



**Grace McCarthy, early Sharp Park resident,
named Pacifica "Woman of Achievement"**

**Written by Jean Bartlett, January, 2019
(A Pacifica Historical Society Project)**



**Grace Lockhart, 1930, University of Illinois at
Urbana-Champaign.**

**McCARTHY, GRACE LOCKHART (1908-
2000)**

Wednesday, November 5, 1975, *San Mateo Times*:

The four Business and Professional Women's Clubs of San Francisco and the adjacent area, have named Pacifica Councilwoman Grace Lockhart McCarthy their "1975 Woman of Achievement."

The award was presented by Sheila Hyman, president of the Portola Club, at a recent meeting at the Hotel Canterbury, San Francisco.

Mrs. McCarthy, who has two children, was hailed in the presentation as a "successful wife and mother, professional woman and outstanding community leader."

In making the award, the BPW noted her ten years on the executive staff of the San Francisco Girl Scout Council, 12 years as a teacher and 11 years as a City Councilwoman in Pacifica, including four terms as vice mayor and three as mayor.

Mrs. McCarthy's Pacifica achievements range from leading the Council to include youth in city government and acquiring significant parkland and open space, to reactivating bus service, and improving access to Skyline College, as well as forming the bicentennial committee.

Mrs. McCarthy holds an honorary life member service award from the Sharp Park PTA, has worked with her husband, Carl, to secure national monument status for the Portolá Discovery Site and achieve full landscaping of the Coast Highway through Pacifica. She received the California Park and Recreational Society Award for service in parks and recreation.

Participating in the award are the Pacifica Club of San Francisco, the Portola Club, San Francisco Club and the Union Square Club of BPW.



August 14, 1909. Grace celebrated her 1st birthday in Long Beach, California.

Grace Elizabeth Lockhart was born on August 14, 1908 to John Emmet Lockhart and Kittie "Matthews" Lockhart at her mother's family home in Memphis, TN. Her father John was born in 1880 in Millerstown, Butler County, PA. Her mother was born in 1882 in O'Neill, NE. Grace had an older sister, Dorothy Ellen Lockhart. Dorothy was born in Memphis on June 18, 1906 and died in El Paso, TX, on October 13, 1907, following an 11-day struggle with meningitis. She is buried in El Paso.

John Lockhart was a graduate of the New Mexico School of Mines in Socorro, New Mexico (now the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology). He was in middle management and worked as a metallurgist – an engineer trained in the extraction and refining and alloying and fabrication of metals – for American Smelting Refining Company. A Consular Registration Application places him, with American Smelting, in Chihuahua, Mexico, from May 8, 1908 to January 4, 1916.

"We lived in an adobe house at the smelter in a big walled residential enclosure surrounded by deserts and mountains," Grace wrote in a cherished family journal written by Grace for her grandchildren in April of 1979. "My mother went home to Memphis for my birth. But I remember our home in Chihuahua. It had two bedrooms, a big-screened front porch, a patio with a banana tree, chickens in the backyard, lots of trees to climb and lots of flower gardens. I had my own big seesaw, and there were tennis courts and swings in the middle of the compound. During Revolution, we lived in a series of apartments in the States: El Paso, TX; Helena, MT, Tacoma, WA and Long Beach, CA." Sometimes when things were stirring up in Mexico, Grace and her mom would stay with her mom's sisters either in Memphis or Little Rock.

"My mother grew up an only child," her daughter Pat "McCarthy" Kremer said. "Her sister had been light skinned and blond and my mother was dark. She would always say she was 'Black Irish.' But while there was an obvious difference in her appearance from Dorothy, my mother never felt to be valued any less."

"Interesting about my mother's mother is that she was trained as an 'elocutionist,' (a public speaker educated in voice production and gesture and delivery)," Pat went on to say. "When my grandmother was a teenager, she took part with her family in making 'tableaux' – where actors would be dressed up as historical figures and would pose, duplicating the famous scene in history or literature. When she and my grandfather married, he did not want her doing these things anymore, so she did not. A very different time it was and I think giving up her public life was not her choice. However, my grandmother did do all the driving. My grandfather lost one eye as a child. This was also the reason why he did not serve in the First World War."

