

# The Coffee Break

\$1.00

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Every last cent goes to the Coffee Creek Volunteer Fire Co.!

## Who's Who—"Mary Scott Hamilton"

When you grow up on a ranch with two brothers, you learn to hold your own. Mary Hamilton more than holds her own today. She is a multi-talented woman with an intense curiosity about the world that has led her in many directions.



**Mary Scott Hamilton**

In 1909, Mary's father, along with two brothers, began looking for a site suitable for a cattle ranch. Her dad was just 17 when they found the spot they wanted. Mary's dad rode a horse up from Lewiston, took a look at the property and rode back the same day. They bought the ranch, which had served as an old stage stop in years past, and used the land for cattle grazing in the summer. Later one of the brothers went into the service, and the other brother died, leaving Mary's dad with the ranch.

From there on Mary and her family wintered the stock near Cottonwood. In the spring they drove the stock up over Trinity Mountain to the ranch at Trinity Center. In the fall they drove the animals back down. They had around 50 horses and 100 cows, which had to be moved separately. It took 2 days or so to move the horses and 5 or 6 days to drive the cows. In the early days, the stock was moved right down the road from French Gulch, down Highway 299 (where Whiskeytown Dam is today) and across to the

Bald Hills. Later, when the road became too busy, they had to load and haul from French Gulch. It was very tense when they had to load 50 horses, which had never been loaded into trucks, for the first time. That may be where Mary acquired some of her determination.

While driving stock over Trinity Mountain to Cottonwood could be an exciting adventure for a kid, it could also be a cold and miserable trip. They had to ford the river, and if you didn't find the right spot, you would find yourself immersed in cold water, and your horse doing the dog paddle!

Just before the Depression, the family was involved in the longest law suit in the history of Trinity County. The issue was over a water rights dispute with a mining company. Because of high legal fees, the Scotts lost the ranch and moved to Shasta County. Later, they were able to secure a loan to repurchase the ranch, and they moved back to their home on the river.

People would occasionally want to lodge at the ranch while packing into the Trinity Alps, so two cabins were built to accommodate the guests. In the end, 20 cabins were erected, and the Scott Ranch became a very popular resort. At the height of the season the ranch hosted as many as 80 guests at a time and another 12 or so employees. The ranch provided lodging, food, and pack trips into the mountains for sportsmen. As a result, Mary knows this country about as well as anyone.

Running the ranch was hard work.

There were the endless cabins to clean and many other chores. Mary and other employees would wash the sheets and hang them outside near a wood boiler. Towels were washed and hung over a barb wire fence.

While ranch operations demanded a lot of time, there was still time for Mary to explore her world with her brothers. After a school year of wearing shoes, an ordeal the kids intensely disliked, it was time to toughen up their feet for a bare-foot summer. Mary and Bill devised a way to accomplish the task by alternating a walk through the cow manure and a walk through dirt. After a fun filled day, at least for kids, the job was complete.

One summer a new employee was hired. Dick Hamilton had been discharged from the service and was working as a surveyor. He was also training horses. He was ready for a change, and he found the Scott Ranch ideal for his skills. He hired on. He spent a great deal of his time leading the pack trips. Gradually Mary took notice, and if the truth be known, Dick also had an eye on Mary.

Eventually, they were married at the ranch. The preacher was an hour late, necessitating Dick's brother to stand in as the preacher for the pictures, as it was getting dark. They left for their honeymoon in a car decked out with a cowbell, and coated with tar, a deed that Dick still remembers today with disdain. Since the ranch could only spare the couple three days for their getaway, time was of the essence. Their wedding night was spent



at the Golden Eagle Hotel in Redding, which has since burned. Then it was off to Susanville for a romantic weekend. They arrived in the town, only to find that there was no place to lodge. Being resourceful, as well as stuck, they spent a "romantic" night in the car.

When they returned to the ranch, they settled into a 2 room cabin, which had been built for them.

At one point, Mary and Dick left the ranch for a year and Dick worked in a store. He would take Mary horseback riding in the valley. Mary remembers riding in blazing hot weather. Today she remembers that she "thought she was in hell". However, Dick was most courteous, and went out of his way to assure his wife a good time. When Mary was thirsty and there appeared to be no water in sight, Dick told her to get off her horse and lie on her belly. Always obliging Mary did as she was told, but saw little merit in drinking out of a hole that Dick described as a spring. For more fun he taught her how to fish. He tied a fly on her line, and cast it for her. He said, "This is how you do it", (always a man of few words), and walked away to fish with his uncle. In his prolonged absence, Mary obligingly cast over and over again. She walked down the stream to try another spot and was confronted by a rattlesnake. That was it. She hung up her pole and waited for Dick. He finally reappeared and said with wonderment, "Why aren't you fishing?"

