

# NOTICIAS del PUERTO de MONTEREY

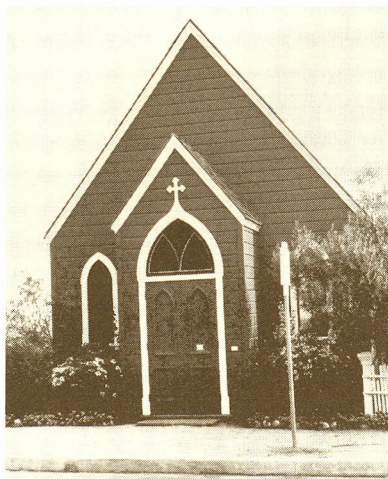
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*Mayo Hayes O'Donnell Library, Monterey*  
(photograph by Robert E. Coffin)

## "A BEACON UPON A HILL"

by Evelyn M. and William T. Butner<sup>1</sup>

When the tiny Episcopal chapel was built on Pacific Street in 1876, the high-spirited vaqueros raced their horses at full gallop along the sandy paths below. Spanish was the predominant language of the town, and the only other church was the Roman Catholic San Carlos Cathedral. But the English-speaking Protestant population had been steadily growing.

In March of 1875 the indefatigable and dedicated Anglican missionary, Father James S. McGowan, had been assigned to hold regular church services in the dance hall of the Washington Hotel. Forty persons attended the first service, but there were times when Father McGowan made the weekly journey from Salinas to find no one there. When asked how many were in attendance on such occasions, he would reply like the true Irishman he was, "There was me, myself, and brother Anthony and I." That, for him, was a congregation.

But attendance gradually increased, and Father McGowan wrote in his journal, "Hope begins to brighten. It was considered advisable to erect a church building as there was no other non-Roman house of worship in town. All united in faithful and earnest work for the accomplishment of this purpose." Financial support came from San Francisco through individual contributions amounting to \$651.00. Monterey parishioners contributed \$399.50; and \$175.99 was raised for the purchase of the church lot at a festival held by the ladies of Monterey.

The Gothic building was completed in the autumn of 1876 and was consecrated on July 14, 1878, by the Rt. Rev. William Ingraham Kip, D.D., Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of California.<sup>2</sup> One year later, after the chapel was officially named "St. James Mission Church," Father McGowan left Monterey to continue his missionary work.

With the opening of the Del Monte Hotel in 1880 and the completion of the railroad to Del Monte Station, elegant horse-drawn carriages brought rich Americans and notables from all over the world to the mission church. Royalty worshiped there when Princess Louise, daughter of Queen Victoria, attended with her husband, the Marquis of Lorne. Father McGowan later wrote in his journal that she came "not with imposing retinue as England's representative, but as the subject of a kingdom higher than earth."

After twenty years of adventurous missionary work in the Salinas Valley and the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, the Rev. McGowan returned to Monterey in 1900 to reside permanently and to become vicar of St. James Mission Church for eleven years. On February 1, 1901, as the whole world mourned the death of Queen Victoria, he delivered a memorial tribute to her in the tiny chapel in Monterey. The church was draped in the royal colors of purple and white. In attendance among the mourners were English residents of the town, as well as the crews of several English vessels anchored in the harbor. Within the year the church was again draped in mourning, and worshippers filled the chapel to pay homage to the assassinated President, William McKinley.

By 1910 the "seed" of the Anglican faith that had been planted in Monterey was flourishing in the neighboring communities: St. Mary's By-The-Sea in Pacific Grove, St. John's Chapel at Del Monte, and All Saints' Episcopal Church in Carmel had, by then, far surpassed the mission church in attendance and support.

Because of the infirmities of old age, Father McGowan resigned as vicar of St. James in 1911, becoming Vicar Emeritus in 1912. The very small congregation of the mission church was served by the Bishop and various Episcopal clergymen for a number of years, but in 1929 the church moved into a period of dormancy.

In 1941 its doors reopened to provide a place of worship for men of the Armed Forces since there were no chapels at the Presidio or Fort Ord at that time. Military chaplains assisted at the services.

