

# SCOPE honors Seacliff Inn

## 120-tons of rock decorate courtyard

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APTOS — It isn't often that a rock garden can be beautiful enough to win a landscaping award. But 120-tons of rocks that form a breathtaking koi pond in the central courtyard of the recently-opened Seacliff Inn did it.

The Santa Cruz Organization of Progress and Euthenics singled out the 140-room inn's landscaping for a 1985 award. Landscaper Jerry Allison won the SCOPE Award in the garden and pond category.

And what a garden and pond it is. The 120-tons of rocks actually is fieldstone upwards of three tons apiece. They make up what is probably the largest rock collection in the

county, short of riprap seawalls that are placed along the shoreline to protect million-dollar homes from storms. Allison's rocks, however, are placed in more than just a haphazard fashion.

The 65-foot-long pond varies from 15 to 30 feet wide and is three to four feet deep. A foot bridge spans a 20-foot gap, connecting the outdoor patio area of Severino's Restaurant with the rest of the central courtyard. Within that courtyard is a large hill which spews a 10-foot-high waterfall, as well as a pool/jacuzzi area and putting green.

Just setting the rocks in place took a week, according to Allison. At one point, a three-ton rock even stood the crane they were using on end, he says. The pond area alone took his nine-man crew more than a month to complete.

"Setting the rocks was the hardest part of the job, but also was the most fun," Allison adds. "I'm sort of a rock nut. I like to use them to create a natural feeling, but I've never used this many in a single job before."

Allison interspersed rocks through the rest of the landscaping too — even along the entrance road leading to the inn. Except for the putting green and small lawn area adjacent the pool, most of the landscaping involves groundcover for low-maintenance. Ornamental strawberry and maze, an Australian groundcover with a small white flower, were primarily used as groundcover.

Trees include native California buckeyes, big leaf maples, flowering cherries and redwoods. Spot color is provided by rhododendrons, azaleas, fuchsias, potato vines and escallonia.

Gracing the hill on which the waterfall spills into the pond are both red and green Japanese maples, Japanese black pines and Irish and Scotch moss.

The grass for the putting green came from an actual golf course, says Allison. He obtained the Seaside Bent green from a San Rafael golf course that was going out of business.

The Seacliff Inn, which opened in March, is the newest and largest motel in the mid-county. Now there is a new and large garden and pool to match.

Photos by  
Michael McGuire



The main waterfall at Seacliff Inn's koi pond.

REFERENCE

SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL  
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Right — The putting green at Seacliff Inn.

Below — Landscaper Jerry Allison and his award winning garden.

Bottom photo — The koi pond at Seacliff Inn.