When Grace was about 4, she met the Mexican Revolutionary General Pancho Villa (José Doroteo Arango Arámbula). He was visiting the compound and he gave her a nod with a smile and told her she was a cute little girl. In August of 1913, Grace and her parents fled Mexico for Texas.

"We were in the midst of the Villista Revolution and became refugees," Grace wrote. "Our home was looted and some of our friends were killed."

As things settled, her father returned to work in Chihuahua. On January 4, 1916, he returned to El Paso which was fortunate. One week later, 18 mining engineers of American Smelting were executed by Pancho Villa's troops.



Grace and her Mom, Kittie, passport photo 1919.

The family stayed in American Smelting housing in El Paso for a while. In June of 1917, John's work took him back to Mexico – first to Monterrey and then to Matehuala, with annual trips home. Passport information shows Grace and her mom visiting John in Mexico in 1919.

Grace attended eight different elementary schools which included schools in Helena, MT, El Paso, TX, and Long Beach, CA. She skipped half grades at least twice and was 16 when she graduated from high school.

"We moved to Lawrenceville in 1922 when I was a sophomore in high school," Grace noted, "and stayed in Illinois throughout my remaining school years. My first year of high school was at Long Beach Polytechnic High School in California."

Grace graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign (UIUC) in 1930 with a major in English and a minor in French. The young student would have graduated earlier but illness sent her home and she missed her first planned year. When she returned, she jumped right back into her education. In the 1930 Illio Yearbook, Grace's achievements are listed as follows: Alpha Phi; Mortar Board; Torch; Phi Beta Kappa; Alpha Lambda Delta; Anonian Literary Society; Inter-Literary Council; General Chairman, Mother's Day (3); Y.W.C.A. First Cabinet and Commission; First Council, W.A.A.; Volley Ball Manager (4). Additionally, during her college years, she occasionally took on jobs as a Spanish tutor.



Inter-Literary Council, 1930 (Grace Lockhart, far left, second row)

"My mother was active in college in many organizations," Pat said. "I remember her telling me, she lost some elected office in college when many of her friends did not vote because they were sure she would win!"

In the summer of 1928, chaperoned by her mom, Grace attended a meeting of the Mortar Board National Honor Society in Yosemite as the UIUC representative. As it turns out, Carl Patrick McCarthy – born December 15, 1898 in Grangeville, Idaho County, Idaho – was also visiting Yosemite.

"My father's best friend (Vern Hickey) was married to the woman who was organizing the meeting (Marion Hickey), so he went along with his friend to keep him company and they could play golf," Pat said. "My father spotted my mother as someone he would like to know better. They went on a few hikes together. He asked her to go to a dance with him, but then changed his mind and asked her to go on a moonlight walk instead. She did not know he did not have the money to get into the dance." (Marion and Vern Hickey would be the couple's lifelong friends.)



Carl McCarthy and Grace Lockhart at Mirror Lake in Yosemite, 1928.

"They liked each other from the very start. They began writing each other and by the beginning of 1929 they were in love," Pat continued. "They took a few trips to national parks before they were married (Grace's mom chaperoned) and continued visiting national parks after they were married. My mom's parents did not want them to marry until my mom was 22. My mother taught in Illinois in the interim."

"I taught junior high English," Grace noted. "I got \$85 a month for what the man who preceded me had been paid \$130 a month. My contract stipulated I could not smoke, marry, nor be out of town more than one weekend a month!"

The man Grace fell for was 10 years her senior. He had moved to San Francisco in 1925 which was where he lived when he met Grace.

"My father lived in a boarding house with his fellow 'Buchanan Street Gangsters,'" Pat said. "Some of his pals had money, but he did not. He came from a large and poor family, which nevertheless valued education. He had gone to Washington State College in Pullman and worked his way through taking a few extra years to graduate."

Grace and Carl married in Illinois on November 24, 1930. On December 15, Carl's birthday, the couple moved into their first apartment – 800 Dolores Street, San Francisco. At that point, both believed that the economic crisis created by the Stock Market Crash of 1929 was mostly over. In actuality, it had opened the doors to the 10-year Great Depression.



Grace Lockhart, taken just before she married Carl.



Carl McCarthy, Christmas of 1929.

