

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

July 23, 1963

### **Delightful Gardens**

The Monterey History and Art Association has received the following communication extending a compliment which we are happy to pass along to our friends and members: "The Committee on City Appearance is happy to award you their letter of commendation for June. The delightful gardens at both the Casa Serrano and Fremont Headquarters add a distinctive charm to Monterey and enhance the beauty of these two historical buildings.

"The care lavished on these two gardens not only refreshes all who pass by but emphasizes the unique historical importance of our city."

The letter is signed by Kate Dietterle, chairman.

"It Happened in Monterey" is the title of a story, illustrated with a half dozen pictures of Casa Soberanes in Monterey. Two of the illustrations are in color and the remainder in black and white. This bit of history appears in the July issue of "Perfect Home Magazine," published by Hampshire Construction Co., Salinas, California.

We quote from the article which appears with the pictures: "Ever since it was built more than 100 years ago, this house, typical of the region, has been used as a comfortable, inviting home.

"As a Cape Cod house is to New England, the Monterey house is to the Pacific southwest. Both styles were ideally suited to their settings. The Cape Cod is designed to combat the rough weather, sea-borne spray and winds from the Atlantic. The Monterey presents thick earthen walls and a balcony to ward off the sun's heat.

"This particular Monterey house was built in the 1830's by the top officer of the Presidio of Monterey during the Mexican period. It has been a home ever since and is closely linked to the colorful history of the area. The latest owner (who still lives in the house) has presented it to the state as a state historical monument, retaining a life tenancy.

"The adobe which forms the walls (three feet thick) is a mixture of native clays, sand and water with straw as a binder. The mixture was formed in wood boxes called adoberos and sun-dried. These heavy slabs were joined with mud and lime mortar and covered with white-

washed stucco. "The southeastern face is two stories high, with cantilevered balcony. Not at all typical are the multi - paned windows which show the influence of settlers from New England.

"Inside, the house is quiet, serene and spacious though not as large as would seem from the exterior dimensions because of the exceptional thickness of the walls. The rooms are furnished with late Empire and rococo revival furniture. Much of it has been in the house for many years.

"Though a true part of the state's history, this Monterey home is ideally suited to its setting and to contemporary living."

Casa Soberanes at 336 Pacific street, described above, will be on the Adobe House Tour, sponsored by the Monterey History and Art Assn., on August 10th, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. This Casa and eight others, not usually open to the public, will be open on this occasion.