

# LATAH LEGACY

The Quarterly Journal of The Latah County Historical Society

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**Picnic 1894**

The annual picnic of the Latah County Pioneer Association, 1894. The picnics were held on Moscow Mountain, and festivities usually included a noon potluck dinner, speeches, and reading of the Declaration of Independence.

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The Past Presidents Speak

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Photographs in this issue are from the archives  
of the Latah County Historical Society

### **The Latah County Historical Society**

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*The Development of the  
Latah County Historical Society*

## **The First Ten Years**

by Mary E. Reed

*The idea for an issue of Latah Legacy devoted to the history of the Latah County Historical Society was prompted by the occasion of our 20th anniversary. As busy as we have been in research and interpreting the history of our county, particularly in these centennial years, we may have taken for granted the significance of our own history. Although I constantly receive questions, comments, and inquiries about our organization, I have not until now taken time out to survey those individuals and events contributing to our development as one of the leading county historical societies in the country. I confess that it has been a pleasure to do so.*

*Looking back over the first ten years of the Latah County Historical Society has given me the opportunity to appreciate the early efforts of the founders and the distance the organization has traveled since its beginning as a museum in the hallway of the county courthouse. Based on my research of past minutes, reports, and correspondence, I have found three important factors that have contributed to our rapid and impressive growth: obtaining professional guidance for all aspects of the society's operations; initiating the highly successful publications program; and undertaking the ambitious oral history project. All three — along with the continued dedication of trustees and members — have, I believe, insured the professional foundation of the society and its future growth. I hope this description of the first years will be instructive and will bring back memories among those who were personally involved during this period. The history of Latah County Historical Society will continue in the next issue.*

*Mary E. Reed*

### **The Latah County Pioneer Association**

On June 2, 1891, twenty years after the first settlers arrived in Latah County, fourteen of these pioneers met to form the Latah County Pioneer Association. The purpose of the organization was to promote community sociability and progress, and to preserve treasured pioneer-day relics. It was a unique occasion, one which few of us can ever experience. These people clearly recognized their own historic importance and that the events in which they had participated would never be

repeated. The organization elected as their chair John Russell, the first man to plat a portion of the town of Moscow, and one who would leave his name to a Moscow school. They adopted a constitution and by-laws that same month with the provision that all people who were in the county by 1878 could join. The group elected G.W. Tomer president, and Secretary John Naylor encouraged all the "old timers" to join. Another important goal was to promote neighborly communion in meeting perils of frontier life.

Enthusiasm grew. At the first annual re-

union, held six miles northeast of Moscow, G.W. Tomer presided over the group which now included 97 members. R.H. Barton was the "orator of the day," and a symbolic act was performed when Bennett Summerfield presented the Association with a stool used in the first school house in Paradise Valley in 1870. Perhaps this was the first donation and an inspiration for the Latah County Pioneer Museum Association which would be created in 1966, the forerunner of our present (and less wordy) Latah County Historical Society. After a bountiful feast prepared by the pioneers, several local pioneers, including W.J. McConnell—a relative newcomer whose Victorian house on Adams Street was only five years old—gave speeches. The group vowed to increase its members by bringing in all pioneers of the Palouse country, and they thanked the "press of the county for the interest they have taken in the association." In the early days the regular meetings took place in Moscow's G.A.R. Hall; for the fifth annual reunion, pioneers were invited to meet in front of the McGregor House—built in 1890 by Henry McGregor, one of the town's founders—for a grand procession. By 1899, the annual meeting had expanded with dancing, a shooting gallery, and refreshment booths at the picnic site. In succeeding years the Pioneer Association sponsored, with the Elks Lodge, a Flag Day, and an Idaho Pioneer Day observance in June.

The school house stool was only the beginning of an urgent desire among the Pioneer Association members to preserve the "relics of the early settlement of the Palouse country." By the 1930s historical artifacts and documents belonging to the pioneers were displayed in the lobby of the old county courthouse, but this was not a satisfactory arrangement. When the glass was broken in one case, some articles were lost. A permanent, secure space was needed. The Pioneer Association began negotiating for an area in the new county courthouse for a museum, and a committee headed by Miss M. Belle Sweet and Mrs. Margaret Fanning began cataloging the collection and asking donors of other suitable artifacts to contact them. More was needed.

On July 14, 1957, immediately after the death of Carl Smith, past president of the Pioneer Association, the secretary Mrs. Carsow telephoned Miss Theodora Smith. She asked Miss Smith to contact the County Commissioners and have them verify a promise made to Mr. Smith that when the new courthouse was built it would have a room designated for their museum. When the new courthouse was dedicated in 1958, the ceremony included a room for the Pioneer museum located on the basement floor. The Association was not completely satisfied with this windowless room, but they were more upset a few years later when the museum contents had to be moved out to make way for a civil defense office. They placed the museum collections into storage. It was time to have their own building.

In 1959 at their annual mid-winter meeting the pioneers announced plans to expand the county museum into a project of community and county-wide interest. The Association's tentative plans called for a two-story building on the southeast corner of the county courthouse block. The group passed a resolution authorizing a building fund of public subscription or by any other means for a Latah County Historical Museum, and that the Latah Free Library be asked to share the use of the building. The library would be on the first floor and the museum on the second. Mr. Roy Naylor headed a new fund-raising committee with the initial, modest goal of raising \$300 in seed money. The next year Mr. Homer David remarked to the director of the Idaho State Historical Society, "If the project is too ambitious, there may be the alternative, that if the University of Idaho ever gets an appropriation for a Museum, that we might have a portion for Latah County set aside."

In 1961, the Pioneer Association was incorporated, and in 1965, members moved another step toward a formal museum by establishing a companion organization, the Latah County Pioneer Historical Museum Association. They adopted the period 1870 to 1920 as the scope of collections for the proposed museum. Its new—and young—president, Larry French, headed a committee to



The 1941 Latah County Pioneer Association Picnic held in conjunction with the Elks Lodge. The two organizations held annual observances of Pioneer Days and a flag service.

seek a location for the museum, hoping it could be located temporarily in the County Courthouse. At one point the Museum Association asked the University Architecture Department to design tentative plans for a fireproof building. In setting up the museum and its collections, the Pioneer Association and the Museum Association sought advice from the State Historical Society and other experts on how to raise money, properly catalog donations, and design a new museum.

Funding increased very slowly. In 1962 and 1963 the County Commissioners allocated \$600 toward the museum and individuals contributed another \$62. After adding in interest and deducting expenses, the Pioneer Association was able to give \$739 to the Museum Association, retaining \$130 for its own expenses. In 1966 the Pioneer Association petitioned the Latah County Commissioners to levy a millage to help meet expenses incurred by the Museum Association, such funds to be used in organizing and constructing displays of county pioneers and their descendents and in establishing and operat-

ing a museum for Latah County. In 1967 the Association voted unanimously to meet all expenses the Pioneer Museum had incurred, including the incorporation fee.

### **The Moscow Historical Club**

Another group would prove instrumental in promoting the county's history and obtaining a museum. This was the Moscow Historical Club, consisting of a group of talented and energetic women. The club formed in spring of 1895 when Mrs. C.W. McCurdy, wife of a University of Idaho professor and member of the Pleiades club, expressed her concern with the limited membership of that organization. She suggested forming a cultural society open to "town as well as gown," with membership open to a larger, more diversified group. Mrs. McCurdy began recruiting members by knocking on doors. One woman who answered her knock was Mrs. Lillian Woodworth, daughter of pioneer Mrs. A.A. Lieuallen. Mrs. McCurdy is purported to have said, "the dishes aren't done and the beds aren't made but here I am, out organizing a club." Twenty-five women

responded, and the Moscow Historical Club began its activities with the study of history and literature under the motto of "Progress Brings Happiness."

Not content with this modest agenda, the women became involved in civic affairs. They were active in early suffrage movements and sent a resolution to the governor urging ratification of the woman's right-to-vote legislation. They organized a public reading room, and then with the assistance of the Pleiades Club secured a donation from the Carnegie Foundation for a handsome public library. In 1906 the club financed the first year's instruction in home economics and manual training courses in the local schools, and they were the driving force behind the organization and landscaping of East City Park. Other civic ventures included funds for lamps, an inhalator and incubators at the hospital nursery, a donation to the University Loan Scholarship Fund, and scholarships for young people to attend summer music and Camp Fire camps.

### **The Frederic Church Bequest**

Meanwhile, in 1941 a University history professor, Dr. Frederic Church, purchased a large, drafty house in which he had rented rooms since 1921. The house was a lively, if somewhat run-down center of activity. University clubs met there, enjoying literary discussions over tea, and students performed in musical recitals. Local people knew the house as belonging to former Idaho governor William J. McConnell. As the years passed, friends prevailed upon Dr. Church to consider bequeathing the house to the county, and upon his death in 1965, his handwritten will confirmed his decision that the house should belong to Latah County for a museum and meeting place. He named the Latah County Pioneer Association, the Moscow Historical Club, and "other cultural organizations working in harmony" as the beneficiaries.

It took time for the legal details to be completed, but the Pioneer Association and the Museum Association began organizing support for their cherished project of moving their museum collections into the house. In March 1967 the indomitable Miss Nan Smith began

soliciting support from politicians and other influential people for a county museum. She sent telegrams and wrote letters about the gift of the McConnell home. "An historical building, one of the 'mansions' of the turn of the century, it offers splendid possibilities....Enthusiasm of the members of the Pioneer Association is high," she continued, as is [the enthusiasm of the] Latah County Pioneers' Historical Relics Hall Committee." The word relics had been substituted for museum, Miss Smith explained, because museum designated a less personalized collection. The Association was also pleased that the director of the University of Idaho Museum and a professor from its school of architecture volunteered consultations. In addition, the County Commissioners allocated the generous sum of \$2,500 dollars annually, to be added to the Pioneer Association's \$1,000 balance. Miss Smith pleaded with Idaho Representatives Harold Snow and George Brocke to start the ball rolling with an appropriation from the Idaho legislature.

Although that did not happen, the pioneers persisted. At a joint meeting in April 1967, Larry French emphasized the need for a membership drive to win county-wide interest, representation and financial support. He selected the first Saturday in May to launch the project. The next, and more serious matter was obtaining permanent use of the Dr. Church Home. The county would decide in June when the probate procedures were completed whether to accept Dr. Church's gift.

The Historical Club also discussed the gift and met with the County Commissioners, and on October 25, 1967, their members joined the Latah County Pioneers Historical Museum Association in the Latah County Courthouse auditorium to discuss the gift and how it should be handled. The Commissioners recommended that each organization appoint three members to confer with them regarding how the house should be used. A difficult issue emerged: although everyone agreed that the house should be preserved as a historical landmark because of its association with an Idaho senator and governor, some expressed

reservations about the house being suitable as a pioneer museum. Ideally, museum collections should be in a fire-proof building. In addition, the process of incorporating the Museum Association prompted another question about the official name. Some had proposed a new name of Latah County Historical Society, but this was rejected as not being sufficiently inclusive. Members pointed out this name omitted any suggestion of a pioneer museum "for which purpose we have been working since the start. It has been properly felt by many present that we are losing valuable relics, which should be preserved, throughout the county....It was felt, therefore, that the words 'pioneer museum' should be included as well as 'historical society.'"

