

## WOMEN FROM OUR PAST

*since well-behaved women rarely make history...*



In the early 1970s, women serving in government were usually found on boards and committees, not in leadership positions.

Enter Mabel Preble, the first woman mayor of Fort Collins (1973-74) and only the second woman to serve on Fort Collins' city council (1971-75).

"I was interested in it, knew I could do it, so I ran," she told *Journey*.

She was already as a counselor at Colorado State University, the wife of a psychiatrist and a mother of four.

"Everybody was proud of Mabel," Ann Azari said, Fort Collins' most recent woman mayor. "She set the stage." Fort Collins was booming and a citizen's steering committee was developing a 7-year capital plan. Supporters of the city's unprecedented forward momentum claimed the community's growth offered huge potential, while others feared it would cost Fort Collins the quality of life they loved.

Former state Sen. Peggy Reeves remembers Mabel's wit and ability to retain control of meetings while allowing citizens their say. She diffused tense situations and avoided unnecessary confrontations with deliberate calm.

As mayor, Mabel came in contact with many lawyers. That piqued her interest enough to send her back to school for a degree in law. Few women were practicing law then, and her general practice took many domestic relations cases. "Women were delighted to have a woman to go to," said Susan Hoskinson, a former publisher of the *Triangle Review*.

Mabel's example inspires all of us who reach for something more in life. ❖

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