

ARTI-FACTS

The Newsletter of the Idyllwild Area Historical Society

Summer 2006

Preserving the History of Idyllwild and neighboring communities in the San Jacinto Mountains

TWO MEN WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE

By Ben Killingsworth

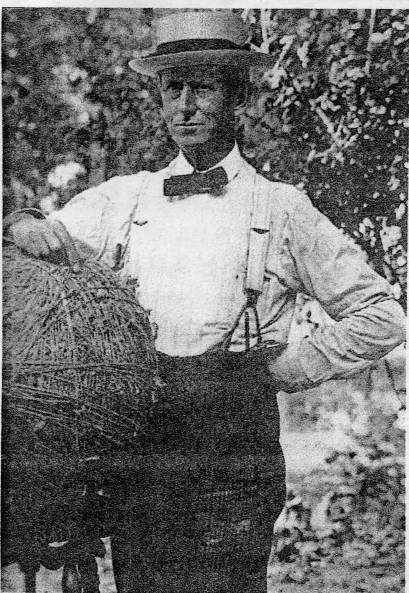
Today's Idyllwild, Fern Valley and Pine Cove communities owe their existence to many people who made the often difficult journey up the Hill for various reasons. Probably most of them came here to make money, but wound up falling in love with the area, which led them in all sorts of directions. But there are two men in particular whose contributions merit special mention.

The first, who has sometimes been referred to as the "Father of Idyllwild," is **George B. Hannahs**. He and his wife, Sarah, came to California in 1887. For a short time he ran a box factory in Coronado, then, in 1889

moved to what would one day be known as Idyllwild.

Hannahs was born and raised in Michigan where his father was a state senator.

He was well educated and had begun a successful career as a Chicago businessman when he decided to move to California when he was 31 years of age.



George B. Hannahs, sometimes referred to as "The Father of Idyllwild"

Around the same time he moved to the mountains the San Jacinto Register described him as, "a man of push and energy and who works with a determination to make a success of whatever he undertakes." As it turned out, truer words were never written. Hannahs began his long and varied career here by first becoming part owner of the Strawberry Valley Lumber Company. One of his three partners was Anton Scherman, who was a key figure in the fast growing logging and lumber business from 1879 to 1902. Most of the lumber they produced in their sawmills was used to make orange crates used by the large number of orange

growers in the valleys below, although the original reason for logging was to provide railroad ties.

Logging and the production of lumber was very big business during those early years of our history. There were numerous sawmills in the area processing hundreds of thousands of board feet of the best trees. The result was a deforested area that threatened to grow ever larger. One estimate made in 1902 was that 4000 acres in Strawberry Valley and 2500 acres near what is now Pine Cove "had been stripped of its best trees." Even so, in 1895 Hannahs also founded the Native Lumber Company, and it too produced lumber used for making orange boxes.

Meanwhile, Strawberry Valley had grown into a bustling resort, complete with a general store and a post office. Soon visitors and residents, along with some well known writers and several botanists, began complaining vigorously that the logging interests were destroying the area. This led to the establishment in 1897 of the San Jacinto Forest Reserve by President Grover Cleveland, but it had little immediate effect.

Then, when the toll that had been charged for using the road to Idyllwild from San Jacinto was no longer being collected, more and more people began making the arduous trip either by horse and buggy, or on horseback. When they arrived, campers were able to rent a space for 50 cents a month, which included firewood and water, or they could stay in a new one story hotel built by Hannahs and Mrs. M. Mitchell. About a year later Hannahs built another resort, which he named Camp Idylwilde. He followed this by building another hotel, along with a number of fully equipped portable cottages. (Continued on page 3) See **MADE A DIFFERENCE**

You are invited to attend the Idyllwild Historical Society Annual Meeting – July 22, 2006 at the Idyllwild Park Nature Center located at 54000 County Park Rd and Hwy 243. Our speaker is Steve Lech, an environmental planner and a passionate amateur local historian with a huge collection of books and post cards relating to Riverside County. He has recently published a book entitled "Resorts of Riverside County," using vintage post cards to highlight the many different resorts and hotels in existence between 1900 & 1950

GUEST REGISTER (Continued from page 2)

Last year we had 331 visitors from outside the state, including 78 from foreign countries, most commonly Canada and Germany, but extending to places like Berwick-on-Tweed, England and Barcelona, Spain. The most distant travelers were one from Capetown, South Africa, and a delegation of 23 students from the islands of Java, Borneo, and Sulawesi in Indonesia.

