

Ysleta's Valley Inn Doomed: Progress Takes Over

By NANCY HAMILTON

Longtime area residents soon will say goodbye to a familiar sight, the Valley Inn at Alameda Avenue and Harris Street in Ysleta.

The large old building, whose actual age is not known, but is well over 100 years, has been duly an inn for stagecoach and train passengers. More recently it was a residence with apartments.

REMOVAL of the inn will clear the way for expansion of the shopping center complex built on the rest of the block in 1961 and 1962. Edward Powell of the PAN Big & Market, one of the shopping center stores, bought the historic property in 1967. Among buildings of historic interest there was Howard's Drug Store, an Ysleta landmark for 38 years.

Last residents of the Valley Inn were Mr. and Mrs. Frank Bailey. Mrs. Bailey died in July, 1971, and her husband last May. They owned the property 41 years, having moved there in 1930 when their four children were still at home. In later years they divided the large building into several apartments adjacent to their own living quarters.

THEIR SON, Bob Bailey, former sheriff of El Paso County, recalls that the building was said to have been built originally by the Roman Catholic Church for use as a convent. The Ysleta Mission is a block away.

In the 1850s, he said, the building was sold by the church to Casper Gier, a prominent man in the community. He used it as an inn on the stagecoach route. The San Antonio stage had begun operating monthly in 1833 and the Butterfield Stage from San Francisco to St. Louis began in 1838. Before 1891 Ysleta had always been one of the major communities in the county.

ACCORDING to Bailey's son, the property was sold to a man named Gibbs. By then the railroad had come to the Ysleta depot, having been built in 1882. Gibbs would send a cart to the depot a few blocks away, pick up train passengers and bring them to the inn for meals.

For many years the 13-room building operated as a hotel and eating place of enduring fame in the valley. Mrs. Freeman Brooks, mother of Gibbs' daughter, who later married the Ysleta Times' editor, the late Paul Thomas, operated the inn during the years after Gibbs' death. Bailey said with the advent of the automobile, El Pasoites would make reservations for Sunday dinner at the inn and go for an outing in the valley.

LIKE OTHER buildings of the period in the Valley, the inn has adobe walls 1 1/2 feet thick. Bailey believes the original floors were dirt, but hardwood floors were laid in some rooms and he recalls some pine floors were laid when the parents owned the place. The inside is lower than the outside but never flooded in heavy rains, he added.

The high ceilings were lowered by the Baileys with modern materials, but the original roof, still intact, is of concrete joists or vigas with overhead pipes and wires running across the top, reads (and in the opposite direction, said a look of dirt on top. The huge central room of the building had skylights when his parents bought the place, Bailey said, but they covered it over. It originally was a patio with all rooms opening onto it.

EACH ROOM of the building had a fireplace but his father covered over several of them, Bailey said. They were built for days when a small fire could take the chill off a room in winter. The thick walls and ceiling helped keep the building temperature acceptable in all seasons.

Bailey said two children were buried on the west side of the house in an area that was still fenced off in the early 1930s. The story was that they were a brother and sister traveling west before the days of the railroad. They became ill and died. There was no Protestant cemetery in Ysleta so they were buried next to the inn.

THE VALLEY INN in the last few years has been divided into two parts with red brick along the roof and roof tiles covering the windows and roof. The woodwork is painted dark green. The doorposts and various other features are an antique collector's dream. It is surrounded by 30 elm trees.

When the senior Baileys died the property was passed to their children, Bob and Vernon Bailey and Mrs. Evelyn Ruth of El Paso and Thurman Bailey of Farmington, N.M. They also owned the property, which has already developed the rest of the block for the shopping center.

MRS. BETTIE HORN, whose late husband Richard was the first mayor of Ysleta, said the grocery will celebrate its 25th anniversary next year. The market was opened in 1948 and relocated several times before opening at its present location in May 1971.

The entire block once belonged to Frank B. Howard who established his drug store there in 1917. He had been the first electric user in the city when the first electric interurban which ran El Paso to Ysleta starting in 1912. Buses replaced the electric Co.-owned line in 1932.

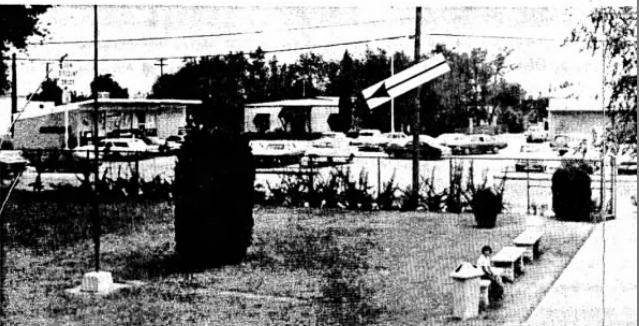
HOWARD OPENED his store with a partner, Dr. E. S. White, at the end of the interurban line, continuing to be a neighborhood for several years until the store was firmly established. The building had been a dance hall before it was a drug store. Alfred Guffey bought the store in 1937 and operated it many years before his death. The Baileys earlier had bought the Valley Inn from Howard.

holding on the block from buildings on the block from Ralph Seaman, the Guffey estate and T. B. Casner. Partners of the Valley Inn complete the conversion of the block.

sell them of the battered, dirty cable of New York City, in which drivers are in such constant danger of assault and robbery that they are protected from their passengers by heavy, plastic shields. In the center of which are little slinged receptacles through which the fare is paid and the change returned.

