

Here are a few words about our venue, adapted from *Under the Oaks: Two Hundred Years in Atherton* by Pamela Gullard and Nancy Lund:

Three houses built as wedding gifts for three sisters in the early years of the twentieth century have survived into the modern era. Known affectionately as “The Three Sisters,” they provide a link to one of the most famous of early Californians, Mark Hopkins, one of the Big Four railroad barons.

Edward Whiting Hopkins, Mark’s nephew, bought the properties beginning in 1883 with ten acres – for a mere \$17,000 – from the Menlo Park Association. In 1902, he added 33 acres from the John Doyle estate, and in 1905 he purchased an additional 14 acres from James L. Flood.

Edward Whiting Hopkins (1848-1926) came west to work for his Uncle Mark, the treasurer of the Central Pacific Railroad, in Sacramento. When Mark Hopkins died in 1878, Edward took over that role. He and his wife Georgina Smith had five children.

In 1901, daughter Edna married William Henry Taylor, a co-owner of the Risdon Iron Works, an engineering and shipbuilding firm. Edna and Will received half of the Doyle Estate purchase, a 17-acre property, in 1903. Here they built their residence, which will serve as our venue for DragonFest 2012.

The Greek and Georgian Revival home was designed by the prominent San Francisco architectural firm of Bliss and Faville, whose credits include the St. Francis Hotel. It was built between 1904-1907. In 1921, the home was the site of then-widowed Edna’s wedding to her second husband, Stuart Samuel Lowery, for whom the residence was renamed.

The house was the scene of a 2005 Decorators’ Showhouse, after having been restored to splendor by Richard and Barbara Pivnicka and Mark Nelson. The other two “Sisters” homes are located at 60 Parkwood Lane and 3 Atree Court, also in Atherton.