

CR est. 2012 HS

Historical Society of Santa Rosa



Image: Spectators watch the Sonoma County Fair parade, the evening before opening day in 1958. Were you there? Tell us about it on our Facebook page.

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Founded 2012

How a Pig Farmer Caused the Demise of Santa Rosa's Largest Bank

by Denise Hill

Frank Albert Brush was born in 1866 in Iowa, one of four children. At the time of his birth, Frank's father Jacob had been promoted to president of the Osage National Bank after starting his own financial institution in 1856. In 1885, the family moved to Santa Rosa where his father started the Santa Rosa National Bank and Frank, now a young man, soon started work there as a teller.

In 1888, Frank married Lena G. Swain and over the course of the next 20 years they had eight children. By 1909, Frank and his family were living in a handsome house on Fourth Street in Santa Rosa and Frank was raising "world champion" Berkshire pigs. By this time, Frank's father Jacob had become a self-made millionaire as the founder of the Santa Rosa National Bank along with building the first street railroad in the area and serving as president of the Merchants' Lighting Company. Frank's brother Irving was also doing well as Superintendent of the Ukiah Water Company using his earnings to invest in real estate and flashy cars.

While his father and brother were well-known around town for their prominent positions in business, Frank seemed content to remain a clerk at his father's bank. By his own account, he was a family man who spent his time at home in the evenings reading and for all appearances to friends, family, and business acquaintances he led a quiet, uneventful life. Imagine the community's shock and disbelief when in the fall of 1918, Frank Brush was arrested for embezzling from his father's bank!

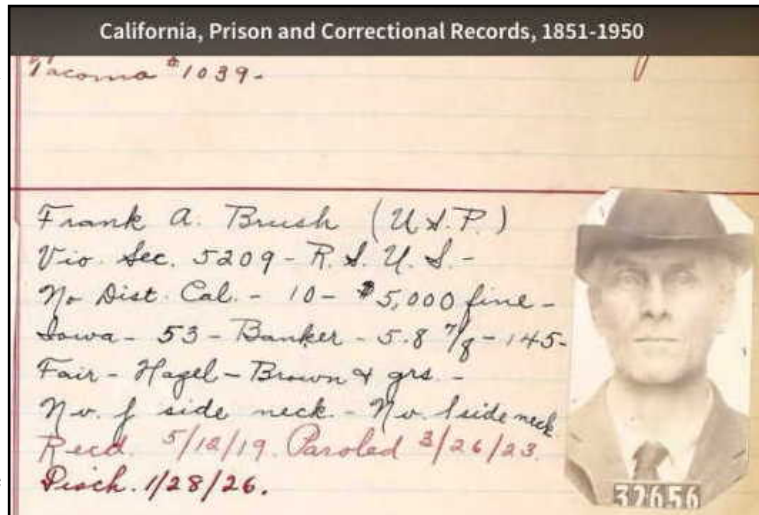
How did Frank go from a pig farmer and dependable cashier to embezzling from his own father's bank? The first domino to fall was a personal investment of \$100,000 Frank had made in the local electric railroad business. Even while acting as one of the directors of the company (and maybe because of his position), he was unable to acknowledge the railroad's inability to provide enough revenue to off-set his investment. This was followed by a large sum of money Frank

borrowed to purchase property in downtown Santa Rosa, tearing down the existing buildings, and replacing them with a substantial new building.

For a time, the new building provided a good return, but it was destroyed in the 1906 earthquake. Since it was the earthquake and not the fires following the earthquake that destroyed the building, no insurance was recovered. The loss to Frank was \$200,000.

This loss followed by WWI which made all his properties "unsellable" was what finally drove Frank to start embezzling from his father's bank. By the time the Feds raided the bank in October of 1918, Frank had embezzled over \$3 million in today's dollars. The insolvency of such a major financial institution in a town with a population under 10,000 could have been devastating devastating, but Frank's father Jacob promised "every dollar I have in the world goes to help take care of the depositors".

...Continued page 7



Shown: Upper: Frank A. Brush's San Quentin record, circa 1920s
California Prison and Correctional Records
Lower: Santa Rosa National Bank, 1911
Calisphere.org

President's Message

Hello HSSR members! I wanted to take this opportunity to send a message to you from all of us on the board. We know these times have been stressful for us all (albeit in different ways) and, as history has shown us, we may not be through to the other side yet...

