

Los Angeles Department of City Planning

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION

CASE NO.: CHC-2007-443-HCM

HEARING DATE: February 15, 2007
TIME: 10:00 AM
PLACE: City Hall, Room 1010
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA
90012

Location: 2706-2708 South Menlo Street
Council District: 8
Community Plan Area: South Los Angeles
Area Planning Commission: South Los Angeles
Neighborhood Council: Empowerment Congress
North Area
Legal Description: Lot 38 of Bancroft Tract

PROJECT: Historic-Cultural Monument Application for the
LOUISE PRATT HOUSE

REQUEST: Declare the property a Historic-Cultural Monument

**APPLICANT/
OWNER'S
REPRESENTATIVE:** Anna Marie Brooks
1109 Fourth Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90019

OWNER: Robert Edward Carrere & Karen Lynette Wright Carrere
2641 Orchard Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90007

RECOMMENDATION That the Cultural Heritage Commission:

1. **Take the property under consideration** as a Historic-Cultural Monument per Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 22.125 because the application and accompanying photo documentation suggest the submittal may warrant further investigation.
2. **Adopt** the report findings.

S. GAIL GOLDBERG, AICP
Director of Planning

[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Ken Bernstein, Manager
Office of Historic Resources

[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Lambert M. Giessinger, Architect
Office of Historic Resources

Prepared by:

[SIGNED ORIGINAL IN FILE]

Edgar Garcia, Preservation Planner
Office of Historic Resources

Attachments: January 10, 2007 Historic-Cultural Monument Application
ZIMAS Report

SUMMARY

Built in 1904, this two-and-a-half story residential building exhibits character-defining features of Swiss/Alpine Chalet and Craftsman-style architecture. The front-gabled wood-frame building has decorative wood trimmed fascia, triangular knee braces, and rafters. A half-length porch on the west façade encloses a slightly off-centered entrance and stained-glass window. The building's exterior features wood siding and composition shingle. The windows are fixed single and multi-pane, multi-pane and single pan casement, and a bay window. Significant interior spaces include an entry hall with beamed ceiling, original open stair landing and stairs, French doors, and built-in cabinetry.

The proposed Louise Pratt historic monument was designed in 1904 by an unidentified architect. The building was built for Louise Pratt, a real estate developer and philanthropist who was married to Edwin W. Pratt, an employee of the Los Angeles Electric Company and the Los Angeles Lighting Company, a pioneering electric utility in the 1880s.

The subject property may be significant as an example of the Swiss/Alpine Chalet and Craftsman style as well as its possible association with significant historical figures.

The subject property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (US-87000139) as a contributing property to the Menlo Avenue-29th Street Historic District.

Later alterations to the subject property include the addition of a detached garage and a stained-glass window (1979) to a preexisting window frame adjacent to the entrance.

CRITERIA

The criterion is the Cultural Heritage Ordinance which defines a historical or cultural monument as any site (including significant trees or other plant life located thereon) building or structure of particular historic or cultural significance to the City of Los Angeles, such as historic structures or sites in which the broad cultural, economic, or social history of the nation, State or community is reflected or exemplified, or which are identified with historic personages or with important events in the main currents of national, State or local history or which embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period style or method of construction, or a notable work of a master builder, designer or architect whose individual genius influenced his age.

FINDINGS

Based on the facts set forth in the summary and application, the Commission determines that the application is complete and that the property is significant enough to warrant further investigation as a potential Historic-Cultural Monument.

SIGNIFICANCE WORK SHEET

TYPE OR HAND PRINT IN ALL CAPITAL BLOCK LETTERS

Complete One or Both of the Upper and Lower Portions of This Page

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

THE Louise Pratt House IS AN IMPORTANT EXAMPLE OF
NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT

Swiss/Alpine Chalet Craftsman ARCHITECTURE
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE (SEE LINE 8)

AND MEETS THE CULTURAL HERITAGE ORDINANCE BECAUSE OF THE HIGH QUALITY OF ITS DESIGN AND THE RETENTION OF ITS ORIGINAL FORM, DETAILING AND INTEGRITY.

