

Four bookstores closed by quake; librarians busy re-shelving

The books came tumbling down

Earthquake 1989 City of Santa Cruz
By Constance Casey
and Carol Doup Muller

ON HIS way out of Bookshop Santa Cruz, owner Neal Coonerty dropped a check in the mail. It was \$1,000 for a colleague whose book store in historic Charleston, S.C., had been hammered by Hurricane Hugo. Half an hour later, the Loma

Book Report

Prieta earthquake struck and put Bookshop Santa Cruz out of business.

According to the Northern California Booksellers Association, four bookstores in the area were knocked out by the Oct. 17 quake: Bookshop Santa Cruz, Logos and Plaza Books on the Pacific Garden Mall in Santa Cruz, and Chanticleer Books for the Young in downtown Los Gatos.

Not until Wednesday did Coonerty get 15 minutes back inside his store, long considered one of the two or three best bookstores in the Bay Area. He grabbed his business records and the oversize rocking horse that graced the store's children's section. Coonerty says of the damage, "It begins with the word horrible and goes downhill from there."

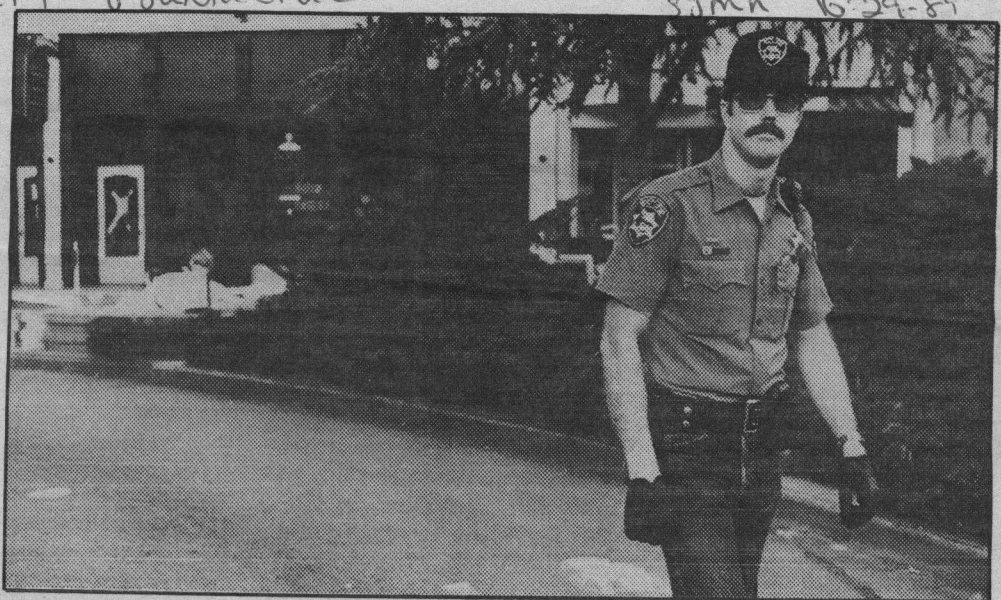
The city has ruled the building uninhabitable, and it seems likely it will be bulldozed with \$625,000 in inventory inside. "There's a sliver of hope that the demolition might be more gradual," Coonerty said. "If we can get our inventory out, we'll start over selling books out of a tent in our parking lot."

At Plaza Books, a general bookstore also known for its selection of posters and cards, the situation is better. Although the front of the building, built in 1908, will be demolished, the back, from 1940, can be saved. Owner Hal Morris says, "We expect to be able to get back in there for business. The only thing we're sure of salvaging" in the front, Morris said, "is the cash registers, which still have receipts from the day of the earthquake."

John Livingston, the owner of Logos, could not be reached. His store, which stocks used and antiquarian as well as new books, is next door to Plaza. According to a friend, George Ow, co-owner of the Capitola Book Cafe, Livingston was working to get more than 15 minutes for his book rescue.

