

School Street Adobe, SC's Link With Past, Finds Itself Orphaned

By Margaret Koch
Sentinel Staff Writer

Fate struck the School Street Adobe a cruel blow this week. And Santa Cruz Mission—the "hard luck Mission"—still seems to be living up to that description, 175 years later.

The School Street Adobe, only remaining building of the original Santa Cruz Mission

compound, was purchased by the State of California in 1957.

Members of Santa Cruz Historical Society, who spearheaded the campaign to save the old adobe, were pleased. They felt it would be restored and preserved as a historical landmark.

Instead, the adobe was all but forgotten. Only when the roof

gave way on the Neary portion of the building was repair work carried out in 1966.

Now the state has relegated the historic adobe to an uncertain future or a slow death, depending on who—or what organization—wants to take it off the state's hands.

The adobe was the original Mission guardhouse, where

lived the Spanish soldiers who guarded the pioneer Franciscan Mission from hostile Indians. The adobe Mission Church was built in 1793-94 on the site of present-day Holy Cross Church. The guard house was built about 1810; the date is controversial because it was not recorded in Mission annals.

The Mission struggled from bare subsistence into a period of semi-prosperity with great herds of cattle, horses, sheep and pigs. Then Villa de Branciforte was established across the San Lorenzo River and a continuing feud developed between the two settlements. The Mission fell on hard days and declined through a series of unhappy incidents and clashes with the Villa.

Alta California went from Spanish rule to Mexican rule; all Missions were secularized, church property was sold or siphoned off in devious ways. Santa Cruz Mission was secularized in 1833-34 and the School Street Adobe was part of church properties turned over to the few remaining Mission Indians. The adobe is all that remains today.

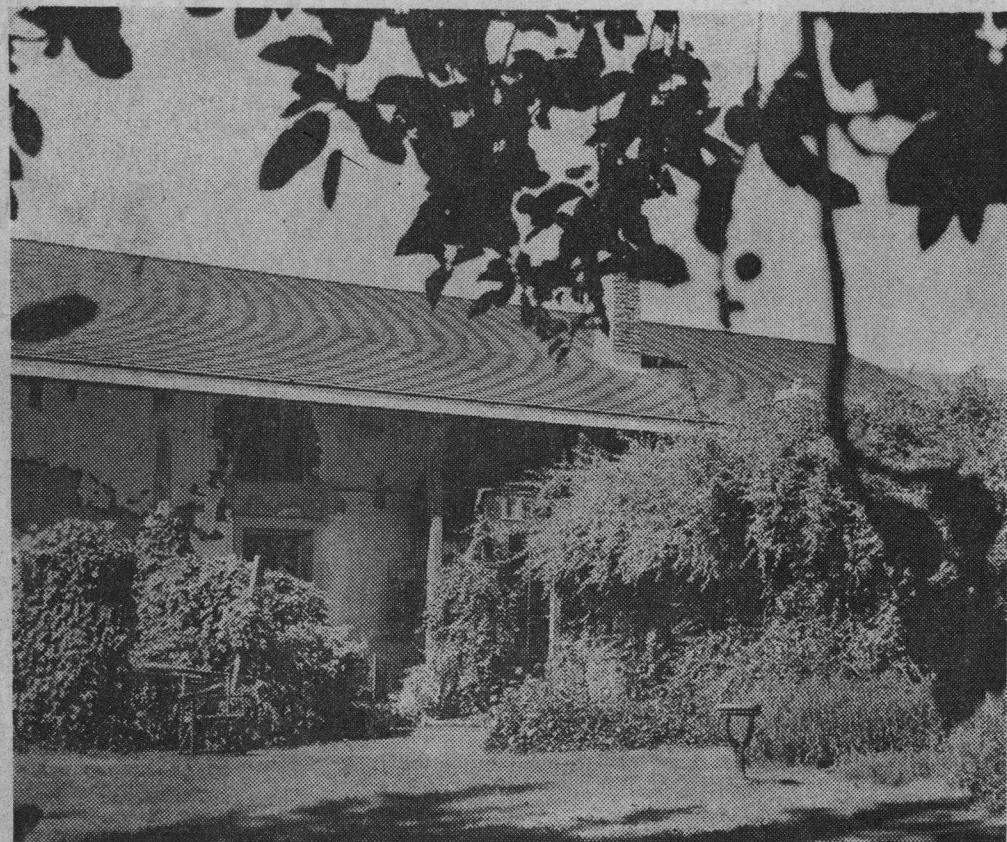
It is a particularly interesting adobe.

