



LATAH LEGACY



The Frank Robinson Diaries

Moscow's Woodstock: The Blue Mountain Music Festival

A Passion for Live Music and a Sense of Adventure: The Greenstock Music Festivals

Building Genesee—One Board at a Time

A Shave or a Haircut—2 Bits!

Judge Norman Buck

Maude Town Davis RN: Professional Nursing in the Pre-Antibiotic Era

Latah County
Historical Society



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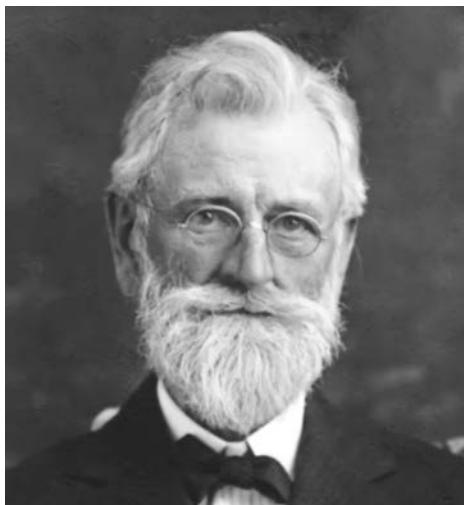
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The Frank Robinson Diaries

by Mary Reed

Introduction

In the 1930s, a large billboard on the outskirts of Moscow proclaimed the city was known over the world as the "Home of Psychiana, the New Psychological Religion." Since the death of the founder, Frank Robinson, in 1948 and the closing of the office in 1953, knowledge of the mail-order religion and Frank has diminished. The three donations his son Alfred made, the first to the University of Idaho and the last two to the Latah County Historical Society, rekindled interest in the man and the movement.

Alfred requested that the last donation he made in 1998 be sealed for 25 years. Finally on October 23, 2023, it was time to open the five boxes. The Historical Society invited the public, reporters, historians, and a former Psychiana worker, Glenda Hawley, to the Kenworthy Theatre. It was a festive occasion. The audience watched a large overhead screen as a drum roll announced the ceremonial unsealing of each box. We hoped that Frank's diaries would be among the contents. When the fifth box was opened and four small diaries appeared, everyone cheered.

Knowing that processing the materials could be a lengthy process, I volunteered to help. After days sorting among hundreds of letters, cards, photos, and other memorabilia and preparing an inventory, I finally reached the last box. There they were, the four small journals, Frank's daily account of the last three years of his life from January 1, 1946, to October 19, 1948. I anticipated that these personal records would add a different and personal dimension of Frank Robinson. The diaries could also shed light on Frank's motives. Was he a charlatan, as many assumed, promoting

Psychiana for personal and financial gain, or was he a sincere believer? Or could he be both?

Frank's life, which began in 1886 in England, was complicated. For 38 years he drifted between jobs until 1928 when he made a permanent move to Moscow working at the Corner Drugstore pharmacy. Frank's impact in Moscow was substantial. In addition to creating a mail-order business with thousands of students, Psychiana was the largest private employer in Moscow. Frank constructed two large buildings at First and Main and Third and Jackson; he bought a printing press and launched a second Moscow newspaper, *The News-Review*. He owned three drug stores and financed a Youth Center. The largest and lasting gift was the Robinson county park.

In 1947, Alfred returned to Moscow to take over the Psychiana business, relieving Frank of much stress. He reluctantly did this as a family obligation, and one that he regretted. Time ran out for Frank in October 1948. After his death on October 19, Alfred and Frank's wife Pearl kept Psychiana alive for the next four years, closing the office in 1953.



A snapshot of Florence, Alfred, Pearl, and Frank at home in 1948. The photo reveals Frank's failing health leading to his death in October. His diaries record his care and concern for the family. *Frank Bruce Robinson papers, MG 101, Box 6. University of Idaho Library Special Collections and Archives.*

The Diaries

Florence, Alfred's sister, had discovered the diaries in 1966. In 1996, most probably with the intention of donating them, Alfred prepared a supplement of identifications and clarifications. In the foreword he described the content and intent of Frank's daily entries. "Although these diaries deal primarily with the nitty-gritty mundane aspects of FBR's

daily life and activities, a refreshing diversion surfaces with the entries in the single diary month of January, 1948, in which he records his innermost philosophical views, perhaps a recapitulation of his beliefs and of his faith on which he brought forth the Psychiana Movement. But even in this record of the daily happenings in FBR's life during the latter three years of his existence, is to be found rich and pointed historical material about the man, his family, and his activities in and out of Moscow. My sister and I are pleased that these FBR writings are in the expert care of the Latah County Historical Society as part of FBR's legacy to better understanding of the man and his life."

The small diaries are formatted with spaces for two days on each page, making the handwritten entries necessarily brief. Three cover the years from January 1946 to his death in October 1948. The fourth one ends abruptly on January 29, 1948, in mid-sentence. The diaries reveal much about Frank's personal life. His entries included visits, meals, and excursions with numerous friends, some of whom were people he had known from his pharmacy days and others through business connections. On his travels Frank records spending time with Pearl's family in Klamath Falls. At home in Moscow, Frank writes about his visits and encounters with many friends. Alf affirms this in his family history, remembering that his father would stroll down Main Street, conversing with all kinds of people.

Frank was welcomed, not ignored, by the religious community. The diaries reveal Frank's personal connections with other religious people. Dr. J. D. Walter, the minister of the First Presbyterian Church, is a frequent visitor to the Robinson house. Dr. Marcus Bach, a professor at the University of Iowa School of Religion and a good friend, invited him many times to speak at conferences at the Iowa School of Religion. There he met with other religious leaders and groups who welcomed him.

The most frequent entries reveal the ordinary pace of his domestic life. Frank mows the lawn, enjoys playing with his grandson baby Bruce, washes the car, walks downtown, takes his daughter to a dance, and buys Pearl a birthday present. Christmas is a happy family time. Frank calls home every day when away. This is a man devoted to his family, proud of his children, taking care of domestic chores, and playing



This striking photo of Frank with hat, pipe, and fur coat shows a handsome and charming man. Making a good impression was important and in 1946 he ordered a coonskin coat which he wrote would attract attention. LCHS Robinson.F.017.

hymns on his organ. In his domestic life, Frank is an ordinary man.

The 1946 Diary. Frank, now reaching 60 years and in declining health, confronts a series of crises that are now a major part of his life. But suffering through January with acute chest pains, Frank shows his resilience. He writes on January 16, "Pain not too bad but bad enuf." Twice his doctors fear he won't make it, but agree "he has fooled us before and may fool us again." Frank writes on February 3, he was "still very ill. But I never gave up hope." The intermittent health emergencies continue through spring and recur in December.

In his failing health Frank continues his intensive work at the Psychiana office. Responding to a drop in income, he lays off most of the direct mail staff and begins writing new lessons and advertising materials. The next month he restarts direct mailing. He begins planning

to build a Psychiana center and writes three chapters of his new book, *The Wanderer*, which Bobbs-Merrill will publish. He boasts that it will be a bestseller, a "humdinger." It will be the 21st book of the total 23 books he will write.

Ongoing federal investigations plague him. These investigations include the Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of Price Administration, and the Internal Revenue Service, as well as the Better Business Bureau. Frank is

seeking non-profit tax exemption for Psychiana and a Direct Mail Permit from the US Post Office. The Bureau's investigation is especially worrying as it campaigns to deter national publications from carrying his ads. During the year he increases the balance of his loans.

Despite the need to revive the movement, and continuing pressure from the Securities and Exchange Commission, Frank decides to begin a lengthy trip to California in his Cadillac. And so in late March, Frank is getting ready for a trip: "Felt good to be walking round town again.... Sleep 6 hours every night now. Take nothing [medicine] at all."

On April 1, Frank and Pearl leave in the Cadillac for the lengthy trip. On the first day he writes: "I drove quite a bit and feel pretty good." He stops at several expensive hotels along the way, including the Marcus Whitman in Walla Walla and the Columbia Gorge Hotel. After Pearl takes the train home, Frank continues the journey, taking photos, visiting with friends and relatives, and buying new clothes. He thoroughly enjoys himself: an airplane ride, attending a farm auction, swimming, and playing the piano. He keeps his Cadillac in garages, washed and polished. On his return trip, he stops in Palo Alto to buy a "cabin" for Alfred who will be attending Stanford University that fall, writing of his son and wife, Annette, "this is the best thing to do." On May 18 he decides to extend the trip: "Guess I don't have to leave so shall stay as long as I can." Finally, on May 25, he drives home and learns that Pearl has bought a new Buick.

Back in Moscow at his Psychiana office, Frank writes a new course of lessons and a direct mail piece on the subject of "Eternal Life." He gets "flashes of inspiration on new course literature" which he claims "have the right kind of inspiration behind them so they will go." In October he writes that it was the "best month in history of movement."

In September, Marcus Bach invites him to a conference to be held in early October. Frank has a busy schedule in Iowa City. He gets "a swell response" from ministers at a breakfast meeting and another one after an address at Rotary. A meeting with twenty preachers results in "phone calls coming in fast." He writes it has been a "very busy but profitable day. Have sold myself to everyone here." Newspapers are covering him. He describes a meeting at a Kiwanis Club as almost a revival. Even though he is very tired, he continues with visits to the Moody Bible Church and a Trappist Monastery. His optimism has soared: "The future may open up in a grand and glorious manner. It has taken 20 years tho....This movement could be quite epochal. It is the last chance the Xtian Church will have to live up to its high calling. I hope it does. But it will be a fight I am afraid." He reflects, "What a sad state the churches are in. I'll snap them out of it tho."

December ends with "a good Christmas" with Alf, Annette, and baby Bruce. Frank and Florence deliver presents all over town, and Frank helps stuff the holiday turkey. In pace with his fondness for expensive clothes, Frank orders a \$495 coonskin coat from the Hudson's Bay Company, and comments: "This will shock the natives, but then, I have to

be different." His plans for 1947 are to put out more direct mail, to make the movement more efficient, and to find more sources of value than ever before. In the background loom the state of his health and business concerns. He has been sleeping in late, is short of breath, and on December 29 he stays in bed all day.

