

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

November 20, 1962

### **Recollections Of The Peninsula**

Old-timers will remember the fascinating maze in the Hotel Del Monte grounds formed by endless rows of cypress hedge and "terrifying cries" of those who lost their way out after having arrived at the central goal. This was one of the great pleasures for everyone, both young and old.

"Perhaps we would have been looked down upon by present day teen-agers, for what sort of a fool would ride a bicycle around the 17-Mile drive to Point Lobos and return, and last but not least, from Pacific Grove to Salinas and return, a distance of 50 miles in one day just to see the great damage done to the huge sugar refinery by the great earthquake," continues Malcolm W. Steel, in his remembrances of Pacific Grove in 1906, shortly after the earthquake and fire.

As in Pacific Grove, glass bottom boats were operated out of Monterey by Manuel Duarte who had his place of business on Alvarado street, just across from the Custom House. People boarded his boat at Pier 1 and were rowed by him out to approximately the present location of Cannery Row. Manuel was a very earnest man in his description of the wonders of the deep, according to Mr. Steel, proclaiming them to be far better at this location than that of any other.

On one occasion, a Southern Californian stood it as long as he could and said, "Catalina Island beats this all hollow." Manuel answered "Perhaps you have something, but right down there is something you do not have for it is a sunken ship on which Napoleon escaped from Elba." it was considered a quick comeback and I believe he was correct, said Mr. Steel.

Wharf No. 2 during the old days was not the wharf it is today. At that time, it was a real fisherman's wharf, especially when the Japanese fishermen tied up in the afternoon with their big catch of salmon, perch, flounder, sole and rock cod. It was a real sight to see the boat loads of fish hoisted up onto the wharf, weighed, and the men given receipts for their morning's work. On days off, the nets were spread on the decks for repair and general, overhauling. All this Mr. Steel looks back on as a young boy vacationing on the Peninsula.

Another Steel remembrance is a thrilling bicycle ride around the 17-Mile drive, entering the drive at Forest

avenue in Pacific Grove. From there on it, became a virtual wilderness through the dense forest thence out onto Point Joe where one always stopped to have a look at the large herd of buffalo grazing. Next was the sight of the "Ostrich Tree" which, unfortunately either was burned or blew down in a heavy wind. In reality, it was two trees growing in such a manner that it resembled from, distance, an ostrich walking away from the sea.

During recent years have heard the statement made that "what this country needs is a man on horseback", and we quote Mr. Steel: "In the old days, Dan Leary was the 'man on horseback,' constantly on the lookout for fire and guarding the area from Pacific Grove to Pebble Beach we might meet him anywhere along the line and have a word with him."

Mr. Steel remembers passing Pebble Beach, which was a real pebble beach when he was a boy, with but one living soul, viz a Chinese curio dealer occupying a very primitive shack. It was always a must for passersby to stop and make some sort of a purchase.

"We might push our bicycles up the old dusty road starting somewhere near La Casa Munras and tear down the south side of Carmel Valley enroute to Point Lobos. To look at the elaborate interchange at the top of the hill today and the signals at Carpenter street turnoff to Carmel as well as those at Ocean Ave. turnoff and again at the Valley turn at the foot of the grade, makes one wonder if he is not living in some sort of a dream world today,"