

*The* LOS ANGELES  
*Soroptimist*



1922-1926

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“It is hoped that this history ... of the Los Angeles Soroptimist Club may be read by new members, and from it they may gain the inspiration to carry on the ideals of Soroptimist.”

*Oda Faulconer and Gertrude C. Maynard, December 1934*

# The First Year

July 25, 1922 to July 17, 1923

In 1921, (William) Stuart Morrow was challenged to form a club for professional women. He responded by founding the Soroptimist Clubs. The first club was chartered in Oakland on September 26, 1921 with 80 members, and the second in San Francisco on February 27, 1922 with 107 charter members.

The membership fees were \$15 to join, and \$6 a year thereafter. Morrow held 90% of the voting power, property rights, and interest in the Soroptimist clubs.



## THE LAST WORD.

BY ALMA WHITAKER

There is a fellow in town busily organizing a Soroptimist Club, a sort of female Rotary Club. Very exclusive. You know the sort of thing—just one lone representative of each profession or business—one manicurist, one milliner, one woman lawyer, one woman doctor, one cook, one writer, and so forth. It costs \$15 to join, and about \$6 a year afterward, with the privilege of meeting at a downtown hotel and eating together twice a month, each paying her own check.

Owing to the exigencies of organization, most any representative who offers herself will be gladly accepted at first. She is not selected by her kind as the *creme de la creme* of them. And if two or three writers happen to crave membership, for instance, one can always get around it by calling one a club editor, another a dramatic critic, another an editorial writer, and so on. Quite simple. No one need be turned away.

The organizer, who is, of course, actuated by only the most altruistic motives, is a little concerned because he finds some of the women he has invited to this exclusive honor, a bit snobby. Professions balk at clubbiness with trades and all that sort of thing.

But I don't think he diagnoses the complaint quite correctly.

A woman lawyer, for instance, has no particular prejudice against manicurists in general, but she wants to pick her manicurist. A woman doctor has no special prejudice against newspaper women, but she would wish to pick her newspaper woman.

And there is No. 4 of the Alms and Objects. "To promote the spirit of service and true friendship amongst its members."

Which might so easily mean that the milliner should confer free hats, the lawyer free advice, the doctor free attendance, and the manicurist free nail shines upon sister Soroptimists. Or even if it meant that one should patronize the particular representative of her clan in any little business she has to dispense, it might be an awful strain on that "true friendship." Men seem to like doing business with "true friends," but women are not so sure.

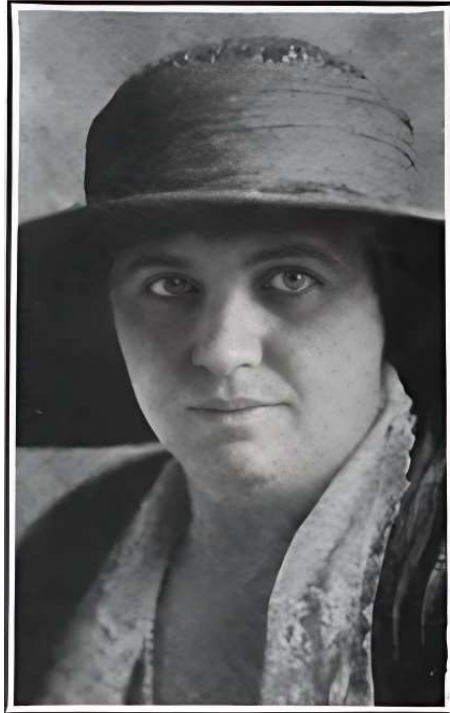
But in any case, I don't believe Los Angeles is a good place to organize yet another female club. We haven't time to go to all those we belong to at present. And paying \$5 and \$6 a month for the privilege of dining with one's milliner or even one's pet female scribbler on a strictly Dutch-treat basis, lacks glamour.

This club may, of course, prove to be a most crying need and bloom into power and influence, after our various duplicated opportunities of joining the exclusive circle have gone by. Then we shall be sorry.

• • •

*Los Angeles Times April 7, 1922*

Stuart Morrow began organizing the Soroptimist Club of Los Angeles in April 1922 with several business and professional women, namely Sallie Richardson, Oda Faulconer, Franc Dillon, Mab Copeland Lineman, and Aletha Gilbert.



Oda Faulconer was the first president of the Los Angeles Soroptimist Club. The second woman jurist in Los Angeles County, she was appointed as a judge to the Municipal Court and reelected twice.

Oda was also Vice-President of the San Fernando Valley Bar Association, State Chairman of the American Citizenship of the California Federation of Women's clubs, President of San Fernando Women's Cub, member of the Friday Morning Club, and was Director of the Bank of Italy in San Fernando and the West Adams State Bank in Los Angeles. She was also a City Mother under the supervision of the Official City Mother's Bureau of the City of Los Angeles. Later she owned and managed a 35-acre citrus ranch and turkey farm in the San Fernando Valley. Her nephew described her as "one great lady" who had numerous friends. He said in an interview that when he was a child it seemed like every Sunday Oda had "a chicken dinner with mashed potatoes and all the people in the world at the table."

The Soroptimist Club of Los Angeles was chartered on July 19, 1922 at the LA Athletic Club. Ours was the third Soroptimist Club, and there were 113 Charter Members. The guests of honor at the charter ceremonies and banquet included William D. Stephens (Governor of California), George E. Cryer (Mayor of Los Angeles), Violet Richardson (President of the Oakland Soroptimist Club) and Dr. Fanny Williams (President of the San Francisco Soroptimist Club). Stuart Morrow was Toastmaster.

SOROPTIMIST CLUB INSTALLATION  
BANQUET AND PRESENTATION  
OF CHARTER

The Installation Banquet and Presentation  
of Charter will take place on

WEDNESDAY, JULY 19, 1922

at the Los Angeles Athletic Club, at 7:30  
p. m.

The speakers and guests of honor will include the Governor of California and Mrs. Stephens, the Mayor of Los Angeles and Mrs. Cryer, the President of the Los Angeles Rotary Club and Mrs. Harper and the Presidents of the Soroptimist Clubs of Oakland and San Francisco.

The Banquet being semi-informal either dinner or sport clothes will be in order. Members may invite one guest (man or woman.) The price of each ticket will be \$2.50.

Reservations must be in the hands of the Banquet Committee not later than July 17, and must be accompanied by check payable to the Soroptimist Club and addressed to

Mrs. Oda Faulconer,  
Chairman, Banquet Committee,  
480 I. W. Hellman Bldg.,  
Los Angeles.

The installed Officers were President Oda Faulconer, Vice President Dr. Veturia Armstrong, Treasurer Marie Haas, and Directors Dr. Della Hubbard, Martha Weaver, Mary Jean Henley, Cora Fithian, and Dr. Lillian Grandmason.

