

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

April 22, 1964

Peninsula Hailed By G. Morris

A number of years ago the Pacific Grove Chamber of Commerce published a simple "Tribute to the Monterey Peninsula" by the late Gouverneur Morris. Mr. Morris was a resident of Monterey as the owner of the present home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Work.

"Jules Simoneau was still alive when I first came to Monterey," wrote Morris. "He had a big porcelain bowl filled to the brim with letters from Robert Louis Stevenson. This was very many years ago. There were more adobes than there are now, more red tiled roofs. In the whole of California there were only three or four automobiles. And the three incomparable approaches to Monterey, that from Carmel and those from Salinas and Castroville were not desecrated by signs.

"There was probably very good bear shooting where Carmel now rhymes and paints, and Pebble Beach was a Chinese village.

"I had been loaned in those happy, dusty days a grey pony named Fiddlesticks, who could find his way blindfolded into the heart of the maze at Del Monte and with whom I became well acquainted with every square foot of the beautiful land on the Peninsula."

Further on Mr. Morris declares: "Now unless it be the Island of Mount Desert, off the Maine coast, there is no small geographical unit in all this Immense world so variedly, deliciously and peacefully beautiful as the Monterey Peninsula. Nor has any other region an air so sweet, so fresh and compelling.

"But this same sweet air is divided and subdivided into as many climates, separate and distinct, as man has wishes. He may keep himself as warm or as cool as he chooses. He may set up his Lares and Penates in a pool of sunshine and captivate the affection of horned, toads, or he may live where the wind blows salt from the sea, and the fogs temper the sun.

"I went away those many years ago," he writes, "so saturated with the beauties and varieties of Monterey, and with its easy good nature and cheerfulness, that my judgment of other places has never been without a bias in its favor.

"If there are people still left in this restless world who care more about homes which grow more beautiful

through occupancy and care - people, in short, who can be content to pick on some place and live in it - I have always thought that from January 1 round to January 1 again there is no place in all the world that has so much to lavish as the Monterey Peninsula.

"If you love a wild coast, it is here. So is deep tranquil forest and the rolling uplands, set richly with live oaks and in the springtime exploding into flowers.

"The peninsula has not stood still but its progress has not been the mushroom growth of certain regions, which, less sure of their real natural charms and advantages, have made up for it by riots of boasting and self-laudation. Such regions are wise to boast. It is best for them to grow while the growing is good.

"But the Peninsula's future is a better and surer kind. Someday there will be 20 million people in California, and this will be their playground."