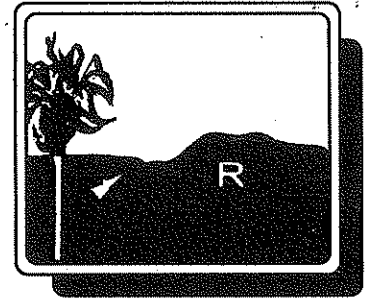


# REDLANDS CHRONICLES



October, 2007

## “History Makers: William Cunningham”

Monday, October 22, 2007, 7pm  
Assembly Room, A.K. Smilay Public Library

The Redlands Area Historical Society program for October 22 will continue with the "Redlands History Maker" theme. Gerry Brassfield of Blue Eagle Video will produce a DVD of the this program as he did for William McCalmon, "Mr. Redlands Fourth of July" and "35 Years of Rockets Red Glare" presentation given at the September meeting was outstanding. McCalmon brought committee members with him and they are all on the DVD as well.

William Cunningham fits the mold as a "mover and shaker" in Redlands for more than four decades. He is the Redlands Area Historical Society speaker for the Monday October 22 meeting at A. K. Smiley Library Assembly Room at 7:00 p.m.

Cunningham moved to Redlands in 1952 with his wife Beverly and was a popular physics and mathematics teacher at Redlands High from 1953-1970. Beverly was also hired as a clerk for the school district. Bill moved from Redlands High and taught physics and astronomy at Valley College a number of years. In 1975, Bill and Beverly bought 18 acres in San Timoteo Canyon and later Bill, "a citrus farmer convert" became a gentleman farmer and eventually president of the West Redlands Water Company and its zanjero. He is perhaps one of the last East Valley zanjeros regularly tending to pipelines and weir boxes that supply irrigation water for citrus.

His teaching and concerns for education led him to actively pursue the elected office as a Redlands School Board member. His reputation as a leader led to several successful elections and he served on the board as president twice. The Redlands PTA honored both Chuck DeMirjyn and Bill Cunningham in March 1986 for their service to education and the city.

As a school board member, Bill could see first hand how development of apartments and home construction impacted the schools. He evolved into the leading spokesman for growth control in Redlands. In November of 1978, Bill spearheaded the movement to pass Measure R for Growth Limits. The measure passed overwhelmingly with 9,172 for and 4,303 opposed. Then again in November of 1987 Measure N Growth Control passed with a large majority. The measure proved so popular that Cunningham was elected to the city council in December of 1987. He would remain on the council until December of 1999, serving as Mayor of Redlands from 1997-1999.

Cunningham helped form the Redlands Association along with a newspaper to voice concerns not shown in the Redlands Daily Facts or San Bernardino Sun. A fiscal conservative and in opposition to Majestic Realty's Donut Hole project, Bill Cunningham was named more often in the local papers than any other city

*Continued, page 2*

*A Letter from your President...*

Ron Running and I are busy planning and writing the Saturday October 20th Hillside Memorial Cemetery Tour. We walked the cemetery last Saturday for the second time taking notes and discovering new items of interest. I've talked with Dr. Harold Hill the president of the Friends of Hillside Memorial Cemetery this week. I think we can aid their organization with the written tour and early history of Hillside. Julie Neitzel, secretary at Hillside, was very helpful with information on two different occasions that I've visited. Ron took many photos of the graves that he intends to use with the Genealogical Society.

If you missed the first regular meeting of the Historical Society September 24th Gerry Brassfield of Blue Eagle Video will take your order for a DVD at any of our future meetings for \$15.00. Bill McCalmon, "Mr. Redlands Fourth of July" was truly a representative of our speaker theme this year of "History Makers." With great enthusiasm he led us all down memory lane with past participants of our town's Fourth of July. Names like Tom Ditchfield, Charlie and Ethel Berlingerie, Dorothy Demerjyn, Chuck Palmer, Jackie Meyer, Scott Reynolds and many, many more.

Bill's story after story reminded me just how "Redlands" this event has become. His family is locked into the one big day of celebration each year. He was so good, I stole all his outline notes for the Heritage Room to go with the DVD we will get this month. He captured his title, "35 Years in the Rockets Red Glare" with true Redlands gusto. Anyone fifty years from now will have a true insight to this Redlands one of a kind history-maker.

We are also planning a January Walking Tour. Hopefully the weather will be warmer than the January Palm Avenue tour this year. Judith Hunt and I started the tour at 9:00 a.m. and the temperature was 34 degrees. When we finished near San Mateo the sun had the temp up to 48. Cold in Redlands sounds strange since the sizzling summer is just ending.

Larry Burgess and I began a new history class on the History of Redlands and the San Bernardino Valley in September beginning our 33rd year by my count. Larry will have a higher number since he is older than I.

See everyone soon,

Tom Atchley

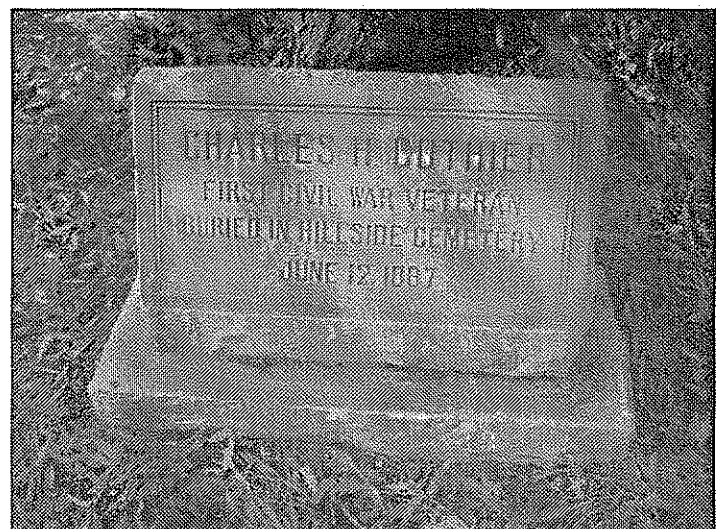
*History Makers, continued*

council member. Editorials both for and against Cunningham's ideas dominated the news for over a decade. The editorial written by James A. Fallows, speechwriter for President Carter, called Cunningham a man of "High Ideals."

