
Bogue Wednesday Club	148	Yuba City	Sutter		95993
Fair Oaks Woman's Thursday Club	175	Fair Oaks	Sacramento		95628
Sacramento Ladies' Museum Association	100	Sacramento	Sacramento		95814
Auburn Improvement Association	225	Auburn	Placer		95603
Lincoln Woman's Club	82	Lincoln	Placer		95648
Roseville Woman's Improvement Club	118	Roseville	Placer		95678
Monday Afternoon Club	77	Willows	Glenn		95988
Orland Woman's Improvement Club	185	Orland	Glenn		95963
Alturas Civic Club	96	Alturas	Modoc		96101
Biggs Woman's Club	87	Biggs	Butte		95917
Chico Art Club	175	Chico	Butte		95928
Monday Club of Oroville	150	Oroville	Butte		95965
Colusa Woman's Club	80	Colusa	Colusa		95932

Source:

Helen M. Winslow, *Official Register and Directory of Women's Clubs in America*, Vol. XXIV (Shirley, Mass., 1922).