1898 Graduated from Stanford University
   She was the first woman in America to earn a degree in Geology
1899 Married Herbert Hoover
1899 While in Tientsin, China, Lou learned to read and write Chinese
1912 Translated and published the Latin Treatise on mining, *Agricola de re Metallica*, to English with her husband, Herbert Hoover
1914 While living in London Lou helped establish and chair The American Woman’s War Relief Fund
1919 Presented the Cross of Chevalier Order of King Leopold, from King Albert of Belgium, for her involvement with the Belgian Relief in WW1
1922 Vice President of the National Amateur Athletic Association
1923 President of the Woman’s Division of the National Amateur Athletic Federation
1924 National President of the Girl Scouts through 1925
1928 Received honorary Doctorate of Literature from Whittier College.
1929 First Lady for four years
1930 The first First Lady to make regular nationwide radio broadcasts. Additionally the first First Lady to fully catalog the contents of the White House
1934 Trustee of Whittier College until her death
1935 Again National President of the Girl Scouts through 1937. She also started the sales of ‘Girl Scout Cookies’
1938 Lou Henry Hoover Elementary School was built
1948 Lou Henry Memorial Hall was founded at Whittier College

**Whittier’s “Grand First Lady”**

Lou Henry Hoover

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March 29, 1876—January 7, 1944
Lou Henry Hoover was the wife of President Herbert Hoover, the 31st President of the United States. Although Lou was primarily known as the former First Lady, she had many accomplishments of her own. She was an independent, strong-willed, cosmopolitan woman interested in public issues. Although born in Iowa she was deeply influenced by her time in Whittier and considered herself a westerner.

Louise Henry was born on March 29, 1874, in Waterloo, Iowa to Charles Delano Henry and Florence Weed Henry. In 1884 when Lou was ten and her sister Jean was just two, her father moved the family to Whittier. He had an opportunity to open the city’s first bank and the warmer weather would be good for his ailing wife. The family quickly settled in to a home at 349 S. Painter Avenue, the present site of the Whittier Civic Center.

As a young girl, Lou Henry was a tomboy, spending much of her time in the hills and mountains surrounding Whittier. She and her father would go horseback riding exploring these areas. Her father bought her a hunting suit, and with 22-caliber rifles they would ride in search of squirrels and gophers pestering the local farmers’ crops. By the age of thirteen she was said to be as good of a shot as her father.

Due to her father’s respected status as the town’s banker, Lou felt a sense of pride being “The Banker’s Daughter.” With merely a large iron safe and a set of books, her father ran a one-man-institution. As a result, Lou could often be found helping her father with the books after school, then departing on long walks through the hills around Whittier.

While in Whittier, Lou Henry attended Evergreen School and then Bailey Street School where she graduated head of her class in 1889. She was self-motivated, involving herself in all types of activities at the school and in the community. She founded a fan drill team for the girls’ of Bailey Street School, which performed during several graduation ceremonies at the Whittier Academy. In addition, she was president of a school girls library club that met once a week to discuss literature and poetry; it was here that she was first introduced to the poems of John Greenleaf Whittier. Lou was often described as a tomboy who loved school sports. Due to a lack of sports fields at school Lou organized the clearing of a vacant lot for a baseball diamond.

During the economic slump of the 1890’s her father’s bank failed and the family moved to Monterey. In 1881 Lou attended Los Angeles Normal School (UCLA), transferring to San Jose Normal School (San Jose State University) where she graduated receiving her teaching degree in 1893. After attending a lecture by Stanford University geology Professor J.C. Branner, she became fascinated with geology. With the support of her professor she was the first woman to study geology at Stanford and she was the first woman in America to receive a degree in Geology.

During her studies at Stanford Lou met Hubert Hoover, an upper classman geology student and they began a relationship. Lou continued her studies while Herbert went to work in Australia marrying on February 10, 1899 after she graduated. They left for China the day after their wedding. In China, Hubert Hoover was under contract with the Chinese Government to investigate the conditions in the Chinese mines. He and Lou settled in Tientsin, China. Lou learned to speak and write Chinese, in fact during her life she learned to five languages, Mandarin Chinese, Spanish, Italian, French and Latin. In June of 1900 all foreigners, including the Hoovers, were forced to leave the city. A political uprising called The Boxer Rebellion wanted to rid China of all foreigners. Lou and Hubert Hoover

During her time in Europe Lou translated De Re Metallica from Latin to English. It was a manual on mining and metallurgy that was written in 1565. Herbert added some notes and they published their work in 1912. While in London, during the beginnings of war, the Hoover’s provided relief for Belgian refugees and was decorated in 1919 by King Albert of Belgium. Additionally during this time she helped establish the American Woman’s War Relief Fund and The American Woman Hospital.

Lou was very interested in the Girl Scouts. She wanted other girls to experience camping, fishing and hunting like she had done with her father. She devoted many hours to the Girl Scouts, helping to form troop leaders in Washington D.C. Her troop was opened to all young girls regardless of their religion, race or physical abilities.

Lou was the first First Lady to desegregate the White House. Lou was also the first First Lady to drive her own car and be responsible for job selection without the need to consider whether male or female. Additionally during one of her radio broadcast she referenced the 4-H Club stating that boys just as girls were capable of housecleaning.

After the White House Lou continued with her political and charitable causes. She was active in the League of Woman Voters, and was one of the founders of the Friends of Music at Stanford University. She served on the Whittier College Board of Trustees and in 1928 received and honorary Doctor of Literature degree. In 1938 Lou Henry Hoover Elementary School was opened and in 1948 the Lou Henry Memorial Hall at Whittier College was founded in her honor. It was not until after her death, January 7, 1944, that her husband, Herbert Hoover, realized her complete dedication to charities, most notably donating to the education of many children and well-being of many children.