

THE VISION

By the end of the 1960s housing prices in Mill Valley had skyrocketed, creating fear that retirees would soon be priced out of comfortable living circumstances.

In 1966 the church made a bold decision to develop an affordable housing retirement center in Mill Valley and in 1970 the congregation approved the project proposal. Few, if any, were aware of the problems and risks involved in this venture! It would require the church to incur significant costs along with the recognition that they would be reimbursed only if all federal requirements were satisfied.

THE EARLY WORK

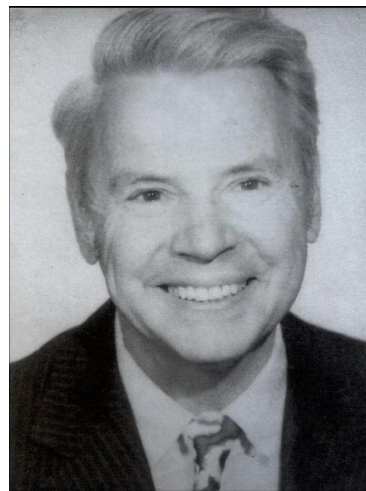
Joe Stewart was appointed to chair a retirement housing committee which, at the outset, included himself, Paul Hewitt and Glenn Peterson. Over the next three years, prior to the opening of The Redwoods in 1972, the committee was expanded. Roy Abbott, a church member and the Conference staff member responsible for senior housing, played a key role in cutting through

government red tape and combatting the inertia inherent in the federal bureaucracy. Government red tape was only one of a series of formidable barriers to be overcome before residents could move into The Redwoods.

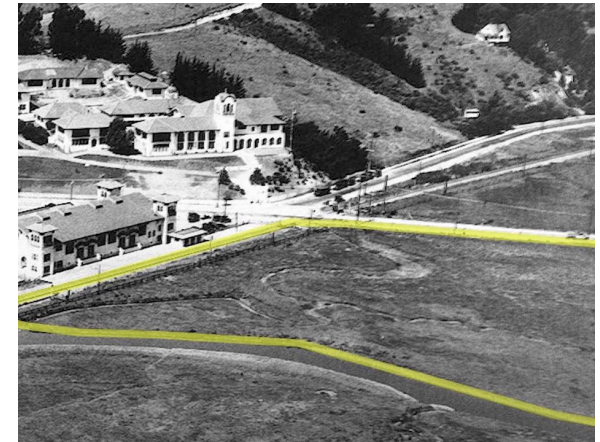
SECURING THE LAND

At the outset, funds needed to be found to secure the land on which to build The Redwoods retirement home as the church did not have the needed financial resources.

Joe and Helen Stewart put up \$10,000, virtually the family's life savings, in order to secure an available 10 acre marshland plot on Camino Real in Mill Valley.



Joe Stewart (photo the Redwoods.org)



The marshland building area outlined in yellow (photo The Redwoods.org)

COMPLETING THE BUILDING

As completion of the building approached, the committee was now faced with the cost of furnishing the facility. Once again, Joe and Helen Stewart dipped into family savings along with others who also dipped into their resources to insure The Redwoods could open as planned.

After a great deal of hard work and financial risk, the dream came to fruition and in December of 1972, The Redwoods was formally dedicated.

THE OPENING

From Bill Eichorn, then the minister of the Community Church of Mill Valley:

"When we dedicated The Redwoods in December 1972, we had nine residents, the dining room was full of church people, community people, and children. It was near Christmas and we lit a candle. The Conference Minister came and talked about how the candle of Advent and Christmas symbolized the light of the church's vision and the spirit of this community to build this kind of a project."

Likewise, when longtime church member Dan Bikle was looking for a church in 1974, he was very impressed by the church:

"I wanted a church that would do a lot in the community. I wanted a church that had 'impossible' visions and was bringing them into being."

The "impossible" vision of a low and middle income retirement home in Mill Valley had become a reality.

EXPANDING THE REDWOODS

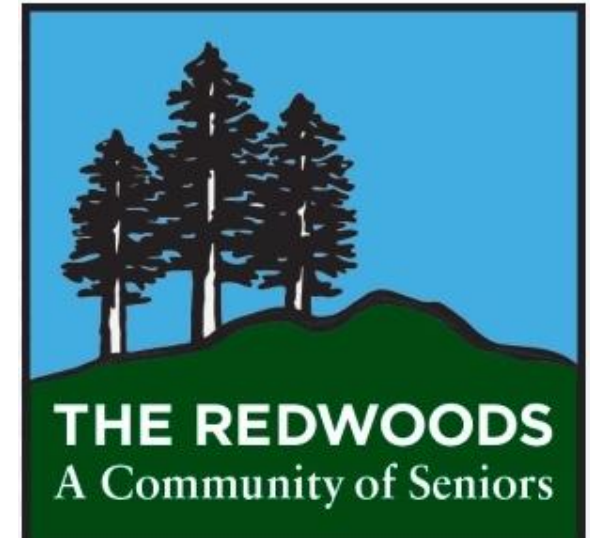
The second phase, with 150 more apartments, the auditorium, and arts and crafts rooms, was completed in 1974 with grant money. The Redwoods also received the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's approval to subsidize the rent for up to 60 low-income residents.

In the 1980s a "New Horizons" campaign provided capital for renovations to enhance the library, kitchen, dining room, volunteer store, and new community room for expanded activities. Residential Apartments were created for Assisted Living, and a Licensed Skilled Nursing Health Care Center was also started.

In the 1990's the Community Church-based Board of Directors transitioned into a Community Board. Presently CCMV still retains two members on the board and it sponsors a Thursday afternoon meeting for the spiritually curious.

Contact The Redwoods, at (415) 383-2741 or learn more at <https://www.theredwoods.org>

THE REDWOODS



**Envisioned
and created by the
Community Church
of Mill Valley in 1972**

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