Another way to look at it is that today somebody knows about Idyllwild in 254 different California communities, plus 106 towns elsewhere in the US, from Talkeetna, Alaska to Apopka, Florida, not to mention 29 foreign cities. Add in our visitors from 2003 and 2004, of course, and those numbers rise.

During one half-day session as a docent last month, I heard English spoken with three distinctly different foreign accents. I never anticipated that signing up as a volunteer worker for the Idyllwild Area Historical Society would not only give me a deeper appreciation of the San Jacinto Mountains, but also bring me in contact with such a spectrum of the world's population.

Beyond its intrinsic interest, the kind of information we get from visitor registers has important practical uses. As we plan and produce new exhibits, it's helpful to know that our museum audience consists largely of tourists and vacationers, people less likely to be very familiar with Idyllwild. Knowing where they come from helps us focus our publicity.

We use total visitor numbers to show potential funding agencies how far their money can go in serving the public, as well as to substantiate with county, state, and federal governments our charitable exemptions from property and income-taxes. And we use daily numbers to refine our schedule of open museum days, in order to make best use of the time of our docents.

So next time you come to the museum, please remember to sign out as you leave. It's a simple gesture, but it certainly helps us fulfill our mission to preserve and share the history of our mountains.

GIRL SCOUTS EARN SERVITUDE BADGE



On May 23, Girl Scout Troop 295 of Idyllwild came to the Museum to work on their "Servitude" badges. Armed with shovels, rakes, gloves and enthusiasm, the girls worked in the front yard pulling weeds, raking, planting flowers and watering under the supervision of Troop Leader Silvis Markels and Garden Club President and IAHS member, Antje Banks. A Certificate of Appreciation was issued to Emily Jimenez, Samandra Markel, Rachael Polk, Melissa Kellner, Ayla Bomis, and Liana Spano by the Historical Society.

MADE A DIFFERENCE (Continued from page 1)

He also opened a grocery store and arranged to have mail delivered three times a week to a small post office in his store. In 1893 he was named Postmaster, a position he held off and on until his death in 1931. The name of the post office was Rayneta, a small community he established, and named after his after his son, Raymond. In the meantime Hannahs had acquired about a thousand acres of land and had subdivided about half of it into two and a half acres lots. Then in 1924 Hannahs sold another 800 acres he had acquired to some Long Beach investors who then subdivided it. The area was later named Pine Cove.

The next man to make a significant impact on the



Claudius and Zelma Emerson and two of their children, Nell and Marjorie, circa 1915

future development of Idyllwild was Claudius Lee Emerson. Born in Lodi California in 1872, he moved to San Jacinto during the 1890's where he became a successful and their five children began

spending their summers in Dominegoni Flat (where Idyllwild Arts is now). In 1917 he moved to Idyllwild and bought the Idyllwild Inn along with 1000 acres of land, which included what is now Idyllwild proper.

Emerson had big plans for Idyllwild, which he was determined to make into one of Southern California's most desirable resorts. He modernized the inn, built forty new cabins, added tennis courts and an a nine hole golf course, and was able to attract the best tennis players and golfers in the state to participate in tournaments he organized.

Emerson also made an effort to establish Idyllwild as a year round resort, telling the Hemet News in 1918, "There will be no closed season at Idyllwild."

He was also a generous man, donating land for a Boy Scout camp, which today bears his name, land used by the present day Idyllwild Pines Camp, and the land still in use as the Idyllwild Riverside County Campground.

