

# ARTI-FACTS

*The Newsletter of the Award-Winning Idyllwild Area Historical Society*

Preserving the History of Idyllwild and Surrounding Communities  
in the San Jacinto Mountains

SUMMER 2018

## A FAMILY AFFAIR

By Robert B. Smith

I've had the pleasure of seeing five generations of my family enjoy summer sojourns at our retreat in the San Jacinto Mountains. So I'm always intrigued by accounts of other family dynasties I happen upon in the IAHS archive.

A rich source is the "Logbook" of Florence Casebeer, who was an Idyllwild pioneer and well-known hostess in the village's earlier years. She prevailed upon many residents who frequented her creekside home on South Circle Drive, just downstream from today's Village Center Drive, to jot down their recollections. She gathered their handwritten stories into a homemade, wood-covered, loose-leaf notebook. Two such accounts, written by Paul Ward and his daughter Pauline Ruskauff, caught my eye. They hinted at a typical Idyllwild tale.

Ward was a teacher in Banning in 1897, when he first got acquainted with nearby mountains by traveling with a friend up Palm Canyon to hunt "wild sheep." Having heard the Indians were unfriendly, they approached the first house they came to with some apprehension. To their great relief, its native occupant actually offered to come along as a guide. The sheep proved elusive, but the party did happen upon an Indian camp at Pinyon Flat, where they were invited to enjoy venison roasted over the campfire and to spend the night.

A year or two later Ward took several pupils and colleagues, plus Banning's town physician, Dr. John King, on a three-day trek to San Jacinto Peak. They camped overnight each way "at the foot of Black Mountain," probably at the abandoned site of Fuller's Mill. The sawmill had shut down in 1895, but its remaining structures provided a convenient shelter for



**Abandoned Fuller's Mill as it would have appeared to Paul Ward's hiking party.**

*IAHS photo archive*

Banning hikers.

Paul and Clara Ward brought their family to spend the summer of 1903 camping near Dutch Flat at the Native Lumber Co. sawmill owned by George Hannahs. Paul went on to become Superintendent of Schools in Hemet, and the family continued to camp and hunt in the area for several years, often staying on the Domenigoni ranch with the Claudius Lee Emerson family.

In her 1949 Logbook entry their daughter Pauline fondly recalled those summers growing up at Idyllwild. Once she and Marjorie Emerson took up Paul's offer to fry frogs' legs for dinner, if the girls could catch enough of them. They did, he did, and the girls thought them delicious, although the sight of them sickened Marjorie's father, Claudius.

Especially memorable was the year 1907, when Clara Ward taught at Kenworthy School in Garner Valley, a persisting artifact of the defunct 1890s

*See Family, page 3*

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**Charlotte Groty, IAHS President**

The summer is always a busy time for the museum. First of all, if you have not noticed, our museum hours have changed. We are now open on Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. year around, as well as Monday holidays and the days between Christmas and New Year's.

The museum has two very special events coming up—the delicious Ice Cream Social on Saturday, September 1, and the 18th Annual Home Tour on Saturday, September 15. Please join us for both.

Our gardens continue to mature and are especially beautiful this year, thanks to care from the Idyllwild Garden Club crew. Come and check the gardens out! The picnic tables are always available for you to rest and enjoy the beauty.

A very big thank you to our museum family for your support, as we continue to work to fulfill the Society's mission of preserving and sharing the history of the Idyllwild area. See you at our upcoming events.

**IAHS President  
 Charlotte Groty**

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**The Cranston Fire**

The men and women who fought and quelled the raging Cranston Fire have our admiration and heartfelt gratitude. They saved Idyllwild.

The town is safe and beautiful, the community is thriving, and the Cranston Fire joins the Mountain, Esperanza, and Bee Canyon fires as part of Idyllwild's history.

## FAMILY ...

*(continued from page 1)*

boomtown and gold-mining scam. Pauline attended classes there along with children from the pioneer Scherman, Arnaiz, and Wellman families.