The revitalized church began regular services in 1943 under the guidance of the Rev. Vincent Colletta who established Sunday School classes for children and adults, English classes for foreign-speaking persons, and instructions in Americanization and citizenship.

With the post-World War II population growth in Monterey, attendance at St. James Church increased. Church facilities, even with the additions that had been made over the years, were no longer adequate to serve the congregation. In 1956 old St. James Chapel was sold, and the congregation moved up the hill to the new St. James Church on High Street.

Over the next few years several other denominations owned and occupied old St. James, but they, too, soon found its facilities inadequate to meet the needs of growing congregations.

In 1963 the Monterey Urban Renewal Agency prepared a Desirability of Rehabilitation report concerning the "American Gothic" church building on Pacific Street. It was determined that "from an historical and aesthetic point of view it would be desirable to retain this building, particularly the original portion, consisting of sanctuary and small office."

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Attempts were made by the agency to interest religious and governmental agencies in preserving and restoring the chapel, but could arouse no interest. The Assembly of God Church, which owned the property, gave some thought to converting the little church into a wedding chapel but wanted to move it to a site outside the Monterey Historic District. There were a few prospective buyers who were interested in the property, but not the building.

When the little chapel on the hill was in its heyday, the adobes on the streets surrounding it were beginning to crumble away. But the adobe houses were being carefully restored and beautified while the little mission church, which had outlived its usefulness, stood alone and neglected on the hillside. Its foundation was shaky, its roof leaked, and its paint was peeling. It had survived fire and the ravages of time, but if the Urban Renewal Agency was unsuccessful in its attempts to preserve the historic building, certainly the day would come when the bulldozer would roar into the hillside and, in an instant, completely obliterate the once-lovely old chapel. In that single moment a significant link with the past would be broken forever.



But Providence had something better in store for the little church. In July of 1967 the Board of Directors of the Monterey History and Art Association decided to establish a Mayo Hayes O'Donnell Library in recognition of Mrs. O'Donnell's many years of volunteer service as Executive Secretary of the Association. Because of her great interest in the history of the west, it was decided to develop a noteworthy collection of Californiana when a suitable place for the library could be found. A few months later an article in *The Monterey Peninsula Herald* read: "If anyone is in the market for a church, there's a nice family size one for sale at 362 Pacific Street in Monterey."<sup>3</sup> The Assembly of God Church had found larger quarters elsewhere and hoped to sell the Pacific Street property immediately.

A year passed. There had been no prospective buyers for the church. The Urban Renewal Agency determined that, if the building were to be preserved, the Agency itself should acquire the property. With the approval of The Federal Housing and Urban Development Agency, The Urban Renewal Agency arranged to purchase it from the Assembly of God Church for \$38,000.00 ( \$33,000.00 for the land and \$5,000.00 for the building). Quite a reversal of values in ninety-five years, when originally the land cost \$175.00 and the cost of building the church was \$1200.00.

In June of 1969 the History and Art Association acquired the Doud house and property on Van Buren Street. A small parcel of land north of the Doud house was exactly the right size for a tiny church building, and in December of 1969 the History and Art Association (represented by the president, Ted Durein) paid \$1.00 to The Urban Renewal Agency for the purchase of St. James Mission Church. The agency agreed to move the historic portion of the chapel to the new site.

On January 7, 1970, Mayo Hayes O'Donnell, sitting in front of her *Casa Soberanes*, watched while the church she and her husband, William, had attended, moved along Pacific Street as it was being taken toward the hill to Van Buren Street where it would become *Mayo Hayes O'Donnell Library*. There it was placed in harmonious row beside two other buildings of the American period: the New England-style *Doud House* and the Victorian *Perry House*.

