

Mission Hill Comes into Its Own

Mission Hill, the place where the City of Santa Cruz got its start, has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The national designation followed a petition signed by 45 residents of "the hill," plus much other information which was gathered and submitted by area residents with the help and support of Santa Cruz Historical Society.

Word of the approval came through Dr. Knox Mellon, historic preservation coordinator, Office of Historic Preservation, in Sacramento. The national register program is administered in California by the Director of Parks and Recreation.

Helping expedite the project was Mrs. Edward Tunheim who is vice president of the local Historical society and who resides at 123 Green Street in one of Mission Hill's older historic homes.

Names on the list of residents who requested the designation include such long-time residents as the late Phyllis Patten, local historian and author; Cornelia Hopcroft who resides in one-half of the School Street Adobe; Howard and Helen Trafton; Joseph and Virginia Bosso; Faith Taubenheim; Ruby Tefertiller; Viola and Carmen Guichard and Clementina Costella.

The application stated in part: "We

are residents and owners of property within the proposed area and feel that approval of the application will not only bring recognition to an asset which is already valued locally and regionally, but also further local efforts to preserve this area and its historic character as a significant landmark of the American Tradition."

The Diocese of Monterey, Education and Welfare section, lent its approval to the project also.

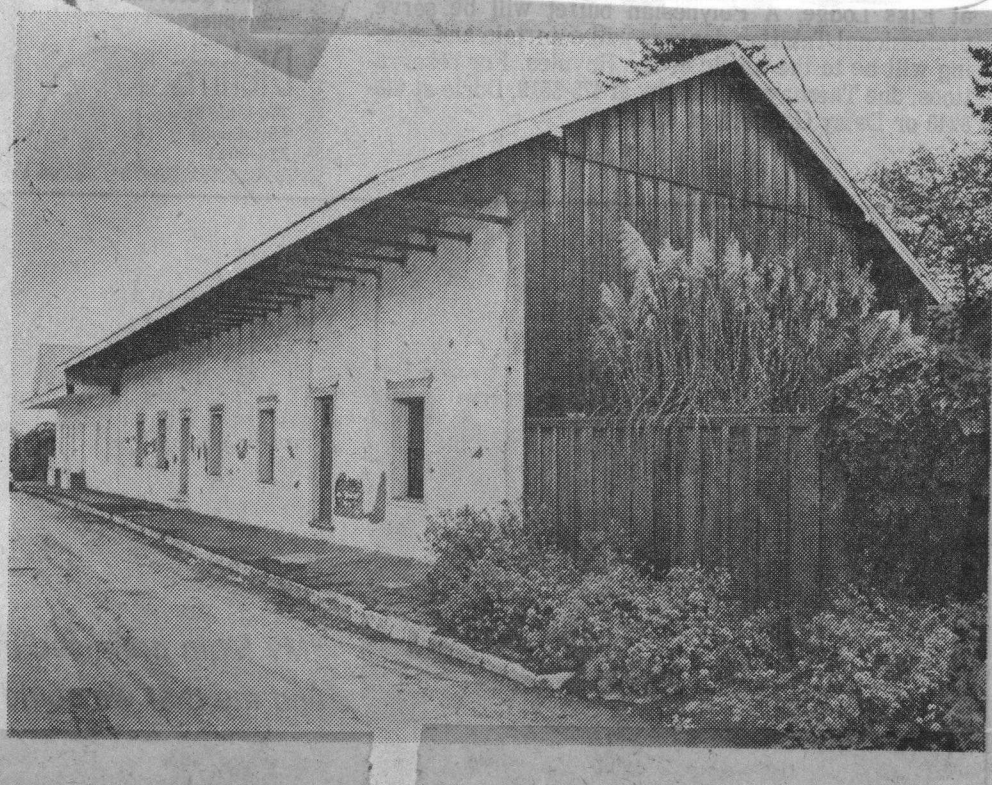
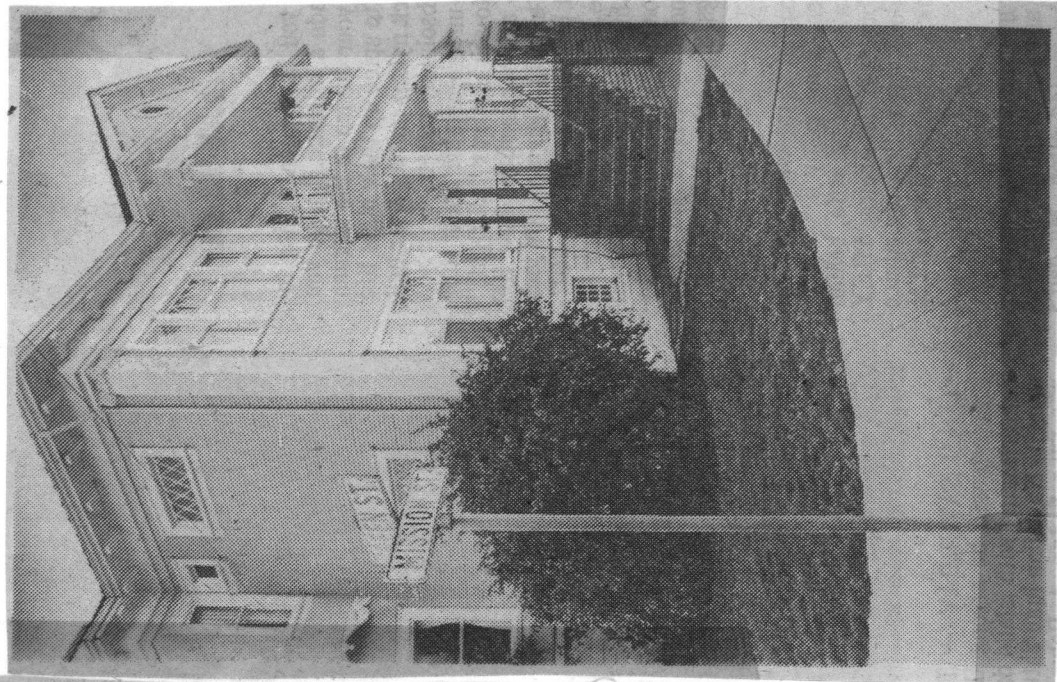
The area included in the register roughly takes in Green Street and Mission to the Chestnut-freeway junction; Sylvar and High Streets to the East of the freeway; Emmett, School and Mission Streets on the hill, and the area behind Holy Cross Church which formerly was an orchard.

Placement in the register does not affect property titles in any way, according to Dr. Mellon.

Mission Hill is where the Santa Cruz Mission was built in 1791, the settlement that provided the foundations for the present city. Of the old Mission, only the School Street Adobe, also known as the Neary-Rodriguez Adobe, exists.

The Mission was secularized in 1833-34 and the Franciscan Padres left the area. In 1857 a wood church was constructed to replace the mission which was in ruins. Holy Cross Church was constructed on the site in 1885.

Since the early 1900s, Mission Hill has remained relatively unchanged.



Date the old Adobe was built is not known, although guesses range from 1791 to 1810. It was originally one-story; a half-story was added.

Top, a view of Holy Cross Church looking through the Plaza; Below left, 210 Mission Street, built between 1888-1892; at right, 105 Sylvar Street, Eastlake house. Above at right, the Downey Apartments at 303-309 Mission Street, constructed 1905-1910. Below, the School Street (Neary Rodriguez) Adobe, only remaining structure of the old Mission Santa Cruz.