

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

July 18, 1956

Adobe House Tour

The Monterey History and Art Association will sponsor an annual Adobe House Tour on Saturday, July 28th, from one until six o'clock when six of Monterey's oldest homes not usually opened to the public, may be visited. Mrs. H.W. Toulmin, the granddaughter of Thomas Oliver Larkin, first and only American consul to California, will be hostess at tea in the Larkin House to all who visit this historic adobe that afternoon.

Tickets for this interesting event may be purchased at the Monterey Chamber of Commerce office on and after July 23rd or at all the homes on the day of the tour. Mrs. M.R. Gragg heads a committee from the association planning a guided tour for the visitors who prefer not to drive their own cars. Parking space is being provided at the Monterey Peninsula College where cars and drivers will be available for this service.

The historic old homes to be opened on this occasion will be: Casa de Castro, the home of Miss Margaret Jacks, on the Del Monte Fairways; Casa Alvarado, 510 Dutra St., where Dr. and Mrs. Wesley Heard will be hosts and show the home of the first governor of California; Casa Amesti, 516 Polk St., now the headquarters of the Old Capital Club; Casa de Joaquin Soto, No. 5 Joaquin Court, where Mrs. Mary Greene presides as hostess; Casa Soberanes, 336 Pacific St., the home of Mrs. William M. O'Donnell; and the Larkin House, 510 Calle Principal at Jefferson street.

All income received from the sale of the tour tickets will be used by the Monterey History and Art Association, td., in its program of preserving the historic landmarks, furnishing the monuments, acquiring historical books and documents and, in general, making collections that will be of interest to historians, researchers and visitors to the Monterey Peninsula.

The board of directors of the Monterey History and Art Assn. is proud to announce that a valuable addition to the large collection of Stevensonana already on display at the Stevenson House on Houston St. has been received. It is the gift of Mrs. Helen Sargent Hitchcock of Greenwich Connecticut, in memory of his sister, Mrs. William Grieg Waker. Neither the donor nor the collector of these valuable items have ever been to the Stevenson House in Monterey, but the knowledge that

such a shrine to the beloved author existed is so worldwide, that the collection found its way back to the house where Stevenson spent a few happy months of his short lifetime.

Mrs. Hitchcock wrote the following note of appreciation to Mrs. William Kneass, the curator of the Stevenson House: "Thank you very much for the long list of material. It is very gratifying to see it so well recorded and I am sure it will be an addition to your very fine organization. It has been a great pleasure to me to make the contribution in Memory of my sister, who was a great enthusiast for the distinguished man of letters." Visitors are welcomed in the Stevenson House each day in the week, except Thursday, from 10 o'clock in the morning until 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

There are 54 items in the collection given in memory of Elizabeth Prescott Sargent (Mrs. William Greig Walker), many of which were purchased at the Anderson Galleries sale in New York City in Nov. 1914 and Jan. 1915. They still have the catalogue numbers of those sales affixed, and follow the listed description.

There are many very old books in the collection as for example a volume "The Life and Death of that Eminently Pious, Free and Faithful Minister, Edinburgh, 1724." The signature of Thomas Stevenson and book label of R.L. Stevenson is included. Others, even older, are dated 1707, "The Testamentary Duty of the Parliament of Scotland (Thomas Spence), and Benj. Hoadley's "The Election-Dialogue," reprinted in 1710.

There are articles appearing in *Munsey and Atlantic Monthly*, *Scribners* and *Columbia Library Monthly*: another entitled "In California with Robert Louis Stevenson" by his sister-in-law, Nellie van der Grift Sanchez; and several by his stepson, Lloyd Osborne.

There are some beautiful shells, stone specimens, photographs and curios from South Seas. Probably one of the most valuable items in the collection is a Tapa cloth from the Samoan Islands. It is creamy white, with elaborate design in black, consisting of three circles, one within the other, diameters, three, five and seven feet respectively; entirely covered between and within circles with a floral spray and variegated pattern; one corner bearing inscription in the native language with date 1890. According to a Samoan student at Columbia the inscription was translated for Mrs. Walker as "The gift of remembrance to Robert Louis Stevenson August

1, 1890, from all the high chiefs of Samoa as a friendship token.”