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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Woman's Improvement Club Clubhouse

and/or common NA

2. Location

street & number 1101 South Main Street NA not for publication

city, town Corona NA vicinity of

state California code 06 county Riverside code 065

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: social

4. Owner of Property

name Women's Improvement Club

street & number 1101 South Main Street

city, town Corona NA vicinity of state California

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Riverside County

street & number 4080 Lemon Street

city, town Riverside state California

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Corona Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1988 federal state county local

depository for survey records Office of Historic Preservation

city, town Sacramento state California

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>NA</u> January 1988

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Woman's Improvement Club Clubhouse sits on the southeast corner of Eleventh and Main Streets. Built in 1913, the clubhouse is Craftsman Style with period revival modifications. Thomas E. Preston, a Los Angeles architect, designed the building based on details of an anonymous Welsh church. The building has been in continuous use since its construction and is currently in good condition.

The clubhouse is a detached, one story wood framed structure which is nearly T-shaped. Exterior painted wood shingles sheath the walls over a beige brick foundation. The chimney and porch piers are of matching brick. The main roof is steeply cross gabled; small side wings have clipped gables. Roof trim is plain bargeboard. Lookout beams, exposed rafters, and plain knee brackets are beneath the eaves. Most vents are triangular with horizontal slats. Several types of windows are on the clubhouse; all are trimmed with narrow molding. There are no outbuildings on the property.

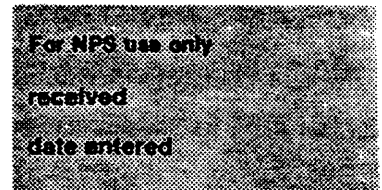
The north elevation faces Eleventh Street. It features a small wing at its eastern end and two porches. The little wing has double-hung windows and holds storage space and a lavatory. The north wall of the interior meeting hall has three sets of ribbon windows; each contains two casements flanking a double-hung central window. A raised, deep porch gives access to the meeting hall through an original oak double door. The doors have vertical clear glass lights; one door displays original hardware. The porch has a concrete deck and steps. Large square brick piers and the solid brick railing all have concrete caps. The piers support large square wood posts and the gabled porch cover. The porch roof structure has exposed tie and collar beams. An original copper or brass Craftsman style light fixture hangs from the tie beam. A plain painted wood bench is bolted on one side of the porch deck. Tucked behind one of the projecting porch piers is a cellar door. To the west of this porch on the vestibule wall are two ribbon windows of differing size. An attic vent on this wall section has a vertical opening with horizontal slats flanked by two tiny square windows. The whole assembly is surrounded by molding. The northwest corner of this elevation is a corner porch, which has stair access from the north and west sides.

The west or "front" elevation faces Main Street. The corner porch features the front door which opens to a vestibule. It is an original oak door with large beveled glass in the center; slender clear glass panels flank each side. Construction materials on this porch match those on the north porch. The corner porch also has a plain wood bench and metal Craftsman light fixture. Three piers support the gabled overhang, the elements of which are more elaborate than those of the side porch. In addition to tie and collar beams, there are diagonal struts. A wooden flagpole extends from the tie beam above the ridge of the roof and is reminiscent of wooden crosses placed at gable ridges on Old English churches. The clubhouse sign is attached to the tie beam by chains. It is a plank with jagged ends and shows "The Women's Improvement Club" in Celtic script. To the south of the porch are large ribbon windows that illuminate the parlor. A central picture window has a double-hung window at each side. The small south wing on this west facing wall houses the kitchen and has casement and double-hung windows.

The south elevation fronts on the club's asphalt parking lot. The southwest kitchen wing has an outside door and concrete stoop. Running nearly the entire length of this elevation is an enclosed four-sectioned sun porch. The porch sits on a brick foundation and has extended ground level concrete pads under each porch post. Its exterior is shingled. Windows extend the length of the porch and are two-over-two, double-hung. The eaves feature double lookout beams at each post. The porch roof is shed style, tar and gravel covered. An entry door is at the east end. This porch may

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not be original; however, none of the W.I.C. members can remember its addition.

The east elevation houses service doors and faces an alley. Double wood doors above a raised loading platform (in poor condition) access the back of the meeting hall's stage. A single back door near the northeast corner is well above grade and reached by concrete steps.

Inside, the meeting room has a small stage with a trough for footlights and a plain proscenium with curved corners. The vaulted ceiling has exposed members composed of wooden beams and steel connectors and rods. Four sets of double doors with two-over-two glass in the top halves separate the south side of the meeting hall from the sun porch. At the west end of the meeting hall, five very large wood paneled doors fold open or slide closed to divide the hall from the parlor.

The parlor's best feature is its attractive brick fireplace. On the wall above the mantel are two carved oak panels; they are florals and not identical to each other. These panels are original and were created by a local doctor who offered them as a gift on "Cornerstone Day". Several original interior doors and hardware are still in place.