A N D / O R

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

THE Louise Pratt House WAS BUILT IN 1904
NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT YEAR BUILT

Louise Yelverton Shipman Pratt WAS IMPORTANT TO THE
NAME OF FIRST OR SIGNIFICANT OTHER

DEVELOPMENT OF LOS ANGELES BECAUSE she was a leading philanthropist and real estate investor/developer.

Please see accompanying biography for Louise Yelverton Shipman Pratt.

**HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT
APPLICATION**

TYPE OR HAND PRINT IN ALL CAPITAL BLOCK LETTERS

IDENTIFICATION

1. NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT Louise Pratt House
2. STREET ADDRESS 2706-2708 South Menlo Avenue (built as 2708 South Menlo Avenue)
CITY Los Angeles ZIP CODE 90007 COUNCIL DISTRICT 8
3. ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NO. 5055-008-024
4. COMPLETE LEGAL DESCRIPTION: TRACT Bancroft
BLOCK None LOT(S) 38 ARB. NO. None
5. RANGE OF ADDRESSES ON PROPERTY 2706-2708 South Menlo Avenue
6. PRESENT OWNER Robert Edward Carrere & Karen Lynette Wright Carrere
STREET ADDRESS 2641 Orchard Avenue E-MAIL ADDRESS: karen7913@sbcglobal.net
CITY Los Angeles STATE CA ZIP CODE 90007 PHONE (323) 734-0444
OWNERSHIP: PRIVATE PUBLIC
7. PRESENT USE single family residence ORIGINAL USE single family residence

DESCRIPTION

8. ARCHITECTURAL STYLE Swiss/Alpine Chalet Craftsman
(SEE STYLE GUIDE)
9. STATE PRESENT PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE OR STRUCTURE (SEE OPTIONAL DESCRIPTION WORK SHEET: 1 PAGE MAXIMUM)
The exterior of the house is largely intact and in good condition. A west facade window, north of the entry door has been replaced w/ a same-size single fixed pane stained glass by artisan Katsuji (Kat) Shinomoto, circa 1979. At the rear/east elevation, a course of windows in the library has been altered by the addition of French doors & the retention of two of the ribbon windows as side lights. A deck has been added at the east. The garage has been converted to living space. The interior is in good condition with some alterations as the structure, over the decades, was converted from a single family residence, to a duplex and back to a single family residence now serving as student housing. Pocket doors are temporarily closed & there is one temporary wall (which contains no electrics) to provide for student privacy. The majority of interior & exterior character defining elements are extant.

**HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENT
APPLICATION**

NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT Louise Pratt House

10. CONSTRUCTION DATE: 1904 FACTUAL: ESTIMATED:

11. ARCHITECT, DESIGNER, OR ENGINEER permit not extant

12. CONTRACTOR OR OTHER BUILDER permit not extant

13. DATES OF ENCLOSED PHOTOGRAPHS December 2006

(1 8X10 BLACK AND WHITE GLOSSY AND 1 DIGITAL E-MAILED TO CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION@LACITY.ORG)

14. CONDITION: EXCELLENT GOOD FAIR DETERIORATED NO LONGER IN EXISTENCE

15. ALTERATIONS A garage was built in 1920. In 1925 the residence was subdivided as a duplex with addition of a kitchen upstairs and a bath downstairs and other necessary accommodations. In 1926 another garage, seemingly a replacement for the earlier one, was built. At an unknown date the residence was returned to single family status. In 1979 a stained glass window was installed in preexisting framing to the north of the entry door.

16. THREATS TO SITE: NONE KNOWN PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT VANDALISM PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT
 ZONING OTHER _____

17. IS THE STRUCTURE: ON ITS ORIGINAL SITE MOVED UNKNOWN

SIGNIFICANCE

18. BRIEFLY STATE HISTORICAL AND/OR ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE: INCLUDE DATES, EVENTS, AND PERSON ASSOCIATED WITH THE SITE (SEE ALSO SIGNIFICANCE WORK SHEET, 750 WORDS MAXIMUM IF USING ADDITIONAL SHEETS)

The Louise Pratt House is a Federal individually listed monument (US-87000139), listed 2/12/1987. It is State listed as No. 026964, as a contributing property (1D) to the Menlo Avenue/29th Street [National] Historic District and as an individual property (1S). It is also a contributing structure in the North University Park Specific Plan. With all of this it is not eligible for the Mills Act program and can only become eligible if it can gain HCM status. See Historical Significance sheet accompanying this application.

