

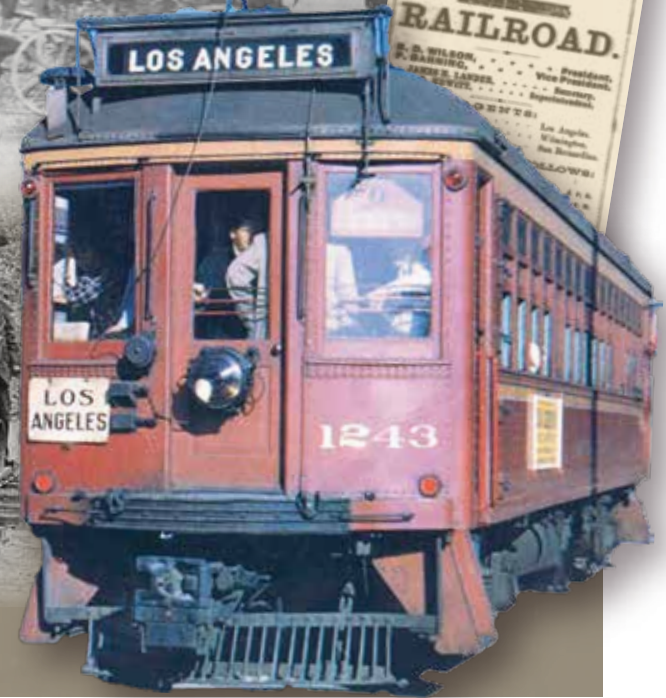
Grace  
Dee May

MUSEUM &  
LIBRARY

# ILLUMINATIONS

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2023

## Masons on the Move



Grace Dee May Museum & Library • 665 W Jefferson Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90007 • [www.gracedeemay.org](http://www.gracedeemay.org)

**ILLUMINATING THE LEGACY OF THE WEST**



# Grace Dee May

**MUSEUM &  
LIBRARY**

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Museum Archivist  
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Museum Graphics  
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Director Emeritus

## Audrey Marie Stein

In 2004, Audrey Marie Stein established the Grace Dee May Museum. Audrey believed that she had been richly blessed by the **Grace** of God.

Audrey's nickname was **Dee** and she had been born in the month of **May**. So, as Director of the Foundation, she named the Museum the **Grace Dee May**.



SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2023 **ILLUMINATIONS**



*"The Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark Expedition stretched the boundaries of the United States from sea to shining sea. Thus July 4, 1803, was the beginning of today's nation."*

– Historian Stephen Ambrose

Two Masonic Brothers, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, trekked across our continent from May of 1804 to September of 1806 along with their 30-plus member Corps of Discovery,

on a secret mission of exploration. Lewis & Clark are among America's best known "Masons On The Move".

Exemplifying, as historian Stephen Ambrose wrote, *Undaunted Courage*, Lewis & Clark led with a sense of purpose, dedication, and curiosity that propelled the Expedition to accomplish what seemed the impossible.



In this special issue of *Illuminations*, we are celebrating the accomplishments of Freemasons who have made history by helping to move mankind into the future. The Grace Dee May Museum is proud to share the stories of Brethren who took the first steps across America and those who followed on horseback, in wagon trains, on sailing ships, by rail, in automobiles, and in flight.

In October, as Masons gather in San Francisco to celebrate the 174th Annual Communication, I'd like to personally invite you to visit the Grace Dee May Museum booth on the Exhibition Floor of the Masonic Auditorium on Nob Hill. We will be sharing exciting stories on "planes, trains, and automobiles" as well as tales of Masons who bravely walked through the jungles of Panama and sailed through the most treacherous seas on the planet as they came 'round the Horn to make their way to California.

Visitors to the GDM Museum booth will also be given some great free gifts. So, become a "Mason On The Move" and join us in San Francisco on October 27-29, 2023.

