

House on Ocean View grew every new generation

TAKE ONE STEP into the attic of the big Victorian at 303 Ocean View Ave. and you can see in an instant that this has been a well-used home for successive generations of a close-knit family. Along with suitcases and holiday decorations of recent origin there are games outgrown by one generation waiting for the next; antique chairs are stacked in a corner, and boxes of family mementos have been set aside for safekeeping.

A sense of continuity pervades the conversation as Truella, Otto and Joyce Lund relate the history of their home and family.

The Lunds' home is an imposing two-story structure with outbuildings scattered on a large city lot; it began as a modest one-story Queen Anne cottage when it was built in

Pieces of history



Cynthia Mathews

1880 for James Rawlings True and his wife Mary Ann. Its many remodelings and additions over the

years have come in response to the family's growth and changing needs.

James True came west for the Gold Rush with his brother Isaac, but they found a more reliable source of income as part of the "service industry" for other miners, first hauling supplies across the Sierra and later in the Mother Lode country.

Mary was a native Californian — barely. Her parents crossed the country by wagon train in 1856, and her mother's pregnancy was near term as the party approached the California border. According to Mary's parents, the captain of the party said, "I will hurry the (wagon) train up a little so you will have a native son or daughter." The timing was close but the effort was successful; the party crossed the border at sundown, and Mary

was born in Calaveras County the following morning.

Mary and James True were married in 1876 and moved to Santa Cruz in 1879. They had three daughters: Edna, Alverda and Trela Luene.

Mary's diaries, begun in 1893 and spanning a period of over 50 years, are among the many personal documents that have been preserved within the home. In a straightforward conversational tone, the diaries describe the domestic life of a hardworking wife and mother, preserving a record of everyday life that rarely appears in conventional historical accounts.

Mary's normal activities kept her busy enough. Entries like these were made almost on a daily basis:

"Baked 5 loaves of bread, 2 pans of biscuit and a few raised doughnuts ... Went over to Mr. Archers to get some plants of swiss chard and brussels sprouts; came home and set them all out ... Cleaned the chicken boxes ... The girls and I did a big washing I can tell you ... Put new steels in my corset and finished Edna's linen shirtwaist this evening ... Went down to see Mrs. Litchfield. She just had Mr. Litchfield pull a tooth for her and she looks miserable ... Claud Hendricks came in this evening. Wants the girls to come out Saturday night to a dance ... Received a letter from Emma."

The diary of 1904 records a particularly active year. Beginning in May and continuing throughout the rest of the year, the family



The house at 303 Ocean View.

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House reflects how a family grew

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home was greatly expanded with the addition of a second floor and major remodeling of the first. In addition to her regular activities, Mary was absorbed in the decisions and actual work of the remodeling project. Anyone who has been through a similar experience can easily relate to these entries:

"May 19: We were up early and I started the breakfast. After that I took up the hall carpet. After that I took up the sitting room and the bedroom carpet. I tell you I was tired. Took a bath and ate my dinner. Pop (James) and I went over to Mr. Wessendorf to see his toilet. (They were investigating this modern improvement.) When we came home Lena had a runaway and we took the harness down to Harry. Soon the electric light man came back with other plans." (Another major upgrade.)

By mid-June the remodeling was in full swing. A tent had been put up in the yard to serve as a temporary kitchen:

"June 23: Edna and I cleaned up some of the plaster. The painters all here, also the plasterers. I tell you this house is in turmoil."

By July the worst was over. Mary recorded the progress as new floors were laid; a handsome newel post and stairway were installed, along with spectacular "art glass"



Truella Lund became Santa Cruz's first female police officer during World War II.

help and I tore the barn down and built a place up on the brink of the hill. Luene can run (the car) very good and Alverda is learning to run it. I can run it some but I don't like it. I find it quite a job to grease and take care of."

The major influence on James' big decision was probably Otto Jensen, soon to become his son-in-law. Otto and Fred Jensen had run a buggy shop on Front Street for several years, but in the early 1900s they saw the wave of the future and converted it to Santa

home, and we got paid about \$4 each for the job."

