

Fire destroys roof of Bay View Hotel

Arson investigators Wednesday were looking for a woman who reportedly saw young men running from the historic Bay View Hotel in Aptos Village Tuesday, moments before a fire was reported in the attic.

The fire, under control in less than five minutes, destroyed the roof of the hotel and old furniture and mattresses stored in the attic above the third floor living quarters.

The fire was reported to the Aptos fire

department at 12:52 p.m., fire captain Stan Mount said Wednesday.

When the first fire units arrived, a section of the roof was burning and the attic was engulfed in flame.

"The fire was under control in five minutes," Mount said, "but because of illegal storage in the attic, we have a five hour overhaul job.

The fire began at the east end of the attic near some old mattresses.

"The fire was manmade, either by error or otherwise," said Mount. "It was either a cigaret in a mattress or someone touched it off on purpose," Mount added, saying that there are no signs of other causes such as a short circuit in the electrical wiring.

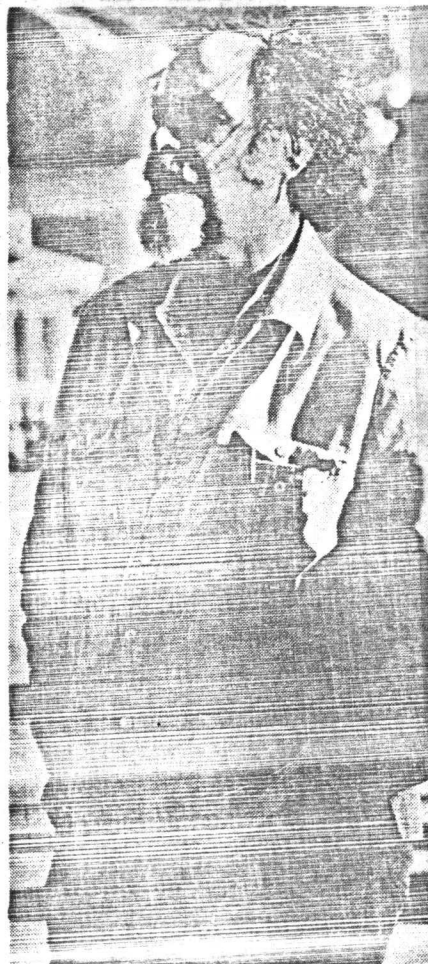
A woman who was using the telephone in the hotel lobby reportedly saw two people run from the hotel shortly before it was discovered.

She disappeared before firemen or investigators could talk to her.

The hotel, restaurant and bar were back in operation a few hours after the fire was extinguished.

Damage was estimated to be \$8,000 to the roof and about \$2,000 to the furniture stored there.

Fire chief Richard Chinn said Wednesday that a citation has been issued against the illegal storage in the attic.



Fran Leal, operator of the Bay View, watches efforts of firemen.