



Falkirk Mansion Dining Room & Parlor

Location: San Rafael, California
Client: City of San Rafael

Conservation of Interior Finishes

Adapted from an 1888 Queen Anne-style residence, the Falkirk Mansion has served as the Community Center of the City of San Rafael for over 30 years. The wooden mansion is listed on the *National Register of Historic Places*. The partners of Architectural Resources Group have been involved in its adaptation since 1977, when they contributed to the project's master plan. Work included a complete exterior restoration of the mansion, interior restoration, building code analysis, provisions for disabled access, new kitchen facilities, and an extensive restoration of the greenhouse and lath house.

ARG Conservation Services recently focused on the interior dining room and parlor. ARG/CS staff analyzed the interior wood surfaces and original coatings, and performed cleaning tests for dirt and stain removal. The elaborately crafted wood interiors were cleaned and the original varnish reformed to return the surfaces to their original luster. ARG/CS matched stains on reconstructed elements and restored areas of previous water damage.

In the parlor, a green silk damask on the upper walls dated to around the 1930's to 1950's was badly deteriorated. Investigations of underlying wall finishes revealed only one layer of wallpaper had been applied directly to the lath and plaster wall. The wallpaper was presumed to be the original surface from the original era of construction in the 1880s and was deteriorated beyond repair. ARG/CS provided investigative services, including analysis and historical research, and procured and installed a replica of the original wallpaper for the upper walls.

