

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

January 24, 1962

20-Year Mark For The USO

The Monterey Peninsula USO is more than 20 years old and in all those years, since Dec. 21, 1941, when ceremonies formally opened the present building at El Estero and Webster street, that organization has played a prominent part in the social, educational and charitable life of the Peninsula. It is a "Home Away from Home" for the servicemen from all the branches - the Navy, the Army, the Air Force, the language school and other groups.

The USO management reports that in the last 12 years Peninsula organizations have served 624 Sunday night suppers to 93,000 servicemen at the Monterey USO.

After all that service, the electric roaster had worn out completely. But after an appeal in Prof. Toro's column in The Herald, four generous persons came forward immediately and delivered four roasters to the USO. The donors were Lt. Dol. Walker of Seaside, H. G. Thomason and Mrs. W. A. Heady, both of Pacific Grove, and George Toole of Monterey, who received an enthusiastic "Thank You" from the management.

Allen Knight was chosen as the new chairman of the board of management at the monthly meeting on Jan. 15. Other officers installed were Chief of Police Charles Simpson, vice chairman; Adm. Raymond A. Spruance (USN ret), treasurer; Frank Adams, USO executive director, secretary. Russell Hansen and Kenneth Ehrman were elected to the board of management.

Other committee heads chosen and installed at the January meeting were Chief Simpson, representative to the USO National Board; Mrs. Charles Bentley, personnel, which has to do with all matters concerning professional and non-professional personnel; Ed Bliss, retiring chairman of the board will be chairman of special events (all events other than regularly programmed); Eldon Covell, superintendent of Monterey schools, chairman of educational activities; 'Sarge' G. T. Cunningham, program director of all program events regularly scheduled, with Harold Brewer, a member of the staff. The board also will have a lawyer, Ken Ehrman, to supply legal advice that may be necessary from time to time.

Mrs. Fenton Grigsby who has been a member of the board for many years and one of its most enthusiastic

members, will have charge of all activities of senior volunteers; Mrs. William O'Donnell, publicity chairman; Mrs. Mae Sweeney will be responsible for food service, the kitchen and all food served. Russell Hansen assumed responsibility of the "house" with all action pertaining to the facility; and Gen. Geo. D. Wahl, Monterey Peninsula Catholic Community Services Committee, will oversee the servicemen's suppers, birthday parties, and all events related to this committee.

The late Charles Shephard Jr. of Pebble Beach was chairman of the board 20 years ago when the USO building formally opened. Nearly 100 persons attended the ceremony.

The USO board of management and the permanent personnel staff in charge, are looking forward to a successful and happy 1962, knowing that the Peninsula is behind them 100 per cent and that the armed services are grateful to the organization for the welcome the servicemen receive at the USO. The organizations who have the use of the building and its facilities also are thankful and will appreciate the continued use of the USO through 1962.