

# Oldest Felton Resident Muses About Progress

By Wally Trabing

Thomas E. Silvey, "Comin' 81 this May," came to Felton when he was 1½ years old, and hasn't left it yet.

He watched the little town take slow root, burn back a couple of times, then, much to his amazement of late, blossom forth.

Silvey has been hit by the concussion of the population explosion.

"You don't know hardly any of the people you meet," any more. They seem less friendly now," he said.

"Used to be you'd meet a fellow on the street and tell him a good story, and you'd know all the time he'd be thinking hard for a better one to come back with."

Silvey's a talker when you get him going. Talking took him back to the roughboard-built town before the turn of the century which stretched from what is now Smiley's bar to the present County bank.

It was a lumber and lime town. There were seven lime kilns in the area and working in lime occupied a great deal of Silvey's life.

He remembered the "whole town" burning down in 1887.

He remembered playing "buck the donkey" and "steal the peg."

He remembered wrestling a team twice a day from Felton to the powder mill in Paradise park, hauling tan bark, when he was 13. "The trip took two hours," he said. "I worked 11 hours and 40 minutes a day and I didn't get any pay. My father got it."

But most of all he remembers baseball. He caught for the Felton Woodpeckers from about 1907 to 1915.

Apparently they played a brand of ball in those days that make the San Francisco Giants look like ballet dancers.

"Oh, they play better ball today," he admitted, "but there's hardly any action."

By action he means fights.

Toughness was a qualification in those days.

His team was beaten by the late, great San Francisco Seals, but their record in the local circuit in 1914 (it was a good year that) was 40 wins and eight losses.

The late Harry Cowell sponsored the Woodpeckers for awhile and Silvey thought aloud that here was a great guy, in fact "one heck of a fine fellow."

Silvey got to talking about his teammates. He remembers the late Fred Quistorf, pitcher; Victor Trotts, third baseman, still living in Santa Cruz; and the late Ralph Hagerman, shortstop.

And speaking of toughness — there was Charlie Glass. "He's gone now," said Silvey. "He was a good baseball man and he could lick any man in the world."

Charlie was engineer on a Valley train, which reminded Silvey of the time Glass' crew was in Felton and was informed that another train was due on the track between there and Santa Cruz in 10 minutes.

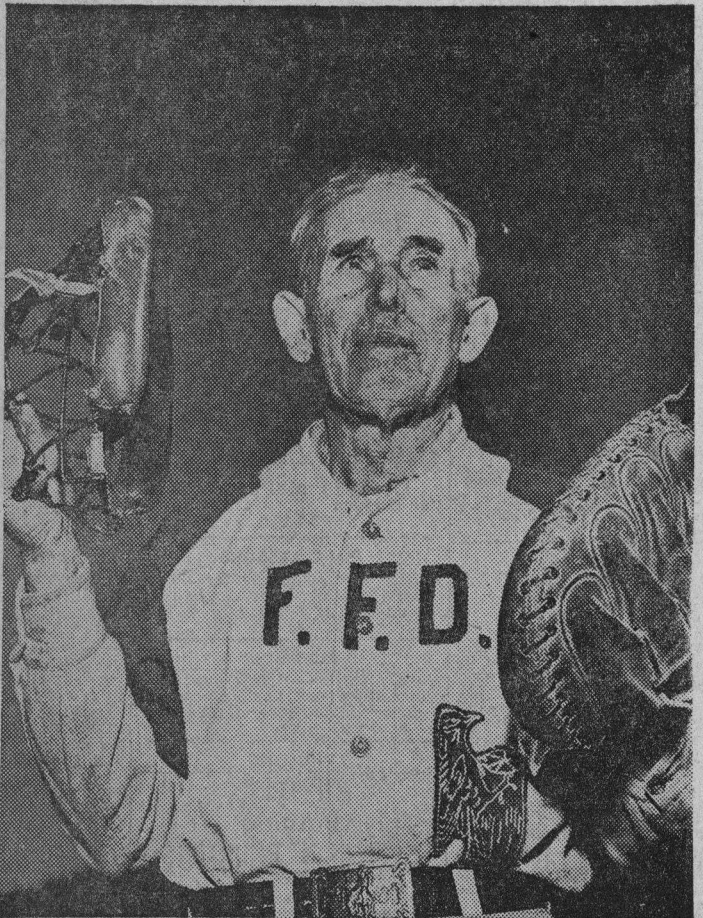
Glass didn't particularly feel like waiting until the other train reached Felton before he got his back to the Santa Cruz roundhouse, according to Silvey, so he reckoned he might try the run in 10 minutes. He told his crew: "If you ———'s can hang on, get aboard," Silvey recalled, working up a good laugh.

