



501 Washington Street

Joseph Weber House
& Mehr Farm House

Built by Joseph Weber in the late 1840s, according to Pioneer Castroville Homes booklet published in 1992 by the Castro Garden Club.

Deed search shows Henry Castro granted property in Castroville to Joseph Weber in 1852.

Medina CAD info:

<https://esearch.medinacad.org/Property/View/13985?year=2023&ownerId=134133>

THE JOSEPH WEBER HOME

Owners: The Leonard Odom Family

The Joseph Weber family were a part of the original colonists, lured to Texas by Henri Castro. There was a total of five family members and they came via the ship *Ocean*. Records show that Mr. Weber purchased this property from Mr. Castro in 1847. He built this house in the later 1840s. Being European and thrifty, he wasted nothing. He built his home on the river near the narrow street. This was done to utilize the balance of the lot for a garden, other structures and for animals. Mr. Weber built the Carle House on Houston Square in 1865; the Alsatian Restaurant part of the building looks very similar to the Weber house. He later helped build the St. Louis Catholic Church. He was on high scaffolding, fell, and as a result lost his life.

The Weber house was originally a two-room structure with a "salt box" shed or porch across the back protecting the residence from the extreme heat. Later it was closed in becoming a kitchen with an additional fireplace added. Also part of the porch eventually became an indoor bathroom. Of interest are the door openings. They all are different, and range from approximately 5'4" to maybe 6' at the front entrance. This indicates the height of our hardy and tenacious settlers.

When electricity was added (account number for this house was #75), the wires were attached to the rock walls, and plastered in place. The outlets still protrude. Only in the 1980s did the kitchen receive a modern rock floor, previously having only a dirt one.

One of Mrs. Odom's favorite treasures is housed in "The Front House." It is a wardrobe previously owned by the Gene Suehs Family. This piece was purchased by his grandfather at the LaCoste Mercantile for a cost of \$12.00 about the turn of the century.

Faustina Christilles Sharp's great grandmother, Katherine Marty, lived in this house when Faustina was a child, and she remembers visiting her many times. Her great grandmother wore wooden shoes and always seemed to be knitting socks. Mrs. Sharp has a pair of her shoes and they are a special reminder of days gone by and early Castroville.

When the city of Castroville was established and surveyed, the streets were named but not marked. In 1973 the houses were finally numbered, and street signs installed. Mrs. Odom notes that the addresses meant nothing to local residents; they would ask who previously owned your home and who your neighbors were. She would report that Carol Hardy had previously owned the home and she should be thanked for the beautiful restoration.

Mrs. Odom also noted that when they moved here in 1989, there was no city delivery of local mail. Everyone had to go to the old post office, which was located on London Street. There they could visit with other townsfolk, and take care of any necessary postal business.

The Mehr Farm House

Today pecan trees canopy The Mehr Farm House, behind the Weber House. It is referred to as "The Back House." It was built in the 1870s, originally being a two-room structure with a porch. It was located on the Mehr property in the Quihi area and later moved to this site in the early 1980s. At that time, two baths and a utility room were added.

The Joseph Mehr family had five daughters. And, during the summer months, all of the girls slept on the front porch. Mrs. Irene Jungman (one of the daughters) remembers how special Christmas Eve was in this house. Her parents would pull the curtains, plug the key holes, and send them outside while they decorated the tree.

The Joseph Weber Home has the PCH Marker and the Mehr Farm House has an SCH Marker.