QUAIL HOLLOW RANCH

a history

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SANTA CRUZ COUNTY HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION

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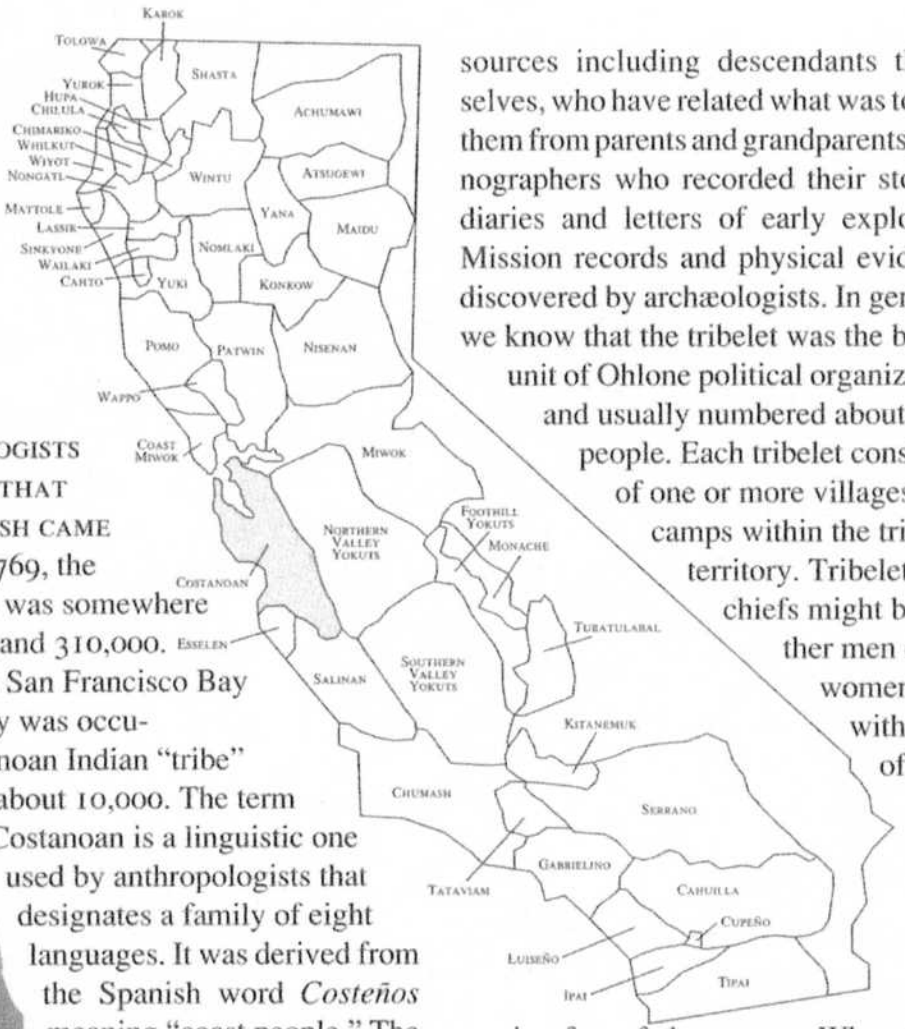
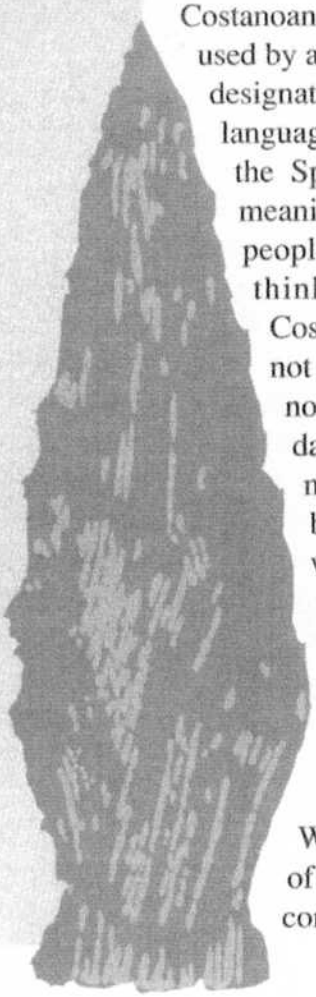
QUAIL HOLLOW RANCH IS LOCATED ON 300 ACRES IN THE FELTON-BEN LOMOND REGION OF THE SANTA CRUZ Mountains. Since its acquisition by public agencies, first by the Santa Clara County Board of Education in 1974 and later by the County of Santa Cruz in 1986, the area has been recognized for its diverse natural and scenic resources. Ten types of biotic communities have been identified within its borders including mixed evergreen forests, riparian areas and pasture land. These are habitat to hundreds of plant and animal species. Quail Hollow Ranch, however, is rich in cultural history as well. Although material remains date back only as far as the 1880s, the land itself was part of the area's settlement history, beginning with Native Americans and paralleling the San Lorenzo Valley's development as a logging and tourist center. The property took on a different significance when, in 1937, it was purchased by Larry and Ruth Lane, owners and publishers of *Sunset Magazine*. Although the Lane family considered the property primarily as their private home, gradually it came to exemplify the best of "Western Living." The transformation of the farmhouse into a long, low Western ranch house, the development of gardens to be enjoyed as an "outdoor living room," and the creation of a modern interior space all were ideas developed and presented in the pages of *Sunset*. What had begun as a small family farm became a sleek 1950s version of the California ranch.

The following history gives some idea of how the land that became Quail Hollow Ranch was used by its various inhabitants over time. It also provides a larger historical backdrop against which the resident families carried out their lives. Quail Hollow is a place but it also embodies some of the magic that newcomers sought in creating their own versions of the California dream.

EARLY INHABITANTS OF THE LAND



ANTHROPOLOGISTS ESTIMATE THAT WHEN THE SPANISH CAME to California in 1769, the native population was somewhere between 133,000 and 310,000. The area between San Francisco Bay and Monterey Bay was occupied by the Costanoan Indian "tribe" which numbered about 10,000. The term Costanoan is a linguistic one used by anthropologists that designates a family of eight languages. It was derived from the Spanish word *Costeños* meaning "coast people." The people themselves did not think of themselves as Costanoan since they were not a single ethnic group nor a political entity. Today, descendants of these native people prefer to be called Ohlone, a word whose origins are uncertain but may have come from the name of a settlement located near San Gregorio Creek in San Mateo County.



What knowledge we have of the Ohlone people has come from a variety of sources including descendants themselves, who have related what was told to them from parents and grandparents; ethnographers who recorded their stories; diaries and letters of early explorers; Mission records and physical evidence discovered by archæologists. In general, we know that the tribelet was the basic unit of Ohlone political organization and usually numbered about 250 people. Each tribelet consisted of one or more villages and camps within the tribelet territory. Tribelet chiefs might be either men or women with the office passing from father to son. When there were no male heirs, however, the position was given to the man's sister or daughter. Duties of the chief included directing ceremonial activities and organizing hunting, fishing, gathering and warfare expeditions. The chief and a council of elders acted only as advisors to the group since the Ohlone people believed in personal independence and recognized a central authority only in times of war.

Dwellings generally consisted of domed structures thatched with tule or grass. Sweathouses (places of purification for the men) were constructed by excavating a pit in the bank of a stream and building the rest of the structure against the bank. Some structures were designed as assem-

bly halls. Such a hall impressed the Spanish explorer Portolá who noted that one structure he observed was large enough to accommodate the entire village of 200 people.

Careful management of the land was an important part of the Ohlone culture. The people carried out controlled burning of large areas to facilitate the growth of seed bearing annuals, to remove dead leaves that could become a fire hazard and to increase grazing areas for deer, elk and antelope. A primary food source was the acorn which was ground to produce a meal that was then made into mush or baked into a form of acorn bread. Seeds and nuts were roasted or ground into a meal. Fruit was a staple part of the diet including blackberries, elderberries, strawberries and wild grapes. Cider was also made from the berries of the manzanita. Game was plentiful in most of the Ohlone territory and hunters stalked and killed large animals such as deer, elk and antelope. An important part of the varied diet was small animals such as wildcat, raccoon, rabbit, squirrel, and mouseall of which were trapped. Birds such as mourning dove, robin and hawks were hunted by using bolas constructed from two pieces of bone tied with a string, and traps made of twigs were used to catch quail. Fish was another staple of the diet. They were captured using basketry fish traps, nets or by spearing.

These practices, characterized by self sufficiency and stewardship of the land, were followed by the Native American population for thousands of years. In what is now California, this way of life was brought to an end with the coming of the Spanish.

