

# The Old Faces Of Santa Cruz

Next time you stroll downtown, remember you're being watched. Not by fellow shoppers, or even by real people — but by a crowd of eave and rooftop creatures made of stone, concrete or copper.

The smiling cherub at the top was born in 1892, when the county courthouse was built. It (cherubs have no gender, much less sex) looks down on Pacific avenue from the peak of the courthouse wall.

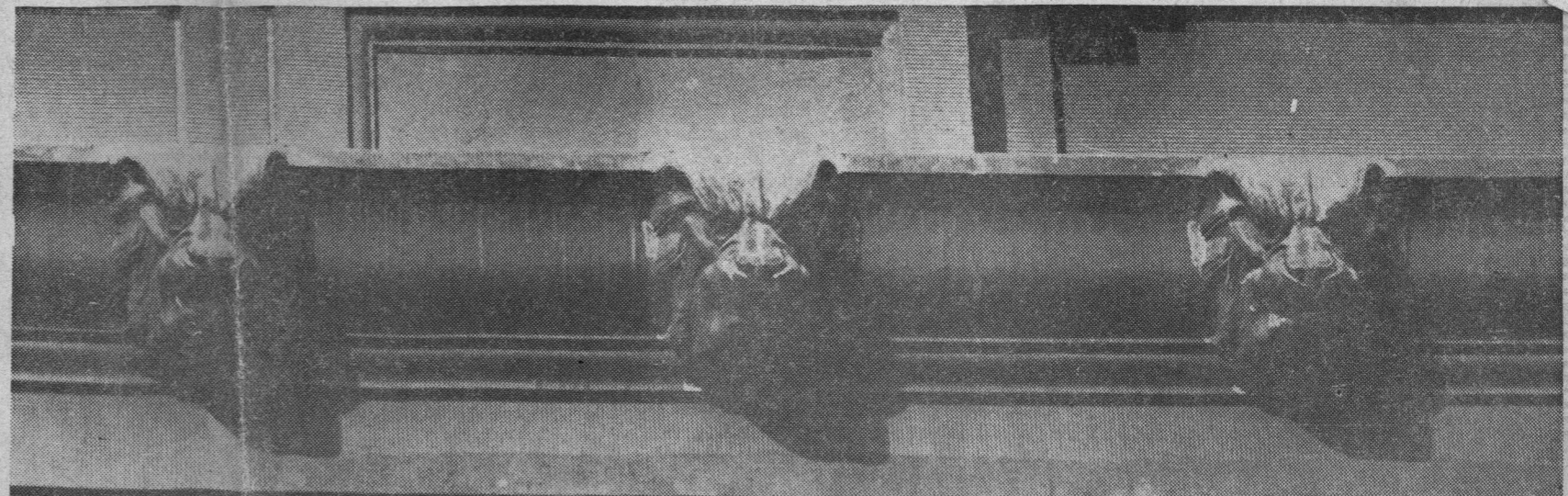
The old art of gargoyle-making has faded with the advent of modern slick-line architecture, but Pacific avenue still boasts a wondrous bestiary of cornices, talismanic heads, and pensive faces looking down on the traffic below, and perhaps guarding the city against strange things in the night.

The three ferocious lions, mottled green now, are of 1910 vintage, growling amid the classic capitals and crenelations of the Wells-Fargo bank, which began life as the People's Bank building.

The heads, flourishes and building-frosting provide a sort of instant course in architectural history as well. Old-time Santa Cruzans should recognize these faces as old familiar friends — but for those who don't, and who are a little wary of walking about town with their eyes on the rooftops:

Both the hawk-faced conquistador and the sad-eyed Franciscan are dwellers on the facade of the Palomar hotel, having taken up residence there in 1929. The year may explain their facial expressions.

They have a hundred neighbors, on almost every building on the avenue.



**Tree'n'Sea Living**

Text by Alan Jones

Photographs by Pete Amos