In 1918 Paul became a partner in Emerson's new Idyllwild Inc. resort development company. Their campsite for summer 1919 was on company land designated as a campground on the flood plain below North Circle and River drives. During that summer Paul's niece, Harriet Snyder, visited the family and was instantly taken with Idyllwild. So when Paul bought a lot next to Casebeer's for a family cabin in 1920, Harriet purchased a large neighboring tract just downstream (the site of today's Rainbow Inn). Three years later she launched the well-known Peak & Pine girls' camp, which she operated there for the next four decades.

During that same summer of 1919 Pauline Ward met her future husband, Frank Ruskauff, at Chimney Flat, a common rest stop on the old Control Road up from Hemet. (Her sister Louise also met her husband on the Hill; he was a brother of Desert Sun School cofounder, Richard Elliott.)

In 1926 the Ruskauffs settled in Idyllwild full-time, and Frank took over Idyllwild Inc.'s general store facing the original Idyllwild Inn. Their daughters began their education at the village's first school, which operated in a cabin Pauline remembered as being located "on the ridge" near the stables that stood on the site of today's



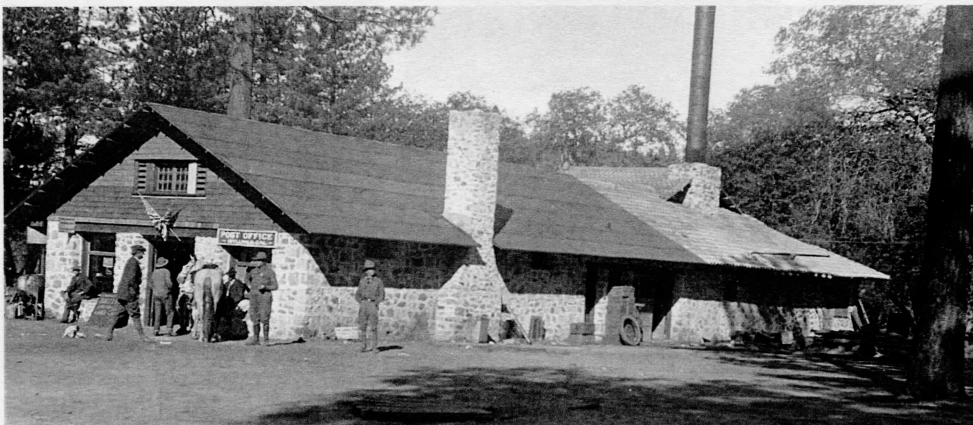
**Mealtime at Peak & Pine Camp, with Harriet Snyder presiding at the far end of the left-hand table.**

*IAHS photo archive*

Camp Maranatha. In 1929 they welcomed the elegant "new" two-room schoolhouse, built where today's elementary school stands. The young family would winter in a company cabin near the store, then summer at the Ward family cabin on South Circle Drive. They managed to remain on "amicable terms with the skunk family below and the pack rat family above," while being visited by king snakes that would sometimes "come in to see us and curl up in the wood box."

After moving to Hollywood in 1932 the Ruskauffs were forever homesick for Idyllwild. Eventually they moved to Riverside, where they remained within striking distance of the family cabin. By then it was being taken over by their daughters and granddaughters, marking four generations of Wards enjoying life in Idyllwild.

In the logbook Pauline did lament the absence of two of her favorite childhood memories: the ubiquitous rattlesnake encounters, as many as 13 in a season, and "the rumblings and quaking of Old Tahquitz Mt." Rattlesnakes and rumbling quakes are still with us, but the Wards and Ruskauffs are long gone from Idyllwild now. But I don't doubt such memories live on in their family lore.



**The Idyllwild Store and Post Office building as it appeared when Frank Ruskauff was manager.**

*IAHS photo archive*

# THE COMPANY WE KEEP

New and renewing members, January through July 2018

We welcome new members and thank renewing members for their continuing support.

Membership coupon below

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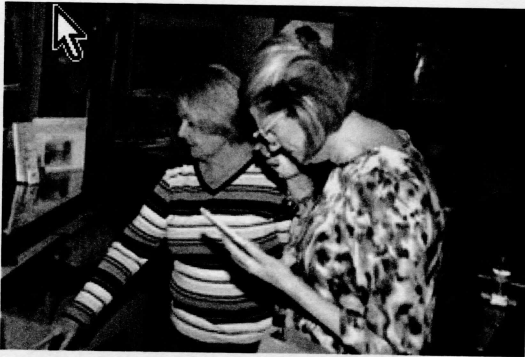
*(Please make your tax-deductible dues check to IAHS & mail to PO Box 3320, Idyllwild CA 92549)*

**If a gift membership, please enter your name and address:**

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# 2018 IAHS EVENTS

Views of tour group enjoying the IAHS museum.  
*Photos by Tom Pierce*



IAHS President Charlotte Grotty and a tour guest.



