

# Presentation by John Sanders at DMFPO Semi-Annual Meeting 11/12/2017

## 1

Introductory remarks

I appreciate the invitation from Kamlesh and Don to join you today and the opportunity to team up with Charley. It is a special privilege to speak in this majestic place that is part of the heritage of Hotel Del Monte.

I've been working on a book - An Illustrated View of Historic Hotel Del Monte - and my remarks today preview this project and offer some of my background analysis.

**A very short chapter one, just over 150 words, sets the tone for this pictorial narrative history. It reads:**

The Seventeen Mile Drive in California rests upon an ancient bed of granite along the southern shore of Monterey Bay.

Cypresses grow among the boulders here. Angular, accentuated and artfully groomed by the sea-wind, the regal cypress blends with stone and mist in an endless dance of shadow and light.

Nearby are the tide pools of Asilomar and the esteros of Monterey. To the north are the sloughs of Moss Landing and Watsonville and the chalk cliffs of Santa Cruz.

South are the Santa Lucia Mountains with sea coves of serpentine, jasper and jade. Inland, along the Salinas River, lie the Gabilan Mountains and the valley of Steinbeck.

Above the rocky shore of Pacific Grove stands a lighthouse, an early building of the American period. In Monterey are the adobes of Spanish and Mexican days, the canneries that once brimmed with sardines and a fading trace of the hotel where the Seventeen Mile Drive first gained world fame.

## 2

I've also been working on an illustration concept. This primitive draft offers a sense of the scope and scale of Hotel Del Monte in the Roaring 20's

The hotel and its parent company, the predecessor of today's Pebble Beach Company, held nearly 20,000 acres in three non-contiguous tracts from Monterey Bay to Carmel Bay and Carmel Valley.

For comparison, a combined Monterey, Pacific Grove and Carmel by the Sea encompass ~9,000 acres. The illustration includes Del Monte and botanical garden, Roman Plunge, race track and aviation field, Del Monte golf course, bath house, Del Monte Lodge, the Seventeen Mile Drive and some of the local points of interest such as the missions, the Custom House and the First Theatre.

### 3

In my research I've categorized two main periods in the hotel's history:

**simply, formative-transformative** and these four films offer a glimpse into the life and times at Hotel Del Monte during its 62 year existence.

As these begin to roll and loop, I should tell you that when I began at the Naval Postgraduate School, my first story was about a multi-national field project in the Marginal Ice Zone that was being led by an NPS professor. I sat at a desk in a basement room just below the hotel's main lobby, typing on a so-called "portable" computer, a Kaypro that weighed in at 26 pounds. At that time, my only association with the name Del Monte was the food company.

I would later learn that the food company drew its name from the hotel and my desk had been in a corner of the Turkish Baths at Hotel Del Monte. I found that many cities throughout California had watering holes with names as Hotel Del Monte Saloon, Del Monte Bar and other variations. You could find these fine establishments in Santa Cruz, Los Angeles, Sacramento, Fresno and more. Many other Victorian-age saloons had custom back bars called the Del Monte. Packard made a custom body named Del Monte in the late 20's. And, of course, there were related operations such as SPRR's Del Monte Express.

I also learned that the operating system for the Kaypro microcomputer had been developed by an NPS professor, Gary Kildall, who established Digital Research. I'm glad things have changed and laptops are lighter now.

#### **Technological and cultural change**

*1897 kinetoscope...kinetoscope parlors*

Victorian architecture in the era of transcontinental rail and stagecoach travel; carriage drawn by six white horses in Ford Museum in Dearborn; carriage transported President Hayes & General Sherman during

their 1880 visit as well as other sitting presidents - Benjamin Harrison, William McKinley, Teddy Roosevelt; Note the western travels of Hayes and Sherman; 1897 opening of Del Monte golf course *Universal Studios at Del Monte...*Laemmle, president, 1924 Sporting Youth; Universal also produced von Stroheim's Foolish Wives; describe scenes such as Denny driving by the Roman Plunge to the hotel's main entrance. The movie's title reflects a cultural youth movement sweeping the nation among the "younger set."

*Depression-era color marketing film...no audio*

*September 1941 Paramount News newsreel of Dali party (mention Hope, Coogan and Nancy Morse)*

These give you a broad overview of the hotel's influence and impact

#### 4

Here are two people who most represent these formative and transformative periods.

Charles Crocker - 19th Century railroad developer - a builder of the nation's first transcontinental railroad and builder of the Del Monte

Here is doing the bunny hop in the hotel's botanical garden with family and friends. The poses might seem a bit static but, somewhat in defense of Crocker in this photo, I will note that cameras of the 1880's required long exposure times - minutes, not seconds.

Samuel Finley Brown Morse - 20th Century land developer - who was a sportsman (Aunt Nancy's "My Daddy" story), builder and conservationist

high octane; roping a pretty girl - Ginger Rogers - the world's greatest dancer in her day

Clearly, Morse is a man of action - for acrobatic roping requires exceptional coordination and upper body strength.

The Hotel Del Monte envisioned by both Crocker and Morse broke new ground in the development and evolution of recreation and tourism as a business and a way of life.

I have made an effort to keep text concise, less than 5K words, yet insightful, informative and readable. My description of SFB Morse offers an example of the style I have used.

*Samuel Finlay Brown Morse maintained his Newton, Massachusetts accent throughout his life.*

*He was identified as a "Noted Sportsman and champion bean chef" in Del Monte's 1936 cookbook, Famous Recipes by Famous People – Hotel Del Monte. His contribution for Boston Baked Beans joined entries from poet Robinson Jeffers, explorer Ales Hrdlicka, novelist Gouverneur Morris, illustrator Otto Soglow, author John Steinbeck,*

*cartoonist Rube Goldberg, Gertrude Stein, Walt Disney, Mrs. Franklin Delano Roosevelt and many others. The publication was a creative project by Herb Cerwin.*

*Disney's recipe, Silly Symphony Souffle, needed only minutes to prepare and cook while Jeffers's Poetic License dish of eight small Bermuda onions with sauce required 75 minutes to bake. Morse's beans took three days of elaborate preparations. The recipe's intricacy reflected Morse's sophisticated penchant for detail.*

## **5**

I developed a set of art panels that blend historic graphics from hotel publications and collateral materials with my photographs and digital renderings these are captioned and, as a set, provide a concise overview of the hotel history...I look at it as an executive summary with pictures, capable of standing on its own.

## **6**

The illustrations highlight the setting and the evolution of Del Monte.

(Note details such as concurrent development of Game & Gossip Magazine. First issue September 1926)

## **7**

Guests came from the four corners of the world, drawn by the allure of Monterey's romantic heritage and the adventure and fun waiting for them there.

Comment on sidebar "Glancing Through Its Guest List" ... as picked at random ... mention personal experiences as NHK documentary on Prince Nitobe

## **8**

Comment on deck of cards

Hotel Del Monte as ace of spades

Del Monte Lodge as joker

Morse's sports empire philosophy

long before Walt Disney sketched out Disneyland, SFB Morse sold happiness

An Illustrated View is a concise prequel that sets the stage for the next book - Cypress, Pine & Sea...in which I will continue to examine Hotel Del Monte's history and heritage.

**9**

Trailer

**10**

Close with comment on McComas mural...friendship between McComas and Morse;

Note the visit by Sydney art dealer

Later realized how much this painting seeps into your soul...

then I met Charley last year

Morse to Charley: *“Put art in your life. It adds balance.”* Learning this from Charley increased my admiration for the talent and creativity of Samuel Finley Brown Morse and reinforced my belief that Hotel Del Monte’s influence in our society and culture is far reaching and of great importance.