At the same time, Emerson's company, Idyllwild Incorporated, began selling half-acre lots, which included water to the property, for \$350. According to a 1920 report published in the Idyllwild Breezes, a newspaper Emerson also established, 114 of the half-acre lots were sold during the preceding two years. (Cont on next page)

OFFICERS

President	Marcia Donnell
Vice President	Carolyn Levitski
Secretary	Adele Voell
Treasurer	Bob Smith

DIRECTORS

Joe Hart
Lynnda Hart, Curator and Museum Director
Shirl Reid, Assistant Curator
Corinne Brown
Nancy Fletcher
Nanci Killingsworth
Sue Miller
Adele Voell
Lynn Voorheis
Kay Wanner

ADVISORY BOARD

Harry Bubb, Kay Cenicerros,
Craig Coopersmith,
Walter Parks, Kent Steele

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Operations Manager	Richard Levitski
Office PC System	Shirl Reid
Home Tour	Lynnda Hart
	Nanci Killingsworth
Newsletter Editor	Ben Killingsworth
Membership	Shirl Reid
Website	Francoise Frigola
Hospitality	Linda and Larry Turner
Oral History	Lynnda Hart
Oral History Video	Carolyn Levitski
Research	Bob Smith
	Lynnda Hart
Photo Album	Nancy Harrison
Field Trips	Marcia Donnell

OUR NEW DIRECTORS

Kay Wanner is the immediate past president of the of the Indian Wells Rotary Club. She is a also former Soroptimist and once served as the president of the Lutheran Association in Iowa. Kay currently owns and operates a Probate Paralegal Service in Palm Desert.

Nancy Fletcher is a newcomer to Idyllwild who recently moved from San Diego. Nancy lived on Catalina Island for 12 years where she was an active volunteer with the Visitors Bureau. She was an employee of the U.S. Justice Department Drug Enforcement Administration for 8 years.

Corinne Brown is a retired Banning School Teacher and Dean and was Principal of the Cabazon Elementary School for three years. She is a member of the Art Associates and currently assists Mary Austin with the docent schedule.

SIGNING GUEST REGISTER PROVIDES IMPORTANT STATISTICS

By Bob Smith

Do you ever wonder what becomes of the guest register you sign in the IAHS museum? Or why you should sign it every time you visit?



Well, be assured you that your entries are noticed, not to create mailing lists, but to tell a story that can inform our planning and communications.

We've kept these records since the day our museum opened in October, 2003. As a result, we know, for example, that in our first full year of operation (2004) we saw 3,715 visitors and last

year 3,615.

Actually, these numbers are conservative estimates. Despite the best efforts of our Cabin Club docents, not everyone who comes into the museum signs the register, especially when the room is crowded. But there's more interesting information in the visitor logs than mere volume of traffic.

In 2005, we were able to track the origins by residence of 92% of our registered visitors. In this way we learned that seven out of eight live off the Hill. Sorting them geographically by residence showed that 20% come from San Diego County. Lesser proportions come from the Inland Empire (17%), Los Angeles basin (13%), the Hill (12%), Orange County (10%), and the nearby desert communities (10%).

It's no surprise that we see healthy numbers from nearby communities like Palm Desert, Palm Springs, Riverside, Temecula, or Hemet. But we also find unusually high numbers from certain more distant towns: Escondido, Oceanside, Huntington Beach and Long Beach, along with the big cities, San Diego and Los Angeles. (Cont. on page 3 - See Guest Register)

GUEST REGISTER (Continued from page 2)

Last year we had 331 visitors from outside the state, including 78 from foreign countries, most commonly Canada and Germany, but extending to places like Berwick-on-Tweed, England and Barcelona, Spain. The most distant travelers were one from Capetown, South Africa, and a delegation of 23 students from the islands of Java, Borneo, and Sulawesi in Indonesia.

Another way to look at it is that today somebody knows about Idyllwild in 254 different California communities, plus 106 towns elsewhere in the US, from Talkeetna, Alaska to Apopka, Florida, not to mention 29 foreign cities. Add in our visitors from 2003 and 2004, of course, and those numbers rise.

