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NATIONAL REGISTER

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Coral Gables Woman's Club
other names/site number 8 DA 4579

2. Location

street & number 1001 East Ponce de Leon Boulevard not for publication
city, town Coral Gables vicinity
state Florida code FL county Dade code FL 025 zip code 33134

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature] State Historic Preservation Officer Date 2/5/90
Florida Department of State-Bureau of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) _____

Amy Federman 3/27/90
JAN 23 1990
HISTORIC PRESERVATION SECTION

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/library

SOCIAL/clubhouse

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL/clubhouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

MODERNE

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls STONE/oolitic limestone

CONCRETE/block

roof OTHER/clay tile

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

1936-1939

Significant Dates

1936

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Works Progress Administration
Merriam, William H.
Fink, George H.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Bureau of Historic Preservation

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property approximately one acre

UTM References

A

1	7
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5	7	4	4	1	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

2	8	4	9	2	8	1	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

B

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--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Coral Gables Douglas Section, PB 25-69, All of Block 15
Folio # 03 4108 009 1380

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary follows the legal boundary for the property that is also the historic boundary associated with the property during the period of significance.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ellen Uggucioni/Coral Gables- Vicki L. Welcher - Historic Sites Specialist
organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date November 9, 1989, February 2, 1990
street & number 500 South Bronough Street telephone (904) 487-2333
city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

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Coral Gables Woman's Club

The Coral Gables Woman's Club is a one story Depression Moderne styled structure constructed in 1936-1937 by the Works Progress Administration. The native oolitic limestone building contains carved terra cotta panels and a gabled, clay barrel tile roof. The terra cotta panels feature Depression Moderne carvings while the interior of the structures is enhanced with wall paintings in the same style.

ORIGINAL SETTING/PRESENT SETTING

The Coral Gables Woman's Club occupies a corner block near the center of Coral Gables in Dade County, Florida. The block is triangular and is bounded by Santillane Avenue to the north, Galiano Avenue to the east, Phoenetia Avenue to the south, and East Ponce de Leon Boulevard to the west. The site is landscaped with lush native and tropical vegetation reflecting the flora of the terra cotta carvings.

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The building consists of a modified "L" plan. The structure is a series of three, one story oolitic limestone buildings with varying gabled roofs covered in clay barrel tile. The main (north) facade of the main building on Santillane Avenue is dominated by a slightly projecting gable roofed central entrance. The entrance bay contains a double door entrance with single paned transoms and a bas relief medallion of the Coral Gables Woman's Club logo and the date, 1923 (organizational date). Two jalousied windows flank the entrance bay. Two one story flat roofed additions of similar exterior materials flank the main block. The west elevation of the main block contains four evenly spaced buttresses surmounted by a capital carved with an indigenous flora or fauna motif.

The west elevation, along Ponce de Leon Boulevard, contains a one story connector building between the Woman's Club (main block) and the Old Library. The connector was built to provide a formal pass-through between the east and west sides of the complex. To emphasize this, the connector was designed with cross-axis barrel tile gable roof and open formal entranceways. The entrance on the west elevation is flanked by two large pillars of oolitic limestone which have been carved in Depression Moderne styled designs depicting a robed female figure on the left and a robed male figure on the right. The apex of the oolitic limestone gable end between the two pillars features a

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Coral Gables Woman's Club

relief medallion of the Coral Gables Woman's Club logo and the date - 1923.

The west elevation of the Old Library displays a centrally located 11'8" tall, Palladian window motif with a semi-circular transom with the following configuration: a 6 light fan transom over a 6 light fixed sash over a 6/6 double hung wood sash, flanked by 6 pane sidelights. Two 6/6 double hung wood sash windows flank the central bay. All three bays are the original fenestration with opaque replacement glass in the semi-circular transoms due to a lowered ceiling height. (Please see alterations portion of Section 7).

The south elevation is detailed with paired 9/9 double hung wood sash windows centrally located between buttresses surmounted by carved capitals depicting indigenous flora and fauna motifs. The western 1951 addition of the south elevation is dominated centrally by a Palladian window.

