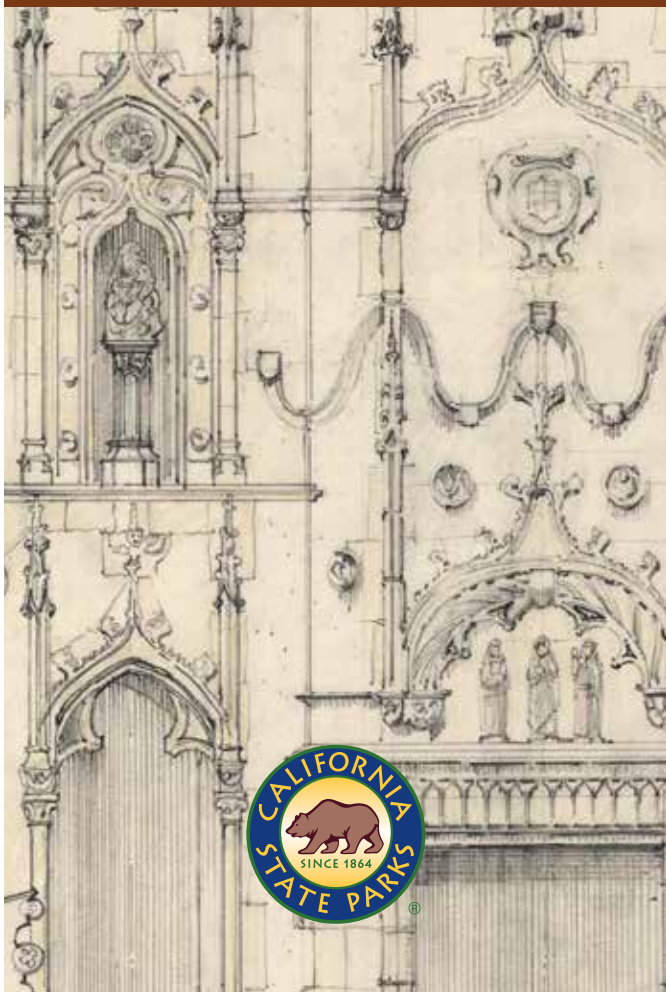




# The Architecture of **JULIA MORGAN**

in California State Parks



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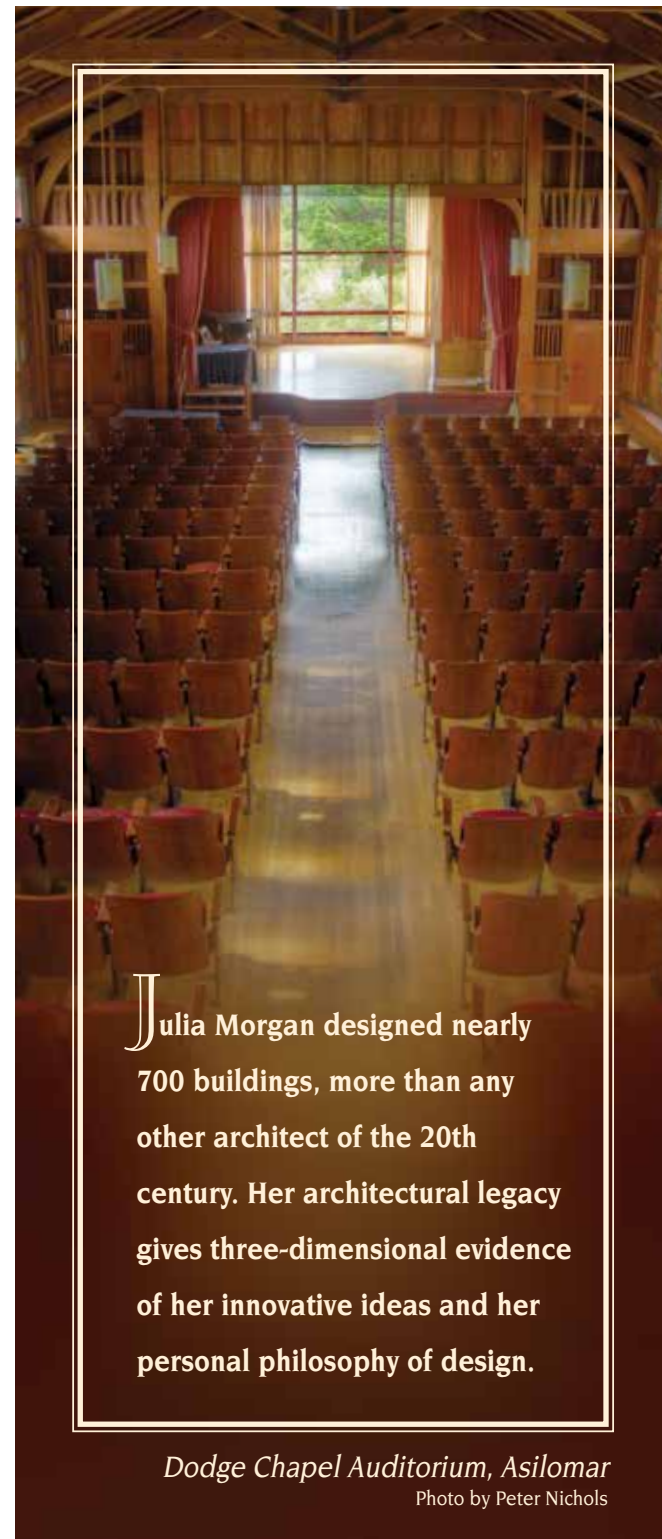
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*Cover drawing: Detail of Hearst Castle  
refectory fireplace by Julia Morgan, 1927*



