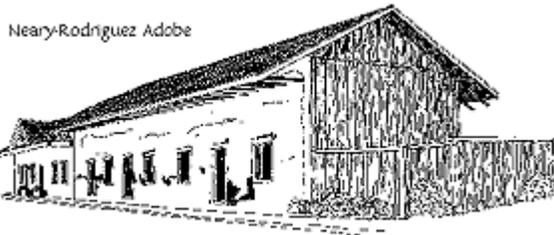


Santa Cruz's Architectural Heritage: A Sketchbook of Styles *By Santa Cruz City Planning Department*

Architecture and history are closely intertwined in Santa Cruz, California. Each period in the City's history has left its impression through buildings and certain architectural styles which continue to be used today. Below is a list of some of the architectural styles in Santa Cruz. For each style, there is a drawing of an existing building (as of April 1997). Accompanying each drawing is a description of characteristics of that particular style.

Spanish Style, 1791

The City of Santa Cruz was founded in 1791, as both the site of a Franciscan mission, *Mission La Exaltacion de la Santa Cruz*, and a Spanish garrison, *Pueblo Branciforte*. In 1793, the Mission was moved from its original flood-prone site near the San Lorenzo River to its present location on Mission Hill, overlooking the San Lorenzo River and today's downtown area. Dedicated in the spring of 1794, the Mission was a complex of buildings that contained living quarters, workshops, and other uses, built around three sides of a plaza bounded by the modern streets Sylvar, Emmett, High, and Mission.



In their style, the Missions's fathers tried to reproduce the late baroque architecture familiar to them in Spain and Mexico. However, the limitations of the adobe building medium and the unskilled Indian labor reduced the buildings to very plain adobe structures, with thick walls. The missions themselves were buttressed by thick piers fronted with arcades and ornamental bell towers. Roofs were more often made of "Brea", the tar found naturally in several spots in California, rather than of tile or shingles, which were not used until the 1840's.

The Neary-Rodriguez Abode at 130 School Street is Santa Cruz's only remaining example of the Spanish era adobe. Originally, it was one story and subsequently had the roof raised and another half-story inserted underneath. Constructed as two buildings with a common-party wall, it is likely to have been used as some kind of living quarters, possibly for the Mission guards.

Pioneer Style, 1850

The earliest frame buildings in Santa Cruz were simple box-shaped clapboard houses. Architectural detail was extremely simple, varying from posts to split pilasters. An example of such a house is the Francisco Alzina house at 109 Sylvar Street, built in the 1850's.



Greek Revival Style, 1850

With the improvement of building skills, Santa Cruz architecture of the mid-1850's began to utilize the more contemporary style used elsewhere in the United States. The Greek Revival style is perhaps the first example of Santa Cruz architecture truly reflecting an American style. The Greek Revival style was distinguished by the use of broad corner pilasters, split pediment, and porches supported by pillars.

A very rare example of a true Greek Revival style of the 1850's is the Judge William Blackburn house at 152 Center Street. (The drawing to the right shows the view from Cedar Street.)



Gothic Revival Style, 1860

The second major residential building style of the 1850's and 60's was the Gothic Revival. Buildings of this style have pointed arches, delicate split pilasters, arched porches and pointed arch windows. This style resulted from the nineteenth century desire for the picturesque and romantic medieval Gothic Cathedral style. The 1865 Calvary Episcopal Church at 532 Center Street is an example of the Gothic Revival style.



Italianate Style, 1870

The first Santa Cruz business buildings were, for the most part, simple frame structures with small-paned windows. Two plain brick buildings — the 1850 James Leslie building at 555 Mission Street, and the Hugo Hihn Flat Iron building at 1538 Pacific Avenue — exemplified this type building. However, all this began to change as the business community began to grow, and the business buildings of the 1870's began to favor the Italianate style. This style was derived from fifteenth and sixteenth century Italian architecture. It is characterized by straight-front buildings without any sizeable projections or recessions. Columns, if present, are primarily confined to porches and window frames. The crowning feature of this style is a cornice along the entire front of the building; the roof behind it is low and invisible to the spectator in the street. Large window areas are fairly common in commercial buildings.