"They headed out to San Francisco from Lawrenceville in their brand new Model A," Pat said. "But in 1932, my father lost his job with a U.S. Radiator and went to work for Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), selling radiator conversion devices on commission. (This was the beginning of what would become a 32-year career with PG&E.) At that point my mother had gotten her California teaching credential. However, the 'times' did not allow married women to teach, only unmarried women. So my mother got a job with the San Francisco Girl Scout Council, for some miserable wage I am sure ('\$25 a month,' her mom wrote), and worked as a Girl Scout professional." (Grace was assistant to Ida Smith, the Council's first executive director, and she was also the co-founder of Camp Sugar Pine – in the Sierra Foothills – and led several troops, including one in Chinatown, which included another legendary Pacifican, May Gee.)

"In the summer she was Camp Director where she worked with various San Francisco Scout troops at overnight camps in the Santa Cruz Mountains and the Sierras," Pat continued. "She also directed the day camp at 'Camp Merced,' a triangular piece of land between Skyline Blvd., near Lake Merced, and the San Francisco Zoo. In this capacity, she met a lot of fairly high powered and wealthy women who worked as Girl Scout volunteers." (Grace worked summers for the Council through the 1940s.)

In 1937, the couple – then living at 1275 Washington Street in San Francisco – purchased four lots, each 30 feet X 100 feet for \$500 in Sharp Park, an unincorporated coastal area 10 miles south of the couple's apartment in San Francisco.

"Before we were married, we talked about a mountain cabin with a view of the sea," Grace wrote to her grandchildren. "However, a five and a half day work week limited the time for driving back in forth if we were to enjoy it much. We looked in Marin County, too expensive, and Santa Cruz County, too far.

"We played golf and one day looked up at the hills east of San Francisco's Municipal Course – 'Sharp Park' – and we decided that was it! We walked the hills and chose lots adjoining Sharp Park municipal property on the hill with a great view of the ocean and Mori Point. We could never buy land to the south because George and Honora Sharp had left that land to the City of San Francisco with specific instructions. It could only be used for recreation."

On June 16, 1937, the couple got the building permit for the "big room with the fireplace over the garage."

"Carl had only had 'manual training' in high school where he built a spice cabinet, and the dressing table I still have," Grace continued. "However, he proved to be an excellent builder – taking a lot of time thinking and measuring. We had no electric tools, and had to get used materials because of wartime shortages."

Those materials included used lumber salvaged by Carl from an old Barbary Coast dance hall, as well as used windows and doors from various old building sites in San Francisco. Weekend road trips meant collecting river rocks for the chimney. Discarded cobblestones – which once lined the newly paved streets of San Francisco – were used to build the hearth.

Grace provided what she called, "the unskilled labor."

"I dug 10 wheelbarrow loads for the original garage; carried pails full of rocks for drainage – thus learning how big a cubic yard is; held iron pipe as hot lead was poured (there were complaints that I was not steady nor vertical!); mixed mortar for the stone fireplace; did undercoats of paint and stainings; helped a little with roofing but was poor where height was involved; fitted nail holes; ran errands; cooked in the fireplace till the kitchen was ready; and furnished constant admiration!"



Shamrock Shack, a work in progress. The area right of the addition is the original 700-square-foot living space.

By 1939, the couple did all their entertaining and spent many weekends at their coastal retreat, which they lovingly named "Shamrock Shack." In 1941 they began adding a dining room and a master bedroom, and additionally bought four adjoining lots to the north. They also moved from their apartment in San Francisco to their Shamrock Ranch full time. They decided their apartment in San Francisco was better suited for needed wartime housing. Grace recalled the War years in Sharp Park.

"We had strict blackouts on the coast and kept blankets over lighted windows. There were air raid alarms, but fortunately they were false. We had gasoline rationing and red stamps for sugar, coffee, meat, etc. Carl was too old for the Draft but he was anxious to do his share and he did Red Cross training."

In 1942, they converted their east porch to a small nursery. Their first child, John, came along in January of 1943. In early 1947, the couple completed a northeast bedroom and bath to make room for their daughter Pat, who was born in April of that year. In 1949, Grace's parents built a home next door. In 1950, Grace and Carl added "to the last bedroom, John's, and the nursery Patty had occupied became a den. We finished our home in 1952." Shamrock Shack was now three bedrooms, two baths with 1,434 sq. ft. of living space.

In 1957 Pacifica incorporated and unincorporated Sharp Park became one of the new City's neighborhoods. The following photo with notes was pulled directly from the pages of the Family Heirloom Book, "Grandma was Quite a Girl" – as written by Grace McCarthy.