Sean Foran  
Curator & Board President



Grace Dee May Inc. (EIN: 03-0591428) is a qualified tax exempt entity under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code



# Masons on the Move – Overland Trails

Meriwether Lewis Apron - Collection of Grand Lodge AF&AM of Montana

**Lewis and Clark** – The Corps of Discovery united a hardy group of frontiersmen under the leadership of two Virginia Freemasons: Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. Traveling more than 8,000 miles on foot, by keel boat and canoes, the Corps, fulfilled the mission of President Thomas Jefferson to explore territory northwest of the banks of St. Louis. The Expedition braved fierce conditions in the wilderness all the way to the Pacific Ocean and back again. The Co-Captains attempted to establish treaties with Native Tribes, noted longitude and latitude, and collected species of plants, birds and mammals to be sent back to Jefferson.



Lewis, a member of Door to Virtue Lodge No. 44 in Virginia, also served as the first Master of Saint Louis Lodge No. 111.



Expedition Compass

**Workman Rowland Party** – Englishman, William Workman sailed from Liverpool to Philadelphia in 1820. Five years later, Workman arrived in Santa Fe, Nuevo Mexico, and worked as a fur-trapper before opening a store in partnership with John Rowland, a fur-trapper from Ohio. The two men left Taos in the autumn of 1841 due to political upheaval. They formed the Workman-Rowland Party, a group of fellow immigrants becoming the first pioneers from the East to travel the Old Spanish Trail into California. Due to the rough terrain, wagons could not be used so the caravan traveled on horseback with pack mules. Both Workman and Rowland became prominent leaders in Los Angeles. William Workman was a member of Los Angeles Lodge No. 42, Lexington Lodge No.104, and LA Chapter 33, Royal Arch Masons. While, to date, no confirmation of John Rowland’s Masonic membership is established, the many descendants of both John Rowland and William Workman have a rich and colorful Masonic heritage.



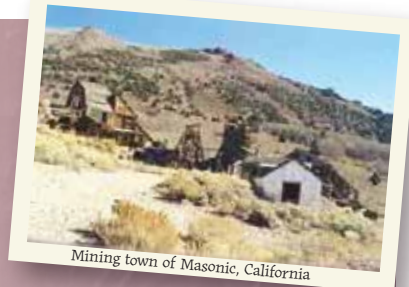
**Abel Stearns** – Orphaned in Massachusetts at the age of 12, Stearns worked as a deck hand before traveling to Mexico after Mexico’s War of Independence with Spain ended in 1821. In 1829, Stearns moved to the small Pueblo of Los Angeles. Considered by many to be the first Freemason in California, Stearns opened a shop in the Pueblo selling hides and tallow before establishing a stagecoach line to carry passengers and goods from his warehouse at San Pedro Bay to the Pueblo. A keenly ambitious businessman, Stearns soon built a flour mill and purchased a 28,000 acre rancho. Abel Stearns married the beautiful **Arcadia Bandini** and the two soon became the most prominent and richest couple in California.

Stearns was a member of Los Angeles Masonic Lodge No. 42.



Style of stagecoach known as a "Mud Wagon"

**The Forty-niners** – The glimmer of gold in Sutter’s Creek in 1848 inspired more than 300,000 people in just four years to grab an axe and shovel and head to California where some would “strike it rich” *without* finding gold. The large number of new arrivals from around the world headed to California. The hopeful gold-seekers brought prosperity to those supplying the gold-seekers with equipment and then transporting miners and hauling supplies into the mining camps. Transportation was also booming in Los Angeles where **Phineas Banning** and **D.W. Alexander**, operated a successful freight and stage lines serving LA, Yuma, Arizona, and Salt Lake City, Utah. Banning and Alexander were both members of Los Angeles Masonic Lodge No. 42.



Mining town of Masonic, California



Banning & Co. Stage Coach



# Masons on the Move – On the Sea

Ad for Fast Ships to the Gold Fields



**San Francisco** was the destination of most ships bound for California during the Gold Rush. Once in San Francisco, ship crews often deserted their vessels

to head for the gold fields. Since experienced crews were scarce, hundreds of empty ships were simply abandoned. These “ghost ships” were converted into floating warehouses, stores, hotels, brothels, and prisons. Some abandoned ships were filled with ballast and purposefully sunk to expand the available wharves and docks.



