

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Our Parks Imperiled**

Newton B. Drury, in his "Chiefly Speaking" in "News and Views" published by the Division of Beaches and Parks of the State of California, writes of all the dangers constantly lurking over the beauty spots of the state. At the recent Conference of Naturalists held in the Big Basin, he reports there was a discussion of a phase of the Naturalists' work for which there is greater and greater need. This is the task of making more clear in the public mind the nature of the "park concept of land management."

All of us, Mr. Drury believes, have a part in this, of course, but the naturalists have the most direct opportunity to explain the nature of the park lands, their purpose, and the trust imposed upon us to preserve them, in accordance with the law and the public policy, toward which millions have been invested. This would seem elementary and obvious. But recent events have shown that it is not, he explains, and that there is an Important educational task ahead of all of us.

Perhaps it is inevitable as our economy expands, that there is an increasing adverse impact of commercial and community demands for the use of park lands for purposes obviously other than those for which these special holdings of the State are intended.

Mr. Drury, the chief of the Division of Beaches and Parks, writes: "Without, at this time, making an exhaustive list, let me mention just a few threats to the integrity of our parks which need to be dealt with patiently and factually:

"Redwood Highway - pressure for freeway construction through the finest groves, a problem now happily approaching satisfactory solution through the fine cooperation of the Division of Highways.

"Emerald Bay - proposal to bridge the entrance, and with several miles of approach roads, mutilate one of the great scenic areas of America and bisect two important campgrounds.

"Huntington Beach - projected plant of a public utility demanding rights of way and the withdrawal for two years from public use of a sizeable portion of the park.

"Anza Desert - insistence on grazing of areas remarkable for their display of desert flora.

"These are but a few of the non-park-use demands that face the California State Park Commission. All are typical of an apparent assumption that park lands are fair game, that regardless of the specific obligation imposed by law and appropriation (many times by gift) they can be turned to other uses."

Many of us have known Lewis Paul Griffith, who has been the supervisor at Pfeiffer-Big Sur State Park for a number of years and have appreciated his work and interest there. He is leaving the park to become administrative assistant at Sacramento. Griffith has been with the division since 1943 and has worked in a number of locations, originally as a ranger, later park supervisor at Tahoe State Park and finally during the past years, a park supervisor at Pfeiffer-Big Sur. His wife and two sons will accompany him to Sacramento.

Visitors to Monterey appreciate the charm and historic value of the Old Custom House as shown by the count taken by the curator each day. Through Saturday July 14<sup>th</sup>, there were 53,146 visitors to the building since Jan. 1, 1956. There were 5,515 last week and over 800 on Tuesday.