

February is a time when love is in the air. It is also the month we honor Black History. The love of our fellow man and ones' community knows no bounds. For this edition of the MM&HS Newsletter we would like to tell the story of Dottie Wright, an African American woman based in Modesto, whose love of her community and the youth of Modesto is truly an inspiration. The MM&HS was honored to be granted an interview with Ms. Wright and her two dear friends Julia Lugo and Samantha Nolasco.

As we move closer to the tradition of Super Bowl Sunday this February 13th, the one thing all football fans can expect to see is cheerleaders. Dottie Wright is a woman who coaches many young ladies locally in cheerleading.

Dottie Wright has been in Modesto since 1989. This single mother of five cheered in high school and college and was a Gold Rush Cheerleader for the San Francisco 49ers from 1981-1982. Since the early 2000s, Coach Dottie has worked as the cheer coach for freshman, junior varsity and for the Panthers at Modesto High School. Dottie has been known to the people of the West Side of Modesto since she first coached cheerleading with the Modesto 49ers through the King-Kennedy Center. She started coaching with the Modesto Eagles and transitioned to the Modesto 49ers Cheerleaders.



Dottie took The Modesto Eagles to ten undefeated national titles before their retirement. Dottie brought some of these girls to a competitive level by creating the Modesto Ninerettes. With the Ninerettes, she continued to build a competitive team who went on to win many national titles and championships.

Dottie was recently recognized with a lifetime achievement award in Las Vegas through *JAMZ*, a national and world recognized organization for cheer founded in Modesto. Many are unaware that Dottie choreographs all her girls' routines. Her goal was to keep young women off the streets and away from drugs and teenage pregnancies. Though she had to take care of her five children, she has and continued to sponsor many of these girls out of her own pocket. Dottie worked for years as a waitress at Coco's and Red Lobster, where she was the only African American server. Not having a vehicle, she walked many a night from Red Lobster home to the West Side.

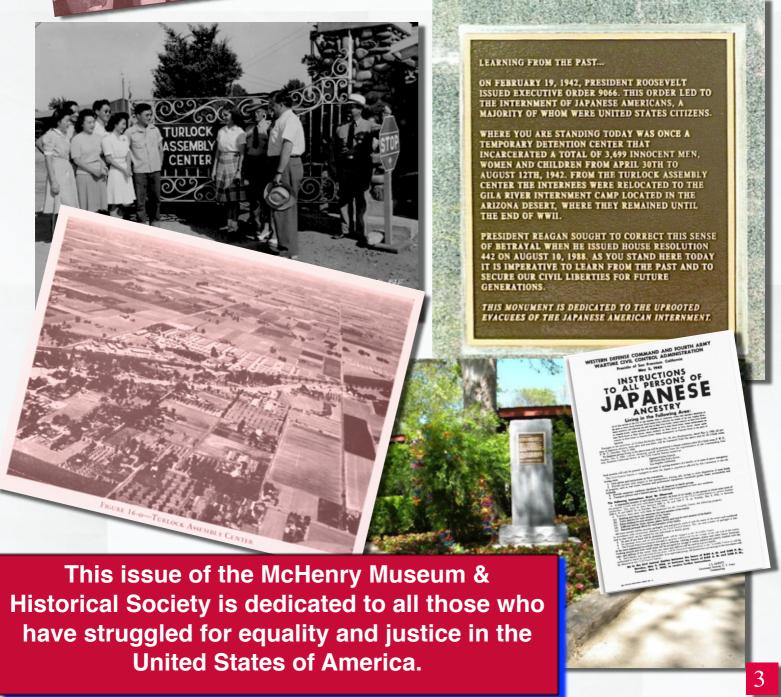
Dottie's greatest legacy is her devotion to her girls. She does so much more than teach cheer. She represents Modesto and Modesto's youth. She embraces these girls, showing them their due attention and teaches them life skills.



Historical Note 80 Years later...



Following Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 on February 20, 1942, calling for the immediate removal of certain Americans from their homes. These Americans were targeted because they were of Japanese ancestry. All Japanese Americans had to report to local assembly centers to await of the construction of more permanent concentration camps further away from the Pacific Coast. One such assembly center was located at the Turlock Fairgrounds. The Turlock Assembly Center operated from April 30-August 12, 1942, and housed 3,699 people, once American Citizens who were now classified as enemy aliens. The camp was populated by contingents from Vacaville, areas of Solano County, the San Francisco Bay Area, Little Tokyo in Los Angeles, and Walnut Grove. Americans from Stanislaus County were sent to Merced County. The entire population of the Turlock Assembly Center was transferred to Gila River, Arizona for the duration of their incarceration. On May 1, 2010, a monument commemorating an injustice that should have never occurred was dedicated at the Turlock Fairgrounds.





- David Seymour began as the new Executive Director for the MM&HS. David previously served as President of the MM&HS. A graduate of California State University, He has taught history at Modesto Junior College since 2012, and history and political science at Merced College since 2013. He has been a part of the MM&HS organization since 2017.
- The Museum Store now carries swag from the upcoming *Graffiti USA Museum*.
- The Museum Store recently gained new copies of our publication *Touchstones: Life and Times of Modesto* by local historian Ken White
- Carole Dovichi and Naramsen Goriel joined the Board of Directors of the MM&HS at the January 20, 2022 meeting.
- We would like to thank Marco Sepulveda for his work as our liaison to the City of Modesto.
 Marco has transition to a position with Stanislaus County.
- We would also like to thank Janice Lane,
 Richard Cato, Sergio Chevalier, Athena Galexia,
 and Nancy Norton for their help in running the
 Museum Store in the month of January.



