

IF WALLS COULD TALK



Casa Mare as it appeared in 1980. Photo by Debbie Ortiz, Director of Communications San Jacinto Girl Scout Council

By Dorothy A. Boyle

If walls could talk, there would be a lot more known about the history and use of the "Big House" once standing on the San Jacinto Girl Scouts' sailing campgrounds — Casa Mare — just north of Seascape One on the bayside of Todville Road.

Built in 1915 by Mr. William Burnet Scott, who was then president (as well as founder) of the Southern Pacific Railroad, the house was an example of Mission architecture. He built the home by the water as a year-round family dwelling because he felt the bay breezes helped his hay fever. The original name of the property was Deepdene. Mr. and Mrs. Scott,

their seven children, Miss Margaret Bruce, (Mrs. Scott's sister) and seven servants moved to the completed home the week of the 1915 hurricane.

The house was built to be hurricane-proof, and withstood many storms as well as the hurricanes of 1941 and 1961. However, it could not stand the rising costs of renovation and reconstruction, and finally was scheduled to be torn down in early fall of this year. The house had a basement and a first floor consisting of kitchen, pantry, living room with fireplace, and dining room. There were six bedrooms on the second floor. The third floor (also with a fireplace) was used by the original Scott fam-

ily as a ballroom and in later years as a gameroom.

If only those 10-inch concrete walls could have told some of their stories before removal, perhaps it would have put an end to the rumor of someone jumping from the third floor outside balcony. Local residents claim this and other stories about the inhabitants of the mansion are really tales invented by older Girl Scouts as bedtime ghost stories.

The San Jacinto Girl Scout Council bought the Scott mansion along with 47 acres of wooded bayfront property in March 1958. They are ensuring that special items from the "Big House" are to be saved in