

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

November 5, 1965

### **Firemen Of 1890**

Several years ago I interviewed Otis Mantor, one of the last living members of the Monterey Hose Company No. 1. He remembered much of the early day activities of the company.

Mr. Mantor came to Monterey in 1885 and joined the hose company the following year, before the department was officially organized.

They had a two-story building on the street, he said, with only a hose cart on the lower floor and a meeting room upstairs. Herb Bispo showed me a picture of the old building and once allowed me to borrow the first minute book.

There was also started about that same date a hook and ladder company, but it had no hook, no ladder and possibly only a wagon, although Mr. Mantor was not sure if he ever saw one.

The hose cart was a two-wheel affair, the hose was of woven material. The great ambition of the company was to beat the Pacific Grove company and it always did, at least as long as Mr. Mantor was in the group.

Mr. Mantor did not remember ever putting out a fire, but he did not remain in the department after it was organized; he later went East and remained there for a number of years.

When William Parker came to Monterey and entered the department, everything changed. A fire department was really organized.

In an old brown paper covered book, long and narrow – the sort in which butchers used to keep their daily accounts – is the first entry of the meeting of the hose company on March 3, 1890. These minutes state that a regular meeting of Feb. 3 and a special meeting on Feb. 14 had been held.

Grant Towle was the foreman, W. Hutts second assistant. Absent at roll call were A. Gunzendorfer, A.A. Osio and Alex Sanchez. Others mentioned were R.A. Mauldin and J.A. Smith. Manuel Wolter was fined 25 cents for absence at the Feb. 14 meeting.

Also noted were an application for Stockdale as member, W.E. Parker's election as chairman of the standing committee, a bill from Grant Towle for one can

of coal oil (\$1.90), a request that members Kessel, Liewald and Osio return badges to the company and discussion of assisting in celebration of July 4 and giving a ball.

Attention was called to that part of the constitution making it a duty of each member to provide himself with a uniform within 30 days after notification of his election to the company; exempt certificates were delivered to the following members: Manuel Wolter, Ed Ingram, R.A. Mauldin, John Ingram, Alex Sanchez, Louis Shaufle and Charles Norton.

There was a meeting March 21, 1890, to elect delegates to elect officers to the department. Nominated were R.A. Mauldin, J.A. Smith, J.H. Girardin, H. Knapp, Mantor, F.S. Perry, Charles Few and Glen Friedman. Elected were J.A. Smith, J.H. Girardin, Few and Perry.

At a meeting on April 7, 1890, minutes of the meetings of Jan. 13, Feb. 14, March 3 and 21 were read and approved. Resignation of Alex Sanchez was read and, he being square on the books, it was moved and carried that his resignation be accepted. Resignation of Louis Shaufle was also read.

At a meeting on April 21, it was moved, seconded and carried that the company organize a team to run against Pacific Grove on July 4. Ab Gunzendorfer was secretary at this meeting.

On May 5, the secretary reported "a bad time getting someone to accept nominations," but at the close of the evening Frank K. Kessel had been elected foreman, James Stockdale first assistant, Ab Gunzendorfer secretary. Total net receipts from the July 4 ball were \$86.65.

On Oct. 6, 1890, the foreman "rescinded all fines for September absences on account of meeting room not being lit up in time or meeting called to order at proper time."