

An Old Home Opens To Public

By Margaret Koch
Sentinel Staff Writer

Santa Cruzans who are curious about "those big old houses" may visit one next weekend.

The historic Rennie home at 514 Cliff Street on Beach Hill, will be open to the public Saturday and Sunday from 2 to 4 p.m.

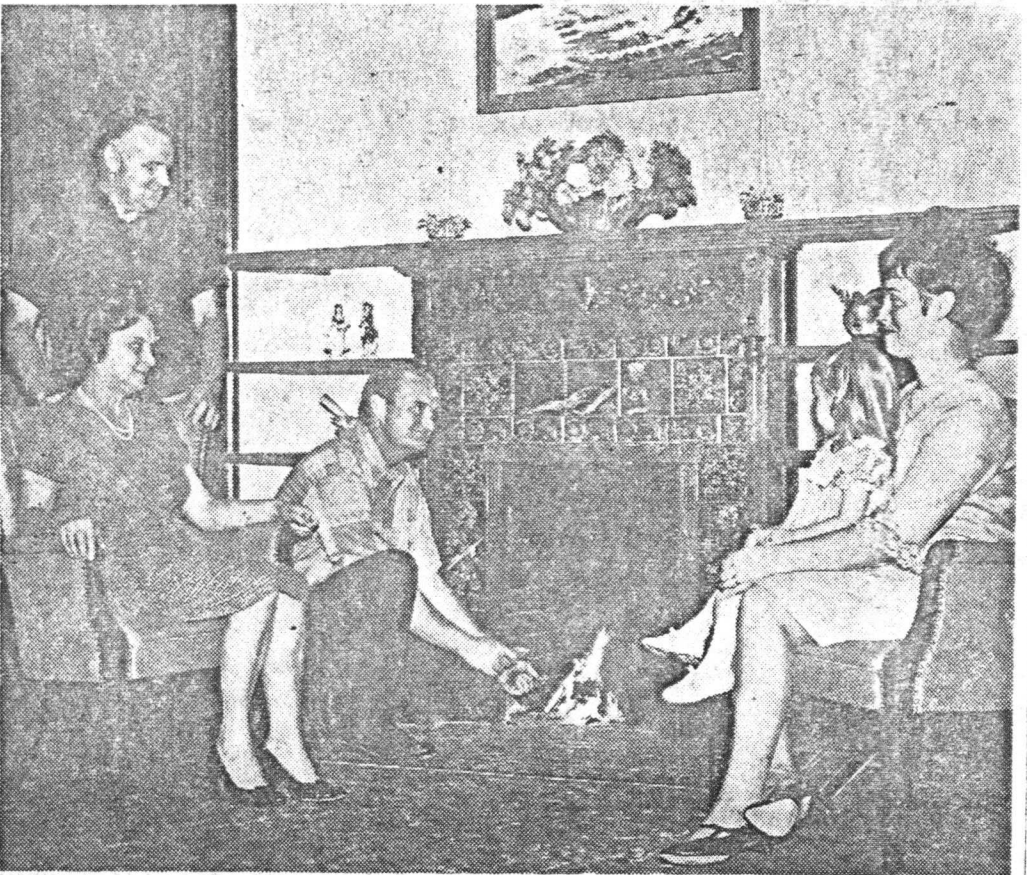
No charge will be made but contributions will be accepted for the new Santa Cruz Dominican Hospital, according to Mr. and Mrs. Joe Compton, owners of the home.

Hosts during the open house will be Dr. Arthur T. Geese of Santa Cruz General Hospital and Jim Hammond, Santa Cruz civic leader. The house has been recently painted inside and out. It is not furnished.

William Rennie, who came to California looking for "nuggets as big as marbles" built the stately home atop Beach Hill. From many of its windows he could look out at the Pacific Ocean which had nearly drowned him 16 years before.

The stout Scot was shipwrecked on his way to Australia—another gold rush jaunt. To keep from starving, he and other passengers and members of the wrecked sailing vessel dined on sharks' meat and the captain's dog.

He learned the carpenter's trade in his native Scotland and came to Canada looking for work in 1849. Two gold rushes and the shipwreck followed before Rennie settled down to farm in the rich Sacramento Valley.

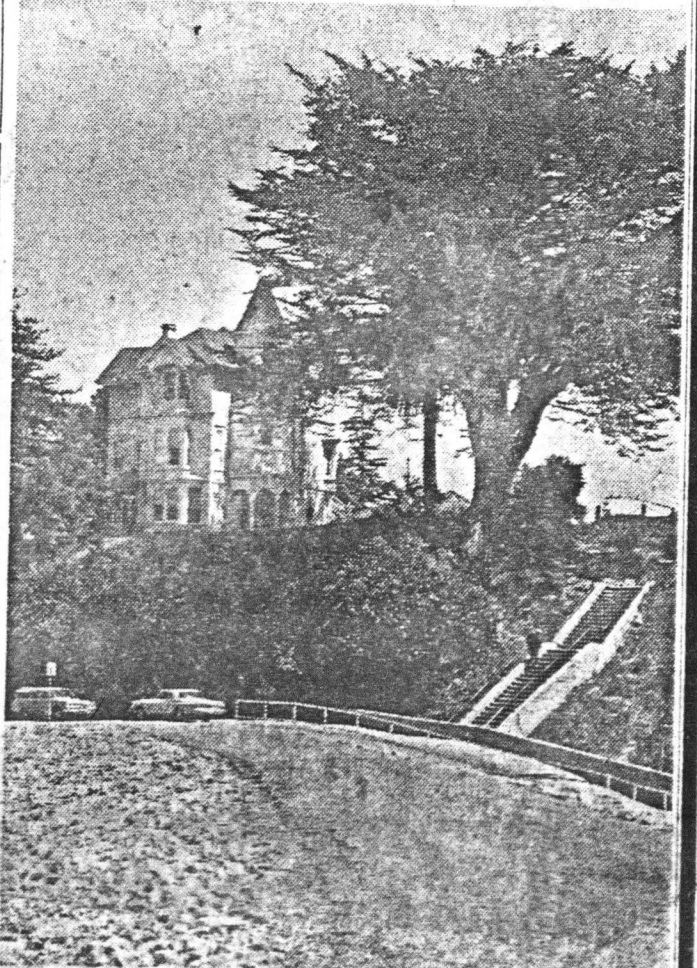


Elaborate tile fireplace in the Rennie home features the figure of a reclining woman. Gathered about the fireplace are, from left, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Compton, own-

ers of the home; their son, Gregg Compton; Mrs. Gregg Compton, and their daughter Joy, 2½.

In 1859 he set sail for the last time—to Scotland, to marry Margaret Dawson. After working the farm for about 10 years the couple came to Santa Cruz with full purses and the wish to build a mansion.

In the early 1880s they built overlooking the treacherous but their home high on Beach Hill beautiful Pacific.



The Rennie House, high on the bluff above the San Lorenzo River, will be open to the public next Saturday and Sunday from 2 to 5 p.m. Persons interested in visiting one of Santa Cruz' old historic homes may visit it then. There is no admission charge but donations will be accepted for the new Santa Cruz Dominican Hospital.

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