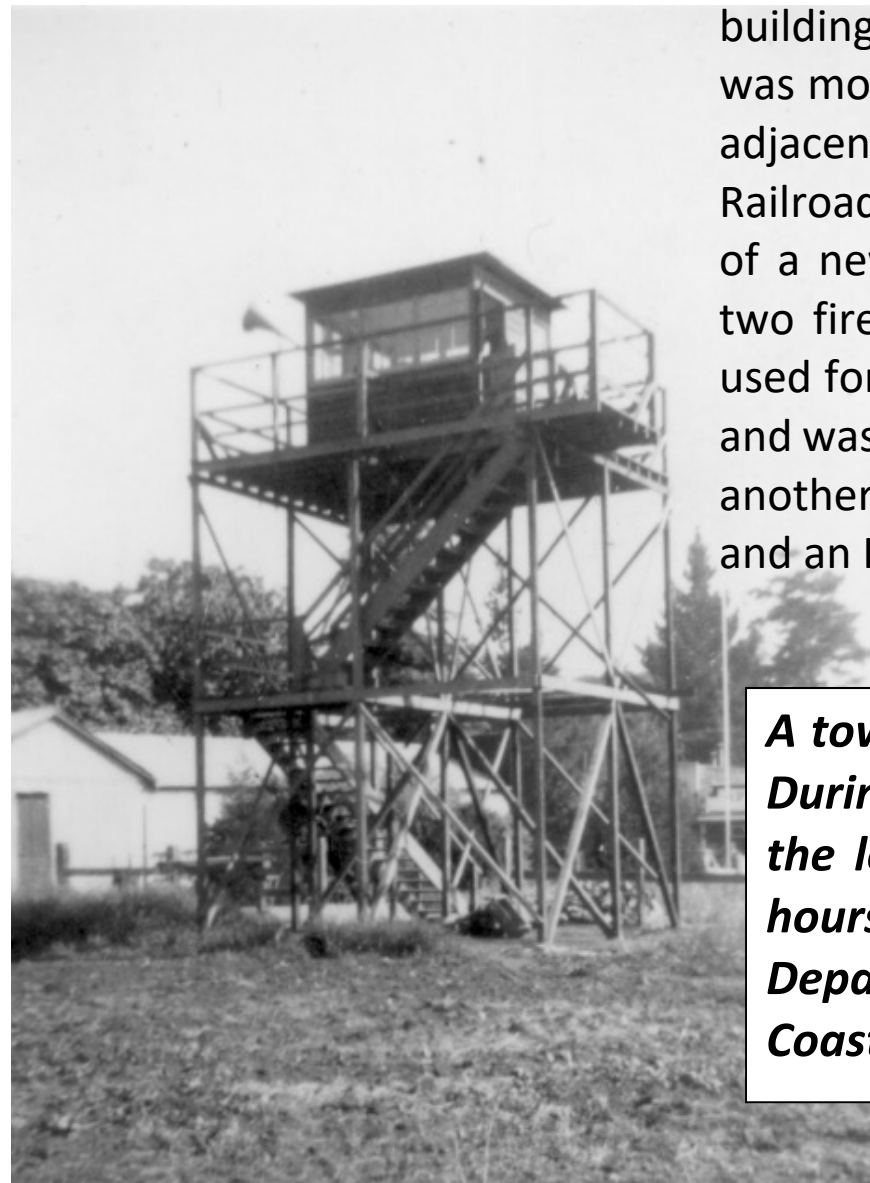


IT'S MANY LIVES AND LOCATIONS . . .

During the lumber era in Aptos, 1883 to 1920, the Loma Prieta Lumber Company had a lumber yard in Aptos Village, west of the Bay View Hotel's formal gardens. Sometime before 1888, the lumber company constructed a small office 120 feet west of the hotel. By 1908, when timber harvesting was in decline, this simple building was used as a house. In 1928, Joseph Arano, owner of the Bay View Hotel, offered land for a fire equipment storage building for the Aptos Volunteer Fire Department. The lumber yard office has long been referenced as the first firehouse, but this is not true. The lumber yard office was moved farther west into the lumber yard and was later used as the Aptos Library for a short time.



By 1935 the department had outgrown the building, so in January of 1936 the building was moved from the Arano property to the adjacent parcel owned by Southern Pacific Railroad where it was connected to the rear of a new addition, large enough to house two fire trucks. The original building was used for meetings to discuss fire protection and was also used as a polling place. In 1939 another addition was added to the building and an Indiana Fire Truck was purchased.

A tower was built by Ralph Mattison next to the building in 1934. During World War II, it was used as an observation post to call out the local militia and to announce blackouts. It was manned 24 hours a day by two-person teams on two-hour shifts. The Fire Department building was a central stopping point for the Military Coast Patrol which covered the Monterey Bay up to Pigeon Point.