Likewise, Dick taught Mary to shoot a gun at a steel back plate. She took a shot and was almost knocked down with the rebound. Dick just said, "Shoot again". Although she protested loudly, and even resorted to crying, she finally took another shot. She got the hang of it, and today is a darn good shot. Eventually, he taught her to use a rifle, which she also mastered.

Even though Dick was well schooled in the outdoor arts, years later, Mary had an opportunity to come to his aid. Dick was on a pack-in hunting trip with some men, when one of the group allowed the horses to get away. The next day Dick was doggedly hiking the 10 miles out to retrieve the steeds, when he saw Mary on her way in with a large string of horses that had wandered back to the ranch the night before. She restrained herself from the obvious ribbing, but Dick, not being a man who is prone to hiking, knows he owes her!

In 1956 preparations were underway to build Trinity Lake, and the resort had to close. The couple was offered a logging job with R & G Saw Mill. With very little money they found a way to buy the needed loader and tractor. Mary did the loading. She cut quite a picture sitting on top of the equipment slinging logs. Their first check was a whopping \$2200. Mary had never seen so much money in one package. Soon she was paying the bills, and the money rapidly disappeared. She says she would "never be impressed with that much money again".

Clearing for the lake began in 1959, and it was time to leave. Today Mary recalls this time wistfully when she thinks of her good times spent at the resort. When the lake is down low enough, she can see where her home was, just off the south end of the airport and east about half a mile.



**18 Year Old Mary with Her 50 Lb. Salmon**

She still pictures in her mind her mother's garden and her childhood spent on the ranch.

She began her new life in the relocated Trinity Center. The land was owned by her father. At the time it was all forest. Mary's dad cleared the land and sold the first lots at cost. Without the new site, there would have been no place for people that were displaced by the lake to live.

Mary's folks had the first house built in the new Trinity Center, and Dick and Mary have the second. The Hamiltons have remembrances of the old ranch when they look at the maple in their front



**Mary with Brothers Lyn and Bill**





yard which came from the ranch. The snowball bushes came from old Trinity Center. The beams from the ranch barn are used in their house today. They have two daughters, Leslie and Laurie, and three grandchildren. Laurie and daughter, Jessica, live in Trinity Center and Leslie, with her children, Rene and Shane, live near Almanor.

Not one suited for an idle life, Mary has many interests and accomplishments. She is an expert on local botany, wildlife, and she enjoys photography. In the past she was on hand for wedding photos and she has a passion for photographing flowers. An outdoors woman, Mary hikes, swims, fishes, gardens, packs, plays tennis and skis. One of her favorite pleasures is working in the horse pasture, clearing brush and burning. She balances her outdoor ac-

tivities by reading and writing poetry.

Mary serves her community in many ways. For 19 years she was in charge of the Labor Day Barbeque, which served 700-800 people. She has served on the school board from when the first Trinity Center school was built. From 1964 until the present she has been on the election board. She also is on the Board of Directors for both the Scott Museum and, since 1980, the Coffee Creek Community Church, where she has been chairman for 20 years. She has also kept the books for the water company since the early 1960's.

Mary has many memories of her years growing up here, but one, she carries with her always. Her left hip sports a brand bestowed by her brother, Lyn, when she was a toddler. He was helping to brand cattle and, in his youthful wisdom, decided that Mary needed one too.

## Times Past - "Tragedy at Eagle Creek Ranch" by Ye Old Editor

What would cause a 21 year old girl to kill herself on a day when spring was just a whisper? Rosalie E. Stoddard took her life on March 22, 1910 when she shot herself in the head. Dr. Farnsworth, who was living at Carrville at the time, was called around 2:30 in the afternoon to come to Eagle Creek Ranch, then the Stoddard Ranch, to investigate the young girl's death.