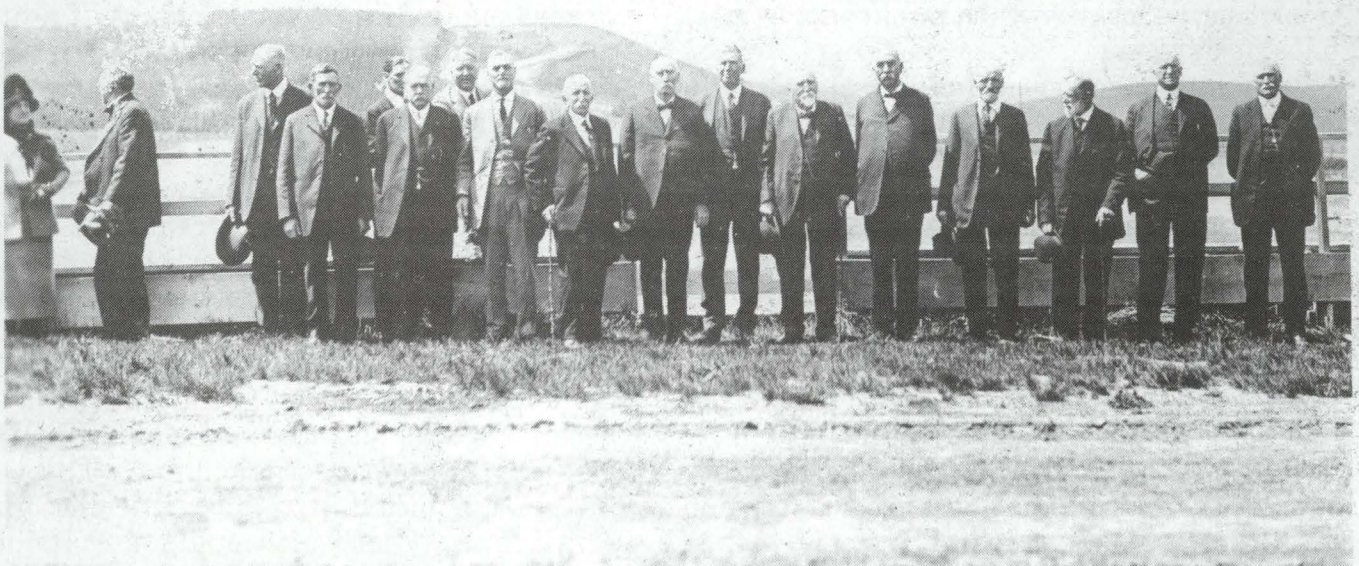
Three days later, representatives of the Historical Club, the Pioneer Association, and the Pioneer Museum Association met to form a committee that could be incorporated and thus qualify to receive money from the County. But the fate of the McConnell house was still somewhat uncertain.

The Pioneer Association and the Pioneer Museum Association again turned to the Idaho State Historical Society for advice and to the University of Idaho for advice on methods for

increasing support for the museum and the ramifications of accepting the Church House for their museum.

To assess the impact of the house on their organization, members of the Pioneer and Museum Associations invited Professor Ellis Burcaw, head of the University's Museology Department, to speak to them. His report was not encouraging: As a museum, the house lacked many attributes. According to Professor Burcaw, the steep steps and narrow doorways would limit access to wheelchairs, there was no fire escape, many windows were accessible to break-ins, the wood construction was flammable, and the house had too many rooms making escape from fires hazardous. Moreover, improvements done over the years had erased the house's historical significance, and to return the house to its historical context would mean removing electrical wiring, indoor plumbing, and aluminum siding. Further, the house was in the wrong section of town and lacked a proper setting and landscape. There was no room to expand, and costs to make the necessary corrections would be great.

In the face of this gloomy assessment, members disagreed with Mr. Burcaw, argu-



The pioneer reunion held at the University of Idaho, May 17, 1922. Identified in the photograph are Mr. Francis Jenkins, second from left, and from the right, sixth and seventh respectively, are Governor McConnell and Mr. John Naylor.

ing that the Dr. Church House retained its architectural appearance, it had been the home of important historical families, it was situated near the heart of schools and town, and above all, it was worthy of preservation as a museum. While agreeing that the Church House did not have all the desired types of museum facilities, the Pioneer Museum Association asserted that "the Dr. Church home stands as a monument to and is significantly representative of the early history of Latah County." The members pledged to do all possible to preserve and/or restore the house in honor of the early settlers by making it a house museum. This would be, Director Larry French affirmed, the priority of the organization.

The Pioneer Museum Association decided it needed a more detailed report to give to the County Commissioners, and it accepted Professor Burcaw's offer to personally inspect the house along with the Head of the Architecture Dept. The second report, dated April 7, 1967, proved even more discouraging than the first. Mr. Burcaw found the cellar, attic, outbuilding and grounds useless for any normal and significant museum purposes. While conceding that "certain old-fashioned characteristics such as the bay windows, high ceilings and decorative woodwork" were interesting, the report pointed to the inadequate grounds, unattractive location with public alleys, ugly backyards, and untidy rear parking lot of the nearby public schools administration building, the large trees that obscured the house, and lack of off-street parking. Furthermore, the house was entirely unfurnished, it contained nothing of value. The building materials were inferior, including the tamarack flooring. The later addition of the steam heating system and exposed pipes would have to be removed. The house itself had a shabby appearance with the 1900s wallpaper dirty, loose and torn in places. Repairs and heating a building without storm windows, weather stripping, and insulation not to mention removing the siding, installing new wiring, and other maintenance work would be an expensive and difficult undertaking. "Of course, many compromises could be made,"



The first Latah County Museum was housed in a room in the Latah County Courthouse. This 1960 photo shows, left to right, Mrs. Lillian Lieuallen Woodworth, Dr. John C. Meurman, and Mrs. Sherman Wahl.

Mr. Burcaw advised "all to the detriment of accomplishing something worthwhile. But even these compromises cannot void the necessity for certain repairs, for maintenance, and for making the house into a reasonably safe and secure public building." The conclusion was stern:

"It is my opinion that the house could never be a good museum building. If a little money would be spent, it would be wasted, if much money should be spent, it would not be an efficient use of it since much more could be accomplished in a new and properly designed building. Further, it is my opinion that the house is not worth being preserved as a historic house. Nothing of historical importance occurred there, its poor condition and lack of furnishings would require a great expenditure to make it into something worthwhile. Some people are drawn to the Church house because it was once the home of a man who was at one time a governor of Idaho. This is an interesting fact, but it has little historical significance. That is, it would not contribute to a better understanding of Idaho politics or life in Moscow at some time in the past.... What is to be done with the Church house must be



decided on the basis of how efficiently it can serve as a school; that is, as housing for organized educational work. Sentiment must not enter in."

Mr. Burcaw recommended that the county should either accept the house and land and then sell them, dedicating the proceeds for building a new museum, or refuse the bequest as an uneconomical and unbusinesslike proposition.

Fortunately for the house and the thousands of visitors that every year enjoy its Victorian setting and exhibits, the Pioneer Association and the Museum Association disregarded this advice. They elected instead to respond to the "sentimental" appeal of the Governor's Mansion and to take what they believed was the correct course on behalf of

the people of Latah County. Now it was time to go to work.

### Organizing the Museum

In February 1967 the Museum Association discussed the future direction of the museum. Was it to be oriented toward the preservation and exhibit of materials relating only to the pioneer families, or should its mission be expanded to encompass the larger history of Latah County? Clearly there was a difference of opinion, with pioneer descendants Miss Alma Lauder Keeling and Miss Nan Smith arguing for the pioneer perspective and keeping the name "pioneer" in the organization's title. Others suggested a new name, Latah County Historical Society, and expanding the museum's interpretation to



Past presidents of the Latah County Pioneer Association taken in June 1951. Back row from left to right: Mr. Perry Carter, Mrs. Ruth Naylor Perkins, unidentified, Mr. Louis G. Peterson, and Mr. Roy Naylor. Front row, left to right: Mrs. Belle Carssow, Mrs. M. Collins, Mrs. Maude Hunter, and Mrs. Lillian Lieuallen Woodworth.

include all of Latah County's history and not just its pioneer past. For the time being, however, the organization elected to retain its present name of Latah County Pioneers Museum.

In 1968 the county officially accepted the Church donation, and the Pioneer Museum Association agreed that its priorities were to recruit members, make an apartment for a caretaker, appoint fund-raising and planning committees, and rewire the house, a project that involve one of the hard-working volunteers, Harry Sampson. It was in 1969 that the Museum Association formerly adopted the provision that the Historical Club and Pioneer Association should have two representatives each on the board of directors which numbered nine. That same year the partially empty house received historical furnishings from Dr. Church's nephew and niece.

During the next two years work proceeded with \$1,500 allocated for redecorating, with the hope that the museum could be opened on April 1, 1970. Although that deadline was not met, there were around thirty



Mrs. Nan Smith, secretary of the Pioneer Association, oversees the signing of the guest book by Mrs. Jennie Driscoll.

volunteers working in the house. Mrs. Grace Wicks, who headed the planning committee, negotiated with local businesses for donations of materials and labor. Professional standards were not neglected, and Harry Sampson became the head of a museum committee which screened museum donations. Other needs were addressed, including designating a place in the museum to keep records, purchasing a lawn mower, and installing a sign, a steel fire escape, and exhibit cases. Mr. Burcaw returned with advice on insurance and security, and the Museum Association drafted and finalized loan and gift agreement forms. Despite the difficult work, morale was high: the museum was becoming a reality. The board approved a plan for insuring and transferring the collections of the Pioneer Association to the McConnell Museum, and it sought new donations connected to domestic living and representing the pioneer period to the end of World War I.

In spring 1971 the Museum Association appointed Larry French general chairman of the new museum committee. He declared his intention to install exhibits in the upstairs rooms, but without altering their future use as period rooms when a new museum was built and the McConnell house could be fully restored. That same spring Mrs. Wicks traveled to Boise, with the intention of talking to the State Historical Society about arranging for someone to come to Moscow to help set up the exhibits and advise on cataloging the articles. Unfortunately, the director Mr. Arthur Hart was unable to suggest anyone who would be able to go to Moscow. Undaunted, Abe Goff obtained the permission of Charles Webbert of the University Library to store irreplaceable papers and documents in their fireproof vault. At a March meeting in 1971 a member suggested that the Museum Association should establish an endowment fund to which people could contribute in order to maintain and improve the museum. A committee quickly formed.

