

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE	California
COUNTY:	San Mateo
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	OCT 1 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Menlo Park Railroad Station

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1100 Merrill Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Menlo Park, California 94025

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
12th (formerly 11th)

STATE	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
California	06	San Mateo	081

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			Yes:
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) Civic			<input type="checkbox"/> Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Southern Pacific Railroad Company

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1 Market Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
San Francisco

STATE:  
California

CODE:  
06

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
San Mateo County Courthouse, Hall of Justice and Records

STREET AND NUMBER:  
County Government Center, Marshall Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Redwood City

STATE:  
California

CODE:  
06

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic Sites Subcommittee Report, Regional Planning Committee of San Mateo Co., historic landmark, recommended for marker #44

DATE OF SURVEY: March 16, 1966  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Regional Planning Office of San Mateo County

STREET AND NUMBER:  
County Government Center, Marshall Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Redwood City

STATE:  
California

CODE:  
06

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**7. DESCRIPTION**

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered slightly			<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		
				<input type="checkbox"/> Moved		
				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE:

The station is a small nineteenth century building which has great charm and character. The exterior, essentially in the "Stick Style", is painted yellow with white trim. Siding is horizontal tongue-and-groove redwood to the eave line. North and south gables are sided with decorative shingles as are hoods surmounting doors and windows.

The windows have large Victorian panes of glass in four-over-four double hung sashes. Cornices above bay windows, the eaves, and gable ends include simple ornamental brackets. The end gables include Eastlake chalet-braces surmounted by finials rising above the ridge.

The interior, with minor alterations, retains its essential character. The "ladies' waiting room," now used by the Chamber of Commerce as a conference room and by civic groups for meetings, is separated from the main lobby by a series of large glass ticket windows mounted on a complex of drawers and cabinets, apparently surviving from the time when the structure was an active railroad station.

Located at the south end of the building, the conference room receives abundant natural light from the bay window. The room has retained much of its late nineteenth century ceiling and redwood walls. Intrusions to the interior character of the room are its linoleum floor, inappropriately placed heating ducts, and suspended fluorescent tube lighting.

The main lobby has been converted to use for the secretarial staff of the Chamber. Wall surfaces have been sheetrocked above the chair rail, and the ceiling has been covered with accoustical tile.

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**6. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian       16th Century       18th Century       20th Century  
 15th Century       17th Century       19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |                                                    |                                       |                                                    |                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal     | <input type="checkbox"/> Education    | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric               | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering  | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi-             | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry     | <input type="checkbox"/> Philosophy                |                                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture               | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention    | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                   |                                          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape    | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                 |                                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-             |                                          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature   | <input type="checkbox"/> itarian                   |                                          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military     | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                   |                                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation              | <input type="checkbox"/> Music        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation |                                          |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Architecturally, the Menlo Park Railroad Station is of special interest because it combines, in a graceful whole, many different elements representative of wooden architecture in the San Francisco Bay Area from the 1860's to the 1890's. The original building of 1867, whose roofline and overall form remain intact today, is a fine example of the simplified "picturesque cottage" style of the 1850's and 60's.

In the 1880's and 90's, the station was updated with the addition of more extensive and elaborate decorative elements: brackets, mouldings, and gable-ornamentation typical of the "Stick-Style" and shingled surfaces and over-windows representative of the "Shingle-Style." As a result, the building is like a survey of architectural styles of the period, a charming document of the changing, fanciful taste of the late nineteenth century.

From an historical point of view, it is one of the earliest-built existing railway stations in California. In 1863, Mr. Louis Golder acquired four lots located between Oak Grove and Ravenswood Avenues. On March 30, 1867, he sold a strip of land 100 by 720 feet, parts of the four lots, to the San Francisco and San Jose Railroad. On this acquisition the railroad built the present station. It was open for business in August, 1867. Early in 1868, the company which would become the Southern Pacific contracted to purchase the San Francisco and San Jose Railroad and soon extended the line southward, eventually to develop the Central Valley and Southern California.

In the 1850's, the region which is now Menlo Park was being transformed from grazing land and thickets under giant oak trees into American farms. Two Irishmen, Dennis Oliver and D. C. McGlynn, purchased a 1,700 acre tract and nostalgically named it after their birthplace on the outskirts of Galway, a town named Menlough. Their new homesite was Menlo Park, and, to identify it, they built a large wooden gateway with the name painted in foot-high letters over the central arch. When the railroad station was built (nine years later), the gate was a landmark, hence the building was located nearby and given the name Menlo Park.

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**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Cloud, Roy W., History of San Mateo County, Chicago, S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1928.  
 Stanger, Frank M., History of San Mateo County, San Mateo, Calif., San Mateo Times, 1938.  
 Stanger, Frank M., Peninsula Community Book, San Mateo, Calif., A. H. Cawston, 1946.  
 Tutrow, Norman E., Leland Stanford, Man of Many Careers, Menlo Park, Calif., Pacific Coast Publishers, 1971.