Scientifically, he described the wound—"It appeared that she had been dead for something like a half an hour probably. The bullet had entered the right temple and made its exit about the junction of the superior temporal ridge and the coronary suture on the left side of the skull." The words reveal nothing of the torment that would cause Rosalie to commit suicide. Three days earlier, the doctor was called by a Mr. Conrey who informed Farnsworth that she had not slept for "three nights previously". She was given a sedative and a "tonic" and apparently slept during the night and felt much better. According to the doctor, she was later given another sedative on the 20th. He stated that she was "very reticent about having anyone know of her condition".

The good doctor states that in his opinion, she was suffering from a "mild attack of melancholia".

Twenty seven year old William Conrey also provided testimony during the investigation. He was stronger in his statement, and declared that Rosalie, in the previous five days, had "been helplessly insane, talking continually of taking her own life". William took everything from her and destroyed "all acids and Laudanum." He then told her folks to watch her. When he left, Rosalie said she would "end her life anyway at some time".

Finally, there is the sad testimony of her father, John Roe Stoddard. He was 66 years old at the time. He stated that on the day that Rosalie killed herself, "Willie came with her and said that she would bear watching. I watched her close and left for toilet. When I came back I could not find her. I looked for her but could not find her. I then asked my wife and went upstairs. She had gone on the porch. I ran out and looked up and down the road, then looked for tracks on the ground, but could find none. I went around the wash house and thought to find her. There she lay by the door. She was still breathing,

but I could do nothing for her. I could see where the bullet went through her head."

And finally, there are faint traces of her torment that caused her to take her life, Her father stated, "She left a note as follows":

"This is because I can't stand to worry you all, as I did before, so don't think bad of me for it. I've done this all myself to get in such a condition, so it is nobody's fault at all. And I didn't want any of you to think you might have done differently because you have always done all you could for me."

When I visit the Stoddard Cemetery, now on Eagle Creek Ranch where I live, I always pause when I see Rosalie's grave. In the stillness of a March morning, I imagine the pain that Rosalie was feeling on a March afternoon, 92 years ago.



The Graves of Rosalie and Her Parents, John and Inez Stoddard







April's Garden Club meeting will be held on Tuesday, **April 9th**. There will be a field trip to Weaverville and lunch at Round Table Pizza. Then there will be a visit to Trinity Nursery. Meet at the IOOF Hall at 10:30 am for a 10:45 am departure. If you have any questions call Wilma Villaloboz at 266-3628.

Bobbie and Dana Graham are celebrating another anniversary at the Forest Café' on **May 18th**. There will be a no host tri tip dinner beginning at 6 and dancing will begin at 8 pm with music by Steve Noverr.

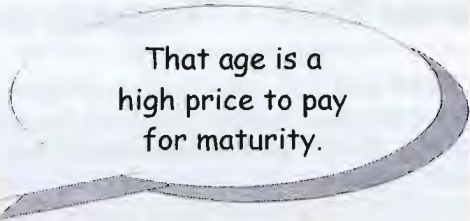
**NEW BOOKS AT THE LIBRARY:**

- The Fate—Western
- The White Chip—Western
- Blood Wager—Western
- The Quiet Cowboy-Western

Dawn on a Distant Shore— A romantic historical saga

- In Patagonia—Classic travel literature
- The Last Time They Met—A romantic mystery
- Sunlight at Midnight—About St. Petersburg and the rise of modern Russia
- The Lord of the Rings—The official movie guide
- Triple Pursuit—A Father Dowling mystery

The library is open 11:30 to 2:30 and 4 to 7 on Mondays and Wednesday. Phone 266-3242



**Did You Know.....?**

**Fire Call**



Coffee Creek Volunteer Fire Company hosted another successful Chili Feed and Auction this past month. Proceeds from the evening were approximately \$5000. The chili was great as usual, and the auction was spirited. Once again, Coffee Creek Fire Company is dependent entirely on contributions. They receive no tax money since they are not a Community Services District. Coffee Creek thanks all of you who helped support the department at their annual feed.



**Robert Kausen and Barry Bowen Whip the Crowd Into a Bidding Frenzy**



**Leah Groves Draws the Winning Raffle Ticket with Julie Eaker**



## SPRING MUSINGS

Spring has obviously sprung here in the Trinities. A few days ago men could be seen along side the highway, waving orange flags and peering through curious, three legged optical devices. My husband tells me they are surveying. I fail to see why, 'cause the road moved very little this winter.