The only two remaining examples of Italianate business buildings are the Williamson and Garrett Building at 1547 Pacific Avenue [demolished as a result of damage from the Loma Prieta earthquake, ed.], and the A.P. Hotaling (McHugh and Bianchi) Building at 1553 Pacific Avenue, built in 1886. The McHugh and Bianchi building is one of the two buildings within Santa Cruz which has been included in the National Register of Historical Places by the U.S. Department of Interior.

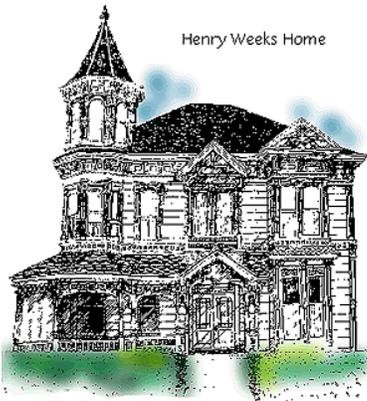
Other examples of the Italianate style can be found in a number of residences constructed in the 1870's and early 1880's. The 1877 Sedgewick Lynch House, 170 West Cliff Drive, designed and built by John Morrow, is a prominent example of an Italianate style home.

Stick Style, 1880

In the 1880's, a move away from the classical forms became apparent in the form of the Stick and Eastlake styles. Stick style buildings have tall proportions with high, steep roofs, and complex and irregular silhouettes. Diagonal "stickwork" is characteristic of this style. A good example of this style in Santa Cruz is the two-story house at 419 Locust Street (H.M. Hanmore House).



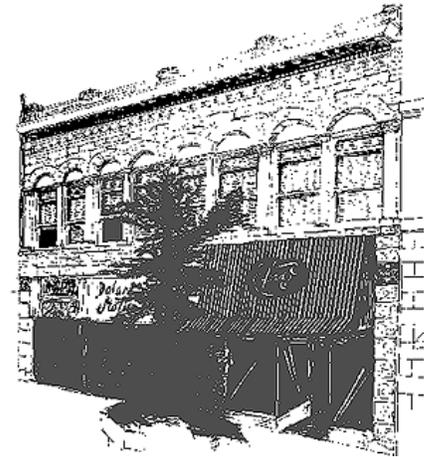
Eastlake Style, 1880



Most Eastlake buildings would be classified as Stick style or Queen Anne if they were not characterized by a distinctive type of ornament. This ornament is largely the product of chisel, gouge, and the lathe, and somewhat like ornamentation of furniture during that period. This imitation of the furniture motif can be seen in decorative knobs of various forms and the posts of porches or verandas which often resemble table legs. A good example of the Eastlake style is the Henry Weeks home built in 1886.

Romanesque Revival, 1890

The Romanesque Revival became the vogue for business buildings in the 1890's. It can be distinguished by rock-faced masonry work and the use of short, clustered columns. The Neary building, 1352 Pacific Avenue, and the old County Courthouse are examples of this style.



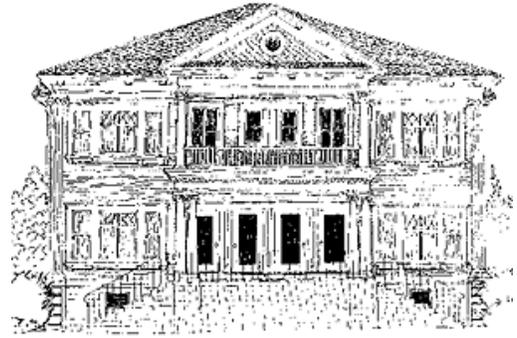
Queen Anne Style, 1890



By the early 1890's, the Queen Anne style had appeared in Santa Cruz. This style is characterized by irregularity of plan and the massing of color and texture. Several different wall surfaces may occur in one building; brick on the ground story, and shingles or horizontal boards above is a common occurrence. Trademarks of this style include elaborate chimneys, corner turrets, and the use of bay windows. An example of the Queen Anne style is the W.D. Haslam House at 304 Walnut Avenue.

