



93 W. Mira Monte Ocean View House 1882

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Photo: John Johnson

The "Ocean View House" was built by our founding father Mr. N.C. Carter in 1882. It was one of the first five or six homes on Carter's tract. Mr. Carter built the two-story farm-style home shortly after moving to California from Lowell, Massachusetts. The home was used for tourists as a boarding house after he built and moved into his home, Carterhia, in 1883. This "Ocean View House" was the first hotel in Sierra Madre and many people came from the east coast for the good weather and to buy real estate from the developer Mr. Carter.

Mr. Chauncey Bowman Relyea and his family lived for a while in the "Ocean View House" and it was he who named it because one could see the ocean from the front porch and it was possible to see the ships come into the San Pedro Harbor without glasses. It appears that Mr. C.B. Relyea and Mr. N.C. Carter knew each other, as they both came from Lowell, Massachusetts. In the 1886 voter register Mr. Relyea was listed as a rancher, but in 1900 he had moved to Santa Monica.

There have been numerous owners of the "Ocean View House" and many changes over the 130 years. In the 1960s the Sidle family lived there and "modernized" it by lowering the ceilings, putting paneling over the river rock fireplace, taking out the wood sash windows and installing metal ones, Formica in the kitchen and covering up the transom windows. The original home had no attached kitchen or bathroom as was customary for the time, and the kitchen was a shed built outside of the home because of potential fires. Sometime in the first decade a kitchen was added, made from the first school house which was moved from Kersting Court to 93 W. Mira Monte ("adapted reuse of the day").

In 1986 the house stood 40 feet to the west of where it is now and had two rental homes at the rear. The current owners bought the property after the lot was split and the house had been moved onto a new foundation. They searched for but could not find any photographs of the original House with sufficient detail to permit a true restoration, but were able to rebuild it with fidelity after determining the locations of the doors, transom windows and other structural details.

They were married in the "Ocean View House" in 1987, raised their five children, celebrated many family holidays and birthdays there, and plan to continue enjoying the old house and its happy memories for years to come.