

Old Santa Cruz

● ● By Ernest Otto

(Editor's Note: The late Ernest Otto, famed and beloved waterfront correspondent for The Sentinel and writer of the "Old Santa Cruz" column, left a number of columns written before his death. They will be published weekly by The Sentinel.)

Few people today can realize how much of a difficulty transportation was in the old days.

Long before the bus lines and automobiles of today, there was transportation of a sort between Santa Cruz and Pescadero for passengers.

This was the Santa Cruz-Pescadero stage line which ran between the two coast communities.

The stage would leave Santa Cruz at 9 o'clock in the morning and arrive in Pescadero at 6 o'clock that night. The driver and the stage would remain there overnight and then come back the following day on the same schedule, alternating nights between the two towns.

The stage barns in Santa Cruz were in the property of N. P. Ingalls at the corner of Laurel and Washington streets. Ingalls was supervisor of the Seaside district for many years and occasionally handled the reins on the up-coast stage line. The red painted stage would leave from the Pacific house in Santa Cruz and the Swanton house in Pescadero.

For freight in the old days, transportation was somewhat easier. Before the days of the railroad, the bay and the ocean represented a means of shipping.

In the good harboring facilities around the bay were the old Cowell's wharf, the Pacific Coast Steamship company wharf off Main street, and the Railroad wharf off Pacific avenue.

Also available as harbors were the wharf off Soquel landing, now known as Capitola; a wharf off Aptos, a wharf off Camp Goodall, also known as Watsonville landing; another off Moss Landing and still another off Main street in Monterey.

Up the coast from Santa Cruz was a wharf off Davenport landing before there was a town of Davenport. Also up the coast was Williams landing to the east of where the Santa Cruz Portland Cement company pier was built in later days.

Schooners, when the sea was calm, would come into the cove at Davenport and a tall spar near the bank was so set up that shipments could be swung over and lowered into the schooner.

A landing for schooners requiring deeper water was further up the coast at Pigeon point. It was operated with a spar like the one at Williams landing.