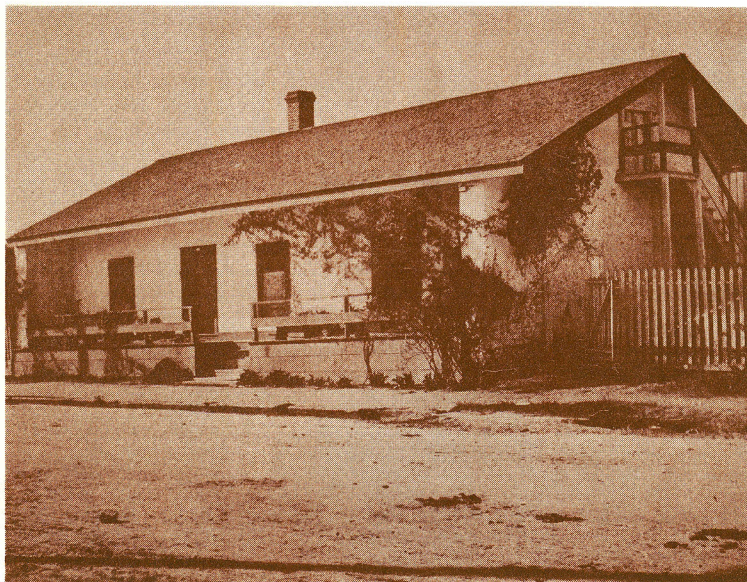


NOTICIAS del PUERTO de MONTEREY

A Quarterly Bulletin of Historic Monterey Issued by
The Monterey History and Art Association

VOLUME III, NUMBER 1

MARCH, 1959



The Casa Serrano as it was in the early 1900's. It is in almost exactly the same condition today, with the exception of additional wooden buildings in the rear and an office attached to the south, (left) side. The building is noteworthy for the closed adobe wall ends on the verandah and the unsupported roof overhang.

*Courtesy
Monterey
Public
Library*

HISTORIC CASA SERRANO SAVED BY THE MONTEREY HISTORY AND ART ASSOCIATION FOR FUTURE HOME

"Who would have thought 62 years ago", Carmel Martin asked the City Council of Monterey, "that I would be here tonight urging the preservation of the old home of Florencio Serrano. In 1896 it was considered a mark of progress to tear down the old adobes; now we know they are our most precious possessions and heirlooms."

Carmel Martin, Claude Faw, and Clinton Slusher, representing the Monterey History and Art Association on this night in September, 1958, were pleading for the deliverance of one more irreplaceable witness to California's story from the ravenous jaw of the bulldozer.

1—Mrs. William Kneass who did much of the research for this article, points out that this house is indicated as No. 6 on the lithograph sketch of Monterey drawn in 1842 for Thomas Larkin.

They came armed with a resolution from the association offering to purchase and protect the Casa Serrano. The rest of the area was destined to be used as a city parking lot. The association had long felt the need for a building of its own, a headquarters for its members, a place to store, display and use some of the historic relics that have come to it, a focal point for the activities concerning the valuable historic heritage of Monterey, and room to develop in the future. There could be no more suitable home than this venerable survivor of Monterey's romantic past,—and it would preserve one more adobe.

The City Council listened sympathetically, but the legal knots took time to undo. On February 2, 1959, the association's committee on acquisition of the adobe, President J. F. van Loben Sels, Mr. Carmel Martin, Mrs. Marie Gragg, and Mrs. W. R. Holman, brought before the directors the city's offer: a parcel of land 98 feet wide and 68 feet deep, including the Serrano buildings, for \$21,524. After lengthy debate and fully realizing the importance of the act, the directors unanimously carried Carmel Martin's motion, seconded by Allen Knight, to purchase the Casa Serrano.

