

# The Women's Faculty Club Newsletter

University of California, Berkeley

June 2013

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As promised, I recount a brief history of the two votes held on proposals to merge the Women's and Men's Faculty Clubs. This process started in 1967 and ended in 1976. My sources are the Oral History of the WFC (primarily the contributions of Josephine Miles, Josephine Smith, and Mary Ann Johnson); documents reflecting the work of joint committees that considered the merger; and notices sent to WFC members concerning each vote.

*CAVEAT: There are current WFC members who participated in these events, and whose memory of them may differ from the accounts I have read. I would be delighted to hear from them over the summer, and happy to amend what follows.*

By the mid-1960s, the membership in both Faculty Clubs had declined and the WFC was badly in need of repair. The Men's Club also faced the problem of significant debt. The WFC Board requested assistance from Chancellor Heyns who, in 1967, appointed an Ad Hoc Committee to study the problems of both Clubs and to determine whether there could be a joint solution. It was also in 1967 that our unified corporate structure was adopted, joining the Building Committee (which owned our building) and the Club's Board of Directors!

Despite its best efforts at fundraising, by 1969 the WFC leadership was unable to raise enough money to take care of the building and believed that the Club was facing a crisis. The view of the Ad Hoc Committee, which had discussed these issues for two years, was that joint operation of the two Clubs was the only viable solution. In addition, Walter Haas was contemplating his generous offer of \$1 million to support both Clubs if they merged. At the WFC Annual Meeting in December of 1970, a Joint Operating Committee, made up of five members from each Club, was approved. Principles for the Joint Operation of the Faculty Clubs were approved by the Board of Directors in June of 1971. Combined operations were contemplated for a trial period of two years, but the experiment did not last long.

The morning after the Board's vote, according to Club Treasurer Josephine Smith, she found the Manager of the Men's Club in our Lounge, rolling up the large carpet to take it to his Club. She stopped him! But the Men's Club did – in the spirit of unification – take possession of the WFC's brand new china and its complete set of table silver. Management of the Combined Operation was vested in the Men's Club, and one-half of the WFC's dues and initiation fees paid for this service.

But joint management of the two Clubs lasted only about six months, in large part due to failures of communication, poor accounting by the Combined Operation, lack of supervision of work being done at the WFC and, in general, a "culture clash" between the two Clubs. Management reverted to the two separate entities. However, plans for a merger continued; reports were written detailing the issues to be addressed; presentations were made at annual meetings; and plans for spending the Hass gift emerged, including a spectacular glass walkway uniting the two Clubs. (Continued on page 2)

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Indeed, a Resolution in favor of merging the two Clubs into the “Berkeley Faculty Club” was approved by the WFC Board on September 15, 1976. There was strong support for the merger among the Board members. A special meeting of the membership was called to vote on the Agreement of Merger. Professor Josephine Miles was tasked with the job of summarizing the arguments made against the merger, which she published later that month. Those arguments boiled down to the failure of the prior “merger” in 1971; rejection of joint accounting, book-keeping and management procedures; and rejection of the WFC assuming any part of the Men’s Club’s liabilities. Miles concluded this document with the following:

*Some form of shared membership and cooperative campus service is suggested, without the sacrifice of the Women’s Faculty Club’s own characteristic spirit and life-style which the concept of merger entails.*

Josephine Smith, the former Treasurer, drafted another document – “A Financial Warning” – and sent it by campus mail before the special members’ meeting. (No email then!) The document focused on the long term debt held by the Men’s Club (\$178,143 according to Haskins & Sells), the potential personal liability of WFC members (through special assessment) for that debt, and the 2:1 ratio of governance in favor of the Men’s Club under the terms of the proposed merger. But in addition, Smith felt strongly about the loss of identity (and even its furnishings) that the Club would suffer.

By vote of the WFC members, the merger was defeated. Fifteen members resigned in protest, as they had threatened. According to Smith, the rest of the members “went on with new vigor.”  
I don’t think we have ever looked back.

