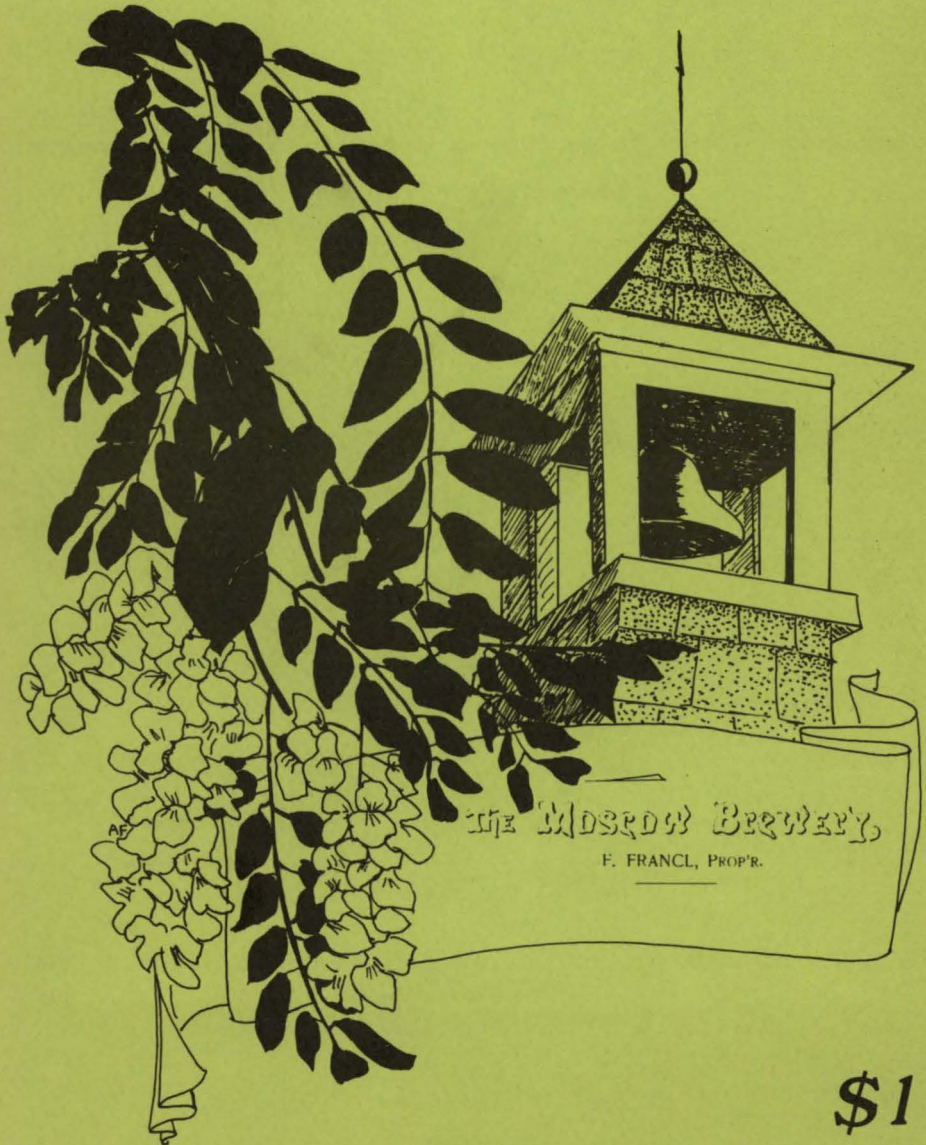


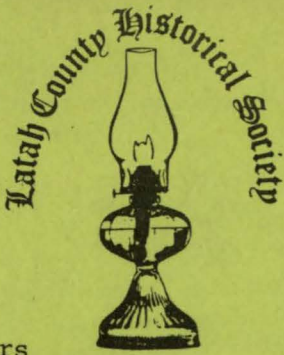
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THATUNA ACADEMY graduates for 1917 included (from bottom, 1-r) Esther Germer, Rhoda Hart, Jessie Germer, Mytle Beebee, Ruben Fighur, Earl Eighme and Glen Palmer. For details, see p. 22. KENDRICK'S LOCUST BLOSSOM FESTIVAL unfolds for readers beginning on p. 29.

# JULIAETTA, GENESEE, MOSCOW--THE BREWERIES OF LATAH COUNTY

by

Herman W. Ronnenberg

In the 1860s to 90s one of the prime marks of a town's success was having its own brewery. Three Latah County towns, Juliaetta, Genesee, Moscow, enjoyed this distinction. Brewing in those days was an important local industry for many reasons. It provided a market for local barley and hops, and a source of employment for local people. The majority of the brewers were German immigrants who were thus aided in entering the mainstream of American business. Breweries all had ice houses and generally were the source of the town's summer ice supply. They stimulated progress by being early users of electricity and telephone service, also.

Although they were never attacked as vigorously as the saloons, the brewers were opposed by temperance forces for being part of the liquor establishment. The success of those "dry" forces caused the demise of the breweries.

The material existing on the three breweries varies greatly in quantity, and the length of the treatment of each brewery is a reflection of that variation.

## JULIAETTA BREWERY

Research on the Juliaetta Brewery has not produced much information. The plant is shown on three editions of the Juliaetta City Fire Insurance map in the University of Idaho Special Collections; one advertisement for the brewery in the Moscow *Mirror* of January 1, 1892 (p. 7, c. 5) is known; and it is listed in the *Register of United States Breweries* which tends to have numerous errors.

As well as can be determined, the brewery opened late in 1891 under the proprietorship of Deetson and Wartemburg and was called the Juliaetta Brewing Company. The brewery was at the corner of Water and Third Streets its entire history. In 1895 Diamond Howarth was the pro-

prietor and it was known as the Milwaukee Brewing Company. In 1896, the owner was listed as Jacob Howarth and it was again called the Juliaetta Brewing Company.

By 1900, the name Milwaukee Brewery was back and Nisser and McGlynn were the operators. In 1903 Albert Wisser ran the brewery and in 1904 Chris Berner is known to have been the owner. The 1909 city map lists the brewery as "no longer in operation." Apparently it was a small operation with the plant about fifty feet square and with an attached ice house. In all probability beer was not shipped further than Kendrick and such adjacent areas.

#### GENESEE BREWERY

Early in 1889 Joseph Geiger and Matt Kambitch began their long association as brewers in Genesee, Idaho. The brewery on the corner of Chestnut and Tammarack Streets featured a saloon on the front of the building facing Chestnut Street. Apparently the brewery never produced large quantities of beer. The fire insurance map of Genesee for 1893 says the brewery could produce seven barrels per brew.

The *Genesee News* of May 11, 1894 (p. 5, c. 1) contained a brief history of the brewery in its special issue to promote the town.

Geiger and Kambitch are the managers of the institution which is operated in a first class quiet manner. The brewery was established in 1889 and has always enjoyed a good reputation. The quality of the beer made is pure, wholesome and healthy and wherever sold bears a good name. Each member of this firm has a good residence in our midst.

Very little about the brewery appears in the Genesee newspapers of these years. In 1892 there was a story that Matt Kambitch came up smiling with an eleven pound boy, born October 22.

In 1893 the Star Saloon in Genesee was owned by Geiger and Gesellche, with Gesellche becoming the sole proprietor in a few months. The Geiger here may well have been the brewery owner but that is not certain.