The rear (east) elevation of the Old Library feature a Palladian style window duplicating the west elevation. Flanking the window are flat buttresses with carved capitals. Stepped out from the end wall of the main building is a one story section detailed with clay barrel tile slope-front gable roofs at the north and south ends with a flat roof separating the two gable roofs.

The north elevation of the Old Library repeats the design of the south elevation with the exception of two huge oolitic limestone chimneys located on the exterior of the wall near the east and west ends of the original portion of the building. The chimneys feature no ornamentation but are noteworthy for their size.

INTERIOR

The main room of the Woman's Club building is an auditorium with an oval patterned terrazo floor and exposed rafters and trussed wood beamed ceiling above. Suspended from the ceiling are original color tinted chandeliers. Matching wall sconces occur periodically throughout the auditorium and adjoining rooms.

A large wall mural depicting a Seminole Indian family in a canoe in the Everglades taking their chickens to market is rendered in somber shades of brown, ochre, green and blue on the

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Coral Gables Woman's Club

south wall. The wall mural was painted in 1936 by Dewing Woodward, and restored in 1988. The east, west, and north walls of the auditorium are linked by a continuous frieze which runs above the windows. This frieze, designed by Cora Parker and painted by several artists, depicts flocks of Roseate Spoonbills, Ibis, and typical Florida plant life including the Royal Poinciana trees. The colors have faded but still present a rich blend of corals, blues, greens, and browns.

The east wall (originally an exterior wall) of the auditorium is shared with the 1949 assembly room addition to the east. This wall has been opened between the flat pilasters that once lined the east elevation of the original building. The pilasters now act as free-standing columns with wood collapsible doors spanning the distance between columns. Still visible on the assembly room side are the chiseled and carved capitals of the old pilasters/columns. Attached to each column is a wall sconce from the original 1936-37 era.

The interior of the Old Library is voluminous with its oolitic limestone walls rising approximately twelve feet to the wood beamed and trussed exposed ceiling. Details in the form of hand painted rafter beams and trusses displaying motifs associated with learning—the scroll, the lamp of learning, the book adorn the room. Huge wrought iron chandeliers are suspended from the trusses and beams. Two fireplaces on the north wall are very with slightly projecting mantels of oolitic limestone.

ALTERATIONS

The Coral Gables Woman's Club has had three additions in 1948, 1951, and 1957. (See Map: Additions A, B, and C.)

To the east of the central portion of the original Woman's Club Building is a 1948 addition which was designed by William H. Merriam to house an assembly room (see Map A). The addition extends the facade of the original building 24'2-1/4" to the east and back 51' south, the length of the main building. The construction material is oolitic limestone matching the stone of the main building and the roof is flat (gravel). Windows are jalousied and occur in groups of three with two groupings across the facade and three groupings along the east side.

On the west side of the Coral Gables Woman's Club building is a 1957 addition designed by the firm of Houston & Ferguson as

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Coral Gables Woman's Club

a dental clinic (See Map B). This addition extends the facade of the original building 24'4" to the west and runs 15'8" south, the length of the main building. The construction materials and roof configuration match that of the east 1948 addition. The jalousied windows of the west addition occur across the facade in a 2, 1, 2 bay pattern, and along the west elevation in a single grouping of three.

The original public library building received an addition in 1951 which carried it to the west (See Map C). The addition was designed by architect H. George Fink, and is described under the category "physical appearance."

THE FOUNTAIN

A sculpture in a two-tiered octagonal basin is located to the north of the entrance to the Coral Gables Woman's Club. Each of the faces of the basin features a Depression Moderne carving of typical South Florida flora and fauna. Originally designed as a fountain, the octagonal basin was never outfitted with the necessary plumbing, and instead has always been used as a planter. Centrally located in the basin is a square pillar with each of its four sides featuring a nude figure in relief carving.

