

# World's Fair style in Santa Cruz

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ROSS ERIC GIBSON COLLECTION

The 1907 Santa Cruz casino and plunge were inspired by the 1894 World's Fair Manufacturers Building.

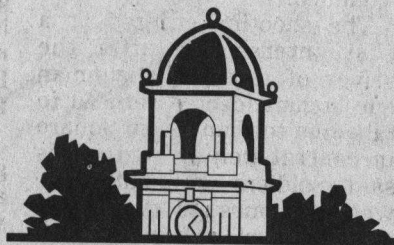
## County displayed wares at early fair in Golden Gate Park

BY ROSS ERIC GIBSON  
Special to the Mercury News

James Duval Phelan and M.H. DeYoung came up with the idea of shipping the exhibits of the 1893 Chicago World's Fair to San Francisco, and then set about raising the money.

Using their own money and private contributions, they raised \$344,320, named DeYoung the fair's director general, and Phelan, whose estate is now Light-house Field, its president.

In five months the fair was built around the Music Concourse in Golden Gate Park and named the "Midwinter Fair" to show off



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California to a snowbound world. It was the first World's Fair west of the Mississippi, representing 38 countries, every state, and every California county.

In the Agriculture Building, Santa Cruz County's exhibit was in a large space facing the entrance. A girl made of sugar promoted Spreckels sugar refinery in Watsonville, with displays show-

ing the steps in syrup manufacturing.

Watsonville demonstrated its growing reputation as the state's "Apple Valley"; while its Lake Farm showed off strawberries, raspberries and blackberries. Judge Logan displayed his hybrids, the loganberry and giant blackberry. Soquel highlighted its place as the county's cherry capital, while mountain communities provided dried apricots and prunes. County viticulture was represented by the Santa Cruz Mountain Wine Company, Emil Meyer and the Ben Lomond Wine Company, which won two gold medals, for its cabernet sauvignon and riesling.

In the Manufacturers Building, an artificial stream bed of colored pebbles led to an exhibit by coun-

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## How Santa Cruz benefited from the World's Fair

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ty geologist Dr. C.L. Anderson. A wall depicting Santa Cruz strata showed where rock and mineral deposits occurred. The display demonstrated how every aspect of building construction was available in the county.

The lowest stratum was granite — quarried at Pasatiempo — that was used as curbstones and building stones. Above it, the four marine sedimentary layers — metamorphic, limestone, sandstone and shale — produced a wonderful display of sea fossils, some of which were discovered and named by Anderson.

Displays of Henry Cowell's company showed how limestone is burned to produce lime, used in mortar, cement, plaster and

whitewash. The county's marble is merely crystalized limestone.

A half-section of roadway showed how bituminous rock and shale are used in roads. From shale also comes aluminum, shown at the two fairs in souvenir coins.

Kron's Tannery, one of the state's oldest, showed the stages of leather production, and leather products. Samples of Santa Cruz glue were shown. The museum at Vue de l'Eau displayed seaweed and seashells, with ornamental objects and books of pressed sea moss. Mountain communities provided beautiful samples of redwood burls.

The fair's most popular exhibit was the Japanese Tea Garden, which remained as a permanent park feature. After the fair, the teahouse was sent to Santa Cruz

and displayed at Front and Spruce streets. This was Water-fair Square for the 1895 Venetian Water Carnival. At the time, city officials also considered replacing a barn-like exhibit hall at Laurel and Front streets with a hall patterned after Chicago's 1893 Mining Building.

But the most lasting local Midwinter Fair souvenir came after the boardwalk casino burned in 1906. The 1894 Manufacturers Building was architect William Weeks' inspiration, reinterpreting its west tower, arcade and pleasure dome for the new casino, and borrowing its east tower and arched roof for the new plunge.

Local historian, architectural consultant and author Ross Eric Gibson writes a weekly history column for the Santa Cruz/Monterey edition.

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