



The GILMAN RANCH FLYER

Issue No. 4

Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum

Summer 1999



A VISIT TO THE GILMAN RANCH —AND A FEW MEMORIES

On April 7, 1999, my wife, daughters and I visited the Gilman Ranch as part of a vacation trip. As a great-grandson of James and Martha Gilman I was both moved and impressed with the Ranch and the Wagon Museum. My daughters, Lauren and Alison, and wife, Shirley, shared the wonderful day. I enjoy learning about my ancestors and meeting relatives. I particularly enjoy learning about the people, skills and crafts of by-gone eras. As a member of the Artist Blacksmith Association of North America, an organization dedicated to preserving and perpetuating the craft of the blacksmith, it is wonderful to see a wagon collection and interpretive displays that define and document the role of wagons in early American transportation. I was equally impressed with the knowledge and skill of Linda Pillow, site interpreter.

It is a particularly moving experience to see and experience the remains of the adobe house that my grandfather was born in, the foundation for his early home and the land and orchards the family worked. I am very pleased that the Riverside County Regional Park District has placed a priority on the preservation of a bit of history . . . not just the personal connection to my ancestors, but through the collections and preservation efforts a sense of life and community in early America is preserved. Thanks to all who have participated in this effort!

Virginia Sisk and I are (3rd) cousins; my maternal grandparents are Herbert M. Gilman and Maude A. (Duncan) Gilman. My mother is Mary A. (Gilman) Upham and father is Harry E. Upham. I am their only surviving child. My brother, Harold E. Upham, died at birth. I am married to Shirley Brown whose parents live in Pidcock, GA. There is one more Herbert M. Gilman descendant living, Phillip Gilman, son of Arthur F. Gilman, in Southern Trinity County near Hetten Valley.

Virginia asked if I knew why Herbert M. Gilman moved to Trinity County from Banning. Unfortunately I do not know and my aunt, James H. Gilman's widow, does not know either. She

has found a few letters that shed some insight on the family and knows some of the same oral accounts of Herbert and Maude that I do. It is always frustrating to become interested in family history after the people with firsthand information are dead.

I do know that Herbert M. Gilman met Maude A. Duncan in the community of Mad River (most likely at a dance), married and homesteaded a section of land (Soldier Basin/Gilman Ranch) on the North Fork of the Eel River in southeastern Trinity County. This property Shirley and I own, having inherited it from my mother. My mother and most of her brothers were born on the homestead.

In later years Herbert Gilman moved his family a few miles to Zenia where they owned a 40-acre ranch. Herbert M. Gilman was deceased long before I was born; however, I remember traveling by horseback from Hetten Valley the 5 miles to Soldier Basin, for a deer hunting expedition. I rode with Maude on her favorite horse . . . I was 4 or 5 years old at the time. On that ride, as night fell, a flashlight in a sack tied to the saddle horn would turn on and off to the rhythm of the horse's steps. Although I cannot remember all the details, even why it was memorable, that event was brought up in many family discussions with my grandmother. My parents enjoyed deer hunting on the homestead with Maude and her second husband, Clive McGill.

Maude lived on the Zenia ranch until she fell ill in the early 1960's. Herbert M. and Maude A. Gilman are buried side-by-side in the Hetten Valley Cemetery along with two of their sons, Arthur F. and Harold B. Gilman. My infant brother is nearby. All the other children of James M. and Martha B. Gilman are buried in the Banning Cemetery; it is likely to remain an unsolved mystery why Herbert moved north and settled in southern Trinity County to make his home. My mother is buried in the Weaverville Cemetery beside my father. The ashes of James H. Gilman, the longest surviving child of Herbert and Maude, were scattered on the Tehama deer Winter Range by his widow, Grace Gilman, my daughter Lauren and I.

My purpose in sharing this bit of history is to further document one branch of James and Martha's family, and to acknowledge the effort of all who contribute to the preservation of history at the Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum. Thank you for sharing your efforts with my family and me!

—Herbert Upham
Sebastopol, California

★★★

The following is a transcription of the obituary of Herbert Gilman, Herbert Upham's grandfather, which appeared in local papers April 3, 1939.

HERBERT GILMAN CALLED BY DEATH

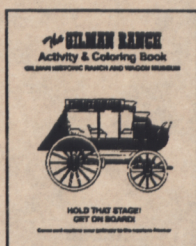
Miss Mabel Gilman received word last Friday of the death on March 29th of her brother, Herbert Gilman, at his home in Zenia, Trinity County, (California).

Herbert M., second son of the late J.M. and Martha Gilman, was born in Banning March 1, 1873. He attended local school schools, leaving Banning for the north in the early 1900's to engage in stock raising. He is the first of the older Gilman children to be called by death.

