

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

September 27, 1960

Historical Award

The Henry R.-Wagner Memorial award will be presented this evening by Donald C. Biggs, director of the California Historical Society, to Fr. Maynard J. Geiger, OFM at an award dinner to be held at the Society's headquarters in San Francisco. The award is made annually by the society to the author of the work published within the preceding two calendar years in the field of history, cartography or bibliography, which the awards committee shall deem most worthy of recognition. Members of the awards committee were Dwight L. Clarke, Los Angeles chairman; Thornton Douglas, Los Angeles; Thomas W. Streeter, Morristown N.J.; Carl I. Wheat, Menlo Park; and George L. Harding, Palo Alto.

Fr. Geiger received this year's award for his outstanding achievement in historical scholarship recently published by the Academy of American Franciscan History, "The Life and Times of Fray Junipero Serra, OFM."

Fr. Geiger was born in Lancaster, Pa., and received his early education there and in Los Angeles. In 1923 he became a Franciscan and was ordained a priest in the Franciscan Order June 9, 1929. He received his doctorate from Catholic University of America. Since 1937 Fr. Geiger has spent his life at the Old Mission of Santa Barbara, where he serves as archivist and historian. Among his well-known writings are: "The Kingdom of St. Francis in Arizona," "Calendar of Documents in the Santa Barbara Mission Archives," and the translations and annotation of Palou's Life of Fray Junipero Serra.

Henry R. Wagner, in whose honor the award is appropriately named, was one of the West's eminent historians and author of the famous "Spanish Voyages to the north-west coast of America." He was a key member of the group which revived and reorganized the California Historical Society in 1922.

Carl I. Wheat, author of "Mapping the Trans-Mississippi West 1840-1861," received the award in 1959.

The new president chosen by the Conference of California Historical Societies at the recent meeting held in Bakersfield, is L. Burr Belden of San Bernardino. Mr. Belden is editorial writer on the San Bernardino Sun. He was one of the original organizers of the conference at

the first meeting in Columbia in 1953 and has continued to serve on the board of directors as regional vice president. Dr. Clarence McIntosh, professor of history at Chico State College, is the new vice president.

The Monterey History and Art Assn. is a member of this important state Conference of Historical Societies.