



ALMA COLLEGE
HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY
Revised Draft – Subject to Revision

BEAR CREEK ROAD
LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA

Page & Turnbull, Inc.
San Francisco, California
November 2005

Cover Photograph: Postcard, Alma College Entry Gate, Jesuit Era (1934-1969), n.d.
(Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

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I. INTRODUCTION

This Historic Structures Analysis has been prepared at the request of EDAW, Inc. for the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District. The Alma College site is located near the town of Los Gatos in Santa Clara County, California. The site, which is west of the Lexington Reservoir and State Route 17, is accessed from Bear Creek Road. The site is part of the Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve, which is owned and managed by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District.

Originally settled around a sawmill in the 1850s, in 1894 the Flood family built an estate on the land. In 1906, Dr. Harry Tevis purchased the land from the Floods and spent the next twenty-five years enlarging and rebuilding the estate with a bungalow mansion, a system of private roads and an extensive water system that fed his many, highly specialized gardens. Dr. Tevis died in 1931 and in 1934 the Jesuits purchased the property for Alma College, the first Jesuit school of theology on the West Coast. The estate was maintained and expanded with new dormitories, classrooms and workspaces to accommodate the new use. In 1969, the Jesuits moved their school to Berkeley and rented Alma College to a series of boarding schools. In 1970, the Main House burned, and today, only a handful of buildings survive, including the Chapel, Library and Classroom Building, along with the elaborate road and water delivery systems that Tevis and the Jesuits built.



Figure 1: Location of Alma College (Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, 2005).

Currently, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District is developing a master plan for its properties along Bear Creek Road, including the Alma College site. They are seeking to ascertain the historic significance of the remaining buildings prior to making a determination regarding their future use. This report provides an historical context and detailed description of Alma College as well as an evaluation of the site's eligibility for the *California Register of Historical Resources* (California Register).

II. RESEARCH AND INFORMATION

A. Sources Consulted

This report primarily used information, drawings and photographs obtained from the Archives of the California Province of the Society of Jesus, located at the Sacred Heart Jesuit Center in Los Gatos, California. Their archives include architectural drawings and photographs from the Tevis family, as well as drawings, photographs and records from the Jesuits' tenure on the property. Newspaper articles and a number of secondary sources provided background on the area. This report also used information from *Appendix G, Historical and Architectural Evaluation of the Los Gatos Country Club Draft Environmental Impact Report*, by Glory Anne Laffey. This appendix is comprised of municipal records, archival information from the Los Gatos Public Library, the San Jose Historical Museum and San Jose State University Library.

B. Potential Sources for Additional Historic Study

Scope limitations and physical conditions prohibited the full exploration of the site of Alma College, and it is the site itself that remains the most significant resource. The 1,100 acres of the Tevis Estate were fully developed with roads, dams, garden features and an extensive water system, and it is a certainty that many of these elements survive unnoticed and should be documented. The Archives of the California Province of the Society of Jesus holds an extensive collection of drawings, photographs and accounts of the site, and the author was only able to examine them in a cursory manner. A great deal of additional information could be gained by a more intensive study of these resources, especially the detailed water system maps.

III. HISTORY OF ALMA COLLEGE

A. Early History of the Site

Alma College is located on a long, narrow ridge in the Santa Cruz Mountains approximately three miles south of Los Gatos. Loggers first settled the area in the 1850s, attracted by dense groves of madrones and redwoods that made this the most heavily timbered area south of Humboldt County.¹ In the early 1850s a man named Webb operated a sawmill on the narrow ridge that would eventually be the site of Alma College. Webb's mill was one of over thirty mills in the area. Located along Dougherty Road (renamed Bear Creek Road in 1952), Webb's mill took advantage of the level site, serving as a processing point between the forests above and the lumber markets to the north.² By the

¹ John V. Young, *Ghost Towns of the Santa Cruz Mountains* (Lafayette, CA: Great West Books, 1984), 98.

² Supervisor's Road File #240, Dougherty Road/Bear Creek Road, County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors.

mid-1850s, James S. Howe had taken over the mill and dammed Webb’s Creek to form a lagoon and a pressure-driven sawmill.³ Over the next century, this lagoon, now known as Upper Lake, would prove to be a central organizing element and the most persistent feature on the site. In the 1860s, Lysander Collins opened the Forest House Inn as a stage stop and dining room, about three-quarters of a mile east of where Alma College now stands (and outside the boundaries of the Bear Creek Redwood Open Space Preserve).⁴ A settlement eventually grew up around the inn and developed into the town of Alma. The establishment of a train depot in Alma after 1881 made the small town a shipping point for the orchards located in the hills above Los Gatos.⁵ In the 1950s, the town of Alma was inundated and destroyed when the area was dammed for the Lexington Reservoir.

In 1887, Captain Stillman H. Knowles acquired Webb’s sawmill. Knowles was a wealthy miner and a business partner of James C. Flood. By the 1880s, depletion of the forests led to the decline in the lumber business in the area. Rather than running a mill on the site, Knowles bought the property as a rural retreat to escape San Francisco’s chilly summers and entertain friends and professional contacts. He built a fifteen-room house on the shores of Howe’s lagoon and developed orchards and a commercial trout farm.⁶

B. Flood Era (1894-1906)

In 1894, Knowles sold his property to John F. Farley, who turned the property over to Maria Rosina (Rose) Flood.⁷ Rose Flood was the controversial daughter-in-law of James Clair Flood, the “Bonanza King” who made his fortune in the Comstock Lode. Rose, a teenage runaway and burlesque star, developed a relationship with Flood’s wild young son, James L. Flood. The two married in 1887 over the Flood



Figure 2: Flood Mansion, 1894-1906 (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

³ Glory Anne Laffey, *Appendix G, Historical and Architectural Evaluation of the Los Gatos Country Club Draft Environmental Impact Report* (County of Santa Clara, 1997), 4.

⁴ Young, 97.

⁵ *San Jose Mercury* 1895: 152.

⁶ “Paradise and the Perfect Rest” *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 3, 1895.

⁷ Deed 172:571, Knowles to Farley, County of Santa Clara Recorder’s Office. Deed 172:150, Farley to Flood, 1894, County of Santa Clara Recorder’s Office.

family's strident objections, and while the family reconciled with their son, they never accepted his wife.⁸ Business interests forced the couple to remain close to San Francisco, but social pressures encouraged them to seek a rural estate where they could create their own social circle. Knowles' estate, with its tremendous views and proximity to the Alma train station, satisfied these requirements. Flood remodeled Knowles' house on the shores of the old mill pond, expanding it to forty rooms and finishing it in great luxury.⁹ Flood rechristened the estate Almadale and expanded the property to include an additional residence, cottages and numerous outbuildings. Set on a narrow ridge, these new buildings required significant site improvements, including excavation and retaining walls.¹⁰ The Floods constructed a private road linking their estate to Alma and also bought additional property, eventually owning 800 acres of farms and orchards.¹¹ In total, the Floods spent an estimated \$250,000 on the development of the estate. The family, including their daughter Constance, spent long summers at Almadale, entertaining friends and family on a lavish scale. Rose died in 1898, and James L. and Constance traveled for a year. In 1899, the widower married Rose's sister Maude. Untainted by the burlesque scandal that plagued her sister, Maude was accepted by her in-laws and San Francisco society at large.



Figure 3: Site Plan, Flood Estate 1894-1906 (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

C. Tevis Era (1906-1934)

James L. Flood's new family enjoyed greater social acceptance, and they eventually decided to reacquire the Flood Mansion in San Mateo, which had been donated to the University of California

⁸ Willa Okker Iverson, *The Strange Case of Constance Flood* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1956) 11.

⁹ "Paradise and the Perfect Rest," *San Francisco Chronicle* (November 3, 1895).

¹⁰ An oral tradition among the Jesuits suggests that Flood built the brick retaining walls that line either side of the long ridge and that Flood attempted to increase their seismic strength by connecting the two walls with a series of buried chains.

¹¹ Alma College Historic Photo Binder v.1, Jesuit Archives, Los Gatos.

upon the elder Flood's death.¹² The Floods no longer required Almadale as a private estate, and in July 1905, they sold it to Dr. Harry L. Tevis.¹³ A contemporary of James L. Flood, Harry Tevis was also the son of a millionaire. His father, Lloyd Tevis made a fortune investing in railroads, mining and real estate.¹⁴ A bachelor, Harry Tevis graduated from the University of California with a degree in dentistry, although he did not practice. Upon purchasing the estate, Tevis began altering the house to accommodate his own needs and tastes. The 1906 Fire and Earthquake, however, significantly damaged the foundations of the house, and Tevis retained the New York architecture firm of Trowbridge & Livingston to design a new house located southeast of the old one.¹⁵ The Flood house remained until 1909 when the new house was completed.



