

# He Used The Town Clock To Ring In The New Year



Rolla Whitney

1-30-76

One of the town's "bad boys" — bad that is, in a harmless but mischievous way, returned to Santa Cruz this week and was delighted to discover that the town clock is on its way to being revived. He has a special memory about that clock.

He is Rolla Whitney who was born in Santa Cruz but now makes his home in North Carolina.

Rolla's grandfather, who came here in 1888, operated the Whitney's Hardware Store for years in the IOOF Building. That was the same building where the clock was located.

However, Rolla's memories of his town clock escapade date only from 1930. He still chuckles over it — although the story couldn't be told for years for fear of getting an elderly

night watchman into trouble, he says.

"The old man — his name was Thompson — left the trap door open for me. It went up to the clock."

Rolla had told Thompson what he wanted to do ahead of time.

"I wanted to ring that clock's bell," he says with a grin. "It had all been shut down because of the Palomar Residents of the Palomar had complained that the clock's bell kept them awake — and it was disconnected."

On New Year's Eve of 1930, an evening that Rolla considered particularly appropriate for such a venture, he and a young lady friend climbed the ladder up through the trap door to the clock.

"Her name was Barbara Clay," he recalls. "We had a watch to go by, so we'd know when it was midnight. A few cars were going up and down Pacific Avenue blowing their horns once in awhile — but things were really pretty quiet. Not like Santa Cruz today."

He and Barbara stood on the trap door — so no one could have opened it if they had wanted to.

"At midnight I lifted the clapper — it was like hitting a big bell with a hammer. What a noise it made! I rang it at least 12 times — later my kid brother said he counted 13 times. A few close friends knew about it and everyone in town was wondering who had done it."

The Sentinel came out with an article in the following edition, titled "WHO RANG THE BELL?"

## Nina Terrace Residents Can Expect Low Pressure

Residents of Nina Terrace subdivision in Boulder Creek are warned they will have low water pressures during the coming week, beginning Monday.

Bill Winner, manager of the San Lorenzo Valley County Water District, explained this week that the Highland Avenue tank which serves the area will have to be drained so that a new liner can be installed.

"In order for us to install the liner, the tank must be drained," Winner said, "and this means residents will have

very low water pressure during this time period."

The water district asks that residents cease any watering of gardens, washing of vehicle, filling of pools, or any other unnecessary usage of water.

Winner said that a small booster pump will be in operation that is expected to sufficient water for sanitary purposes only.

## Volleyball At Laurel School