

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

November 26, 1952

A Visitor to Casa Soberanes

It was a delight a few days ago to receive in Casa Soberanes Mrs. Anthony Kambish, a grand niece of Don Ezekial Soberanes. Don Ezekial had purchased the old adobe home on Pacific Street in 1860 from Don Rafael Estrada, the grantee of the property from the Mexican government in 1841. At the time of these real estate transactions Pacific Street was known as Calle Estrada on the maps of Monterey.

Mrs. Kambish's mother, Adelaide Broner, was the daughter of Fabiana Soberanes, niece of Ezekial, who married a Swiss Italian named Costino Broner. Mrs. Kambish remembers her grandmother telling her that her bridegroom carried her wedding bouquet on horseback all the way from his home near San Mateo to San Antonio Mission, where the ceremony was performed. We hope that she still thought it beautiful when she received it.

M. Kambish inherited from her parents one of the charming little old brick and stone houses on the main street in Almaden, the community which sprang up in Santa Clara County before 1850, because of the quicksilver mines which were opened there in 1824. Mrs. Kambish is the owner-curator of the historical museum which is open each weekend in New Almaden.

Recent comments in the Diary on California's First Theater productions and members of the Gold Coast Troupers have brought forth further historical data relating to the past history of the old adobe building at Scott and Pacific Street.

Miss Anne Hadden of Pacific Grove has loaned us a printed program entitled "Musical Entertainment at the First Theater in California, on Friday, Jul 11, 1919, for the benefit of the Serbian Relief Fund." This occasion marked the first time the First Theater in California had been opened to entertainment since 1860.

The program carried a brief history of the First Theater written by Fred Smith, who lived in the building in 1919 and ran a curio and gift shop. He was a former Del Monte Hotel employe and in his spare time made souvenirs out of whale bone and sea shells. His works of art, miniatures of the missions, paperweights, etc., are still treasured possessions in many homes throughout the country.

The late Edward Berwick of Pacific Grove introduced the speaker of the evening, Lt. Milutin Krunich of Belgrade, who addressed the group on "Serbia in Abundance and in Need." Krunich, an instructor in Slavic and French languages at the University of California, formerly had been a lieutenant of the Serbian Army.

A special feature of the evening's program was Miss Maria Antonia Field's rendition of a selection of vocal numbers. She first presented a group of old English heart songs: "I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls," "When the Swallows Homeward Fly," "The Last Rose of Summer," and "I Cannot Sing the Old Songs." These were followed by Italian, French and Spanish songs.

Miss Field was accompanied by Mrs. Carol Turner on the piano and Mrs. James Harper on the violin and these ladies also presented two instrumental numbers, "Legende" by Weinawski and "Serenade" by Pierne.