

Let's Put Up A Limestone Monument

10/13/93

In case you were asking, I plan to vote Yes on Measure A. That's the one that asks our advice. Should they be permitted to build some homes in the old quarry so they can afford to go ahead with commercial development of part of the remaining property? If he doesn't get the ok to build the housing, Mr. Orosco will probably try again elsewhere. In case you hadn't noticed, there are plenty of competitors out there, hungry enough to grab away our jobs, our commercial development, and our next year's taxable income. They just had a fair in Silicon Valley where folks from all sorts of unlikely places displayed their trousseaus in the forms of free land, low costs, low taxes, low wages, etc. Object: matrimony. Some of us have excellent ideas on how to develop the quarry. I want to build a golf course surrounding a marsh, surrounded by retail establishments, overlooked by open space. Somebody else thinks it's ridiculous to develop a shopping center in the quarry if it has its back to the ocean. He has a point. Trouble is, neither he nor I have eleven million bucks to fritter away on a hobby like the quarry. Mr. Orosco has experience building shopping centers. He appears intelligent enough, honest enough and experienced enough to carry it through, provided we voters don't insist on 5000 different ideas which will cancel each other and cancel out Mr. Orosco's as well.

As past president of the Pacifica Historical Society, I would like to propose a plaque or monument, made from the local limestone, at the entrance to the new subdivision planned for our old quarry.

As you know, that old rockpile was used as the source of whitewash in 1776. One source tells me it was used on Mission Dolores, another on Presidio construction. Regardless, our very own quarry may be California's oldest industrial site. Perhaps it is even California's oldest disturbed ecosystem. It is fitting that a place that has been disturbed habitat for 224 years should continue to generate arguments about frogs and snakes. There is hope for endangered species if such rare creatures are still viable in an area European man has continually messed around in for almost two and quarter centuries.

Someone pointed out the other day that the old quarry on U.S. 101 in Marin County looks much better since a housing development was built in it. You remember that old swaybacked quarry building if you traveled north very often. It looked like it would fall down any minute. Few knew it was so full of hardened cement no earthquake would have budged it, but it was the ugly centerpiece of an ugly area, now vastly improved by housing. I hope we do as well as Marin. Pacifica's problem is not apathy. It is just the opposite. We have many concerned citizens. Each wants the best for our city, but none can figure out what that best is. Add to that paranoia, fear and suspicion of outsiders, and we have the makings of paralysis as we plan for the future.