Colonial Revival Style, 1890

The Colonial Revival was more aptly a nationalistic style. At a time when "manifest destiny" was at its peak, the early 1890's, Americans began to value their own heritage and architecture. Colonial Revival sought to follow the style of the period around the Revolutionary War. Distinctive in this style are multiple columned porches, and doors with fanlights and sidelights. The two-story apartment building at 303 Mission Street (the Weston Richardson House) is a Colonial Revival building.



Shingle Style, 1890

The idea of the facade of the building being its basic design appeared in the Shingle style of the 1890's. The distinctive feature of this style was the wide use of shingles as a form of siding on the walls of the upper stories and, in some cases, the ground story. The overall effect is simpler and quieter than in the Queen Anne style, with more horizontal emphasis.



This drawing shows a building which is a good example of the Shingle style. The house is the 1891 "Monte Carlo" at 924 Third Street, which was built for Major Frank McLaughlin. The towers of this home are visible throughout the downtown area and provide a charming yesteryear contrast to other buildings in the area. An interesting sidelight to this home is that it was the site of notorious tragedy in 1907, when Major McLaughlin, saddened by the loss of his wife and financial reverses, shot his step-daughter Agnes and ended his life with a glass of poison.

Mission Revival, 1900

Around the turn of the century, Californians also began to realize that they had a rich heritage of their own, and perhaps did not need to import tradition and architectural styles for the East Coast. As one Californian stated at that time:

“Give me neither Romanesque nor Gothic; much less Italian Renaissance, and least of all English Colonial--this is California--give me Mission.”

The Mission Revival style was the result. Arches and tiled roofs are the most general features of this style. Other attributes are low pitched roofs, smooth plastered walls, balconies, and towers on larger buildings. The 1912 Piedmont Court, 260 High Street, is a very effective Mission Revival work. This style lasted up to the 1920's, when Spanish Colonial Revival came into favor, with a more sophisticated, formal and classic Hispanic style.



California Bungalow, 1920

Sharing the Mission Revival's concern for the California environment, the Bungalow style emphasized the natural rather than historic aspects. Both stressed a return to simple handcrafted workmanship, and the Bungalow style also stressed the integrity and beauty of materials in their native state.



Characterized by a rustic exterior and sheltered-feeling interiors, bungalows were most successful in the growing suburbs of Southern California. Bungalows are often stained rather than painted, covered with clapboards or shingles, and have broad spreading eaves supported by multiple gables with projecting beams. Windows may be small-paned or are often divided into a large lower pane and small upper panes. Also characteristic of this style are spacious front porches supported by squat posts atop chunky river boulder and brick piers.

The residence at 1107 Mission Street (The W. Holmes House) is an example of the Bungalow style.

Post World War I

While architecturally significant buildings and residences were frequently constructed up to the First World War, the emphasis changed after this period. In order to meet the housing needs of a rapidly growing population, quantity rather than quality became the new criteria for building. There were, however, a few important exceptions to this new emphasis. The 1937-38 Monterey Colonial Revival style City Hall, the



International style house at 1010 Laurent Street, and the La Bahia Hotel at 215 Beach Street are some of the architecturally significant buildings of this period. The founding of the University of California at Santa Cruz campus in the early 1960's provided another setting for design innovations in Santa Cruz.

Source

The drawings and text are reproduced from the *Draft Historic Preservation Plan of the General Plan*, prepared by the Santa Cruz City Planning Department, 1974.

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