

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

February 16, 1953

### **This And That**

Today we present a column of "This and That," a collection of short items which we have hoped to use for several weeks but other more important items seem to have a way of intruding upon the best laid plans.

A short time ago Louis Adolfo Sanchez spent a few days in Monterey – the city of his birth. He is the son of the late Adolfo Sanchez and Nellie Van de Grift Sanchez, both early day residents of this city. Mrs. Sanchez was the author of "Spanish and Indian Place Names of California," widely used as a reference book since its publication in 1922 and now a collectors' item; "A Short History of California," a collaboration with Dr. Rockwell Hunt, head of the California history – division of the College of the Pacific; and "The Life of Mrs. Robert Louis Stevenson," who was her sister.

Mr. Sanchez brought with him from his Berkeley home a set of phonograph records of the "Dances of Early California Days" as described in Lucille K. Czarnowski's book of that title. The records had been recorded at Padua Hills, the delightful colony of Mexican people near Claremont in Southern California, where musicians and dancers had collaborated with the Bowmar company in reproducing these historical tunes and dances. Recordings included Los Camotes (sweet potato), El Sombrero Blanco (The White Hat), La Contradanza, which is a familiar Spanish waltz, and La Cachucha and others. La Contradanza is a recording as the dance was danced in Monterey, and was given to Miss Czarnowski, as it was remembered by those old-timers who had danced it here and taught it to a second generation.

The sixth annual institute of the California History Foundation will be held at the College of the Pacific, in Stockton, March 13 and 14. The joint session for historical societies and teachers of history is scheduled for March 14 with Hon. Herbert C. Jones, of San Jose and Harold G. Schutt, as co-chairmen.

Dr. Rockwell D. Hunt, director of the California History Foundation, has sent out invitations to interested individuals and groups to attend the sessions. President Robert E. Burns, president of the College of the Pacific, will preside at the annual dinner on March 13. The two main papers will be presented by Dr. Peter T. Conmy,

librarian of the City of Oakland, and Dr. Glen S. Dumke, Dean of the faculty of Occidental College. Chancellor Tully C. Knoles will lead the annual luncheon program on March 14<sup>th</sup>.

Latest report from Michael, the Marine in Korea. "Well, I made my little tour of Seoul. Is that place ever a rat race! There are about two or three million people running in 50 different directions at the same time. I almost got trampled in the rush. I'm not used to those big crowds any more like I used to be on Market Street in San Francisco on New Year's eve or Salinas on Saturday night of 'Big Week.'

"Most of the people in Seoul try to beg or sell for G.I. money. About three out of every four are little kids from four to 15 years old. They are so poor but there is not much we can do about it. Every time a Korean Childs' Relief Fund comes up we all give as much as possible. At least we can help a little. Too bad there isn't an organization in the States to help these kids. I know they need it badly.

"The March of Dimes is on! At the present time the Marines (the smallest unit in Korea) are in the lead. The 7<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment has contributed over \$3900 to date. Our company donated \$1082 and we are still collecting. It is a good cause and everyone is glad to give."

One of the original pianos to arrive in California was purchased by Don Jose Abrego and placed in the adobe home he had built at the corner of Webster and Abrego Streets. This piano was, until a few years ago, in the possession of Don Jose's granddaughter, the late Mrs. Frances Bolado Davis, and in her home at Tres Pinos, near Hollister. She presented it to the California Historical Society and it is now on display at their headquarters on McAllister Street in San Francisco.

A paper glued to the inside of the piano has this inscription written by Don Jose: "In 1841 Captain Stephen Smith arrived with his vessel in Monterey, and I engaged him to bring me a piano on his next trip to this country. In March, 1842, he returned in a brigantine; he had three pianos on board. I bought this one for \$600. He then sailed for San Francisco, where General Vallejo purchased another of the pianos and the third was sold in Los Angeles to K. de Celis."

The piano owned by Abrego was a small instrument of German make and probably difficult to keep in tune, so later Abrego bought another piano of about the 1850

period, for his home. This piano is now in the Old Custom House, a gift to the State of California by Don Jose's grandson, Edward Abrego of Oakland.