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Coral Gables Woman's Club

SUMMARY

The Coral Gables Woman's Club is significant at the local level under Criterion C in the area of architecture, and Criterion A in the areas of community planning, and social history. The building, a product of the Works Progress Administration, is a very rare example of Depression Moderne architecture that is extremely uncharacteristic of the City of Coral Gables. The building was designed and constructed by the Works Progress Administration to house the Coral Gables Woman's Club and the Coral Gables Public Library. The Woman's Club is responsible for the creation of the City's first public library, which opened its doors in November, 1927, in the historic Douglas Entrance building. By 1936, the library had so dramatically expanded that a new facility was needed. With the assistance of the City of Coral Gables, (who donated an entire block of land), and the Federal government's Works Progress Administration, the Coral Gables Public Library/Coral Gables Woman's Club was constructed.

HISTORIC CONTEXT
Criterion A

The City of Coral Gables, Florida's premier boomtime development, began in 1921 when the first lots were sold by developer George Merrick. Merrick's scheme for the City incorporated every possible suburban amenity, all designed within the framework of a Mediterranean Revival styled architectural theme.

Competition for lots sales in South Florida during the late 1910s and early 1920s was intense, as a growing number of development entrepreneurs dredged land from the Biscayne Bay in the Miami area, built bridges to previously uninhabited islands, and removed the dense hammock to create home sites. Merrick's development was a complete success as his creation was a product of a melding of inspired talents which included architects, landscape architects, and fine artists.

The development was directed towards modest and higher incomes, and the youthful as well as the elderly. As such, the Coral Gables Corporation, with Merrick as its chief executive, took into account a full range of the medical, inspirational, and recreational needs of its residents.

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Coral Gables Woman's Club

The City was overwhelmingly affected by the increasingly bleak economy of the late 1920s. By the October stock market crash in 1929, it was apparent that the Florida Land Boom was over. Building and improvements ceased, the Bank of Coral Gables collapsed, and George Merrick was asked to resign from the City Commission of the City he founded. By 1933, the greater Miami area was showing some signs of recovery while the rest of the country was in the financial grasp of the Great Depression.

Criterion C

The Art Deco and Moderne styles of architecture describe a number of artistic architectural movements which spread across the United States during the 1920s and 1930s. The major movements are known as Art Deco or Zig Zag Moderne, Streamline Moderne, and W.P.A. or Depression Moderne. The Art Deco architecture associated with Dade County and Miami Beach, a local adaptation of these styles, combines Streamline Moderne massing with Art Deco applied details based on tropical symbols.

The Art Deco style came to the United States after the Paris Exposition of 1925, where the style was featured as a reconciliation between the (decorative) arts and advancements in industry and technology. The style is a relaxed form of the later hardline architecture, devoid of any ornamentation, known as the International style. It offers a new language for applied decoration, based on abstract organic forms and geometric patterns, executed in the latest materials and methods of construction available. Forms are angular, often with stepped back facades. In South Florida, nautical and tropical motifs are the main source of artistic inspiration. Palm trees, flamingoes, pelicans, native flora and fauna, the moon and the ocean are among the favorite decorative themes, expressed in bas-relief stucco panels, etched glass and murals.

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, the United States government initiated a series of programs aimed at giving jobs to the nation's thousand of unemployed. The Public Works Administration (P.W.A.) commissioned construction of new roads, government buildings and other public improvements. The Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) created works for artists through the commissioning of murals, sculptures, and other embellishments for public buildings. The architecture of these programs produced a style with the distinctive traits of the Streamline Moderne, but with a return to more conservative,

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Coral Gables Woman's Club

traditional vocabulary, befitting the governmental nature of these works. Classical elements were reintroduced, replacing the more playful forms and details of earlier years.

Just as the Art Deco style reflected the exuberance and wealth of the 1920s, the Depression Moderne style paralleled the somber mood of the 1930s. The richly encrusted motifs and luxurious materials of the earlier style were replaced by architectural designs with formal balance and restrained ornamentation that imply a quiet grandeur.