His wife, who had been Maud Duncan, survives him. Children are James, of the forest Service, and a local high school pupil from 1923 to 1926; Mary, who is teaching school; Harold, a fish and game warden; and Arthur, living at home. Brothers and sisters of Mr. Gilman are M. French, Carrie, James, Arthur, Mabel, and Ethel.

Mr. Gilman has been in poor health for the past several months. The funeral was conducted last Saturday. Burial was in Hetten Valley.

ONE MORE USEFUL TOOL!



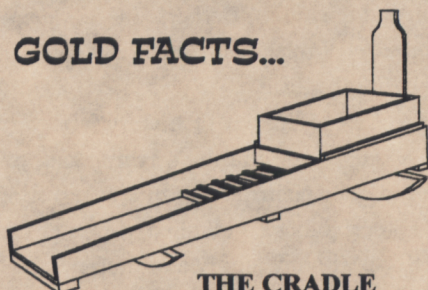
The Gilman Ranch Activity & Coloring Book has arrived and is being given out to the kids participating in the ranch's interpretive program. The book is the creation of Cate Whitmore and Linda Pillow who felt the need for additional reinforcement of the information presented to the students in a way that would be fun for them. It contains projects

on the history of the ranch and the ranch house, the stagecoach, the Bradshaw Trail, the Cahuilla Indians, the railroad, Mountain Men, bears, wagons, and all sorts of other information about the museum and the park. Thanks to Cate and Linda. ★

HISTORY LESSONS II

Steve Lech's class entitled "Early History of Riverside County," offered at Riverside Community College last April, was so

GOLD FACTS...



THE CRADLE
OR ROCKER BOX

This gold recovery device was effective in dryer areas where water was not plentiful. Gold-bearing gravel was shoveled into the screen-bottomed box on top of the cradle and water was poured over the gravel. While adding the water, the cradle was rocked from side-to-side to wash the gravel and dirt through the screen and down the cradle's channel and over the gold-trapping slats called riffles. A burlap sack was placed under the riffles to catch the finer gold particles that escaped the riffles. After repeated use, the sack was burned and the gold was panned from the ashes.

We are fortunate to have a replica of this Gold Rush artifact at our museum. It was donated to us by Mike Warren, who, along with his friend and classmate, Kyle Hyer, built it as a class project. Mike is the grandson of ranch hand Bob Schley and is a junior at Hemet High School. He is active in FFA, and enjoys the great outdoors and working with his hands. We appreciate very much having his project for display. ★

popular that it is being offered again. The course, sponsored by RCC Community Services, is designated CAP 91600 and will meet on Saturdays, September 11, 18, and 25, from 9am to 12 noon. Cost for the three sessions is \$45 plus a \$5 materials (maps and handouts) fee payable at the first class meeting. To sign up for the course, or get additional information about it, call 909-222-8090. If you have any questions for Steve, you can e-mail him at tracydl@pe.net. ★



BLACKSMITHS AT THE RANCH

Blacksmithing demonstrations are being presented at the ranch on the last Sunday of each month and will continue through October. Tom Laughlin, originator of the program, is a retired California Department of Forestry fire captain who has been practicing his hobby of blacksmithing for most of his adult life. It is because of his devotion to the craft that he has gathered together a group of like-minded individuals who, by exhibiting their skills, are perpetuating a bygone trade. We welcome you to come and observe what, without these gentlemen, would have become the lost art of blacksmithing. ★



MOVIN' ON...

Two very special people are moving on and we're sad. Cate Whitmore, Curator of History for the Riverside County Regional Park system, and Linda Pillow, Site Interpreter for the ranch and museum, are leaving us.

Cate has been a friend of the ranch for a long time and her efforts were responsible for the growth of the ranch as a recreational, educational, and historic facility. Her keen interest in the ranch, its founders, and the people who now maintain and

preserve it, is evidenced by the quality of the site and the scope of its contents. Her quietly determined management style was refreshing and appreciated as she involved herself in all phases of the day-to-day operation of the ranch. She will be missed.

Linda's tenure was shorter but no less evident. Her educational programs were designed to augment the state-mandated history curriculum for fourth graders, and the big increase in the number of school tours at the ranch can be attributed solely to her persuasiveness and enthusiasm. She presented pertinent material with intelligence, understanding, and verve. The superlative used most often by the kids' teachers to describe Linda's program and presentation was "the best." She too will be missed.

★★★

Dear Gilman Ranch Hands and Friends,

I am retiring, after much consideration, to pursue other interests. Before leaving, however, I wanted to express my sincere thanks to all of you for your wonderful support, and to say it has indeed been my pleasure and privilege to work with you over the past several years. Together we have pursued the mission and dream of restoring the Gilman Historic Ranch to its full potential as a historic site. In my view, we have made great strides together in meeting our ultimate goals and objectives for this site. Through all the ups and downs, I have appreciated your great loyalty to the site. Because we have been through so much together in achieving our aims, I will fondly recall each and every one of you no matter what I may be doing. Without your support and steadfastness of purpose, this progress would never have happened.