**J**ulia Morgan designed nearly 700 buildings, more than any other architect of the 20th century. Her architectural legacy gives three-dimensional evidence of her innovative ideas and her personal philosophy of design.

*Dodge Chapel Auditorium, Asilomar*

Photo by Peter Nichols

# JULIA MORGAN (1872-1957)



ca. 1878

Julia Morgan was born in San Francisco on January 20, 1872, and raised in her family's home in Oakland, California. She exhibited talents for mathematics and playing the violin. After

graduating from Oakland High School in 1890, she attended the University of California (UC) at Berkeley. Morgan was the only woman to earn a degree in civil engineering in 1894.

A year after graduation, Morgan traveled to Paris, France, to attend the architectural school at L'Ecole de Beaux Arts. Because she

was a woman, she was denied admission.

Two years later, Morgan was finally permitted to take the admission exams; on her third attempt, she was

*El Campanil bell tower at Mills College, completed in 1904*

admitted into L'Ecole. By 1901, at 29, she had earned the required four certification medals, becoming L'Ecole de Beaux Arts' first graduating woman architect.



*Julia Morgan's student identification card for L'Ecole de Beaux Arts*

Julia Morgan returned to San Francisco in 1902. She accepted a position with architect John Galen Howard, designing new buildings for the UC Berkeley campus. Morgan was the draftsman for the Hearst Mining Building and assistant supervising architect for the outdoor Greek Amphitheater.

Steadily building experience, Morgan opened her own office in 1904. Morgan was the first woman ever to receive California's State Architectural License (License #B344). She set up an office in the carriage house of her parent's home. Friends called with small commissions, mostly houses. Morgan's first large commission was the El Campanil bell tower at Oakland's Mills College in 1904.

Morgan eventually moved her office to Montgomery Street in San Francisco. When the 1906 earthquake struck the city, Morgan's office was destroyed, but her library of architectural books, stored in Oakland, was spared from damage.

A few months after the earthquake, the Law Brothers hired Morgan to rebuild their Fairmont Hotel. It would prove to be one of the most important commissions of her career. Morgan reset steel girders, replaced marbled columns and ceilings, and reinforced stairs. Within a year, the hotel was open for business.

