

Great Scott left name and home

SV group tries to restore historic home

By TOM LONG

Sentinel Staff Writer

SCOTTS VALLEY — As soon as Hiram Scott hit Santa Cruz in 1846, he was a hunted man.

Scott, the son of a Maine sea captain, had served as second mate on a sailing ship that rounded the cape of South America and headed up the coast that year. Once the ship anchored in Monterey Bay, Scott apparently decided he'd had enough of frozen nights in Maine and stormy nights at sea.

He jumped ship. And hid until his captain and crew gave up their search for him.

Within a few years, Scott had made a fortune and bought 4,300 acres about six miles north of Santa Cruz. In 1853 he built a house on the land.

For more than 10 years, the Scotts Valley Historical Society has been trying to restore that house, which is listed on the national register of historical sites. About \$20,000 has been spent; it is estimated that completion of the project will cost well over another \$100,000.

"A historic restoration can be pretty expensive," said Charlie Graham, one of the society members most involved with the Scott House.

"We had one city manager say 'why don't we just bulldoze it? We can build another one cheaper'," Graham recalled.

"But to me it's historic, not just old," he said.

A lot of people in Scotts Valley agree with Graham. Now, with the help of Seagate, an electronics firm housed in a building on Scotts Valley Drive directly in front of the Scott House, funding for the restoration is much closer to being realized.

Seagate recently offered \$50,000 in matching funds for the restoration; in other words, the company will match every dollar donated towards the restoration with a dollar of its own, up to \$50,000.

Hiram Scott would have understood the importance of raising money.

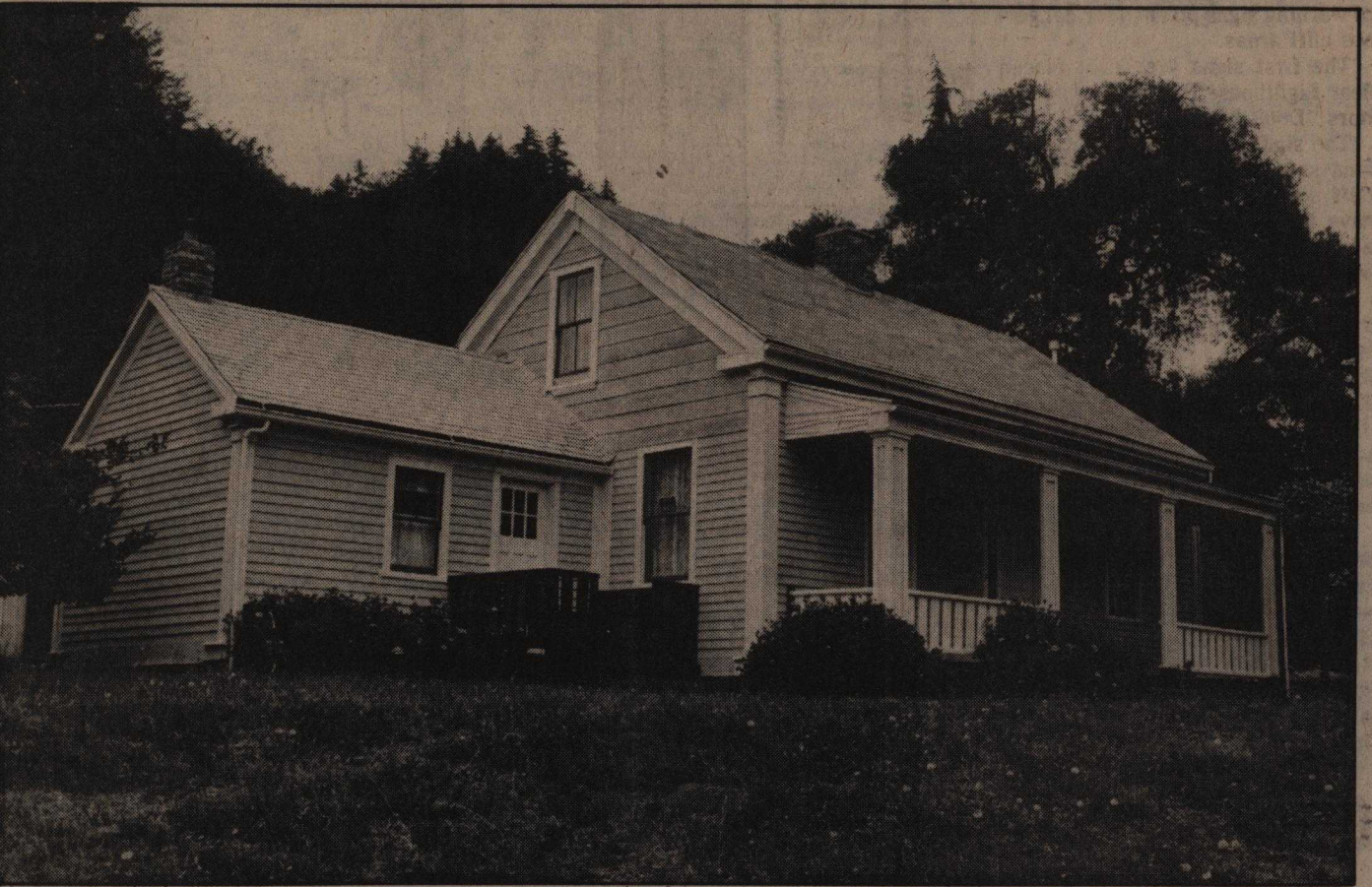
After his captain gave up the search and set sail, Scott worked as a shipbuilder in Santa Cruz for a time. Then came the California Gold Rush, and off went Scott. Apparently he had some success as a miner, then established the first ferry to cross the San Joaquin River. With the funds he made from that enterprise, Scott built a hotel in Stockton.

