

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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Trees, Flowers Make Monterey Beautiful

From the files of the Monterey Democrat and the Monterey Gazette of the early 1870s we have learned of the early gardens in Monterey.

Juan Bonifacio was praised for his garden of beautiful roses and Theodore Gonzales was said to have best laid - out garden in the old town.

Rock's Nursery of San Jose, represented by J.S. Merritt, supplied many trees, shrubs and plants desired by the people of Monterey and Kelsey Nursery of Oakland as well as Paul Romie of Monterey also came into prominence for the importance they gave to advertisements in the local papers.

By 1875, the following were listed in advertisements in Monterey: Cypress, pine, oak, black walnut, eucalyptus, ash, elm, sycamore, mulberry, pepper, Rose of Sharon, snowball, lilac, dwarf pomegranate, silver maple, poplar, willow, palm, grape, fig, olive almond, nectarine, cherry, apricot, apple, currant, gooseberry, blackberry, ironbark, veronica, oleander, japonica, roses, woodbine, geraniums, hollyhocks, jasmine, ivy, and dracaena. Together with the growth of native flowers, shrubs, and trees, this means that Monterey has passed the time of disregard.

After the 1880s, especially after the building of Hotel Del Monte and the planting of its world-famous gardens, Monterey has enjoyed an ever-increasing growth of trees. The American Legion several years ago planted as a gift to the city, the plane trees the entire length of Jefferson street.

Myron Oliver was petitioned to make the artistic benches which are such a nice part of Friendly Plaza, when that garden was completed. We are happy to say that they are really used. When he received his check to cover the cost of the benches he put the entire amount into 50 trees which now surround the Friendly Plaza and the Few Memorial Building.

Dr. Oliver also planted, at his own expense, the trees around the block of Alvarado, Scott, Olivier, and Decatur streets. The late Mrs. Mary Black Morrison planted all the acacias which beautified Church and Abrego streets. A few years ago, one whole block of these trees was cut down by order of the city council - too bad.

Jack Dougherty planted hawthorn trees from Casa Munras to the intersection of Munras and Abrego streets.

The Monterey Woman's Club instigated the planting of the trees on Calle Principal. Mrs. B. D. Marx Greene was the president of the club at the time of the planting and with a committee she visited all the property owners and obtained permission for the plantings. It was Mrs. Greene who also received permission of these people to ask the council to change the name of the street from Main to Calle Principal.

The late Mrs. Francis Elkins and the late Misses L.,M., and V. Jacks also planted trees in front of their several buildings. The Monterey Peninsula Herald, the law firm of Hudson, Martin, Ferrante and Street, William Hudson, Dr. Winton Swengel and the Herald Printers and Publishers planted the parking spaces in front of their respective buildings on Pacific street and the City of Monterey, which maintains all the trees planted on Pierce street. We also must give the State of California full credit for the well-kept gardens at the historical monuments in Monterey. And we now have the hardworking Committee on City Appearance, which is doing such an effective work in various locations around our town.

We should also list the beautiful and well - kept gardens at each of our 42 old adobe homes and business houses.