

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

August 1, 1960

Two Chairs

There will soon be two chairs in the Museum-Center of Studies in Petra on the Island of Mallorca, Spain, in honor of Mrs. Laura Bride Powers; first curator of the Old Custom House and one of the founders of the Monterey Historical and Art Assn.

At a recent meeting of the directors of the association Mrs. Mary L. Greene spoke enthusiastically of her recent visit to Petra, the birthplace of Father Junipero Serra, as the guest of Dina Moore Bowden; a native of San Francisco who now makes her home in Palma, Mallorca. She suggested that each member of the board of directors give a dollar to make up \$25, the cost of each chair, and send the money to Mrs. Bowden in memory of Mrs. Powers. The full amount was soon realized, and the check went off to Spain.

When Mrs. George Applegarth, the daughter of Mrs. Powers, was informed of the memorial, she also sent a like amount to Petra. Mrs. Powers was a devoted admirer of Padre Serra and of the missions he had built in Monterey, Carmel, and San Francisco, where her later life was spent with the Applegarth family. The annual Merienda, sponsored by the Monterey History and Art Assn., was originated by Mrs. Powers in observance of Monterey's birthday.

Mrs. Bowden has written this note to the association directors expressing her appreciation of the generous gift.

"Your letter with its interesting news and the most generous donations has given me great pleasure as it will our friends of the association "Amigos de Fray Junipero Serra" when they hear the good news. I am very glad that Mrs. Laura Bride Powers and her valuable work is to be commemorated in the Museum-Center of Studies in Petra. It may seem strange, but such memorials find reverberations in the hearts of Californians visiting Petra in a way that is deeply significant. The work of persons such as Mrs. Powers is linked to the history they helped to preserve, at its source. And Californians are happy to see such work honored.

"We now have chairs honoring Capt. Juan Perez, navigator, (given by Leon de Fremery of San Francisco); F. Maynard Geiger (John and Mary Swingle of the

California Book Store, Berkeley); Prof. Bolton (Miss Vesta Condon, a pupil, and Mr. Theron Howard); a George King Bell Chair (given by his daughter, Mrs. Elsie Bell Earnshaw); a Ralph Sylvester Peer Chair, (donated by his wife) and a donation for another, as yet not named. So, with the two for Mrs. Powers, we now have seven named.

"On July 21 we shall celebrate the first anniversary of the inauguration of the Museum-Center of Studies at Petra. The center is looking very lovely now that the garden is full of flowers. Once again, very many thanks to you and Mrs. Greene for your interest and cooperation. It is deeply appreciated, I assure you."