

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

January 31, 1964

Old Sites Preserved

The consul - general of Spain, the Mexican consul, the mayors of the nearby cities and Monterey, and the descendants of old - time Monterey families were guests of the Monterey History and Art Assn. at the Merienda in Memory Garden on June 3, 1932, celebrating Monterey's 162nd birthday. That year, S.F.B. Morse, Allen Griffin, Carmel Martin, and Colonel Roger S. Fitch were made members of "Old Monterey Preservation Committee." Their primary duty was to meet with the city council and the trustees of the Few Memorial in the endeavor to ensure the erection of the memorial on a site that would enhance the old-time atmosphere of Monterey.

The committee was informed on November 15 that the building must be built on Monterey city-owned property. Colton Hall - Friendly Plaza square. If not on Friendly Plaza site. the Brown adobe would or must be torn down in order to afford a proper setting for the memorial.

The committee objected to both plans and insisted that the only possible site in that area was the rose garden (formerly at the corner of Madison and Dutra streets) and that the Brown adobe could and should fit into the picture. The roses were moved to the lot next to the old Monterey Library and the Few Memorial was built with the Brown adobe as a delightful part of the whole.

In 1843 the present site of the Brown-Underwood Adobe was deeded to the alcalde of Monterey, Santiago Stokes, who erected the older portion of the present building upon it. The three - foot adobe walls constructed by Stokes are still intact and good for many years: to come, according to the report written by the WPA Historical Survey The land was included in the original grant of 27, 200 acres from the Mexican government to the city, or rather, the Pueblo of Monterey. Later this grant was confirmed by the United State government.

In 1843, Stokes sold the property to Jose Marie Sanchez. The deed under which the property was transferred is interesting. It describes how Stokes took Sanchez through the building while the new owner opened, and closed doors pounded on the walls

scattered handfuls of dirt on the backyard and by still other rituals indicated ownership.

The title of Sanchez to the property was good without question. He passed away in 1863 and the adobe fell to his heirs. At a public auction held in 1864, the residence was bid on by William Roach, then sheriff of Monterey County. At that time Monterey was the county seat for both Monterey and San Benito counties.

W.S. Johnson, county clerk, purchased the property from the sheriff for \$750, and maintained the title until 1866, when he disposed of it to Charles Underwood for \$650.

It was in possession of the Underwood family until 1926. In 1934, it reverted to the City of Monterey under a bequest by a wealthy citizen to remodel the property without altering the 18th Century charm, and it is now occupied by the office of the city manager.

The building can be seen located in the Friendly Plaza, Pacific and Madison streets.