# Soroptimist Club

## Los Angeles, California

### Charter

Know all men by these presents:

**Whereas**, the persons whose names appear at the foot hereof, each of them being a white woman, over the age of eighteen years, engaged as proprietor, partner, corporate officer or manager of a legitimate business in the County of Los Angeles, State of California, having enrolled themselves as Charter Members of the Soroptimist Club (Los Angeles) and having agreed to conform to the By Laws of said Club as adopted and having on the Eighteenth day of July, 1929, organized by electing the following officers to wit:

**President.** *Ida Faulkner*

**Vice President.** *Esther C. Armstrong, M.D.*

**Treasurer.** *Maria Haus*

**Directors.**

*Altha Gilbert*

*William M. Grandmason*

*Clara B. Fishbein*

*Mary Jean Henley*

*Della H. Hubbard*

*Martha C. Weaver*

**Now, Therefore**, in consideration of the premises, the Soroptimist Club, a corporation organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the State of California, **Doth hereby Grant** to the aforesaid officers and to their duly elected successors, sole and exclusive right to conduct a Soroptimist Club in the City of Los Angeles, County of Los Angeles, State of California, together with all rights and privileges appertaining thereunto, subject to the condition that the active membership of said Club shall at no time fall below twenty five, and to the further condition that should a State or National Association of Soroptimist Clubs be hereafter organized, the said Soroptimist Club (Los Angeles) shall be represented therein, and shall comply with such by-laws as may be regularly adopted by said State or National Association.

**In Witness Whereof** this Charter has been issued and executed by the Soroptimist Club Incorporated and the seal of said Corporation affixed therunto this 19<sup>th</sup> day of July, 1929.

Soroptimist Club, Inc.



Per *Stuart Morrow*

Managing Director.

**Charter Members of the Soroptimist Club (Los Angeles)**

|                                  |                              |                            |                             |                                |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Sallie D. Richardson</i>      | <i>Charlotte Brown, M.D.</i> | <i>Alberta P. Wilson</i>   | <i>Altha Gilbert</i>        | <i>Ida V. Wells</i>            |
| <i>Mac Fontaine</i>              | <i>Olga McHale, M.D.</i>     | <i>Esther A. Buckel</i>    | <i>Kathryn P. Pichon</i>    | <i>Anne L. Strong</i>          |
| <i>Eva L. Swager</i>             | <i>Kath Tapp</i>             | <i>Alice Lee</i>           | <i>Gertrude J. Hadden</i>   | <i>Ethel M. Wern</i>           |
| <i>Jeannette Brown</i>           | <i>Frances G. Lora, M.D.</i> | <i>Barbara Campbell</i>    | <i>Annie L. Colburn</i>     | <i>Louise H. Kramer</i>        |
| <i>Maribel V. Borponier</i>      | <i>Alice W. Hamilton</i>     | <i>Margaret Neely</i>      | <i>Bernice Bowdler</i>      | <i>Elizabeth L. Kemney</i>     |
| <i>Margaret Burke</i>            | <i>Francis A. Dillon</i>     | <i>Addie R. Marks</i>      | <i>Esther A. Buckliff</i>   | <i>William C. Brown</i>        |
| <i>Frances Campbell</i>          | <i>Alice Moore Edwards</i>   | <i>P. Cadoux Allen</i>     | <i>Isabelle L. Miller</i>   | <i>Helen K. Porter, D.D.S.</i> |
| <i>Frances C. Thayer</i>         | <i>Sylvia Harding</i>        | <i>Maria Haus</i>          | <i>Lydia M. Cooper</i>      | <i>Ada F. Watson</i>           |
| <i>Ellis J. Bolton</i>           | <i>Madge A. Bonnell</i>      | <i>Dolphine Hutchiffe</i>  | <i>Johnny Lind Kennedy</i>  | <i>Katherine Foster</i>        |
| <i>Joanne C. Spencer, D.D.</i>   | <i>Ada E. Goldstein</i>      | <i>Mary L. Kelly</i>       | <i>Kate M. Myers</i>        | <i>Mary D. Lacey</i>           |
| <i>Harriet L. Connor, D.D.</i>   | <i>Edith L. Hanklark</i>     | <i>Maud C. Smithies</i>    | <i>J. Eva Faulkner</i>      | <i>Frances M. Wood</i>         |
| <i>Harriet Rehnauer</i>          | <i>Clara Reuss</i>           | <i>Della H. Hubbard</i>    | <i>Louise P. Crow, D.D.</i> | <i>Gertrude C. Maynard</i>     |
| <i>Sara R. Brown, M.D.</i>       | <i>Anna V. Green</i>         | <i>Florence M. Stevens</i> | <i>Evangelina Mercader</i>  | <i>Elizabeth B. Thompson</i>   |
| <i>Alice J. Pickenger</i>        | <i>Clara C. Griffith</i>     | <i>Georgie L. Dickrell</i> | <i>Mae Carroll</i>          | <i>Marion C. Shaffer</i>       |
| <i>Emma L. Prugmann</i>          | <i>Emmelle Giffen</i>        | <i>Marian Wardle</i>       | <i>Agnes Woodward</i>       | <i>Genevieve Reus</i>          |
| <i>Clara B. Fishbein</i>         | <i>Frances Guckling</i>      | <i>Pearl Reall</i>         | <i>Lorraine Griffin</i>     | <i>Ida C. Schmadel</i>         |
| <i>Margaret Kelly</i>            | <i>Alvin A. Watson</i>       | <i>Alexandra Munroe</i>    | <i>Mabel Moberg Wright</i>  | <i>Inez J. Smith, D.D.</i>     |
| <i>Mary C. Ashby</i>             | <i>Agnes S. Swobbe, Maud</i> | <i>Blanch A. Roberts</i>   | <i>Martha C. Weaver</i>     | <i>Heila Dennis Taylor</i>     |
| <i>Ida Faulkner</i>              | <i>Della Andros</i>          | <i>Gertrude Comstock</i>   | <i>Frances C. Parker</i>    | <i>Woodward M. Hanson</i>      |
| <i>William M. Grandmason</i>     | <i>Mary C. Kelley</i>        | <i>Blanch Spellerberg</i>  | <i>Mary Monahan</i>         | <i>Frances E. Benson</i>       |
| <i>Constance Ralph</i>           | <i>Florence Banks</i>        | <i>Lera Borres</i>         | <i>Julia C. Powers</i>      | <i>Katherine M. Fradicks</i>   |
| <i>Gertrude C. Griffith</i>      | <i>Anna M. Bergeron</i>      | <i>Mary J. Henley</i>      | <i>Agnes M. J. Nash</i>     | <i>Madge B. Burnham</i>        |
| <i>Esther C. Armstrong, M.D.</i> | <i>Lydia Neels Baker</i>     | <i>M. J. Rolso</i>         | <i>Kathryn W. Fletcher</i>  |                                |

SOROPTIMIST CLUB  
Los Angeles, California.

