

Carmendale Fernandes

CHSSA HALL OF FAME 1987



Carmendale Fernandes was selected as one of the original ten coaches inducted into the NFL Hall of Fame in 1978. She and Jim Copeland are the only surviving coaches of the original ten. Nine years later, in 1987, she was selected as one of the original ten coaches inducted into the CHSSA Hall of Fame, and to date, she is the only coach to have served as President of both the NFL and CHSSA.

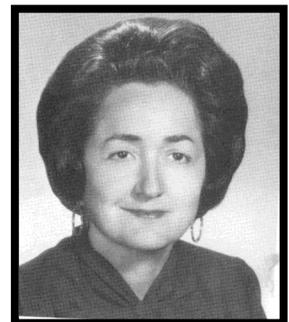
Carmendale served as a director of forensics for a remarkable forty-three years. She had originally wanted to become a courtroom attorney, but the field did not want females in those years. She began her speech career as a student at Turlock High School where she entered the Lions' Club, American Legion and Native Sons' oratory contests and also took elocution lessons. Her father, who was a natural public speaker and spoke at numerous conventions, encouraged her in her pursuits. She went on to attend San Jose State where she participated in both individual events and debate.

After college she taught one year at Gustine in the Central Valley and began their first speech program while teaching drama and three levels of English. As a second year teacher at a time when the troops were returning from World War II, she was very lucky to receive a job at Fremont in Sunnyvale. She was thrilled to be back with her friends on the San Francisco Peninsula and near her college where, in free moments, she worked on her master's degree. She began a forensics program, directed four dramatic shows a year, taught three levels of English and started the first Rally Committee.

Carmendale went on to serve the California State Council when CHSSA was formed from the existing north and south groups and later became president of the organization. She was the only high school teacher to be President of the Western Speech Association and was later presented with the organizations Outstanding Communication Service Award.

Carmendale served on the NFL National Council for over thirty years as a council member and had the opportunity to work with one of its original sponsors, Senator Karl Mundt. A fifth diamond coach and former president and vice-president of the NFL, Carmendale was responsible for getting the NFL tournament accepted by the National Secondary Principal's Association.

Carmendale's involvement with speech began well before CHSSA was formed. Her former students are serving as teachers, ministers, lawyers, engineers, doctors, mayors and legislators. Several have gone on to political positions. Carmendale is still in contact with many of them and in 2004 they planned an all class speech reunion in her honor.



She says that she is a lucky individual to have had the opportunity to be an active participant in the changing dynamics of our field of speech communication and she has been fascinated by the many diverse ways in which it has developed.