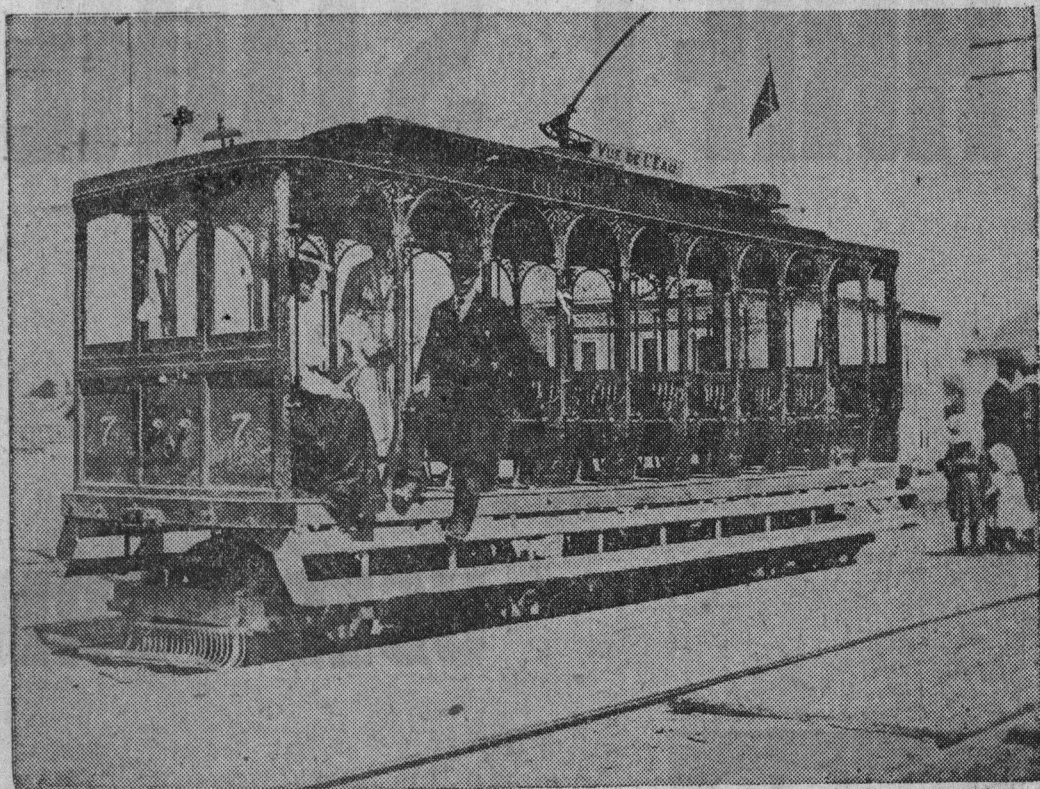


2-2-58

SANTA CRUZ YESTERDAYS



STREETCAR OF 50 YEARS AGO

(From the Preston Sawyer Collection)

Santa Cruz streetcar service started in the mid-70's with "one horse power" per car in the middle of Pacific avenue. Transit up and down Pacific avenue from the plaza to the beach was by narrow gauge track.

Electrification did not come until 1892.

The horse-drawn systems, one of which, the Ely line, extended as far as Twin Lakes, yielded to progress. The faster carriers served the Vue de l'Eau Casino at West Cliff drive and Garfield avenue (now Woodrow).

Also, they provided transit between the downtown area, the beach and the Mission Hill hotels, Pope House and Bedell.

Growing Plans

By 1904 rival companies were seeking new routes. Santa Cruz, Capitola and Watsonville Railway had ambitious plans to continue on to the Apple City. They were completing the Capitola phase when the Union Traction company was born, by consolidation with the Santa Cruz Electric Railway.

Capitola passengers were then

enabled to transfer at Soquel and Pacific avenues to a beach car, which reached the Casino via Lincoln and Center streets, passing the Southern Pacific depot.

The car pictured is believed to be one which (here seen on Beach street near the then new Furrer Hotel) used still another route between there and town, namely via Riverside avenue, Laurel street extension, Cathcart street and Pacific avenue.

Ran On Trestle

Along Laurel street much of the trackage was on a trestle, due to the low level of the street bed.

As the country recovered from the panic of 1907 the company tried to bolster financial returns by buying bigger and better cars. In 1908 the fine concrete trestle over the San Lorenzo river at Water street was built, which eventually became part of the present span.

The metal plaque naming "Union Traction Company," John Martin and others is still on the south railing.