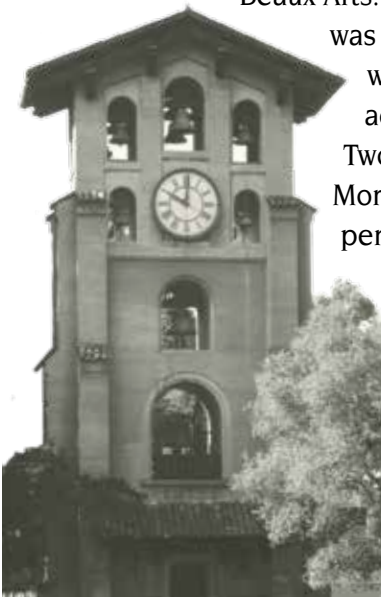
While she was working on the Fairmont Hotel, Morgan opened her new office with a junior partner, Ira Hoover, in the Merchant Exchange Building in San Francisco. When Hoover moved to the east coast in 1910, Morgan never took on another partner,

working as the principal architect.

Morgan accepted nearly every architectural commission that came her way—more than 700 over her career. Her designs ranged from single-



*Reconstruction of the Fairmont Hotel, 1907*





*Dinsmore residence*

family dwellings and apartment buildings to commercial and institutional structures.

Morgan's largest institutional clients were the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and women's clubs. Her longest commission came from William Randolph Hearst's San Simeon retreat.

Morgan's professional reputation cited her careful work and on-site supervision.

She designed to please the client with both function and form. Her architectural services could be affordable by the common person or lavishly scaled for wealthier clients.



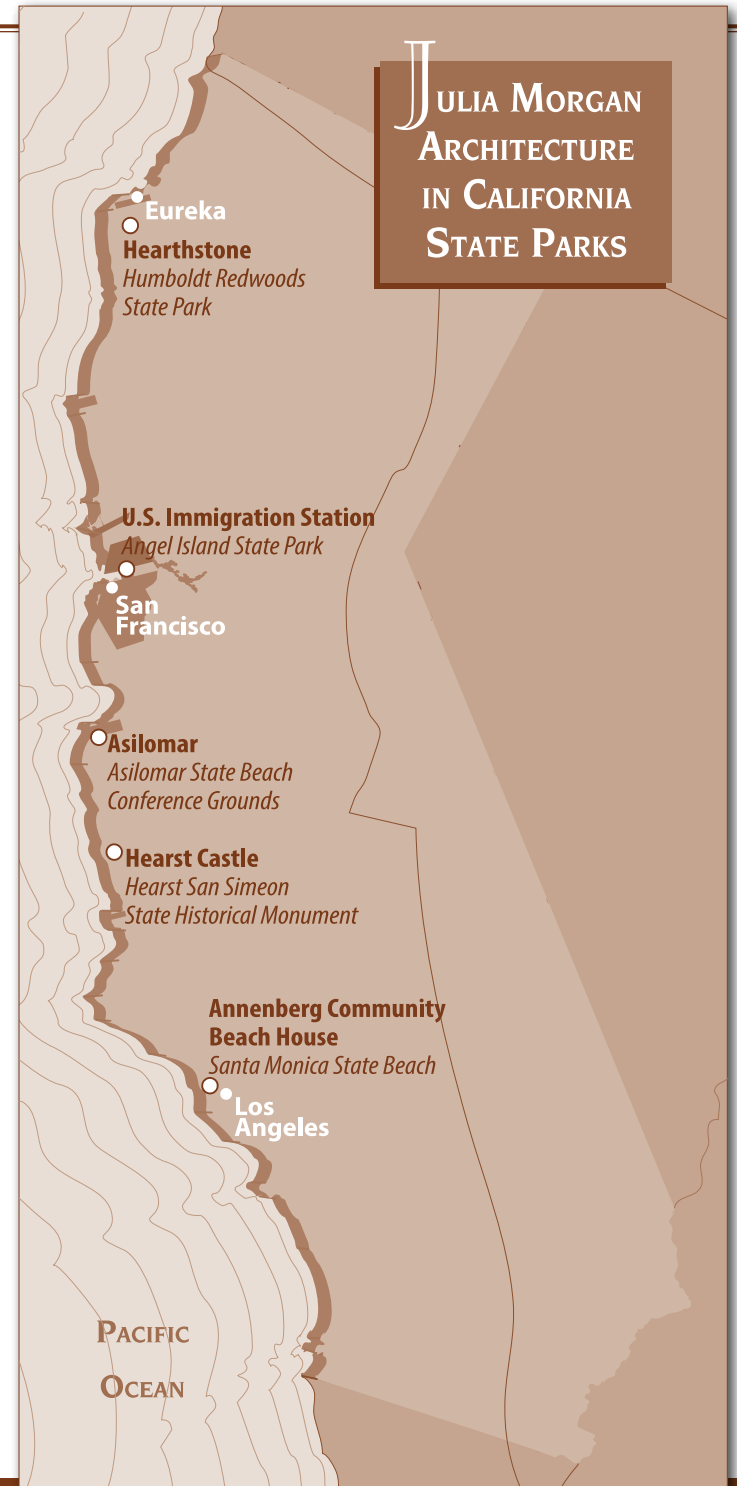
*Left, Morgan's family and friends, 1943. From top left to bottom right: Flora North, Sachi Oka, Sally Moon Morgan, Julia Morgan, Emma Moon, Hart North, Emma North, Judith Morgan*

