

# Ocean View Hostelry Leveled

Davenport's last remaining hotel was completely destroyed this morning.

The three-story, 56-year-old Ocean View hotel went the way of the other hotels in the historic cement and whaling community—by fire.

Flames from an unknown source began their work on the 28-room structure, 11 miles north of Santa Cruz on the Oceanshore highway, in the quiet pre-dawn before 5 a.m. Its wooden body reacted explosively to the fire while its four occupants slept.

Firemen from most of the departments in northern Santa Cruz county were unable to save anything but the surrounding buildings.

The flames had already consumed a good part of the cavernous middle section before Vickie Pauling, a guest, was awakened and spread the alarm. The others, Joe Monti, his uncle, John, and another guest, Ray Seeley, ran for their lives down a fire escape on the northwest side of the hotel.

Damage was estimated at \$50,000 by insurance man Dan Hurt. He said the building was fully insured. The Ocean View was owned by Mr. and Mrs. Pete Monti and Giuseppe Monti.

Davenport Fire Chief Francis Gregory was aroused at 5 o'clock. "When I first saw the hotel the whole middle section was engulfed in flames," he told The Sentinel.

Firemen and equipment responded from Santa Cruz, Soquel, Scotts Valley, Live Oak, Big Creek Timber company, the PCA plant and from the division of forestry in Felton.

During the height of the fire, a wall collapsed against the neighboring Foresters hall, another Davenport landmark. It set the hall, built in 1913, aflame, but firemen saved the building. The hall is badly damaged. It was used as a storage facility. One of the Davenport firemen, Elio Orlando, was treated for smoke inhalation by his private physician and sent to bed.

A gas heater near the dining room fireplace may have caused the fire, Gregory speculated after talking to the owners.

The Ocean View's demise leaves a tragic gap along Davenport's already-dying business district. On its right is the cement hulk of the Dorillo Morelli general store and post office which burned in 1953. To its left is charred, water-soaked Foresters hall.

The hotel was built in 1906 by the Coast Dairy and Land company to house employes of the old Portland Cement company.

The 40-room Hotel Italia was already in operation and full to capacity, down by the Davenport bakery.

Lumber for the Ocean View came from the redwood trees above Davenport. They were cut at the San Vicente lumber mill and hauled down by horse-drawn wagons. It was built of 90 per cent redwood.

Its foundation was made from cement hauled by ship down from Napa junction, and unloaded on the cliffs across from the hotel.

George Beard and Julio Pearson were the first to lease it from the land company. Charles J. Bella took it over in 1919 with his late brother, John. They bought it in 1921 and it was in the Bella family until March, 1961. It was then sold to the present owners.

The famed banker, A. P. Gianini used to stop at the hotel, according to Bella. Bella's wife, Carmelina, gave the hotel state-wide fame for her spaghetti.

The Italia burned in 1956. Three other hotels, located a mile north at Davenport Landing, burned in two big fires of 1915 and 1926.

Bella was called to the fire this morning, but stood a moment staring at the smoking ashes, then left.

"It made me sick. I had to go," he said.



The historic Ocean View hotel settles in its death throes, completely engulfed by flames. It finishes the last remaining hotel in Davenport, along Oceanshore highway, 11 miles north of Santa Cruz. Only four persons were inside when the fire started between 4 and 5 a.m. All escaped uninjured. Photo taken by Dennis Gregory. Other pictures on Pages 4 and 8.