Coonerty said the literary and book-selling communities have been very supportive. "People have been calling. It gives us the courage to keep going until someone tells us we're dead." The city, though it may require immediate demolition of his store, "has been very sympathetic. I don't feel we've gotten a raw deal," Coonerty says building owner Ron Lau, who has earthquake insurance on it, expects to rebuild and hopes Bookshop Santa Cruz can be the tenant. "Santa Cruz is a great book community."

Coonerty's house, at 510 King St., survived the quake. "I lost a chimney, but the house is fine, as long as the publishers don't take it away from me." In a slight change of plans occasioned by the 7.1 quake, his front yard will be the scene of Bookshop Santa Cruz's 20th birthday party on Nov. 4. And his book-selling colleague in Charleston called to say that she won't cash that check.



Karen T. Borchers — Mercury News

A policeman near Bookshop Santa Cruz, which may be bulldozed in the wake of the quake

building housing Chanticleer, the well-loved — and newly remodeled — children's bookstore on East Main Street, has been red-tagged, declared uninhabitable. Owner Harriet Zander, reached by phone Tuesday and sounding very weary, reported, "I have my home, and I have my family; I just don't have my beautiful store."

The wall next to the parking lot separated from Zander's building during the quake. In the following days, it was shored up, according to the recommendations of a structural engineer. Chanticleer employees spent last weekend moving out some 200 boxes of books to a storefront at 15330 S. Bascom Ave., where Zander hopes to open for business.

The quake was "the most terrifying experience," Zander said. "We were all thrown to the floor. I was in my office. It was pitch black, and papers were flying everywhere and desk drawers were coming out at me." Books rained down, and even a few fixtures that had been bolted to the walls toppled.

But "the most amazing thing" Zander says, is that at 5:04 — often a crowded time — there wasn't a child in the place.

Booksellers Association has started a relief fund for the employees of the four Bay Area bookstores that suffered complete structural damage. All the money gathered will go to staffers, not owners, to help with basic living expenses. The fund address is: Booksellers Earthquake Relief Fund, c/o Wells Fargo Bank, 145 West Portal Ave., San Francisco 94127.

Ron Lang, co-owner of Capitola Book Cafe, has promised to donate 20 percent of his store's sales yesterday and today to the NCBA relief fund.

Owner Valerie Lewis of Hicklebee's Children's Book Emporium in Willow Glen and children's book author/illustrator Patricia Polacco of Oakland are hatching a fund-raising plan with the Northern California Children's Booksellers Association. They're asking illustrators to donate finished artwork and signed sketches for a \$10-a-ticket raffle, and the proceeds will be used to rebuild children's bookstores and children's sections of general bookstores that suffered extensive damage. The Association of Booksellers for Children, a national group, will administer the drawing

LENDING A HAND: The Northern California

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Picked up any good books lately?

County Librarian Susan Fuller asked us to remind readers that "the library system is a real good place for people to come if they need information for rebuilding their lives."

Bay Area residents lucky enough not to need the library's book on home repairs may be interested in learning more about earthquake science and earthquake preparedness. Here's a list of resources prepared by county reference librarian Linda Lubovich:

"Peace of Mind in Earthquake Country: How to Save Your Home and Life," by Peter Yaney (Chronicle Books, 304 pp., \$8.95). A classic in the how-to-bolt-a-water-heater genre, first printed in 1974.

"Terra Non Firma: Understanding and Preparing for Earthquakes," by James M. Gere and Haresh C. Shah (Freeman, 203 pp., \$12.95). A 1984 book, part of the Portable Stanford Library series, that tells why quakes rock California and how to get ready.

"On Shaky Ground: An Invitation to Disaster," by John J. Nance (Morrow, 415 pp., \$19.95) and **"The Coming Quake: Science and Trembling on the California Earthquake Frontier,"** by T. A. Heppenheimer (Times Books, 290 pp., \$17.95). Two 1988 books on what's shaking in seismology (and paleoseismology, the practice of attaching dates to quakes past and future).

"Volcanoes and Earthquakes," by Martyn Bramwell (Franklin Watts, 38 pp., \$9.90) A children's book on earthquake science.

