

The Reactor

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Neighborhood history

You may be enjoying the monthly series being published by the *Tribune* featuring various Pacifica neighborhoods. The pages tell of the present-day situation in the various areas.

Perhaps you wondered how the neighborhoods of Pacifica began. Quite a few started in the early 1900s as a result of the Ocean Shore Railway. Nineteenth century farms that could have been had for a song were subdivided and sold for the phenomenal price of \$250 per lot. Many were sold but few were lived on. Brighton Beach and Salada Beach, the areas that eventually combined to become Sharp Park, had a few buildings and vast open spaces in early panoramas. Anderson's store, where the Pacifica Chamber of Commerce and Oceana Deli are located, and County Road Market stood out in the open landscape. Early farmers whose coastal properties were carved up included the Inches family, the Silicanis and Emil Rohte.

Edgemar was the first subdivision reached by the Ocean Shore trains. The first train reached Edgemar station in October 1907. There are a few homes from that era still in Edgemar. Unfortunately the architectural distinctiveness is mostly gone, and it is hard to distinguish a home built in 1907 from one built in 1947. Pacific Manor, on the south side of Monterey road, is post World War II. It was one of the earliest of postwar subdivisions.

Valleamar is one of the original subdivisions. Unlike Tobin Park, which is still a poison oak infested paper subdivision, Valleamar was improved with hundreds of trees. Descendants of the original developer have lived in it for more than 80 years.

Rockaway Beach and Pedro Point likewise date back to the early part of the century. Their distinctive landscapes have drawn residents with an individualistic turn of mind, politically active and from all parts of the political spectrum, united only in their love of their little communities. Political observers aren't surprised to find Pedro Point with an extremely high turnout at the polls, with the results completely fractured.

In the early fifties Andres Oddstad bought artichoke farms in San Pedro Valley, subdivided them and called his project Linda Mar (see this week's People Page, 1B). Purists have been saying ever since that he should have called the place Mar Linda. Fifteen years later Oddstad was dead from injuries sustained in an auto accident and his company was building Park Pacifica. They named all the streets after National Parks. Meanwhile Henry Doelger was finishing up his planned development, Fairmont. Originally it had been called Westmont.

Westview, or Pacific Highlands, has had its problems ever since it was built not long after World War II on sterile pasture, but it also has had its share of loyal residents who appreciated the fact they got the most square footage for the least dollars. It is one of the few parts of Pacifica where residents don't have to drive up a slope to leave town. A few parts of Westview are in the drainage pattern for Colma Creek, contrasting with most of Pacifica which drains west to the ocean. No matter which part of town you live in, you're in a very special part of California. I don't know about you. I feel it's a privilege to live here.