It was time for members of the History and Art Association to roll up their sleeves for the tremendous task of restoration. Under the supervision of architect Francis Palms, Jr., and Mrs. Maggie Downer, the library received a new foundation and a new roof. The original color of the chapel was accidentally revealed during the moving process, so once again the building was painted red in pleasant contrast to the white *Doud House*. Using gallons of water and an incalculable amount of elbow grease, library volunteers scrubbed away the dust and grime from the knotty pine interior walls which had replaced the original paneling some years before. Items of furniture (library tables, chairs, and filing cabinets obtained from the old County Courthouse in Salinas) were sanded and refinished.

Members of the History and Art Association contributed other items of furniture which included antique chairs and Persian rugs. The largest rug was acquired at auction from the Persian pavilion after the close of the St. Louis Exposition of 1903; it was a gift to the library from Col. and Mrs. William McC. Chapman.

The library dedication ceremony on August 26, 1970, brought together Margie McGowan, great-great-granddaughter of the Rev. James McGowan, and Mrs. Mayo Hayes O'Donnell in symbolic meeting. One represented the builder of the old mission church; the other, its future use as a storehouse of history.

Mrs. O'Donnell had acquired a collection of historical books during her years as columnist for *The Monterey Peninsula Herald*. Her books, which she presented to the library, were greatly implemented by *The Frank La Cauza Memorial Collection*, purchased (at the request of his widow, Mary Ann La Cauza) with funds acquired in his memory by the History and Art Association. A number of members also contributed books in memory of this distinguished gentleman who had been an instructor at the Naval Postgraduate School and had served as Councilman for the City of Monterey. The two collections, in addition to some other books from *Casa Serrano*, formed the nucleus of the library which now contains 1500 books, fully cataloged and placed on the shelves.

Cataloging has been accomplished by a committee of volunteers which includes Martha Bentley, Mary Ann La Cauza, Fran Adams, Kenneth Pemberton, and Elizabeth Fielder.

In addition to the historic volumes and novels by writers associated with the Monterey Peninsula and California, tax records, commercial ledgers, abstracts of titles, development maps, tourist maps, and brochures are part of the collection. The file cabinets contain early maps, and there are seven drawers filled with newspaper clippings and small publications relating to the Monterey Peninsula. Shelves in the chancel hold periodicals which include *The California Historical Quarterly*, *The Pacific Historian*, and a complete set of *Noticias del Puerto de Monterey*. There is a file of newspapers dating from 1887; Volume I of *The Monterey Cypress*; and ten years of *The Monterey New Era* dating from 1896. The photograph file is small but representative of a number of periods of Monterey history. There are also a number of photograph albums.

*Mayo Hayes O'Donnell Library* has been open to visitors since 1971. Staffed by volunteer hosts and hostesses, each of whom serves three hours each month, it is open every Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday from 1 to 4 p.m. and on Sunday from 1:30 to 3:30. Approximately 1500 persons visit the library each year. They represent almost every State in the Union, and many come from foreign countries.

Visitors are most impressed by the Trinity windows in the chancel, which present a magnificent view of Monterey Bay, the town, and the hills and mountains beyond. Some remain to browse among the books and often comment on the quiet serenity which fills the room.

"The Battle of Santa Clara" is the subject of an oil painting which attracts attention from its position above the vestry door. It is one of several oils by Frank M. Moore who was commissioned to paint them for U.S. Marine Corps Headquarters, Department of the Pacific, in San Francisco. The paintings are adaptations of watercolors by William Henry Meyers, gunner on the sloop of war *Cyane* which sailed with Commodore Thomas Ap Catesby Jones into Monterey Bay in 1842, in a comic opera attempt to capture California for the United States. *The Frank Moore Collection* now belongs to The Monterey History and Art Association, a gift from his widow.

As the library's resources have increased, so have the number of researchers seeking information on a variety of subjects: the gardens of Monterey; the letters of Charles Warren Stoddard; the Del Monte Hotel; onetime First Lady Lou Henry Hoover who, as a young girl, lived in Monterey. A descendent of a Portuguese fisherman, hoping to write a book, sought information on the Portuguese whalers of Monterey. A young man, in preparation for a term paper, asked, "Where did the sardines go?" Some visitors seek genealogical information concerning the old families of Monterey. The library contains some genealogical charts, and there are a number of books on the shelves, and photographs which might provide clues for a seeker of "roots." However, the library would welcome more genealogical histories and early photographs and paintings of the "first families."