These imposing Depression Moderne buildings often had long windows arranged in recessed panels between masonry piers for vertical emphasis. Frequently, however, the architect achieved a strong horizontal line using regular formations of unadorned, squared window openings. Roofs were flat and minimally trimmed in contrast to the opulently embellished parapets of the Art Deco style. Exterior surfaces are smooth rather than richly patterned. Purged of their excesses, 1920s Moderne motifs emerged as chaste designs in the relief sculptures and ironwork used for decorative emphasis on these elegant buildings. By removing all frill from their compositions, architects merged Neo-classical details with a sprinkling of simplified Art Deco style motifs to produce a spare, dignified style.

The Federal government created two major sub-agencies to oversee the decoration of buildings being erected under the Federal building program. The Public Works of Art Project (P.W.A.P.), January, 1934-June, 1934, was replaced by the Temporary Emergency Relief Administration (TERA). In the Fall of 1935, the Works Progress Administration Federal Art Project (WPA/FAP) provided employment at craftsman's wages to artists for murals, sculptures, paintings and other forms of artwork.

When the Federal government assumed the role of art patron in the 1930s, it unconsciously changed the direction of contemporary art. For the first time, art was commissioned on a large scale, with purchase dependent on quality rather than on the established fame of the artist. Allowing relatively unknown regional artist, selected on the basis of professional qualifications and need for employment, to participate in W.P.A. design competitions effectively broke down the long monopoly of these established artists in works produced for public facilities. In addition W.P.A. funding allowed impoverished American artists the opportunity to devote themselves wholly to

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Coral Gables Woman's Club

the business of producing art. Large W.P.A. mural projects brought artists together in an "esprit de corps" as well as providing the experience to create large area art instead of the limited easel picture previously allowed for promising artists.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

In the Fall of 1923, a small group of women began meeting in a private residence. That group formally met on March 2, 1924, with forty-nine women present. They were the nucleus of the Coral Gables Woman's Club. In May, 1924, the club affiliated with the Dade County Federation of Woman's Clubs.

During these formative years, the Club met in temporary quarters in the Country Club of Coral Gables. As their numbers continued to grow, Merrick allowed the Club the use of the "Cathedral Room" in the Douglas Entrance, at S. W. 8th Street, and Douglas Road, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1972.

The Club had as its primary goal the establishment of a public library. After months of planning and the support of the City's administration, the first free public library opened in November, 1927. The City provided \$2,500 a year for the library which was managed and operated by the Woman's Club Library Committee.

The Coral Gables Woman's Club never lost their desire for their ultimate goal-to have a clubhouse of their own. The library had continued to expand, and by 1935, was circulating over 5,000 books a month. In 1935, the Woman's Club entered into an agreement with the City of Coral Gables to establish their permanent home. The City donated a block of land in the Douglas Section, in close proximity to their former space in the Douglas Entrance, and appropriated annual funds for its operation. The Club was in turn obligated to raise \$10,000 to construct the building.

Largely due to the efforts of Mrs. Don Peabody, club president from 1926-1928, the first Public Library in Coral Gables was established. As chairman of the Library Committee, she and other members worked for months contacting approximately three hundred authors, requesting them to donate their works towards the establishment of a free public library. With these donations and furniture provided through the generosity of the

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Coral Gables Woman's Club

Coral Gables Corporation, the library opened its doors in November, 1927.

As the City grew, so did the patrons of the library. Simultaneously, the roll of the Coral Gables Woman's Club swelled, necessitating larger quarters for the library and the club itself. Under the leadership of Mrs. Louis E. Lanford, President of the Woman's Club from 1925-1938, the present building was constructed. The Club entered into an agreement with the City, which furnished a block of land, and the Club was asked to raise the \$10,000 necessary for its construction. The challenge of raising these substantial funds was met with enthusiasm through a variety of events and marketing initiatives.

The result of this civic/public partnership was the Coral Gables Woman's Club/Coral Gables Public Library Building. From the beginning, this building served an important community function, as the only public library in Coral Gables. By 1949, it had the largest per capita of readers for a city of its size, with over 27,000 volumes on its shelves.