The 1947 Diary. Alf noted in his family history that in the last two years his father was "more ill than not." However, Frank's declining health does not deter him from planning a long trip. Leaving for California on January 7, he becomes ill with angina pain when he reaches Klamath Falls. "Guess I was out of my head this night trying to hold pain down or overcome it by will power. It's dynamite tho. Some day it will be curtains in a spell like this. It's awful." Still ill, he drives on to Santa Barbara hoping he will last a long time. "Think I will." He is now taking morphine, penicillin, and often oxygen. Pearl joins him in early March. After visiting Alfred in Palo Alto and feeling better, he drives home on March 25. Intermittent spells of bad health with angina and lung pain plague him the rest of the year. Some days his handwriting becomes illegible.

After graduating from Stanford, Alfred returns to Moscow to manage the Psychiana business. Frank is relieved and writes: "Alf is not another FBR but will be a valuable help to me in years to come." This allows Frank to take another trip in August. He writes, "Hate to be away but I need the relaxation, I guess." The trip in August revives him and gives him time to reflect on his beliefs: "Feel very much strengthened by this trip. I'm on the right track and my spiritual experiments are all scientifically working out. The Law of Eternal Life exists as surely as the law of chemistry or physics. It is here. If Eternal Life is not discovered on this earth it never will be discovered. This is something very new in the realm of religion. My thinking, I believe, goes far beyond that of any religious leader."

On September 14, Frank travels to Chicago with plans to go on to Iowa City where Alfred will join him. During the rest of the month he suffers from continuing pain. On the 22nd he isn't able to sleep despite two shots for the pain. He notes that he hasn't been out of bed but thinks he will be able to get up tomorrow. The next day, with a high temperature, he has another terrible night, but guesses he'll be okay in a few days. A few days later a doctor wants him to go to a hospital. Frank writes on the 28th that he guesses he has pneumonia. Always optimistic, he repeats that he will throw it off and refuses to be hospitalized.

The diary is not clear about the next few days, including where he is, although he has made reservations to travel to Boston and Iowa City. His friend Marcus Bach invites him to speak to a group of preachers. He attends a "Youth for Christ" movement but is unable to go to a church meeting in Des Moines. Then, with "much chest pain" he is unable to sleep despite two shots of morphine. "Haven't been out of

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I am afraid."
I am afraid.*



Frank in his office holding a Dictaphone. His prolific writing included Psychiana lessons, advertisements, and correspondence, as well as twenty-three books, the last one written in 1947. LCHS 01-10-033.

bed today. Will get up tomorrow I think." Despite a doctor's advice, he again refuses to go to a hospital.

Frank's plan is to return home on November 1, but on October 11, Alfred, who now is with Frank in Chicago, makes reservations on the fast train to Spokane. He arranges for an ambulance to take Frank to the depot. They leave the next day. On October 13 they arrive in Spokane where an ambulance arranged by Short's Funeral Home is waiting to take them to Moscow. Frank writes, "This was a bad trip believe me. But I'll kick it off." At home finally, he gets an injection and sleeps until noon. He feels he will be O.K. now.

During the year, pressures from federal investigations and the Better Business Bureau mount. Newspapers cancel his ads. The Post Office threatens to cancel his non-profit permit. The IRS is demanding accountability for Psychiana claiming a tax exemption and in July rules that it won't be allowed. Frank writes, "Guess we will have to go to court against IRS. But we will, and we will win."

Financial problems do not deter Frank's purchasing three-fourths of a city block with a \$20,000 cash payment in July. He is pleased to read a big newspaper article about the purchase. Psychiana enrollment and revenue fluctuate. He is spending much time at the office, dictating letters and working on a Psychiana bulletin. In April, he notes a great increase in enrollments and cash. In May, he receives

the first four copies of his new book, *The Wanderer*, and notes that Psychiana income is "The best in twenty years." In November, Frank draws up a Robinson Peace Plan and begins a new book, *The Better Way*, which he will finish in December. About the rumors flying that he is on a big drunk, he notes: "That's a new one." At the end of December, Dr. J. D. Wilson offers \$100,000 for the Robinson Professional Building which Frank accepts. He remains optimistic, writing in November and December "Everything seems to be well at office but haven't been there yet," and "Office seems to be running swell."

He remains optimistic, writing in November and December "Everything seems to be well at office but haven't been there yet," and "Office seems to be running swell."

The year 1947 is a busy one for the Robinson family. In June, Frank and Pearl drive to Palo Alto for their son's graduation from Stanford. Alf's family moves back to Moscow into the house, next door to his parents, which they had bought for him. Frank has prepared for their return, paying for landscaping, buying shrubs, bushes, and window blinds, ordering carpets, even picking out a rose tint paint for the bedroom. Frank is especially delighted with the baby, Bruce. He praises both Alf and daughter Florence as very sweet.

However, there is often tension between Frank and Pearl with Frank complaining that she is often “on the warpath.” For their 25th anniversary Pearl, whom he nicknames Old Lady, buys him a wedding ring, which is “28 years too late.” At the end of the year they again celebrate a family Christmas which Frank calls “Best Xmas ever.”

At the end of the month Frank begins planning a trip driving down the California coast. He cannot make up his mind whether to go before or after the Christmas holiday. Frank reflects on his future: “Everything seems so wrong these days. Guess I’m slipping.” On December 26 he is on the road to Walla Walla and then the Columbia Gorge Hotel “where it is nice and quiet.” At McMinnville doubts

“as there is nothing he can do. Must go awful easy I suspect. Will call home again tonight. No pep.” Reaching Oakland, Frank meets friends, attends Rotary, and keeps in touch with Alf. Still in pain, he asks Pearl to come. She arrives on January 24th and writes the next few diary entries for him.

By February 1, Frank has rallied. He accepts an invitation to give a speech in Iowa City in March which he will later have to cancel. Despite his health, the couple plan to continue the trip. Finally, on February 24 his worsening condition sends him to a hospital. They finally arrive home on April 3. The rest of the year he will experience recurrences of crises now complicated with lung hemorrhaging, needing oxygen, falling, and numerous doctor visits. In September he writes:

“Playing with fire but I still believe I can throw everything off. All I need is a little more absolute faith. Maybe I’ll get it who knows. At least I shock the doctor and family time and time again.”

Back home in Moscow, his Psychiana work schedule is full. He writes new ad flyers, articles, and newspaper copy. Then in May, a serious crisis. Frank learns that publishers are refusing to run Psychiana material, which is his main income source. The next month he works on a complaint against the Hearst newspaper which will not take any copy. “They must be getting leery. It’s too late tho.” In July his new book, *God in the Dark*, is finished and he begins work on a new one, *The Flame*, noting that he will not rush this one and it will be better.

His good friend Marcus Bach arrives on July 4th for a family picnic on the lawn. “A lovely day. I watered lawn all morning. Feel swell.”

Over the next two months, Frank’s condition continues to worsen. He is spitting up blood and suffering angina attacks. Some days his writing becomes barely legible. Even so, he plans another trip. “Soon as able, will pull out with P.B.R. [Pearl] & go south where it’s warmer for the winter.” He adds, “Old Lady and I on an engagement or honeymoon trip. Feel pretty good tonight.” The next day he experiences “a frightening and most excruciating pain.” Dr. Wilson is called



The diaries record Frank's pleasure when traveling and the close relationship with his family. In his last years the long trips became crucial retreats from increasing business pressures and deteriorating health. *Photo by Elaina Pierson.*

arise: “I see no need of continuing this trip, it can do no good I’m afraid. I can’t be long.” At Coquelle, Oregon, his chest is “dynamite. Won’t take any strain at all. Chest bad. But I’ll beat it all right.” By December 31 he has a notion to turn around. “Don’t believe I should take a chance as this distress is really dangerous,” and “it will not go away I am afraid.” Resolute, he drives on to Medford and calls home. It has been a very hard day although the distress has eased somewhat. He wonders what one year from today will bring. It will be a hard and fateful year.

The 1948 Diary. The month begins badly in Medford. Although in pain, he dismisses the idea of seeing a doctor,

and comes running to the house. Frank writes, "Cannot ignore this – bad."

Frank Robinson's last day, October 19, 1948

October had begun badly when Frank found something was forming on his left lung. October 7 would be the last day he would be up. His handwriting deteriorates, and on October 16, Dr. Wilson is called again. On October 18, Alf writes in the diary, "Dad had severe pain about 3 p.m. About 6:30 p.m., without warning, came a lung hemerige [sic] about a quart of blood came up. Scared us all very much. Wilson stopped it immediately.

Mrs. Grimms, Registered Nurse is spending the nite here."

October 19, Pearl writes, "Bad night, but is cheerful and bright. Up to the bathroom but very weak. Dr. Wilson made his call about 9 o'clock. Annette brought Chris [the new baby] down for Dad to see. 12:15. Bad hemorrhage. Passed away at 12:30. . . . This all happened very quickly. Robbie had been having some severe pain and I had been with him, but he knew our lunch was ready and urged me to go and eat with Florence. I had just been out of the room long enough to pour a cup of tea when he called, saying, 'Ma, it's coming again.' We rushed in and he was sitting on the side of the bed. He said, 'I can't get my breath; it's filling up my lungs.' I kissed him. He was very calm. Dr. Wilson and Alfred came but Robbie had lost consciousness. We got out our wires and our close friends came. Mrs. Marineau, Dawn Magee, Ann Schroeter, Mrs. Scott, Annette and Alfred. Our loss is great. Services were held Oct 22, 1948. Dr. Marcus Bach in charge."

Alf adds his account. "Dad died October 19, 1948; watched him hemorrhage, his life blood pouring from his mouth. Mother, Florence and I there at 122 S. Howard. Covered my grief up for days. I coldly helped mother with all the arrangements. Scads of people at funeral. Marcus Bach was superb. In Spokane, mother walked next to the casket to the mouth of the fiery crematory furnace as she told us, 'I told Robbie I would see him to journey's end."

Alf later adds, "For five more years Dad's memory lived through Psychiana. Mother and I closed the doors in 1953, with no desire or motivation to continue, and no regrets. This chapter in my life ended, but the traces will be forever there as I proceed through the process of my own existence."

