

A MONUMENT TO HONOR PIONEER WOMEN

The Sego Lilly Story

Wilhelmina Logan Mousley was born Oct. 11, 1840 in the state of Delaware where she spent her youth. In February of 1859 she met and married David H. Cannon. She was eighteen years of age and David was twenty. The young couple was anxious to begin their married life. However, the following fall he left on a mission to England. After he returned in 1861 the newlyweds began to establish a home in Salt Lake. Having been educated in the Eastern United States, Wilhelmina was a rather sophisticated young woman. Although she found Salt Lake very different from the East, she was happy to establish a home there.

In October of 1861 David, along with 309 other families, was called by Brigham Young to move to St. George to establish the Cotton Mission. When David approached her she was not sure what lay ahead, but with his enthusiasm she determined she would leave Salt Lake and help to establish a community now St. George. When the settlers arrived they built dug out huts in the hillsides until more permanent housing could be established. Wilhelmina, the sensitive, tenderly reared young woman from Delaware did her best to bear the harsh hardships of Utah's desert with few complaints. However, in her heart she yearned for the beauty of the life she had given up to come to a desolate place where her dirt floor hut left much to be desired. One day, at her wits end, she challenged her husband, David, to show her one single thing about their present location that was beautiful or she could not be satisfied to remain and would return to Salt Lake. He prayed fervently and diligently searched for the one thing that might be the key to restoring his wife's happiness and sense of contentment. One day as he looked down an embankment, he saw the most beautiful flower he had ever seen. A beautiful Sego Lilly grew not far away. He went down the hill and picked the flower, but on his return slipped and fell down the hill injuring his leg. Unable to walk, he remained there until he was found that evening--still grasping the beautiful flower. When he was carried back to his home his wife, Wilhelmina, concerned for his injury, but was greatly touched by her husband's act of love in securing this thing of such beauty for her. Inspired by the exquisite loveliness of the flower she renewed her effort and remained to do the work at hand to help settle this desert wasteland that became St. George.

Years later when Utah achieved statehood the Sego Lilly became Utah's state flower.

This monument is being established to honor the pioneer women who sacrificed so much to settle this area, but also the beautiful flower that inspired them. Today, the sego lily is still found and is a testament of the beauty that can be seen throughout the Southern valleys.

Note: *The heroic size sculpture features Wilhelmina as her husband David presents her with the beautiful Sego Lilly he had brought to her.*

Total cost for the sculpture is \$115,000.

Washington County Commissioners and St. George City Council members are very supportive