



# THE GILMAN RANCH FLYER

Issue No. 1

Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum

Fall 1998

## GILMAN HISTORIC RANCH & WAGON MUSEUM

Imagine the raucous roll and pitch of a stagecoach, the thundering beat of six lurching horses barreling down a mountain pass, and the rush of the spring-fed stream ever beckoning. Listen to the sounds of the wind rustling through the cottonwoods, blending eerily with the haunting voices of the Cahuilla Indians singing about the beginning of time. Hear the shriek of the whistle as the locomotive labors through San Gorgonio Pass, carrying freight and passengers to the cities of California and the gold fields of Arizona and further east. The wagons no longer run, but the pass, the stream, the cottonwoods, the Cahuillas, and the train are all still very much in evidence. At Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum one has an opportunity to explore the impact of all these elements on the development of the San Gorgonio Pass area and how they influenced the life and times of the settlers over the past 150 years.

The park and museum are open on Sundays only, from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, from March 1 to November 30. Group tours are by appointment only. Reservations should be made at least three weeks in advance with alternate dates available in case of scheduling conflicts.

For more information, call 909-922-9200.



## NEW SCHOOL PROGRAMS FOR GILMAN HISTORIC RANCH & WAGON MUSEUM

Three new education programs, designed by personnel of the Riverside County Parks Department, will soon be offered at Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum to schools throughout the pass area. The programs are tailored primarily for elementary school level, but may be modified at a later date to attract high school students.

The programs complement current school history curriculum, i.e. the West Movement, California History, and U.S. History, offered in the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades, respectively. The tours are lead by trained professionals.

Teachers and other group leaders should allow two hours for each program.

## A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE *The French Gilman Nature Trail*

The nature trail at Gilman Ranch is named after French Gilman (born in 1871), the oldest son of James Marshall Gilman. French became a nationally recognized authority on the flora and fauna of Southern California and Arizona, and many plants were named after him as he was the first person to identify and describe them. In the 1930s, French was appointed a field naturalist for the newly established Death Valley Monument. There he did his most extensive plant collecting for which he is best known.

A tour of the nature trail includes an interpretive talk and discussion of the animals (from bears to bugs) and plants (both native and introduced) of the area. Students and other visitors will be able to cross the stream via a new bridge and ascend the trail that borders the old olive orchard, keeping a keen eye out for black bears, reptiles, butterflies, and birds.



## INTERESTING CAHUILLA INDIAN CUSTOM

The Cahuilla Indians were divided into two groups (*moieties*), one the wildcats (bobcat) and the other coyotes, which served as marriage regulation groups. A member of one group had to marry a member of the opposite group. Intermarriage between the members of the two groups encouraged strong economic and social alliances.

## WHAT'S NEW ON THE RANCH

Two new fixtures have been built at Gilman Ranch to facilitate the presentation of educational tours and interpretive talks.

A massive bridge has been constructed over the stream that runs through the ranch. Designed by Patrick Shannon, Chief of Maintenance at Gilman, the bridge was built with the help of community workers. The six-foot-wide,



forty-foot-long structure connects the out-buildings and historical sites to the south of the stream with the nature trail and old olive grove lying to the north. Supported by treated utility poles donated by the electric company (Edison), the bridge will easily accommodate over thirty students at once participating in nature walks arranged by museum personnel.

The second new feature at Gilman is the 32-foot-long sluice box built by volunteer Marvin Neitzel and volunteer and Park Commissioner Bob Schley. The sluice box will be utilized in the Gold Strike Trail education program, providing a water source for the young prospectors.

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## PLAYING AT THE RANCH

Long memories return to me whenever I have an occasion to visit the Gilman Ranch, and that is often. The sturdy old house that I loved is gone now, but I remember it well as part of a happy youth. The wall-papered rooms, the wrought iron that decorated the fireplace mantle, Indian baskets on the wall, the kitchen and pantry with its spicy aromas, all weave a tapestry of years of living by generations of the Gilman family. The kitchen was special and unique, a real ranch kitchen, with its big cast-iron cookstove that helped to heat the entire house in the winter, and the many cooking utensils of yesteryear. Marian Gilman Hunt radiated a special brand of hospitality to all who visited. "Living in a good old-fashioned way," she called it.

In the heat of summer we could sit beneath one of the many fruit trees and relish a cool breeze from the west, as we looked down across the Pass to the Wolfskill ranch. On an especially hot summer day we were allowed to take a dip in the water cistern north of the old barn, and then come back to the kitchen for cookies and lemonade. Exploring the creek as it wound upward toward the "Bench" and picking berries along the way could be an exciting time, if the little black bears were picking also. Once we saw a bobcat, and marveled at its beauty and wildness. Other "varmint" came for the fruits during their ripening time.