Finally on April 30, 1971 the Museum Association held its grand opening of the McConnell Mansion. In addition to the period rooms on the first floor, there were exhibits



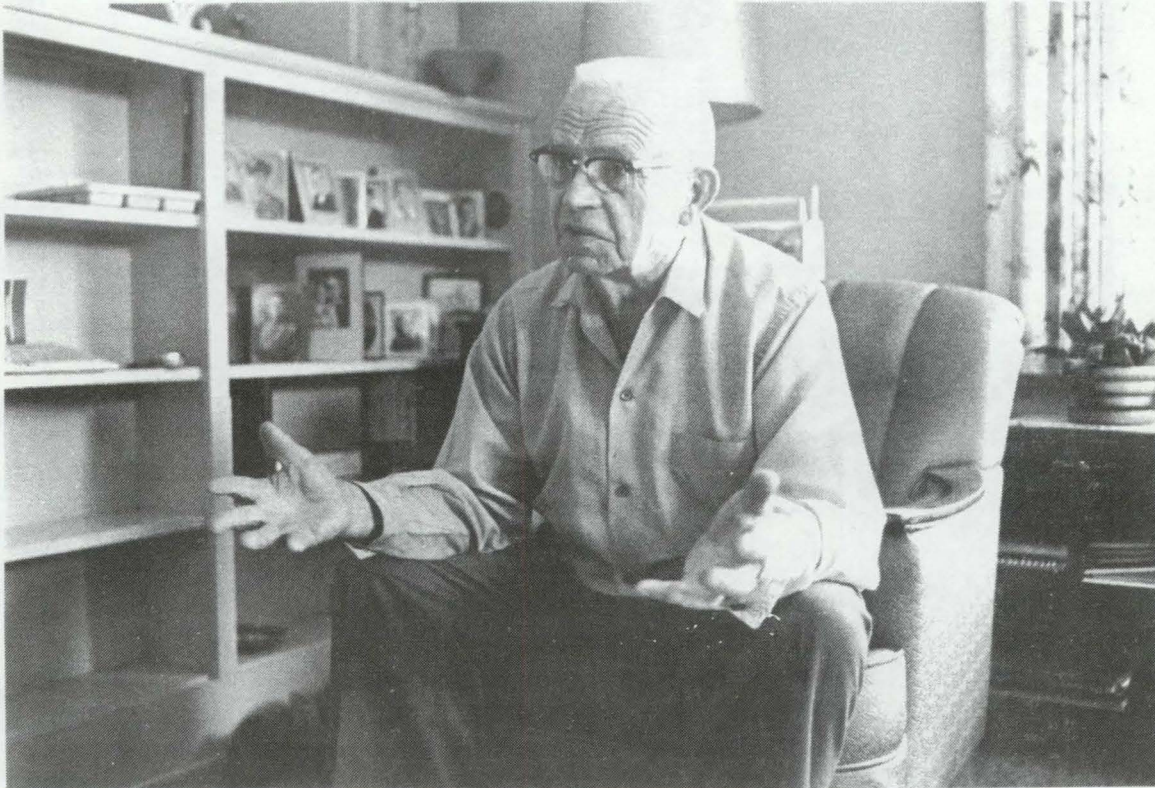
**The 1971 fundraising campaign for the new museum included collecting box tops of Zoom cereal. The placard reads: "Help! Help! Please save Zoom boxtops. It's a hol (sic) cereal by Fisher Company. When they are redeemed they will help build an annex for the McConnell Mansion."**

portraying the development of the county, a Hall of Pioneers display, and several private collections on the second floor. Mary McConnell Borah sent a telegram congratulating the organization on its work. It was an occasion to celebrate, but the hard work continued.

The museum was now open three afternoons a week, and the fee for conducted tours was \$5.00. The problem of raising funds was partially met by soliciting life memberships at \$50, regular memberships for \$2.50 each year, and memorials to purchase museum furnishings. In addition, the County Commissioners dedicated an annual allocation of \$2,500 for upkeep and operating expenses, and a new fund was created for a future, fire-proof building, perhaps an annex that would be connected by a breezeway to the McConnell house. One fund-raising idea for this museum which Miss Smith vigorously promoted was persuading the Carnation Company to redeem product labels. The Company decided instead to make an outright donation of \$1,000. Another fund-raising project was to collect box tops from Zoom cereal and redeem them

at five cents each from Fisher Flour Mills. The Museum Association appealed to student bodies of the county's high schools and youth organizations to collect the box tops under the slogan, "Pioneers of the Space Age." The Girl Scouts made personal appeals and posters, and were interviewed on Moscow's KRPL radio station.

The Museum Association hired Steve Talbott as the new caretaker, a position which would grow into a volunteer commitment for him in the coming years. Mr. Talbott furnished a list of needed repairs, including the chimneys, and Leora Stillinger began restoring some of the museum pieces. With the period rooms completed with donations from the Moscow Historical Club, the Museum Association concentrated on new exhibits, cataloging the museum collection, organizing the Hall of Pioneers, setting up an office and establishing a filing system. Larry French provided a large part of the effort, building storage space in the attic and basement and installing the upstairs exhibits. Mr. French also began writing to national state historical



Carl Olson of Dry Ridge in Troy was interviewed for an oral history by Sam Schrager in 1973. His reminiscences were published in the booklet, "Carl Olson's Story," for elementary school students.

societies asking for information, brochures, and other materials on a variety of museum topics. He suggested that the Museum Association establish a staff with himself designated as director, Lou Cormier as Curator, and a secretary. Mr. Cormier moved into the museum apartment and began the task of landscaping the grounds. Another important project was to collect information and photographs from pioneer families for the Hall of Pioneers. There were now 88 life members and 80 regular members.

### **A New Publication and Project**

In 1972 the Board made a decision which would considerably widen the influence of the Pioneer Museum. Kenneth Platt suggested beginning a *Quarterly Bulletin* in mimeograph form to keep members informed of plans, events, and other news in addition to being a permanent record of the Association. The *Quarterly* served these purposes admirably during the next few years, adding historical

articles and photographs, and changing to a printed instead of mimeographed form. It finally evolved into two parts: a separate historical journal, *Latah Legacy*, and a *Newsletter*.

The next year, 1973, the Pioneer Museum became involved in a new area of historic preservation in its search for meeting and museum space. Harry Sampson began this effort by inquiring about the Federal Post Office which was scheduled for abandonment. There was an alternative and complementary proposal that Mr. Platt championed, which would be to excavate the basement area of the McConnell house to provide room for museum displays, lecture rooms, offices, storage space, a vault and workrooms.

In addition to these new plans for additional space, 1973 marked the beginning of what would be one of the Museum Association's most ambitious efforts in collecting the county's history. In that year the Board initiated its acclaimed oral history project under the aus-



In 1974, the museum's flagpole was dedicated. Those present at the ceremony included, left to right, Mr. and Mrs. George Bingham, Mrs. Nyra Renshaw, Mr. Carlton Lamphere, Mr. Abe Goff, Mr. Clark, Mr. Walt Schumaker, Mrs. Ruby Osmondson, Mr. Eugene Settle, and Mr. Tom White. The flagpole and plaque were gifts of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion.

pices of the Idaho Bicentennial Office. The driving forces were two men from Troy, Sam Schragar, a student of folklore, and Rob Moore, a writer and English student. In February they presented their project to Grace Wicks and others. All were enthusiastic, but they faced a problem of funds. The minimum needed for the project was projected at \$8,500. Mrs. Wicks agreed to present the proposal to the Museum Association for their approval and sponsorship, and Mr. Moore and Mr. Schragar agreed to prepare a program to take to granges and other service clubs to seek funds. Mr. French initiated inquiries to the State Museum and the Idaho Bicentennial Commission. At an emergency meeting that May, the Museum Association discussed ways of funding the project. Donations and pledges collected at the meeting totaled \$1,800, and \$1,000 was raised the following week. The

Museum Association gave permission to the two investigators to use space and equipment in the museum, and it agreed to help solicit private funds that could be used to match a grant. In its appeal to county people the Association stated: "If these young newcomers are willing to make such a sacrifice by asking so much less than their true earning capacity, surely we native sons of the local pioneer heritage can support them in their efforts." Subsequently the Association raised another \$1,000, and at a June meeting the Board pledged that it would raise the remaining funds to match the state grant from the Bicentennial Committee. The board formed a special committee for the oral history project, and the two men began compiling a list of people to interview. The project was underway, and perhaps no one realized that it would continue to expand to become one of the largest



In 1971, the Carnation Company donated \$1,000 to the Latah County Pioneer Historical Museum Association for its Annex Building Fund. Left to right are: Mr. Steve Talbott, curator; Mrs. Jeanette Talbott, president of the Latah County Pioneer Association; Mr. Larry French, director; Mrs. Grace Wicks, president of the Museum Association; and Mr. Bruce McKnight, manager of the Bank of Idaho which managed the fund.

collections of its kind and a model for local historical societies throughout the nation.

The key to the project's success was involving a wide range of people and the decision that as many of the tapes as possible should be transcribed. Mr. Moore and Mr. Schragger envisioned newspaper articles, a book-length general history of the county, and children's booklets for the schools as products from the project.

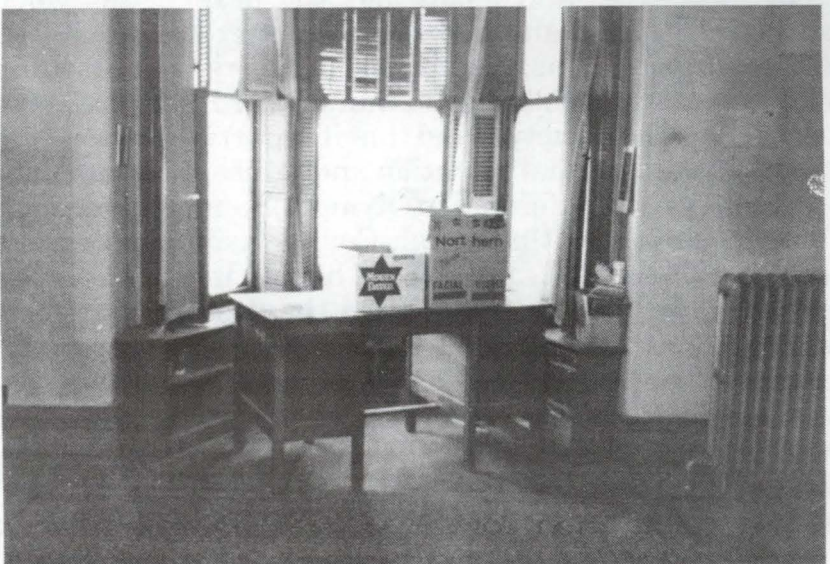
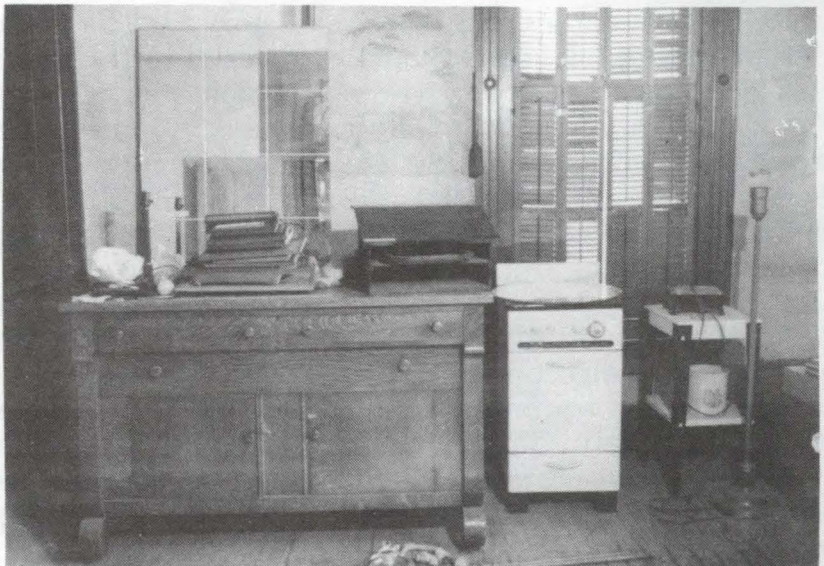
At the same time the Museum Association launched the oral history program, it prepared a prospectus of program and facilities development for its planned, new museum. County funding had increased to \$3,500, but that barely covered salaries for the three-

month director and the curator. Even if the County could increase its funding to the newly state authorized level of \$9,000, this would not be enough for a full museum operation. The income of \$350 from memberships and fees for using the house was negligible, and the publications planned for the future were promising but not immediate. Expansion to the old Post Office was uncertain, and space was still severely limited at the museum. The conclusion was that the Museum Association should launch an aggressive campaign to inform and interest prospective donors, and to cultivate favorable attitudes toward donations and bequests.

