

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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Front Door Lock to The First Theater

A little bit of this and that for today's Diary.

A few days ago we wrote two articles on the origin of the Monterey Foundation and the publication by the group of a brochure on Monterey's old adobe buildings and the history of the Foundation.

Today we will add a brief report of the several historical tours which have materially assisted in the first projects of this newest organization. In 1945 the Monterey History and Art Association had a tour of several of the old historic homes and were able to give a check for \$250 to the Foundation as the very first subscription to their funds to purchase and restore the old buildings.

On October 6, 1948, another tour was given by the association when the Casa Soberanes, the Larkin House, Casa Amesti and Casa Alvarado were opened by their owners and \$910 was realized.

After the expenses were paid, a check for \$744 was sent to the treasurer of the Foundation to defray the expenses of a new roof on the Gutierrez adobe on Calle Principal, which has been purchased by the latter group and was in the process of restoration.

During the Centennial celebration in Monterey in 1949 another tour was given under the auspices of the Centennial Committee of Monterey. Mrs. Harry Toulmin was appointed chairman by Dr. Hugh Dormody, then mayor of Monterey. She selected a committee of women to assist and it was decided, with the permission of the Centennial committee, that all funds collected would be used to defray the expenses of the restoration program on the Gutierrez adobe.

Plans are now under way for another tour to be held the latter part of June of 1951.

The front door lock of California's First Theater was returned to Monterey and to the theater. Recently a letter came to the History and Art Association from William H. Depew of Las Vegas, Nev., saying that he had the lock in his possession and would send it to the association if it was wanted. It arrived a few days ago with the following history of its disappearance.

"I have mailed you the front door lock to the Old Theater. I understand that this lock came round the Horn from New York. It came into the possession of my

father, Charles M. Depew, at the time the Hugh Tevis home was being built on the waterfront in Monterey.

It was the desire of Mr. Tevis that there should be employed as many of the old Spanish residents as possible. For a long time there were quite a number of the older Monterey residents at work on the building and the grounds. They were very grateful for the work and when my father expressed a desire to obtain some of the historic relics of old Monterey he was given quite a number including the lock.

There was a large brass key to the lock but Albert Farr, the architect on the Tevis home, induced my father to let him have it. Mr. Farr was an avid collector of early California items and obtained nearly everything my father had.

"Among other things there were four small cannon balls dug out of the walls of the old Custom House fired from the vessels in the harbor when the town was attacked.

"Jules Simoneau used to come to the building several times each week peddling tamales to the workers. I later visited in his home with Mr. Farr and was shown many interesting Stevenson first editions and pictures presented to Simoneau by the author and so inscribed on the fly leaf."

Another gift received by the association and now on display at the Stevenson House is a bootjack, the gift of Mrs. Ethel Fraser Doane of 320 East 11th Street, Oakland. It was made by her grandfather, Simon Thomas Fraser of Massachusetts. It is quite clever in that it folds compactly for traveling.