

Keys to the City



by Garry Gibbs

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Santa Barbara was entering an era of unprecedented growth and development. The "Upper East" already had a number of mansions and elegant homes located in the vicinity of the Mission and "Crocker Row" along Garden Street and Santa Barbara Street. In 1908, when the South Santa Barbara County Realty Board was formed, the City of Santa Barbara had a population of over 11,000 people. Santa Barbara became the film capital of California and remained so for the next decade.

Clarence Black announced in 1913 that he would build the first Riviera mansion at 2130 Mission Ridge Road, now a school, Marymount of Santa Barbara. The Riviera Development Company laid out a "subdivision" on a total of 300 acres. Houses to be built were stipulated to cost \$4,000; some cost as much as \$10,000. Lots were advertised at "\$25 a front foot, with all the advantages of a \$60 neighborhood." Tract sales began in April 1914, with the first houses built at 1538 Alameda Padre Serra, 1617 Paterna Road, and 1111 Mission Ridge Road.

Beginning in 1919, Santa Barbara saw a post-war tourist boom, and the population was nearly 20,000. It was during this time that Louis G. Dreyfus and Harold G. Chase established themselves as the leading real estate brokers of the 1920s. In 1923, Thomas M. Storke, Douglas Fairbanks, and William Gibbs McAdoo began development of the eastern part of the Riviera. The Las Alturas tract and, subsequently, the Loma Media tract, were opened. Storke continued with the development and sales of lots on the Las Alturas tract and claimed that he sold his holdings thirty years later "at a substantial loss." The developer of the Loma Media tract, Charles O. Middleton, lost unsold portions of the tract in the Depression, and the open hillside of the "Riviera" did not develop rapidly until the building boom after World War II.

By 1930, the City of Santa Barbara had a population of 34,000 people, but growth was mostly halted during the Depression. According to the census of 1940, the population of Santa Barbara had grown to only 34,438, up only 825 from 1930. Following the war, the town's population exploded with a rebirth of business downtown.

MONTECITO

Montecito became known world-wide for its "millionaire estates," erected by America's foremost architects during a boom around 1920. In 1930, Harold G. Chase published a roster of over 200 "major" estates. Montecito's population tripled over the next 50 years, increasing from 3,000 residents in 1928 to 9,500 in 1978. In 1991, Montecito established a "growth" ordinance to regulate Montecito development, allowing a limited number of land use permits for new residential units - a total of only 19.

CARPINTERIA/SUMMERLAND

East of Montecito, Carpinteria and Summerland began development in the 1920s, with several small farms in the area being subdivided into tracts. Long the site of seeping tar, oil had been discovered in 1886, with the first offshore wells in the world drilled in the 1890s. Summerland was originally founded as a spiritualist colony and developed with small lots for tents. Today, it retains an eclectic feeling with its mix of houses, shops and the Nugget restaurant, visited by Presidents Reagan and Clinton. The Santa Barbara Polo Fields are located between Summerland and Carpinteria, which also serves as home for Cate School and the Pacifica Graduate Institute. Since the 1970s, Carpinteria has become known nationally for its greenhouses and fields of flowers. It is also the location of many research and development and high-tech firms. In 2000, the population of Carpinteria totaled 14,194 people, with 4,989 households, 3,332 families and 5,464 housing units. In 2004, the population was approximately 13,829.

HOPE RANCH

In 1925, a historic earthquake struck Santa Barbara, leveling much of the downtown business area. It was this same year that the La Cumbre Estates Corporation, a holding of Harold S. Chase, bought 835 acres and began the development of Hope Ranch Park. Chase was the son of Harold G. Chase and brother of prominent civic leader Pearl Chase. Today, Hope Ranch includes 1,850 total acres, with estates ranging from the minimum lot size of 1.5 acres to lot sizes of 50 acres. By the year 2000, there were 771 total parcels developed, 720 of which had houses built, and a total population of about 2,000.

WESTSIDE

During the early part of the century, development was underway in the "Westside" of Santa Barbara and in the "Upper East." Although the Westside was known as a center of tourism activity, with Stearns Wharf, the harbor, and the Potter Hotel, it was also the site of many agricultural activities and residential neighborhoods. Today, six out of 10 houses in the Westside were built prior to 1940. The Upper East continued to be the neighborhood of choice for many elegant homes and mansions.

