

## REAL ESTATE

SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL

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624



Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel

While less ornate than a Victorian, this Edwardian house on the corner of Laurel and California streets has several nice touches.

# Hidden treasure

1908 Edwardian might be less ornate than its Victorian brethren, but reflects an elegant era

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SENTINEL CORRESPONDENT

## SANTA CRUZ

From the street, you only get tantalizing glimpses of the grand home at 603 California St. Its face is largely hidden behind a tall green hedge, which arches over the entrance way.

The house is painted with palette of unusual colors that enhance its style. The base color is muted green, and it is trimmed with maroon, yellow and touches of dark brown.

The house was built in 1908 and designed by architect William Weeks for F. S. Cox, an attorney. It is not strictly speaking a Victorian, even though it looks the part, said owner David Luers.

"It's an Edwardian-style house, built between the Victorian and Craftsman eras," Luers said. "It's less ornate than a Victorian."

Still, the two-story house has lots of ornate touches: leaded glass windows, 10-foot ceilings and lots of decorative wooden molding.

The kitchen features a butler's pantry and the original marble counter tops, and there is a large formal dining room with a fireplace

## Grand Westside house

**WHAT:** Edwardian-style house owned by David Luers.

**WHERE:** 603 California St., Santa Cruz.

**BUILT:** 1908, designed by architect William Weeks for F.S. Cox, an attorney.

**FEATURES:** Two-story house featuring leaded glass windows, 10-foot ceilings, decorative wood molding, butler's pantry, three fireplaces, three bathrooms, hardwood floors throughout.

**LOT:** Built on ¼-acre lot that includes a guest cottage and a garage converted to laundry/storage room. Laurel Creek meanders through the property, crossing under an arched bridge and past a blue-tiled Japanese tea house before passing through a stone culvert under California Street.

**PRICE:** \$895,000.

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and a front parlor with a fireplace. In all, the house has three fireplaces and three bathrooms, one with the original claw-foot tub. There are hardwood floors throughout.

Upstairs, there are four bedrooms, with a shaded deck off the master bedroom, overlooking the garden.

"We often sit here in the afternoon for tea," Luers said.

The ¼-acre lot also contains a small guest cottage. The garage has been converted to a laundry and storage room.

But the *piece de resistance* is the

creek that meanders through the property, crossing under an arched bridge and past a blue-tiled Japanese tea house before passing through a stone culvert under California Street.

"It's called Laurel Creek, and it's super clean," Luers said. "We see crayfish in there."

The creek gives off the soothing sound of rushing water. It winds past the house across the street to Babbling Brook Inn and empties into Neary Lagoon.

See **HOUSE** on **PAGE E2**



# House: Architect also designed Palomar

Continued from Page E1

The house is surrounded by large old trees, flowering wisteria and jasmine vines. The greenery frames a patio area with build-in barbecue grill and a small fish pond with a fountain. There are several places to sit outside and admire the garden.

"We do very little actual gardening," Luers said. "Except for cleanup, the garden seems to take care of itself."

Luers has owned the house for 3½ years and said he is reluctant to sell it. But he has a planned restoration project in Davenport to which he wants to devote his time, energy and money.

The house was designed by William Weeks, one of the area's most prolific architects. Weeks also designed Darling House, a bed and breakfast inn on West Cliff Drive, the Palomar Hotel in downtown Santa Cruz, the Cocoanut Grove Casino at the Boardwalk and Santa Cruz High School.

Weeks is noted for the number of schools he designed, including three high schools and several elementary schools in Watsonville. He also designed schools in some 22 other cities throughout California and 21 Carnegie libraries.

As a school designer, Weeks championed the use of reinforced concrete for building schools, after observing that buildings built of reinforced concrete survived the San Francisco earthquake, while



Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel

The entry area for 603 California St., an Edwardian in Santa Cruz.

brick buildings did not.

Weeks was described as a "safe man" who inspired trust in school board members. He worked in a variety of styles, from Mission to Tudor, but most of Weeks' schools contained two floors and a basement.

Weeks was born in 1864 in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, and moved to Denver where he studied architecture at the Berger Institute. He joined his father's construction firm in Wichita, Kan.

In 1891, he married Maggie Haymaker and moved to Oakland. A year later, he opened an office in Watsonville, where he was work-

ing on Watsonville's first high school. In 1905, Weeks opened an office in San Francisco, which allowed him to be active in post-earthquake reconstruction.

Weeks' firm built approximately 1,500 structures, mostly in California. His homes and commercial buildings dot the state, but it is his schools for which he is most remembered, noted Watsonville historian Betty Lewis.

Weeks used to say that schools were his special love and no other man had designed so many.

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