

Geraldine Work  
127 Green St.  
Santa Cruz, Calif.

# Supervisor Burton Explains Stand On Keeping DeLaveaga As a Park

By Robert E. Burton:

(Robert E. Burton, Branciforte supervisor, is a staunch believer that DeLaveaga park should be used only as a park. He has written the following article for The News, telling reasons why a county juvenile hall should not be constructed there--Editor's Note)

At the turn of the century, there was given to the City and County of Santa Cruz, by a local resident, Mr. DeLaveaga, a piece of land overlooking the city and having an area of almost 700 acres, which is now known as DeLaveaga Park. This is an area equivalent to almost one tenth the area of the City itself.

Although the deed did not specify exactly what it was to be used for, citizens of the city and county always assumed that it would be used for recreation purposes, and, from year to year, the city, has appropriated, some funds for its improvement and maintenance. The city has done a commendable job in the discharge of its trust.

During the first decades of this century, a considerable community interest was developed. Various civic organizations like the Garden Club under the promptings of George Streater, Mrs. Alice Dixon and Mrs. Robert Cardiff and others built an elaborate garden arbor with an excellent collection of roses. Someone else donated a bear, others built a pit and cage for it, others established an aviary, monkeys arrived and filled a cage, a coyote roamed an ex-

tensive rockery and groto etc. all in all, the place had the genuine smell of circus.

We are not saying that in sarcasm. What man or woman does not remember with nostalgic longings the smell of a circus!

So popular was the park in these days that the Union Traction company ran a regular street car service to it. It ended at the park entrance at the end of Morrissey Avenue, where, at the entrance to the park a decorative iron arch was erected and still remains as a witness of a leisurely period.

Picnic tables were erected under the spreading locust trees (a nostalgic gift from some local Iowan). It was not unusual on a Saturday evening to listen to a German group singing "Augustine" to the click of beer mugs.

Then came the World War I with its restrictions, its strained social relations: folks stayed home, prayed for peace and raised beans.

Under the fever of war, various concessions were made for defense purposes which have now grown to embarrassing proportions. Errant city dogs have been provided with what is called a "shelter" which in reality, outside of a few who are redeemed lucky ones, is for most of them the first step into a canine Austerlitz gas chamber.

Now what about its trees? The Park contains, of course, a complete assortment of our local flora, a sort of natural arboretum. But, since there are always those who wish

to gild the lilies of the field, there are also some exotics which were planted to compete with our natives.

One of the men who was most responsible for these introductions, now long since dead, was Humphrey Pilkington, who was then owner of the Loma Alta ranch just back of the park. Humphrey was born a poor and honest man and died as such. More than that he was a visionary man, and, as many of his kind he was not able to cash in on his visions. Wood was then the universal fuel and of course the lumber of the day. Forests were receding at an alarming rate. Humphrey became fired up with the spirit of conservation. While at the University of California, he had exchanged notes and ideas with a fellow student who later became a great conservationist and also the governor of the state, Governor Pardee.

When the Big basin was set aside as a park who should become its warden but Humphrey Pilkington.

When DeLaveaga acquired the present park site, which was then fairly barren, who should he hire but his neighbor to the East, Humphrey Pilkington, to plant trees. Various pines such as the Monterey, Bishop, Knobcone, yellow, Aleppo etc., etc. were planted. Today, only the Monterey has maintained a certain amount of supremacy. The others are mere curiosities of a by-gone period. The Monterey cypress was also extensively used and has remained dominant.

While in the University of California, Humphrey had become interested in what was then a recent introduction from Australia, the eucalyptus, which arrived on these shores in the seventies under the prompting of two deans of the college of agriculture, Professors Hilgard and Wickson. There are about two hundred varieties of eucalyptus but one variety, the "globulus" offered the most promise to relieve what was predicted to be a fuel shortage. On "globulus" Humphrey pinned his hopes and he was able to convince many others, hence some of the finest groves of such trees are in this county.

He might have been right had it not been for oil and gas, but, who knows what the future may bring? Our plants may yet prove to be our main store houses of solar energy.

Of course there are other kinds of trees in the park, such as, fine groves of locusts trees and a very interesting group of hickory trees. Probably the most puzzling tree to Humphrey, was the olive. His imagination fired up by financial gains which could be made. In cooperation with DeLaveaga, he sent to Spain for olive trees. He not only planted them in the park where there are still remnants of them crowded by Monterey pines and Scotch broom, but, also a considerable grove on his former ranch. Later on Humphrey confided to me that crafty Spaniards not wanting foreign competition had sent him worthless and barren

trees.

In 1932, The Santa Cruz Masonic Lodge planted a redwood grove and erected a monument to celebrate the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of George Washington. It is on the Branciforte creek side of the park. Today it is a beautiful picnic grove which is enjoyed by many. It is also a credit to the public that after thirty three years none of the commemorative plaques have been destroyed.

The covered bridge, also on the Branciforte, owes its existence to our former County Supervisor, Mrs. Rose Rostron. This bridge used to be on the Glen Canyon Road, near by. When it became necessary to build a new bridge to accommodate automobiles, the \$300 that it would have cost to tear down and remove the bridge were given to a group of citizens who donated their time and removed the bridge to its present site by means of jacks, pulleys and ropes and much tugging.

Volunteer services are usually spasmodic and wilt under the winds of adversity, much credit is due to a former City Park Warden, Frank Burns, a bear of a man in build but not in disposition, who gradually edged the bridge to its present foundations.

Of the geology, of the hidden valleys of the flora and the live streams much could be said.

Now a less commendable use for our park is proposed to our city council. It is

contemplated to establish a juvenile hall, which is really a penal, as well as, a corrective institution in that park and on one of its choice scenic spots. Using parkland because you do not have to pay cash for it is being penny wise and pound foolish. The value of that land is much greater for recreation than the cost of more suitable land for a juvenile hall would be. Where shall we go for recreation? What now seems as surplus land will be a necessity tomorrow. The public has already voted a sum of half a million dollars for the improvement and enlargement of our juvenile hall. Out of that sum, there should be enough to buy some land for the 30 delinquents which the buildings are supposed to house and feed. These delinquents must be given just and kind treatment but not at the cost of the majority which is well behaved. Never has so much been taken from so many to give it to so few, who are the delinquents and hardly deserve the best.

More serious is the fact that youthful delinquency is on the increase. The accommodations for 30 delinquents which the ten or more acres of the park would now provide, will hardly be sufficient a year from now. It may grow and in this case ultimately embrace hundreds of acres of the park.

Now is the time to save our park from any further encroachment and pass on to our children a breathing place and tolerate no deviation from that trust.