Figure 4: Tevis Alterations to Flood House, 1906-1909 (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

Trowbridge & Livingston was a successful architecture firm based in New York City, specializing in buildings in a variety of Classical Revival styles. Samuel Beck Parkman Trowbridge attended Columbia University, the American School of Classical Studies and the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. Classmates at Columbia, he and Goodhue Livingston formed a partnership, with Stockton B. Colt in 1891. In 1897, Colt left the firm, and Trowbridge & Livingston went on to build a number of significant buildings in New York City, including J.J. Astor's Second Empire-style Baroque St.



**Figure 5: St. Regis Hotel, 1904
Trowbridge & Livingston
(<http://www.nyc-architecture.com/MID/MID046.htm>).**

¹² Dorothy F. Regenery, *An Enduring Heritage: Historic Buildings of the San Francisco Peninsula* (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1976), 151.

¹³ Deed 321:56, Flood to Tevis, 1905, County of Santa Clara Recorder's Office.

¹⁴ Laffey, 9.

¹⁵ Construction drawings, Western Archives of the Society of Jesus.

Regis Hotel (1904), and the Renaissance Revival B. Altman Department Store (1905).¹⁶ After the 1906 Earthquake and Fire, the firm was hired to design a new Palace Hotel, firmly established as the finest hotel on the West Coast. Tevis, a member of San Francisco's elite, must have been aware of the commission and perhaps hired the firm for his new estate house during one of their trips to San Francisco.



Figure 6: West Facade, Tevis House, 1909-1931 (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

Significantly, the house Trowbridge & Livingston designed for Dr. Tevis did not reflect the revivalism that dominated their public work. Rather, this C-shaped building clearly reflected the most modern interests in the California Bungalow style that the Greene Brothers were contemporaneously perfecting in Pasadena.¹⁷ Only one story high at the main entry, the low slung house fit into its steep site, with a second story at the rear. A wood shingle roof overhung the walls, punctuated by numerous glazed doors and windows. Together with the free-flowing interior plan, the house blurred lines of separation, as space flowed from the Living Room, to the Dining Room, and from interior to exterior without perceptible barriers. Wood paneling throughout the interior emphasized an interest in natural materials. Built-in woodwork, together with materials and flow, suggested a deep interest in Japanese architecture, reinterpreted for an American client. The American bungalow aesthetic, which reached its highest point of development in California, was less a style than a handful of common concerns, including a sense of rootedness in site, a specificity of



Figure 7: Sitting Room, Main House, 1911 (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

¹⁶ Trowbridge & Livingston, New York Architecture, <http://www.nycarchitecture.com/ARCH/ARCHTrowbridgeLivingston.htm>.

¹⁷ Robert Winter, *The California Bungalow* (Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, 1980), 45.

region, a preference for natural materials naturally expressed, a sense of openness and an emphasis on craftsmanship. In seeking a means to reconcile their clients' wants and needs, designers often incorporated elements of Japanese or Swiss architecture. They also built bungalows in a great variety of revival and fanciful styles, ranging from Spanish Colonial to Snow White. Constructed only one year after Greene & Greene completed the Gamble House in



Figure 8: Tevis Library, 1909 (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

Pasadena, which was widely accepted as the apex of bungalow construction, the Tevis House was an early, architecturally significant representative of the style, marking a new, more casual approach to living, as well as an aesthetic achievement.

On the main, west façade of the Tevis House, a covered walkway with carved wood capitals led west to the library. Reportedly built from the remains of Flood's stable, the independent building was largely rebuilt in the bungalow style to match the Main House, and featured a high gable roof and horizontal wood siding punctuated by paired french doors. On the interior, wood paneling lined the walls, with a wood floor and exposed wood roof trusses.



Figure 9: Interior, Tevis Library, 1909-1931 (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

The estate became the primary, year-round residence of Dr. Tevis from 1909 until his death in 1931, and construction continued throughout his tenure. Tevis expanded the east, rear façade of the main house twice, in projects that involved extensive excavation and the construction of retaining walls over thirty feet high. George Kelham was the designer of both additions. Kelham initially worked for Trowbridge & Livingston, moving west to oversee construction of their Palace Hotel. Once in San

Francisco, Kelham began his own successful career, designing many significant public buildings, including the Beaux-Arts San Francisco Public Library (1916), the Gothic Revival Russ Building (1928) and the Moderne Shell Building (1930).¹⁸ It can be assumed that Kelham oversaw construction of the Tevis House as well as the Palace Hotel, and perhaps he had a significant influence over the design of the house. Naturally, Tevis turned to him when he wished to make alterations to the house later. Tevis hired Kreiss & Sons to complete the interior furnishing of the house.¹⁹



Figure 10: Lily Pond and Trellis, 1911 (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

East of the main house, Tevis initially constructed a lily pond with a brick trellis, but later constructed a large swimming pool, the “Roman Plunge,” on the other side of the trellis. Tevis bought surrounding properties, enlarging the estate to 1,100 acres.²⁰ Sixteen miles of oiled roads and eleven miles of dirt roads were constructed around the estate, supplementing Flood’s private road to Alma. Tevis also significantly expanded the water system begun by the Floods, damming creeks



Figure 11: Roman Plunge 1909-1931 (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

high up in the hills and channeling that water throughout the estate. By 1931, the system had the capacity to hold eleven million gallons of water.²¹ Much of this water was delivered to the extensive gardens Tevis developed, with the aid of forty-three full-time gardeners. In addition to prize winning dahlias, lilies, roses and fuchsias, Tevis developed experimental gardens of exotic, rare plants. Tevis also reshaped the lake at the entry of the estate, originally Mr. Howe’s mill pond. Beyond the

¹⁸ David Gebhard, *Architecture in San Francisco and Northern California* (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, 1976), 69.

¹⁹ Construction drawings, Western Archives of the Society of Jesus.

²⁰ Alma College Historic Photo Binder v.1, Western Archives of the Society of Jesus.

²¹ Red leather scrapbook assembled in the 1960s, Western Archives of the Society of Jesus.

swimming pool, along the Flood's private road to Alma, Tevis built a small village for the support of his estate and its staff of nearly one hundred servants. The village included servants quarters, greenhouses, storage buildings, garages and a barn, reportedly designed by Julia Morgan.²² The stable in the village accommodated Tevis' extensive herd of Tennessee Walking Horses.

D. Jesuit Era (1934-1969)

A bachelor, Tevis lavishly entertained a large circle of friends at his home until his death in 1931. His ashes were scattered at the highest point on the estate, and in his will, he left portions of the property to a number of employees. Several others stayed to care for the estate until 1934 when ownership transferred to the Sacred Heart Novitiate of Los Gatos and the Jesuit Order. Because the property was sold in the depths of the Depression, the Jesuits obtained 950 acres, upon which Tevis had spent an estimated \$650,000 of improvements, for a mere \$85,000.²³ The estate was renamed Alma College and adapted for use as a Jesuit seminary.

A Catholic order, the Jesuits are not strictly associated with the local diocese; instead, the Jesuits take their orders and direction from their leaders in Rome who answer only to the Pope. St. Ignatius Loyola, a Spanish Basque soldier, founded the Jesuit order, known as the Society of Jesus, in 1540. The order emphasized



Figure 12: Barn, perhaps designed by Julia Morgan, part of the estate village, 1909-1931 (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

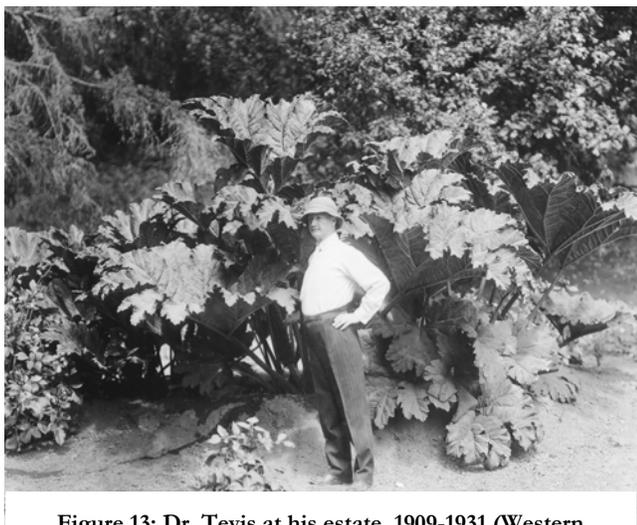


Figure 13: Dr. Tevis at his estate, 1909-1931 (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

²² The Julia Morgan archives indicate that she designed a barn for Tevis that was inundated by the Lexington Reservoir, but oral history holds that she designed the barn in the Village, which was demolished. The Western Archives of the Society of Jesus does not have any construction documents for the barn, however, so evidence is inconclusive.

