

# THE LEGACY

Lompoc Valley Historical Society's Quarterly Newsletter

## Lompoc Women's History part II

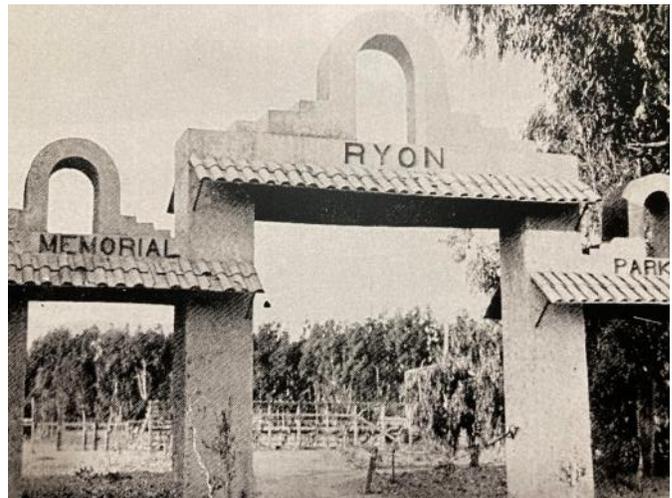
by Marcia Harris Hart, writings of Earl Calvert, Karen Paaske

*As a result of a program on the subject presented to the DAR La Purisima Chapter and Lompoc Alpha Club in March 2022, several issues will be devoted to the amazing ladies who were so instrumental in the Lompoc Valley Community.*

In the Fall of 1999 the Lompoc Valley Historical Society joined with the Lompoc Valley Chamber of Commerce in co-sponsoring a program to select a "Man and Woman" of each Decade from 1900 to 2000, and for the Century, from a variety of sources including the general public. The following are some of many impressive Lompoc women who added to the quality of life for Lompoc Valley in service and volunteer work including contributions in the Arts, Education, Youth Activities, Business Development, Health Services, Community Development and Philanthropy.

Mary Ryon was selected for the [1900-1910](#) decade. Born in 1843 she married Harry N. Ryon in Santa Cruz and in 1874 came to Lompoc. They prospered as farmers and were respected by all. By the terms of her will in June 1908, she presented the town of Lompoc with a pleasure park, to be known as Ryon Memorial Park, a tract of land 585 sq. feet, bounded by Ocean Ave, O St. and Cypress Ave. It was given to the city, to be used forever, for park purposes together with the land for the extension of Cypress Ave. past the park. A devout

Catholic, Mary also gave \$11,000 to the Catholic Church for a new church building and priests residence at Lompoc.

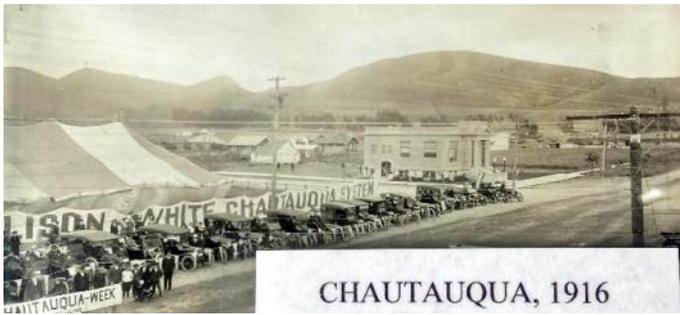


1910-1920-Woman of the Decade for consideration were:

Mrs. Mae McLean, representing Alpha Club on the Chautauqua executive committee. A Lompoc Record, May 28th 1915 article states "The success of the Chautauqua is due to the women of the Alpha and Civic Clubs wholly-and not the men."

Alpha Club's Ida Luella Simpson Sloan serving as a Library Trustee and helped secure the land and money for Lompoc's Carnegie Library.

Women's Book Club members. They changed their name to the Lompoc Civic Club when the Lompoc Library was built in 1910 (library is in Chautauqua photo),



donating 536 books and paid for the binding of a number of magazines. They also gave the Library \$167 towards furnishing the library basement, to be used as a club room. Even the town council met there. In 1916 the Lompoc Civic Club was responsible for the funding of the mission style gateway at the Ryon Park entrance.