January 1948 Diary. This is an unusual document which ends abruptly on the January 29 entry. Frank has dated the title page 1948 to 1949. The first page carries the notation

*In September he writes:
"Playing with fire but I
still believe I can throw
everything off. All I need
is a little more absolute
faith. Maybe I'll get it
who knows. At least I
shock the doctor and
family time and time
again."*

"365 Days with God." Although the format is the usual dated entries, Frank uses the structure for his thoughts on his faith. While some of the entries correspond to the full 1948 diary with added dialogue, others do not. For example, in the 1948 year diary when he records his struggles with his pain, the January diary instead continues his narrative about the God Power. Other deviations are his lyrical passages on the natural beauty and meaning of God's hand in nature.

Frank first explains his gratitude and good fortune in having Alfred taking over the management of the Psychiana movement. He now feels relaxed and free to take his extended trip. The narrative changes to Frank's struggles with his relationship to the God Power. He is suffering from strange feelings of God being very far from him. "An impenetrable wall of silence seems to have come between me and the consciousness of the Spirit of God." Over the next few days he still is not able to "get thru to God. It amazes me." But he adds, "I'm not at all worried."

He continues his struggle to re-establish his relationship with God. "All I know is that the consciousness of God and the physical consciousness of FBR, are, for the time being, pulling apart." In the next entry he has reconciled himself with God. He advises a woman who is questioning the meaning of life, "Be still and know that because you live, God must live also in you. I have never doubted the existence from that day on. I never shall."

Subsequent subjects are the warning of man destroying himself by atomic fission, "It is only a step to the possible extermination of the human race," and a sharp criticism of the major religions, "I am sure the spirit of the living God is not in any of the great religions. If it were, they would not kill each other."

In the last few entries Frank writes that two physicians have been in attendance, and their prognosis is not good. He expresses doubts about his survival. "How can I best neutralize the pains of the heart, by calling upon the Spirit of God and place the in-dwelling Power of the Creator? That is the perplexing question. However, I have one advantage – I realize that the Spirit of God, which created this physical body, still lives in it. It must. Therefore, while the agony of angina pains torments me, at the very core of that pain is the Power of God. Now how can I cause the Power of God to either reduce that pain, or ordain that it disappear completely? There is one formula which has always worked. I go into the Great Silence which is God, take the pain with me, and leave it there."

The next entry follows up on that question, but it also leaves a clue as to the purpose of this chronicle, "My readers will be interested in what happened to my pains." As he records his recovery and continuation of the trip, the final entry ends with the unfinished sentence: "Tomorrow we must move from the wonderful penthouse in the Hotel Leamington as someone else"

Purpose of the January diary. Frank intended to use the diary format of daily entries for his discourse on his relationship with God. Although he copied some of the 1948 diary entries, most of the writing describes his experiences in struggling then reconciling himself to the existence of the God Power.

Frank also intended this to be a publication. The January 26 entry begins with the sentence, "My readers will be interested in what happened to my pains." This certainly indicates he was writing for an audience, perhaps as another book. The final incomplete sentence is puzzling but may indicate his declining interest or inability to continue. There is no indication of when he began writing this narrative and when he stopped.

Conclusions

The question of whether Frank truly believed in Psychiana is not completely resolved. Alfred was positive his father was truthful in his innermost philosophical views, describing the diary as "perhaps a recapitulation of his beliefs and faith on which he brought forth the Psychiana Movement." In the 1947 diary Frank writes, "Feel very much strengthened by this trip. I'm on the right track and my spiritual experiments are all scientifically working out. The Law of Eternal Life exists as surely as the law of chemistry or physics. It is here." In 1948, the September 25 entry states, "All I need is a little more absolute faith." If he recorded his true, candid thoughts, these passages could indicate his religious belief in Psychiana.

Dr. Marcus Bach, a respected professor of religion at the University of Iowa's School of Religion, believed that Frank was sincere. In his memorial remarks at the funeral, Marcus referred to Frank's trust in God, his bold and daring faith, and said that his "limitless conviction of what he thought was right and true were honest credentials of an inner light." Marcus also spoke of Frank confiding in him this truth, "you know I have had moments of such completeness of the presence of God that words cannot describe them." Bach also believed that Psychiana would continue due to the continuing loyalty of its members who would carry on with renewed vigor "as a tribute to the man who gave the movement birth."

Brandon Schrand, author of *Psychiana Man*, describes Frank in a different light, one having the calculations of a gifted ad man, yet one whose calls for cultural unity in 1941 "were ahead of their times." His book includes the letters of many of Frank's students who wrote to Frank with testimonies of how Psychiana had changed their lives. Brandon attributes the failure of Psychiana to endure to Frank's failure to plan and organize for its future.

Keith Petersen offers a concluding observation about Frank's legacy in his booklet, *Psychiana: The Psychological Religion*: "One image that has come down through the years is untrue. Frank Robinson did not make millions from his

religion; he did not do it only for the money. Frank Robinson lived well. He had a fine house, though not a mansion. He drove nice cars, though he could have afforded more and better. He dressed well. But he was not greedy. . . . Frank Robinson dealt honestly with people. He wrote his lessons and his books and made them available. People could buy them or leave them. He caused no one harm, and he helped many. Enough people bought so that Frank Robinson lived comfortably in the only town in which he found happiness. He spent much of what he earned improving that town. But through it all, he never really convinced people one way or another whether he truly believed what he taught."

As the person who knew him best, Alfred remembers his father as "seldom somber and irritable, but as a person who was injected with a 'hyper serum' calling him to exciting life-actions and behaviors most of us do not have. His life could be pictured as adventurous, exciting, zestful, stimulating, charismatic, all of which translates into a mood of caring and love. From the very beginning of his diary keeping during the first 1 1/2 years of my life, to his taking me on trips, nicknaming me Toby, his kidding and playful ways with me by acceding to most every wish and desire I had, greasing the acceptance skids of the Navy, universities and businesses, writing most every day to me while I was overseas, being overly empathetic in times of emotional or physical discomfort and distress – all of the above, to me, translated into 'a mood of loving and caring.' I continue to carry this 'banner of Love,' sewn, assembled and modeled by my father, into my interpersonal frays."

Acknowledgements

The works of Brandon Schrand and Keith Petersen provided essential information about Frank Robinson's life and personality. Another important source was Alfred Robinson's family history.

I wish to thank Kaitlynn Anderson for her assistance in accessing the Latah County Historical Society's collections archives for additional information. Another thank you to Hayley Noble, LCHS's Executive Director, for her support. A special thanks goes to LeNelle McInturff who transcribed the four handwritten diaries. They will soon be available online.

Moscow's Woodstock[®] The

by Elaina Pierson

The 1960s and 1970s in the United States were a time of profound political, social, and cultural change. The Civil Rights and Women's Liberation Movements challenged and changed the status quo, underground groups such as the Symbionese Liberation Army set off hundreds of bombs in cities across the country, and the Vietnam War entered its second decade, just to name a few of the monumental events happening nation- (and world-) wide. Into this tumult appeared the Blue Mountain Rock Festival at the University



Blue Mountain Rock Festival advertisement. *The Argonaut*, May 7, 1971. University of Idaho Library Digital Collections.

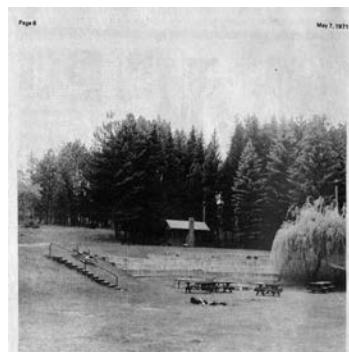
of Idaho. Planned as a free outdoor concert on the last day of Parents' Weekend in May 1971, the festival featured twelve hours of music from ten different bands. Though the concert happened on Sunday, May 9, it was only formally announced

The Blue Mountain Music Festival

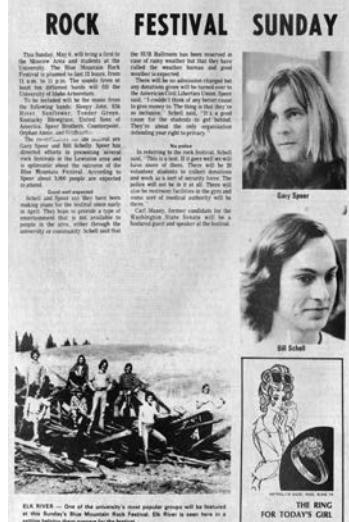
in the university's student newspaper, *The Argonaut*, two days before, a somewhat unassuming beginning for an annual event that would build in legend and notoriety with each successive year.

This first announcement in the May 7, 1971, issue features a front-page concert poster that lists the anticipated musical groups and a few paragraphs and photos on page six. Other items printed alongside offer a perfect illustration of the nation's collective state-of-mind at that moment: an article describes the estimated 500 in attendance on the Administration Building lawn to commemorate the shooting deaths of student protesters at Kent State by National Guard troops and at Jackson State by city and state police, both events having occurred one year previous.

Another article seeks to assure the student body that the campus "drug squad" was not designed to bust people for drugs, but to give education on the effects of illicit substances and to help people "having bad trips." Below this, another article describes the latest decisions made by the State Board of Regents, including that female freshmen were now allowed to carry keys to their dormitories and no longer had to observe a curfew. (Senior, junior, and sophomore women had had key privileges since 1969, while their male counterparts of all ages had never had such restrictions.) A letter to the editor co-signed with almost 50 signatures declares the writers' refusal to continue paying a "war tax" levied on telephone service to protest the Vietnam War, while



Rock Festival — The Arboretum will be turned on to the varying sounds of at least two different bands this Sunday at the Blue Mountain Rock Festival.



A university's most popular group will be featured at the Mountain Rock Festival. Elk River is seen here in a scene from the festival.

