

A HOUSE BY ANY OTHER NAME

BY CLAUDIA STERNBACH

Victorian charms
meet modern convenience
in historic home



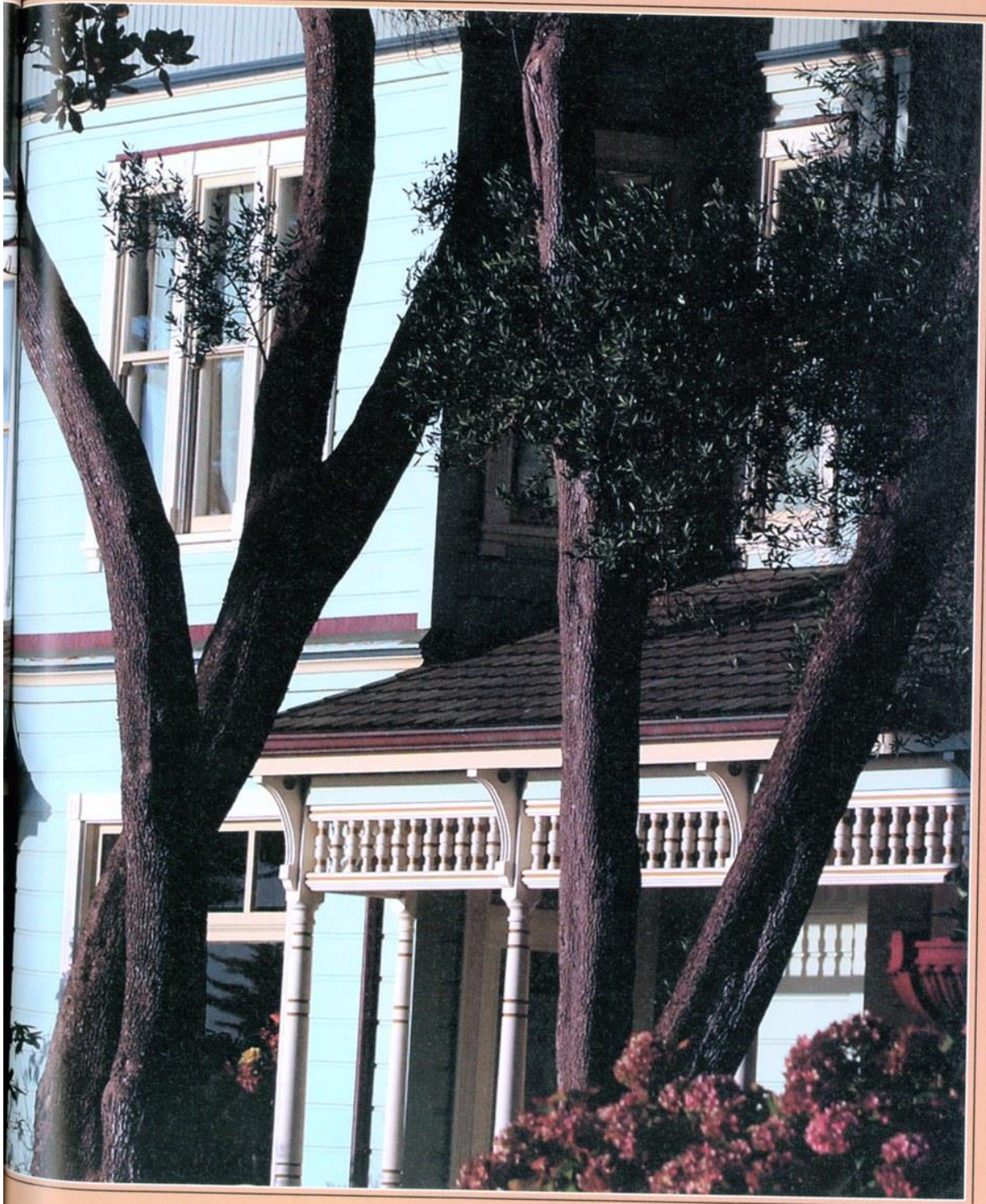
Kristine Horn is still surprised by where she lives. Relaxing on the sofa with a cup of freshly brewed tea, she looks around her parlor and shakes her head. Her softly curled brown hair catches the sunlight. Her eyes are the color of the sky.

"I never thought I'd live in a house with a name," says Horn. But she does. This 37-year-old woman left the world of high-tech and her former home in Woodside more than four years ago and settled into one of the most historic houses in Santa Cruz, Epworth-By-The-Sea.