Mary Long Saunders, the town's first librarian, serving from 1909 to 1919.



Lillian Williams, she began teaching at Lompoc High School in 1912, became Vice-Principal in 1914 and Principal in 1917. She made sure the high school students were actively involved in Lompoc's Junior Red Cross World War I efforts.

Selected as Woman of the [1910-1920](#) decade was Susan Henning Van Clief. She was born in 1870 and married Vinton. Susan opened her Van Clief Sanitarium-a nursing and maternity home in 1914 at the corner of N. 3rd St and Walnut. It was Lompoc's 2nd hospital.

[1920-1930](#)-The very long list continues of the Lompoc Women Club members who did so much for the city. Jennie Dimock began serving as Alpha Club's secretary in 1905

and continued for 33 years. The two Rennie sisters, Marguerite Hall and Hattie Smith, both Lompoc natives, were life long community workers, belonging to organizations mentioned and several fraternal groups. Mrs. Hall always said, "If there is anything new and good being started, I want to be there." She was Alpha Club chairwoman of the first Lompoc flower, Dahlia Show, in 1922. From then on the Lompoc flower shows grew in size each year. The Lompoc Women's Civic Club's largest project, to date, was the placing of a large memorial flag pole at Ocean and H St. in honor of WWI hero's. The dedication was held in 1925.

Julia Corning Harris, the first woman in Lompoc to register to vote in 1920. She played the organ and piano for the Baptist and Presbyterian Church, was active in the PTA, Red Cross, Pioneer Society and Alpha Club.

As part of a PTA sponsored project, Mary Launer-cooked the first hot meals served to students at the Lompoc grammar school in 1926.



Nellie Hogan Sperber was selected. Beloved in Lompoc, an 1897 Lompoc High School graduate, Nellie nursed her husband during his fatal illness of 1919. She

then opened a sanitarium (Sperber Maternity Home) in Lompoc. For 25 years she helped doctors deliver babies and taught their mothers how to care for them. In later years she ran the Catholic USO during W.W. II



In the Decade **1930-1940** -A Women's Club member is selected.

Margaret Heiges moved to Lompoc with her husband, Dr. Lawrence Heiges and two sons in 1911. She was deeply

involved with her family, the Lompoc Red Cross, Civic Club, Alpha Club, PTA, the Farm Bureau and the Presbyterian Church. In the 1930's she was Chairwoman of the "Clean Up the City" campaign, Chairwoman of Civic Club's Better Homes committee, Chairwoman of the Homes and Garden section of the Alpha Club-both sponsoring tours of local homes and backyard gardens. She was also Chairwoman of the Associated Charities Committee-raising funds for local indigent relief and Co-Chair with Mildred Daniels of the home department of the Farm Bureau on project work representing Lompoc.

**1940-1950**-Woven into the tapestry of Lompoc valley in 1940 a vibrant

"Japanese community thrived and the future seemed limitless" (from "Vanished" Lompoc's Japanese by John McReynolds). Toki Iwamoto helped her husband run his business, befriended and advised new brides, while raising her family. Toshi Inouye, active in music and performing arts at LHS, class of 1936, assisted her husband with their store. In 1941 a Lompoc chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League was chartered, the first organization of American-born Nisei. Japanese American girls enjoyed being a part of LHS's Scholarship Society and captained Lompoc High's Japanese American girl's basketball

team to championships two years in a row.

While Nellie Sperber ran the Catholic USO, Faye Porter was the director of the Surf USO, an extension of the Lompoc Walnut St. Club. She was "Mom" to 1000's of Army men who passed through Camp Cooke.

Hattie Rennie Smith, previously mentioned in the 1920-1930 decade, was selected. After graduating high school, Hattie went to nursing school and joined Alpha Club in 1911. She married Mr. J. M. Smith, but always took her job seriously. "Nursing was her calling" said author of "Her Story" Mary Lou Parks. In 1943, Hattie started home nursing classes at the Walnut St. USO. She worked relentlessly for the Red Cross during the war, as a volunteer. She and her sister Marguerite Hall were two of the first women to become members of the new Lompoc Community Hospital Auxiliary.