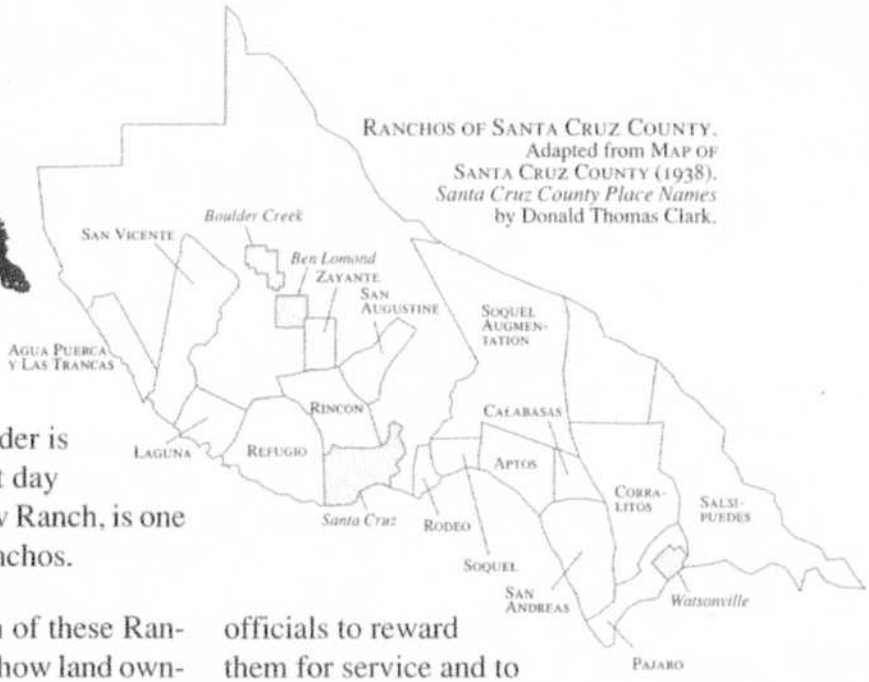
THE HISPANIC PERIOD

WHAT HISTORIANS CALL THE HISPANIC PERIOD BEGAN IN 1769 WHEN A SPANISH EXPEDITION LED BY CAPTAIN GASPAR de Portolá, governor of Baja California, was sent to locate Monterey Bay. Although the coast of Alta California had been the subject of previous exploration as early as 1542, Spanish Colonial efforts for over two hundred years were centered in other parts of the world. Threats of colonization by both Russia and England in the 1760s refocused attention on California and, as a result, Spain designed a plan to occupy and settle the area. A key element of the plan was the establishment of a series of missions that would eventually number twenty one and stretch the entire length of California.

As a result of Portolá's visit to the area, a site was chosen on the banks of the San Lorenzo River for the twelfth mission, Santa Cruz or Holy Cross. The mission was begun in 1791 and the first annual report listed an Indian population of 89. This population reached its peak in 1796 with 523 neophytes (converted Indians.) Disease and poor nutrition eventually took its toll and by the time the Missions were secularized in 1834, scarcely a single member of the native population was left.

The Missions had other purposes besides converting the native population to Catholicism. At the peak of its operation, Mission Santa Cruz ran 8,000 head of cattle which produced hide and tallow. These were traded to foreign merchants for necessary supplies to support the Spanish religious, military and civilian population.

Mexican independence in 1821 and the secularization of the missions in 1834 brought about a change in land use and ownership in the former Spanish territory. Church lands became available for civilian settlement and, within the borders of present day Santa Cruz County, twenty five separate land grants were made by the Mexican government. Twenty one of these grants, called ranchos, were finally patented by the U. S. Lands Commission. Rancho Zayante,



Ranchos of Santa Cruz County. Adapted from Map of Santa Cruz County (1938). *Santa Cruz County Place Names* by Donald Thomas Clark.

part of whose northern border is included within the present day boundaries of Quail Hollow Ranch, is one of the original Mexican ranchos.

Understanding the creation of these Ranchos helps us to appreciate how land ownership in California progressed through the Native American, Spanish, Mexican and American periods of California history. At the time the land grants were made, virtually nothing remained of the Native American people, their villages or their culture. It is interesting, however, that sometimes their place names persisted. Such is the case with the name *Zayante*, which was recorded in Mission records with a number of spellings including *Sayanta*, *Sayante*, and *Zyante*. Originally a *ranchería*, the Spanish term for Indian settlement, Zayante once was an Ohlone village located somewhere on the creek that now bears its name. There is no record of the meaning of the word, however, and its origin has been lost to us.

Rancho Zayante, consisting of 2,658 acres was granted in 1833 to Joaquin Buelna. He was a former alcalde (chief civil officer) of Branciforte, originally a Spanish civilian settlement located near Mission Santa Cruz. After Mexican independence, it was the usual practice for governors to bestow grants of land on civil and military officials to reward them for service and to encourage settlement. As a result, officials such as Buelna received large tracts of land called ranchos.

With the coming of statehood to California in 1850, retaining titles to these lands became a difficult and expensive process which often resulted in the sale of all or part of the ranchos to Americans at bargain prices. In the case of Zayante, it appears that Buelna let his claim lapse by not settling it. Several individuals, including a French Canadian, Francisco Lajeunesse, and two Americans, Isaac Graham and Henry Neale, made attempts to acquire the land while it was still part of Mexican territory. Graham and Neale saw the great value of the timber on the land but they were not Mexican citizens and therefore ineligible for receiving a grant. Undaunted by

the legal technicalities, Graham convinced Joseph L. Majors, an American who had taken Mexican citizenship to apply. Majors came to the area in 1835, married Maria de los Angeles Castro, became alcalde in Santa Cruz and later, was selected Santa Cruz County's first treasurer. He applied for Zayante and the adjoining rancho San Augustín and was granted both in 1841 under the name Juan José Crisóstomo Mayor. Four months after receiving the grant, Majors and a syndicate that included Graham and three others built a mill that was located on the grounds of today's Mount Hermon. The lumber business thrived and Graham maintained a home in Zayante until his death in 1863. When the land of Rancho Zayante was finally patented by the United States Land Commission in 1870, it went to Graham's daughter Matilda Jane of Aptos. The land was eventually bought, divided and sold by Santa Cruz County developer, F. A. Hihn.

The story of Rancho Zayante is a common one in the early history of California land ownership and use. Indian land was appropriated by the Spanish as part of their colonization system that began with the Missions. When Mexico received its independence from Spain, the Missions were secularized and their extensive lands carved up into ranchos that were given to Mexican citizens. The provisions of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo between the United States and Mexico in 1848 agreed to honor Mexican land claims after California became part of the U. S. The legal process commonly took as long as twenty years. It was so arduous and expensive, however, that by the time the land was patented, most of the original grants had been acquired by Americans. Because of this system, speculators and developers already owned vast areas of California's most desirable land before ordinary settlers ever arrived.

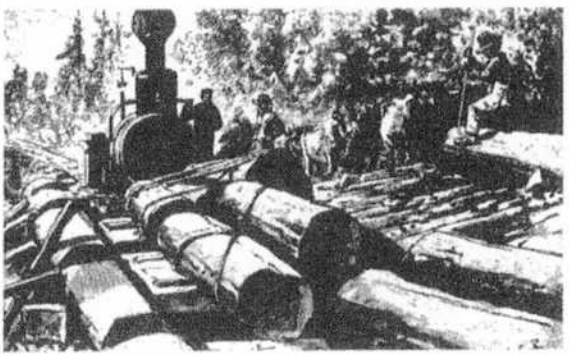
When California became a state in 1850 there was another way to acquire land besides purchasing Mexican land grants and that was by homesteading. Lands not included in the grants were eligible. In 1866, Joseph Kenville, 39 years old and a native of Canada, took advantage of this opportunity and homesteaded 44 acres on what is now Quail Hollow Ranch. Unfortunately, we know little about Kenville and his wife America Baker, the daughter of a Carson City innkeeper, only that he drove a stage coach between Sacramento and Carson City where he met his future wife. Later, he started his own stage company in Santa Cruz. Kenville added to his original acreage when, in 1870, he purchased an 88 acre adjoining homestead belonging to Amos Moon for $2,000. Census records for that year show his entire property was worth $3,000 and his personal property an additional $500. According to one source, Kenville's most notable crop was watermelons and he was known locally as the "Watermelon King." Although we have few details of the lives of Joseph and America Baker during the 35 years spent at their ranch, we can imagine the growth and changes to the area that they witnessed during that time.

Adventurous and ambitious young men like Kenville were drawn to California in its

ADAPTED FROM HARPER'S NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE, 1873, 1882

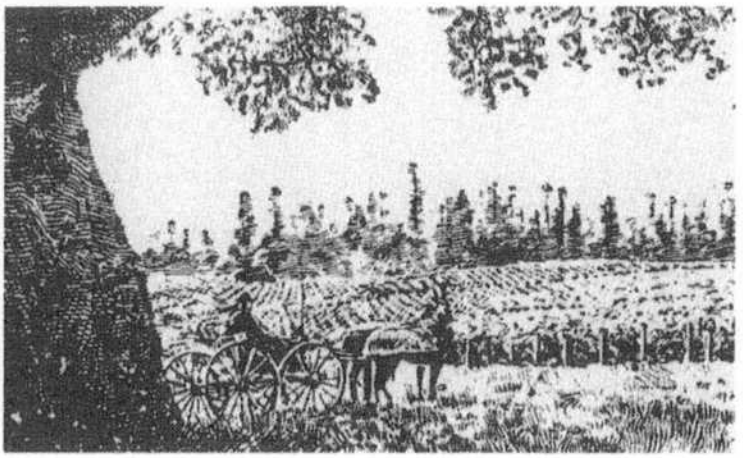
early years for a number of reasons besides gold. In Santa Cruz County, early entrepreneurs recognized a different kind of "gold" in its rich stands of timber. The history of the San Lorenzo Valley is linked to the development of this resource. As already noted, the acquisition of Rancho Zayante was an important one for Isaac Graham and his partners. They constructed the area's first saw mill and followed it with a larger mill located on the east bank of the San Lorenzo River a mile north of Felton. In order to get it to market, the lumber was hauled up the hill east of Zayante, along a hilltop to Branciforte creek, and, following the creek to Santa Cruz, it was finally loaded on ships. The settlements and towns that grew up in the valley between the late 1860s and the 1880s — first Zayante, then Felton, Ben Lomond (initially called Pacific Mills) and Boulder Creek all came into being to support the burgeoning industry. In 1857 there were ten sawmills in the entire County and by 1864 there were twenty eight in the San Lorenzo Valley alone. In 1875 , the boom was aided by the construction of a lumber flume from five miles north of Boulder Creek to Felton thus making the town the center of lumber shipping for the valley. When the flume was replaced in 1884 by the South Pacific Coast Railroad line up the valley to Boulder Creek, that town became the new center. The settlement of Pacific Mills, begun in 1877 as a large sawmill, also prospered. When, in 1887, the U. S. Post Office objected to the name (according to one account because there were already too many California places with Pacific and Mills in their names), the town chose Ben Lomond. The name came from the mountain range rising above it that was christened by John Burns, a Scot, after a mountain in his homeland.

