



## Gage Park History

An Elk Grove resident for over 50 years, Anabel Gage has left an indelible mark upon our community through her tireless volunteer efforts and timely community activism.

Born Anabel Brady on January 17, 1921, the majority of her childhood was spent in the small town of Gridley, California. The fourth of nine children, her family moved to Sacramento in 1932. Anabel graduated from McClatchy High School in 1938 and went on to attend Sacramento Junior College. That same year, she met Chalmers Gage, the son of Norman Gage. The Gage's were a prominent farming family in the Elk Grove area. Anabel and Chalmers were married on June 28, 1942 and the couple settled in Elk Grove.

Anabel immediately became involved in the community – forming a women's group to wrap bandages for the war effort, becoming a Girl Scout Troop Leader and also teaching Sunday school. Following the births of her three children, she was also a 4-H leader for many years, a member of Lambda Theta Alpha, and a member of the Western Festival Committee.

In 1962, Anabel and three other local women – Ada Gage Beattie, Helen Mahon Reynolds, and Noreen Wackman – formed a group to start preserving Elk Grove's history. Indeed, their efforts were the antecedent for today's Elk Grove Historical Society.

Tragedy struck the family in 1963 when their second son, Roy James, was diagnosed with heart problems. Unfortunately, medical treatment could not save his life and he passed away shortly after receiving open-heart surgery. Anabel and the rest of the family worked through their grief. After some time, Anabel resumed her community work and became Elk Grove's representative on the Sacramento County Bicentennial Committee. She was also a driving force behind the moving and restoration of the Rhoads School to its present location at Elk Grove Regional Park. For her work on these and countless other projects, Anabel was awarded Elk Grove Citizen of the Year in 1972.

In 1979, Anabel retired from the Elk Grove Unified School District after 25 years of service. That same year, following the sale of Gage ranch, she helped her son Richard and his wife, Shirlyn, to preserve and relocate the original ranch victorian to a three-acre plot on Tegan Road in Elk Grove. A historically significant piece of architecture, the house was built in 1880 by Lincoln H. Cutbirth, a local carpenter.

In her later years, Anabel was involved in the Sacramento County Historical Society, Florin Historical Society, quilting groups, photography, doll clubs, and traveling with her husband, Chalmers. The two spent their winter months in Yuma, Arizona, but always returned to their home in Elk Grove. Anabel passed away on October 5, 1996 after a seven year battle with breast cancer. She is survived by her husband Chalmers, her children Richard and Valoyce, and her four grandchildren – Cherree and Cynthia Gage, and Theodore and Charles Chilton.

*The information within this document was created at the time of park dedication and may not be current.*