The competition between beers was always strong in Genesee. Moscow beer was sold there for years and in 1893



MATT KAMBITCH, Genesee Brewery owner, stands behind the bar of the establishments saloon while his customers heft a glass for the photographer.

when the newly enlarged Moscow brewery went bankrupt, Spokane's brewers entered the competition. A letter in the brewery archives at Washington State University says the New York Brewery of Spokane entered the marketing areas of Genesee, Vollmer and Uniontown in 1893 when the Moscow Brewery closed.

Out-of-state brewers from St. Louis and Milwaukee also competed successfully in the Northwest in the early 1890s thanks to the new railroad networks. The Silver Safe Saloon in Genesee advertised Moscow keg beer at 75 cents per keg and St. Louis bottled beer at \$10 per barrel in September of 1892. Bottled beer was sold by the barrel in those days because barrels were a convenient packaging device.

Apparently in 1902 Joseph Geiger became the sole pro-

prietor of the brewery. By 1908 bottled beer was being produced there. An advertisement in the *Genesee News* of February 21, 1908 (p. 4, c. 1) was for "Gold Drop Beer, a Genesee Product, manufactured by the Genesee Brewery."

As local option loomed, one Paul Rech took over the brewery and announced his intention to sell "maltine" a beverage containing less than 2% alcohol. This apparently was not successful.

In the middle of April of 1909, the county liquor license for the Genesee Brewery was denied. The Latah county commissioners had decided to make the county dry by administrative directive instead of democratic process. All liquor licenses were routinely denied in 1909.

In July of 1909 this ad appeared in the *Genesee News*:

The last chance to get your harvest wet goods, threshers buy your ginger brandy now. Everything must be sold by 12 o'clock Saturday night when the town will go dry. Near beer will be the next best. All goods reduced.

Next week you will find me at the old stand selling soft drinks, tobacco and cigars.

O. O'Reilly

A week later the same paper said Genesee was "dry" with the expiration of O. O'Reilly's liquor license. Only two saloons were still in operation in Latah County (Princeton and Kendrick), with no breweries operating.

Genesee apparently never took the dry movement very seriously. The paper contained a number of funny stories about the movement. The *Genesee News* (September 24, 1909, p. 3, c. 3) ran the following story from Grangeville which sums up their attitude:

A very ardent prohibitionist had a great deal of local option literature stored away in a barn. During his absence on a lecturing tour the herd of cows became hungry during the absence of the owner, broke into the shed and ate a lot of the literature and when the owner returned every cow he owned had gone "dry."

## MOSCOW BREWERY

In 1882, six years after Paradise Valley had been redubbed Moscow, Otto Fries opened the Moscow Brewery. Joseph Niederstadt was apparently a junior partner from the beginning. The brewery was on the northeast corner of Main and A Streets, lots 11 and 12, and the Latah County Title Company records show that Otto Fries and Joe Niederstadt co-owned these lots in 1882. The *Moscow Mirror* of 1885, the oldest Moscow newspaper known to exist, had the following advertisement for the brewery:

Moscow Brewery; Fries and Niederstadt proprietors; wines, liquors and cigars, BEER, in lots to suit purchasers. A comfortable bar room in connection with the brewery, beer sold by the quart or glass.

Our Popular Townsman Otto Fries

C. B. Reynolds, a practicing attorney, was also editor-publisher of the *Moscow Mirror* during the middle 1880s. Reynolds stated in various editorials that he did not drink, but apparently drank enough of Otto's beer to form a fast friendship. Reynolds treated Otto to numerous short articles in the *Mirror*, most of which sound like inside jokes we'll never be truly privy to. On November 6, 1885, the *Mirror* printed this anecdote:

Otto Fries, our popular townsman of the brewery has left us. For some time past he appeared to have something on his mind. Mysterious letters have been coming to his address for several months past which seems to effect [sic] him. He has complained of not feeling well. The cause of his abstraction is a sweet heart who lives in the lower country. She will bring him back. The band is expected to come out. The boys are supposed to be around, we will be there Otto.

Two weeks later (November 20, 1885, p. 3, c. 2), Reynolds has this to say about poor Otto.

Otto Fries has been going around lately with his left hand tied up. This looked so mysterious that our reporter, by listening through key-holes, down chimneys, etc. has arrived at the conclusion that Fries girl had gone back on him and he had made a deter-

mined effort to put an end to himself, but weakened after pulling the trigger and tried to stop the bullet from coming out the muzzle with his hand, with the above result.

Apparently Otto's "lost love" and "attempted suicide" didn't slow him for too long because two weeks later the *Mirror* readers learned that Otto had been strolling every evening with a lady with red ribbons on her bonnet.

The following January the *Mirror* announced that a new city "on the Bronta Cabin place about six miles east from Moscow" had been named Otto. Otto City was even to be the site of a large dinner-dance in the "new hall."

These happy joking days did not last long for Otto. In March of 1886 a notice appeared in the paper that Fries and Niederstadt were dissolving partnership due to the failing health of Otto. In April of 1886 the legal notice of this was printed:

Notice of the Dissolution of co-partnership between Otto Fries and Joseph Niederstadt, Brewers at Moscow, Idaho doing business under the name Fries and Co. Notice is hereby given that the co-partnership heretofore existing under the firm name of Otto Fries and Co., said firm consisting of Otto Fries and Joseph Niederstadt doing business of brewing and selling malt liquors at Moscow, Idaho and at Pullman, W.T. is this day dissolved by mutual consent. Otto Fries retires from the business at Moscow and Pullman and said Niederstadt will assume the liabilities of said firm and collect all outstanding accounts. Otto Fries. Joseph Niederstadt. Signed in the presence of G. Weber, C. H. Jones, S. W. Harris. Dated at Moscow, Idaho, March 22nd, 1886.

The same issue of the paper noted that the brother of Otto Fries had arrived on a visit from California and was so pleased he was going to stay. The next mention of Fries was a year later when a brief note said "Yontis, Coburn and Boice were up this week from Lewiston to appraise the estate of Otto Fries deceased."

Joe Niederstadt carried on the brewery business for several years alone before taking on a new partner. He built a fine home in the Frye addition and became a



permanent resident. Niederstadt eventually got out of brewing and spent many years as a Moscow saloonkeeper.

### The Brewery and the Town

The brewery played an important social role in the town from the beginning. The town was obviously proud when the brewery in 1885 was "refitted throughout and appears not second to any business in town." The same year the big Christmas activity at the brewery was a

Rifle Raffle: turkeys, geese and chickens to be shot for at the brewery day before Christmas. The field will be full of foul [sic] and the man who hits the mark will get the turkey for Christmas. Rifles on the geese and turkeys and shot guns on the chickens--hurrah boys for the holidays.

In 1888, Niederstadt and a Mr. Fry bought lots one and two on the same block as the brewery. This is the southeast corner of Main and C Streets and later became the site of a new brewery in the 1890s.

The Moscow City Insurance Map of 1888 gives an excellent description of the structure of the brewery. The map shows the beer cellar, fermenting cellar, and malt kiln. The kiln is described as wood above a perforated floor with a furnace to heat it, and exhaust pipes from the furnace enter a solid brick chimney. The hopper, where barley is stored, is brick lined and the brew kettle is also heated by the furnace. The 1889 map shows that an ice house was added that year. The saloon was the part of the brewery facing Main Street.