From the orchard, looking down across the fields, one could imagine the travelers of history—stagecoaches, wagons, horseback riders, buck boards and the coming of the "Iron Horse" of the railroad. Many pathways led to the ranch, and many lives were touched by its presence. Even now, while sitting at a picnic table beneath the olive trees, the scene repeats itself, and my imagination colors it in vivid hues. I shall always remember the majesty of the ranch house as it presided proudly over the scenes of history in the making, and the memories of myself and others who enjoyed it. As members of the Ranch Hands we strive to help maintain the Ranch and preserve its heritage for future generations. It is a labor of love.

—Frances Park



## THE RANCH'S NEW OLD TRACTOR

The Gilman Ranch is now the home of a beautifully restored 1949 8N Ford tractor. Rich White, one of the maintenance personnel at Bogart Park, supervised a number of Community Service Workers in refurbishing the classic tractor to its present pristine condition. The familiar gray and red paint sparkles, and with the new tires it looks like it just rolled off the assembly line. Valued at over \$ 3200 today, it sold new for about \$700. The 8N was, and still is, one of the most economical, dependable and versatile tractors to be found on any farm, large or small, in any part of the world.

☆☆☆☆☆☆

To compliment the tractor, Rich and his friends have just finished restoring a 1925 Dayton-Boyle gas pump. The pump is from the Marshall Canyon Ranch and sports its original hose!



## NATIVE GARDEN

The most spectacular native garden is taking root. Bill Deans, member of the Ranch Hands, reports that the entrance arbor is in place and a beautiful sign created by Gilman Ranch caretaker Ann will be in place soon. The redwood screens covering the electrical outlets are in place, the walkway is half done, a foot bridge over the drainage ditch is being built and benches and one picnic table will eventually be in place. Plants and trees on order are: 6 large Bigleaf Maple, 40 pots of Scarlet Penstemon, 80 pots of Douglas Iris, and 80 pots of Desert Mallow in colors of lavender and apricot. This living exhibition of native plants and trees is made possible by the Ranch Hands. Visitors will be able to identify plants and trees observed along the walk by the kiosk located in the garden.

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## HISTORIC FRUIT TREES

On Wednesday, September 23, 1998, Mits Kawahara and his wife, Terry, from the California Rare Fruit Growers (CRFG), Inland Empire Chapter, came out to the Gilman Ranch to speak with us about registering the historic fruit trees at our site. As part of CRFG's interest in fruit trees and their historic value, the Inland Empire Chapter has taken on the project of cataloging and registering historic fruit trees in this area. With the awareness that many of the people with information about historic trees will not be here forever, they are attempting to record the information before it is lost. The CRFG is asking members of the agricultural community, as well as the general public, for information regarding the location of historic fruit trees. The registry will be public information and will be available through their office, and will be accessible through the Internet in the future. If you have knowledge of historic fruit trees in Riverside or San Bernardino County, please call Mits and Terry Kawahara at 909-780-9167.

## INAUGURAL MESSAGE

I hope you have enjoyed the first edition of the Gilman Ranch Flyer. The newsletter will be published quarterly and will inform readers about the activities taking place at the Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum.

It has been exciting these past six months to see real progress at the ranch. Some of the activities we have been involved with include attending the Palm Desert Education Expo to promote our educational programs, a booth at the Farmers Fair held at Lake Perris to promote the Gilman Ranch Park, planning an open house on May 15, 1999, to acquaint educators with the site, a volunteer training program in the Fall of 1999, and a kid's summer camp in the summer of 1999.

The 5th annual Rendezvous was successful, and over 1400 children from various schools enjoyed the museum and the Mountain Men.

One of the most important assets of the Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum is the volunteer. I have a strong belief in the value and power of volunteerism. That belief has been validated during my first six months here. So many volunteers have directed, aided and supported my endeavors to promote the ranch. There has been a true team approach to make the site succeed to its fullest potential. My thanks go to Joan Coombs and her Rendezvous Docents; Bob Schley and Marvin Neitzel for our wonderful sluice box; Ginnie Sisk, Gilman descendent, in her ongoing research of the Gilman family; Gordon Sisk for creating and editing our newsletter; Bill Deans, Bob Knighton, Mike Pickett, and Elmer Drogolovitch for their green thumbs; Joan Coombs, Muriel Wehrman, Darlene Adrian, and Irene Edwards for their work inventorying the collections. Also Bill and Lucille Goza's daughters Ann and Lou. Lou contributed articles to the newsletter about the nature trail and what's new at the ranch and Ann answered my numerous questions about the park. I want to welcome Marty Kreisinger and Cassidy Cording as our new Assistant Interpreters. Our good-byes and well wishes to Dana Neitzel in her new position at the Riverside Municipal Museum. And thanks to Bob Knighton for the beautiful painting of the ranch.

