

SANTA CRUZ YESTERDAYS



BAY STREET RESERVOIR NEARS COMPLETION, 1924 (From the Preston Sawyer Collection)

An event of significant importance to the growing city of Santa Cruz and a big step forward in the annals of her civic development, was the dedication and placing in service of the 36,000,000 gallon Bay street reservoir as an integral part of the city's water system.

Slightly more than a year after the project was started the great water storage tank, here shown nearing completion, was dedicated with ceremony and celebration on December 6, 1924.

It was a proud day for Mayor John B. Maher, under whose administration the project was started and completed. Seven thousand happy citizens of a Santa Cruz then several thousand less in population than now, gathered at the site on Bay street, opposite Meder and near High street, for the two p.m. event.

Owing to recent rains the city had laid down board walks around the top of the reservoir,

enabling those who wished to view the affair from that vantage point. Many others went to the floor of the great basin where soon the combined waters from Laguna, Majors and Liddell creeks would flow, to create a vast storage pool near the city's limits.

At about two the community band in the center of the tank struck up the martial strains of "Star Spangled Banner", and the program was on.

Parked Cars

By this time an immense crowd had poured onto the floor of the tank. Outside two motorcycle police had directed the parking of what in those days was considered a "sea of cars."

Chamber of Commerce Secretary Leslie Cranbourne, with a large megaphone, W. S. Moore, Dr. Alan P. King, and others formed the assemblage into a great line which, headed by Mayor Maher and others, marched and countermarched around the

tank floor, until they were twenty couples abreast. Movies were taken of the "big parade". (Original celebration plans had called for dancing).

Rev. J. H. N. Williams offered a benediction.

Many speakers gave short talks on the opening and the crowd cheered them to the echo.

Miss California Stars

"In a few minutes," the Mayor said, "the water will be turned on by Miss California, not to be turned off, we hope, for many years." Hon. M. M. O'Shaughnessy from San Francisco, in his remarks said, "This water storage reservoir in your city will last for all time. I predict a great future for Santa Cruz."

Miss Faye Lanphier was Miss California (later chosen Miss America), who supplied the climax to the afternoon's events by turning on the waters that continue today to keep the great tank full.

An auto cavalcade was afterward formed and by invitation of the mayor and other dignitaries the procession toured the newly paved Cliff Drive.

It was stated during the speeches that the reservoir's cost would be in the neighborhood of \$160,000. O'Shaughnessy was consulting engineer; S. H. Williams, city engineer.

A point pridefully stressed at the time was that the city's fine new reservoir had been completed at an extremely moderate cost, as compared to others similar, and then also new.