

In Shakopee, the people had Fords and Chevrolets, but the cars in front of Rock Spring were too fancy. If you look inside, almost no one was there. A local guard was at the basement door where the machines and other equipment were kept. Only secret clientele were allowed in, usually from the Twin Cities.

The Rock Spring Café and other places had runners to inform them when raids were coming. They had safe houses, including one on Spencer Street across from St. Mary's School. There were 30 or 40 safe houses, where the slot machines were stored there for hours or a day until it was safe to return them.

Elizabeth K. Ries was elected a second time in 1927. But in 1928, Elizabeth resigned to become postmaster.

Elizabeth K. Ries died on May 6, 1949 at 74 years age. She was buried at the Shakopee Catholic Cemetery.



Rock Spring Café is now the Turtle's 1890 Social Centre in downtown Shakopee.



Elizabeth K. Ries was buried at the Catholic Cemetery in Shakopee.



SHAKOPEE HERITAGE SOCIETY
2109 Boulder Pointe, Shakopee, MN 55379

952-693-3865

shakopeeh heritage.org



SHAKOPEE HERITAGE SOCIETY

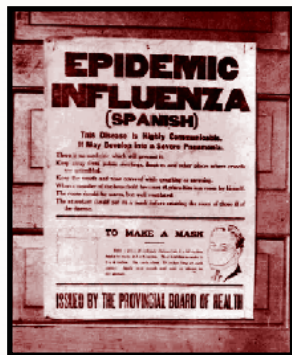


Elizabeth K. Ries
1874-1949



Elizabeth K. Ries was born on August 26, 1874 in Shakopee. Her parents were Jacob Franz Ries (1830-1911) and Josephine Mamer Ries (1835-1916) who were born in Septfontaines, Canton de Capellen, Luxembourg, and arrived in Minnesota in 1857, where Jacob founded the Jacob Ries Bottling Works in 1872. The company bottled water and other beverages under the name Rock Springs Beverages. Jacob Ries also served as Shakopee's mayor from 1895-1899.

Elizabeth became a nurse so she could take care her mother, Josephine, who needed help. During 1918, during the Flu Pandemic, there were not enough nurses, and Elizabeth gave her services night and day.



In the early 1900s, a picture of Jacob Ries family was taken by J.E. Jones. The family, including Jacob Franz Ries, Josephine Mamer Ries, and family in front of their home. Photograph from the Scott County Historical Society. On right is a picture of Elizabeth Ries Rock Springs Café, one of the most popular establishments in town in the 1920s and 1930s. The location is now Turtle's 1890 Social Centre.



In 1925, just five years after the passage of the 19th amendment granting women the right to vote, the City of Shakopee elected its first female mayor. The election was a nail-biter. Elizabeth K. Ries beat incumbent John P. Ring 319 to 290 votes, according to Jon Lyksett. She also was elected again in 1927.

Ries embraced her newfound stardom. In 1926, she appeared on WCCO radio in Minneapolis as a sort of mistress of ceremonies, bringing with her a group of musicians known as the Shakopee Serenaders and a group of male singers which she deemed The Lady Mayor's Trio, according to Jon Lyksett.



Lady Mayor and Her Trio with Harris DeMers, August Krueger, Jr., and Sylvester Devenney from the St. Paul Pioneer Press, January 1926

During her time as mayor, Shakopee approved a critical connection to Chaska over the Minnesota River with the Holmes Street Bridge, which remains today as a pedestrian bridge.

Elizabeth Ries was also the owner of the Rock Springs Restaurant, one of the most popular establishments in town in the 1920s and 1930s. "Shakopee was really a community by itself, cut off by the Minnesota River and the river bottoms, said Joe Jenn. "Back in the 1930s, the town was a little Las Vegas. We had 33 beer joints at one time and notorious nightclubs like Rock Springs and the Riviera. People, including gangsters, came here for booze, women, and gambling; the mayor, sheriff, and city councilmen went along with it all."



Joe Jenn