Florencio Serrano would have appreciated the irony of the situation. He himself had been mayor of Monterey; he had had to listen to the pleas of citizens and judge their effect on the well-being of the pueblo. But long before that, he had given evidence of initiative, courage and responsibility. As a medical student in Mexico City, the death of his parents had thrust upon him the task of supporting himself and Francisca, his younger sister. An uncle offered to maintain them, but young Florencio prized independence. He had heard glowing tales of opportunity on the northern frontier of California near Sonoma. Jose Maria Padres and a wealthy, influential gentleman, Jose Maria Hajar, had formed a California colonization company with governmental blessing and now, in 1834, it was ready to travel. It was a chosen band of 250 farmers, doctors, craftsmen and other worthy artisans. They were promised rich lands, a governmental loan to tide them over the first year, animals to start their ranchos, and free transportation. Little wonder that 20 year old Florencio and his sister enrolled themselves as colonists. But alas for their golden dreams after they arrived in the land of promise; politics snarled up the authorizations, the friars feared that the mission lands would be taken, and the jealous rivalry of the Californians insured the wreckage of the colonists plans. However the majority of the stranded settlers stayed, among them the Serranos and Jose Abrego, who made their homes in Monterey.

The newcomers were practically destitute, for the brig *Natalia*, which had carried all their effects, had gone ashore at Monterey in a gale and smashed herself to bits. Serrano, as an educated man, soon found employment as the administrator of San Antonio in 1835 and as a teacher and clerk of various offices in Monterey from 1836 on. Sister Francisca, however, pined for her home and friends in Mexico. She was unhappy in the raw frontier environment, and Florencio sadly sent her back to their relatives. The ties were not broken, for years later, her son, Juan Carvajal, a wealthy manufacturer, wrote to his uncle in California, asking Florencio to send him a son or grandson to be his heir, in memory of the love and kindness of Florencio to poor homesick Francisca. No Serrano went back; they had made their home in Monterey and they loved it.

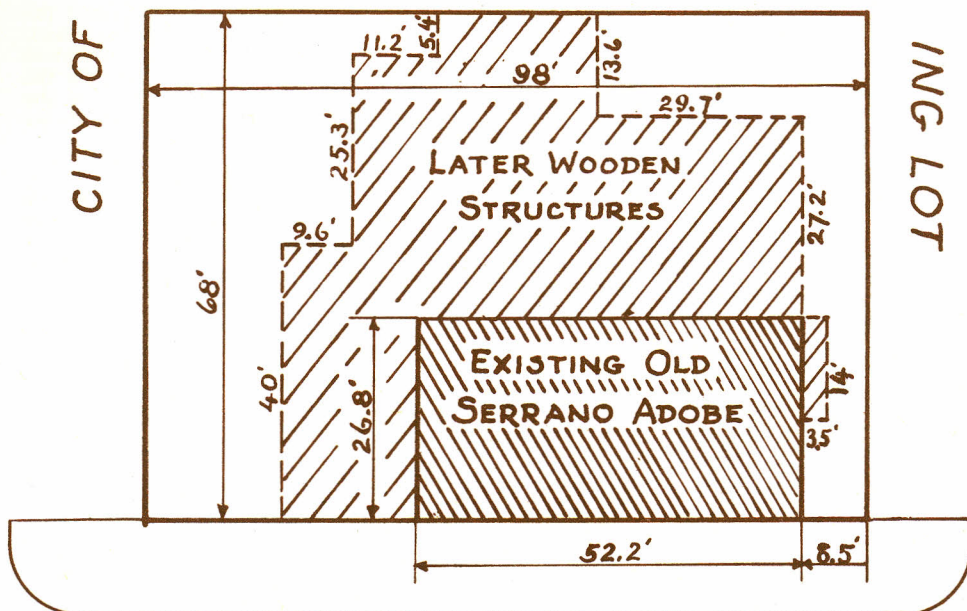
Don Florencio became secretary of the town council in 1838, and in 1844 he was Second Alcalde, or Assistant Mayor. When Commodore Sloat's sailors and marines scrambled ashore at the old Custom House in 1846, he was recorder and secretary for the prefecture and had been married just a year to the sprightly Rita de la Torre, daughter of Joaquin de la Torre and Maria de los Angeles Cota.

