

Tree 'n Sea Living

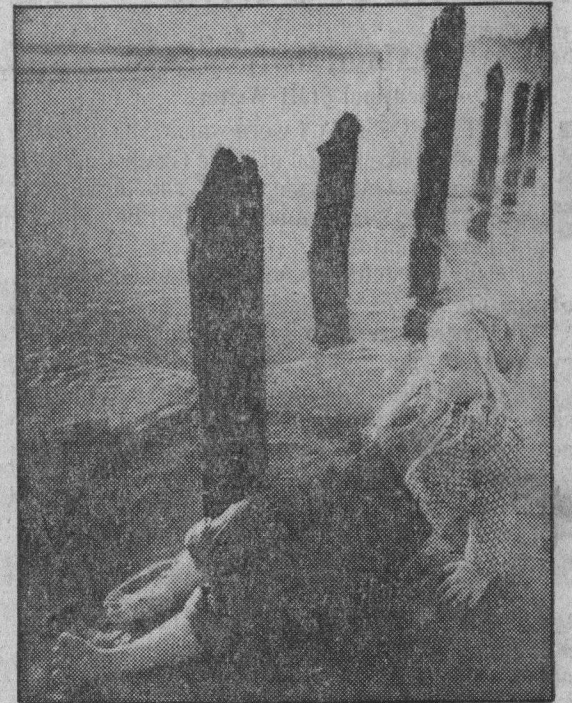
Travel _____ 8-9
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Sunday, Jan. 23, 1983 — Santa Cruz Sentinel

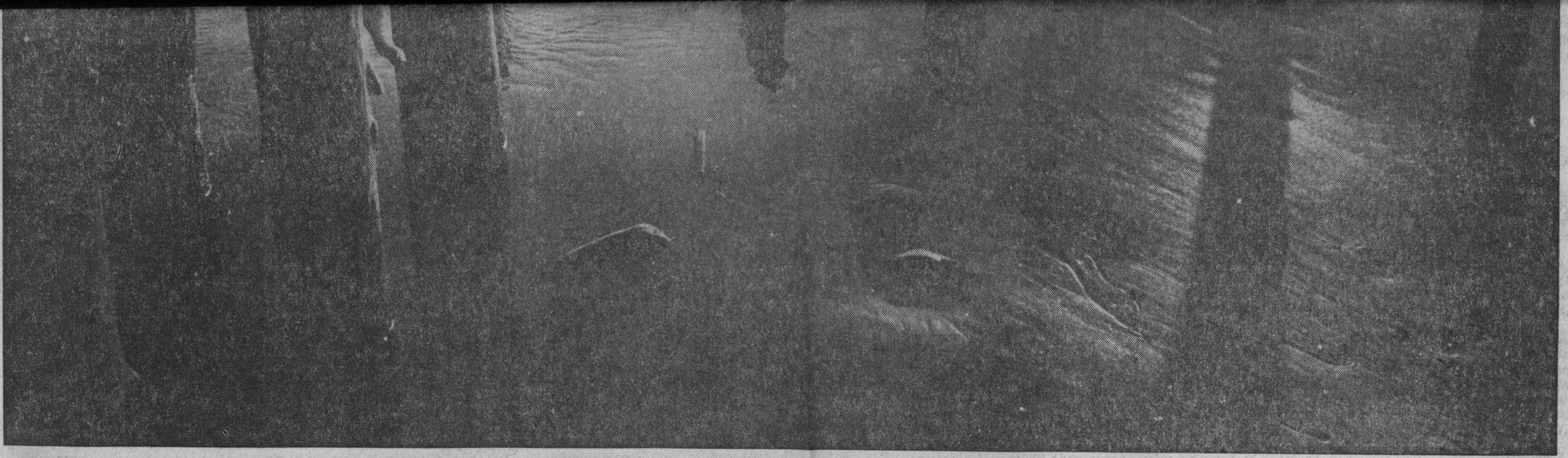
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A trestle to our past



Photo courtesy Randolph Brandt collection





Photos by Bill Lovejoy



ABOUT THIS TIME time of year Santa Cruzans who drive past Twin Lakes Beach are witness to a little transportation history. The combination of winter surf and high tides lays bare the remains of a trestle that carried a trolley line between Santa Cruz and Capitola.

It was a modern day miracle of electricity for those turn-of-the-century passengers who enjoyed a ride on Soquel Avenue from Pacific to Cayuga Street, then down Pine Street to Seabright Avenue. A left turn on Atlantic Avenue brought the trolley to the trestle at Woods Lagoon. Then it was along East Cliff to Portola and down to the Esplanade.

The Union Traction Co. railway began in 1890, when its two cars were horse-pulled, according to historian Margaret Koch. It cost a nickel to ride from the main terminal in downtown Santa Cruz to Capitola. The line was extended to 16 cars and electrified in 1892. It ceased running in 1926, when Santa Cruz got its first bus lines.

Today the pilings which supported the train tracks are visible only in the winter and cause speculation as to their origin. Our photographer heard one small child wondered aloud why anyone would "try to build a bridge out of all those old rotten logs, when they could make a nicer one out of plastic?"

The pilings don't hold up anything as tangible as trolley cars these days, but they can easily support the imaginations of children and adults alike.