

The OAC Serial, "The 35 Ladies Project" continues . . .

Carrie Klyce

(Mrs. Harvey Klyce)

1873 – 1967

DEDICATED HISTORIAN

Carrie Klyce was one of the youngest OAC Founders in 1902. And for the next 65 years, she was an active, contributing member. While never serving as President, our archives evidence her continued involvement in both OAC community projects and social events. In 1940 at age 67, feeling that the people, deeds and events of the previous Mill Valley decades "*deserve memory and record*," Carrie sat down at her typewriter and wrote 69 pages, a history of The Outdoor Art Club written by a woman who had lived every moment of it. This history remains another treasure in our archives.

Caroline Marie Carr Gray was born July 11, 1873 in Yuba City, California. Orphaned at age 6, she was left an estate large enough for her care. Raised by a great-aunt and uncle, she went on to school at Oakland's Mills College. She then went on to Chico Normal School whose graduates pledged to teach school at least one year. Though already engaged to be married, she taught in Marysville at a one-room country school and had a class of 28 pupils, grades 1 through 9.

In 1895, the Sausalito News reported "*On Wednesday, June 5th, Mr. Harvey A. Klyce of this place will lead to the altar one of Yuba City's fairest daughters. Mr. Klyce is one of Mill Valley's contractors and builders, and is favorably known. He left the valley last Tuesday for Yuba City, and the marriage was to take place shortly after his arrival. Miss Carrie Gray, the bride-elect, is a Native Daughter, born in Yuba City. She belongs to one of the leading families of that section, and is a graduate of the State Normal School at Chico. Mr. Klyce and his bride will spend a few days with friends in Sacramento, and after taking in some of the popular resorts, will come to live in Dr. Beauman's cottage, on Lovell Avenue. The News extends its congratulations to the happy pair.*"

In 1900 husband Harvey designed and built a family home at #501 Throckmorton Avenue. In 1902, Carrie Klyce was 29 years old, a mother of two, (she later had 2 more children). It is helpful here to mention that in addition to environmental and civic concerns, another issue energizing our Founders was the "*deplorable*" state of the grounds around the town's only school in 1902. Located at the corner of Cornelia and Summit Avenues, known then as the Mill Valley Grammar School and later as Summit School, the Club helped provide a playground, complete with retaining walls, trees, fencing, a level play ground and play equipment. In upgrading the school grounds, members "*decided to gravel, sand and oil the playground so as to make it free from mud in winter and dust in summer.*" They even procured eyeglasses for the children who needed them and also persuaded town fathers to attend to truancy.

In those early years of the OAC, Carrie was chair of the Forestry & Botany Department that quickly went to work. This committee not only made plans for an Arbor Day event, but also took on "the matter of protection of trees" and was given \$25 "for the use of planting." For the Arbor Day event members of



for use by that department.” The San Francisco Call of December 2, 1902, published an article headlined **“Mill Valley’s Arbor Day.** . . Arbor Day was befittingly observed in this city. Though the weather was inclement, it did not deter Mill Valley’s citizens from being present at the tree-planting exercises in which “300 school children participated. The affair was under the auspices of The Outdoor Art Club. The programme included literary and musical selections at the old mill, for which the town was named, and tree planting on the public schoolhouse grounds. Talent from San Francisco contributed services at the mill, while the tree planting was done by the school children. The ladies having the affair in charge were Mesdames H.A. Klyce and W.W. Davis.”

In 1908, Carrie took on the responsibility of Club Historian, an interest she pursued for the rest of her life. For the OAC’s anniversary in 1922, she wrote, *“For more than 20 years, the Club building has fostered the activities of the women’s club of Mill Valley, an organization that has made itself essential to the town in many ways. It has been a center from which nearly every other organization in town has dispensed hospitality throughout the years. Other clubs, churches, schools, fraternities and young people’s organizations have made use of it for social occasions of various natures, dances, wedding parties and festivals. The friendly walls have listened to the marriage vows and the merry laughter of childhood games. Here has been provided a community hearth which has welcomed all residents and their friends.”*



Through the years, Carrie remained very active in The Outdoor Art Club. Consequently, her many years of service and her sweet nature greatly endeared her to all members. In July of 1963, an article in the Mill Valley Record announced that *“More than 200 friends are expected to attend a tea honoring Mrs. Harvey Klyce on her 90th birthday...Mrs. Klyce is the last living Founder of the club which was started in 1902.”* This photo was taken at her birthday tea, *“where all club members are invited to come and wish the Founder continued health and happiness.”* That festive Tea was later written about in the Marin Independent Journal: *“Highlight of the afternoon was Mrs. Klyce’s response after she was greeted by the traditional ‘happy birthday.’ In a clear, ringing voice she read—without glasses—her thoughts on ‘life and friendship.’ She called the party the third most important event of her life, the first two being her birth and her marriage.”*

Caroline Marie Carr Gray Klyce died in September of 1967, at age 94. She is buried alongside husband Harvey in San Rafael’s Tamalpais Cemetery.

In the next installment of the OAC Serial, **“The 35 Ladies Project”**, you will read about the most enigmatic yet compelling of the OAC Founders.