

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

March 25, 1960

Father Junipero Serra

In these day when there is so much written and spoken of the possible sainthood of Father Junipero Serra, we take liberty to refer to a newspaper man's story of an interview with Don Miguel Fio Bunola, which took place at the foot of the parish church in Petra, Father Serra's birthplace. The conversation took place the day previous to the fiesta in honor of the distinguished Padre who founded the chain of California Missions and whose body lies before the Altar in Carmel Mission.

Don Miguel Bunola begins his story: "Tomorrow, here, devotees (The most devout) of Father Junipero shall render homage to the future Majorcan (Mallorcan) saint."

Our reporter inquires: "I like to hear you speak of Fr. Junipero."

Don Miguel: "I feel great admiration and devotion toward him. He is the most illustrious son of Mallorca. Hector de Santisteban made me become familiar with his biography. I would be able to relate it to you almost day by day."

The reporter: "How was Fray Junipero while he lived in Petra?"

"He was a child of weak and feeble constitution. He was baptized here on Nov. 24, 1713. He was born at one o'clock in the morning and received the names of Miguel Jose Serra Ferrer. Next Nov. 24th, will be the 247th anniversary of his birthday (Natalicio). These lands, (he added after a brief pause) are truly blessed by God. Here all is love and beauty.

"Think about this incomparable countryside. It was here that I, for the first time six years ago, experienced that impression that anyone with subtle sensibility, upon seeing a paradise would experience. A son of this territory had to be Fray Junipero Serra."

Reporter: "Speak to me of the Colony of Silence."

"I thought then that this area should change itself into the most ideal place for the retirement of wisemen and that opinion, the writer, Camilo J. Sela confirmed: He said that in the calm and serenity of the privileged area one would be able to find that dream world that we all desire anxiously."

The reporter next asked: "How will the Colony of Silence be?"

"Great and spacious sun areas with much room between each building. Green game areas, and avenues and streets on a high modern plane."

"To what city would this Colony of Silence belong?" was the next question asked of Don Miguel Fio Bunola, and he replied with pro and con for rural urbanization.

"What logical relation has this beautiful place to Fray Junipero Serra." Son Miguel responds: "I believe that the child Miguel Jose Sera saw the sea for the first time from this point of Porta Petro. Here he should have launched his journeys to those far – distant lands where he conveyed that message of love of that "poor little one Assisi."

"Beautiful ending. We are unable to add not one word or letter."

Signed,
CALDENTEY.