In the spring of 1973 two important de-

## McConnell Mansion

After Latah County accepted the donation of Dr. Church's house in 1968, the Pioneer Association and Museum Association members faced several years of work before the McConnell Mansion could be opened to the public in 1971. These scenes show various stages in its renovation.



velopments occurred. The first shortened the name of the organization to the Latah County Museum Society and increased the number of trustees to fourteen. The second brought University of Idaho museology students to serve as interns in the museum. The interns provided valuable assistance in projects ranging from routine cataloging to ambitious exhibits and publications. Many moved on to careers in prestigious organizations.

Outreach efforts continued. In 1973 the Museum Society installed and painted a new outside sign and it printed 4,000 copies of its new brochure to be distributed throughout Moscow. The next year the City of Potlatch invited Society members to meet in its historic city hall to discuss establishing a community history center there. The oral history program, now in full steam, had already collected 70 hours of taped interviews, of which 42 had been transcribed. Equally important, the oral history project had reached its goal of raising \$5,750, and the State Bicentennial Commission granted an additional \$2,000 to copy historic photos and other printed materials.

Another important development that would affect the direction and prestige of the Society was the beginning of a publications program. Kenneth Platt's short booklet on Latah County, *Some Pioneer Glimpses of Latah County*, was the first of a series of local history papers.

In fall, 1974, Rob Moore left the oral history project, and although the project exceeded all expectations, the transcribing work proved more time-consuming than anticipated. Nonetheless, the Society found that its efforts were receiving regional attention and praise. At an oral history conference in Olympia, Sam Schragger discovered that Latah County had become a pioneer in the field of oral history in the Northwest and its project was the first full-time effort to be undertaken in Idaho, Washington or Oregon. The oral history program provided the basis for a series of five booklets that were distributed to elementary schools along with excerpts from the taped interviews and study materials for teachers. In addition, the Society used the proceeds

from Mr. Platt's two books, *Some Pioneer Glimpses of Latah County*, and *Whispers from Old Genesee and Echoes of the Salmon River*, to establish a publications fund.

## Organizational Changes

With the growth of the organization and need for continuing support from annual membership fees, the Board closed the category of "life member." The categories of sponsoring membership of \$25 a year and a sustaining membership of \$50 a year were adopted. January 1975 brought the good news that the county had increased its support to \$9,000 and membership had increased from 178 in March 1974 to 217. It was time to begin discussing the need for year-round services. The present director, Larry French, farmed during nine months of the year and could work only three months at the museum. The question was raised, could the Society generate enough support in the county to pay for a full-time professional museum director? An alternative would be to join with the Luna House Society in Lewiston and the Whitman County Historical Society in Colfax to jointly hire a full-time director. Another alternative was to secure funding from the CETA program. The decision to hire a full-time director was not easy. Mr. French had launched the Society's impressive growth in a professional direction, but his three-month-a-year tenure interrupted continuity and disrupted activities when he had to leave each April. For example, student interns were assigned to the museum until the end of the semester in May. The Society had reached a turning point. There was need for extensive public relations work to broaden the base of financial support and to create liaisons with city and county agencies, the University and public schools. It was time to investigate assistance from granting agencies and foundations, and the intern program should have both a fall and spring semester. The plans for a major building project and exhibits in outlying towns and schools needed a full-time staff person. Moreover, city and county Bicentennial projects offered an opportunity for the Society to play a strong role in planning and carrying out



projects and observances. It was also important that the director would have the time to be closely involved in giving the annual town and county events a bicentennial flavor in 1976. Many board members stressed that "The time for action is now....Let us not allow such an opportunity to go by default through our inaction."

After deliberating, the Board decided to hire a full-time staff person through the CETA program, and Lee Magnuson became the museum's first professionally trained curator. At this point the trustees looked back with some amazement at its ability to attract a university graduate to be the position. "A few years ago it might not have been surmised that the Museum, as presently constituted, could be a valuable training ground, not only as a laboratory for class work, but as an area for interim assignment and employment to give experience as a stepping stone to better job opportunities." At the same time, the trustees recognized that the museum was "lightly funded," and that most of the regular income had to be spent on utilities, maintenance, and operations. There was not enough money to continue to fund the curator's position unless a new CETA grant became available.

The publications program moved smoothly along, and the Board approved the second and third local history papers: Opal Ross's *Fields and Pine Trees*, and Charles Munson's *Westward to Paradise*, and more oral history booklets were completed, including one based on Lola Clyde's interviews which became an immediate best seller. H. Robert Otness gave a magic show as a benefit for the

oral history project, and Potlatch Forests donated \$250. The landscaping under Mr. Cormier's tenure boasted handsome plantings of boxwood, yews and other shrubs, and with donations from Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Long of Kendrick, historic roses were added. By mid-July 1976 the count of taped interviews stood at 425 hours. The extension of the CETA program provided funding for the curator through September 1977 and for the oral history program until January 1977. Mr. Schrager's reputation spread, and he spoke at the Pacific Northwest conference, advised Clearwater and Bonner Counties on oral history programs, and participated in a two-day program on "A Future for the Small Town in Idaho." Clearly the Society was becoming a leading historical organization in Idaho and the Pacific Northwest.

It was also in 1976 that a link with the McConnell Mansion's past was severed. Mamie McConnell Borah died in January, and in April a memorial service was held at the McConnell Mansion. She was 105 years old.

Looking back eleven years to the inauguration of the Museum Society under the name of the Latah County Pioneer Historical Museum Association, the Board could take much pride in its direction and accomplishments. Although the new, fire-proof museum was still a dream, the historic McConnell house was handsomely refurbished and contained an active Society under the direction of a full-time curator and with ambitious plans for the next nine years. The next issue of *Latah Legacy* will tell the second part of the story.

## The Presidents Remember . . .

*The commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the Latah County Historical Society on October 21, 1988, brought together more than 70 members and friends to celebrate the past and look toward the future of our organization. Several past presidents spoke about the organization and we invited them to write down some of their experiences. Here we have printed both written and oral comments on the first ten years of our history. The next issue will contain reminiscences of those who served during the Society's second decade.*

### Grace Wicks (1970-1972)

It was a joy from start to finish, almost the finish, I should say.

The generosity and competence of the Palouse volunteers who helped establish the Latah County Historical Museum made anyone in leadership believe it was truly blessed.

It was 1968 when I returned, deep in grief, from traveling with my husband to adjust to the difficult widowhood which was ahead. At such a time, one feels utter despair and wonders why life can't end with the long-time partner when for 40 years you have done everything else together. But you have to face facts. Work helps and for the next five years, every spare moment I had went to the Museum.

First, Harry Sampson, retired Moscow merchant from Davids' store and the then president of the Society, asked me to be nominated for vice president. The result lasted the year and thereafter I served three years as president, plus one as past president.

Credits go to too many people to list. That is sad because some of their efforts were so unique, so suited that good stories result. But I shan't take time to write them for it would take a two-volume researched job and that kind of time I do not have. Suffice to say that in this brief review, the effort, without much



Grace Wicks

of any money, without experienced professionals, without foundations in files, storage, or organization, still added up to a proud achievement. We emerged at this time with a working museum and a wholesome effort to preserve our local heritage. I felt my part had been done, but my interest did not wane.

This opportunity to thank the many people responsible I am most grateful for, and deeply appreciate. Volunteers, you are wonderful!

**Grace Wicks** (*transcribed from luncheon talk*)

I used to be in piano recitals at Genesee and you started off with somebody you were a little doubtful about. And you wound up with the stars. This is a wonderful occasion for me. I look out at your faces and see old friends and I'm so grateful that the liveliness and the forward, on-going building of the historical society continues today. I came on board in 1968 when my husband had died in January and I came home as you might know. At a time like that you could either jump off a tall bridge or get awfully busy.

Harry Sampson wanted me to run for vice president of the Museum Society. Well it had been long in my mind because as a county commissioner, both Nan Smith of the Pioneer Association and David had waited on the commissioners to get them to do something. and then Dr. Church gave the McConnell Mansion to the county. While I was away the very first president that I know of was Orient Baker, followed by Harry Sampson. They cleared out the bachelor home of Dr. Church after it had been lived in by a deputy sheriff

who had little children. It was a difficult thing for all of us. We were such rank amateurs, I mean, we knew nothing except our desire to get a working museum going. Since the mansion was donated to the county, the Pioneer Society and the old and honorable Historical Club, the county commissioners gave us \$5,000 which Harry and the board he headed used to correct the electrical system.

When I took over as president the next time we had the election, we got \$5,000. How do you spend that to do the most good? You get mouthy, you ask anybody for anything because it isn't for you. It's for what you believe in. So I go to merchants and say, We haven't any money but we have enough to buy your product, say floor covering, for example, we'll give you cost plus 10% plus freight. You lay it, truck it, you put it in place. How about it? And they did. All the time they did.

Upholstery, there wasn't one outfit that turned us down on free upholstery because everything in the mansion but the settee set that came from Pennsylvania that was Dr. Church's parents' possessions, everything needed recovering and restoring. For example, that fainting couch, they took a two pound can of spikes and tacks and nails and screws out of it before they could start to restore the frame, re-upholster it and cover it. Moscow Furniture and Moscow Upholstery and others helped us out. By the time I left office we had a working museum such as it was.

Now, thank goodness for you younger folks who come and show interest, we're blessed by you. Thank you one and all. And by the professionals, that by hook or crook or grant or whatever, we can lure to help us, named Petersen, that's alright, isn't it, Mary? What we have to think about is keeping the thing going and I've probably already talked too long. I told Mary, if she didn't keep a stopwatch on us and touch a knee at the proper time, that we'd all monopolize. But I can tell you this, amateurs that we were, we went to the help on the campus and Ellis Burcaw was wonderful in his enormous background of museology.

And if this group of people ever wants to be nice and have a name day, let it be dedi-

cated to Larry French. He was the red-cheeked, 18 year old, who just turned up on our door step because he was interested and he remained years later with his wife, working for \$600 when we could find it for the year. And he established our file system, he organized our storage system, he put structure of sense and order and continuity into what we were trying to do. Larry French is the fellow we owe enormous gratitude to. He presently, as I understand it, is working in Montana. So it may be a little hard to get him here, but what he can tell you, you'd all love to hear. Thank you, thank you for being you and thank you for what you do for our heritage.

### **Ray Berry (1974)**

When I became President of the Latah County Historical Society in 1978, the organization had been in existence for ten years and many of the problems that often plague new groups had already been solved. However, there were some that had never been solved and new ones soon showed up.



