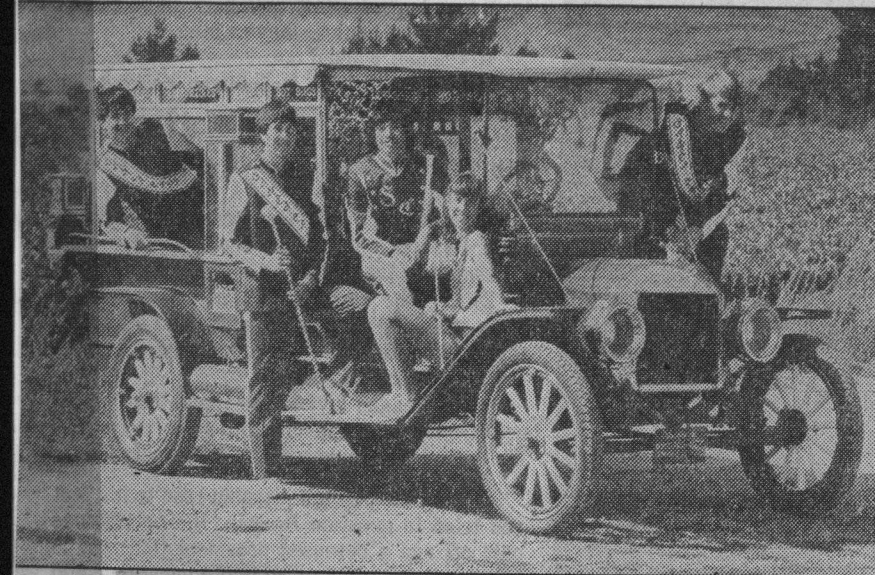


Big birthday bash Saturday



Members of Santa Cruz High School band — from left, Shawn Savadkahi, Lawrence Wolfsen, Martin Corona, Shauna Schaeffer and Jeff Matlock.

By TONI COCCO

Sentinel Staff Writer

SANTA CRUZ — The 192nd Birthday Party for the city of Santa Cruz will be celebrated with a parade and festival Saturday.

Called the Mission Day Fiesta, the event marks the establishment of Mission Santa Cruz on the site of Holy Cross Church on Mission Hill in 1791.

The fiesta was reborn three years ago, following a hiatus of a few years. The previous big celebration had been in 1964, with a Heritage Days celebration in 1969 — the anniversary of Portola's expedition.

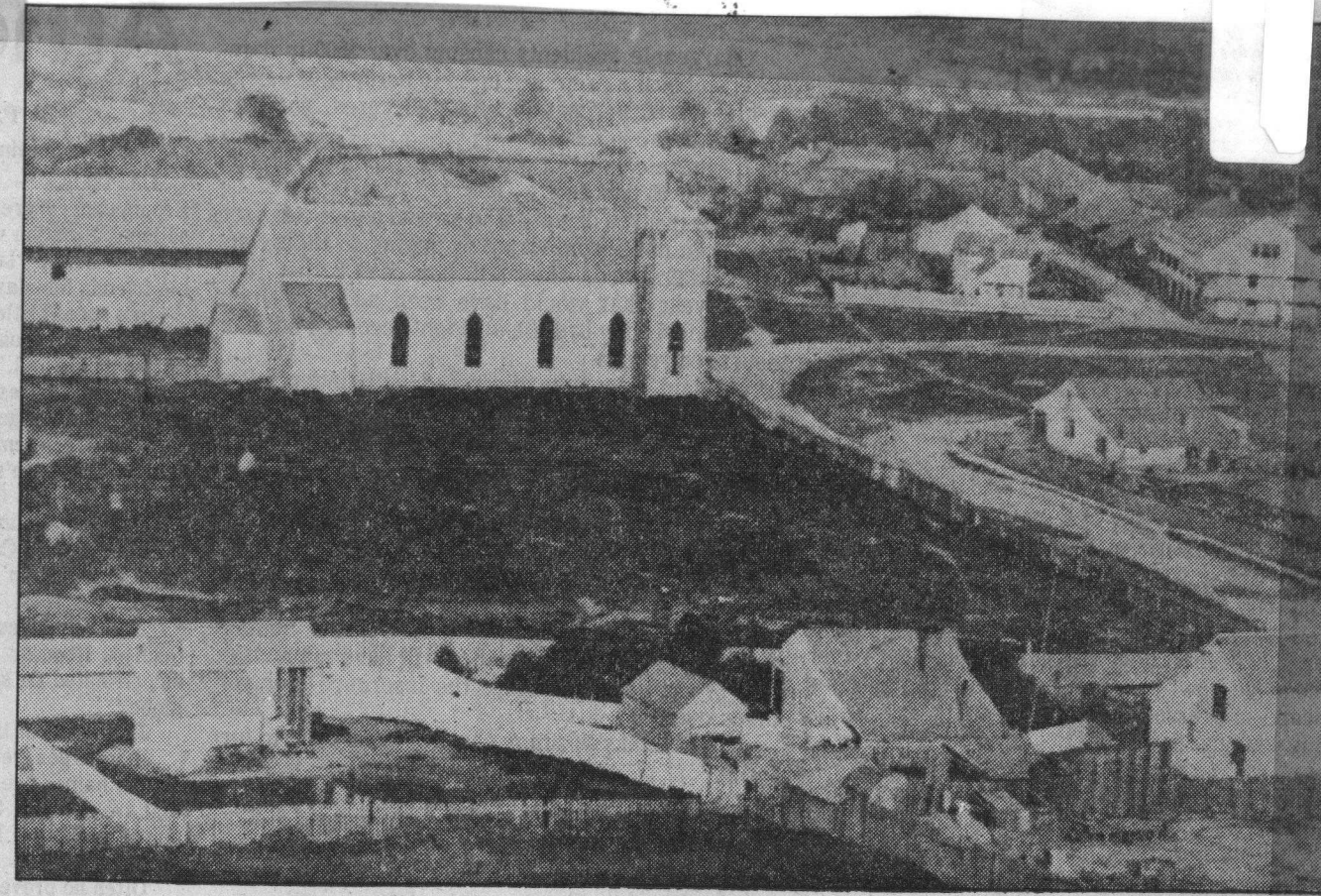
It was first organized by Leslie Cranbourne on October 17, 1924. Cranbourne had staged the Portland, Oregon Rose Festival and had come to Santa Cruz to organize a Spanish Ball or Fiesta Espanol to observe the 155th birthday of Santa Cruz. (She had calculated the age of Santa Cruz from the date of Portola's landing in 1769. Fiesta organizers and historians now set the birthday party celebration by the date the mission was founded, in 1791.)

