

SANTA CRUZ YESTERDAYS



COMPLETING BAY STREET RESERVOIR, 1924

(From the Preston Sawyer Collection)

Slightly more than a year after the project was started, the great 36,000,000 gallon Bay street reservoir of the Santa Cruz city water department was ready for dedication.

And an event of significant importance it was, to the growing city — marking a big step forward in local civic development. Shown here nearing completion, the huge tank was formally dedicated on December 6th, 1924, almost 33 years ago.

It was a proud day for Mayor John B. Maher, under whose administration the project was started and completed. Seven thousand and happy citizens of a Santa Cruz considerably less in population than the thriving community of today, gathered at the site on Bay street opposite Meder and near High street, for the 2 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

event 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.

Band Music

At 2 o'clock the Santa Cruz band in the center of the tank struck up the martial strains of "Star Spangled Banner" and the program was on.

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 reservoir floor, until they were twenty couples abreast.

Movies were taken of the "big parade". (Original celebration plans had called for dancing).

Many speakers gave short talks. Rev. J. H. N. Williams offered benediction.

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 huge basin full.

It was stated during the afternoon speeches that the reservoir's cost would be in the neighborhood of \$160,000, which was considered very moderate, in comparison to other similar projects.