

Roaring Rancho Zayante

By Margaret Koch
Sentinel Staff Writer

Rancho Zayante, a name almost lost today, in its day was a rip-roaring place, and it spawned two of Santa Cruz county's historically important objects.

The first was Isaac Graham's power sawmill, first in Alta California, built by Peter Lassen about 1841.

The second was—and still is, because it still exists—the Felton covered bridge. This span once bore the brunt of main road traffic from Felton to Graham Hill road and the Mount Hermon area. It was retired gracefully when a new concrete highway bridge was constructed across the San Lorenzo river in 1938, several hundred yards upstream.

The Felton bridge is the tallest covered bridge in the United States, according to bridge authority Kramer A. Adams. It rises 35 feet from bottom stringers to roof peak. It was built in 1892 of native redwood.

The tall old bridge also holds another record: it is the longest (186 feet) of the three Santa Cruz county covered bridges.

The old bridge may be retired but it still leads an interesting life.

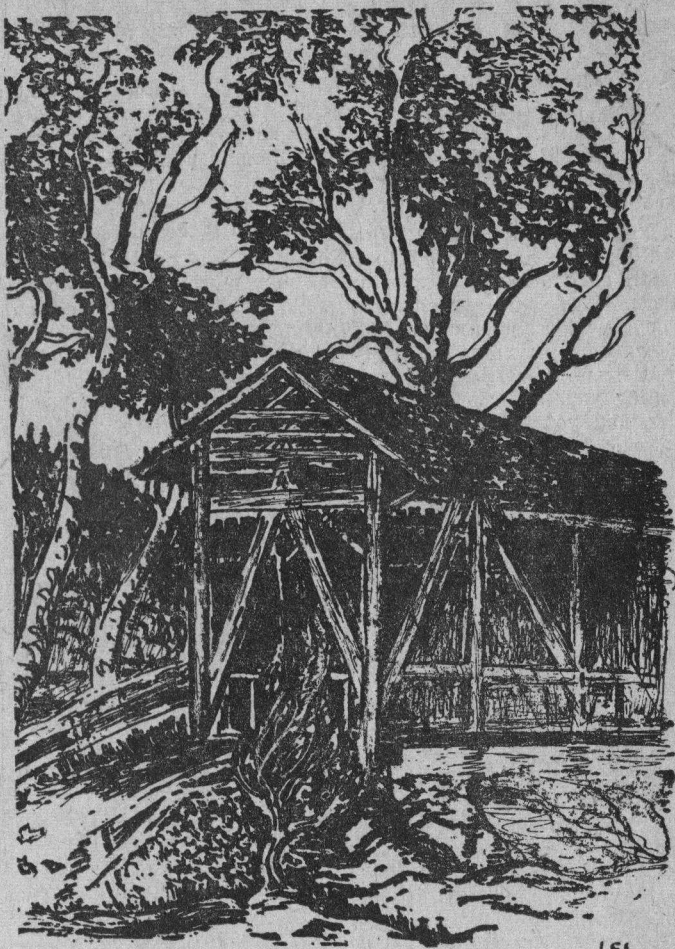
When it began to show signs of falling apart in spots several years ago, Feltonites banded together to do something about "their bridge." With true Valley spirit they held a series of pancake breakfasts to raise money for the bridge repairs. In order to convince pancake customers that the need was real and urgent, the breakfasts were held right on the bridge with concerned people like the Ted Tofts running the show.

Latest venture on the bridge is a Sunday art show — open air, all free — which has drawn hundreds to visit the old span.

A touch of imagination, a bit of work, and a lot of concern will keep this old bridge safe for future generations. Mrs. Louise Lovett, Santa Cruz artist, has captured it in a silk screen view, right, which will be reproduced in color as well as black and white.

NUNES ON DEAN'S LIST

William E. Nunes, of 1114 Laurel street, has been named to the Dean's list as a senior at the University of the Pacific. A total of 175 students were on the list.



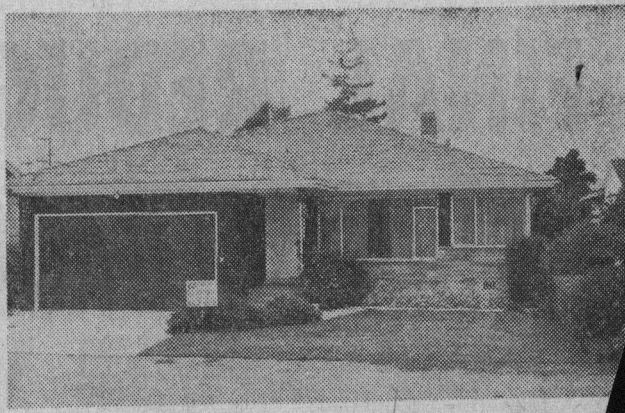
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