IN THE MID-30s, the Jensen brothers sold the dealership, but Otto Jensen wasn't completely ready for retirement. He ran a seasonal boat rental business near the mouth of the San Lorenzo River, with boats and canoes he'd made himself. The daily logs of rentals, complete with names and times, is among the family records that have been kept.

When Truella graduated from high school, she went first to Notre Dame College in Belmont, then to Mills College. Later she entered the masters program at University of the Pacific, but World War II interrupted her plans. She was unable to complete her degree, but there was a bright side: While at UOP she met her future husband, Victor Lund, who was in Stockton for military training. Their engagement announcement from 1942 is patriotically emblazoned with a small American flag.

While Victor was in the service, Truella returned to Santa Cruz. As happened in so many other occupations where the war had created a lack of traditional manpower, Truella became the first female police officer for the city of Santa Cruz. She worked the swing shift, providing support and dispatch services in the office, and she loved it!

At the war's end, Victor and Truella finally were able to marry.



windows in the front door and hallway. Eight-five yards of lace (purchased on sale, Mary notes) were sewn into new curtains. In October, new cement paths were poured in the garden, and gas pipes were connected in December.

As is generally the case, Mary did in fact survive the remodeling. By the close of the year the expanded house was the center of holiday baking and family gatherings:

"Dec. 31, 1904: The last day of the year. A fine day it has been. Mabelle went home to Aunt Carrie's this morning. Alverda going downtown with her. Mrs. Masters came in to try some music. I dressed an old rooster for tomorrow's dinner. Then I cleaned the cooler, pantry, bathroom, our bedroom, sitting room, parlor, sewing room and stairs. I will commence the new year CLEAN."

THE HOUSE was not the only feature that changed. A letter from James True to his brother, written May 11, 1913, gave testimony to a major revolution in the American lifestyle:

"I sold my horse and traded in my wagon and surrey for an auto. I found it was hard to get in and out of the old barn so I got a man to

Crutz's first automobile dealership. By 1912, Jensen Brothers included Ford cars with their existing line of carriages and farm equipment. The business was located on Front at Cooper, in the general area of the present-day Galleria.

In 1914, Otto Jensen married Luene True, and thus began another generation in the big house. Their informal wedding portrait on the front steps (complete with Luene's pet dog) shows the house much as it looks today. They did make some modifications of their own, including a "modern" Craftsman-style buffet built into the dining room.

Truella Lund, Otto and Luene's daughter, recalls the special perks of growing up in a car dealer's family. "When I was at Santa Cruz High, I'd come down to the garage at lunch time. We always had an hour, so I'd grab a car and ride on home for lunch. Everyone ate at home those days. The Garibaldi Hotel was in the back of the garage, and sometimes I'd give a ride to a few of the girls who worked there."

When a new shipment of cars came in, the whole family was drafted into service. "We'd take the 7 o'clock SP train to San Francisco and go to the warehouse to pick up the cars. They only went about 25 miles an hour. We got a free ticket to eat lunch on the way

Shortly after, Truella's father died, and the family home was remodeled again to accommodate another generation as Truene and Otto came along.

The latest round of remodeling at the Ocean View house is quite recent. In the summer of 1989, a charming cottage was built at the back of the property for Truella, so Otto, Joyce and their three children could occupy the main house. Immediately after the cottage was complete the earthquake caused significant damage to the main house. Otto and Joyce have approached the rehab work with a careful eye to authenticity, and are trying to restore as much of the original look as possible.