For his bride, Don Florencio had bought a house that "a foreigner" had erected. It was a good solid adobe with walls over two feet thick, divided downstairs into a big center room about 19 x 22 feet, and with two smaller rooms at either end. The adobe partition walls, as well as the exterior ones rise straight up to the roof-tree and support it. The ceilings were open beamed; the three attic rooms were reached by a wooden stairway on the northern side of the building. The roof was probably always of shingle or shakes.

Before the Serranos moved in in 1845, the careful husband had done a great deal to make the house more comfortable. He laid a floor, installed windows, and probably erected the indispensable outdoor lean-to kitchen, for no cooking was done inside the house.

Besides office work, Don Florencio tried his hand at teaching school. Education in California was a hap-hazard, spasmodic adventure under Spanish and Mexican rule. Most teachers were scarcely more learned than their pupils, pay was irregular and attendance uncertain. Learning the *doctrina cristiana* by heart was the prime purpose of the school. Cartridge paper was used for writing material, carefully saved and returned to the military stores. The day after the Americans landed in 1846, Thomas Larkin recommended to Commodore Sloat that a schoolmaster be appointed and paid \$1000 a year "from your funds", or he himself would stand good for one-tenth of the cost. In the Larkin account books, Florencio Serrano is credited with \$225 "for instruction in the public school from August 15, 1846 to November 15, 1846". Ser-

MONTEREY PUBLIC PARK-



PACIFIC ST.

Ground plan indicating extent of property to be purchased. The old adobe is firm and in good condition; the wooden additions are flimsy and in poor condition. The whole property will be surrounded by a city parking lot.

Sketch Courtesy of Parker Hall

rano had to see to the making of the schoolroom furniture, and for "carpenters, boards, desks, &", he was credited with \$95.50 on Larkin's books. Exactly where this schoolroom was is unknown, but it was not improbable that the Casa Serrano served in this capacity, as it did in later years. It appears, therefore, that Florencio Serrano was the first "public school" teacher under the American flag, although, naturally, he taught in Spanish.

He was sincerely interested in teaching. He had a phenomenal memory, and as his daughter Manuela used to relate, he could tell, even without looking at the book, when the children skipped a word in their reading. This photographic mind stood him in good stead in later life when he became blind. Then he could quote page and line from his beloved texts to the little group of scholars in his home.

Don Florencio was very much respected in the town. He was chosen to sit on the first jury convened in California. After the departure of Walter Colton, he became alcalde for 1849. His small adventures in trade in the 1850's were not markedly successful, and in later years, blind and poor, he was supported by his sons Rafael and Pedro. Shortly before he died, aged 63, in 1877, the great California historian, Hubert Howe Bancroft, sent a scribe to take down from Don Florencio's lips the tales of the past that thronged the blind man's prodigious memory.

Rita, his wife, survived him, and after she too, had died, her son Rafael brought up his family in the Casa Serrano. In 1933 the Cademartori family leased the adobe and converted it into a unique Italian restaurant. As the fame of their good food grew, wooden additions were added and the kitchen enlarged. By 1946, the Cademartoris, forced to expand, moved to a more commodious site, and in the following years, two or three other restaurants attempted without success to use the old adobe. For the last few years, despite an occasional transient occupant of the side office, this relic of old Monterey has been abandoned.

With love and care, it will again take its place among the historic adobes of California.

—Donald M. Craig

OUR PRESIDENT CITES ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF 1958

On a wild and stormy night that sent trees crashing across streets, downing electrical lines and plunging a large part of the Monterey Peninsula into howling darkness, a brave band of some fifty members of the Monterey History and Art Association gathered at the U.S.O. building for the Annual Report of the association, songs by Mrs. Pamela McFayden, and a talk by George L. Harding of the California Historical Society on the history of the state organization.