I am open to ideas for programs and events you are interested in. I invite you to come by the park and express your ideas and share in their development.

—Linda Pillow, Gilman Ranch Site Interpreter

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## INTRODUCTIONS

Our first issue of *The Gilman Ranch Flyer* gives me the opportunity and pleasure to introduce our newest staff members:

Molinda Baxter, our District's new Collections Asst., recently completed the Museum Studies Program at Cal. State Univ., San Bernardino where she also obtained a B.A. in Anthropology. Before coming to the Parks District, Molinda interned at the Riverside Municipal Museum. You can find Molinda at the Ranch every Wednesday.



Linda Pillow has been working for the last several months as a Museum Asst. at the Gilman Ranch, but most recently accepted the position as Site Interpreter. Linda comes to the Ranch with a B.A. in History from Cal Poly Pomona, and a Museum Studies Certificate from Cal State Univ., San Bernardino. She has worked at several Museum/Cultural sites including the Agua Caliente Cultural Museum in Palm Springs, where she was busy developing and leading educational programs, curation of the collections, research, and the preparation and presentation of promotional material. She has also worked for the San Jacinto U.S.D., as a substitute teacher, and served as a docent at the Southwest Museum in Los Angeles. Lastly, (or might I say firstly, in her professional career) she flew over our skies as a flight attendant for United Airlines. It is great to have them both "on board!"

Remembering my first year at the Ranch, it is hard to believe what an "old timer" staff person I have become (maybe in more ways than one). It was in 1989, however, that I went to work cleaning and inventorying the Wagon Museum Collection in preparation for its move to the Gilman Ranch. This was when the wagons sat across from the Community Center. I remember fondly the visits from Bob Baliff and Phil Coombs during this period, and their generous sharing of knowledge about the Pass Area, the history of Banning, ranching, and cowpoking. They are missed!

If you have not met Linda and Melinda, stop by the Ranch and say "Howdy!" A sincere thank you to all our dedicated and talented volunteers!

—Cate Whitmore, Curator of History

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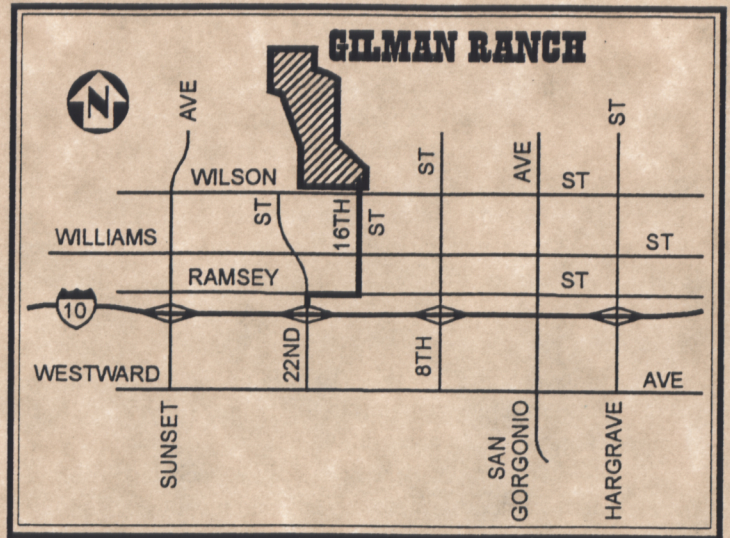


Established 1998

Cate Whitmore, Curator of History  
Linda Pillow, Gilman Site Interpreter  
Melinda Baxter, Collections Assistant  
Gordon Sisk, Volunteer Editor

Published by  
The Gilman Historic Ranch & Wagon Museum  
16th & Wilson Streets  
Banning, CA 92220

The Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum is located at 16th and Wilson Streets in Banning, CA.



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**RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN-SPACE DISTRICT**

"To acquire, protect, develop, manage and interpret for the inspiration, use and enjoyment of all people, a well-balanced system of areas of outstanding scenic, recreation, and historic importance."