The library continued to be operated by the Woman's Club until 1954, when the City of Coral Gables took over its operation. In 1969, the library joined with the Miami Public Library (forerunner to the county-wide system set up in 1971) and moved into their present facility on Segovia Avenue. The vacated space in the building was soon leased to the Junior Woman's Club of Coral Gables, who continued to occupy the facility today.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Coral Gables Woman's Club is architecturally significant as the only example of the Depression Moderne style within the City of Coral Gables. In addition, it is one of only a few buildings of this style in Florida. While the City of Miami Beach, also located in Dade County, is known for its Art Deco styled buildings, the use of the Depression Moderne style by the WPA was extremely rare in Florida.

The building is distinctive as a fine example of the Depression Moderne style. As were many buildings in Dade County, the building makes use of the native oolitic limestone as a construction material. However, instead of being in the Mediterranean Revival style that was implicit in architecture within the City of Coral Gables until 1933, the Woman's Club was

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Coral Gables Woman's Club

designed and constructed in the style so closely associated with the W.P.A., that it is commonly referred to as the Depression, or W.P.A. style of architecture.

The alterations to the buildings have been made to incorporate, or closely replicate, the authentic materials of the original structure including wall bricks, windows, and decorative wood sashes. The alterations do not adversely affect the architectural integrity of the structure. Rather, they lend credence to the significance of the building within the city as reflected in the design requirements of later architects to preserve the Depression Moderne style above anything else.

The interior of the Coral Gables Woman's Club is significant also as an excellent example of the use of local architects in the design and implementation of murals through the W.P.A. program. Local artists provided interior decoration for the Club house that reflects the local history of the area through a style closely associated with the Great Depression Era. As there was limited building in Coral Gables during the 1930s, and little if any of it reflected the Depression Moderne style of art and architecture, the Coral Gables Woman's Club is indeed a unique historic resource.

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- City of Coral Gables, Landmark Site Work Sheet. Historic
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Coral Gables Woman's Club

1. Coral Gables Woman's Club
2. Coral Gables, Florida
3. Ellen Uguccioni
4. 1988
5. Historic Preservation Division, City of Coral Gables
6. Front elevation facing south
7. Photo 1

Items 1-5 are identical for photographs 1-23.

6. Fountain and main facade facing south
7. Photo 1A

6. East elevation facing southwest
7. Photo 2

6. East elevation facing southwest
7. Photo 2A

6. East elevation, connector building facing west
7. Photo 2B

6. East elevation, connector building facing west
7. Photo 3

6. 1948 east elevation addition facing west
7. Photo 3A

6. Back portion of east elevation facing southwest
7. Photo 3B

6. Original portion of east elevation facing west
7. Photo 4

6. South elevation facing north
7. Photo 5

6. South elevation facing north
7. Photo 6

6. South elevation facing north
7. Photo 7

6. End of 1951 west elevation addition facing east
7. Photo 8

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- 6. West elevation facing northeast
- 7. Photo 9