Joseph Kenville and other farmers found a ready market for their produce in these San Lorenzo Valley



settlements that soon became towns and even when the lumber boom slowed, the area found a new industry — tourism. Although visitors had come to Santa Cruz as early as the 1850s to enjoy resort accommodations at the beach, the extension of railroad lines into the Valley to accommodate the timber industry opened that area to tourists as well. In 1883, the South Pacific Coast Railroad advertised the route to Felton and Big Trees: "Cool and Shady Route — Scenery — Varied — Novel — Grand." Visitors were also urged to hitch up a carriage and drive to the Ben Lomond District: "Every mile romantic and the atmosphere is exhilarating."

In 1894, the *Santa Cruz Surf* carried major articles reporting the "Ben Lomond boom." As early as April of that year all vacant homes in the area were full and "many inquiries are heard almost daily from 'want to be residents' of our lovely little town." In 1899, according to continued glowing newspaper reports, the two major hotels, the Rowardennan and the Ben Lomond were filled to capacity, each playing host to 200 guests. In addition, there were smaller resorts and "the woods everywhere in every nook and corner, are full of campers."



ADAPTED FROM SANTA CRUZ COUNTY BY E. S. HARRISON, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, 1890.

In 1902, after 35 years of living on their prosperous farm, Joseph Kenville and his wife, America, retired to Santa Cruz and sold the property to William and Leona Richards of Los Angeles. According to one account the farm raised everything "from guinea pigs to coons and pumpkins to peas." Richards was a nurseryman and experimented with grafting techniques. He planted orchards containing both exotic and domestic varieties of fruit trees. Like the Kenvilles, the Richards did not have to go far to sell their produce.

Promotional material carried in the *Santa Cruz Surf* in June 1908 touted Ben Lomond and the surrounding area as "one of the most enticing spots for home making and recreation in the state." Tourists in Santa Cruz were encouraged to travel by train for a visit. The thirty minute ride was offered four times a day at the cost of 60 cents round trip. For those who made Ben Lomond their primary destination, accommodations could be found at the Rowardennan Hotel which boasted "a large dance hall for social entertainment, dancing and concerts, regular orchestra, a new club house costing $4,000, with a billiard parlor and bowling alley. . . croquet and tennis courts, golf links, boating, swimming, riding, driving, hunting and fishing." All this could be had at $14 a week! If more variety was desired, guests could ride a stage from Ben Lomond to Santa Cruz enabling them a chance to see "beautiful San Lorenzo Canyon, spend several hours at Santa Cruz on the beach, and return for dinner at the hotel." Along with the usual resort attractions, one of the main reasons advertised to visit the area was a look at the giant redwoods.

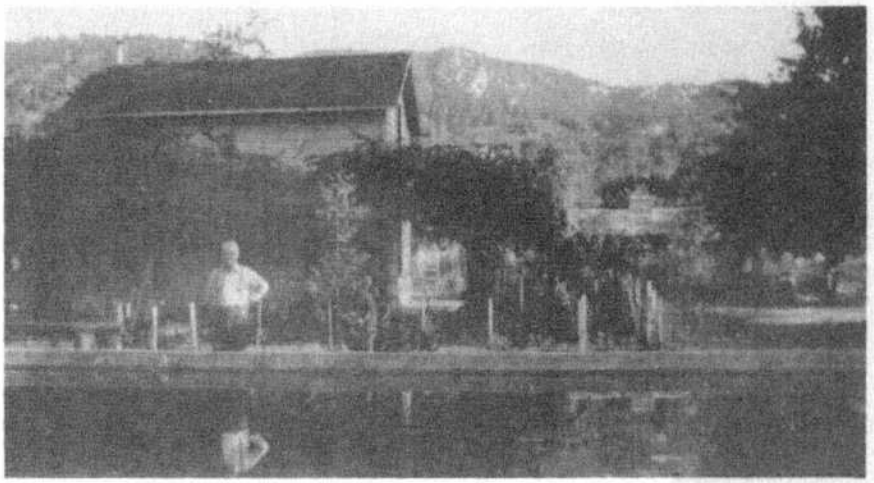
It is ironic that the trees which provided the industry for early settlers in the form of lumber should also provide for future generations as a

tourist attraction. At first, large redwood groves such as the one in Felton were paid tourist attractions where only registered guests were permitted to take photographs. Beginning in 1899, a movement began urging preservation of the big trees for all the public. With the rallying cry of "Save the Redwoods," a committee of interested citizens began its quest to have a state park established in Big Basin. As a result, California Redwood Park, consisting of 3,800 acres was established in 1902. A trip to the "Big Trees" became a popular tourist activity and helped provide a primary reason to visit Santa Cruz County. As one newspaper article said of the area, "nothing can prevent the summer exodus from San Francisco to the Santa Cruz mountains, increasing in volume until every crag, every valley, every hillside and every bottom shall be taken."

Tourists may have found the place irresistible in the summer but permanent residents found good reason to be pleased as well. According to a number of newspaper articles published from the late 1880s through the early 1900s, the land around Ben Lomond provided some of the finest farming imaginable. Vineyards and orchards were common, growing grapes for both wine and table, as well as apricots, pears, prunes, figs and apples. Peaches were especially large and flavorful and brought $1.25 for a 25 pound box. Hay and grain were also raised for domestic use and for market and the relatively small family farms grew all types of seasonal vegetables.

In 1910, eight years after purchasing it from the Kenvilles, Will and Leona Williams sold their property to Emil and Genie Grunig who continued the local farming tradition. "Judge" Grunig (so called because he served as a Justice of the Peace in southern California) gave his new home its first recorded name, "Sun Kissed Ranch."

With the improvement of roads and the growing popularity of the automobile, an increasing number of travelers found their way to the hotels and camps among the redwoods. A new type of settlement was developed in 1905 when a group of 250 people meeting at the Glenwood Hotel made plans for a Christian conference, education and recreation center. Representing several denominations but primarily Presbyterian, they purchased 400 acres at the confluence of Zayante and Bean Creek. Located about 8 miles inland from Santa Cruz, the site boasted convenience to the town of Felton on the the Southern Pacific Railroad line. The Mount Hermon Association began sponsoring excursions to the area and, by March of 1906, the group had gotten pledges for nearly half the acreage. In July 1906, stockholders were given the opportunity to choose their lots by writing their choice on a piece of paper and having it drawn from a box. Development began immediately and, by 1912, the *Santa Cruz Surf* reported that 150 private cottages had been built around central facilities that included a hotel, an auditorium, hiking trails and bridges.



According to a history of Mount Hermon, the center was named by the Board of Directors for the reputed place in Palestine where Jesus went apart with his disciples and was transfigured before them. Its aim was to provide an alternative to the fashionable resorts and hotels in the area and it featured religious conferences and services along with campfire talks, nature hikes, and lectures.

The Grunigs found eager customers among these summer visitors for their products. At Sun Kissed Ranch, they raised chickens and turkeys in addition to a wide variety of fruits and vegetables. They too took advantage of modernization. While Judge Grunig started out making deliveries by horse and wagon, he later loaded up his produce and made his rounds in a Dodge touring car.

The photographs on these two pages show Judge Grunig in the fields and near the house at "Sun Kissed Ranch." Provided courtesy of Grace Stegemann.

Help on the ranch was provided by two brothers, Fred and James Bonnetti, who lived in a small cabin on adjoining property one half mile northeast of the Gruning house. Local stories have it that the Bonnettis grew grapes in their small vineyard and produced wine which was stored in the cellar. Outside the cabin was an Italian beehive oven. The Bonnetti's made part of their living by harvesting oak and madrone and selling it for firewood. According to one story, the brothers had a falling out at one point and built separate cabins on opposite sides of a canyon. While this may have been the case, only one cabin stood when the Santa Clara County School Board bought the property in 1974. It was destroyed by a mudslide in 1982.

A tragedy ended the Grunigs lives in 1936 when both died in an automobile accident near Tulare, California as they returned from a trip to Los Angeles. The sale of Sun Kissed Ranch ended an era and began a different look and a new use for one of the valley's most scenic and productive farms.

For 70 years, the original homestead of Joseph Kenville had grown and prospered as a family farm. Owners took advantage of the climate and location to raise fruits, vegetables and poultry, finding a ready market among the summer visitors at nearby resorts. When the property came on the market in 1937, another family looked at it with interest. Had Laurence Lane continued his family's Kansas farming tradition, he might have joined other Midwesterners in pursuing that occupation in the mild, pleasant surroundings of California. Sun Kissed Ranch would then have continued to be just another local farm until, like surrounding properties, it would finally be bought and developed into small pieces of the California dream. Instead it represents a kind of prototype of that dream because the new owner, Laurence Lane, was also the publisher of *Sunset,* "the Magazine of Western Living."

SUNSET MAGAZINE — SETTLING AND LIVING IN THE WEST

ONCE THE GOLD RUSH IN CALIFORNIA CAME TO AN END, DISCONTENTED AND ADVENTUROUS MIDWESTERN AND EASTERN FAMILIES FOUND OTHER REASONS TO MAKE the trek across the plains and settle in the magic new land. To encourage this migration, a number of publications appeared, usually filled with romantic poetry and colorful travelogues. None of these was as long lived or influential in creating a new Western self image as *Sunset Magazine*.