During one half-day session as a docent last month, I heard English spoken with three distinctly different foreign accents. I never anticipated that signing up as a volunteer worker for the Idyllwild Area Historical Society would not only give me a deeper appreciation of the San Jacinto Mountains, but also bring me in contact with such a spectrum of the world's population.

Beyond its intrinsic interest, the kind of information we get from visitor registers has important practical uses. As we plan and produce new exhibits, it's helpful to know that our museum audience consists largely of tourists and vacationers, people less likely to be very familiar with Idyllwild. Knowing where they come from helps us focus our publicity.

We use total visitor numbers to show potential funding agencies how far their money can go in serving the public, as well as to substantiate with county, state, and federal governments our charitable exemptions from property and income-taxes. And we use daily numbers to refine our schedule of open museum days, in order to make best to use the time of our docents.

So next time you come to the museum, please remember to sign out as you leave. It's a simple gesture, but it certainly helps us fulfill our mission to preserve and share the history of our mountains.

GIRL SCOUTS EARN SERVITUDE BADGE



On May 23, Girl Scout Troop 295 of Idyllwild came to the Museum to work on their "Servitude" badges. Armed with shovels, rakes, gloves and enthusiasm, the girls worked in the front yard pulling weeds, raking, planting flowers and watering under the supervision of Troop Leader Silvis Markels and Garden Club President and IAHS member, Antje Banks. A Certificate of Appreciation was issued to Emily Jimenez, Samandra Markel, Rachael Polk, Melissa Kellner, Ayla Bomis, and Liana Spano by the Historical Society.

MADE A DIFFERENCE (Continued from page 1)

He also opened a grocery store and arranged to have mail delivered three times a week to a small post office in his store. In 1893 he was named Postmaster, a position he held off and on until his death in 1931. The name of the post office was Rayneta, a small community he established, and named after his after his son, Raymond. In the meantime Hannahs had acquired about a thousand acres of land and had subdivided about half of it into two and a half acres lots. Then in 1924 Hannahs sold another 800 acres he had acquired to some Long Beach investors who then subdivided it. The area was later named Pine Cove.

The next man to make a significant impact on the



Claudius and Zelma Emerson and two of their children, Nell and Marjorie, circa 1915

future development of Idyllwild was Claudius Lee Emerson. Born in Lodi California in 1872, he moved to San Jacinto during the 1890's where he became a successful and their five children began

spending their summers in Dominegoni Flat (where Idyllwild Arts is now). In 1917 he moved to Idyllwild and bought the Idyllwild Inn along with 1000 acres of land, which included what is now Idyllwild proper.

Emerson had big plans for Idyllwild, which he was determined to make into one of Southern California's most desirable resorts. He modernized the inn, built forty new cabins, added tennis courts and an a nine hole golf course, and was able to attract the best tennis players and golfers in the state to participate in tournaments he organized.

Emerson also made an effort to establish Idyllwild as a year round resort, telling the Hemet News in 1918, "There will be no closed season at Idyllwild."

He was also a generous man, donating land for a Boy Scout camp, which today bears his name, land used by the present day Idyllwild Pines Camp, and the land still in use as the Idyllwild Riverside County Campground.

At the same time, Emerson's company, Idyllwild Incorporated, began selling half-acre lots, which included water to the property, for \$350. According to a 1920 report published in the Idyllwild Breezes, a newspaper Emerson also established, 114 of the half-acre lots were sold during the preceding two years. (Cont on next page)

MADE A DIFFERENCE (Continued from last page)

To support the resulting flurry of new home construction, Emerson also established the Idyllwild Lumber Company, which operated a small sawmill here during the 1920's.

The Idyllwild Inn was the center of social activity during that period, with dances held every night except Sunday, along with a steady stream of parties, masquerade balls, amateur theatre, and musicals. There were also frequent visits by famous Hollywood stars, who sometimes stayed at the inn while they made movies.