²³ Red leather scrapbook assembled in the 1960s, Western Archives of the Society of Jesus.

scholarly achievement and gained fame and prestige in the church as it led to an intellectual charge against Protestantism. Throughout its history the order has sent missionaries throughout the world, emphasizing conversion as well as scientific and academic achievement. The Franciscans, famed for their poverty, arrived in California in 1769 and were responsible for the settlement of much of Alta California, but the Jesuits, famed for their intellectual achievement, did not arrive until 1849 when the Gold Rush-era population explosion demanded an expansion of Church services.²⁴ The Jesuits quickly established operations in Northern California, founding a number of colleges, including Santa Clara College in 1851. In 1855 the order opened St. Ignatius, the first Jesuit church and college in San Francisco.²⁵ St. Ignatius College eventually developed into San Francisco University. In 1909, the Jesuit presence in California had expanded significantly, and they were declared a fully independent Province, which included California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and Alaska.²⁶

Although the Jesuits had founded colleges in the West following the Gold Rush, Alma College was the first Jesuit seminary to be founded in the region. Prior to 1934, Jesuit seminarians from the

Province spent their last four years of training at seminaries elsewhere, in the Midwest, East, or Europe. Jesuit training is a particularly long and demanding process. Typically, students entered a four-year novitiate after high school, followed by three years at a university. After this, seminarians spent three years teaching at a high school or college.



Figure 14: Alma College Campus, with Main House at rear of image, 1937 (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

²⁴ John Bernard McGloin S.J., *Jesuits by the Golden Gate: The Society of Jesus in San Francisco* (San Francisco: University of San Francisco, 1972), 1.

²⁵ McGloin, 12.

²⁶ The California Province of the Society of Jesus, www.calprov.org/history/html.

Finally, the seminarian spent four years at a theological college such as Alma College. The men were ordained after their third year of study, and then returned for a last year of training.²⁷ Fifty men comprised the first class at Alma College, led by Father James E. Malone, who served as rector until 1937.²⁸

After purchasing Tevis' estate in 1934, the Jesuits undertook a large and rapid building campaign to make the estate suitable for their needs. In that first year, architect Edward James converted Tevis' library into a chapel, which required the construction of two side chapels along the north and south sides of the building.²⁹ The main house was marginally altered to accommodate it for use as a residence for the faculty, and in time, several additions were made to the rear of the house. James also constructed a new, two-story library just west of the chapel, with brick at the first floor and wood shingles above. The school also constructed a two-story dormitory west of the library, called Dormitory 1. Sometime in the early years of Jesuit habitation, a covered walkway was constructed along the north side of the property, connecting the north façades of the



Figure 15: Tevis Library, converted to the Alma College Chapel, 1934 (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).



Figure 16: Interior of the Tevis Library, converted to the Alma College Chapel, 1934 (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

²⁷ Laffey, 10.

²⁸ Philip C. Blake S.J., "Alma Through the Years: A Pictorial History of the Alma College Property" *Western Jesuit* (October 1948).

²⁹ Main Buildings File, Western Archives of the Society of Jesus.

chapel, library and dormitory buildings. Adjacent to the original walkway that connected the house and the library (now the chapel), the new walkway used simplified carved wood capitals and wood picket guardrails that resembled the earlier design. James and the Jesuits consciously retained the bungalow aesthetic established by 'Tevis' house in their own construction, using natural materials, a feeling for the exotic and a clear connection with the exterior.

In 1935 the Jesuits constructed the Classroom building just south of Dormitory 1, establishing a formal open space, or mall, that led from the main house to the old Howe millpond. The pond, now known as Upper Lake, became the central organizing element for the campus as it expanded. The classroom is a simple one-story building on brick foundations with shingle and board-and-batten siding. 1935 also



Figure 16: Library, Alma College, built 1934 (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

witnessed the construction of Dormitory 2, just west of Dormitory 1. In 1934 the Jesuits constructed Dormitory 4, which lay to the west, close to Upper Lake. The dormitory buildings, designed in a row along the north side of the mall, ranged from the two-story Dormitory 1 to the three-story Dormitory 4. The buildings were clad in wood shingle and vertical board and batten siding, with high wood shingle gable roofs and dormers. Wood fretwork decorated the lower portions of the oriel windows along the façades. The massing, materials and decorative elements in the dormitory buildings referenced Swiss Revival architecture, which also played a part in the development of the American Bungalow aesthetic. The designers of Alma College used the Tevis bungalow aesthetic to



Figure 17: Dormitory 4 on the left, Alma College, 1959 (Fr. Philip Blake).

establish a flexible, but distinctive visual coherence across the campus. In addition to new buildings in the formal campus area, the Jesuits expanded and adapted Tevis' village to accommodate new needs, including a large bookbindery that maintained the school's rare book collection. In 1937, as the most significant construction on the campus ended, the California Department of Transportation began to alter the path of State Route (SR) 17. The new road passed onto Alma College property and forced the removal of a number of Dr. Tevis' gardens.³⁰

By 1949, the two-story library built in 1934 could no longer accommodate the growing collection, and a large addition was constructed to the west of the original library. A clay-tile overhanging gable roof visually joined the new library with the rest of the campus, but in many ways it differed

markedly, illustrating the dominance of International-style Modernism in American architecture following the end of World War II. Rather than the palpably thin wood frame walls, or the fire-proof and human-sized bricks used in the earlier library, the two-story addition is constructed of stucco-finished concrete, possessing a sense of weight and scale much different than the earlier portions of the campus.



Figure 18: New Library, Alma College, 1949 (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

The rerouting of SR 17 in 1937 had stranded the town of Alma a considerable distance from the road, and during the 1940s the town withered to little more than a few houses and a store, primarily patronized by seminarians.³¹ In 1952, the state decided to create a reservoir in the valley, deluging Alma and the nearby community of Lexington. While the new reservoir had little impact upon Alma College itself, it drastically altered the view from the ridge, now dominated by a large body of blue water, rather than vegetation.

³⁰ Western Archives of the Society of Jesus.

³¹ Historic photo, Western Archives of the Society of Jesus.

In 1967, after thirty-three years at Alma College, the Jesuits decided to relocate the seminary to a new campus in Berkeley, so that the school might take part in the Graduate Theological Union of the University of California. The school actually moved in 1969, and in the fall of that year, the Jesuits began renting the property to a private boarding school. On Christmas Eve 1970, the Tevis house burned nearly completely. The great house, which so clearly embodied the principles and aesthetics of the Bungalow movement, was lost. The Dormitory buildings were also demolished. The Jesuits continued to lease the property to a series of private schools until 1989 when it sold the land to Hong Kong Metro Realty, who hoped to turn the sprawling property into a golf course and country club. In the fall of 1999, the upper 805 acres of Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve was originally acquired by Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) for \$10 million using public funds from the Bay Area Conservancy, two major gifts from the Gabilan Foundation and an individual donor, and other donations from individuals and foundations. That same year, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District acquired the lower 260 acres of the Preserve, which included Alma College, for \$15 million. In 2001, POST transferred the upper 805 acres to the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF ALMA COLLEGE

A. Site

Alma College, formerly Almadale and the Tevis Estate, occupies a narrow ridge amid the hills on the eastern side of the Santa Cruz Mountains. This ridge runs southeast from the Upper Lake and the main entrance to the property, with steep declines on both the northeast and southwest sides of the site. The



Figure 19: Aerial View, Site of Alma College, 2005 (Googleworld).