In 1838 Roman Rodriguez bought one-half of the long adobe. In 1864 Patrick Neary bought the other half. The two families lived in it for many years, their respective homes separated by a five-foot thick adobe wall that cuts through the center of the building.

Mrs. Cornelia Hopcroft, a Rodriguez heir, still lives in her half of the building, under a life tenancy agreement with the State. Miss Alice Neary's half of the adobe is used for an antiques shop run by Alma Schaefer.

Out in back, on the bluff overlooking the city, is what remains of the garden of Mission days. Old fashioned roses p.m.; and ancient fig trees grow there. Redwood trees flourish—birds sing. It's a beautiful and secluded spot.

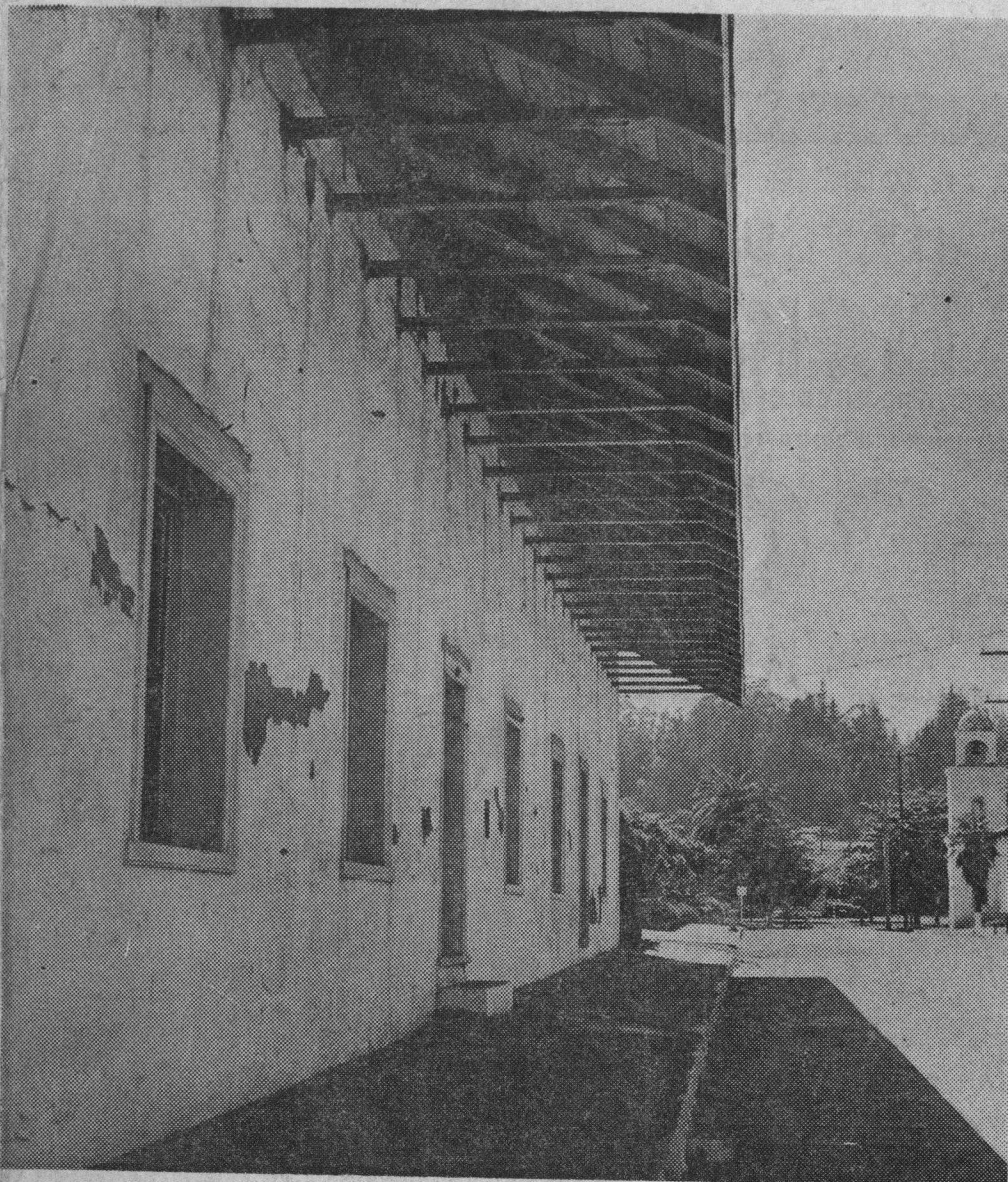
It was back in 1956 that the Santa Cruz Historical Society started a campaign to have the adobe acquired by the State Division of Beaches and Parks. Robert E. Burton and Moreland Johnson headed the society's committee. Attorney Donald B. Younger negotiated the deal. The late Assemblyman Glenn



