

1929: Town clock to ring no more

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Sentinel is celebrating its 150th year in 2006 by reaching into our archives to republish some of the noteworthy stories out of the past. The following article appeared in the Sentinel on October 17, 1929.

Original headline: YES, THE OLD TOWN CLOCK SHALL RING NO MORE; ON 160TH BIRTHDAY BELL TO QUIT

"Two o'clock and all is well!"

Santa Cruzans may yet grow accustomed to the cry of an old-fashioned town-crier if objections to the hammer of the bell of the town clock by patrons of the Hotel Palomar and St. George Mission Inn are permitted to carry sufficient weight to have the bell discontinued according to those who are in favor of letting the clock ring out the hour as it has for the past half century.

Others, petitioning for the discontinuance of the clock bell, visualize Santa Cruz as a growing city in a modern time, which makes such an instrument obsolete. This class points out that the town clock ringing out the

hour was essential in olden times when this was but a backwoods town, but is not necessary in modern times.

Be that as it may, patrons of the city's leading hostelrys have entered complaints to the effect that they can not sleep at night because of the ringing of the bell in the heart of the Odd Fellows timepiece.

J.A. Roberts, manager of Hotel Palomar, states that several patrons have walked out after the first night because of this noise, a thing which he points as detrimental to the hotel and city because they go elsewhere. The same condition has been fought in the St. George Mission Inn, according to Manager Bob Jones.

Members of the Odd Fellows' organization have taken steps to remove the nuisance and next week Santa Cruz will be silent on each hour as far as the town...

[Editor's note: Some text was missing here from our archived story.]

[T]he town clock has tolled out the hours of the day and night

with little rest the past 50 years. The original Odd Fellows' building was the second on what is known now as Pacific Avenue, but was called Willow Street in olden days.

Many of the older citizens of the city, familiar with the sound of the clock are protesting against its fate and making a staunch stand in its behalf. Many are suggesting that the bell be muffled during the night from midnight until seven o'clock the following morning, but those familiar with the working of the instrument state that this can not be done, because the hammer is worked by electricity and can only be touched after it has run down.

According to City Clerk S. A. Evans, Santa Cruz operates the town clock for the Odd Fellows and has done this for a great many years. This part of the clock was taken over following a fight of long duration as to who received the most benefits from the historic timepiece. While the city operates and maintains the timepiece, it has no jurisdiction over the works that are in it which is purely the property of the Odd Fellows, Evan states.