Mr. Harding stressed the need for educating the millions of newcomers to California to our historical heritage, and the even more pressing necessity of saving our irreplaceable landmarks from destruction through long-range planning. In this program the active interest of the numerous regional historical societies is absolutely essential. The California Historical Society, for example, is presently publishing 20,000 copies of a 90 page pictorial booklet on "Fabulous San Simeon". It plans to expand this educational work to cover the key historical areas of the state, and pamphlets on Monterey, Donner Pass and the Los Angeles Pueblo Lands are already projected.

Mrs. W. M. O'Donnell presented the treasurer's report for 1958. (The complete report may be found in this issue). Mr. Claude Faw presented Miss Margaret Jacks with a color photo portrait of herself taken recently as she stood framed in the doorway of her historic adobe home.

President James F. van Loben Sels, in his summary of the year's accomplishments, first paid tribute to the founders of the organization who, in Cademartori's restaurant on Fremont Street on January 19, 1931, completed the incorporation and elected their first officers. Col. Roger S. Fitch was chosen president; Carmel Martin, vice-president; Col. Easton R. Gibson, secretary, and Bernard Rowntree, treasurer. "Fifty members were approved by the board that night, and a slate of fifteen directors chosen. Of that original board, Myron Oliver and Carmel Martin are still serving as directors, but the membership has increased to over 600 active members, sixteen life members, and a dozen junior members," the president stated.

"Several new projects were inaugurated in 1958," Mr. van Loben Sels went on. "Among them we should mention the purchase of a very good slide projector which has done great service. Claude Faw took pictures of both interiors and exteriors of all the Monterey historical monuments and of the exhibits in the museums of the Custom House, Stevenson House, First Theater, Pacific Building and Colton Hall. Carrying out the program set up the year before, talks were given before many clubs, school classes and visiting associations, not only in Monterey, but in various parts of the state by Mary Greene, Claude Faw, Amelie Kneass and Mayo O'Donnell.

"For the annual Adobe House Tour in August, the association published a small booklet containing the history of the Monterey History and Art Association, pictures of the nine houses that were open on that occasion, and an interesting commentary on their stories. Selling for 50 cents, they were very popular and brought in a goodly sum. The postcard sales at the First Theater, Pacific Building, Stevenson House and Custom House have been most satisfactory. We are grateful to the curators: Mrs. Kneass, Mrs. Issler and Mrs. Stewart for their interest and support." The president also mentioned with gratitude the permission given by the State Division of Beaches and Parks to sell these cards in the buildings, both as a service to the visiting public and as a favor to the association. "The Old Pacific Capital" by Robert Luis Stevenson, sold only at the Stevenson House, remains a "best seller".

Mr. van Loben Sels singled out for special acknowledgment the initiation of the Lavender Sachets by Mrs. Marje Eliassen, which have been a source of revenue this past year. Made from the fragrant lavender grown at historic Colton Hall, they have been sold there by generous Mrs. Pauline McCleary, the curator.

Completion of two association projects was noted; the placing of a bronze plaque honoring pioneer David Jacks, and the landscaping in Don Dahvee Park, just off Munras Avenue, and the placing of a fountain and pool dedicated to the memory of our first president Col. Roger S. Fitch, originator of the Path of History in Monterey, in the Friendly Plaza near Colton Hall.

Two traditional anniversary observances were held in the summer. The raising of the United States flag at the Custom House in 1846 was celebrated in July with the Navy, Army, Navy League and History and Art Association taking part under the chairmanship of Allen Knight. The 188th anniversary of the landing of Father Junipero Serra and the founding of Monterey was celebrated with the famous Merienda in the Memory Garden behind the Pacific Building.