During the mid 1930's Emerson bought 450 acres in Domenigoni Flat where he planned to build a dam to create a large lake. Unfortunately, his plans fell through, and that, together with the onset of the Great Depression, Emerson was forced into receivership. In 1938 the Emerson family lost everything and left Idyllwild. But Emerson's contribution lives on, in part due to his donation of three large parcels of land still in use today as the Camp Emerson Boy Scout Camp, the Riverside County Park, and Idyllwild Pines.

During WWII Idyllwild suffered a setback primarily because of gas rationing, which precluded would be visitors from making the trip. At the end of the war there were only about 450 fulltime residents, but by 1948 it had grown to a population over 1200, and by 1959 was home to over 2500 residents, just a mere 1000 fewer than those who call it home today.

Thanks to the vision and determination of men like Hannahs and Emerson, the three communities of Idyllwild, Fern Valley and Pine Cove have come a long way toward fulfilling their dreams for making the Hill a place where people can enjoy the peace and quiet of the forest, whether they live here full-time, part time, or come simply as visitors.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The eight new members listed below joined the Historical Society between February 14, 2006 and June 10, 2006.

Welcome to you all

FAMILY

Bob and Sherry Edwards, Idyllwild, CA
Paula and Steve Hibbard, Phoenix, AZ

INDIVIDUAL

Dan Bernier, Los Angeles, CA
Elliott Taylor, Idyllwild, CA
Charlie Webb, Idyllwild, CA
Kirk Wood, Idyllwild, CA

NEW BYLAWS TO BE PRESENTED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING ON July 22, 2006

We made a special effort this year to time the completion of the new IAHS ByLaws so as to be able to present them at the Annual Meeting where we can expect the largest number of attendees. We hope to see you there. Your opinion matters.

ANAHEIM COMPANY DONATES TWO COMPUTERS TO MUSEUM

Cidesign, a company located in Anaheim, gave two brand new computers to us in early June. One will be used to help speed up the archiving of documents and artifacts, and the other will be placed in the museum to allow visitors to search our archives for themselves.

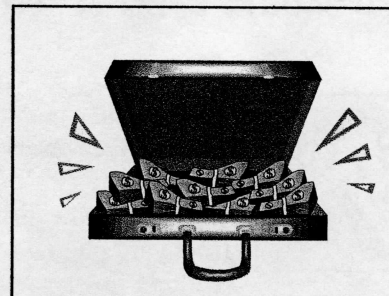


Cidesign officials, Cupid Chiu (left) and Jeff Wu, company MIS Chief and CEO, respectively, are pictured above making their donation. Our sincere thanks to Cupid and Jeff for their wonderful generosity.

TENET HEALTHCARE ADDS \$500 TO HISTORICAL SOCIETY COFFERS

Thanks to volunteer Terry Casella and his employer, Tenet HealthCare, the Idyllwild Historical Society was the grateful recipient of a \$500 donation as part of Tenet's Volunteer Improvement Program. Tenet donates \$500 to any nonprofit organization one of their employees donates 50 or more hours in a year.

Thanks to Terry for giving us 50 hours of his time and to Tenet HealthCare for having such a generous and public spirited program.



STORAGE FACILITY PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION MOVES FORWARD

By Bob Smith

In January we submitted a proposal for planning money, to take us through architectural planning county reviews this year. Our proposal received high marks from reviewers and was a finalist for consideration by the state board that makes funding decisions based on quality reviews and geographical balance. Unfortunately, we were not awarded a grant. So we're tapping a \$12,000 grant for this project that we received from Riverside County in 2003 and are moving ahead with the planning, anyway. Jim Marsh of Hemet is our architect on the project.

The California legislature created an entity called the California Cultural & Historical Endowment and gave it a multimillion-dollar fund to use primarily on grants for construction of facilities by such organizations as historical societies. We expect to submit another proposal to CCHE in January 2007 for construction funds.