The function of all this equipment is not as complex as one might guess. Barley would be stored in the hopper, which was the tallest part of the building, until needed. Then it was spread on the kiln floor and watered down. In several days, when each sprout had grown as long as the kernel of the grain, the kiln was heated to dry the "malt" and stop further growth. This new malt was then ground, mixed with water and boiled in the brew kettle with hops. Hops are strictly a flavoring agent. The liquid which resulted was siphoned off from the "spent grain" and put in a vat in the fermenting cellar which was kept cold with ice. Yeast was added to this "wort" and the brew was left several days to ferment. Finally it was put in kegs and deposited in the beer cellar to age until ready to sell.

Joe Niederstadt and the Editor

*Mirror* editor C. B. Reynolds never seemed to have quite the same comradery with Joe Niederstadt that he enjoyed with Otto Fries, but there was a friendly relationship. Reynolds once told his readers that

Joe Niederstadt the brewer dropped in on us this week with some coin. Joe's beer can't help but be the best because he is square and honest in all his dealings.

Despite his claims to being a non-drinker, editor Reynolds once published a blatant hint for a liquid birthday present. "Bismarck on his birthday received a keg of beer from every brewer in Germany. We don't mention this because our birthday is near at hand." Three weeks later Moscow learned the results. "Joe Niederstadt, the brewer, complimented our office this week with a keg of his best beer. Joe has always been an advertiser in the *Mirror* and always paid up promptly."

Difficult Years for Brewing--1890-1902

Joe Niederstadt was sole proprietor of the brewery up to January of 1890. By May, though, the brewery ad reads "Niederstadt and Schober, proprietors."

Although the records for the 1890s are either missing or vague, apparently Spokane brewer F. L. Koehler moved to Moscow in 1891 and entered into the partnership. These three men then built a much larger brewing plant at the north end of the same block on the lots Niederstadt had jointly purchased in 1888.\* According to Emery's "History of Moscow" this was called Latah Brewing. According to the Moscow Insurance Map of 1893 it was the Idaho Brewing Co.

The plant had electric lights and the only ice making equipment Moscow was to enjoy for over twenty years. The old Moscow Brewery apparently sat vacant during these years or at least the saloon part was all that was used.

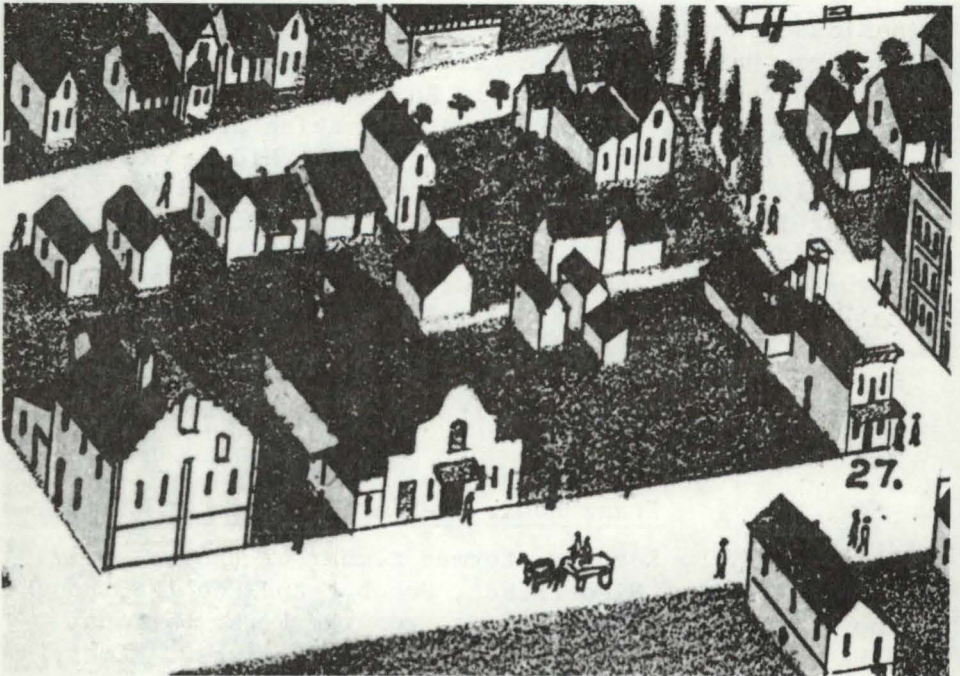
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\*For the later history of this building see "Moscow's Vinegar Plant" by Jeanette Talbott, Latah County Historical Society *Quarterly Bulletin*, April, 1978, p. 4.

Emery tells us that the brewery failed. The *Moscow Mirror*, then under the new editorship of the Jolly Brothers, said in 1897 that Niederstadt "was one of the founders of the Moscow Brewery, an institution that proved too large for the town under a democratic administration." More likely it was the depression of the 1890s that ruined many Moscow businesses that was the culprit, not the Democrats. The old Moscow Brewery plant was apparently part of the assets of the new brewery, and it was taken over by the First National Bank through foreclosure.

In December of 1896, the following item appeared in the *Mirror*:

The Moscow Brewery and ice plant machinery has been sold to parties from Trail Creek and is being taken down preparatory for shipment. The greater part of



MOSCOW'S TWO brewery buildings occupied the same block, though on opposite ends, according to this 1897 map "A Bird's Eye View of Moscow" by Augustus Koch.

the machinery will be removed from the building this week and be ready for loading on cars next week. Al Ingle is assisting in setting the plant up again, which will take at least a couple of months.

Since the ads for the Moscow Brewery continue unabated in the *Mirror* before and after this announcement, it must be assumed that it was the Idaho Brewing Co., not the Moscow Brewery, that had its equipment sold.

A letter in the brewery archives at W.S.U. from the New York Brewery of Spokane to R. Jackson of Genesee, dated May 26, 1893, said that the New York Brewery had been unable to enter the market around Moscow, Idaho, because of the brewery there. However with the Moscow firm defunct, they were taking its former territory in Genesee, Vollmer and Uniontown.

Besides general economic conditions there are other factors that explain the failure of the expanded brewery. In 1890 the Northern Pacific Railroad reached Moscow giving the town two railroads and making possible the inexpensive shipment of goods from the Midwest to Moscow. In 1891, the Mammoth Saloon of Moscow advertised "A car load of the celebrated Val Blatz Milwaukee beer, just received, which will be sold wholesale or retail." It was only the discriminatory freight rates of the railroads that made it possible for firms 1500 miles away to compete. In 1893 the giant Pabst of Milwaukee was also advertised in Moscow. A newly expanded local brewery was understandably hard pressed to meet this kind of competition.

#### Franz Louis Koehler, Brewer

In 1895, F. L. Koehler, former member of the recently defunct firm of Niederstadt, Schober and Koehler, bought the old Moscow Brewery plant from the First National Bank and put Moscow back in the beer business. Emery's 1897 "History of Moscow" relates the following about the Koehler run brewery.

Moscow Brewery, F. L. Koehler, Proprietor

The Moscow Brewery was built by Otto Fries, in 1882 and is Moscow's only brewery. At first it could

produce only 5 barrels a day. It has been improved and can produce 20-30 barrels of the finest lager beer per day.