Alterations to the structure include major electrical rewiring and new fixtures being installed at this writing bringing the clubhouse back to code standards. The kitchen has had several changes over the years. The most obvious of these was construction of a large work island with plumbing in the middle of the room. Many of the kitchen cabinets are original, as is a pass-through window from kitchen to parlor.

The W.I.C. Clubhouse has been a functioning structure since its construction. Its appearance has changed little although it has been in constant use. The rustic style and well established presence of this building act visually as the landmark structure on the 1100 block of Main Street.

Resource Count: One Contributing Building

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1913-1938 **Builder/Architect** Thomas E. Preston, architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Woman's Improvement Club (W.I.C.) Clubhouse, built in 1913, is the oldest secular assembly building in Corona. It is unique among the city's structures in its architectural style. The W.I.C.'s activities figure prominently in the early social/humanitarian development of Corona, and many local "firsts" took place at the clubhouse.

Thomas E. Preston of Los Angeles designed the building. It is Craftsman style with an eclectic Old English look. Preston used an old Welsh church as inspiration for his plans. The building's interior and exterior exhibit a simplicity that adds to its rustic charm. The clubhouse is an apt example of the Arts and Crafts movement's penchant for a "natural" yet functional design. The only institutional example of this style in Corona, this building is located on a busy Main Street corner within the Grand Boulevard circle. It continues to be a visual link to Corona's disappearing non-residential architectural past.

The W.I.C. was formed in 1899 as a civic organization. Originally called the Town Improvement Association, the club's goals were to encourage city beautification, set a high moral tone for public activities, and educate its members in history, literature, and the arts. The Woman's Improvement Club name was adopted in 1902 as a more appropriate title for the organization, firmly establishing it as one among hundreds of local woman's civic clubs springing up all over the United States during this period. The Corona club was often host to numerous Inland Empire and Los Angeles women's groups. These clubs sought opportunities to visit each other for discussions of contemporary topics such as public health, conservation of natural resources, and women's suffrage. The W.I.C. was involved with other women's organizations at the regional and state level through the California Federation of Women's Clubs.

The club's first activity was to revive the former Women Christian Temperance Union's struggling reading room into a lending library. Club members offered their labor and donations until the library was established enough to merit a governmental board to administer its operation in 1900. The club also helped the town win a Carnegie library.

Several successful projects earned the W.I.C. a considerable voice in community politics. Club members personally planted shade trees along major thoroughfares, irrigated and planted neighborhood parks, and cleaned neglected yards and streets until a chagrined Corona Board of Trustees (City Council) established a permanent Sanitation Department and Parks Maintenance crew. Other ordinances initiated by the club involved consumer rights, street lighting, and moral legislation.

Mrs. Ella L. S. Joy, a Corona founder, donated two lots at Eleventh and Main Streets for the clubhouse in 1906. After the building's construction in 1913, the clubhouse became the center for the W.I.C.'s varied activities. Issues debated in the building were women's rights, the temperance movement, protection of forests and animals, child labor, education and playgrounds, and the establishment of a California juvenile court system. The club began a school lunch program, a humane society for animals, did World War I Red Cross relief work, and established the Settlement House (which is still thriving) to aid disadvantaged families. The clubhouse was home to Corona's original Red Cross chapter (1913) and its first Girl Scout troop (1922). During World War II the club offered citizenship classes.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Corona, California. Corona Public Library Heritage Room. Women's Improvement Club Collection and Information File.

Reynolds, Stanley, and Eldridge, Fred. Corona, California Commentaries. Publ. 1986

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .4 acres

Quadrangle name Corona South

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	1	4	4	7	6	4	0	3	7	4	7	6	9	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B

Zone	Easting				Northing									

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

The property consists of Assessor's Parcel #117-266-06 in the City of Corona, Riverside County. This is the city lot historically associated with the club.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
NA			

state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title AEGIS / Susanna Branch

organization City of Corona

date January 1988

street & number PO Box 2904 Palm Street

telephone (714) 371-8425

city or town Corona 91720

state California 91720

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Kathryn Guatteri

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 9/13/88

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I hereby certify that this property is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Carol Shull

Keeper of the National Register

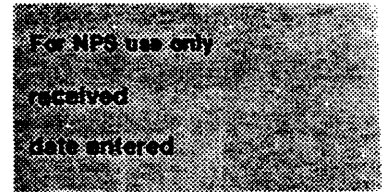
Attest:

Chief of Registration

11-3-88

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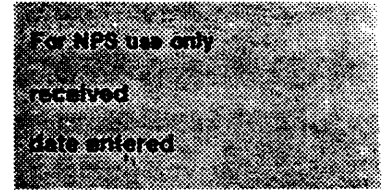
The clubhouse has always been featured in Corona social events. Club teas, dances, readings, plays, and recitals have been held there continuously since 1913; most of these activities were open to the public. The W.I.C. has also rented out the building for meetings, dances, and receptions. These activities have continued to the present.

