

# Tuttle House brought Victorian style to Watsonville

In 1998 a beautifully illustrated book was published by Kenneth Naversen entitled Beautiful America's California Victorians. Included in this book are featured two of Watsonville's historic homes - the Judge Lee house and the Morris Tuttle house - both designed by William Weeks.

The following appeared in the Watsonville Pajaronian on January 18, 1900: "All branches of work in connection with construction and furnishing of M.B. Tuttle's handsome new home on Lake Avenue (723) have been completed and Mr. Tuttle and family are now occupying it. They have a home in which they can take pardonable pride and which is one of the most finished and complete residences in this county or near-by districts.

"The plans for the residence were prepared by W.H. Weeks, of this city about a year ago and the building work was commenced last spring. The work was not rushed, the desire being to have finished work. The general design of the building is original with Colonial detail. The foundation is of bright granite from the quarry of the Granite Rock Company and its appearance and solidity demonstrates the value of this stone for building purposes.



**Betty  
Lewis**

**That was  
Watsonville**

"From the foundation to the attic the exterior is largely of Arizona sandstone. There are a number of admirable variations in house-building, notably the round porch, with its stone pedestals and fantastic gargoyles, the circular tower and windows of plate glass, the recessed main entrance with its heavy plate glass door and the effective stone and buff chimneys that blend so well with the roof color.

"The front entrance is one of the most attractive parts of the building. It is finished in selected mahogany and richly cut and colored art glass, all chosen with due regard to harmony. The wide reception hall is richly furnished having a heavy beamed and paneled ceiling, inlaid floors, spacious stairway and paneled walls, all in highly polished oak.

"The mantle in the reception hall is in harmony with finish of the room. To the right of the reception

hall is the parlor. The room is especially admired for the rare mahogany which is a prominent feature of its finish. This handsome wood is used in the doors and panels and with oak and rosewood appears in the inlaid floor. The parlor mantle was made from a special design of architect Weeks and is deservedly much admired. It is a magnificent piece of work."

Also on the main floor were a bedroom, living room, library, lavatory, dining room, closets, pantry, kitchen and servant's room. On the second floor were six bedrooms, bathroom, lavatory and medicine and linen closets. The attic was floored and used as a play room for the children, party room plus there was a billiard table.

In 1939 the house was converted into apartments and, in 1974, the handsome structure was purchased by Oliver Realty. Morris Tuttle was born in Iowa in 1858, one of nine children born to Owen and Mary Burns Tuttle. The family came to the Pajaro Valley in 1877. Morris married Mary Ingles in 1880 and they had six children - Warren, Lee, Owen, Mabel, Gladys and Adele. Mary died in 1926 and Morris in 1937.

*Betty Lewis, a local historian, is a contributing columnist to the Register-Pajaronian.*



The Tuttle house on East Lake Avenue.

REFERENCE



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