

The Old and the New

On Ocean View Avenue . . .



By MARGARET KOCH
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"When I remove a piece of old molding I am extra careful — you can't replace it today."

That is Louis Bacigalupi speaking, talking about the old house he owns at 401 Ocean View Avenue. Louis, his wife and five children live in the house and love it. They also are working on it in their spare time.

They are refugees from Santa Clara Valley smog.

Louis still has his wallpaper and decorating business over there, and he commutes daily. He says it's well worth the drive.

The former dining room in the big old house is his local business office.

Ocean View Avenue is a famous phrase in Santa Cruz nomenclature. In the old days it was synonymous with "high society" and gracious living. Today it takes on a different aura — that of history and the Gay 90's. And big, fascinating old houses.

Several are famous and their history is well known.

Others are not so well known, but just as interesting. And still others have pasts buried in a series of renters, buyers, and the passing years.

"Imagine painting this wood!" Bacigalupi said with a degree of indignation, pointing to pillars of redwood and redwood trim around walls, doors and windows.

Nevertheless it had been painted—with umpteen jillion coats, and the Bacigalupi family spent three and one-half gallons of paint remover and five and one-half weeks of hard labor, removing the paint.

Underneath is fine old redwood.

In the four years they have lived there, they have re-done three rooms and half the kitchen. Complete are the living room, dining room, office.

"We stopped working on the house so we could put a pool in the backyard," Bacigalupi

explained.

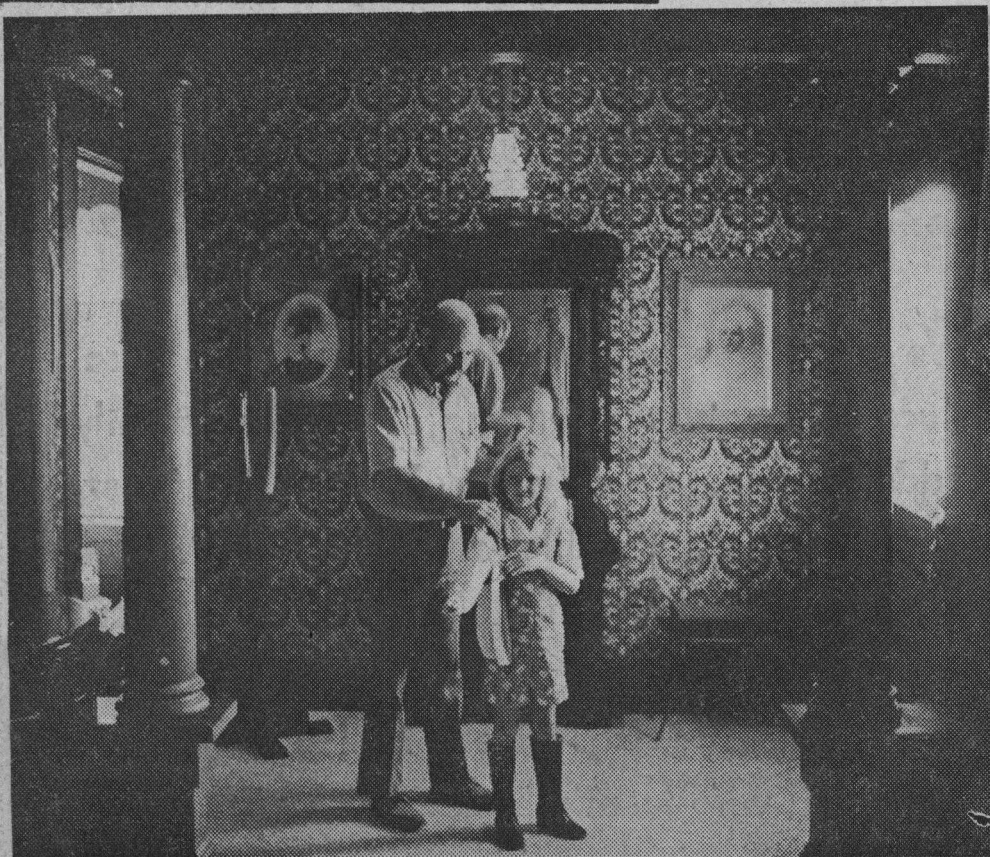
They have five and one-half rooms to go.

We took a picture of the stairway to show how most of the house looked before it was redone. However, appearances are deceiving in one way: the house is still as solid as a rock, Bacigalupi asserts.

He says it was built about 1894. By whom? By someone who loved trees, that's for sure. There are two huge elms out front and a sizeable camellia "tree" at the front steps.

Bacigalupi is a native of San Francisco but he says that is no place to raise kids, today. He feels strongly about what has happened and might happen in Santa Cruz County, in the name of "progress."

"I've seen it happen over the hill," he said. "It makes you want to shrink Highway 17 down to two lanes and put chuck holes in it."



Dining room, at top, and entrance hall above, are completed. Louis Bacigalupi helps daughter Tammy with her sweater. At right above, stairway that hasn't been re-done yet, is in marked contrast to finished rooms. Upstairs bedrooms are yet to do, plus half the kitchen, large pantry and family room.