SAN ROQUE/SAMARKAND

San Roque and Samarkand also began development following the end of WWI. Rutherford Park was laid out in 1923, with a series of curving streets radiating from a center hub named Argonne Circle. Only half built up by 1940, the San Roque district developed most of its home sites between

1955 and 1965. About this same time, State Street was extended from the 100-year-old dead end at Constance Avenue to a junction with De la Vina.

MESA

The Mesa experienced an oil boom beginning in 1922, which lasted more than a decade. By 1936, the eastern third of the Mesa was spiked with wooden derricks. The neighborhood between Mesa Lane and Oliver Road, originally platted as early as 1920, did not develop until after WWII, when many veterans built homes with the help of GI loans. By 1974, the Mesa had 10,978 people living in 3,826 dwellings on 1,920 acres.

GOLETA

To the west, Goleta Valley, long known as a prominent lemon-growing area, remained mostly rural until after WWII. Beginning with the completion of the Lake Cachuma dam in 1956, the Goleta Valley tripled in size to equal Santa Barbara. Predominantly tract housing was built in the late 1950s and 1970s. In the 2000 census, the Goleta Valley had a total population of 55,204, with 19,954 households. Only a part of the valley was incorporated into the new City of Goleta in 2002, with an estimated population of 30,904. Goleta serves as home to the South Coast's only shopping center containing "big box" stores (Costco and Home Depot). Many high-tech businesses, software companies and defense and aerospace companies are located here in settings like the Cabrillo Business Park.

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In 1969, Santa Barbara made worldwide news with an oil spill in the channel five miles off-shore from Summerland. This spill, aside from its devastating impact on South Coast wildlife and beaches, brought heightened environmental awareness globally.

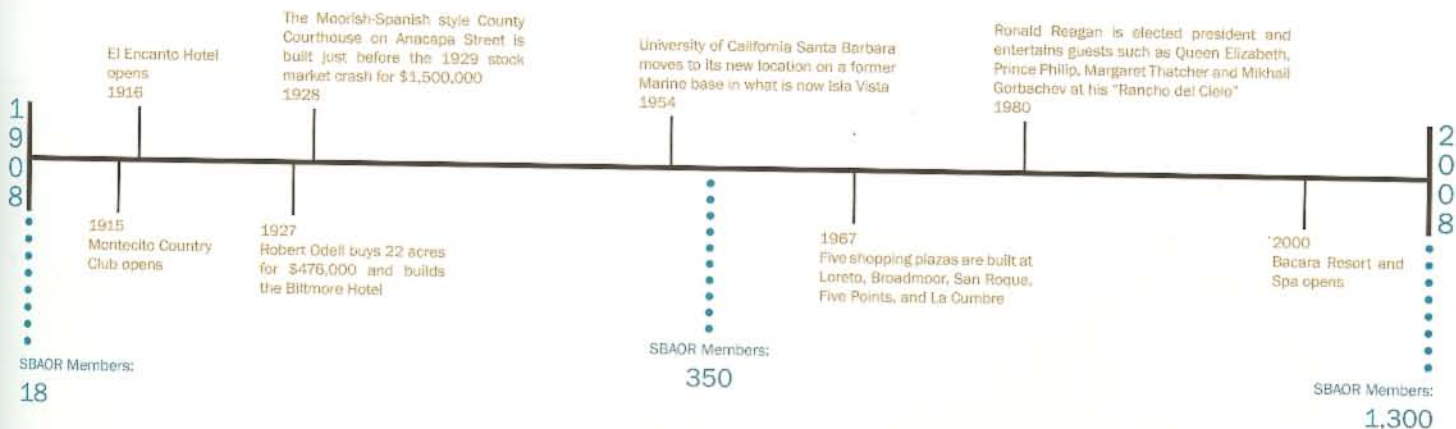
Many environmental organizations, government agencies and regulations that

we know as standards today were a direct result of this 1969 event.

By 1970, the population of the City of Santa Barbara had grown to 70,215. Overall, from Carpinteria to Goleta, the South Coast had a population of 93,245 at the end of the 1950s and had grown to 162,469 by April 1974.