**Ray Berry**

One of these was the matter of a satisfactory name. For years prior to the organization of this group there had been a women's group called the "Historical Club." This was one of the oldest clubs in town and also one of the most prestigious and its members objected to another organization using such a similar name. However, when the Latah County Commissioners accepted the mansion, they had already tentatively agreed to use it for just such a purpose. They also felt strongly that it should include the entire county and not just Moscow. This caused considerable discussion which continued through the first ten years and it was still moot when I accepted the position and a number of members felt that it should be settled without further delay.

In order to try and find an acceptable solution to the problem, we arranged a meet-

ing of the officers of both groups. After some discussion the following statement was approved by both groups:

The original women's group would have exclusive use of the name "Moscow Historical Club" or "Moscow Historical Society." The new group would use the name "Latah County Historical Society."

The second problem that I recall was also suggested by the county commissioners. A review of our membership revealed that we had been able to attract very few members living outside of Moscow. They wanted very much to have this representative of the entire county.

Our officers accepted this recommendation and scheduled meetings in Potlatch, Genesee and Kendrick. These were held but in each case more people in attendance were from Moscow than from the local communities. As a result these local meetings were suspended and a rather careful study of our membership was made. This suggested that the major reason for poor attendance was lack of room for group meetings of this kind.

This condition still exists but it is hoped that it can be solved when we are able to use the building across the street which we have recently acquired.

All of these were minor problems compared with deciding which artifacts should or should not be added to our collection. As it turned out, one of the first decisions we had to make was an easy one. A man from the Genesee area offered us an early day threshing outfit. It was operated entirely by horses turning a treadmill. In a wheat country such as Idaho, it fitted excellently in every way except size. What could we do with it? Where to store it? We were expected to preserve and care for the objects we accepted. So the matter of size became important. A second criteria was, "Can this object be preserved and/or protected without excessive care?" As an example, some paper is too fragile; some inks fade rapidly in bright lights, etc.

Obviously there is no simple answer but we did spend some little time considering one or two problems of this nature. A similar question arose when we were offered an object

that needed some repairs before it could be displayed. "Was it rare enough for us to spend the time and money to make it ready for exhibit?"

And a final question which probably was the most important of all. Remembering that ours was a Latah County Society, partly financed by the county, what, if anything, is the connection between the artifact and the county?

Our final decision went somewhat as follows:

a. Where there is a choice between two copies of the same artifact and other things are equal, prefer the one from Latah County. Likewise preference should also be given to objects from the Inland Empire and especially from Latah County.

In closing I would say that "lack of space for display" was really the most important guide of all. Even before the end of my term of office, we felt that more room was necessary if we were to make a worthwhile contribution. Thankfully, that possibility is now in sight but it will take a real effort of all friends of the museum to make it a reality. The amount of money needed is large but not an impossible sum.

### **Leonard Ashbaugh (1975-1976)**

*(transcribed from luncheon talk)*

Being a newcomer to the territory and not a native and not knowing a lot of the background that came up to the time when the mansion was acquired, I want to cover a little incident that occurred at the time and just following the time in which we actually started to work in the mansion and find out what we had. This was probably less than two years after Dr. Church had passed away. We had not been here too long. I had just completed building my house and we had gotten moved into it.

Exactly 20 years ago, sometime during



**Leonard Ashbaugh**

this month, the weather was very much like it is now. Harry Sampson came over one day and said it was about time we started working on the mansion, getting something done inside of it, finding out what we had acquired and had to work with. Now understand, the mansion and the grounds had only recently been vacated. The inside of the house was just as it had been left with what was scattered around there, a few pieces of furniture and so forth. At that time the county had given permission to the city to house a police officer, apparently as a new occupant, and this was part of his salary. He worked at night and slept in the daytime. He was married and had at least one small child, maybe two, and a dog. He had been occupying part of the building as his quarters.

Harry mentioned several people who might work on it. I said, "I'm a stranger here. I've been too busy to get acquainted with most of these people." But he read the list off and I knew one or two. So I said I'll check those and he said I'll check the rest of them and we'll see what we can do. I did contact the person I was supposed to contact. He was very enthusiastic and yes, he'd be working right with us. As it turned out, we never saw him in the building, maybe for some good reason of his own. But about a week after that, which would have been in the latter part of October, Harry came over one day and says, "Well, I've contacted those people. I think we should get going on this." He suggested a day in the following week in the afternoon when we could go over and get started and see what we had.

On the evening before we were to go, he called me on the phone and said something came up and can't make it tomorrow. But, he says, how about the day after and I said that would be fine. However, the following day, I thought I'll go down and see what's going on. I knew about where the mansion was, but outside of that I had never been on the grounds or in the house or paid much any attention to it. I went down there on this afternoon, and I knew the policeman and his family were supposed to be there residing in the building. Everything was quiet around the place. And I thought, well, I'll look inside. So the front door

was open and I went into what I'd suppose you'd call the parlor, and I saw the two sliding doors ahead of me. So I went over to those and opened them up a crack or so and looked in and the policeman was asleep on a mattress in the room. He was sawing wood. I very carefully went out again and I thought, Well I'm here, what am I going to do, if anything? I wanted to get acquainted with the place so I spent the next half an hour or so looking in the basement, on the grounds, in the shed, and so forth.

Well, things were in pretty bad shape. I didn't know that the lawn had ever been mowed much. There were kids' toys and some clothes cattered all over the yard. The dog had been a pretty practical character because in front of the bay windows, he had dug a ditch about 6 feet long and about a foot deep on the deep end where he got into in hot weather to keep himself cool. But there was no dog there; there were no children. So I thought, well can I do anything of any good this afternoon? I looked around and spent the next hour or so just picking up junk around the yard and in the small building and piled it up here and there around the grounds, just loading up junk that we separated out of the building and out of the parts of the house we could get into and hauling them out to the junk yard.

We wanted to sort of refurbish the quarters for a custodian. Since the building was occupied, that kind of put a damper on that but lo and behold, I don't think two weeks had passed when we got word that the policeman and his family had moved out. So we had free reign to do what we wanted to do. And we immediately got to work there in working up the quarters for the possible use of a custodian. I don't remember who the first custodian was. It seems we had one before Lou Cormier came in, but anyway, we were able to get right to work on refurbishing the quarters and getting them in a reasonable shape for someone to live in.

We began to get some response from people to come and help and work with us and within a month — I don't think later than October/November — there was a project, I think it was federally supported, to train individuals

who wanted to learn the art of hanging wallpaper, and perhaps some other things regarding interior decoration. And they gave them permission to set up their school, which was held on Saturdays only, in the upstairs. Well, that fitted in very well with what we wanted to do. So when they got their class going, we also came in there on Saturday and within a week or two, the class was ready to hang paper and we helped them on that by cleaning up the place in general. That carried on over the entire winter, and of course, a whole lot of things followed that in the succeeding years. I can't go into any of that, but I just wanted to tell you about how we got started or how we began our work in actually cleaning up the mansion. And that actually started 20 years ago this month. Thank you very much.

### Lillian Otness (1979)

Being asked, for this edition of the "Legacy," to contribute reminiscences of my term as President of the Latah County Historical Society has confronted me with a problem. When Donna Bray resigned as President within a few months of the end of 1979, as First Vice-president of the Board of Trustees I inherited the job of finishing out her term of office. Some might have called me a lame-duck president, but I preferred to think of myself as a somewhat drafted caretaker/president who would keep the seat warm for Gerald Ingle, who followed me.

Prior to 1979 my chief interests in the work of the Society had been with the publications committee and the oral history project. It therefore seems to me more appropriate now to reminisce about the origin and development of the Society's work on oral history, which has contributed substantially to the recognition LCHS now enjoys.

In March of 1973 our Society was approached by Rob Moore and Sam Schragger of



Lillian Otness

Troy with a proposal to "tape record the recollections of people who lived through the settlement and development of Latah County." The Board of Trustees agreed to sponsor the project and "to solicit private funds to be matched by grant sources." By summer of that year the state Bicentennial Fund had approved a grant of \$5,750 to be matched by private donations. In April of 1974 the LCHS had raised the required matching funds, and Schragger and Moore were at work at subsistence wages of \$300 a month each.

Such was the beginning of the oral history project. With assistance of some secretarial help from the State Employment Office and later with money from the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, it became possible for what had been planned as a one-year project to be extended until Sam Schragger left it to begin work for a Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania in the fall of 1978. Sam, meanwhile had prepared a guide to the county's oral history collection which is still in use. In addition, by the time Sam left, the University of Idaho was making transcripts of LCHS interviews available to the public as part of its Special Collections, and money and equipment from the U of I library were helping with recording interviews on archival tape.

As early as 1975, LCHS began its efforts to make available to the public the oral history materials the project had collected. In that year, the Moscow Bicentennial Committee presented a 25-minute slide-tape show open to the public in November. This was later shown to more than 3,000 people throughout Latah County and was copied by the State Historical Society in 1976. This, we felt, was an encouraging beginning, but we wanted to try other methods of acquainting people with the material we were accumulating.

The first medium we tried was print. In 1975-76, the LCHS cooperated with the White Pine School District in publishing five booklets based on our oral history interviews. These were intended for use in 4th grade classes, and each was accompanied by a taped excerpt from the interview. Later our first adult publication based on an oral history transcript was "*Railroad Man*," edited by Keith

Petersen and based on interviews with W. J. Gamble, manager of the W.I. & M. railroad. This was a booklet issued in connection with a two-day exhibit on railroading which took place at the McConnell Mansion in June of 1981.

Another means of reaching the public was through radio broadcasts. In 1980 the Association for Humanities in Idaho (AHI), now the Idaho Humanities Council, funded a series of 26 five-minute radio programs which were broadcast weekly over four stations in Moscow and vicinity: public broadcast stations in Moscow and Pullman, commercial stations in Moscow and Lewiston.

Still another medium we tried was a dramatic production. In 1980 Rob Moore, who had left oral history interviewing in 1974, prepared a script for a short play based on a composite of material drawn from a number of interviews. The play was called "Homestead Act." Two grants from the AHI, one for Rob's preparation of the script and one for staging the production and taking it on the road, made possible this means of reaching the public with our historical material. In 1981 Rob's play had 20 presentations ranging geographically from Bonners Ferry to Grangeville, in

places varying from public schools to nursing homes.

Another grant in 1981 from the AHI made it possible for Mary Reed to travel to California and interview Carol Ryrie Brink in depth shortly before her death. Her taped interviews are invaluable additions to our knowledge of this well-known author whose roots were so firmly in Moscow and for whom the children's section of the Moscow-Latah County Library is named.

In the same year Sam Schrage was commissioned by the AHI to do a number of follow-up interviews with people important in Latah County history. Since 1981 oral history activities have been confined to workshops and to special projects that have enabled the Society to add to its collection.

At present both the University of Idaho Library and the library at the McConnell Mansion make available over 11,000 pages of transcripts of interviews from over 200 informants. Tapes of these and untranscribed interviews are housed in the Special Collections of the University of Idaho Library. These sources are often consulted by researchers and other interested persons and continue to shed light on the history of Latah County.

## Book Review

By Keith Petersen

*The Park Builders: A History of State Parks in the Pacific Northwest.* Thomas R. Cox. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1989. 260 pp. \$35.00 cloth; \$14.95 paper.

Each year, more people visit state parks than national parks. State parks play a major role in tourism and preserve significant parts of our national heritage. Yet until recently they have remained largely unstudied by historians. We have an increasing body of works about national parks and wilderness areas, but literature on state parks is not only slight by comparison but, as the author of this new book states, it is also too "narrowly focused geographically, usually dealing with a single park or state."