And two especially useful booklets:

"Quake Stress: Preparation for the Psychological Effects of a Major Disaster," available from California Psychological Publications, 1223 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 170, Santa Monica, Calif. 90403; \$6.95 plus \$1 handling.

"How to Prepare for an Earthquake Made Easy: a Planning Workbook for Personal Earthquake Preparedness for California Residents and Visitors," from NuAge Survival Publications, 2407 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 331-NASP, Santa Monica, Calif. 90403. \$7.50.

Some libraries are closed until shelves can be reinforced

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signed sketches for a \$10-a-ticket raffle, and the proceeds will be used to rebuild children's bookstores and children's sections of general bookstores that suffered extensive damage. The Association of Booksellers for Children, a national group, will administer the drawing tentatively set for Nov. 20.

THE CHECK-OUT DESK: Ann Turner, director of libraries for the city and county of Santa Cruz, says the 295,000 books on her facilities' floors was depressing, but she saw a silver lining for library workers. "We're luckier than many municipal workers; we had something concrete to do:

"By the end of that Friday (Oct. 21), due to a spectacular volunteer effort, everything that could be

had been re-shelved." As of Monday, Oct. 24, all Santa Cruz County library branches except two were open. As of that Monday afternoon, the central branch was closed indefinitely because of a suspected asbestos problem.

"Our mental health is fine," Turner said Wednesday. "But yesterday, when the asbestos thing hit, I thought, 'What next, God?'"

The 16-year-old Watsonville Library lost a few tiles off the roof, and three-fourths of its 90,000 volumes were on the floor. With volunteer help, it was reopened last week. At the San Benito County Library in Hollister, the staff had everything back on the shelves in two days.

THE DAY THE EARTH DIDN'T STAND STILL: When they make the TV movie, they'll need a good li-

brary scene, and the Los Gatos Public Library could serve. In the children's room there, an upright piano crunched out through a plate-glass window. Most of the stacks collapsed, too, according to library director Peggy Murray. "The ones that were perpendicular to the wave went like dominoes. Most of the others were parallel to the wave and the shelves went weee-waaa, and now they're all in the shape of parallelograms."

The library has opened its children's room, where shorter shelves didn't get badly warped. The upstairs reading room will probably open this week; the main collection downstairs will have to wait at least a couple of weeks.

At the Mountain View Public Library, director Susan Ozubko said that nearly half of the library's 200,000 volumes came down, "and magazines, knee-deep on the basement floor."

The Mountain View library, open now, stayed open on a small scale, through a Bookmobile in the parking lot. "From the first day after the quake, we checked books

out of the Bookmobile's collection of 2,000," Ozubko said. "Reading is a consoling activity."

In the San Jose library system, the main library and the Pearl Avenue and Calabazas branches "sustained extensive shelving damage," and will remain closed until shelves can be reinforced.

The Santa Clara library will reopen Monday, although there will be limited access to part of the collection. Overdue materials returned in the coming week will be fine-free — even if you checked out the materials in 1906.

Santa Clara County Librarian Susan Fuller, reporting on the nine cities in her jurisdiction, says the most damage occurred in the Saratoga library, which will have to wait for new shelving to reopen fully.

EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN: Book people throughout the Bay Area have been dazzled by quake camaraderie. Australian author Thomas Keneally, visiting to read from his novel, "To Asmara," offered to go to bookstores where he

hadn't been scheduled to read, to sign books and raffle them off ("if they're worth anything," he said modestly) to raise money.

Valerie Lewis of Hickleebee's says, "We haven't seen anything negative about this — except the physical damage. We had kids — on their day off from school — come to the door with their mothers to see if they could put books back on the shelves. Every time the phone rings, it's someone offering help."

And an unusual and touching press release reached the Mercury News book staff from Bear & Co. Publishing in Santa Fe, N.M. — a letter, dated Oct. 18, "To our friends in California."

"We Bears have been glued to our televisions and radios since yesterday evening, when the big earthquake hit the bay. . . . All of us at Bear want to convey our immediate and deep concern for your well-being and safety." On the stationery, the Bear logo contains the description, "books to celebrate & heal the earth." ■