NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

NAME
HISTORIC
ROOM 307 GILMAN HALL, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
AND/OR COMMON
SAME

LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER
Campus, University of California, Berkeley
CITY, TOWN
Berkeley
STATE
California
COUNTY
Alameda
VICINITY OF

CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY
DISTRICT
BUILDING(S)
STRUCTURE
SITE
OBJECT

OWNERSHIP
PUBLIC
PRIVATE
BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION
IN PROCESS
BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS
OCCUPIED
UNOCCUPIED
WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
YES: RESTRICTED
YES: UNRESTRICTED
NO

PRESENT USE
AGRICULTURE
COMMERCIAL
PARK
EDUCATIONAL
PRIVATE RESIDENCE
ENTERTAINMENT
REligious
GOVERNMENT
SCIENTIFIC
INDUSTRIAL
TRANSPORTATION
MILITARY
OTHER

OWNER OF PROPERTY
NAME
The University of California at Berkeley
STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Berkeley
STATE

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Alameda County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Oakland
STATE

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE

DATE

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE
Room 307 Gilman Hall is part of the attic of Gilman Hall, and is still used as a research laboratory. The building and the room derive their importance only from the events which transpired within during the late 1930's and early 1940's. Nothing remains from that period in the room which would suggest a connection with the discovery of Plutonium. The room has been refitted many times, with more and more advanced experimental equipment, while a partition which had divided the space into rooms 307-A and 307-B was removed when the National Landmark designation was made in March 1966. Gilman Hall stands near the center of the campus of the University of California at Berkeley.
### Areas of Significance

- **Prehistoric**
- **Archeology-Preliminary**
- **Archeology-Historic**
- **Agriculture**
- **Architecture**
- **Art**
- **Commerce**
- **Communications**
- **Community Planning**
- **Conservation**
- **Economics**
- **Education**
- **Engineering**
- **Exploration/Settlement**
- **Industry**
- **Invention**
- **Law**
- **Literature**
- **Military**
- **Music**
- **Philosophy**
- **Politics/Government**
- **Religion**
- **Science**
- **Sculpture**
- **Social/Humanitarian**
- **Theater**
- **Transportation**
- **Other (Specify)**

### Specific Dates

- **February, 1941**

### Builder/Architect

- Irrelevant

### Statement of Significance

In this small research laboratory at the University of California at Berkeley, the man-made element Plutonium was first identified. From that day in February 1941, atomic research continued until ultimately a new source of energy had been developed. Had it not been for the momentous discovery here, neither the atomic explosives used in 1945 to end the War with Japan, nor the subsequent development of nuclear energy reactors would have been possible.

**History**

Although the possibility of extending the periodic table of elements had been considered many times, the hope of extension did not become realistic until 1934, when artificial radioactivity was discovered.

Ninety-two elements were then known, but in 1940, the first of the man-made elements was developed by bombarding uranium with neutrons until it captured a neutron and released an electron, thereby producing a new element, #93, Neptunium, an isotope of Uranium.

A few months later, five co-workers shared in the discovery of element 94, Plutonium, by the same process. They were: Arthur Wall, Edwin MacMillan, Glenn Seaborg, Emilio Segre, and J.W. Kennedy. By using a cyclotron to bombard uranium oxide with neutrons, they created another isotope, and the one which has been far more important than any other. Plutonium, used in a nuclear fission process, can be and has been used for both power-generation in a nuclear reactor, and as an atomic explosive. Doctors Seaborg and MacMillan later shared a Nobel Prize for their work in this field.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Encyclopedia Brittanica

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than 1

UTM REFERENCES

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Room 307 Gilman Hall, consists quite simply of a room in the attic storey of this science building at the University of California at Berkeley.

The physical aspects of neither the room nor the building are of any great consequence, other than as the site of certain important experiments early in the history of the development of atomic energy. The accompanying site map, entitled...

FORM PREPARED BY

James Dillon, Architectural Historian
National Historic Landmarks

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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 CERTIFICATION

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
"University of California, Berkeley, Central Campus Area" copyright 1965, The University of California, shows Gilman Hall encircled in red pencil. The accompanying USGS map also shows the location of Gilman Hall within the University Campus. The acreage of Gilman Hall, the logical boundary for the room within, is less than one acre.

The boundary of the landmark is coterminus with that of Gilman Hall. Beginning at a point approximately 100' from the southeast corner of Le Conte Hall, proceed in a northwest direction approximately 150'; thence northeast approximately 60'; thence southeast 150'; thence southwest approximately 60' to the point of origin.