He then returned to Santa Cruz a wealthy man. He paid \$20,000 for what was known as the St. Augustine Ranch in 1852, and decided to import the rest of his family to sunny California from Maine. As they made the trip, he built a house on his new land.

Considering Scott was then the equivalent of a modern-day millionaire, the Scott house seems surprisingly spare by 1980s standards; about 1500 square feet, many of which were spread over a loft that served as the kids' bedroom. Two additional bedrooms were downstairs, along with a kitchen, dining room and parlor.

The building, now owned by the city of Scotts Valley along with five surrounding acres, was an almost identical replica of the Scott family house in Maine.

"In 1850 this was a pretty plush house," Graham said. Folks didn't just trot down



Pete Amos/Sentinel

Hiram Scott's home was built in 1853 might someday provide a tourist attraction.

to their local lumberyard or dial their favorite contractor back in those frontier days. In fact, they didn't even use nails for most of the building.

The Scott House is largely put together of redwood boards fitted to each other; many of the pieces of wood don't even qualify as boards, they're just ragged rails of wood, obviously split off a log. The beams across the ceiling of the kitchen are all hand-hewn.

"This type of framing went out of style in the 1840s," Graham said. The framing and the house's architecture are just two of the reasons Graham and others want to restore, rather than renovate, the house.

"We don't want to restore it to its original state, though," Graham explained. "We want to keep the plumbing and electricity, but make it something like it was before 1900."

"We don't want a two-hole toilet out in back," he said.

What the Historical Society, the city administration and the city's Chamber of Commerce all want is a restored house that will capture some sense of local history.

One of the downstairs bedrooms is slated to be used as an office for the Chamber of Commerce; the rest of the house — which is near the new city hall — will be a museum. The kitchen will even be outfitted with a wood-burning stove so students can come experience how difficult it was to bake bread back in the good old days.

The Scott family, though, never baked a loaf at the house's current location. The structure was moved about 300 yards in 1936 when it began to get in the way of progress and, more specifically, the traffic on Scotts Valley Drive.

Scott himself didn't hang out around the original location to bake much bread anyway. He deeded the house to his father in 1856 and took off to Northern California to try mining silver, where he apparently promptly lost his shirt.

So he made his way back to Santa Cruz again and built a toll road to Los Gatos. Next he owned a livery stable and then tried his hand at politics, becoming one of



Pete Amos/Sentinel

The Scott House is historic, not just old, says Charlie Graham.

the county's first supervisors.

His relatives lived in the house until 1872.

The mining wanderlust never left Scott's blood. "He ended up going to Tombstone, Ariz., to try some prospecting," said Graham.

"He died in the back room of a bar he owned there, practically a pauper, prob-

ably a drunk," Graham said.

Still, this less-than-storybook ending to a colorful life shouldn't discourage those who want to help restore the one-time fugitive's abode to its proper state. Anyone wishing to donate money to the effort may do so by writing the Scott House Historic Park Project, Bank of America, P.O. Box 66749, Scotts Valley.

Homes for the Holidays

By **MARYBETH VARCADOS**
Sentinel features editor

COMING HOME from their high-pressure business life convinced Peter and Terry Vokos of one thing — that their domestic surroundings must be soothing.

As soon as they began to visualize the home they would custom build in the rolling hills skirting UC Santa Cruz, they defined such requirements as lots of space, soaring (10½-foot) ceilings, nooks for privacy — and a spacious kitchen to accommodate Terry's gourmet talents.

Add one more requirement — quality. No shortcuts.

Three and a half years ago, they and their daughter, Ali, now 12, moved into their new Normandy-style home on Moore Creek Road, off Western Drive. What they look back on as epic discussions, struggles, demands, concessions happily produced a center of comfort and a showcase.

The old saw about building homes ruining marriages came to mind several times during the process, Terry says, but now they good-naturedly list who won disputes, and where. The rose shade of the master bedroom carpet, for example, went to Peter.