CHARTER

Honour all men by these presents:

WHEREAS, the persons whose names appear at the foot hereof, (each of them being a white woman, over the age of eighteen years, engaged as proprietor, partner, corporate officer or manager of a legitimate business in the County of Los Angeles, State of California) having enrolled themselves as Charter Members of the SOROPTIMIST CLUB (Los Angeles) and having agreed to conform to the By-Laws of said Club as adopted and having on the Eighteenth day of July, 1922, organized by electing the following officers, to-wit:

PRESIDENT: Oda Faulconer

VICE-PRESIDENT: Veturia C. Armstrong, M.D.

TREASURER: Marie Haas

DIRECTORS:

Aletha Gilbert  
Lillian M. Grandmason  
Ora B. Fithian  
Mary Jean Henley  
Della H. Hubbard  
Martha C. Weaver

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the premises, the SOROPTIMIST CLUB, a corporation organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the State of California, DOETH HEREBY GRANT to the aforesaid officers and to the duly elected successors, sole and exclusive right to conduct a SOROPTIMIST CLUB in the City of Los Angeles, County of Los Angeles, State of California, together with all rights and privileges appertaining thereunto, subject to the condition that the active membership of said Club, shall at no time fall below twenty-five, and to the further condition that should a State or National Association of Soroptimist Clubs be thereafter organized, the said SOROPTIMIST CLUB (Los Angeles) shall be represented therein, and shall comply with such by-laws as may be regularly adopted by said State or National Association:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF this Charter has been issued and executed by the SOROPTIMIST CLUB INCORPORATED and the seal of the said Corporation affixed thereunto this 19th day of July, 1922.

SOROPTIMIST CLUB, INC.

(signed) Per Stuart Morrow  
Managing Director



Aletha Gilbert was born in El Monte, California in 1870. Her mother, Lucy Grays, was the first police woman in Los Angeles and Aletha became the second in 1902. After working in local juvenile supervision for 20 years, she founded the City Mother's Bureau in 1914 where she worked until her retirement in 1929.

The City Mother's Bureau was the first of its kind in the country and helped families with marital discord, childhood delinquency, protected dependents, and also worked to prevent crime.

Over the years several other members of the Soroptimist Club of Los Angeles joined the City Mother's Bureau and our club made many donations to help support the Bureau including providing gifts for the clients at Christmas.

There were four membership rules: there could only be one Soroptimist club in each city, a member must be an owner of a business or an executive in a well-established business, there could only be one member of each classification of business within a club, and mandatory attendance of almost 100% was required.

Early member business classifications included such diverse professions as physicians, attorneys, store owners/managers, bankers, performers and musicians, insurance agents, journalists, teachers, law enforcement, seamstresses, and politicians, and our club could also count Mae Carvell, the first female industrial engineer in the country. As an article published in the Los Angeles Times in 1923 explained, “there are lawyers and doctors and merchants, but no beggars or thieves.”

Regular weekly meetings were first held at the Paulais Café and several other local restaurants. This first club year was focused on increasing membership and establishing meeting formats and traditions.



Paulais Café, at the corner of Hollywood Boulevard and Las Palmas, c. 1925

These early meetings started with a roll call, which was designed to allow members to get to know each other and learn everyone's business and professional status. Also on the agenda was a drawing for an attendance prize, which were donated by members gave a short statement about their business at the time of the drawing.

At the first meeting, member Aletha Gilbert stated "In her opinion it was the duty of each club member to help the other members by buying from them when they have things to sell and sending their friends to said member" and that the club should "take up some charity so that it will stand for real service as the Rotary Club does."

Our club's first fundraiser was a theater party at Miller's California Theater to see "Timothy's Quest." 1926 tickets were sold resulting in the club earning \$379.60.



*Miller's California Theater c. 1921 located at 819 S Main Street, Los Angeles*

Our first club pin was designed by Dr. Lillian M. Grandmason. It used a design similar to the wheel used by Rotary, with the Mercury wings extended upward to indicate speed and accuracy in business.



The colors were black, violet, and gold and were suggested by our member Julia C. Powers. Julia was a famous numerologist, and as she explained “through the science of numbers, the word Soroptimist vibrates to the number eleven, which is its number of expression. We are using the colors Black, Violet and Gold which vibrate to our expression number. Black represents the highest type of everything in thought and action. The violet gives us force and energy and within its center the golden flame brings us together in true spirit of service. The watchword is PEACE and SERVICE.”



The Soroptimist clubs later adopted an official pin designed by Anita Houts Thompson (a Founder member) to, as she explained, “represent womanhood with her arms uplifted in a gesture of freedom and acceptance of the responsibilities of the best and highest good. The leaves and the actors represent the strength of our organization and the leaves of the laurel typify victory and achievement.”

By the end of our first club year, new clubs had been formed in Washington D.C., Sacramento, and New York City.



Lillian M. Grandmason was an Optometrist and was very active in the local club scene. Along with being a charter member of the Soroptimist Club of Los Angeles, she was also involved in the Salvation Army, the American College Club, the Community Chest, the Fire and Police Salary Adjustment Committee, the Old Mission Restoration Fund, and was on the Advisory Board for the City Mother's Bureau.

She contributed the glorious dress shown here for the Soroptimist Club's big fashion show fundraiser in 1927. It was made out of 2000 eyeglass lenses and was valued at \$10,000. It was explained that "though the dress looks fragile, Miss Dorothy Huddleson did an Egyptian dance in it and later took first prize for most beautiful costume at the Trooper's Ball."

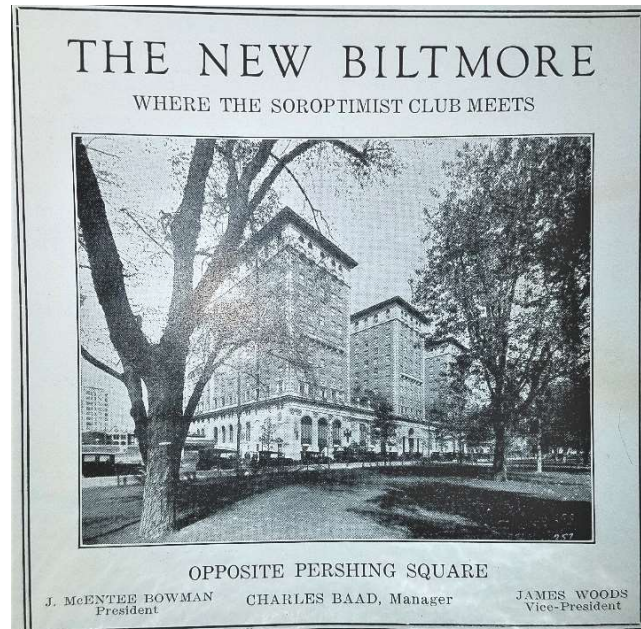


## The Second Year

**July 24, 1923 to September 20, 1924**



The Soroptimist Club of Los Angeles was up and running! The 1923-1924 club year began with revising the Club's Constitution and By-Laws. Meetings were held at the Elite Restaurant, and then moved to the Biltmore Hotel once it was built - the first club in the city to utilize the Biltmore for meetings.