In 1951, Julia Morgan closed her office at age 79. She spent the next year traveling to Spain and Portugal. She retired quietly to her apartment on Divisadero Street in San Francisco, visited by family members and a few close friends. Miss Morgan died on February 2, 1957, at age 85.



*Above: Passport photo, ca. 1951*

## JULIA MORGAN ARCHITECTURE IN CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS



# HEARST CASTLE

## Hearst San Simeon State Historical Monument

Hearst Castle is Julia Morgan's best-known project. World-renowned for its dramatic beauty, the project became one of the longest and most fascinating collaborations between architect and client. It started in 1919, when newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst asked Miss Morgan to design a small bungalow on his family's campsite overlooking San Simeon Bay. This modest beginning evolved into a vast Mediterranean-style estate of 165 rooms. Hearst generally called the compound his "ranch at San Simeon."

Known as Hearst Castle today, its formal name is *La Cuesta Encantada*,

"The Enchanted Hill." Morgan's design evokes a Mediterranean hill town of the Renaissance era. The twin-towered main building (called Casa Grande) resembles a Spanish church. Just below it are three lavishly decorated cottages surrounded by terraced gardens. Further down the hillside, two imposing swimming pools are built in ancient Roman style.

Julia Morgan worked closely with Hearst on every aspect of the estate, as thousands of surviving letters and drawings attest. For more than twenty-eight years, Morgan showed great patience with Hearst's "changeableness of mind." She designed all the hilltop buildings and worked as both interior decorator and landscape architect. She built the zoo, airport, barns, stables, estate village in San Simeon, and Hearst's large Spanish-style Hacienda, the ranch headquarters thirty miles north. Throughout this enormous project, she continued her busy architectural practice in San Francisco.

William Randolph Hearst died in 1951. His heirs and the Hearst Corporation donated the Castle to California State Parks in 1957.

