

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1325 Arch Street was built in 1907, commissioned as a private home to be the residence of University of California professor Albert Schneider and his wife, Mary.

Bernard Maybeck was the architect. The design commission and project came during a prolific period in Maybeck's architectural career, and is the largest of his "chalet style" designs to be constructed. The house has been frequently cited, described, and praised in scholarly and popular books on Bernard Maybeck's work, and Berkeley / Bay Area architecture in general.

Since construction, the house has been expanded to the rear and has undergone a number of repairs and renovations, but it is remarkably intact and expressive of its original design vision, both inside and out.

The house sits on a block of residences primarily constructed between 1905 and 1914 including homes by several of the Bay Area's notable architects. The immediate environs represent one of the most intact groupings of early "brown shingle" homes remaining in the city.

In the past 114 years the house has been home to numerous families / households, and a number of individual residents. One household—the Kroebers—owned and used it as a residence for more than 50 of those years.

At least four notable individuals in national history—anthropologist **Alfred Kroeber**, author **Theodora Kroeber**, novelist and essayist **Ursula LeGuin**, and bacteriologist and criminologist **Albert Schneider**—lived at the house. One individual important in State of California history—**Clarence Haring**—lived at the house, although his tenure appears brief and was not during a period when he did his most notable work as a University of California dean.

The house has been home to at least three University of California faculty members, two of whom were founding Chairs or Deans of their academic departments / divisions.

It is worthwhile to also note, as described in the Introduction, that research for this application has found one error in previous accounts and has filled in one historical gap.

For decades descriptions of the house have referred to Professor Albert Schneider, the original owner, as a professor of classics at the University of California. This error may have come from some recollections offered by Theodora Kroeber. She mentions Schneider as a classics professor, but she was unlikely to have had first-hand knowledge of him, since he was living in Portland when the house was purchased by the Kroebers, and died soon after. The Kroebers bought the house not from Schneider but a subsequent owner.

Whatever its source, this “fact” about Schneider’s academic discipline has been repeated several times in stories of the house and in books about the work of Bernard Maybeck. However, Professor Schneider was not a classics scholar but, rather, a trained medical doctor and researcher who taught pharmacy and related subjects in the “Affiliated Colleges” that later became the University of California, San Francisco.

As noted above in the Introduction, the Schneiders built the house, but they then sold it to a previously mysterious second owner, who eventually sold it to the Kroebers. The identity of that second owner has been unknown, as least in published literature regarding 1325 Arch. As with the Schneider story, the story to date is based on an account of Theodora Kroeber who said that the second owner, a UC professor, had remodeled the house extensively to live in and then, reportedly because of a “pending divorce” and a research fellowship in Sweden, put the house on the market. Theodora Kroeber wrote that she never knew the name of that owner, and that’s where matters have stood since the early 1960s when modern-era scholars first began to write accounts of the Schneider House as an architectural masterpiece.

Research for this application has identified the second owner or, at least, the second set of residents who appear to include the owner, filling in an important gap in the chronology of the house. That information is included in the “History” section of this application. *(Below, a 2020 illustration of the street frontage of 1325 Arch for a real estate advertisement. <https://www.maybeckarchitecture.com/>, accessed June, 2021)*



QUESTION #14: ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The house is a two story over basement wood frame, wood clad, building, on a concrete foundation. Because of the very steep slope of the land, the front elevation rises three stories, including basement, above ground level, while the rear, 1930s, addition to the house is visually less than two stories tall at the easternmost, uphill, part of the lot.

The primary construction material was old-growth redwood used for structural framing, exterior siding (horizontal, and vertical board and batten), balconies, architectural details, windows and some doors, roof timbers, and interior siding and trim.

It is a freestanding structure on a steeply sloped lot. The original house contained three bedrooms, one bathroom, a large living room, a formal dining room, and a kitchen and laundry room, as well as an unimproved basement accessible only from its own exterior door. The house has since been modified internally, primarily on the upper, bedroom, floor, had a two story rear addition designed in compatible character, experienced kitchen remodels, seen one of its four original balconies enclosed and roofed as a sleeping porch / sun porch, and had the basement connected to the remainder of the house by an interior staircase and extensively improved to add livable space.

The following description of the exterior begins on the west side of the house and proceeds, counter-clockwise, by elevation around the original house, concluding with a description of the rear addition and the grounds / gardens.

This description is present day. It includes material on the original character of the house, but many of the details of renovations are presented in a later section of this Application.

The interior of the house is noted, but not extensively described, in this document. The house has been profiled many times in architectural publications with photographs and descriptions of the interior, and the interior features of privately owned properties are not subject to review / oversight by the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

WEST ELEVATION

This is the primary elevation as seen from the street below, and also the tallest on the house. The elevation is about 26 feet wide. There are three visible levels. The lower level (basement) is full height on this elevation. Four large, diagonal, wooden brackets support the projecting balcony above. Each bracket is attached to a square wooden column that is slightly expressed on the exterior, dividing the facade at this level into four wall sections, each clad in horizontal board siding. Originally, the far right hand bay (at the southwest corner of the building), was shown on the original plans to contain a Dutch door to the basement (there is some uncertainty, however, whether this door was ever built, or whether a door on the north elevation served as the exterior entrance to the basement.) The other three bays had no openings.



(At left, west elevation showing upper two floors and roof form.

Photo S. Finacom. 2021)

Remodels inserted a double casement window into the far left (north) bay, and paired French doors to the south (right) each with four divided lites (two above two), the mullions forming a cross-form on the door. Above the French doors is a Craftsman style cylindrical contemporary hanging light

fixture. The site of the presumed Dutch door at the southwest corner now holds another casement window.

The main (first) floor above is, like the basement level, clad in horizontal board siding. The columns expressed on the level below continue at this level, up to a water table at the top of the floor. The elevation originally contained from left (north) to right (south), a horizontal / rectangular window, placed approximately four feet above floor level, a central placement of French doors bearing the same pattern as those on the level below, and a vertical / rectangular casement window. The French doors and the casement window open onto a west facing balcony projecting from the building and upheld by the four brackets below.

