

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

January 1, 1960

### Photos Of Past

Today I received a surprise note and collection of photographs taken on the Monterey Peninsula at the very beginning of the 1900's for which I am most grateful to Malcolm W. Street of Carmel. Each and every picture reveals a bit of the history of tis part of California in 1903 and '04. Mr. Steel's mother took the pictures during vacations spent here in those years.

The letter begins: "Will you please accept my congratulations for the interesting stories of the old days appearing from time to time in the Monterey Peninsula Herald and which bring back memories of my school days when we were visitors at Pacific Grove.

Referring to pictures Mr. Steel writes: "Perhaps the most interesting one is the large one of the wreck of the Pacific Coast Steamship Co.'s little steamer "Gypsy" at Macabee Beach at the foot of what is now Hoffman Street in New Monterey. This little steamer operated from San Francisco to Santa Cruz to Monterey to San Simeon and return and perhaps as far as Port Hartford, now know as Port San Luis.

"From Port Hartford, the narrow gauge Pacific Coast Railroad served San Luis Obispo, Los Alamos and Los Olivos in Santa Barbara County. With the commotion the "Gypsy" caused when arriving at Monterey wharf (the present fish wharf), one would think the 'Queen Mary' was arriving from Europe."

Mr. Steel goes on to relate that the beach was one of the favorite beaches and was served by the famous Monterey-Pacific Grove railroad. Mr. Macabee was the "professor" of swimming, trying to teach the girls wearing the terrible costumes of the day. At any rate it was a pleasant family gathering place.

An amusing part of the letter will probably strike a familiar note for some "old timers." "To the boys of the day, the locomotive engineer was the greatest of idols. I believe we would have killed ourselves assisting in polishing old numbers 1310, 1375 and 1377 at the Pacific Grove roundhouse, just for the privilege of sitting in the cabs."

Upon his recent visit to the Monterey Peninsula, Mr. Averell Harriman stated that he was not known at the old Del Monte Hotel when his father's private car was put on a siding and its passengers from New York were

hauled to the hotel in the old horse-drawn stage which met all trains.

Mr. Steel regretted that he had lost his photograph of old Del Monte Beach bath house, at which he swam a few races in his high school days. There were then the Las Vegas "one armed bandits" or slot machines at the baths and the boys, when playing the five cent ones, admired the "Rich and Cultured" from the hotel who could fill the 50 cent machines.

"As a very small boy I can still remember the Stanford summer school students at the Hopkins Laboratory at Lovers Point in Pacific Grove, riding the Pacific Grove-Monterey train to Del Monte beach baths and kicking up a rumpus for the entire distance. Perhaps, deliberately trying to "shock" the good people of the Grove, they would leave the cars at the Custom House, grab a beer at a nearby bar and rejoin the cars a block or so to the east of Alvarado street.

"From the point of re-boarding to the baths, they would usually argue the conductor and driver out of an additional fare. These same students usually held football practice in the business section of Pacific Grove on Lighthouse Ave. much to the disgust of the townspeople.... All of their pranks put them down as future guests at the state penitentiary. Needless to say, many years later, they all looked quite harmless."

More of Mr. Steels' reminiscences will be recalled in the future.