



Economic Development of the City of Santa Cruz, 1850-1950

By Susan Lehmann

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OVERVIEW

Years before the gold rush of 1849 brought about the transformation of California, several American adventurers had recognized the potential for development of Santa Cruz County's abundant natural resources. Known to the Mexican authorities as "foreigners," these men established the first industries in what was to become Santa Cruz County.

With the coming of statehood for California in 1850, more Americans moved to the County, buying up Mexican land grants and establishing industrial plants at a number of locations. By 1879, Santa Cruz County had developed into a notable manufacturing area. There were five shipping points within the county limits, mills turned out 36 million board feet of lumber a year; five live kilns, employing over two hundred men, produced the highest quality lime for mortar in the state. There were four flour mills, a sugar manufacturing plant, a chair factory, a glue factory and several tanneries. The largest and most important of the County's manufacturing facilities was the California Powder Works located on the San Lorenzo River in what is now Paradise Park. The Powder Works was started in 1861 to provide blasting powder to the mining industry and was a major source of employment during its years of operation.

Within twenty years, however, the seemingly unlimited supply of timber was seriously depleted and, as a result, continued growth of Santa Cruz County as a prosperous manufacturing area did not continue much past the turn of the century. All of the area industries were dependent of local natural resources including redwood trees for lumber and for use as fuel for the lime kilns, and oaks for the tanneries. As supplies were depleted, an effort was made to import the basic materials by rail and on ships. This, however, proved economically unfeasible. With the exception of a few holdouts, the lumbering and the lime industry dwindled and the black powder manufactured by the California Powder Mill was eventually replaced by dynamite made elsewhere, causing the mill to close.

Commercial fishing, though never as extensive as in Monterey, nonetheless was an important part of the city's early development. It all but disappeared during World War II and except for some sport fishing, there is little reminder of the fleet of boats that were once a common sight on the bay.

The Santa Cruz described by the glowing promotional literature of the 1890s was virtually unrecognizable by 1910. Although relatively short lived, this thriving industrial economy provided the funds to establish the town and was responsible for its basic layout and orientation with the port. Only one representative of these early manufacturing industries survives today, the Salz Leather Company.

Concurrent with industrial development ... tourism began about 1865 when John Leibrandt built a bathhouse, swimming tank and entertainment house. During the late 1880s, the tourist industry received its biggest boost in the person of promoter Fred Swanton who envisioned a grand seaside development equivalent to New York's Coney Island. Aided by national publicity and a hook up with the existing railroads that served resorts in the Santa Cruz Mountains, converting the city's economy from industrial to tourist oriented proved very successful throughout the 1920s. The Great Depression and the popularity of the automobile, however,

changed the nature of tourism in the years preceding World War II. The grand hotels closed or were destroyed by fire and not rebuilt. They were soon replaced with tourist camps and attractions aimed more at day travelers than visitors who stayed several weeks. In spite of the restrictions of the War, the boardwalk managed to survive and continues to this day, a mixture of new rides and attractions with the historic roller coaster and carousel.

Until the earthquake of 1989 devastated downtown, the historical development of the city could be seen in its commercial buildings which displayed a broad range of architectural styles and periods. Only a relatively few examples remain in the city center and it is now the outlying neighborhoods that are, for the most part, the repositories of the broad stylistic diversity that [makes] up the city's architectural and visual heritage.

Industrial remnants, such as the lime kilns located at the University of California, Santa Cruz and the buildings of the Salz tannery, can be counted on one hand. They are in danger, through neglect in the former case and the pressures of business in the latter, of disappearing altogether. There are isolated examples of old industrial buildings being adapted for other purposes including the Enterprise Iron Works on Chestnut Street and some of the larger Cowell ranch buildings at UCSC. Perhaps the biggest and brightest success story, is the Sash Mill on River Street which [was] converted to a variety of uses in the 1970s and now includes artists' studios, offices and a winery tasting room.

Remnants of the early tourist industry are everywhere. Although the grand hotels are all gone, replaced first by motor courts and then by motels, there are pockets of charming survivors. These run gamut from stately Victorian vacation houses on West Cliff Drive to tiny cottages that line the streets of Seacliff. The Boardwalk, although continually adding new attractions, pays tribute to its beginnings as well. A recently created website celebrates the Boardwalk history and its company logo features the casino and the Giant Dipper. Most importantly, the roller coaster and the carousel have been preserved and continue to operate.

On Beach Hill, the City owned Carmelita Cottages, once used as vacation rentals, are now a youth hostel. The last reminder of the era of grand hotels is La Bahia, a housing complex that served as long term rental units for the Casa del Rey Hotel at the beach.

To know something of the history of economic development in the city is to understand the way it appears today -- its architecture, its street layout, its relationship with the coastline and the forests that surround it. How the environmental movement was born at the start of the twentieth century is easier to understand in the context of the 19th century philosophy that preceded it. The taming of the wilderness and the exploitation of its resources were central to the early prosperity of the West resulting in destruction that [gave] rise to a new ethic. The success of that ethic in Santa Cruz was due, in large part, to the economic benefits of tourism which replaced heavy industry with the selling of mountain scenery, beach front attractions and healthy air to visitors from all over the county. This effort was initially successful because of heavy advertisement by the railroads and through the efforts of local promoters. The prosperity brought by tourism began to wane beginning in the late 1920s and continuing on through the 1950s. This was due to a number of factors including the Great Depression, the popularity of the automobile, and the coming [of] World War II. The glory days of the "Coney Island" of the

West were never to be seen again and the city's current economic base of day tourism, the University and high tech is a story that has yet to be written.

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INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT: LUMBER, LIME AND CEMENT, FISHING

Lumber

The enormous stands of virgin timber found in what would become Santa Cruz County attracted entrepreneurs to the area as early as 1840 when a French Canadian, Francisco Lajeunesse and two Americans, Isaac Graham and Henry Neale made attempts to acquire Rancho Zayante. Graham, a trapper and rifleman, described by Historian Hubert Howe Bancroft as "a loudmouthed, unprincipled, profligate and reckless man" and his partner, were unsuccessful because they were not Mexican citizens. They finally succeeded when they took on another partner, Joseph L. Majors, who was married to a member of the Castro family. Majors was granted the rancho in 1841 and four months later he, and a syndicate that included Graham built a saw mill that was located on the grounds of today's Mount Hermon. Another mill was built in 1845 and, by 1857, there were ten sawmills in the county. By 1864 the number had increased to [twenty-eight].

One of the largest problems associated with the industry was transporting the lumber from the mills to markets outside of the area. In 1847, construction of a 20 mile long flume from the headwaters of the San Lorenzo River to the Pacific Ocean was authorized by the California legislature. In 1851 a wharf was built into Santa Cruz harbor which facilitated development of the port area and made possible the shipping of lumber and other raw material. It was obvious that the development of a rail line from the mountains to the harbor was necessary to ensure continued economic growth. Entrepreneurs within the city realized the financial opportunity of having a rail line that began in Felton and ended at a wharf in Santa Cruz harbor. The Santa Cruz and Felton Railroad constructed a tunnel under Mission Hill, laid tracks down Chestnut [Street] and in 1876 ran a line that began in Felton and proceeded to the harbor, terminating at the renamed railroad wharf.



Hubbard and Carmichael Lumber Mill - Porter Gulch, 1884

Through the 1800s, lumber production continued to increase and Santa Cruz became one of the major suppliers for the builders of San Francisco. The intense logging activity eventually took its toll, however, and by the turn of the century, timber suitable for cutting, was all but exhausted. In addition, a new conservation movement had [begun]. This ushered in the eventual change in the economic base from industry to tourism.

Lime and cement

The initial availability of a plentiful wood supply gave rise to another major industry in early Santa Cruz County, that of lime production. In the 1850s two engineers from Massachusetts, A. P. Jordan and Isaac E. Davis began investigating commercial possibilities of developing lime

which, they discovered, was of excellent quality and abundant quantity in the County. Lime was an important part of the building industry of the time and was used for making mortar, plaster and whitewash. The process of converting limestone into building lime involved the burning of chunks of limestone in large stone kilns. Both the ancient Egyptians and the Roman used the process and the Spanish brought the technology to California, building kilns at several Missions. A post Gold Rush construction boom in San Francisco created a great demand for the product and Jordan and Davis recognized that all the elements for creating a lime industry existed in Santa Cruz County. Besides the plentiful supply of lime, the accessibility of a large timber supply was essential. Each firing consumed seventy cords of wood and redwood was also needed to make barrels for storing and transporting the finished product.

