

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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When the Artists Came

The beginning of the summer of 1913 was probably also the beginning of the influx of artists to the Monterey Peninsula. On June 14, 1913, the Cypress American*, published in Monterey a series of columns entitled "Among the Artists."

Even the advertising section of the daily paper appealed for rooms and studios for the artists and their pupils who were arriving here to spend the summer sketching and studying. The editorial writer asked his readers to create studios out of old barns and houses so the artists might be welcomed and accommodated.

"The weather during the past week has been a delight to the artists," the leading story reported. "One painter remarked that it was really the first time he had been enabled to enjoy the much talked-of 'California color' in landscape."

"The classes of Miss Thompson and Martinez have been studying painting long hours each day. The Oak Grove lagoon and the House of Four Winds share honors as subjects to be painted or sketched," we have been informed by the report of 1913.

In another item we learn that there were two or three additions to the artist colony during the preceding week. Miss E. Charlton Fortune of San Francisco and Edinburgh, Scotland, was here accompanied by her mother. They had taken a house in Pacific Grove for the duration of their stay and Miss Fortune was busy working on a commission for some decoration in a cathedral in Edinburgh.

In later years Miss Fortune owned a home in Monterey on Roosevelt Street just above High and was a prominent member of the artists group. It was Miss Fortune who designed the interior of St. Angela's church in Pacific Grove and was the founder of the Monterey Guild, a group of craftsmen who carried out her designs for interior church decorations which were used in churches throughout the United States. Miss Fortune has been carrying on this work for some years in Rhode Island. She expects very soon to leave Portsmouth Priory in Rhode Island and move to Kansas City, where she will continue her work.

Another item concerned an important artist who still makes his home in Monterey on El Dorado Street: "The

latest addition to the artist group is a pupil of Armin Hansen. William H. Creed of San Francisco. He tells many amusing stories about the Bohemian Club while he mixes the colors on his palette. Mr. Hansen and his pupil came upon a group of Chinamen sacking dried squid upon a grassy, oak-dotted plateau a mile back of San Carlos Church and they say it has suggested a fine subject for a large canvas."

We were amused by this item: "The picturesque old Custom House was surrounded by Miss Thompson's class one day. Of course it had to surrender gracefully, the assaulters being of the graceful and tender sex."

Again there was reference to Miss Fortune in another and late column: "Miss Fortune has cleverly arranged for herself a way to carry her painting outfit on her bicycle and she will soon go to study the Point Lobos landscape.

Daisy Bostick in her "Carmel Today and Yesterday," published in 1945, describes Carmel as the artist's colony: "No wonder Carmel makes such an appeal to the artist! Who would not exchange soot-filled city air for the fragrant odor of pines, backyard lines and endless dingy roofs for purple hills and green forests, the nervous strain of metropolitan life and the discomforts of piercing cold and wilting heat for simple living in comfortable surroundings?

"The artist who came to Carmel in the early nineteen hundreds found that he could secure a three-room bungalow, studio or shack for an extremely moderate monthly rent. He could add to his table with fish, abalone or mussels obtained by himself during his hours of exercise. He could spend years wearing out his old clothes. Aside from his smokes and the material for his work, what else did he need that money could buy?"

*The newspaper's title is Monterey American.