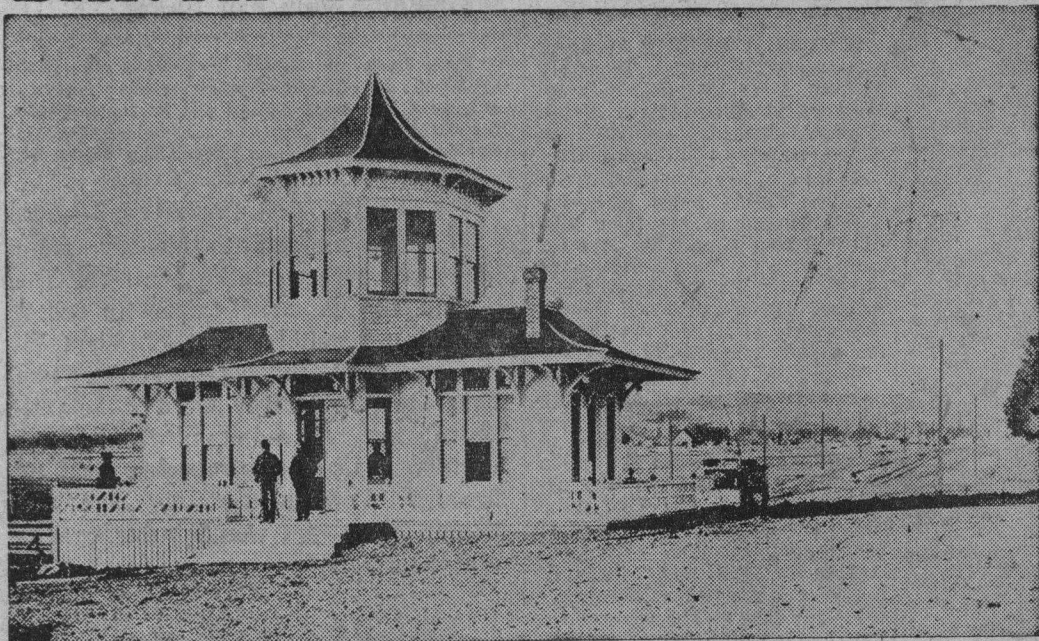


SANTA CRUZ YESTERDAYS



AT VUE DE L'EAU, OVER 60 YEARS AGO

(From the Preston Sawyer Collection)

Back around 1892, with the era of electric trolley service just getting underway hereabouts, the above "ornate" little structure at the West Cliff drive end of Garfield (now Woodrow) avenue, came into being.

It was part of the promotion of the trolley line, which bore the grandiose title of "Santa Cruz, Garfield Park and Beach" line. The name of the cliff car terminus was Vue de l'Eau (Ocean View), doubtless applied by wealthy J. P. Smith, a New York and Paris business man, who maintained a residence here through the nineties. He was a large financial backer of the streetcar enterprise.

The little "cliff house" pictured was variously called an "observatory," waiting station, or sometimes, "depot." Before the automobile era descended the place was especially used in rainy weather where striking views were obtainable from a dry vantage point, as breaking waves dashed high over the cliffs. Many rode the cars cliffward to view the display.

Also part of the Vue de l'Eau development was a "Casino," which preceded the original Neptune Casino at the beach by ten years. This casino with its ballroom on the second floor, restaurant and lounge on the main floor, stood at the end of Gar-

field avenue, between Pelton avenue and the Cliff drive (extreme right, not visible in the picture).

Back of the Vue de l'Eau Ca-

sino was for some years a baseball diamond where in 1895, the "Electrics," a team backed by W. F. Ely, manager of the trolley line, won fame for Santa Cruz, with a superior brand of baseball.

The first football games by Santa Cruz high school were played at the Vue de l'Eau field when the local grid greats of 1895 scored victories over Santa Clara and College of the Pacific.

A streetcar is poised at the end of the line ready to start an inbound trip, just to right of the little "observatory." Close study of the original photograph reveals that the longtime Garfield park tabernacle, built in 1890, was then standing. The large landmark stood in the exact center of the "circles" for 45 years, until it burned in August of 1935.

The colorful cliff structure survived the trolley era to finally fade from the scene in the late twenties.

Across the drive a little to the west was for many years the Cliff Museum and store, operated for some time by J. A. Moore. It too, was later destroyed by fire.

The Vue de l'Eau Casino building in 1905 was included in a zoo project in that area, which served for two seasons as the winter quarters of the Norris & Rowe circus.