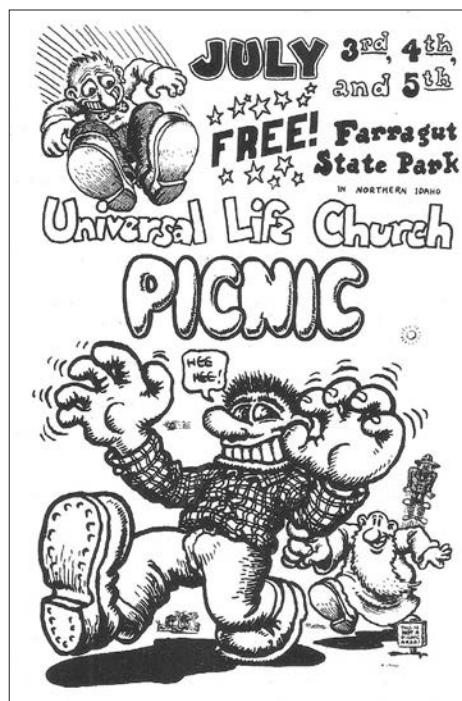
Article about the first Blue Mountain Rock Festival.
The Argonaut, May 7, 1971.
University of Idaho Library Digital Collections.

another encourages Vietnam veterans in support of the war to let students know by writing in to the paper. A short editorial describes an occurrence the previous week at the Spruce Tavern in Moscow when three uniformed ROTC students were booed by 200 bar patrons, as another letter notes the one-year anniversary of the firebombing of the Navy ROTC building on campus. All of this in between ads for strobe lights and blacklights and “strobe blacklites,” Rainier Beer’s new recyclable bottles and cans, waterbeds, leather hot pants; “Five Easy Pieces” at the Varsity Drive-In Theatre and “The Owl and the Pussycat” at the Nuart; Kentucky Fried Chicken and the Kiwanis Pancake Feed and a special price on kegs from the Spruce if you have your own pump. Life for the average college student in 1971 would appear to have been a conflict of “first world problems” and privileges against a burgeoning social consciousness in a world

increasingly going haywire. In response to this came Blue Mountain.

The organizers of this first concert, UI students Gary Speer and Bill Schelly, had been planning the event for about a month. They secured its location at the University of Idaho Arboretum (now the Charles Houston Shattuck Arboretum, or “Old Arboretum”) from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., with the SUB Ballroom (now International Ballroom in the Pitman Center) reserved in case of rain. At least ten bands and 3,000 people were expected, with 20 volunteer students on hand as a *de facto* security force – “the police will not be in it at all,” assured Schelly. “This is a test. If it goes well we will have more of them.”

A summary of the event published in the *Argonaut* on May 11 made clear that the first Blue Mountain had indeed gone well. Only six bands took to the stage rather than the anticipated ten, but around 6,000 people were estimated to have been in attendance throughout the day, including some



Reproduction of a poster advertising the 1971 Universal Life Church Picnic at Farragut State Park, drawn by Dennis Eichhorn in the style of R. Crumb. Courtesy of John Hecht.

parents leftover from the Parents’ Weekend activities. The article notes that “a young co-ed handed a lit joint to her mother and father. They didn’t smoke, but they passed it on.” In addition, \$500 in donations were gathered for the ACLU. Organizer Bill Schelly later explained that total expenses for the concert were about \$75, all covered by donations, and the Arboretum had been thoroughly cleaned afterward by volunteers from the student-run Talisman House [see *Latah Legacy* Vol. 50, No. 1, 2023].

Although the idea of rock festivals had been in sharp decline since the pinnacle of Woodstock and the tragedy of Altamont in 1969, Blue Mountain seemed to have resurrected the idea in Idaho. The May 11 article states, “the free admission, warm sunshine weather, and feeling of community among the crowd seemed to merge making the festival one of the few really successful rock gatherings in the past two years.” It was a success, and there would be more.

Peripheral to this first Blue Mountain in Moscow in May 1971, another large-scale festival occurred that year, 100 miles north in Farragut State Park over the Fourth of July weekend. Known as the Universal Life Church Picnic, its initial use permit submitted in the spring planned for an innocuous-sounding “church picnic attended by at least 200 people.” It wasn’t until June that area officials began to



The Farragut Report was the result of an investigation conducted by concerned citizens into the Universal Life Church Picnic held at Farragut State Park in 1971. Photo by Elaina Pierson.

student Dennis Eichhorn, who would be heavily involved in later years of the Blue Mountain Rock Festival.

In Farragut, major alarms began ringing among the locals in the first days of the Universal Life Church Picnic. The July 3 edition of the *Coeur d'Alene Press* carried the front-page headline: “Farragut Growing at Car-a-Minute Rate!” Estimates put the eventual crowd size at anywhere from 14,000 to over 80,000, depending on the source. Numerous

big-name bands were rumored to appear, including Iron Butterfly and Santana. A 1993 *Lewiston Tribune* highlight of Eichhorn (by then a successful writer and producer of alternative, not-made-for-children comics) claimed that 80 bands performed over the course of the three-day event. While apparently there were no nationally famous musicians in attendance, the exact identities of those who did perform are largely lost to history, owing in part to the fact that many revelers weren't strictly there to enjoy the music. Alcohol and drugs flowed aplenty, and public displays of nudity and sex were so common that "even the tourist eyebrows quit rising," according to the *Idaho Statesman*.

Once the crowd cleared and the park was put back in order, an investigation was conducted by an independent committee of concerned citizens led by Stanley D. Crow, a Boise-area lawyer. Their findings were published the following year in a 143-page book titled *The Farragut Report: A Study of the Universal Life Church Picnic Held at Farragut State Park and Recommendations for Legislative and Administrative Action*. The report was meticulously researched and its dry and matter-of-fact tone is a striking contrast to its subject matter, which includes testimonies from "expert" and "informed" witnesses and undercover officers who describe instances of heavy drug use, nude swimming and sunbathing, and a man advertising "free love at the festival by means of balloons tied to his penis," among many other illegal and frowned-upon

expressed concern that Idaho could be earning the reputation of a "Mecca for drug users." Its authors urged a number of legislative actions to inhibit this type of gathering in the future.

In counterpoint, the park manager for Farragut, John Greig, was quoted in a number of sources as saying, "As far as I'm concerned, they can have one of these every weekend, all summer. The picnickers left the park cleaner than the Boy Scouts did [the National Scout Jamboree had been held at Farragut two years earlier, spanning six days with almost 35,000 people in attendance] and we can really use all the money it collects at the entrance."

Regardless of the positive impressions of Greig and the picnic's attendees, north Idaho locals and public officials were not open to a repeat of the event, and it would be almost 40 years before Farragut State Park played host to another multi-band rock festival.



Blue Mountain Rock Festival, 1974. LCHS 01-08-134.01.

activities. One of the report's hypothesized findings was that the main purpose behind the event was to "expand the market for illegal drugs in Idaho and the Northwest," and it



ASUI Vice President Tom Slayton at Blue Mountain Rock Festival, 1972. *Gem of the Mountains 1972*, University of Idaho Library Digital Collections.

Back in Moscow in 1972, preparations for the second Blue Mountain began in February, with approval by the Associated Students of the University of Idaho (ASUI) Senate's Facility Use Committee for the event to be held in the Arboretum on May 7, and a bill to authorize granting \$400 for promotion sent to the finance committee. On May 2, the *Argonaut* reported that the event would run from 10 a.m. to midnight with 20 bands, 20 "Blue

Mountain Peace and Aid" people from the Talisman House for security and assistance, and four medics on standby. This year's coordinator Tom Slayton told the newspaper that the



Blue Mountain Rock Festival photo spread from *The Argonaut*, May 11, 1971, p 8. University of Idaho Library Digital Collections.

event was dedicated to the students killed at Kent State and Jackson State two years prior and donations would once again be collected for the ACLU. Dennis Eichhorn, putting his festival-planning skills to good use, asked for donations of lumber and tools for the stage and for volunteers to meet the day before to construct it. He also asked that attendees sort garbage during the concert into designated receptacles and that frisbees be kept away from the stage. The University reiterated that fires were only allowed in designated pits. Another announcement notes that a film crew made up of UI students would be there to record "people having a good time and will not be in conjunction with government officials or the police." While this year's festival was not as well attended as the first, with only about 2,000 people, and bad weather prompted multiple moves back and forth between the Arboretum and the SUB Ballroom, it was also

deemed a success. There was even a surprise appearance by three skydivers floating unannounced, and unidentified, into the crowd.

April of 1973 brought news of Blue Mountain III – and the first whispers of discontent. An April 13 editorial in the *Argonaut* decried the university administration's attempt to put the festival's "spirit and joy into a sort of bell jar, where the authorities and important organizers can watch the activities and keep the spirit of the festival under control." The ASUI had taken over more responsibility in the event's organization, with its Big Name Entertainment Committee appointing Richard Brown as coordinator. University officials, including Vice President for Student and Administrative Services Dr. Thomas Richardson, wanted the event shortened to daylight hours only and canceled entirely in the event of rain. Authorities also expressed concern about the public relations of the event and its reflection on the university, as well as the influx of out-of-towners and non-students. Moscow Chief of Police Clark Hudson was quoted on May 4 as saying, "Every year we have had complaints about the amount of drugs thrown around down there and the fact that high school students get alcoholic beverages there."

Still, the May 6 event went off with little difficulty, and a recap a few days later indicated that the weather was good, but not too good, attracting a crowd of about 5,000 instead of a possible 10,000 that some had suggested (and feared). A further analysis of the event in the fall, written by *Argonaut*



Blue Mountain Rock Festival, 1974. *Gem of the Mountains* 1974, University of Idaho Library Digital Collections.

political writer Kenton Bird, expressed a growing concern among many at the UI: Blue Mountain was getting too big for the university to handle, the ASUI in particular, and its essence was becoming less "communal family picnic" and more "diligently-planned and staged entertainment event."

