

The past is not easily forgotten

Olive Leonard remembers. She remembers when Leisure World was a serene and tranquil spot on the map, where gentle winds stirred the grassy hills dotted with grazing sheep and cattle.

That was 13 years ago and she has not only seen but been an important part of the burgeoning growth of the community. Dove hunting in the still of early morning is now just a memory, but the past is not easily forgotten and Olive Leonard remembers.

Chosen by Rossmoor Corporation as Leisure Worlder of the Month for November, a portrait of Mrs. Leonard will be hung in the rotunda of the main sales office during this period. Her many friends and neighbors are invited to attend the informal ceremonies to be held at 10 a.m. on Nov. 1.

A native of Kansas and one of eight children, Olive was born into a family where the love of music was nurtured and encouraged. Her natural talent was evident at the early age of four years when she accompanied her violinist father at an old pump organ where her feet barely touched the pedals.

It was a happy home, she recalls, where good music and good values were a way of life. It was



Olive Leonard

a family of achievers and the examples set by her parents were sturdy guideposts in raising her own family of which she is intensely and justly proud.

A graduate of Minnesota School of Commerce, she then decided to enroll in Minnesota College of Music. After graduation she attended MacPhail College and following a teaching career in Wisconsin, Olive married a law stu-

dent and helped him open a bank in the northern part of that state where their five children were born.

With all the responsibility of such a large family she still found time to be a church organist where she served for 45 years, headed the Sunday School, was active in Girl Scouts, Red Cross, Tri-County Handicaps and helped organize the Community Concert Association of the Feder-

ated Music Club.

She gave piano and organ lessons at home and after the bank opened, she became a director of the board continuing in that capacity for 20 of their 45 banking years.

Following a serious car accident to her husband she had to manage the bank for many months, and she remembers with some amusement her tour of duty as the local postmaster, (not postmistress, she stresses.)

In the meantime she helped put her children through college with doctorate and masters degrees.

The first year Olive and her husband came to Leisure World, he passed away and in her loneliness she reached out to the warmth and friendship of the community. "We were a close knit group helping one another and helping the community to grow through our individual strengths and determinations."

She joined the church choir and substituted as an organist. At that time all church services were held in Clubhouse 1 and 2 and she says she played for just about every denomination at one time or another.

She was also a member

Ms. Leonard honored

of World War I and American Legion groups and as the area grew, she played for the dedication of Clubhouse 2.

She joined and held office in the Chorale, orchestra and became the musician for the Melody Men, Harmonaires, Wahines, Wisconsin, and California Clubs. Later, she played for service and other state clubs.

Together with Ruth Biehle, Olive played for all Production Guild programs and joined the

Dick Currier and Ralph Carmichael combo.

She helped organize the Community Concert Association and joined the small group that has become Opera 100, helped to stage the big and successful Wine Festival with a special program in the gazebo featuring opera costumes from the Laguna Beach Lyric Opera Association.

She was a charter member of the Federated Music Club, Philharmonic, Organ and Keyboard Clubs

and played for the Golden Rain Foundation annual parties and for the dedication of Royal Savings, Home Savings, Beverly Manor and Saddleback Community Hospital. She also cut the tape for the dedication ceremony of the Leisure World Stables.

Olive Leonard has indeed left her mark on Leisure World, stamped with a philosophy that defies defeat: "It is better to attempt a great deal and fail than to attempt nothing and succeed."