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The Town Clock in downtown Santa Cruz is mentioned in a new book, '228 Interesting, Odd, Beautiful and Historic Things to See in Santa Cruz County.'

New book points out 228 interesting things to see

From well-known landmarks to kooky spots, they're all on display

By SHANNA MCCORD

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SANTA CRUZ — A statue of Jesus with an electric guitar in his hand, surrounded by pink neon lights, isn't on the must-see list of most Santa Cruz visitors.

Encased in Plexiglas, the 3-foot-tall Jesus in a purple robe sits just inside the entrance to the downtown nightclub Catalyst and is seen mostly by hurried concertgoers.

Yet the statue made it into a book written by longtime Santa Cruz resident and publisher Steven Bignell of the top things he and co-author Susan Bruijnes consider worthwhile to check out countywide.

"228 Interesting, Odd, Beautiful and Historic Things to See in Santa Cruz County," by Bignell and Bruijnes was released in November.

"The fun of the book was to go out and see the things we've thought of over the years but haven't been to," said Bignell, 63. "I've driven past Rancho del Oso a zillion times but never stopped. And I'd never been to Castle Rock State Park."

The duo's book reaches the far corners of Santa Cruz County, from the San Lorenzo Valley to Watsonville. Each spot includes a photo and description.

Their list includes obvious places such as the Boardwalk, Mystery Spot, Roaring Camp and Town Clock at Pacific Avenue and Water Street, which was No. 1 on the list. But the book also covers obscure places and things most people haven't heard of.

For example, who's stopped to examine the three concrete monoliths on Beach Road outside Watsonville? The 14-foot-tall monoliths that tower over acres of farmland look like giant Art Deco chess pieces and were No. 225 on the list.

A special section, at No. 20, is given to the dozens of murals found in alleys, little-known side streets and buildings.

Bignell highlights the 70-foot mural by Santa Cruz artist Marvin Plummer on a wall near the Kuumbwa Jazz Center, which depicts five jazz greats — Betty Carter, Roy Hargrove, Regina Carter, John Scofield and Christian McBride — who have performed regularly in Santa Cruz over the past few decades.

In Aptos, the concrete steamship grounded at the end of the pier at Seacliff State Beach made No. 176 on the list. Often called "the cement ship," the S.S. Palo Alto was built at the end of World War I as an oil tanker but was converted into a dance hall that was severely damaged in a winter



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The guitar-playing Jesus with a neon halo graces the entrance inside the Catalyst night club.

storm around the Great Depression.

Glaum Egg Ranch's vending machine, with its dancing chicken puppets, is also an Aptos highlight.

The Bockius-Orr house and gardens on East Beach Street in Watsonville are among many historical homes the book notes.

The Victorian home built for Godfrey Bockius in 1870 is now home to the Pajaro Valley Historical Association and

SEE BOOK ON B2

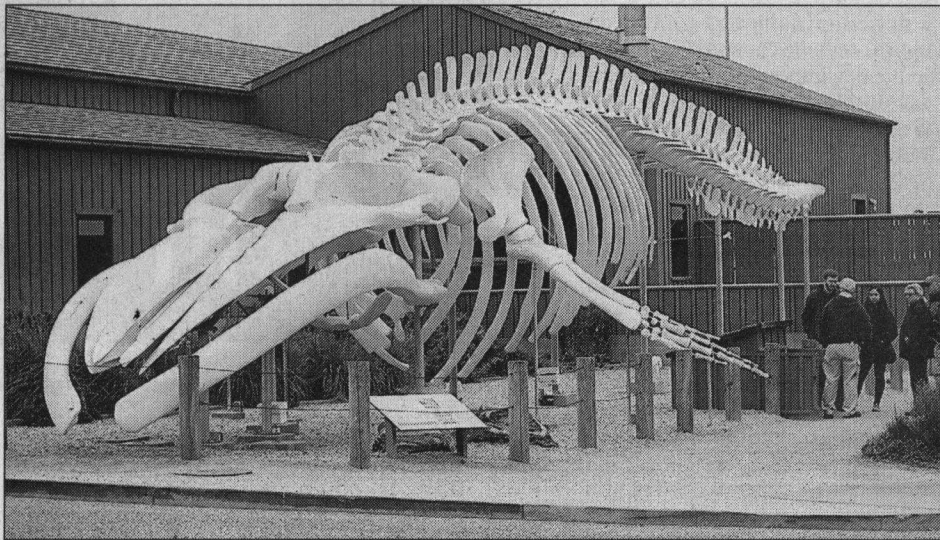
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is on the National Register of Historic Houses.

Also selected in Watsonville are St. Patrick's Catholic Church, with its impressive English Gothic brick building and stained-glass windows, and a former gas station at the entrance of the Watsonville Auto Center on Main Street, which celebrates the Machine Age with crisp deco design features.

The book, priced at \$14.95, is available at Bookshop Santa Cruz, Capitola Book Cafe, Crossroads in Watsonville and some of the local State Parks gift shops.



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The blue whale skeleton at Long Marine Lab is mentioned in '228 Interesting, Odd, Beautiful and Historic Things to See in Santa Cruz County.'