

# Hutto Bottling Works

by Harvey Olander

Yes, the unbelievable did happen. A woman, Mrs. Lizzie Henley Bostick mixed the sodas, bottled and sold the soft drinks to all the people who jammed the Hutto streets; and operated a horse drawn hearse that she stored between funerals in a barn, which is now Snuffys (early 1900s).

Oscar, my dad, told me he drank red sodawater at the Henley's outdoor stand beside the cafe. *\*The shed had a hinged wall that opened to make a shade for those who stood at the counter.* He said that in order to open the soda he had to push down a wire that protruded from the neck of the bottle. This wire forced the stopper out of the neck and into the bottle. His tongue held the wire while drinking, to keep the stopper from resealing the bottle. Mrs. Bostick had bottles made embossed with **HUTTO BOTTLING WORKS**.

Where was Mr. Bostick? There was never a mention of him. Even in the late 1800s women were not

considered competent to operate a business. Women had no rights. My great grandfather was a Church Warden in a Lutheran Church in Sweden. He made sure all boys could read and write, but there was no need to educate girls to cook and raise children. A woman's place was in the home but she did win a right to vote about 1919 in the USA. I heard rumors that during the 1929 Depression that the Hutto School did not rehire single girls but hired local men who were considered "family bread winners" so they could support their families.

A friend near my age was the daughter of a Methodist preacher in Mississippi. With her father's permission she went to college but the parishioners in his church kept telling him, "You are wasting your money; all she will ever do is get married and have children." This was in the 1930s. She mentioned a museum in Ohio about women's rights. One woman who is honored there sued a factory and won the right to collect her own paycheck.

Before then only the husbands of the women workers were allowed to pick up the wives' checks. My Aunt Fina Olander Lofgren was forced off of the vineyard she and her husband worked all their lives to establish because California had no community property law. When he died the vineyard went to his relatives.

I can't believe Mrs. Bostick started the funeral home or the bottling works. She must have inherited the business when Mr. Bostick died. Women were considered possessions of their husband. Women took wedding vows even into the 1940s that promised to love, honor and obey. My wife took that oath, but guess who stands at attention

for a clothing inspection before he goes out?

If Mrs. Bostick and Miss Henley financed and ran these businesses, Hutto should have a museum honoring both ladies for moving into a man's world and proving women are capable. Even the citizens of Hutto should be honored for allowing it to happen.

Mr. Hugh Davenport please enlighten us as to the mystery about the missing husband.

*\*Story of the Henley Potato Chip Factory and a picture of the building were featured in the Hutto Herald on July 6, 2000. Charles Hanstrom, Hugh Davenport and Hutto Museum each have a bottle on display.*