19. SOURCES (LIST BOOKS, DOCUMENTS, SURVEYS, PERSONAL INTERVIEWS WITH DATES) Please see accompanying Bibliography

20. DATE FORM PREPARED 01/09/2007 PREPARER'S NAME Anna Marie Brooks

ORGANIZATION _____ STREET ADDRESS 1109 4th Avenue

CITY Los Angeles STATE CA ZIP CODE 90019 PHONE (310) 650-2143

E-MAIL ADDRESS: historichomesLA@aol.com

DESCRIPTION WORK SHEET

TYPE OR HAND PRINT IN ALL CAPITAL BLOCK LETTERS

THE Louise Pratt House IS A two-and-a-half -STORY,
NAME OF PROPOSED MONUMENT NUMBER OF STORIES

Swiss/Alpine Chalet Craftsman, irregular PLAN single family residence
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE (SEE LINE 8 ABOVE) PLAN SHAPE (Click to See Chart) STRUCTURE USE (RESIDENCE, ETC.)

WITH A wood siding FINISH AND wood TRIM,
MATERIAL (WOOD SLIDING, WOOD SHINGLES, BRICK, STUCCO, ETC.) MATERIAL (WOOD, METAL, ETC.)

IT'S steep pitched gable ROOF IS composition shingle wood
ROOF SHAPE (Click to See Chart) MATERIAL (CLAY TILE, ASPHALT OR WOOD SHINGLES, ETC.) WINDOW MATERIAL

fixed single and multi-pane, multi-pane and single pane casement WINDOWS ARE PART OF THE DESIGN.
WINDOW TYPE (DOUBLE-HUNG (SLIDES UP & DOWN), CASEMENT (OPENS OUT), HORIZONTAL SLIDING, ETC.)

THE ENTRY FEATURES A recessed, off-center, raised
DOOR LOCATION (RECESSED, CENTERED, OFF-CENTER, CORNER, ETC.)

door with six-pane window & decorative strap hinges DOOR, ADDITIONAL CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS
ENTRY DOOR STYLE (Click to See Chart)

OF THE STRUCTURE ARE clapboard exterior walls, non-sysemetrical facade, steep pitched gable roof, miniature
IDENTIFY ORIGINAL FEATURES SUCH AS PORCHES (SEE CHART); BALCONIES; NUMBER AND SHAPE OF DORMERS (Click to See Chart)

balcony with paired sash windows and decorative balustrade in gable end, full length overhanging balcony, raised
NUMBER AND LOCATION OF CHIMNEYS; SHUTTERS; SECONDARY FINISH MATERIALS; PARAPETS; METAL TRIM; DECORATIVE TILE OR CAST STONE; ARCHES;

side entrance porch, first floor slant bay, corbel eave and bracket supports, corbel opening at porch,
ORNAMENTAL WOODWORK; SYMMETRY OR ASYMMETRY; CORNICES; FRIEZES; TOWERS OR TURRETS; BAY WINDOWS; HALFTIMBERING; HORIZONTALLY;

chimney at the south elevation, six over one windows in bay, shaped bargeboard.
VERTICALLY; FORMALITY OR INFORMALITY; GARDEN WALLS, ETC.

SECONDARY BUILDINGS CONSIST OF A garage
IDENTIFY GARAGE; GARDEN SHELTER, ETC.

SIGNIFICANT INTERIOR SPACES INCLUDE entry hall w/ beamed ceiling, open stair landing, stairs w/ newel post and
IDENTIFY ORIGINAL FEATURES SUCH AS WOOD PANELING; MOLDINGS AND TRIM; SPECIAL GLASS WINDOWS;

balustrade; parlor w/ west facing slant bay & east pocket doors to dining room; dining room w/ south slant bay,
ORNATE CEILINGS; PLASTER MOLDINGS; LIGHT FIXTURES; PAINTED DECORATION; CERAMIC TILE; STAIR BALUSTRADES; BUILT-IN FURNITURE, ETC.

pocket doors in east & west walls, box beam ceiling; library w/ paired french doors & sidelights on east wall.