Mary Jean Henley served as President. At the time she was a Realtor but had been a teacher in her home state of Missouri. Along with running her real estate business with her husband, Mary Jean was a bible teacher and Los Angeles City Mother.



Our second year was focused on an intense membership drive. One tool used to attract new members was holding interesting program meetings, which were often attended by numerous guests as well as club members.



*Los Angeles Evening Post-Record April 1, 1924*

These program meetings boasted guest speakers including authors, musicians, "business life" lectures, prosecutors, and police officers. Many of the speakers were Club members. One meeting had the telephone company conducting a demonstration explaining "just what happens when we call a number and what we should do and what we should not do to get the most pleasure and satisfaction from our phones."

The list of guest speakers included Aimee Semple McPherson who spoke on the influence of women during biblical times; the Baroness Otilly du Ropp of Russia; and Signora Alice de Foncesca Pallottelli who spoke of "Italy, the Facisti, and the Women's Place in the New Order" and also extended greetings to the club from Benito Mussolini.

Agnes Woodward won a \$25 prize for writing a club song, which was sung at the club's fall Fashion Pageant which boasted 94 members and 106 guests in attendance. Fashion shows would become a mainstay fundraiser in the following years.



*Daily News September 17, 1924*



Agnes Woodward was a charter member of the Soroptimist Club of Los Angeles. Her father was a military surgeon and veteran of the American Civil War. Agnes trained as a singer at the Detroit Conservatory of Music.

She sang with the Whalom Opera Company until her voice was damaged. Undeterred, she learned how to mimic bird-song by whistling and became so proficient she founded the Agnes Woodward School of Whistling (later renamed the California School of Artistic Whistling). The school was opened in Glendale, California and later had branches in Chicago, Portland, Seattle, and Yakima.

Agnes had many students from all over the world, including Sarah Bernhardt, John Wayne, Bing Crosby, and Pat Boone, and she managed several of her student's careers including Margaret Gray McKee. She wrote a textbook called *Whistling as an Art* that was eventually published in three editions.

"Girls who whistle and hens that crow will make their way wherever they go."  
- Agnes Woodward

It was a huge accomplishment when our club was admitted into the Federation of Women's Clubs, which would turn out to be a great asset in networking in the following years. The General Federation of Women's Clubs was formed in the United States in 1890 and there were chapters in several states.

The Christmas Committee led club donations of almost \$200 to the Bide-A-Wee Nursery, which was part of the Bide-A-Wee home for single women, single mothers, and their children founded by Club member Minnie Barton.



Minnie Barton was a member of the Soroptimist Club of Los Angeles since at least 1930 until her death in 1946. She was the first woman probation officer in Los Angeles and was a member of the Los Angeles Police Department from 1906 until she retired in 1942. Minnie is credited with creating and defining the role of Chief Woman Probation and Parole Officer. When she first joined LAPD, the Penal Code did not provide for a police probation officer so she worked for 10 years without a salary. Minnie befriended homeless girls while working with young women on parole or probation, often taking them into her home and teaching them basic skills and handicrafts.

In 1917 she founded the Minnie Barton Training Home where young female offenders were often committed rather than to jail. The Minnie Barton Training Home was the only aid agency in Los Angeles that took children, and they often had to turn mothers away due to overcrowding. In 1923 Minnie opened the Bide-A-Wee Home for Deserted Mothers to address this need. Minnie also established the United Way's Big Sister League (now known as Children's Institute International) and the Barton Recreation Home for Old Persons.

An article in the Los Angeles Times on March 10, 1940 quoted Minnie Barton as saying "The women of the United States have waked up to the fact that it is up to them to right things. Just look at all the things that are being done for men and boys in this city, and all the money that is being spent by the city and by social agencies. Compare that with the little that is being done for girls and women ... When you think of their problems, you realize that it is up to us women to take care of them."



Minnie Barton Memorial at the Soroptimist Grove in Griffith Park

The membership drive paid off and our Club membership grew from 79 members with \$250 in the treasury to 151 members and \$1658.48 in the treasury, which allowed a \$200 Christmas donation to the Municipal Day Nursery Fund. The Municipal Day Nursery was established by the City Mothers to care for children while their mothers were at work.

On March 24, 1924 the second Soroptimist Club in the southland was formed! The Soroptimist Club of Long Beach became the seventh Soroptimist club in the world.

#### SOROPTIMIST

SOROPTIMIST - SOROPTIMIST  
A club of highest aim  
Soroptimist - Soroptimist  
A club of wit and brain.  
Our voices full and strong we raise  
Its merits ever praise  
Soroptimist - Soroptimist  
Aloft our banner waves.

Soroptimist - Soroptimist  
Oh happy sisters we  
Soroptimist - Soroptimist  
Our motto SERVICE be.  
We spread afar o'er land and sea  
We ever sing this lay,  
Soroptimist - Soroptimist  
Live on for aye and aye.

(TUNE: Auld Lang Syne or America the Beautiful)

# The Third Year

October 7, 1924 to June 17, 1925

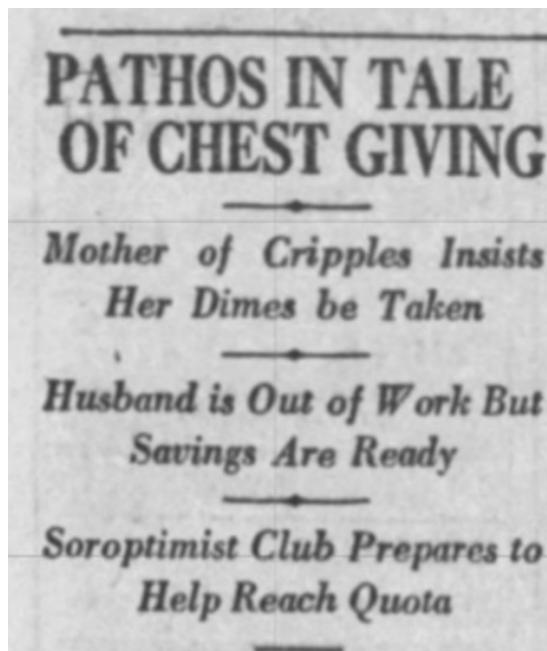
Our third year began in October with an installation banquet in the Music Room of the Biltmore Hotel. According to Oda Faulconer, "Mary Jean Henly, retiring president, acted as toastmistress, and she presided so brilliantly that the incoming president – Gertrude C. Maynard – was on the verge of retiring then and there, and would probably have followed her impulse had it not been for the encouragement of the speaker of the evening, Mrs. Eleanor Joy Toll, President of the Los Angeles District, California Federation of Women's clubs, who sat beside her."