Shamrock Shack occupied a lot of our time in the actual construction without professionals being hired. Started when we could not get such help, doing it ourselves became a source of pride! In picture above, note eroded "bad lands" to the south, "Victory Garden" in front of house, and complete lack of shrubbery and trees that grew so big surrounding the house.

"One of the most important lessons that I think my mother took from her childhood was 'always do your best.'" Pat said. "While her mother, with whom she was very close, was a perfectionist and always insisted on getting things right, interestingly my mother was not a perfectionist and I think that contributed to her getting so much done. She never seemed to worry too much about how well she did something. She had some inner confidence that she did things well and did not struggle with it. Perhaps, the most important lesson from her childhood was her deep and genuine self-confidence. She never needed to brag or show off, or show she was smart and had good ideas. She already knew she was smart and effective as a leader. Her loving and overprotective parents had instilled in her a very deep self-worth and my father continued to nurture this. His supportive role was huge as she went on to have a higher profile in Pacifica."



Formal family photo, circa 1952: John, Grace, Carl and Patty.



Family 1952 Christmas photo "Time Out For Cheer:" Carl, Grace, John, Silver and Patty. Silver, the family's Siamese cat, topped the list as Grace's favorite pet. He lived to be 22.



After Pacifica incorporated on November 22, 1957, Grace was appointed to Pacifica's first Park, Beach and Recreation Commission in 1958. Six years later, 1964, she was elected to the Pacifica City Council. She was reelected in 1968 and 1972 and served as Mayor: 1967-1968, 1971-72 and 1972-73. She was Chairwoman of the San Mateo County Council of Mayors in 1971 and Secretary of the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury, 1977-78. She was appointed by California State Assembly Speaker Willie Brown to the Central Region Committee of the State Coastal Commission and served on the Central Commission from 1972 through 1980. For the first two of those years, she was the Vice Chairwoman. From 1981 through 1983, she served on the California Coastal Commission, and through 1990, she was an alternate. She additionally served on City Council as an interim appointee in the 1980s, when she was appointed to fill the term of Ellie Clark who moved from the community. She was also a member of the Pacifica Branch of the American Association of University Women, was active with the League of Women Voters and was called a driving force behind the Pacifica Historical Society. Her daughter noted that while Grace "disavowed *Women's Lib*," she was nevertheless a lifelong advocate for women's rights. Included among her earliest memories was marching with her mother in suffragette parades to call for a constitutional amendment guaranteeing women the right to vote. (Passed by Congress June 4, 1919, and ratified on August 18, 1920, the 19th amendment guarantees women the right to vote.)

Grace was also community driven in the 1940s. When her son John started first grade in Sharp Park's four-room schoolhouse, now Pacifica's City Hall, Grace began volunteering with the PTA. She also worked as a substitute teacher. She would be active in the PTA for more than 15 years. This included being President of the Sharp Park PTA and Charter President of the Oceana High School PTA. In addition she served as a Cub Scout Den Mother and was the Girl Scout Leader of her daughter's troop.

"Everyone, whether they have children or not, should be active in PTA," she said in a 1959 interview. "It gives people an opportunity to get to know local conditions. Parents get acquainted with their children's teachers and organized programs for adults stimulate thinking. Our meetings give everyone a chance to meet their neighbors and discuss common problems on an informal basis."



Grace McCarthy, 1956.

Extensive articles were written on Grace as she gave so much of her time to the city that she loved. In February of 1957, the *Coastside Tribune* reported that: "Two long-time Sharp Park residents last week were honored with life memberships by the Laguna Salada PTA for 'outstanding work with young people.' In a candlelight Founder's Day ceremony, life memberships were presented to Rev. H. D. Harkins, pastor of the Little Brown Church, and Mrs. Grace McCarthy, two-time president of the Laguna Salada PTA."

On July 10, 1958, the *Coastside Tribune* ran the headline – **Meet Our First Rec Commissioners.** The appointed commissioners were: Donald C. Campbell, James M. Cooper, Frank Corcoran, George M. Dains, Mrs. Grace McCarthy, Mrs. Margaret Moseley and Mrs. James Vincent. "Mrs. Grace McCarthy has been active in civic work, ever since she and her husband Carl built their home in Sharp Park 17 years ago. She has held numerous offices in the Sharp Park PTA, including the presidency, and holds an honorary life membership for her work. A former professional Girl Scout Worker, she has led many Girl Scout and Brownie Troops on the Coastside. As a

member of the Citizens Advisory Committee for Public Education, she was chairman of a committee which drew up new report cards (now in use) in the Laguna Salada School District."