Today, the population seems to be holding relatively steady at approximately 200,000.

The South Coast's economy has large education, tourist and service sectors, renowned for its climate, architectural style, beaches, and an emerging reputation for wineries.



SETTLING THE SOUTH COAST

Home Prices Through the Years

In 1950, when the Multiple Listing Service was first established, there were 18 active members. Sales for the month of September 1950 totaled \$113,775. Listings in 1956 totaled 1,636 properties, with 825 sold that year, for a total dollar volume of just over \$13 million. For the seven-year period from 1950 to September 1957, sales totaled \$53.4 million. MLS membership had increased to 93 brokers, 103 offices, and 350 salesmen. Today, the Association of REALTORS® has a membership of about 1,300.

Home prices in Santa Barbara presently average close to \$1,500,000, with a median price of over \$1,250,000. For the more expensive areas of Montecito, Hope Ranch and the Upper Riviera, prices range from a median price of \$2 million to \$3 million, with many sales between \$5 million and \$10 million.

Numerous sales have been reported in the \$25 million to \$50 million range for estates (e.g., Oprah Winfrey's Montecito estate) and beachfront property (Padaro Lane just south of Summerland) - the highest priced sale occurred at the beginning of 2007 with \$135 million paid for two adjacent ranches along the Gaviota Coast, the Cojo and Jalama ranches.

Although many areas of the Santa Barbara South Coast have lower home prices, only a small number of single family homes are available at prices less than \$800,000. Condominium prices have also increased over the years, and today's median price is in the range of \$650,000. One recent sale

went as high as \$5 million for a waterfront condominium in Bonnymede.

Like most real estate markets throughout the nation, Santa Barbara real estate prices have experienced cycles ranging from periods of relatively little change to periods of rapid increase. This was seen most recently from 2000 - 2005. Looking back to the early 1950s, Riviera prices, for example, were typically in the range of \$25,000 to \$50,000, increasing to the \$60,000 to \$75,000 range in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

By the mid 1970s, prices were beginning their first real run up, reaching levels of \$200,000 to \$300,000 and higher by the late 1970s and early 1980s. Then, additional market pressures during the 1980s brought prices above the half-million dollar mark, and in some cases over the \$1 million level by the peak years of 1990-1991. This was then followed by a slowing in sales and prices that were flat to declining between 1993 and 1996, with median prices for the City of Santa Barbara remaining flat at about \$450,000. As anyone who has observed the Santa Barbara real estate market over the last decade knows, prices in Santa Barbara have increased two- and three-fold since 1996.

A major factor in increasing home prices on the South Coast relates to the limited growth in supply of homes, due both to our geography and to self-imposed limits on our communities. As a result, the number of homes available for sale has become severely constrained over the past

decade, resulting in fewer homes sold. Listings of homes for sale reached a peak of just over 3,000 in 1990, declining about 10 percent by 1992 to a level of about 2,750. Since 1992, the number of listings has declined dramatically, averaging about 1,900 new listings per year for houses and condominiums combined, with a level of about 1,600 to 1,700 for the last five years.

The number of house sales averaged about 1,250 per year throughout the 12-year period from 1993 to 2005. In 2006, we saw this number decline to just over 1,000 sales of houses for the year, a number that increased somewhat in 2007, but is still low historically.

The net result on prices has been an average rate of appreciation of more than 15 percent each year for the past decade. This represents a total increase in prices of more than 150 percent since 1997, with a current average sales price just over \$2 million for the first half of 2007, up about 10 percent from the average sales price of \$1.8 million at the end of 2006.

Today, the real estate industry is an integral part of the South Coast community, with residential sales alone at close to \$1 billion in the first half of 2007, building from an annual level of \$1.6 billion for the year 2006.

Combined sales of all categories of real estate, including houses, condominiums, residential income, commercial and ranches/land, totaled \$1.25 billion in the first half of 2007, following an annual level of just over \$2 billion in 2006. ■

A History of **MARKETING**

compiled by Garry Gibbs

1908

A lot for sale was offered at \$750. A five-room cottage in Santa Barbara was \$1,800, an unfurnished cottage in San Roque could be rented for \$12 per month, and 10 acres of land in Montecito was for sale at \$1,500 cash. 160 acres of land in Montecito was offered at \$100 per acre, and a well-located 10-room house facing a park with two baths, two toilets, electric lights, a barn, a cement cistern, and a lot size of 96 by 225 feet was \$8,000. Today, these properties would be much more expensive. These advertisements from the *Santa Barbara News-Press* illustrate the changing value of real estate.