"Sometimes I think I should just call it Fred," says Horn with a laugh.

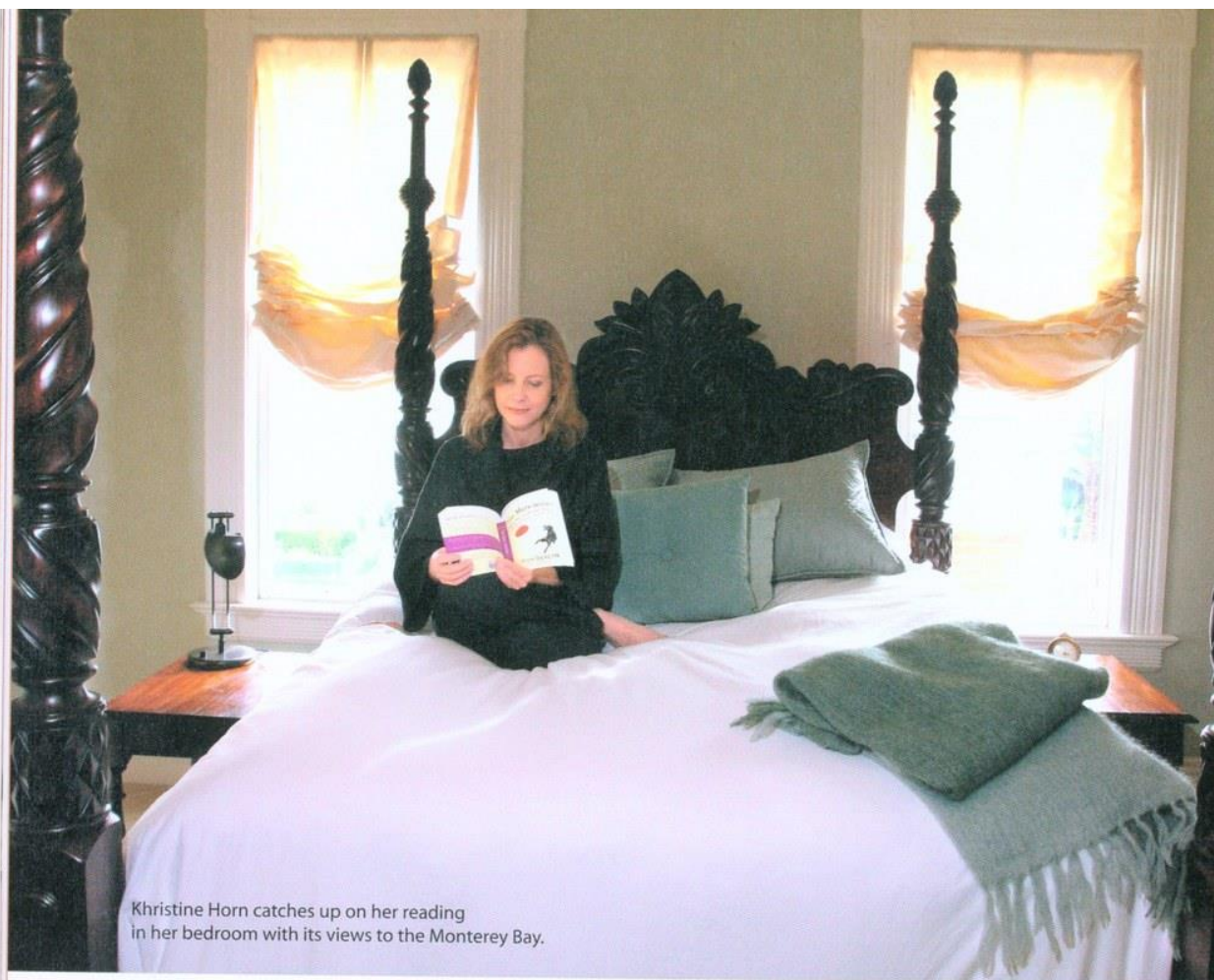
But gazing around the Victorian-era home, which sits across West Cliff Drive from Cowell Beach, it is easy to see this is a house which deserves more than a simple name. Built in 1887 and remodeled two years later in the style of the Hotel Del Monte in Monterey, it was the home of Henry Warren, a Methodist bishop. He and his wife Elizabeth Iliff were the first residents of the estate. It was Bishop Warren





PHOTOGRAPHS SHMUEL THALER

Santa Cruz Magazine | 45



Khristine Horn catches up on her reading in her bedroom with its views to the Monterey Bay.

who named the property Epworth-By-The-Sea in honor of the birthplace of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism.