Santa Cruz Mountains rise to the north and west while the Lexington Reservoir, which was an open valley until the 1950s, lies to the east. As indicated on the schematic site plan, which is attached as Figure 20, the primary approach to the site is from Bear Creek Road, which winds southwest from SR 17, passing along the north side of the college site. Turning left off Bear Creek Road, one passes through a series of modern gates. A main road leads around the north and east sides of Upper Lake, which began its life in the 1850s as the Howe millpond. Over the next century, the body of water was regularized and used as the primary gateway to the property and a critical organizing element for all three estates as well as the seminary that succeeded them. Beyond Upper Lake, the road bends to the south and east and rises

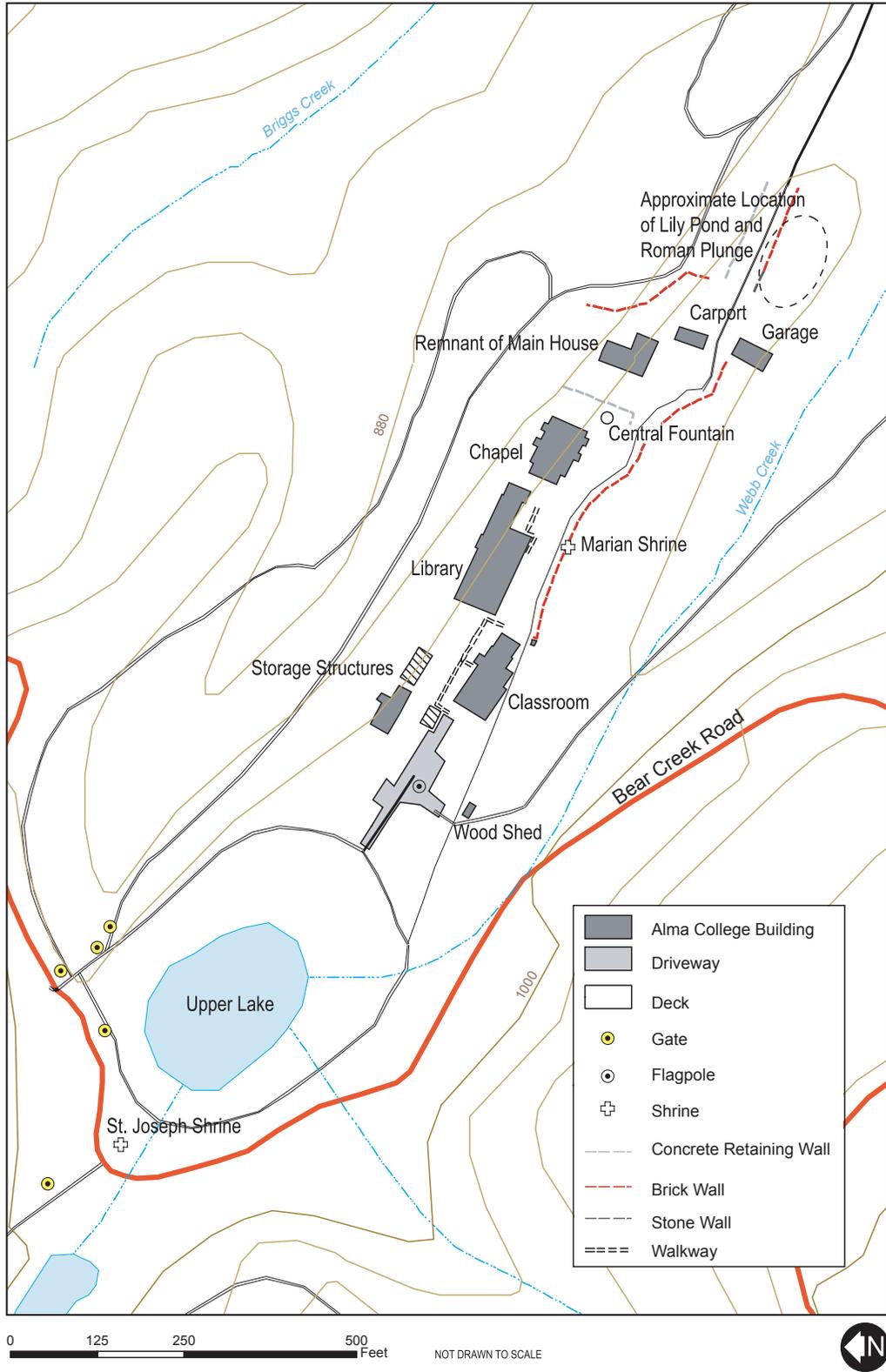


Figure 20: Site Map of Former Alma College, Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve (Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District map; modified by Page & Turnbull, August 2005).

with the natural slope of the ridge. The main buildings of the Alma College campus rise north of the road. Expanding the facilities constructed by Dr. Tevis, the Jesuits developed a campus with a central open space following the narrow ridge, with the dormitories along the north side and the Classroom Building on the south. The main house stood at the eastern end of the space, with the lake at the western end.³² Beyond the ruins of the main house, the road begins to slope downward, with the historic Roman Plunge on the right and eventually leading past the ruined Alma Village to the stables. Originally constructed by the Flood family, this private road ran from



Figure 21: Aerial View of Alma College (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

their property to the town of Alma, which now lies under Lexington Reservoir. A difficult, hilly site, the handful of wide level spaces, including Upper Lake, the main campus area, as well as the Roman Plunge, represents a significant effort, which required extensive excavation and is maintained only through a system of retaining walls, currently crumbling due to seismic activity and disrepair. Several site elements are clearly historic, including the lake, which is the oldest built element on the site. In addition, the entry road and the road that once led down to Alma are both historic, establishing carefully crafted and engineered routes and views throughout the site.

B. Chapel (1909)

Some records suggest that portions of this building were initially built as part of the Flood barn, and later adapted by Dr. Tevis to serve as a free-standing library, but no physical evidence survives to indicate that this is true. In 1909, significantly renovated, or constructed anew by Trowbridge & Livingston, Dr. Tevis' library was a single-story building, largely square in plan, with a deep gable roof. Pent roof overhangs covered portions of the wide porches that wrapped around the building, with low wood guardrails. A covered walkway lead east to the main house. The site of the Library

³² To simplify, this text will assume plan north that is actually northeast.

sloped down steeply to the north, with a gentler grade declining to the west. Consequently, the brick foundations that supported the porch are minimal to the east and south but quite substantial to the north. Vertical wood siding covered the exterior, punctuated by paired french doors. Half-timbering covered the gable ends to the east and west, and a chimney rose along the south wall.

On the interior, the Library, housing Tevis' collection of rare books, was primarily a single open space with French doors leading out to the porch that wrapped around all four sides. Dark wood floors and paneled walls contrasted with the bright light pouring in through the windows. The exposed wood truss ceiling drew heat upward, creating a cool, dark retreat from the heat of a warm day. A large stone fireplace dominated the south wall of the room. Expansive, cool and breezy, the Library was both a more fire-proof repository for Tevis' rare book collection and an inviting retreat, sometimes used for large gatherings.

In 1934, the Jesuits converted the Library to serve as the Chapel. On the exterior, two small side chapels were added on both the north and south façades of the building. The large stone fireplace along the south wall was removed, pews were installed and a raised altar was built at the west end of the main room. In later years, the building fell into disrepair, the pews were removed and the french doors broken and boarded over. Carpet now covers the wood floors, and the building has a significant vermin problem.



Figure 22: Interior, Tevis Library, now Alma College Chapel (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).



Figure 23: South Façade, Alma College Chapel, former Tevis Library, 2005 (Page & Turnbull).

C. Library (1934)

Just west of the Chapel, the Library also stands on a site that slopes dramatically to the north and more gradually to the west. Built in 1934, fire concerns encouraged the construction of the first floor of the Library in red brick, with a wood shingle-clad second story.³³ The shingle roof had exposed wood eaves and two dormer vents.

Casement windows brought light and air into the spaces, varying from paired ten-light casements to

single six-light casements, to fixed art glass panels. One-story shingle-sided additions were attached to the east and west façades of the Library, and a semi-enclosed vestibule with a spindle screen window sheltered the main door along the south façade. Early on during the Jesuit tenure, a covered walkway was built along the north side, between the Chapel and Library. On the interior, bright wood paneled reading rooms with wide wood desks provided places for study.

In 1949, Paul A. Ryan designed a new, stucco-finished reinforced concrete addition adjacent to the 1934 Library.³⁴ Like the old Library, the site of the addition slopes gently to the west and dramatically to the north. The addition burrows into the hillside, with only one story visible at the east end and two stories exposed at



Figure 24: Interior, Alma College Chapel, former Tevis Library 2005 (Page & Turnbull).



Figure 25: Interior, Alma College Library, 1934-1969, (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

³³ History binder, Western Archives of the Society of Jesus.

³⁴ Construction Documents, Western Archives of the Society of Jesus.

the west end. A double-height window dominates the west façade, rising to the apex of the gable end of the clay tile roof and serving as a focal point along the length of the campus. The south façade is occupied by a low colonnade at the first story, with a flat walkway at the second, screening the windows that fill the full length of the façade. A concrete Jesuit seal is located at the



Figure 26: Addition to Alma College Library, 1949 (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

western end of this façade. On the east façade, a planter and stairs direct visitors up to the main entry, with a window and door surrounded by flat stucco trim. The northern portion of this façade adjoins the 1939 library building. The stucco-finished north façade is contiguous with the brick façade of the old library. A covered walkway passes the length of the north façade, with steps marking the slope of the hill. A door on the east end provides access to the upper level of the Library, while a second door on the west end opens into its lower level. Between them, groups of two or three windows, surrounded by flat stucco trim, illuminate the interior. Initially, the building accommodated office, reference and stack space on the upper floor, with more stacks and a study area on the lower floor.

