

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

February 1, 1950

### **Founding of History And Art Ass'n Recalled**

On the 12<sup>th</sup> day of December in 1930, the articles of incorporation of the Monterey History and Art Association, Ltd., were drawn up and signed before a notary public in and for the County of Monterey, State of California. It might be interesting to those now on the Peninsula to have a review of the purpose in forming that corporation.

That purpose, as stated in the Articles of Incorporation, is to collect, preserve and own paintings sketches, drawings, records, books, manuscripts, charts, and other material pertaining to the history and art of Monterey and the State of California; to foster and promote an interest in the art and history of Monterey and California, and to assist and further all projects and activities connected with the purposes of this organization; and to have and hold, buy and sell such property, both real and personal, as may be necessary to carry out the objects of the creation of this organization.

To do and perform every act and thing necessary or convenient to carry out the above-named purposes, to the same extent as natural persons might and could do.

The names of those who were appointed to serve until the first election and who signed the incorporation papers on the above date, were: Carmel Martin, Roger S. Fitch, Allen Griffin, Myron Oliver, Bernard Rowntree, Lewis C. Merrell, Gouveneur Morris, Harold Mack, Stanley Wood, Mrs. Laura G. Wheeler, W.O. Raiguel, Easton R. Gibson, E. Charlton Fortune, J.R. Sneyd-Kynnersley and Jerome G. Pillow.

The voting power of the corporation shall be vested exclusively in the active, sustaining and life members, who shall each be entitled to one vote for any proposition on which a vote is taken. There shall be the following classes of membership: active, sustaining life and special members.

The purposes of the Association as contained in the constitution are three-fold: To promote interest in the history of Monterey County, to protect its historic sites, landmarks and buildings, to assist in the identification of points of historic interest and when deemed advisable, to erect suitable markers or monuments. To cultivate and promote a widespread interest in the development of art in Monterey County; to encourage contacts between artists and the public to their mutual benefit, and to facilitate the artistic growth of the community in architecture, painting, sculpture, and other forms of art.

To collect preserve, and own paintings, records books, manuscripts, etc. as pertain to the history.

The Association was formed on January 19<sup>th</sup>, 1931, at a gathering of about forty interested individuals residing on the Peninsula. In one year, according to the first annual report of the president, Col. Roger S. Fitch, the Association grew to one hundred and twenty-eight.

The first committee on art was headed by Miss Charlton Fortune, now residing in Portsmouth, Rhode Island, and concentrating on liturgical art; the late Mr. W.O. Raiguel headed the committee on architecture, and the late Mrs. Laura Bride Powers, noted historian and the first curator of the Custom House was the first chairman of the committee on history. Mr. Sneyd-Kynnersley was chairman of membership; Mr. Carmel Martin, old missions, and Mr. Myron Oliver, entertainment.

The first year the Association sponsored an Old Monterey Loan exhibit at the Custom House. The first Monterey Birthday Party or Merienda was held on June 3<sup>rd</sup> that year. Memory Garden was the setting through the courtesy of Misses Lee, Margaret and Vida Jacks. On July 7<sup>th</sup>, at the suggestion of the Association, the Monterey City Council asked the USS Nevada to remain in port to participate in celebrating the eighty-fifth anniversary of the raising of the American flag over the Old Custom House by Commodore Sloat on July 6<sup>th</sup>, 1846.

That year the Old Custom House, under the direction of the State Division of Parks through its chief, Col. Charles B. Wing, was sympathetically restored, needed repairs made, and proper facilities provided for the safe keeping of the historic relics there on exhibition.

The First Theatre was also on the recommended list for much needed repairs to building and grounds. That year the old-fashioned brick sidewalk was laid, proper drainage was provided to protect the adobe walls. Mrs. Jane Todd gave freely of her time and thought in making the garden the beautiful setting it is for the Old Theatre. A note of thanks was extended to Mrs. Abbott, the mother of Mrs. Arthur Hill Gilbert, for the care she had given the building and grounds in past years. Mrs. Abbott had been the custodian.

The Association began that first year to lay plans for the marking with suitable markers of about twenty historic spots in the old town. These markers with the addition of many more, have become a familiar sight and guide to many residents and tourists who visit Monterey and drive along the red and yellow lines which mark the historic route.