

Clarice Rose Trotchie. (b. 1942)

By Jackie Trochie (Trottier)

Clarice Rose Trotchie was born in Fort Belknap, Montana, on June 6, 1942, to George Trotchie (Trottier) and Mary Louise Briere (Bruyere). As a girl, she was told she had been named after her Aunt Clara Naples. Therefore, she assumed her name was Clara. She never did use her birth name, but instead went by the names, Clara and “Haha,” a nickname her brother, Joseph aka “Chic” gave her since he couldn’t pronounce her name.

The Trotchies moved to Helena in the 1950s where Clara attended St. Mary’s Elementary and in 1962, she graduated from Helena Senior High. She immediately went to work for Blue Cross Blue Shield, but decided she could earn more money working with the family out in the hay fields in Townsend, Montana bucking bales onto stone boats. Clara put several of the male employees to shame because she could throw a 65-70 pound bale seven feet high. Clara attended the School of Business in Spokane, Washington and Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, where she studied construction and business. Later she attended Eastern Idaho Technical College in Idaho Falls, where she studied construction management.

At 23, Clara married Vaughn Anderson, a farmer from Shelley, Idaho where she worked all winter running a snow plow to raise enough money to take her sister to Hawaii, but the night before they were to leave, her husband used her savings to buy a semi-truck to haul hay to Montana until each of them filed for a homestead of 160 acres. They later sold land and moved to work in Washington and Alaska, but when a flood wiped out the small town of Rigby in Idaho, the two moved back and built a home in Roberts, Idaho.

Being a farmer, Vaughn bought some calves and started working for other farmers while Clara started a business called Arrowhead Construction (her daughter owns Eagle Feather Construction). Soon, she developed a multi-million dollar operation and her husband quickly joined her in doing the labor while she did the bids and office work. Both were equipment operators, and they raised her daughter and son on the equipment too, and now the children have their own businesses. Clara passed away at her home in Idaho Falls on October 4, 2014.



At the Controls.



Clara Anderson scoops up about a yard of sand.

Clara

*She sold the family farm
and bought a dump truck*

by Kitty Fleischman

ROBERTS — The swollen waters of the Snake River in eastern Idaho have kept many people busy 'round the clock in recent weeks with sandbagging operations — one of them a woman who got into the business almost by accident.

Clara Anderson, owner of Arrowhead Sand Inc. got

into the sand and gravel business to help with the rebuilding of Rexburg after much of the town was destroyed by flooding when the Teton Dam burst in 1976.

They'd sold the family farm a few years earlier, Anderson said, and while she'd have preferred to use the money for a trip to Hawaii, it was invested in a

dump truck instead.

After doing some logging in Washington and hauling in Alaska, Anderson said she came to Idaho to help with the rebuilding of Rexburg and got into the sand business.

There were lots of 16-hour days at the start Anderson said, and as the rebuilding

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projects began to taper off there was a lot a new work coming in because of the high-quality sand she was providing for customers. Much of her business centers on supplying sand to area concrete and concrete block businesses, Anderson said, as well as working for many private business projects and providing much of the sand used at the Arco nuclear site for building.

Jobs her company does include road building, excavating, landscaping, reclamation, grading, bulldozing, gravelling and hauling. In addition, Anderson said, her firm has intrastate hauling authority in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming. It can also provide water and vacuum site trucks for construction and oilfield projects, Anderson said, and can provide site preparation, site cleanup, reclamation and snow removal for oilfield projects.

While it may be somewhat unusual for a woman to be involved in the rugged work around road construc-

tion and oilfield projects, Anderson is able to hold her own.

Much of what she does, she said, she learned just by doing it.

But a lot of help, she added quickly, came from the Minority Business Assistance Center in Boise run by Tom McAdams and Betty Jo Ayarra-Sorenson. The center, which operates through a consulting contract with the Idaho Transportation Department, is designed to help women and minorities which have been discriminated against in roadbuilding establish businesses.

Originally brought about as legislation to help disadvantaged minorities, the Mitchell Amendment has since been expanded to help women as well.

Anderson — a member of the Turtle Mountain Chippewa nation from North Dakota — qualifies as both a women's business enterprise (WBE), and a disadvantaged-minority business enterprise (DBE) under the

program which requires that 10 percent of the funds from all highway projects be paid to WBE or DBE firms.

The center has helped with "lots of little things," Anderson said. "They've done really a lot of things to help us out."

The help has come in getting licensing, financing, bonding, and getting contracts, Anderson said. In addition, she said, McAdams and Sorenson have given her lots of new ideas for finding business as well as giving her access to plan rooms where she can review current projects up for bid.

They've also been able to help out with finding current rental costs when she needs equipment, Anderson said, and they helped her find a construction dictionary which she frequently uses in her work.

Right now, she added, she is also learning to use a word processor. A consultant arranged through the center has been coming to the business to teach her how to operate the computer.