On June 27, 1961, the *Coastside Chronicle* reported: "By unanimous vote, the Park, Beach and Recreation Commissioners elected Mrs. Grace McCarthy as their chairman for next year. Mrs. McCarthy was one of only two of the original members still on the commission. (The other, Margaret Moseley, was chairman in 1960.) Since formation of the commission she has served at various times as Chairman of the Sites Committee, Swimming Pool Committee, and Objectives Committee. She also served on the Board of Review which selected the staff and was responsible for hiring Eldred Lokker as Recreation Director. For two years she ran the Christmas Do-It-Yourself Show. Having been active in all forms of PTA work, she also was an executive of the Girl Scout Council of San Francisco for ten years. She formed the original Girl Scout troop in the Sharp Park area."

Grace's civic engagement would feature prominently in local newspapers from the 1950s through the late 1990s. But it never undermined her love of life with her family. Some of her favorite memories, recorded in her journal, are mentioned here as well. "After my children were born I always seemed to be up at midnight Christmas Eve finishing some sewing or knitting for them." "My happiest Thanksgiving was our 25th wedding anniversary. We had a champagne breakfast and I made it into my wedding dress for nearly the last time." "My most romantic New Year's Eve was being the mother of the bride in 1969." "My gladdest Christmas season was awaiting my first born. John came January 24, 1943." "Celebrating our 41st wedding anniversary at the Mauna Kea Beach Hotel on the Island of Hawaii." "One of my happiest Christmas memories in my teens was caroling at dawn in the snow, chaperoned by my indulgent father."



Grace described her mother, in her journal, as the one person who most influenced her life. "My mother, who understood the possible loneliness of being an only child and moving around so much with a metallurgical engineer father when most of the world stayed put."

Grace described her husband Carl as being "My best, best sweetheart since 1929."

←(Grace and Carl on their 25th wedding anniversary.)

She also knew how to relax and found it very important to do so. She enjoyed knitting, reading, baking, traveling, driving, taking in the scenery and cooking for her family. Friendships meant a great deal to her as well. Pacifica friendships included Jean and Joe Fassler (Jean was Pacifica's first Mayor), Bill and Peggy Drake (Bill was the owner, publisher and editor of his 1959-founded Pacifica Tribune), Fred and Marian Ballew, and Jim and Lydia Cooper.

"Although my parents had many friendly interactions with lots of people in Pacifica, their best friends continued to be those they knew from their early years in San Francisco," Pat said. "My father continued with his Masonic group in San Francisco ("West of Twin Peaks"), and his San Francisco Lions Club, as well as the "Plumbing and Heating Club." They were at least 10 years older than most of the other parents so I think that made a difference too."

As a public servant, Grace had her share of detractors. Following her death at the age of 92 on November 21, 2000, Pacifican and legendary *Pacifica Tribune* columnist Paul Azevedo (his "cornucopia" column "The Reactor" ran for three decades) dedicated his column to Grace and addressed Grace's biggest local turbulence, the proposed 380 extension which would have connected Interstate 280 to Highway 1 in Pacifica in the 1970s.

"One of the finest tributes paid to Grace McCarthy was written in 1975 by Patrick Lynn," Azevedo wrote in late November of 2000. "Lynn was then the Executive Editor of the Columbus, Mississippi, Commercial Dispatch. (He's since been a TV Anchor in Anchorage, Alaska, and the owner of a radio station and newspaper in Valdez, Alaska. He was also the voice heard reporting the Exxon Valdez oil spill nationwide over the ABC radio network.) His letter was in the Dec. 17, 1975 Tribune."

Azevedo printed that letter in full which is also done so here.

"Editor, I was much distressed to read in a late-arriving Tribune that Councilwoman Grace McCarthy has been challenged to remove herself from any decisions on Freeway 380 because the McCarthy home was in the path of one of the possible alternative routes of the freeway.

"The unfortunate insinuation is an unwarranted slur on the character of a remarkable and truly outstanding public servant.