## Soroptimist Ideals

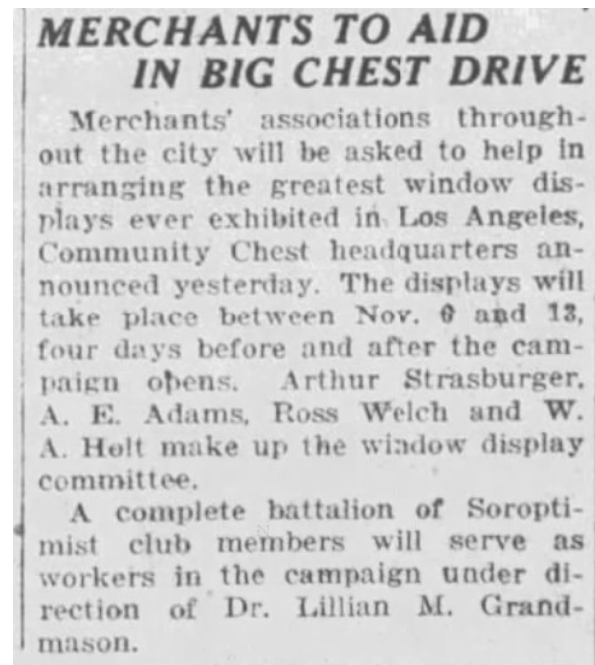
|               |                                                                                                             |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| INTERNATIONAL | To promote friendships between women of different nations in order to foster world peace and understanding. |
| PATRIOTIC     | To foster loyalty to our own flag, coupled with respect for the flags of all nations.                       |
| CIVIC         | To encourage meritorious civic movements, and to urge co-operation for the betterment of local conditions.  |
| MORAL         | To foster high ethical standards in business and professional life, which is to practice the Golden Rule.   |
| SOCIAL        | To interest ourselves in and work for the Major Project of our club.                                        |
| PERSONAL      | To broaden our characters by fellowship and striving thereby to improve conditions for Womankind.           |

The club decided unanimously that it should "further it's purpose of service by giving a scholarship to some worthy girl or girls for business education and that a fund of \$250.00 be appropriated and set aside from the treasury for that purpose, as a beginning..." This year, the club paid the tuition and books for one girl to go to a college, and paid for a three-month course of education for another young woman applying for a position with the Community Chest.

The Community Chest was incorporated in 1924 in Los Angeles to serve as a central clearinghouse of more than 100 groups and non-profits for the collection and dispersal of charity, relief, and welfare work. Our club would donate \$200 to the Community Chest this year as well.



*The Los Angeles Times December 2, 1924*



*Daily News October 2, 1924*

Gertrude Maynard began her career as a clerk at age 16 in Jones Book Store and worked her way up to Vice President and Treasurer. She created the first “Educational Department” in a bookstore in the United States. Along with her activities in the Soroptimist Club of Los Angeles, Gertrude was also a Regional Director of the Girl Scouts.

Oda Faulconer recalled later that “she was really shy and did not like to take the floor, but upon taking office she asked questions and found that the members did not realize that the club really belonged to them and not alone to the officers, and in order to find out what the members really desired sent out a series of questionnaires. The response was inspiring and as a result the year was devoted to increasing attendance, finding the programs the members wanted, and establishing the purpose of the club.”



Upon reading the club charter, Gertrude noted that the seal on the charter read “Soroptimist Club, Inc., Oakland, California.” Concerned, she obtained a copy of the Articles of Incorporation and learned that Stuart Morrow had the sole and exclusive right to organize any Soroptimist Clubs and National and International Federations. While travelling for work, Gertrude visited Soroptimist Clubs in Washington DC, Philadelphia, New York, Sacramento, San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose, and informed them about the club rights and ownership status. This was the beginning of efforts to purchase rights and title to the Soroptimist clubs and organization.

### SOROPTIMIST PLEDGE

I pledge allegiance to Soroptimism and the ideals  
for which it stands;

the sincerity of friendship,  
the joy of achievement,  
the dignity of service,  
the integrity of professions,  
the love of country.

I will put forth my greatest effort to promote,  
uphold and defend these ideals for

a larger fellowship  
in home, in society, in business  
for country and for God.

CANDIS NELSON.

Program meetings continued to be very well attended. The best attended program this club year was in March when Japanese opera singer Donna Tamaki Miura was visiting with 91 members and 250 guests in attendance. This was the first time the singer had performed outside of a theatrical performance. Mme. Miura was an international sensation after singing Cio-Cio-San in Puccini's "Madama Butterfly."

## Prima Donna at Club Meeting

A number of club members from Whittier and vicinity attended the Reciprocity day meeting of the Soroptimist club in Los Angeles on Tuesday including Mrs. George Triggs, Mrs. L. W. Houghton and Mrs. A. A. White from the Rivera Woman's Improvement club, and Mrs. James West, Mrs. H. A. Cate, Mrs. J. Larson, Mrs. E. Tubbs and Mrs. J. W. Ditzler from the Pio Pico club.

The Soroptimist club is a business women's club of Los Angeles, membership in which is allowed to only one representative from each occupation. Mrs. Gertrude Maynard, vice-president of the Jones Book store, is president of the club, and presided at the affair.

The honor guest of the occasion was Madame Tamaki Miura, Japanese prima donna, who has created a furor in Los Angeles in "Madame Butterfly," presented by the San Carlos Grand Opera company.

Madame Miura sang beautifully for the club ladies present, her numbers being, "Mother Machree," and a Japanese lullaby of her own composition.

She was followed by Fumi Iwasaki, a small Japanese girl, who is regarded as one of the prodigies among Southern California musicians, and who played a piano solo.

Mrs. Margaret Goetz then gave an operologue of "Madame Butterfly."

The musical program was preceded by a talk by the Japanese consul in Los Angeles, Mr. Waka-sugi, who told of the value of music in uniting the spirits of the two countries, Japan and America.

Between four and five hundred guests were present on the occasion, among the distinguished ones being Maj. S. H. M. Byers, of Oskaloosa, Iowa, author of "Sherman's March to the Sea," and donor of a valuable collection of paintings to Penn College, Oskaloosa, Iowa, the alma mater of many Whittier residents.