The fiesta was continued by a group of Santa Cruz businessmen led by Fred McPherson Jr., now chairman of the board of The Sentinel.

The celebration focuses on the Spanish and Indian heritage of Santa Cruz. At one time it included a fancy dress ball, a fiesta queen, and family activities that included a treasure hunt on the main beach and a parade along Pacific Avenue. Also included in past celebrations was a fireworks display on the beach.

The focus of the modern Fiesta celebration is the Santa Cruz Adobe — the last surviving building of Mission Santa Cruz. The building stands on School Street and once ran the entire length of the street.

Efforts to preserve the adobe were begun in 1954 by McPherson, then president of the Santa Cruz Historical Society. Through the work of McPherson's Adobe Committee, the state purchased the building in 1958.



Mission Hill in 1865, with the Adobe at upper right of photo.

Renewed efforts to restore the Adobe are being made by the Adobe Coalition, formed in 1980 and which grew out of the Adobe Task Force appointed by the City Council in the 1970s.

Progress on the restoration has been made and the Adobe will be open for visitors Oct. 1 during the fiesta celebration.

The Fiesta Parade this year will wind through downtown Santa Cruz and end at the Plaza in front of Holy Cross Church near the surviving adobe building.

The fiesta will be held in the Plaza and will feature early crafts and traditional food and music.

The parade will start at Fords department store on the Pacific Garden Mall and end at the Santa Cruz Mission Plaza.

Highlights of this year's parade will be: costumed Indian riders from White Rock Ranch in Big Sur; Wells Fargo stage coach; Larry Wolfsen's restored circus wagon; military color guards from the Presidio; Merced County Sheriff's Posse; the Alameda County Sheriff's Mounted Posse; an Amish wagon; the old horse soldier; llamas and donkeys; antique cars from the Model A Ford Club; Marshall Frank Milburn's Model T Ford truck; the Seaside float; the Scotts Valley Historical Society; various drill teams and color

guards; groups of costumed school children from Evergreen, Gateway and Davenport Schools.

Bands include the Seventh Infantry Fort Ord Band; the 149th California Military Reserves Band from Walnut Creek; the U.S. Coast Guard Band; the Santa Cruz High School Band; the Harbor High School Band; and the North Monterey High School Band with the Seaside Six.

Grand Marshal of the parade this year will be Sandy Lydon, local historian and professor of history at Cabrillo College, where he teaches a class on the Missions of the Monterey Bay area. The parade will begin at 11 a.m.