Davis and Jordan built their first kilns in 1853 at what is now the corner of High and Bay Streets in the City of Santa Cruz. They built a 450 foot wharf at the base of Bay from which the lime was shipped to San Francisco on their own schooner, "Queen of the West." In 1858, two other companies went into operation. One owned by Samuel Adams, operated a mile west of the Davis and Jordan and the other, owned by Andrew Glassell, was located eight miles up the coast from Santa Cruz.

As the supply of lime at their original location was exhausted, Davis and Jordan created a quarry on the former Rancho de la Canada del Rincon located on the San Lorenzo River between Santa Cruz and Felton. Part of this property was eventually sold and became the California Powder Works. In 1863, Jordan moved back East and sold his interest in the lime enterprise to Henry Cowell. Cowell, who came to Santa Cruz in 1865, is one of the County's best known pioneers and it is on his former property that the University of California, Santa Cruz is now located, along with a state park that bears his name.

The Davis and Cowell Lime Company became the largest and most profitable of all the operations in the County, shipping about 1,000 barrels a week in 1868. Another company, headed by Thomas Bull and Eben Bennett went into production in the mid-1860s in an area about two miles west of Felton. The company was eventually acquired by a San Francisco lime merchant, Henry Holms.

About 8,000 barrels of lime a month total were produced in the County by the end of the 1860s. With the completion of a railroad line between Felton and Santa Cruz in 1875, the operations became even more profitable and companies continued to be created including the I. X. L. Lime Company which was located two miles north-west of Felton. The North County saw increased development as well when the Santa Cruz Lime Company began constructing facilities in 1875 three miles inland from Davenport. The peak of the lime industry was reached in the 1880s when the Santa Cruz Companies: Davis and Cowell, Holms and I. X. L. produced half of California's total supply. By the 1890s, however, a decline began caused by a number of factors. The first was the lack of cheap fuel. Intense logging by the timber, powder and lime industries had resulted in an almost complete removal of the forests that had covered the Santa Cruz Mountains. Alternative fuels to power the kilns had to be imported and were expensive. In addition, the development of cement, which involved a process that could utilize a cheaper and less pure grade of limestone, had begun to replace lime as the building material of choice.

Santa Cruz Lime Company stopped shipping lime in 1906. It was replaced by a cement plant built by the Santa Cruz Portland Cement Company at Davenport. Cowell's operation eventually purchased I. X. L. and continued under the management of Cowell's son Samuel until 1925. In Felton, the Holms Lime Company was able to continue operation for a time using kilns that burned oil but it too shut down in the 1930s.

During its years of operation, the lime industry made use of both skilled workers and laborers. Stone cutters shaped the granite and limestone boulders used in making the wall of the kilns and lined the inside with fire brick. Other workers, called "archers" were responsible for stacking the pieces of limestone within the kiln in arches four or five feet high and seven to nine feet long. This required an exacting skill since the firing took three days and if the pyramid of limestone collapsed before the process was complete, the entire load was ruined.

In addition, laborers were needed to cut timber, load and unload kilns and care for the livestock. No record has been found of the ethnic origins of the first workers. In the later Henry Cowell operation, however, Swiss-Italians and Portuguese from the Azores made up the majority of the work force. Most were single men who lived in cabins on the company land and were paid ten to fifteen dollars a month in addition to room and board. A few of the worker's cabins still stand on the campus of the University of California, Santa Cruz although they are in deteriorating condition and are in imminent danger of collapse. Other remnants of Cowell's lime operation and ranch can also be found on the campus, the most noteworthy being the lime kilns which are the largest remaining kilns in the county and possibly in the state. Another example of kilns can be found in the city owned Pogonip Park.

Fishing

Earliest reporting commercial fishing operation in Santa Cruz County was a small Chinese colony established in the 1850s. The camp was temporary, however, and the first viable commercial fishing company was not created until a narrow gauge railroad line was built between Santa Cruz and the Southern Pacific station near Watsonville in 1875. A group of Italians, along with some Californios already living in Santa Cruz began a fresh fish business at the terminus of the railroad in Santa Cruz. In 1879, 139,000 pounds of fish were shipped from that port. Italian families, most from Genoa and the towns nearby, became associated with the fishing industry and many of their descendants are still residents of Santa Cruz. These include familiar local names like Stagnaro, Carniglia, Canepa and Faraola.

Cottardo Stagnaro arrived from Italy in 1874, and along with his sons and grandchildren, established the C. Stagnaro Fishing Corporation. In 1902, John and Sunday Faraola whose father immigrated to California in the 1860s, established a commercial fishing company on the old railroad wharf. They built a fleet of fishing vessels that was one of the largest on the Central California coast. At the height of the industry, 75 to 100 boats a day unloaded tons of salmon, sea bass, rock cod and sole. Sport fishing has been a top attraction since the turn of the century and the Faraola family ran a charter service on the wharf in addition to their commercial fishing business.

World War II proved a disastrous time for the Santa Cruz fishing fleet. As a result of Executive Order #9066 issued in February 1942, Italian families, many of whom had established neighborhoods at the lower end of Bay Street near the waterfront, were made to leave their homes and move inland. Even those who had sons who were born in the United States and were serving in the armed forces, were not permitted to enter restricted areas that included the entire coastline. The boats were abandoned or confiscated for use in the war effort. After the war, many of the fishing families became involved in other business pursuits. Although Santa Cruz no longer has an active commercial fishing fleet based in the city, the sport fishing business is still active and the names of pioneering Italian families can be seen on the concessions and restaurants lining the present day municipal wharf.

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INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT: TANNERIES

The Santa Cruz County tanning industry had its start [in] 1843 when Paul Sweet built a tannery on the San Augustine Rancho in Scotts Valley. Sweet, who arrived in Monterey in 1840, was a sailor who worked for a time at Isaac Graham's sawmill. He began his enterprise to take advantage of the plentiful hides and the existence of copious quantities of high quality tan bark, a necessary ingredient in the tanning process. His operation, although small and unsophisticated, was nonetheless successful because of the need for leather goods such as saddles and leggings.

This early enterprise was one of the first commercial ventures of its type in California. The Spanish, when establishing their mission and pueblo system in the late 1700s had some rudimentary facilities for leather tanning. Because of a lack of skilled labor, however, tanning large quantities of hides was not successful and manufacturing was generally limited to crude shoes, rough saddles and saddle pads. It was more feasible to ship raw or minimally processed hides than to make leather. After 1834, when the Mexican government secularized the California missions, the hide and tallow industry continued on the large ranchos carved and divided from mission lands. One shipment recorded in 1836 from California to the East Coast lists a cargo of 39,000 hides.

Although Sweet ceased operations in 1846, the next fifteen years saw the establishment of other similar businesses in Santa Cruz. In 1857, an article in the Pacific Sentinel, lists the Kirby and Jones tannery, located then on Mission Hill, the Porter Brothers in Soquel, C. Brown and Company on Laurel and the Grove Tannery operated by William Warren and James Duncan on the present site of the Salz Tannery on River Street. These four, according to the article, were able to tan and dress ten thousand hides a year. In addition, the Santa Cruz County manufacturers had established outlets in San Francisco for leather goods that included skirting, harness, belting, bridle and sole leather.

The Warren and Duncan operation, begun in 1856, was small in comparison to the others, turning out only 500 hides a year while Kirby and Jones produced about 3,500. A flood washed away the building of the Grove Tannery in 1861 but it was rebuilt and later purchased by Jacob F. Kron.

Kron who was born in Prussia in 1823, traveled with his wife Anna Katherine first to Napa where he raised cattle and finally to Santa Cruz where he bought an interest in the Grove Tannery in 1866. He became sole owner the following year, paying a total of \$5,500. When extensive fires in northern California in 1870 wiped out much of the tan bark used by San Francisco manufacturers, it provided a boon to Santa Cruz tanners and Jacob Kron took advantage of the opportunity to expand and improve his facilities. Using the services of carpenters Giles Ellingwood and Wilbur Huntingon, a dry-house was constructed: "50x75 feet, with fifty windows, the basement to be occupied by vats." An interesting feature was the inclusion of a plank walk with tanks at either end located at the apex of the roof. The purpose of the tanks was to hold water to be used in case of fire. Even at this early date, fire protection of the wood frame buildings was of great importance.

In addition to the dry house, a kiln sufficiently large to hold twenty cords of bark and heated by a double furnace was constructed at the cost of \$1000. This was in addition to other improvements such as an engine, fixtures and construction which would bring the total expended to \$4000, a considerable sum of money for the time.

The four tanneries were part of the industrial expansion of the County during the 1860s and 70s and became known for both the quality and quantity of the leather produced. (Kirby alone was processing 1,500 hides a month.) To maintain the industry, however, took prodigious amounts of tan bark. Not just the bark but the entire tree was harvested and used for barrel staves as well as firewood to produce steam to run the plants. Although the supply seemed endless, by the turn of the century, the oak trees, like the redwoods used for lumber and to fuel the limekilns, were seriously depleted bringing about the eventual demise of the industries they had created.

