

Winifred (St. John) Chappell

In Memoriam



Winifred Chappell died peacefully in her home on the afternoon of July 10, 2010. She was 99 years old. She is pictured here to the left in her high-school graduation picture in 1929.

Winifred was born on May 2, 1911, in San Francisco, California, to Burr and Clara Amelia (Clark) St. John. She grew up and was educated in San Francisco, earning her California teaching credential.

She became the first licensed ham radio operator in the Western part of the United States in 1929, possibly the first in the USA. Her call letters were W6ATP.



Winifred at her Ham Radio desk in 1930

Win married Otto Rudolph Martin dijohn Mont-Eton in 1933. They moved to Georgetown, California, up in the 49er Gold Rush country where they lived until February of 1950. It was here that the unique event of a baby shower over the ham radio waves was held for their expected first child, daughter Lorry. Win's friends organized and sent gifts to her husband "Monty" who held all in secret, telling Win they had a "conference" on the radio station at a certain time on a certain night.



*Winifred and 11-month-old Lorry
Dee in
Georgetown,
California*

When the ham radio was fired up at the designated time, all her friends were there sending "surprise" by Morse code...this was before voice ham radio and Monty brought out the hidden gifts. Win's story is located on her daughter's web site: <http://www.sdarabians.com>.

Win went on to become a full-time teacher, acquiring her Master's Degree and ending her 25-year teaching career in the Trona Elementary School in 1975.

Win was preceded in death by her father and mother, Burr and Clara Amelia (Clark) St. John; first husband, O. R. Mont-Eton; second husband, William A. Chappell; son, Joseph Burr Mont-Eton; sister, Geraldine; brother, Charles; and brother, Andrew. She is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Lorry and Larry Wagner of Inyokern and her grandson and wife, Joel and Kelly Mont-Eton of Ridgecrest, in addition to great grand children plus nieces and grand nieces and nephews.