What we do know is that we have each other. We have a community of being connected by our passion for the events and people of the past; a yearning for the lessons they show us as we move forward in the present. A quest to seek out the untold or misted histories of those that came before us. We hope to build on that community and continue to find ways to bring us together.

The HSSR began 2020 quietly. We had our general meeting on February 3rd, and had been preparing plans and dreams of events and programs for the spring, summer, and fall. Alas, bigger things prevailed and we, like many other

organizations, have pulled back from those plans. The Board is currently working to see what type of alternate programs we can come up with for our membership and hope to have more communication as the summer gets going. Keep an eye out for some messages from us and we look forward to connecting with you as 2020 moves along.

If you have any ideas or concepts that you think would work, feel free to pass them along. Also, if you have a passion for this and some time to commit, we are looking for a few additional board members. Send us a message about any of this or just to say hi; and, as the Dalai Lama said, "I truly believe that individuals can make a difference in society. Since periods of change such as the present one come so rarely in human history, it is up to each of us to make the best use of our time to help create a happier world."



John Lengyel setting type at the Press Democrat, circa 1970s
Sonoma Heritage Collection

Bryan Much
President of the HSSR

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Our events and programs are made possible
through membership renewals and the generosity
of our members and community partners

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Welcome New HSSR Members

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Susan Logan
Patricia McQuerry
Kathy Torres
Julie Trudel
Mark Schakel

Newsletter Team

Kelly Carrillo Fernández
Ann Galantine
Denise Hill
Karen Stone



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HistoricalSocietySantaRosa.org/

Want to Contribute Content for the HSSR Newsletter?

The HSSR seeks Santa Rosa Centric memoirs and research based pieces for our newsletter. Contact us at Newsletter@HistoricalSocietySantaRosa.org for more information.

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The Speakeasy Days of the Stone House

by Karen Stone

The Stone House on Highway 12 near Brush Creek Road was built in 1909. It has had many lives — a rooming house for Italian stonecutters in the early 1900s, Hillside (tuberculosis) Sanitarium from 1929 to 1931, a series of inns and restaurants, a topless bar in the 1960s, and currently a women's recovery facility. In the 1920s during Prohibition, it was the location of illegal liquor sales — a speakeasy.

On May 4, 1923, the Stone House was raided by Sheriff Boyes and his deputies because they suspected the sale of illegal liquor. They gained entry after kicking down a door and after the proprietor unlocked a series of three bolted doors.

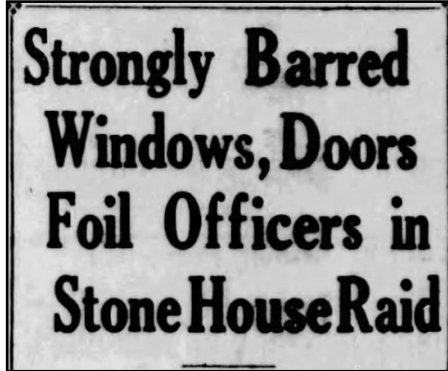
The raiders found no liquor and suspected that it had been poured down a sink as they were making entry. Some of the customers present during the raid were "members of the socially elite of Santa Rosa", according to the Press Democrat. The sheriff warned the business that raids would continue unless it stopped the illegal activity.



Above: The Stone House, circa 1910s
Malvino Family Collection

Four months later, on September 7, 1923, Sheriff Boyes and his deputies again raided the Stone House. The doors and windows were barred, so they had to batter down the door to gain entrance, after discovering that an electronic buzzer system had been installed to control opening the door. No liquor was found during this raid. A successful law enforcement raid on the Stone House occurred on September 29, 1927. According to the Petaluma Argus Courier, "a considerable quantity of rare old liquors, port wine, Scotch whiskey, gin, and bourbon" was confiscated.

On December 30, 1927, the Stone House was one of three establishments in the area raided by law enforcement one day before anticipated New Year's Eve celebrations. Five bottles of mixed liquors were seized at the Stone House.



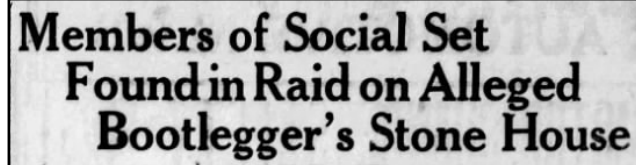
Newspaper clippings shown:

Top Left: The Press Democrat, September 8, 1923

Top Right: California Republican, December 9, 1933

Lower Right: Santa Rosa Republican, May 5, 1923

All sourced: Newspapers.com



In 1933, to celebrate the end of Prohibition, the Stone House hosted a "Repeal Celebration".



