

A BRIEF EARLY HISTORY OF THE WOMEN'S FACULTY CLUB



The Women's Faculty Club is the only women's faculty club in the nation with its own building. It was conceived and formed through the initiative of Dean Lucy Ward Stebbins, the second Dean of Women on the Berkeley campus. In the fall of 1919 Dean Stebbins circulated an invitation to all women faculty to attend a small organizing meeting to discuss forming a group where "we might know all our colleagues better and have more opportunities to discuss our common interests." This meeting was held at the Cloyne Court apartment of Dr. Jessica Peixotto, first female full professor at Berkeley.

At the time women were not allowed into the Men's Faculty Club and the women members of the faculty felt the need "for a place of their own, as a refuge from the bustle and confusion on the campus." After the first meeting the group held an organizing dinner and invited seventy-six women who were either faculty, worked in the University Library or held positions of administrative responsibility. No minutes were taken of this first dinner meeting but the seeds for the club had been planted. By December of 1919 a constitution and by-laws had been adopted and a seven member Board of Directors elected. Dean Stebbins was elected the first President and the women began work on a financial plan to build a permanent club house.

The women met for meetings and tea in a variety of locations and began to meet with both the representative for the Regents and the campus architect John Galen Howard. Howard was selected as the architect for the building and presented a number of plans. The Finance Committee and the Executive Building Committee were jointly responsible to raise the money and sell stock.

The building was completed in 1923 and after years of hard work the women now had a permanent home.