The first issue of *Sunset*, named for the Southern Pacific Company's Sunset Limited route, was published in San Francisco in May 1898. Through its pages, the railroad attempted to lure travelers to the West and, once there, to induce them to buy land and stay. *Sunset* featured articles and photographs of spectacular attractions such as Yosemite and gossipy items from places like Los Angeles, Riverside, Santa Cruz and Paso Robles. It offered mining news, farming news, poetry and jokes, but never forgot the *Sunset* creed: "Publicity for the attractions and advantages of the Western Empire."

While *Sunset* dealt primarily with California, Arizona and New Mexico, the *Pacific Monthly*, also begun in 1898, covered Oregon and Washington. The two publications merged in 1912 and the Pacific Monthly's subtitle, "The Magazine of Western Living" was adopted by *Sunset* and can be found on the cover today. In 1914, the Southern Pacific management decided to sell the publication, and it was purchased by the magazine staff. Under their ownership, emphasis in the magazine changed somewhat. While still featuring travel and promotional articles, *Sunset* became more of a literary magazine, a kind of *Atlantic Monthly* of the West. Within its pages could be found the work of Jack London,

Kathleen Norris, Earle Stanley Gardner and Aimee Semple McPherson. Unfortunately, this format was not nearly as appealing to readers and, by 1928, circulation was down and the publication was available for sale.

It came on the market just as the eager young advertising director of Meredith publications, which produced the magazine *Better Homes and Gardens*, was looking for a vehicle to try out some ideas of his own. Laurence William ("Larry") Lane realized in his travels across the country that living in the West was decidedly different from living in any other part of the county. Not only were the practical aspects such as building a home and planning a garden different but the attitude about them was different as well. While publications up until that time had articulated these differences to people in the East, none had been aimed specifically at those who already called the West their home. It was to address their needs that Larry Lane set out to start his own magazine.

A trip to San Francisco led to the discovery of the ailing *Sunset*. Lane, along with six friends from Des Moines, raised $65,000 and bought the magazine in September 1928. The January 1929 issued boldly announced the coming of a "new" *Sunset* which would be "vitalized by a constant stream of new ideas in the art of living. It is keyed to the principal interests of life in the West — indoors and out." Fueled by hundreds of letters from readers offering their opinions on what the publication should be, *Sunset* made the promise that it would "go far beyond any magazine printed in helping you get the most fun out of living in the West."

With departments devoted to home building and decorating, travel, gardening and cooking, the magazine delivered on its promise to be "a magazine written for the West alone, and dealing with the adventure of Western Living." The uniqueness of the West as defined by *Sunset* emphasized the mild climate which resulted in the propensity of Westerners to spend more time enjoying the outdoors whether


FOR THIRTY YEARS

SUNSET MAGAZINE

has represented the West ▾ ▾ ▾ Upon this enviable record of stability it stands in its new dress, looks out upon its own territory and finds it good

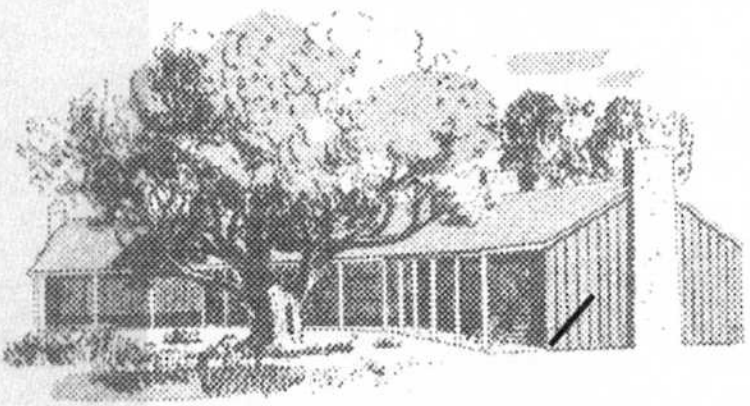
Now more than ever before Sunset represents a progressive West ▾ ▾ ▾ a West of families ▾ ▾ ▾ of homes, gardens, recreation ▾ ▾ ▾ a West of New Ideas ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾ ▾

Tell your friends about this new Sunset ▾ ▾ ▾ Let them see your beautiful copy ▾ ▾ ▾ the blank below is printed for their benefit as well as for your own ▾ ▾ ▾ A year's enjoyment costs only one dollar ▾ ▾ ▾

ILLUSTRATIONS ON PAGES 11-13 ORIGINALLY APPEARED IN SUNSET MAGAZINE *1906-1950.*

in their own backyards or traveling the highways. The magazine also explored the interest of Westerners in their homes and the desire to get involved in everything from building design and construction, to the "do it yourself" home improvements that became one of *Sunset*'s hallmarks.

While the magazine did not invent the concept of combining indoor and outdoor living in home planning and architecture, it was probably the earliest and most successful



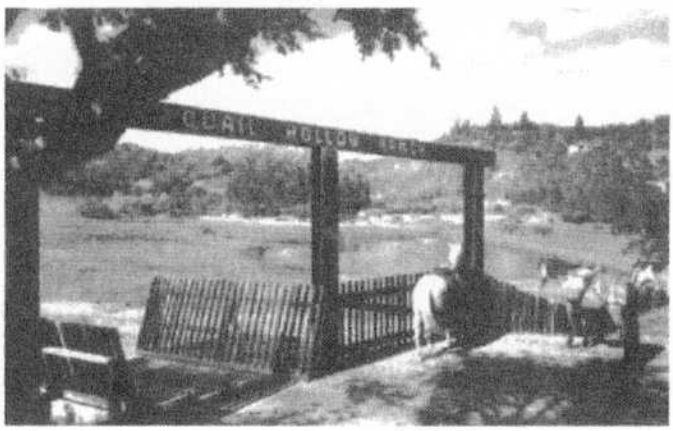
agent in popularizing it. In the late teens and early twenties, the most popular Western architectural styles were California craftsman bungalow and various adaptations of Mediterranean and Mission Revival styles which featured red tile roofs and white stucco walls. By the mid-1920s, San Francisco Bay area architects like William Wurster, were looking to another California tradition for inspiration — early Spanish ranch houses. With their long, low profiles and breezy porches open to the outside, these houses were a much better expression of the way people in the West seemed to live than the boxy suburban bungalows with their traditional separation of house and garden. Teamed with landscape architects such as Thomas Church, who pioneered the idea of the garden as "outdoor living room," these innovators began designing homes for well-to do clients. One of Wurster's first and most well known works in this style was the Gregory farm house located near Santa Cruz and completed in 1927.

Sunset Magazine embraced this modern adaptation of an old idea and began popularizing the California ranch house with extensive articles, plans and photographs. Rather than viewing the ranch house as a strict architectural style like Mission Revival or Victorian or Tudor, *Sunset*'s staff encouraged the reader to think of it as the embodiment of "the informal, friendly spirit of the West." Characterized by easy, open access to the outside, with porches and patios at the back rather than the front, the ranch house was, in its best form, the melding of modern building materials with time honored Western tradition. In addition to the actual form of the house, the *Sunset* reader was given advice on its component parts.

The heart and center of the home, the kitchen, was given much attention beginning with the earliest editions of the "new" magazine. Efficient design coupled with labor saving devices were explored along with the food produced in these rooms. *Sunset*'s recipes, submitted by readers and tested by the food staff, became a department called the "Kitchen Cabinet." Even these recipes and their preparation had a uniquely Western slant. In the February 1929 issue, the reader was assured that even

though the out of doors was calling us to come out of the kitchen, through make ahead and "remote control" cooking, the lure of "gardens and golf greens" could still be answered without sacrificing the family's daily three meals. In mid-winter, while the rest of the country shivered, the Western homemaker was preparing a quick family supper so she could enjoy the outdoors — a very *Sunset* concept!

Readers liked the single minded Western approach but the timing of the magazine's maiden voyage could certainly have been better. It came just in time for the stock market crash. The Depression brought lean times but Larry Lane and his staff managed with the help of financial backers to keep the fledgling publication afloat. In 1938, it was doing well enough that *Time Magazine* featured Lane in its press section with the descriptive title, "Sunset Gold." In spite of some humorous remarks about *Sunset*'s "chirpy cheerfulness" that "grates on Eastern nerves," the article gave full credit to Lane for revitalizing the magazine and posting a profit that year of $25,000. This was no small feat at a time when other, long established publications had lost their fight for survival.



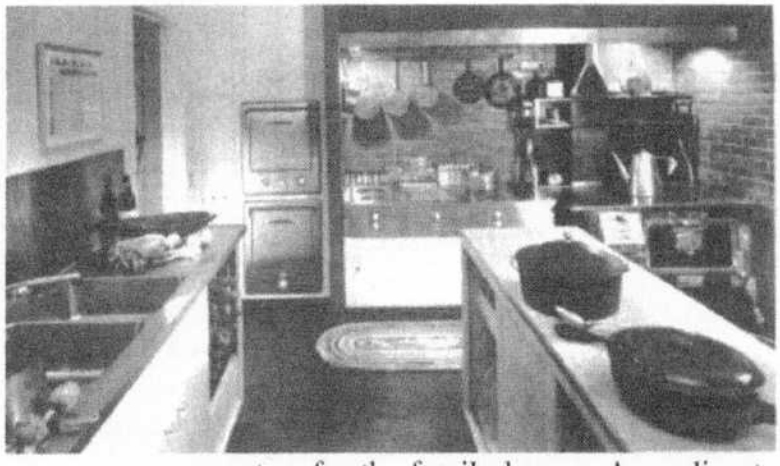
AT THE TIME OF THE *Time Magazine* ARTICLE, THE LANE FAMILY HAD JUST BEGUN ITS OWN ADVENTURE in "Western Living" by purchasing what they would call Quail Hollow Ranch, named for the valley in which it was located.