Before that time, however, the entrepreneurs of Santa Cruz County took full advantage of the natural resources within easy reach. While the Kirby operation was the largest and most well known in the County during the 1870s and 1880s, by 1890 A. C. Kron and Company was manufacturing products worth \$160,000 a year and soon became the leading institution of its type in the County.

The development of the San Lorenzo Tannery into a major Santa Cruz industry did not end with the death of Jacob Kron in 1879. The business passed to his wife Anna and their three sons, Henry, Oscar, and Franklin. The company was incorporated in 1890 with Oscar as president, Henry as Vice-President and Franklin as manager of the company's operation in Sydney, Australia. This office both provided a distribution outlet for products and provided hides that were purchased in Sydney and shipped to Santa Cruz.

The company employed over thirty workers in 1890, with a payroll of \$16,000 to \$18,000. They paid \$25,000 for hides, and not surprisingly the same amount for tan bark, so important was this commodity for the production of first quality leather goods. In addition to the Santa Cruz facility, the Kron Trading Company had a wholesale leather and commission house on Clay Street in San Francisco under the management of Oscar Kron. The Sydney branch processed leather from 50,000 kangaroo hides a year.

By 1896, the San Lorenzo Tannery, as the Kron operation in Santa Cruz was now called, had succeeded Kirby's operation as the premier leather producing company in the County. Being a family business, both Anna Kron and Henry as site manager, lived on the tannery grounds. In addition, cottages were provided for married employees as well as a boardinghouse for the unmarried men.

At that time, the tanning operation consisted of a 40' x 120' beam house; a 16' x 120' leach house with ten six cord square leaches and two eight cord round leaches; and 140 double and single tanning vats that were housed in an open sided building with drying loft above. Steam for the operation was provided by a furnace with a 110 foot brick stack. Fuel consisted of wet tan bark delivered to the furnace by an elevator. The plant generated its own electric power with

an Edison electric dynamo capable of providing 150 incandescent lights to the tannery and the family residences.

The Sanborn Fire Insurance map for 1892 describes the Kron facility as "mostly new -- premises very tidy with a night watchman and an electric (fire) alarm connected to the men's sleeping quarters." Fire protection, a necessity given the woodframe buildings and the distance from a municipal firehouse, was provided by the Pogonip Hose Company. The company, which had a hose house located across from the plant on River Street, was composed entirely of tannery employees. It provided fire protection to the northern part of the city and remained active until 1904.

Photographs from the period do indeed show a "tidy premises" -- typical of the various kinds of manufacturing operations that could be found along the rivers and streams of Santa Cruz County. Located in a bucolic setting, surrounded by trees and within a convenient distance to the nearby town, the tannery had its own orchards, and gardens, raised hay for livestock and provided living quarters for its workers.

Fifty men were employed in the tannery along with additional crews and teams that hauled 2,500 cords of tan bark a year from forests of the Santa Cruz Mountains. Hides came from California, Australia and Hawaii to the plant which processed 250 sides a day. The sole leather produced was shipped to San Francisco, Chicago, New York and Boston as well as overseas to Japan and Australia.

By the turn of the century, however, the financial realities of the period, along with a string of personal tragedies, profoundly affected the Kron operation. Oscar Kron, who ran the commission house in San Francisco died in 1899. He was followed by his brother, Franklin, manager of the Sidney operation in 1913. Their mother and widow of the founder, Anna Katherine, also died that year.

Business was affected not only by the high cost of raw materials but a lowering of demand for sole leather which was the tannery's principal product. By 1915, the company was in receivership with all real and personal property assigned to satisfy creditors. As a result, the plant closed for three years "going out with the powder works and causing a serious lapse in the pay roll resources of Santa Cruz County." In April 1918, purchase of the property by Kullman, Salz and Company who owned tanneries in San Francisco and Benicia was announced. The company, most well-known for its harness leather, brought hope that diversification of its product line would once again make the tannery successful. An editorial in the Santa Cruz Surf welcomed these developments: "From every point of view Santa Cruz will be glad to see work revived at the tannery and will welcome the enterprise of the new investors."

The partnership of Herman Kullman and Jacob Salz had begun in 1874 with their joint involvement in a tannery in Stockton. In 1881, Kullman, Salz and Company acquired the Benicia Tannery and in 1896, the firm incorporated with headquarters in San Francisco. With the death of Jacob Salz in 1900, his son, Ansley Kullman Salz became involved in the business and continued his associated until the firm was liquidated in 1928 and the Benicia Tannery shut down.

The San Lorenzo Tannery in Santa Cruz had continued its operation, however, despite persistent rumors that it was about to close. In 1920, a shortage of hides and other unnamed factors, prompted the facility to curtail production and lay off a number of workers. By 1924, the plant was in full operation again and producing sole and harness leather. In spite of the perception that there was no market for harness leather, there were actually more horses in California than there had been in 1914 and demand remained high. Raw materials continued to be a problem since the seeming inexhaustible supply of tan bark on the Central Coast had been virtually depleted, and tanners all over the state were utilizing the remaining stands from Humboldt and Mendocino [sic] County. Hides came primarily from the Pacific Coast and South America and the finished product marketed to the West and Middle West as well as Japan.

The Great Depression took less of a toll on the Santa Cruz economy than other places, largely because the primary base had shifted from manufacturing to agricultural. The few remaining industrial enterprises, like Kullman Salz, however, were subject to the same market forces as the rest of the county. The company was dissolved in 1929, and the San Lorenzo Tannery closed in April of that year. Ansley Kullman Salz, however, was persuaded to invest his own funds into continuing the enterprise and on October 1, 1929, A. K. Salz and Company was incorporated.

On October 3, the local newspaper reported that the facility would reopen, employing at least [twenty-five] men under the name of Santa Cruz Tannery. By March of 1930, the company announced that it was able to market everything it could produce. During the 1930s the leather was used in horse tack, saddles and dog harnesses, as well as case leather for luggage.

In spite of the extensive precautions taken to prevent such disasters, a huge fire broke out in the tannery on September 29, 1934. Believed to be the result of arson, the fire destroyed over half the plant including the hair house, the currier shop, the drying loft, the tacking loft and a warehouse as well as various sheds and the engine and boiler rooms. The long vat building located to the north of those destroyed also caught fire but was saved. In addition to the loss of the buildings, \$95,000 worth of finished leather, and equal amount in unfinished materials was also lost. The total amount of damages was put at \$250,000 most of which was covered by insurance. Ironically, a new \$10,000 sprinkling system had just been installed and was to have been put into operation the following week. Seventy employees were temporarily thrown out of work by the fire but the plant was rebuilt and quickly resumed operations.

During World War II, leather was used for a variety of purposes for the war effort including fan belts for Army tank engines and as pads for the recoil mechanism of big guns. Salz produced mechanical seal leather, during the war, using chrome on the leather after it was vegetable tanned to give the leather higher resistance to hot temperatures around bearings.

Following World War II, Salz developed a smooth leather, unlike the grained leathers available during the war that was glazed by hand. At the time, there was enormous pent up demand in the country for a range of products that were either rationed or simply unavailable. The scarcity of tan bark and the pressures of competition caused the tannery to change its method from vegetable tanning to the use of chrome as the principal tanning agent.

The company now purchases ... a product called "wet blue" which is between raw hide and leather. So called because of the blue color imparted by the chrome used to tan it, the tannery splits, shaves, retans and colors the product. This results in the finished leather used for a wide variety of consumer products, including footwear, belts, garments and accessories.

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RESORT AND RECREATION DEVELOPMENT: WATERFRONT, BEACH, BOARDWALK

The late 1800s brought a major change in the economic base of Santa Cruz County. Intense lumbering had all but denuded the forests of the Santa Cruz Mountains. This, in addition to an economic depression in the 1890s, brought about the decline of not only the lumber industry but also the lime and powder industries which were dependent upon the availability of enormous amounts of timber. A recognition that the remaining trees should be saved, and a realization of their value as a visitor attraction, gave rise to a conservation movement which is still active to this day. Promotion of the "Big Trees" was to soon contribute to an already existing industry — tourism.

The arrival of the railroad not only ended Santa Cruz's dependence on shipping but gave increased accessibility of the area to tourists. A spur from Watsonville and Gilroy was completed in 1876 as well as another line that ran up to Felton. As the port declined in importance into the 1880s, the beach front became more necessary to the economic well-being of the City than ever before.