This third iteration of the festival had also developed some new problems, one being that it had been heavily advertised

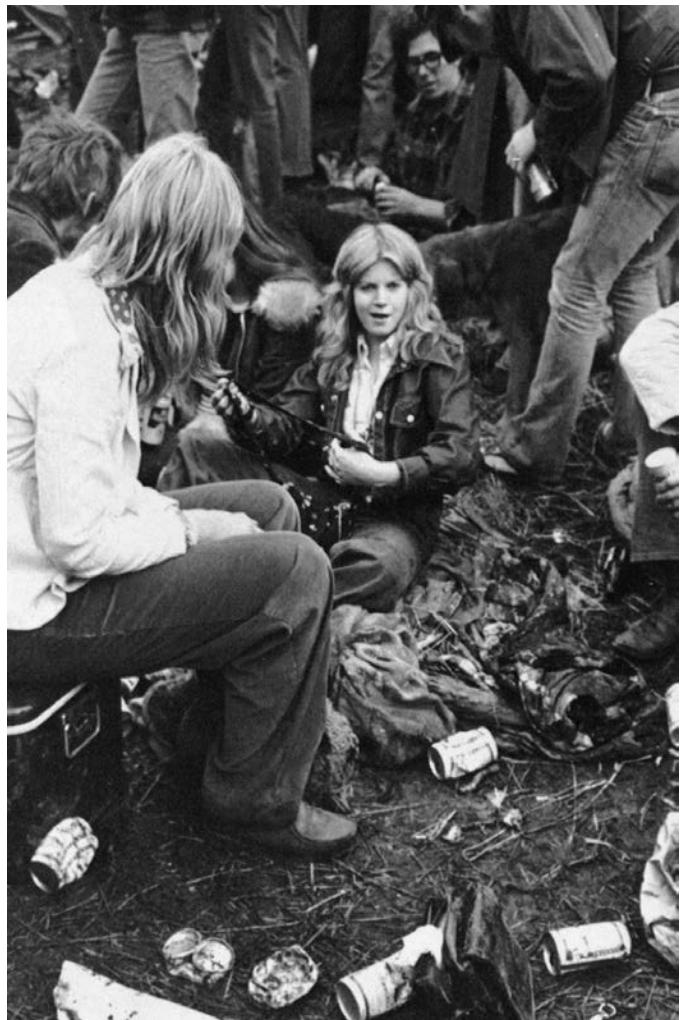
outside the area, with outsiders estimated to make up half the attendance. A major increase in overnight campers in the Arboretum was also noted, and "hawkers" were plying the crowd, selling anything from smoking paraphernalia to beer divvied out from kegs and cases. As noted by Vice President Richardson, "It's not just a campus get-together but a building commercial extravaganza." The final, and perhaps most worrisome, element was a growing atmosphere of "anything goes," with Richardson going on to say that there was no pretense that "normal state, city, campus codes and regulations could be enforced or even existed." Still, he insisted, he didn't object to a fun spring event for students: "There may be a time and place for letting it all hang out. I'm just not sure that our campus can or should be the site of bigger festivals."

While Blue Mountain's fate seemed uncertain at the end of 1973, the beginning of 1974 brought increased discussion, and ever greater opinions. Candidates for the ASUI elections in February made it a point to declare their positions on how and if the concert should continue, and under whose authority. Dennis Eichhorn wrote a scathing letter to the editor declaring that the Peoples Blue Mountain Committee would hold the Peoples Blue Mountain concert on Sunday, May 5, and that the committee was accepting full responsibility for the event and returning it "to the people," claiming that the previous year's event had "completely bastardized" the spirit of Blue Mountain. He quoted the committee as being resolved to "save the spirit of Blue Mountain before the ASUI politicos screw it up any worse than they already have."

By March, the ASUI had agreed to "help with the festival, but I doubt we'll take full responsibility like we did last year," according to ASUI President Dirk Kempthorne. Plans were introduced to broaden the scope of the festival by adding an arts and crafts element on Saturday, May 4, before the concert the next day. Organizers and UI officials hoped this would attract more locals from both the university and the greater community, while putting less of a focus on bringing revelers from out of town. In April, the *Argonaut* reported that the arts and crafts element was officially deemed the Renaissance Fair and would run in conjunction with and as an alternative to Blue Mountain. It would be held at Friendship Square in downtown Moscow for three days starting Friday, May 3, with local artisans and exhibits, soap- and basket-making demonstrations, a jazz workshop in the Moscow Hotel, and a number of other dramatic and musical performances. An organizer for the Fair, Bob Cameron of the Talisman House, told the newspaper, "Blue Mountain is somewhat of a spectator sport. The Renaissance Fair will give local people a chance to participate."

Meanwhile, even though prior concerns about Blue Mountain revolved around the need to keep the event small, the preparations taking place seemed to indicate the opposite. While it was still only a one-day event, a professional sound system was rented out of Portland, Oregon, with

various fundraisers planned to cover the \$400 price tag. The stage was already under construction, as facilitated by a coalition of six campus organizations; with assistance from a local building contractor and at a cost of \$600, it would be intended as a permanent feature available for use by other student groups and the outside community. The first-aid tent would be overseen by Peter Bloomfield, a pre-veterinary student, and the head of student health services announced



Blue Mountain Rock Festival, 1975. *Gem of the Mountains* 1975, University of Idaho Library Digital Collections.

that the campus infirmary would be available 24 hours a day all weekend. The planning committee itself, overseeing both the Renaissance Fair and Blue Mountain, claimed to have over 100 members.

While the new arts and crafts element was seen as a great success – indeed, it is the predecessor of today's Renaissance Fair held in Moscow's East City Park, celebrating its 52nd year on the first weekend of May 2025 – the success, or disaster, of the rock concert varied by who was asked. That year's UI yearbook, *Gem of the Mountains*, included a four-page spread of photos from the event and noted that an estimated 10,000 participants came from all over the

Northwest and Canada to enjoy the day in varying stages of dress and undress. One *Argonaut* editorial called it “a pure sunshine experience” that “radiated good feelings right up to the hassle-free midnight closing when Moscow officials finally moved in to stop the party.” The author went on to laud the group of around 30 people who returned the next day to clean up trash left behind.

Damage to the Arboretum itself was a major point of contention, with concert goers seen breaking branches off trees to fuel campfires, fires that were not always built in the designated pits. One letter to the editor asks the reader to consider the effects of such large gatherings on the environment, concluding by addressing “the people sitting aloft on a platform in the willow tree [to watch Blue Mountain]. I suggest next time you want to play bird, find a high voltage wire.”

As the spring semester of 1975 commenced, once again Blue Mountain’s fate seemed uncertain. At a Board of Regents meeting in April, a motion was made to prohibit the festival from being held on university property, but it failed to gain a second. University officials and members of the Student Committee for an Outdoor Music Festival (SCOMF) expressed a commitment to keeping the festival small, perhaps having flashbacks of the previous year’s crowd of 10,000. To this end, several ideas were considered, including to change the name. (UI President Ernest Hartung made mention of “The Rites of Spring,” while other popular ideas were “The Gentle Mental Lentil Festival” and “The Palouse Pea Prom.”) Other locations were scouted but quickly discarded. While some details were still being hashed out, the ASUI Senate appropriated \$1,500 from the entertainment budget for the concert, and organizers vowed that the concert would end much earlier than its forced midnight closing the year prior. It was also decided to change the date from the traditional first Sunday of May and only announce it on the Friday before, which would in theory give less time for news of the event to spread outside the community.

The editorials and letters to the editor of the *Argonaut* became increasingly contentious. Staff writer Dan Yake spoke out against the concert’s “total anarchy,” saying that it was “barely more than an excuse for a great number to get



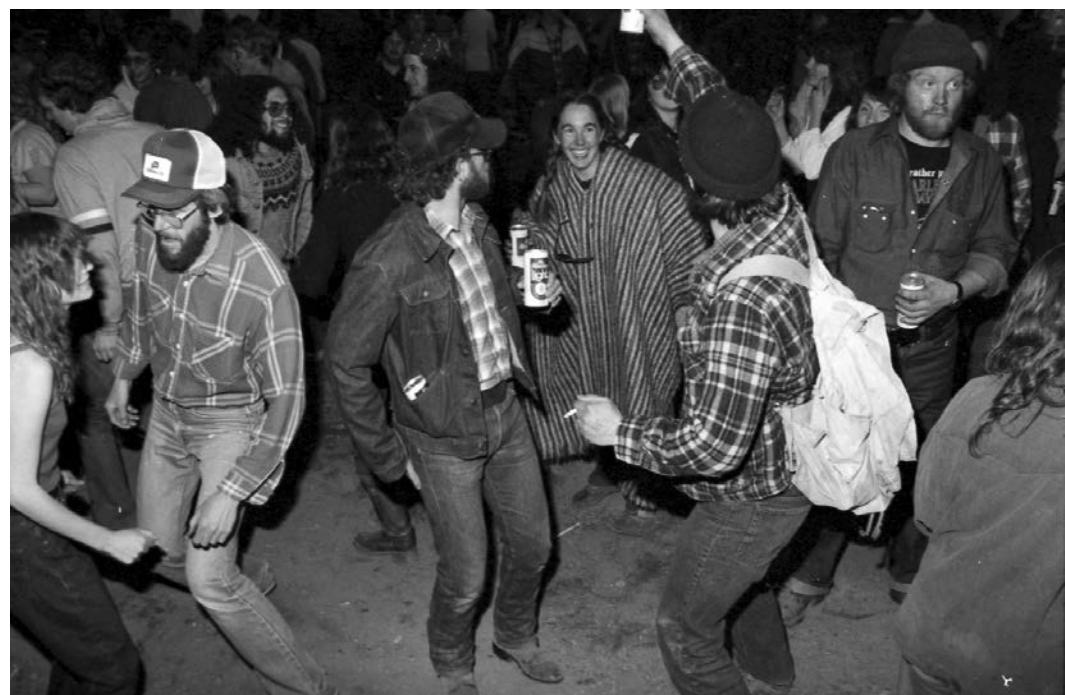
Blue Mountain Rock Festival, 1976. *Gem of the Mountains 1976*, University of Idaho Library Digital Collections.

loaded without the fear of getting caught.” He claimed that there were many opponents of Blue Mountain, but they hid their distaste for “fear of being branded as ‘non-hips,’ right wingers and dog haters,” while noting that the Idaho state legislature also disapproved and “like it or not, those people control the purse-strings.” Students wrote in to agree that the event could be better organized, and more efforts should be made to minimize damage to the Arboretum, while also addressing Yake: “C’mon, Dan, when was the last time you were out of Idaho?” and “If there was ever a ‘non-hip’ at an institution of higher learning, then it is Dan Yake.” Others pointed out the festival gave much-needed exposure to local bands, gave students free entertainment in an area with otherwise limited activities, and provided an opportunity for them to briefly unwind before the final weeks of the semester. Still others decried the organizers’ intent to not only change the date, but to announce the concert with just two days’ notice.

