

# Historic UCSC lime works celebrated

Lime Kilns  
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SANTA CRUZ — The weathered limestone buildings near the entrance to UC Santa Cruz are now officially historic: Friends of the Cowell Lime Works held a ceremony Friday to unveil a permanent plaque commemorating the placement of the area on the National Register of Historic Places.

After years of work by local historians and UCSC staff, the Lime Works District was placed on the register in early 2008. Now, the plaque alerts campus visitors to the area's key role in Santa Cruz and California history.

"This really is a treasure to our community," said Mayor Cynthia Mathews at the event. "It's part of why Santa Cruz grew up the way it did."

The district produced lime, which was a key component of the mortar and plaster that built California buildings after the Gold Rush and at the turn of the 20th century.

Because Henry Cowell bought thousands of acres of land to house the lime works, the redwoods that fueled them and cattle, the land was never developed, so it was free to house the university after the lime works closed in 1920.



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**Frank Perry, president of Friends of the Cowell Lime Works Historic District and UCSC Chancellor George Blumenthal unveil a plaque commemorating the placement of the Historic District on the National Register of Historic places on Friday.**

"What we gain from having this designation is recognition from the community and from the campus that this really is a significant historic site," said Sally Morgan, staff liaison to Friends of the Cowell Lime Works. "And that recognition may be a foothold for us to get funding, to get more volunteers, to get contributions."

News of the ceremony, which was attended by about 50 people, reached as far as Washington on Thursday.

"Historical places like these are an example of

what makes our community a national leader in the preservation of lands that continue to shape our society," said Rep. Sam Far, D-Carmel, on the House floor Thursday, according to his representative Allyson Violante. "I know I speak for the House of Representatives in saluting the UCSC community on this momentous occasion."

Henry Cowell was a hard-line industrialist whose tactics, such as an attempt to buy up the entire Santa Cruz waterfront, alienated many locals, according to Henry Perry, president of

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the Friends of the Lime Works. But Friday, Cowell's contributions were honored. And the speakers did not forget to mention the contributions by the district's immigrant workers.

"They facilitated the starting of the university, which is dedicated to providing the access to students who can benefit from the education and improve themselves and their future, as well," said UCSC Chancellor George Blumenthal. "So I think that the story continues."

On a count of three, Perry and Blumenthal uncovered the permanent bronze plaque, which is fitted on a limestone base near the former Cook House, now the UCSC Admissions Office.

UCSC is the only higher education institution in California that contains a National Register of Historic Places site.