

150W Celebration 2020-2021

About the Women's Faculty Club



(Photo credit – Peg Skorpinski, 2012)

[Watch the video exploring the Club's history and where we are going in the 21st Century.](#)

Visit our full website at: <https://www.womensfacultyclub.com/>



Our Vision

Founded in 1919, the Women's Faculty Club has served as a symbol of UC Berkeley's commitment to the equality of the sexes in higher education for almost 100 years. Its founders were women faculty who were truly "the first" of everything they did on campus. The beautiful brown shingle building that they built, designed by Campus Architect John Galen Howard, is an Historic Structure. Ours is the only faculty club in the nation, founded originally for women, that still has its own building.

We are inspired by the women who founded the Club. They were motivated by a vision of progress and for serving the public good. Excluded from the existing men's faculty club, they needed a space of their own within which they could flourish. And throughout its 100 year history, the Club has continued to provide a special place for women on campus to gather and to learn from each other.

Of course, the Club now serves the entire Cal community – men and women, faculty, staff and alums. But its inspiration remains the same – to furnish a unique space in which its members can flourish – enjoying fine food at lunch; reserving its gracious hotel rooms so that families, visitors and guests can stay in the heart of our beautiful campus; hosting meetings and professional or private social events and celebrations of all kinds in the Club's indoor and outdoor spaces.

We are especially excited about the opening of our new outdoor patio, surrounded by gardens of native plants, nestled near Strawberry Creek. This patio expands the Club's outdoor event space. It provides a beautiful setting for members to hold their private events – receptions, weddings, even outdoor barbecues. An accessible pathway connects to both the Club and the patio, ensuring use by all our members and guests.

But the Women's Faculty Club is not only gracious and accommodating for its members, it serves the public good through the opportunities it offers to current Cal students. The Club funds the Lucy Ward Stebbins undergraduate scholarship; we employ exclusively student staff in our dining room, providing numerous employment opportunities for young men and women at Cal.

In addition, the Club serves the entire campus and the community through three public program series. The lecture series "Christina Marsden Gillis Academic Lives" features talks and panel discussions on issues of public importance, featuring women faculty, students and alums. The Club partnered with the "150 Years of Women" History Project on a number of our "Academic Lives" programs during the 2020-2021 academic years. We will continue this collaborative effort during the next academic year as well. "Arts in the Afternoon" brings talented musicians and other artists, both Cal students and professionals, to the Club. Student performances include the Baroque Ensemble, and members of the University Symphony Orchestra and the University Chorus. The "Stebbins Studio Series" presents noon recitals by undergraduates playing on our celebrated Steinway piano.

History

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 membership in The 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.

Community Events at the Club

Christina Marsden Gillis Academic Lives Program



(Photo – Susan Ervin-Tripp)

Academic Lives was founded in 2008 by then Program Chair Christina Marsden Gillis. The program was initially designed in conjunction with the Association of Academic Women and later programs were done in partnership with the Division of Equity and Inclusion Faculty Mentoring Program. During the celebration of the 150 years of women at UC Berkeley in 2020-2021, the Club sponsored lectures about the history of women faculty on the campus.

[Click Here for the Recorded Zoom Lecture on Elizabeth Scott and Sue Ervin Tripp](#)

[Click Here for the Recorded Zoom Lecture on Frances Perkins and Barbara Armstrong](#)

[Click Here for the Recorded Zoom Lecture on The Rise and Decline of Berkeley Women Faculty](#)

Complimentary discussions and receptions are open to the entire campus community. Early panel presentations considered the balancing act necessary to juggle career and personal lives. Other events have honored Berkeley's "Seven Women Deans," looked at the impact of "Academic Friendships" across departmental boundaries, and considered dual career couples. Economics Professor and past Chair of President Obama's Council of Economic

Advisors Christina Romer spoke on her experiences in both Academia and the public sector in a talk titled “A Tale of Two Cities.”

It was a particular honor to have former two term Governor Jennifer Granholm speak of her experiences guiding Michigan through a period of unprecedented economic challenge and change. Granholm had been employed as a Night Manager at the Club while a student at Berkeley.

Recently the format has been geared to conversations between academics from various perspectives. Topics have included the environment, immigration issues, parenting skills and assisted reproduction and the legal right of the child.

In 2016 the series was named “The Christina Marsden Gillis Academic Lives Series” in honor of Gillis’ vision and tenacity in guiding the program through its formative years.

Arts in the Afternoon



[Click here to view “A Celebration of Bach” A virtual concert in honor of Bach’s 335th birthday](#)

“Arts in the Afternoon” was also launched in 2008 and features complimentary concerts and/or visual presentation of the arts at UC Berkeley. Many student musicians and groups have had the opportunity to perform in the intimate setting of the Stebbins Lounge. Every musician who has played in the Lounge has been thrilled with the quality of the acoustics. Professor Davitt Moroney has said that these concerts provide an excellent venue for students to experience performance in an intimate—“salon” setting—similar to the settings in which much Baroque music was originally performed.