Beginning in the 1860s, visitors began coming to Santa Cruz to enjoy the beach. In 1868, John Leibrandt built a bathhouse, swimming tank and entertainment house. Captain C. F. Miller opened the Neptune Baths in 1884. They consolidated their facilities in 1893 and built [a] bathhouse with [an] indoor seawater pool. Although long touted in locally produced publications, an article in an 1894 Harper's Weekly produced the first important national recognition of Santa Cruz as a tourist destination. As a result there were an increasing number of trains in summer months. Hotels and cottages were built to accommodate [tourists] who came for weeks at [a] time.

At the turn of the century, the area was ripe for major development and had produced the individual to bring it about. Fred Swanton, was, more than any other individual, responsible for the change of the city's principal economic base to tourism. A business college graduate, he was possessed of boundless energy and displayed a remarkable knack for boosterism and promotion. At one time "Fabulous Fred" joined with a marching band and a committee from the City to travel throughout California and Nevada promoting the "New Santa Cruz."

Swanton, who was born in New York but lived in Santa Cruz from the age of four, started his career with the help of his father. Together they built the first three story hotel in Santa Cruz in 1883 which, unfortunately, burnt to the ground five years later. Undiscouraged he soon became involved in a variety of other enterprises including the establishment of the area's first telephone system in the 1880s and, with other partners, began the Santa Cruz Electric Light and Power Company in 1890. The utility was expanded in 1896 and became the Big Creek Power Company which was sold in 1906 to San Francisco financier John Martin. It was Martin, along with other investors including the Southern Pacific Railroad, who would provide much of the capital for Swanton's dream to create a magnificent pleasure palace in Santa Cruz which he planned to be equal to New York's Coney Island.

Their first move was to buy the Miller and Leibrandt bathhouse and form the Santa Cruz Beach, Cottage and Tent City Corporation. In 1904 they opened Neptune Casino which included 500 dressing rooms, a plunge, a cafe and a grill, a ballroom and two roof gardens. They also built a "pleasure pier" with electric wiring running through tubing on the railings and lights that were mounted on poles which ran at intervals for the entire 400 foot length of the pier.



Dolphin Bath House, Santa Cruz Beach, circa 1890's - Courtesy of Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History

With the Casino only open for two years, disaster struck and the entire thing burned to the ground on June 22, 1906 at [a] loss of half a million dollars. Martin, Swanton's partner, was talked into investing a million dollars for a second casino. Work on a replacement began the day of the fire and was completed a year later opening on June 15, 1907. The result is described by architectural historian, John Chase, as a "spectacularly ugly" building with a central semicircular domed pavilion flanked by twin obelisks. At either end of the casino were hipped roof pavilions with bulbous domes.

Swanton continued his development plans for the City and in 1908 he organized the Swanton Investment Company to develop a subdivision on West Cliff Drive. In 1910, he undertook construction of Casa del Rey Hotel across from the Casino which was designed to replace approximately 200 cottages that had developed from a popular "tent city" across from the Casino. The hotel, which in its later years served as a retirement home, survived until the 1989 earthquake, after which it was demolished.

Unfortunately for Swanton, his ambitious promotion schemes did not result in financial success. Perhaps his greatest miscalculation was the Swanton Beach Park development, which has been credited with his subsequent financial ruin. He eventually deeded much of the unsuccessful subdivision to the state which created Natural Bridges State Park. In 1912, Swanton declared bankruptcy and a group of local investors organized the Santa Cruz Seaside Company to acquire the boardwalk and its related enterprises.

The company, which still owns and operates the facilities, created a number of new attractions which have survived to the present. A carousel, constructed by Danish woodcarver Charles I. D. Loeff in 1910-1912, was moved from Riverside, Rhode Island to its present site. Loeff was a factory worker who became a skilled wood carver in his free time. His first carousel was completed in 1875 for the Coney Island Amusement Park in New York.

The first roller coaster at the Boardwalk was constructed in 1884 with a five hundred foot circumference and a top height of twenty four feet. L. A. Thompson's Scenic Railway was opened in June 1908. At 1050 feet, it was the longest in the United States at the time. The present roller coaster, called the Giant Dipper was constructed by Loeff's son, Arthur in 1924. Constructed in just 47 days at a cost of \$50,000, it has a top height of 70 feet and a one minute and fifty second ride.

While the carousel and roller coaster have remained constant, other attractions at the boardwalk have changed over time. All such entertainments suffered during the Depression, and new ways were developed entice patrons. Acts like Ruth Kahl the human submarine, death defying fire dives, swimming team races and exhibitions were part of the Water Carnivals that took place on summer week-ends at the Plunge. The Olympic swimmer and famous surfer, Duke Kahanamoku caused great excitement when he appeared at a Water Carnival performance in 1938.

Built in 1907, the Plunge was touted in its early days as one of the largest of its type of the West Coast. Filled with heated sea water, it provided a less rigorous swimming experience than was available in the chilly waters of Monterey Bay. Although the water carnivals ended in 1945, the facility was operated, at an increasing loss, until 1963. By then the novelty of swimming indoors no longer had much appeal and the facility was converted into a miniature golf course.

World War II brought travel restrictions and gasoline rationing and, as a result, tourism fell off drastically. During the summer months at least, the boardwalk stayed open with limited activities. Because of its position on the coast, security was an issue and black-out curtains were securely placed over the Casino windows during any nighttime activities. After the war, the entire site was ready for a facelift. The facilities underwent major renovations in the 1950s and again in ... 1981. It continues to operate today as a mixture of historic and modern amusement park attractions.

From: *Fully Developed Context Statement for the City of Santa Cruz*. Prepared for City of Santa Cruz Planning and Development Department. Prepared by Susan Lehmann, October 20, 2000. Chapter 3, Context I: Economic Development of the City of Santa Cruz 1850-1950, pp. 14-16.

RESORT AND RECREATION DEVELOPMENT: SURFING, OTHER RECREATIONAL SITES

Surfing

Although the Boardwalk was the primary commercial endeavor to capitalize on tourism at the beach, no history of Santa Cruz would be complete without a discussion of the city's most well-known sport, surfing. Surfing, as far as anthropologists can trace, is estimated to be a thousand years old in Hawaii and three or four thousand in Polynesia. It was bound to all aspects of religious life and was surrounded by rituals that began with the selection of the tree that was to be used for the board. The recitation of chants and prayers by the priest, or kahuna, accompanied the shaping of the board which was carved of solid wood with stone or bone tools. Surfing festivals and meets were an intrinsic part of the culture and gambling on the outcome was common.

The practices associated with the activity were abhorrent to the religious missionaries who came to the islands in the nineteenth century. Polynesian historian Ben Finney noted that the Europeans were alarmed to find that when the surf was up: "the thatch houses of a whole village would empty," and "daily tasks as farming, fishing and tapa-making were left undone while the entire community -- men, women and children -- enjoyed themselves in the rising surf and rushing white water." In spite of the concerted efforts of the missionaries to obliterate surfing, the sporting, if not the religious, aspects were to return after the missionary period ended.

The annexation of Hawaii to the United States in 1898, brought American tourists who became interested in the native Hawaiian culture. Among them were writers Mark Twain and Jack London. It was London who published a magazine article on the "Royal Sport" of surfing and is credited with aiding the movement to revive the sport. In 1908, along with other enthusiasts, he founded the Outrigger Canoe Club whose purpose was to preserve surfing on boards and outrigger canoes.

A native Hawaiian, Duke Kahanomoku [sic], was the chief practitioner and promoter of modern surfing. Born in 1890, he was a teenager at the time when a resurgence of interest in the sport was just beginning. He and a group of friends known as "the beach boys" found that they could make money teaching tourists and members of the Outrigger Canoe Club how to surf. Kahanomoku [sic] won the gold medal and set a worlds record in the 1912 Olympic Games in swimming and used his fame to promote surfing throughout the United States. He visited Santa Cruz in the 1930s and performed at the Plunge, an event that is still remembered by local old time surfers.

According to some historical accounts, surfing came to the California coast in 1907 when George Freeth, an Irish Hawaiian, was hired by the Pacific Electric Railroad as a promotional stunt to encourage ridership of their new line between Redondo Beach and Los Angeles. Practitioners of the sport outside of Hawaii were few in the 1920s but in 1932, Tom Blake, a Californian, patented a design for the "Hawaiian Hollow Surfboard," a hollow paddle board

that became standard rescue equipment for lifeguards. It had the advantage of being lighter (at about 60 pounds) than the classic solid wooden boards and encouraged more participation in the sport.

Surfing in Santa Cruz, began about 1936 when a group of the local teenagers learned the basic techniques in board building and surfing from young men who came from Southern California. Their first boards were made in wood shop class at Mission Junior High. In 1938 they started a formal surf club and began keeping their boards in a member's barn on Bay Street, three blocks from Cowell's Beach. With the help of the Junior Chamber of Commerce, they built a board house which was located on the beach at the foot of what is now the Santa Cruz West Coast Hotel. The club remained active until World War II when most of the members left for military service. Those who returned after the war were soon involved in jobs and families and the club was never revived.