In Japan, Japanese-style restaurants serve Japanese food. Western-style restaurants serve Western food—and never the two shall meet, except for the insipid piece of Cheddar cheese that sometimes turns up in a tray of delicacies in a Japanese inn, along with bits of fish, rice, and fern shoots.

The names of Japanese restaurants are written in ideographs or in "katakana," the current phonetic syllabary. The names of Japanese restaurants, adorns with pure glass and chromium, are themselves Western, like "Mitsue Cafe," "London Grill" or "Maui-lan," and written both in ideographs and in "katakana" are from, and in ideographs.



HISTORIC YSLETA BLOCK—This business block in the heart of Ysleta, facing on Alameda Avenue and bounded at left of the bus Pharmacy by Harris Street, will become totally commercial with the razing soon of the historic Valley Inn, indicated by arrow, visible at left center. Trees surround the building which served as a stopping place for stagecoach riders, a popular dining place for early train passengers through the valley, and in recent years as an apartment complex. The property will be used by Edward Powell of the PAN Big & Market, one of the shopping center stores, which he bought in 1967 for its present use. At right is the late Richard Horn started in several times before opening in this block.



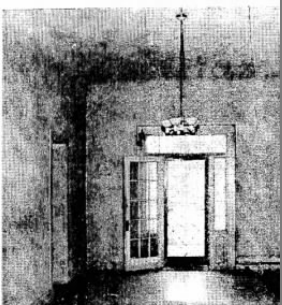
AGE A MYSTERY—The Valley Inn, Ysleta landmark, doesn't look its age which is well over 100 years but how many more, on one answer exactly. The exterior is white stucco with brick around the lower part of the building. Windows are on the overhang above the windows and front door. The roof is made in the Spanish colonial style with cast-iron beams, white stucco and a red tile roof with a fast thickness of dirt.



MAIN ENTRANCE—The main entrance of the room. Built well over 100 Valley Inn, Ysleta landmark, opens into this arranged with a central large room which leads to the largest central other rooms again.



CORNER FIREPLACE—Each of the five rooms down the sides of the Valley Inn patio and the central rooms at the front and back had a fireplace similar to this. Bob Bailey recalls that his father, the late Frank Bailey, who bought the property in 1932, covered over several of the original fireplaces. Thickness of the walls may be seen in the doorway. The adobe building has outside walls about 1 1/2 feet thick and ceilings of cast-iron beams.



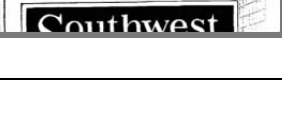
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The Hayakawa Column

By S.I. HAYAKAWA

Present column from YAMANASHI CITY, Japan

—People keep asking me if notice many changes in Japan since I was here last—which was only two years ago. The answer I give is a great "Yes, please everybody. All your facts are air-conditioned now."

"Two years ago you could get an air-conditioned car on special order, but I do not recall being able to get one simply by calling a cab on the street. But this year every taxi we have taken, whether in Tokyo or in provincial cities like Fukuoka, or even in a small town like Seto, was a new or almost new car, and invariably air-conditioned.

AS I SAID, my Japanese friends were pleased that I had noticed. "But surely," they said, "air-conditioned

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dark, Dutch and Norwegian lozenges. Among the drinks offered were Coca Cola, Pepsi Cola, 7-Up, iced tea and coffee and Bireley's orange.

IN SHORT, along with prosperity and a rising standard of living, there is a host of increased interest in foreign-style co-ownership. There are McDonald's hamburgers in "Tokyo. If Col. Sanders hasn't yet invaded Japan with his Kentucky fried chicken, he should do so at once. Also wanted are chains of smart-piercing and coffee shops featuring rich American ice cream. (The Japanese kind leaves something to be desired.)

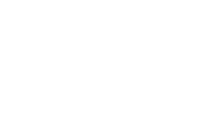
Joseph Magala's, the woman's car outfit, is now opening 11 stores in the Tokyo area. They should do well.

BUT THE BIGGEST success among American imports is bowling. Even here in Yamanashi City (pop. 20,000) there are three bowling establishments. You see them every-

where, Dutch and Norwegian lozenges. Among the drinks offered were Coca Cola, Pepsi Cola, 7-Up, iced tea and coffee and Bireley's orange.

CENTER OF INN—This large room at the center of the Valley Inn building was the dining room when it was a famous eating place years ago. During the 40 years that the late Mr. and Mrs. Frank Bailey lived there, he displayed his well known collection of guns in this room. It originally was a patio with skylights which the Baileys covered over when they moved there in 1932.

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