Text for the Julia Morgan Building Historic Plaque

Theo Armour ~ 2025-01-18

# Text 1

This facility was commissioned by the San Francisco Ladies Protection and Relief Society, a nonprofit found in 1853. The building was designed in 1923 by Pritzker Prize–winning architect Julia Morgan. It opened in 1925 to provide care for elderly women, as well as convalescent women and children. The facility is now the home to a retirement community for the elderly offering inclusive contracts that include apartments, meals, housekeeping, and on-site medical care.

Modeled in the Tudor Revival style, the exterior features brick walls, terracotta ornaments, leaded glass windows and a slate roof; its earthquake resistance comes from a reinforced concrete framework. The Terracotta column capitals, window architraves and other decorations throughout the building often depict a four-petaled Tudor rose, a motif traditionally associated with love and protection.

A spacious garden stretches the entire length of one block, and midway down two side streets. With the building set back from the streets, dramatic views are afforded from three three different streets.

# Text 2

Commissioned by the San Francisco Ladies’ Protection and Relief Society—a nonprofit founded in 1853—this facility was designed in 1923 by Julia Morgan, the renowned, Pritzker Prize–winning architect. Completed in 1925, it originally served elderly women as well as convalescent women and children. Today, it houses a retirement community offering comprehensive amenities such as apartments, meals, housekeeping, and on-site medical care.

Built in the Tudor Revival style, the structure showcases brick walls, terra-cotta ornamentation, leaded glass windows, and a slate roof. Its seismic stability derives from a reinforced concrete frame. Throughout the building, terra-cotta column capitals, window architraves, and other details often feature a four-petaled Tudor rose—a symbol traditionally associated with love and protection.

A spacious garden runs the full length of one city block and extends down two side streets. Because the building is set back from the roadway, it commands striking views from multiple vantage points.

# Text 3

In 1923, the San Francisco Ladies' Protection and Relief Society commissioned Julia Morgan—California's first licensed female architect and a pioneer of reinforced concrete construction—to design a revolutionary care facility. Completed in 1925, this impressive Tudor Revival structure originally served as a sanctuary for elderly women, convalescents, and children in need, continuing the Society's mission of protection and support that began with its founding in 1853.

Morgan's masterful design marries beauty with innovation. The building's elegant brick exterior is enriched with intricate terra-cotta ornamentation, particularly the recurring four-petaled Tudor rose motif—a traditional symbol of love and protection that appears in column capitals, window architraves, and decorative details throughout. Leaded glass windows and a slate roof complete the Tudor aesthetic, while a hidden reinforced concrete frame provides crucial seismic resilience for the Bay Area location.

The property's thoughtful siting enhances its architectural presence. Set back from the street, the building is surrounded by a magnificent garden that spans an entire city block and wraps around two side streets. This generous setback creates compelling views of the structure from multiple angles while providing residents with a peaceful, park-like setting. Today, the building continues its legacy of care as a modern retirement community, offering comprehensive amenities including apartments, dining services, housekeeping, and on-site medical care—a testament to both Morgan's enduring design and the Society's ongoing commitment to elder care.

# Text 4

Designed by pioneering architect Julia Morgan, this Tudor Revival building exemplifies the marriage of social reform and architectural excellence in early 20th-century San Francisco. Commissioned by the Ladies' Protection and Relief Society (founded 1853), it originally served elderly women, convalescents, and children in need. The structure showcases Morgan's mastery of both aesthetics and engineering, featuring brick walls, terra-cotta ornaments, leaded glass windows, and a slate roof, all strengthened by an innovative reinforced concrete frame. The recurring Tudor rose motif throughout symbolizes the Society's mission of protection and care. Set within a block-long garden, the building continues its historic role today as a retirement community.