*Tamaki Miura, 1916*

*J. Willis Sayre Collection of Theatrical Photographs*

The big event of the year was the Annual Fashion Pageant and Business Show. Held in the Biltmore's Ball Room, the event drew a record attendance of 111 members and 478 guests. The hotel foyer held twenty-seven different exhibits highlighting different lines of member's businesses. For example, Gertrude Maynard showed the books which "every home should have"; Lena Pepperdine displayed different types of automobile supplies; Alberta Gude Lynch showed shoes and hosiery from Gude's Inc.; and Katherine Fredericks, the owner of the Los Angeles Furniture Company, had a large furniture display.

The fashion show models were all members from our club and the accompanying music was played by Art Hickman's Orchestra.

#### PROGRAM

The Beginning of all Fashion Shows.....by J. F. Freisleben

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Pajamas: As they should be worn—exhibited by M. Z. Ellison, 1928 West Seventh Street.  
Pajamas: As they should NOT be worn.

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Draping by Vola De Graff on Miss Fredericks.

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Sports—All sorts—exhibited by Vola De Graff, 1604 So. Hill Street and M. Z. Ellison.

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Sport shoes and shoes for tailor-wear exhibited by Gude's, 537 South Broadway, 625 W. Seventh St.

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Specialty—By Mrs. Sue Reynolds, Courtesy of Mrs. Rose Bryant.

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Ensembles presented by La Marque (Mrs. Marks, 235 So. Gramercy) Vola De Graff and Mrs. Ellison.

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Fur Coats from the Colburn Fur Store—716 South Flower Street.

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Negligees—Batik novelties by Cora Bee Sheffield, 1124 So. Fair Oaks Ave.

---

Shoes—Semi-dress and comfort shoes by Gude's; also those for evening wear.

---

Soprano Solo by our own Alberta Wilson's talented daughter, Dorothea Wilson.

---

Afternoon Gowns fashioned by Vola De Graff and La Marque.

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Here Comes the Bride! Entire bridal party's costumes by Vola De Graff.

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Listen to the birds! Two of them presented by Agnes Woodward, 428 Music Art Bldg.

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Evening Gowns—Vola De Graff, M. Z. Ellison, La Marque, C. B. Sheffield, K. Fredericks, Muriel Knight, and Lena R. Pepperdine.

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The End of all Fashion Shows.....Lydia Knott Hillyer

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The Fashion Show Committee desires to extend to our friends who were so kind as to model for us our heartfelt thanks for without them we could not have presented to the Club our Show of to-day.

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Our thanks to the Engstrum Apartments for the use of their ballroom gratis for our rehearsal. This was through the courtesy of "Mother" Gilbert.

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The Club transferred \$500 from the general fund to a new Service Fund and \$150 of this was designated as the Gertrude C. Maynard Scholarship “with the further recommendation that it be made a perpetual fund maintained by the Soroptimist Club in recognition of her contribution to the ‘service idea’ of the Club throughout her entire administration.” This scholarship fund awarded eight scholarships in its first year.

This year the Club also donated \$100 for a redwood memorial tree to contribute to the Federation of Women’s Clubs efforts to save the redwood forests. Christmas Gifts of clothing, toys, and jellies were sent to the Big Sisters, Plaza Community Center, Less-Than-Minimum Wage Girl’s Club, Salvation Army, Children’s Hospital, City Day Nursery, and the County Farm, and cash was given to some private families.

## HOWDY DO! SOROPTIMISTS!

Soroptimists! Soroptimists!  
We are a body strong  
We stand for right and principle  
We stand for nothing wrong.  
We are composed of women  
Who are from the business world  
And we go marching on!

### *Chorus*

Howdy howdy howdy do,  
Howdy howdy howdy do,  
Howdy howdy how are you,  
As we go marching on

Loyal to our flag we’ll be  
Americans through and through.  
Support the civic movement  
That will make our city true  
The Golden Rule we’ll practice  
In our homes and business, too,  
As we go marching on

### *Chorus*

—Mme. Aletha Gilbert  
(Tune: Battle Hymn of the Republic)

# The Fourth Year

June 23, 1925 to June 22, 1926

In this fourth year, the Soroptimist Club of Los Angeles continued to focus on increasing meeting attendance rather than directly on a membership drive. This brought the average meeting attendance to 115 members. By the end of this club year, the membership consisted of 149 regular members, 5 associate members, 9 press members, and 1 honorary member. Gertrude Maynard was again President.

The club held a California Day event to celebrate California's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of being a State. Member Grace Stoermer was in charge of planning as she was also State Chairman of the History and Landmarks division of the California Federation of Clubs. The event was held in the music room of the Biltmore Hotel and was also broadcast over radio. George Cryer, the Mayor of Los Angeles, took part along with many other dignitaries and entertainers. The event was also used to encourage donations to help repair the Santa Barbara Mission that had been badly damaged in a 6.3 earthquake a few months before the event.



[Los Angeles Evening Post-Record August 29, 1925](#)

Along with raising funds for the Santa Barbara Mission, the Club helped raise monies to repair the Casa Adobe which had been acquired by the Southwest Museum.



Grace Stoermer worked in the Los Angeles County Recorder's Office and was head of women's activities for the California Republican Party. She served as the Secretary of the California Legislature from 1919-1921, the first woman secretary of any American state legislature and the first woman to give the oral roll call in the California Legislature. There wasn't a second female Secretary of the Senate in California until 2018.

After leaving the legislature, Grace worked as Vice-President of the Women's Banking Department of the Bank of Italy. The Women's Banking Department was staffed only by women, and was physically separate from the main bank lobby. This was the first time in the United States women could manage their accounts without the involvement of their spouses or other male relatives. When the Bank of Italy changed names to Bank of America in 1930, the Women's Banking Department was merged with the main bank and Grace became a Vice-President of Bank of America.

Among her many club memberships, Grace was the Founder of Girls Week in Los Angeles County, was appointed Hostess for the State of California when the 1932 Summer Olympics were held in Los Angeles, and was appointed by the mayor to represent Los Angeles at the dedication of the Golden Gate Bridge.

The largest event of the year was the annual Business and Style Show in March which featured almost all 150 members of the Club. Held in the Biltmore ballroom, the program included a complete fashion show, a skit by Camp Fire Girls showing the main interests of the Club, dances by Norma Gould and her students, and general business presentations. It was attended by 719 guests.



[The Los Angeles Times March 24, 1925](#)

Soroptimist Founder Stuart Morrow suggested forming a Federation of American Soroptimist Clubs. Plans were made to have a meeting of Soroptimist Clubs to discuss purchasing the rights of the Soroptimist name and organization from Morrow.



[Oakland Tribune, June 16, 1926](#)

A Pacific coast congress of Soroptimist clubs will probably be the outcome of a conference to be held Wednesday, August 25, at Hotel Oakland at the call of the Soroptimist club of Alameda county. Authorization was given to a call for a convention of delegates from the Soroptimist clubs functioning on the Pacific coast in a resolution adopted by the members of the local group last week. Notification of the fall meeting will be sent to all clubs in the United States and abroad. This is the first step toward a national and international federation.