SIXTH ANNUAL IDYLLWILD HOME TOUR - COMING SOON

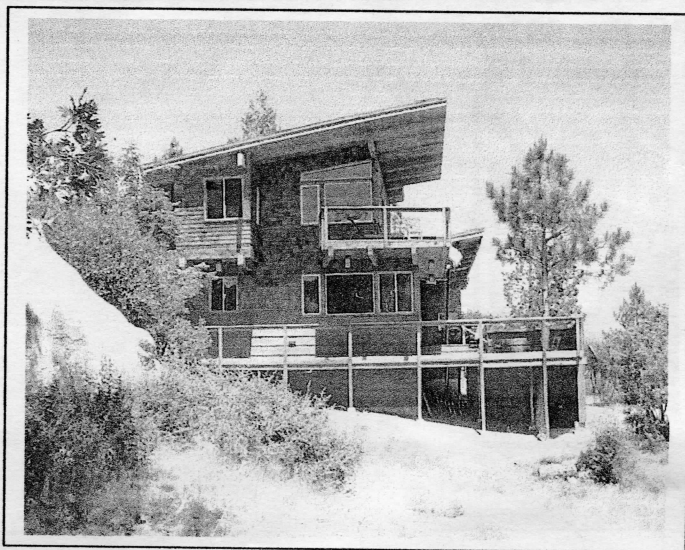
By Nanci Killingsworth

This is an event not to be missed, so mark your calendars for October 21st and join us for another treasured Idyllwild journey.

This year we are pleased to offer five storybook homes nestled in the stunning landscape of our San Jacinto Mountains. Soaring views, hand crafted furniture, two 1920s homes along with a sweet artist's cottage and studio. Delight in the home filled with dancing glass situated at playful levels, and the home perched high above forested canyons with Diamond Valley Lake visible on the horizon

Finally, partake of complimentary refreshments at the Idyllwild Historical Museum, which, of course, is our very own vintage jewel.

Pictured below are two of the five homes selected for this year's tour. Their location and other details are well kept secrets, so don't ask, cause we won't tell.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 4th Parade - We'll be honoring our Cabin Club Docents

July 22nd Annual Meeting at 2:00PM - We'll be serving old time refreshments at the Nature Center

August 16th - Docent recognition day. Details to be announced

September 2nd - Ice Cream Social. More Information to follow. Everyone's invited

October 7th - Wine Walk - There will be wine tasting at the Museum

Membership Information

Give a Gift Membership and they will receive . . .

- **Arti-facts** Newsletter
- Field Trips
- Gatherings
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Support of historical research and documentation of photos and artifacts
- Support for the Idyllwild Area Museum
- 10% discount in the Museum Shop

Send A Gift Membership to:

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Email Address _____ Telephone _____

Gift card from _____

- ♦ \$15 Individual
- ♦ \$25 Family
- ♦ \$35 Contributing
- ♦ \$35 Business
- ♦ \$100 Sponsor
- ♦ \$500 Patron
- ♦ \$750 Corporate
- ♦ \$1000 Founder's Circle:
Lifetime membership and plaque in museum
Installment plan available - \$100/year for 10 years

Send this membership form and check to:

Idyllwild Area Historical Society, PO Box 3320, Idyllwild, CA 92549 • (951) 659-2717

– We appreciate your support –

All dues and contributions are tax deductible

Idyllwild Area Historical Society, PO Box 3320, Idyllwild, CA 92549 • (951) 659-2717

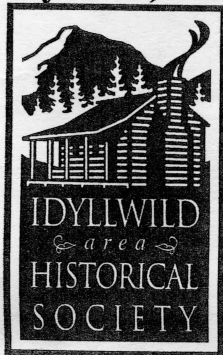
Museum: 54470 North Circle Drive, Idyllwild, CA 92549

Website: www.IdyllwildAreaHistoricalSociety.org

Arti-facts, the official newsletter, appears quarterly and is mailed to all members

Newsletter Editor – Ben Killingsworth

**PO Box 3320
Idyllwild, CA 92549**



Non-profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Idyllwild, CA
Permit No. 3320