Mr. Koehler purchased the brewery from the First National Bank of Moscow in 1895 and has since conducted it with increasing business and success. The Brewery as modernized by Mr. Koehler is now, except as to its capacity, almost a duplicate of the the best modern breweries.

Ice is put up in sufficient quantities to keep the vaults at the desired low temperature during the warm weather, and also, for sale. A wagon is run for accomodation of city patrons, and to facilitate the shipment of beer to outside points.

Mr. Koehler takes personal charge of every brew made. He uses only the best Palouse grown barley, and best Oregon and Washington hops. He makes his own malt, and makes only pure malt and hops lager beer. It is an interesting fact that the exceptionally pure water used is especially adapted to making a strictly pure lager beer, and that the product of the Moscow Brewery is the equal in flavor and keeping qualities of the best beer made in the east.

Mr. Koehler is an experienced German brewer, but has been many years in the United States. He was formerly in business in Spokane, and from that city came to Moscow in 1891. He was a member of the firm of Niederstadt, Scholer [sic] and Koehler, which built the Latah brewery. Notwithstanding the failure of that enterprise Mr. Koehler had abiding faith in Moscow as being a good point for the brewing industry. He has proved his opinion to have been well founded, by his ultimate success, and he is esteemed, not only as one of the best brewers in the northwest, but as a straight-forward, responsible business man as well.

Koehler ran the brewery during 1895 and 1896 as sole proprietor but some time in 1897 took on a partner named Herman. In some sources a partner named Hermann or Herrmann is listed for the following year. Whether this was one man whose name was inconsistently spelled or two men is not known. Koehler was definitely sole proprie-

tor afterward until 1901 when Herman Nicola became the owner for a short time.

### Fred Francl, Brewer

Ferdinand Francl was another in that long line of graduate German brewers that came to America to ply their trade. Little is known of his early life, but when he took over the Moscow Brewery in 1902 he already had lengthy brewing experience in America.

Francl apparently took over a neglected business and had to struggle to get it back on its feet. The Insurance Map of 1902 says the brewery "runs occasionally only, prop'r lives on prem's." Between 1904 and 1908 Francl did well enough to build a small house just north of the brewery.

There is a marked relationship between the character of a beer and the character of the man who brews it. If Francl's beer was everything the ads for it claimed, then both Francl and his beer must have been exceptional. In 1906, he advertised "natural process Pilsener and Bohemian Beer, extra quality bottled beer, manufactured from pure malt and hops without chemistry."

An ad of 1905 named the brewery's retail outlets: "Moscow Brewery Beer on draft or in bottles. at the following saloons: T. L. Olson, Headlight Saloon; Andrew Boe, Club Saloon; L. R. Thompson, Idaho Saloon. The beer is pure, no chemicals used."

In the spring, as every good German brewer would, Francl prepared dark, sweet Bock Beer. "Bock Beer on draught. The best and most perfectly brewed beer in Moscow. Made from malt and hops, absolutely free of chemicals and injurious colorings." Other times he advertised it as "a good spring tonic." In the hot months Francl's ad read "Drink Moscow Beer and keep cool, always kept in cold storage, so never gets warm, pure and healthful."

Just the fact that Francl kept rewriting the copy for his ads was a big innovation in that day when ads frequently never changed a word for years at a time. The impression one gets of Francl is that he was a dedicated brewer following the finest traditions of the German brewing art, and a hard-working businessman who made a success of a

marginal business.

### The Brewery Purchase Option

Francl's skill and diligence and Moscow's potential as a brewing center became obvious in time and investors took interest.

Saturday [4-11-1908] Mr. and Mrs. Ferdinand Francl who own the Moscow Brewery gave a purchase option on the property to L. G. Van de Bogart, Arthur Philips and A. D. Merritt of Spokane, and John Smith and Ferdinand Francl of Moscow for the sum of \$20,000. The option extends to September 1, 1908. The option is on the present brewing plant and the large brick building on north Main Street, north of the present brewery. Terms of the option \$12,000 cash to be paid to the present owners and Mr. Francl is to receive \$8,000 in preferred stock in the new company which will be founded by those who have the option. Mr. Francl is also under contract to act as brewery manager of the firm for a period of three years at a salary of \$200 per month. It is the intention of the purchasers to incorporate before the first of September as the Moscow Brewing and Malting Company. On September 1st the property will be formally transferred. In connection with the brewing and malting plants the company will install an artificial ice plant.

The Latah County Commissioners renewed the liquor license "to Ferdinand Francl for the brewery in Moscow" a week later and the brewery business looked more promising than ever before.

Two weeks after this first article on the brewery option, The *Star-Mirror* carried a second article which included an interview with two of the option holders, John Smith and L. R. Van de Bogart. This article said some prominent businessmen and capitalists of Spokane were involved and they had thoroughly investigated the prospects. They had found the water especially well adapted to beer manufacture and the barley produced in the area of the highest quality required to make malt. The demand for malt in the Northwest at that time was

greater than the supply and they intended to sell any malt produced beyond their own needs. An electric railroad to Moscow was under construction which would improve the already adequate transportation.

Smith and Van de Bogart said they planned to "take over the Moscow Brewery Malt Plant, greatly enlarge its capacity and install an artificial ice manufacturing plant, pop factory and bottling works." They went on:

"With modern improvements to our malt house we will consume at least 100,000 bushels of barley every year, which means a good profitable market to the farmers who will raise barley in this locality. The need of an ice plant in Moscow is felt by every household and businessman."

The availability of barley in the area was one of the major considerations that led these men to invest in Moscow. In 1908, Idaho had 65,352 acres in barley which yielded 2,874,652 bushels of the grain. Latah County barley was reportedly yielding 60 bushels to the acre of "fine quality barley, well adapted for brewing purposes as well as for feeding." Adjacent Whitman County in Washington was claimed to have grown 2,000,000 bushels of barley in 1907.

Neither considerations about barley or anything else was destined to make any difference. Four months later all the well-laid brewery expansion plans were gone and nearly forgotten.

#### The Final "Dry" Push in Moscow

1908 was the year of the Drys in Moscow! Both Latah County Republicans and Democrats agreed to push for a state prohibition plank in their party reforms, and four of Idaho's twelve delegates to the Prohibition Party state convention in Boise were from Latah County.

When winter's snows had melted, the drive to close Moscow's saloons began to warm. On March 22, 1908, the Reverend A. A. Luce spoke at the First Methodist Church on "A Boost for Moscow--By the Men and Boys, How?" As excerpted in the press, his sermon said in part, "Men and boys should be broadminded, fight shy of vice and immorality, and rid the town of liquor stores and



kindred, evils, . . ." The same night The Reverend Orrich at the Christian Church preached a sermon to the effect that liquor is one of the things that produces undesirable citizens.

It is interesting to note that the wild wickedness they opposed had produced a grand total of one arrest for drunkenness in the preceding two months.

On April 4, a meeting was held at the Methodist Church to form plans to make Moscow "as dry as Death Valley as far as 'booze' is concerned." All the young people's church groups in town were at this meeting in force. Speeches were made against the saloons, but no mention of the brewery is known to have been made. Pullman, Washington, Moscow's sister community which had just had a successful dry campaign, was used as an example of what an aroused community could do.

