

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

May 22, 1957

### **A Past Merienda**

Saturday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, will be Monterey's 187<sup>th</sup> birthday, when, according to a custom established in 1932, a Merienda will be held in Memory Garden for members of the Monterey History and Art Assn. Ltd., and a barbecue served followed by the cutting of the huge and beautiful birthday cake provided each year by Miss Margaret Jacks.

In looking over our clippings of past Meriendas we came across one describing the Merienda as it was given in 1933. The festivities began on Friday evening and lasted through Saturday evening when a fishing fleet night carnival was held in the inner harbor. It would be well if this feature of the birthday celebration could be revived. The Special Events Committee might give this a thought for another year.

The anniversary party of 24 years ago began with a civic sunset ceremony at the Serra Monument on Presidio hill. We remember the music of the old 11<sup>th</sup> Cavalry band was thrilling and the address of Col. Ben Lear, commandant of the Presidio of Monterey, informed all present of the landing of Don Gaspar de Portola, his predecessor, and Father Junipero Serra, on June 3, 1770, near the present Presidio gate when California was claimed as a possession of the King of Spain.

Col. Allen Griffin was chairman of the program. Miss Engracia Enrequita Freyer, now Mrs. William Dougherty of Greenwich, Conn., was La Favorita. Mrs. Dougherty is a cousin of Miss Maria Antonia Field. She was named for her great grandmother, Engracia Munras, and was the daughter of the late Capt. Frank Barrows Freyer, U.S.N. She is now the mother of two children.

Miss Field also took part in the program when she read Bret Harte's "Angelus." Talks were made by the mayors of the three cities, J.L. Steward, Monterey; John Catlin, Carmel, and Sheldon Gilmer, Pacific Grove.

The consul general of Spain, Alvira Aguilar, and the consul general of Mexico, Enrique Bravo, were present and brought greetings from their respective countries. J.R. McKillop, superintendent of Monterey Union High School, gave an address on "Junipero Serra." The Rev. James Culleton, D.D., pronounced the benediction. "Retreat" was sounded at 5:30, as national colors were

lowered during which the audience stood at "Attention".

The Merienda on Saturday was presided over by Col. Roger S. Fitch president of the History and Art Assn., the sponsors of the event. Carmel Martin Sr., was the toastmaster. The Favorita was presented and the two visiting consuls brought greetings from Spain and Mexico. Vocal and instrumental selections were given by Fernando M. Feliz, attache of the Mexican consulate, and Lorenzo R. Feliz.

S.F.B. Morse was heard in a well-rounded talk on Portola and the Rev. Jose Thompson of Los Angeles, a Franciscan and member of the de la Guerra and Carrillo families, spoke of Father Serra's life and work.

There was a beautiful birthday cake that year and the Favorita led the processional as it was shown to the guests in the garden. Mrs. Ben Lear, the wife of the Presidio commandant made the first cut in the cake, a custom which is still carried out at the Merienda each succeeding year. Mrs. William M. Breckinridge, wife of Maj. Gen. Breckinridge, in command of Fort Ord, will have this honor in 1957.

Beginning at 1 o'clock on Saturday, June 3, 1933, there was a bocce and horseshoe contest in the Custom House plaza, followed by a concert in Friendly Plaza by the 11<sup>th</sup> Cavalry band. In the evening there was an exhibition of native Japanese pastimes in Plaza de Muelle, followed by dancing. From 8 until 9 o'clock the night carnival of the fishing fleet was enjoyed.