

WALK

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evening along a section of East Cliff Drive, ducking into short streets that end abruptly on cliffs dangling over the beach, describing the lives of early residents and the history behind those structures that still stand. As he talked, his grandsons held up black-and-white photographs depicting elegant women, distinguished men, and buildings of a bygone era.

For example, the Villa Maria Del Mar Chapel, built in 1906, still stands on 19th Avenue, and can still be rented for weddings. Kate Handley, a hat maker and successful businesswoman, purchased a lot on Sunny Cove Drive in 1892, though the Spanish Colonial Revival house that now stands there wasn't built until more than 30 years later.

Then there's the English Manor-style home built by a San Francisco architect, who later got into the beer-distribution business after Prohibition ended in the 1930s. The following decade, Poitevin said, some of the homes in the area



KEVIN JOHNSON/SENTINEL

A group of tour walkers surround local historian Norman Poitevin as he explains a historic landmark on East Cliff Drive in Santa Cruz on Tuesday.

had cannons and machine gun nests stationed in their yards, fearful of an attack from the Japanese during World War II.

The railroad through the Santa Cruz Mountains already had been established by the time the Del Mar district was

established, allowing Bay Area residents to easily travel by train, then transfer to the tram that shuttled between Santa Cruz and Capitola for a relatively quick weekend getaway. A local couple, Virgil and Violet Macy, even ran a service — a horse-drawn

buggy — that shuttled tourists from the train depot to one of the 17 motels that once dotted the area between 17th Avenue and Portola Drive.

Follow Sentinel reporter Kimberly White on Twitter @kwhite95066