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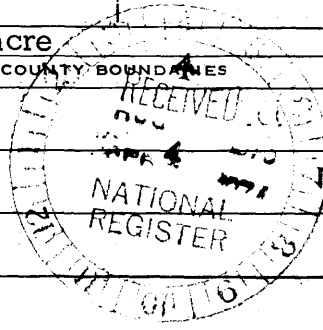
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "	37°	27'	16"
NE	° ' "	° ' "	122°	10'	51"
SE	° ' "	° ' "			
SW	° ' "	° ' "			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



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**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: Mrs. Richard M. Blois

ORGANIZATION: Committee for the Restoration of the Menlo Park Railroad Station DATE: April 12, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER: 1100 Merrill Street

CITY OR TOWN: Menlo Park STATE: California 94025 CODE: 06

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: [Signature]

Title: State Historic Preservation Officer

Date: August 26, 1974

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

[Signature]  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 10/11/94

ATTEST: [Signature]  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 9.30.74

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8. SIGNIFICANCE

Statement of Significance, page 2

The coming of the railroad marked the beginning of a double transformation: the growth of a town and the development of a countryside filled with fashionable estates and beautiful grounds. The Atherton family had introduced the idea of a summer home in the area, and the railroad made it possible for others. In 1863, as the line was being constructed, the Menlo Park Villa Association advertised 800 acres in "villa lots" of "not less than five acres." The tract was a three-hour drive from San Francisco, but the new railroad could bring passengers from the City in 80 minutes!

Many prominent citizens, attracted by the natural beauty and mild climate of the area, came down to purchase or build stately country homes. It was a common sight to see handsome carriages waiting at the station for expected guests and distinguished visitors, who in future years would include the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII), General Ulysses S. Grant, and President Benjamin Harrison.

Timothy Hopkins, James C. Flood, Edgar Mills, William Sharon, Charles N. Felton, and Leland Stanford were all prominent residents. Stanford, Governor of California and later U. S. Senator, began purchasing acreage in the 1870's and built a summer home on the banks of San Francisquito Creek. Although the Stanford home was just across the San Mateo County boundary, the Menlo Park Station was "their" station, and the family was very much a part of the Menlo community. After the tragic death of their only son, the Stanfords determined to create a lasting memorial by founding a university on the vast landholdings of their Palo Alto farm.

The opening of Stanford University in 1891 was a major event. The building had brought an array of architects, stone cutters, masons, landscape gardeners, and various technicians. Numerous professors as well as students lived in the village of Menlo Park, and all came and went from the Menlo Park Station.

The depot held the first telephone exchange for the area in 1884. It was called the Sunset Telephone and Telegraph Company. By 1888, there were ten subscribers to the service!

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8. SIGNIFICANCE

Statement of Significance, page 3

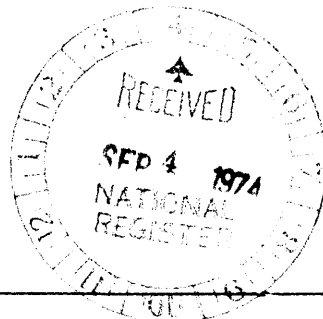
During the 1880's, Thomas D. Wakelee was the agent for the Southern Pacific and for the Wells Fargo Company. An old record book found in the attic of the depot catalogues the delivery of freight and merchandise of all kinds to the surrounding estates. The fertile soil in outlying areas provided a wealth of fresh produce which was shipped from the depot to the City markets.

The stationmaster's wife served tea to the ladies in the well-furnished ladies' waiting room at the south end of the building. Irish lace curtains adorning the bay window permitted a pleasant view of the large oaks and the waiting carriages to the south of the building. The little station was the hub of activity.

World War I saw the establishment of Camp Fremont, adjacent to Menlo Park, and brought a great influx of military personnel into the area. To accommodate all the baggage and equipment which was arriving by train, it was necessary to construct a large covered shed at the north end of the station. Somewhat modified, it remains today.

The Menlo Park Railroad Station, having spanned the years, remains essentially unchanged from its very beginning. The minor changes reflect the growing demand for transportation over the years as the community grew. The station is located in what is still roughly the geographic center of Menlo Park. Our station, which is now over 100 years of age, is our major landmark for giving directions east or west. Though it no longer serves as ticket office, it remains the terminus for the trips of hundreds of commuters who continue to make the daily rail trip up and down the San Francisco Peninsula. As the office of the Chamber of Commerce, the building continues to play a role in the growth of the community.

A new city transit system, the Menlo Park Carriage Authority, initiates community-wide bus service soon. The Menlo Park Station serves as its major junction. The building thus carries its tradition into another era of transportation history.



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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES  
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Timothy Hopkins Transportation Collection, Stanford University Archives,  
Stanford, Calif.

Collected Papers of Miss Susan Gale, Menlo Park Historian, Menlo Park  
Historical Collection (unpublished)