"He did it too, but the brakemen didn't see much scenery. They were lying on the caboose floor."

Silvey has never owned an automobile, nor flown in an airplane. He and his wife, Maude, have lived in their two-story white house on Gushee street for 48 years.

It was only two years ago that he retired from managing the Hallcrest winery vineyards in

## 'Those Were The Days'



Thomas E. Silvey, 80 of Felton, got out his catcher's mitt and mask which went through sweat and "action" with the old Felton Woodpeckers from 1907 to 1915. Silvey has lived in Fel-

ton from childhood and watched the little town struggle for a spot on the map. There was a lot of action in his early life and "I can still shake a leg," he said.

Felton, and he was at that for 20 years.

He's fathered three boys and three girls. Two living in this area are Mrs. Clarence Hansen and Roy A. Silvey of the Felton area.

Despite this oldest's rugged baseball days, he never smoked or even chewed tobacco, and despite his 20 years associated with a winery he touched very little drink, he said.

He's still a hearty soul. Just the other day he took a three-mile stroll. He used to like to go to dances, although not so much of late. But don't get the idea he couldn't dance if he wanted to.

"I can still shake a leg," confirmed Felton's longest resident.

## Fire Kills Five Tots In Home

Texarkana, Tex. (AP) — Flames sweeping through a house occupied by 12 persons killed five tots 3 months to 4 years old Thursday night.

The victims all were grandchildren of Mr. and Mrs. Willie Sanders, a Negro couple with whom three daughters made their home.

One of the survivors, Benny Earl Sanders, 9, said one of the children shouted as the blaze was discovered: "I'm on fire — the quilt is burning!"

Firemen said the bedding somehow came in contact with an open heater in a room where six children had been put to bed.

Those who perished as flames destroyed the five-room frame dwelling were Gary, 4, Vickie, 3, Dennis, 2, and Steve, 6 months, all children of Margaret Sanders, and Sherry, 3 months, daughter of Lula Dean Sanders.

Margaret Sanders, her 18-month-old son Darrell and Mrs. Willie Sanders, the grandmother, were taken to a hospital for treatment of burns and shock.

## Man Hires Thief To Get Mother Out Of Business

Pittsburgh (AP) — Wilbur Hightower says he hired a man to burglarize his mother's dress shop to force her out of business because she has a heart condition.

Hightower, 36, of Pittsburgh Thursday was held for grand jury action on charges of receiving stolen goods. Police are searching for the other man who took \$2700 worth of dresses and machines January 18.

Hightower testified at a magistrate's hearing that his mother, Madeline Hightower, refused to give up her share in the shop and he decided to take a "drastic measure to force Mrs. Hightower out of business."

He said the hired thief was to take just enough to force Mrs. Hightower out of business.

Mrs. Hightower has given up her share of the shop.

## Gold-Brocaded Garlands Are Given To Queen

New Delhi, India. (AP) — The Indians finally ringed Britain's Queen Elizabeth II with a garland Friday — a gold-brocaded one.

Distinguished visitors to India are usually buried in garlands of flowers, but Buckingham Palace sent advance word that the queen wanted none—fearing they might spoil her clothes.

When she appeared to open the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences today, an official met her and her husband, Prince Philip, with gold-brocaded garlands that took nine craftsmen two months to make.