Author, Alma McDaniel Carrillo, 1818, Carrillo Family Collection

A Very Young Hold-up

A memoir by Alma McDaniel Carrillo (1894-1977)

Eugene Carrillo was a nice looking youngster - In fact his mother (Elizabeth Carrillo) often said that Eugene was such a "Cute baby". He had long curls and was dressed like a little girl until his father (Manuel Carrillo) demanded a haircut and trousers for his son. The reason for their change was hastened because a customer came into the blacksmith shop and commented on the "cute little girl".

But when Eugene was still wearing starched ruffled white dresses, he was given a present of a toy water pistol. He was playing outside near the County Road which was in front of the Carrillo home. He heard a heavy wagon, drawn by a number of horses coming down the road. Now can you imagine the scene? A youngster dressed as he was - running out to the road and calling to the man sitting on the high seat - "hands up!" Everyone knew this family so the man laughed and then tossed some fire crackers (called lady fingers) to the boy on the ground who believed he was being "paid off".

The subject, Eugene Carrillo, was born in 1897

'Two Gun Al' Goes on a Rampage

by Ann Galantine

On the morning of July 15, 1935 Alfred F. Chamberlain set out for revenge. Before it was over the blood soaked rampage would take the life of the Police Chief of Santa Rosa and wound another local citizen. It began with Chamberlain cornering J. B. McCabe in a corral on McCabe's property. He shot him six times. Then Chamberlain jumped into his roadster and drove into town searching for his next victim, Police Chief Charles B. O'Neal. He plugs O'Neal with three .45 bullets and heads out for his next victim. Unable to positively identify the sheriff by sight puts Chamberlain at a disadvantage for his next revenge-motivated move. When he runs into the Sheriff he is forced to ask, "I'm looking for Sheriff Patteson, are you him?"

Patteson, Sonoma County Sheriff, realized that Chamberlain may be crazy. Wanting to eliminate any further carnage he plays Chamberlain's game, "No I'm not Patteson. What the hell's a matter with you?"

At that instant two business men come running to the scene to help subdue Chamberlain. One is armed with a shot gun and the other an automatic pistol. The Sheriff seized the two barrels full of Chamberlain's weapons and overpowered him. Sheriff Patteson hits him in the head with one of the gun butts, bringing Chamberlain down to the sidewalk.



Sheriff Patteson, 1934
Sonoma Heritage Collection

Patteson questioned Chamberlain in attempt to determine the cause of this chaotic turmoil. Chamberlain was well known within the community as a joke wearing a 10 gallon hat, heeled cowboy boots, a gun holster and spurs. In 1929 Chamberlain had come into town on his old buckboard with his horse team of two. He raced through residential neighborhoods. For this Chamberlain was arrested at the corner of McDonald and Spencer Avenues. The write up in the Santa Rosa Republican labeled him as 'Two Gun Al'. The nickname stuck.

After that 1929 skirmish resulting in his arrest, Chamberlain revealed his motive to the Sheriff. He stated that the City had closed down the family livery stable on Sonoma Avenue, taken possession of the property, and charged him for clean up of the property. This resulted in Chamberlain having to sell the 600 acres to McCabe, his first victim on that July 1935 rampage. Patteson realized that Chamberlain was a 77 year old broken man whose family had been prosperous, but as time moved forward and things progressed, Al did not.

McCabe survived the rampage, however Police Chief O'Neal's wounds proved to be fatal. When word of this development reached the assailant, Chamberlain told Patteson, "I guess this means they will hang me." Chamberlain did not hang, but was sentenced to life in prison. He spent the final eight years of his sickly life at San Quentin state prison.

He died at the age of 85 and was buried in the family plot at the Santa Rosa Rural Cemetery.

Vikings Steal Panther Bell

by Karen Stone

The Santa Rosa High School Panthers and Montgomery High School Vikings are long-time sports rivals. In November 1969, during Big Game week before their annual football game, Montgomery pranksters stole Santa Rosa's Panther bell from a Santa Rosa High School building. The Montgomery students, posing as Santa Rosa students, persuaded a Santa Rosa High School night custodian that they were taking the bell for safekeeping before the Big Game.

The bell was taken to the backyard of one of the Montgomery students, where Panther orange and black were painted over with Viking red and grey. The prank was in retaliation for the previous year's vandalism of Montgomery's Viking ship by some Santa Rosa students. The Montgomery students planned to return the bell at half-time during the Big Game the following weekend. However, after being threatened with arrest for



The Santa Rosa High School bell
Santa Rosa High School Foundation

breaking and entering and receiving stolen property, the Montgomery students returned the bell before game day.