Moore Creek encompasses an architecturally controlled neighborhood of 16 homes. Here, residences must pass muster.

The 3,300 square-foot Vokos home sits back from the street with two levels on one-third acre. Peter, who owns the Men's Room at Capitola Mall, had built two stores previously, so acted as his own contractor and worked with an architect.

But the hero, the couple agrees, is builder Joe diMarzio. "Look at that crown molding," Terry says, indicating the edge of the 10½-foot ceiling. "It is meticulously fitted." Care with the finish work is crucial, Peter added. The walls are finished with plaster, not sheetrock.

Entry to the two-level home is on the hill side, with the reception hall breaking into three staircases. One leads down to bedrooms, a plush family room featuring a grape-toned sink-in couch, and the laundry. The other two go upstairs, one rounding an open bar area into the living room and the other leading to the dining room. An opening in the dining room wall looks back and down at the entry hall. So,



Carousel theme adds fun.

from the entry, two spectacular light fixtures are visible — crystal in the entry, and a lily-style water-fall in pink glass in the dining room.

Interior decoration was a personal matter with Terry, who owns Ali Claire's women's shop in Capitola Mall, in charge. A close look reveals their affection for whimsy. Ethereal pastels, while airy and calming, also suit a carousel theme. Living room walls are a tone called "crisanthemum," with the taupe carpet leading to a marble fireplace and cabineted wall, designed by Peter. A carousel horse hanging, in pastels, was designed and made by a friend.

Pouf curtains in a pink and white Laura Ashley stripe set off the French-style windows that side the fireplace and eventually give way to sliding doors along the bay-facing wall.

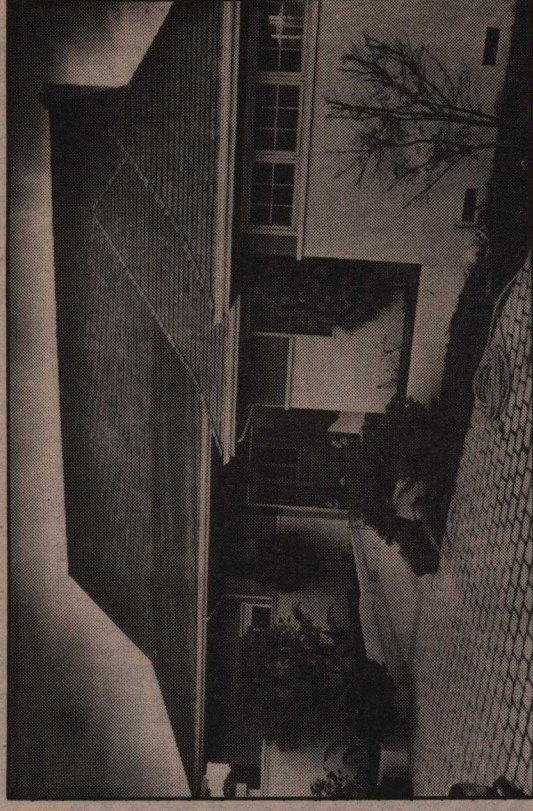
The use of pastels wraps through the dining room, lightens in the kitchen and eventually turns to a lively pink in the windowed dining nook. A copper hood hovers over the cook's island, complete with commercial-style gas range and service sink. One kitchen wall is filled with a desk area, the exterior wall holds cabinets, including handy appliance barns.

Terry points out a large kitchen witch, recostumed to meet the color scheme. But the best part of the kitchen, Terry concluded, is Corian sideboards. "I would use it everywhere, if I had the choice again," she said.

What Peter learned from the process, he said, is "When you plan a custom home, you should plan your furniture, too. We had a lot that we couldn't use."

So the dining room set with glass-top table was specially made by a San Francisco firm. And Peter himself made a French-style cabinet with stained glass-style doors to house the entertainment center.

VOKOS: Pastels and whimsy



Peaked roofs, paned windows give home distinctive style.

An opportunity to see the Vokos home comes Saturday during Santa Cruz County Symphony's Holiday House Tour. Five decorated homes will be open for touring from noon to 4 p.m., with refreshments starting at 1:30 p.m. in the courtyard at Silver Birch Lane, Soquel, with two homes open for touring. Music will be by Aptos High School Chorus directed by Merri Tassano and the Santa Cruz Chorale, Mary Lynn Place-Badarak, director. The Rose Quartet will play selections "from Mozart to mariachi" at a Victorian home, Epworth-by-the-Sea on West Cliff Drive. Final stop will be the home of Tia Baldwin on Walnut Street, Santa Cruz. Tickets are \$10 in advance or \$12 at the door. For more information, call 688-0779, 438-7264 or 688-7192.



Kitchen dining nook faces the bay and opens to second-story deck in the home of Peter and Terry Vokos, above.

Photos by Bill Loveley