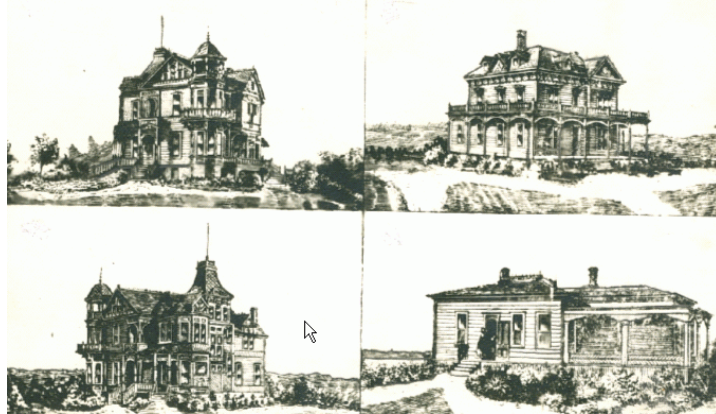


Carlsbad Architecture

By Marge Howard Jones

Presented at the CHS Annual Meeting on September 30, 2005 – 30th Anniversary



ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

Twentieth century architecture has been guided by the mantra of Form Follows Function and even in 19th century Carlsbad utility was the determining factor for the built environment. From 1843, when the Marron's built their adobe hacienda on Rancho Agua Hedionda, up until the end of World War II, this was a tiny, relatively isolated farming hamlet by the sea, whose inhabitants worked the soil and/or provided services to one another without much thought for architectural design beyond keeping a roof over their heads.



Rancho Agua Hedionda

Juan Maria and Felipe Marron were living in San Diego when they built their simple three room "second home" with local materials, following the example of the Franciscan mission padres who had brought their own indigenous

construction methods from Spain. The padres taught the natives of the area to make bricks from the on-site clay soil and bring timbers from the mountains to support their structures. A key skill was the forming of roof tiles on the workers' thighs, which made the tiles wider at one end and more efficiently nested on the roof. During their stays on the rancho Juan Maria and Felipe provided periodic agricultural and domestic assistance to Mission San Luis Rey but they never ran cattle or farmed their own land.



Shirley-de-la-Motte-Kirmse House

The Yankees that settled here over the next fifty years brought another kind of simple structure, sometimes called the Stick style, because it consisted of just a wooden frame, sheathed in wood siding, Foundations were concrete pillars, which raised the structure off the ground by about 1 foot. No water was piped into or out of the house; kerosene lamps provided

light and wood stoves gave what ever heat was necessary. A handy farmer could build such a house, hopefully with the help of friends and family and farmers were just about the only ones living here until 1886, when the two Nebraska gentlemen, Gerhard Schutte and Samuel Church Smith, arrived to build a town of "small farms and gracious homes."



Schutte House

Expecting that others would do the farming, Schutte and Smith focused on the concept of gracious homes. Schutte had a big family, so he built a large ornate home in a style known as Queen Anne, an outgrowth of the Victorian era with its visual contrast in detail and ornamentation. Elaborate window and door frames, roof gables and turrets, fish scale shingles and stained glass windows looked out over the empty landscape that the owner visualized as the new town of his dreams.



Wadsworth House

Next door to him was a home of identical but reversed design intended for W. W.

Wadsworth, another partner in the Carlsbad Land and Mineral Water Co. Both houses are credited to the architectural firm of Comstock and Trosche, which built commercial structures and several other similar homes in San Diego. Lumber left over from the construction of the Schutte house was appropriated by the builder, A.J. Culver, to build his own Queen Anne family home on Highland Drive.



Culvert-Myers-Caps House



Santa Fe Depot

The town founders encouraged Santa Fe railroad to build a train depot, which turned out to be of the same Queen Anne design as that followed in Perris and Encinitas. They also built a large hotel of similar architecture, but it burned to the ground after a few years.