The Soroptimist club of Alameda county, which is the first of a string of similar organizations to be founded throughout the world, admitting business and professional women on a classification basis, was given its charter October 3, 1921. It is known as the "Mother" club. Recognizing its obligation of leadership, the call for consideration of the organization of a federation logically goes out from the local group.

Clubs which will be given seats in the August conference are: San Francisco, San Jose, Sacramento, Los Angeles, Long Beach, Seattle, Portland, Spokane and Vancouver. Other clubs in the United States are found in New York, Washington, D. C., Philadelphia and Kansas City. Paris and London business and professional women are organized in active groups under this charter.

At the end of the club year, outgoing President Gertrude C. Maynard said "this fourth year of the Los Angeles Soroptimist Club was a very happy and successful year, with a record of real service, carrying out the ideals of Soroptimism and a spirit of cooperation among the members which was truly marvelous."

## Soroptimist Club of Los Angeles Charter Members

| <b>Member Name</b>            | <b>Business Classification</b>                 |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Allen, Francis Cadieux        | Guitar, Mandolin and Banjo                     |
| Andres, Stella                | Lingerie and Neckware                          |
| Armstrong, Veturia C. M.D.    | Physician                                      |
| Ashby, May E.                 | Public Accountant                              |
| Balfour, Constance            | Singer (Professional and Teacher)              |
| Banks, Florence E.            | Credit Manager (Wholesale and Manufacturing)   |
| Benson, Frances E.            | Photoengraver                                  |
| Bergeron, Anna M.             | Toilet Preparations Manufacturer               |
| Berres, Dora                  | Social Worker                                  |
| Bolton, Ella J.               | Printing                                       |
| Boon, Frances M.              | Weight Correction                              |
| Bouchier, Bernice             | Storage and Moving                             |
| Brown, Charlotte M.D.         | Anesthetist                                    |
| Brown, Jeanette               | Multigraphing                                  |
| Brown, Sara Rittenhouse Ph.D. | English Critic and Teacher                     |
| Brugmann, Emma L.             | Credit Manager                                 |
| Burke, Margaret               | Apartment House Owner                          |
| Burnham, Madge B.             | Law Course (Correspondence)                    |
| Buttel, Esther N.             | Men's Shoes                                    |
| Campbell, Barbara             | Hotel                                          |
| Campbell, Frances             | Real Estate Broker                             |
| Carpenter, Mabel V.           | Manufacturer's Agent (Pictures and Post Cards) |
| Carvell, Mae                  | Engineer (Industrial)                          |
| Clark, Edith Lillian          | Pianiste (Concert)                             |
| Colburn, Annie L.             | Fur Merchant                                   |
| Comstock, A. Gertrude         | Professor of Public Speaking                   |
| Connell, Madge H.             | Funeral Director                               |
| Connor, Harriet L. D.O.       | Associate                                      |
| Crow, Louise P. D.O.          | Pediatricist                                   |
| Dillon, Franc N.              | Publicist                                      |
| Edwards, Alice Mavor          | Journalist                                     |
| Faulconer, Oda                | Attorney, Judge                                |
| Faulkner, J. Elva             | Mail Order Company                             |
| Fawcett, Delilah Otey         | Court Reporter                                 |
| Fithian, Cora B.              | Life Insurance                                 |
| Fletcher, Kathryn Y.          | Loan Contracts                                 |
| Flickinger, Alice I.          | Public Stenographer                            |
| Fontaine, Mae                 | Dentist                                        |
| Foster, Katherine Anthenette  | Information Service                            |
| Frances G. Leix, M.D.         | X-Ray Specialist                               |
| Fredericks, Katherine M.      | Neckwear Manufacturer                          |

| <b>Member Name</b>             | <b>Business Classification</b>                    |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Giffen, Camille                | Business College                                  |
| Gilbert, Aletha                | City Mother                                       |
| Glidden, Gertrude T.           | Notary Public                                     |
| Goldman, Ada E.                | Pharmacist                                        |
| Grandmason, Lillian M.         | Optometrist                                       |
| Green, Anna V.                 | Woman's Hotel                                     |
| Griffin, Loraine               | Associate                                         |
| Griffith, Gertrude C.          | Hospital Manager                                  |
| Haas, Marie                    | Bank Representative                               |
| Hamilton, Alice C.             | Automobile Electrician                            |
| Harding, Sylvia                | Violinist and Teacher                             |
| Hausam, Winifred M.            | Vocational Director                               |
| Healy, Margaret                | Associate                                         |
| Henley, Mary Jean              | Investments, Realtor                              |
| Hubbard, Della H.              | Chiropodist                                       |
| Hunter, Harriet R.             | Permanent Hair Waving                             |
| Jackling, Frances              | Associate                                         |
| Kelley, May E.                 | Gowns                                             |
| Kelso, M. L.                   | Automobiles                                       |
| Kennedy, Jennie Lind           | Nurse (Accident and Industrial First Aid)         |
| Kenney, Elisabeth L.           | Attorney/State Inheritance Tax Appraiser          |
| Kramer, Louise Helen           | Dancing Teacher                                   |
| Lahey, May D.                  | Referee Probate Dept. Superior Court              |
| Lee, Alice                     | Electrolysis                                      |
| Lewis, Clara                   | Bakery                                            |
| Marks, Addie L.                | Corsets                                           |
| Maynard, Gertrude C.           | Bookstore                                         |
| McNeile, Olga M.D.             | Assistant Prof. of Obstetrics, Medical Department |
| Meeks-Baker, Byrde             | Editor                                            |
| Miller, Isabelle J.            | Associate (Printing)                              |
| Monahan, Mary                  | Restaurant                                        |
| Munroe, Alexandra              | Dresses, Manufacturer of (Wholesale)              |
| Myers, Kate M.                 | Nurses' and School Uniforms                       |
| Parker, Frances E.             | Photographer (Portraits)                          |
| Percival, Evangeline D.O.      | Obstetrician                                      |
| Pickarts, Blanche M.           | Lamp Shades Manufacturer                          |
| Pickrell, Georgia L. (Georgie) | Insurance Broker                                  |
| Porter, Helen K. M.D.          | Pedodontist                                       |
| Powers, Julia C.               | Numerologist (Entertainer)                        |
| Rackliff, Esther M.            | Candy Manufacturer (Wholesale)                    |
| Rall, Pearl                    | Drama Critic                                      |
| Richardson, Sallie D.          | Campaign Manager                                  |
| Richey, Kathryn P.             | Tea Room                                          |