Board House on Cowell's Beach, ca. late 1930's-early 1940's - Photo property of Harry Mayo

Little remains of the club's original facilities except for the clubhouse. It has [an] interesting history in itself and is a lesson in adaptive reuse in miniature. The structure was originally built by Surf Club member Harry Mayo's grandfather as a fruit stand where he sold watermelons in the summer. It was moved to the beach and became a refreshment stand selling hamburgers and cold drinks. Since it stood adjacent to their board house, the club rented it for use as a clubhouse but with the breakup of the group, it was abandoned. In 1952 the building was moved once again, this time to Frederick Street where it is presently used as a residential structure behind a house.

Surfing has now become a large commercial enterprise with international competitions held every year in all parts of the world including Santa Cruz. Those who were part of the Santa Cruz Surfing Club, however, have managed to keep its history alive by aiding in the creation and maintenance of an excellent surfing museum, a bronze statue that has become a local landmark and personal tales of homemade long boards and the ultimate wave.

Other recreational sites – Seabright

The center of tourism in the City of Santa Cruz has always been located in the wharf area. Other beachfront areas, however, both in the County and City grew up along the coast and catered to summer visitors. One of these is Seabright which was once a separate settlement with its own post office and railroad station. The small summer cottages, according to promotional literature, catered to "the finest kind" of people from San Jose and the Central Valley. Seabright had its beginnings in 1884 when F. M. Mott of Sacramento purchased 12 acres of land, that he called a farm, as a summer home for family and friends. After visiting Sea Bright, New Jersey, he borrowed the name, laid out streets and lots and Seabright, California was born. The

development was not intended for sale to the general public but was only open, initially, to friends and relatives.

The cottages were simple in design and construction, of board and batten -- the boards usually painted white with battens in bright blue, green or vermilion. The community had an active civic improvement group [led] by Miss E. C. Forbes who promoted a number [of] worthy causes. She was also the chief proponent of octagonal cottages, and lived in one herself. ...

About 1903, the Seabright improvement society proposed construction of a library and in 1915, a Carnegie library was built in Tyrrell Park at a cost of \$3000. The library ... was closed in 1965 and became [a] city museum. Seabright is no longer an independent community having been annexed and became part of the city of Santa Cruz in 1904.

Other recreational sites – Pogonip

The early success of Santa Cruz as a resort area was due, in large part, to the variety of activities offered to tourists and their accessibility by train. Visitors could visit the Big Trees and then spend time at the seashore. The hotels both in the Santa Cruz Mountains and at the coast offered all sorts of diversions including: dancing and concerts, billiard parlors, bowling alleys, croquet, tennis courts, boating, swimming, riding and golf. As part of the development of the Casa del Rey Hotel at the beach, Fed Swanton created a club and golf links in 1911. He leased 145 acres of a large meadow on the eastern portion of the Cowell ranch. Financed by John Martin and the Southern Pacific Railroad, which promoted the Casa del Rey extensively, the facility included an 18 hole golf course and a clubhouse which officially opened on February 22, 1912. The course was touted as a working man's golf course with reasonable rates and was part of [an] advertising strategy that attempted to portray Santa Cruz as a winter, as well as summer, resort and recreation area. Swanton's bankruptcy in the same year forced a reorganization that placed the club under the auspices of the Santa Cruz Golf and Country Club which ran it until it closed in 1930. The closure was caused by a number of factors including the financial climate of the Depression and increased competition from Marion Hollins' Pasatiempo which had opened nearby.

In 1935, the facility opened again, this time as the Pogonip Polo Club. The revival was brought about by Dorothy Deming Wheeler, one of [a] group of area women including Marion Hollins, who promoted women's involvement in what had previously been considered men's sports. Wheeler, along with her husband, Deming Wheeler, enjoyed playing polo and hoped to make Santa Cruz part of the national polo circuit. As part of their \$12,000 improvement program, they removed the fairways and leveled the land to make it into a field. In keeping with the club's previous aim of a working man's golf course, the [Wheelers] intended that polo club include women and children and that prices would be lower than other clubs. The co-ed polo games they sponsored were an unusual and popular feature of the facility. Dorothy Wheeler tried to promote this spirit of inclusiveness but when the men's National Polo association rejected creation of a women's association, she went on to found and administer the first U.S. women's polo association and served as its president for many years.

World War II brought [an] end to polo at Pogonip. As part of the war effort, however, Dorothy Wheeler became active in Red Cross Motor Corps. She used the Pogonip ponies and grounds to train a women's mounted corps whose purpose was to assist in rescue operations when motor vehicles could not be used. Although the club re-opened in 1948, the focus turned to social rather than sports activities for which it was formerly known. Over the year, the grounds have been used for Hollywood movies and proceeds from a fee charged in 1936 to the makers of the Maid of Salem paid for the building of a swimming pool. In 1986, the Pogonip Clubhouse was the location for the movie, *The Lost Boys*.

In 1986, the five redwood stable buildings located on the west side of Golf Club Drive about a quarter mile below the clubhouse were demolished. The tennis courts are no longer usable and the swimming pool has been filled in. Only the clubhouse remains. Although in deteriorated condition, the City of Santa Cruz, its present owner, is now undertaking a restoration study in the hopes that the building can be used again as a community facility.

Although it still makes a considerable contribution to the city's economy, tourism has changed dramatically since the 1920s. The growing use of the automobile altered the type of accommodations offered to travelers. Variations of the tent camps continued to operate and cabins with room to park the family automobile became increasingly sought after. These auto courts eventually gave rise to what we know at the motel. While highway improvements brought a different type of tourist to the mountains, tourism in general eventually dropped off as visitors were lured to more exotic locales such as Lake Tahoe and Yosemite. Those camps that survived the Depression were dealt another blow by gas rationing during World War II. Within the City, tourist accommodations are now generally served predominantly by chain motels located near the beach. Most of the seasonal cabins have been converted into year round housing and a few large old homes now operate as bed-and-breakfasts. Although tourism remains a major part of the city's economy, visitors for the day still make up the majority of the tourist population.

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COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT: DOWNTOWN BUSINESS, RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Downtown Business

As discussed in an earlier section, the Santa Cruz Mission and its satellite properties (including the Mission gardens, orchard and small farms) were the first center of what would eventually become the City of Santa Cruz. From secularization through statehood, these lands were sold and subdivided and some later became separately developed tracts.

Industrialization of the area necessitated the building of the first wharf in 1851 and the center of activity for the town shifted from the plaza around the mission to an area that would connect more directly to the waterfront. Elihu Anthony bought the land south of Water Street between Front Street and the River in 1848. He built the first business in that part of town at North Pacific, Water and Mission Streets and offered the rest for sale. As more [businesses] were established, Front Street became the main business street in town.

In 1860, the town created a water system and as the population increased, more residential development occurred both above and below Lincoln Street. Concurrently with the industrial development, the first tourist hotels, cottages and other facilities were constructed at the beach. This partly explains why the city often seems to be divided into two separate unconnected parts: the beach area which was developed as a tourist center and the downtown which served commercial and industrial interests.

In 1866, as the result of the Wright-Forman survey, the name of Main Street was changed to Front and Willow to Pacific. Beginning at this time, the center of business began to shift to Pacific from Front and the latter became known as the location of the city's seamier businesses including waterfront saloons and whore houses.

The industrial boom throughout the County resulted in the city's population growing by fifty per cent in the 1870s. Business establishments continued to shift to Pacific Street which experienced a building boom after 1875. Horse cars ran down Pacific and Front Streets to the beach providing a link between the city's business area and the hotels and other attractions at the seashore. During the 1870s, facilities were built to enhance the cultural life of Santa Cruz. A hall for socials and concerts was constructed and as well as an Opera House in 1877. The city center boasted a bank as well as a savings and loan. There were also a number of large commercial hotels which offered free transportation from the train station and to the attractions at the beach. In addition there were churches and fraternal halls, a temperance hall and a town brewery.

According to the City Directory for 1876-78, businesses on Pacific Avenue included the following: attorneys, a tailor, a dry goods store, livery stables, a shop selling boot and shoes, as well as one providing "books, stationery and 'fancy goods,'" a bakery, restaurants, an ice cream parlor, several saloons, and a number of contractor's offices. One merchant showed a flair for business diversity -- George Staeffler, at 1510 Pacific, offered furniture and bedding as well as his services as an undertaker.

Until the late 1870s, the development of the waterfront was a key element in the city's economic development. The coming of railroad, however, with the opening of a spur from Watsonville and Gilroy in 1876, ended Santa Cruz's dependence on shipping. At the same time a line ran up to Felton which also gave increased accessibility to tourists. The port continued to decline in importance and in the 1880s, the beach front as [a] tourist attraction became more important than ever before.

