

A black and white portrait of Jane Hollister Wheelwright. She is an older woman with short, wavy, light-colored hair. She is resting her chin on her right hand, which is holding a dark, thin object, possibly a pen or a small stick. She is wearing a dark, long-sleeved shirt. The background is dark and out of focus. The title 'LADY PIONEER' is printed in large, white, serif capital letters over the bottom right of the portrait.

# LADY PIONEER

*Known for being curiously fearless and wise, passionate and plainspoken, author, feminist, and stewardess of the land JANE HOLLISTER WHEELWRIGHT literally walked softly but carried a big stick*

by STARSHINE ROSHELL



There's a local legend about a little girl who, in 1913, would ride her horse alone from her family ranch near Gaviota all the way down to her boarding school in Mission Canyon. With her coat and lunch tied behind the saddle, she'd take off on her sorrel mare Nita and trot along the coast past Robbers' Roost—an old adobe in Arroyo Hondo Canyon where highwaymen sometimes staged holdups. The journey was 45 miles and took the better part of eight hours.

The girl was 8-year-old Jane Hollister. The homestead was the illustrious Hollister Ranch. And the story strains the bounds of credibility—that is, unless you knew Jane.

"I believe she did it," says Betty Wheelwright, Jane's daughter-in-law.

If you knew Jane, you'd believe it, too. You'd believe it because Jane Hollister was a fiercely independent spirit, a frontier feminist who bucked the era's expectations by refusing to conform to "ladylike" behavior.

And you'd believe it because her life was full of inspiring adventures. Having grown up on a dusty, rustic cattle ranch, Jane went on to travel the world, living in London and Shanghai and Zurich. She studied with renowned psychologist Carl Jung and became a pioneer Jungian analyst in the United States. A silent sort for most of a century, she found her own voice late in life and published several influential books in her late 70s and 80s.

But mostly you'd believe that far-fetched horse tale because there's nowhere Jane would have rather spent a day than ambling in solitude, surrounded by the unspoiled beauty of the local landscape. In fact, when her Santa Barbara Girls School classmates attended church on Sundays, Jane opted instead to ride Nita up Mission Canyon. "I would argue," Betty says, "that Mission Canyon was her church."

Jane's passion for the land has inspired a new lecture series about her life and work at the Pacifica Graduate Institute. Free and open to the public, the lectures are taking place on the school's Ladera Lane campus from 6 to 8 pm on September 9 (Jane's birthday), November 11, and February 2.

Jane's photo albums, handwritten letters, and audio tapes are part of the OPUS Archives and Research Center—a collection of the personal writings and artifacts of Joseph Campbell and other eminent psychology scholars—located on the Pacifica campus. Researchers there have been delighted to discover, upon reading Jane's journals, that in addition to being a trailblazing feminist and leading Jungian disciple, she was also decades ahead of her time in drawing connections between the human psyche and the state of our natural surroundings. Long before green was the new black, Jane predicted that our growing disconnection from the earth would have disastrous results.

"Her writings on the wilderness predate the term 'ecopsychology,'" says Doyle Hollister, Jane's nephew and an instructor at Pacifica, "and yet she was an ecopsychologist. That's what she was doing."

It's also what drew her back home at the end of her life. Jane finished out her days right where she started them—on Hollister Ranch, the place that shaped her character and soothed her soul.

AN EXCLUSIVE AND EXQUISITE GATED COMMUNITY that counts James Cameron and Jackson Browne among its residents, today's Hollister Ranch is a patchwork of prime 100-acre parcels spread out across otherwise pristine beaches, bluffs, canyons, mesas, and rolling hills. Surfers know "the Ranch" for its world-class waves. But for 100 years, the land belonged to the strong-willed characters that make up the Hollister family.

Jane's grandfather William Hollister was a pioneer in his own right, leading the first transcontinental sheep drive from Ohio to the Golden State. In the 1860s, he bought 39,000 acres of coastal property from Point Conception to past Gaviota.

Born in 1905, Jane grew up roaming that land—jumping her horse across creeks, dodging rattlesnakes, driving wagons, and joining the cowboys on roundups. "As a child and teenager," she once wrote,



PREVIOUS PAGES, LEFT  
TO RIGHT: Jane Hol-  
lister Wheelwright,  
at age 75, photo-  
graphed in 1985 by  
Pamela Valois; in the  
1960s, Jane commis-  
sioned photographer  
Carol Baldwin to  
capture images of  
Hollister Ranch when it  
was being liquidated.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Photo composite  
of twins Clint and Jane Hollister at the  
Hollister house, 1913; Jane on a ride  
bidding farewell to the ranch; a rabbit  
sculpture Jane made at age 8; a por-  
trait of the author as a child.