The 1949 library addition resulted in the demolition of the one-story shingle-clad addition and the alteration of the brick wall on the west façade of the 1939 Library. In time all of the original windows in this portion have been damaged and boarded up, but beyond general deterioration, little has changed on the exterior of the building. On the interior, however, significant changes have occurred. The main entry hall remains



Figure 27: Entry Hall, Alma College Library, 2005 (Page & Turnbull).

largely historic, with painted wood paneled walls and ceilings, a wood floor and an original light fixture. To the right of the entry hall, two small rooms retain their original wood paneled walls and wood floors, with the addition of a suspended acoustic tile ceiling. To the left of the entry hall, within the two-story portion of the building, the second floor has been partially removed, creating a double-height space with a kitchen along the west wall and a loft above. The windows, significantly damaged, are the only historic elements remaining in this area. New gypsum board walls and ceilings, carpeted floors and new fixtures finish the space. Today, there is no connection between this area and the 1949 library addition. It was not possible to survey the interior of the 1949 addition in 2005, and it is unknown what kind of changes the Jesuits and later tenants made over time.

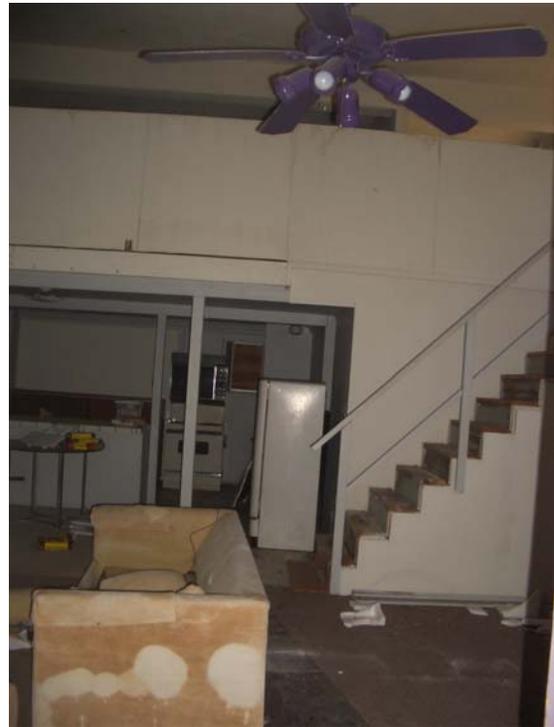


Figure 28: Interior of the Alma College Library, 2005 (Page & Turnbull).

D. Classroom Building (1935)

The Classroom Building stands on a site that slopes gently to the southwest, one story high at the northeastern corner, with a full story brick basement exposed at the southwestern corner. The long narrow building consists of two attached sections. To the west, an exterior arcade runs along the north side of the building, connecting a series of classrooms and looking out at what was once the mall for the campus. At the eastern end of the building, an enclosed space occupies the full footprint of the building. A brick vestibule with spindle screen openings serves as the main



Figure 29: North Facade, Classroom Building, 2005 (Page & Turnbull).

entrance at the center of the building. On brick foundations, the wood frame walls are finished with shingle siding, and the asphalt shingle gable roof covers the exterior. Within the arcade, the walls are finished in flush vertical wood siding, and brick tiles cover the floor. Much like the covered walkways on the south side of the campus, the arcade has carved heavy timber capitals. Some original doors remain boarded-up on the exterior, and at least one historic light fixture survives within the arcade. Over time, changes were made to the Classroom Building. On the exterior, asphalt shingles replaced the original wood shingles and metal angle braces have been attached to the arcade capitals, suggesting an attempt at seismic reinforcement. Currently the west façade of the building is finished only with building paper and vertical wood battens, although it seems probable that this façade was originally finished with wood shingles similar to the other three sides of the building. The interior of the building has been more significantly altered. Partition walls have been demolished and finishes removed. The interior at the east side was not accessible, but beyond original doors and windows, nothing survives on the west end of the building.

E. Main House Remnant (1909-1920)

The Main House burned down on Christmas Eve 1970, and today only the northeastern corner of the building survives. Constructed of brick, the remnant consists of one floor above grade and a two-story section that extends into the hillside



Figure 30: Arcade, Classroom Building, 2005 (Page & Turnbull).



Figure 31: East Façade, Main House, 1909. Note the location of the large rock. (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

along the north side of the campus. The surviving remnant was actually an addition to the east side of Tevis' original house, designed in 1920 by George Kelham and then altered in 1923. The 1920 addition consisted of a two-story brick guest wing, built into the steep hill, and a single-story area above ground accommodating service and entertaining spaces. The roof of the new addition served as a wide deck for the entertaining areas on the main floor of the house, offering a dramatic view of the Santa Clara Valley to the north and east. Built around a large, jagged rock that served as a landmark for Tevis, a grand brick stair led from the ground level up to the deck, while two stairways led down to the guest rooms built into the hill. In 1923, the stair leading up to the deck was eliminated, replaced with a hallway with arched openings.³⁵ No windows, doors or finishes survived the fire, and although a concrete stair leads down into the guest room area, the original wood floor within the space has collapsed. Burned timbers attached to concrete beams on the above-ground level of the remnant attest to the high finishes of the original interior as well as the severity of the 1970 fire.

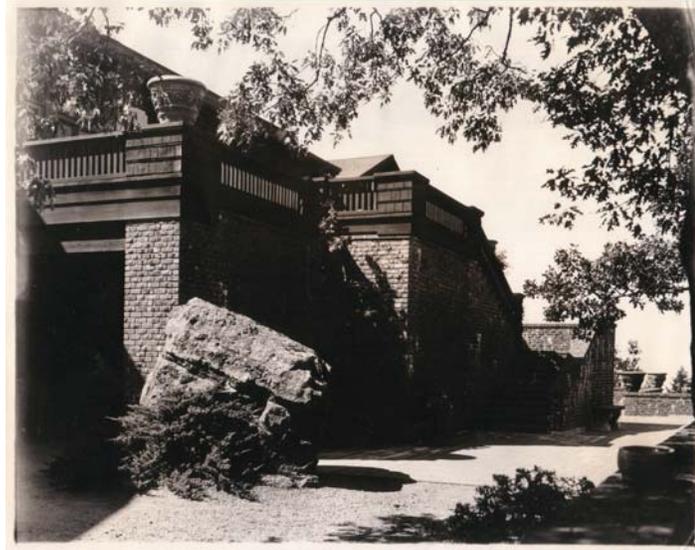


Figure 32: East Façade of the Main House after 1920. Again, note the location of the rock. (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

Figure 33: 1923 East Façade Addition to the Main House, 2005 (Page & Turnbull). The photograph shows a brick archway with a wooden door, heavily overgrown with thick, tangled tree roots and vines. A person is visible through the archway, and a person is standing in the foreground near some pipes.



Figure 33: 1923 East Façade Addition to the Main House, 2005 (Page & Turnbull).

F. *Lily Pond (1912), Pergola and Roman Plunge (1915)*

In 1912, George Kelham designed a small Lily Pond to be located on the south side of the Flood's private road, east of the main house and garage. The pond stood atop a plinth, surrounded by low brick walls and was approached over a wide, open lawn, a luxury on this hilly site. In 1915, Kelham expanded the water feature by erecting a brick pergola to

the east of the pond and building a large swimming pool on the other side of the Pergola. Known as the Roman Plunge, the new pool represented a significant engineering effort, as the south side of the pool stood unsupported, resisting the high lateral pressures exerted by the water. In 2005, the site of the Lily Pond and Roman Plunge is significantly overgrown. It was not possible to discern their outlines, but it seems more than likely that these two water features still exist, filled in and hidden by brush.



Figure 34: Remnant of the Main House, 2005 (Page & Turnbull).

G. Central Fountain (1909-1931)

In 1909, Dr. Tevis installed a circular sunken pool within the courtyard of the main, west façade of the building. Sometime during his occupancy, he replaced this sunken pool with a raised, stone pool in the same location. That stone pool survives today, in a somewhat dilapidated condition, south of the chapel.



Figure 35: Central Fountain, 2005 (Page & Turnbull).

H. Garage (1934-1989)

A garage stands southeast of the remnant of the Tevis house, across the private road the Floods constructed to Alma. Built into the steep hill that runs along the south side of the site, the Garage is a two-story building containing living space below and a three-stall garage above, with a wide drive to the east. No construction documents survive for this building, but it was constructed after the Jesuits took possession of the estate. Materials and methods of construction suggest the 1960s or 1970s as a

³⁵ Construction Documents, Western Archives of the Society of Jesus.

likely building date. The building has poured concrete walls at the lower floor, with a brick structure at the upper floor supporting the gable asphalt shingle roof. On the upper floor, a small interior space encloses the stair to the lower level, not accessible to survey. Three garage bays stand south of the enclosed area and a level, graveled parking area lies east of the Garage.