On April 12, a mass meeting at the Methodist Church drew 800-900 people to hear the saloons attacked. A petition drafted by W. S. Morley, J. B. Rickett, and Ira Boyd was approved for submission to the City Council. Three copies were made: one for student signatures, one for voters and one for other citizens. The petition read:

To the Mayor and City Council of the City of Moscow: We, the undersigned voters, students and other citizens of Moscow, express our approval of the plan to close the saloons in the city of Moscow, and hereby petition your honorable body to use your offices to revoke the licenses now in force, if possible, at an early date, and refuse to grant any further licenses for the sale or manufacture of intoxicating liquors in the city of Moscow in accordance with the power granted you by Paragraph VIII of House Bill No. 113 of the session of 1907.

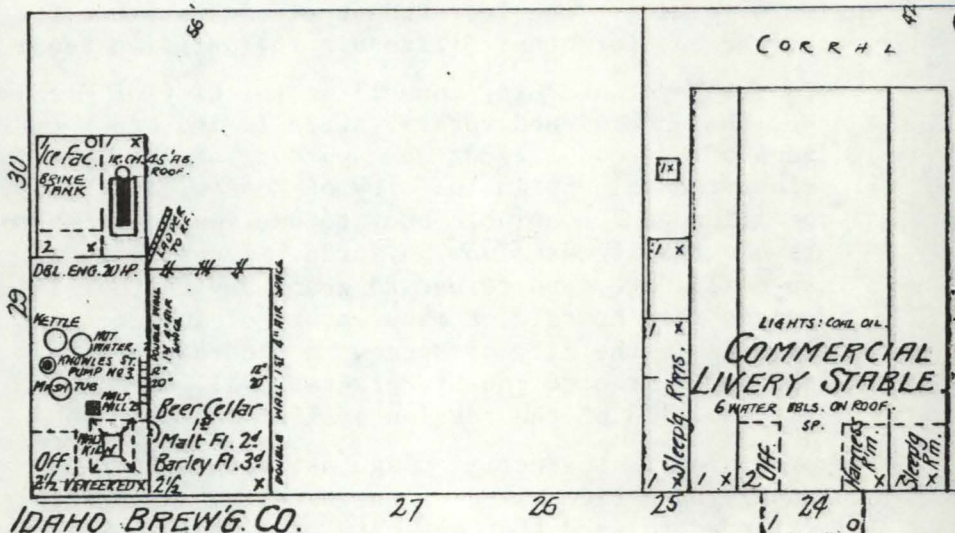
The provision in the petition against manufacturing could only have been aimed at the brewery. The state law referred to said that any city or village could regulate or prohibit the selling or giving away of alcoholic beverages.

On April 26, yet another big Sunday rally was held to test the public support for the petition. After numer-

ous long harangues, the crowd voted 489-19 to close the saloons and to present their petition to that effect to the City Council at its next meeting.

On May 5, the petition was presented to the City Council at a mammoth public meeting. Seven hundred and sixty-five voters and an unstated number of students and other citizens had signed it. At the meeting the business and saloon interests argued back and forth with the crusaders while the Council watched, not eager to go out on a limb by supporting either group. Finally the Council adopted a resolution by a 4 to 2 vote calling for a referendum on the saloon issue to be held May 19, and the Council "hereby bind ourselves to immediately act in accordance with the majority vote cast at such an election."

In the wording of the proposal to be voted on, the provision against manufacturing of alcohol was deleted. Win or lose the Moscow Brewery would be permitted to



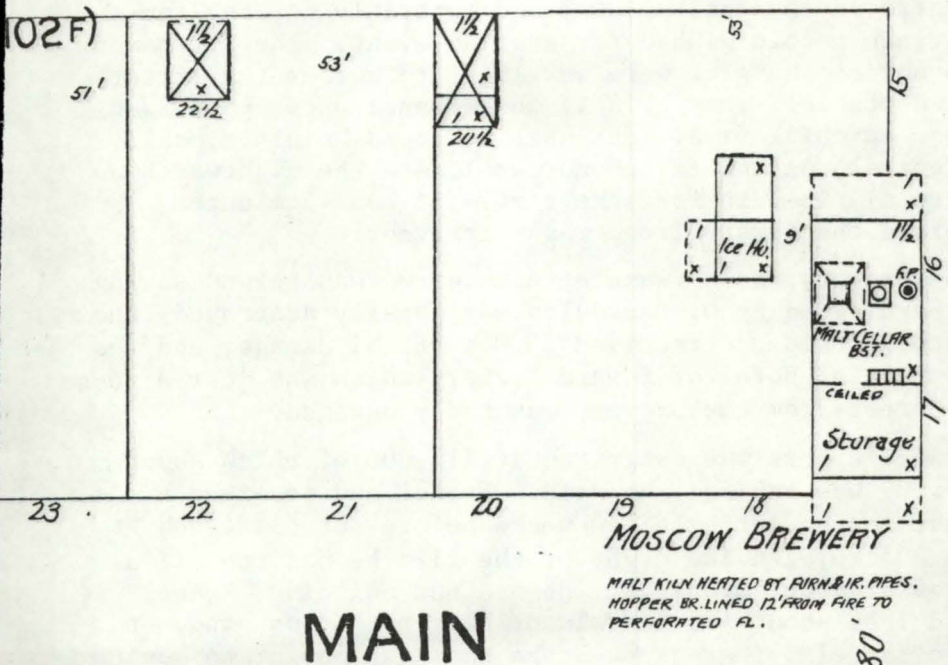
**IDAHO BREW'G. CO.**  
 CAP. 25 BLS. EACH BREW. WATER PUMPED FROM WELL BY KNOWLES ST. PUMP NO. 3. 100' 1 1/2" HOSE, 200' 1" HOSE, 50' 1" HOSE ATT'D. TO ST. PUMP, 50' IN ATTIC. 2 MEN SLEEP IN BUILD'G. MALT KILN HEAT: FURNACE. HOPPER BR. LINED. 1 PERFORATED FLOOR NO' ABY. FIRE. LIGHTS: ELEC. FUEL: WOOD. (NOT IN OPERATION, Mch. '06.)

operate, but without its retail outlets, how could it?

The saloon owners seemed in a daze! They had had one lawyer at the last City Council meeting to represent them, but most of the men with a vested interest in the liquor question had not bothered to show up.

Beside Sunday sermons devoted exclusively to the saloon question, prohibition sentiment was whipped up in other ways. The classic temperance play "Ten Nights in a Bar-room," dedicated to the theory that just one drop of liquor leads inexorably to destruction, was scheduled for May 8. A Chicago-based temperance speaker was scheduled for June, after the election but in time to help sway the outcome with his advance publicity. Numerous newspaper articles highlighted every liquor related law violation in the nation.

All the saloonmen could muster in their defense was a calm, facts-and-figures advertisement pointing out the



amount of taxes they paid. They showed that each of the six saloons paid \$1,255 per year in license fees and \$4,590 of the total went to the local schools in Moscow. The figures showed that without this revenue the schools would be a minimum of \$590 in the red even if taxes were raised to the allowable maximum.

On election day dry forces marched little children down Main Street carrying banners printed with dry slogans. One thousand, two hundred and six Moscow citizens turned out and the saloons lost 814 to 392.

The Council kept its word and passed a lengthy new anti-liquor ordinance. Although manufacturing was not prohibited, no malt liquor could be sold, given away or offered to sale. It was unlawful to drink or be drunk except in one's own residence, and a violation was a misdemeanor. The market for Moscow Brewery beer was gone.

