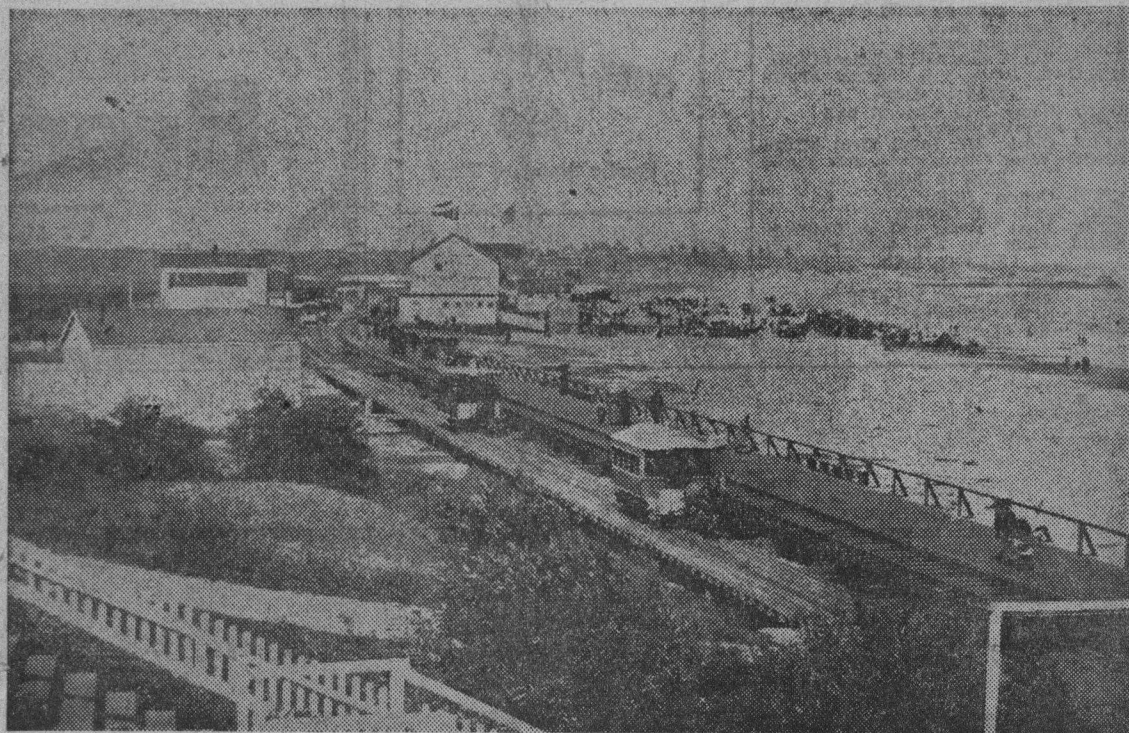


JUNE 19, 1949

Santa Cruz Yesterdays



HORSE CAR DAYS AT THE BEACH

(From the Preston Sawyer Collection)

Folks who rode to the beach in the late 80's either hitched up old Dobbin to their own rigs — or climbed aboard a horse car.

Santa Cruz had been among the first few communities in the state to embrace horse car transportation when in the mid-70's two lines were started from the lower Plaza to the "bath houses" and the wharf. One was known as the Red line. Another was the Yellow line. One followed a narrow single track down Pacific avenue. The other for a time shared the Santa Cruz & Watsonville railroad track down Chestnut avenue.

The line shown above extended parallel to the railroad tracks as far as the Southern Pacific trestlework over the San Lorenzo for the benefit of patrons bound for a favorite swimming spot at the mouth of the river.

The camera was aimed from the garden of the new Sea Beach hotel; John T. Sullivan, lessee. Opened in time for the summer season of 1888, it had been undergoing development since D. K. Abeel, formerly of Kansas City, purchased the property two years before.

Two Main Bath Houses

Main beach building visible in the background is "Neptune Baths", opened May 31, 1884, by Capt. C. F. Miller. Beyond was the "Dolphin", popular bath house of the Leibbrandt brothers. In between, the large word "Free" showing on the roof, is the museum and souvenir shop of Mrs. J. F. Par-

ker, who sold novelties, shells and pressed sea mosses.

The Millers and the Leibbrandts, after years of competition joined forces, and erected a single large establishment they dubbed the Plunge Baths. It opened with a fanfare to the strains of Hastings' Brass band on the evening of Saturday, July 15, 1893. Eventually this became the Plunge connected with the Neptune Casino promotion of 1904.

In the long-gone days of the photo a driveway was at the west end of the Neptune Baths. All types of horse-drawn conveyances were driven onto the sands of the beach. In all probability some at least of the crowd, were gathered around the waffle wagon.

Father's Day Then?

Father was having his day even then. Note the man and perambulator on the boardwalk at extreme right. The walk and both railroads were yet on trestles at the time. Filling in of the esplanade was begun not long afterward. Note closed car is followed by an open type.

First electric cars in Santa Cruz ran in April, 1892.

Marking the end of horse cars here, F. W. Ely was, late in March

of 1893, advertising for sale "14 head of horses, 2½ miles of 20-lb. "T" rails and nine street cars."