## Panama Shortcut

The trip around Cape Horn to California aboard a sailing ship typically took six months but some trips took almost a year. Some chose to sail the Caribbean to Panama and then embark on a treacherous journey on foot across the isthmus to the Pacific. A typical trek across Panama took 30–90 days walking through steaming jungle undergrowth where they risked being attacked by bandits. Travelers then faced the problem of waiting for weeks or even months for a ship to come along to carry them up the Pacific Coast. Travelers who walked the Panama route between 1849 and 1850 numbered in the thousands and, tragically, many fell gravely ill and others succumbed on their journey.



Painting of an Isthmus stream

Map of Isthmus



**Commodore John Drake Sloat**, was charged in 1850 to locate a site for a naval base in California. Sloat’s selection of Mare Island was approved by the U.S. Navy.



**Commodore David G. Farragut** was installed as Mare Island’s first base commander. The work to build docks took nineteen years and was completed in 1891. For more than a century, Mare Island served as the United States Navy’s



West Coast shipyard.

John D. Sloat was member of Nicholas Masonic Lodge No. 321 in New York City. David G. Farragut was made a Mason on the island of Malta in 1818, when he was 17. Farragut was buried with Masonic honors by the Grand Master of New Hampshire and St. Johns Lodge No. 1 of Portsmouth.

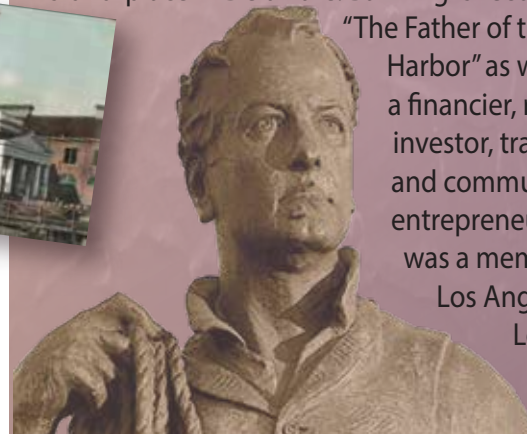


Mare Island Gate House

**Phineas Banning** worked as a teenager on the dockyards of Philadelphia before signing on as a deck hand at the age of 20. After many treacherous voyages, Banning left his life at sea and walked across Panama hoping to make his fortune in California. After initially working as a stagecoach driver, Banning started his own stage line and then, with a group of investors, purchased a 640 acre tract of land adjacent to San Pedro. He named the property Wilmington, after his birthplace in Delaware. Banning is recognized as “The Father of the Los Angeles Harbor” as well as being a financier, real estate investor, transportation, and communication entrepreneur. Banning was a member of Los Angeles Masonic Lodge No. 42.



Banning Advertisement



Statue of Phineas Banning



# Masons on the Move – By Rail

**"The Associates"** – In 1861, four businessmen in Sacramento shared a seemingly foolhardy vision to construct the first Transcontinental Railroad through the Sierra Nevada and the Rocky Mountains. These four Masons – Leland Stanford, Collis P. Huntington (uncle of Henry Huntington), Mark Hopkins, and Charles Crocker became famous as "The Big Four." with Stanford having the honor of driving in the Golden Spike. In the mid 1800s, the term "nabob" was used to describe men of wealth and influence. All four of the partners built mansions in San Francisco, the area become known as "Nob Hill".



Mansions on Nob Hill

**Edwin Tobias Earl** – Businessman, newspaper publisher, real estate investor, and philanthropist, Earl invented the ventilator-refrigerator train cars for transporting fruit and vegetables across the country.



