## Ottie Ashley Motte

OTTIE ASHLEY MOTTE 1917-2009 Ottie Ashley Motte, matriarch, the last member of her generation of the pioneer Motte and Ashley families, died Thursday of natural causes at her Perris home. Ottie was 92. Ottie and her late husband Charles were the founders of Motte Rimrock Preserve in Perris. In the '60s, they created the reserve adjacent to their beautiful home on the hills west of Perris. The Rimrock Reserve totals more than 1,000 acres in the University of California Reserve system. Charlie and Ottie donated more than 500 acres of that and are the founder's and creator's of the reserve. It is used today as a teaching Reserve by UCR to measure nearby urbanization effects on species, and is an integral part of the Riverside County Multiple Species Plan. Ottie and Charles were also major benefactors to many institutions and individuals. They helped Riverside Community Hospital, the Diocese of San Diego and later the Diocese of San Bernardino, St. James Church and School and many other organizations and individuals. Most of the help was done anonymously. Ottie and her late husband, Charles, were major farmers and land owners in the Nuevo, Lakeview, Romoland, Perris and Menifee Valleys and were key players in the lawsuit brought by local land owners against the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California when they tunneled through the San Jacinto Mountains cutting off groundwater supplies to the area. That lawsuit resulted in a favorable settlement that led to the creation of the Eastern Municipal Water District ("EMWD") which now serves about 650,000 people in central Riverside County and is the Inland Empire's largest water company. Ottie came to Nuevo about eighty years ago with her mother Alice. Ottie attended old Nuevo School and Perris High School. Their family lived across the street from the school, just west of Rosary Avenue. Ottie helped her mother take care of their very active family. Ottie remembered vividly the wonderful relationship that all of the children and young men and women had during a time of no TV or movie theatre. During these difficult times they had each other, their friends and neighbors. They did have radio and records. The young people entertained themselves in a completely wholesome way with picnics, ball games, potlucks and dances. Ottie and Charlie, John and Evelyn Motte and Frank and Judy Motte were organized in business as the Motte Brothers. They accumulated and farmed more than 6,000 acres in the Perris Valley in the late 1930s, '40s and '50s. Frank and Judy left the firm in '60s and Charlie and Ottie retired from farming years later, selling the farming operation to nephews John and Leon Motte. Charlie and Ottie and John and Evelyn Motte divided their holdings between them. Charlie and Ottie continued to own vast acreages after that. Charlie and Ottie loved to play golf, play cards with friends and travel in the United States and abroad. Having no children of their own, they loved their nieces and nephews as if they were their own. They especially loved taking their nieces and nephews with them in their travels. Ottie was Charlie's partner in life and passionately supported his farming activities and later his real-estate development and investment efforts. Ottie Mae Ashley Motte was born May 21, 1917 in Wichita Falls, Texas. Ottie was one of seven children. Her twin sister died at birth. Ottie's other siblings, Ethel Mason, Virgil Ashley, John "Lucy" Ashley, Joyce "Cotton" Ashley, Geraldine Ashley and Robert Ashley, all preceded her in death. Ottie is survived by many nieces and nephews who she loved as her own children including Melissa Greenwood of Menifee, Sandra and Bob Walker of Mariposa, County Supervisor Marion Ashley and his wife Mary of Perris, Michael and Terry Ashley of Nuevo, Cassie Stewart of Murrieta, Alex Stewart of Murrieta, Charles and Nancy Condosta of Rancho Cucamonga, Robert Condosta of Loomis, Leon and Darlene Motte of Romoland, Yvonne Johnson of Carlsbad, John and Ann Motte of Perris, Franklin and Emma Motte of Moreno Valley, Jonathan Motte of Nuevo, Janet and Jim Barberie of Nuevo, Frank and Karen Smith of Homeland, Marvin Smith of Oklahoma, sisters-in-law, Edde Ashley of Menifee, Dr. Theda Ashley of Platte, Kansas and dozens of great-nieces and great-nephews. Rosary service and viewing will be held Sunday, July 12th from 5:00 pm till 7:00pm, with a Rosary service at 6:00 pm in the evening at Miller-Jones Mortuary, 26770 Murrieta Road in Menifee-Sun City. Funeral services will be Monday, July 13th at 2:00 pm in St. James Catholic Church in Perris. Memorial donations in Ottie Motte's name, may be made to the Perris Valley Historical Society and Museum, 120 4th Street, Perris, CA 92570 OR The St. James Catholic Church Building Fund, 260 W. 3rd Street, Perris, CA 92570

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**Published in Press-Enterprise from 7/11 to 7/12/2009**