1918

\$1,000 cash will buy Riviera Bungalow of 6 rooms, bath.

Lot with abundance of flowers and old trees, garage, lawn, etc. Price \$4,000.

Mountain ranch in Montecito - 15 acres with modern 6-room bungalow; unsurpassed views, garage. Can give immediate possession. Price \$15,000. Terms if desired.

1935

☼ Near El Encanto - charming home, 3 bedroom, 2 baths, large glass sunroom, living room, dining room and kitchen. Unit heat. For quick sale \$8,000.

☼ Now is the time to buy in San Roque Park - beautiful subdivision with large 70 x 130 ft lots for as low as \$800.

☼ 1933 Chevrolet Coupe \$495, 1930 Ford Coupe \$250.

1945

East Side Home - \$16,500, a beautiful panoramic view, fully tiled roof. All on one floor. Three large comfortable bedrooms, two ½ baths, spacious living room, large dining room, delightful den & sunroom, large well planned, modern kitchen, breakfast nook, unit heat, full basement, two car garage, family orchard.

Riveria - One acre with views of ocean and islands. Large living room, dining room, 5 bedrooms, 2 baths, 2 car garage. Price \$12,500.

1950

San Roque, a 3 bedroom, 1 ½ bath, 2000 sq. ft of honest construction on a large corner lot, 2 yrs. old. Reduced to \$21,500.

Upper East-Side, 3 bedroom redwood home, 2 story, fireplace, lot 55 x 212, asking \$11,800.

Unfurnished in Montecito for rent at \$350 per mo., 5 masters, 4 baths, available immediately.

Montecito home advertised at \$15,900 (reduced from \$19,000) for a "new" 3-bedroom home at a fine Montecito location.

Riviera, beautiful Monterey, delightful outlook of City, Oceans and Mountains, 4 master bedrooms, 4 baths, maid's room, colorful garden - \$40,000.

1975

Santa Barbara - Reminiscent of the English Tudor is this handsomely restored Riviera home, Thoughtfully proportioned throughout, four cheerful bedrooms, three modern baths, beamed-ceiling living room, elegant dining room, remodeled kitchen, terraced garden, and the VIEWS! \$89,500.

Montecito - Magnificent residence on just under four sylvan acres. Distinctive circular entrance hall and staircase, six lovely bedrooms, six and one-half baths. Engaging balcony, flagstone terrace, enticing pool, artistic garden, orchard, a brilliant residence of very special merit, \$325,000.

Hope Ranch - On over two level acres, a rambling 5 bedroom home, built in 1973. Big living room, inviting dining room, "last-word" kitchen. Family room with bar, cozy den, dark room, two fireplaces. Unusual. \$195,000.

1990

Fabulous Ocean Views, 3br/3ba, loft, 2 frplcs, hardwoods, custom ktchn & bath, Privacy, Expansive low-main landscaping & much more! Priced to sell, \$603K, Owner.



Selected Sale Price Histories

Rivera

One property on Las Alturas Road was sold in 1963 for \$30,500. It was subsequently destroyed in the Sycamore Canyon fire in 1977; a new house was built and later sold in 1984 for \$457,500. In 1996, this same house sold for \$670,000 and was resold in 2002 for \$1,350,000. It sold again for \$2,865,000 in 2006.

Another property on Las Alturas Road, purchased for \$55,000 in 1973, sold in 1996 for \$442,000. It sold again in 2004 for \$1,440,000, and most recently in 2007 for \$1,929,500.

A property in the El Encanto area on Paterna Road sold in 1971 for \$59,700. It then sold in 1998 for \$606,250, sold again in 1999 for \$1,185,000 and sold more recently in 2000 for \$1,325,000.

Upper East

Sales records for a landmark property of the Upper East, built in 1925 on E. Constance Avenue, show a sale in 1975 for \$130,000. In 1987, the house sold for \$1,000,000. In 2005, it sold for \$3,925,000.

