

Fred Toney Killed

Prominent Aptos businessman Fred Toney was killed and his wife, Elma, critically injured Monday afternoon when their pickup truck overturned on Interstate 5 near Fresno.

The Toney family was northbound on Interstate 5 at 1 p.m. Monday when the truck went out of control and flipped in the center divider. Both Toney — the driver — and his wife were ejected from the truck.

Toney, 74, was taken to Fresno's Valley Medical Center where he subsequently died. His wife was listed in critical condition at the hospital this morning.

The Toney family, who operated the Village Fair shopping center in Aptos Village, reportedly were en route home after delivering antiques to a customer.

A native of Aptos, Toney began business with a hardware store. He later owned a grocery store before purchasing the historic Bay View Hotel in 1944. With a crew of five men, moved the historic structure 100 feet west of its original location to its present spot in the village.

After operating the hotel for years, Toney leased the building in the early 1970s to Pete Marchese and Frank Leal.

The Toney family converted an old apple shed behind the hotel into the present Village Fair after a flea market operation in the remodeled building went out of business.

Toney, son of a pioneer Aptos stationmaster, gained notoriety in 1968 when he took on the Southern Pacific Railroad which put up a barricade on its tracks, blocking the entrance to Village Fair.

Portions of the barrier were torn down by angry village residents, and the tracks were blocked by a mound of gravel. Mrs. Toney was arrested in the latter incident when, sitting atop the mound of gravel drinking a cup of coffee, she defied then-District Attorney Peter Chang to arrest her.

Though Chang arrested Mrs. Toney at the scene, no charges were filed, and Chang drew the wrath of SP for accusing the railroad of trampling on the rights of "little people."

Toney also installed a gravel driveway through the opening in the barricade so customers could reach his shops.

The state Public Utilities Commission mediated the situation late in 1970, allowing portions of the barrier to remain, but ordered Toney's driveway left open and even be paved by SP.

Toney is survived by his wife and two daughters, Gail and Patricia, both of Aptos.

Funeral arrangements are pending.

REFERENCE

APTOS BRANCH LIBRARY

7695 SOQUEL DRIVE
APTOS, CALIFORNIA 95003

SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL
June 12, 1979