

# Home-towners met to share warm memories of a friend

By CAROLYN  
HEEBNER-SWIFT

It was a hometown event with German music, cool refreshments and tributes in honor of a friend — just the kind of festivity the honoree would have enjoyed.

More than 150 persons gathered Saturday at the plaza in the heart of Soquel for a dedication ceremony and unveiling of the fountain in the honor of the late Marion Hobbs, longtime civic leader and Soquel Postmaster.

A German band from the Watsonville Band played two lively selections to start the event, and William Berk, master of ceremonies, announced that two of the group's members had once performed in a similar band organized by Hobbs.

The plaza is located at the corner of Porter Street and Soquel Drive, next to the Monterey Savings and Loan Association office. It is the cooperative effort of the association and the Soquel Chamber of Commerce.

"I like to think that friendliness is the hallmark of Soquel," Berk said, "The quality which makes our community a little better, a little more enjoyable place to live. Certainly, Marion was a very friendly person and now we have a new plaza where townspeople can sit for a

friendly chat — a sip of water — and relax in a patio garden in the center of town."

Robert C. Littlefield, president of Monterey Savings and Loan Association, introduced staff and members of its board of directors, and told the audience that although he had never met Hobbs, "I am very impressed with the footprints this man left in the community."

Ron Lari, president of the Soquel Chamber, said that although he, too, never had the chance to meet Hobbs, he feels acquainted through his contributions.

"I know I will feel Marion Hobbs every day I live in this town," he said.

Many of those who spoke in the early afternoon program touched upon personal memories, and all talked about the gifts Hobbs had given to the town. Most of the speakers also remembered Hobbs's willingness to take on jobs in behalf of the community — chores & duties that were sometimes avoided by others — and the dedication he had to see a task completed.

Robert Meyer said if people come to town and want to know about the man honored by the plaque, he hopes they ask him. Ken Izant recalled Hobbs's years of service for the

Soquel Fire Protection District, while Josie Belvill, assistant postmaster, talked about the friendship that was felt by all the Soquel postal employees.

Evelyn Blakemore, president of the Soquel Pioneer and Historical Society, said it was "a double pleasure," to speak at the memorial dedication, for she had been a childhood friend of both Marion Hobbs and his wife, Frances.

Their friendships extend back generations, she said, because their grandparents had been friends in the early days of Soquel. She had participated in the wedding ceremony of Frances and Marion, and they had been a part of hers.

She also noted Hobb's contributions to the Soquel Pioneer and Historical Association, and said he served on its board of directors for many years.

Don Burklo, speaking as a representative of the Kiwanis Club and Soquel Congregational Church, said Marion Hobbs was one of the first people he met when he came to town years ago.

"I remember that he made me feel welcome and comfortable," he said.

Burklo described some of the many duties Hobbs had assumed over the years, and

then added that in Kiwanis meetings, the opening song was always off-key if Marion was absent.

"Through all the organizations," he said, "Marion could always be counted upon to take a post, and then to do all the work."

Hobb's wife, Frances, stepped to the fountain to unveil the plaque that reads, "Dedicated to Marion R. Hobbs, Soquel Postmaster 1957-1977; Civic Leader — Humanitarian — Friend. With love, from the People of Soquel."

Artist Lee Blair made a rubbing of the plaque, and this was presented as a gift to Mrs. Hobbs.

Speaking on behalf of the family, Jim Hobbs said it was gratifying to see the friends gathered for the event. He said he has had time to reflect on his father's life, and wished to share his thoughts.

"In most respects, he lived his life in an ordinary fashion," he said, "He never sought acclaim. Yet there were two things he did every day — he loved and he gave. He loved the town of Soquel and he gave of himself to make it better."

The love, he added, has come back to Marion and his family. He then thanked the town in his father's behalf.



Frances Hobbs received rubbing of plaque honoring her husband.

BIOGRAPHY  
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