IMPORTANT LANDSCAPING INCLUDES _____
IDENTIFY NOTABLE MATURE TREES AND SHRUBS

Biography: Louise Yelverton Shipman Pratt

Louise Pratt House ~ 2706-2708 South Menlo Avenue, Los Angeles CA 90007

Louise Yelverton Shipman was born in New York State in November of 1864. In 1888 she married Edwin W. Pratt of California. They settled in Los Angeles where Mr. Pratt was, until August of 1897, the confidential man of the operation, and longest term employee, of the Los Angeles Electric Company and the Los Angeles Lighting Company. The Los Angeles Electric Company was the city's pioneer electric utility, organized in 1882 to provide electric street lighting in the city of Los Angeles utilizing strategically placed 150 foot high masts, each of which carried three arc-lights illuminated by electricity. The system was unveiled on December 31, 1882 by Mayor Toberman, providing the first electric service in the City.

In August of 1897 a financial scandal rocked the Los Angeles Electric Company and the Los Angeles Lighting Company and Edwin Pratt, who was noted in the *Los Angeles Times* as, "...a man of ample means outside his employment," who was in no way related to the cash of the operation resigned from the companies amidst the resignations of colleagues and the suicide of one. (*Los Angeles Times*. Aug 31, 1897. pg . 7) No record has been found indicating Mr. Pratt's next employment. In 1904 the company was reorganized as the Los Angeles Gas and Electric Company.

At a later unknown date Louise Pratt and Edwin W. Pratt were divorced. While still married, the Pratts had regularly invested in real estate. Louise continued to invest in land and real estate and her dealings were frequently chronicled in the real estate columns of the city's newspapers. Among her holdings were a 1907 six-story apartment building she had built at 649 South Olive Street, a house on 6th between Hill and Grand streets, the Pratt residence at 816 S. Figueroa Street and many other investments.

In 1910 Louise Pratt and friends undertook an extended grand tour visiting Hawaii, Japan, China, Korea, Manchuria, the Malay Peninsula, Java, Burma, India, Ceylon, Arabia, Egypt and Africa, followed by an extended tour through Europe.

Louise Pratt was regarded as an important Los Angeles philanthropist and was active in the Ebell Club and the Home Musical Club. Pratt died June 10, 1912, in the home of friends Mr. and Mrs. Robert Marsh, 1119 Westchester Place. At the time of her death the majority of her property was in real estate including 100 shares of the stock of Country Club Park, 336 shares of the East Naples Land Company and 25 shares of San Gabriel River Improvement Company. The publication of the details of Pratt's will included bequests to many of the charities and organizations of which she had been a life-long supporter. Among the beneficiaries of her accumulated wealth were Rev. Dana Bartlett who established Bethlehem, a men's hotel for the honest (working) poor and other related charities, the Protestant Los Angeles Orphans' Home, Children's Hospital of Los Angeles, George Junior Republic (an innovative residential assistance program for youth founded in central New York State) and the Salvation Army. Pratt also established at Occidental College a scholarship trust fund for the "assistance, maintenance and education of female students." The trust was established in the name of Pratt's brother, Dr. D. M. Shipman who, at the time, was a long term inmate of the New York State Insane Asylum. Monetary and material gifts were bequeathed to friends and family members. (*Los Angeles Times*, June 28, 1912)

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Historic Significance

Louise Pratt House

2706-2708 South Menlo Avenue, Los Angeles CA 90007

The Louise Pratt House is historically significant as an intact example of a Craftsman residence with Swiss/Alpine Chalet design elements.

The architect of the residence has yet to be discovered. Since the Louise Pratt House was built in 1904 there is no extant permit. To date a search of *Builder and Contractor* for the relevant time period has been impossible as the microfilm at the Los Angeles Public Library for that time span has been damaged and awaits a decision on replacement. The *City of Los Angeles Historical and Cultural Resources Survey for North University Park, 1982-83* lists no architect or builder information for this residence. There is also no architect or builder notice in the *Los Angeles Times*. Further attempts will be made to uncover architect information.

Louise Pratt was historically significant as a well-known and well-regarded philanthropist and real estate investor/developer in Los Angeles and its environs prior to and after the turn of the 20th Century. She and her husband Edwin W. Pratt invested in real estate and after her divorce from him and following Edwin's subsequent death, Louise continued to invest and went on to develop several larger apartment buildings. Edwin was known as a prominent utility company officer who served as the confidence man for the Los Angeles Lighting Company and the Los Angeles Power Company, the providers of the first electric lighting in the City of Los Angeles.