Past performances have included the University Baroque Ensemble, Young Musicians Program, chamber music ensembles from the University Symphony, groups of singers from the University Chorus and jazz musicians.

In addition to music, we have had programs representing a wide variety of other visual arts programs.

We celebrated the 90th Anniversary of the Club's founding with a series of events which focused on John Galen Howard, the Club's architect and a primary architect of the entire campus. Margaretta Lovell, Jay D. McEvoy Professor of American Art History, led seventeen undergraduates in a class titled "Access, Archives and Architecture: John Galen Howard and the University of California Berkeley's Women's Faculty Club." The class ended with a symposium which was a featured "Arts in the Afternoon" program. The students shared many tales they had gleaned from their intense research and then divided the audience into sections and led them on tours of each quadrant of the campus showcasing the existing John Galen Howard buildings in each section.

The symposium kicked off a series of events focused on Howard's architectural legacy. The Environmental Design Archive hosted an exhibit of Howard's drawings and memorabilia and a special "Arts in the Afternoon" program was held off-site as we toured a Howard designed house in the Berkeley hills.

We have been able to enjoy the new patio for a jazz concert and look forward to continuing to find new programs that work well in the outdoor space.

All programs are complimentary and open to the entire campus community. Programs are followed by a reception which allows artists, presenters and guests to interact.

Arts in the Afternoon Events are complimentary and open to the campus community.

Priority reserved seating is available for Club Members.

Stebbins Piano Concert Series

Gather at the Club for a noontime series of concerts—the "Stebbins Piano Series" which features current UC Berkeley keyboard students in piano recitals on our historic Steinway piano.

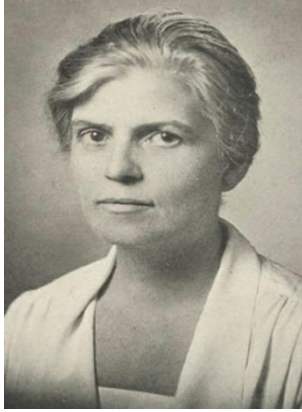
This concert series is named for the first President of the Women's Faculty Club Dean Lucy Ward Stebbins.

Stebbins served as the Second Dean of Women Students on the Berkeley campus. Together with women faculty who were "the first" of almost everything at Berkeley, she founded our Club in 1919. Stebbins was also a tireless advocate for women students of her era.

The "Stebbins Piano Series" will celebrate both the space that Stebbins helped to create as well as the Club's 1902 Steinway piano. Cal students rescued the piano in 1923 from the home of President Emeritus Benjamin Ide Wheeler as the Berkeley hills burned. After the death of President Wheeler's wife, Amey Webb Wheeler, the piano was donated to the Women's Faculty Club in honor of that early rescue and the safe harbor that the Club provided.

Now we honor both women's legacies with a series featuring U.C. Berkeley's current keyboard students performing on the Club's historic Steinway in the Lucy Ward Stebbins Lounge!

Early Prominent Members



Lucy Ward Stebbins

The second Dean of Women at University of California, Berkeley

First President of The Women's Faculty Club (1919–1941)

Professor of Social Economics

Stebbins Hall named by women students in her honor



Jessica Peixotto

Second woman to receive a Doctorate from University of California, Berkeley

First female full professor–1918

First woman to chair the Economics Department

Developed first professional curriculum for the School of Social Welfare

First Vice President of the Women's Faculty Club

Supervised California's juvenile penal system



Agnes Fay Morgan

Professor of Nutrition – Pioneer in developing the science of nutrition

Chair of the Department of Home Economics

First to recognize cause and effect between vitamin deficiencies and health

Agnes Fay Morgan Hall named in 1961

Second President of the Women's Faculty Club



Barbara Nachtrieb Armstrong

First woman in the nation appointed to the faculty of a major law school – 1919

Promoted to full Professor in 1935

Helped draft the Social Security Act

Served on first Finance and Building Committees for the Women's Faculty Club



Pauline Sperry

First female Professor of Mathematics

1950 – Refused to sign the Loyalty Oath required of Professors by the Regents. Fired for her beliefs – after protracted litigation was reinstated shortly before retirement

House and Finance Committees for the Women's Faculty Club – major responsibility for retiring the mortgage early



Josephine Miles

First woman to become tenured member of the Berkeley English Department

First woman to be appointed full University Professor – 1973

Distinction in Creative Writing, Teaching and Scholarship

Led the debate in opposing unification of the two Clubs