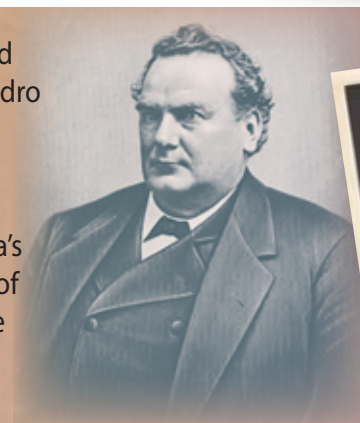
Earl proofing his newspaper

Earl also founded the Earl Lectures at Berkeley featuring distinguished speakers including Theodore Roosevelt, Maya Angelou, and other noted individuals. Earl was a member of Pentalfa Masonic Lodge No. 202, and Los Angeles Commandery No. 9, Knights Templar.



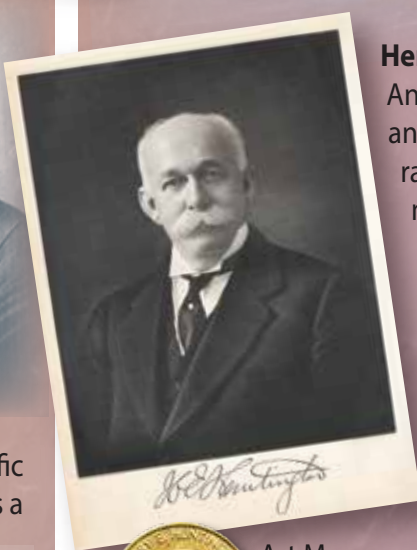
Ventilator-Refrigerator Train Car

**Phineas Banning** created the Los Angeles & San Pedro Railroad, connecting the harbor in San Pedro to downtown L.A. In 1869 it was Southern California's first railroad. Ownership of the LA & SP passed to the Southern Pacific in 1873. The Southern Pacific completed its transcontinental route through to Los Angeles. The railroad held a monopoly on all rail traffic from the city to the port at Wilmington. Banning was a member of Los Angeles Masonic Lodge No. 42.



Phineas Banning's First Locomotive

**Henry E. Huntington** – An American railroad magnate and collector of art, books, and rare manuscripts. Huntington made his fortune with his ownership of Los Angeles' Pacific Electric Railway system known as "The Red Cars" as well as considerable real estate interests. The former home of Henry and his wife Arabella became the The Huntington Library, Art Museum and Botanical Gardens which is now known as The Huntington.



It has been open to public since 1928.

The extensive library contains the collections of George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. Spectacular gardens cover 120 acres on The Huntington estate.



Pictorial History of the "Red Cars"



# Masons on the Move – On the Road

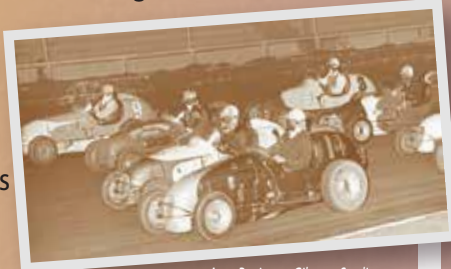
## Arthur Fremont Gilmore –

A dairy farmer who was drilling for water but stuck “Black Gold” instead. Arthur was a member of Hollenbeck Masonic Lodge No. 319.

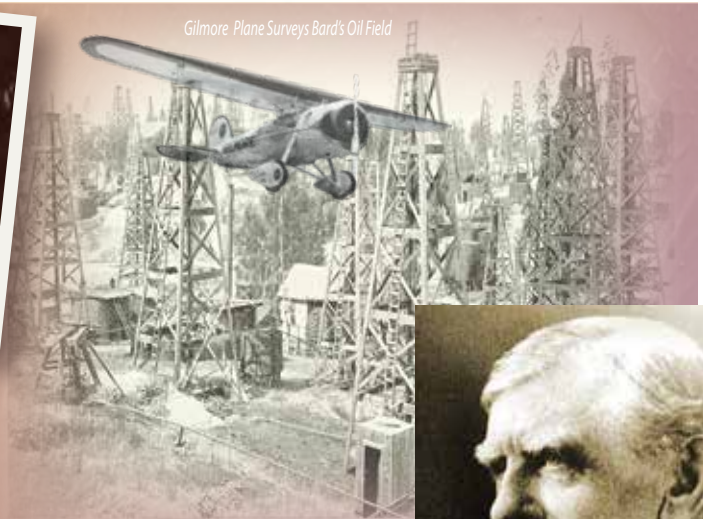


**Earl Bell Gilmore** was an oilman, paving contractor, and marketer. The creator of “Roar with Gilmore” gas stations, the LA,