When not traveling the world, Louise regularly entertained the elite of Los Angeles and raised funding and philanthropic awareness from her Swiss/Alpine Chalet Craftsman home at 2708 South Menlo Avenue in the North University Park district.

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Bibliography

Louise Pratt House

2706-2708 South Menlo Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90007

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Louise Pratt House

2706-2708 South Menlo Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90007

Photo date: December 2006 ~ © Anna Marie Brooks 2006



West façade detail: Corbel eave and bracket supports, shaped bargeboard, paired windows in gable end with bracket supported balcony with rail, full length overhanging balcony at second level with two pairs multi-paned French doors, viewed to east.

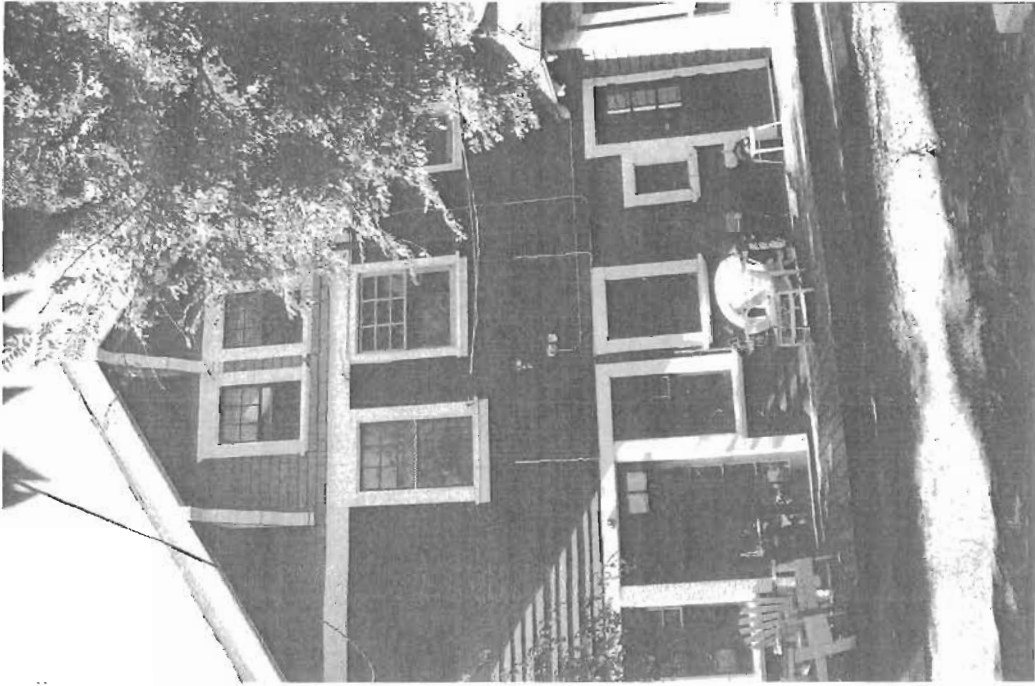


West façade detail: West slant bay paired nine-over one casement windows flank central fixed pane topped by ten light fixed transom, viewed to east.