To ensure that prospective residents wouldn't feel obligated to follow Schutte's fancy example, Smith built a modest bungalow in what has come to be known as the Craftsman style. Evolved as a negative reaction to the fussiness of the Queen Anne style, it was meant to be much simpler, more natural and, most of all, accessible, most frequently through a mail-order catalogue. Smith selected a three-bedroom home with high ceilings for his family of three grown children and a house-keeper.



Smith-Shipley-Magee House

This and the even simpler Stick style became the model adopted by most newcomers to the new town. A good example is the Kreutzkamp house, originally built as a land office on what is now Roosevelt St., but later moved north to Laguna Dr., and, with the removal of the false front facade, converted to a home.



Kreutzkamp House



Elm Avenue looking East

When the real estate boom of the '80's collapsed into the economic bust of the '90s many small houses were abandoned. After Smith himself was forced to move to San Diego, Alexander Shipley took over his property, and some of the town's now-empty houses found their way onto his land.

One of the main economic problems was the lack of water, but in 1914, the South Coast Land Co., built a pipeline from the San Luis Rey River, and the small sandy town began to come

alive as a farming center. State Street became the hub of a re-vitalized downtown and the town's first real neighborhood came into being with the arrival of immigrant field workers from Mexico.



Madison Ave.

An enterprising Frenchman named LaBetta developed land south of downtown with tiny frame houses on small lots. Soon known as Barrio Carlos, it had water but no electricity and no sewers. This was not too different from farm houses around town, except that the farm houses were mostly built on large pieces of property that could accommodate leach lines. Sanitation was to become a major issue in 1928 when the Carlsbad Mineral Springs Resort and Hotel was in the planning stages, prompting the creation of a sanitation district, Carlsbad's first public agency.



Carlsbad Hotel

The advent of the San Diego Exposition in 1912 had inspired new interest in the area's Spanish architectural heritage, with its archways, tile roofs and ornamental stone. Carlsbad was now beginning to attract growers and business people, and especially, refugees from the hectic life in Hollywood and this was a style that expressed their vision of their new little paradise by the sea.



Magnolia Avenue

These and other more modest structures, all with their own eclectic version of Spanish colonial design, soon sprouted up all over town.

The new hotel followed this style, as did Alfred Cohn, a grocery wholesaler from Los Angeles who built his dream home overlooking the ocean. The brand new Bank of Carlsbad was



Cohn Home



Carlsbad Bank Building

built on the corner of State St. and Elm Ave. and Leo Carrillo re-created an early California rancho on the old Kelly homestead east of El Camino Real.

Mission Revival architecture was another expression of new-found interest in the area's history. The Carlsbad Community church employed arches and a tile roof in its first

sanctuary on Pine Ave. in 1926 and the Carlsbad Theatre followed its example a year or two later.



Carlsbad Community Church

As the world grew smaller, personal horizons expanded and soon the architectural diversity of what is now the city's northwest quadrant became apparent. The Greek revival home on Highland Dr., built by Chicago opera impresario Clark Shaw and the Dutch cottage built by the Gaus family on Jefferson St. are just two examples from the era of the '30s. More recent architectural inspirations can be seen in the Rock House on Garfield St., and the Pink Castle west of 1-5.



Shaw-Schindler House



Gaus House



Rock House



Twin Inns Restaurant



Pink Castle



Luther Gage House
Monterrey condominiums



Vermilyea House
Real State Office

.....

Even more significant to the town's historic character are the examples of adaptive re-use, which has given new functions to old forms. The Schutte house became the Twin Inns in 1916 and has remained a landmark restaurant ever since. The Monterrey style home built by ranunculus grower Luther Gage in the '30s is now the hospitality center of the Monterrey condos on Lincoln St. The Vermilyea home, reminiscent of a Southwest Adore, is a striking real estate office at the comer of Grand Ave. and Roosevelt St. Many other small old homes have also found commercial uses that will ensure their survival, while contributing to the historic character of our community.