



The Holgerson building, next to the Pajaro Valley Bakery, is being refurbished as part of Manuel Santana's La Manzana project.

Buildings at 513-525 Main testimony to Weeks' skill

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Though architect William Weeks moved from Watsonville in 1911, he retained property and business interests in the Pajaro Valley.

Many of the buildings on Main Street that he designed are still standing as a testimony to his skill and imagination. Some of these are the Bockius Block, 323; Sheehy Building, 307; Lettunich Building, 400; Brewington Block (Kalich), 428; Weeks Building (Chamber of Commerce), 444; Mundhenk (Office Supply), 440; Harris Building, 446; Weeks Building (Goodwill), 464; Resetar Hotel; Jefsen Building, 502, plus the three buildings at 513-525.

Of the three at 513-525, the one furthest north was built in 1925 on property purchased by Weeks in 1923 from the Walker family. The building now houses the Pajaro Valley Bakery (which was originally in the building furthest south of the three).

There was much speculation about what Weeks would do with his newly purchased property. Rumors were that a new hotel would be built or that the land would be subdivided. But Weeks had other plans, and in January of 1925 work was under way on concrete foundations for a new business block to contain five large stores.

"The handsome new Weeks business block, a picture of which has been in local windows for some weeks past, will be pushed to completion as rapidly as possible," the Evening Pajaronian reported.

At this same time L.P. Holgerson and Ludwig Schmidt

purchased the lots south of the new Weeks building from the Conlan estate and hired Weeks to draw plans for two more new buildings. One was to be the Pajaro Valley Bakery at 513-517 Main Street and the other the Watsonville Creamery at 519-521.

The James Ingham two-story house stood at 517 Main St. It was moved to 22 High St. and is now owned by Jim and Georgia Miller. This house, saved from the wrecking ball, had been completely remodeled in 1896 by Weeks.

Ludwig Schmidt's bakery, the first of the three Spanish Colonial Revival buildings, was built at a cost of approximately \$23,000, with local man Al Short the contractor. The two-story building contained apartments on the second floor. Two huge bake ovens were installed at a cost of \$5,300, one for bread and the other for cakes. A bakery wagon — "one of the prettiest" — was placed in service traveling the streets of town with fresh, hot bread from the bakery.

The bakery opened to the public on Dec. 7, 1925, when "thongs" of people visited the new facilities, which also housed a barber shop conducted by Ed Drake and Jack Silva.

"Ludwig Schmidt, the proprietor, has had the entire building and plant erected with the sole purpose of efficiency and convenience with the idea of not only catering to the general public, but also of being in a position to take care of any volume of business which may be developed for many years to come ..."

—Evening Pajaronian
Dec. 7, 1925

At this time the plans for the

Watsonville Creamery Building were still on the drawing board at the office of architect Weeks in his office in Oakland. Business at the creamery was still conducted across the street in its old place at 522-526 Main St.

L.P. Holgerson had purchased the creamery in 1920. It had been organized in 1892 by local ranchers over in Pajaro.

The new creamery building was completed and opened to the public on December 4, 1926 — a "Class A" building of reinforced construction, with a late-Spanish motif on the facade. Again, Short was the contractor.

Produced in the plant was Apple Blossom Butter, "the butter that betters the bread." This was the only creamery in the county that churned its butter from absolutely sweet cream, 1,000 gallons of it making over 2,000 pounds of butter a day. A fountain with ice cream department was installed, also serving all kinds of soft drinks.

These three new buildings designed by Weeks were certainly a welcome addition to the north end of Main Street, along with the completion of the Hotel Resetar in 1927. W.H. Niebling purchased the Weeks Building at 523-525 Main St. in 1940 and it became the new home of the Pajaro Valley Bakery. It is still owned and leased by his son, William Niebling, to Charles Wong.

Weeks contributed much to the architectural heritage of Watsonville, and it is good to know that Manuel Santana and Ernest T. Kretschmer are now completing the revitalization of the Schmidt and Holgerson buildings — a decided asset to downtown Watsonville. step in the preservation of the city's architectural p