

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

July 26, 1961

A Letter To Carnegie

At the second annual meeting of the Monterey Library Assn., formerly the Ladies' Circulating Book Club, held Jan. 29, 1903, there were 25 members present. The secretary-treasurer's report showed a gain of \$27.32 over the previous year, and a balance on hand of \$80.70.

In September of 1903 the directors of the Old Capital Club proposed to the library association that if the ladies of the library will open a free reading room, the club will give them a lease to terminate at the same time as the Old Capital Club at a rental of \$1 per year and if no free reading room be opened the library association be given a lease to expire at the same time as the Old Capital Club lease, Dec. 3rd, 1906, at a rental of \$5 per month.

Mrs. J. P. Sargent, Mrs. Emily Fish (wife of the lighthouse keeper at Pacific Grove), and Mrs. Zimmerman were appointed a committee to investigate the proposition.

At the next meeting Mrs. Sargent reported what the expense would be in establishing a free reading room, the trustees could not see their way clear to establish one. But they did vote to open the library every Wednesday and Saturday from 2 until 5 p.m. A reading corner was established free to the public and a vote of thanks was extended to Mrs. T. J. Field for a feather duster and a paper cutter.

Trustees present at the third annual meeting on Jan. 28, 1904, were Mesdames M. M. Gragg, president; William Kay, Clara Zimmerman, J. P. Sargent, Ross Sargent, Emily Fish, T. J. Field, (mother of Miss Marla Antonia Field); W. W. James, Sophie Harris and J. Moore. Thirty-six members were present. Receipts for the year showed a gain, the sum being \$198.00. There were 815 volumes on file.

On June 9, 1904, the library association held a garden party at the home of Mrs. J. P. Sargent, now known as the Gragg or Stokes adobe (Gallatin's). Mrs. Sargent and Mrs. Robert Johnson were in charge of the program. Miss Pardee and Mrs. Little had the printing done, Miss M. Bergschicker did the decorating, Mrs. M. Harris and Mrs. A. B. Guzendorfer had charge of the cake table, Mrs. Zimmerman, was at the gate and Mrs. Henry

Fonda and Mrs. Hollinsworth served ice cream. Miss Eva Doud, Miss Pardee, Miss Lillie and Miss Morey served coffee and sandwiches, Julia Gragg (Breinig) and Antoinette Field had the flower booth and Mrs. Schaufel served lemonade. That month they bought matting for the floor.

At fourth annual meeting, Jan. 25, 1905, all the officers and trustees were, present and the secretary reported 967 books on hand. Mrs. McGowan addressed the meeting on the necessity of a free reading room. Mrs. A. B. Guzendorfer spoke of the fine library at Santa Cruz and proposed that the association write a letter to Mr. Andrew Carnegie. It was moved, seconded, and carried that the president write or appoint someone to write to Mr. Carnegie, asking under what condition he would assist the association. Mrs. M. M. Gragg appointed the secretary, Mrs. Clara Zimmerman.

In April of 1907, Mrs. Zimmerman left for a tour of Europe and Mrs. J. P. Sargent asked her sister, Miss Etta Eckhardt, then a resident of Gilroy, to come to Monterey and be librarian during the secretary's absence and remained for more than 30 years the chief librarian of the Monterey Public Library. The Van Buren street library was built in 1911 with Carnegie money, perhaps obtained as a result of the letter which went to him from the Ladies' Circulating Book Club of Monterey.

(To Be Continued)