

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

July 22, 1957

The Adobe Tour

The annual, always looked-forward-to Adobe House Tours, sponsored by the Monterey History and Art Association, will be held this summer on Aug. 31st from 1 until 6 o'clock in the afternoon. This year there will be nine of Monterey's most historic and attractive private homes open to the interested public for a charge, which will include a shuttle service from house to house by private car.

On the list of houses not usually open to visitors will be Casa Alvarado, the home of Mrs. Wesley Heard, 510 Dutra Street; Casa Amesti, 516 Polk Street, through the courtesy of the Old Capital Club; Casa Abrego, corner of Abrego and Webster Sts. Courtesy of Casa Abrego Club; Casa Bonifacio, Mesa Road, Mrs. Guy Catlin, hostess; Casa Boronda, Boronda Lane, Dr. and Mrs. Mast Wolfson, hosts; The Larkin House 510 Calle Principal, Mrs. Alice Larkin Toulmin, hostess, courtesy of California Division of Beaches and Parks; Casa Soberanes 336 Pacific street, Mrs. William O'Donnell, hostess; and Casa de Joaquin Soto, No. 5 Joaquin court, off Eldorado at Pacific street, Mrs. Mary Greene, hostess; and Casa Castro, on Castro road, Miss Margaret Jacks, hostess.

Each of these unusual houses are of special interest for their historical value as well as their charm in furnishings, the gardens and the early California architecture which they exemplify. Casa Alvarado was once owned by one of California's early governors, Don Juan Bautista Alvarado; Casa Amesti, once the residence of Mrs. Frances Elkins, now the Old Capital Club, built in the Mexican period by Don Jose Amesti, a Spaniard; and Casa Bonifacio which once stood on Alvarado street where the First National Bank now is. The old adobe was the home of Miss Maria Ygnacio Bonifacio, the heroine of the Sherman Rose legend. The Boronda adobe is one of the oldest adobe buildings in Monterey. It was once a boys' school conducted by Don Manuel Boronda. Dr. and Mrs. Mast Wolfson are now the owners of this old home.

Casa Soto is the residence of Mrs. Mary L. Greene, the curator of the Custom House Museum. The Soto adobe was built in 1827 by Joaquin de Soto and remained in the family until purchased by Mrs. Greene in 1943.

The Casa Abrego was built by a Spanish merchant who came to Monterey from Mexico in 1834 with a group of colonists under Don Jose Maria Hajar in the vessel "La Natalie," which is said to be the vessel on which Napoleon escaped from the Isle of Elba. The adobe is now the home of the Casa Abrego, a newly formed women's club.

The Castro Adobe on the Del Monte Fairways, is the home of Miss Margaret Jacks. It was the country home of Gen. Castro and his family as well as the caretakers' house at one time. Casa Soberanes was built by Don Jose Estrada, a prefect of Monterey in the Mexican period, later acquired by the Soberanes family.

The Larkin House is one of the best known of the old adobes in Monterey. It was built by Thomas Oliver Larkin, the first and only American Consul to Monterey. His granddaughter, Mrs. Alice Larkin Toulmin, recently presented the house and the furnishings to the State of California as a historical monument.

R. H. Partridge, a director of the Monterey History and Art Assn., is in charge of the shuttle service for the guests who wish to visit these old and historic homes. Those taking the Historic Route, who do not wish to drive their own cars, are asked to motor to the Monterey Peninsula College parking lot, park their cars and accept the offer of a ride from one of the members of the History and Art Assn. The Guests will be dropped at one of the adobes, picked up later and driven to the second house, and so on throughout the afternoon. Tickets may be purchased at the first house visited or at the Monterey Chamber of Commerce after Aug. 1st.

There appeared recently in The Herald a news story announcing the sale of part of an old Spanish grant near Hollister, by Gaston B. Ashe. That grant was part of the Bolado property. Ashe is the son of the late Julia Bolado Davis, a member of a distinguished Spanish family of Monterey.

Mrs. Davis' grandfather was Don Jose Abergo, the builder of the Casa Abrego, the old adobe at the corner of Abrego and Webster streets, now the Casa Abrego Club. Her grandmother was Josefa Estrada. One of their daughters married Don Joaquin Bolado and they became the parents of Julia Balado Davis, who died at her home near Tres Pinos a few years ago. She was the donor of Balado Park to the City of Hollister for the establishment of a 27 acre park.