

# New Life Proposed For Historic Capitola Railroad Depot

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The historic Capitola Depot, where thousands of visitors stepped off the train for sun-filled weekends in the heyday of the seaside resort, may soon begin a new life as a bed and breakfast inn.

The depot, located at 250 Monterey Ave., just a stone's throw from Capitola Village, has served as the residence of Cecil Carnes since 1974.

The living room was once the ticket area for train passengers — the curved windows where tickets were sold still exists. A couple of the

original depot signs are still in use, adding a touch of nostalgia.

Carnes has submitted the planning proposal for the bed and breakfast establishment. It is currently in the pre-stage process of a land use change with the state Coastal Commission. The change to visitor-serving use already has been unanimously approved by the City Council.

Carnes says she hopes plans for the five-bedroom inn can be before the city by the end of April.

She says she has always envisioned converting the depot to an

inn. "I've always wanted something like this," she explains. "Everybody knows the old depot and it really should be enjoyed by everyone."

As it is now, curious passersby can only admire the gleaming white mansion-like structure from a distance. Interestingly, a small city park directly in front of the residence offers a choice viewing spot.

"Occasionally people will come up and look through the front windows," said Carnes. "It's such an imposing building, they think it's a museum or something. They're surprised somebody is living

there."

The depot is almost European in style, with its gray shingles, white pillars and trim. In back there's a paved patio that includes a small fountain and pond where the same two ducks return each year.

The 1,224-square-foot interior includes the living room and an efficient kitchen where the ticket area once was. Up a half-dozen steps where the baggage room used to be is a large bedroom and bath, complete with a sunken Roman tub. Concealed behind double doors is another tub.

A powder room was installed about 1959 by a

former owner. A Southern Pacific depot sign "Waiting Room" is on the door.

Besides the railroad, the depot has had only three owners.

When Southern Pacific stopped serving Capitola, one of the company officials purchased the depot and grounds for

\$1. In 1959 it was sold again — for \$1 — and it was that owner, Lucina Savoy, who began to make many of the changes apparent today.

Savoy turned the building on its axis, moving the front portion away from the railroad tracks to face Monterey Avenue.

In 1971, Savoy sold the depot to Harry and Bea Schultz. Carnes' acquisition in 1974 was actually a trade. She admired the depot so much that she traded her Pot Belly Beach home for it.

Many of her changes have been cosmetic — primarily changing the painting scheme. The in-

terior is now a pleasing two-tone, terra cotta. The small bedroom has a miniature aviary built in next to the window where a family of doves lives.

The first train came to Capitola on a narrow gauge in 1876. Southern Pacific bought the pioneer railroad in 1881,

broadgauging it in 1883. Regular passenger service was discontinued in 1940, although the Sun Tan Special continued to use the depot until the mid-50s.

Carnes' dream is the addition of five bedrooms and baths to the rear of the original Depot "so everyone can enjoy it."



Owner Cecil sits in kitchen, where windows once served as ticket counters



Historic Capitola Depot now serves as residence of Cecil Carnes

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