In the decade **1950-1960** there were 100 plus members in Senior Alpha Club including vigorous long time members Hazel McCabe, Clara Sloan and Mrs. James Larsen.



Anne Scolari Calvert was selected. Anne graduated from LHS in 1924 and began teaching at Jalama School in 1927. Mr. Clarence "Pop" Ruth recruited Anne to teach art in town to the 6th grade class. Anne was actively involved in the Pioneer Society, Community Concerts, the Methodist Church and Lompoc Museum. In the sixties she was elected Secretary of the Historical Society

which she held for a number of years.

Martha Negus came to Lompoc in 1933 and taught at Honda School, then in town. She was active in Alpha Club, PTA, La Purisima Mission Association and a charter member of the Lompoc Mental Health Association.



In the 1960-1970 decade Lompoc's first female mayor was selected. Charlotte Benton settled in Lompoc in 1950 when her husband was stationed at Camp Cooke army base, now Vandenberg Space Force.

She was a ten year city council member beginning 1964 and a beloved philanthropist who donated her time and knowledge to benefit Lompoc and its residents. Charlotte was Lompoc Valley Chamber of Commerce Woman of Year in 1969 and chosen mayor by her fellow council members in 1977.

For the 1970-1980 Decade Dorothy Jackson was selected. She rose from substitute teacher to school principal of Clarence Ruth Elementary School for 10 years. Dorothy was among the first African American teachers in Lompoc-and a charter member of Beta Pi Sigma sorority/Lompoc chapter, serving as its first president. In 1991 Dorothy with the Clarence Ruth staff wrote a grant proposal for a center to support low-income families through the Healthy Start Program. It was fully funded and the Dorothy Jackson Family Resource



Center is located today on North H St.

1980-1990 Woman of the Decade was a tie.

Frances Houston was a member of Lompoc's chapter of DAR, Friends of the Lompoc library and Lompoc Republican Women Federated.

Judy Stevens was the chairwoman and Commissioner of Lompoc's Beautification and Appearance Commission. The Lompoc Mural Project came about when Judy and her husband Gene visited Chemainus, British Columbia that developed tourism with the help of beautiful painted murals. It was Judy and Gene that brought the idea of murals back to Lompoc.

1990-2000-Alice Milligan was selected. Alice began her career in education in the Lompoc Unified School District, which spanned 43 years until retiring as associate superintendent. She served as president of the Lompoc Hospital foundation and chaired the City of Lompoc's Downtown Revitalization Committee. She was also president of LV Chamber of Commerce and Visitor's Bureau



## The Woman of the Century !

Selected-Louise Fisher Mollath

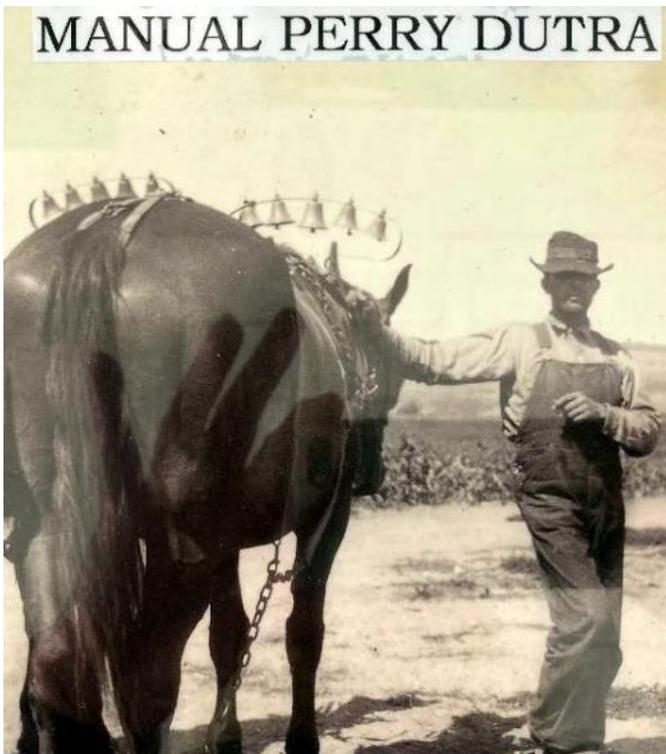
A public health nurse, Louise dedicated her life to public health in Lompoc and endeavored to make a difference in the lives of others. She was First President of the Lompoc



