

School In Davenport Demolished

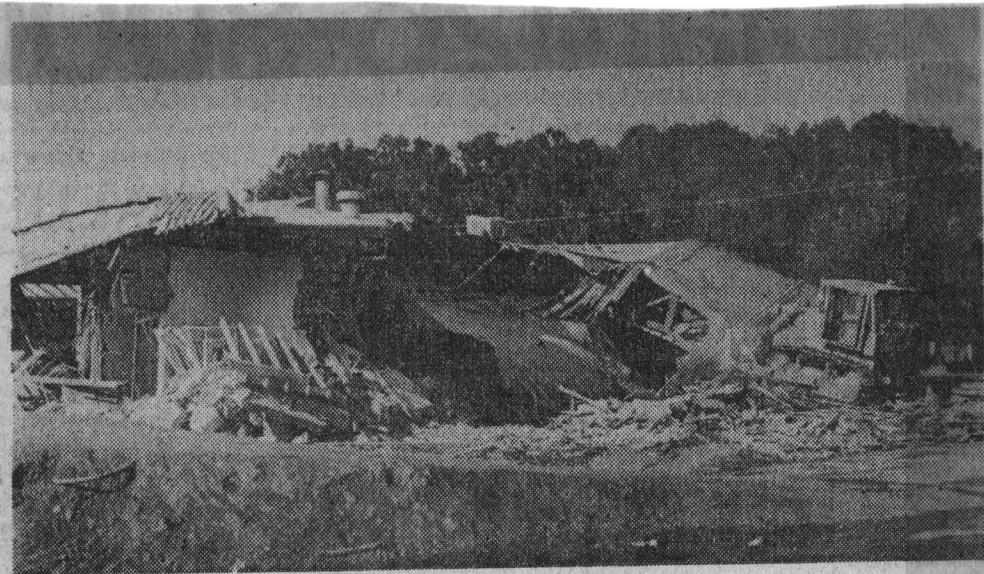
Davenport said goodbye to the Pacific Elementary School building this week, as bulldozers tore down the 53-year-old structure because it didn't meet state earthquake standards.

The state ordered the building either be demolished or renovated because it wasn't earthquake-proof to meet Field Act standards, yet an observer of the demolition said bulldozers had a difficult time falling the thick walls.

As the old building was coming down, construction continued nearby on a new school building slated for completion in mid-March. The site of the old building will become a playground.

Faced with the possibility of losing their school and having to transport students to Santa Cruz, Davenport voters passed a \$345,633 bond measure in March 1977 to build the new school.

Various setbacks and higher costs delayed construction on the new school, but the finan-



Pacific School was torn down this week.

cial picture brightened this October when the school district received a \$125,000 emergency loan from the state.

The 50-plus students attending Pacific School are being housed in a portable classroom and at St. Vincent's Church.

The death knell for the old school began ringing in early 1976 when a state inspector announced the building didn't conform to the Field Act of 1933, which set earthquake standards for school buildings.

Students attending the school got an extended summer vaca-

tion that year as the first day of school was delayed until mid-September while the state made sure the building was safe to occupy.

The school was ordered closed by June 1977, but there wasn't enough time for a new school to be built between the time the bond was passed in March and the June closing date.

So, Assemblyman Henry Mello, D-Watsonville, got a bill passed allowing the old school to remain open for one more year. Mello also was respon-

sible for the legislation for the getting school an emergency loan this year.

As Davenport residents waited for the wrecking ball to strike, Third (Seaside) District Supervisor Gary Patton announced plans this summer to save the old building for a community center.

Patton's plans never materialized and the building met its fate this week.

But before the building bit the dust, more than 200 alumni bid the school farewell during a reunion in July.

SANTA CRUZ SENTINAL
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REFERENCE