

News from the Inn-Spector



Jessie Van Brunt

1864-1947

Jessie Van Brunt was born into a wealthy family in Brooklyn, New York. She studied art, specializing in creating artistic stained glass. Jessie Van Brunt traveled throughout the world and came to California in the 1930's. Perhaps she was lured to California by the romance and fascination of the Spanish Missions. She explored the Missions and wrote a book about them illustrated with her colored drawings. The book, published in 1932, emphasizes the symbolism of the Missions rather than their historic significance. For instance, one of her drawings and entries in the book describe the yucca blossoms that decorated the landscape surrounding the Missions.

Jessie Van Brunt was a familiar face at the Mission Inn in the 1930's. Room 161 is associated with her name. The Mission Inn collection includes several stained glass windows signed by Jessie Van Brunt. Most are displayed in the Spanish Art Gallery and include:

- The Juggler of Touraine with a dedication to Edwin Markham.
- The Hospitality window in remembrance of Alice Miller Richardson.
- The Courtesy window dedicated to Allis and DeWitt Hutchings.
- Several family crests rendered in stained glass.
- The St. Francis window in the St. Joseph Arcade adjacent to the Atrio with St. Francis depicted as Frank Miller.

Jessie Van Brunt donated windows to churches and shrines throughout the world. Her windows can be found in New York, India, New Zealand, Alaska, Yellowstone Park, and Jackson Hole, Wyoming. She is known and quoted for her boast that the sun shone through her windows "every hour of the 24." Jessie Van Brunt's artistry adds to the diversity and wonder of the Mission Inn Collection. The Mission Inn is part of the sun shining through Jessie Van Brunt's windows every hour of every day.