

Santa Cruz City limit side of Arana Gulch, northwest of the present intersection of Soquel Avenue and Capitola Road.

Earliest land title transfers in Live Oak occurred in the 1850's, the same time American and European settlers began to settle at villages throughout the county. This was the decade of the cultural transition from California to Yankee, from Spanish to English.

On June 14, 1846, the Bear Flag was flown at Sonoma. California became a state in 1850 at the start of the gold rush, and on April 6 that year boundaries were formed for a county named "Branciforte," although it was soon changed to "Santa Cruz."

Californios lost much of their lands early in the 1850s through a transition in economy and costly legal battles before the state lands title commission.

Santa Cruz County land transfer records show that Jose Rodriguez transferred title for some Live Oak lands on April 20, 1850, to Marcus Arana—for whom Arana Gulch is named.

In 1856, the Pacific Sentinel noted Arana owed taxes on "60 acres on public lands in Soquel township, bounded by Monterey Bay and the claim of Otto and Trust; on the north by the claim of Manuel Rodriguez; and west by the claim of Dr. Frederick." This land was roughly along the Twin Lakes side of Woods Lagoon in the area of 7th Avenue.

Land above the Santa Cruz-Watsonville Road (Soquel Drive) was never considered part of Live Oak by the people who lived there, although these tracts are today within the Live Oak General Plan boundaries and service lines of the Live Oak Fire District.

One of the earliest residents of that area was Paul Sweet, who worked with Isaac Graham in 1842-43 and marched south for the Bear Flag Battalion in 1846. He eventually settled at a valley in the hills "east of Santa Cruz and Soquel Road, and something like halfway between the two towns."

Another early resident above Soquel Drive in Live Oak was Henry Winkle, who came to Santa Cruz County in 1866 and purchased a 180-acre farm in the Branciforte District near Rodeo Gulch and Soquel Village. This property was later acquired by Leonard Winkle, and his family sold a part of the Live Oak land to be subdivided by Wilson Bros. as chicken ranches in the 1920s.

J.S. Mattison—for whom Mat-

tison Lane is named—is another early settler who arrived in the gold rush era. Mattison settled on a farm in Live Oak in 1852, and that year was elected one of two justices when Soquel township was formed. He returned to New York and the midwest for several years, and came back to California with his wife after his marriage in 1858.

In the book, "Illustrations of Santa Cruz County, California, published in 1879," it was noted that Mattison's farm, consisting of 96 acres, is beautifully situated about one-mile from the bay, between the towns of Soquel and Santa Cruz, one-mile from the former and three-miles from the latter place."

One of Mattison's neighbors to the west was Marquisio Rodriguez, who owned 100 acres near Rodeo Gulch. His property was bounded on the north by lands of Conrenian Rodriguez. Two other members of the Rodriguez family, Jose and Brijido, sold land to Martin Kinsley in 1865.

Land transfer records then begin to include names that have since become familiar to Live Oak residents as the names of streets and lagoons. Among area residents by 1864 were David Wilson, L. G. Caldwell, who once served as county sheriff; John McKenney, John Woods (Woods Lagoon), Carsmiro Amaya, A.M. Maciel, Joseph Kenville, Simon Perez and James Corcoran (Corcoran Lagoon).

Throughout the 1860's, Live Oak was a sparsely settled area of cattle ranches and farms that grew wheat, corn and barley. There was no school, but there were the beginnings of a community.

On Nov. 6, 1869, an organization known as "The Farmer's Club," was organized with a membership of 18 men at the Santa Cruz County Courthouse in Santa Cruz. A constitution was adopted, and among its officers were three Live Oak residents—J.S. Mattison, president; John Wood, vice-president; and Martin Kinsley, treasurer. J.W. Morgan was secretary for the charter membership.

Ten years later, in 1879, the organization had by then changed its name to "Sixth Senatorial District Agricultural Association."

John Mattison was still the president, and Kinsley was still treasurer. The organization held three fairs and purchased more than 300 books for its library. One June 21, 1870, Martin Kinsley