



Paul Azevedo

The Reactor

Sharing Oldtime Tales

You don't have to go back to the dark ages to find a Coastside that was a very different place. And that was proved to me when I looked through a 1944 phone book and discovered a different world, one I did not fully recognize though I have been around this area for over 20 years.

So I asked some questions, and thanks to Marian Thoreid and Charlie English and Tom Johnston, now I know more than I did before. As usual, in the course of answering one question they raise two more.

I'm told Montaraz Terrace is what is now Canyon Drive, in East Sharp Park. It was changed to avoid confusion with Monterey Road.

Ma and Bruno Bendorf ran a bar. The building was moved and became Winter's Tavern. The J&L Market was located where the Amused Carrot is now, and Ma and Bruno ran their place close by.

Chris Prevolos lived on Reina del Mar, not Rio Del Mar, in spite of the phonebook. Irene Rees' Tavern? That, they tell me, became the Vagabond Villa.

The Surf? That was over on Waterford, and still exists as the Surf Lounge, on Aura Vista, a few doors from the Tribune. I didn't connect a 1944 beer bar with its 1985 successor.

Aiken's Castle? Mr. Aiken was a sign painter, Mrs. Thoreid tells me, and his castle was also a speakeasy during prohibition.

Bella Vista Egg Ranch was south of what is now the Dahlberg's Mobile Home Park, (Pacific Skies Estates). They had good eggs.

Mrs. Thoreid mentioned a building on the beach, made completely of doors. How Odd!

R. Mori of Mori's Point also ran another of the ubiquitous speakeasies of the prohibition era at the Adobe. It would appear that most of our landmarks have been used for illegal purposes at one time or another.

William Brigmon of Vallemar Park? He just lived on Amapola in Vallemar, and the Park name was a variation.

The Frisco Market was the old, small Landi's on Palmetto which was still operating in the mid-60s.

Maracci's Place in Pedro Valley? That became the Wander Inn in its last incarnation, before it went down in a blaze of glory. Is the concrete slab still there?

The Reeses, predecessors of the Vagabond, also rented horses near the old Pedro Point Safeway.

Mr. Troglia, of Coastside Distributing had sold beer and his own brand of wine, Bon Gusto, bottled in the basement of the building where he permitted the local Catholics to hold Mass. My notes are a bit rough here. Was Troglia's bottling place what became Louise's Store, the familiar red landmark of Rockaway that was demolished to make way for Fassler Avenue? don't want to misquote anyone here.

The county road passed west of Sharp Park Restaurant in the early days, and wound up over the hill. This was before the road was changed to take advantage of the railroad cut below what is now Sheldance Nursery.

If there is anything more fun than researching local history, it's talking about it with people like Mrs. Thoreid and our other local experts.

I'm going to be talking about Honora Sharp to the Pacifica Historical Society come September, and I hope all the oldtimers will bring their memories to share.

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