- 6. North elevation of rear building facing southeast
- 7. Photo 10

- 6. Central portion of west elevation facing southeast
- 7. Photo 11

- 6. Connector building at west elevation facing east
- 7. Photo 12

- 6. West elevation facing northeast
- 7. Photo 13

- 6. Detail of west elevation facing east
- 7. Photo 14

- 6. Front portion of west elevation facing east
- 7. Photo 15

- 6. Fountain facing northeast
- 7. Photo 16

- 6. Old library building facing west (east elevation)
- 7. Photo 17

- 6. Old library building facing east (west elevation)
- 7. Photo 18

- 6. Connector building facing east
- 7. Photo 19

- 6. Front elevation facing south
- 7. Photo 20

- 6. Interior frieze facing east
- 7. Photo 21

- 6. Interior of old library facing south
- 7. Photo 22

- 6. Interior main building facing south
- 7. Photo 23

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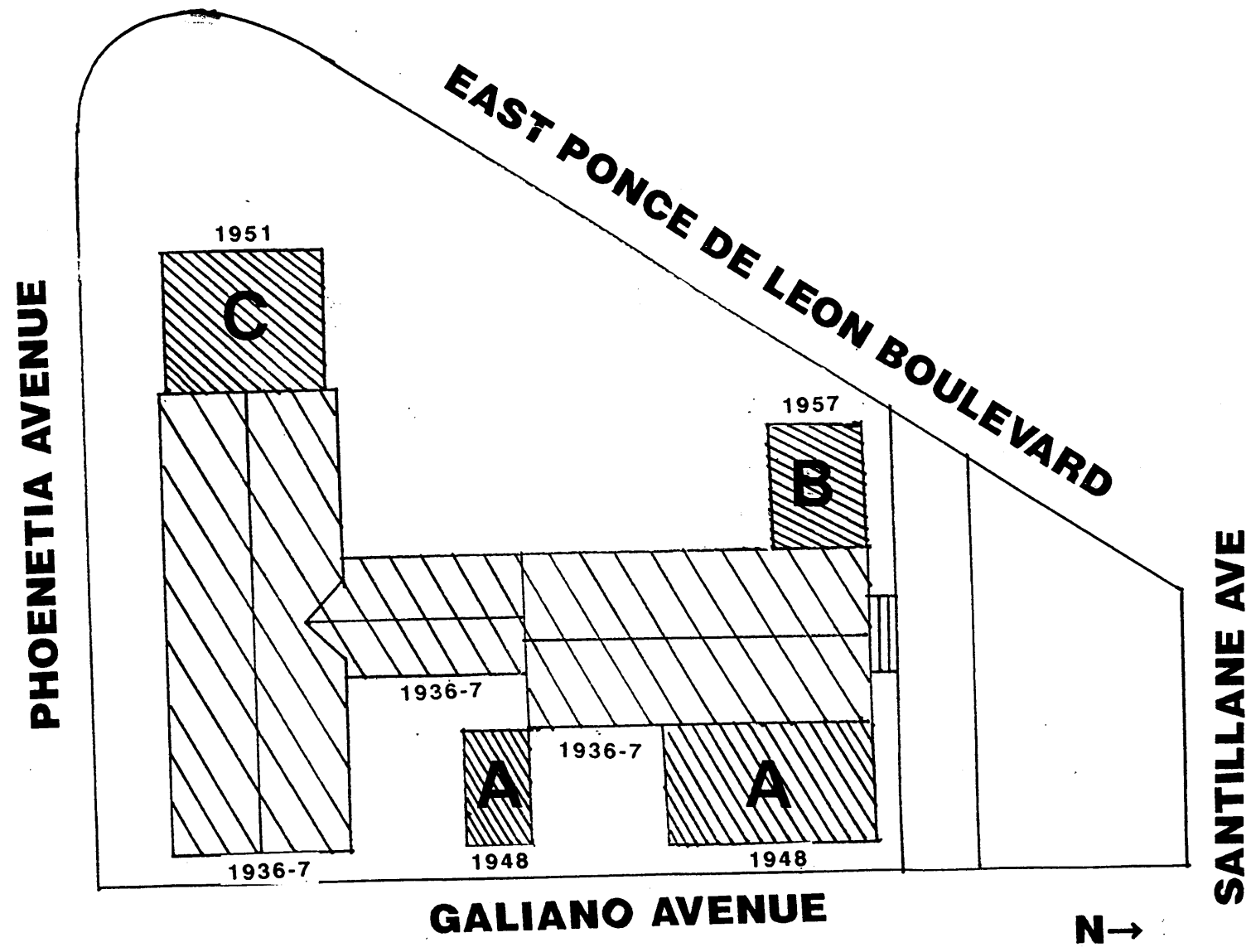
Coral Gables Woman's Club

1. Coral Gables Woman's Club
2. Coral Gables, Florida
3. Unknown
4. 1938
5. Historic Preservation Division, City of Coral Gables
6. Historic Photo of Old library building facing southeast
7. Photo 24

1. Coral Gables Woman's Club
2. Coral Gables, Florida
3. Unknown
4. 1938
5. Historic Preservation Division, City of Coral Gables
6. Interior historic Photo of old library building facing west
7. Photo 25