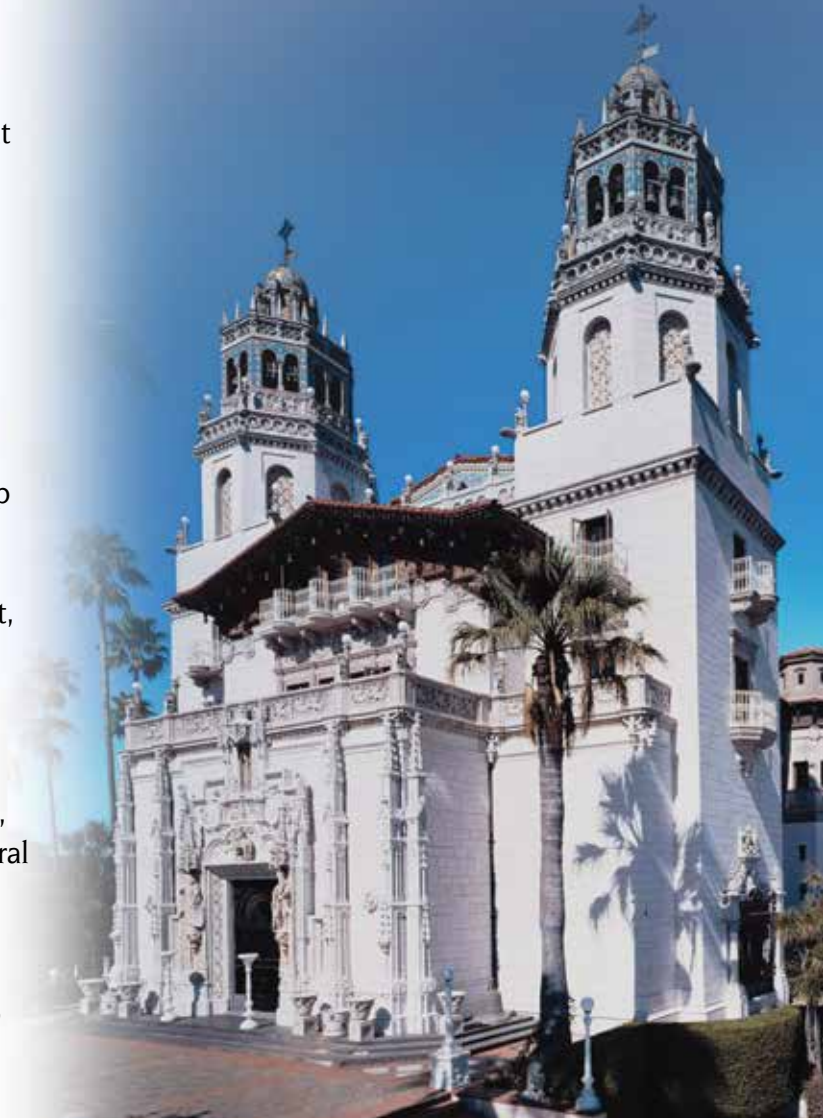
For information on tours and events:

**Hearst San Simeon  
State Historical Monument  
750 Hearst Castle Road  
San Simeon, CA 93452  
(805) 927-2020  
[www.hearstcastle.org](http://www.hearstcastle.org)**

Photo courtesy of Bison Archives



*William Randolph Hearst and Julia Morgan,  
ca. 1928*





## HEARTHSTONE

### Humboldt Redwoods State Park

One of the largest and oldest volunteer organizations in the world is the General Federation of Women's Clubs, founded in 1890. The California chapter (CFWC) was organized in 1900.

The CFWC held their state convention in Eureka in 1923. To underscore the convention's theme—*Conservation, the Hope of Civilization*—delegates traveled south to Dyerville to see redwood forests. Impressed by the beauty and size of the redwoods, the members decided to help save these trees by purchasing an old-growth redwood grove through the Save the Redwoods League. Starting in 1928, the California Chapter collected \$1 from each of their members and raised \$45,000. With matching funds from State bonds, their grove was purchased in 1931 and dedicated in 1933. It protects nearly 1,000 redwood trees and 106 acres of redwood ecosystem that continue to flourish today in Humboldt Redwoods State Park.

The CFWC hired Julia Morgan in 1933 to design a memorial to symbolize their victorious effort and champion their motto, "Strength United is Stronger." Miss Morgan designed the "Hearthstone," four stone fireplaces united with a common chimney. Oversized rocks, collected along the south fork of the Eel River, face all aspects of the structure. Cut tree trunks support wood roofs that cover the open hearths. Stone bench inglenooks provide a resting place.

The completed landmark serves as the focal point in the redwood grove as it enhances the grandeur of the outdoor space. Above each fireplace mantel, a medallion of smooth stone is inscribed with four different engravings:

*"For lo in the forest comes contentment  
peace and the sweet companionship  
of nature."*

*"Oldest of living things what wisdom  
forests teach stirring men's heart to  
thought deeper than speech."*

*"Would that we were great as these and  
men were brotherly as trees."*

*"These are the oldest of all living things."*

For information:

**Humboldt Redwoods Interpretive Assn.**  
P.O. Box 276, Weott, California 95571  
[vc@humboldtredwoods.org](mailto:vc@humboldtredwoods.org) • (707) 946-2263



## U.S. IMMIGRATION STATION

### Angel Island State Park

Opening in 1910, the U.S. Immigration Station on Angel Island processed over 500,000 immigrants before closing its doors in 1940. The Station was primarily built to enforce the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, aimed at excluding laborers and working-class people coming from China and other Asian countries. The law would expand to encompass immigrants from over 80 countries.



