

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

October 7, 1964

Militant Garden Club

The Monterey Peninsula had a garden club in 1922, according to the minute book of that year.

The first meeting was called in the Monterey Chamber of Commerce rooms on Nov. 22, 1922 by Allen Griffin. Mrs. Jean Todd was unanimously elected president, Harry A. Greene honorary president and Miss Emma Perry secretary.

The objective was "to take not only an active part in planting, forwarding civic and neighborhood improvements in which flowers, shrubs and trees would be planted and cared for. A yearly payment of 25 cents per member was decided upon, and school children will be given a junior membership free of dues."

Mrs. Will Jacks, Monterey; Miss Helen Parks, Carmel, and Mrs. J.A. Pell, Pacific Grove, with the officers of the club, constituted the executive committee.

At the next meeting on Nov. 28, by-laws were adopted and the club became the "Outdoor Circle," Mr. Harry A. Greene of New Monterey was one of the most interested members and was the speaker at the December meeting.

At a very early meeting the Circle took up the problem of billboards and determined to wage war along highways of the state. Brought to members' attention at the first meeting in 1923 was the lack of any planting around the Southern Pacific depot. It was decided to ask officials of the company to beautify the buildings and grounds (We are still asking in 1964).

Mr. Greene spoke of the way in which Berthold Park (located in Colton Hall grounds) had been neglected. Mrs. Will Jacks, Mrs. Pell and Miss Ethel Berkman of Carmel Highlands were appointed to an anti-billboard committee.

In April of 1923, the Circle held its first flower show in the lounge of the Del Monte Hotel. Among the exhibitors of wild flowers from Corral de Tierra were Mr. and Mrs. Claude Engels, Mr. and Mrs. D. Leibrandt, Violet Smart and Jannetta and Del Large.

Dr. Walter K Fisher of Hopkins Marine Station won a first prize for the best collection of iris, Mrs. de Forest, second prize for an exhibit of Spanish yellow iris; Miss Emma Perry, a first prize for a collection of roses; Mrs.

Milton Withers, second, for a bowl of pansies and Mrs. William Ten Eyke, an exhibit pelargoniums, Mrs. R.D. Olmstead, Mrs. William Dale and Mrs. William Orchard and Tom Lee were close prize winners.

At a June meeting, Gouverneur Morris, noted author who resided for many years in the Castro adobe, offered a prize of \$100 for the best flower garden produced within a year on the Peninsula.

The offer was accepted with thanks. A representative of one of the largest outdoor advertising agencies attended the meeting and was allowed to speak briefly.

The last minutes in the secretary's book were written on March 12, 1924. At that date Miss Maria Antonia Bach (later Mrs. Thompson) was the corresponding secretary, and William Fiddes, president. He later became mayor of Pacific Grove, president of the Monterey Peninsula Garden Club, and most active in the Circle. There were 215