

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

October 23, 1953

Possession of Father Serra's Birthplace Pressed

It was pleasing to learn in the news last week that San Francisco is endeavoring to regain possession of Father Serra's birthplace in Mallorca. It has been reported that the city property director has announced that he will ask the Board of Supervisors for \$500 so that a Spanish attorney can be engaged to press the city's case.

The Serra birthplace was purchased by the Rotary Club of Mallorca and given to San Francisco in 1932 as a gesture of good-will by the Rotarians there. The gift was formally accepted with great fanfare and public celebrations both in San Francisco and in Mallorca, and the deed is now held in the San Francisco archives. The Franco government, however, in line with thievery of Communist, Fascist and Nazi governments, stole title and removed the plaque from the house. The plaque stated that San Francisco, California, was the owner of Father Serra's birthplace.

The annual conference of the group known as "Western Museums" was held in Yosemite National Park, Friday and Saturday, October 16 and 17. The main panel included discussions of general interest on Friday and Saturday, with concurrent workshops on specific topics in art, history and science. A Monterey group was asked to contribute to the workshop on history led by Mrs. William O'Donnell, with Mrs. William Kneass, curator of the Stevenson House, speaking on the place of an historical house museum, in the life of the museum program. Others attending from Monterey were Mrs. Mary Greene, Old Custom House, and Mrs. Isabel Hartigan, California's First Theatre, curators; Miss Myfanwy Lloyd and Mrs. Vera Stewart, assistants.

At the September meeting of the Monterey Peninsula Garden Club the membership voted to sponsor a resolution adopted at the board meeting of the California Garden Clubs, Inc., held in Sacramento, September 9th, relative to the preservation of the Redwood Highway and the bordering big trees.

Following the resolution which was sent to the State Highway Commission and all other organizations which might be influential in the fight for preservation of these scenic monuments:

Whereas a motion was made, seconded and carried that the California Garden Clubs, Inc, maintain its policy

of putting forth every effort for the preservation of the Redwood Groves in California, and

Whereas, we wish to petition the State Park Commission and the State Highway Commission to give serious consideration to preserving the present Redwood Highway U.S. 101 passing through Humboldt Redwood State Park, Dyerville to Miranda, as a park without further widening and attendant destruction of its irreplaceable trees, thus preserving for generations to come one of the world's most magnificent forest drives, and

Whereas, we recognize the need for proper thoroughfare for commercial and through travel we urge that such a road be constructed so as the [to] bypass Humboldt Redwood State Park, and,

Therefore, Be It Resolved, that letters be sent to the State Park Commission apprising them of our actions and determination.

Signed by:

Mrs. Weston Walker, President California Garden Club, Inc.

Mrs. Clifford B. Stratton, Secretary

Mrs. R.C. DuSoe, Chairman, Resolutions.