Gaye LeBaron wrote about the theft in her column. This poem, written by a Montgomery parent, was included in that column. Dr. Soso, mentioned in the poem, was Superintendent of Schools.

*Santa Rosa, cry and tell
The Vikings stole the Panther bell.
Santa Rosa, cry and tattle,
Dr. Soso fights your battle.
We returned it just because
We were threatened with the fuzz.
So you have your bell today
But look again – it's red and grey.*

Fifty years later, the perpetrators – undoubtedly known to many – remain unidentified.

A Moving Story — Part II

by Denise Hill

Many structures in Santa Rosa have been saved because they were moved rather than torn down. Santa Rosa being a fairly young city (incorporated in 1868), it might surprise you to know that homes were already being moved prior to incorporation. As early as 1862, a butcher shop was moved to the northeast corner of the plaza in downtown Santa Rosa.

In 1874, the Christian Church was moved from the corner of B and Fourth streets to a new site on Fifth Street between A and B streets.

And, in 1889, the Pacific Methodist College was moved. An amazing undertaking considering the building was a three-story wooden structure with a cupola, 110 feet long and 55 feet wide, and the distance it was moved was more than a mile. It is said the college didn't even have a crack in the plaster when it arrived at its new destination.



Pacific Methodist College, circa 1875
Sonoma Heritage Collection

While a fair number of businesses were moved, homes being moved was much more prevalent as noted in this Nov. 13 1875 issue of the Sonoma Democrat:

Our friend John S. Taylor is preparing in earnest to have erected a two-story brick block on his lots opposite the northeast corner of the Plaza. Those old frame buildings which formerly stood on the lots, and so forcibly reminded the passers-by of the days of "auld lang syne" have already started down the street on their journey to their final abode in some more quiet spot, and in a few days more handsome brick walls will occupy their old resting place.

It appears, urban renewal was in effect numerous times in downtown Santa Rosa over the decades between the mid 1800's up to the 1970's. As commercial enterprises moved into the downtown area, homes were moved to nearby neighborhoods to make space for them.

By far, one of the most prominent and prolific movers of homes was Augusta Metzger. She lived in an impressive two-story Italianate house built in 1872 on land in what is now the St. Rose Preservation District. As the downtown area started experiencing commercial expansion in the early 1900's, Augusta started saving homes in the path of development, the

first one in 1903. That home was built in 1874 and very similar in architecture to her home and was the home of her friend Dr. Boyce who had passed away in 1898. The house was moved from Third Street five blocks north and placed next to her house on B Street.

In 1904, she moved the ornate Eastlake style mansion of T.J. Ludwig (one of Santa Rosa's pioneer architects) from 401 B Street to 429 Eighth Street. Unfortunately, this structure succumbed to an arson fire in 1983. On the day of the 1906 earthquake, the "Quinn House" was being moved down Fourth Street. The 2-story house was severely damaged, but Mrs. Metzger purchased it, moved it to the 403 8th Street, and rehabilitated it as a one-story building. Next she moved one of the few examples of Carpenter Gothic-style homes in our city from 5th and Davis Streets to 548 A Street. The fifth house she moved was the "Carithers House" built by a prominent merchant and located on the 400 block of B Street. Augusta had it moved to 421 8th Street. All the homes she saved were turned into rental units – an adaptive reuse that saved them from demolition.

In the late 1930's, encroaching commercial development north of Fourth Street resulted in two homes being moved from Mendocino Avenue to Ripley Street. These homes were moved to 518 and 540 Riley Street.

Then in the late 1940's, the freeway was built through downtown resulting in a number of homes being moved from both Davis and South Davis Streets and surrounding areas. When it was finished in May of 1949, the freeway had effectively split the existing neighborhood west of Mendocino Avenue to the railroad tracks in two. Many homes were destroyed, but a number were moved to surrounding nearby streets. One of them – a lovely Colonial Revival house - is now located at 333 Tenth Street.

In 1957 two important structures were moved to save them from demolition. The first was the home of Con Shea, one of the city's wealthiest early 1900's. His style home was



Shown: Left: Metzger House and Dr. Boyce's House - 535 and 537 B Street, 1901,
Sonoma Heritage Collection



Right: 1878 drawing of Augusta Amelia Metzger at age 29, Konicek Collection

prominent and business men in the impressive Eastlake moved from Mendocino Avenue to 625 B Street. The Church of One Tree was also moved that year to make room for a parking lot on Ross Street and now resides in Juilliard Park.

