

HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

Ser. No. _____
HABS _____ HAER _____ Loc _____ SHL No. _____ NR Status 4
UTM: A _____ C _____
B _____ D _____

IDENTIFICATION

1. Common name: Porter-Sesnon House
2. Historic name: Porter-Sesnon Estate
3. Street or rural address: corner of Soquel Drive and Cabrillo College Drive (Aptos Area)
City Aptos Zip 95003 County Santa Cruz
4. Parcel number: 039-251-17
5. Present Owner: Cabrillo College Address: 6500 Soquel Drive
City Aptos Zip 95003 Ownership is: Public Private _____
6. Present Use: Education Original use: Residence

DESCRIPTION

- 7a. Architectural style: Spanish Colonial Revival
- 7b. Briefly describe the present *physical appearance* of the site or structure and describe any major alterations from its original condition:

The stuccoed central block with prominent entry recessed between two large projecting bays is hip roofed with clay barrel tiles typical of the Spanish Colonial and Mission Revival styles emerging when this structure was erected. The entrance portico with paired doric columns is paved with clay tile and brick. Leaded obscure glass enriches the arched and conventional windows of the first floor of the facade, one of which is barred with turned rajas, another Spanish Colonial Revival detail. Wrought metalwork embellishes the second floor windows of the facade as well as the glass paneled oak entry doors with 'S' designs for Sesnon. Altogether the structure is a conventional Beaux Arts classically inspired one overlaid with Spanish derived detailing. Architects Ward and Blohme of San Francisco, designers of the County Bank of Santa Cruz, seem to have been comfortable designing institutional structures.

The brick stairs leading to the entrance doors have been replaced relatively recently and a wrought iron railing added without detracting from the building's appearance measurably. Less well executed additions have been made to the two side elevations where they are less noticeable, however. To the south, a ca. 1920s era addition constructed of less expensive building materials and poorer workmanship generally, is itself modified with a graceless wood framed handicapped access ramp. A portion of the exterior circulation corridor has been enclosed with vertical grooved plywood and aluminium windows. To the north, a wood framed utility staircase intrudes upon the former side entry, still surmounted by a pergola at the second floor level. The rear verandah appears to represent another early modification to the structure of unknown date.



8. Construction date: 1911
Estimated _____ Factual
9. Architect firm of Ward & Blohme
10. Builder William Sesnon
11. Approx. property size (in feet)
Frontage _____ Depth _____
or approx. acreage _____
12. Date(s) of enclosed photograph(s)
June 26, 1988

13. Condition: Excellent ___ Good ___ X Fair ___ Deteriorated ___ No longer in existence ___
14. Alterations: yes, the rear porch has been enclosed
15. Surroundings: (Check more than one if necessary) Open land ___ Scattered buildings ___ Densely built-up ___
Residential ___ Industrial ___ Commercial ___ Other: institutional (church, college)
16. Threats to site: None known X Private development ___ Zoning ___ Vandalism ___
Public Works project ___ Other: ___
17. Is the structure: On its original site? X Moved? ___ Unknown? ___
18. Related features: none

SIGNIFICANCE

19. Briefly state historical and/or architectural importance (include dates, events, and persons associated with the site.)

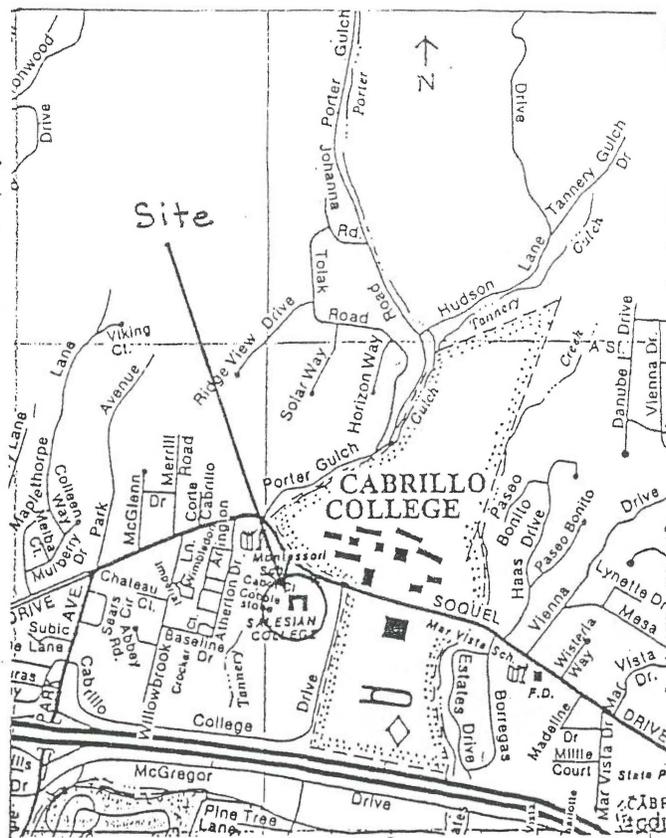
The house was built by William T. Sesnon and his wife, Mary Sophie Porter, in honor of her father, Benjamin Franklin Porter. The father was an early Soquel pioneer and tannery owner. The house was built as a family summer home. The architect was the firm of Ward & Blohme, which described the structure as a combination of Moorish, mission and American architecture. They dubbed the design as Californian in style. The family named the property "Pino Alto" or High Pine. The home was built at a cost of between \$60,000-\$70,000.

The home was sold by the Sesnon family in the 1940's to the Salesian Brothers and Sisters, who sold it to Cabrillo College in June 1974.

20. Main theme of the historic resource: (If more than one is checked, number in order of importance.)
 Architecture ___ Arts & Leisure ___
 Economic/Industrial ___ Exploration/Settlement ___
 Government ___ Military ___
 Religion ___ Social/Education X

21. Sources (List books, documents, surveys, personal interviews and their dates).
 Article, Ann Conyin, The Register-Pajaronian, Aug. 15, 1978.
 Article, Carolyn Heebner-Swift, Register Pajaronian, Nov. 30, 1979. Article, Register-Pajaronian, Nov. 28, 1977.

22. Date form prepared September 1988
 By (name) Edna Kimbro
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Porter-Sesnon House (Soquel Drive)

ADDENDUM—1994

PHYSICAL INSPECTION

Date: February 2, 1994

Result of Inspection: No apparent changes.

CONSULTANT'S PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS:

No change.

(Change of rating pending public hearing before the Historical Resources Commission with final approval by the Board of Supervisors).

Context: 2 (architecture)
Property type: house