

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: California

COUNTY: Santa Clara

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	OCT 30 1973

1. NAME

COMMON: T. B. Downing House

AND/OR HISTORIC: same

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 706 Cowper Street

CITY OR TOWN: Palo Alto

STATE: California	CODE: 06	COUNTY: Santa Clara	CODE: 085
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
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4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Pernice G. Seavey (one of 5 relatives who own building jointly)

STREET AND NUMBER: 183 Thompson Square

CITY OR TOWN: Mt. View

STATE: California

CODE: 06

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Santa Clara County Recorder's Office

STREET AND NUMBER: 191 North First Street

CITY OR TOWN: San Jose

STATE: California

CODE: 06

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: A.A.U.W.

DATE OF SURVEY: 1971

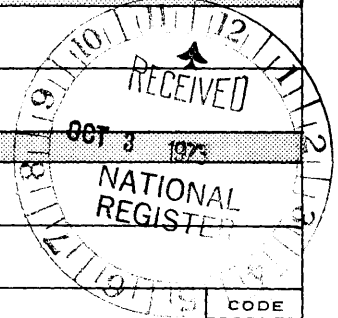
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Palo Alto Historical Association's archives

STREET AND NUMBER: Main Library -- Newell Road

CITY OR TOWN: Palo Alto

STATE: California

CODE: 06



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☒ Fair ☐ Deteriorated ☐ Ruins ☐ Unexposed

(Check One)

☐ Altered ☒ Unaltered

(Check One)

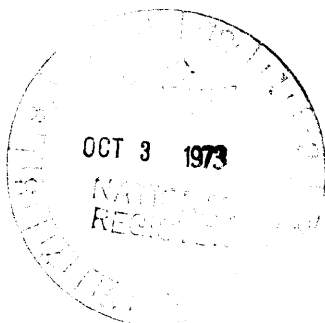
☐ Moved ☒ Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Downing House is rich in decorative features. Outstanding is the round corner tower with its finial, brackets, dentil and window molding, as well as the different types of shingles. The gable is used in the facade three times: over the porch, at the second floor roof line, and on the attic dormer. The rich motifs on the bargeboards and in the peaks are also repeated. The porch abounds with more of what is often called gingerbread: the columns, the balustrade, and the spindles at the eaves. On the side of the house is still another gable below which is a slanted bay framing a round window. The popular bracket and pendant decoration softens the cut-off corners.

The exterior has been unaltered through June 1972, when a fire confined to the third floor caused smoke discoloration at that level and partially destroyed the roof.

The interior was divided into five apartments many years ago, but the original elaborate woodwork and fixtures have remained. The recent fire will require considerable construction work on the third floor.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

3. 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)

1894

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal

☐ Education

☐ Political

☐ Urban Planning

☐ Prehistoric

☐ Engineering

☐ Religion/Phi-

☐ Other (Specify)

☐ Historic

☐ Industry

losophy

☐ Agriculture

☐ Invention

☐ Science

☒ Architecture

☐ Landscape

☐ Sculpture

☐ Art

Architecture

☐ Social/Human-

☐ Commerce

☐ Literature

itarian

☐ Communications

☐ Military

☐ Theater

☐ Conservation

☐ Music

☐ Transportation

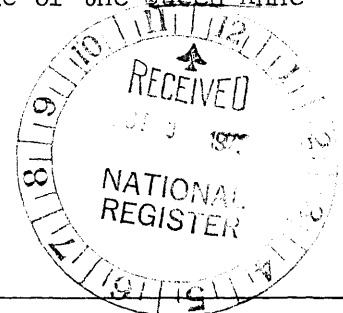
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The following statement has been condensed from ...Gone Tomorrow?, a publication on Palo Alto's architectural heritage, published in 1971 by the American Association of University Women, Palo Alto, California Branch:

In 1890 Palo Alto was a grain field with five houses. The reason for Palo Alto's founding was the founding of Stanford University. The early close ties with the university were largely responsible for Palo Alto's solid origins and consequent growth. The nucleus of the new town in the grain field was immediately around University Avenue. There were located what contemporary newspapers called the "neat cottages," the homes of the artisans and merchants. Sprinkled between were the homes of the more affluent, known as "handsome residences." Toward the bay were the dairies, orchards, and strawberry ranches.

In Palo Alto's first decade there were occasional undeveloped blocks even near the center of town. T. B. Downing, a member of the first city council of Palo Alto and an early member of the school board, had one of the largest and most ornate homes in the fast-disappearing grain fields, built in 1894 at 706 Cowper.

This house is the most outstanding, extant example of the Queen Anne Style in Palo Alto.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

A.A.U.W., Palo Alto Branch. Gone Tomorrow? Palo Alto, California, 1971.
Palo Alto Times, September 18, 1916.
Palo Alto Times, September 14, 1894.
Palo Alto Live Oak, January 1, 1900.

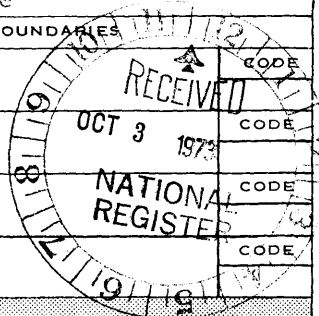
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES			
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE			
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"		
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"		
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
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:



UTM
10/57470
414453
CD

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Gay Woolley		R
ORGANIZATION -----	DATE 28 June 1973	
STREET AND NUMBER: 1605 Mariposa Avenue		
CITY OR TOWN: Palo Alto	STATE California	CODE

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]
State Historic Preservation Officer
Title

SEP 11 1973

Date

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

[Signature]
Associate Director, Professional
Services

Date OCT 30 1973

ATTEST:

[Signature]
Keeper of The National Register

Date

10-25-73



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

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COUNTY Santa Clara	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER OCT 30 1973	DATE

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COMMON: T. B. Downing House
AND/OR HISTORIC: same

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 706 Cowper Street

CITY OR TOWN: Palo Alto

STATE: California

CODE
06

COUNTY: Santa Clara

CODE
085

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Kenny Winter

DATE OF PHOTO: 28 June 1973

NEGATIVE FILED AT: Kenny Winter

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

The front, or northeast side, of house.

#1 of 2





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

#2 NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

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STREET AND NUMBER:

706 Cowper Street

CITY OR TOWN:

Palo Alto

STATE:

California

CODE

06

COUNTY:

Santa Clara

CODE

005

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Palo Alto Live Oak

DATE OF PHOTO: 1 January 1900

NEGATIVE FILED AT:

Palo Alto Historical Association

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

The front, or northeast side, of house.

2 of 2

