

Fariipiti Fare Basket (Salle Orton)

The Fariipiti chapel and mission home were dedicated in January 1950 by Apostle Matthew Cowley. Just below the mission home was a beautiful lily pond. In 1950 an outdoor cement basketball court was built. "On November 1, 1950 under the direction of Elders Richard Pearce and Robert McClellin. The members of the Papeete Branch commenced pouring of a cement floor to make a basketball court and dance floor at the Fariipiti complex. Of particular note was the valiant effort of the Relief Society sisters, who served food during the entire twenty three hour non-stop project. The completed court was considered to be the finest in Tahiti at the time and it greatly helped the program promoted by President Mallory to provide wholesome activities for the youth of the Church." "It was officially dedicated on January 4, 1951 with many local officials attending."

Due to the heavy rains, it was unusable during the rainy season. Mission President John K. Orton decided to build a cover for it. In 1954 he succeeded in obtaining the First Presidency permission to construct a cultural hall at Fariipiti and he personally donated \$5000, half the cost of construction. The additional funds were provided by the First Presidency. It was to be built over the cement basketball court with the stipulation that each needed adult male member donate free labor. "Construction of the covered hall did not begin until after Orton's departure " due to medical problems. Victor Cave notes that his non member father, David m. Cave, did all the welding on the metal trusses. The Fare Basket was completed in November 1954. "The dedication festivities began on November 29, 1954 with 1500 people in attendance. The mayor of Papeete, Alfred Poroi, cut the ribbon to completed Fariipiti cultural hall., the only one of its kind in French Polynesia. A community basketball tournament involving sixteen teams was held over the next three days. The building was dedicated on 2 December 1954 by President Larson Caldwell." As noted in the pictures that follow, the Fare Basket was officially named "Salle Orton" in honor of President John K Orton. The sign for Salle Orton had been removed by 1963 when I arrived in Tahiti. Details are from Seasons of Faith and Courage by S. George Ellsworth and Kathleen C . Perrin. Pictures are provided by Lucille Caldwell, Ira Tree and Marlowe Ashton.

Shown below are some nostalgic pictures of the "fare basket" It was also used for Relief Society bazaars, plays and dances. One of the first memorable plays was the Life of Christ in the mid 1950s. For many years it was the only covered basketball court in Tahiti. It was demolished in 1978 to make way for the new Fariipiti Stake center. The lily pond is still visible just north of the stake center, but the old fare basket is now a parking lot. For us old timers it was a lot more useful and fun in the "tau tahito."

Dedication ceremonies December 2, 1954. Lucille and President Larson Caldwell are to the left of Papeete Mayor Alfred Poroi. (note the furniture from the mission home)



Salle Orton





Fare Basket 1954

Hina Caldwell, Lucille Caldwell, President Larson Caldwell, Joseph Childers, Keni Orton, Lynn Bissell, Ira Tree, Dean Whiting, Robert Steed



Fare Basket by Lily pond

Picture of Fare Basket used for a Relief Society Bazaar in 1964



Compiled by Gerald Faerber November 2011