

The Swans Club





In 1960, Bobby Whitehead and Shirley Foster formed the Swan's Club and Debutante Program to promote self-improvement of Black youth and their own community.

Marcella "Susie" Pruitt reminisces how the Swans worked alongside the Home of Neighborly services, held extravagant gatherings and fundraisers.



We had to use our expertise as young ladies and go out and request funds from friends, neighbors, businesses, all different types and the ads that we sold were on inside the book when it was.

-Jeanette Rhuebottom







Suzi Pruitt is among debutante award winners

Suzi Pruitt, 16, daughter of Mrs. Frankie McDonald, 1716 Washington street, and Jack Pruitt of Pomona, was selected an alternate award winner of a \$100 scholarship at the recent Eight Annual Debutante Presentation in San Bernardino sponsored by the Swans Club.

A Redlands high school senior, Suzi is active in speech and drama and is a member of the school band.

She was one of 15 young women presented to adult society at the Grand Ball in the Orange Blossom Room on the Orange Show Grounds. The evening climaxed the debutante season that started last April. During that time the girls received extensive training in grooming and poise.

During the summer, Suzi worked on civic and community projects that included presenting puppet shows and story hours at several libraries.

The Debutantes were adorned in white formal attire, taught to speak for themselves and give back to their community.

Former Debutantes proclaim the program as a cherished rite of passage into their community and the world.



Jeanette Rheubottom recalls the Deb. Program as: "Once you get the girls that want to be Debs., it's like one big happy family really. We work together."

Sources

Jeanette Rheubottom Oral History Marcella "Susie" Oral History https://theswans1960.com/about



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