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Santa Venetia's Past

By Scott Fletcher

Marin History Museum Volunteer

This early 1950's era photograph shows Clark Reagan's Texaco Service Station at 296 N. San Pedro Rd. in Santa Venetia. The price of gas at the time was about 18 cents/gallon and, as the sign reads, you could enjoy a nice cold Royal Crown Cola while filling up. A few years earlier, in the late 1940's, Reagan was listed as owner of a Mobil Gas station at the same location. Though much of the surrounding area has changed dramatically, some things remain constant. At the same address today is the C&C Automotive Repair Shop. The gas station was one of the early Santa Venetia businesses along with Tweedies General Store right next door at 290 N. San Pedro Rd.

John & Ruth Tweedie ran the store for over 20 years and many long-time residents fondly remember the couple and their store. The couple had moved from Marion County in Oregon after WWII with their youngest son, Johnnie. Along with the service station and garage, the general store was a hub for the local community. The Marin County Library bookmobile stopped outside Tweedies, as did the local school bus, and there was a public phone inside the store. The Tweedies were very civic minded, sponsoring food drives for local charities and for "Korean orphans" during the Korean 'conflict'. They also offered their store as the location for local residents to take advantage of "X-Ray Day" sponsored by the Santa Venetia Improvement Club.

As the Santa Venetia area evolved from a sleepy, semi-rural area to a thriving, bustling bedroom community, Tweedie's General Store was an important and beloved community resource for residents of all ages. One local recalled that, "You could buy anything from bread, milk, salami sandwiches (25 cents), a kerosene lantern, a handful of nails, gold pans and ice cold Delaware Punch, mmmm! What a place when you were young." The Tweedies sold the store in 1968 to make way for the 7-Eleven that now sits on the property. Their December closing-sale advertisement

lists for sale, “1000 Household Items, Toiletries, Gold Pans, Antiques, Everything for the Kitchen and Garden, Tools, and Plumbing and Electrical Equipment along with FREE Christmas Cheer on Sat. Dec. 14th”; whatever that may be. No wonder they were fondly remembered!

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