Farmer’s Market, Gilmore Stadium, and the iconic Pan Pacific Auditorium. Earl was a member of Los Angeles Commandery No. 9, Knights Templar.



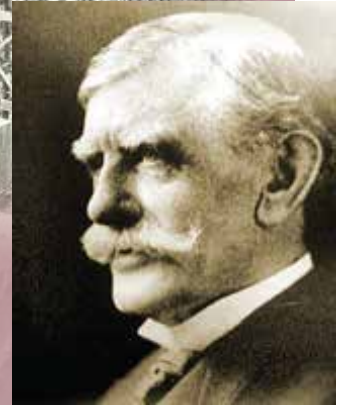
Auto Racing at Gilmore Stadium



Gilmore Plane Surveys Bard's Oil Field

## Thomas Robert Bard –

U.S. Senator and businessman, Bard was the first to produce oil from a drilled well in CA and later founded the UNOCAL Corporation. Bard was a member of Hueneme Masonic Lodge No. 311, Oxford Masonic Lodge No, 341, Los Angeles Commandery No. 9, Knights Templar.



**Edward Laurence Doheny** – A prospector, oil driller, businessman, and philanthropist. In 1892, he drilled the first successful oil well in the Los Angeles City Oil Field.

This set off a petroleum boom in Southern California. Ten years later when Doheny sold off his oil properties it made him a fortune. Edward Doheny was a member of Los Angeles Masonic Lodge No. 42



*E. Doheny*

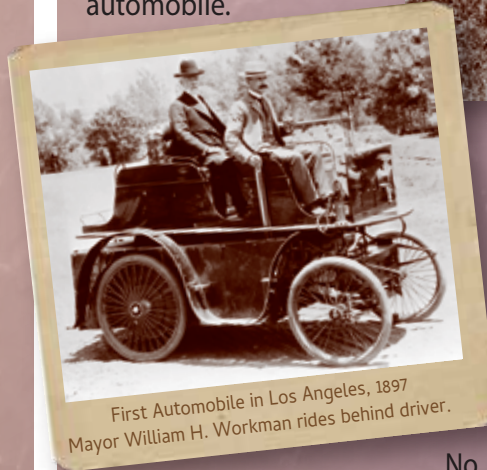


Doheny Oil Workers

**California takes to the road** – As Californians drilled for oil, they fueled the new auto industry. Masons like Ransom Olds, Walter Chrysler, and Henry Ford revolutionized the way the world would move. The first auto built and driven in LA was in 1897 as Mayor and Freemason, William H. Workman, test drove a Sturgis automobile.



Mack Sennett's "Keystone Kops" Off-roading



First Automobile in Los Angeles, 1897  
Mayor William H. Workman rides behind driver.

William H. Workman was the Secretary of Los Angeles Masonic Lodge No. 42 and a member of Hollenbeck Masonic Lodge No. 219 and Los Angeles Chapter No. 33, Royal Arch Masons.



# Masons on the Move – In the Air

**Will Rogers** – Famous actor, comedian, and radio personality. He championed the expansion of air travel within the U.S.A. Rogers and pioneer aviator, Wiley Post,



Final Flight of Will Rogers and Wiley Post

were exploring air routes through Alaska when a tragic accident took both of their lives in Pt. Barrow, Alaska, in 1935. Rogers had just attended a Shrine Ceremonial in Fairbanks before flying to Pt. Barrow. After hearing of the incident, Brother Mason Eddie Rickenbacker delivered a radio tribute in memory of the aviator. Rogers was a member of Claremore Lodge No. 53 in Oklahoma.