Two successful tours were sponsored by the association in October and November under the chairmanship of Mr. Claude Faw, member of the Board. The first tour was that of our

members and friends to Hearst Castle. The second tour was a visit to local adobe homes arranged for 300 members of the California Historical Society who spent November 15th in Monterey, and then visited Hearst Castle the next day. Members of our Board were hosts, serving refreshments at Casa Sobranes during the tour, and supplying the musicians for the tour and banquet in the evening. Mr. Faw is to be complimented on the success of both tours, and our thanks also to the many ladies who acted as hostesses at the adobe homes."

At the conclusion of his report President van Loben Sels thanked Mrs. Eleanor Frazier for another scrapbook of Association history; this is the twelfth year that Mrs. Frazier has carried out this valuable work. The many donors of historic material, whose gifts were already gratefully noted in the *Noticias* of the year, were thanked personally by the president.

* * *

ECHOES FROM YESTERDAY

The need to conserve the natural resources of California was realized by a few of our earliest public officials, as shown by the following order issued by Walter Colton, Alcalde of Monterey on September 12, 1847.

"To prevent the ruin and destruction of the pine Forest in the neighborhood of Monterey It is hereby ordered that no person whatever shall cut down any green pine trees in the said Forest without permission from this office."

(Source: page 1763, Vol. 13, Mexican Archives)

SANITARY RULES IN MONTEREY IN 1847 AND 1848.

The problem of hogs and other animals running loose in the streets of Monterey, and the practice of killing such animals within the town limits led to several orders being issued by both the civic and military officials.

An order was issued August 25, 1847 stating that "the sickness in this town is ascribed by physicians to the decomposition of animal matter: to get rid of the malady we must get rid of its cause." Following this preface the order states that all persons, either in person, or by substitute, must work in the streets the following Friday and Saturday to clean up the rubbish. Governor Mason ordered all the government carts to be at the service of the town for those two days to cart the rubbish away to be burned.

The rubbish may have been cleaned up in August but the cause of the rubbish was not yet controlled, so on January 17, 1848 was issued an order requiring all persons having hogs in the town of Monterey to keep them shut up — "otherwise they will be killed for the use of the prisoners."

Then in May definite regulations were issued by Governor Mason with regard to the slaughtering of cattle.

"The season of the year is now approaching when we may reasonably expect the Town to be visited with fevers or other diseases. With a view of preserving the health of the inhabitants and improving the cleanliness of the town the following Police regulations are promulgated, which the civil authority will cause to be strictly enforced.

1st—No beef cattle will be slaughtered in the streets or in any private premises in Monterey

2nd—No Matanza will be allowed within one mile and a half from the Government House

3rd—The slaughtering of the cattle for the ordinary consumption of the troops and town will be near the Pond beyond the Church

4th—Any violation of these regulations after the fifteenth day of June next ensuing will subject the offender to a fine of Five Dollars for each Beef slaughtered contrary to the foregoing articles.

5th—The Alcalde will take the necessary steps to cause the streets and gouches in Town to be properly cleaned and drained, in the performance of which duty the Military will furnish carts and horses to haul off the filth."

(Source: Vols. 13 & 14, Mexican Archives)

Monterey, September 28th, 1846
Magistrates Office

Whereas the laws of the United States prohibit under severe pains and penalties all gambling, and whereas great misery and distress are occasioned by this vicious practice

The chief Magistrate and council of the jurisdiction of Monterey decree

That any money staked at hazard may be seized wherever found and converted to the municipal funds

Any person found gambling shall pay for the first offense a fine of twenty dollars, and the occupant of the premises in which the gambling takes place shall pay a fine of one hundred dollars and be held security for the payment of the other fines imposed.

For the second offense fine and imprisonment at the discretion of this court.

Any person who shall give information to this court which may lead to the detection and conviction of persons engaged in gambling shall be entitled to one half the fines imposed by this ordinance.

