

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

March 27, 1953

### **Stevenson House Visitors**

Miss Maria Antonia Field, of Laguna Seco Rancho, is a member of the Mission Soledad Restoration Committee of the Grand Parlor of the Native Daughters of the Golden West, and Mrs. Clyde Dyke, of Pacific Grove is the Grand President of this State organization. During this current month the committee has compiled a letter to the membership and interested public, from which we are privileged to quote in this issue of the Diary.

Addressing the members of the many groups of Native Daughters in California the committee had this to tell: "In reviewing the standing and progress of the committee on Mission Soledad Restoration, it gives us much pleasure to report that we now have a little more than \$12,000 on hand. Forty-two parlors have joined the ranks of 100 per cent – meaning that every member of those parlors has given \$1 toward the program of restoration of the only one in the chain of 21 missions completely unrestored."

Over the past many years the Native Daughters of the State have contributed to many of the other Missions in an effort to assist in their maintenance and restoration. Now, as a measure of service and devotion, the Native Daughters of the Golden West have pledged themselves to underwrite \$30,000 for the restoration of this historic and holy landmark.

Through the contribution of \$1 per member, the organization will have the necessary funds to complete the chapel and the two rooms adjoining it.

Joseph Real of 154 Eldorado Street has placed on loan in the Stevenson House a horse's bit, which also has a bit of Monterey history attached to it. In a case in an upstairs room of the old adobe, Mrs Kneass, the curator, has placed the bit in a case with the following description: "Joseph Real found this bit in the hills of Carmel Valley, heavily encrusted with rust and dirt. He has shown it to several old vaqueros, each of whom identified it as having belonged to Ponciano Manjares, a great uncle of the finder. Copper rivets hold the silver conchos and fine silver inlay in place."

Joseph Real is a native of Monterey, a descendant on his maternal side of the Dutra family who played an important role in early California and Monterey history.

Visitors to the Stevenson House recently were Mr. and Mrs. Duncan Gleason of Hollywood, and Mrs. Lucretia Phelps Wolfskill of Los Angeles. Mr. Gleason is an artist of the Southern city, the grandson of James Gleason who married Catalina Watson of an early Monterey County family. He is also a nephew of Capt. Paty, early navigator, who had a store in Monterey before 1850, and also in San Francisco. Mr. Gleason has in his possession a diary and letters written by Capt. Paty in which he described life in Monterey during his residence here.

Mr. Gleason's mother was Nellie Duncan who was a school teacher in Monterey when classes were held in Colton Hall. She often told her family, Mr. Gleason recalled, that she had attended the dancing parties in the old Washington Hotel, and once had the pleasure of sitting out a dance with Robert Louis Stevenson and found him very fascinating and a most interesting conversationalist.

Mrs. Evelyn Bertrand, president of the Humboldt County Federation of Women's Clubs, attended the meeting of the California State Federation recently held at Asilomar. During her stay on the Peninsula Mrs. Bertrand saw for the first time the home of her grandparents, James Stokes (Gallatin's) and Dona Maria Josefa Sota de Stokes.

The Stokes house was built of adobe in the late 1830's by Stokes, an English sailor turned doctor and druggist, and later became the consulting physician to Gov. Figueroa. It is said that in the sala (ballroom) of this house were held many of the important social functions of the day, including Cascarone balls.

Mrs. Bertrand was also pleased to see "The Book of Devotions" which had belonged to her grandmother, Dona Josefa. This beautiful little book was given to the Monterey History and Art Association for display in the Stevenson House by another of the owner's granddaughters, Mrs. Winifred Wolf of Gonzales.