

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Nevada City: Past, Present**

Nevada County was formed in 1851 from territory that originally had been a part of Yuba County. Nevada City was made its county seat, it is situated in a region where the entire upper country wears a heavy mantle of snow during the winter months, the name Nevada was appropriately chosen by its citizens for the town of Nevada City. Later the Same name was given to the county.

Generally, October is the month to visit Nevada City because of the beautiful fall colorings, but this year the cold spell has missed the city and there were only a very few trees even beginning to turn those lovely shades of gold, brown and bright yellow when we were there. But the beauty of the hills, the many green trees, the winding streets, and the charming old houses so clean looking were a joy to behold.

We toured with Ray Polk, president of the Nevada County Historical Society, over Aristocracy Hill, Prospect Hill (named in honor of the miners of '49), Lost Hill and Piety Hill.

The latter name amused us most. Here the street names fitted the hill, there were Jordan, Gethsemane Zion, Calvary, Cross and Tribulation. There appeared to be no sorrow or tribulation there, for the houses were well kept and the view was one of remarkable beauty.

Nevada City is a friendly place - an orderly, peaceful and home-loving community, where third and fourth generations have come back to buy for themselves the old homes which their grandfathers had constructed in this early mining community during the early part of 1850.

We were impressed by the cleanliness of the streets, the gutters and the sidewalks - not a scrap of paper, an old beer can, used cigarettes, or any other dirt to be seen. We do not know whether to compliment the city or the people who live there, but we know it is thoroughly clean.

And the same may be said of Grass Valley, Coulterville and the rest of the Mother Lode country. Wish we could say the same of Monterey.

The Red Castle on the steep slopes of Prospect Hill above the city's plaza, which has long been a mecca for

camera fans, was saved from destruction a few years ago when the historical society bought it and resold it to a private party who pledged to restore it authentically and make the old Structure his home.

City Councilman Dr. Arch McPherson of Nevada City recently represented that city at a scenic highway hearing held in Marysville. He concluded his speech with these expressive words:

"I have heard lots of speculation as to why the highway department has to come up with such an elaborate solution for a relatively small problem as the traffic of Nevada City. I personally think it is a sign of affection for Nevada City. The nicest thing a highway engineer can do for you is to build you a road. The more he likes you, the wider and fancier the road will be. It is a little thing - like being loved by a polar bear. You have to be pretty big to survive, let alone enjoy it.

"It is our hope that the Scenic Highway Committee can help the highway department to find a solution for our traffic problem that will also preserve the beauty and historical values of Nevada City."

Our host took us to the ancient Nevada City cemetery, one of the most interesting places to look for history in any community. We found this history on a large headstone in the center of a large lot: "Patrick Henry 1736-1799; John Henry 1770 to 1830; Joseph Henry 1801-1887; Minerva Henry Connor, 1825; James M. Connor, 1852 to 1937."

Beneath these names and dates are these words: "Respective to markers, others lying here are invited guests."

That is something to ponder! Do you agree?