The link between the downtown business area and the beach was touted in the 1891 *Mercantile Guide for California*: "The sidewalk on Pacific Avenue, the main street of Santa Cruz is almost 20 feet wide and nearly a mile long from the post office to the bathing beach and along this sidewalk every summer a large percentage of the very best people in California promenade ..."

Interestingly enough, the downtown maintained its rather prosaic appearance, a legacy, no doubt, of its origins as the commercial center of an industrial empire. In 1890, E. S. Harrison wrote: "The business blocks of the city while making no pretensions to magnificence of proportions or particular beauty of architecture, are substantial, and bespeak an air of prosperity..."

With its population of 5,800, the city also supported another commercial district on Soquel Avenue which catered to local traffic. In 1894 it had, among other businesses, a shoemaker, carriage and wagon makers, grocers, blacksmiths, livery stables, and a generous share of saloons.

On April 14, 1894, the downtown area suffered a fire that would change the face of downtown. As was the case in cities and towns across the country, fire was always disaster waiting to happen and it became virtually unstoppable as it tore through the wood frame buildings that comprised many downtown areas during the period. Santa Cruz prided itself in having a modern and extensive water supply and a near perfect firefighting system. The afternoon of April 14, however, the main water gate at the reservoir had burst cutting off most of the water supply to downtown. Firefighters were nearly helpless to stop the blaze which burned most of the block bound by Pacific, Front and Cooper destroying the courthouse, along with other major structures. The disaster caused major new commercial construction and rebuilding resulting in a changed look for [downtown] as limitations were put on wooden buildings. The fire danger was addressed in 1896 when new fire department facilities [were] constructed on Church Street.

Aside from some facade changes, mostly initiated after World War II, the downtown area maintained its post 1894 appearance until 1989. The unreinforced masonry replacements constructed following the fire were vulnerable to a different kind of disaster and suffered wholesale destruction as a result of the effects of the 1989 earthquake. Only a small number of these buildings remain including the County Bank Building at 1502 Pacific which had been remodeled [in] 1910. It was virtually destroyed by [the] earthquake but the facade was saved and has been rebuilt for commercial use. The Leonard Building, designed in 1894 by Edward L. Van Cleeck, and originally housing a saloon in the bottom floor was another survivor along with the William Weeks designed structure at 1515 Pacific now known as the ID building. Also intact

is the 1882 former Hall of Records at 118 Cooper Street which is now part of the Art and History Museum.

There was some additional construction during the 1920s and 1930s and examples of these were spared destruction by the earthquake and its aftermath. These include the Del Mar Theatre constructed in 1936, the 1929 Bank of America Building, and the Veterans Building constructed in 1932.

Residential Development

The industrial and commercial development of Santa Cruz governed the early residential development and influenced the later patterns of residential growth. By the 1860s Fred Hihn owned most of the old Mission garden between Mission Hill and Beach Hill. Earlier, during the 1850s, he had developed a tract located north of Lincoln Street. Although land was also subdivided for houses on Mission Hill and west of the Mission on the Coast Road to San Francisco, most of this early development took place on the flat lands below the hill.

In the 1870s important residential developments moved to the east side of the river and to the West Cliff area. Ocean View opened up in 1871 and Riverside Avenue subdivided in 1876. In 1875, [the] old Mission orchard and pasture (River Street) was subdivided but never filled up. With the exception of worker housing, including single family dwellings, boarding houses and the homes of owners of industrial sites such as the tannery, the area remained industrial. In the 1880s small housing tracts appeared all over town including the near west side and area just east of the River. In 1889 the Circles area was laid out by Fred Hihn for the Christian Church of California. It was the first major geometric planned area in Santa Cruz and representative of an unusual planning idea in a few other California cities of the period. It was a failure both as a plan and as [a] real estate venture at the time it was built. Other houses were later constructed in the Circles, mostly after World War II. It is a notable location because it was the center of a post-World War II African American community.

The 1890s brought electrification and expansion of [the] street railroad system. By 1895 major new lines ran out Mission and down Younglove and Woodrow and out Soquel and down Cayuga to Seabright. Housing followed these streetcar lines and a great deal of the resulting neighborhoods still remain, although no longer connected by the public transportation that brought them into being. Following this, little residential growth occurred in the city until after the turn of the century due to an economic depression and limited population growth.

From 1900 through 1910 new housing went up near the streetcar lines and when a new line ran out Water and Morrissey, the large piece of land between Soquel, Morrissey and de Laveaga Park was subdivided and developed as Laveaga Park. During the period between 1910 and 1920 the city lost population for the first time and little building took place although new subdivisions were plotted on the outskirts, particularly on the west side. One of the most notable failures of the period was the Swanton Beach Tract just east of Natural Bridges. The development never sold and, as a result, Fred Swanton was driven into bankruptcy.

New housing in the 1920s occurred mainly on the west side of town on King Street and surrounding areas, much of it built in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. In 1927 the streetcar system closed down due to [the] popularity of cars and the ubiquitous garage with every new house, no matter how modest, made its appearance. There was very little development during the Depression and World War II and housing constructed after the war occurred as small tracts and infill within established neighborhoods.

From: *Fully Developed Context Statement for the City of Santa Cruz*. Prepared for City of Santa Cruz Planning and Development Department. Prepared by Susan Lehmann, October 20, 2000. Chapter 3, Context I: Economic Development of the City of Santa Cruz 1850-1950, pp. 19-21.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT: CHINATOWN

Although no traces remain, there is curiosity among many Santa Cruz residents about the location of the city's Chinatown and its eventual fate. In reality there were several Chinatowns and all have disappeared for a variety of reasons. Perhaps the most important is that the Chinese never established a permanent niche in the Santa Cruz economy and, in the city at least, their numbers were always relatively small. The following is a summary of information about the location of the city's Chinatowns provided by Sandy Lydon's excellent study, *Chinese Gold*, the Chinese in the Monterey Bay Region. The book provides an in-depth history of the Chinese experience in Santa Cruz and the rest of the region and is highly recommended to anyone interested in this important subject.

In the County of Santa Cruz, the early Chinese immigrants were involved in manufacturing. In 1864, about a dozen Chinese laborers arrived at the California Powder Works which by [the] 1870s became the largest industry in Santa Cruz. By that time the number of Chinese had grown to [thirty-five] men who worked primarily in the cooperage. Most lived at the powder factory rather than in town.

The city of Santa Cruz' first Chinatown developed in [the] mid-1860s on the west side of Willow St. (now Pacific Avenue) and consisted of two or three laundries housing less than a dozen men. This small group of buildings eventually expanded to take up most of [the] block between Lincoln and Walnut [Streets]. The Pacific Avenue Chinatown included a temple, one or two stores, a collection of laundries and a small cigar factory. In addition, this Chinatown provided a place to go for the Chinese who were domestic servants and waited on tables in Santa Cruz. Santa Cruz had more Chinese servants than other towns in [the] Monterey Bay area because of its wealth which was due to a manufacturing based economy. The middle class, therefore, was larger and had bigger incomes than other towns in the region.

During [the] 1870s the surveying and realignment of the Santa Cruz streets prompted the first move of Chinatown. Expansion of the Main Street (now Front Street) business district was limited on the east by the San Lorenzo River and on the south by a dead end, so in 1866, during incorporation and survey of the town, Willow Street was renamed Pacific Avenue and designated the primary business street while Front Street was declared a secondary street. As a result, businesses began to relocate in the 1870s to Pacific Avenue and rents there rose. At this time the Chinese began to move to the vacant buildings on Front Street and in 1877, the last of the Chinese moved away from the Pacific Avenue Chinatown.

The Front Street Chinatown was the largest in the city and lasted from the late 1870s until April 1894 when it was destroyed by fire. During its existence, it occupied most of the east side of Front St. between Cooper and Water Streets as well as several buildings across the street on the west side of Front Street. The 1880 census shows a Chinatown consisting of ten buildings housing [thirty-seven] men and one woman. [Thirty-one] of the men were laundrymen, two cooks, one domestic and one a merchant. The woman was a laundress. Less than half of the [ninety-eight] Chinese living in Santa Cruz in 1880 lived in the Front St. Chinatown. A few lived in laundries but most lived in homes where they were servants.

In addition to the laundries, by the mid-1880s three Chinese merchants had set up shop in the Front Street Chinatown. They sold goods such as groceries, peanut oil, Chinese candies, dried oysters, fish and sea weed; as well as Chinese slippers, water pipes, herbs and opium to an almost exclusively Chinese clientele. One store, operated by Wong Kee, occupied the only brick building in the Front Street Chinatown. On the ground level was a grocery store while above there was a gambling parlor and opium den.