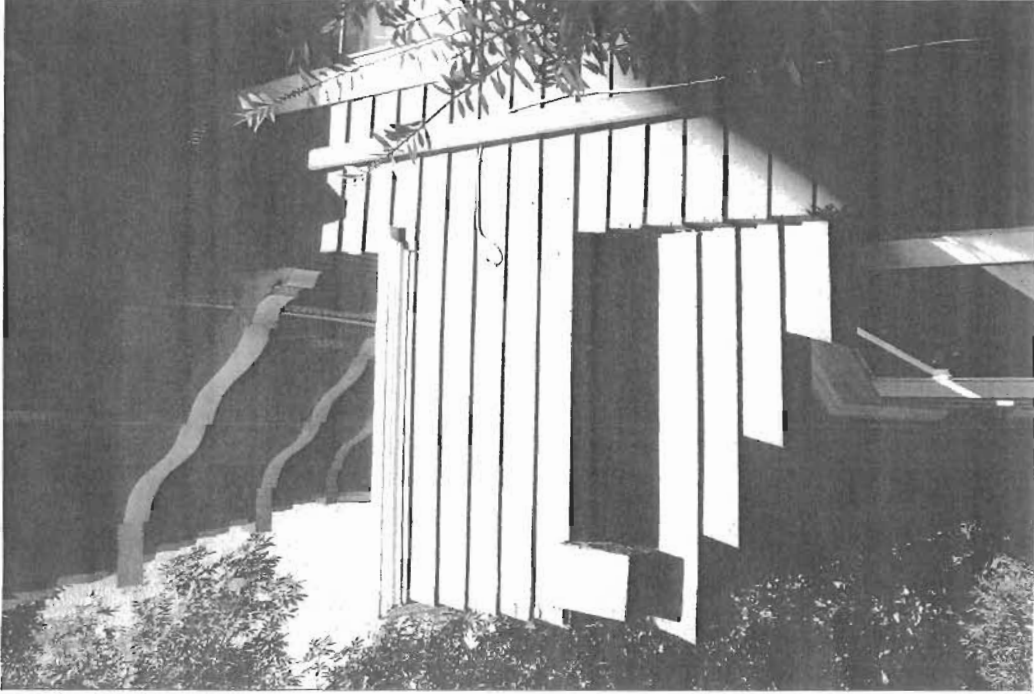
Louise Pratt House

2706-2708 South Menlo Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90007

Photo date: December 2006 ~ © Anna Marie Brooks 2006



East elevation: Viewed to northwest.



Side view: Second level, south end of west facade full balcony and bracket, viewed to north.

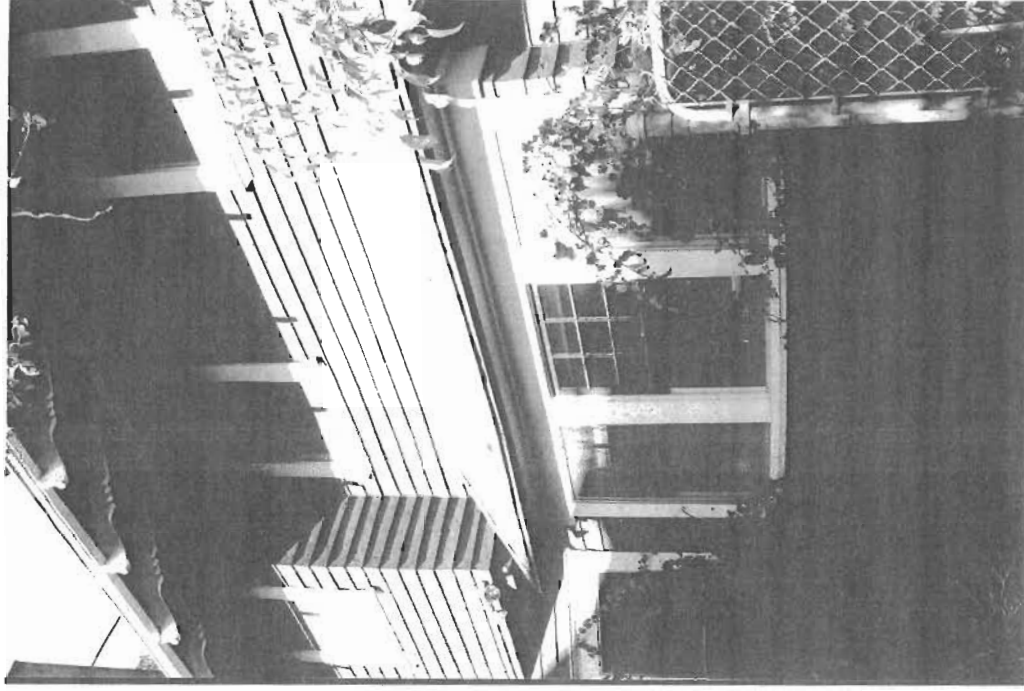
Louise Pratt House

2706-2708 South Menlo Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90007

Photo date: December 2006 ~ © Anna Marie Brooks 2006



South elevation: Second level shaped eave corbels, paired multi-pane French doors, viewed to west.



South elevation: Upper box bay, lower box bay with shed roof, viewed to northwest.