

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

September 4, 1964

### **A Stroll In Old Town**

Let's take another walk. Park your car in the public lot on the beach and go directly to the Old Custom House.

You will be greeted by the curator, who will be ready and anxious to conduct you on a tour or let you alone to take your own time to see all the interesting and historic items on display in the cases or on the floor.

From the Custom House go to the Pacific Building across the street at the corner of Scott and Calle Principal and visit the Spanish, Mexican and American rooms down stairs.

Then be sure to ascend the stairs to see the Indian collection given by Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Holman of Pacific Grove. It is especially fine and valuable as well as educational for grown-ups and young people alike. Wednesday and Thursdays this adobe is closed.

Leave the Pacific Building by way of the rear door into the Memory Garden, a delightful stop in which to sit in the sun and just think. This garden is annually the appropriate setting for the Merienda, given by the Monterey History and Art Assn. in celebration of Monterey's birthday June 3, 1770. This building is closed Wednesdays and Thursday.

A gate leads from the rear of the garden to the Casa de Oro (House of Gold) across Olivier street. It is so named because, it is said, the miners left their gold dust there for safe-keeping when they returned from the Mother Lode country.

Leaving this monument, continue west to California's First Theater, corner of Pacific and Scott streets. In this old building you will be entertained with pictures and mementos of old theater days.

You will see the very small stage used each weekend for thrilling old-time plays. Visit the Green Room and see the costume exhibit. Also be sure to walk in the garden at the rear of the old adobe. The Theater is closed Tuesdays.

South on Pacific street the Casa Soberanes, marked with an historical marker, will be the next old adobe on your walking tour. It is not open to the public but the Casa and the garden can be seen from over the blue gate. It is private property.

Still further south on Pacific and across Franklin street is Casa Serrano, headquarters of the Monterey History and Art Assn. It was restored by the association in 1959 and completely furnished by that group through gifts and purchases of authentic furniture typical of the Spanish and Mexican periods in California. The adobe is open each Wednesday afternoon from 1 until 4 o'clock with hostess members to greet the visitors.

From the flagpole on the northeast corner of the Custom House reservation, the flags of three nations have flown: Spain, 1814-1822; Mexico, 1822-1846; and the United States from July 7, 1846 until 1903 when the State of California took over the building after it had been declared surplus property by the federal government. The Bear Flag was added to the Stars and Stripes.

The Monterey History and Art Assn. has substantially assisted the state in furnishing the historic adobe building. It is now historic monument No. 1.

The Pacific building was erected by James McKinley in 1835. Miss Margaret Jacks, daughter of David Jacks, a former owner, presented the large adobe structure to the State of California as an historical monument a few years ago.

The House of Gold was also presented to the State by Miss Jacks and her sisters after they had restored it. It is now furnished as a store as it was when gold was stored there during the days of gold rush.

California's First Theater is the building in which the first public dramatic entertainment on the Pacific Coast was staged. It was built in 1843 by Jack Swan, a sailor who came from England. It is now a state historical landmark.

There are books and postcards in each of the buildings to explain further the history of Monterey's old adobes and the Path of History which we will follow in future walks in Monterey.