



Chloris Scott

Birthday Celebrations Today Nostalgic

Today's been the day for birthdays.

It's Alice Mable Knox's 84th birthday. She's a native daughter and daughter of the man who gave his name to the "Corners" around Main and Magnolia before they officially became El Cajon.

There's a Lakeside man, Clarence Ellis, a victim of amnesia for 14 years following an accident, who has reached the age of 95.

Then there's Rose Hacker, affectionately called Rosie by grandchildren and friends, who's turned 80. Following eye surgery last November, when both eye balls were taken out of their sockets and worked on for several hours, Rose has returned to the once-a-week volunteer job at the El Cajon Thrift Shop that she's had since the shop opened seven years ago.

Then there's Fred Kersten of El Cajon who had to quit his job several years ago when he fell and broke a hip. He'd had the job 33 years and hadn't planned on quitting then. He and his wife, who also has a September birthday, just celebrated their 58th wedding anniversary.

Miss Knox laughingly admits she was born in San Diego "down by the gas tanks at 12th and G before there were gas tanks." Her birth took place there in a private home because Knox's Corners, where her parents, Amaziah Lord Knox and Illa M. Knox, lived had no doctor.

Knox had come to San Francisco in 1855. He drove a four horse team to San Diego 100 years ago where he became foreman of the ranch that was El Cajon valley. He built a hotel in 1876, later adding to it. The first part is now the private home at the corner of Magnolia Avenue and Lexington Street.

Not only is it Miss Knox's birthday but it's also the Founders Day of the Native Daughters of the Golden West, of which she is a member. El Cajon's 11-year-old Parlor was named for Miss Knox's mother, who was a native of Ohio and lived to be 84.

Gov. Ronald Reagan has commended the Native Daughters on their birthday for their marking of historical landmarks, which includes the Knox Hotel; and working in the field of education.

Miss Knox's education was in El Cajon's first schools, going in the sixth grade to the Southwest Institute in San Diego which her sister, the late Mrs. John Ballantyne, recommended. She also graduated from Pacific Union College and from nurses school in 1904 at Battle Creek, Mich.

Since she majored in obstetrics she admits "I've taken care of a lot of babies in El Cajon." She also was supervising nurse for 7½ years at Edgemoor Farms, now Edgemoor Geriatric Hospital. "Now I know what these elderly people were going through."

Once the owner of 160 acres in Singing Hills Estates, Miss Knox has sold all that and has lived in La Jolla the past 21 years. She and her sister-in-law, widow of the late Dr. Charles Knox, will go out to dinner tonight as a birthday celebration.

Mrs. Hacker was born in Kentucky, lived in Illinois with the past 35 years in the La Mesa-El Cajon area.

She's the widow of James Hacker, a longtime local barber, and the mother of three sons. Because of her surgery, she's had to give up the quilting and crocheting she's always done and even watching television.

Her birthday, and that of Mrs. Vera Myers, "just a youngster," was celebrated at a Monday luncheon at the Coffee King by 10 co-workers at the Thrift Shop.

Born in Lincoln, Neb., Ellis was working on a railroad section gang in Oklahoma when he was hit by a train. He lost his memory and was lost to family for 14 years, when he was found sitting on steps of a building in Fort Riley, Kan. He's been living at Sommers Lodge, where he shared a birthday cake with 22 other residents and staff today. He has a sister in Victorville.

Kersten is a native of Kansas, where he was raised on a farm. Before coming to California in 1924 with his wife and two children, he was a baker and grocer. Those were the days he baked as many as 100 pies a day, made bread and sold six, 16 oz. loaves for a quarter, paid \$10 a month rent for a two story house and lived on \$2.50 a week.

I could go on longer with his life story. After all, he's my father.

SCOTT, CHLORIS