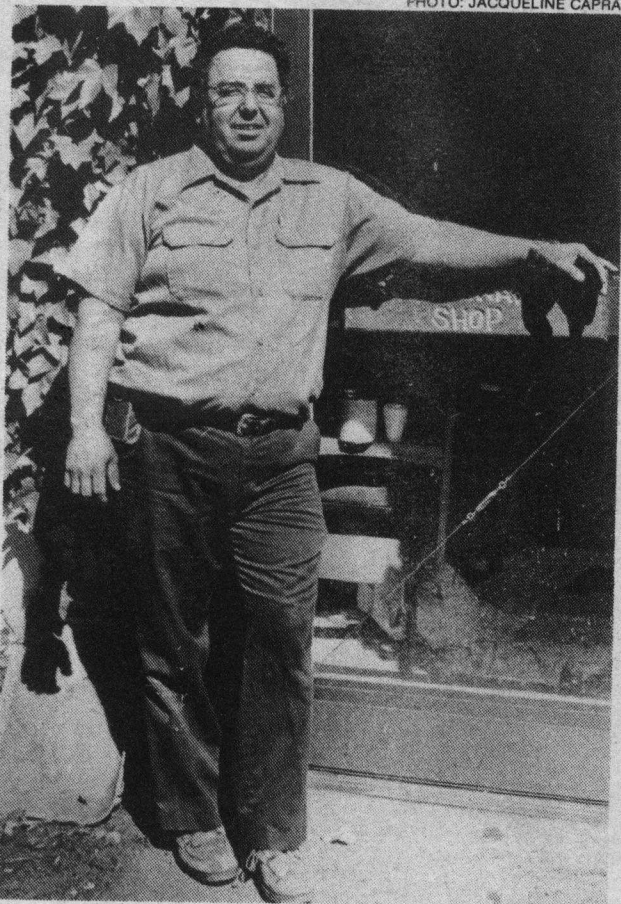


PHOTO: JACQUELINE CAPRA



Bill Ibarra, ten-year veteran of Cowell College maintenance service, contemplates his daily rounds.

As UCSC is stoked up for another year, some of the University's most important people will again be taken for granted — the janitors and maintenance crews. Not only do they keep the whole place spotless and running smoothly, they provide an important link between the University and the community at large, between the students and faculty and the working class. In fact, many have been there longer than most of the faculty, keeping an objective eye on the trends and currents which sweep the campus.

Take Joyce, for example. I was among the 50 or so students in her dormitory, Cowell College's Parkman House. Sometimes I would catch her in the hallway late in the morning as she made her rounds.

"Mornin' Joyce."

"Mornin'? Why it's almost noon!"

I never knew what time her day started, but no matter what time I was up, Joyce was well into her work. Late sleepers seldom went without comment. Laughing to herself as she passed a suspiciously quiet room, she would say, "Ah, that Steve. Must have been studyin' *awfully* late last night. And still so early in the quarter." Much as we tried to be

## Behind the Scenes

M.A. Koltko

discreet, Joyce knew all that went on in Parkman House.

Bill Ibarra is another Cowell old-timer, a veteran of 10 years of University employment. "I'll be here until I retire or until they get tired of me, whichever comes first," he says. "I guess if I worked down below [the administration] things would get pretty hectic. But up here they leave me alone."

In addition to keeping the college in shape, he tends to the needs of the students. Bill is the man to see if you need another shelf, if you want to paint your room, or if you just want to talk for a minute or two. "I love my job here," he says, "especially working around the students. And people who have graduated are always coming back to say hello. That's very important to me."

Did he see any major changes in the 10 years that he has been at the University? "Mostly in the students. They're different now, more conservative, not as crazy as they were in the beginning. They're more private and keep to themselves. Not like before, when everything happened out in the open."

As we spoke, at least five students came for his help or to say hello. Bill Ibarra is clearly an important figure at Cowell College.

Upon graduation, or even during their studies, some of the most fortunate students have moved into the custodial services of the University. For the graduates, it is an ideal environment to make the transition from four years at UCSC to the Future, where real skills such as weed pulling, bathroom cleaning and painting rooms are acquired. For others, it provides a dependable, flexible job to finance their "higher" education.

One student, a woman in the re-entry program, moved

up to janitorial work after doing several years in the campus secretarial services. To her, being a typist was like "being a sieve. Information was poured through my brain and came out my fingers onto the typewriter."

She is one of the few woman janitors, and acceptance into this male-dominated world presented its problems. The moment of truth came when she and her new partner, a man stood before the first urinal. To his disbelief, she stepped up and mopped it out like a pro. "Things went fairly smooth afterwards," she says.

"I like my job much better than secretarial work. I keep control of my own mind. Nobody tells me what I have to think while I'm at work."

Not many today could say the same. □