*Immigration Station complex, ca. 1930*

The Immigration Station complex initially included small facility buildings, detention barracks, an administration building, hospital, power plant, and pier. Eventually, additional buildings



*Bungalow cottages, ca. 1960*

were needed. Architect Julia Morgan was hired by her brother-in-law, Hart H. North, Commissioner at the U.S. Immigration Station, to design them. Miss Morgan catalogued the commission as Job #303.

Morgan designed 12 small bungalow cottages nestled on a hillside overlooking the complex and the bay. They created a neighborhood for the families and staff that worked at the Station. The freestanding single-family cottages had a simple floor plan; most of the living spaces fit on one floor with plenty of fitted built-ins.

In 1963, Angel Island became part of the California State Park system. Miss Morgan's 12 bungalow cottages fell into disrepair in later years. Tragically, they were burned in 1971 as part of a fire-training exercise, filmed for *The Candidate* starring Robert Redford. All that remains of these residences today are

the concrete foundations along the main road. Today, the barracks buildings at the Immigration Station serve as a house museum and are open for viewing and tours.

For more information, visit  
[www.parks.ca.gov/angelisland](http://www.parks.ca.gov/angelisland)

Angel Island Immigration  
Station Foundation  
[www.aiisf.org](http://www.aiisf.org)

Angel Island Conservancy  
[www.angelisland.org](http://www.angelisland.org)



*Immigration Station*

## Asilomar State Beach and Conference Grounds

Julia Morgan's largest commercial client was the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). Of the 17 YWCA sites she designed for the organization, Asilomar was the largest. In 1913, Asilomar became the first women's summer camp and conference grounds in the United States owned by a women's organization.

Morgan designed Asilomar in the Arts & Crafts architectural style. The buildings are redwood construction with granite stones covering concrete supports and foundations. The interior spaces are as expressive as the exteriors, allowing natural light to accentuate the structural beauty of the wood.

Morgan's layout of the grounds complements the natural landscape. The social hall, dining room, and chapel auditorium stand in a circular campus at the edge of the forest, sheltered from the ocean by sand dunes. The lodges are tucked back into the trees. Morgan's work at Asilomar spanned nearly two decades, from 1913 to 1928. Asilomar represents her largest collection of Arts & Crafts-style buildings in one location.

The YWCA sold Asilomar to California State Parks in 1956. Today, the buildings are a National Historic Landmark. Park visitors can stay overnight in the historic lodges and reserve meeting rooms for seminars and conferences.

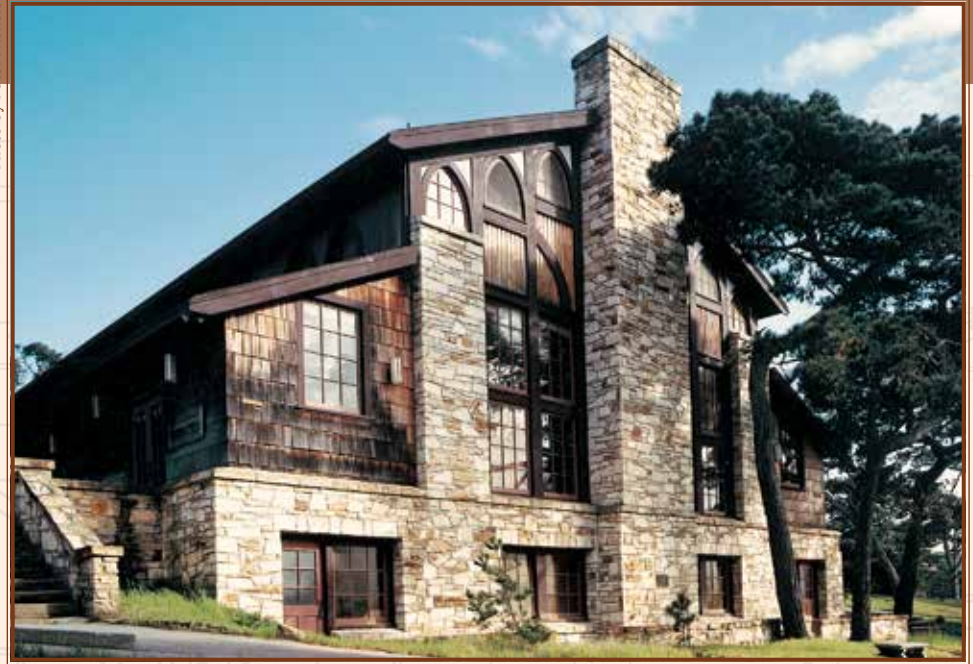
For tours of the Julia Morgan buildings, contact:

