



A neighborhood legend of love and devotion came down to earth along with this old house at the corner of May Avenue and Hubbard Street in

Santa Cruz Wednesday. The house, legend had it, had never been lived in before it was bulldozed down by wrecker Don Santos to make

way for eight apartment units. The units will be leased to the Santa Cruz Housing Authority by Wellington Development Co.

Old House Dies, Story Lives

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them up," said neighbor Mary Laurenzi.

"They kept horses and chickens, and had really unusual trees and plants."

Then, Pete Sonognini left his wife a widow. No one can remember when or how, and there is no record in The Sentinel filed, but everyone agreed he died suddenly.

Neighbors also agreed on what happened next. Mrs. Sonognini moved out of her new house and never lived there again.

"She lived in back, in the shed meant for the chickens," said Mrs. Laurenzi.

Whether it was uneasiness over the ghost of her husband, or whether it was an overwhelming sorrow that drove

Margaret Sonognini from her new home, no one can say. She stayed on, caring for house and lawns and gardens as Santa Cruz grew close about her. But she never lived in the house again.

She died in September, 1952. She left the house and some stock in local corporations to a neighbor, Lillie Skinner. She apparently had no living relatives. Five years ago, in November, Lillie Skinner died.

"I went in once, with Lillie, to clean out the place," Mrs. Laurenzi recalls. "Lillie wanted to pay me, but I said, 'don't be silly, we're neighbors. So she gave me a box of clippings and little things.' These photos and news clippings formed the basis for some of the story.

The yard became weed-grown

and the dying trees were ripped out by subsequent owners. The house remained vacant, until the bulldozer finally came to end its loneliness.

"There was one rosebush I saved," said Mrs. Laurenzi. "When at first I saw it, I thought it was dead. But I watered it, and, you know, it came back to life. It's very, very old, and has the most beautiful flowers. When they tore the house down, they promised to save it."

And so goes a rose and a memory.

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