

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Back Roads To San Francisco**

Someday let us not be in a rush to motor north on the highway to San Francisco. There is so much beauty to enjoy and so many enjoyable things to see along the way—the so-called back roads by way of Santa Cruz to Los Gatos, Saratoga, Palo Alto and Woodside.

That is the route which Mary Greene and the writer took to get to San Carlos, where Mrs. Greene, the curator of the Old Custom House, spoke for the members of the San Mateo County Historical Society. Her subject was her favorite - "How to plan and maintain a museum."

A stop for lunch in Los Gatos is always the time to see a bit of this very nice spot. A small shopping district on the way out of town, going north, is a charming bit of scenery lacking the usual advertising signs and garnishes of modernism. We regretted the disruption of so many of the orchards in Santa Clara Valley where huge subdivision projects are being promoted, for we will miss the blossoms in the spring and the delicious fruit that was produced there.

A stop was made at Stanford University where we visited the museum on the campus. This depository of the possession of the Stanford family has recently been reopened after undergoing several years of refurbishing. In addition to the donors' personal valuables there is much of historic interest in the additional exhibits.

The Woodside Store at Woodside was the next stop on our historic route. This store and post office were established in 1849, but the present building was erected for Dr. R.O. Tripp in 1854 when it was the center of the redwood lumbering operations. Within a five-mile radius here at times more than 1,000 lumberjacks found their mail, supplies, and liquid refreshments.

The store is now owned by San Mateo County, having been purchased and restored by the Board of Supervisors. In 1954 the 100th anniversary of the building was celebrated, with the San Mateo County Historical Society assisting in furnishing it with historic items which are of public interest.

Next on our agenda was a visit to the home of Sunset Magazine - and if our readers have not called there it

should be a must for the next motor trip. Menlo Park is the location, where the buildings have little in common with most office buildings. The heavy roof shakes are hand-split from redwood logs cut in La Honda mountain area 20 miles to the west. The adobe bricks in the two-foot thick walls were hand made in Fresno and the 10-foot entranced doors were hand carved from four-inch thick pin panels.

The land upon which Sunset built lies along San Francisquito Creek. It has a romantic history for it was once a portion of the Rancho de las Pulgas, an original grant to Don Jose Arguello, governor of Spanish Lower California, in 1815. Later owners were his son, Don Luis Antonio Arguello, the first native-born governor of California under Mexican rule, and Milton S. Latham, governor of the new State of California in 1859.

Conducted tours for visitors are held throughout the day in the building but guests are privileged to wander through the five-acre garden at their leisure. Here all the plants and shrubs are labeled and easily read, as one wanders from the Canadian to the Mexican border passing from the native plants of the Pacific Northwest rain forest to plants of Southern California's semi-desert.

Also, the property of San Mateo County is the Sanchez Adobe, which was officially opened to the public on June 6, 1953, as a historic house museum. We completed our tour there on the coast overlooking the Pacific Ocean, within 19 miles of San Francisco. Our journey homeward was made down the coast road to Santa Cruz which is also a picturesque change from the much traveled highway through more densely populated areas.

(To be continued)