THE GILBERT PEAK LABEL SERIES: LEGACY, ADVENTURE, SOIL, VITALTY

Left: 1949 dedication. Justice Douglas standing. Meg & Laura's grandmother, Virginia, is seated to his right. Her husband, Cragg D. is roped in at the bottom of the frame. Right: Curtiss R. hiking as a young man

LEGACY || In 1918, Curtiss Richey Gilbert returned to Yakima from the trenches of World War I, determined to lead the next generation in developing their orienteering skills while spending his time in the beautiful Cascade Mountains--especially the Goat Rocks Wilderness. He became an avid hiker as well as a respected local scout leader. Among his many descendants are Meg Gilbert and Laura Rankin, Gilbert Cellars' owners (who are also cousins).

When Curtiss died in 1947, his most frequent hiking partner, Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, decided to name the highest point in the Goat Rocks Wilderness in Curtiss' honor. Mt Curtiss Gilbert, aka Gilbert Peak, was officially dedicated in 1949. The family celebrated the 10th anniversary of the dedication with an organized hike, which continued each decade following. In 1997, the centennial anniversary of the Gilbert's move to Yakima, a vibrant 80 member hiking party up the Peak marked the occasion. An annual tradition took hold.

ADVENTURE || The mountains were a special place for Curtiss, as well as Justice Douglas. Gilbert Cellars is formed in the same spirit of adventure and exploration. In Of Men and Mountains, Douglas wrote, " If throughout time the youth of the nation accept the challenge the mountains offer, they will help keep alive in our people the spirit of adventure….A people who climb the ridges and sleep under the stars in high mountain meadows, who enter the forest and scale the peaks, who explore the glaciers and walk ridges buried deep in snow—these people will give their country some of the indomitable spirit of the mountains."

Above: Laura Rankin and Meg Gilbert, 2013 Right: Anne Gilbert and Margaret Gilbert, 1959

VITALITY || Gilbert Peak is more than just a place, or even a family honor—it is also inherently linked to the vitality of agriculture in Yakima. As the main watershed for the upper Yakima Valley, Gilbert Peak's glacial melt forms the Tieton River--the water that feeds acres of vineyards and orchards and supports the agricultural bounty of this beautiful region.

SOILS

On an even bigger scale, Washington's viticultural ties to the mountains are indelible. As Jancis Robinson reminds us, "Washington's wine story really began fifteen million years ago, when the region experienced chaotic volcanic activity. Lava flows hardened into the basalt bedrock that covers much of the Northwest today. Cataclysmic floods followed, resulting from glaciers moving south from Canada and stopping at the Clark Fork River in the Idaho Panhandle. This enormous piece of ice formed a natural dam, creating Lake Missoula. The dam eventually burst with the "Missoula Floods" depositing sand, silt, granite, and quartz throughout the region----a cycle that would repeat itself many times over. Winds spread this matter to the surrounding hills, and volcanic eruptions in the Cascades added ash to the already-complex soils." The Hackett Ranch, home to the winery and the Sunrise Vineyard, lies in the elevations just above the Missoula flood plain. Underneath the volcanic silty loam of the Hackett Ranch, is solid basalt deposited by lava flows from the ancient volcanos of the Goat Rocks, including Gilbert Peak.

WINE

When you open a bottle of Gilbert Cellars, we hope it evokes the same sense of place and sense of adventure that we feel when we create it. Our first wines featuring the new Gilbert Peak label will be released in March 2014 and throughout this year. Visit us at www.gilbertcellars.com , at our tasting room in Downtown Yakima, or at The Hackett Ranch, where our wines are crafted.

GILBERT CELLARS

*Columbia Valley / **Unoaked Chardonnay***
Two Thousand & Thirteen