In spite of the fact that here was no conscious effort to make the newly purchased ranch a reflection of the philosophy espoused in the pages of *Sunset*, nonetheless it did, over time, come to exemplify and reflect those values and ideas. It was first and foremost, however, the family home.

Bill, the older Lane son, remembers with fondness the acquisition of the property. The family had come from Iowa in 1928 and stayed with grandparents in Los Angeles. Their first northern California home was a rented house in Burlingame and later a home in Palo Alto. A fire that seriously damaged the house in 1936 forced the family to rent an apartment so the possibility of having a ranch, if only on week-ends and holidays, was an exciting one to Bill and his younger brother Mel. Larry Lane wanted a place where he could relax, entertain and especially to ride horses. In spite of a publishing career that kept him in San Francisco he was, according to son Mel, a farm boy at heart. Ruth Lane looked forward to gardening, raising fruits and vegetables, and

experimenting with cooking and freezing techniques that would be incorporated into *Sunset*'s food section.

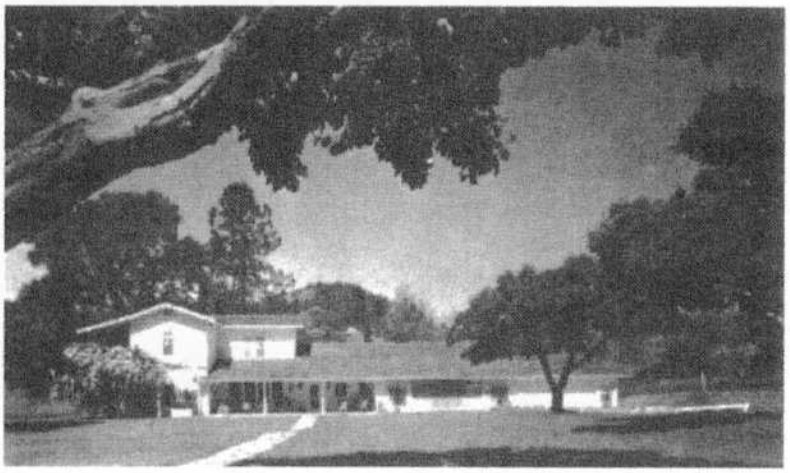
After the purchase of Quail Hollow, the family began a routine that brought them to the ranch for part of every week. Even after the young men went off to college and later the Service, the elder Lanes continued the routine, commuting by train to a nearby railroad station where they were picked up and driven to the ranch by the caretakers. Eventually Larry Lane shortened his work week at the San Francisco office so that he could spend more time at Quail Hollow. He set up an office just off the living room and conducted business from there with the aid of his Santa Cruz secretary, Mary Bower.



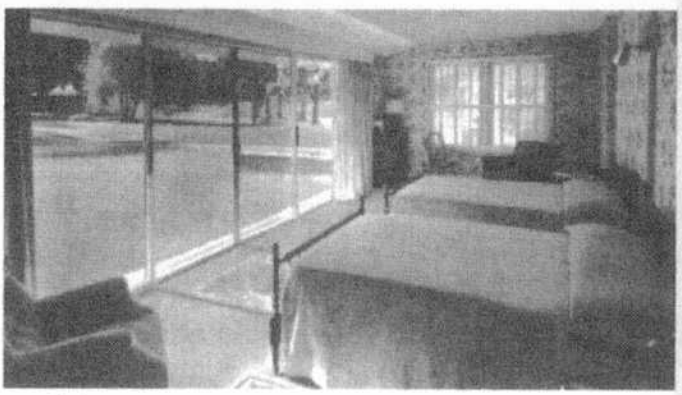
To the Lane boys, ranch life was an exciting and sometimes even profitable experience. They kept busy entertaining friends, horseback riding, and constructing what Bill Lane calls the "Sunset Trail" around the property. Mel served as barbecue chef to the many visitors. The enterprising brothers also discovered that apples still growing plentifully in the orchard planted by previous owners, would bring a handsome price when sold in nearby Santa Cruz. The ranch even had a family cow and the milking chores usually fell to Bill.

At first, the farmhouse was used as it was by the family. Gradually, the barns and outbuildings were removed and replaced by sturdier quarters for the family horses. According to Mel Lane, the initial remodeling of the house centered around the family kitchen. This was not surprising since kitchens played so large a part in the *Sunset Magazine* philosophy of comfortable and efficient Western living. In planning their kitchens, readers were urged to have up to date equipment including stoves with temperature and time controls, roomy refrigerators, and adequate storage space. Model kitchens, as pictured in the magazine, featured the use of brick walls and floors, hanging pot racks and below surface storage all of which found their way into the Lane family kitchen. A touch of the old remained in the form of a wood burning stove

which stood next to the modern electric range. Even the arrangement of the kitchen and dining room as one large space was a concept explored in *Sunset*. In a number of articles, the magazine emphasized that the separation of kitchen and dining room was an outmoded idea more appropriate to the past when cooking and serving was done by servants. Homeowners were urged to integrate the kitchen with the rest of the house by eliminating walls that separated the kitchen. An excellent example of the concept can be seen at Quail Hollow where dining room and kitchen are separated only by a low counter.



A later addition to the house consisted of a one story wing constructed to the north and containing an extension of the living room and kitchen, utility rooms, a master bedroom suite and bathrooms. Rather than adopting some variation of the traditional two story farmhouse, the Lanes chose to take a new direction. The resulting additions and modifications illustrate their interpretation of a modern Western ranch house.

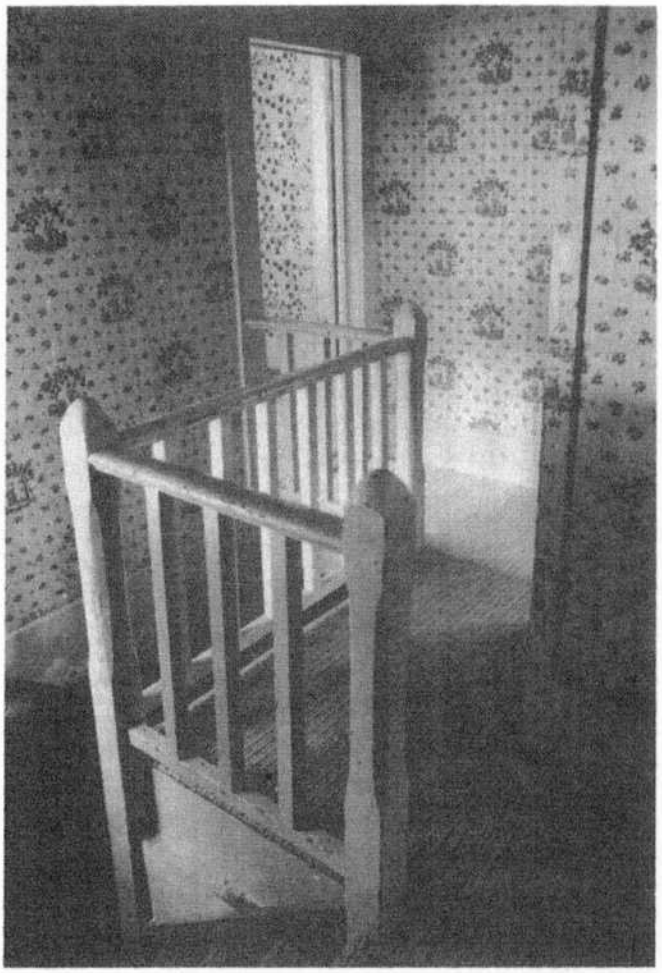


Over the years, *Sunset Magazine* featured the work of a number of architects, including William Wurster, Gardner Dailey and Cliff May, who provided variations on the style. In 1946, May, collaborating with the editorial staff of *Sunset*, produced a book entitled, *Western Ranch Houses*. Within its pages can be found a complete exploration of the concepts that these and other Western architects had been developing since the late 1920s. The book, drawn from a number of previous *Sunset* articles, explored the history of the ranch house and explained what that history meant to the modern builder. Stressing practicality over architectural theory, the authors emphasized the importance of the *corredor* or open porch, the garden as an outside room and the modern use of large expanses of glass to take advantage of the view. The purpose of these ideas was to erase the line between indoors and out and to consider the house and its surroundings as one integrated living space. At the Lane's ranch house these concepts are illustrated by features of the newer addition. The integration of indoors and out is provided by a covered patio that overlooks a sloping lawn where guests could gather and enjoy the weather as well as a view of the rest of the ranch. Outdoor entertaining was further facilitated by a small room, once outfitted with a built-in bar, sink, and refrigerator, that opened directly on to the patio. A separate master bedroom wing also provided access directly to the outdoors through a wall of sliding glass doors.

In addition to its layout, the house contains a number of details that embody Larry Lane's fondness for the idea of the Western ranch. While the ladies' bath is decorated in a sedate flower print, the gentlemen's is boldly decorated with custom wall paper depicting cowboys and cattle and, prominently displayed among the decorative brands, is *QH* for Quail Hollow. The idea is not unlike those found in a 1938 *Sunset* edition featuring ox yoke lighting fixtures, horseshoe wall brackets and a lamp decorated with cattle brand marks. Perhaps the only notable omission at Quail Hollow from *Sunset*'s ideal house scheme was an outdoor brick barbecue. Mel Lane, who often served as chef, remembers that the family barbecue was of the portable variety, but in good *Sunset* fashion, it was home made.