An Anacapa Street property was offered for sale in 1967 for \$27,000 and again in 1974 for \$85,000.

Another Anacapa Street property sold for \$575,000 in 1995 and sold again in 1999 for \$1,275,000.

Montecito

Another property on Hot Springs Road was bought in 1960 for \$60,000, was sold a number of times and ultimately brought \$4,100,000 in 2004.

Another, purchased in 1968 for \$89,500 was sold in 2001 for \$2,250,000 and again in 2004 for \$6,000,000.

A property on Picacho Lane was purchased in 1960 for \$55,000, in 1964 for \$125,000, in 1973 for \$121,500, in 1977 for \$192,500, in 1987 for \$595,000, in 1997 for \$1,395,000, and in 2003 for \$2,750,000.



This Montecito property sold for various prices over the years.

Sold for **\$40,000** in 1959

Sold for **\$58,500** in 1971

Sold for **\$114,000** in 1976

Sold for **\$172,000** in 1977

Sold for **\$1,212,000** in 2000

Sold for **\$2,500,000** in 2003

Sold for **\$2,425,000** in 2004

A George Washington Smith property on Via Benedita was purchased in 1957 for \$30,600, in 1962 for \$160,000, in 1979 for \$2,500,000, in 1997 for \$6,790,000, and sold again in 2006 for \$21,500,000.

A Laguna Blanca property was sold in 1971 at \$75,000, in 1983 for \$350,000, and in 2003 for \$1,850,000.

Another property on Laguna Blanca was sold in 1976 for \$162,500, in 1984 for \$425,000, in 1994 for \$1,200,000, and in 1998 for \$1,175,000.

The following advertisement is an example of prices and amenities offered in San Roque in 1935:

"Now is the Time to Buy in SAN ROQUE PARK. This beautiful subdivision, located on Hollister Ave., within the city limits of Santa Barbara, offers you large level lots surrounded by beautiful homes with attractively landscaped grounds. Building restrictions protect every property owner but are in accord with present day conditions. LOTS 70 x 130 FOR AS LOW AS \$800. We shall be glad to show you at your convenience. Louis Dreyfus, July 4, 1935."

The following excerpt from a 2004 article in the Santa Barbara News-Press illustrates Goleta prices:

"In the period of 1972-1973 Delco brought engineers and their families from the mid-west and other parts of the country to work at the expanded defense and aerospace facility in Goleta. Sticker shock was already in place, when these families encountered \$57,000 price tags on a pleasant 4-bedroom tract home, about 25 to 30 percent more than the cost of similar homes in the Midwest. A lucky veteran of such moves, one employee being transferred was able to buy a five-bedroom home with a pool for about \$54,000."

Hope Ranch

San Roque

Goleta

On the Street

The History of Santa Barbara

by Neal Graffy

I've been studying the origins of Santa Barbara's 52 original street names for many years. Some of them are easy to understand, and some of them have taken a lot of research to discover just exactly what the "Committee of Three" - Joaquin Carrillo, Antonio Maria de la Guerra and Eugene Lies - were thinking in 1851 when they came up with these names.

One thing they didn't do was name the newly surveyed streets in order from A to Z, First, Second, Third, names of trees or presidents as so many other communities did and still do today.

Instead, they reflected on the history of the community, telling us of the Chumash, the first families, early governors, important events, and images of the town as they saw it, hoping to preserve these people and scenes for all time.

A full history of Santa Barbara street names is forthcoming in book form, but following is a highly condensed version of just a few of our streets.

CANON PERDIDO

The "lost cannon" was not so much lost as it was stolen. On the night of April 5, 1848, five young Barbareños decided to steal and hide a cannon that was lying on the beach awaiting shipment. Their hopes were to have it available in the event of a forthcoming insurrection to drive out the Americans. Using a team of oxen, they dragged it from the foot of the future Chapala Street to present-day Anacapa Street before it got stuck and the oxen became too tired to take it any further. Thereupon, they buried it. When Captain Francis J. Lippitt, the commanding officer at Santa Barbara, heard of the missing cannon, he overreacted, bypassing his superior in Los Angeles and sending a messenger at great expense to the military governor, Col. Richard B. Mason, warning of an uprising.

