

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

October 18, 1961

Big Fiesta In Mexico

Sept. 30 is a big day in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, for it is San Miguel Day and so Big Fiesta went on, according to a letter received from Mary L. Greene, former Monterey resident and curator of the Old Custom House for many years. Mrs. Greene now lives in this fascinating Mexican town and is building an adobe residence there.

Mrs. Greene writes that she is now an (migrant and may stay in Mexico longer than an ordinary tourist can. She is also permitted to import her (Volkswagen by paying the custom duty at the border and then re-entering Mexico.

Continuing, Mrs. Greene writes of San Miguel Day: "We got up at 3:30 this morning, fireworks had been going on all night, bands parading by the house, up at the central plaza, sky rockets started at 4 from the main church all the church bells ringing constantly for an hour, church all illuminated outside as were all the buildings, around the plaza, dozens of skyrockets at one time were shot off as fast as the man could light them, with other noise-makers, a fine band paraded around the plaza, mainly playing, very well, "Anchors Away," of all things, then they would alternately play a piece on the bandstand, between pieces of the band, Indian pipes and drums could be heard, then boys marched back and forth with huge tissue paper stars mounted on circles of bamboo, lighted inside, held aloft on long poles.

"Everyone was there, a huge castillo was set off - that is high pole, about 40 feet, on which was mounted huge bamboo pinwheels, was set off to the amazement of the crowd. At 5 a.m. the fireworks were over, the gates of the atrium were opened and people went in to early mass.

"More has been going on all day, tonight outside, there will be gatherings at the church, dancing all night and all day tomorrow.

The Santa Barbara Historical Society has announced the publication date of "Etchings of California" as Nov. 15, 1961, "The headquarters and museum of this well-known and active society is in the Old Mission of Santa Barbara, where copies of the book may be ordered at the pre-publication price of \$6.50 per copy plus tax.

Between 1880 and 1885, the well-known artist, Henry Chapman Ford, made a tour of the California missions and as he went, he sketched. One of the results of this tour was a series of etchings of some 80 years ago, 24 in number, that ranks among the best records of our missions that have been made. Many of them have become so soiled and battered that they are no longer attractive. William A. Edwards has offered a set of these etchings, remarkably clean and unharmed after so many years, for reproduction in the hope that, by so doing, they will become available at small cost to everyone who wishes to possess them.

To this series of twenty's four another twelve etchings have been added, among which are "Gaviota Pass", "The Arch in the Mission Wall", "A Pastoral Scene," "View of Santa Barbara in 1880", and "The De la Guerra House".