Gilroy Yamato Hot Springs, California

Project Partner: Henry W. Coe State Park Located in Santa Clara County, California

History:

Beginning in 1865 as a warm mineral water resort with hunting, fishing, hiking, and horseback activities for guests, Gilroy Hot Springs was a very popular destination spot for movers-and-shakers with time and money. Imagine a 3-hour train ride from San Francisco to Gilroy, an overnight stay in town, then a 3-hour horse and buggy ride up 12 miles of dirt trails to reach the place. This isn’t a quick day trip; most guests stayed one or two weeks, at least.

The large resort was built by early settlers in the region, with a boom during the 1920s, affected by the development of the automobile. It was a popular
site for dancing, poker, and socials. After a decline, the resort was bought in 1938 by a Japanese capitalist who built a shrine and teahouse on the site, turning it into a Japanese gardens and hot spring. It became a popular destination for Japanese internees after World War II and was run as a private resort into the 1980s. It was finally purchased by the California Department of Parks and Recreation in 2003.

Gilroy Yamato Hot Springs was designated a California Historic Landmark 20 years ago. Guided tours are available and the site is now a popular picnicking and family area. Cabin restorations on the site began in 2011 and volunteers are encouraged to participate in regular opportunities to restore the resort to its former glory.

**Scope of Work:**

Volunteers worked with HistoriCorps field staff to learn new skills in restoring the Ohio and Pennsylvania cabins on the site. Scope of work for each involved:

- Assembling scaffolding and roof anchors
- Installing redwood shingles
- Repairing and replacing roof rafters

**Nearest town:**

Gilroy, 13.5 miles

**Project Location:**

Gilroy Yamato Hot Springs is located within the Henry W. Coe State Park in Santa Clara County. It is situated in the hills just east of Gilroy, California, a 25 minute drive along dirt back roads.

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Gilroy, CA 95020