The largest enterprise undertaken by the Chinese in the City were the market gardens developed by groups of Chinese in [the] late 1870s. The gardens were run by partnerships who pooled resources and labor to lease plots of land and grow vegetables for sale. In 1880 there were two market gardens in Santa Cruz as well as others in [the] County. Those in the City were located on Mission Street and on Branciforte Avenue.

By 1900 the number had grown to include one at Neary's Lagoon, several on Garfield Avenue, four on King Street, and on the San Lorenzo River bottom behind Front Street. There were also several below Branciforte bluff and along Branciforte Creek. Gardeners usually built a small shack within the garden and lived on [the] grounds. The most profitable crop was strawberries which often appeared as early as February and commanded incredibly high prices. When train service was established within the city some were shipped to San Francisco as well as being sold locally.

The Protestant churches, beginning in the late 1860s, took an interest in providing religious and educational services to the Chinese living in town. The largest of the missions was begun in 1869 by Santa Cruz Congregational Church which offered a Sunday school for Chinese. In 1881 a full-fledged Chinese mission was organized by the church. Chinese joined this mission and other churches to socialize and learn English which had bible study, English lessons and singing. The Congregational mission began at the home of its minister and later, during the 1880s, the mission moved to [a] second story location in the Front Street Chinatown where it was eventually led by English speaking Chinese. It was destroyed in the 1894 fire and a new site was found on Bellevue [Place] in what was eventually called Birkenseer's Chinatown. It operated there into the 20th century but its membership declined over time with the declining Chinese population.

The fire that broke out on April 14, 1894 not only devastated the heart of downtown but brought about the complete destruction of the Front Street Chinatown. Following the fire, the Chinese were offered alternative sites to rebuild. Dr. P. B. Fagen and George Birkenseer offered them an island in the San Lorenzo River known as the Midway just 100 yards downstream from the old Front Street site. At the same time Mrs. Harriet Blackburn offered a new site next to Neary's [Lagoon] off Laurel Street on the west side of the Santa Cruz business district. The Chinese mission arranged for leases with Fagen and Birkenseer and it was primarily the Christian Chinese who moved out to the island. A small group led by merchant Wong Kee, who were not Christian, moved to the Blackburn property. This served to divide the Santa Cruz Chinese community in the 1890s and the areas became known by the names of [the] property owners as Blackburn's and Birkenseer's Chinatowns.

Birkenseer's Chinatown was the larger of the two and had [fifty-nine] residents in 1900 composed mainly of cooks, servants, laundrymen and laborers. Blackburn Chinatown listed a total of 19 men with no families and no women or children. Gambling halls continued to thrive in Birkenseer's Chinatown until after World War II and the Sanborn maps labeled several of the 1930s buildings as gambling halls.

In 1905, the Southern Pacific Railroad planned to buy 20 acres west of Chestnut Avenue, including the Blackburn Chinatown, to erect a railroad yard. The railroad company purchased the buildings and demolished them. The only building to survive the sale was Chee Kong Tong headquarters and temple which was disassembled and reconstructed at the extreme east end of the Birkenseer Chinatown. By 1910, the census confirms that the Chinese population in Santa Cruz was declining. The Chinese drifted away and in 1910, there were only 59 in Birkenseer's Chinatown almost all of which were older men. Most were to die or move back to China before 1920. The low lying location of this last Chinatown was to bring about its final destruction. High water was a common problem and [during] a flood in 1905 water covered the wooden sidewalks and subsequent floods often inundated the first floors of the buildings. In 1940 several residents had to be rescued from second stories and following the disastrous flood of 1955, the remaining residents left. The last buildings of Santa Cruz's remaining Chinatown were razed during the redevelopment of the area following the flood.

From: *Fully Developed Context Statement for the City of Santa Cruz*. Prepared for City of Santa Cruz Planning and Development Department. Prepared by Susan Lehmann, October 20, 2000. Chapter 3, Context I: Economic Development of the City of Santa Cruz 1850-1950, pp. 22-24.

TRANSPORTATION: ROADS, WHARVES AND PIERS

Roads

The wealth of natural resources in Santa Cruz County was obvious to the first pioneers in the area. A major problem in developing these resources, however, was in bringing them out of the rugged and often inaccessible terrain to a point where they could be shipped. Another important goal was to provide links between the settlements that serviced the lumber, lime and powder industries and which would become the County's villages and towns. When the railroads finally arrived and took over this function, the early roads became less important for conveying goods and more important for bringing in the tourists who valued the way they meandered through some of the state's most picturesque scenery.

The first road in the county, actually more a crude trail, was created in 1791 to link Mission Santa Cruz with Mission Santa Clara. The route traversed the Santa Cruz Mountains and was the forerunner of present day Highway 17. The governor of California, Diego de Borica, made it clear that the road, improved in 1799, was not to be used for frivolous purposes. Settlers of Branciforte were required to have advance permission to make the journey, since the governor believed they should remain at home tilling the soil rather than loitering around San Jose. The route, he said, was to be used exclusively for bringing supplies in and out of the area.

During the early 1840s the road, described by some as a "bear trail," was used to transport lumber out of the mountains. Other toll roads came into existence in the 1850s and 60s including one built by Charles McKieran [sic], known in local lore as Mountain Charlie. The road wound through his property on the summit and joined the turnpike toll road of the Santa Cruz Gap Joint Stock Company of which he was a shareholder. This road ran on the west side and parallel to the present day Highway 17 and part of it, called Mountain Charlie Road, is still used today. The road was eventually incorporated into the Santa Cruz Gap Turnpike, which was financed by stockholders in both Santa Cruz and Santa Clara counties.

This link between San Jose and Soquel, built from 1857 to 1862, was known on various maps as the Soquel Turnpike, the Old San Jose Road, and the Soquel and San Jose Road. It was the chief route over the mountains into Santa Clara County until Highway 17 was constructed between 1931 and 1943. Several stagecoach routes operated on these roads and served as a link between communities until they were replaced by the railroads.

While much of early road building activities centered on linking Santa Cruz County with outside communities, roads that served to move goods within the county were important as well. The lumber, lime and powder manufactured in the San Lorenzo Valley had to be moved out of the rugged terrain and into Santa Cruz to be shipped by sea. In the early 1860s, several incomplete and primitive roads were constructed by local land owners but no direct route existed to connect Felton, the primary lumbering center, with Santa Cruz. Businessmen in both the San Lorenzo Valley and Santa Cruz began a campaign in 1866 to construct a road to serve that purpose.

After succeeding in raising money by subscription, the County of Santa Cruz contracted with lime kiln owner, Eban [sic] Bennett to construct a road at a cost of \$6,000. The road, four miles long, connected two existing roads, one coming north from Santa Cruz and the other south from Felton. Completed in May 1868, the road was considered a model of road building, since it was constructed on a continuous hillside grade on an angle of about 45 degrees. It runs along the west bank of the San Lorenzo River and at some places it had to be constructed over 1,500 feet above the water. Although the road had been paid for through subscription and county funds, money was necessary to maintain it and for this reason it became a toll road.

In spite of the decline of the timber, lime and powder industries, the area soon became a popular tourist destination and the road continued to be used by visitors, first by wagon and stagecoach and later by automobile. Now called Highway 9, it still connects the city of Santa Cruz with the San Lorenzo Valley.

Within the city, the street layout, established over the years by patterns of development rather than grand design, persist to the present in many areas. Instead of a standard grid, the streets follow the irregular geography which is characterized by a river and its flood plain, hills and flatlands. The first attempt, in 1866, to map the city reinforced the existing conditions of individually subdivided tracts of land connected by little more than cow paths and trails -- most going back to the mission era. In recent years, highway incursions into the Mission Hill area, redevelopment between Front Street and the river and attempts to affect traffic flow by changing street directions have all had an effect on historic patterns of street development.

Wharves and Piers

Before railroads and motor roads linked the community to the outside world, the city's industries were dependent on shipping. Getting goods to waiting ships was the first problem and the initial solution was primitive at best. Lumber was dragged through the surf and hoisted aboard waiting schooners. Men carried lighter objects on their shoulders to small boats which in turn brought them to ships. Elihu Anthony, a merchant and foundry owner came up with a marginally better system with his partner Edwin S. Penfield when in 1847 they built a rudimentary wharf at the foot of the present Bay [Street]. The "wharf" was really a plank chute steep enough to slide a sack of potatoes into a waiting rowboat. It was later bought by Davis and Jordan who owned a small fleet of schooners that carried shipments of lime from their kilns. They replaced the structure in 1856 with a 1000 foot wharf and developed a system wherein the lime was transported by tram cars moved by gravity down an incline, then hauled with horses back up the hill. This wharf was ultimately destroyed by heavy seas in 1907.