Thomas Cox's *The Park Builders* is a welcome change. Not only is it perhaps the most significant work about the history of state parks yet published, but it is also wide-ranging in its coverage, examining in detail parks in the three northwestern states, and continuously reminding readers of developments in an even broader field by placing the state parks movement in national perspective.

Cox is one of the country's leading historians of national resource development and the conservation movement. His latest book lives up to his exacting standards of scholarship. And — as usual — his wide-ranging sources approach bibliographic exhaustion. Cox's writing has been more sprightly in the past, but this is not a book of academic tedium. The casual reader will find much of interest here.

Cox is at his best in describing the influences of key individuals in the state parks movement. "For all the importance of the larger forces of class and group," he writes, "individuals have played a key role in shaping

America's parks." Cox provides rich biographical detail about his major protagonists, helping readers understand them as people.

Readers of *Latah Legacy* will be interested to know that several local residents play important roles in the story of state parks development. The most prominent is Virgil McCroskey of Oaksdale who not only donated Steptoe Butte as a Washington state park, but also struggled through three Idaho legislative sessions before this state's assembly accepted his donation of over 4,000 acres of land now known as Mary Minerva McCroskey State Park.

Leon G. Green, in the 1950s head of the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation at the University of Idaho, was another important resident. Idaho Governor Robert Smylie lacked money to pay for a study of state recreational resources, but prevailed upon Green to undertake a study voluntarily. Green agreed, providing Smylie with just the report he desired. Smylie had been elected Governor in 1954 and encouraged the development of state parks. The UI professor's report was also the basis of repeated recommendations by Smylie to the legislature to create a state parks department.

University of Idaho President Donald Theophilus was yet a third local individual who played a major role in the development of Idaho's parks system. In the late 1950s Governor Smylie named a Commission on Natural Resources Organization and Administration, headed by Theophilus. To Smylie's dismay the Theophilus Commission made more modest recommendations for state restructuring than the Governor had hoped, but it did encourage development of a state parks department and Smylie used this to continue to badger the legislature into providing one.

While these three local men played instrumental roles in the development of Idaho's



state parks system, the real hero of the Idaho story is Robert Smylie. Born in Iowa and awed by Idaho's grandeur, Smylie — an avid fisherman, hunter and outdoor sportsman — pursued his idea of a state parks system with bulldog determination.

Idaho was one of the first states in the nation with a state park. Idaho Senator Weldon Heyburn wanted a pristine piece of property around Lake Chatcolet set aside as a national park. The federal government — after years of wrangling — vetoed the idea, but in 1911 Heyburn State Park came into being.

While Idaho's beginning was auspicious, it soon fell behind virtually every other state in the nation. By the time Virgil McCroskey finally convinced the legislature — with Smylie's assistance — to accept the land, it was only Idaho's third state park. By this time Oregon had 140 state parks and Washington about 70.

Although Robert Smylie had a difficult time convincing the legislature to develop a state parks department, he was able, by various means, to develop a state parks system. By the mid-1960s — during his third term in office — Idaho had 16 state parks.

Democrats in the legislature — including Cecil Andrus, whose reputation as a strong environmentalist belies his voting record as a legislator — consistently vetoed any measure for a parks department even though Smylie brought it before each legislative session. One wonders if Idaho ever would have developed a parks department had it not been for Roland Harriman.

Roland Harriman's father, Edward — chairman of the Board of the Union Pacific Railroad — purchased part interest in a huge cattle ranch in southeastern Idaho in the early 1900s. The Harriman family visited regularly, but in the late 1950s Roland and his wife Gladys decided to donate the property to the State of Idaho. They negotiated with Smylie for two years, and finally in 1961 announced that they were giving their 14,000-acre ranch as a state park. But Smylie in-

sisted that the gift be contingent upon the legislature authorizing the development of a professionally staffed parks department.

The legislature knew a good deal and easily accepted the Harriman donation in 1961. Still, despite the stipulation attached, it defeated his proposal for a parks department in both the 1961 and 1963 legislatures. Finally in 1965 Smylie got his parks department passed.

Idaho has far fewer parks than its western neighbors, and the author of this book is not necessarily optimistic about this state's future. "Not until the days of Robert Smylie did state parks begin to prosper in Idaho. Even then, progress came in the face of general indifference among the state's citizens. Indeed, Smylie worked not just to create a professional parks system ... but ... to reorient the state's dominant political traditions. Idaho's political orientation in subsequent years — influenced by the increasing political influence of the conservative Mormon community — would suggest that Smylie's victories in the latter realm, if not the former, may have been largely transitory."

Idaho's now-dominant Republican Party has swung considerably to the right since Smylie's days, and conservation issues are hardly a centerpiece of its current platform. Idahoans will need vigilance if they are to protect and enhance the system of parks that people like Virgil McCroskey, Leon Green, and Robert Smylie worked so hard to create.

This is a useful, valuable book by a most able historian. Some of us like to think that history better prepares us to live in the present and to plan for the future, and it would behoove those interested in state parks and conservation issues to carefully study this book not only for what it can tell us about our past, but for insights it can lend us as we prepare for the future.

*KEITH PETERSEN is currently writing a book with Mary Reed on the history of Harriman State Park in southeastern Idaho.*

## Latah County Historical Society Presidents

<b>Dr. Orien Baker</b>	<b>1968</b>
<b>Harry Sampson</b>	<b>1969</b>
<b>Grace Wicks</b>	<b>1970-72</b>
<b>Bill Jacobson/Kenneth Platt</b>	<b>1973</b>
<b>Ray Berry</b>	<b>1974</b>
<b>Leonard Ashbaugh</b>	<b>1975-76</b>
<b>Donna Bray</b>	<b>1977-78</b>
<b>Lillian Otness</b>	<b>1979</b>
<b>Gerald Ingle</b>	<b>1980</b>
<b>Roger Slade</b>	<b>1981-82</b>
<b>Everett Hagen</b>	<b>1983</b>
<b>Duane LeTourneau</b>	<b>1984-86</b>
<b>Stan Shepard</b>	<b>1987-88</b>
<b>Warren Owens</b>	<b>1989-</b>

## LIFETIME MEMBERS

Michael Anderson, Bozeman, MT  
Mrs. Oscar Anderson, Moscow  
Leonard & Jean Ashbaugh, Moscow  
Mary Banks, Moscow  
Ray & Lura Berry, Moscow  
Patricia Brocke Bloomster, Portland, OR  
Willis Bohman, Moscow  
Lola Clyde, Moscow  
Robert Earl Clyde, Moscow  
T. H. Correll, Lewiston  
Leon Danielson, Clarkston, WA  
Mary Williamson d'Easum, Boise  
Larry French, Potlatch  
Mabel Gano, Moscow  
Mrs. Henry Gauss, Austin, TX  
William & Janet Greever, Moscow  
Nellie Tomer Handlin, Moscow  
Gordon & Grace Hauck, Portland, OR  
Dorothy R. Henrikson, Moscow  
Charles Horgan, Moscow  
Robert & Nancy Hosack, Moscow  
Kathryn Collins Howells, Moscow  
Mildred Humphrey, Moscow  
Agnes Jain, Lapwai  
Audrey Pleiman Jain, Genesee  
Jess & Pearl Johnson, Genesee  
Mabel Otness Kayler, Seattle, WA  
Dorothy Green Korn, Yakima, WA  
Agnes Pavel Kottke, Moscow  
Marguerite Ward Laughlin, Moscow  
Gladys Love, Palo Alto, CA  
Patricia Thompson Lowe, Huntsville, AL  
John & Rowena Luedke, Moscow  
Vaughn P. McDonald, Moscow  
Sophia Marineau, Moscow  
Boyd A. Martin, Moscow  
John B. Miller, Belmont, CA  
Gainford Mix, Moscow  
Mrs. Ed Morken, Sr., Genesee  
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Bookpeople, Moscow  
Centennial Health Center, Moscow  
Chamber of Commerce, Moscow  
El Burai Center, Moscow  
Fleming Truck & Equipment, Kendrick  
Fountain Flying Service, Moscow  
Harden Realty, Moscow  
Hayden & Ross, Moscow  
Idaho First National Bank, Moscow  
Latah Care Center, Inc., Moscow  
Latah County Bar Association  
McCoy Plumbing & Heating, Moscow  
Moscow Grange  
Moscow Insurance Agency, Inc.  
Moscow Realty  
Nobby Inn, Moscow  
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Sharpe Oil/Campus Link, Moscow  
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LATAH COUNTY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
South Adams St.  
Moscow, Idaho 83843

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6/89  
John & Arlene Wallace  
917 East 7th  
Moscow ID 83843

**Note: Due to the high cost of returned issues, we appreciate being advised of changes of address.**

In 1968 interested individuals organized the Latah County Historical Society to collect and preserve materials connected with the history of Latah County and to provide further knowledge of the history and tradition of the area. Every person, young or old, who is interested in the history of Latah County and who would like to assist in its preservation and interpretation is cordially invited to become a member. Subscriptions to this journal and a discount on books published by the Society are included in membership dues. Dues for the various classes of membership are as follows:

	<b>Member</b>	<b>Friend</b>	<b>Contributor</b>	<b>Sustainer</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Patron</b>
Individual	\$ 7.50-15	\$16-30	\$ 31-75	\$ 76-150	\$151-499	\$500 up
Family	12.50-25	26-50	51-100	101-250	251-499	500 up
Business	25-50	51-100	101-250	251-350	351-499	500 up

Note: For Canada and Mexico, add \$4; for Europe, add \$8.

Privileges are identical for all classes; the highest dues represent a much needed donation to help the Society's work. Dues are tax deductible.

The Society's services include conducting oral histories, publishing local history monographs, maintaining local history/genealogy research archives and the county museum, as well as educational outreach. The Society wishes to acquire objects, documents, books, photographs, diaries and other materials relating to the history of Latah County. These are added to the collections and made available to researchers while they are preserved for future generations.

The Society is housed in the William J. McConnell Mansion, 110 South Adams, Moscow. The museum is open Tuesday through Friday, 9 a.m. to Noon and 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday hours are from 1 to 5 p.m. Visits to the museum or research archives at other times can be arranged by calling (208) 882-1004.



Latah County Historical Society  
110 S. Adams  
Moscow, Idaho 83843  
208-882-1004

# NEWSLETTER

*Sent  
Dues*

April 1989

Volume 11, No. 4

## ANNUAL MEETING HAS A CENTENNIAL THEME

Around 45 members and friends gathered on January 28 to enjoy a potluck dinner and to elect new trustees. They are Warren Owens, president; Duane LeTourneau, 1st vice-president; Connie DeWitt, 2nd vice-president; JoAnn Thompson, treasurer; Mary Jo Hamilton, secretary; Marie Scharnhorst, Arlene Jonas, and Janice Johnson, 3-year trustees; Christi Jackson, Dana Dawes, and Bert Cross, 1-year trustees. Stan Shepard is past president, Dana Magnuson represents the County Commission, Jeanette Talbott and Loyal Talbott represent the Latah County Pioneer Association, and Gladys Bellinger represents the Historical Club.

