

Anderson's Store -- A Place To Remember

Most buildings are just buildings. They're a place to get out of the rain and keep warm. They have rooms, and furniture, and bathrooms. They are wired for electricity and plumbing.

A few buildings are part of the history of their community. Such a building is the one most people think of as Anderson's store.

It's been called other things: Salada Mercantile, Anderson's liquors. These days it's called Chez D Cafe, a pun that goes over some people's heads until they see it both written and pronounced. At various times you could get groceries, and then liquors at this building. Today you can get fancy coffees and the goodies that go with them.

It's had different addresses. First it was located in Salada Beach. That changed to Sharp Park in the thirties, then to Pacifica in the fifties.

Much of its long and eventful life since it started out in 1906 or thereabouts it was run by Math Anderson, the man who built it. He also helped build the McCloskey Castle, high on the hill above his store, as well as County Road Market and the Little Brown Church. Anderson died in 1964, but his daughter and son in law continued to operate the family business until 1980, when they passed it to Math and Bertha Anderson's grandchildren. Even after Anderson's Liquors closed in 1989, the building has stayed in the family. For a short stint the upstairs apartment was the Chamber of Commerce. Downstairs they sold pizza, until Deidre and Eric Edstrom discovered its charming possibilities and created Chez D.

They let in the light, added to the charm, and now more folks than ever are dropping in to share and enjoy.

Bertha Anderson, who arrived about 1908 and stayed the rest of her long life, could recall the day when there were only three cars in town, if you counted the one on Mori's Point.

It was a simpler time. You went to church at the Salada Community Church. (Now we call it the Little Brown Church, though it serves as Pacifica's police station). You bought your groceries from Andersons or County Road Market. You were educated at San Pedro School, which would later be given by early Realtor Ray Higgins to the newly incorporated City of Pacifica as his way of saying welcome to the Coastside.

If you were Paul McCloskey Sr. (They didn't call him Senior until much later) you rode the Ocean Shore Railroad to San Francisco so you could attend Lowell High School. Electricity came to the church the same year the Ocean Shore Railroad closed down, in 1920.

By the time the lawsuits had been settled and it had been agreed that the Sharp ranch would become a recreational property called Sharp Park, to be owned by the City and County of San Francisco, it was 1917, and Anderson's Store had been in business for 11 years. By the time San Francisco decided to build a golf course it was 1929, and Anderson's was an institution, having survived almost a quarter of a century.

f The gold course opened in 1932, and immediately became the biggest thing in the whole area. The struggling subdivisions called Brighton Beach and Salada Beach were constantly getting their mail confused with another little town called Salida. They solved that with a salute to the golf course, and the town

became Sharp Park. Anderson's continued, as it would when the few local phones were served by the exchange at, where else, Anderson's.

The Anderson's daughter Lorraine grew up, married George Coen, and continued to work at the family business.

Somewhere along the way, the railroad tracks were torn up, neighbor commercial enterprises came and went, Highway One became a freeway and Oceana Blvd. was put in, and Anderson's became a corner store. The Salada railroad station was torn down. A short distance south a shopping center was built, and all around Anderson's, the sleepy village of Sharp Park became the busy city of Pacifica.

The country became the city. A few neighbors became thousands. A few telephones became many thousands. The Andersons, and then their daughter, grew old and died. But the old store, with a new coat of paint, usually red, and a new roof from time to time, is still there, serving new generations in new ways, but always remembering its roots. It's 90 years old and going strong.