



Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard
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Celebrations are one of the great memories of the Christmas season and other times of the year and have become an important part of the social life in Fillmore since its earliest days. Whether you call them a party, a get together or a jubilee, they bring to mind the gathering of people to mark a festive event and revel in the occasion with food, song, dancing and other entertainment.

These thoughts were brought about by advertisements I had seen about the Bar D Wranglers Christmas Jubilee in Fillmore on Saturday, December 12. It sounded like some exciting musical fun but I found myself wondering about the “Jubilee” name so I did a little research.

According to what I read, the practice of a Jubilee year began anciently with the Jews. They counted seven years’ times seven and the next year – the 50th – was the Jubilee year. At that time all slaves were freed and debts were forgiven. Somehow I don’t think Zions or Wells Fargo would like that activity.

Later the Jubilee year was usually celebrated for the 25th or the 50th anniversary of an event.

The first mention I read about a Jubilee in Fillmore was the Diamond Jubilee which was celebrated on September 2, 1926. This was the 75th year of the settling of our community. In some special program reminiscences of three of the early settlers were read. Those settlers were Orange Warner, Judge Joshua Greenwood and James A. Melville. A speech was given by Emily Ray, the Queen of the Jubilee, who was chosen because she was born on July 14, 1852 and had helped to make Fillmore’s history from the beginning. Music was furnished by a ladies’ chorus and by the Delta and Millard High School bands. The afternoon was filled with sports and a rodeo. There were also boxing matches to entertain the crowds. In the evening, there was a movie at the Avalon Theatre, as well as dances in both the American Legion Hall and the school building. All of the entertainment was filled to capacity.

Portions of Emily Ray’s speech gave an interesting overview of the first 75 years in Fillmore. It reads, in part:

“July 14 was my seventy-fourth birthday. I was born in the old log fort in a log cabin a block east of my present home. There is not another living man or woman in this town who was here at this time. Of the first pioneers who arrived here in October, 1851, a hardier nobler group of men never undertook a more difficult task with right good will. Nearly all of them were heads of families whom they brought with them.



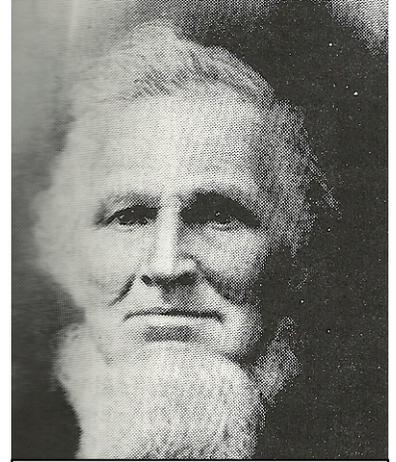
Emily Ray – Queen of the 75th
Anniversary Jubilee and
daughter of Orange Warner

“Joseph Robison and Columbia Call were born here in March and January of 1852. The land where Fillmore now stands was covered with cedar trees, sage brush, thistles, wild flax and a few rabbit brush. The bench land known as Rhoda Holbrook's Hill was occupied by Indians. Our supplies came from Omaha and California. We ground most of our flour in coffee mills; we paid a dollar a yard for domestic calico, a dollar a pound for sugar, sixteen dollars a pound for tea and coffee. The first winter most people lived in their wagon boxes, a few built log houses.

“The struggle of settling Fillmore was extremely hard but it was cheerfully and bravely met. It has been my privilege to know the greater part of the all the boys and girls, men and women who have come and gone from the town of my birth. The welfare of Fillmore and its people has been entwined like garland of flowers around my heart. Their progress and prosperity have always enlisted an anxious thought and care.

“I think of the little ragged, rusty-fisted boys with bare feet and happy faces who are now occupying prominent and prosperous positions. May the boys and girls among us in the future write the name of Fillmore in the circle of fame in the bright sunlight of glorious achievement.”

In 2016 Fillmore will celebrate its 165 year. It might not mathematically be a “Jubilee” year, but certainly is a great achievement for our community and reason to do some celebrating.



Orange Warner
Fillmore Pioneer