

## Annie M. McCaskill

*By Rechts Ann Pedersen*

Annie M. McCaskill, "Woman of Achievement," "Woman of the Year," was a Santa Cruz businesswoman and civic leader. She was born in Scotts Valley and attended local schools. Her father was employed by the Santa Cruz Powder Company for many years and for a while she worked there, too. She then took a job with the Santa Cruz Land Title Company where she worked for more than 60 years—secretary, searcher of records, title examiner, escrow officer, secretary of the corporation, and finally president of the company. She retired in 1977.

Annie McCaskill died on March 25, 1981, at age 91. In her obituary, the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* outlined her accomplishments:

*She was named 1974 Woman of the Year by the Santa Cruz Area Chamber of Commerce and 'Woman of Achievement' in 1973 by the four Santa Cruz County Business and Professional Women's Clubs.*

*Over the years she contributed to many civic projects. She was instrumental—along with former police chief Al Huntsman—in forming the first Boys Club in Santa Cruz.*

*McCaskill was active with United Fund and the Santa Cruz redevelopment project.*

*She is also said to have held the oldest membership of the First Presbyterian Church.*

*She is a past president of the Santa Cruz Business and Professional Women's Club.*

The City of Santa Cruz was named as one of two residual legatees of her estate. The other was the First Presbyterian Church. Upon the death of her sister, Frances McCaskill, the City's share of the estate was to be divided into two equal parts. An article in the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* announcing the bequest stated that:

*One half of the city's share of the estate is to be used 'in establishing and maintaining a department devoted to historical documents and objects and the promulgation of the local history of the city of Santa Cruz and of the State of California.'*

*The other half of the city's share of the estate is to establish a department in the library system to provide braille books, materials, records and tapes for persons with defective sight.*

Francis McCaskill died in 1986, and the Library received its distribution during the summer of that year.

Miss McCaskill continues to give to the community through the Annie McCaskill Trust. The Trust provides funding for such items as books on tape, large print books, equipment for use by the visually impaired, and local history materials. It also helps fund special local history projects, such as the Library's online Local History Photograph Collection.



*Annie McCaskill, 1962.*

## Sources

- *"Annie McCaskill," Santa Cruz Sentinel. October 25, 1968.*
- *"BPW Women are Honored," Santa Cruz Sentinel. October 31, 1973.*
- *"Bequest and Trust Fund Accounts: a Summary". (Library memo.) August 1999.*
- *"Civic Leader Annie McCaskill Succumbs at the Age of 91," Santa Cruz Sentinel. March 26, 1981.*
- *"Two Major Gifts Bequeathed to Library," Santa Cruz Sentinel. August 5, 1981.*
- *"Western Title Company Buys S.C. Land and Title," Santa Cruz Sentinel. December 1, 1974.*
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