

STORIES FROM THE PAST

How Angela Canepa Spent Her Husband's Gold

by History Editor Skip Sommer

Petalumas Victorian “Herold Building”, on the corner of Kentucky and Washington Street was built in 1899 by Angela Canepa, whose husband had passed away, just six months before. Mrs. Canepa lived only a few doors up the hill, at 223 Kentucky Street, and she had a lot of bucks in gold from her husband, Giovanni's adventures in the Sierras.

The Canepa home (now a fourplex) had been constructed in the Italianate style, featuring large overhanging eaves with brackets, fish scale shingles and bay windows. Angela was ‘set’ on carrying that

same influence into her own ventures, as well. The sizeable fortune, founded in the gold mines by Giovanni Canepa, would be invested in this growing town of Petaluma, California.

The first building she constructed, on the corner of Kentucky and Washington, is Italianate-Victorian in style, with white marble steps adorning the entrance. To top it off, she wanted a beautiful “witch's cap” roof with a flag pole at its peak. Angela's building is still one of Petaluma's most impressive commercial structures.

It didn't escape Angela Canepa that, investing in a commercial building, which

was located only a block from home, she would be able to monitor the tenants, without having to haul out her buggy and harness her horse. Angela had been left a wealthy widow and she was determined to become even wealthier. She carefully used her inherited money to eventually own many houses and commercial buildings in Petaluma.

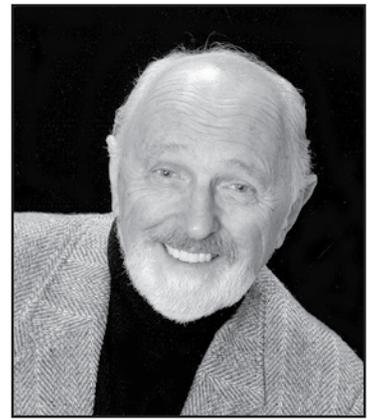
In 1907, The Young-Herold Drug Company moved to the location. At that time, this retail frontage was one of the hottest in town, and the Young-Herold druggists wanted the Petaluma Valley to know they “meant business”. They were the first to have a telephone in town (phone dial #1), which they felt would make them “better able to serve the pharmaceutical needs of the community”. However, it has occurred (to this writer), that, if you are the only telephone in town, who is going to call you? I assume, it took a while for this new fangled telephone-thing to catch on.

The druggists featured “Herold's Compound”, a “new innovatpoion to make sore feet feel glad”. (Would that be where the term “happy feet” came from?? Harry Herold went the extra-advertising-mile by printing that phrase on free dance cards, which were distributed in the local dance hall. They wanted the ranch ladies to be sure to know where they could find “The magic wand of foot comfort”.

A fascinating item, to this writer, about this “foot care” subject is that, the current tenant, occupying this building now, (at 161 Kentucky), is Jessie Jangs Pampered Feet Massage. Coincidence?

My own favorite ad, from

Historian Skip Sommer has restored many historic properties in Marin and Sonoma Counties including The Great Petaluma Mill, The Riverhouse Restaurant and Larkspur's famed Lark Creek Inn. Skip is an honorary member of Heritage Homes of Petaluma and has been the History Editor of The Petaluma Post for 20 years. He is a Realtor with CPS/Golden Land Realty in Petaluma. E-mail Skip at skip-sommer@hotmail.com



the Herold Drug Company, was for “Knoxit Globules”. It was said, they... “cure inflammation of the nose, throat and urinary organs as well as coughs, colds, headache and malaria, with no bad effects”. Hotcha!! But, one wonders what the Food and Drug Administration would make of all that. I'm positive, that President Theodore Roosevelt, who was constructing The Panama Canal at that same time, would have given anything to find a true malaria cure.

Harry Herold became the sole owner of the drug company and building in 1923 and continued the store, until his death in 1932. His principal competitors were The Tuttle Drug Company, est. 1880 at 132 Keller St., (now occupied by Pazzo Restaurant), O'Neills Drugs, est. 1910 at #7 and #9 Petaluma Blvd. North, (which is now occupied by Nicoles Boutique and Volcano Smoke Shop), and The Gossage Drug Company,

est. 1929 by William Naye and Paul Elmore. Sadly, all four of these family operated pharmacies are gone today, replaced by large national drugchains.

Harry Herold, Harry heriold, as well as Angela Canepa, had flourished and Herold flourished, and erold, also built himself a fine home on Petalumas C Street, to show off his wealth. The beautiful commercial building on Kentucky Street, still carries Herolds name, if not his ad, that was painted boldly upon the bricks facing Washington Street: (“Herold Drug Company, dispensible druggists”). When you wander over that way, don't bother asking for “Knoxit “ there, It was long ago banned by the government..



Angela Canepa's home today (photo by Skip Sommer)



Herold Building today (photo by Skip Sommer)



Herold Building, circa 1909.