Of course there have been weddings in the church-like atmosphere of the library. Small ones, to be sure, but the warm intimacy of the old chapel appeals to a number of bridal couples. Some wedding ceremonies have been traditional, others have been improvisational. Music has run the gamut from chants of an ancient religion; to Renaissance music played on the harp; to contemporary wedding music played electronically.

The little chapel on the hill cannot escape history. It stands on a small portion of an extensive gathering place of prehistoric Indians which Bancroft refers to as "The Place of the Mourning Doves." Abalone shells and some small artifacts were found during the restoration of the building. And in 1979 construction was halted on the property adjacent to the library when remains of an apparent Indian burial ground were unearthed. But archaeologists discovered that the site had been greatly disturbed when homes were built there at the turn of the century, making the discovery of small value to them.

Old St. James Mission Church, now *Mayo Hayes O'Donnell Library*, lives on, continuing to be a part of Monterey history. Father McGowan called it "A Beacon Upon A Hill" and wrote in his journal, "May its light spread and its life abound in good works." Its light of Anglican faith has spread in Monterey and the surrounding communities, and its good



works continue in the treasury of knowledge it protects in the *Mayo Hayes O'Donnell Library*.

## Notes

- (1) The authors are a married couple, both fourth generation Californians and graduates of the University of California. William (Bill) Butner was employed at a Berkeley industrial firm for thirty-eight years, retiring as its general manager in 1969. Evelyn served in public relations for a number of San Francisco Bay Area health and educational organizations. In 1975 the Butners moved from Kensington, California, to Pacific Grove where they have been active in several historical groups on the Monterey Peninsula.
- (2) Twenty-four years earlier, on July 30, 1854, Bishop Kip had held an Episcopal service in Colton Hall, but continuing the services had not seemed advisable then since most of the families that could have supported a Protestant faith had left for the gold fields, or for the new State Capitol at Benicia.
- (3) The site is now occupied by the Peninsula Building.

## Sources of Information

1. Father Kenneth Barta, Vicar of St. James Episcopal Church, *Copies of Early History of St. James Church*.
2. McGowan, Rev. J.S., *Mission to California* (excerpts from the diary of his missionary experiences)
3. *The Monterey Peninsula Herald*, miscellaneous clippings, 1953-1970
4. Owens, Lillian, *A Historical Perspective of St. James Church* (written by the Redevelopment Assistant, Monterey Urban Renewal Agency)
5. Wright, Susan Burns, *St. James Episcopal Church, 1876-1976* (booklet written by the Parish Historian)
6. Interviews with members of The Monterey History and Art Association (Historian: Amelie Elkinton; The Library Committee: Marthy Bentley, Mary Ann La Cauza, Liz Fielder)



(from *Old Monterey, California's Adobe Capitol* by Laura Bride Powers, 1934)

## iBORONDA! (Part III)

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Following are the progeny of Lester Boronda's grandparents, Eusebio and Josefa Boronda, who were married on September 15, 1831, at Santa Cruz. Birth dates are followed by names; those in parentheses were used by the family in addressing that person (sometimes "nicknames"). Brackets with numbers indicate the record source at San Carlos Church in Monterey.\*

1832 Luis, baptized at Santa Cruz; "died young" (before 1836).

1833 (Santos) José DeLos Santos, born May 1; bap. [M.3852] May 29 in Monterey; godparents, Eusebio's Carmel Valley cousins, Manuel Boronda, Jr., and wife María Juana Cota Boronda. Was one of the two children recorded in the 1836 census. "Lived his life very primitively in back hills near Jolon." His first wife bore fourteen children; second, three at least. It seems he did not associate with the rest of the Boronda family, and was never mentioned in division of his parents' property.