Views of tour group enjoying the IAHS museum.

## The Volunteers Luncheon

This spring IAHS held a special luncheon for the many volunteers who help with IAHS programs and events. The event, held at Silver Pines Lodge, was well attended and provided a chance for the volunteers to meet and enjoy each other's company. All enjoyed a delicious luncheon provided by the Hospitality Team, Larry and Linda Turner. Unfortunately, no one took photos. 📷

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## The Ice Cream Social is Coming

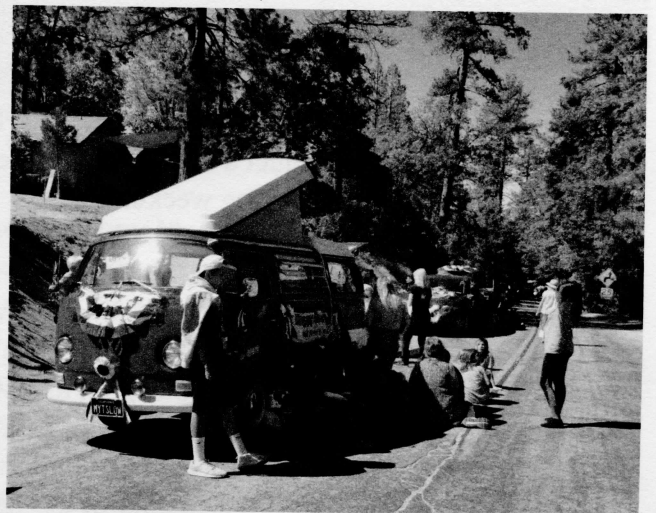
A perfect summer event to be held at the museum grounds on September 1. Come have a rootbeer float, or a hot fudge sundae

It's FREE and it's Fun

September 1, 11 am till 2 pm

## IAHS Writers' Tour Thurs. 1-18-18

On Thursday, January 18th, a group of Sierra Club writers and travel journal writers visited the Idyllwild Area Historical Society Archives, Museum and Village Garden. The writers' tour of Idyllwild had been arranged by Nathan DePetris, of Quiet Creek Inn. IAHS docent tour guides Charlotte Grotty, President, and board members Nancy Borchers and Marlene Pierce welcomed them. 📷



The IAHS 4th of July parade entry this year was a beautifully restored 71 VW camping bus. Even though the license plate says "MY T SLOW", Jimmie and Hedy Tyson had no difficulty bringing it up the hill from their Riverside home. This is the 4th year that this couple has provided a vintage car for our parade entry. Lots of fun. 4<sup>th</sup> parade photos by Hedy Tyson

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

### Archive Projects

Work is always ongoing in the Archive building. Volunteers catalog and document all donations that are received by the Society.

A shoebox, recently sent to the IAHS, contained family photos of the family and the work of the original owner of the Grey Squirrel. Although the donation was sent anonymously with no additional information, archivist Bob Smith recognized the contents.

The huge collection of Ernie Maxwell material, donated by his niece, Laurie Corbett, has now been processed, and many of the items will be used in the Art Alliance's upcoming Ernie Maxwell Art Retrospective which the IAHS is co-sponsoring. 📖

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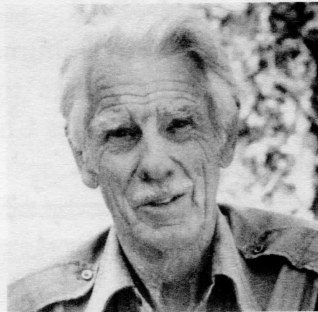
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### The Art of Ernie Maxwell, Idyllwild Renaissance Man

By Joan McCullough

A retrospective of Ernie's work will be presented October 19 to November 5 at the IAA Courtyard Gallery. There will be work from various stages of his career, with many articles from the IAHS archival collection.