As I depart, let me say that I think a new curator with new energy, new ideas, and new strengths, will be good for the ranch. I know that with your loyal support, and your able assistance, a new person will take the ranch to new heights of achievement.

Again, thank you for everything you have done over the past years to make my efforts productive and meaningful. "Happy Trails" to you all!

Sincerely,

Cate

★★★

An unforgettable year...

As many of you are aware, I recently resigned from the Riverside County Parks Department as the Gilman Historic Ranch Site Interpreter. I am first and foremost a teacher, and in this position I've been able to share my knowledge and love of history. It was after much deliberation that I accepted my new full-time position as Education Coordinator for the Agua Caliente Cultural Museum in Palm Springs.

The Gilman staff and I hope you have enjoyed the first year of The Gilman Flyer—the newsletter was just one of our many projects. We are most proud of the educational programs we presented to over 4000 kids and their teachers and chaperones during this past season. A coloring and activity book was put together to be given to each child participating in these programs. New Gilman history and Gilman Ranch walking tour brochures were created. We initiated a new special event, Ranch Days, and continued our collaboration with The Living History Association (Mountain Men Rendezvous). Working blacksmiths demonstrating their craft are a new site feature (*see BLACKSMITHS AT THE RANCH in this newsletter*).

I'm indebted to Cate Whitmore for giving me the opportunity to participate in the Gilman experience. I appreciate the support of Roland Perales, Assistant General Manager of

Riverside County park system, and his staff. I cannot thank enough Marty Kreisinger and Cassidy Cording, my assistant interpreters, for their hard work and dedication.

Thank you all for the assistance, information, and encouragement you offered me throughout the year. I am convinced that our accomplishments were due in no small measure to your support and advocacy.

I invite you to visit the Agua Caliente Cultural Museum and say hi.

Linda

★★★

Taking over the reins—

On behalf of the Gilman Staff we would like to introduce our new Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum Site Interpreter, Shelley Kibby. She was formerly a nature interpreter for school programs at Lake Skinner. We welcome Shelley aboard. ★

FOR WANT OF A NAIL...

A morsel of genuine history is so rare a thing as to be always valuable.

—Thomas Jefferson

HELP WANTED

DOCENTS: Joan Coombs is in desperate need of volunteer docents at the ranch to work Sundays from 10:00 to 4:00. If you like meeting people, enjoy fresh air and would like to learn more about the ranch yourself, give Joan a call at 849-2133.

GARDEN HELPERS: The French Gilman Memorial Native Garden is progressing nicely, but more hands are needed to keep it growing, watered, and weeded. If you like to garden and need the exercise, Bill Deans could sure use you any Wednesday from 10:00 until your pooped. Call Bill at 849-1094 for information or just show up at the ranch garden.

MANNEQUIN: Having delved into the depths of the museum's inventory, Melinda Baxter has discovered a wonderful collection of women's clothing. Displaying or photographing the garments would be greatly improved if they were on a mannequin of small or petite size. If anyone has such a thing in their attic or closet that they would like to donate to the museum, call the museum at 922-9200.

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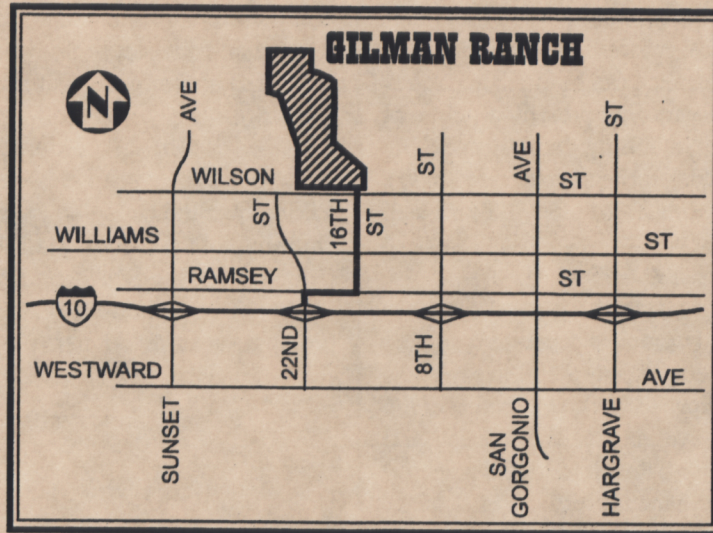


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The Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum is located at 16th and Wilson Streets in Banning, CA.



GILMAN HISTORIC RANCH AND WAGON MUSEUM

16th and Wilson Streets ★ Banning, CA 92220

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."