The ends of the projecting timbers on which the balcony rests are covered with metal (possibly copper) caps beveled in a pyramidal form at the end; the timbers slightly project beyond the joists supporting the balcony. The balcony railing is composed of square, vertical posts capped by slightly wider rectangular boards. They are infilled with vertical pickets, planks scroll sawn in a pattern of abstract butterfly forms and classical balusters. The butterflies are located only at the extreme ends of the balcony, two at the



(At left, detail of basement level with newer French doors. Photo S. Finacom, 2021)

south and two at the north. The balcony “turns the corner” of the building on the southwest and extends onto the south facade. The balcony is lit by contemporary metal fixtures, with downward facing hoods. The balcony railing has a board to which the balusters below are attached; then there is a narrow gap, and a wider railing cap mounted above that. Since parts of the balcony are known to have been reconstructed after deterioration / storm damage, it is likely that the top board was added during a

reconstruction to raise the overall height of the balcony, perhaps to comply with modern codes, or simply to accommodate the generally taller height of humans today. Either way, it was done in a manner sympathetic to the original design of the house.

The upper (second) floor on this elevation extends only about 2/3rds of the width of the facade, beneath a wide, westward facing, gable. On this level the horizontal board siding is replaced with vertical boards and battens. The wall below the gable is symmetrically divided by a vertical post that runs to the eave. North of the post there is a French door, and a vertical casement window; south of the post are two vertical casement windows. The gable is fronted by a projecting balcony, upheld by three

(At right, southwest corner of house showing upper two floors, balconies, and corner roof form. Photo S. Finacom, 2021.)

brackets. The form and decoration of the balcony matches that on the level below, and includes the same butterfly and classical baluster cutout motifs. There are 22 balusters and four butterflies * (the latter formed from six boards, total) on the long west side of the balcony, and two butterflies and two and a half balusters on each of the short north and south ends.

A wide gable roof extends over the southwest corner of the building, projecting over the southern portion of the third floor balcony.

** the author has used, for the purposes of this application, the term “butterfly” refer to the scroll sawn abstract motif present near the ends of the balcony railings. In some publications this is called a “butterfly” form. In other cases it’s referred to as an abstract “Swiss apple” form. It could, indeed, be taken to resemble either. Research did not identify whether Maybeck identified it one way or the other. The reader can choose their own preferred term.*



Summary of changes to the west elevation:
-insertion of French doors and window at basement / ground level.
- Partial reconstruction of balcony.

(At left, detail of lower balcony, southwest corner of house. Note ‘butterfly’ cutouts, classical balustrade form, and metal caps over balcony supports, lower left. Photo S. Finacom, 2021.)



(Above. Top floor of west facade, top floor balcony under gable. Note metal caps on ends of roof supports, Venturi form chimney top at left, and canted southwest corner roof form at right. Below, detail of southwest roof corner. At left. View of basement level of west elevation, looking southeast towards entry path. New patio outside basement in foreground. (Photo S. Finacom, 2021.)



(At right. South elevation, looking west. Vestibule bay is at right. Basement windows at bottom are modifications of original openings, not original. Photo S. Finacom 2021.)

SOUTH ELEVATION

Like the west facade this elevation contains three levels, but the basement level disappears into the rising slope of the hillside, placing the main / first floor close to ground level at the rear corner of the house. The original main house on this elevation is about 36 feet wide in the portion above ground.

The siding of the basement level is vertical board and batten, rough sawn. There are now three square windows, single lites, in a band slightly above the concrete foundation. Because of the rising grade, from the inside of the basement space these are essentially transom windows.



The original drawings show two windows in this location, slightly divided by a section of wall. Further east on the wall there is a horizontal, single-lite, window with obscure glass. This appears to be an addition, since the original working drawings show only a small opening in this area, perhaps a ventilation grate or hatch.

The second (main) level of the elevation, above, has a projecting bay that contains the entry vestibule of the house. The front door is on the eastern end of this bay, so someone entering the house steps forward into a rectangular vestibule, then turns right into the central hall facing the staircase. The exterior balcony described on the west elevation extends around to this side, forming a “L” shape that ends where it meets the projecting bay. There are two French doors exiting the living room onto this balcony, flanking a vertical wooden column. They appear on the original plans but were replaced



(At left. View of south wall, showing lower balcony and how it dead-ends into vestibule wall; one of the French doors to balcony from living room; change in siding from horizontal boards to vertical boards and battens at main level. Photo S. Finacom, 2021.)

in kind in recent decades. Like the doors on the west elevation from the living room, they have four divided lites, 2 over 2, with the mullions forming a cross shape.

The wall of this level facing the balcony is clad in horizontal boards. The projecting bay, in contrast, is clad in vertical boards and battens so it stands out from the main plane of the house wall not only physically but stylistically. Offset to the left (west) of the south wall of the bay there is a vertical fixed window, with a geometric pattern of leaded glass forming diamonds, squares, and

lozenges. The glass is primarily clear, but the perimeter contains small, square, blue glass inserts and some portions of opaque glass. The window is framed on the exterior with a whimsical wooden cutout form. The wooden cutout is a replica of the original and the sawn pattern is slightly different and somewhat simplified from the original. The leaded glass window is not explicitly shown on Maybeck's original drawings, but is mentioned by Mark Wilson, who visited the house in the early 1970s and was given a tour by Theodora Kroeber.

The east end of the bay contains the main entry door to the house, sheltered beneath the overhang of the second floor balcony, now an enclosed sun porch. The front porch is reached by four wooden steps, flanked by a solid cheek wall built of wood, with a wide wooden cap, on the left (south) side. There are no railings at present, and none shown in the original plans. The steps are painted gray, possibly with an elastomeric paint or coating, terminating in a small exterior landing. At the end of the landing is a wooden Dutch door, unpainted, with the upper section containing a single glass pane and a metal door knob. There is a small, contemporary, doorbell to the left of the door, and a light fixture, possibly contemporary, composed of two downward facing metal



(At left. 1970s photograph of south facade, showing deteriorated horizontal board siding at first floor level, original French doors from living room to balcony at left, and original scroll-sawn wooden surround for vestibule window, at right. Source: Freudenheim.)