Refreshments will be served at the opening on October 19 and there will be a demonstration of printing with his woodcuts. Some items will be for sale. The Forestry Service will conduct a hike on the Ernie Maxwell Trail on the following weekend.



### Diann Coate writes of Ernie Maxwell:

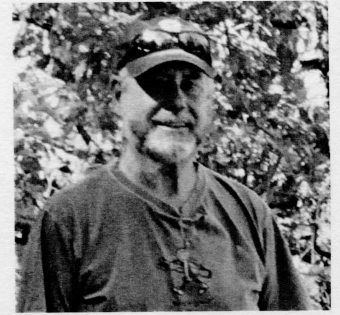
Among friends and admirers, Ernie was known as the Renaissance man. Idyllwild was his home and he felt the need to enhance and protect it. He saw the need for a newspaper and, with his wife Betty, founded the Town Crier. He saw the need to protect our environment and founded a chapter of the Izaak Walton League here.

He was also a talented artist and sculptor working in wood, ceramic, oils, and watercolor. Idyllwild owes much to Ernie's foresight and love for this community. 📖

### Getting to Know You:

#### Archive volunteer, Bob Greenamyre

Bob is a fairly recent arrival to Idyllwild. He and his wife, Corinne, purchased their home in 2014. Bob and Corinne moved up to Idy full time in 2017. They love the \*hill\* and its friendly, talented community



Bob grew up in Tulare County in the little town of Strathmore. Bob went through high school in Strathmore and then attended UCLA, where he received an undergraduate degree in History. That may be why he enjoys working at the museum so much! He'd enjoyed working at the Grace Fernald School on the UCLA campus so he decided to earn his teaching credential. He received his elementary credential in 1976 and was hired in Poway, California as a kindergarten-first-second grade teacher! He later taught 4th and fifth graders before retirement. Bob earned his administrative credential while teaching and worked in administration as an Assistant Principal for three years and a Principal for seven years in the Poway district.

After retiring, Bob worked at a non-profit art organization for a year and then decided to devote his extra time to volunteering for the San Diego Roots Sustainable Food Project, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving our local food system. He helped develop Victory Gardens San Diego, SD Roots educational outreach program. Utilizing all volunteers, VGSD helped homeowners build edible gardens in a single day. This morphed into a three weekend garden education program that helped build gardens not only at homes, but at churches, immigrant education programs, women's shelters, halfway houses, veteran's programs and schools. In all, VGSD helped create over 100 food gardens in San Diego and educated over 1000 people on how to grow their own food. Bob "retired" from VGSD when he moved up to Idyllwild, although he is still involved with local garden programs such as the Youth Garden Project in Idyllwild.

Bob and Corinne have three wonderful adult children and three amazing granddaughters. They enjoy sharing the beauty of Idyllwild with their family every chance they get. Bob enjoys playing pickle ball, building projects around the cabin, hiking and biking with Corinne and helping out in the community where he can. He also enjoys just sitting on his deck and admiring the beauty of Idyllwild. He was so inspired by the magic of Idyllwild that he just completed a children's book, *The Cabin Elves of Idyllwild*, inspired by the beauty and friendly nature of his Idyllwild home. 📖

# IAHS 18TH ANNUAL HOME TOUR

**Saturday, September 15th, 2018**

This year's Annual Home Tour will showcase five wonderful "vintage" homes. All have been lovingly restored by their owners. The oldest was built in 1919, and the newest was built in the 70's. Every one of these homes has a story to tell, and the owners and docents are eager to share these stories with you.

"ELVIS IS IN THE HOUSE!" On this year's tour we have the Hidden Lodge. The owners are very excited to share their home. The Lodge, built in 1947, is tucked below Tahquitz Peak, and though it was originally intended to be a winter sports center with ski runs, that was not to be. Only several short runs and rope tows were available.

In 1961, Elvis Presley's movie, "Kid Galahad", was filmed in and at the Hidden Lodge, as well as at other locations around Idyllwild. Many of the townsfolk were hired as extras. You will see and learn much more about this storied house on this year's Annual Home Tour.

The former home of Lora Steere, first teacher and artist of ISOMATA, which later became the Idyllwild School of the Arts is on the tour.