- 1834 Rafael (probably an infant death)
- 1835 (Carmen) María del Carmen de Carmelo Josefa, born May 31; bap. June 1 at San Juan Bautista; was the other child listed in the 1836 census. On April 15, 1858, she married A. (for "Apoleon") Leon Cervantes, a surveyor; the couple had a large family before moving to San Luis Obispo where they were divorced. Carmen is said to have married several times more (unconfirmed).
- 1836 José Juan Gemelos, one of twins born Oct. 10; said to have died the same year (there was another Juan Gemelos, probably a cousin, who married one DeLos Angeles Terry in Santa Cruz and died Dec. 10, 1867).
- 1836 (Francisco) José Francisco Luis, the other twin born Oct. 10; confirmed, together with his father and sister Maria, in 1844. He married María Ygnacia (or "Ignacia") Castro in Watsonville on June 25, 1861, and the couple lived in a small adobe near that of Francisco's parents; they reared seven sons and six daughters (one adopted). The eldest child, Narsiso (or "Narcisso") Ygnacio (Oct. 29, 1863-Apr. 2, 1940), was "the last of the horse-stage drivers over the grade to Tassajara." In 1888 the Monterey County Great Register listed Francisco (#230) as a farmer of Castroville, age 45 [sic], "American by Treaty with Mexico." After Ygnacia died in 1896, Francisco again married, Aug. 11, 1899, to Dolores Orozco, eleven years his junior, daughter of María Orozco and Francisco Faries of Los Angeles. The couple moved with their family of children to Tijuana, Mexico, where Francisco died and was buried some time after 1909. He should not be confused with a cousin by the same name and only a year older, a son of Manuel Boronda, Jr., of Carmel Valley. This other Francisco Boronda was usually known as "Pancho," and was a farmer at Soledad in 1888, later a *ranchero* in the Big Sur; he, also, had a large family; his wife was María Juan María Villa, an Indian girl.
- 1837 María Juana, probably born that summer, was the child buried at San Juan Bautista on Nov. 25, 1839 [3405].
- 1838 (Cirilo) José Civito Los de Jesus del Carmen, born July 9; bap. [M.4133] July 16 at *Patrocinio*, the Hartnell ranch chapel, with godparents Prudencio Espinosa and María Antonia Buelna (who served many times in this capacity). Cirilo is said to have lived until 1878 (not confirmed).
- 1839 (Narciso) José Narciso, born Oct. 29; bap. [M.4221] on Nov. 3 at *Patrocinio* with godparents Prudencia Espinosa and M. Antonio Buelna. Narciso was living in 1864; is said not to have married; death date unknown.
- 1840 (Maria and Mary) María de la Expectacion Guadalupe, born Dec. 2; bap. [M.4297] on Dec. 18 with "... (not legible) and Marie A. Buelna." On Feb. 28, 1863, Maria wed Alfred le Baudour, listed in the 1888 Great Register as a "native of France, naturalized July 14, 1869, aged 50, Salinas farmer (#2461);" their witnesses were two well-known citizens of Monterey, H. Escolle and Pedro Estrada. One of the Badour daughters, Sarah, married a Hartnell. A son, Jacob José Badour (1877-1968), "like others of his generation ... was well-known in rodeo circles. He trained trotting horses and racers at the old Salinas race track, now the California Rodeo grounds on North Main Street." Maria died on April 12, 1927.
- 1843 (Jose) José de Jesus (some records add "Juan") Mariá Encorose, born Jan. 29; bap. Feb. 14 [M.4453], with godparents Prudencia Espinosa and Antonio Buelna. In 1865, on Dec. 5, Jose married Ramona Espinosa; the couple's son died young, while their daughter, when only seventeen, succumbed to consumption at a San Jose convent. Later Jose "left the area in disgrace with the family and church over marital irregularities, headed for Arizona" (which accounts for the fact that he is not mentioned in distribution of his parents' property). At Oxnard Jose met a Scotswoman from Canada, Anna McNeil; they married, settled in Ventura County where Jose passed away Feb. 3, 1918.
- 1845 Esiquio, born Nov. 18; bap. [M.4685] March 11, 1846, with godparents José Jesus Gessa and Mariá Guadalupe Rodriguez Castro (who would later become his stepmother). The 1888 Great Register (#249) calls him "Eucevio," age 76 [sic], Salinas *ranchero*. Esiquio never married. During the Spanish-American War he was



employed by the United States Army to purchase horses. It is said that he died in the Philippines (not confirmed: however, it should be noted that his grave is in Calvary Cemetery, dated Nov. 5, 1902.)