Sincerely,



Eleanor Swift  
President  
Board of Directors

## PROGRAM AND EVENTS

### “Arts in the Afternoon” - series on John Galen Howard



(John Galen Howard –City of Learning)

Thank you to curator Miranda Hambro and the Environmental Design Library for their wonderful exhibit on John Galen Howard. The exhibit titled “John Galen Howard: Crafting Campus, Continuing Practice,” explores Howard’s work on the campus and beyond. Howard was the founder of U. C. Berkeley’s School of Architecture, campus architect from 1901 – 1922, designer of many landmark buildings and, of course, architect of our own historic Club. Hambro gave Club members and guests a grand tour at the opening on Friday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> prior to a reception at the Club. The exhibit continues through September 6<sup>th</sup>. Do plan to visit. (Madeline Mixer)

## UPCOMING PLANS

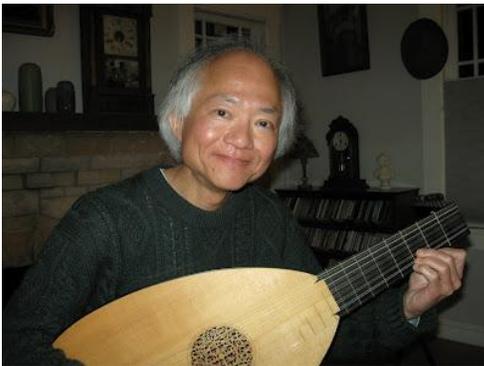


(Melanie O'Reilly)

Fall promises to be a busy time at the Club as three “Arts in the Afternoon” programs are already scheduled and a new twist on the “Academic Lives” series is being considered. We hope to launch a mentorship program in conjunction with the Association of Academic Women. Plans are also underway for a Reception to celebrate the formal opening of the Club 90 years ago in September 1923. Details as they emerge!

Celtic singer-songwriter Melanie O'Reilly joins us in September along with Peter Glazer, Associate Professor in the Theater, Dance and Performing Arts, for a musical theater piece on "Women Who Left: Giving Voice to Silent People."

Franklin Lei will grace our space in October with a concert of both Baroque Lute and Archtop Guitar. Trained as both an engineer (M.I.T.) and a musician (Renaissance and Baroque Lute at State Conservatory of Cologne) Lei offers a unique program that features two of his passions – Baroque Lute and Jazz guitar.



*(Franklin Lei)*

In October we will also return to our exploration of architectural space as Karen McKneil discusses Julia Morgan and the creation of uniquely women's spaces – including our own Club. (Doras Briggs)

### **CONGRATULATIONS – GRADUATES**



*.(Nicole Orlov and John Domingo)*

Once again we congratulate our graduates as they begin to scatter in new directions in pursuit of their goals. All have enriched our lives as they have passed through the Club.

John Domingo (Marine Biology) will be working on campus in a lab for Environmental and Sedimentary Isotope Geochemistry and will apply for graduate school in Oceanography. Jennifer Lalli (English) plans on earning a PhD in English and publishing

books on contemporary British literature. Isabel Halpern (Art Practice) looks forward to helping others through art and sharing her love of nature.



*(Isabel Halpern)*

Elizabeth Felando (Sociology) will indulge her love of sailing as she works as Program Director at the Alameda Community Sailing Center during the summer. Eventually she plans on a Masters in Sociology with a focus on Criminology. Nicole Orlov (History) will travel to Israel and Europe during the summer and plans on Law School and to work on Public Health and Food Policy. Geraldine Briceno (Masters – Public Health) will continue to focus on health services available to migrant workers.



*(Elizabeth Felando)*

### **Women's Faculty Club Authors –**

Thank you to all who have replied! Books are displayed on the Library desk. We will add more as received and will feature books in the newsletter as space permits. Please continue to bring additional books.

**HISTORICAL NOTES – Will be continued in next newsletter due to space constraints**

## **DINING ROOM NEWS –June 2013**



- **Dining Room is closed Monday, July 1 – Friday, July 12, 2013  
Dining Room re-opens on Monday, July 15, 2013**
- **“Summer Salad Buffet Special” – Enjoy a bountiful array of seasonal salads each Wednesday in June and the final three Wednesdays in July for the summer special price – \$7.50 per person**
- **“Tasting Tuesdays” - Join us for lunch each Tuesday in June – We continue a tradition of small tastings each week. Tastings change each week.**
- **Thank you program for individual members – Receive a complimentary coupon for the Salad Buffet after every eight luncheons within either six month period:  
January – June or July - December**
- **Find your (name) within the body of the newsletter and win a \$20 gift certificate**