

Back in those golden days of yesteryear, when Sharp Park had its own post office and there were several Pacific Avenues all over what was to become Pacifica, a phone book was published that covered the Coastsides from Edgemar to Pedro Valley. My thanks to Grace McCarthy for sharing a copy.

To get to the north Coastsides from San Francisco, you drove west on Alemany Blvd. in Daly City, (now John Daly Blvd.) until you got to Thornton Beach, then south past Mussel Rock. This area took a serious hit from the 1957 quake.

Eventually the road was closed.

The year was 1955. The Hernandez family lived at 1307 Hermosa Ave., Linda Mar. Their phone was ELMwood 9-1234. You may remember Keith Hernandez. He played his Little League baseball in Pacifica, big league baseball later. Keith grew up, played baseball superlatively, eventually retired and wrote a book. He is still in the process of coming to terms with the pressures laid on him by his father. Quite a few folks in that book still live in the same homes. Often they'd bought their homes only months before that 1955 phone book came out. A surprising number still have the same phone numbers. I assume most of the folks listed were at least 21. Add 39 to 21, and it means the youngest are into their early sixties. I would love to mention their names and compliment them on their stability. They have formed the backbone of this community as it grew and shaped itself. It is not for nothing, however, that so many folks these days have unlisted phones, or have de-listed their street addresses. If I mentioned names and addresses, some cemetery plot salesman would be on the phone pitching for business.

Reading a phone book for pleasure sounds odd, but reading a 1955 phone book in 1994 is fun. Names pop out that bring back whole memories. In 1955 this was a community of young growing families. A survey would have found a majority ex-San Franciscans. Boys grew up, were drafted or enlisted, mustered out, got married. The young couples looked around for housing and found San Francisco beyond their means. They heard about a new subdivision in Westview or Pedro Valley or Pacific Manor. The houses were about \$10,000. A little high, but the GI bill would help.

The greatest barrier was psychological. San Franciscans had a hard time getting used to the thought of living in the boondocks of San Mateo county. "My God, that place is a couple of miles south of Sharp's Park, Mary." But the opportunity of a new home, three bedrooms where the kids could grow up with a lot of other kids in a nice neighborhood that was also affordable brought the buyers.

The first euphoria gave way to the realities of living in unincorporated territory controlled from Redwood City. The new settlers soon decided they needed a city of their own. The old timers disagreed. They liked the way it was, without city conveniences but also without city controls. The newcomers outvoted them. Westview, Pacific Manor, and Linda Mar provided the margin needed to make a city out of a string of coastal hamlets.