Connie DeWitt received the Volunteer of the Year award, and certificates of appreciation were given to the Latah County Bar Association, Alfred Dunn, and Cal and Kathleen Warnick (who also received a standing ovation). The staff presented Stan Shepard with a gift in appreciation of his many volunteer hours at the museum. Stan is usually there during the busy Friday afternoons and Saturdays to greet visitors, answer phones, and catalog photographs.

After the business meeting, Dennis Colson Professor of Law at the University of Idaho gave an entertaining and educational talk entitled "McConnell Goes to the Convention." The talk described the role of Latah County at the convention and outlined some of the historic issues and problems that have shaped our current politics.

## MARDI GRAS RECEPTION AND EXHIBIT

This year the historical society joined in the Moscow Mardi Gras celebration with a special exhibit featuring black and white clothing and accessories. Also on display were Mary McConnell Borah's evening gowns, and a dress of Maude Woodworth along with a photograph of her wearing it.

The fun began with members of the Latah County Local Celebrations Committee participating in the Mardi Gras parade. They were Dana Magnuson, Nancy and Inga Johansen, Ann Turner, and Mary Reed. Because of the cold, snowy and windy weather, the group rode in Dana's station wagon. Mike Hamilton and Zachary Pall, dressed in black and in white face, walked alongside, carrying sandwich boards which invited parade goers to the museum for the exhibit, hot drinks and cookies. Connie DeWitt, dressed as a French maid complete with dust cap and feather duster, greeted visitors, and Michelle Farah, in a white feather boa, helped serve. Visitors came all afternoon and included many children and newcomers to the museum.

## NEW EXHIBIT AND PANEL HONOR THE UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO'S 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



"The County Connection" is the name of the new exhibit which opened on May 8th. The exhibit tells the story of cooperative extension in Latah County, beginning with the establishment of the first agricultural experiment station at the University of Idaho in 1892. Cooperative Extension reached almost every resident of the county through its educational programs for farmers, housewives, and children. In addition

to historic photographs, the exhibit will have examples of devices designed to help agriculture, like the Idaho lever dendrometer which measures growth of apple trees and the original wheat exhibit that was assembled for a display in New York in the 1930s. There are samples of the famous Mosida and Idaed wheat varieties developed and grown in Latah County.

Following the exhibit opening, we held a public forum, "Connecting with the Future" at the Moscow Community Center. Panelists Dr. Larry Brannen, Dean of Agriculture, Dr. Peggy Pletcher, Director of the School of Home Economics, Tim Miller, Latah County Agricultural Agent, Judy Nest, Latah County Home Agent, Connie DeWitt, Latah County Extension Homemaker, Douglas Scoville, Latah County Farmer, and Jim Miller, Latah County 4-H Club Member led the discussion of how Cooperative Extension is adapting to modern needs. These include nutrition, chemical pesticides, and family well-being. Cooperative Extension is now reaching to urban as well as traditional rural audiences and seeking ways of involving younger homemakers.

We have a supply of brochures on the history of Cooperative Extension in Latah County. If you are interested in having one or more copies, please let us know. An article on the history will appear in a future issue of Latah Legacy.

#### ORCHID AWARD

The Idaho Historic Preservation Council has awarded an "orchid" to LCHS for our many contributions to historic preservation. Among the accomplishments cited were the preservation and restoration of the McConnell Mansion, a new interpretive sign for the McConnell house on the corner of Second and Adams, plans to restore and interpret Centennial Annex, walking tour brochures of Moscow and Potlatch, a slide program on the Fort Russell neighborhood, and the professional care of research collections in the library. President Warren Owens accepted the award at this year's 13th annual awards banquet held in Boise on May 11.

The Historic Preservation Council is a non-profit, statewide organization with the goal of increasing awareness of Idaho's heritage. In addition to awarding orchids, the Council gives onions to individuals and organizations whose actions are detrimental to historic preservation.

A project related to our historic preservation activities will be a new sign for the entrance of Mary Minerva McCroskey park on Highway 95. We requested that the Idaho Department Transportation install the sign, and we prepared and submitted the text to the State Historical Society. It is also encouraging that the State Parks Department has agreed that the Virgil's endowment for the park be removed from the General Fund and set aside for the park's maintenance. This was a lengthy effort with many people involved. Current plans include some road maintenance and building turn-outs and restoring the picnic area. The consensus of a public meeting at the park was that it should be kept in an undeveloped stage in keeping with McCroskey's own intentions.

#### MCCONNELL MANSION NEWS

On Sunday, February 5, during record cold weather, an upstairs radiator which had been turned off for several years, burst. That morning Steve Talbott had dropped in to check the pipes and found a wall of water cascading from the second floor into the kitchen area. A work crew quickly assembled with mops, buckets, wet vacuums, and rags, and Steve succeeded in disconnecting the radiator and capping the pipes. Fortunately, the damage was confined to work areas, leaving the period rooms and library materials untouched. The soaked carpets and pads were removed and discarded, and we now await a settlement from the insurance company. There may be a silver lining to the story if we can use the insurance money to further the restoration of the two rooms that were damaged.

On a related matter, an inspection of the McConnell Mansion found asbestos in the basement and attic. While that in the attic is stable or can be stabilized, the asbestos in the basement furnace room must be

removed. The County Commissioners are now contacting contractors to do the work. Preliminary plans call for a plastic tunnel leading out of the basement and careful cleaning of the artifacts stored in the furnace room.

March 15 was the last day for our bookkeeper Charlotte Fullerton who had performed these services for over a year. Our new bookkeeper is a long-time member and friend of LCHS, Arlyne Gilbertson. Arlyne works for A & V Bookkeeping in Moscow. We thank Charlotte for her hard work and look forward to working with Arlyne.

In case you have not noticed, we have been able to extend our hours for visitors and researchers. We are now open Tuesday through Friday, 9 to 12 and 1 to 5 and on Saturday from 1 to 5. As another service for visitors we are republishing the Walking Tour brochures of Moscow's downtown and Fort Russell neighborhood. They are available at 25 cents each.

#### CONFERENCES AND MORE CONFERENCES

Spring has been an especially active time for conferences. On April 6-8 the staff attended a state-wide conference in Boise sponsored by the Working Together Project, the Idaho Association of Museums, and the State Historical Society and Museum. Joann Jones gave a talk on designing storage for small spaces, and Mary Reed discussed risk management in museums.

April 13-15 was the joint meeting of historians, archivists, and oral historians in Moscow. On Thursday Mary talked to the Northwest Oral History Association about how LCHS has used oral histories in various projects, including publications, exhibits, and slide programs. Afterwards there was a reception attended by the oral historians and several other friends. On Saturday Mary gave another presentation, this time on the Century/Historic Farms Project.

#### CENTENNIAL NEWS

The Idaho Centennial Commissioners are holding their May meeting in Moscow, and we

are hosting a reception for them on Sunday, May 21. After the reception at the McConnell Mansion, the Commissioners will be invited on a walking tour around Fort Russell neighborhood and downtown.

Washington Water Power, which is celebrating its own centennial this year, has made a generous donation to the Latah County Centennial committee. The funds are designated for a new exhibit case at the county courthouse. Bids were solicited, and a committee selected Woodcraft of Moscow's design. The case will make it possible to install a variety of exhibits at the courthouse; at present temporary cases in rather sad repair are being used.

Plans for an exchange with Power County, Latah County's sister county, are well underway thanks to Diane Pavek. Diane, a former resident of Power County, is assisting with a quilting project and exchange of high school students. She is also a member of Palouse Patchers who are planning several quilting projects to commemorate the centennial. One of these will give county residents the opportunity to add a stitch to centennial quilt during 1990.

COMING HOME TO LATAH COUNTY will be the theme of the major event celebrating Idaho's 100 years. At its March meeting, the centennial committee decided to move the date from the county fair to July in order to insure that families from out of state or the area will be able to attend. The weather should also be warmer. Plans are to have a parade, a huge barbecue, music, demonstrations, a children's fair, and special attractions like the Forest Service's mule pack train. The date will coincide with the ice cream social in order to take advantage of the centennial theme and the many visitors and tourists who are expected in town. PLEASE PUT JULY 22, 1990 ON YOUR CALENDAR and PLAN TO ATTEND THIS GALA EVENT. Many volunteers will be needed and we hope that many of our members and friends will help to make this the event of the century in Latah County.

While July 22, 1990, is the date of the homecoming celebration, July 3, 1990 is the official anniversary of the day when Idaho

became part of the Union. Bovill is planning a statehood day celebration to commemorate this event. The entire county is invited to participate in this event, and we will keep you informed of the details.

GENESEE CENTENNIAL

This year Genesee is celebrating its centennial, and there will be a special event on October 23, the official date of its incorporation. We will include details in next issues of the newsletter. One special project will be a history of the town which Marie Scharnhorst is preparing. The history will be published as a special issue of Latah Legacy this summer or early fall. Extra copies will be printed to be available for Genesee residents, both past and present.

WE REGRET.....

We are embarrassed and frustrated that this issue of the Latah Legacy is so late. We have developed a schedule of articles to bring us up-to-date, but the immediate problem has been finding a satisfactory way of typing and formatting each issue before it goes to the printer. Our editor, Bert Cross, has just found a solution for the future which is a word processing program we can use ourselves at the historical society. It will take some time to learn how to run the program and format the pages, but we should soon be able to create finished copy for the printer and catch up on the back issues.

Thank you for your patience and continued support during this difficult period!

MEMORIALS

- In memory of Glen Gilder  
Lillian Otness
- In memory of Gertie Otness  
Bernard and Joan Otness  
Mrs. Bill Florence Anderson
- In memory of Joyce Otter Finke  
Kenneth and Mildred Hensley  
Eleanor Axtell Bergsma  
Mary A. Bailey  
Lillian Otness

- In memory of Carl Petrick  
Donna Bray
- In memory of Sheryl Hanson  
Keith Petersen and Mary Reed

MONETARY DONATIONS

- Palouse Patchers  
Edna Sturman  
Delta Kappa Sorority  
Beta Sigma Phi Sorority

LIBRARY DONATIONS

- Dr. William Marineau: photo of John Paulson home, built in 1893
- Bueletta Nordby Williams: Nordby Family History Book II
- Lois K. Dullanty: photos of Troy, Moscow, and 4th of July Celebration
- Valerie Jensen: eight photos from May 1988 Garden Party at McConnell Mansion
- Idahonian: Moscow Mirror Oct. 5, 1932
- Fred P. Maurer: four poems written by Mr. Maurer
- Charlotte Buchanan: record books, from M. J. Shields Co. 1891, and Ward Paint & Hardware 1962-1965
- Jeanett Talbott: notepaper and business stationery for W. A. Lauder, library card, story of "Idaho's Territorial Governors", photo of Edward Taylor's wife and daughter, several photos, letters to and from Alma Lauder Keeling, Latah County Authors and Their Works, minutes from Latah County Pioneer Museum Association, photo of Moscow 5th grade 1914, photo of Iva and Paul Robbins, insurance slip from the Boston Store
- Jay Nelson: University of Idaho extension Annual Report 1964, Genesee News Dec. 6, 1895, 1 photo of Thorncreek School
- Dale Golis: clipping about school hot lunch program, 1915
- A. M. Sternagle: book, Erector Parts Illustrated
- Lillian Otness: portions of Great Good Country manuscript
- Patrick Clark: mounted photos from Ham dinner 1988, honoring Lalia Boone
- Adrie Chatelain: two Moscow post cards
- JoAnn Thompson: Moscow Centennial Commission records 1986-1988
- Lee Gale: two issues of the Star Mirror, Sept. 1, 1910 & Sept. 22, 1910