Finally, in 1979, after being spared from the wrecking ball multiple times, the 10,000-square foot, 1,700-ton, Roman Renaissance

Revival-style post office built in 1909 began its 750-foot, 75-day journey to its new location on 7th Street, and now houses the Sonoma County Museum.

Will more historic Santa Rosa buildings be saved from the wrecking ball by being moved? We certainly hope so.

Antoinette Crandall-Wheeler

by Denise Hill

“The Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) stands for the complete abstinence from alcohol, tobacco, and all harmful drugs and protection of the home. “

Antoinette S. Crandall was born on a farm in Pennsylvania on September 7, 1842. She was one of seven children of Daniel Crandall and Isabel Morey. In 1853, the family moved to Michigan and then a few years later to Illinois, eventually ending up in the Rockford area of Illinois.



813 Cherry Street, Santa Rosa
Home of Andrew and Antoinette Wheeler, present day
by Denise Hill

On September 25, 1861, at the age of 19, Antoinette married Andrew J. Wheeler in Ogle, Illinois. Wheeler was employed as a drayman. In 1871 they have their first and only child, a daughter they call Frances Lydia. They continued to live in Illinois raising Francis until 1887 when the family moved to Santa Rosa, California. In Santa Rosa, Andrew opened an appraisal and second hand furniture store at first located on the

Hahman block and later on Third Street in downtown Santa Rosa. Their house, a charming Italianate cottage built in the 1880's was nearby on Cherry Street.. Sometime after Frances married Henry G. Matthias in 1889 and moved to Healdsburg, , Antoinette became involved with the Sonoma County chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. In 1894 she was elected president and served in that position for the next 10 years during which she was a delegate to the State Convention in 1894 and 1895. Sonoma County W.C.T.U. meeting discussions covered many issues including “the problem of idleness and poverty” that could be traced back to drinking,



W.C.T.U. Float – 1911 San Diego, California Parade
San Diego Historical Society

removal of all saloons in California, the pros and cons of if “the wife and mother needs the ballot”, and Susan B. Anthony’s message that women should work persistently for equal suffrage.

...Continued page 7

The Story of Iva Kroeger

by Ann Galantine

In January of 1961, Iva Kroeger came to the attention of the Santa Rosa Police Department. They received a phone call reporting the disappearance of the Santa Rosa motel owner, Mildred Arneson. Arneson was a nurse and successful real estate investor. She lived with her husband Jay, a retired Army Major disabled by advanced Parkinson's disease. Detective John Coffman learned that Mrs. Arneson was a spiritual follower of Rosicrucian and was going to South America with fellow believer Iva Kroeger who had taken on the name Eva Long.

When Detective Coffman went to the motel to research the hotel owner's disappearance he was met a cheerful and helpful Iva Kroeger. Kroeger was then running the business. Kroeger reported to



Coffman that Mrs. Arneson was somewhere in South America. She denied ever having planned to accompany Mrs. Arneson on the trip. Iva Kroeger said she was to take care of the business and Mr. Arneson until Mrs. Arneson sent for him to join her.

The following year, in February of 1962, Mildred Arneson's mother reported to the Santa Rosa police that Jay Arneson's had now also disappeared. When the police returned to the motor lodge they found that Iva Kroeger was still running the business. They noted the motor lodge

...Continued page 7

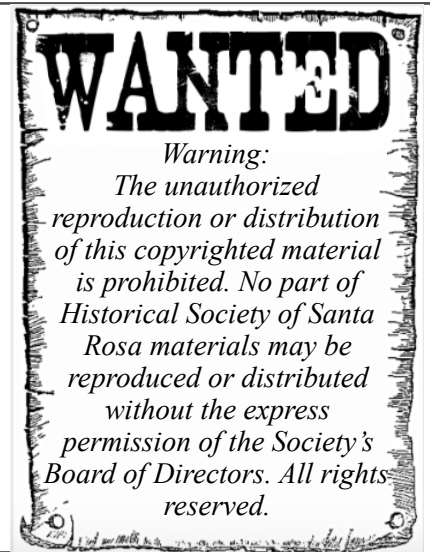
Image: Iva Kroeger (left) faces four witness accusers in the basement of her San Francisco home where the victims were unearthed.
The Press Democrat, September 13, 1962

Pig Farmer... continued from page 1

Sadly, for Jacob Brush - now in his 80's - the situation was devastating as he watched his once successful institution closed by the Feds and his son arrested, indicted, and sent to San Quentin for a 10-year sentence. Out for good behavior in 4 years (during which time his wife divorced him), Frank moved to Los Angeles, where he lived until his death in 1938 at the age of 72.