- 1847 (Octaviano) José Octaviano de Jesus, born May 2, bap. [M.4777] May 22 at *El Patrocinio de San Jose* with godparents none other than the hosts, Don Guillermo (W.E.P.) Hartnell and his charming wife, Senora Mariá Teresa de la Guerra y Noriega. This was the third time the Borondas had asked the Hartnells to honor them by having the intimate ceremony at their home, and it establishes the close bond which existed between the two families. Dakin (again) well summarized it: "The choice of *padrinos* (godparents) was carefully considered in California, since real responsibility was attached, not only to protect the child 'from the Devil and all his works,' but to assume care of the child in the event of accident to the parents. A peculiarly Latin relationship existed between parents and godparents, a bond often closer than blood relationship. From the day of christening, parents and godparents addressed each other as *comadre* and *compadre* and did not hesitate to ask, and to give, continual and tangible assurances of true friendship." Octaviano was the last Boronda child to be born in the original adobe. In 1886 he married Josefa Soberanes (1860-1919) and they established their own home on a 73 acre farm about one and a half miles north of Salinas; Barrows and Luther in 1893 called it "one of the most attractive in the valley. The Señor is a man of fine appearance and his wife and children are intelligent and pleasing." Josefa was a daughter of Francisco Soberanes and Isabel Boronda (who was *hija* of Octaviano's uncle José Manuel Boronda, Jr., of Carmel Valley); and she also brought the Borondas another close tie with the Hartnell family since her brother, Benito A. Soberanes, on May 25, 1881, married Ada Smith, whose mother was a Hartnell. Octaviano was considered one of the most colorful figures in the Salinas Valley: "A man who handled horses all his life, he met a tragic death in May of 1928. He was thrown, then dragged, by a spirited young saddle horse he intended to ride to town from his home in the Graves district." He, his wife and three children (all daughters) are buried at Calvary Cemetery.
- 1849 (Dolores) María Petra de los Dolores, born Jan. 18; bap. Feb. 23 with godparents "... and María Josefa Buelna" [M.4950]. She married Jacob Durr, but they divorced sometime after 1867; Dolores married then to Francisco Vidal, and a third time to John B. Alm.
- 1851 (Carlota) María Louise Carlota was born on Oct. 6 and at the Nov. 10 baptism in Santa Cruz was given as godparents her brother Francisco and sister Carmen [M.5197]. There is something poignant about these fifteen and sixteen-year old siblings rallying to unity of the Boronda family at a time when their parents were bickering. However, the baby only lived one year, dying on Oct. 6, 1852.
- 1857 (Sylvano) José Sylvano (or "Silvano"), born Dec. 7 and lived until 1940; father of Lester Boronda, who will be discussed in Part IV.
- 1859 (Agnes) María Ynez (or "Inez"), born Ap. 20 and bap. July 5 [M.5379], was the youngest child of Eusebio and Josefa Boronda, only five years old when her mother died. She married on May 19, 1877, William A. Anderson of Castroville (born at Santa Cruz on June 20, 1852, to William J. Anderson who had come to the California coast on a whaling vessel in 1837). The couple had thirteen children. It is of interest that, like her uncle Sylvano, one married into the Graves family of Salinas. Agnes died Dec. 25, 1923.

\* Great effort has been made to untangle the historical complexity surrounding these early names. For instance, problems were created when families gave the same name to more than one member; or when death records listed women's maiden names, not always followed by that of the husband — or by his first name only! Finally, the greatest challenge to research was the ancient Spanish calligraphy, faded in hue but alive with fantastic curlicues. It is hoped these gleanings are accurate, and the author welcomes corrections and additional information.

To be continued.

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