Another cabin, built in 1947, and originally only 600 sq. feet, provides a chance to imagine what it was like to live in early Idyllwild.

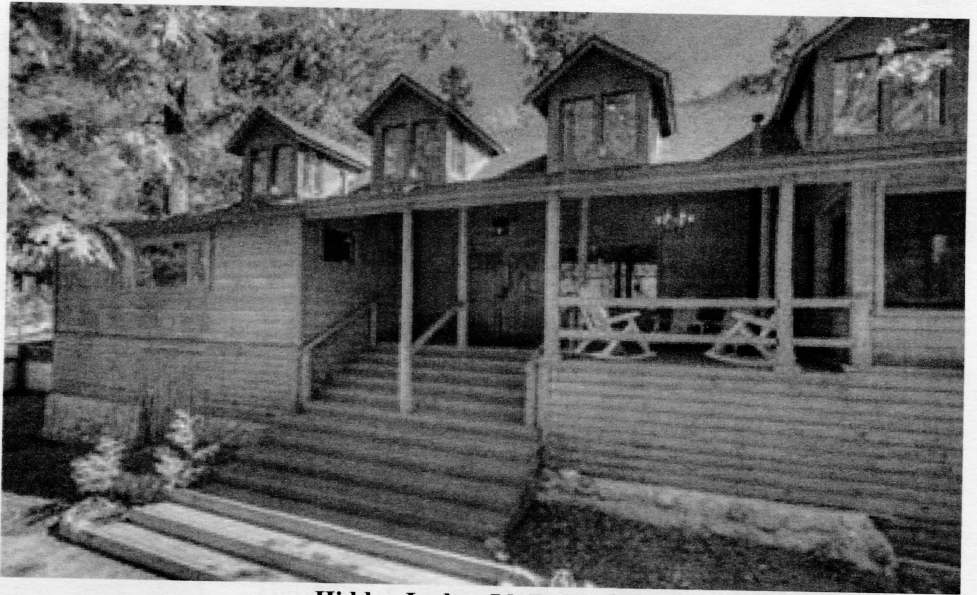
There is a beautiful log home, originally built by George and Sheila Meyer, two of the original founders of the IAHS. The home is filled with vintage finds and memorabilia.

Finally, we have a cabin built in 1942 where the owners have saved all the charm of the cabin's vintage roots while making the cabin seem current. This home has a story to tell of the Ladies of the Golden Candle Stick, a 1940s Christian Covenant fellowship, in which this cabin played a role.

Come and visit these very special homes. Tickets are \$20.00 per person, and can be purchased in front



**The former home of Lora Steere, first teacher and artist of ISOMATA, which later became Idyllwild Arts, is on the tour.**



**Hidden Lodge, Idyllwild, CA**  
CURRENT PHOTOS BY GLIDETOUR & PHOTOGRAPHY

of the Harmony Monument in the center of town, or at the IAHS museum starting at 9:45 a.m. on the day of the tour. The tour begins at 10:00 a.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m. Delicious refreshments, provided by our hospitality team, Linda and Larry Turner, will be served at the museum.

Oh, so much to see and hear about in all of these homes. We hope to see you on September 15. 📌

***The Annual Home Tour is the Society's major fundraiser, and all proceeds directly support the Idyllwild Area Historical Museum.***

**Museum Hours**

**10am to 5pm**

**Friday, Saturday, Sunday**

**and Monday Holidays**

**Also daily between Christmas  
and New Year**

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**Visit our website**

[www.idyllwildhistory.org](http://www.idyllwildhistory.org)

**For special tours and other business,**

**call (951) 659-2717 or**

**email [info@idyllwildhistory.org](mailto:info@idyllwildhistory.org)**

**Admission Free**

**54470 North Circle Drive**

**Donations Welcome**

**Dates to Remember:**

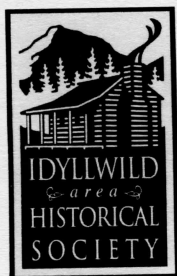
**Ice Cream Social - Saturday, September 1**

**18th Annual Home Tour - September 15**

**Art Alliance Wine Walk - October 13**

**Ernie Maxwell Art Retrospective - October 19-November 5**

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