

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

June 10, 1952

Joint Birthdays

Monterey and Wells Fargo & Co. have the same birthday. Monterey was 182 years old on June 3 and Wells Fargo celebrated its 100th year in California on that same day. Monterey had a Merienda and Wells Fargo had a dinner party at the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco.

The firm of Wells Fargo & Co. arrived in San Francisco three years after the first discovery of gold in the Mother Lode country. Shortly, through good fortune, the failure of rivals and its own shrewd and far-sighted administration, it became the most powerful banking house in California, an agency for banking and the transport of express matter with a name that was one of the hallmarks of the pioneer West.

Of all the firms doing business on the Comstock in bonanza times, none was more closely associated with the fortunes of the West than Wells Fargo and Express and its subsidiaries, the Pony Express, the Pioneer Stage Company and Wells Fargo Mining Company.

The Merienda is over for another year. It was a grand party in every sense of the word. A gay group occupied every one of the 400 places which had been set – even the seats which had been carefully marked “reserved” for the men and women who had been working in the garden since the very early hours of the morning. But those helpers cheerfully ate their luncheon either standing or occupying the benches in the corridor or near the barbecue pit. We did not hear a word of complaint from anyone, not even when they could not find an extra knife or fork for their own use. And each and everyone of those men and women paid for the privilege of being of service on Monterey's birthday.

A vote of thanks is extended to Mrs. Richard Johnson of the Troupers of the Gold Coast for her part in making the presentation of La Favorita and her attendants the very finished spectacle that it was. She made and fitted the lovely white costume worn by Miss Gregory. She planned the colors and the dresses for the three young women who attended her – Misses Nancy Fleisher, Dion Zaches and Sherry Hicks. Mrs. Charles Kiernan, La Favorita's chaperone, wore a becoming black costume with high comb and mantilla. Around her shoulders she

wore a handsome black lace cape which had once been a prized possession of the late Mrs. Martha Cooper.

A note from William W. Hubbard of Pacific Grove voices his appreciation of the Merienda. The letter reads: “This is to thank you for your gracious courtesy in extending to a newcomer the privilege of attending the delightful Merienda. My daughter, Mrs. H.S. Stolter of Monterey, and I enjoyed every minute of it. It was a rare treat.

“My congratulations to the Monterey History and Art Association upon so successfully rolling back the years and transporting us to the old Spanish days with their easy grace and gaiety. You are doing much to preserve that lovely heritage which I hope will always be cherished on the Peninsula. It is as though you had said to us in true Spanish hospitality, ‘Mi casa es suya.’ Again I wish to thank you.”

In the opinion of at least one person Monterey has one of the finest city street department crews in the state. They are always cheerful, cooperative and interested, Manuel Perry, the superintendent, Orville Watson, superintendent of building and grounds, Bert Bruno, and all the rest of the men. Bert Bruno lit the fire in the great barbecue pit at 4 o'clock on the morning of June 3 and stayed to watch it until all was over in the late afternoon. Manuel Perry assisted at the pit in cooking the 450 steaks which were so thoroughly enjoyed by all present at the 182nd birthday party.