Walter Colton
Chief Magistrate
Monterey

(Source: Vol. 8, pg. 1264, Mexican Archives)

MONTEREY HISTORY AND ART ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSE

January 1 - December 31, 1958

INCOME:

Postcards	\$ 570.50	
Less cost of cards	417.45	\$ 153.05
(cards on hand not taken into consideration)		
Lavender Bags	233.00	
Less costs	64.35	168.65
Merienda and Theatre Party	1,288.35	
Less costs	1,130.46	157.89
House Tour	1,387.50	
Less costs	96.81	1,290.69
Hearst Castle Tour	3,010.00	
Less costs	2,709.64	300.36
Membership dues		2,602.00
Total Income		\$4,672.64

EXPENSES:

Notices, stamps, etc.	\$ 967.79*	
Office Supplies	14.78	
Books, Furniture, etc.	470.15	
Fitch Memorial	780.53	
Insurance	149.90	
Gifts of Appreciation	14.88	
Dues to other Hist. Assoc	40.00	
Sloat Landing	158.53	
Calif. Hist. Soc. Meeting	65.66	
Total Expenses		2,662.22
Operating Profit		\$2,010.42
Transfer to Savings		1,950.00
Profit over distribution to Savings		\$ 60.42
Bank Balance Dec. 31, 1957		2,127.31
Deposits	9,183.95	
Less Checks	9,123.53	60.42
		2,187.73
Advance 1959 Deposit		155.00
		\$2,342.73
Savings 12-31-57	\$1,078.18	
Deposits	1,950.00	
Interest	90.40	\$3,118.58

(Includes \$600 for printing of quarterly bulletin, *Las Noticias del Puerto de Monterey*; increase due to rise in membership from 416 to 600.)

COSAS DE INTERES PARA LOS SOCIOS

Miss Margaret Jacks and Carmel Martin have been named honorary members of the board of directors of the association. Both have been active in the work of the Monterey History and Art Association since its foundation in 1930; both are life-long residents of the Peninsula, and both have been most generous benefactors in the cause of preserving the historic landmarks of Monterey. We are happy that they have retained their connection with the board and that they will still be available with their usual sound advice and encouragement.

A great shifting of board members came about at the beginning of 1959. Directors retiring from the board are Mary Greene, who sails from Mexico for Europe at the end of this month for a long travel-study tour of France, Italy and Spain; Mrs. M. R. Gragg, who has done an outstanding job as chairman of the transportation committee for the Adobe House Tours and as chairman of hostesses at the Meriendas; Mr. C. L. Slusher, who intends to travel extensively; Mr. Howard Severance, a long-time and valued member who also wants to travel; Mr. Charles McHarry, ex-president of the association and already in Europe; Miss Ethel Soliday, Librarian of the Monterey Public Library and co-editor of the *Noticias*, under heavy pressure of library work; Mrs. Wesley Heard, a very valuable director and a key figure on the Adobe House Tours.

Newly elected directors are Miss Anita Doud, descendent of a pioneer family of Monterey, Mr. Henry Jones, for years the chief barbecuer at the Meriendas; Mrs. Jack Craft, who has served on the transportation committees; Mr. George Leutzinger, owner of the Old Whaling Station; Mr. Harold Davis of the Bank of America; Mrs. John Short, this year's Transport Chairman on the Adobe House Tours, and Mr. William Stahl, long-time member; his daughter was the beautiful Favorita of 1957.

New Life Members in 1959 are Mrs. Della Brooks Walker, Mrs. Eleanore Wiley Dobbins and Mr. Cortland Hill. The \$50 Life Memberships are devoted to the building fund.

Sustaining members, paying dues of \$10 are Mrs. H. Dalzell Wilson, Mrs. Frances Andrews, Mrs. Wesley Heard, Miss Hilda Van Sicklin, Mr. S. F. B. Morse and Mr. Matthew M. Maguire.