Below, left. Detail of vestibule window today. Surround has been replaced and the side and top details are slightly modified / simplified from the original. (Photo S. Finacom, 2021.)

cones one inserted into the other, above the porch. At porch level, to the immediate right of the door, are two casement windows with a wide, sloping, sill, in the main wall of the house. This wall resumes the horizontal board sheathing that was interrupted by the projecting vestibule bay.

On the upper (second) level of the south elevation, the projecting one story bay was originally topped by a wide balcony / porch that extended over the front porch and the projecting vestibule bay below. An early photograph shows a cloth awning over this porch. The open air porch has since been enclosed and forms a sunroom, although the cutout balusters—again in the butterfly and classical baluster pattern—remain on the exterior, below windows and, backed by board siding, form essentially a raised relief pattern on what is now part of an exterior wall.

The original working drawings show this balcony was



accessed by four French doors, in two pairs, and faced with board and batten siding, like the second level on the west elevation. Each pair of doors open from a bedroom. To the left (west) of the balcony (now sunroom) there is a small window, with an even smaller square window under the eaves further to the left (west).

This level of the elevation is under a wide asymmetrical gable, twice as long on the west as on the east, and descending on the west to form the prominent projecting roof at the southwest corner of the building.

Summary of changes to the south elevation:

- two windows at basement level converted / expanded to a band of three windows;
- One (likely) ventilation space at basement level enlarged for horizontal bathroom window;
- Second floor open air porch enclosed, with windows and a sloped, projecting, roof in the same style as the original house;
- Original two French doors from living room to south balcony replaced in kind;
- Portions (or all) of lower balcony rebuilt;
- Some wood elements replaced, including portions of board siding and scroll sawn surround on vestibule window.



(Above, left and right. Two views of the east end of the sunroom porch and south wall of the house, above the main entry porch / door. Photos S. Finacom, 2021)



*(At left. Looking west towards the the house and the main entry. Path from street approaches on the left. Four wooden steps with low cheek wall on outer side, rising to small porch which is beneath overhang of sunporch above. Windows to dining room facing porch at right. Front door at center. At right, portion of replacement arbor / pergola over dining room terrace. The sun porch on the second floor was originally an open air balcony under awning, later enclosed. Balcony always formed “roof” over front porch. **Below**, front door of house with Dutch Door configuration, dining room windows at right.*

Photos S. Finacom, 2021)

EAST ELEVATION OF ORIGINAL HOUSE

The east facade has been altered by construction of the later (1930s) wing extending to the east into the hillside. This is the most altered facade of the original house because of the 1930s addition but the general character of the original is still present where visible.

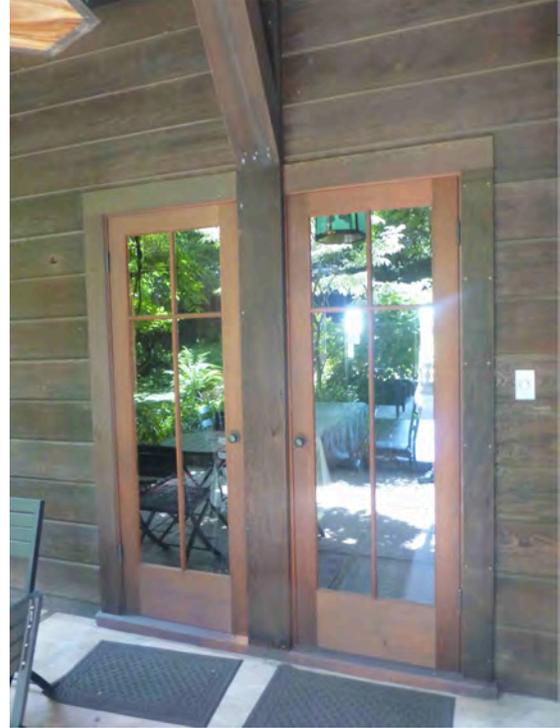
On the east the basement level is so far sunk into the hillside it is not visible. On the main level there were, and are, two French doors opening from the dining room to the exterior, in the same two-over-two divided lite pattern with the mullions forming a cross. The doors open at grade onto a concrete terrace. The siding at this level is formed of horizontal boards. To the north (right) of the dining room



the kitchen originally projected a short distance—a little over eight feet—forming a small extension, less than ten feet wide, clad in vertical boards and battens, on the northeast corner of the house. The kitchen extension contained a small window on the south (left) and a back door on the right (north). The design of the back door is not indicated on the original plans, but it was covered on the exterior by a screen door divided into upper and lower panels.



(Above: view of the eastern elevation, with dining room at center bottom, second floor at the top center, and 1930s addition to house at the right. The kitchen is at the lower level, in the angle where the addition meets the original house. The front door of the original house faces this way but is out of sight behind the foliage at the lower left of the image. Photo S. Finacom, 2021)



(Above, right. Doors from dining room onto terrace, under pergola / arbor.

Above left. South end of terrace under pergola / arbor and second floor balcony. The front porch of the house is just out of sight around the corner of the wall.

At right. A view of the house overhang from the dining terrace. One can see the way the second floor cantilevered out from the first floor, then the new pergola / arbor structure at left, topped by second floor balcony. Photos S. Finacom, 2021).



On the upper level, atop the kitchen extension, there was deck accessed by a glass door from what was then the only bathroom, located in the northeast corner of the second floor. This deck was later enclosed for a maid's room, which was later removed or subsumed into the larger two story addition. The original deck atop the kitchen did not appear to have had the decorative scroll sawn balusters of the other balconies on the other three facades. The second floor exterior above the dining room projects slightly over the first floor level and the front steps, and has a triangular bracket at the south east corner. This corner of the second floor contained a corner bedroom with three casement windows overlooking, to the east, the terrace

below, and to the right (north) on the east elevation a small 2 x 3 window to light a bedroom closet, plus another small window to light the bathroom, adjacent to the glass door to the deck.