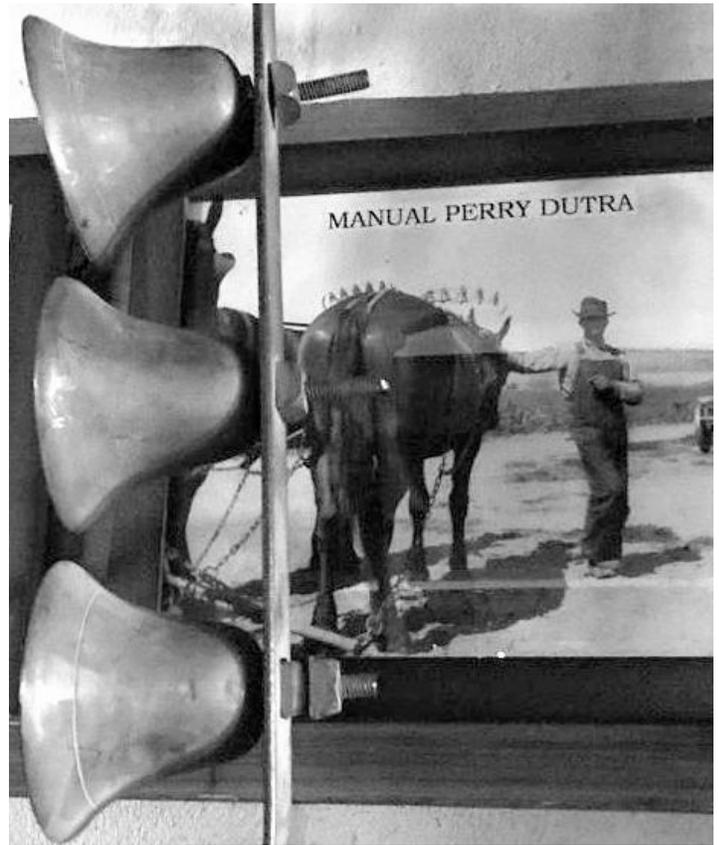
Hospital Auxiliary in 1944 and established the Northern County blood bank. Louise donated money to many worthy projects, including the hospital defibrillators for emergency service vehicles, police dogs, search and rescue dogs, swimming lessons for special needs children and money to help purchase Stone Pine Hall and a new roof for the Spanne House. She died in 2006 at the age of 98. Louise set up Charitable Renewable trusts, that to this day, fund the Lompoc Historical Society, the music department at Lompoc High and The Lompoc Pops.

## Dutra's Handmade Bells

Rosemary Dutra West visited in June and brought a Dutra family treasure. The bells used by Manuel Dutra when plowing with his horses are handmade and fit into the harness of the team.



The Dutra Ranch was located at Four Corners (south of the mission).



Amazingly our carriage house had a picture of Manuel, his horses and the bells, probably taken in the 1920's. The Bells are on display with the photo.



*Rosemary West and Dan Dutra in the Carriage House*

Selected from A Hodge Podge of  
Miscellany, November-December  
1991

Edited by Myra Manfrina

## A VANISHED ERA

Surf was only a railroad junction when the railroad was being constructed in 1895/1901. It was a bustling place-not a town, but workers lived there and the railroad depot was built there. It was called "Lompoc Junction" at one point, then changed back to "Surf". It did have two saloons in 1899 and Baroda, a railroad stop nearby on the Lompoc spur, had 3 saloons ! Through the years there were some houses constructed for railroad workers and some of them lived in cars on a siding, but there never was an actual town there, with the exception of the railroad building period. Mr. Morinini's store and the Morinini home were the closest it ever got to a town. Henry Morinini was affectionately called the Mayor of Surf ! At one time in the 1920's there was a large ballroom/pavilion constructed with prospects of having a resort there, but that venture, called Aloha Beach failed. A lot of Lompocans of the 1920's and 1930's had fun at dances held in that building.