"In more than 15 years as a newspaper reporter and editor, I've had to scrutinize warily many municipal public servants in action in California, Florida, Washington and Mississippi, including five years in Pacifica during which I rarely missed a meeting of the Pacifica City Council. During those Pacifica years, it was frequently reported in the Tribune and other papers, that one of the possible, though unlikely, freeway 380 alternative routes could possibly include the McCarthy homes. It was no secret, and Mrs. McCarthy openly discussed it with two city attorneys, the late Judge Conrad Reisch and John Sherman, and with attorneys representing the California Division of Highways.

"Reflecting back on those years, Grace McCarthy emerges in my mind as the most intelligent, well informed, effective and scrupulously honest municipal official I have ever encountered. This is to say nothing of the untold private hours of labor she has given on behalf of the city through the City Council, the PB&R Commission, ABAG, the North County Council of Cities, the California League of Cities, the Coastal Commission, and a number of non-governmental agencies (Girl Scouts, Federated Women, League of Women Voters, etc.)

"The Freeway 380 challenge was an ill-advised and unworthy slap at an admirable person who has served diligently the public far beyond what the public has a right to expect."—Patrick Lynn, Dec. 17, 1975.

Azevedo went on to say that Grace had been one of his own favorite people since he first got to know her, in the mid-1960s, and that he was not alone in his admiration for Grace.

"Jack Billmire was responsible for the Grace McCarthy Fuchsia, a beautiful tribute," Azevedo wrote. "The City of Pacifica has dedicated the Vista Point on Sharp Park Road to her. For more than 60 years she has lived in and served this community. Whether it was Girl Scouts, or protecting and appreciating the environment, or keeping alive our sense of history, it was Grace McCarthy who led the way and fought the good fight.

"Someone once said that when an old person dies, it's like a museum has burned. With Grace's death, it is like a hundred museums are gone. She was a personal friend of leaders of the government of Catalonia, the Spanish state where Gaspar de Portolá was born. Jordi Pujol, who visited Pacifica and Mrs. McCarthy when the statue of Portolá was given to the State of California by Catalonia, has been the key to the stability of the Spanish government.

"Pacifica would have been a much poorer place without her."



Grace, age 56, 1964.



Grace, age 70, 1979.

In January of 2019, longtime Pacifican Shirlee Gibbs shared remembrances of Grace.

"My late husband Chris and I bought our first house on Brighton Road in Sharp Park in 1956," Shirlee said. "In 1957, before the City incorporated, a knock came to the door and it was Grace. She was the welcome wagon hostess. She had a basket of little goodies with some gift certificates in it – to Bubak's Meat Market on Francisco and the old pharmacy that was up on the little strip mall along the highway. We had a very nice visit."

"Several months later, she rang the doorbell again and said, 'You have a daughter in first grade and I think you should be a Room Mother, and maybe you should start a Brownie/Scout Group,'" Shirlee recalled. "She told me she was a Girl Scout Leader and she pointed out that I had two girls. So I ended up being a Girl Scout Leader from Brownies through Girl Scouts to Senior Scouts for 12 years!

"Then when I ran for City Council in 1982, she urged me to run. She was my mentor and the first one to sign my nominating papers. But she was also already a mentor to me.

"We lost a great Pacifican when Grace passed. She was a wonderful woman. She wasn't demanding but she was insistent. She was assertive. If she had her mind made up to do something, she was going to pursue it. She was so involved in our community affairs and she really cared about people. There has never been another person like her."

Following Grace's death, Congressman Tom Lantos, D-California, also paid tribute to this longtime Pacifican in the House of Representatives Congressional Record on December 6, 2000.

"Mr. Speaker, the phrases 'ecologically sound' and 'environmental protection' were not as popular thirty years ago as they are today," Lantos said, "but Grace did a great deal to give them meaning in Pacifica. Never bending simply because some opinionated leaders may have disagreed with her, Grace was a maverick whose steadfast views and boundless energy were key to protecting Pacifica's natural splendor beginning in the 1970s.