The ground level terrace in the exterior angle of the dining room and kitchen is now overhung by a pergola of heavy timbers, supporting both a wisteria vine and a second floor balcony. The pergola is not original but is designed in the general character of the original house, and includes an arrangement of small, square, wooden poles grouped in threes that form the “ceiling” of the open air terrace below. Two large, hexagonal, metal and colored glass lamps hang on chains from the pergola, over the terrace; the six vertical glass panels have a sea-green color. These fixtures are not original, but were apparently added by Ken Rasmussen after 2012.

Summary of changes to the east elevation:

- Original rear of kitchen / laundry room altered and incorporated into 1930s eastern addition to house to form a two story wing, rather than a one room projection;
- Top deck (on top of original laundry room) removed;
- Pergola / arbor over patio terrace rebuilt;
- One window of southeast upstairs bedroom converted to door, to access new balcony / deck built on top of pergola / arbor.

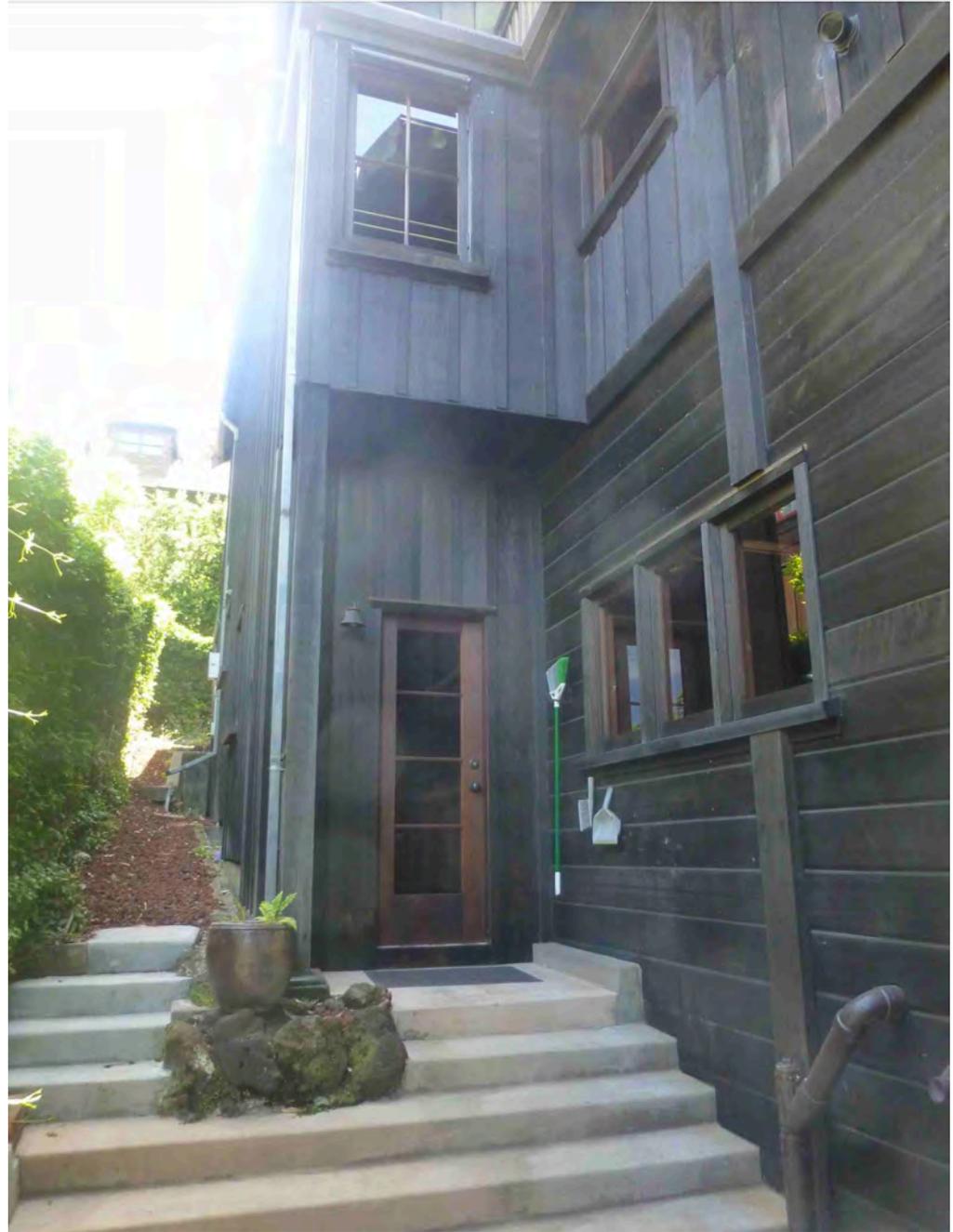
NORTH ELEVATION OF ORIGINAL HOUSE

The north elevation originally faced a vacant lot, Lot #29 on the block subdivision. Like the south elevation, the grade steeply ascends here so the basement level recedes into the hillside the further east one goes. Like the other elevations, the basement and first / main floor levels are generally covered in horizontal board siding, while the second / top floor has boards and battens.

The north elevation includes an exterior chimney and a projecting bay that encloses the staircase landing. A small “Juliet” balcony further projects from the bay at the level of the landing. The balcony also has the “butterfly” cutout and classical baluster motif.