"What I love most about living here is the symbiotic existence of the old and new," Horn explains as she points out the lovely details in the 4,000-square-foot home. The high ceilings and crown moldings. The hardware on the doors. The richly polished hardwood floors. The cherry wood staircase leading upstairs to the large master bedroom and spacious guest room.

On the third floor, where there are two more bedrooms, a living area and two bathrooms, an original stained glass window looks out to the bay.

But not all of the Victorian touches are original. The previous owners worked with Santa Cruz general contractor Gary Fusari to make improvements around the estate.

"It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience," says Fusari of the project. He hired locals to work on the architectural details. From knocking out walls on the second floor to turning five bedrooms (the home once served as a boarding house) into a master suite, guest room and small additional room, to replicating plaster moldings and adding a second

porch to match the original, Fusari and his crew captured the look and feel of the Victorian design.

"If I ever get to work on a project like that again it will be a miracle," says Fusari.

The previous owners had impeccable taste, Horn is quick to say. They were very careful to honor the style of the era when remodeling. From the parlor's Rumford fireplace, designed tall and shallow to reflect more heat, to the massive soapstone counter in the kitchen, the home's

**"Santa Cruz is such a wonderful place.
There is a quality of life here.
A quality of conversation."**

— Khristine Horn



Peacock feathers and an ocean shell
in a guest bath reflect the home's Victorian seaside roots.



With cozy chairs and Rumford fireplace, the parlor is Kristine's favorite room.

new additions reflect the style of a bygone era. But, Horn admits, she does not live like a woman of Victorian times. Her home is equipped with DSL as well as new plumbing.

In the kitchen, a Sub-Zero refrigerator, climate-controlled wine cabinet, and a six-burner Viking stove complete the modern touches. Upstairs, in both the master bedroom and the guest room, are high, four-poster beds which did not come from centuries past, but from Ralph Lauren. Yet they blend seamlessly with their vintage surroundings.

Outside, the day is clear and sailboats skim on the sea. A ball of yarn the color of summer fog rests on the glass-topped coffee table in the parlor. Two matching sofas, the

shade of white-sand beaches, face each other. Fat pillows encourage nesting.

"This is my favorite room," says Horn, who loves to knit and owns the Swift Stitch yarn shop in Santa Cruz. With its hint of mustard-colored walls, custom balloon shades by Gotcha Covered of Santa Cruz and beautiful art work, it is easy to imagine hosting knitting parties or gathering in front of the fireplace to enjoy conversations with friends as the sun dips into the sea and the moon begins to rise. The room is filled with paintings by Pescadero artist Meredith Reynolds. Over the mantel is a landscape which seems to be lit from within.

Proof of Santa Cruz's artistry is everywhere in Horn's home.

Hanging in a half-bath is a charming painting of Its Beach with happy dogs frolicking in its sand done by local artist Erika Perloff. Tucked in a small, third-floor office is a desk of startling beauty. Made by Aptos artists Robert and Christian Meier, the wood is as smooth as glass. And speaking of glass, all through the house visitors will find stunning light fixtures which blend perfectly with the look and feel of the home and were created by Santa Cruz glass artist Rick Strini and Johnson Art Glass in Capitola.

Horn's love of animals is evident as you wander and explore. Collections of furry friends rest on shelves and couches. A hand-carved Noah's Ark, complete with animals two-by-two, rests atop a dresser in the master bedroom.

Horn, who speaks several languages including Kiswahili, also has a passion for travel. One of her most gratifying experiences was her successful climb of Mt. Kilimanjaro. But with the world at her feet and all possibilities open to her, Santa Cruz is where she chose to settle.

"Santa Cruz is such a wonderful place," Horn says as she sips her tea. "There is a quality of life here. A quality of conversation.

"When people ask you how you are doing, they stick

around long enough for you to tell them," Horn says, smiling. And, she says, the neighbors were warm and welcoming when she first settled in her new home.

Outside, wide porches filled with wicker furniture welcome visitors. A narrow path winds past a Norfolk Island pine reaching toward the sky. A magnolia tree stands next to an olive tree and a cedar basks in the sun. Giant ferns add to the lush plantings. The original landscaping was designed by the same landscape architect who created the old Hotel Del Monte grounds.