On Tuesday, April 22, the *Argonaut* front page was taken entirely by an announcement that Blue Mountain would be held that Sunday, April 27. An editorial on page four explains that they had been asked by SCOMF, the ASUI, and school administrators not to print the story until Friday, and that to announce the date early would endanger not only the possibility of any future festivals but could result in potential disaster if it brought a larger crowd than could be managed. The editorial board, led by editor Kenton Bird, disagreed, saying that any concerns were outweighed “by the public’s – and in particular, the students of the University of Idaho – right to know” and called the lack of advance notice “unfair” and a “disservice” to students, whose obligations

from classes and jobs required the ability to plan ahead for such an event. They also noted that this announcement still only gave five days' notice, and a considerable reduction had already been made in the number of out-of-town people planning to attend.

They closed by stating, "Our job is to report the news, regardless of its potential consequences. Only in very rare instances, such as a clear and present danger to the security of our nation, is suppression of a story by the news media ever justified. This is not one of those cases." The reaction was swift: administration officials, ASUI and SCOMF members were of course displeased, while letters flooded into the *Argonaut* praising the newspaper for "doing its job – for once." Jay Shelledy of the *Lewiston Morning Tribune* noted that the student newspaper had recently been recognized by the Society of Professional Journalists as the Inland Empire's



Revelers at a 1982 Blue Mountain held on Charlie Brown's property north of Moscow. Courtesy of Lou Cuevas.

best college newspaper, and that it had "evolved from sophomore attempts at boatocking to responsible in-depth delivery of sensitive and relevant university news."

Regardless of what Thomas Richardson called a "500-pound gorilla at the beginning of the week," and an 800-pound gorilla by the end, Blue Mountain V came and went much the same as previous years. Cold weather, including snow flurries, and the attempted publicity blackout worked to drastically reduce the size of the crowd, and *Argonaut* contributing editor John Hecht called the event "uniquely reflective of the spirit of the school and community. It is singular in that it is now the longest running music event of its type in the country. [...] Such an event has not happened, and probably could not happen anywhere else but here."

Dennis Eichhorn, who had that year stepped away from any official role in the festival's organization, appeared in the *Argonaut* with a full-page, Hunter S. Thompson-style synopsis of the event. He described the "Muscovite bacchanalia" and its variety of talented local and regional musical groups, the friendly people and perceived narcs in the crowd, and lamented that "Blue Mountain will never be spontaneous again."

Still, opposition to the festival was growing, with many citing illegal activities, underage drinking, and increasing damage to the Arboretum. Moscow Police Chief Clark Hudson and the Moscow Chamber of Commerce filed formal requests to ban any event like Blue Mountain, with the Chamber calling them "detrimental to the community." In defense of the festival, UI student John Orwick pointed out that arguments against it are "also arguments against Vandal football. Both draw a large number of out-of-town people [...] and widespread drinking takes place at both. The only difference is that Blue Mountain doesn't lose \$150,000 a year."

During the buildup to ASUI elections in the fall of 1975, many candidates declared Blue Mountain to be a central part of their platforms, and a referendum was placed on the ballot asking students if they supported a spring music festival of any kind. In November, 76% of student voters chose to keep the Blue Mountain-style festival, while also placing it fully under the responsibility of the ASUI. Even with

overwhelming support from the student body, however, the likelihood of a spring music festival in 1976 was by no means certain.

In a 2025 oral history interview with John Hecht, he noted that the Idaho Board of Regents was one of the most progressive of any public university in the country during the 1970s. Even so, they were reported to have "strong reservations" about approving another Blue Mountain because of the blatant and pervasive illegal activities in prior years.

In a January 1976 meeting between the ASUI Senate and Moscow Chamber of Commerce members, UI's Academic Vice President Robert Coonrod claimed another Blue Mountain might even be illegal. One business owner told the student senators that, due to their sponsorship, they would be held liable for any damages stemming from the concert

and that they should make sure their liability insurance was up to date. Others contended that the northwestern area of the Arboretum could no longer be used for the festival without the natural boundary of the Old Fieldhouse, a large WWII-era corrugated steel structure that was demolished the previous fall after serving various purposes for the university, namely as a backdrop for the stage at Blue Mountain. ASUI President David Warnick assured the gathering of the measures being taken to keep the festival under control, including their plan to limit the event only to students from Idaho and WSU.

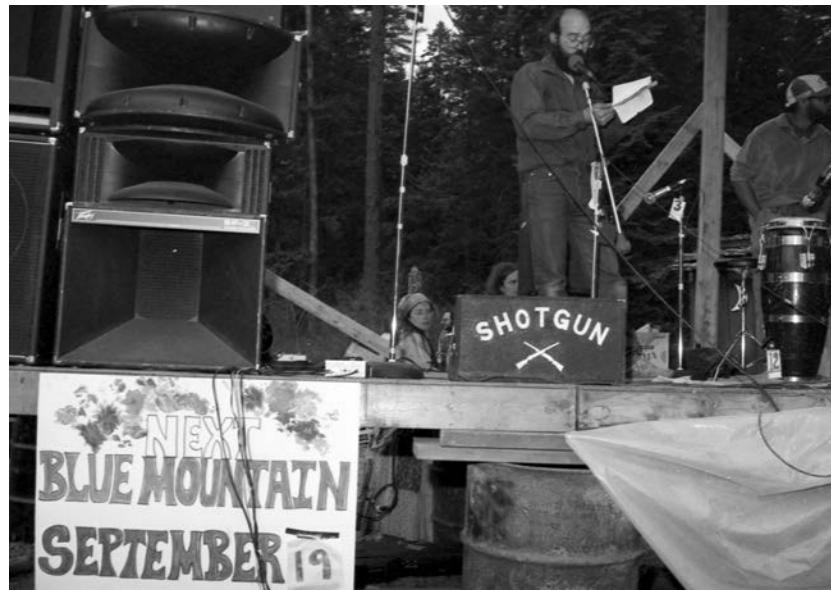
Over the following months, President Hartung and the UI administration laid out several prerequisites, including that the concert would be canceled entirely in the event of bad weather, and that the ASUI appropriate \$800 for official police protection rather than the volunteer peacekeepers of years past. Entertainment Manager Ed Gladder told the *Argonaut* of other preparations underway in the week before the event, such as prohibiting camping and campfires, and, to that end, camping sites elsewhere had been reserved for out-of-towners. He also noted that the loss of the Fieldhouse as boundary and backdrop was actually helpful as it meant "we have an extra 22,000 feet to work with this year [...]. This will hopefully keep the majority of the crowd out of the woods." As far as illicit activities, Gladder told the paper he'd been informed there would be narcotics agents, presumably undercover, mixing with the crowd.

Issues and disagreements aside, planning continued and Blue Mountain VI occurred on May 2. While organizers nervously waited out a morning of rain that delayed the event's start, the rest of the day progressed much the same as in previous years, with one notable exception: with a task force of city, county, and state law enforcement, 45 Moscow-area residents and students had been arrested on drug charges in the week leading up to the festival, 19 that same weekend, including ASUI Vice President Brian Kincaid. Many saw the timing as suspicious and designed to cast a further pall over the Blue Mountain event by association. Moscow Chief of Police Clark Hudson and Latah County Sheriff Ed Pierson, both outspoken critics of the festival, denied there was a connection, saying the evidence and charges had been "stacked" for six months or more, with arrests made all at once later so as to preserve the usefulness of their confidential informants and undercover officers.

While efforts to curb illegal activities at the festival were seen by university officials as a failure, President Hartung did admit that damage to the Arboretum was much less compared to previous years' and the space had been adequately cleaned afterward. Publicity of the event was also seen to be

well regulated, which helped to limit the crowd to a more manageable size. The festival's more negative aspects were too great, however, and in a memo to the ASUI Senate on June 23, Hartung officially prohibited the Blue Mountain Rock Festival, citing alcohol abuse and illegal activity as the primary deciding factor.

1977 began, once again, with discussion of the possibility of another Blue Mountain. However, judging from editorials and letters to the editor in the *Argonaut*, there had been a tonal shift in the topic. While UI and city officials were as opposed as ever, the students now also seemed somewhat



Charlie Brown addresses the audience from the stage at a 1982 Blue Mountain held on his property north of Moscow. Courtesy of Lou Cuevas.

uninspired by the idea. Where normally the drumbeat of excitement would have started in January or February, with student groups lobbying the administration for permission, organizers identified, fundraisers planned, volunteers rallied, this year was much more subdued. While people expressed interest in having another rock festival on campus, few were willing to volunteer their time to make it happen, and those who had been major coordinators in past years were reluctant to get involved again, with one saying, "No way I'll work on it. I've been burned too many times already." The front page of the *Argonaut* ran an illustration of the Arboretum with a headstone for Blue Mountain in the center reading, "In Memorium 1971-1976," causing a minor blip in the rumor mill as it was printed in the April 1 joke and satire edition. Otherwise, Blue Mountain was moving steadily into the realm of nostalgia. There were a few smaller-scale "picnics" organized here and there, like the Afternoon Delight event in 1977 and 1978, but for the most part over the next several years, the free outdoor festival concept was largely abandoned at the university.

In 1980, a local character known as Charlie Brown, an "icon for the abnormal" as described by a friend, began

trying to resurrect Blue Mountain. A September issue *Argonaut* editorial written by Betsy Brown makes mention of Charlie's "new Blue Mountain celebration" held that spring on his property off Idler's Rest Road north of Moscow. This event hosted about 500 people, a couple bands, and "lots of good vibes."

Charlie Brown wrote his own editorial in the *Argonaut* the following March, where he discusses his plans in the third person: "Charlie Brown, the Head Gardner [sic] of Blue Mountain, said Blue Mountain is alive and recovering. Blue Mountain is only for his friends. That way it will remain a place of private pleasures, for which the System has no pass. But as Charlie spoke, it was realized that those of the world in total are his friends. He knows all who walk the paths of Peace and Love. [...] The meadow of Blue Mountain has grown. Not once, but twice a year will people gather to see the beauty before them. It opens at noon and closes when his friends have left. And Charlie says, 'Let my friends call or write, hopefully sharing a stamp, so that I may tell them where the meadow is hidden, and the days it will be open for walking in full with Peace, Love, Live Music, and Good Vibes. The blossoms of the flowers we call ourselves are Blue Mountain."