It is unclear whether the top of the chimney has been modified. Maybeck’s original drawings for the house show a Venturi cap on the chimney, with two square cutout gaps on each side in the masonry or terra cotta top. Venturi caps were a feature Maybeck often incorporated in houses of his design in this era. However, the current chimney shows only one square cutout on each side, and it does not fully penetrate the chimney to facilitate the air exchange function but, rather, serves as an external decorative motif. There is also a metal top to the chimney that does not appear old enough to be original. Was the chimney top rebuilt at some point? And was it built to Maybeck’s original design, in the working drawings, or initially constructed (and/or later reconstructed) in a modified form? Research to date has not provided an answer.

(At right, the rear addition of the house as seen from the north, looking east. The original kitchen area and second floor of the main house are to the right; the addition projects to the left. Photo S. Finacom, 2021)





(At left, looking west, along the north wall of the original house, showing the one and a half story board and batten bay that contains the stairwell. The “Juliet” balcony is on the right, and there is a small hipped roof over the projecting bay. Photo S. Finacom, 2021.)



(Above, upper exterior wall and roof detail of north elevation of main house. Note the wide eaves, brackets, board and batten on upper floor, horizontal board siding on main floor, and wooden “posts” expressed on the exterior. This is looking southwest, towards the upper portion of the second floor, with the stairwell bay at right. Photo S. Finacom, 2021)



(Right, chimney for main living room fireplace looking up from ground level. Photo S. Finacom, 2021.)

REAR WING (1930s ADDITION, LATER MODIFIED)

As noted in the description of the eastern facade of the original house, there was a small main level projection of the kitchen, with a simple deck above accessed from the second floor bathroom. In the 1920s the deck was “glassed in” to create a maid’s room. When the Kroebers moved in they quickly added a 10 x twelve foot office for Alfred Kroeber behind the kitchen.

In the following decade when the house was further extended to the east, kitchen level, office, and upper level maid’s room were further modified and incorporated into a much more extensive two story wing. On the main floor the kitchen became longer to the east. On the upper floor the corner bathroom was reconfigured to allow for a hallway to reach what are now two bedrooms in the addition The easternmost bedroom has an exterior door that accesses an open air staircase that descends to the ground.



(Above, dining terrace looking northwest from garden. At left, front door of house. At center, dining room and pergola. At right, kitchen. Photo S. Finacom, 2021.)

(At right, the east end of the 1930s addition, looking north from the garden. The lower windows at right open to Alfred Kroeber's second home office. Note the horizontal board siding on the ground level, the board and batten siding on the upper floor, and the overhanging eaves with brackets, all corresponding to the character of the original house. Photo S. Finacom, 2021.)



Overall, the wing added a two story block, about 16 feet wide and about 20 feet deep, extending eastward from the extreme north east corner of the house and converting what had been a sloped rear garden across the entire lot into a smaller garden space in the angle of the building.

The addition / wing was constructed with board and batten siding and a hipped roof and open eaves to reflect the main house. Theodora Kroeber was of the opinion that the roof form and other elements did not match the original house well. She wrote decades later *"it appears ludicrous now at this distance not to have had Maybeck (do the design). We could by no means have afforded him...It is forever regrettable that the roof slopes and overhang were not repeated"*. But in general, to today's observer, the wing is compatible with the original structure, and is appropriately deferential and secondary to the main building to which it is attached. Placement of the addition in the northeast corner of the lot also preserved the southeast garden area, and the relationship of downstairs dining room and upstairs bedroom to the outdoors.



(At left, east end of addition showing balcony and staircase that altered the original “Juliet” balcony in this location. Kroeber study is lower left. Photo S. Finacom, 2021.)

Drawings of the original plans for the rear addition from the 1930s show what appear to be either double-hung windows, or casement windows with one fixed horizontal mullion dividing the glass into two equal panes. Some of these windows were later replaced with aluminum frame windows, and the current windows all appear to be either wood frame casements or fixed windows. The second floor of the wing has its own east door, exiting to a small balcony / porch with

a straight run of steps descending to the garden on the south.

The wing originally included Alfred Kroeber’s study, with a separate door on the north which was put in so individuals coming for psychoanalysis could enter without going through the main house. When the two story wing was built, his study remained in the addition but was shifted further to the east and provided with its own fireplace on the north wall; the new study initially could only be reached from a door from the garden; presumably this was to provide a separate space where Kroeber could work undisturbed by activity in the house. Over the decades the interior of the two story wing was modified a number of times. At one point it contained Ursula Le Guin’s childhood bedroom. The attic of the wing was a primary place the Le Guin children played indoors.

Summary of changes to the east wing:

- Most of the windows appear to have been replaced or altered over time, with some re-located;
- an exterior door was added to the east end of the addition, along with a balcony / porch providing direct staircase access to the garden;
- the interior has been modified.

INTERIOR SUMMARY

Since privately owned home interiors are not covered by the jurisdiction of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, this section of the summary is brief, not detailed, and no interior photos are included. Descriptions are of present day configurations.

The lower level of the house, originally the basement, contains a large room, variously described as a “media room” or a “guest suite” with its own exterior entrance to a west facing patio, and an interior staircase to the main floor. This room has its own bath. The rear of the level, built into the hillside, has a basement area and mechanical spaces.

The main / first floor has the main entry on the south, midway on the south facade. The vestibule entry turns right into an open space facing the principal staircase. On the left is the large living room—about 26 feet long and 13-16 feet wide— with French doors and windows opening to the west and to the south, connecting to the “L” shaped balcony that wraps the southwest corner of the house at this level. A monumental fireplace is on the north end of the room, made of clinker brick, inset slightly behind the adjacent wood paneling. A large wooden cabinet or cupboard, original to the location, with metal strap hinges hangs above the fireplace.

Opposite the living room, across the entry hall and in the southeast corner of the floor is a dining room, about 14 x 14 with its own fireplace and a door to the kitchen; it has French doors opening to a terrace. In the northeast corner of the main floor is a rectangular kitchen, extensively remodeled, and accessed from the dining room. There are doors from the kitchen area both to the terrace on the south and a service door to the north. The kitchen extends in a wing to the east, where the rear annex contains a half bath, a bedroom, and a pantry space.

