

READY, SET: It was estimated that the hill had gradients up to 63 per cent.



Eventful day: A record was set by Ralph Hepburn, seated with dog, famed racing driver. At left is John Durst; standing at front wheel is Tom McHugh, timer; in back-

ground is an unidentified elderly man standing with Fred McPherson Jr., who served as starter for the record-breaking run. To right of driver is Highway Patrol-

man George Cavanaugh; kneeling are Warren Goodman, mechanic, A. G. (Gus) Sgarlato, who furnished the automobile for the run, and standing, Frank Gherse, mechanic.

# A Once-Wild Hill Will Lead Sedate Life

By Margaret Koch  
Sentinel Staff Writer  
"Motorcycle Hill," it used to be called.

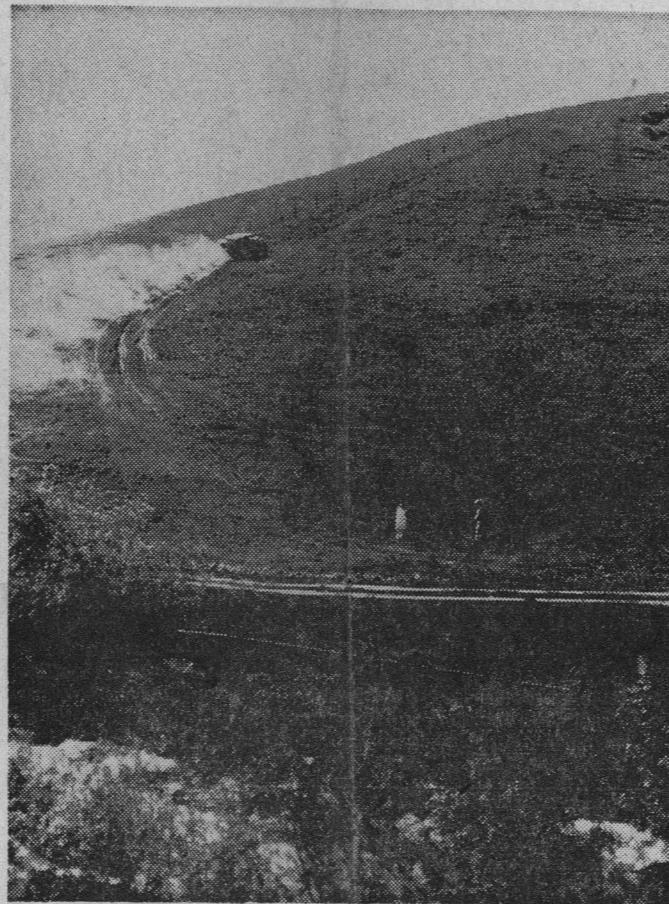
And not so many years ago at that . . . about 35. Before long it may become known as "Elks'

Hill' because the new Elks lodge building is going up on a site carved from the hill's southwest flank.

The old hill also wears a crown of homes today, known as Tanner Heights. And what

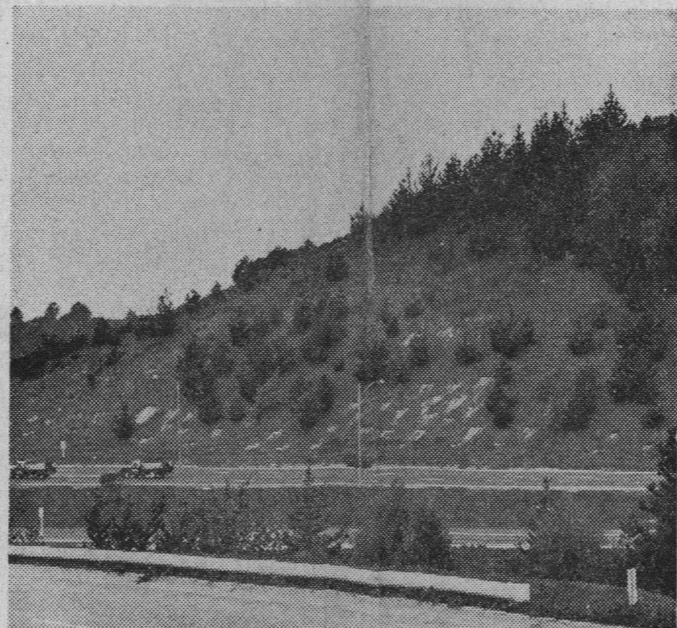
with Highway 17 slicing a piece off here and a hunk off there, the hill has undergone some major facelifting operations in the past few years.

Back in 1930 it was all-of-a-piece, an upthrust portion of earth where men tested their skill, their courage and their motors. These tests were conducted to the savage accompaniment of snarling machinery, churning wheels, flying turf and the acrid smell of scorching rubber tires.



Up they go: Grinding, sliding, bucking and roaring they went in a cloud of dust and

smoke, and Motorcycle Hill was conquered.



Sometimes man and machine won.

Sometimes the hill won.

In March 1930, Motorcycle Hill was conquered for once and all time by a famous racing driver, Ralph Hepburn, who drove the second auto to ever attempt the climb. The nationally-known racing driver piloted an Erskine sedan up and over the hill in 42.4 seconds, beating by 13 seconds the record set seven months before by a Durant stock roadster. The Durant had been the first auto to attempt the hill.