Although the Lanes considered Quail Hollow primarily as their home, experiments in gardening were conducted on the grounds before production of the magazine was moved from San Francisco to Menlo Park in the 1950s. The garden editor and staff were frequent guests at the ranch. With their help, decorative gardens containing Ruth Lane's favorite camellias were laid out, joining the more practical areas used to raise vegetables and fruit. To accommodate the abundant produce prepared by Mrs. Lane for storage, a freezer was installed in the utility area.

During the years 1944 through 1947, Ruth Lane served as Managing Editor of *Sunset*, the culmination of years of reading and editing magazine copy and acting as advisor to her husband. She also put to good use her degree in home economics from Drake University in Des Moines, according to son Mel. Many of the recipes sent in by readers were personally tested



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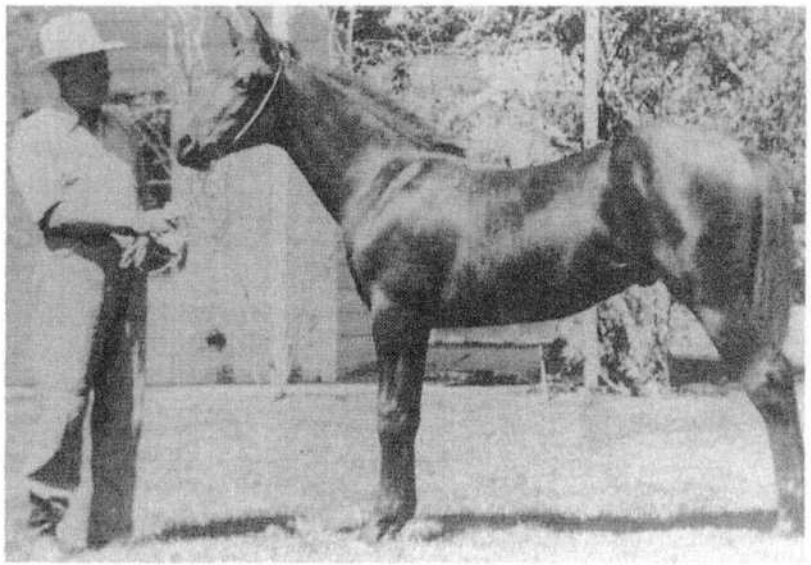
The above photograph shows the upstairs hall in the original section of the Quail Hollow ranch house as it appears today. Wall paper design at the left can be found in the master bath of the 1950s addition.

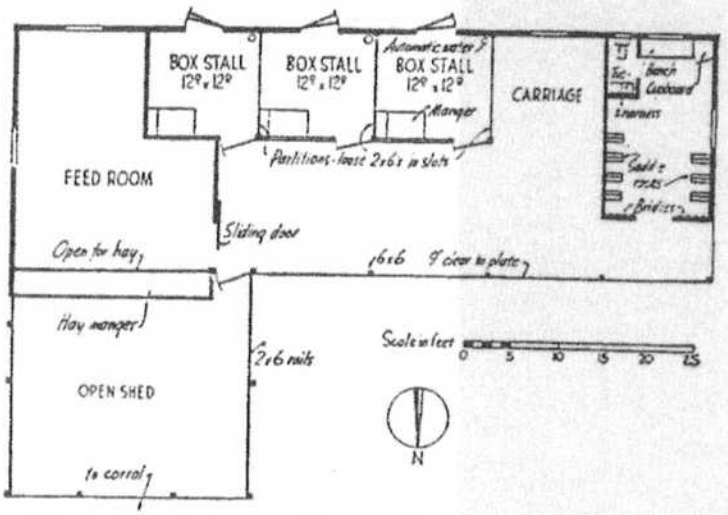
by Mrs. Lane and made an appearance at the Lane family table before they found their way to the pages of *Sunset*.

By the time the Lanes sold the ranch in 1954, the magazine's concept of informal, out door family living, houses built low, open and accessible to the outside and landscaping with plants best suited for the geographical area were an accepted way of life for millions of Western residents. It is not surprising that as the Lane family's home for twenty years, Quail Hollow reflected and embodied these concepts.



Larry Lane, Sr. with one of the horses kept at the ranch.

Larry Lane's love of horseback riding was integrated completely into the family ranch when, in 1948, a complex of stables and barns with a large riding arena was constructed east of the house. This was the one feature that actually was included in an edition of *Sunset*. The August 1948 issue carried an article entitled, "A Report on Western Stables." Of the Quail Hollow barn the article says: "When a barn works smoothly, when there's a place for everything, when both horses and men find it a pleasant place, it becomes the center of activity."

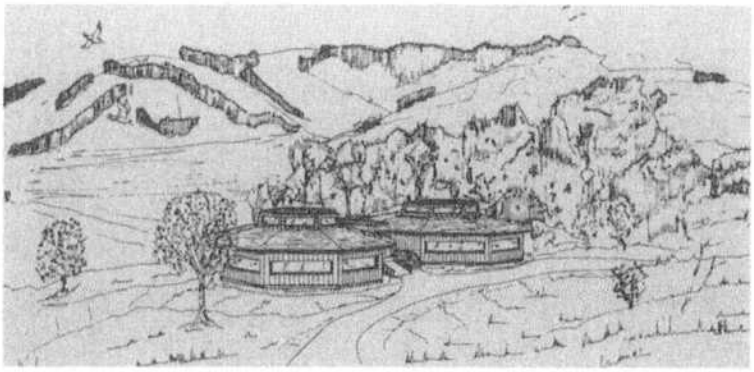


The floor plan drawing is from the Sunset article featuring the stable. Lower photograph shows Bill Lane and guests in one of the family's antique carriages, soon to be in the collection of Quail Hollow Ranch County Park.

This aerial photograph taken in the late 1940s shows the overall layout of the Lane's Quail Hollow Ranch. The orchard can be seen in the upper left corner; the family's large vegetable garden at the lower right. Grafts from apple trees and berry plants were distributed to several friends outside the area, and still grow in their gardens.

AFTER THE LANES

In 1954, the ranch was sold to J. J. and Dorothy Galentine, who sold it again three years later to Harry and Maude Owens. The Owens, who owned the property for the next seventeen years, lived part of the time at the ranch and part at their home in Hawaii. During this period, some of the ranch was leased for grazing cattle and horses. The Santa Clara County Board of Education purchased Quail Hollow in 1974 for the purpose of creating an out-of-doors educational campus. Planned programs for the campus included environmental education and resident camping for the district's sixth grade students; a residential retreat program for other students and groups; and a study program for one day student field trips. The plan called for building a number of residence clusters, a dining commons, interpretive stations and a sports recreation area. Reuse



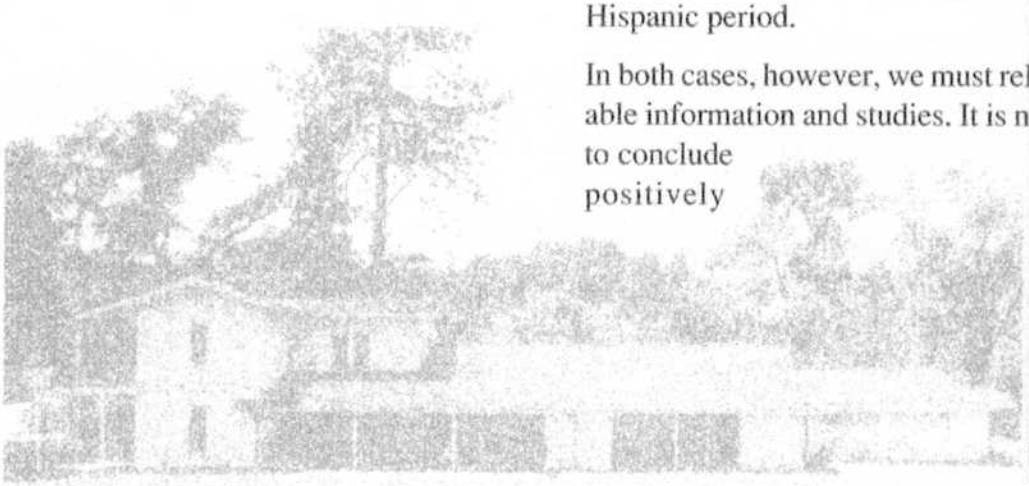
and adaptation of the barn, garage, maintenance sheds and caretakers cottage was also planned. In addition, the main ranch house was to be renovated to accommodate special uses such as retreat activities, orientations and community gatherings. Like so many ambitious plans, however, Santa Clara's Quail Hollow project fell under the budget ax as a result of Proposition 13 passed by the voters of California in 1978.

No further development took place and the ranch was overseen by a permanent caretaker until 1986 when it was purchased by Santa Cruz County with additional funding from various California state agencies. It is currently under the administration of County Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services. After a number of meetings that solicited public input, a Master Plan for the park was drawn up and accepted by the Board of Supervisors on February 27, 1990. Implementation of the Plan awaits completion of an environmental impact report.

QUAIL HOLLOW TODAY

IN SPITE OF SEVERAL CHANGES OF OWNERSHIP AND AMBITIOUS PLANS FOR USE, THE STRUCTURAL LAYOUT OF QUAIL HOLLOW IS MUCH THE SAME TODAY AS it was when the Lanes left it in 1954. Little remains, however, from its earlier days. In 1976, a preliminary archæological study was conducted at the ranch. The study reviewed site records and maps of known archæological resources located in the general vicinity. In addition, a field reconnaissance was made to observe all areas which might contain archæological resources. The author of the report concluded that most of the ranch site is generally unsuitable for sustained prehistoric land use due to steep slopes and the distance from fresh water and, indeed, found no evidence of such use. Likewise to date, there is no archival or archæological evidence to indicate that the land saw any use during the Hispanic period.