*“One must wait until the evening to see how splendid the day has been.”*  
– Will Rogers



Will Rogers Aviation Postcard

**Cecil B. DeMille** – The renowned Film Director and “Founding Father of Commercial Aviation in California.” Mercury Aviation, founded in 1919 by DeMille, was the first



Junkers landing at DeMille Field No. 2

commercial airline service in California. Mercury flew both charter and sightseeing flights in WW I Curtiss “Jennies” from DeMille Field No. 1 to Catalina Island, San Diego, and San Francisco. DeMille adding DeMille Field No. 2 and added a third air field near Pasadena. DeMille purchased a Junkers-Larsen JL-6 to expand his airline service. This new plane was delivered to DeMille Field No. 2 by WWI ace pilot and Masonic Brother Eddie Rickenbacker. Cecil B. DeMille was a member of Prince of Orange Masonic Lodge No, 16, in New York and also active in Hollywood Masonic Lodge No. 355.



Aviator Cecil B. DeMille

**Eddie Rickenbacker** was an American World War I fighter ace, a recipient of the Medal of Honor, and a pioneer in commercial aviation. He also served as president of Eastern Air Lines. Rickenbacker was a Mason in Kilwinning Lodge No. 297, Michigan.



Flying Ace - Eddie Rickenbacker

Masonic souvenir given by Eddie Rickenbacker – the propeller of his aircraft and a length of cable tow used to rescue his plane. It is hand-carved with an eagle and Masonic emblem. Currently on display at the Grace Dee May Museum.



**Charles L. Ducommun** –

Born in Switzerland, Ducommun walked from Arkansas all the way to Los Angeles. Ducommun began life in California first as a goldminer but soon set up shop in LA as a watchmaker in 1849 (a year before California statehood). Being a good businessman he expanded into other fields of metallurgy. The Ducommun Company is the oldest continuous operating company in California. Charles Ducommun was a member of Los Angeles Masonic Lodge No. 42 and Los Angeles Chapter No. 33, Royal Arch Masons.

Ducommun Watch



Bro. Charles L. Ducommun

Ducommun’s company produced the metal for “The Spirit of St. Louis.” Charles Lindbergh was a member of Keystone Masonic Lodge No. 243, St. Louis, Missouri.



Charles Lindbergh “Spirit of St. Louis”



Visit the Grace Dee May Museum booth in the Exhibition Hall

# Masons on the Move

California Grand Lodge, San Francisco  
October 27-29, 2023

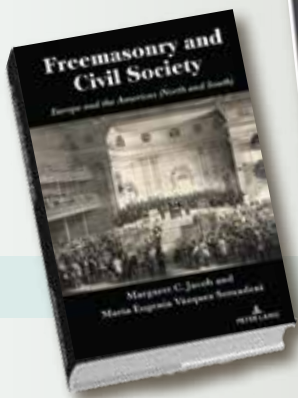


**Our Vision:**

The Grace Dee May Museum will seek to present a thematic look at the American West by utilizing its extensive collection of Western Art, and incorporate California history to broaden and deepen the public knowledge and appreciation of the men and women that settled the western part of the United States.

- New Masonic Video • Posters • Masonic Quiz
- Bookmarks • Great Giveaways • Untold Masonic Stories

Congratulations to Grace Dee May Museum Board Members Margaret Jacob and Maru Vázquez on their new book – *Freemasonry and Civil Society*



Dr. Margaret C. Jacob



Dr. Maria Eugenia Vázquez Semadeni

For information contact:  
**Sean Foran**  
[info@gracedeemay.org](mailto:info@gracedeemay.org)  
**818-222-6796**

**Our Mission:**

The Grace Dee May Museum is committed to advancing the public knowledge and understanding of the American West and the contributions that Freemasonry has played in its development.

*Grace Dee May*  
**MUSEUM & LIBRARY**  
*located at the historic Shrine Auditorium*

665 W. Jefferson Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90007

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