The main staircase ascends in a south facing “U” from the main floor to the second / upper floor. The stairwell is open to both below and above, and is partially contained in a projecting bay to the north. Upon reaching the second floor—facing south—the staircase faces a large open space some 16 x 22 feet. To the right, at the front (west) end of the floor is the master bedroom with a closet under the eaves, and its own bath. To the south is a sun room, originally an open-air sleeping porch, now enclosed. To the north is a bathroom and laundry area. Extending to the east, as a second floor to the addition, are two bedrooms divided by a narrow staircase to the attic level. The addition has an attic, unfinished.

Many Maybeck houses had some furnishings designed or specified by the architect. No attempt has been made for this Application to determine what was done for the Schneider House in this regard, but a few known items may be mentioned.

In many cases with Maybeck houses, as with Frank Lloyd Wright and Greene and Greene furniture designs, purpose built furnishings have taken on their own value and, as a result, have been dispersed beyond the house and “collected” by museums and individuals.

Ursula Le Guin mentioned in her 2007 essay about growing up in the house that the furnishings of the Kroeber family were haphazard, but *“the dining table was one of our few elegant pieces, because it had been built with and for the house—a single broad redwood board, rather low as tables go, that sat eight comfortably and ten with a squeeze. It was somewhat battered, since redwood is soft and scars easily, but if you beeswaxed it diligently, it got a fine, deep glow, like chestnut horse. There were cabinets built in corners here and there, in good Arts and Crafts style, some with paned glass fronts; and a seat like a window seat ran along the inner living-room wall, at right angles to the huge firebrick hearth and chimney.”* (Le Guin, pages 54-55).

Purpose-built furniture of Maybeck’s design periodically appear in auctions, sales, and collections. There is a “sidechair for the Schneider House”, made of oak, in the collections of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. <https://art.famsf.org/bernard-maybeck/sidechair-schneider-house-semper-virens-berkeley-california-201540>

GROUNDS / GARDENS

The Schneider house was built on a rectangular plot of land purchased by the Schneiders in 1906. At some point the Schneiders, or subsequent owners, appear to have also acquired a similarly sized lot to the north. The lot to the north was not part of the original purchase, and on Sanborn maps appears to have originally been a separate parcel (Lot #29). The Block Book at BAHA shows both Lot #29 and Lot #28, to the north of it, owned by a “*Henry P. Whiting*” (the exact spelling is unclear) at the same time Lot #30 to the south was owned by Mary Schneider. Whiting—or someone after him—built a large house on Lot #28, leaving Lot #29 as vacant between the two houses. The second large house has the address of 1317 Arch Street today.

Early Sanborn maps show Lot 28 and Lot 29 combined in one large parcel with the address of 1317, with no property line between the two original lots. However, at some point an owner of 1325 Arch, perhaps the Kroebers, acquired lot #28. It may be that lots #28 and #29 were never legally combined into one parcel.

This area of Lot #28 functioned as part of the 1325 Arch garden until, about 1939, the Kroebers built two smaller houses (#1321 and #1323 Arch) designed by Theodore Osmundson on Lot #29, which considerably reduced the outdoor space of 1325 to areas east, south, and west of the original house.



(Above, overall view of street frontage of property showing garage at lower left (in northwest corner of property), and rise of garden levels to house. The larger trees at the upper right are the liquid ambers mentioned by Theodora Kroeber in her description of the garden. Photo S. Finacom, 2021.)

These separate houses now have separate owners, although the Kroebers seemed to have used them as rentals. Their history has not been researched for this Application, nor has the early ownership history of Lot #29 been researched.

The presumption at this point is that the formal garden designed by John McLaren for 1325 Arch was confined to the single lot (Lot #30) and Lot #29 to the north was informally gardened along with the formal McLaren grounds around the house. (Some of Ursula Le Guin's recollections could be construed to imply that some of the area of Lot #28 to the north could have been part of the McLaren garden design, but since she was ten years old or younger when the houses were built to the north, her impressions were those of a child with a large contiguous planted space around her house to play in, not someone with detailed understanding at the time of the property history and design.)

There is another land parcel oddity to the property that may be mentioned here.



(Above, southeast, uphill, corner of garden. The property line follows the fences at left at right. At upper center there is the west wall of the small “1325 1/2 Arch” structure built on an adjacent property and owned separately. This is likely the building that the neighbors to the south offered to sell to the Kroeber’s as an office in the 1930s; the Kroebers chose instead to build the two story addition to the main house. Photo S. Finacom, 2021.)

Adjacent to the upper, southeast, corner of the 1325 Arch property there is a small structure, essentially a one room studio or cottage with board and batten siding on the downhill side, built on the property line, overlooking the 1325 Arch garden. This is currently part of the adjacent property to the south, 1329 Arch Street.

Checking property maps, this can be identified as, originally, a little extension of one of the lots on Bay View Place, to the east uphill of 1325 Arch. The small land area is just 20 feet wide and 30 feet deep, and extends west and downhill from its larger lot like a miniature Oklahoma panhandle.

On early maps / plans it is shown as unbuilt. However, on a 1920s Sanborn map it already has a one room structure and, curiously, is completely enclosed within a rectangle of property lines separating it from the adjacent parcels and, additionally, a street address of 1325 1/2 which seemingly associates it with the Kroeber property.

In her historical notes about 1325 Arch Theodora Kroeber wrote that in “*depths of Depression...Laura Adams Armer, next door, offered to sell the studio at the back for \$1,000. Kroeber was about to take it but got a bid from a Welch (sp) carpenter to put on the addition for \$1,500.*” She then goes on to describe the addition to the main house.

Laura Adams Armer has not been researched, but the block book at BAHA shows a handwritten notation of a “Sydney Armer” owning the lot to the south of the Kroebers. On present day property maps show the corner of land as part of the property of 1329 Arch Street, south of 1325.