#### Blaze Burns Brewery

About 2:30 A.M., July 29, the Moscow Brewery was set afire. A large fire in those days could well have destroyed the entire town, and certainly no sane temperance people wished for such an event. The first men to notice the glow were working late across the street at a stable. They quickly woke Francl whose house was also catching fire. Attempts to sound an alarm, call "Central" on the telephone, or locate the nightwatchman were all in vain for some time. It was 45 minutes before the first fire company arrived.

The brewery was a frame structure and was beyond saving. A barn owned by O. Beardsley was totally destroyed, the Francl residence received \$300 worth of damage, and the Commercial Hotel of Edward Corkery which was just across A Street from the brewery was badly damaged.

Francl's loss was estimated at \$18,000 of which about \$7,000 was insured, he said. Francl had received a threatening letter a few weeks before but dismissed it as a joke, and the night of the fire he had run off a prowler about midnight. Beside the building, Francl had lost about 150 barrels of beer he had on hand, and two barrels of grape sugar he had just bought to begin producing a temperance drink.

Mrs. Francl cried as she talked about her chickens which had all perished in the fire. Fred collapsed from emotion during the fire and had to rest on a make-shift bed in the street until he recovered enough to walk with a cane.

Thirty-two days before the official sale of the brewery was to close, the deal literally went up in smoke.

### Moscow's Firebug

About June 11, six weeks before the brewery fire, Moscow's moving picture theater had also burned under mysterious circumstances. Three weeks after the brewery blaze four sheds were set afire and a Mr. Groff was arrested at the scene when he acted very strangely and aroused suspicion.

Groff had formerly been an excellent mail clerk between Pittsburg and New York, but had become a recluse who read the Bible and wrote poetry incessantly. He had been seen in Moscow about the time of the brewery fire. Groff never confessed and was never brought to trial.

Two local doctors weren't sure what to make of Groff, so an expert, Dr. Givens, from the asylum at Orofino came up to make an evaluation. Givens declared him insane and took him to the asylum. Local opinion was summed up this way in the *Star-Mirror*: "The belief is that this man Groff, who is so bright in so many ways was subject to 'brain storms,' is the man who burned the Moscow brewery some time ago."

The brewery was gone, the brewery expansion deal was gone, the saloons were gone, and now the arsonist was gone too.

### Francl--After Prohibition and Fire

On September 10, 1908, the readers of the *Star-Mirror* learned that Fred Francl had collected \$1,200 from the Prussian National Insurance Company of Stetlin, Germany, with branch office at Chicago. Two other men who sustained losses in the fire made similar advertised statements. Francl may well have had additional policies since the initial report on the fire suggested he

had \$7,000 of his loss covered.

In that December there was a newspaper mention that a "Creighton and Francl building" was under construction. It is likely that Francl invested his insurance money in this joint venture with this well-known Moscow business family. The following February Francl built a cement block wall around the old brewery site but nothing else was ever done there by him. In April of 1909 Francl's county liquor license expired. The County Commissioners were in the process of making the county dry by refusing all liquor licenses at that time, but Francl had no realistic hopes of going back in the brewing business anyway.

### Conclusions

When good old Otto Fries opened the Moscow brewery in 1882 it was visible proof that Moscow was a real village, no longer a mere crossroads. The brewery was a market and hence a stimulous for barley production. For the sizable German immigrant population it was a cultural link to their former way of life.

The brewery suffered from economic cycles as did other Moscow businesses and in the 1890s tried to expand too rapidly. The brewery helped to make Moscow known to the outside world and helped keep money spent on beer in the local economy. By selling ice, using electricity and subscribing to telephone service, the brewery helped to promote these innovations. The succession of brewers that came to Moscow appear to have been honest, decent businessmen and credits to the community.

In 1908, the Moscow Brewery stood at the brink of great growth and development but an opponent or two it never reckoned with struck it down. German brewers were notoriously unable to understand that the temperance forces intended to drive them out of business. The saloon was the primary target of the temperance forces; the breweries were guilty by association.

The dry forces believed they held the key to the bright and perfect world of the future, and had a sacred obligation to convert the sinners to their brand of truth

at any cost. The zeal created by this view gave them a power over mere humans with human frailties. No saloonman, no brewer, no working man relaxing in a saloon, ever felt he had a divine mandate to proselytize his views; consequently these men were spiritually unarmed against the onslaught. When the brief, feeble, defensive battle they waged was over, they had lost, and one of their least noticed casualties was the Moscow Brewery.

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#### MOSCOW BREWERY OWNERS, 1882-1908

- 1881--No liquor manufacturers in Moscow.
- 1882--Otto Fries starts Moscow Brewery. Possibly Joe Niederstadt was his partner.
- 1883--Otto Fries (and Joe Niederstadt?).
- 1884--Otto Fries (and Joe Niederstadt?).
- 1885--Fries and Niederstadt.
- 1886--Fries and Niederstadt. On March 22, Joe Niederstadt became sole proprietor.
- 1887-89--Joe Niederstadt.
- 1890--Joe Niederstadt. By May 20, Schober had become a partner with Niederstadt.
- 1891--Niederstadt and Schober. Apparently F. L. Koehler became a partner this year.
- 1892--Niederstadt, Schober and Koehler build Idaho Brewing Company plant on same block as Moscow Brewery.
- 1893--Niederstadt, Schober and Koehler.
- 1894--Idaho Brewing Co. suffers business failure.
- 1895--F. L. Koehler buys Moscow Brewery plant from First National Bank. Possibly he had a partner named Herman.
- 1896--F. L. Koehler. A Mr. Herrmann may have been a partner by late in the year.
- 1897--F. L. Koehler (and Herman or Herrmann?).
- 1898-1901--F. L. Koehler.
- 1902--Herman Nicola. Possibly Nicola took control in 1901. During the year Ferdinand Francl bought the brewery.
- 1903-08--Fred Francl. Brewery destroyed by fire 7-29-08 and never reopened.

## THE THATUNA ACADEMY AND "ADVENT HOLLOW" AT VIOLA

by Marilyn Chaney

About two miles east of Viola, on the Flannigan Creek road, there is a little church building now used for hay storage. This is all that is left of the Seventh Day Adventist community which was known as "Advent Hollow."

The Seventh Day Adventist church bought property to move their schools away from the influence of the cities and to provide their people a place to live and grow their own food. One of these sites was at Viola. It is told that Ellen G. White picked this place with the idea of having a cereal mill nearby that would provide jobs for the settlers in the community.

The Upper Columbia Conference purchased a ranch of 180 acres in 1908 for \$10,000 on which the Thatuna Intermediate Boarding School was established. Small parcels of land, about ten acres in size, were sold to the Adventists who moved to the country and sent their children to the school. There were students staying in the dormitory from Walla Walla, Portland and other distant places.

The settlers in the Advent community planted gardens and orchards. Most had a little equipment with which they tried to eke out a living on their small farms. Some had cows and would sell milk. The George Jordan family raised corn for feed and sold eggs from their chicken ranch. The Buswells had a berry farm which produced strawberries, raspberries and other small fruit. Garden produce could often be sold or traded at the store in Viola. Many of the S.D.A. men worked in the woods, at the sawmills, and for larger farmers in the area.

