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Here Today; Gone Tomorrow?

Santa Cruz' Own Candy Man

Historic Houses

(Editor's Note: The following is another in a Sunday series on old and historical buildings in the Santa Cruz area. The series is done in conjunction with SCOPE and the Santa Cruz Historical Society to foster interest in the Santa Cruz County heritage.)

By Margaret Koch
Sentinel Staff Writer

When Frazier Lewis wasn't concocting a batch of his famous 5-cent candy bars, he was off hunting or fishing. These, he once said, were his "favorite sports."

Frazier did his last concocting at The Cupola, located at 2-1130 East Cliff drive. Now an art gallery, it served him as the last factory site where he made his popular Victoria candy bars. Frazier mixed the candy himself, from a secret formula, and stirred it with two spades be-

fore the days of electric beaters. Old-timers used to say he originated the nickel bar of candy.

Whether he did or he didn't, Frazier's candy became world famous. Fame, or perhaps notoriety of a sort, was to follow Frazier Lewis all of his life. He was the son of Patty Reed Lewis, who came to California with the ill-fated Donner Party.

Caught in early snows near Donner Lake, members of the pioneer expedition resorted to cannibalism to keep from starving. Patty Reed was a child of 5 at the time.

For 18 years, Frazier Lewis whipped up candy in a Pacific avenue factory where he sold it, and ice cream. Then in 1928 he moved, lock, stock and

spades, to the Twin Lakes "factory." There he continued mixing his secret candy formula for nearly 13 more prosperous years.

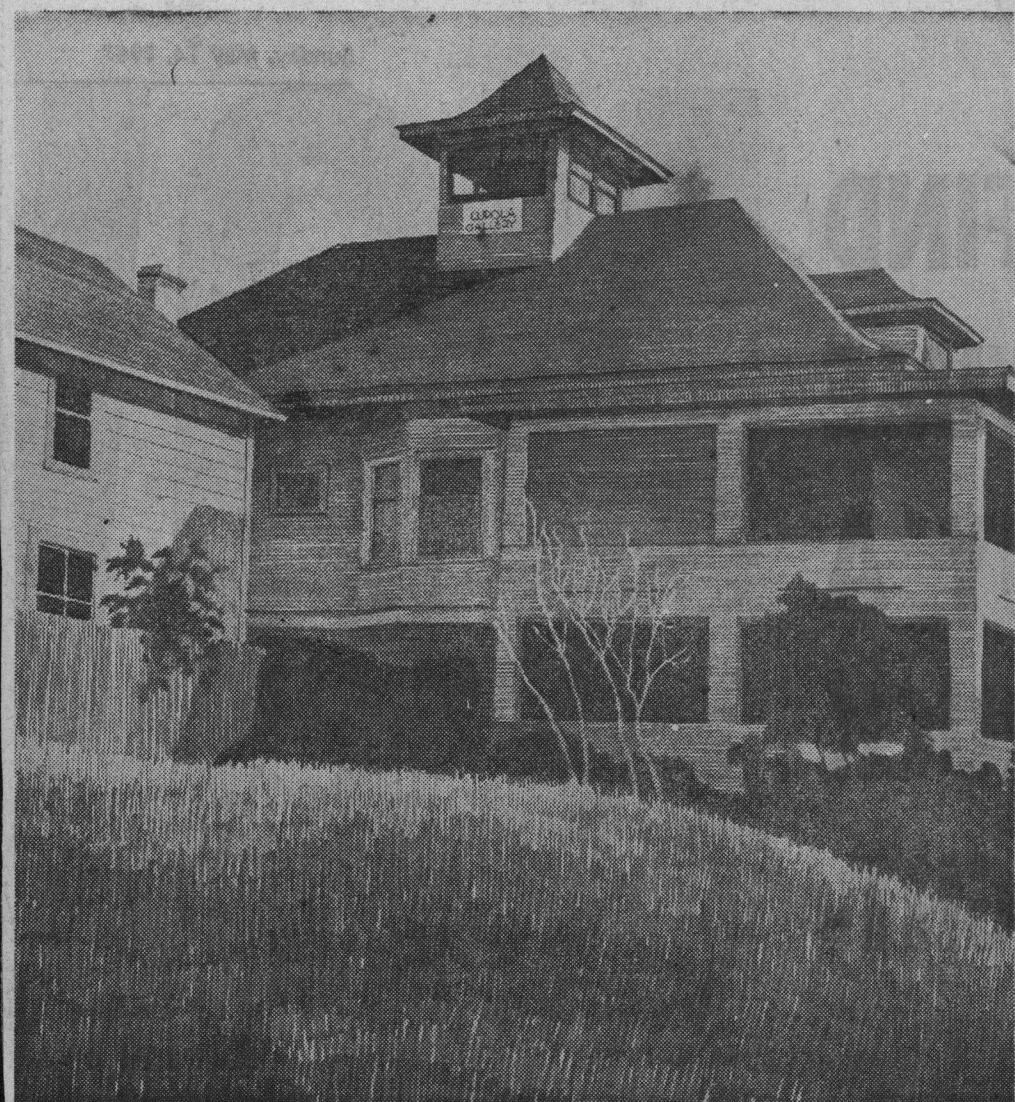
Imitation "Victorias" appeared from time to time but none could equal Lewis' candy. For years, candy corporations also had tried to buy or steal the candy recipe from Frazier Lewis, but he held tight.

In June, 1941, he retired to rest and travel. When he died in the late 1940s, everyone thought at first that his secret formula had gone to the grave

with him. But Lewis left a sealed envelope, containing the candy recipe, to lodge brothers of the Native Sons of the Golden West.

Among negotiators for the envelope was the late Zasu Pitts, former Santa Cruz girl who became a well-known movie comedienne.

For years after the death of Frazier and his sister, Miss Martha Lewis, the big old house at Twin Lakes echoed with dusty memories of the past. In 1962 it was cleared of relics and remnants and turned into an art gallery.



The Cupola stands high above Schwan Lagoon in Twin Lakes, a landmark to old Santa Cruzans. Artist Will Shepherd draws

it with pen and ink for The Sentinel series on old homes and buildings in and around Santa Cruz.