

# Dude rancher Frank Galey dies

By Joseph Piccoli  
Staff writer

Another of Jackson Hole's living links to its past was severed Saturday with the sudden death of Frank Galey.

Galey, who with his wife, Nona, owned and operated the White Grass Ranch, died Saturday about 12:30 p.m. of an apparent heart attack.

Galey was alone when he died but had been with an employee of the ranch at 12:30. He was found collapsed five minutes later.

Galey died just a month and a day after his longtime friend and fellow Jackson Hole notable, John Cooke.

A native of Philadelphia, Galey moved with his mother to Jackson Hole in 1919.

His mother quickly fell in love with the valley and found a husband in Harold Hammond, a rancher who had homesteaded the White Grass six years earlier.

"We took dudes starting in 1919," Galey said in a 1981 interview with the *Jackson Hole Guide*.

A number of other ranches were converted from cattle to tourists, Galey remembered, and they attracted wealthy Easterners who would arrive laden with steamer trunks and servants for a two and one-half month stay.

Galey's stepfather died about the time the dude ranch phenomenon entered its heyday and his mother took over the operation. Galey took it over in 1951.



Frank Galey

White Grass Ranch, which today is situated within Grand Teton National Park, hosted about 25 guests at a time at \$10 per day.

"That's probably more than we charge now, considering how much money was worth then," Galey said in 1981.

In 1945, Galey joined the Army and spent five years as a pilot. He also spent some time at Princeton and at school in France.

Except for these forays and for a pe-

riod when Galey divided his year between Jackson and the West Indies, he lived all the rest of his life in Jackson.

Among Galey's friends were Fred and Elizabeth McCabe, owners of the *Guide*.

"I've known Frank since I've been in the valley and I feel keenly that I have lost one of my best friends in the valley," said Elizabeth McCabe, "and Fred and I have lost one of our best friends."

One of his oldest friends was Bob Dornan who said Monday that Galey's passing is a "great loss to the valley."

Dornan, who said "Frank and the White Grass Ranch were just synonymous," called Galey "one of the people that made Jackson Hole what it is."

That was especially true for travellers who knew Jackson Hole primarily through the White Grass Ranch.

The ranch was the first to go to dudes in Jackson Hole and survived when most of the other dude ranches folded.

Galey said once that he remembered a time when there were six dude ranches on the sage flats at the base of the Tetons.

Today, only the White Grass remains on the western shores of the Snake River and with Galey's death, even the White Grass faces an uncertain future.

Funeral arrangements were not complete at press time and only a partial list of Galey's surviving relatives was available.

Galey is survived by his wife, Nona, a daughter, Cynthia Peck, two grandchildren, a cousin, Chick Galey and one nephew, Frannie Fox.

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Tue, Jun 5, 2018