The back garden . . . secluded remnant of Santa Cruz Mission days. During repairs to roof two years ago, wood

stairs that led to second floor were removed. Masonic

Lodge was organized up there 115 years ago.



The adobe as it looks from School Street. This is the Neary portion, now in use as

an antiques shop. Originally, the building had wood posts supporting the roof overhang. They were not put back when the roof was replaced in 1965.

◇ ◇ ◇

City May Hold Key To Future Of Old Adobe

Does the School Street Adobe's future lie with the City of Santa Cruz? It may, according to Jim Hammond, chairman of the county parks and recreation commission and member of the city parks and recreation board.

"The City of Santa Cruz would be the most appropriate government agency to handle something like this. The adobe's within the city limits and within a couple of blocks of city headquarters," he said.

The state has no efficient way of handling a small project like this; it doesn't warrant putting a full-time person in charge, he noted.

The state is reviewing all its holdings at this time, particularly anything that is not completely under its control.

"As a county agency, we would be wise to find out all properties in Santa Cruz County under this classification," Hammond said. He plans to instigate such a project.

CL
wife
brigh
Arm
nam.
A, 1
ry D

Recreation Calendar

Harvey
t San
p.m.;
DeLa-
young
UCSC
co-ed
junior
soft-
minor
square
junior
enzo
fit-

Night Set

Johnson headed the society's committee. Attorney Donald B. Younger negotiated the deal. The late Assemblyman Glenn E. Coolidge put through legislation for its purchase.

Miss Hoperoff received \$13,650 for her portion; Miss Neary, \$24,640. To all intents and purposes the adobe was saved. Historic-minded citizens sat back to await state funds and restoration. They never came. Instead, in 1965, the rains came. They came right through the roof. Parts of the adobe walls in the Neary portion were damaged. Adobe is like sugar; it melts when it gets wet.

A crew of workmen came from the Monterey office of the state division of beaches and parks to replace the roof. They also installed a concrete bond beam around the top of the walls for strength.

In the process of removing the old roof, the crew discovered the adobe had originally been a one-story building. The second story was added later. First floor walls are about three feet thick; second story walls are 22 inches. Support for the added story was obtained by chipping into the ground floor walls.

If anything, this discovery further establishes the main adobe's authenticity as being built before 1810.

For a time the second story was used as a lodge meeting hall. In 1853 Santa Cruz Masonic Lodge was organized there. Felipe Armas lived on the ground floor in the Neary portion at that time. He had bought it from two Mission Indians.

What lies ahead for the old adobe now?

The state claims the adobe is only of local interest. It should be that, of course. But it should be more than that.

This "stepchild adobe" stands as a monument to the past. In some way, it could be developed to link the past with the future.

As a county agency, we would be wise to find out all properties in Santa Cruz County under this classification," Hammond said. He plans to instigate such a project.

Swim Signup, Teen Night Set

Re
fo
tion
vey
C
from
will

La To

Sal
Quin
appe
two
La
alto
soon
bamb
ern m
ters
he sa
music
Awar

His
tured
the T
bottle
Chin
with
Latee
The
perform
except
McGa
dition
Sunda
4 to
Sta
into

Coa
Halba
Mrs.
house
Guard
tioned