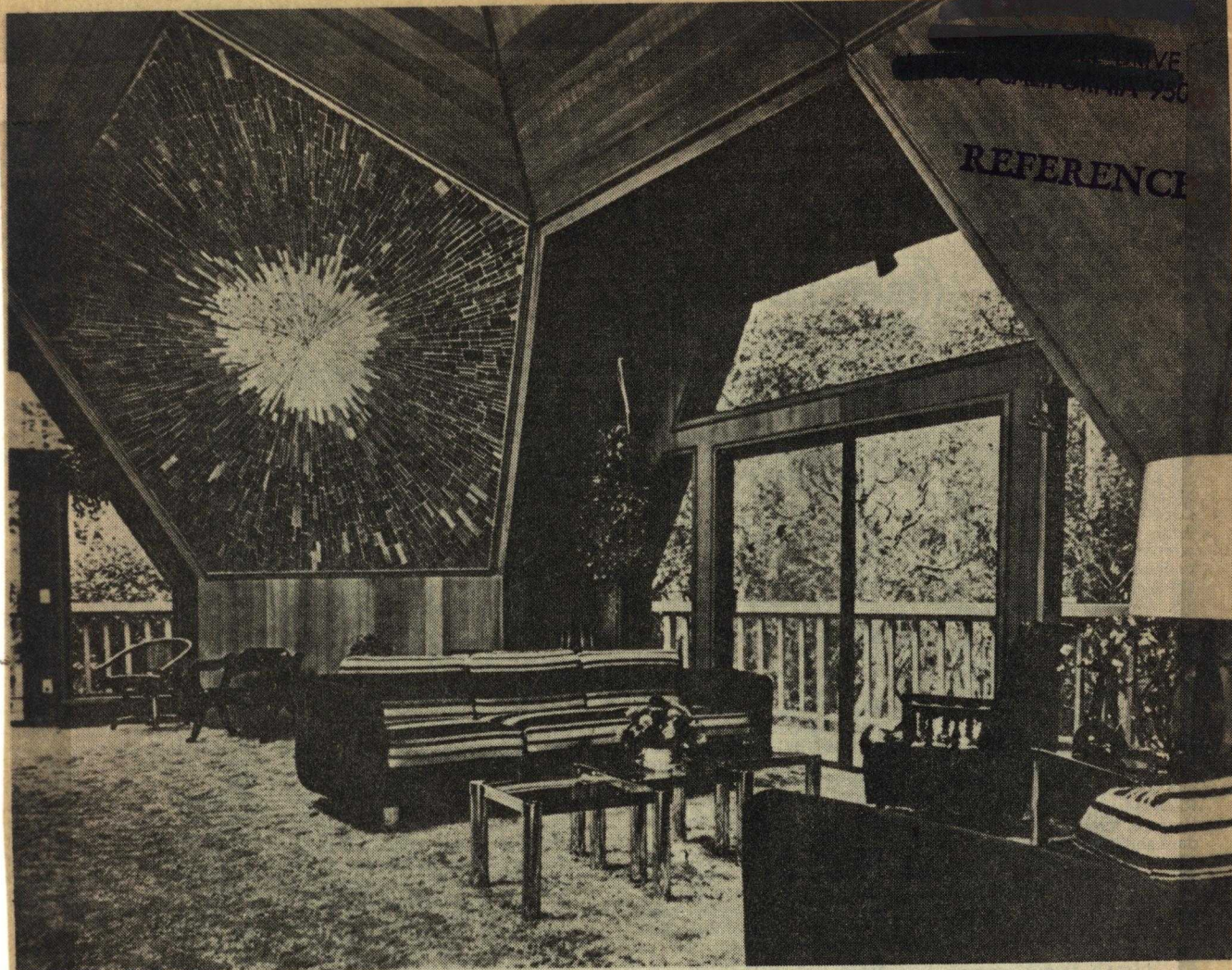


to 1979

APRIL 1979



Inside a dome there's plenty of open space

In the business world

## Best year yet for Aptos firm

Cathedralite Domes, the Aptos-based residential dome firm, is enjoying the biggest year to date in its 16-year history.

The company, which is now the largest dome residential firm in the world, expects to build 1,500 domes this year in California alone.

Each year for the past five, it has doubled the number of domes built the previous year. It now employs more than 100 people and has an annual payroll of more than \$1 million.

Additionally, it has established two subsidiary

corporations, both based in Watsonville. One is the Rio del Mar Architectural Group and the other, Shelter Systems, which manufactures dome-shaped greenhouses useful for backyard gardening or in large farming operations.

Cathedralite, as part of its program to widen its market, has established a franchise program to augment its roster of 50 distributors. It sponsored a convention at the Holiday Inn in Santa Cruz earlier this week, attracting attendees from throughout the United States and three foreign countries.

The group was feted at a concluding barbecue Wednesday night held at its model dome which can be seen from the freeway at Larkin Valley Road.

Tate Miller and Barry Nottoli, both 30, president and vice president respectively, head the firm that was founded in 1962 by Jake Rutzebeck, a Hayward toolmaker who had gotten the rights to a so-called Pease dome kit design. The Pease patent differed from other dome designs in that it replaced the open latticework framing, which required inner and outer skins, with a system of solid wood triangles. When the triangles were bolted together to form pentagons, their curved shapes could be linked to

form geodesic domes.

(Enthusiasts of dome construction contend that the rounded structures built with a system of triangles, an idea developed by Buckminster Fuller, are stronger than conventional homes, quicker to assemble, and cheaper, require less energy, and can be put up by the owner himself. Visitors are welcome at the dome model at 2001 Larkin Valley Road (note the address: 2001) which draws more than 1,500 sightseers a month from all over the country).

When Rutzebeck was killed in a plane crash in 1966, the company was bought by the Rev. Don Sheley of Daly City who gave it the "Cathedralite" name and built a sales base. In 1975 control passed to Nottoli and Scott Hewett who brought in Tate. All hold

college and university degrees from schools in northern California. (Hewett left the firm in 1977 to pursue other interests).

Cathedralite domes come in eight sizes ranging from 26 feet in diameter to 60; many of them can be seen sprinkled throughout the Aptos area, some in expensive residential areas. The kit for the 26-foot diameter domes sells for \$3,995, and provides 485 square feet of floor area. The 45-foot dome kit costs \$8,295 and includes an upstairs in its 1,500 square feet. The 60-foot domes sells for \$26,995 and provides 2,800 square feet with a second and third floor.

The company maintains a manufacturing plant in Oroville where the actual work of cutting out the various struts and triangles to precise sizes on large jigs takes place. That plant employs 30 persons.

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