"Nothing demonstrates this more than Grace McCarthy's appointment to the first Coastal Conservation Commission for Pacifica and to the California State Coastal Commission. During her tenure, Grace fought unpopular battles and was often at odds with fellow commission members, but her views always earned respect because of her unquestioning devotion to protecting and preserving the coast in and around Pacifica. The *Pacifica Tribune* commented, 'As a member of the Central Coastal Conservation Commission, she catches it from both sides. Free enterprise businessmen and property owners figure she's aligned with those who would 'close' the coast. The environmentalists accuse her of being aligned with the free enterprise business and property owners . . . Fortunately, Mrs. McCarthy is a practical, tough, not easily intimidated or discouraged public servant who's doing a hard job well.'

". . . Decades before environmental issues were in vogue, Grace McCarthy devotedly and doggedly fought for wilderness parks, open space, riding and hiking trails, and the dedication of parks in new subdivisions," Congressman Lantos continued. "Although she was a fierce, determined and indomitable conservationist, in her public activities and in her private life, she was the epitome of her name—Grace. "Mr. Speaker, all of us who honor Grace McCarthy will look to Pacifica's treetops and coastline and know that much of what we cherish there is ours to enjoy because of Grace's energy, foresight, fierce determination and firm conviction. We will miss her in the fights that lie ahead, but her spirit will continue to inspire and guide our actions."



After Carl retired from PG&E in December of 1964, Grace and he did some traveling between projects. They visited their respective family roots in Scotland and Ireland, retraced the path of Portolá from Baja California into Pacifica, did a sister-city visit to Portolá's birthplace (Catalonia, Spain), and also visited New Zealand and Australia. She additionally volunteered with her husband on his retirement project – to promote and establish the Portolá Discovery Site on Sweeney Ridge (which they got done).

Following Carl's death in 1981, Grace continued to live at Shamrock Shack. She also did some traveling – China, Scandinavia, Fire Island in New York (where her daughter's extended family had a beach cottage), and more. But mainly she remained very active in community. Along with her long list of committees, commissions and councils already mentioned, she also joined with Pacificans Bill Growney, Marv Morganti, Robert Siebert, Sheila Hyman, Karl Baldwin and Henry Budinot, to be one of the first team members of the 1982-formed Pacificans Care (locals helping locals). She additionally served as a member of the San Mateo County Planning Commission (1984-1993) and from 1985 through 1999, she wrote her weekly 'reflections' column 'Space for Grace' in the *Pacifica Tribune*.

In her lifetime, Grace was the recipient of many awards and recognitions, a few of which are listed here: Peninsula Community Foundation Koshland Prize (1984); Pacifica's Grace McCarthy Day and Testimonial Dinner (April 28, 1990); a new hybrid fuchsia named "Grace McCarthy" developed in 1998, and the establishment of the Grace McCarthy Vista Point off Sharp Park Road in the late 1990s. Often referred to as "the heart of Pacifica," Grace was true to herself and always willing to roll up her sleeves and try to make a difference.

"What do I think politicians today need most?" she wrote in answer to a number of "journal" questions in April of 1979. "Honesty and common sense, a good staff and the ability to keep in touch with a good cross section of their constituents – that keeps them informed.

"What political party do I believe in? I am a registered Democrat and Carl is a registered Republican. We both vote for the best candidate rather than the party line.

"What would I like to see happen? Quality products, made to last; a less wasteful economy; improved growth and distribution of food to meet the world's hunger; renewed (and justified) faith in our governmental process; and equal job/equal pay, it's only fair."

She also wanted to see more people involved in civic affairs. "It starts by being an informed voter. Participation, no matter how small, makes a community better."

She was grateful for her family's encouragement, and Carl's consistent knack for finding – even in what she considered "a simple task" – something to compliment her on or thank her for.

She offered advice to her grandchildren.

"Enjoy life to the fullest, not spoiling the joys of the future by doing anything you will be ashamed of. Good experiences are great, and good memories are wonderful – collect them as you go! I will also quote from a song I used often to open the day at Girl Scout Camp: 'God has created a new day, silver and green and gold. Live that the sunset may find you, worthy His gifts to hold.'"



Grace Elizabeth Lockhart McCarthy (1908-2000)



Jean Bartlett is a longtime Bay Area features writer: Pacifica Tribune, Oakland Tribune, San Jose Mercury, San Mateo Times, Portraits & Roots, Marin Independent Journal, Twin City Times, Ross Valley Reporter, Peninsula Progress, Coastal Connections, Contra Costa County Times, Bay Area Business Woman and Catholic San Francisco.