The cannon resurfaced in 1858 when it was uncovered by a winter storm, and it was moved to State and de la Guerra Streets. Sometime before 1876, it was sold and taken to a foundry in San Francisco, where it was melted for scrap.

MASON

Col. Richard B. Mason was the American military governor of California when the cannon disappeared from the beach in Santa Barbara. He waited until May 31, 1848 for "el canon perdido" to be returned.

When it had not surfaced, he issued an order that the town be "laid under a contribution of \$500."

QUINIENTOS

In Spanish, it means \$500, representing the "fine" imposed by Gov. Mason on the populace of Santa Barbara for failing to return "el canon perdido."

The first seal of the City of Santa Barbara even celebrated the incident, displaying a cannon presumably on the beach and the words "Vale Quinientos Pesos" (value 500 pesos).

GARDEN

Listed on the first two official maps of the city in 1853 as both Garden and its Spanish equivalent, Jardines, the street took its name because it passed through the center of the de la Guerra family's garden (roughly between Ortega and Cota Streets).

SAN ANDRÉS

San Andrés, literally "Saint Andrew," is really named for Andrés Pico. Pico, a brother of Governor Pio Pico, was in command of the victorious California troops at the Battle of San Pascual and one of the signers of the Treaty of Cahuenga, thus ending the war in California. His elevation to sainthood shows how admired he was by the Californians.

Highly regarded by the Americans as well, Pico was elected to the State Assembly in 1851 and the Senate in 1860. He was brigadier-general of the state militia and commissioned major of the First Battalion of Native Cavalry during the Civil War (though he declined due to illness).

Where You Live

Barbara Street Names

SALSIPUEDES

Sal si puedes means "get out if you can." This street not only passed through the edges of the estero, making for a difficult journey, but also dropped into a box canyon (today's Peabody Stadium), through which a small stream ran. The marshy terrain and sheer sides of the canyon would be a challenge for anyone hapless enough to enter, hence the name "get out if you can."

PEDREGOSA

Pedregosa (or pedregoso) means "stony" or "rocky," thus describing the terrain of the upper east side at that time. The abundance of sandstone in this area was one of the reasons Mission Santa Barbara was located here.

For many years, Mission Creek and Mission Canyon were known as Pedregoso Creek and Pedregoso Canyon.

HALEY

Haley Street takes its name from Salisbury Haley, who performed the infamous survey for Santa Barbara's first streets.

Haley, a 49er, was a man of many hats. He was best known as the skipper of the coastal steamers *Sea Bird* and the *Goliath* in the 1850s, but also appears to have been a doctor, a pharmacist, a lawyer, and of course, a surveyor (at least once).

In 1854, he married into the prominent Sepulveda family of Los Angeles and eventually settled in Los Angeles, where he spent the remainder of his years practicing law.

ANACAPA

One of the two streets from the Chumash language, Anacapa is translated as "mirage" or "ever-changing." This accurately describes Anacapa Island, which, depending on the day, time and mist conditions, can be viewed as no island, one island, or several islands. The actual Chumash pronunciation is something like 'on - ya - pah', but the name has certainly been muddled over the years. During his stop here in 1793, the English explorer Captain George Vancouver described Anacapa in his log for Tuesday, November 19th as "...a group of three islands, called by the natives Enneeapah, (the westernmost being the largest and highest island)...." In 1827, Frenchman Auguste Duhaut-Cilly, aboard the French trader *Heros*, wrote "...toward the southeast, is a cluster of four small islands called by the Indians 'Enecapah.'"

"Enecapap" was the spelling used by the Common Council and the first street maps, but within a few years it was modified to the spelling we use today.

MICHELTORENA

Manuel Micheltorena was the governor of California from 1842 to 1845. He arrived in California with a "convict" army raised from the prisons in Mexico, which did not sit well with the Californians. Ordered to keep foreigners out of California, he instead befriended them, granting several ranchos to Americans.

A populist revolution culminating in a bloodless battle at Cahuenga Pass removed him from office and sent him back to Mexico. **■**

Neal Graffy is a Santa Barbara historian noted for his illustrated lectures and publications. Look for his upcoming book, *What's in a Name? Santa Barbara Street Names*, in spring 2008.