

= McAllister Tower Apartments =

McAllister Tower Apartments is a 28 @-@ story , 94 m ( 308 ft ) residential apartment skyscraper at 100 McAllister Street in San Francisco , California . The property is owned and operated by the University of California , Hastings College of the Law . The tower includes mixed @-@ use offices on various floors , and the Art Deco @-@ styled " Sky Room " with a panoramic view on the 24th floor .

Conceived as an unusual combination of a large church surmounted by a hotel , construction of the building brought architectural dispute . Initially designed by Timothy L. Pflueger in the style of Gothic Revival , the investors fired his firm and hired Lewis P. Hobart , who changed little of Pflueger 's design . In a resulting lawsuit , Pflueger won nearly half the damages he asked for . The building opened in 1930 as the William Taylor Hotel and Temple Methodist Episcopal Church . However , extra construction expenses had put the congregation at greater financial risk , and the church @-@ hotel concept did not prove popular . No profit was made in six years , and the church left , losing their investment . In the late 1930s the building housed the Empire Hotel , known for its Sky Room lounge , then from World War II to the 1970s , 100 McAllister served as U.S. government offices .

Reopening as university housing and offices in 1981 , McAllister Tower is home to some 300 law students and their families . " The Tower " is sited one block from the administrative and scholastic center of Hastings College of the Law , and is the most prominent building in the district .

= = History = =

= = = Church and hotel = = =

The skyscraper at 100 McAllister began in 1920 with a plan formulated by Reverend Walter John Sherman to merge four of the largest Methodist Episcopal congregations in San Francisco , sell their various churches and properties and combine their assets to build a " superchurch " with a hotel on top of it . From their initial \$ 800 @,@ 000 they bought property at McAllister and Leavenworth streets and hired the architectural firm of Miller and Pflueger to design the edifice . Timothy L. Pflueger was chosen as the designer . The new hotel , intended to be " dry " ( serving no alcoholic beverages ) in the " sinful " city , was to be named after William Taylor , a Methodist Episcopal street preacher and missionary who formed the first Methodist church in San Francisco . The large church was named Temple Methodist Episcopal Church , or simply " Temple Methodist " .

Beginning in 1925 , Pflueger designed a 308 ft ( 94 m ) , 28 @-@ story , step @-@ back skyscraper made of brick framed with steel , along the lines of his just @-@ completed Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Company Building . Its main decorative theme was neo @-@ Gothic , expressed strongly in the three Gothic arches which formed the main street @-@ level entrance for the church . The Great Hall , the large worship area located within the second , third and fourth floors was to seat 1 @,@ 500 churchgoers and a smaller chapel was designed for 125 more . A grand pipe organ from Skinner Organ Company was installed with four manuals controlling 3 @,@ 881 pipes . A stained glass window was placed 80 feet above the sanctuary , representing Faith , Love and Hope in three tall , narrow panels . Two assembly halls could be combined to hold 1 @,@ 100 attendees for theatrical or athletic events . Some 500 guest rooms and 32 tower apartments were intended to bring a steady flow of visitors and a source of profit to the church . Though never the tallest building in San Francisco , it was to be the tallest hotel on the Pacific Coast for many decades .

In a dispute , the architectural firm of Miller and Pflueger was fired from the project , and was replaced by Lewis P. Hobart . Miller and Pflueger sued for \$ 81 @,@ 600 , alleging that Hobart 's design was little changed from Pflueger 's original . Three months after the hotel and church opened in January 1930 , Miller and Pflueger won \$ 38 @,@ 000 in a favorable court decision .

Dedication of the church 's pipe organ took place August 31 , 1930 . The combined congregation was very satisfied with their new place of worship .

Eventually costing US \$ 2 @. @ 8 million ( \$ 40 million in current value ) , the building 's completion required several rounds of new financing from its investors in order to overcome unanticipated expenses . Unfortunately for the congregation , the idea of a hotel above a church didn 't attract the requisite number of guests and the venture failed to turn a profit .

From 1990 through 2001 , the church housed the theater of George Coates Performance Works ? an experimental multi @-@ media theater troupe that utilized the 60 foot high vaulted ceiling for projections .

= = = Empire Hotel = = =

By November 1936 , enough debt had accumulated that a bondholder 's protective committee foreclosed on the property , buying it back for \$ 750 @, @ 000 . The Temple Methodist congregation lost its investment and was asked to leave . The Skinner Opus pipe organ was removed to be sold to Occidental College in Los Angeles and rebuilt in their Thorne Hall . The three @-@ piece stained glass window was removed and exhibited , eventually making its way to Stockton , California where it was installed in the Morris Chapel at the University of the Pacific . The 100 McAllister building itself was refurbished : the church 's floor area was given over to parking , a coffee shop was built in part of the first floor lobby and the new enterprise opened again as the Empire Hotel , noted for completing , in 1938 , the first view lounge in the area , the Sky Room on the 24th floor . With plush carpeting , a large Art Deco @-@ style oval bar , and plate glass windows on all sides , the Sky Room provided a panoramic view of the city . Architect & Engineer wrote of the luxurious bar in April , 1938 , that it " has no prototype west of New York " , referring to Manhattan 's Rainbow Room which opened three @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half years earlier .

= = = Federal offices = = =

At the beginning of direct American involvement in World War II , the U.S. government bought the building and converted it to federal offices , officer billets , spaces used by the Army 's Ordnance Procurement department , a passport agency and an induction center run by the local draft board . The high vaulted ceiling of the Great Hall worship center was hidden by a dropped ceiling . After the war , the Internal Revenue Service moved offices into the building .

Many federal groups at 100 McAllister moved their offices in 1959 ? 1960 to the newly built federal building at 450 Golden Gate Avenue , later named the Phillip Burton Federal Building . Occupancy at 100 McAllister was low , though the United States Army Corps of Engineers moved their San Francisco District offices there in the 1960s , and local draftees were still required to appear there through the late 1960s . The San Francisco Selective Service System offices were located in the lower floors of the building during the Vietnam War .

= = = UC Hastings = = =

In 1978 , the University of California , Hastings College of the Law bought the building , the most prominent in the Tenderloin district , and began two years of refurbishment and redesign . Calling it " McAllister Tower " , 248 units were modernized for residential use by law students , and the building opened in 1981 with a combination of compact studio units as well as larger one- and two @-@ bedroom apartments taking up a total of 17 floors . The building , home to about 300 law students and their families , is casually referred to as " the Tower " by Hastings residents and faculty , who have but a one @-@ block commute to the law school 's main building at 200 McAllister .

The old Sky Room with its spectacular 360 @-@ degree view reopened in 1999 as the James Edgar Hervey Skyroom , in honor of alumnus James Edgar Hervey , Class of 1950 , a prominent San Diego trial lawyer . It is used as a space for student study by day ( no alcohol allowed ) and is available for special events in the evenings . Other floors of the building hold offices , apartments and residential conveniences . The mezzanine level contains a compact fitness center , the third and fourth floors contain classrooms and offices for political action groups and legal assistance

organizations , and the 22nd and 23rd floors hold publishing headquarters for a number of scholarly journals .

The Great Hall remains un @-@ refurbished and has been judged by UC Hastings to be in need of substantial repair and improvement , including major architectural engineering work . The college has plans to create a 400 @-@ seat performing arts venue within the Great Hall .