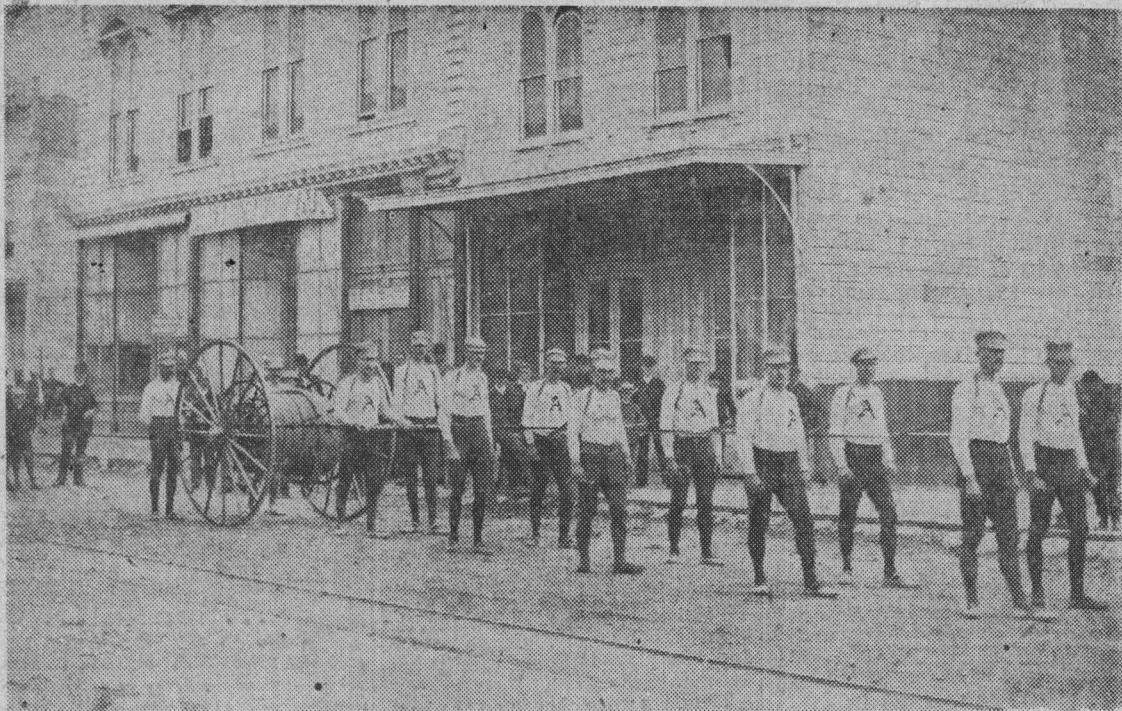


# Santa Cruz Yesterdays



**HOSE TEAM OF THE ALERTS, 1885**

(From the Preston Sawyer Collection)

About this time each spring in the early eighties was tournament time for the firemen of Santa Cruz, when they could match their prowess with other firefighters.

Meeting annually in a different central California community the occasion called for two or three days' competition between hose and hook and ladder teams, concurrent with the yearly convention of the State Firemen's association.

In 1885 four teams went from here to the statewide tournament held that year in San Jose. They were the local Hook and Ladder team, Pilot and Alert hose teams and the Pilot juveniles.

San Jose made a gala function of the event, and decorated with banners and bunting everywhere. Speculation was rife on whose running teams were best. Community spirit and rivalry was keen.

Rules of the contest said hose carts, as pictured above, were to carry at least 350 feet of hose, reeled on in one continuous line, all couplings screwed up (regulation fire hose). Overall weight of cart and hose at least a thousand pounds. Twelve men made up each running team. Distance covered was 1200 feet in all, 900 feet to hydrant, "lay 300 feet of hose, uncouple and screw on pipe." Numerous cities and towns competed in the contests during the tournament period, in this, and in other events for hook and ladder teams.

## Win State Honors

Hose team of the Santa Cruz Alerts brought home the bacon to be lionized here for days afterward. They set an excellent 1:11, best time then on record for the state. With \$650 cash, and other awards,

they also returned the diamond belt to Santa Cruz.

The picture shows the boys on a "warm-up" prior to the tournament, garbed in their tights and running slippers. Left to right, starting behind the large wheel: Frank Bartlett, J. Alzina (behind hose), Con Crowley, C. H. Dennett, Frank (Kindy) Carter, J. Gannon, Enoch Alzina, Ben Patterson, H. Kelley, John Ross, Ed Lilly and Elmer Dakan Jr.

## Background Landmarks

Behind them, as they pause on Pacific avenue in the center of town, are a couple of business buildings erected in the latter seventies. The nearest one, then known as the Le Gassick block, still stands with a remodeled stuccoed front, immediately south of the Palomar hotel. To the left is Ely Block No. 2, built by William Ely, after his first building of 1875 up the avenue opposite Church street, near the old court house. "Block No. 2" was dismantled in 1928 to make way for the hotel.

In the original photograph a small and barely distinguishable sign indicates "Western Union Telegraph Office" in the Ely building directly back of Frank Bartlett. This would place it surprisingly near its present location. Showbills hanging in the window of the Avenue Lodging House to the right, refer to an attraction at the Opera House: Ben Cotton and Co., featuring his daughter Idalene and Mrs. Nellie Cotton, in a two-night stand here. Friday night's show was "Irma, the Waif" which also featured Saturday's matinee. That evening it was "Black Diamond." Cotton was an old-time minstrel man.

## 'Sun Tan' Train To Bring Hundreds Late This Month

First "Sun Tan" special trains of the summer season will bring hundreds of visitors here from San Francisco Sunday, May 28, and on Memorial Day, May 30. T. Louis Chess, general passenger agent for the Southern Pacific railroad announced here yesterday.

Agent Chess was guest speaker at the meeting of the Santa Cruz Lions club in Palomar hotel. He told the club that this year the railroad is giving wide publicity to the special tourist run to Santa Cruz and private cars will be made available to organizations.

Chess was introduced by Program Chairman Louis W. Jenkins.

## Railroad Crews Are At Work On Mission Tunnel

The Southern Pacific bridge and building crew is at work in the tunnel under Mission Hill, putting in new timbers.

They are hampered somewhat by water, although when it was first built in the middle of the 70s it was a damper tunnel.

At one time it was No. 8 among the eight tunnels through the mountains on the Santa Cruz-Los Gatos line.

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