

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

July 31, 1961

Corporation No. 2

Filed for record Nov. 14, 1857, at 10 a.m., and recorded in Book "A" of Miscellaneous Records, pages 2 and 3, was the certificate of election of officers and the incorporation of the Monterey Library. James H. Gleason was the recorder of the county on that date - 114 years ago.

The document, written in longhand on lined paper, reads:

"Monterey, November 13, 1857."

"We the judges of an election held this day by the members of the Monterey Library, to elect officers and trustees of that society, do hereby certify that at such an election the following persons, shareholders in the corporation, were duly elected officers and trustees of said library for the ensuing year, to wit, James Gleason, as president; David H. Spence Jr., as treasurer and D. R. Ashley, as secretary and librarian.

"The name under which said society shall be known and under which said trustees shall act, be called and known, is the 'Monterey Library' which is a literary and scientific institution, is incorporated under the laws of the State of California, and is located in the City of Monterey."

"Signed: William Curtis, D. L. Spence, and James A. Gleason, Judges of the Election."

Our readers will notice that at the date of the filing of these papers, Monterey was the seat of Monterey County. The document was No. 2 In the files, the Presbyterian church incorporation being No. 1.

Between that date and the forming of the Monterey Library Assn, on January 17, 1901, we have been able to unearth a few bits of additional data. We have found references in several of the early issues of the Monterey Cypress prior to 1900 that the supervisors had granted sums of money for the support of the library, which was then housed in a room in El Cuartel, an adobe two stories in height, built by the Mexican government in the early 1840's. It stood on Munras Avenue where a gas station is now located. It is city-owned property.

" Robert Louis Stevenson refers to a library in El Cuartel in his writings of Monterey, at the time of his residence here. He states that he looked in the library in the old

building, but found it closed and no one on duty. Later the books and equipment were moved to the school building, on the present site of headquarters of the Monterey school system on Pacific Street.

On January 17, 1901, a group of women who called themselves the Monterey Ladles Circulating Book Club, held an annual meeting and voted to keep the 16 books they had on hand and form a library association. The book of the minutes of the early group is now stored in a safe place at the new library, the dedication of which was held on Sunday, June 8, 1952.