The Thatuna Academy, as it was known, consisted of a combination church and school building; a three story dormitory, and a house for the director or teacher. The church-school building was rectangular in shape





A WOODCUTTERS' BEE was held annually to supply the school.

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with a bell tower on the north end. The tower was built of four large poles, like a windmill, and the bell was hung at the top of this. The dormitory was a square building with a front porch on the top two levels. The first floor was a kind of daylight basement and this was the kitchen and dining area. The second floor was the girls quarters, and the third floor was for the boys. There were wood stoves in each room which required a lot of wood to be packed up the stairs. The men of the area would get together each year for a wood cutting bee. There was no running water in the building--water was carried from a nearby well or spring. There were two eight-hold toilets--one for the girls, the other for boys.

The Academy was supposed to become self-supporting, but there were some problems that could not be overcome. The roads were in bad shape and much of the time they were impossible to travel. It would have been very expensive to modernize the dorm, and students did not much like the primitive conditions.

While it was operating as a boarding school, there were three classes graduated from the 12th grade. Usually there were about 30 students and two teachers. Often the teachers were man and wife and lived in the house provided by the school. There were women with children attending school who lived in the dorm and

acted as house mothers.

The Thatuna Boarding School was closed in 1917 because of financial difficulties. The property was sold to Mr. Fred Schoeflin and, as there were still several S.D.A. families in the area, he was determined to keep the school going.

Although it was no longer a boarding school, the S.D.A. school continued under the auspices of the Upper Columbia Conference. Classes were held in the bottom of the dormitory building. Some people lived on the upper floors. Among those was Mrs. Eisenhardt and her children. Her husband was a railroad man and was away most of the time, so she and the children stayed at the school where they attended classes. The Eisenhardt girl took piano lessons and wanted a piano in their apartment. The piano would not go around the corners, so Fred Schoeflin set up a rig just like he used to load hay into his barn and hoisted the piano up to the second floor and into one of the large windows. The Germers were another family that lived in the dorm. Florence (Buswell) Jordan remembers staying with them when the snow was too deep to walk the two and one half miles from her home. This school became known as the Viola Adventist School.

The school continued to operate in the same place until 1925. At that time the old dormitory was torn down and the boards were used to build a new little church-school building on the Schoeflin property near Flannigan Creek road. While the new building was being built, classes were held in the old church. In 1927 classes were begun in the new school. The new building had two school rooms and a wood shed downstairs while the upper level was used for church. Although the Viola Adventist School was under the Upper Columbia Conference in Spokane, it had it's own school board which hired the teachers. S.D.A. members paid tuition to the conference and the conference paid the teachers. Each teacher received the same salary whether they had three or thirteen children in their class.

The subjects were essentially the same as those in public schools with the exception of the daily Bible classes. Most textbooks were the same as those in public schools, but reading and library books were S.D.A. publications. The school had what was called the M.V. reading course. The local church would have baked food sales and bazaars to raise money to buy library books and the conference would match the amount raised. S.D.A. books were published by Pacific Press, an Adventist publishing house.

From 1917 on the highest grade was 10th. At completion of the 8th grade students took the state examination. When children had completed ten years at Viola they could finish their schooling either in public school at Moscow or at the S.D.A. boarding school in Granger.

Most of the years both of the rooms in the school were used. Grades 1-7 were in the larger room and grades 8,9 and 10 were in the smaller room. If there were only enough students for one teacher, class was held in the large room. Classes were about like those in most one room schools. The assignments were written on the blackboard and the students knew what to do while the teacher was helping the other groups during the day.

There was a wood-burning barrel stove in the room and sometimes when it was cold the kids would put their chairs in a circle around the stove to do their work. When the wind blew hard from the west the stove would fill the room with smoke and classes had to be dismissed for the day. The students still walked or rode horseback to school and occasionally they had cases or frost-bite on their hands or feet.

There were a few years in the '30s when there were not enough students or not enough money or perhaps no teachers available. Whatever the reason, there were some years when the Adventist children went to Viola School.

Mrs. Chittwood, a teacher in 1957, let the children

have their desks wherever they wanted. The children called them their dens. A favorite place was behind the piano, which sat kitty-cornered in the room. A child had a little hideaway all his own with shelves on the back of the piano to put his papers on. One year a teacher got some records and taught Spanish.



THIS PAIR of women take a break on the balcony of their floor of the Thatuna Academy dormitory. Male students were housed on the floor immediately below.

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The students took box lunches to school, but one year Miss Buswell decided to teach Home Economics, so the children had to eat the soup the girls cooked. Most were glad to go back to their own lunches.

The public health nurse came out once a year to give the children their shots. Sometime during the year someone from the conference would come and look around and, of course, the kids were asked to be on their best behavior that day.

The S.D.A. children enjoyed progressive classroom or "Path Finders," which is like scouting or the camp-fire program. The steps in "Path Finders" were:

1st grade: Busy Bees	2nd grade: Sunbeams
3rd grade: Builders	4th grade: Helping Hands
5th grade: Friend	6th grade: Companion
7th grade: Guide	8th grade: Master Guide

A student got a scarf and a pin when he completed the grade and there were many honors to be won in each grade. Several students rode their bikes to Troy and back to get one such honor. When Master Guide had been completed, a student could help others with their work. A summer camp was held every year at Hayden Lake which the S.D.A. children could attend.

The Dorcus Society that the Adventist women belonged to was very active. They studied nutrition and sewing, held sales and bazaars to raise funds to help the church, and during the war they rolled bandages and made bathrobes for the wounded soldiers. Orpha Garvin was a nurse who lived in the community and she attended most of the Adventist mothers when they were giving birth. She was always ready to help in case of sickness or accident. Everyone called her "Auntie Garvin."

The Seventh Day Adventists were very family oriented and from the beginning of their time at Viola the church-school was the center of activity. Almost every week there was a get-together where group games were played and relay races held. There were box socials and at Christmas time a pinata to try and break. Everyone came to the gatherings, young and old, and all took part in the fun.

At Thanksgiving the S.D.A. school put on a program and the people from Viola were invited to attend. At

Christmas the S.D.A. people went to the program that the Viola school children had at the Viola church. The Fourth of July picnic was an exciting affair. Members of congregations from Colfax, Pullman and even Walla Walla came. There was a nice flat by the school set in a grove of trees with a clear stream running through it. The people from the wheat country to the west enjoyed coming to the mountains. There was a parade through the flat, and one year Howard Schoeflin had four calves yoked together to pull a buggy. Another time there was a cage of chicken wire on a wagon and someone inside the cage wearing a black furry costume with large horns. The "animal" made loud noises and was most impressive to the children. There were speeches, music, readings and lots of good food at these celebrations.

The Adventist church did not have a regular pastor in the Viola area; most of the time the elders of the church would arrange for and conduct the services. Once in awhile a preacher would come and have a series of meetings, and in later years the pastor of the Moscow church conducted services at Viola every other week. In 1959 both the school and the church were permanently closed. The S.D.A. children from Viola went to the church school that was started in Moscow.

There was a definite separation between the communities of Viola and "Advent Hollow." Each of the communities centered activities around their own school and church and, with few exceptions, never really got to know each other. At one time the S.D.A. had a branch Sabbath school at the Viola Community Church, and occasionally the S.D.A. pastor would speak at the church, but as a rule the two areas pretty much kept to themselves.

