

Peninsula Diary Mayo Hayes O'Donnell

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Santa Cruz Fete

"Santa Cruz, Exciting Early History of an Era," written by Margaret Koch and published by the Heritage Days committee of the Greater Santa Cruz Chamber of Commerce, is just off the press, and a copy has come to this desk.

This section of the history of Santa Cruz has been published as part of the first annual Heritage Days celebration. It is planned that subsequent editions will be published each year and in 1969 a complete volume will be compiled.

It is announced in the introduction that "Heritage Days" is to emphasize the historical heritage of Santa Cruz County while providing the framework for a much larger celebration in 1969 when, it is claimed, Santa Cruz will celebrate the 200th birthday of its discovery and naming by the Don Gaspar de Portola expedition Oct. 17, 1769.

On Oct. 18, 1769 Portola crossed an arroyo at the site of the present city of Santa Cruz which he so named. If Santa Cruz lays claim to be older than Monterey because of Portola's discovery of the site of Santa Cruz then Monterey should celebrate its 363rd birthday on Dec. 16.

On that date in 1602 Vizcaino anchored in Monterey Bay. He landed the next day and Mass was said by the friars. The port was named "Monterey" in honor of Gaspar de Zuniga y Acevedo (Count of Monterey), ninth viceroy of Mexico.

One hundred and sixty-eight years later Monterey became the site of the principal presidio, as well as the capital, of California, and the location of chief mission in the chain of such establishments founded by Franciscan missionaries.

The birthday Monterey has always claimed is June 3, 1770, when Mission San Carlos de Monterey was founded by Father Juniper Serra. Gaspar de Portola, governor of California, assisted by Father Serra and soldiers, founded the Presidio of Monterey and took formal possession of the land in the name of Charles III, King of Spain.

The formalities consisted of planting of the royal standard, the uprooting of plants and casting of stones,

the latter symbolizing the seizing of the territory. San Francisco does not claim to be older than Monterey, observing its birthday on June 29 with a three-day celebration.

We congratulate Santa Cruz and are happy to receive the small book of the city's history. There are entertaining paragraphs on the life and work of Cortez, Cabrillo, Drake, Vizcaino, Portola, the Santa Cruz Mission, and its founding, the Mission Indians, murder at the mission and the mission grist mill, given by Captain George Vancouver, British officer who explored the Pacific Northwest. The mill was erected in 1796 at the foot of what is now the Lauren street hill.

Villa de Branciforte was a village separate from Santa Cruz, although it was established just across the San Lorenzo River from the mission. It was founded by Spain in 1797 as one of three pueblos; Los Angeles, and San Jose were the others. The two villages eventually merged into one community. Santa Cruz, in 1907. All land grants in Santa Cruz County were made by Mexico.

Articles in the book list natural resources, flags that have flown over California, the Bear Flag Revolt, gold, Santa Cruz "firsts," Scotts Valley earliest industries, "Way Back When," agriculture, recreation, early Protestant churches, decline of the Santa Cruz Mission, adobe relics and a biography of the author, Margaret Koch.

In the article on early Protestant churches appears one of special interest to Monterey residents: "The Episcopalians organized in 1862 with C.F. Loop as the first rector. Mrs. Eliza Boston donated the lot where the church was constructed...it is still in use today. The cornerstone was laid on July 2, 1864."