A May 3, 1982, article in the *Spokane Chronicle* details the fifth occurrence of Charlie Brown's Blue Mountain Rock Festival. Once again, the crowd numbered around 500, this time with seven bands performing, and, after living adjacent to multiple iterations of this event, many of his neighbors were not happy. One complained of cars lining the roadside for two miles leading to the concert area, and partygoers damaging his fence and answering the call of nature in plain view of his house. Another neighbor had a "heck of a time" getting to sleep at night with all the racket across the road.

Various descriptions of these events by friends and acquaintances describe a "mini-Woodstock," an authentic Blue Mountain experience on a smaller, rural scale. At some point, Charlie Brown even became an ordained minister (with the Universal Life Church, naturally) so he could claim the concert was a church function. Long-time friend Kay Moore described the scene to the *Moscow-Pullman Daily News* in 2011 as having 10-20 kegs of beer, several live bands, a natural dance floor in an "amazing meadow." The college crowd loved it, but "if you were a father...you hated Charlie with a passion." Another visitor to one of Charlie Brown's festivals said, "I honestly don't remember there being music. I was 15 and went with my friends, we were so drunk."

In 1983, Charlie's Blue Mountains came to an end for a very familiar reason: they were expensive and time-consuming to facilitate, and few seemed willing to volunteer their time or money to help. In a letter to the editor of the *Argonaut* in April, Charlie claimed he traveled "coast to coast" for work to support it, even going "to Paul's Pawn to get enough money for toilet paper." He estimated that each

instance of the festival took about 400 hours of work for him alone, and while he had helpers and friends in the beginning, "they seem to have left."

Over six contentious years at the University of Idaho and four more years in private hands, this little Woodstock had grown from a quickly-planned, volunteer-led, community-minded gathering of music lovers to a heavily orchestrated and ever more expensive party, just "an excuse for a bunch of pseudo-radical jerks to get wasted," as labeled by Betsy Brown in her 1980 *Argonaut* editorial. But she praised the festival's generous spirit and the people who made it happen by being "willing to stick their necks out for something they believed in." She went on to add that maybe, even for all its problems, it had served as a kind of pressure release to tensions that "otherwise caused people to flip out and get violent." Blue Mountain appeared in 1971 as an antidote to an atmosphere of unrest and paranoia, and Brown mused over the expansion of that same atmosphere nine years later: "Maybe, what this town needs right now is another Blue Mountain."

[Did you attend any of the Blue Mountain Rock Festivals? We'd love to hear about it! Please contact the Latah County Historical Society at lchslibrary@latahcountyid.gov]

An earlier version of this article first appeared in the May/June 2025 issue of Home&Harvest magazine.

Special thanks to Ariana Burns, Palouse Anthropology, and LeNelle McInturff, Latah County Historical Society.

Sources:

The vast majority of information for this article came from 1970-1983 issues of the University of Idaho *Argonaut*, available digitally courtesy of the UI Library's Special Collections and Archives: lib.uidaho.edu/digital/argonaut.

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A Passion for Live Music and a Sense of Adventure: The Greenstock Music Festivals

by Ariana Burns, Palouse Anthropology*

Following the tumult of the Blue Mountain Music Festivals, University of Idaho Argonaut commentator Betsy Brown in 1980 looked back and wondered if another Blue Mountain was needed to again free tensions building up in people.

Five years after the last festival, the desire for more live music had barely subsided. Only the year before, Waterbust garnered attention from Washington State University's (WSU) student newspaper, *The Daily Evergreen*. Waterbust was followed by Coug Fest and the Greenstock music festivals. Whether or not another Blue Mountain Music Festival was needed, spring fever, the desire to be outdoors and listening to live music at a large festival couldn't be stifled.

The Moscow-Pullman area was seeing a boom in its music scene through the late 1970s to the early 1990s. There were more and more local musicians and not enough venues, public halls, community centers, and bars to host them. Performers also played at party houses in the area. Houses like Hell House, Green House, Tri-Lamb, the Log Cabin, and the Blue Zoo were entertaining almost every weekend. At the same time, civic and academic leaders were trying to curb these activities.

In a 1991 *Evergreen* news article, Chris Gryiel asked where the good times had gone and lamented the end of the "Wazzu party scene." He wrote that "[c]hanges in the law, insurance hassles and a temperance-minded administration have all but killed the legendary WSU party scene." Gus Kravas, associate vice provost for student affairs at the time, agreed with this sentiment adding that:

...the administration expects students to be more accountable for their behavior...At one time, we thought of the residence halls and fraternities as the domain of the individual and as a result, people could do what they wanted.

But with the university administration wanting to discourage drinking and drug use, it kept "a more watchful eye on its wards."

Kravas' statement reflected an ongoing tension between universities and students to define the former's role as *in loco parentis* or their day-to-day responsibility for their students' wellbeing. For example, in the early years of the University of Idaho, women students, with few exceptions, were required to live on campus and with a curfew. By 1967, U of I students drafted a student bill of rights. During the Blue Mountain years, the university wasn't as concerned with what students did in their fraternities or dorms.

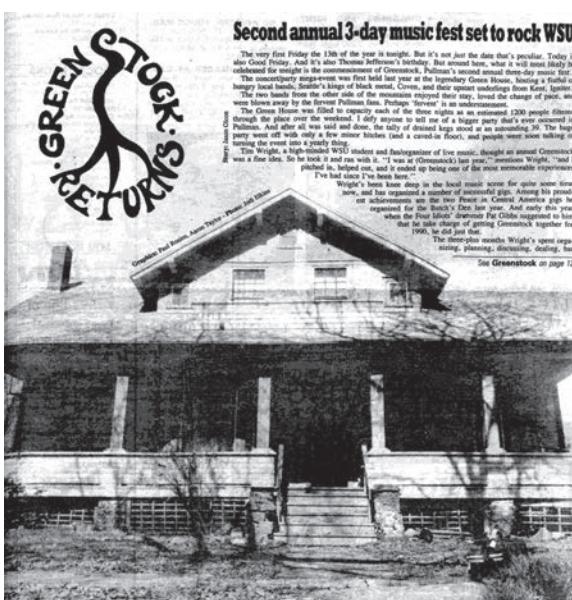
The Blue Mountain Music Festival grew up on the University of Idaho campus, occasionally under the auspices of the Associated Students of the University of Idaho or working with campus entities, until President Hartung shut it down. Waterbust, a WSU fraternity-sponsored event, offered concerns for the WSU administration. By 1991, the culture had changed. Universities were adopting a more active role as *loco parentis*. This in turn resulted in these sorts of events no longer being adjacent to universities and individuals taking over production and the liability.

Waterbust

Looking back to Gryiel's good times, one of the big music



Advertisement for Waterbust in *The Daily Evergreen*, May 9, 1980.



The Green House where the Greenstock music festival got its start. Photo by Jodi Elkins, *Evergreen*.

gatherings in the early 1980s was Waterbust, a Phi Delta Theta-hosted event held south of Pullman, Washington, on the Snake River. Starting in 1979 as a fraternity house gathering, it grew to include more people. At one point it boasted 13,000 attendees, with multiple bands performing, food stands on site, local law enforcement and volunteers assisting with safety. The 1985 festival had a volleyball tournament, four bands, and visits from parachuters and hang gliders throughout the day.

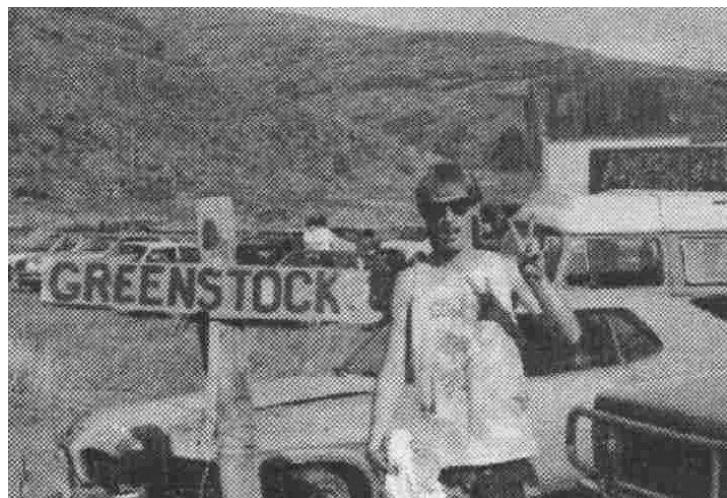
Originally held in the spring, Waterbust was moved to the first weekend before fall classes. A staff item in WSU's *Evergreen* spoke of it as "the ideal way to welcome the entire student body back to school while, at the same time, having fun before classes start demanding most of the students' time..." It became what one student described to the *New York Times* as a WSU tradition. The *Times* continued that:

Since 1979 fun seekers and sun worshipers from across the Pacific Northwest have trekked to the park 22 miles south of the Pullman campus to attend. Back then, it consisted of just a few fraternity brothers drinking beer. But over the years it has exploded into a festival that has attracted up to 12,000 people.

Waterbust was never sanctioned by Washington State University and in 1988, long-time sponsor Phi Delta Theta stepped away, citing increasing costs and liability concerns. Private individuals took over production. The 1988 event was organized by John Worrell and in 1989 WSU



Nighttime performance at Greenstock 1991. Courtesy of Steve Buell



Unidentified male at entry to Greenstock 1991. *Evergreen*.



Scattercreek, formerly the Moscow band Chaos, performs at Greenstock 1991. Courtesy of Steve Buell.

economics student, David Thompson, and local businessman, Todd Robbins, took on the challenge.

The two men rented Boyer Park for Waterbust 1989, acquired insurance and, to ease parking problems, arranged a shuttle from Pullman. They also rented a nearby airstrip to serve as a parking lot. Local law enforcement noted that calls dropped to a fourth of what they had received the previous year.

In the *Evergreen*, Kravas remarked that Waterbust gave the fraternity members valuable production experience. He added that hosting the event year after year was "a tribute to their energy and creativity." His comment hinted at the level of logistics required to produce a festival.

Beyond the physical work of prepping a site for a concert, transporting and setting up staging and sound equipment, there was also legal paperwork and permits, promotions, scheduling the acts, coordinating safety, and working with local law enforcement and civil authorities. After a festival concluded there was an effort made, with mixed success, to clean up the site and haul the trash away. Being out in a rural area, there were also problems with dangerous driving and excessive traffic on the narrow, winding roads.

