

City of Santa Cruz Saves Victorian

By MARGARET KOCH
Sentinel Staff Writer

The City of Santa Cruz has gone into the old house business...

In a small way, to be sure. One house — located at 346 Church Street — now converted to office use.

However, it shows what CAN be done with an old house. And it is fascinating.

The house at 346 Church was built in 1877 as a "double tenement house." Today it is in use as offices for Santa Cruz Parks and Recreation.

The city bought the house from the estate of H.O. Heiner in 1970 for \$25,000. Another \$15,000 was spent on remodeling it for office purposes.

The result is charming, comfortable and efficient.

Most importantly, it preserves a truly fine example of an early-day duplex, and a huge old redwood tree which a purple bouganvillea vine has taken over...that colorful vine has always been a conversation topic in Santa Cruz, dating from the days of reporter Ernest Otto.

Ernest started many a column with the tidbit that "the purple bouganvillea vine in the tall redwood, corner of Church and Chestnut, is in full bloom again..."

The house was built for a Mrs. Bowen who purchased the lot in 1877 from E. Kunitz who had a soap and glue factory there originally. He moved his glue works out to River Street and Mrs. Bowen hired Charles W. Davis to draw

the plans for her duplex — then called a double tenement house. It was to cost \$2000.

On July 14, 1877, Mrs. Bowen let a contract to carpenters Alexander and Marsh to build the double house for \$1373. The double house was to have two stories, 10 rooms, and closets. Work started on July 21.

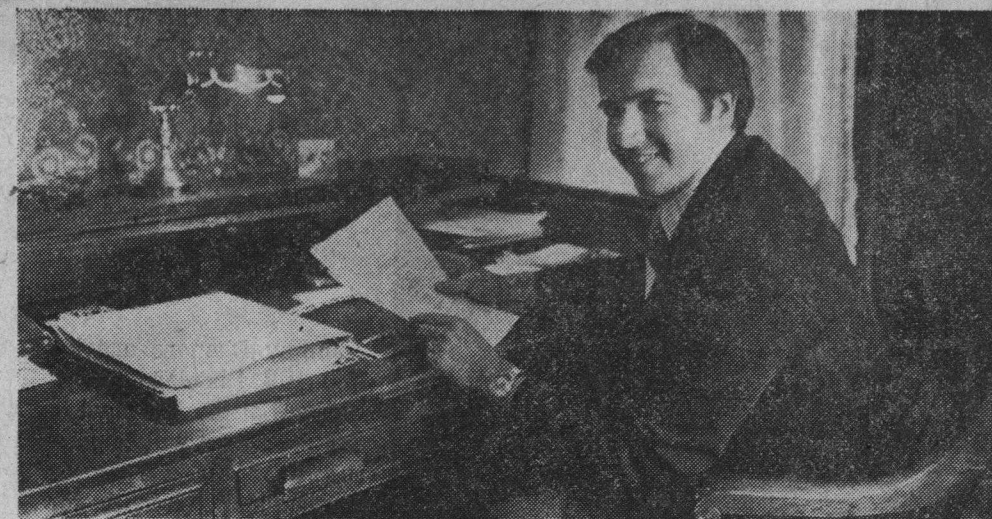
Who exactly lived in the house is a bit confusing because it was a double house and two families usually resided there at one time. Mrs. Bowen lived in it, of course; others were the Dow family, Andy Balich who either owned it or lived in it, H.L. Mellen and the Heiners. There may have been others.

The house is commonly called "Stick style," with touches of other styles thrown in for good measure. Carpenters let their imaginations — and their hammers and saws — run wild in the old days.

Heiner-Bowen House, as it is called, will be open to the public for viewing on Friday, May 3, from 1-5 p.m. Paul Thiltgen, director of City Parks and Recreation, hopes that interested persons will come to see what can be done with one of the city's venerable structures.

It contains one main office, one conference room, four upstairs offices and a kitchen.

It seems particularly appropriate that the city's "double tenement" will be holding open house on Friday. National Historic Preservation Week runs from May 6-12.

