

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

July 12, 1954

'Land of Discovery'

Glancing through the current issue of Motorland – which by the way, we enjoy very much – we read with interest an editorial written by Benjamin K. Kimber, publisher of the Modesto Tribune.

“See California First” is a slogan which has well-nigh fallen from sight in recent years. Mr. Kimber has a very definite point in his appeal to Californians to become better acquainted with their own state.

In the first place, modern roads and motor cars, airplanes, fast trains and luxury liners have made it so easy for us to visit more distant scenes that perhaps it is true we have been neglecting our own state, the editors of the Motorland believe.

In the second place we have enjoyed a large influx of new people, and it is only natural for them, when they plan a vacation, to think first of their former homes.

California is a land of discovery, Mr. Kimber points out as follows:

“Everything you yourself have not found – has not yet been discovered, so far as you are concerned.

“On your trips over California, did you discover the largest trees in the world, trees whose leaves reflected the light of the Star of Bethlehem? Did you discover the largest ocean in the world, gnawing at the continental shelf of your own state, creating sunken gardens, glorified inlets, palisades and lazy beaches?

“Did you discover that ancient stand of cypress, defying the ocean storms on the cliffs above Carmel-by-the-Sea?

“Did you travel through the largest stands of Joshua trees on earth? Or visit the oldest date farm in America, or wander through the palms in the lost canyon guarded by Indians?

“Did you see the columns of giant towers marching across the mountains bearing upon their shoulders millions of kilowatts to aid California in living? Did you see the valley where thousands of almond trees blossom and fruit, where homes are built on acre lots, and the swift passage of jet planes shakes the windows of hundreds of new homes being built to house the jet operators?

“Did you see the Golden Gate at night; or the lights of San Francisco and East Bay cities linked by the gleaming Bay Bridge? Did you wind up rivers filled with fish to valleys full of history and mountains full of game?

“Did you discover queenly Shasta or Lassen, where earth's internal fires still send up steam and gasses to bubble through the mudpots? Did you discover even one of the myriad of lakes that dot the high Sierra?

“Have you listened to the Feather or the Yuba rivers or any of our rivers making symphonies in spring, or seen the serene reaches of that vast man-made lake on the Sacramento headwaters?

“See them, the, or some of them, and when next you drive back East, or visit the fabled spots of some foreign land, you will have some homeland feature in your mind, with which to make a comparison. See California first, near your own garage door.”

The above seemed quite appropriate to use as a borrowed column today, now that vacation time is upon us – for we truly do have so much of beauty, history and enjoyment right here at our own doorstep if we just take the trouble to investigate it.

Illustrating this article are eight photographs of beauty spots in California, including a view of the Monterey cypress taken on the golf course at Cypress Point and a charming picture of the patio and staircase of the Plaza Hotel at San Juan.