

# Historic House... A Farewell Party

Out on Old Adobe Road, in the San Andreas area of Santa Cruz County near Watsonville, there sits a handsome old adobe house that is more than 125 years old. It is the home of Don Joaquin Castro.

This house, currently the home of Mrs. Victor Jowers and her children, Laura and Andrew, was the scene of a Renaissance party—a sort of farewell party given by Mrs. Jowers who will leave soon for England.

The party served a two-fold purpose: Mrs. Jowers' farewell to the old adobe which is to be sold, and as a gathering of a group of art-

ists who met through the Sticky Wicket. Mrs. Jowers and her late husband formerly operated the "Wicket" which became an Aptos center for art and the performing arts.

The party featured 15th-18th Century music played by Diva Goodfriend-Koven, flute; Dorothy Isaacson, oboe, and Doug Isaacson, bassoon. Food was served in the garden-patio by candlelight and was arranged to depict a Renaissance still life painting. Guests wore long gowns and clothing suggestive of the Renaissance period.

Robert Hughes, who served as host for the gathering, notes that it represented the "end of an important period in the development of the arts in Santa Cruz County."

Party-goers gathered on the patio lawn to eat by candlelight while Renaissance music was played from the balcony which runs along the entire front of the adobe. Old house features six bedrooms, Spanish-tiled kitchen.

The adobe was constructed sometime in the mid-1830s; the exact date is unknown. It was the second home built by Joaquin Castro, a pensioned soldier who had arrived at Monterey in the schooner "Concepcion" in 1799. He built it for his second wife, Rosaria Briones, a bride aged 17. The house is 30 by 100 feet in size; the upper floor originally fea-

tured a ball-room 30 by 50 feet.

In 1880 the old house was purchased by the Hansen family; in 1948 it passed into the hands of the William Nelsons and some modern comforts were installed. The Nelsons had it re-wired for electricity, a fireplace and an inside stairway built. They also turned the ball room into two bedrooms.

The John Paizis' bought it in 1959 and made further improvements, including modernizing the kitchen. Five years ago the Jowers' bought the house. They painted it inside and out, helping preserve the thick adobe walls; they also added layers of wax to the glossy redwood plank floors.

Out in the front garden stands a magnificent old loquat tree, a survival of the days when Joaquin and his young bride lived there.

An old legend says there is buried treasure there too — Spanish doubloons. The nine acres on which the house now stands were once a part of the Rancho San Andres, granted to members of the Castro family in 1833.

—MARGARET KOCH  
Sentinel Staff Writer



Castro Adobe, more than 125 years old, has been preserved beautifully by a series of history-conscious owners, latest being the Victor Jowers. Mrs. Jowers, leaving soon for London to live, gave a farewell party at the house this past week.

Living room features beamed ceiling fastened with hand-carved Madrone pegs . . . fireplace added in later years. Mrs Donald Brown of Watsonville was a party guest.