**Asilomar State Park Office**  
**804 Crocker Avenue, Pacific Grove, CA 93950**  
**(831) 646-6443**

To reserve overnight lodging and meeting rooms, contact:

**Aramark — Asilomar**  
**800 Asilomar Avenue, Pacific Grove, CA 93950**  
**(888) 635-5310 • [www.visitasilomar.com](http://www.visitasilomar.com)**

Photo by Peter Nichols



*Merrill Hall, west side exterior*

Photo by Peter Nichols



*Merrill Hall interior*

## Santa Monica State Beach

When William Randolph Hearst and film star Marion Davies collaborated to build Davies a beach house in the 1920s, Hearst purchased five acres of beachfront property about a mile and a half north of the Santa Monica Pier.

Hearst originally hired designer William Edward Flannery to draft the mansion's plans. Hearst soon called upon architect Julia Morgan to replace Flannery, who was having difficulties with the project. Morgan finished the construction of the main house and then designed a pool and a 7,000-square-foot guest house surrounded by gardens. The 110-foot saltwater swimming pool featured ornamental tile and a marble pool deck in a Greek key design. Once completed, the dazzling white Georgian Revival home was dubbed the "Versailles of Hollywood," with 110 rooms, 37 fireplaces and 55 bathrooms.

Davies lived in the Santa Monica beach house from 1929 until 1942. She sold the property in 1947 for \$600,000 to Joseph Drown, who converted it into "Oceanhouse, America's Most Beautiful Hotel." Drown constructed an accessory swimming club as a hotel enhancement. After the hotel closed in 1957, the main house was demolished. The property was sold to California State Parks in 1959. From 1960 to 1990, the members-only *Sand & Sea Club* operated



*Present-day guest house*  
Photo courtesy of Annenberg Community Beach House. Photo by Grant Mudford

on the site. The City of Santa Monica took over the property in 1990 and renamed it *415 PCH*. They operated the facility until the 1994 Northridge earthquake severely damaged all structures on site.

As part of the recovery efforts from the earthquake damage, the City embarked on an extensive public input process to re-envision the role of *415 PCH* as an important public gathering space. A reuse plan was adopted in 1998. The project sat on hold while the city tried to secure funding. Wallis Annenberg of the Annenberg Foundation held fond memories of visiting the *Sand & Sea Club*. When she learned of the City's struggle to realize its vision for a year-round public beach facility, she enthusiastically offered to

help. The Annenberg Foundation provided a \$27.5 million grant that paved the way for the site's rehabilitation, in partnership with the City of Santa Monica and California State Parks. Additional funding was provided by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development.

Staff from the Foundation and the city worked with Frederick Fisher Partners, Architects, Charles Pankow Builders, Historic Resources Group, Mia Lehrer & Associates, AdamsMorioka, and Roy McMakin to form the new Annenberg Community Beach House. The project involved rehabilitation of Marion Davies' historic guest

house and pool, as well as construction of new recreation and event spaces.

Opened in April 2009, the Annenberg Community Beach House is a truly unique destination that's open to all — with no membership required.

For hours and activities, contact:  
**Annenberg Community Beach House**  
**415 Pacific Coast Highway**  
**Santa Monica, CA 90402**  
**(310) 458-4904**  
**TTY (310) 917-6626**  
**[www.annenbergbeachhouse.com](http://www.annenbergbeachhouse.com)**



*Davies' beach house, ca. 1948*  
Photo courtesy of Santa Monica Library Image Archives