The following regular members are heartily welcome; Mr. James H. Parks, Professor and Mrs. Robert Strum, Dr. and Mrs. C. A. Broadbush, Mr. and Mrs. Guthrie Courvoisier, Mr. and Mrs. Howard L. Reed, Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Bliss, Mrs. Freda Harding, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Starr, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas L. Craig.

Under *Gifts*, the association is happy to record that the A.W.V.S. has given a number of items for display at the Stevenson House. Mr. E. J. Bolce has also placed in the Stevenson shrine a hat-rack that was in the Jonathan Wright house at the Carmel Valley goat ranch where Robert Louis Stevenson was so desperately ill in 1879. The late Mrs. Bolce was the daughter of the Wrights.

From Mrs. Juan Garcia, we have received an American and a Spanish flag with their standards and holders. Mrs. Wesley Heard has also given a piece of the original furniture of the Alvarado Adobe: a walnut armoire, and as a gift in honor of Mrs. W. M. O'Donnell, our indispensable secretary, \$400 has come from the To Ka Lon women's group. The money will be used in refinishing furniture for our new adobe home, Casa Serrano.

Two other recent acquisitions have been a .44 caliber short carbine, presented by Col. Richmond, and a number of photographs of Monterey, Pacific Grove, Carmel Mission and Point Lobos taken in 1889 by Miss Bohlemus, and given to the association by Miss Nellie Ryder, librarian of the Carmel High School.

At the February meeting of the directors, Allen Knight was elected President for 1959; Claude Faw selected as Vice-President; Mrs. Mayo O'Donnell retained as Corresponding Secretary; Mrs. Christine Raynsford as Recording Secretary; Mrs. Isabel Tostevin named Treasurer. The directors expressed their warm appreciation for the time, interest and financial help that out-going President J. F. van Loben Sels had devoted to the association during his three terms in office, and gave him a vote of thanks as an outstanding president.

THE EDITORS
MONTEREY HISTORY
AND ART ASSOCIATION
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MONTEREY HISTORY AND ART ASSOCIATION

OFFICERS 1959

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Vice-President: Claude Faw
Corresponding Secretary: Mrs. W. M. O'Donnell
Treasurer: Mrs. Isabel Tostevin

EDITORS

Donald M. Craig
Mrs. William E. Kneass
Miss Ethel Solliday

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HONORARY DIRECTORS: Miss Margaret Jacks, Carmel Martin, Sr.

A special treat has been arranged for the members on the night of April 13 at the U.S.O. building when Chaplain Leon Darkowski, LCDR, U.S.N., will show movies of "Operation Deep Freeze, II", the naval expedition to the Antarctic. Honoring our members who are connected with the navy, the evening will be known as "Naval Post-Graduate School Night".

President van Loben Sels reports that at the annual dinner of the California Historical Society in San Francisco the Monterey History and Art Association was cited for special honors by the Society and received one of the first Awards of Merit granted by the state organization for outstanding community service, particularly for the preservation of the old adobes. Miss Margaret Jacks was also the recipient of an individual Award of Merit by the Society for her contributions in aid of California's history.

The area of the Battle of Natividad in 1846 is now marked by an appropriate plaque. Dedication ceremonies were held Nov. 16 by the Monterey County Historical Society, and several members of our Board represented us at the time.

Mr. and Mrs. Reginald Stuart, librarians from the College of the Pacific, conducted a group from the College to the Monterey historical buildings, including Casa Soberanes. With them was Mr. Glenn Price, who is now associate professor of History at the college, and has also become a director of "The Westerners."

Two local Curators were elected this fall as Vice Presidents of the Western Museum Conference: Mrs. William Kneass of the Pacific Building, vice president for History, and Mr. Vern Yadon of the Pacific Grove Museum, vice president for Natural History museums. The 1959 conference of the Western Museums will be held at Asilomar, and local museums and associations will be hosts.