The Erskine was the second auto to try the run and the first sedan. It was a standard six. Passengers on Hepburn's record-shattering run were Warren Goodman and Frank Gherse, mechanics at the local Studebaker garage, and California Highway Patrolman George Cavanaugh.

It was estimated in the Santa Cruz Morning Sentinel of March 30, 1930, that "steepness and gradients of Motorcycle Hill reach as high as 63 per cent—and the hill is

approximately 400 yards from bottom to crest and is far from smooth on its surface."

"Hepburn thrilled spectators with a skidding turn up the mountain side . . . again he thrilled them when the front wheels bounced at least a foot in the air over a particularly rough portion of the incline..."

The rear wheels were covered with chains for added traction. It also was estimated that the men passengers averaged 155 pounds apiece. Two sacks of sand weighing 350 pounds also were carried.

Two young fellows who took a great interest in the whole operation were Fred McPherson Jr., who served as starter, and Tom McHugh, who acted as timer.

Hepburn literally had to "cut" a road up the hill, making three tries before the successful run. Then, with chunks of dirt flying, up and over he went, to win a trophy awarded by the Santa Cruz News.

One of the first people to congratulate Hepburn on the run "over the top" was A. G. (Gus) Sgarlato, manager of the Pacific Motor Sales company which furnished the Erskine sedan for the trip.

"And now I want to go over the top with you, Ralph," Sgarlato said. And over they went again.

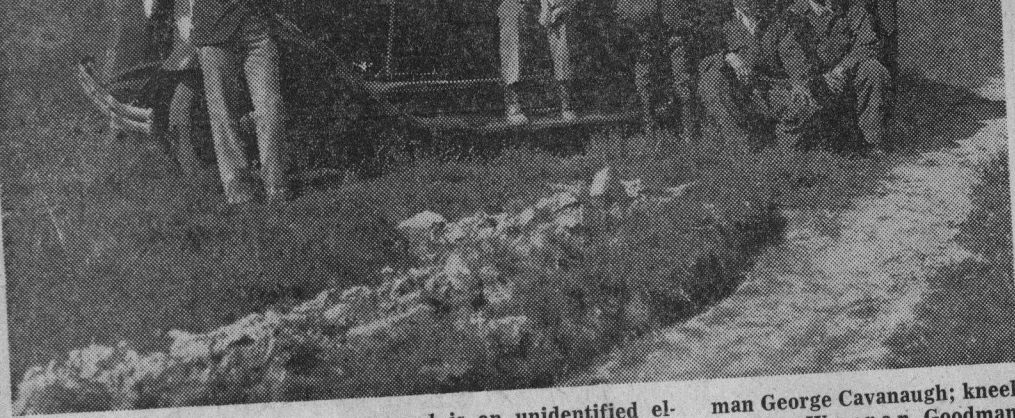
Today, Sgarlato, who furnished the pictures of the record-breaking event for this article, is pledge campaign chairman for the new Elks building on the hill.

## BELGIUM TAKES OVER EMBASSY AFFAIRS

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## Sen. Jackson Says:



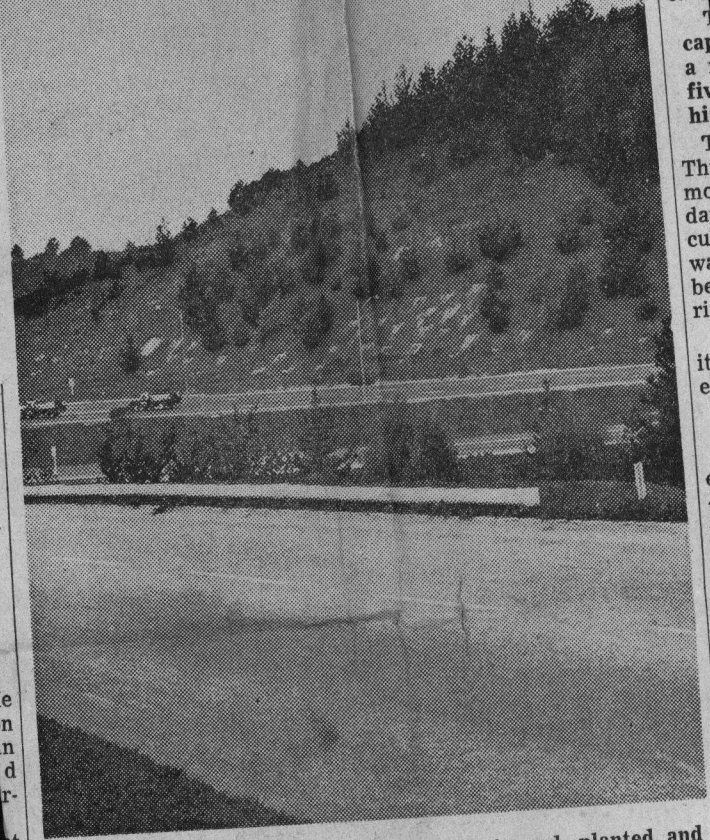


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The hill today; This is Motorcycle Hill as it looks today — trimmed, planted and tamed.

## Democrats Debate Programs

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