

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Awnings to Railroads**

Do you remember the wooden awnings that used to grace many business buildings in California towns?

This question is being asked in the Newsletter of the Conference of California Historical Societies sent to the membership this last month. To be sure the Pajaro Valley Historical Society is answering that question with action. They are endeavoring to save one of the old wooden awnings in Watsonville, hoping that the old building to which it is attached may someday become a museum. The Society is being supported in its preservation program by other local agencies.

Congratulations are in Order for Executive Secretary Coke Wood, and the College of the Pacific for receiving a reward from the American Assn. of State and Local History for "promoting a better understanding of national heritage on a local level" through their pioneer telecourse over Channel 10 in History of California.

The Shasta Historical Society publication for 1958, "The Covered Wagon," has just been received. Mrs. Mabel Frisbie, the editor, is to be congratulated for presenting an interesting and neat publication. All those interested, including former residents of Shasta, may address Mrs. Frisbie at 2135 Shasta St, Redding, in order to obtain copies at \$1 each.

Siskiyou has completed its "country store" in the basement of the museum. We advise those traveling north to visit this museum when in Yreka. It is said that large numbers of students and teachers visit this outstanding museum as a part of schoolwork. The State Division of Beaches and Parks is planning to restore the Casa Del Oro in Monterey as the store it was in the early 1850s. The building, at Scott and Olivier streets, was made a State Historical Monument in 1939 when it was deeded to the State of California by the Misses L. M. and V. Jacks.

Two hobby groups that are preserving much that is of historical value and interest are the Railfans and the Horseless Carriage clubs.

For instance, "The Western Railroader" is filled with pictures and news of historical value. Did you know that the Western Pacific has torn down all its water facilities for steam locomotives? Visiting steam jobs will have to call on the fire department for service. It is good to

know that a number of steam locomotives have been given to museums by the railroad companies. The Southern Pacific gave one of its huge engines to Monterey for the Dennis the Menace Playground on El Estero. And is it popular with the young people!

This summer, we have learned, the Railfans Club conducted its longest tour which included Colorado's narrow-gauge roads. It's quite likely that there will be enough tourist traffic to make at least one narrow gage line a paying proposition.

Also, Karl Kortum, of San Francisco Maritime Museum, reports that a ferry boat with walking beam and side wheel propulsion has been saved.

Tuolumne County Historical Society has received a grant from the Board of Supervisors which will be used partially, at least, to publish a brochure featuring points of historical interest in the county suitable for public distribution. The Museum has also acquired the iron doors from the Burns Cigar Store, one of the pioneer Sonoma stone buildings which is being torn down.

Tulare County will place a marker at Mooney Grove dedicating it to the memory of those who helped preserve the remnants of Valley Oaks that are the chief attraction at the county park. Two state plaques have also been dedicated at points of interest on the Butterfield Mail Route. One at Fountain Springs and one at Lindsay where a section of the original road is now a state highway.