*Long before green was the new black,  
Jane predicted that OUR GROWING  
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WOULD HAVE DISASTROUS RESULTS.*

"I was expected to compete with my brothers in riding, roping, hunting, and climbing trees, to take physical risks of all kinds, and to bear the same responsibility as they."

Thus was her farsighted brand of feminism born: the certainty that women are every bit as capable as men but that womanhood is a privilege in its own right. "She was really tapping into radical ideas for the time about valuing women's experience as different but at the same time equal [to men's]," says Safron Rossi, director of the OPUS Archives and Research Center. "That's such a third-wave idea from the women's movement."

Jane's mother, Lottie Steffens Hollister, was a force of nature herself. She possessed a PhD in psychology and had met Jane's father, John James Hollister, in Stanford University's pioneer class. They married in Lottie's Sacramento family home—an elegant Victorian that later became the Governor's Mansion. Theirs was a *Green Acres* relationship.

"She was as intellectual as my father was not," Jane once wrote about her mother—a city girl who seemed "like a caged wild thing" on the rugged ranch. Lottie had a proper townhouse built there with French doors, gold curtains, and a grand piano in the parlor.

But Jane always felt most "at home" on the land itself. "She was a no-nonsense kind of gal," says Betty, who is married to Jane's son, John Hollister Wheelwright, and lives in the Bay Area. "She didn't suffer fools and she didn't beat around the bush." Jane spoke in Western idioms: If she didn't believe someone, she'd say, "Oh, what a four-flusher" (a poker bluff). When she hiked to a steep hilltop, she'd say, "Let me stop a minute and blow" (like a horse).

When she left home as a young woman to attend Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania, she was surprised and frustrated by the spurious roles women were expected to play.

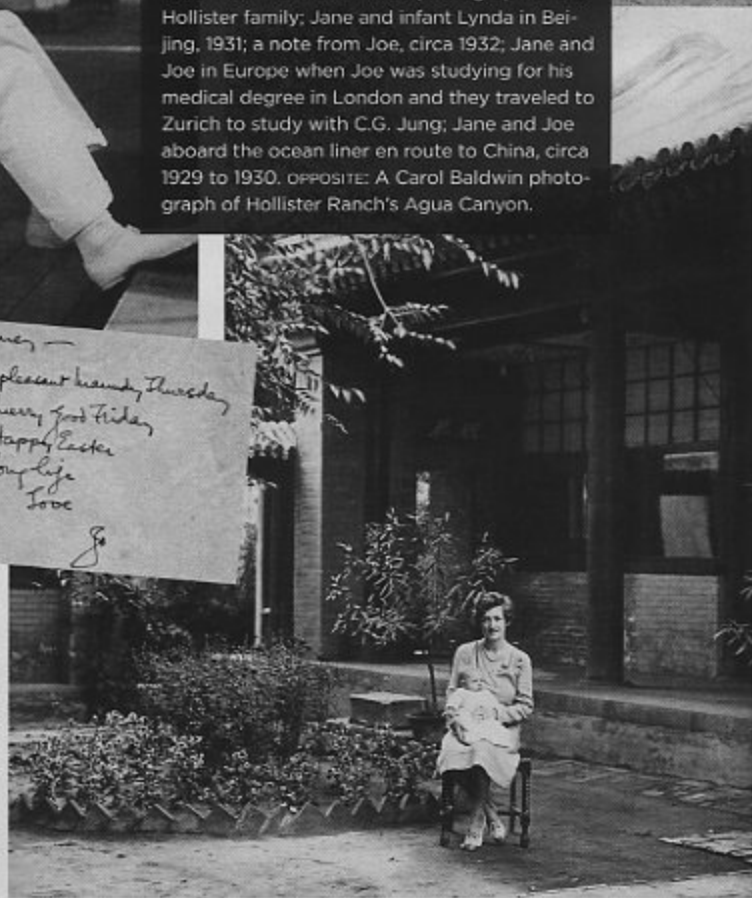
"Growing up like a coyote the way she did was not preparation for civilized life," says *Continued on page 150*



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: A 1936 photograph of the Hollister family; Jane and infant Lynda in Beijing, 1931; a note from Joe, circa 1932; Jane and Joe in Europe when Joe was studying for his medical degree in London and they traveled to Zurich to study with C.G. Jung; Jane and Joe aboard the ocean liner en route to China, circa 1929 to 1930. OPPOSITE: A Carol Baldwin photograph of Hollister Ranch's Agua Canyon.



For Jane —  
A pleasant windy Thursday  
A happy good Friday  
A Happy Easter  
A long life  
Love  
Jo





TOP TO BOTTOM: Shots from Jane's later journals and daily diaries, which she kept avidly—notes of her travels abroad as well as a property map of Hollister Ranch showing the various parcels.