Berkshire pig, 1898
1898 Agricultural Book



Wheeler... continued from page 6

On December 18, 1902, "franchise" was the subject for discussion at the regular meeting for the W.C.T.U. held at the home of Mrs. A.J. Wheeler at 813 Cherry Street. Also, at the Wheeler home was the establishment of the first Santa Rosa Equal Suffrage Association on December 20, 1904, with Mrs. A. J. Wheeler serving as president. On May 16, 1905, the Suffrage Association met again at the Cherry Street home of Mrs. A.J. Wheeler. Antoinette's husband, Andrew died on April 2, 1906 died - just two weeks prior to the earthquake that virtually destroyed the area in and around downtown Santa Rosa. Mr. Wheeler's obituary describes him as a man with fine principles and strong character; who had provided his wife with assistance in her role as president of the W.C.T.U.

By this time, their daughter Frances had moved to Southern California with her second husband, Ernest J. Gookins, and it probably wasn't a hard decision between the shock of losing her husband along with the earthquake for Antoinette to leave Santa Rosa and move to Los Angeles in April of 1906.

Antoinette's activities with the W.C.T.U. didn't stop when she moved from Santa Rosa. She is mentioned several times in the Los Angeles Herald including that she was the winner of a Silver Medal in an oratorical contest held by the W.C.T.U. In 1920, it was noted that she was still active with the W.C.T.U. when she died at the age of 78 in San Diego. She is buried next to her husband in the Odd Fellows Cemetery in Santa Rosa.

Kroeger... continued from page 6

had a fresh coat of paint, rents were collected by Kroeger, and Iva Kroeger had recorded a deed. The deed, reflecting execution by Mildred Arneson was in favor of none other than Iva Kroeger.

In May of that year Eva Long pulled a gun on a repairman at the motor lodge to collect on an overdue bill. When the police arrived on the scene they found that the woman had slipped into a cab and fled. The investigation revealed the woman in question, Eva Long was actually Iva Kroeger. Kroeger had a police record going back to 1945.

The hunt for Iva Kroeger, or Eva Long, was on. They contacted her son who was also looking for his shady mother. She had taken his children to Oakland and left them wandering the streets alone, while she disappeared.

The police obtained a search warrant in August to search Kroeger's San Francisco home at 490 Ellington Avenue. The search yielded the bodies of Mildred and Jay Arneson who had both been strangled and buried in the garage. Iva's husband, Ralph Kroeger, was arrested on the charge of first degree murder. Iva avoided arrest until September when she was arrested on the same charge.

The trial was long and drawn out. Iva was in rare form. She would talk gibberish, sing songs, wave her hands, throw things, and state that she was the "mother of God". At first she pleaded 'not guilty' yet later changed to 'guilty by reason of insanity'. She had often bragged that when in doubt act like a nut which she demonstrated nicely during her trial. The psychiatrists didn't buy her act and they testified that she was not insane, just deceitful and manipulative.

Iva Kroeger was convicted and initially sentenced to death, yet

the sentence was later converted to life imprisonment. She was paroled in 1974. By 1985 was arrested yet again in Florida for threatening a man with a gun. Iva Kroeger died in 2000 in Boston, Massachusetts.

Police Make 140 Arrests in Month

Police arrests during February totalled 140, according to the monthly report of Police Chief Emil Biavaschi, made public yesterday. Overtime parking violations headed the list, with motorists tagged for this offense. One driver was arrested for failure to stop at a boulevard sign, nine were tagged for double parking, one was jailed for operating a lottery, 11 were booked for petty theft, five for burglary, four for drunk driving, one for assault and battery, one for liquor law violation, one for robbery, two for malicious mischief, 12 for vagrancy and 24 for being intoxicated.

Newspaper clipping: The Press Democrat,
March 3, 1936



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Historical Society of Santa Rosa

Membership Application

The Historical Society of Santa Rosa intends to build a strong and diverse organization of individuals, families and groups to investigate, record and relate the history of the City of Santa Rosa. Membership includes subscription to the newsletter and priority invitations to HSSR sponsored events.

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