Today we saw a county road crew staring into gaping holes on our road, while their hardworking boss was busily filling the holes with oozy, black asphalt.

Last week I saw many wet, cold, but determined men (and a woman or two) out on the lake in small boats. They huddled next to smoky fires on shore. Why? They were waiting for the first murmurings of the upcoming bass fishing season. A few locals who use live bait did very well. The plug casters caught a few, but only after about 100 casts per fish.

Yesterday, I saw men walking up and down along the river waving their arms and talking in small circles, staring off into the distance, where one was pointing. These are the first signs of the upcoming crop and pasture irrigation season.

Today, I threw caution to the wind and began to plant seasonal flowers in my garden (long before the admonition not to plant before the snow is off Billy's Peak). This is sure to bring about six more weeks of snow and a late, rainy spring.

## Fishing—by Ye Old Editor's Fishing Obsessed Husband

By the time you read this, the bass and trout fishing should be wide open in the lake. Try dragging crayfish along the depth brakes in the mouths of large coves. If you are a lure fisherman, cast a lightly weighted plastic tube or grub to the bank and slowly crawl it back to the boat on the bottom. For a change of pace try black backed rapalas or crawdad, colored deep diving cranks. Cast them to shore and rip them back out. If you're fishing from shore, cast those same baits parallel to the shore line or fish floating trout bait over small sliding sinkers.

You can also do well trolling or casting rapalas into the fast water in the lake right where the streams come in. Stay in the lake and don't cast upstream, as stream water is closed 'til the last Saturday in April.

**Editors note:** —Or you can visit your local fish market and avoid the obviously very iffy chance of catching one of the finned wonders. They are most certainly smarter than the ever hopeful fisherman that has to resort to such strange behaviors. I am always amused at the site of the poor unwary angler, sitting in the cold, drippy rain trying to convince themselves, that they truly are having fun. I'll wait 'til summer, thank you.

## School Days



### We Have A School—by Bill Loucks

We have a school where children can be children.

We have a school where children play beneath snow-capped mountains and clean air fills their bodies with energy; where rippling streams carry their laughter down through the canyons bringing life to drier ground.

We have a school where the sounds of small, singing voices drift from the windows to start each day with joy and harmony.

We have a school where children walk through the rooms in stocking feet while their shoes dry by a heater; where they ski for PE and cook for Science.

We have a school where problems are small and hearts are huge.

We have a school where a girl can climb her tree to gather her thoughts and a boy can call home for dry socks; where loving hands serve breakfast in the morning and admonition in the afternoon.

We have a school where children are safe, warm, loved and well fed.

We have a school where boys know how to split and stack wood and girls watch fawns play on the grass; where parents bring babies and grandparents bring memories.

We have a school where things are in proper order.

We have a school where teachers and staff stand guard against fear and darkness and where children are free to learn, free to grow and free to be children.

We have this school, right here in Coffee Creek.

## Coffee Creek and Trinity Center Life

**New Arrival:** Brian Wesley McCoy was born on March 17th to Megan and Hickory McCoy. He weighed in at 8 lbs. 15 ounces and was 21 inches long. Maternal grandparents are Bill and Velma Justice and Brian's paternal grandfather is Dale McCoy.

Look in your drawers and see if you can't unearth an old pair of glasses. The Lions Club lost about 500,000 pair when a warehouse was destroyed in a fire. You could help to replenish the supply just by donating unused glasses to the Lions Club.





Every last cent from the sale of this newsletter goes to the Coffee Creek Volunteer Fire Company!



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## Let's Get Acquainted

The Coffee Creek Country Store is proud to be able to offer you some of the finest natural meats available anywhere. Our pork, beef and chickens are raised in small farming communities located in No. Calif. and So. Oregon. Our meat is raised free range, without the use of harmful chemicals, growth hormones or antibiotics. Our beef is high quality graded choice and aged 14 days to insure flavor and tenderness. For your safety a federal food inspector is on site daily and all meat is USDA inspected.

It is our desire to bring an excellent product along with exceptional value and good old fashioned service directly to you, our customer.

Sincerely,

The Country Store

# Forest Cafe

## Finest Dining in Coffee Creek

Winter Hours:  
Closed Mondays and Tues-  
days  
Wed. – Thur. 12 noon to 4 pm  
Fri. and Sat – noon to 8 pm  
Sunday —9 am to 8 pm



Call ahead for  
nightly specials

266-3575