*"I had a strong sense  
OF BEING BURIED  
DEEP IN THE SOIL,  
lost under the vast,  
rocky ledges, melted into the  
landscape, submerged as an  
INTEGRAL PART OF THAT PLACE."*

—Jane Hollister Wheelwright

Jane's daughter Lynda, who also spent her youth on the ranch, riding bareback on its beaches and leaping onto hay bales from the rafters of its barns.

"I ended up hiding my basic abilities and achievements," Jane later wrote, "and making a stab at...female role-playing in a not-too-successful attempt to fit into my new environment."

Not too successful indeed. She dropped out of school and went to live abroad with her beloved uncle Lincoln Steffens, the muckraking journalist who wrote the potent political exposé *The Shame of the Cities*.

But it was back home on the ranch that a visiting Joe Wheelwright spotted Jane atop her horse and announced he'd seen "some goddess running around on earth." The two were opposites in every way, not the least of which was stature: Joe was a lanky 6'8"; Jane was a sturdy 5'1".

"There was almost no shared temperament," says Lynda of her parents. "He was an extrovert. He was all about people. She was this deeply introverted, thinking type."

But opposites attract and the two quickly fell in love. "My father was entranced with her," Lynda says. "Most people were jumping all

over him, and she was aloof—an extremely beautiful young woman. She was a very sober person and got swept up in his enthusiasm."

The pair eloped, marrying at Mattei's Tavern in 1929. They set sail on an ocean-liner to see the world, traveling in steerage but donning their dress whites to sneak up and lounge on the first-class decks.

But close quarters aggravated their contrasting personalities.

"They practically came apart at the seams after traveling the world," Lynda says. The couple had heard of Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung's groundbreaking work in analytical psychology, examining the uncon-

scious forces and motivations underlying human behavior. They sought his counsel in 1932, and he helped them work through their differences. "It might not have lasted," Lynda says, "if it hadn't been for Jung."

The couple was so inspired that they became Jungian analysts themselves, studying with Jung during the next six years. Back in the states in the 1940s, they helped establish the training center that became today's

C.G. Jung Institute. Jane spent years working with fascinating patients, from lesbians (she had zero tolerance for prejudice) to the terminally ill.

When Jane's own father died in 1961, the family locked horns over what to do with the ranch, which had become too expensive to maintain. Jane was shocked to discover she had inherited voting rights over her siblings and cousins.

"He left it all to her to handle, which continued the alienation between her and her brothers," Lynda says. "It was a hard time for her. It damn near sank her."

But something good came of it: Jane began writing. She wandered the cherished homestead of her youth and documented her observations and memories in two books: *The Ranch Papers: A California Memoir* and *The Long Shore: A Psychological Experience of the Wilderness*, which she coauthored with Lynda.

"Here was my living home and my real parent, even my excuse for living," Jane wrote in the latter. "I had a strong sense of being buried deep in the soil, lost under the vast, rocky ledges, melted into the landscape, submerged as an integral part of that place."

Betty often walked the property with Jane. "She knew every flower, every plant, and when they would bloom," she recalls. "She described herself as having an indigenous soul."



One day in 1963, she caught a ride from a helicopter pilot and got her first-ever bird's-eye view of the land she knew so well. "I could have ridden the ranch forever and never seen what I did in that instant," she later wrote in *The Ranch Papers*. "That ranch had never really been ours. It belonged to a much bigger system than the Hollister family."

Part of the ranch was given to the State of California, and developers bought the coastal tract for a little more than \$12 million in 1965, but they invited Jane and Joe to buy back one of the 100-acre parcels for themselves. The couple chose an especially remote plot on the pathway to the Western Gate, the place where the Chumash believed spirits leave the physical world.

They built a simple home—a cinder block house wedged into the surrounding sandstone, and called it Tepitates, the Chumash word for "sacred high place." They cooked with well water on a primitive stove. They used candles and kerosene. And they were happy.

"She just melded back into that world," says Lynda, and though Jane's relationships with her siblings were never fully repaired, she found peace in returning to the land of her youth. "It became her salvation again, after it all, and she felt blessed that she could have that wholeness again."

If Jane's life began with daring rides down the coast, it ended with daring walks down her driveway. She took a daily stroll down the lane despite mountain lion and even bear sightings. "She would take an umbrella with her to make herself look tall so the lion wouldn't think she was prey," Lynda says. "She would say, 'I can bop him on the nose if he follows me.'"

Jane Hollister Wheelwright died in 2004 at age 98. She told us this before heading out the Western Gate: "Hardly anyone in our whole, wide world, except those who were born in the country and know what they are missing, will try to get enough time in nature or enough natural solitude to be human and sane." ■

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Model Tatjana Patitz. Photographed by David Cameron. Styled by Marina Ray. Hair by David Cox. Makeup by Sage Maitri. For more information, see "Shopping Guide" (page 158).