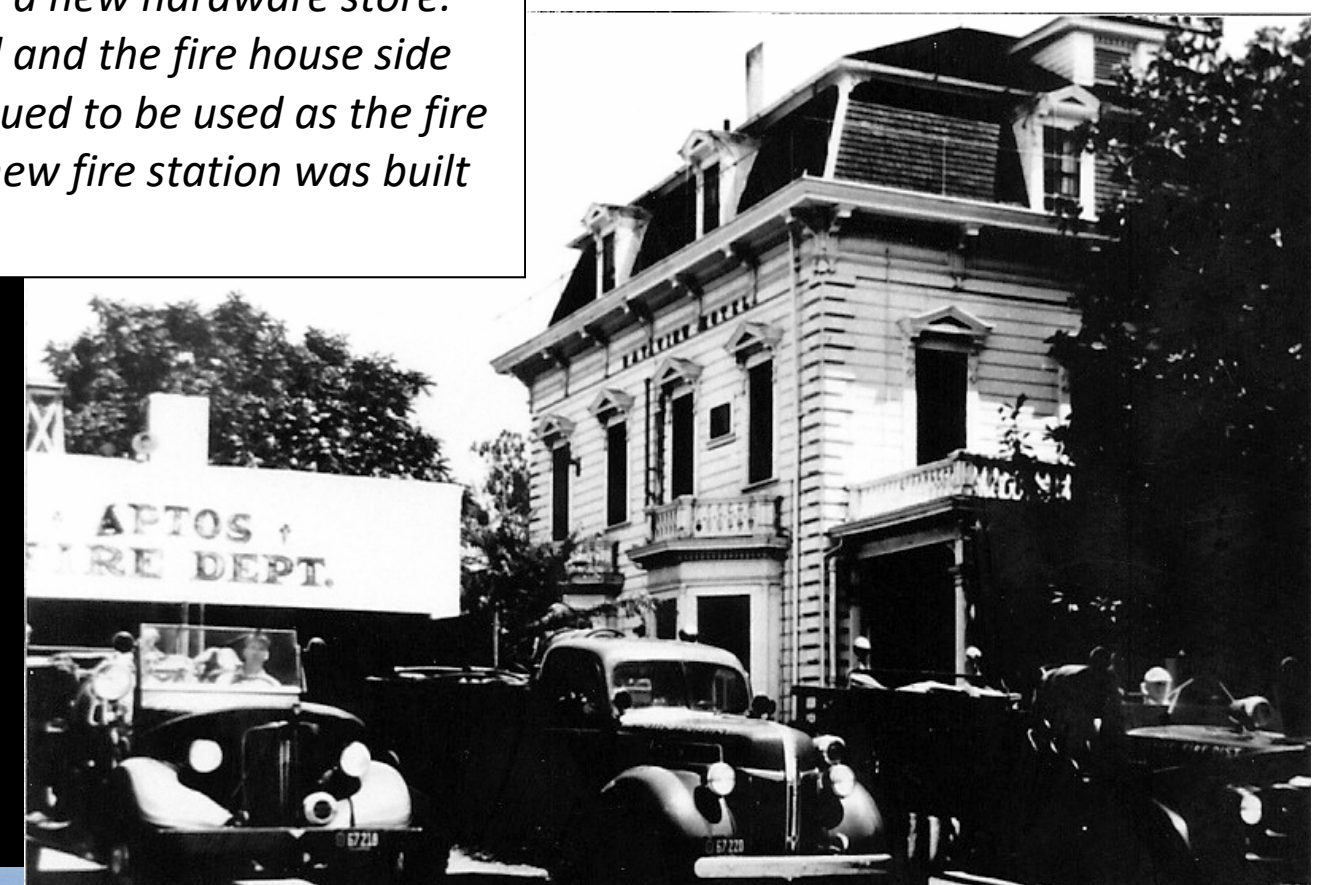
In November of 1953, American Legion Post 778 moved into the former fire house and remodeled the building. The front of the fire house was shortened and given a false front making it look like an "Old West" store front. The American Legion occupied the building until 1979. Since then, the building was remodeled several times and used as an antique store, a produce stand and several retail stores.



The 1928 Sanborn Map shows the lumber office in its new location and the new firehouse as well. The Santa Cruz Evening News proclaimed that on January 31, the first timbers were laid for the new Aptos Fire House and several volunteers were constructing the building.

On 23 December 1930, the town voted to approve the Aptos Fire District and to tax themselves for the purpose of establishing a fire department. Ralph Mattison became the first Fire Chief, a position he held for 26 years.

After the war, the Bay View Hotel was moved 118 feet west to make room for a new hardware store. That move placed the hotel and the fire house side by side. The building continued to be used as the fire station until 1953 when a new fire station was built at 8059 Aptos Street.



The building was taken down in 2016. For over 100 years, this building and others in the Village, showcased the concept of recycle, repair and reuse. The stories that go along with these buildings are a rich part of Aptos' History.