Thomas Berg: W. I. & M. Interstate Commerce Commission Valuation Docket, copies of official railway equipment registers, article on W. I. & M. from "Switchlist"  
David Wahl: Brooklawn Reverie by Elizabeth Gamble Wahl  
Kathryn V. Fader: post card photo of Potlatch grade school c. 1915  
Johanna Shell: two photos, one of a 4th grade class in Moscow, c. 1903, the other unidentified  
Kim E. Gilmore: nine unidentified photos c. 1951  
Bervette Williams: two booklets on Idaho and Moscow schools  
U of I Landscape Architecture class: four landscape plans for Centennial Annex  
Bruce Harding: Benewah County map 1915, pamphlet on Nez Perce Language 1985, Article from American West magazine, brochure for Dogwood Festival 1989  
Lola Clyde: photo of Mt. Tomer School c. 1915, "Public School Souvenir" class of 1914 booklet which lists pupils and teacher

#### DONATIONS TO THE MUSEUM COLLECTION

Lillian Otness: Art Deco wood picture frame, ration book case, five books and stamps  
William T. Marineau: wooden sign from "Anderton Apartments"  
Lou Stevens: woman's hat c.1920's, glass washboard, glass salad serving set,  
Nadine Smith: David & Ely tokens, \$5.00  
Jeanette Talbott from Alma Lauder Keeling's collection: Priscilla Taylor's needle threader with instructions, Priscilla Taylor's seam ripper, Mrs. W.A. Lauder's stamp, pair of steel knitting needles, photographs of artifacts donated previously  
Jeanette Talbott: ashtray with seal of the State of Idaho, women's clothing c. 1960  
Linda Chapman: beater and 2 harnesses from loom  
Jay Nelson: tablet from Sherfey's Bookstore  
Ken Hedglin: local advertising material, knit lap robe with applied cross-stitch design, various kitchen appliances and utensils, Boy Scouts book, pamphlet and flatware set, 2 metal folding camp stool,

2 tobacco tin lunch boxes c.1910, baseball bat and mitt, electric heater, child's sewing machine  
Stan Shepard: University of Idaho centennial coin  
Carol Asplund: curtain stretcher  
Bruce Asplund: Zon-A-Wave Ozone Generator  
Carl Mantz: corn shucker  
Duane LeTourneau: "Scharer Phosphatase Test Kit" for dairy cattle  
Cynthia Osland Cox: men's shirt cuffs  
Nez Perce Historical Society: Glidden Brighten Homes Magazine from Ward Paint and Hardware Co. of Moscow  
David Wahl: stereoscope cards  
Leila Old Historic Costume Collection: pillow sham from Margaret Ritchie collection  
Fred Winkler: beaded pin cushion, silver cream and sugar set, wallet and purses, jewelry, table clothes, table runners, women's handkerchiefs, sewing scissors, books, kitchen curtain panels, place mats, embroidered sample  
Wilma Himes: 2 decorative plates from O. Olson's store, Genesee  
Ann Goff: photo album  
Elizabeth Wahl: wooden meat mallet, "Packard" bag, tin types, leather bag, framed original art piece owned & possibly made by Aubrey Wetherell, original art piece made by Annette Bowman, 2 straight razors

#### NEW MEMBERS AS OF MAY 24, 1989

Alta Atherton, Lake Worth, Florida  
Robert Beckmann, Pullman, Washington  
Glenn and Edwinna Bierman, San Gabriel, California  
Mr. and Mrs. Tom Boyd, Genesee  
Mr. and Mrs. James H. Cooley, Moscow  
Marianne M. Emmendorfer, Moscow  
Mrs. R. F. Goranson, Pocatello  
Blake Harden, Moscow  
Leland Hawley, Moscow  
Bernard C. Parker, Bremerton, Wash.  
Swayne and Regelin, Moscow  
Lloyd B. Thomas, Moscow  
Nancy Thompson, Moscow  
Margaret Thornton, Seattle  
Marjorie Wilken, Kendrick



# Centennial Annex News

## Praise for Society's Centennial Project

Many people have congratulated the Society since it received word in December it was one of only 35 institutions nationwide to receive a prestigious National Endowment for the Humanities Challenge Grant in 1988. The National Endowment will provide the Society with \$40,000 towards its Centennial Annex fundraising campaign, provided the Society raises \$120,000 in non-federal funds over the next three years. As detailed elsewhere in Centennial Annex News, we are well on our way to meeting that challenge.

Noted Senator James McClure: "The announcement of your receipt of the Challenge Grant is good news indeed. With their strict criteria, Challenge Grants are very difficult to get. This obviously speaks well of the work you're doing. With your record of achievements since the founding of the Historical Society, you're no doubt eager and ready to take on these challenges."

Wrote Senator Steve Symms: "It is my understanding that congratulations are in order after having been presented a Challenge Grant. This is quite a feat."

Harry Magnuson, Chairman of the Idaho Centennial Commission, sent these words: "I was very pleased to hear that a Challenge Grant has been received by the Historical Society. This was a wonderful Christmas gift for your Society as well as all of Idaho."

Even the National Endowment for the Humanities followed up with some praising comments. Wrote Abbie Cutter, Program Officer in the Office of Challenge Grants: "The Society's excellent work evident in [its] books and other projects convinced panelists that NEH money would be well invested in the Historical Society." Indeed, the National Endowment asked the Society to be part of a panel discussing the success of its Challenge Grant program at the national conference of the American Association for State and Local History next fall.

## Volunteers Help at the Annex

The Moscow Central Lions Club has been busy at Centennial Annex. Last fall members cleaned the garden area on the Annex's east side. Over the winter, the Club asked Curator Joann Jones how they could help further, and Joann sought their assistance in providing new hanging storage units for museum textiles. The Club made a generous contribution of \$500 to purchase materials for the units, and members have volunteered to make them. Both the contribution and the volunteer labor are eligible to help the Society meet its Challenge Grant obligations.

All of the Society's clothing and personal textiles will be hung rather than folded, which will greatly aid the preservation of the textiles. Textiles will be arranged in chronological order by decades so that exhibit designers and researchers will have easy access to all the Society's textile collections.

Because of the urgent need for textile storage space, the Society will not rent one of the upstairs apartments next year. In June Society staff and volunteers will move textiles to the new storage facility.

## More Volunteers Needed

Have you been waiting for an opportunity to get behind the scenes at the Society? Waiting for a chance to see all those exciting clothes and textiles the Society has carefully collected? Now is your opportunity.

This summer the Society will move part of its textile collection into one Annex apartment. We need volunteers to assist in cleaning and painting the apartment; help with the move; do an inventory of textiles to be moved; and fumigate textiles before they are stored.

This will be an educational--and fun--job, and is especially suitable for a small group that might like to work together. It is a big job--too big for the staff by themselves. Come out and help!

## Landscapers Design Annex Plans

At the urging of Rae Ellen Moore, who has helped with landscaping plans at the Society for the past ten years, Don Brigham's UI landscaping class took on Centennial Annex as a class project.

The Society's staff provided the students with guidelines: the Society wanted a plan that would be compatible with a 1930s building; that would be compatible with the landscaping around the McConnell Mansion; that would require minimal upkeep; and would be affordable.

Working under these guidelines, the students designed four innovative plans and presented them to the Board of Trustees on April 11. All of the concepts include public areas where the staff can conduct outdoor classes. All have quiet places for people to meet. All enhance the beauty of the Annex and the neighborhood. All provide off-street parking. And all incorporate innovative ideas to highlight the special "name" bricks donors can purchase to help in the fundraising campaign.

The Society will probably complete its landscaping of the Annex over the course of a few years, beginning in 1990.

### The Move to Centennial Annex

Several people have asked when the Society will move into the Annex. As outlined earlier, the Society will adapt one of the building's seven apartments into a textile storage area this summer. However, the major restoration of the building, and move of the library, staff and volunteer offices, and other storage spaces will not take place until the summer of 1990--Idaho's centennial year. The Society will continue to rent the remaining six apartments until that time.

## Donors

The last issue of Centennial Annex News listed the 53 individuals, businesses, and organizations that had contributed to the Centennial Annex fundraising drive through December 31, 1988. The following is a list of donors FROM JANUARY 1 THROUGH APRIL 15, 1989. We thank all of these for their generous contributions:

Bennett Lumber Products  
Carol and John Blom  
Bert and Dode Cross  
Jack and Jeri DeWitt  
Wayne and Kay DeWitt  
John E. and Winifred P. Dixon  
Sam and Fran Fleener  
David Freece  
Everett and Dorothea Hagen  
Dwight and Melva Hoffman  
Sharon Hood  
Charles and Ruth Horgan  
Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Howells  
Grace Warren Ingle  
Richard and Joann Jones  
Mary Kiblen  
Dorothy Korn  
Marguerite Laughlin  
Janet Lecompte  
Jeraldine J. Legard  
Carol Lemke  
Mrs. Iver Longeteig  
Mell and Mildred Lyon  
Mr. and Mrs. Albert A. Monnett, Jr.  
Moscow Central Lions Club  
Richard J. Naskali  
Norman and Alcie Nethken  
Ray E. Osterberg  
Jeannette Petersen  
Malcolm and Carol Renfrew  
The Children of Miriam Shelton

REMEMBER: For each \$3 you donate, we are eligible for an additional \$1 from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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If you would like information on how you can contribute to Centennial Annex, or if you know of a person, business, or organization we should mail fundraising information to, please clip and complete this form, and mail to:

Latah County Historical Society  
110 S. Adams  
Moscow, ID. 83843

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Your name, if different than above: \_\_\_\_\_

CALLING ALL FORMER RESIDENTS OF POWER COUNTY!

Help Create Ties of Friendship from North to South  
through the Latah County-Power County Sister Project

With the assistance of a generous grant of \$2,000 from the Idaho Centennial Commission, the Latah County and Power County Centennial Committees are planning an exchange of people, students, ideas, and fun for 1990.

We invite you, your family, and your organization to become involved. You can serve as a host family for a high school student for a week in spring 1990, participate in activities involving the students, be a host to visitors from Power County in July 1990, and help with the general organization of the exchange.

Anyone, of course, can participate, but we especially invite former residents of Power County to help provide special hospitality between our two counties. Maybe you have names of friends in Power County you would like to send a special invitation to or perhaps you would like to be on a welcoming committee to make Power County visitors feel at home. Power County is also organizing a special hospitality week for us. If you would like to be included in the planning or be a guest, please let us know.

The county exchange will be a highlight of our centennial activities in Latah County. We encourage you to become involved in this very personal activity. The ties of friendship we create between our two very different parts of Idaho will last long after the centennial. If you are interested in participating or would like more information, please contact the Latah County Historical Society, 110 South Adams, Moscow, Idaho 83843. 882-1004. You can also fill in the enclosed form and return it, and we will contact you. Please feel free to pass along this information to a friend. Thanks!

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Yes! I want to be part of the centennial friendship exchange between Latah and Power Counties in 1990.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

I would be interested in

- being a host family for a high school student in spring 1990
- participating in the hospitality week for Power County visitors
- having a high school exchange student speak to my group
- writing letters and/or telephoning people in Power County
- serving as a resource person for information on Power or Latah County that can be exchanged
- general information on the program