In both cases, however, we must rely on available information and studies. It is not possible to conclude positively



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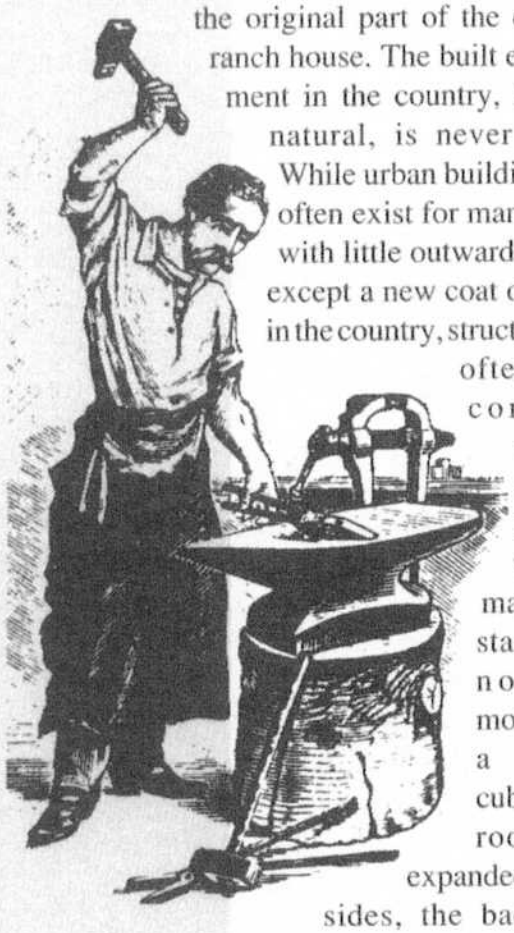
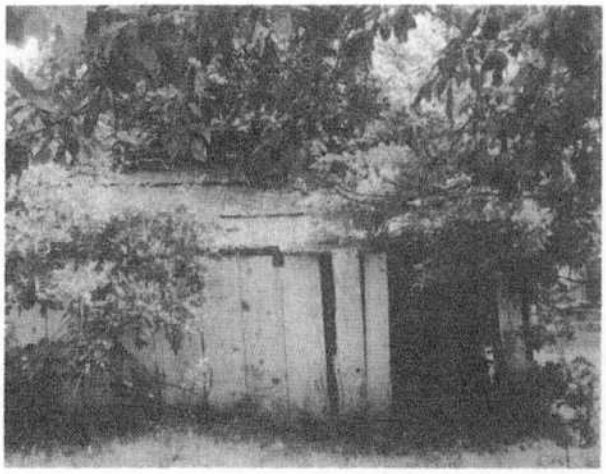
that the land saw no human habitation before it was settled in 1867, only that we have no information on these periods. If physical evidence exists related to these periods, it has not yet been been discovered.

The only remnants of the early families that lived at Quail Hollow are an old structure that once served as a blacksmith shop and the original part of the existing ranch house. The built environment in the country, like the natural, is never static. While urban buildings can often exist for many years with little outward change except a new coat of paint, in the country, structures are often in a constant state of change. Houses, which may have started as nothing more than a basic cube with a roof, are expanded at the sides, the back and above as more space is needed. Barns and outbuildings serve different purposes over time and wood and nails from one structure may be reused to built something else. A shed that once sheltered the farm wagon may one day be adapted into the family garage. The chicken coop from one generation may serve as storage shed or even extra living quarters for the next. For this reason it is often difficult, if not impossible to date exactly, all, or even the various parts, of



rural buildings. A small structure that lies east of the main house is a case in point. According to several accounts, it was used once as a blacksmith shop. Built of vertical board and batten on wood frame with redwood mudsill, it is said to have been constructed around 1885. A physical examination of the building materials, however,



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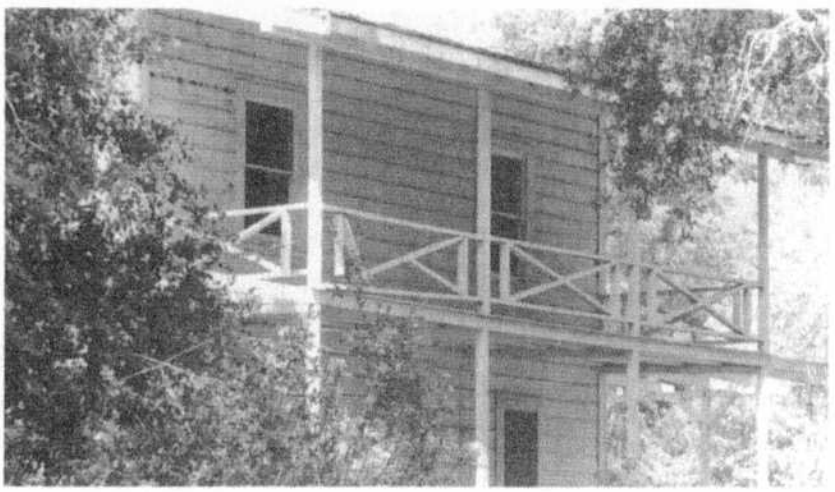
shows that the nails came from a later period. This is not as contradictory as it seems. In all likelihood, a building used as a blacksmith shop did exist on the site. The original structure was probably repaired and parts replaced so it is now difficult to know how much of the original remains. At present, the remnants of the structure are deteriorating, held up, primarily, by a large climbing rose bush.

The other remnant of Quail Hollow's early history is the shell of the original ranch house that was incorporated by the Lanes into the current structure. Research has not provided the exact date of construction. One researcher puts the date at 1905 while another report places the date earlier in 1890. The style and method of construction as compared to other properties in the area is consistent with the earlier date. If that date is correct then the house was built by the original owner, Joseph Kenville. From historical photographs taken during the time that the ranch was owned by the Grunigs, it appears that the second story originally presented a blank

wall to the south and a gabled roof. Later photographs reveal that it was replaced with a flat roof as the result of a fire that occurred in the early 1930s. The Lane's returned to the gabled roof style when they remodeled.

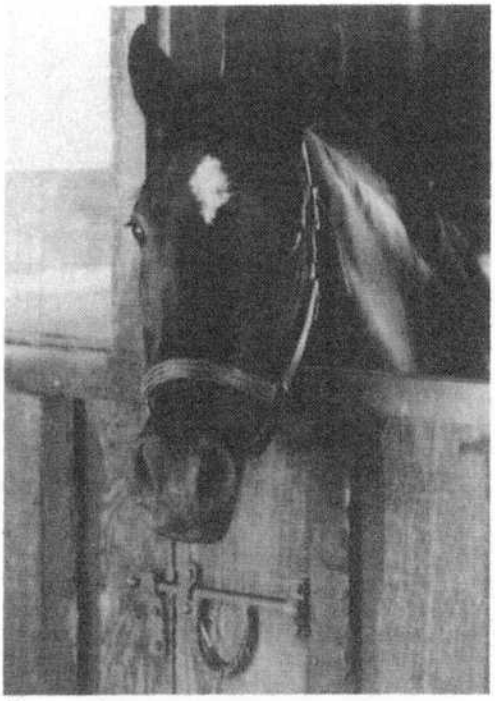


JOHN LEHMANN (2)

In spite of a search by the Lane family and staff members of *Sunset Magazine*, no original plans for the ranch house renovations were discovered. Neither Bill nor Mel Lane were able to provide specific information on the designer or architect of the additions. According to Bill, his father supervised the project and architect Cliff May, a family friend, might have provided help and advice. In any event, the end product appears to reflect a compilation of ideas that were featured over the years in *Sunset*.

Photographs taken by the Grunigs show an abundance of climbing roses and flowers at the front of the house, a practice that was continued by the Lanes in later years. The cultivated gardens around the house have not been maintained though a few hardy specimens, including one of the climbing roses planted near the front porch still grows. The Grunigs grew crops within sight of house in addition to other places. This practice was discontinued by later owners and the Lanes planted the area with a rolling lawn. The aerial photograph on page 18, taken in the late 1940s, shows that a number of fruit trees planted by previous owners grew behind the ranch house. A few of these still remain. The same photograph shows the size and location of the Lane's vegetable garden, a large plot behind the caretakers cottage. The oak tree that has grown for years near what was once the front door of the house, presently shades picnickers who come to enjoy the park.

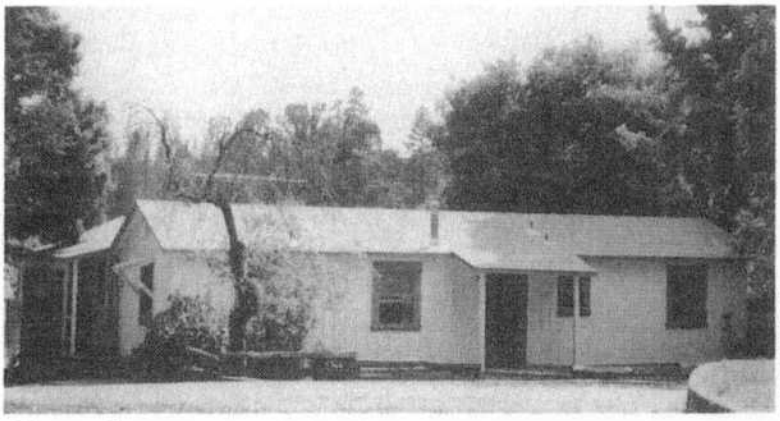
In 1952, a water storage area in front of the house was removed and a spring fed pond was created in a marshy area near the entrance to the ranch. The pond is now fully enclosed by willows and provides a habitat for a variety of water fowl.