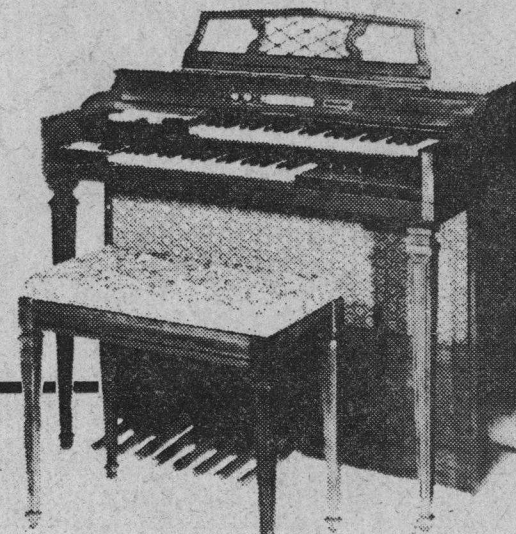


Paul Thiltgen, City Parks and Recreation director, at his rolltop desk — it's an oldie, and handsome.



Wall between staircases was removed, allowing more light from upstairs window around the corner. Burgundy carpet is used throughout the house. Wallpapers are different colors in each room, with woodwork colors coordinated. Handsome woodwork, all in Victorian style, is work of

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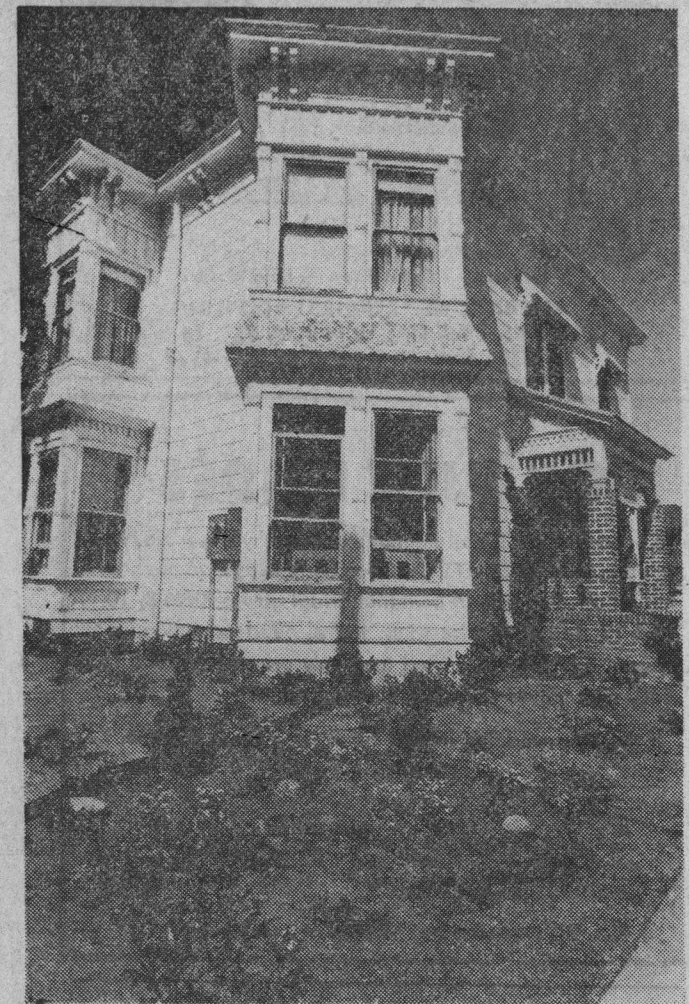
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The City of Santa Cruz' "double tenement house" at 346 Church Street, will be open Friday to the public from 1-5 p.m. Below Clerk Cindy Miller admires old coatrack in entry hall. Much of period furniture came from Santa Cruz Museum where it had been stored for years.



Main downstairs office. Wallpaper and lighting fixtures carry out Victorian theme. Most interior design plus carpeting, was the work of Doni Tunheim.