I. Shrine of St. Joseph

On the western shores of Upper Lake, the Jesuits constructed a shrine dedicated to St. Joseph.³⁶ At the center, a brick arched panel houses a platform for St. Joseph holding the infant Jesus. This portion of the structure stands about eight feet high, and rough rock walls descend on either side. Today, the statue has been removed, and trees and brush have grown up around the structure.

J. Retaining Walls

Throughout the site, retaining walls attest to the once cultivated nature of Alma College. A significant concrete and brick retaining wall lies to the north of the campus, spanning its entire length and supporting the steep decline in this direction. Seismic activity and years of deterioration and plant growth have created large cracks in this wall. Poured concrete walls mark the original foundations of the east wall of the Main House. Moving further east, beyond the house, along the private road the Floods constructed to Alma, a significant rough stone retaining wall rises to the north. Beyond the late-era garage building, the Floods' road passes across a narrow ridge. The north side of this ridge is supported by a massive, reinforced-concrete wall that



Figure 36: East Façade, Garage, 2005 (Page & Turnbull).



Figure 37: Shrine of St. Joseph, 1931-1969 (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

features an arched center panel and a series of descending concrete pools, apparently used to move water from the south to the north side of the estate. Brick retaining walls and a brick retention pond stand south of this massive wall, across the road and below the level of the adjacent lawn. These retaining walls represent a massive construction effort and illustrate how extensive and intensively developed this property has been in the past. These examples are visible in 2005, and it is a virtual certainty that many more survive, hidden by years of plant growth.



Figure 38: Retaining Wall and Water System at North Side of Complex, 2005 (Page & Turnbull).

K. Miscellaneous Structures

A variety of insubstantial structures lie throughout the site, including a wood shed near the edge of Upper Lake, a wood Marian shrine across the road from the Library, and a pair of open storage structures north of the classroom building, on the site of the old dormitories. An open carport stands against the rough stone retaining wall east of the remains of the Main House. Greater information would need to be obtained to determine the history and significance of these buildings.

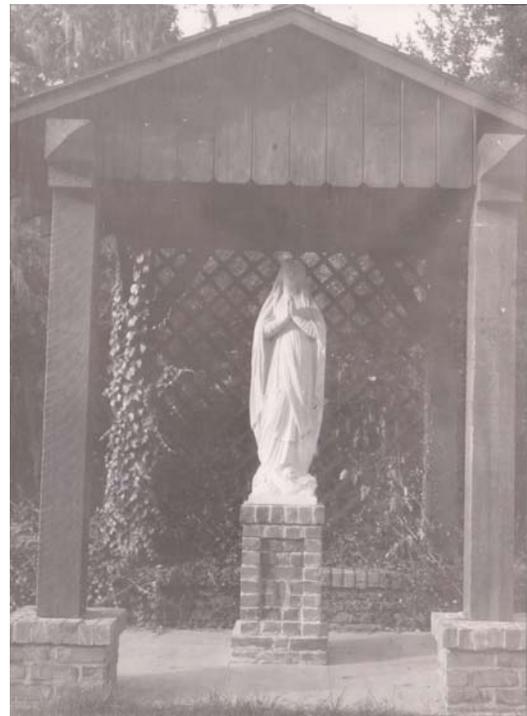


Figure 39: Marian Shrine near Classroom Building, 1934-1969 (Western Archives of the Society of Jesus).

³⁶ Construction Documents, Western Archives of the Society of Jesus.

V. CALIFORNIA REGISTER CRITERIA

The California Register is an authoritative guide to significant architectural, archaeological and historical resources in the State of California. The evaluative criteria used by the California Register for determining eligibility are closely based on those developed for use by the National Park Service for the *National Register of Historical Places* (National Register). Resources can be listed in the California Register through a number of methods. State Historical Landmarks and National Register-eligible properties (both listed and formal determinations of eligibility) are automatically listed. Properties can also be nominated to the California Register by local governments, private organizations or citizens. This includes properties identified in historical resource surveys with Status Codes of 1 to 5 and resources designated as local landmarks or listed by city or county ordinance. In order to be determined eligible for listing in the California Register, a resource must be demonstrated to be historically significant *and* retain sufficient physical integrity to convey its historic significance. Resources may be eligible for listing individually or as contributors to a defined historic district.

A. Significance

In order to be determined eligible for listing in the California Register a resource must be demonstrated to be significant under one or more of the following criteria:

Criterion 1 (Event): Resources that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.

Criterion 2 (Person): Resources that are associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history.

Criterion 3 (Architecture): Resources that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values.

Criterion 4 (Information Potential): Resources or sites that have yielded or have the potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.

B. Integrity

In addition, resources must have sufficient physical integrity to convey their historical significance. The concept of integrity is essential to identifying the important physical characteristics of historical resources and hence, evaluating adverse change. For the purposes of the California Register, integrity is defined as “the authenticity of a historical resource’s physical identity evidenced by the survival of

characteristics that existed during the resource’s period of significance.”³⁷ A property is examined for seven variables or aspects that together comprise integrity. These aspects, which are based closely on the National Register, are location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. *National Register Bulletin 15, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* defines these seven characteristics:

Location is the place where the historic property was constructed.

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plans, space, structure and style of the property.

Setting addresses the physical environment of the historic property inclusive of the landscape and spatial relationships of the building/s.

Materials refer to the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern of configuration to form the historic property.

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history.

Feeling is the property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.

Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property.

The California Register may include properties that have suffered a greater degree of impairment to their integrity than would be acceptable for listing in the National Register. According to the State Office of Historic Preservation guidelines:

It is possible that historical resources may not retain sufficient integrity to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register, but they may still be eligible for listing in the California Register. A resource that has lost its historic character or appearance may still have sufficient integrity for the California Register if it maintains the potential to yield significant or historical information or specific data.³⁸

C. Historic Districts

Resources may be eligible for the California Register individually or as contributors to a historic district. Historic districts are defined as those districts that possess a “significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by

³⁷ California Code of Regulations, tit. 14, chap. 11.5.

³⁸ California Office of Historic Preservation, *Technical Assistance Series No. 6*.

plan or physical development.”³⁹ In general, a district must be a definable geographic area that can be distinguished from surrounding properties in terms of density, scale, type, age, or style, or by differences in patterns of historic development or associations. A district can either convey a visual sense of an overall historic environment or be an arrangement of thematically related properties. In addition to being an identifiable entity, a district must be important for historical, architectural, archeological, engineering, or cultural values. A district can include features that lack individual distinction so long as the features possess integrity. Moreover, a district can include features that do not contribute to the significance of the district so long as they do not affect the ability of the district to convey its sense of time, place, and historical development.

D. Cultural Landscapes

A resource may also be eligible for listing in the California Register as a “cultural landscape.” A cultural landscape is defined as “a geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein, associated with a historic event, activity, or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values.”⁴⁰ There are four general types of cultural landscapes: historic sites; historic designed landscapes; historic vernacular landscapes; and ethnographic landscapes. A historic site is a landscape significant for its historic associations, such as battlefields and presidential homes. A historic designed landscape is a landscape that was consciously designed or laid out by a professional according to design principles, or by an amateur working in a recognized style or tradition. A historic designed landscape may be associated with a significant person, trend, or event in landscape architecture, or illustrate an important development in the theory and practice of landscape architecture. Examples include parks, campuses, and estates. A historic vernacular landscape is a landscape that has evolved through use of the occupants, such as a farm complex or a collection of rural homesteads. Finally, ethnographic landscapes are those that contain a variety of natural and cultural resources important to the heritage of an associated group, including contemporary settlements, sacred religious sites, and geological structures.

VI. EVALUATION OF HISTORIC STATUS

A. Previous Studies

Alma College is listed in the Santa Clara County Heritage Resource Inventory, but has not been assigned a State Resource Status Code. The Northwest Information Center, which is the repository

³⁹ U.S. Department of the Interior, *National Register Bulletin No. 15*.

⁴⁰ U.S. Department of the Interior, *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* (Washington, D.C.: 1996).

of the California Historical Resources Information System for Santa Clara County, does not possess any historical studies concerning Alma College. In 1997, an Environmental Impact Report prepared by Glory Anne Laffey found that the buildings on the site composed an eligible California Register historic district under Criterion 1, citing the significance of Alma College as the first Jesuit School of Theology in the West.

Although the 1997 Environmental Impact Report found the site eligible for listing in the California Register as an historic district, this 2005 study reaches the opposite conclusion. Due to lack of maintenance, the unoccupied site has deteriorated in the eight years since the previous study. While the site remains historically significant, it no longer retains sufficient integrity to be understood as an historic district. However, this study also finds that the Chapel building appears to be individually eligible for listing in the California Register. The building is architecturally significant and retains historic integrity. Moreover, this study has revealed that the site may be potentially eligible for listing as a cultural landscape, although further research is required to make a definitive determination.