CORAL GABLES WOMAN'S CLUB

CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA



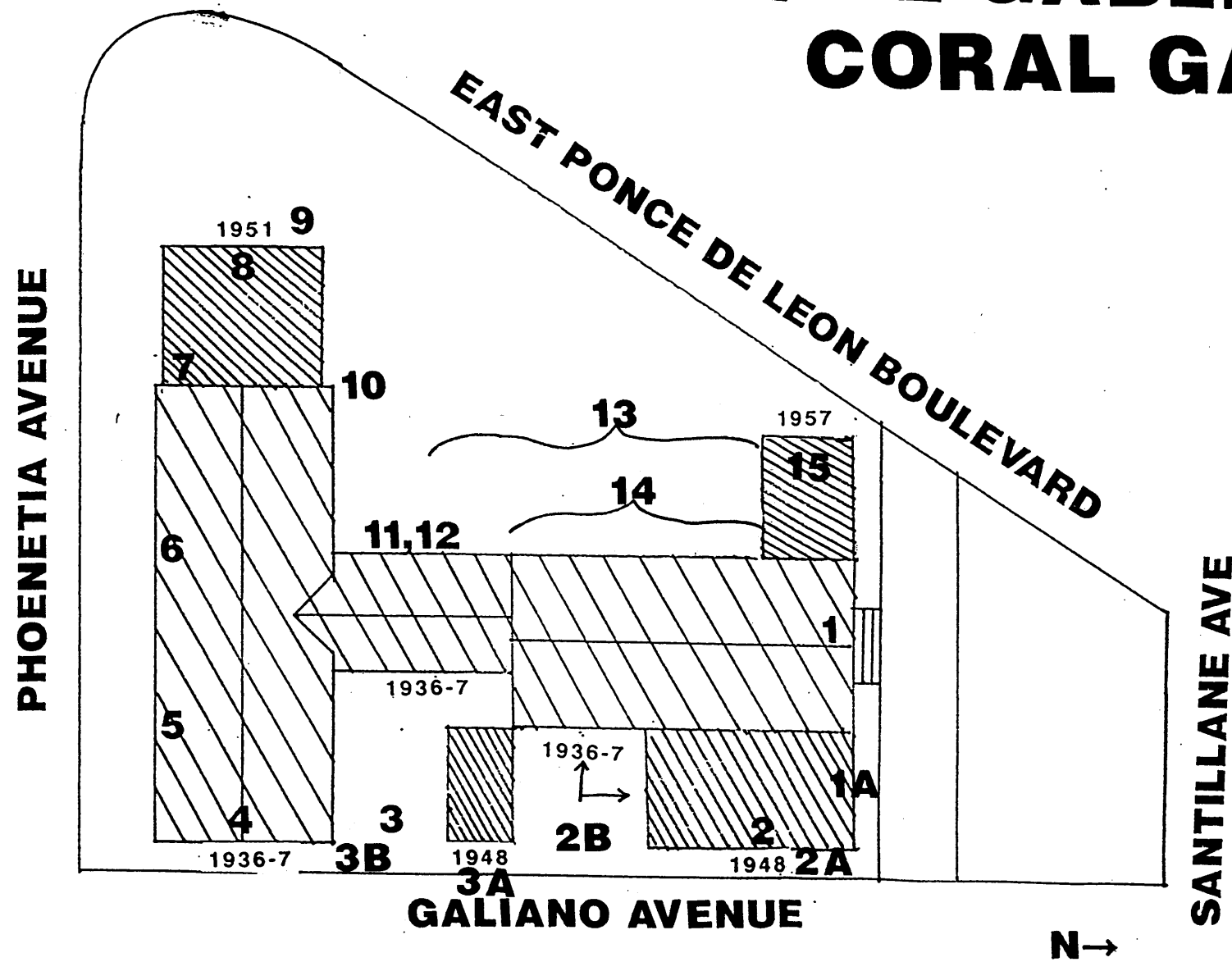
Scale 1" = 20'

LEGEND

	Original Building
	Additions

PHOTOGRAPH KEY

CORAL GABLES WOMAN'S CLUB CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA



Scale 1" = 20'

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION
SECTION