| <b>Member Name</b>          | <b>Business Classification</b>      |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Ruiz, Genevieve             | Glass (Plate, Window, and Wire)     |
| Sapp, Ruth                  | Office Nurse                        |
| Schmadel, Ida E.            | Groceries (Retail)                  |
| Shaffer, Marion E.          | Feathers and Feather Novelties      |
| Shaner, Frances E.          | Cosmetician                         |
| Sheffield, Cora C.          | Art Consultant                      |
| Shelby, Margaret            | House Builder                       |
| Sleeper, Lydia M.           | Gift and Card Shop                  |
| Smith, Inez S. D.O.         | Gynecologist                        |
| Smithies, Maude C.          | Physio-Therapy                      |
| Spencer, Jennie C. D.O,     | Osteopathic Physician               |
| Spielberger, Blanche        | Jewelry Novelties                   |
| Stark, Agnes M.             | Flowers (Handmade)                  |
| Stevens, Florence M.        | Employment Agency                   |
| Strong, Anne L.             | Interior Decorator                  |
| Sutcliffe, Delphine         | Associate                           |
| Swager, Eva L.              | School of Beauty Culture            |
| Swodbie-Meade, Agnes L.     | Millinery                           |
| Taylor, Stella Dennis       | Music Publishing                    |
| Tomlinson, Elizabeth Bowman | Fire Insurance                      |
| Warde, Marion               | Dramatic Art (Teacher and Reader)   |
| Watson, Ada S.              | Golf Accessories                    |
| Watson, Minnie H.           | Plaiting, Hemstitching, and Buttons |
| Weaver, Martha C.           | Girl's School                       |
| Wells, Ida V.               | Attorney                            |
| Wern, Ethel M.              | Art shop – Pictures and Framing     |
| Wilson, Alberta P.          | Garage                              |
| Woodward, Agnes             | Whistling, Artistic                 |
| Wright, Mabel Metzger       | Sheet Music                         |

# Soroptimist Club of Los Angeles Officers

## 1922-1923

President: Oda Faulconer  
Vice President: Veturia C. Armstrong  
Treasurer: Marie Hass  
Secretary: Florence E. Banks  
Directors: Aletha Gilbert, Della Hubbard, Martha C. Weaver, Mary Jean Henley,  
Cora B. Fithian, Lillian M. Grandmason

## 1923-1924

President: Mary Jean Henley  
Vice President: Constance Balfour  
Treasurer: Alberta P. Wilson  
Secretary: Florence Banks (resigned)  
Elizabeth Bowman Tomlinson  
Directors: Lillian M. Grandmason, Martha C. Weaver, Oda Faulconer,  
Elizabeth Bowman Tomlinson, Lena R. Pepperdine

## 1924-1925

President: Gertrude C. Maynard  
Vice President: Lena R. Pepperdine  
Treasurer: Alberta P. Wilson  
Secretary: Elizabeth Bowman Tomlinson (resigned)  
Estelle M. LeSage  
Directors: Mary Jean Henley, Stella Dennis Taylor, Margaret Reordan,  
Martha C. Weaver, Inez S. Smith, Frances Cadieux Allen,  
Elizabeth Kenney

## 1925-1926

President: Gertrude C. Maynard  
Vice President: Mae Carvell  
Treasurer: Alida Dyson  
Secretary: Alice Mavor Edwards  
Directors: Cora Bee Sheffield, Fern Dell Hunt, Margaret D. Reordan,  
Amelia F. Johnson, Addie L. Marks, Elizabeth L. Kenney,  
Alberta Gude Lynch

## Soroptimist Clubs in Order of Organization

ALAMEDA COUNTY (Oakland.) (Organized Sept. 26, 1921.) President, Luella S. Swauger. Secretary, Mrs. H. M. Gamble, 692 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland. Meets Mondays at the Hotel Oakland.

SAN FRANCISCO (Organized Feb. 27, 1922.) President, Mary Dry Boldemann. Secretary, Nellie M. Remler, 2054 Hyde Street. Gaystone 6875.

LOS ANGELES (Organized July 18, 1922.) President, Mrs. Gertrude C. Maynard; Secretary, Alice Mavor Edwards, 426 W. 6th St. Meets Tuesdays at Hotel Biltmore.

WASHINGTON, D. C. (Organized Nov. 27, 1922.) President, Mrs. Mina C. Van Winkle, 1445 Ohio Ave. Secretary, Mrs. Ella Davis Levis, 732 17th Street, N. W. Meets Wednesdays, Lafayette Hotel.

NEW YORK (Organized June 20, 1923.) President, Dr. Valeria H. Parker; Secretary, Pauline E. Mandigo, Room 1221, 342 Madison Ave. Meets first and third Tuesday, Town Hall Club, 123 W. 43rd St.

LONDON (Organized Feb. 27, 1924.) President, Mrs. Fox Pitt. Secretary Mrs. Hill Tickell, Windsor House, Victoria St., S. W. 1; Phone Victoria 2572. Meets Thursday, Criterion Rest.

PARIS (Organized Oct. 8, 1924.) Alice LaMaziere, President; Secretary, Mlle. Marthe Gillet, 47 Avenue de l'Opera. Meets Wednesdays, Restaurant de Valois, Palais Royal.

LONG BEACH (Organized 1923). President, Miss Naomi Tomkins; Executive Secretary, Anna McDonnell. Meets Fridays, Virginia Hotel.

SACRAMENTO (Organized March 2, 1923). President, Dr. Una Cary; Secretary, Gertrude Ross.

Meets Fridays, Hotel Sacramento.

PHILADELPHIA (Organized April, 1925). President, Miss Elizabeth E. Johnson; Secretary, Miss Eleanor C. Schaefer, 1015 Chestnut St. Meets The Arcadia Cafe, Widener Bldg.

SAN JOSE (Organized 1925). President, Miss Mary Williams, 802 First National Bank Bldg., San Jose. Executive Secretary, Florence M. Curry, 63 W. Santa Clara St. Meets Thursdays, Hotel Vendome.

SEATTLE (Organized October 14, 1925). President, Mrs. G. M. Starr; Secretary, Miss Eloise Flagg, 3302 L. C. Smith Building. This Club meets on Thursdays at the Hotel Olympic.

PORTLAND. President, Mrs. Oliver E. Lutz. Secretary, Miss Corinne F. Wright, 383 Pittock Bldg. Meets Mondays, Elk's Temple.

SPOKANE. President, Miss Magdalene Doose; Secretary, Miss Mary Keating, 405 Rookery Bldg. Meets Thursdays Hotel Davenport.

VANCOUVER, B. C. Mrs. Clare Davies, 645 13th Ave. W. Secretary, Irene Fraser, Suite 15, 1070 Haro St.

KANSAS CITY. President, Patience Hocker; Secretary, Tierra Farrow.

MANCHESTER, ENGLAND—Organizing.

DETROIT, Organizing. Stuart Morrow, 1500 Real Estate Exchange Bldg.

*The Los Angeles Soroptimist*

Soroptimist Club of Los Angeles Newsletter June 22, 1926

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