So we can speculate that the Armers who lived to the south of the Schneiders acquired the tiny little rectangle of land in the middle of the block with no street frontage and perhaps built the little freestanding studio room there sometime in the 1920s. When the Kroebers needed more indoor space they considered buying the studio—which had one wall adjoining their garden, and could have easily been connected to their property—but instead decided to build the addition to their own house.



(Above, eastern end of the garden, showing flagstone terrace and stone walls south of the house addition, at left. Photo S. Finacom, 2021.)

In addition to the removal of the northern portion of the gardened area, the eastern portion was reduced by the construction of the addition to the house in the 1930s that extends along the north property line nearly to the east property line.

There was at some point in the 1980s an extant copy of the original garden plan by McLaren since it is referenced in the unpublished account of the history of the house compiled for Lisa Stadelhofer in 1985 (the writer notes, *“The plan of the garden still exists, but we have not been able to acquire a copy.”* No archival source for that plan is noted, however.)

The following quotations are from that unpublished account.

“The grounds were laid out in 1906 by John McLaren...There was a retaining wall along the sidewalk, but only to the south of the entrance. Then there were stone steps about where the present ones are, and red gravel paths. Both the walls and the steps were built without concrete. The west slope, down to the street, was planted with prostrate juniper, and also with scotch broom, plum trees, and acacia trees. At the north west corner of the house there was a clump of three redwood trees, and a Cecil Bruner (sic) rose was planted to climb up the south balcony. The path up to the house was loose red gravel, and on either side there were bushes and trees, elderberry, laurel, camphor, Eugenia, Japanese plum, and pyracantha. There was ivy against the south side of the house and a wisteria growing over the arbor outside the dining room.

Behind the house, the garden was larger than now, since the new part of the house was not built. There was no terracing: the garden followed the natural slope of the hill. In the center, there was a fountain, and around that bulbs, and around that a circle of rose bushes. Around the edges of the property there were no fences, but there were hedges all around. On the north side of the house there was a Virginia creeper growing up the north balcony, and berry bushes planted against the house.”

“Theodora (Kroeber) says, ‘It was obvious McLaren meant the fast growing and ‘lesser’ planting to be removed as the slower-growing planting took hold. In fact, nothing was taken out, and much added. The sloping rose garden required constant maintenance and the bulbs rolled with the rains, to come up the years after, always in new and surprising places.’ The Kroebers pruned the overgrown garden and removed plants. They also terraced the back garden. I don’t know why the fountain was removed. I have a plan for the concrete steps and walkway, but unfortunately the plan is not dated. It is probably from the 50s. It shows that the north half of the retaining wall along the street, the concrete steps, and the concrete path were all put in at this time. Also, the balcony at the back, with its steps, was put in, as well as the ‘sidewalk going nowhere’. The plan suggests that there was originally a concrete path across the lawn, but if so this was later remove. The drainage system, and the retaining wall at the back of the house, were also put in at this time. The concrete work outside the kitchen door may also have been done about this time.

During the 60s, many of the low rock walls were built, and the fence was put around the house and the two houses to the north, which the Kroeber's also owned. The step railings were installed. Then in the 70s John Quinn added extensive new planting, and put in the garden lighting and the electric fountain. The railing was built around the garden roof. He first built, and then took out, a high fence screening off the view of the house to the south. The front gate was also added during the 70s, as a picture of the house, dated 1969, shows no gate.

Lisa (Stadelhofer) put in a grapestake fence along the north property line, so the lot is now completely fenced, and the north side of the house is an enclosed dog run. She has done extensive planting, including the street trees, and she put in the railroad-tie wall along the south edge of the lawn."

(At right, grapestake fence along north property line. Either the original installed by Lisa Stadelhofer, or a replacement, in kind. Photo S. Finacom, 2021).



Theodora Kroeber wrote herself sometime in the "mid to late 70s": "What remains of McLaren's garden: The rosebush - Cecil Brunner (sic) on south balcony; the club of three redwoods, north-west corner. Many times cut and pruned. The west most one cut down. Present tree its fruitful daughter. Juniper on front slope.

It was more than a year after we moved in that, prowling one day amongst the broom - then well over my head - and the tangle of the thorny berry bushes and the trees then overhanging the sidewalk, I caught a glimpse of juniper. An hour's hard cutting opened up a space sufficient to reveal that under the shrubbery some of the juniper had indeed survived and awaited only removal of all else growing there.

*Kroeber garden changes (parenthesis in original)
(Unhappy) covering of stone steps when the rocks began to be a serious hazard, like falling teeth.
(Unhappy) replacement of gravel. Loose gravel on a slope is really unmanageable.
(Dream) to replace steps with stone or redwood.*

Building of garage. Cars not allowed then to remain overnight on street. Reinforced concrete. Cost then \$600 (!).

An aunt of mine and I ventured on the first terracing. The rear east garden wall is evidence of our industry if not of our skill. We got some family help with the 'plazita' wall and brought into being the first level space in the garden.

Terraces began to grow in the fifties. And replacement of the roses from the circle to the upper rear terrace. And more pruning. But it remained a children's play garden and one to be left on its own each summer.

Present garden, terraces and pruning-planting is John Quinn's own. And he it is who wrapped the garden as a single entity around the three houses with are now one property and which we called 'The Compound'."

