

The Old And The New

Victorian Home on Tour



Haslam House, now the Estess home.

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It's an eye-catcher, a traffic-stopper.

Everyone who sees the big pale green and white Estess house for the first time stops in his tracks and LOOKS. It is that handsome.

The Victorian mansion has pleasing lines — a round cupola, a glass-enclosed entry porch which one suspects was added later, but which is in keeping somehow.

The house also has large trees outside which give it scale on its corner lot, and I'm told a squirrel or two live in the trees. Imagine — live squirrels right in the middle of town! It sort of makes you think there might yet be hope for us all.

This charming house of yesteryear will be open to the public on the YWCA Homes Tour, August 14, 1-4 p.m. Tickets at the Y or at the home. The Homes Tour is being run in conjunction with the YWCA Antiques Show at Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium, August 12-15.

Inside, the Estess house is authentic Victorian with wainscoting, high ceilings, hand-carved fireplaces (four), and carved golden oak staircase. All this has been retained but the high ceilings and the wainscoting have been painted white, the staircase has been carpeted with copies of Oriental runners and a full heating system has been installed that makes depending on fireplaces a thing of the past.

The furnishings also carry out the authentic Victorian flavor, with a few concessions to 1971 — mainly along comfort lines.

The house was built in 1895 by William D. Haslam, an official with the old City Bank of Santa Cruz.

It's been a lucky house.

Instead of ending its days as a neglected and dilapidated white elephant, as so many of the aged mansions have done, it has had owners who loved it and who cared for it beautifully.

The old and lovely house, complete with crystal chandeliers inside and squirrels outside, is now the spacious home for the young family of Dr. and Mrs. Floyd Estess.

And what a house for kids!

There are rooms enough and more, for everyone. Downstairs and upstairs are now completely refinished and being lived in. But there's a bonus too — the third floor. It's a lucky child who gets a third floor attic for exploring and playing on rainy days. I know — I did.