

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

February 27, 1959

Letter from Mary Greene

Mary Greene, former curator of the Old Custom House and director of the Monterey History and Art Assn., has reported from Mexico. We know that her many friends and admirers will be interested in reading of her activities while in the country across our southern border.

Recently Mrs. Greene's daughter visited in San Miguel de Allende, where Mrs. Greene has been attending the Instituto. During the visit they spent some time in Mexico City, visiting the Pyramids, Xochimilco, and going to a bullfight.

Mrs. Greene reports: "I had never been to one before and I think that one will do me for the rest of my life. There was a bullfight here the Sunday after we arrived back in San Miguel. Marian went, I did not. But she said she had to see how a small-town bullfight compared with Mexico City.

"The one here was very bad and she walked out after the second one. They fought cows which insisted on sitting down, then they twisted ears and tails to try to get them up. Then they killed them and butchered to the sight of the audience - that was the small town 'bullfight'."

The letter goes on to tell of a carnival to San Miguel which was on for three days as a pre-Lenten affair. In the evenings they went to the "Jardin" where they were pelted with cascarones.

"Some were very beautiful, I bought one, to send some home to Monterey. They mounted the Cascarone on a long stem, then formed a large paper flower around the egg, beautifully tinted the flower, then sprinkled it with glitter. Some of the flowers were, exquisite. We attended the dance at the 'Club-Deportiva' Fronton Court, nice music, but it was rather open air and we were cold.

'I have to go to Mexico City tomorrow to re-register my car. They only give permits for three months; another three months may be granted here but the second time I had to go to Mexico City. Then I have to return there within 11 to 15 days to get the papers. They absolutely refuse to mail them. The American embassy, informed me that it would be impossible for me to sell my car here, so after I get back from Mexico City I will start

packing as they only give me to March, 17 to get the car across the border.

"I go on a trip to Patzcuaro the 26th, the semi-annual trip by bus conducted by Mr. Dickenson of the Instituto. I am sure we shall see much of interest, craft shops, etc. We will be away four days. The day before I went to Mexico City there was a great pilgrimage to San Juan de los Lagos. There were more than 2,000 who left San Miguel alone, and among them my criada (maid). She walked with the pilgrims nine days. It is way over 200 miles. They got up at 3 o'clock in the morning, rested during the midday, then went on until late at night. Each one carried some bedding and a pot to cook beans. Lola fell three times and hurt her arm badly. As yet I do not know if it was broken. Anyhow she got home but has not been able to work.~

"I am so glad the Serrano Adobe has been saved and I am sure the history and art association will make a fine thing of it. It is good to get The Herald and to keep abreast of happenings.

"I will sail from New York on the Holland-American-Line, 'Statendam' on April 29. I will land at Rotterdam: from there my plans are very uncertain. I want to see Holland, then get down into Italy, Vienna, Germany, see England in the summer, then to Spain."