JOHN LEHMANN

The ranch house today provides a meeting and administrative building for park personnel and volunteers. Although the furnishings have been removed, a walk through both the original portion of the house and the later additions still gives a strong sense of what living here might have been like. The upstairs of the older section with its colorful wallpaper, tiny hall and small bedrooms, once belonged to Bill and Mel Lane. Although a shady porch fronts these rooms, there is no access door. According to the brothers, before the porch was floored, they went outside by way of the windows, and afterwards they simply continued the practice making a door unnecessary. The downstairs rooms, the result of remodeling and additions, still display the features found over the years in *Sunset Magazine*. Built in book cases surrounding the fireplace, a cupboard that once served as a bar and a custom made fireplace screen with quail design can be seen in the living room. The kitchen no longer displays a row of bright pots and pans but the red brick alcove that held them remains, along with stainless steel appliances that once were state of the art. Even the skylit utility area holds a flower cutting sink with a tile design straight out of a 1950s *Sunset* piece on kitchens.

The ranch manager's cottage, constructed south of the house in 1940, is now used for that same purpose by resident caretakers. The barn, proudly displayed in the magazine in 1948, stables horses as it always has. Built on a concrete foundation with redwood framing and vertical board and batten siding, the structure is still in excellent condition. Other buildings in the barn complex, including two maintenance equipment sheds, are also virtually unchanged and presently are used for storage.

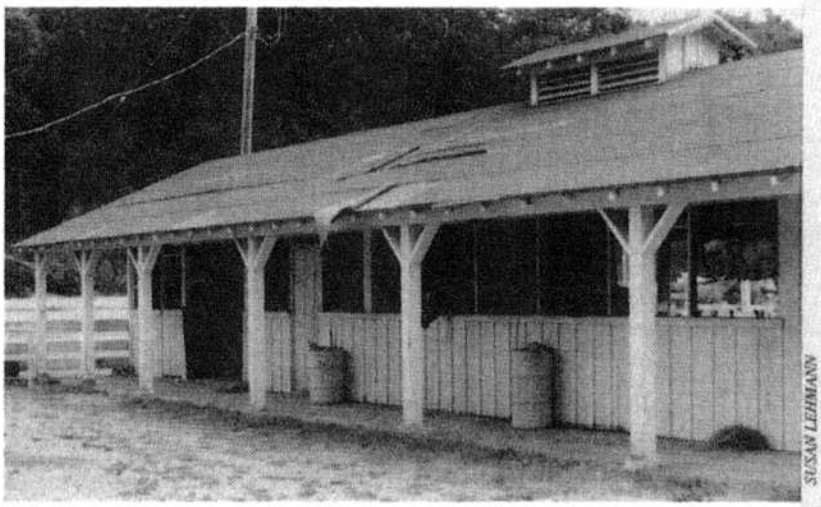


SUSAN LEHMANN

Current planning calls for renovation of existing buildings and the former family home will be adapted for the enjoyment and use of visitors. What began as public land in 1865 has returned to public ownership.

IN CONCLUSION

Since it was acquired by the County of Santa Clara in 1974, the 300 acre Quail Hollow Ranch has been the subject of extensive planning efforts centered around the unique opportunity it offers for the study of the natural world. The evergreen forest, dominated by coast live oak, provides a habitat for grey squirrel, ringneck snake and screech owl. The chaparral is home to the grey fox and the rattlesnake who prey on the rodents also found in the community. The pond which contains bass, sunfish and mosquito fish provides a feeding ground for birds such as the blue heron and the belted kingfisher. The land itself can be enjoyed for its scenic beauty from the wooded groves to the meadows carpeted in spring with an abundance of wildflowers. In the midst of all this beauty, man has also made a mark and some of the area's history is reflected in what remains. Homesteaders found rich soil, and, with water from wells and nearby springs, were able to grow an abundance of crops. A ready market for this produce could be found in nearby towns of the San Lorenzo Valley which grew and prospered by taking advantage of their greatest natural resource — timber. At first the trees were cut for lumber but it soon became obvious that they could create another industry in the form of tourism. From 1865 until 1938, area residents and tourists could find for sale fruits and vegetables grown at what is now Quail Hollow Ranch. A visitor to the ranch during that time, after touring the tidy gardens, orchards, barns and the two story house would have a hard time distinguishing the place from a similar family enterprise in Kansas or Iowa or New Jersey.



SUSAN LEHMANN

By the time the Lanes bought the ranch in 1938, both natives and newcomers to the West were beginning to realize that their lives were different from those of the Eastern and Midwestern relatives they left behind. Protected from the harshness of extreme weather and blessed by unbounded natural beauty, Westerners wanted to live more of their lives outdoors. They also wanted their homes to reflect this casual, year round, indoor-outdoor feeling. Larry Lane, astutely recognized this desire and through the pages of *Sunset Magazine*, provided a blueprint for creating a new western life-style. While Quail Hollow had for years been indistinguishable from transplanted family farms anywhere in the West it later became, through the combined talents of the Lane family, a model of the type of life to which many new Westerners aspired. Using the architecture of early California Mexican ranchos as a model, *Sunset Magazine* popularized a style for homes featuring a long low profile, open porches and easy access to the outdoors for relaxing and entertaining. All these features, as well as the utilization of modern interior design can be seen in the new wings and in the remodeled interior of the original house. State of the art stables, riding trails and horse training areas all surrounded by neat white fences, could easily have been the fantasy of many California's suburban dwellers of the 1950s.

Strolling through the house and grounds of Quail Hollow today, the visitor can trace the remnants of its past. It is possible to imagine the life of a turn-of-the-century farmer and his family while standing in the remnants of the orchard or looking out the windows of a small upstairs bedroom. Watching the horses in their stalls or enjoying lunch on the shaded lawns still can give the feeling of being a guest at one of the Lane's many social gatherings. Whether they came in 1860 or only last year, newcomers to California each had a personal version of the California dream. Bits and pieces of that dream are still weaving their magic at Quail Hollow.

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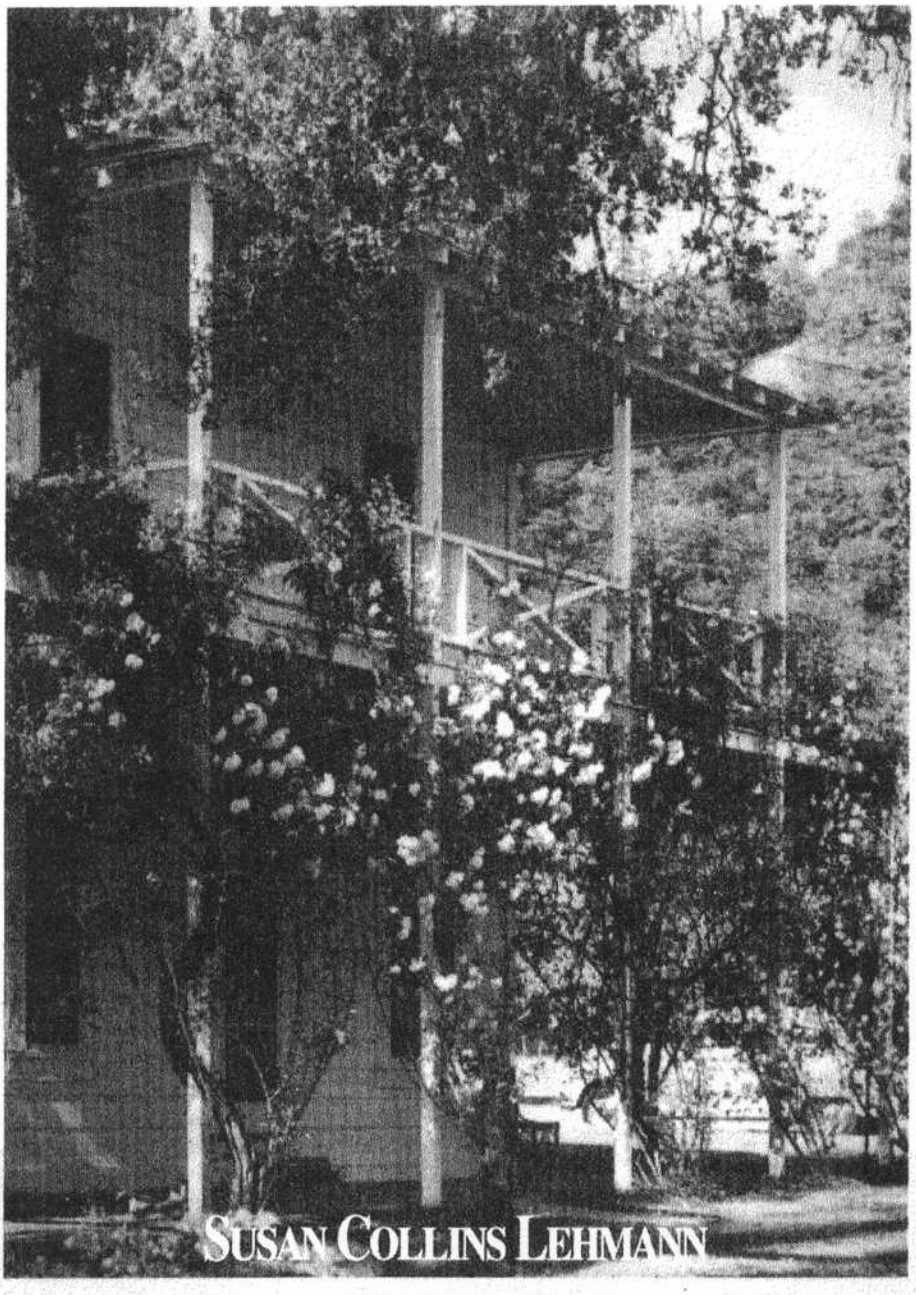
Front cover photograph: Susan Lehmann.
Back cover photograph: Courtesy of Bill Lane.

QUAIL HOLLOW RANCH

a history



SUSAN COLLINS LEHMANN

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMISSION