

Historical Ramblings

Lompoc Landmarks

Lompoc's City Council recently approved the designation of an historic district, with boundaries to be determined at a later date. This district will undoubtedly include some of Lompoc's unique historic structures in the downtown and south side of the City. The establishment of such a district brought to mind the efforts of the now defunct City Advisory Landmark Committee, which worked diligently from 1969 until the early 1990's to officially bestow landmark status on some of Lompoc's important historic buildings.

The committee actively solicited nominees for landmark status. This task was difficult, as reluctant property owners mistakenly assumed that free use of their properties would be curtailed. During the application process, the owner could select the restrictions to be placed upon their properties, ranging from protection from demolition to approval over new construction in the immediate area of the proposed landmark. Despite the difficulty in garnering nominations, ten buildings eventually gained official landmark status.

Landmark number one, Lompoc's Carnegie Library building, at 200 S. H Street, was listed in 1969. Constructed in 1911 with the aid of a \$10,000 grant from Andrew Carnegie, the structure served as the Lompoc Library until 1969, at which time it became the Lompoc Museum. The Carnegie building is also on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Spanne Chalkrock Building, located at 111 S. I Street, became landmark number two in 1981. This unique building is only one of two Lompoc buildings constructed entirely of diatomaceous earth blocks, mined from the "white hills" south of Lompoc. Originally built for an agricultural implement business, it also housed a mortuary, frozen food locker, grocery store and a print shop. It currently is the home of the Lompoc Valley Chamber of Commerce.

In 1972, Artesia School became joint City-County landmark number three. Although the City had no landmark number three at the time, it was numbered thusly to coincide with the County's landmark numbering system. Artesia was built in 1876 and served as Lompoc's first country school. Originally located on Artesia and Central Avenues, it was in use until the school district unified in the 1960's. The school was moved into town in 1972 to the 100 block of W. Chestnut Avenue and renovated by the school district. Through the cooperative efforts of the Lompoc Valley Historical Society and Lompoc Museum, the school house has been fully furnished and is open to the public on the fourth Sunday of the month from 2 to 4 p.m.

Landmark number four, listed in 1981, is the Fabing-McKay-Spanne House, Lompoc's first two story wooden residence, which was built in 1875. Located at 207 N. L Street, it is currently maintained as an historical house museum by the Lompoc Valley Historical

Society. It may be visited on Monday and Thursdays from 9-11 a.m. and the fourth Sunday of the month from 1-4 p.m.

In 1983, the IOOF Building, at the southwest corner of Ocean Avenue and H Street, was designated landmark number five. It was constructed in 1905 by the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, who still own and operate the building. Three of the four walls are comprised of diatomaceous earth block. The fourth wall, shared with the Rudolph Building is red brick, allegedly manufactured at a local brickyard.

The Henning-Skaarup-Belluz House, at 1113 N. A Street became City landmark number six in 1985. Lompoc's only remaining large, ornate Victorian home was built in 1890 by John Sanor Henning.

Landmark number seven is the McCabe-Marks House at 203 N. N Street. Constructed in 1908 by Dwight McCabe, the home is a typical example of Craftsman style architecture. In 1983, the home was selected by the Lompoc Valley Board of Realtors as a representative house to commemorate the National Association of Realtors', and the home's, 75th anniversary. The home was listed as landmark number seven in 1985. It is now the site of the Marks House homeless shelter.

The Huyck-Grossini-Arnold home at 120 W. Cypress Avenue became landmark number eight in 1988. The home was built at Renwick and Ocean Avenues in 1890. In 1911, a team of 30 horses moved the huge house into town over a period of one week. It has been completely restored by Chuck and Barbara Arnold, who now operate it as the 1890 House Bed and Breakfast.

Landmark number nine, listed in 1989, is the Douglass-Willis home at 105 W. Olive Avenue. The home was constructed in 1908 with lumber salvaged from the 1907 wreck of the lumber schooner "Sybil Marston," which went aground one mile south of Surf. The residence is a typical California Bungalow. It was completely renovated by Don Willis.

The final landmark, number ten, is the Veteran's Memorial Building, at 100 E. Locust Avenue. The Spanish revival structure was built in 1936. It became a landmark in 1989.

There are, of course, many more structures worthy of landmark designation. With the establishment of the long overdue historic district, these structures will certainly enjoy their long awaited celebrity as official landmarks.