

Here Today; Gone Tomorrow?

There've Always Been Books At The Plaza Stationery Store

Editor's Note: This is one of a series of articles on old and interesting homes and buildings in Santa Cruz and surrounding areas. The series appears in conjunction with efforts by SCOPE and Santa Cruz Historical Society to preserve local history.

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From the days of the bustle and the high button shoe, books have been sold at the Plaza Stationery Store.

This building has been remodeled several times in the past half-century. It stands on one of the oldest business sites on the "lower Plaza," as this meeting place of roads was called in early Santa Cruz days.

The last major remodeler in 1929, with an eye on Santa Cruz' beginnings, chose to perpetuate the Mission style of architecture. An "eyebrow" of red Spanish roof tile runs along the entire front facade; decorative glazed tiles trim the lower front.

Back around the turn of the century, it was a wood building of a style inelegantly referred to today as "carpenter gothic."

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DAY**

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GIVE

Whitman's
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Her favorite box of gift
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In those days, A. B. Carr was selling Zane Grey's latest thrillers as well as the Farmer's Almanac, other periodicals of the day, and "writing paper."

When Carr retired from the stationery and bookstore business, the store became Greenlaw's Stationery Shop. Next Sam Elsom bought and operated the business and even installed a soda fountain as an added attraction.

In 1935 he sold the business to Don Fairchild. Fairchild came to Santa Cruz in 1921, fresh from Stanford University where he had gained fame as a star basketball player. For 28 years he operated the business as Don's Plaza Stationery — with the extra fillup on his sign of "Things and Stuff."

He recruited extra help from

the ranks of local high school boys; several of them went on to become professors, he is proud to tell. One of his part-time helpers in the store was Gordon Sinclair, now managing editor of The Sentinel. And Don remembers him as an "inveterate reader." Another was Sid Carter, now executive vice president-manager of Santa Cruz Savings and Loan Association.

In October, 1963, Fairchild sold out to the present owner of the business, Hal Morris, who continues to serve the reading public.

Back in the early 1900s the building was owned by Mrs. Hettie Peters. Later it was sold to Rupert Lease and Paul Wettstein who operated the grocery store where McHugh and Bianchi are today.

In its earlier days, the build-

ing was flanked by C. D. Hinkle's Cash Store (groceries) and by Hugo the Photographer. Hugo snapped the shutter where Channing Manning now holds forth; later the Bubble Bakery got its start there.

To go back again, even farther, when stage coaches creaked and wheeled into Santa Cruz, this was the first part of town they came to. From Watsonville way, they crossed the Water street bridge and usually came to a halt at the Santa Cruz House which stood where the Veterans building is now. From "up the coast," they came down Mission street hill and stopped here.

The Lower Plaza was the hub of commerce and travel in those days.