At one time there were about 270 people in "Advent Hollow." Now the church and school are gone and just a few descendents of the early families live in the Viola area. The property on which the last church-school stands is now owned by Lucian Burns. Mrs. Fred Schoeflin still lives on the original Thatuna site.

## KENDRICK BLOOMS IN MAY

by Bill Loftus

The Kendrick Locust Blossom Festival enters its 19th season this year. As with most events, the festival has evolved over the years, some facets changing, some remaining constant. In some ways, the people of Kendrick have kept pace with the times by molding the events to the tune society was turning to at the time, like the twist contests held in the sixties. But the festival has also remained remarkably static in other respects.

One of the consistent features of the festival has been the ability of Kendrick to at least quadruple its population of about 400 with the influx of visitors. Likewise, the unpredictability of the locust trees has left festival organizers guessing each year as to whether the long creamy clusters of blooms would arrive in time or last long enough to scent the festival air.

The festival was founded on a whim in 1961, according to its first chairman, Bill Rogers. According to Rogers, Rev. Schmidt, Kendrick's non-denominational preacher at the time, was at a Lion's Club meeting when the group was trying to decide on a civic-minded project for the town.

"Deary had a strawberry festival at the time, so we eventually got to talking about having something like it," Rogers said. "All of a sudden, Rev. Schmidt turned and said 'We'll call it the Locust Blossom Festival, and you're in charge.' Of course, he was pointing at me."

The core of the festival, as it evolved, was to revolve around five events: a parade, barbecue, flower show, gymhanka and a dance. Although the main emphasis of the day was to entice former residents back to town for a day when others who had also left could be expected to return, the festival was also to provide a little excitement for townspeople and outsiders alike.

The first annual festival may have been the biggest, Rogers said, because of extensive publicity and advertising efforts. He estimated that 3,500 visitors showed up to enjoy a day and its events which had "dawned

cloudy and then turned to warm comfortable sunshine," according to a report in the *Kendrick Gazette*. The newspaper also noted, "Every spot that would accommodate a car was taken" within the town.

That year the barbecue fed 1,400, one of the largest throngs to date. The barbecue has remained constant in regards to both menu and numbers served. According to Bob Magnuson, who chaired the barbecue committee for 18 years before stepping down this year, approximately 1,200 portions of barbecued beef, baked beans, cole slaw and bread have been dispensed annually. The secret is the system, he said. By dividing the line of guests in two, and having a server stationed at each different menu item, the total time needed to serve everyone ranged from an hour to an hour and a half.

After the original festival's success, the Kendrick post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars linked forces with the Lions to orchestrate the event. A dance had been sponsored by the Lions in the V.F.W. hall that first year, so the alliance became a natural extension of the two groups' cooperative efforts in the past. The 1979 festival will apparently end without a dance, however. It will be the first time without.

Other events have come and gone, like the twist contest mentioned earlier. According to Bill Rogers, the contest was held to keep in touch with the times. "We decided to have it because the twist was really popular. It was amazing how many people came to the festival and entered the contest. And they weren't just young people, either."

The gymhanka has also fallen from the festival agenda. Originally, a number of area saddle clubs had joined together to sponsor and administer the event, but the recent dissolution of the major club had spelled the end of the event. The first year, 81 horses had been entered in the gymhanka, with that number eventually building up to a high of 150. Two years ago, a logging contest was added to fill in for the horseman's meet.

Other transitory events have included auctions for the community's benefit and motorcycle hill climbs. Events which have lasted include an art and flower show sponsored by the Hill and Valley Garden Club, an Old Time



Fiddlers Contest, a pioneers reunion and the parade. High school bands from the area, commercial and non-commercial floats, kiddies, farm machinery and horses remain a part of the parade. For many it is the highlight of the day. Indeed, when Bob Magnuson recounted some of the festival constants, "It's never rained on the parade" was one high on his list.

The pioneers reunion has hosted as many as 170 old-timers with roots in the area's history. Awards recognizing the oldest and those who have traveled the furthest to attend are usually given. After the 1966 festival, the Lewiston *Morning Tribune* reported that Charles Hoffman of Leland at 83 was the oldest pioneer attending. At the 1975 festival, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Cox won recognition for being the longest married pioneers present, having been married 45 years.

At the 1966 festival, Mrs. Stanley Hepler of Southwick won the overall sweepstakes award at the flower show with her arrangement titled, "A Tisket, A Tasket, Flowers in a Basket." Mrs. Hepler also gathered five other blue ribbons that day.

The day has hosted other special activities. In 1978, the Kendrick High School class of 1928 held its fiftieth reunion at the festival. Six of the original seven graduates attended, along with two others who had left school before graduation.

The festivals have served as a forum for the exhibition of historical displays and collections, as well. In 1967, Marvin Long, an early collaborator on the festival, prepared and exhibited "a collection of bells from throughout the world," according to a newspaper report. The 1966 festival had served as the announcing arena for the dedication of Christensen Park. The park, designed and built to honor Dr. D. A. Christensen for his 35 years of service to the community, was dedicated before the community by its builder, Lloyd Craig.

In 1978, the festival received another athletic event. A morning six-mile run was added, another example of efforts by the planners to keep the festival current with topical drawing cards. And that is partly why the Kendrick Locust Blossom Festival has survived while other small town festivals have succumbed from lack of attendance.

The participation of town members must count greatly as a reason for the festival's vitality, too. Both factors, the blending of the old and the new, have ensured its survival. On the one hand, it was "a desire to get the town going again," as Bill Rogers put it, and on the other a flexibility to meet the changes of society which have given Kendrick the reputation of "the place to be in Idaho the last Saturday of May."

## CONTRIBUTORS

MARILYN CHANEY, a 25-year Viola resident, is working on a book about the town's history, which she hopes to complete in the next few years. She has been instrumental in gathering oral histories from long-time Viola residents.

ANNE FISKE is presently employed by the University of Idaho publications department as a graphic artist. Her cover illustration incorporates elements from each of this issue's articles.

BILL LOFTUS, Quarterly co-editor, is currently employed by the University of Idaho as a newswriter for the College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences and the News Bureau.

HERMAN RONNENBERG, Quarterly co-editor, is a doctoral candidate in the University of Idaho history department. His article is an outgrowth of a seminar paper for an American history class. He plans to expand his studies of Idaho breweries to fulfill the requirements for his doctoral studies.

The Quarterly invites suggestions and submissions from readers. Correspondence should be addressed to the editors in care of the society. All work for the magazine must be considered strictly on a volunteer basis.

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Moscow, Idaho 83843

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#### COMING EVENTS

- Saturday May 19: Treasure Sale, 4-H Building on Latah County Fairgrounds. All proceeds from the sale will go to the restoration project.
- Wednesday May 23: The award-winning film *Nannabah's Friend* will be shown at the McConnell Mansion at 7:30 p.m. Admission is free.
- Mid-June: Exhibits on the history of Deary, Genesee and Troy will be set up in the respective towns to run through the summer.
- Early July: Exhibit on the history of Potlatch will be set up in Potlatch to run through the summer.
- July 6-22: Exhibit on merchandising in Latah County will be shown in the Moscow Mall.
- July 28: Fourth annual Ice Cream Social and Old Time Crafts Fair, with music and tours through the McConnell Mansion.