A second wharf was completed in 1855 by David Gharkey who extended it in 1863 to accommodate larger vessels. When a narrow gauge railroad began operating between Santa Cruz and Felton, tracks were laid and the Gharkey Wharf became the railroad wharf. It was later purchased by the South Pacific Coast railroad. Although the California Powder Works initially used the Davis Jordon [sic] wharf, they began construction on their own which was located on

what is now Santa Cruz's main swimming beach. In addition they built a large warehouse on the top of Beach Hill.

For about five years, the powder and railroad wharves were connected but the cross wharf between the two was demolished in 1882. The city's fishing fleet used the railroad wharf as its base of operations but moved to the municipal wharf that was constructed by the city in 1914. The railroad wharf was finally torn down in 1922.

The opening of the municipal wharf, built as a result of a \$172,000 bond issue, was dedicated with great fanfare on December 5, 1914. Composed of over 2000 Douglas fir pilings, the wharf was 2,745 feet long. It has been remodeled and refurbished a number of times, including a major project completed in 1984. In contrast to the city's early wharves that had warehouses and businesses associated with fishing and shipping, the current wharf is tourist oriented with restaurants, stores and souvenir shops.



Railroad Wharf ca. 1910 - Photo from the Library's Collection

Although it only exists in photographs, the Pleasure Pier, constructed in 1904 as part of [the] development of [the] first Casino and boardwalk, was long a part of the city's waterfront attractions. It was torn down in 1962 at the same time the boardwalk's plunge was converted into a miniature golf course.

From: *Fully Developed Context Statement for the City of Santa Cruz*. Prepared for City of Santa Cruz Planning and Development Department. Prepared by Susan Lehmann, October 20, 2000. Chapter 3, Context I: Economic Development of the City of Santa Cruz 1850-1950, pp. 24-25, 27.

TRANSPORTATION: RAILROADS AND STREETCARS

Like so many isolated communities of the west, the City of Santa Cruz owes much of its early economic development, both industrial and tourist oriented, to the coming of the railroads. In 1870, no rail lines serviced Santa Cruz County. Within the next ten years, however, several lines were built connecting scattered communities, creating new ones and altering transportation and economic development patterns throughout the region. In spite of road building efforts, transportation before the railroads was chancy at best. Roadways were narrow, rutted and subject to flooding, landslides and other natural disasters. Some sections were impassable for months during wet winters and tolls made travel and transporting goods expensive.

Businessmen wishing to increase profits and expand operations realized that the only way this would be possible would be through the construction of railway lines that could link up to systems outside the area. The first line to be developed was the Santa Cruz and Felton Railroad, a narrow gauge line incorporated in 1874 and completed in 1875. It ran between the lumber flume in Felton and the wharves of Santa Cruz, eight miles away but did not go beyond the County. The line was operated as an independent entity until the South Pacific Coast Railroad leased the tracks and rolling stock in 1879.

When the Southern Pacific Railroad declined to build a line from its railhead at Pajaro to Santa Cruz, a group of businessmen from Santa Cruz, Soquel and Aptos organized the Santa Cruz Railroad in 1873. The line was subsidized by the county and ran east from Santa Cruz through Soquel and Aptos linking up with the Southern Pacific at Pajaro. Although passengers could go on to other points by changing trains, the line was used primarily for hauling freight.

The most ambitious plan for a railway line was designed by Senator James Fair, a multi-millionaire who envisioned a route from the east side of San Francisco Bay, south to San Jose then on to Los Gatos and through the mountains to Felton. He incorporated the South Pacific Coast Railroad in 1876 and immediately began building the segment from Dunbarton in the East Bay to Los Gatos. The most difficult part of the line, however, was the segment through the Santa Cruz Mountains. Plans called for a 6,000 foot tunnel at the summit as well as a 5,000 foot tunnel between the mountain towns of Laurel and Glenwood and six smaller tunnels along the line.

A great majority of the labor needed to construct these railroad lines was provided by Chinese workers. The eight miles of track for the Santa Cruz and Felton Railroad was constructed in just eight months with all but the Mission Hill tunnel in Santa Cruz built by Chinese. That tunnel was constructed by [thirty-two] Cornish miners, employed because the city of Santa Cruz did not want a large crew of Chinese working in the center of the city.

While constructing the Santa Cruz Railroad, the Chinese workers lived in a tent camp a mile east of the city. Paid a dollar a day of which two dollars a week were deducted for food, the workers labored six ten hour days per week.

It was the construction of the South Pacific Coast Railroad over the Santa Cruz Mountains that took the greatest toll on workers' lives. Six hundred men, hired by the Ning Yeung Company of San Francisco, provided the labor for all the grading, track laying and tunneling. The digging of

tunnels, especially those near the communities of Wrights and Laurel was exceptionally dangerous and an explosion of coal gas in Wrights tunnel claimed the lives of five workers in February 1879. Eight months later, another explosion killed 24 Chinese workers with an additional 17 badly burned. Seven of those eventually died bringing the death toll to 31. The Chinese became convinced that the north end of Wrights tunnel was cursed and the railroad was forced to bring in a Cornish crew to complete the work on that end while the Chinese worked on the south.



Southern Pacific Depot, Brookdale, undated - Photo from the Library's Collection

All three of the original Santa Cruz lines were narrow gauge and subject to the same hazards that the county roads faced, including landslides and flooding. The destruction of the Santa Cruz Railroad's San Lorenzo River trestle by flooding in 1881 proved financially ruinous for the line and most of its stock was acquired by the Southern Pacific Railroad. The Southern Pacific's first move upon acquiring the company was to lay broad gauge line on the route between Santa Cruz and Watsonville and add a spur line from Aptos into Aptos Canyon. By the late 1880s, Southern Pacific also controlled the South Pacific Coast Railroad which was

forced to lease the line due to financial problems.

New capital pumped into the system by the Southern Pacific Railroad Company allowed many advances and by 1883, there was at last a through line to San Francisco for both freight and passenger trains. The line served Santa Cruz, Soquel/Camp Capitola, Aptos and Watsonville linking towns and villages along the way and providing a fast, economic way for tourists to enjoy the scenic wonders that the railroads were happy to promote. Although the 1906 earthquake and an economic downturn on the west coast in 1908 brought an end to railroad construction in the Santa Cruz area, the period between 1910 and 1920 was a good one. Already existing lines carried less freight but provided service for an ever increasing number of tourists. In 1918 there were 18 passenger and six freight trains a day arriving and departing Santa Cruz. One of the most popular lines was the Scenic Local which ran from San Francisco to Monterey via Los Gatos, Santa Cruz, Aptos and Watsonville. By 1920 the automobile had begun to have an effect on train travel as more people purchased cars and the "good roads" movement took hold. Lobbying and fund raising previously devoted to getting railroads into communities were now aimed at improving local roads and hooking them up to a state highway system.

In an attempt to keep the tourist dollars coming, however, the Southern Pacific inaugurated its Suntan Special in 1927 and, coupled with the Seaside Company's Water Carnivals at the Plunge, it proved extremely successful. The first route was run on Sundays between San Jose and Santa Cruz and later lines were added from Oakland and San Francisco. As many as 5,000 people per day took the Suntan Special during its heyday. As roads improved, however, and competition from the automobile and trucking freight lines took its toll, the line was shut down, making its final run in 1940. In spite of the fact that railroads paid such an important part in the

development of the city's history, little remains except a railroad tunnel between Chestnut Street and Mission [Hill] and two railroad trestles and a former freight station at the depot site on Washington Street.

It would be almost impossible to tell from the appearance of the City today that it once supported a thriving streetcar system which linked downtown to the boardwalk and outlying neighborhoods. An extensive and lavishly illustrated history of the system can be found in the book *Surf, Sand and Streetcars, a Mobile History of Santa Cruz California* by Charles McCaleb.

In brief, the City got its first streetcar line in 1875. The horse drawn vehicles ran on a line that connected downtown with Beach Hill and the wharf and eventually to east Santa Cruz along Soquel Avenue. The system was electrified and expanded in the 1890s and, by 1895, major new lines ran out Mission and down Younglove and Woodrow, as well as out Soquel and down Cayuga to Seabright. Housing was built along these lines and when additional lines were run out Water and Morrissey (from 1900 through 1910) housing followed suit.

What had taken years to develop literally disappeared in a few months when, in 1926, the streetcars were replaced with motorized buses. All that remains of the system are roads such as Woodrow and Younglove that were originally laid out with a center median strip for trolley tracks and are now just exceptionally wide residential streets.

From: *Fully Developed Context Statement for the City of Santa Cruz*. Prepared for City of Santa Cruz Planning and Development Department. Chapter 3, Context I: Economic Development of the City of Santa Cruz 1850-1950, pp. 25-27.

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