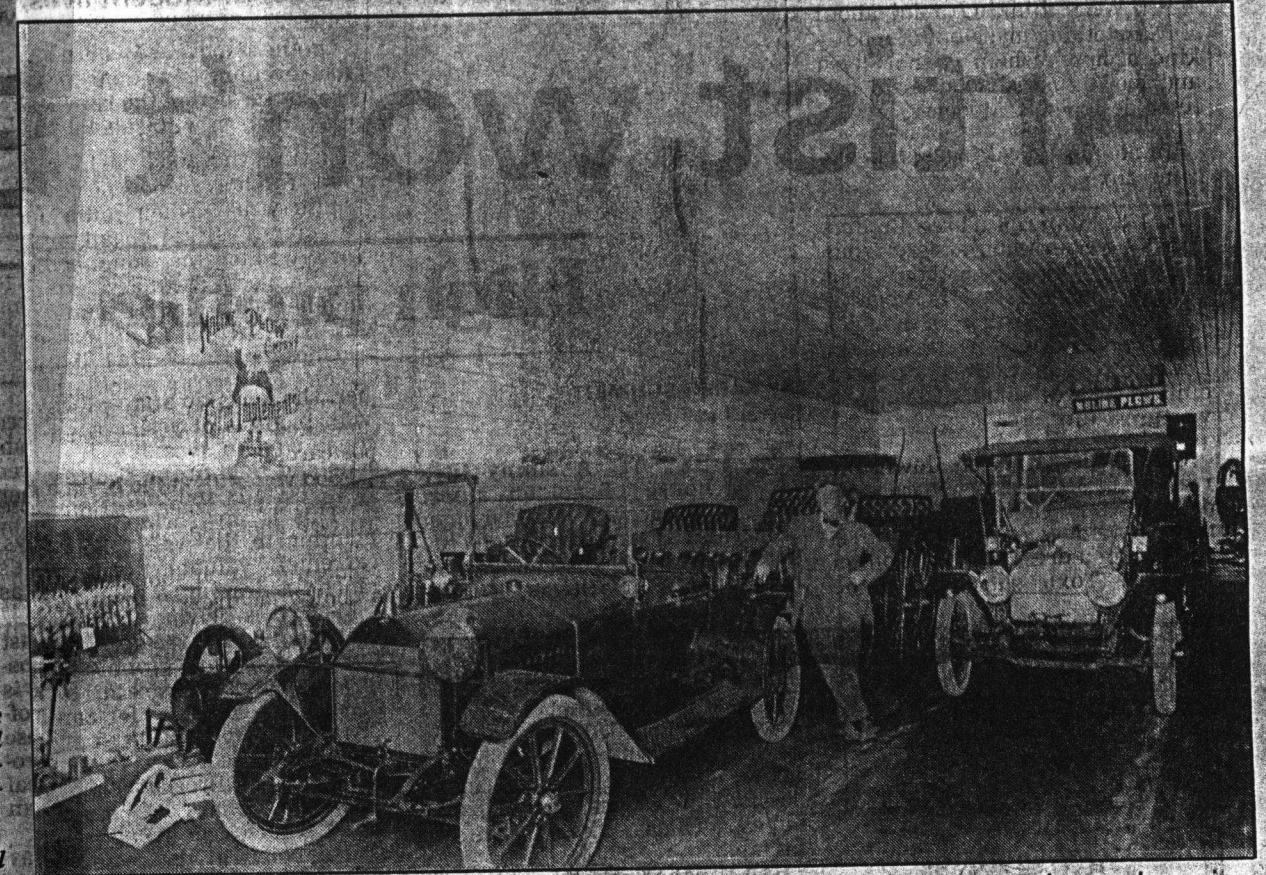
CLEARLY THIS is a house for a contemporary family. There's a swimming pool in the side yard and a computer in the back parlor. But in many respects the feeling of tradition lives on. As Mary and Luene did before them, Truella and Joyce continue to maintain their own journals of family events. The heirloom quilts created by Mary Thomas True roughly a century ago have been carefully preserved by Joyce, an accomplished quilter in her own right.

This family with such a rich sense of its own history is generously sharing its scrapbooks, diaries and photo albums with local historians for the benefit of the whole community.

Cynthia Mathews has been active with Santa Cruz County Historical Trust for many years and is involved with plans for the McPherson Center for Art and History.

If you have items related to local history that you would like to donate or share with the Historical Trust, please contact the office at 425-3499.

Wedding photo (1914) of Otto Jensen and Trella Luene True (with Trella's dog Topsy) on the front porch of the family home at 303 Ocean View.



A 1912 photo of Jensen Brothers Co. combines automobiles, horse-drawn buggies, and ads for farm equipment.

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