The W.I.C. Clubhouse represents an integral part in Corona's development history. Its members played an important role in improving the dusty agricultural image of early Corona. The clubhouse is a symbol of the commitment of many civic minded American women determined to bring their towns into the 20th century with order and beauty. Today the clubhouse, unique in Corona's architectural repertoire, is still a site for social activity and community involvement.

The period of significance has arbitrarily been ended at 1938 because exceptional significance has not been demonstrated.

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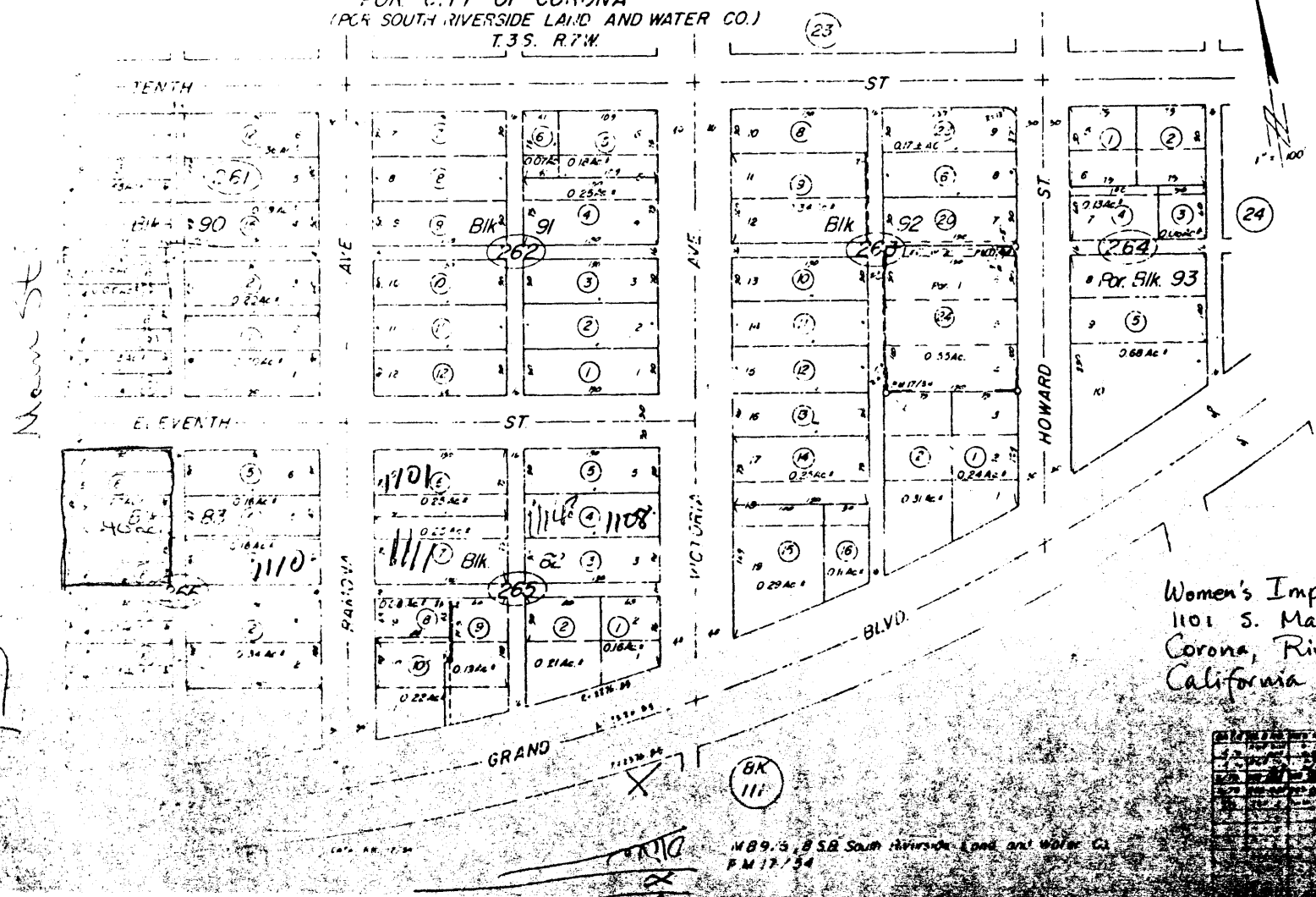
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Hellerstein, E.O., Hume, L.P., and Offen, K.M., ed. Victorian Women.
Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1981.

POR. C. TY OF CORONA
(POR. SOUTH RIVERSIDE LAND AND WATER CO.)
T.3S. R.7.W.



Woman's
Improvement
Club
1101 S Main St.
40 Ac

Women's Improvement Club
1101 S. Main St.
Corona, Riverside Co.
California

111
BX
111
1489.5 B SB South Riverside Land and Water Co.
PM 12/54