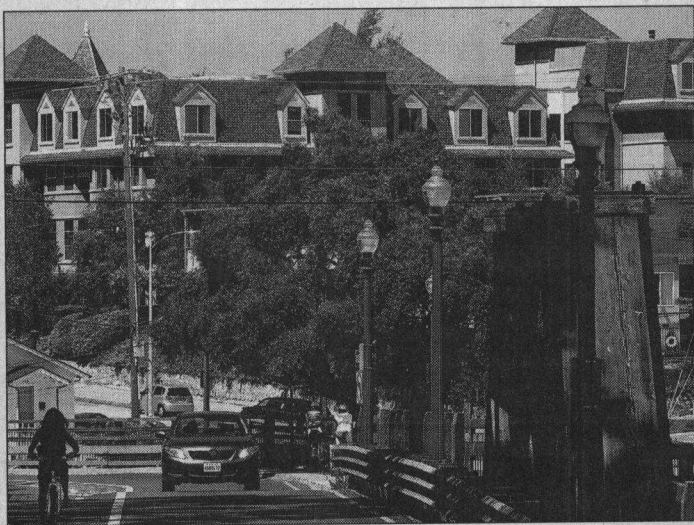


O'HEARN RECALLED



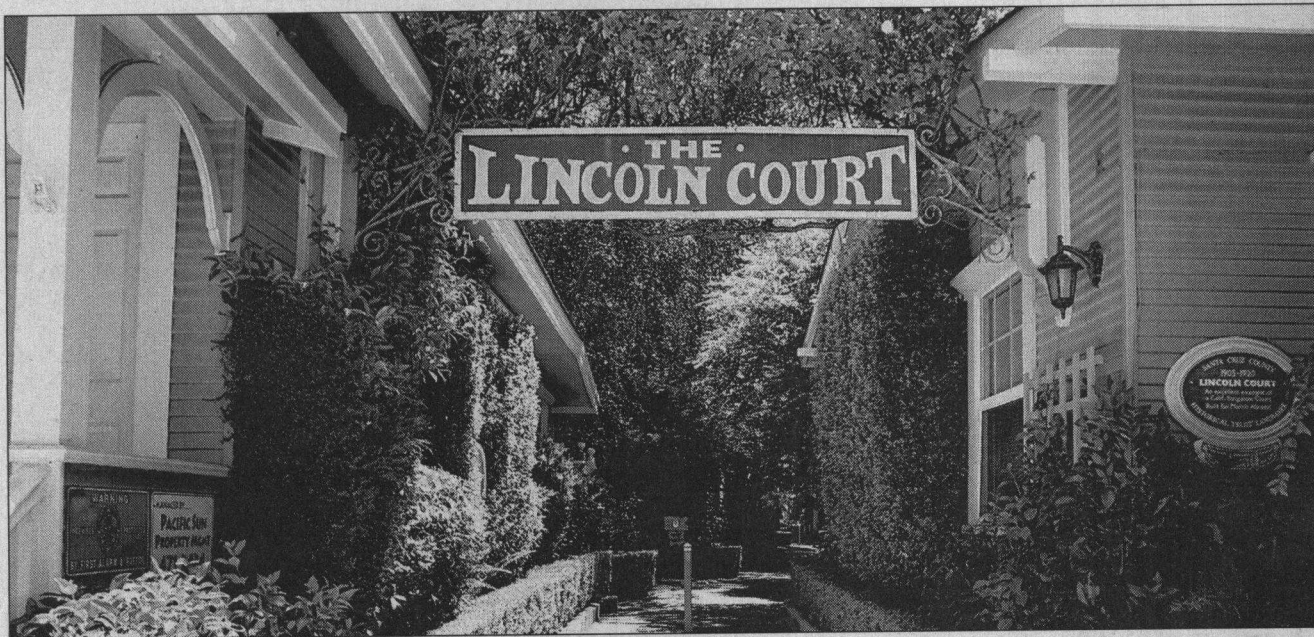
SHMUEL THALER/SENTINEL

Attention to historic detail was one of architect Michael O'Hearn's hallmarks as demonstrated at the 1876 Cope House, O'Hearn's own home on New Street, which he restored in 1990.



SHMUEL THALER/SENTINEL

Architect Michael O'Hearn helped remake the old McRae Hotel atop Beach Hill into Sunshine Villa.



SHMUEL THALER/SENTINEL

Architect Michael O'Hearn's most recognizable and well-known achievement in downtown Santa Cruz is The Lincoln Court, which was built for Morris Abrams in the early 20th century and restored by O'Hearn in 1990. O'Hearn was known for integrating landscaping into his projects.

Architect sought to make world more beautiful

Sentinel staff report

SANTA CRUZ — Architect Michael John O'Hearn left his mark on the tree-lined side streets of downtown Santa Cruz with the numerous Victorians he helped restore after 1989's Loma Prieta earthquake.

He also shepherded the renovation of the Progressive Missionary Baptist Church on Center Street. He helped transform Sunshine Villa on Beach Hill from an old hotel into a historic landmark. He was the main architect behind a 15-unit townhome complex that brought a Mediterranean feel to Second Street.

The longtime Santa Cruz resident died

Aug. 2 from throat cancer. He was 71. The accompanying photos are a sample of his work.

"His whole purpose for living was to make the world more beautiful than it was," said his wife, Gretchen O'Hearn.

The San Francisco native earned a degree in architecture from UC Berkeley, designed homes in Marin County and in Europe for a few years, then returned to California and helped found the architectural firm Habitec in Santa Clara. Through the firm, O'Hearn helped design hundreds of office buildings across the state.

He sold the firm to his partners in the early 1980s and moved to Santa Cruz, where he continued to work as an archi-

tect. While the design and development of homes and buildings drove much of his work, O'Hearn was equally passionate about landscapes.

He believed landscaping was "the outside room and space," according to a 1997 Sentinel story about O'Hearn's role in downtown preservation. He had an eye for planting flowers and trees that perfectly accented a home or business.

He was also an easy-going guy with little ego.

"I was just impressed with how instinctively he knew what to do," said Santa Cruz's Robert Cooney, who worked with O'Hearn last year. "Mike was a true local treasure."