

Miss Martha Moore



Some information and Moore photo courtesy of Benita Ruth Shields

Martha Moore was born in 1880 in KY. Martha was named Maddie at birth. However, she never liked the name Maddie and eventually changed it to Martha. Her father, J.D. Moore and her mother, Sue Ellen (Stotts) Moore arrived in Sarcoxie around 1881. Martha never married and locals referred to her as “Miss Martha”.

Martha was active in the community. In 1916, she was elected to serve as one of the guardians for a newly formed organization of Camp Fire Girls. She was frequently called upon to entertain at various events. In 1938 she had the opportunity to hear Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, who delivered an address on peace at Memorial Hall in Joplin. In 1941, as head of the Commercial Club, she took steps to reconstruct the old bandstand situated in the city square. During WWII, Martha, along with many other local residents, sold war bonds. In January 1944, it was reported that in two days the workers succeeded in selling bonds amounting to \$21,000 with more coming in before the end of the week.

Martha began her career at the Red Front in 1902, working for Henry Sabert. In 1919, Sabert sold the Red Front dry goods and shoe departments to William DelaRue. DelaRue closed the business in 1932 and moved to Bolivar, MO, taking Martha along as his sales lady. The Red Front remained closed for a short time but Martha’s brother, Allan and his cousin Ed Pelsue, soon reopened the Red Front and Miss Martha returned as manager.

Miss Martha was a woman ahead of her time as manager of the Red Front. She saw the advantage of advertising. In 1934, she promoted items that could be purchased at the Red Front by conducting style shows at Star Theatre and other locations on the square. . . As a prominent businesswoman, Martha Moore was awarded the first PBWs “Woman of the Year” Award in 1957-58.

Miss Martha was seldom seen without her trademark, a stylish hat. Miss Martha passed away in 1958.