B. Significance

Criterion 1 (Event)

As the first Jesuit School of Theology built in the American West, Alma College is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to regional history. Beginning in the 1850s, the Jesuits made important contributions to California by operating a number of colleges and universities, including Santa Clara College and the University of San Francisco. By opening Alma College in 1934, the Jesuits of the California Province were no longer required to send their seminarians elsewhere for their final years of training. After eighty-five years of growth, Alma College signified the full maturity of the province within the church.

The Alma College site is therefore significant under Criterion 1 as a potential historic district. The period of significance is the period of Jesuit use of the site, from 1934 until 1969. Contributing resources include the Chapel, originally constructed in 1909 as Dr. Tevis' library and converted by the Jesuits to a chapel in 1934; the Library, which was constructed by the Jesuits in 1934 and expanded in 1949; and the Classroom Building, which was constructed by the Jesuits in 1935. In addition, a number of landscape features, including Upper Lake and the St. Joseph Shrine, contribute to the potential historic district.

Criterion 2 (Person)

Although the Alma College site is closely associated with individual persons, including the Flood family and Dr. Tevis, as well as Jesuit seminarians, research has not revealed that these persons are of sufficient historic importance such that the site is significant under Criterion 2.

Criterion 3 (Architecture)

The Chapel appears individually eligible for listing in the California Register based upon its architectural significance. The Chapel, which was originally constructed in 1909 as a library for Dr. Tevis, is the oldest building on the site and the only one surviving from Dr. Tevis' estate. Its period of significance encompasses Dr. Tevis' habitation of the site from 1909 until 1931. Son of a millionaire investor and industrialist, he played a noteworthy role in the architectural development of the Bay Area. Digging their wealth from the ground, or profiting from those who did, the rich, and more extravagantly, their children, began constructing lavish estates around the Bay Area, establishing outposts of luxury and civilization in rural frontier California. For example, the Hearst family commissioned A.C. Schweinfurth to design Pozo de Verona (1895) in Sunol; the Floods built Linden Towers (1878) in Menlo Park; and Willis Polk designed the Carolands (1912) for Harriet Pullman Carolan in Hillsborough.⁴¹ Dr. Tevis' estate was a part of this larger pattern and represented a unique aspect of the movement. Rather than constructing his estate in a familiar, formal revival style befitting those aspiring to a level of European and Eastern acceptance, Tevis chose to build a magnificent bungalow complex. These low-slung buildings, without clear European reference, were allied with an architectural movement that aspired to informality, comfort and a connection to the land—an aesthetic that California architects developed most successfully into a regional expression.

Criterion 4 (Information Potential)

The site was not evaluated for its potential to yield information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation. Prior to altering the site, the project sponsors are advised to consult with a qualified archeologist regarding this criterion.

C. Integrity

The seven aspects of historic integrity as they relate to the Alma College site are discussed in this section.

Location

⁴¹ Richard Longstreth, *On the Edge of the World: Four Architects in San Francisco at the Turn of the Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 279. Gebhard, 151.

Because none of the locations have changed, the site and the Chapel retain their integrity of location.

Design

The design of the Alma College site has been significantly lost over time. At the time the Jesuits occupied the site, buildings lined a mall, which led up to the main house, the focal point of the complex. Not only is the Main House gone, but the dormitories along the north side of the green space have also been demolished. The sense of an enclosed exterior space, critical to the Jesuits expansion of the property, no longer exists.

Considered alone, the Chapel has also lost its design integrity.

Converting Dr. Tevis' Library into the Chapel, the Jesuits added two chapels on the north and south sides of the building, and over time the porch that wrapped around the building was removed from the south and west sides. The building has also been significantly altered by the addition of a roof on the north side. The original sense of openness and connection to the exterior has been significantly



Figure 40: North facade, Alma College Chapel, former Tevis Library, 2005 (Page & Turnbull).

diminished. On the interior, the building remains largely a single, expansive, open space. The alteration of the north and south façades has caused the loss of the Chapel's design integrity.

Setting

Although the creation of the Lexington Reservoir altered the view east from the site and heavier traffic now rumbles along Bear Creek Road, the site of Alma College remains remote and unchanged. Within the Alma College site, however, the setting has changed dramatically. Alma College was organized around the main house, and the three surviving buildings were sited in relationship to that building. With the 1970 loss of the main house, as well as the dormitories, the potential Alma College Historic District setting has been so altered that it has lost its integrity.

Taken as an individual building, the setting of the Chapel has also been significantly altered. Important for its relationship to Dr. Tevis' Main House, the Chapel now stands alone, unmoored from its intended anchor. Although always an independent structure, the Chapel gained its purpose from its relationship to the larger building, and without it, it lacks integrity of setting.

Materials

The exteriors of the Library and Classroom, which are contributors to a potential Alma College historic district, remain largely unchanged; although the interior of the Library has been nearly completely altered, and the interior of the Classroom has been altered and significantly damaged. The conditions of most windows and doors were impossible to determine during the site visit, so it is unclear what proportion survives behind the plywood barriers that currently cover the openings. The potential Alma College historic district has lost its integrity of materials.

The original materials of the Chapel are largely intact, although the addition of side chapels has made them more difficult to perceive. Individually, the Chapel retains its integrity of materials.

Workmanship

The Chapel and Classroom Building are light wood-frame buildings with wood finishes and details that express an essential connection to their site and the larger character of the estate. The 1934 Library, with a brick lower floor and wood frame upper floor also communicates that sense of lightness and workmanship. The 1949 Library addition, with thick reinforced concrete walls, however, communicates a very different sense of weight that has little in common with the original buildings on the campus. Despite the Library addition, the workmanship of the original library remains clear. The potential Alma College historic district and the Chapel individually each maintain its integrity of workmanship.



Figure 41: Arcade, Classroom Building, 2005 (Page & Turnbull).

Feeling

The Alma College site was gradually assembled over a period of years to accommodate seminarians in their final years of study. The exteriors of the Chapel, Library and Classroom survive, but the Dormitories have been lost, along with the Main House, which served as faculty residence, cafeteria and gathering space. These three buildings alone can not communicate the original feeling of the campus, and therefore the integrity of feeling of the potential district has been lost.

Considered individually, the Chapel continues to communicate the essential qualities of the bungalow aesthetic, with natural materials, a low, overhanging roof and a sense of connection with the exterior, established by the paired french doors and the surviving portion of the exterior verandah. Although the addition of the side chapels has diminished the open quality of the original building, the Chapel retains its integrity of feeling.

D. Determination of Eligibility

The Alma College site as a whole does not appear to be eligible for listing in the California Register as an historic district. Although the site is historically significant under Criterion 1 for its association with the founding of the first Jesuit seminary in the West, the site no longer retains sufficient integrity to be eligible for listing in the California Register as an historic district. Although the site maintains integrity of location and workmanship, it has lost integrity of design, materials, setting and feeling. Without the Main House or Dormitory buildings, it is not possible to understand the physical and spatial function of this assemblage of buildings. The site cannot be considered significant for its role as a Jesuit college if it can no longer be perceived as such.

The Chapel, on the other hand, is eligible for listing in the California Register as an individual resource. The building is historically significant under Criterion 3 for its association with architectural history and retains sufficient integrity to convey its historical significance. The Chapel maintains integrity of location, materials, workmanship and feeling, although it has lost integrity of setting and design. Overall, the building retains its integrity because it is still able to communicate the remarkable wealth and independence of taste Dr. Tevis exercised in the construction of a bungalow estate.

E. Potential Cultural Landscape

The Alma College site may qualify as an “historic designed landscape” or an “historic vernacular landscape,” which are two of the four categories of cultural landscapes recognized by the Secretary of the Interior. The site includes a large number of designed landscape elements, including a raised,

stone pool installed by Dr. Tevis, a shrine dedicated to St. Joseph located on the western shores of the Upper Lake, and the remains of the Lily Pond and Roman Plunge, which are located in the area east of the remnant of the Main House. In addition, the grounds include Upper Lake, at least one truss bridge, an extensive water system, a road system, retaining walls, walkways, stairs and the remnants of other garden structures, only a portion of which are currently accessible or visible. All of these elements, associated with the Flood, Tevis and Jesuit eras of the site, communicate the character of the historic property. Clearing and further site examination will undoubtedly reveal many more historic designed landscape elements.

