

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

November 19, 1965

Fr. Serra's Anniversary

For weeks before the November 23, 1913, observance of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Father Junipero Serra, Father Ramon Mestres, pastor at that time of both the Carmel Mission and the Royal Presidio Chapel in Monterey, had been in constant correspondence with Father Torrens, the only known relative of Padre Serra, who was planning a similar ceremonial in Mallorca, Spain. This month will mark the 252nd anniversary of birth of Father Serra in Petra on the Island of Mallorca, Spain.

In 1913, that the state as well as the church might show its appreciation of Junipero Serra's great work, Governor Hiram Johnson sent Frank H. Powers, founder of Carmel, as a special Serra commissioner to the Mallorca celebration.

Cablegrams were exchanged, November 23, between Father Mestres and Father Torrens. King Alfonso's representative at Washington telegraphed greetings and congratulations from his sovereign to the worshipers in Carmel.

But because of inclement weather, the Mallorca celebration had been held earlier. The Serra commissioner had come too late. Instead of icily polite official regrets, such as might have been expected from a country with which the United States had been at war only 14 years before, Father Torrens got up a second celebration in order that the American envoy's mission might not be in vain.

Following the quaint old world custom, he sent criers through the streets announcing to the people that there would be special services in honor of their countryman, Junipero Serra.

Happy over the expected holiday, dressed in their best, the crowds came, according to Mr. Power's report after his return to Carmel, listened to their priest's speeches and applauded when Father Eastlink translated the English speech of the commissioner Frank Powers of Carmel.

The late Frank Powers was the father of Madeline Powers Leoni and Gallatin Powers of Monterey.

The following personal request is being sent to all the constituent members of the Conference of California

Historical Societies at the suggestion of Hal Altman of Sacramento, vice-president of the conference.

Mr. Robert E. Levinson, 4917 Manila avenue, Oakland, is a candidate for the Ph.D. degree in History from the University of Oregon. The subject of the doctoral dissertation is a study of the several Jewish communities of the California Mother Lode that flourished during and after the Gold Rush. Cities of the Mother Lode that have Jewish cemeteries dating to this period include Nevada City, Grass Valley, Auburn, Placerville, Mokelumne Hill and Sonora.

Mr. Levinson's purpose in writing is to enlist the aid of all who would be interested to report anything of a Jewish nature that date from the last century. He is especially interested in such items as letters or diaries written by Jews, business records, prayerbooks, family Bibles and synagogue and benevolent society records.

He would welcome information concerning Jews whether those of the Mother Lode or not as the parties concerned may be descended from the people he is studying.

The California Historical Society announces the completion and publication in one volume of "The Index" of the California Historical Society Quarterly, Volumes One to Forty – 1922 – 1961.

"Certainly the most handsome index ever produced for an historical journal", the association writes to its membership, has been designed by Adrian Wilson, San Francisco designer and printer.