

Old House Gets New Lease on Life

by MILDRED ANN SMITH
Sentinel Women's Editor

There is childish laughter again in the old Haslam house on Walnut Avenue and if the new owners, Dr. and Mrs. Floyd Estess, have their way, their's will be just one of the success stories in saving and revitalizing the Victorian homes on the street.

The Estesses, who came to Santa Cruz from southern California when he became head of psychiatric services at Dominican Hospital and health service counselor at UCSC, were tired of the boxy and ranch style homes of suburbia. They admired the spaciousness and craftsmanship in old Victorian homes and immediately began searching for one.

And the one they found is a prize. It was built in 1895 by William D. Haslam, an official with the City Bank.

Those were the days when men walked to work from their homes on Mission Hill and down on the flat. Folks living on Green Street, Locust, Church, Walnut and Lincoln were close to the new high school too. And the present city tree-planting had nothing on that of the '90s era for in those days trees lined all of the streets.

The Estesses immediately saw the possibilities on the rambling, high-ceilinged home with its oak wainscoating, hand-carved fireplaces (there are four) and nooks

and crannies which the Estess children, Elise, 2½, and Edward, 4½, like to explore.

Since they purchased the house in December of 1968 they have completely redone the first floor, have almost finished the second, and are looking forward to tackling the third floor.

The year 1970 fades and you're back in the Victorian era when you enter the Estess home. It's all there — the ornate furniture, the kick knacks, 19th century paintings, the lace doilies and even the potted palms.

But there's warmth too, and hospitality and a collection of Americana which an antiques dealer would envy.

Of course there are concessions to 1970 living. The Estesses put in central heat and completely remodeled the kitchen. Americana is the theme there too, with Pennsylvania Dutch wallpaper in red, white and blue, a fire engine red sink and telephone, and Eagle hangers holding the copper pans and primitives which Emily Estess has collected including an apple peeler which she still uses.

There are plank floors (the Estesses put in oak floors throughout the first floor), a stained glass window (one of several) and the family breakfasts at a round oak table. Finishing touch is an antique high chair used by Elise Estess.

The five-foot wainscoating throughout the house origin-

ally was light oak but former owners had painted it beige. The first thing the Estesses did was paint both wainscoating and the plaster walls and ceilings white. They added shutters to set off the handsome trim around the tall windows and brought in color and warmth with their furnishings and Oriental rugs.

The family sitting room is upstairs on the balcony of the bedroom floor. The third floor eventually will be remodeled into two more bedrooms, a bath and a family room.

The Estesses say that cost of their home and the restoration is far less than one would expect to pay for having a house custom built.

"Old homes are a part of California history," says Dr. Estess, "and we feel we're doing a part in retaining the Victorian flavor of Santa Cruz."

Emily, who enjoys walking downtown to shop and particularly likes the mall, says she really feels a part of Santa Cruz.

Interest in Victorian homes of Santa Cruz isn't new. The Chuck Abbotts purchased and remodeled three on Lincoln Street. And Sentinel Staff Writer Margaret Koch wrote a series on many of the fine old houses with Will Shepherd doing the illustrations.

Now the enthusiasm of the Estesses is having its effect on Walnut Avenue and more old houses are changing hands.



It's a new beginning for the old Haslam house on Walnut Avenue. Exterior looks much as it did when it was built in 1895. Emily Estess has used plants of that era too.

The Floyd Estesses have furnished their



Stairway in the Estess home is carved golden oak. Mrs. Estess, in photo at left, used cotton copies of Oriental rugs as runners.



Edward and Elise Estess enjoy this cozy corner underneath the stairway of their Victorian home.

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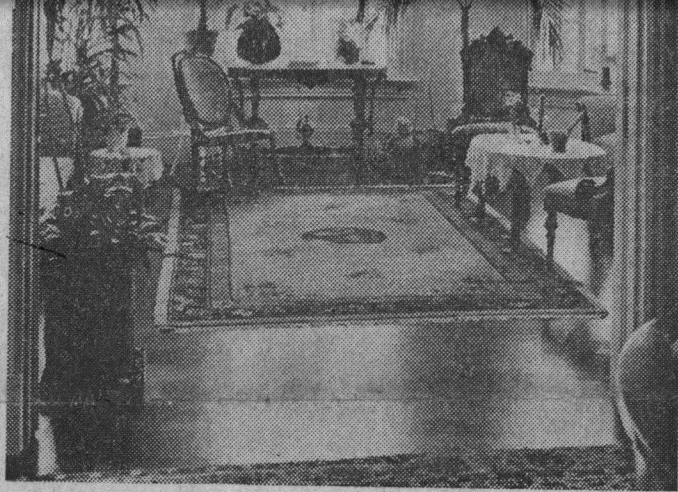
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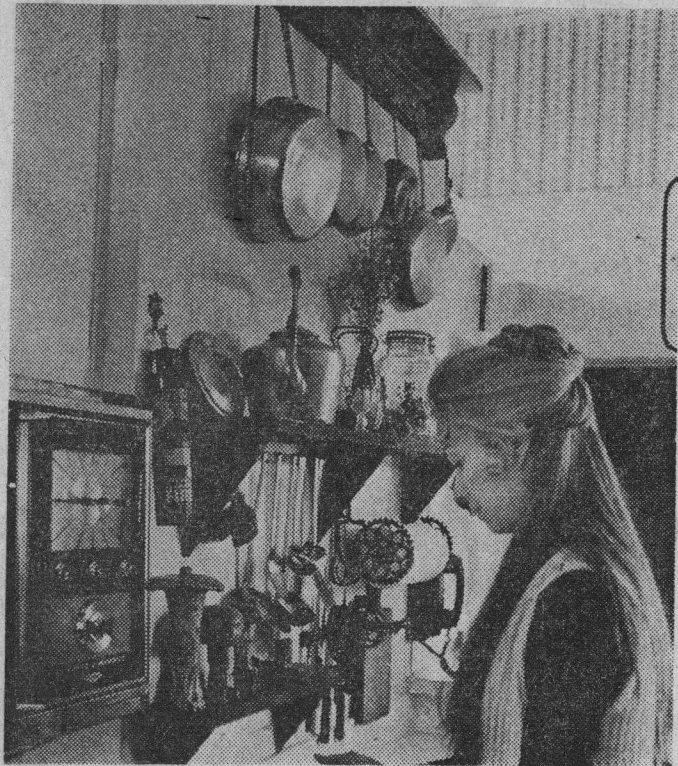


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The Floyd Esteses have furnished their parlor, circa the 1890s, even using potted palms. Large sliding doors separate it from the "receiving" room.



Emily Estess displays her collection of primitives in her kitchen which is very appropriately Americana with its red, white and blue color scheme.



Stairway in the Estess home is carved golden oak. Mrs. Estess, in photo at left, used cotton copies of Oriental rugs as runners.

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