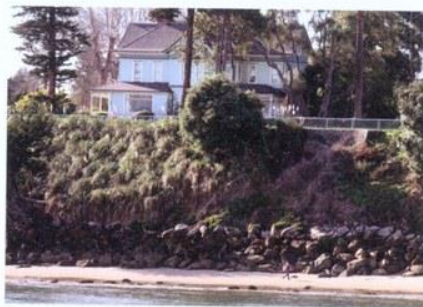
In the backyard is a cozy, one-bedroom cottage. An old, two-story barn

stands next to it waiting to be remodeled. Three baby foxes were discovered residing under the foundation of the rustic building.

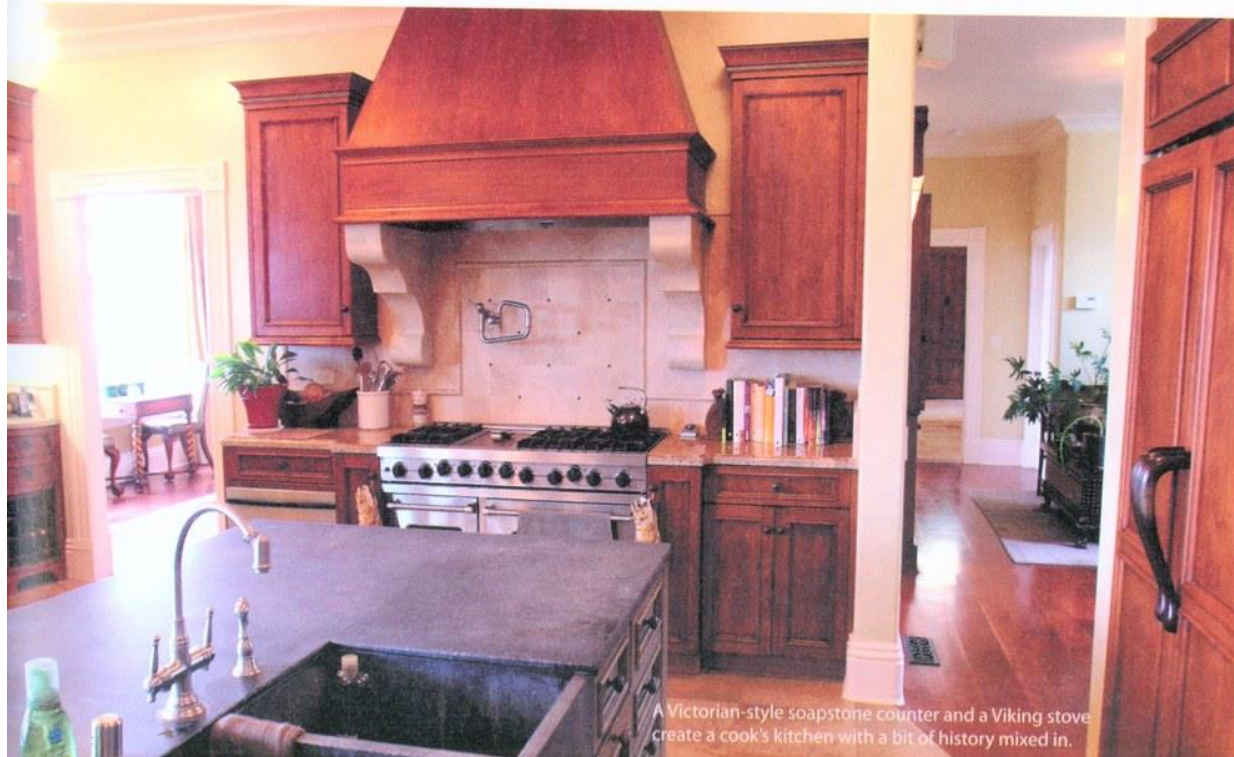
Across the street, cyclists ride along the curve of the bay. Surfers paddle out hoping to catch a wave. Cars slow to a crawl as the curious steal a peek at one of the most beautiful houses on what was once known as Millionaires' Row.

And Horn looks blissfully content. She has found her own slice of heaven. It's called Epworth-By-The-Sea. ♦

Claudia Sternbach is a newspaper columnist and author who lives in Aptos.



Epworth stands sentinel over Cowell Beach.



A Victorian-style soapstone counter and a Viking stove create a cook's kitchen with a bit of history mixed in.