

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

May 21, 1951

The Monterey Foundation

It was on March 27, 1945, that the Monterey Foundation was formed and soon after its articles of incorporation were approved in Sacramento.

Dedicated to the preservation of the community's unique assets, historical and otherwise, the Monterey Foundation was formally organized at a meeting held in the Old Custom House. By their unanimous action 32 men and women representative of the various interests and sections of the Peninsula area became members of the Foundation at the meeting. By their enthusiastic expression of approval for its purposes they assured its success, according to Col. Roger S. Fitch, who was then president of the History and Art Association, Ltd.; and who, with S.F.B. Morse and Carmel Martin was chiefly instrumental in creating the organization.

Modeled on the highly successful Santa Barbara Foundation the local group has and will provide a responsible agency through which public spirited benefactors may contribute to funds for the purposes stated.

Those who were present and signed the articles of incorporation were Samuel G. Blythe, Clyde A. Dorsey, Miss Anita Doud, George W. Eckhardt, Mrs. Frances Elkins, Stephen J. Field, Dr. James B. Finley, Col Roger S. Fitch, Mrs. M.M. Gragg, Mrs. Mary Greene, Stuart Haldorn; Armin Hansen, W.R. Holman, W.G. Hudson, Miss Margaret Jacks, A.B. Jacobson, Robinson Jeffers, Angelo Lucido, Col. Harold Mack, Carmel Martin, Col. Charles M. Mason, Emmett G. McMenamain, S.F.B. Morse, W.M. O'Donnell, Myron A. Oliver, Mrs. Henry Potter Russell, Noel Sullivan, Mrs. Maria Bach Thompson, E.H. Tickle, T.A. York, and J.F. van Loben Sels.

From this number were chosen the following board of trustees:

Mrs. Dorsey, Mrs. Elkins, Dr. Finley, Col. Fitch, Mrs. Greene, Stuart Haldorn, Miss Jacks, A.B. Jacobson, Sol. Mack, Carmel Martin, S.F.B. Morse, William M. O'Donnell, Myron A. Oliver, Mrs. Russell and E.H. Tickle.

At the first regular meeting of the directors, Carmel Martin presiding as temporary chairman, announced that the by-laws provide that while the foundation is "organized for perpetuity and its scope covers all

general charitable purposes, the by-laws provide that "until such time as the historic buildings, landmarks and sites of Monterey have been preserved for posterity, the preservation of such historic buildings, landmarks and sites is the primary objective of the foundation."

The first officers, chosen by unanimous vote of the trustees present, were Allen Griffin, president; Mrs. Henry Potter Russell, vice president; Clyde A. Dorsey, secretary-treasurer.

Colonel Fitch, president of the History and Art Association, under sponsorship of which the Foundation was organized, presented a check for \$250 on behalf of the association, the first contribution to the fund, which it was hoped would grow until all the aims of the foundation had been realized. Other contributions of cash and pledges announced at that meeting in 1945, amounted to \$6,500.

It was on October 2, 1945, that the Foundation acquired the Gutierrez adobe on Calle Principal. The foundation offered a bid of \$5,639 for the property in the Monterey county superior court, when it was up for auction to satisfy unpaid taxes. Mrs. Frances Elkins, owner of the Amesti adobe, was primarily responsible for the success of the transaction, which was later repaid.

The next project of the foundation was the acquisition of a portion of the lot which adjoined the First Theater on the south, in order to protect that historic structure in a proper setting. The owner asked \$3,000 for the property. A gift of \$1,000 toward the purchase was made and other funds collected through tours and gifts. The purchase price was later returned to the foundation by the State Parks Commission, as the theater is owned by the State of California and administered by the State Parks Commission.

Mrs. Henry Potter Russell, is the president of the board of trustees, with A.B. Jacobson, Miss Margaret Jacks and Mrs. Harry Lusignan, serving as vice presidents and Frank Work, secretary-treasurer.