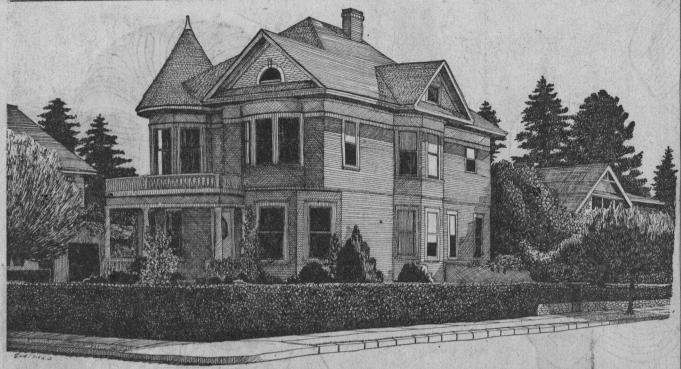
Sunday, February 26, 1967



In his pen and ink drawing artist Will Shepherd has captured the charm of the Louis Wessendorf home at the southeast corner of Mission and Green streets. The

house, built in 1904, was designed by a well-known architect of that day.

Four Generations Resided Wessendorf Home

Editor's Note: These articles are appearing in conjunc-tion with efforts by SCOPE and the Santa Cruz Historical Society to preserve and spark interest in local history.

By Margaret Koch Sentinel Staff Writer The Louis Wessendorf home

was designed by architect E. L. Van Cleek in 1904.

Four generations of Wessendorfs had lived there before it was sold several years ago by Louis' son, Lester Wessendorf.

A graceful house which hints of French architectural influence, it sits at the south-east corner of Mission and Green streets. For many years its garden contained a large Japanese magnolia tree that town "conversation piece" when in bloom.

The corner lot was the site of Santa Cruz' first Protestant church (Methodist) and Wessendorf bought the property wessendorf improdictable on Mission street the Wessendorf family had lived on Maple street where Laurel School is now located. from Thomas Weeks.

When Louis Wessendorf had the house built, he had already become a prosperous Santa Cruz businessman. He was a na-tive of Hamburg, Germany. He spent several years in Memphis, Tenn., where an older brother was in business, and in Baltimore, before coming west. Wes-sendorf arrived in San Fran-cisco in 1875, looked up a sendorf arrived in San Fran-cisco in 1875, looked up a in a separate but adjoining wholesale furniture dealer and building which fronted on Coopproceeded to inquire about a er street between what is now position.

store.

"How do I get there?" queried the eager young Wessendorf.

"Can you ride a horse?" countered the wholesale dealer.

Instead, Wessendorf took passage on a coastal steamer and arrived at Santa Cruz wharf. Here the bewildered young man found himself in the middle of some kind of celebration. band was playing. A large crowd had gathered. A big Irishman named Mike Curry pushed through the crowd, shook hands with Wessendorf and introduced ness had been dropped for that himself. He explained that it of mortician. And the present was a St. Patrick's Day celebration and invited Wessendorf to structed at the southeast corcome along to the Catholic ner of Center and Church church.

"But I'm not a Catholic,"

Wessendorf immediately went to work for George Staffler whose main business was a two-story furniture store. It was located about where Montgomery Ward is today. However, in connection with the furniture business, Staffler also conducted funerals, a process known in those days as "undertaking."

Santa Cruz County Bank and The furniture dealer just hap-Santa Cruz Land Title Compened to have on his desk a pany. A short open passage-letter from George Staffler of way from Front street gave ac-Santa Cruz, telling of an open-cess through to the rear en-

ness.

Five years after Wessendorf went to work, Staffler Sr. of-fered to sell out to him. Wessendorf accepted the offer, taking in George Staffler Jr. as a partner.

Business went well until the big fire of 1894 which leveled most buildings in the block. Wessendorf rented temporary quarters at the temporary quarters at the corner of Elm and Pacific until the burned block at Pacific and Cooper was rebuilt.

By 1924 the furniture businer of Center and Churchestreets by Louis' son, Lester.

Before Louis built the home

There are three old houses still standing, which were homes of the Dreher family. Katherine Dreher was Louis Wessendorf's wife.

Katherine was born in the house on the southwest cor-ner of Elm and Center streets. In the house next to and Center it lived an uncle, August Dreher. And Katherine's sister, Mrs. Mathilda Becker, lived nearby in the house at the southwest corner of Laurel and Center streets.

Katherine's father, John Dre-her, came to California from New York as a veteran of the

War with Mexico.
"He was offered 10 acres of

ing in Staffler's Santa Cruz trances of both places of busi-free land because he was a commented Lester veteran. Wessendorf.

The Drehers crossed the Isthmus of Panama on mules and 3:31 sailed into Santa Cruz in 1848. His 10-acre farm took in the area between Center and Wash-ington structure. ington streets and ran down to a d the present day Southern Paci-fic Depot.

Louis Wessendorf lived in his Mission street home until he died in 1953. Katherine Dreher p.m Wessendorf lived there until me 1958. Lester Wessendorf lived 5 It there as a boy, and one of his Mis daughters and several grand-Jur children lived there later, mak- law ing the four generations.

San Juan Bautista dar **Festival Today**

The first wagon train in 100 3:3 years is to arrive in San Juan Bautista today at 1 p.m.

Four covered wagons and some 100 riders left Frontier Village at San Jose yesterday morning. The route was down El Camino Real, Highway 101, to a point just south of San law to a point just south of San Martin, where they made camp. The remainder of the trip was to begin this morning at 7.

Those aboard the wagons include Cottonseed Clark, Cactus law Parl Jack and Red Murrell, disc jockeys for Radio Station KEEN, San Jose, and Big Jim De Noon of Grand Ole Opry

fame. The San Juan Bautista Chamber of Commerce has arranged for a chicken barbecue for the riders and passengers, and dins and passengers, will be available to the ners public at \$2 a person. The Charros, a Mexican - American group in full costume, are part of the train and entertain

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