Cunningham loves Redlands and the city he moved to in 1952. He has influenced the political debate and land management policy of the city since 1978. Now 80 years of age, Bill Cunningham is one of the "History Makers" of Redlands.

*Newsletter Deadline*

All RAHS members are encouraged to submit articles for the *Redlands Chronicles* to Nathan Gonzales at [ngonzales@akspl.org](mailto:ngonzales@akspl.org) by the 1st of each month.



Headstone of Charles H. Cothier, the first Civil War veteran buried in Hillside Cemetery.

We have made it to October, which for the Redlands Area Historical Society means membership drive time. We thank each and everyone of you for your support last year. One of our goals last year and this year is to attract new members. So bring friends to our monthly meetings and the Old House Group gatherings and Genealogical Society presentations. Then get those friends to join. Membership forms are available at each of our regular meetings the fourth Monday of October, January, February, March and April.

So what does membership buy? First of all the purpose of a local historical society is to educate the community on its local history, so they can appreciate their community more. We do that with free programs six months of the year. We support the Old House Group, which is truly focused on the architectural heritage of Redlands and tours a home each month. Members get to share common nightmares as they fix up 100 year old homes. As a society we usually have our Christmas Party in an old home each December. We have a volunteer home already for the party!

We send everyone a newsletter monthly. That letter requires postage and must be printed. Snacks and a beverage are provided at nearly all of our functions. The plaques for the Heritage Home selections provided at each Ice Cream Social in June cost more now that they did in 1975, when we started the awards. We gave our past president flowers last June for all of her work on behalf of the society and I expect a Cadillac when my time arrives.

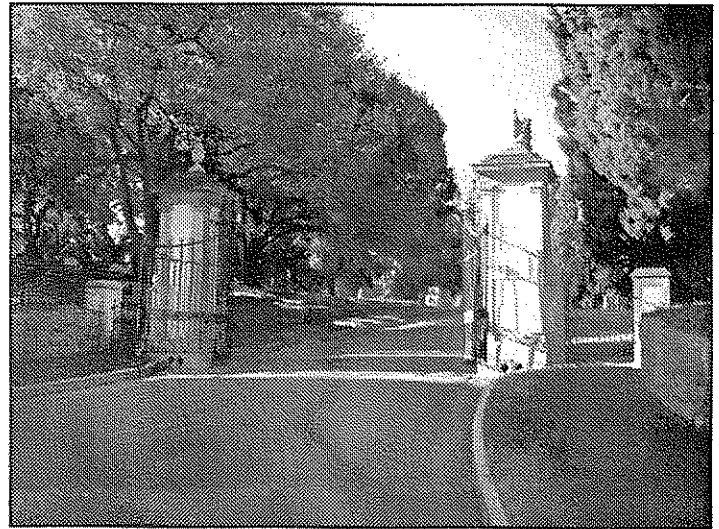
Last year the society conducted three walking tours. We did Alvarado Street, Palm Avenue and a Smiley Neighborhood Tour on the twins birthday. The Historical Society Board has written checks for the Heritage Room of A.K. Smiley Library every year, Kimberly Crest, Friends of Prospect Park, Heritage Auxiliary Tours, for the fourth grade tours, our telephone, post office box, stationery, and several magazines that promote preservation and local history. We purchased the projector used in June for the Heritage Home Awards.

We promote the preservation of historical documents and we also interpret the history of our area truthfully. Our "History Maker" series started with "Mr. Fourth of July" Bill McCalmon. If you missed it you can purchase the DVD for \$15.00 at the next meeting.

Make our treasurer happy and pay soon.

## Hillside Cemetery tour October 20th!

On Saturday October 22 the Redlands Area Historical Society will conduct a walking tour of Hillside Memorial Park 1540 Alessandro Road at 3:00 p.m. beginning near the Alessandro gate entrance and finishing before sundown. Tom Atchley will lead the tour assisted by Ron Running, both directors of the historical society. Ron will collect a \$10.00 donation from each person joining the tour. The walk will not be lengthy but uneven surfaces and moderate hills are abundant in the cemetery.



The tour will begin at the Stokes Entrance gate donated by Caroline and Olivia Phelps-Stokes in 1920. Judson and Brown, the founders of Redlands, never envisioned a cemetery in their preliminary map of Redlands in 1881. When their good friend and mentor, Myron Crafts, died in 1886 the event led to their purchase of 23.47 acres from the Southern Pacific Railroad Land Company. Judson and Brown then donated this Hillside Cemetery site to the Hillside Cemetery Association. The association consisted of six board members: John W. Edwards, E. G. Judson, Charles Putnam, A.L. Park, K.C. Wells and J. S. Edwards. They met the first time June 8, 1886. The city did not take over management of the cemetery until February of 1918.

Gravestones themselves will be utilized to focus on the pioneer biographies of important people in Redlands history. The 1928 Egyptian Mausoleum reminds Redlanders of their fascination with the discovery of King Tut's grave in Egypt in the 1920's.

Join the tour and learn many other interesting facts on Hillside Memorial Cemetery, one of the few city-managed cemeteries in California.