

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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### **Delegates To See Peninsula**

The 16th annual conference of the National Trust for Historic Preservation will be held in San Francisco Oct. 4-8. This will be the first time that members of this organization - non-profit, non-governmental, dedicated to safe-guarding America's heritage - have met on the West Coast. Besides table discussions, exhibits, reports of affiliated societies and a banquet, several out-of-town trips will be made.

A journey via Big Basin to the Monterey Peninsula will be on the agenda to take a look at Casa Amesti, the former home of Mrs. Frances Elkins and now belonging to the National Trust under terms of her will.

They also will visit several other historic structures during a short stay here. A stop at San Juan Bautista is planned for the trip back to San Francisco where headquarters are established at the Hotel St. Francis. Mrs. Henry Potter Russell of San Francisco and Carmel Valley is hospitality chairman for the visit.

The mention of a visit to San Juan Bautista reminds me of a story told to me by Claude Faw of Carmel. It is most amusing, and we are sure historically correct.

In checking over early San Juan history, Mr. Faw ran across an old grave dating back to 1893 and the headstone consisting of a heavy bell about 3 feet in height and 4 feet in diameter, evidently of bronze. On a portion of the bell usually used for suspending was a tombstone marked "J.R. Hodgdon 1893." In his research Mr. Faw learned that Hodgdon was known as "Roscow" and had been chief of the San Juan Fire Department.

The fire bell in use at that time was installed on the porch of Chief Hodgdon. Being a periodic drinker, the chief returned home after imbibing too much and, striking the fire bell none too lightly, smashed the old bell to bits. The fire department at a following meeting voted that Chief Hodgdon replace the destroyed bell with a new one.

Chief Hodgdon agreed to the request and demanded of the fire department that the new bell be his own property.

The department agreed to this stipulation and following the death of Chief Hodgdon, the bell was mounted on the hearse leading the funeral procession to the old

cemetery located on the old "rocks" road adjacent to San Juan.

Following the usual respects to a valued citizen and burial, the fire bell was mounted as a headstone and to this time the bell remains as a marker of the resting place of Fire Chief J. R. Hodgdon.

Mrs. Elizabeth Haverside Noorzoy of Berkeley has given me this bit of personal history of Pacific Grove, which she visited as a child.

"We have a deep interest in the Monterey Peninsula. In 1925 my parents, Mr. and Mrs. O. M. Haverside, built a small house in the Country Club to which I am now introducing my children while my husband completes his doctoral thesis.

"Grandparents Haverside were among the early settlers in Pacific Grove's 'tent city' and my father, himself a graduate of Pacific Grove High School, had many wonderful stories to tell us. Grandparents Bonner visited the Peninsula from the 1880's on. Among other things they vividly recalled the morning the St. Paul was wrecked and everything available in horse and buggy was hired out for sightseers to view it. They also had a charming collection of seashells purchased from the Chinese merchant at Point Joe.

"We follow the reports of the good activities of the Monterey History and Art Assn. and notice that the annual tour is set for Sept. 29. I had the pleasure of going on the tour and I hope it can perhaps be again, if I am able to come down for it.