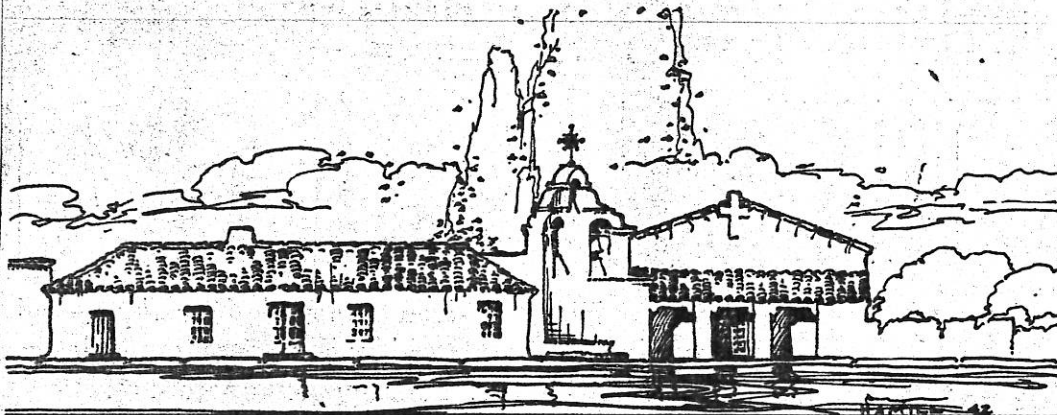


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Architect's Conception of Future Old San Diego House of Worship



This is the architect's conception of what the Old San Diego Community church will look like some day when the congregation's dreams come true. In the meantime, services will be held for the first time tomorrow in the Machado house, the wing at the left.

Machado Home To Serve as Meeting Hall

By RUTH TAUNTON

For the first time since a group of Spanish soldiers established the first white community and fort on Presidio hill 173 years ago, a Protestant church is preparing to send permanent roots into the adobe soil of Old Town, and to worship under a red-tiled roof of its own.

Through the interest and assistance of a local committee, headed by George W. Marston, the Old San Diego Community church will begin holding its services tomorrow in the historic Machado house on San Diego ave., across the street from the plaza where the Stars and Stripes was raised for the first time in southern California.

The two wings of the old house still standing, and the lot, 142 by nearly 200 feet, have been purchased, and are being held under a trust by the San Diego Union Title & Trust Co. for the community church, which has an indefinite option to buy the property.

OBBLIGATED TO OWNERS

"The church is under great obligation to Clifton Rock," according to one of the interested group, "for making it possible to secure this option. As owner of the building for some time, Mr. Rock spent considerable money and time in repairs, and the casa probably is in better condition than it has been at any time in the last 75 years. The former owner also is giving tables, chairs and other furniture to the church."

Under the direction of their pastor, the Rev. Joseph S. Fox, the 35 charter members of the church, and their friends, have put the thick-walled adobe in order for Sunday school at 9:45 tomorrow morning. At 11 o'clock, Mr. Fox will preach on "Insuring God's Presence."

FOLDING CHAIRS INDUCTED

Folding chairs have been installed, but the church members plan to make pews that will be comfortable, and yet have the authentic look of early California chapel seats.

The church is accepting donations from those who desire to help purchase redwood for the pews, and for the next immediate need, a good organ "even if just a second-hand instrument that some other church no longer needs," according to Fox. A pulpit also would be a welcome gift.

Steeped in the atmosphere of our yesterdays, if not in luxurious church appointments at the start, the congregation already has an architect's drawing of how they expect their church home to grow into a structure of great beauty.

TO BECOME LANDMARK

The Machado house will remain as it is, a landmark exhibit for future Californians to see, and will be used, when dreams of a new auditorium come true, for Sunday school and church offices.

A campanile, for which great bells already have been promised, will connect the Machado adobe with the auditorium, which is to be constructed in harmony with early San Diego architecture. All this, however, is still in the future for the new church, whose articles of incorporation were taken out only in May of last year. Its constitution and by-laws came in March, 1942, and, meeting in temporary quarters, the church officially received its charter members May 10.

FOX TO STAY AT HELM

The first annual meeting of the church was held June 7, and Mr. Fox, after 16 months of preliminary service in organizing the new congregation, was invited to remain as pastor. The local committee, sponsoring the church movement, also had expressed a desire that he remain in the pastorate.

Committee members include Herbert H. Holmes, for 20 years executive secretary of the San Diego Y.M.C.A.; Dr. Leland D. Jones, lay church leader; Dr. Frank Lowe, Christian church minister; Dr. James W. Mahood, Methodist minister; W. N. Gilliam, member of the board of directors for the new church; and Marston.

A church census was undertaken in Old Town last September, and it was reported that there were 560 Protestant families, 234 Catholic families, Mr. Fox said. On the basis of this census, plans for development of the community's first Protestant church went forward.

MINISTERING TO PROTESTANTS

Many Protestant groups have held church services and sponsored Sunday schools in Old Town at intervals over the last 100 years, but none had established themselves in the community and erected permanent church homes.

"It is our purpose," said Mr. Fox, "to minister to the Protestant families in the neighborhood, and to painstakingly preserve, restore and rebuild the Casa de Machado in harmony with its historic values."

The casa has been called the "house of the flag" because of an interesting incident in the fall of 1846. Built for Maria Antonio Machado de Silva by her father, Corp. Jose Manuel Machado, member of the leather-jacket company of Spanish soldiers who came to San Diego in the 1780's, the casa probably was constructed in the early 1830's.

The American flag first was raised in Old Town plaza July 29,

1846, but Californians again had possession of San Diego in the fall. When the Americans returned, Maria Antonio Machado, realizing that her beloved Mexican flag would be hauled down, grabbed a kitchen knife, rushed out to cut away the rope, catch up the flag and hide it in the folds of her skirt as she dashed back to the shelter of her home.

Albert B. Smith, long a resident of Old Town, then climbed the flag pole, attached new halyards, and hauled up the American flag at a spot where the emblem of human freedom still waves.

Although the exact age of the Casa de Machado is not known, it probably is well over 100 years old, and one of the oldest adobe homes still standing in southern California.

BORN IN MADAGASCAR

"Naturally, we are deeply interested in the venerable history of our new church home, and glad to be the protectors of the old building," Mr. Fox said.

The Old Town pastor was born in Madagascar to parents who were English medical missionaries to the island. Specializing in community and social service, he was recorded as a Friends minister 30 years ago, and has been a resident of this city for 18 years. He and Mrs. Fox have seven children, three grandchildren.

As a first step in needed community service, the women of the new church have applied for official permission to provide day care for children of mothers employed in defense industries.