The advertisement features a sunburst logo at the top. The main text is in large, bold, black letters. Below the main text, there are several lines of smaller text providing details about the sale, including building site prices and directions to the location.

**Aloha  
Beach**  
**Pre-Opening Sale**  
**Sunday, April 1st**

Town Sites and Beach Property  
on the New Coast Highway

Here we have Bathing, Boating, Fishing—Every-  
thing. You may have all this permanently

Building Sites From

**\$450<sup>up</sup>** This price in-  
cludes water,  
curbs, gutters,  
electricity and  
surfaced and graded streets at reasonable terms

Prices Will Advance After  
Public Opening

**TO REACH ALOHA BEACH**  
Drive to Lompoc and follow arrow signs to  
beach. Railroad station on the tract at Surf, or,  
if you desire, we will arrange to drive you there  
in our cars FREE.

### From your Treasurer...

I'll be mailing out membership dues renewals in August for those members that pay on an annual basis. Our membership year is Sept. 1, 2022 to Aug. 31 2023. Annual dues will be due this coming Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>. Life members are not included in this mailing.

# Reference Room

## Ramblings **by Karen Paaske**

*The reference room area is full of information requests are received constantly. This column reflects a few of the inquiries during the last few months.*



There have been some memorable donations this month including Joe Avila's Navy uniforms, and the Dutra horse bells.

An interesting inquiry on the history of the building at 125 S. H St will lead to a history of the building in a future article.

July 7 was the very first school tour since the fall of 2019. Miguelito Summer school 5th and 6th graders toured the property.

Many thanks to docents Barbara Nyman, Dan Dutra, Lynn Romine, Marcia Hart & Karen Paaske.

The society is hoping to enlarge the carriage building. Need help from an architect, so let us know if you have someone who would volunteer. Also need a construction person to evaluate the front porch for repair.



*Lynn Romaine (right) & Barbara Nyman (Left) with the school tour.*

The last name of Brian Scott Donelson was omitted from the Memorial List in the Legacy. Brian is the son of Brian Donelson who is a LVHS Lifetime Member. Our sincere apologies go out to Brian and his family for this oversight.

### **May, June & July 2022**

### **Memorials & Membership**

Welcome New Members

**Bonnie Macado**

**Rosemary Dutra West** (Life)

Total Number of Members: 362

Memorials for

**Henry Vasquez** (Class '57)

**Forrest Staffanson**

**Bill Rule**



# Up and Coming Events...

## Executive Board

Ken Ostini - President

Ardeane Machado Eckert - 1st Vice President

Dr. Blake Jamison - 2nd Vice President

Linda Warren - Secretary

Jeannette Miller Wynne - Treasurer

Lynn Romine - Corresponding Secretary

## Directors

Dan Dutra, Jesse Jones, Karen Paaske, Don

Fletcher, Sherrie Chavez, Debbie Schuyler

Manfrina, Larry Huyck, Marcia Harris Hart, Eva

Hamon, Steve Junak, Karen Osland and Julie

Moore

Honorary Board member

Carolyn Huyck Strobel

- **No Open House for August in preparation of Pioneer Weekend celebration**
- **Sept 2 Elk's reunion dinner**
- **Sept 3 Open House 10 to 1**
- **Sept 4 Ryon Park chicken BBQ at Noon**
- **Oct 22 Open House 10 to 1**
- **Nov 19 Open House 10 to 1**

**COME CELEBRATE  
THE RETURN OF THE  
PIONEER REUNION  
ON LABOR DAY  
WEEKEND 2022**

Non Profit Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
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Lompoc, CA 93436

Lompoc Valley  
Historical Society  
P. O. Box 88  
Lompoc CA 93438