In addition, the site may include elements of an historic vernacular landscape, the features of which are shaped by the activities of the occupants rather than consciously designed. The site was closely associated with timbering and milling during the second half of the nineteenth century and included a sawmill, as well as associated infrastructure. Moreover, the creek that runs through the site was dammed during this era to create the lagoon that is now known as Upper Lake. Later landscaped, the lake may have characteristics both of a designed and vernacular landscape.

A cultural landscape report should be prepared to determine whether the site meets the criteria for an historic designed landscape or an historic vernacular landscape. According to guidelines developed by the National Park Service, a cultural landscape report should include a site history and analysis of existing conditions.⁴² A site survey should be conducted by an historical landscape architect to determine the character-defining features of the landscape, including the age, composition, and structure of vegetation. The historic significance and integrity of the landscape should be evaluated and boundaries determined. Finally, the cultural landscape report should develop a treatment plan based on the *Secretary's Standards of the Interiors Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes*.

F. Physical Condition

The assessment of the physical condition of the existing structures on the site is distinct from the historical evaluation of the site. However, an assessment of physical conditions is necessary to develop an appropriate treatment plan and will inform the decision whether to preserve, rehabilitate, restore, or reconstruct the resource. Before selecting a treatment plan for the Alma College site, the project sponsors are advised to consult with a qualified engineer to determine the structural integrity

⁴² Robert Page, Cathy Gilbert and Susan Dolan, *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, Process, Techniques* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1998).

of the buildings and landscape elements on the site. However, as a preliminary matter, the present study can offer general impressions and recommendations regarding the physical condition of the site based upon a limited visual inspection.

In general, the overall physical condition of the structures on the site ranges from poor to fair. Throughout the site, the brick foundations appear to be in poor condition, with numerous cracks that appear to be the result of plant growth and seismic activity. The wood structures, including the roofs, of the Chapel, Library, and Classroom Building are intact and appear to be in fair condition. The 1949 addition to the Library appears to be in good condition overall. The remnant of the burned Main House is in poor condition with collapsed timber floors, burnt beams, and destroyed windows and doors. The landscape elements are in generally poor condition. Like the brick foundations, the brick retaining walls are seriously cracked. The fountain installed by Dr. Tevis is in disrepair, and the Lily Pond and Roman Plunge are no longer visible beneath an overgrowth of brush.

Because of the poor-to-fair physical condition of the Alma College site, restoring or reconstructing the site is likely to be prohibitively expensive. The expense of rehabilitating the site for a new use would likely be somewhat less costly, though still expensive. Further study is required to place a monetary amount on the cost of treating the site. The cost will depend on the treatment option selected, as well as the specific plans for potential reuse of the site.

VII. HISTORIC PRESERVATION REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This section outlines the local, state, and federal historic preservation regulations that may affect planning for the Alma College site.

A. Santa Clara County General Plan and Code

The Santa Clara County General Plan, which was adopted in 1994, recognizes the importance of preserving the County's heritage resources, including historical sites, structures, and areas. The General Plan states that the County's historic resources are important for their potential scientific value, cultural and historical value, and for their contribution to Santa Clara County's unique sense of place. The general approach to cultural resource protection outlined by the General Plan consists of three basic strategies:

- Inventory and evaluate heritage resources;
- Prevent, mitigate or minimize adverse impacts on heritage resources; and

- Restore, enhance, and commemorate resources as appropriate.⁴³

Santa Clara County has established an eleven-member Historic Heritage Commission, which is advisory to the Board of Supervisors and county agencies in all matters relating to historic resources. The commission is required to review applications for demolition permits for historic resources. The county is currently developing a comprehensive historic preservation ordinance, a draft of which will be available for public review and comment in late October 2005. It is anticipated that the Board of Supervisors will adopt the comprehensive historic preservation ordinance in the spring of 2006.⁴⁴

The County maintains a local Heritage Resource Inventory. First begun in 1962, the inventory was significantly updated in 1975, 1979, and 1999. Properties listed in the inventory are subject to the special consideration by the Planning Office and the heritage commission must review applications for demolition permits.⁴⁵ In addition, pursuant to County policy, projects that potentially impact properties listed in the inventory are required to undergo review in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act. An update of the Historic Resource Inventory is presently underway and is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2005.

B. California Environmental Quality Act

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires the identification of a project's significant effects on the environment. For purposes of the act, the "environment" means the physical conditions that exist within the area that will be affected by a proposed project, including objects of historic or aesthetic significance.⁴⁶ A project that causes a "substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment."⁴⁷

The determination of whether a project may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a two-step process. First, it must be determined whether historical resources exist within the area that will be affected by the proposed project. The CEQA Guidelines define an "historical resource" as a resource listed in, or determined to be eligible by the State Historical

⁴³ *Santa Clara County General Plan, 1995-2010*, adopted December 20, 1994.

⁴⁴ Santa Clara County Government website,
<http://www.sccplanning.org/channel/0,4770,chid%253D608681%2526sid%253D12867,00.html>.

⁴⁵ Santa Clara County Code, Article 7, Section C1-91.

⁴⁶ Pub. Res. Code § 21060.5.

⁴⁷ Pub. Res. Code § 21084.1.

Resources Commission, for listing in the California Register. In addition, a resource included in a local register of historical resources or identified as significant in an historical resource survey is presumed to be historically or culturally significant. Generally, a resource is considered to be historically significant if it meets the criteria for listing on the California Register.⁴⁸

It must next be determined whether the project will cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of the identified historical resources. Substantial adverse change is defined as: “physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired.”⁴⁹ The significance of an historical resource is materially impaired when a project “demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an historical resource that convey its historical significance” and that justify its inclusion in, or eligibility for inclusion in, the California Register.⁵⁰

Under the provisions of CEQA, a significant impact on an historic resource is generally considered mitigated if it comports with the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. According to the CEQA Guidelines,

Where maintenance, repair, stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, preservation, conservation or reconstruction of the historical resource will be conducted in a manner consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings ... the project’s impact on the historical resource will generally be considered mitigated below a level of significance and thus is not significant.⁵¹

C. National Historic Preservation Act

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 generally requires federal agencies, as well as agencies making use of federal funds, to take into account the effects of their “undertakings” on historic properties. Undertakings are defined as “any project, activity, or program that can result in changes in the character or use of historic properties, if any such historic properties are located in an area of potential effects.”⁵²

⁴⁸ Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15064.5.

⁴⁹ Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15064.5(b)(1).

⁵⁰ Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15064.5(b)(2).

⁵¹ Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14 § 15126.4.

⁵² 36 C.F.R. § 800.2 (o).

Pursuant to Section 106, the lead agency for a project must consult with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to identify historic properties within the “area of potential effects” (APE). The APE is defined as “the geographic area or areas within which an undertaking may directly or indirectly cause changes in the character or use of historic properties, if any such properties exist.”⁵³ After an APE has been determined, historic properties within its boundaries must be identified based on the criteria for listing in the *National Register of Historic Places* (National Register). Properties eligible for local or state historical registers are not considered historical resources under Section 106 unless they also qualify for the National Register. In consultation with the SHPO and interested public parties, the lead agency must seek ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects on historic properties within the APE. In general, compliance with the Secretary’s Standards will sufficiently mitigate adverse affects. Disputes that arise during the Section 106 review process are referred to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, a federal agency that advises the President and Congress on matters related to historic preservation.

D. Application

In developing the master plan for the Alma College site, the project sponsors are advised to acquire further information regarding the specific application of the local, state, and federal preservation policies and regulations outlined above. As a general matter, site planning should be in accordance with the Santa Clara County General Plan, which encourages the preservation of historic resources and seeks to minimize adverse impacts upon them. The project sponsors should be prepared to work with the County Planning Office and the Historic Heritage Commission to develop an historically sensitive project that comports with the General Plan. The project sponsors are further advised to follow the progress of the County’s draft comprehensive historic preservation ordinance, which will likely impose additional preservation requirements on the development of a master plan for Alma College.

Site planning for the Alma College site is likely to be subject to review under CEQA. The Alma College site is presumed to be an historical resource for purposes of CEQA because it is listed in a local register of historical resources. The Chapel is also an historical resource within the meaning of CEQA because it meets the criteria for listing in the California Register as an individual building. As noted above, the impacts of a project that complies with the Secretary’s Standards will generally be considered mitigated to less-than-significant levels under CEQA, and the project sponsors are advised to tailor their planning accordingly.

⁵³ 36 C.F.R. § 800.16 (d).

Finally, the use of federal funds may subject site planning for Alma College to review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Once the funding sources for the project are determined, the project sponsor should seek further information regarding the specific application of Section 106, which requires consultation with the SHPO in order to delineate an area of potential effects, identify historic resources, and assess and resolve adverse impacts.

VIII. RECOMMENDED TREATMENT OF ALMA COLLEGE

IX. CONCLUSION

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