

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 114

Adopted in Senate August 10, 2006

Secretary of the Senate

Adopted in Assembly August 31, 2006

Chief Clerk of the Assembly

This resolution was received by the Secretary of State this
_____ day of _____, 2006, at _____
o'clock ____M.

Deputy Secretary of State

RESOLUTION CHAPTER _____

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 114—Relative to the Mignon “Minnie” Stoddard Lilley Memorial Bridge.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SCR 114, Chesbro. Mignon “Minnie” Stoddard Lilley Memorial Bridge.

This measure would designate the new South Fork Eel River Bridge, located on State Highway Route 101 in the County of Mendocino near Confusion Hill, as the Mignon “Minnie” Stoddard Lilley Memorial Bridge. The measure would also request the Department of Transportation to determine the cost of appropriate signs showing this special designation and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources covering that cost, to erect those signs.

WHEREAS, Mignon “Minnie” Stoddard Lilley was a woman of many facets and dimensions; and

WHEREAS, Minnie was courageous, intelligent, creative, kind, stern, hard working, musically inclined, honest, religious, impetuous, practical, and also, by all accounts, quite an attractive woman; and

WHEREAS, Minnie was a teacher, environmentalist, homesteader, entrepreneur, healer, visionary, and a true pioneer in every sense of the word; and

WHEREAS, Minnie led a full vigorous life and was highly thought of by all who came in contact with her; and

WHEREAS, Minnie taught for over 40 years and left her mark on many young minds and occasionally, when necessary, on their backsides too; and

WHEREAS, Minnie lived in a time when a person was required to deal with the harsh realities of living on the “frontier.” A person had to offer something of value to the community to become part of it and there were no free rides. In fact, during this time everyone walked; and

WHEREAS, As a teacher, Minnie offered the community something that was important to them and as a person she set a

positive example for all by her unselfish concern for all those around her; and

WHEREAS, From 1904 to 1936, Minnie taught in the one room schoolhouses of the Andersonia/Piercy area. Minnie spent her entire teaching career in the County of Mendocino teaching at Usal, Moody, Bear Harbor, Alder Glen, Franklin, and Buck Mountain before settling down and staying in the Andersonia/Piercy area; and

WHEREAS, All these once thriving settlements have, for the most part, disappeared over the years; and

WHEREAS, Minnie can also lay claim to being the first schoolbus driver in the area because around 1919, having acquired a horse-drawn buggy, she would pick up some of her students and give them a ride to school; and

WHEREAS, Minnie met William G. Lilley while she was teaching at Andersonia and they were married January 25, 1905, at the Grand Hotel in San Francisco. An article in the Fort Bragg Advocate newspaper described Mr. Lilley as being “one of Mendocino’s most promising young men, a man of sterling principles” and the same article described Minnie as “a young lady of many accomplishments and one of Mendocino’s most successful teachers;” and

WHEREAS, In the spring of 1904, Minnie set out to homestead a claim up the Eel River in the redwoods. For many years Minnie had walked over 5 miles to the schoolhouse so a solitary hike up the South Fork of the Eel River through some “darn tough country” was no big deal to her. A quote from a 1950 Humboldt Times article reads “as soon as the spring rains had subsided enough so that the Eel River could be crossed safely, she went into the depths of the redwood forest, fording on a homemade raft the turbulent waters, and set up her location markers;” and

WHEREAS, Minnie then hired a man to build her a simple one room cabin on the property. Minnie loved telling people about her first night in the cabin, all alone way out there in the forest which she spent “with prayer on my lips and a pistol in my hand;” and

WHEREAS, Minnie had “true grit” and started making a habit to travel to her cabin on weekends, weather permitting. On one occasion, Minnie arrived to find that three men were there with

the intentions of jumping her claim and were building a cabin on her property. What actually transpired between Minnie and the would-be claim jumpers was never known, but it is known that she stayed and they did not; and

WHEREAS, Around 1925, Minnie and William bought a 55 acre parcel adjoining the homestead and that property included a particular tree Minnie lovingly called “The Fraternal Monarch.” This amazing redwood tree stands over 250 feet tall, is 101 feet in circumference, and has had the center burned out by a fire some 300 years ago. Today this tree is known as “The World Famous Tree House;” and

WHEREAS, When William and Minnie bought the property, there were no roads of any kind along the Eel River; and

WHEREAS, In 1919, construction of the Redwood Highway through the canyon of the South Fork of the Eel River began; and

WHEREAS, In 1929, Minnie and William started building a few small cabins near The World Famous Tree House; and

WHEREAS, On May 14, 1931, for the sum of \$10, the Lilley’s deeded enough land to the State of California to make improvements to the new road that ran through their property; and

WHEREAS, During construction of the highway, the tree house was a camp for the convict labor that was used to work on the road. These men actually used the old burned out tree as a shelter to sleep in; and

WHEREAS, Now that tourists were visiting the redwoods, William and Minnie were in a great position to benefit from this new situation; and

WHEREAS, One day, Minnie decided to put a gift shop inside The World Famous Tree House and she had a floor, windows, and a door fitted to the measurements of the burned out hole in the redwood. This was one of the very first gift shops on the Redwood Highway; and

WHEREAS, On March 8, 1947, Minnie, a remarkable pioneering woman, passed away and, according to her wishes to be with her beloved trees through eternity, she was interred in her mausoleum right near The Fraternal Monarch; now, therefor, be it

Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature recognizes the

contributions of Mignon “Minnie” Stoddard Lilley to the history of California and designates the new South Fork Eel River Bridge (Bridge number 10-0299, Kilometer Post 160.03), located on State Highway Route 101, in the County of Mendocino near Confusion Hill, as the Mignon “Minnie” Stoddard Lilley Memorial Bridge; and be it further

Resolved, That the Department of Transportation is requested to determine the cost of appropriate signs consistent with the signing requirements for the state highway system, showing this special designation, and upon receiving donations from nonstate sources sufficient to cover the cost, to erect those signs; and be it further

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of this resolution to the Department of Transportation and to the author for appropriate distribution.

Attest:

Secretary of State