

the reactor

By Paul Azevedo

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When I asked you, several months back, to tell me what you knew about Honora Sharp, you didn't reply. Of course, no one else told me, either.

I knew that she was the one who had given Sharp Park golf course to the city of San Francisco, but that was about all I knew.

I FORGOT about it until I found myself with a late lunch hour in San Francisco and I spent it at McLaren Lodge, which is the homey headquarters of the San Francisco Park department.

Mrs. Katherine Colzani is the secretary to the Recreation and Park Commission of San Francisco. I hope that you find every government employee as pleasant and helpful as I found her. With her help, I reviewed some of the minutes of SF park commission meetings.

She was able to pin down for me that the Sharp Park property, which would eventually be the golf course, was accepted by the park commissioners in 1917.

AND THE name "Sharp Park" was used even then. Then there is the annual report from John McLaren, superintendent, in 1924.

"This splendid property," he wrote, "Sharp Park . . . near Salada and Brighton Beaches, and comprising 444 acres, was the gift to the City of Honora Sharp, who also placed in trust the sum of \$80,000 to provide for its initial cost and development.

"Its present location, to the vision that is not far-sighted, or prophetic, may seem somewhat remote since it is situated in San Mateo County at no inconsiderable distance from the county line. But the park commission existing at the time of the transfer accepted it on the showing of superintendent McLaren that its future value as one of the beauty spots of San Francisco's park system was already well out of the sphere of mere speculation. . . . During the years since it became a part of the park system . . . has progressed satisfactorily at regular intervals . . . until it is now the embryo plantation of many thou-

sands of trees suited to soil and climate . . . More water than can be used for all time to come can be taken from the lagoon at comparatively small cost."

THE PARK commission had accepted the deed to the property from Samuel G. Murphy and wife on August 30, 1917, for their undivided one-half interest in the "San Pedro ranch, San Mateo county (Sharp Park) sent to Mr. Dunnigan, clerk of the Board of Supervisors."

This was to be kept "with the deed filed by A. B. Spreckels a short time ago."

Before that, the May 13, 1917 minutes show that US bonds were purchased with the "Sharp bequest."

"President Lindsey reported," in the minutes of May 3, "having an interview with Mr. Samuel Murphy, who agreed to the turning over of Sharp's ranch to the city and county of San Francisco to be used for Park purposes only." (he) "advised the acceptance of the offer because of the advantage it might bring in obtaining the money later that is now in the hands of Mr. Murphy."

THE RANCH had been rented out, on a five-year lease, at \$58 per month, with Madison and Burke, Inc., managing the property.

Other reports of the impending transaction are reported through the summer of 1917, including one on Aug. 9, which notes that the city attorney has received the deed from Murphy (The property is) "known as Sharp's Park."

On Oct. 11, 1917, the park commission leased "San Pedro Rancho" to A. Del Chiaro and Co. for five years at \$120 per month.

In December 1924, \$26,587.12 in "The Spreckels Special Fund, Honora Sharp, trustee," was reported as invested in Los Angeles school district bonds.

None of this told me much about Honora Sharp, who she was, when she died, her family, etc.

But I looked some more.

Next week: Who was Honora Sharp?