Later, in her memoir, Alfred Kroeber: A Personal Configuration, Theodora added these comments about the garden:

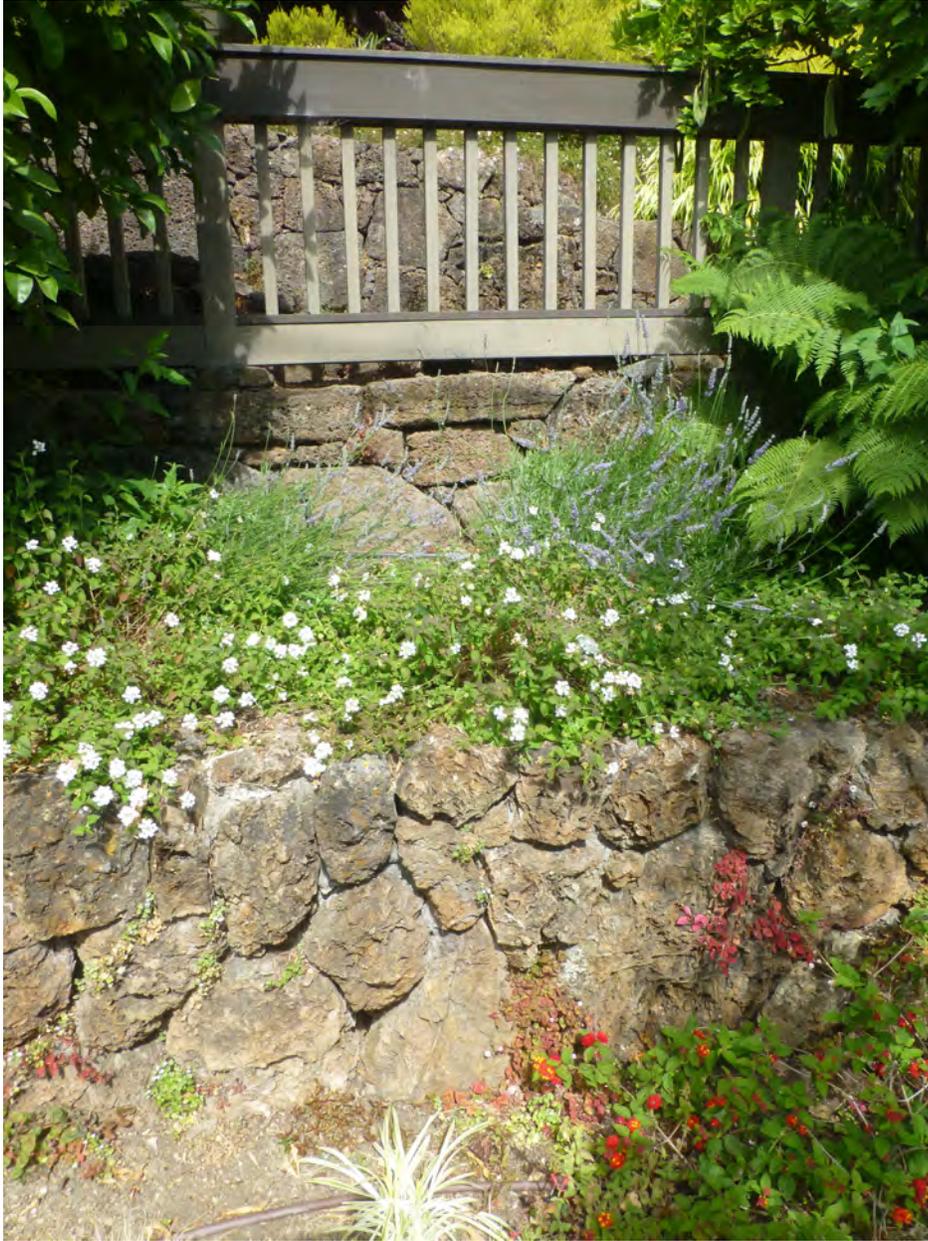
"John McLaren, the man who made Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, planted the original garden of which little remains today except the low-growing Sierra juniper on the front slope and the clump of redwood trees which partly screens the house from the street." (Kroeber, Configuration, page 136)

She also wrote *"in (1953) we renovated and restored house and gardens..."* (page 211) This was after the house had been rented while the Kroebers were on an extended sabbatical in New York.

She also included this description in the same memoir of her husband. *"It is autumn as I write, the season Kroeber cared for least. I am sitting in his garden which looks much as it looked when he left it for the last time. It is a spring garden, not a fall one. Unpruned rose bushes put out long thorn branches and a willow tree weeps to the ground across the entrance to the front door. Yet there is order in the line of the dry-rock walls, in the close-cropped grass plot, in the camphor strawberry and liquid amber trees pruned to be uncrowded in the small space. Roses, fuchsias, dahlias, chrysanthemums, and the night-opening tobacco are in full late bloom. In the borders are pansies, lobelias, and begonias along with herbs and succulents. From the plaza the prospect is of distant hills and city, bay, and boats—two dimensional and Japaneseque in the milky-golden haze... Without sentimentality his garden can be construed as a metaphor for Kroeber's ending years; its tools which are at hand, its weeds which are not out of hand but are present, its intimacy, its window on the outside world, its variety, its unfinished pattern still on the loom of imagination and innovation. Here it was Kroeber read and wrote and gardened whenever we were at home..."* (Kroeber, Configuration, page 192)



(At right. Entry gate from the street. Stone columns and rhyolite stone walls are from the Period of Significance. Gate and arbor above it are more recent additions, as are concrete stairs. Photo S. Finacom, 2021)



The garden contains a variety of stone walls. The oldest stones along the sidewalk, south of the entry gate, appear to be of Berkeley Rhyolite, a native volcanic stone picked up on Berkeley hillsides in weathered condition in the 19th and early 20th centuries and used throughout the eastern portion of the city to construct rustic garden walls that were seen as especially compatible with Arts and Crafts and Berkeley brown shingle houses. The stone walls to the steps ascending to the main door of the house are from early in the history of the house, but other areas of stone walls were apparently added in later periods.

The picture above shows an early, most likely Berkeley Rhyolite, stone wall at the sidewalk edge, with a planter bed above and a newer stone wall, topped by a newer fence, above that. Beyond the fence is yet another section of stone wall. Photo S. Finacom, 2021.)

THE GARAGE

The one car garage at the lower northwest corner of the property was added to the grounds in 1933, so is from the Period of Significance, but has been altered in subsequent decades. The wood siding and garage door itself are not significant. No early photographs of the garage have been found, so it is not known whether there was originally a garage door or whether, as was sometimes the case in Berkeley, a roofed structure was built into the hillside but left open to the street.

(Photo at right, S. Finacom 2021.)

