

# Oak was slow



—Photo courtesy of Vester Dick

horsecar line from Santa Cruz. The church conference, right, later became "Hotel Surf."

average attendance of 32 children, ages ranged from five to 15 years—and it was possible for a five-year-old and an 11-year-old to be placed in the same grade. The children were never dominated by one particular teaching style, nor was there any security of teacher tenure. In 1888, Edna Young was the teacher, but she was replaced in 1889 by Annie E. Kingsbury, who was replaced in 1890 by Flora B. Smith. All three had been paid about \$50 per month, a standard salary for women in rural schools.

In the 1890s, Live Oak farmers suffered along with most county residents when a nationwide depression spread from the east coast in the winter of 1893. The depression closed county lumber and paper mills, slowed the tourist industry and increased competition among laborers. Effects of the depression were avoided in the county only by Watsonville, which was spared through the operation of Claus Spreckels' Western Sugar Beet Mill.

In 1894, Lynsky, Kinsley and Thompson were still Live Oak trustees — and were faced with the district's first pinch for classroom space.

Enrollment records of the early 1890s contained a significant change from previous years. Addresses were no longer divided along only "Upper," and "Lower," Soquel Road. Parents now listed themselves as "H.E. Parker, of Twin Lakes;" "Simon Perez, of Live Oak;" or "Mrs. Gillen, of Del Mar," who sent her daughter to Live Oak School during a summer stay from San Francisco.

Just before 1891, the Baptist Church had purchased Live Oak property owned by J. C. Kimble of Oakland, who donated additional property and a stretch of beach for a total of 22½ acres. Jacob Schwan of Schwan Lagoon gave another seven and one-fifth acres, and the church purchased 12, all for a summer encampment to be known as "Twin Lakes."

The Baptist Religious

Association was formed, and N.W. Beckwith of Los Gatos was hired as superintendent and resident-agent for the sale of 40-by-80 foot lots. Non-church members were allowed to buy church property, although the sale of alcohol was forbidden on the grounds.

Twin Lakes campground and park, with facilities for salt-water bathing, was Live Oak's first church resort. It included Twin Lakes Baptist Church, built with a spire that stood as a surrounding subdivisions. There were tent campgrounds, cabins, an auditorium and conference center built in 1890.

Conference center facilities later became "Twin Lakes Hotel," a summer operation close to the beach and flanked by the church. It eventually was owned by Milton D. and Mary Bardwell as "The Surf Hotel." Karl Kott bought the building in 1926, and a year later — on April 19, 1927, the hotel burned.

There was little Live Oak residents could do about fires then, except watch them burn. The Surf Hotel fire was fought by the Santa Cruz Fire District, with water from Schwan Lagoon. When the Live Oak Volunteer Fire Department was finally organized in 1943, one of its early acts was an inspection of the Twin Lakes resort.

Listed in county tourist publications as a "minor resort," in 1892, Twin Lakes rated a service from Santa Cruz that Live Oak never had before. The "East Santa Cruz Street Railroad," a promotional venture of William Ely, ran from downtown Santa Cruz through the community at Seabright and out to Twin Lakes, where a bridge was built across the lagoons. A six-bench horsecar skirted the beach in front of the hotel.

In 1892, the first electric trolley line in the county was built from Santa Cruz, and eventually extended through Live Oak to Capitola. "Santa Cruz-Garfield Park and Capitola Railway,"

(Continued on page 12)