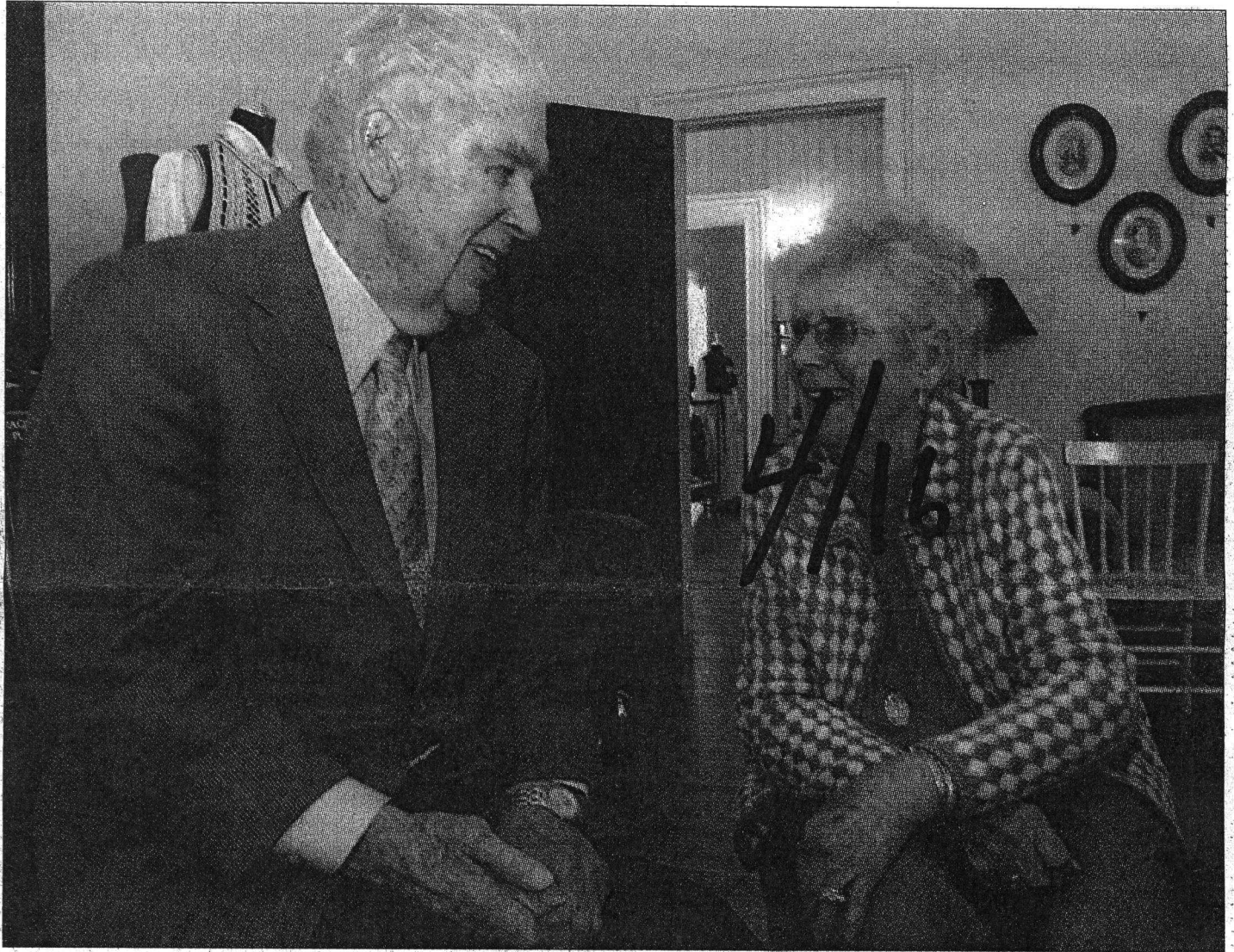


In visit, Weeks' legacy honored



Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian

Harold William Weeks, grandson of famed architect, William H. Weeks, whose numerous building designs garnish Watsonville and other California cities, pays a visit Tuesday to historian Betty Lewis and the Pajaro Valley Historical Association.

Grandson remembers architect who designed city's most iconic landmarks

By ROGER SIDEMAN
OF THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

Harold William Weeks shares something pretty special with the historic buildings that dot the Watsonville landscape.

Both he and the buildings are the legacy of architectural legend W.H. Weeks, whose prolific designs give Watsonville its character as much as the agricultural fields define its identity

outside city limits.

The 85-year-old grandson of the famed architect paid a visit to Watsonville on Tuesday to tour a couple of Weeks-designed buildings, rekindle mem-

ories of his childhood visits here, and meet with historians.

"You know, grandpa contributed a lot to this place," said the

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Courtesy of the Pajaro Valley Historical Association

ABOVE: Architect William H. Weeks designed the first Watsonville High School, which was built in 1895 and destroyed by fire in 1901.



Courtesy of Betty Lewis

Architect William H. Weeks designed the First Congressional Church, which opened in 1928 at the corner of East Lake Avenue and Madison Street.

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younger Weeks, who spent summers on his grandfather's ranch, now a part of the Graniterock quarry in Aromas.

Weeks made the journey from his home in Olympia, Wash., with his wife Marjorie. They met up with his cousin Karen Weeks of Santa Rosa, who set up the meeting with local historian Betty Lewis, who authored a book about the

architect in 1985. They met up at the Pajaro Valley Historical Association, which is aptly located on a small stretch of East Beach Street where about half a dozen Weeks-designed homes still stand.

"Today is a momentous occasion, a colliding of worlds, a first," said Gerry Martin, a docent with the historical association.

From stately homes built for the farming elite to one-story dwellings for ordinary citizens, Weeks designed nearly 100 houses in the Pajaro Valley in

the late 1800s and early 1900s. Some of the valley's most recognizable structures are his, including the gothic-style St. Patrick's Cathedral on Main Street, the Victorian-era Redman-Hirahara House, the Wall Street Inn and the circular bandstand in the Watsonville Plaza. Solid construction helped most structures survive the 1989 earthquake and the high level of detail and bold forms still stand out on any given street.

His signature slim Greek columns, patterned shingles and elaborate ornamentation signal a bygone era when labor was cheap and innovations in agriculture had created a new wealthy class. He built the homes for famous names like Martinelli and Driscoll.

"His work wasn't trying to create something at the lowest dollar — it was trying to create a memory," said Harold William Weeks.

The younger Weeks remembers playing and picking fruit



Courtesy of Betty Lewis

Architect William H. Weeks lived from 1864-1936.

on his grandfather's several hundred-acre ranch, and falling asleep under the drafting tables at the architecture firm's San Francisco headquarters.

"We have great memories of the ranch," he said.

He was about 13 years old when his grandfather died in 1936. The architect's 40-year career touched almost every corner of the state, including dozens of libraries, schools and other civic buildings.

If imitation is the highest form of flattery, than Weeks should feel pretty good about his grandfather's legacy. Jane Borg of the historical association said she regularly fields phone calls from builders requesting copies of Weeks blue-

prints so they can recreate his designs.

"The buildings are durable in materials and durable in style," said Borg.

A sampling of buildings designed by Weeks

- Redman-Hirahara House
- Tuttle Mansion
- Wall Street Inn
- Resetar Hotel
- E.A. Hall Middle School
- Minte White Elementary School
- Radcliff Elementary School
- Linscott Charter School of the Arts
- Old gym at Watsonville High School
- Watsonville Plaza bandstand