Despite changes in format and producers, Waterbust faded and WSU's new event,

Coug Fest rose. Coug Fest, held on university property, was an attempt to manage a music event for students in a way that WSU couldn't do with Waterbust. The university ad-

ministration denied trying to replace Waterbust, but offered Coug Fest as an alternative. In 1991, University Police Chief Dave Wareing predicted Waterbust's end: "I don't think you'll see Waterbust again as an organized event—It's just too costly."

Enter Greenstock

House parties continued on the Palouse with the Green House holding an annual music and beer festival. Jason Olcott, reporting for the *Evergreen*, wrote:

Traditionally, the event [is] held in a beautiful but quickly deteriorating house off campus known as the Green House (of course). Bands set up in the basement and bashed out hour-long sets while indiscriminate partying went on in the upper floors of the rickety old mansion. This lasted from Friday afternoon 'til Monday morning, when the last of the 15 or so bands had cleared the makeshift ...stage.

Greenstock music festival grew in stature to rival Waterbust. Olcott, writing for the *Evergreen*, noted that "Greenstock is really the only party event of such magnitude left for WSU students these days, now that the future of Waterbust, ... looks cloudy."

The Greenstock concert "started out as a joke and became a legend," Mike Hartwell, a Green House resident, told the university newspaper. "We said why not have every band in Pullman play at our house one weekend." Euphoria bassist Dan Cox came up with the name "Greenstock" for the three-day festival. The first Greenstock had fifteen bands, forty kegs, and was attended by an estimated 1,200 people.

Commemorative T-shirts were created, and a special closed-circuit TV system was installed to provide a view of the band "in the sweaty, crowded basement." Even with the house's floor partially collapsing, the festival was judged to be a success. "Nobody died," Hartwell joked.



Greenstock 1991 attendees climbing the hill to the festival site.
Courtesy of Steve Buell.



Greenstock 1991 overlooking the Snake River. Courtesy of Steve Buell.

Though the Green House had been hosting parties for some time, the music festival started in either 1988 or 1989 according to conflicting reports. A 1990 *Evergreen* stated that year's Greenstock was the second annual but the 1991 event was described as "the second coming of the Mother of All Parties."

The festival continually evolved to meet outside demands and the organizers' new ideas. Tim Wright managed Greenstock 1990 and devoted three-plus months to organizing, bargaining, meeting, "and worrying about the event." He was determined that it be a positive experience for all. Wright booked seventeen bands including, Charivari, Death Squad, Coven, Gravel, Horse, Ignatius, Gas Huffer, Idiots, and Euphoria.

There was also no alcohol. "It's just too much of a hassle," explained Wright. Also, he wanted the audience to pay attention to the music:

In Pullman, there's this beer-music equation, where people seem to have to get drunk to enjoy live music. I'd like to see people come for the music not the alcohol, and having no kegs there will help.

The only reported technical problem was caused by a band overloading the house's electrical system.

"I'm here to tell you it got mighty bleak and gloomy in that pit of a basement when the lights went out," Al Thordarson wrote in an *Evergreen* opinion piece.

A side benefit of these shows was the attention they brought to the Palouse music scene. An album was released featuring local acts. "Eight Bands No Money One Tape" included tracks from Ignatius, Without A Name, Gravel, Euphoria, and the D.Ts.

Into the Great Outdoors

Before the 1991 festival, new residents moved into the Green House. These renters had zero interest in throwing

a large music party. The search for a new venue began and a self-appointed Greenstock Committee was formed. It selected Idaho's North South Ski Bowl and spent months planning for an expected 5,000 attendees. There would be twenty-eight bands, a professional sound crew from American Music in Seattle, and a shuttle bus. A limited run of ceramic medallions/ticket passes was created.

The Ski Bowl was not an ideal location for the fledgling April outdoor festival. Snow still covered the ground and there was concern that attendees might wander into the wilderness and get lost. The organizers didn't need to worry. The Benewah County Commissioners denied a use permit for the event which was billed as a "celebration of the beginning of summer, uninterrupted live music and alcohol consumption" according to the *Evergreen*.

There was discussion about holding the event near Boyer Park, the former Waterbust location, on private land but there they ran into the same problem with securing a permit. Whitman County would not give approval.

For the organizers there was no thought about cancelling. After being told to call it off, the event continued to be promoted. Authorities warned that not only would the land-owner be penalized, but the bands risked being charged with a misdemeanor and having their gear seized. The threats did not dissuade the producers and those planning to attend.

Following the festival dates, an *Evergreen* staff report announced that "Greenstock '91 never officially happened, more than 1,000 people had fun just the same." When securing a permit for Greenstock proved impossible, property owner Greg May requested and was allowed to hold a private party.

Greenstock finds new site; sheriff says no

By BEN LONG
Staff Writer

Greenstock III organizers, forced to change their original plans, say they're moving the three-day music and beer festival from the Idaho mountains to private land near Boyer Park.

But the Whitman County law enforcement officers say organizers don't have the necessary permit, and they'll shut the party down.

Greenstock III, a 30-band outdoor concert in the Woodstock tradition, was planned for Benewah County's North-South Ski Bowl northeast of Moscow this weekend.

But those plans went awry this week when organizers failed to prove they had security, sanitation and traffic in control to the satisfaction of Benewah County Commissioners.

The U.S. Forest Service, which owns much of North-South's parking space, also gave Greenstock III a thumbs down.

Wednesday afternoon, North-South general man-

Please see PARTY back page



Greenstock IV



Seattle band Chaos plays a set at the fourth annual Greenstock music festival. The event, which took place on the hillside above the Snake River near Boyer Park, was declared a success by organizers, who said the biggest complaints that surfaced around the weekend-long concert focused on rattlesnakes and dirt. Bands from across the Pacific Northwest entertained thousands of Palouse music fans, who braved a rocky uphill trek from the river to the make-shift tent community. Musical groups included Seattle's Dirt Love, Sweet Water, Inflatable Soul, Bam-Bam, Tiny Giant, and Chaos, as well as Spokane-based Black Happy. Pullman was represented by Kissin' Phyllis, Awake, Last Call, Evil Chuck and Thin Section.

The newly christened "Gregstock" (after the property owner) was on a bluff overlooking the Snake River. It was a 20-minute steep hike over uneven, hard scrabble rock, dirt, and snakes. Attendee Ivan Peterson recalled packing a heavy cooler up the steep hill and rattlesnakes. At the top, he was surprised to see all the speakers and sound equipment others had carried. He also remembered people "whipping up rattlesnake steak on their campfire."

The *Idaho Statesman* reported that the only problems at the festival were sunburns and skinned knees.

Evergreen "Letters to the Editor" following Gregstock offered rosy reviews.

above: Moscow Pullman Daily News clipping, 1991.

left: Chaos performs at Greenstock 1992. Photo by Brett Larson, *Evergreen*.

...the bluff echo[ed] and rumble[d] for two days with live and recorded skull-crushing rock and roll...it is impossible to stop individuals with a passion for live music and a sense of adventure. ... Long live rock and roll, fresh air and freedom! - *Julie Green*.

To tell you the truth, I personally feel the event is a fantastic idea. A bunch of college students basking in the late-April sun, drinking some beers, and perhaps getting a little bit of much-needed stress relief before finals week inevitably rolls around. - *John Miller*.

Golly, nobody got killed... - *Jason Olcott*.

Even Greg May, the property owner, wrote in:

Many of my neighbors offered their assistance to me and quite a few visited... [They] were tickled with the resolve my guests displayed in hauling massive equipment up this hill....This weekend is what America is about. - *Greg May*, WSU Instructor, Wilderness Survival.

Two Greenstocks were held on the Snake River. During the 1992 Greenstock there were reports of personal items being stolen, and Christine Nakane wrote in the *Evergreen* about the joys and hardships of attending the event.

The magic of that weekend electrified us all...We climbed that treacherous rocky hill together, clutching our ice coolers, sleeping bags, tents, beverages of choice, and other paraphernalia necessary for this weekend break away. Those who went have a newfound respect for running water, clean hands, a hot shower, a 7-11 and an accessible working toilet. For two days we were without those things that we commonly take for granted. - *Christine Nakane*.

Mudstock

The 1993, and final, Greenstock promised to be the "biggest ever."



Greenstock logo from the *Argonaut*, 1993.



Greenstock 1993. Photo by Jeff Curtis, Argonaut.



Front of the Greenstock 1993 entry ticket.

Its motto was "Don't drink and drive, just camp out." Russ Woolsey heralded the coming festival in the University of Idaho's *Argonaut*:

It's legal, it's insured, it's the fifth annual, and it will be the biggest ever to hit the Palouse. It's GreenStock [sic] '93, and it will be jamming through night and day on April 23-25 outside of Kendrick, Idaho.... on approximately 80 acres of pasture this year, with plenty of parking for the 6,000 expected music fans, unlike last year's ankle twisting, rocky, unfriendly, dust setting.

The stage would be in a natural amphitheater, with security and EMTs on site, as well as portable toilets, running water. The lineup would include fourteen local bands as well as Black Happy, G.T. Noah, and House of Large Sizes from Iowa. A mystery act was scheduled for Saturday and Sunday. Rumors abounded that Soundgarden or Pearl Jam was the surprise band. It turned out that it was neither.

Not everyone was excited about the coming festival. The *Evergreen* reported critics called it a drug fest. There were complaints that the festivals damaged the landscape. Josh Kosh, Jr., argued in the *Evergreen* that if it was organized correctly it "would come to represent not only a good time, but a good cause."

Maury Heier, a Kendrick area farmer, learned of Greenstock's reputation and that it was going to be adjacent to his land. He and about 300 Kendrick-area residents signed petitions against the concert, but the Latah County commissioners said there was no law against it. Another interested party was the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), which pays farmers to retire erodible land and adopt conservation practices for at least 10 years, established in the 1985 Food Security Act.

The area surrounding the concert site was part of a major watershed. Heavy rain and even hail were commonplace in April.

While a participant in the CRP, the landowner Dennis "Skip" Chilberg agreed to rent the property out to the festival even though it would have "parking, camping, and other activities that could adversely impact the control of erosion or weather quality by destroying the permanent cover."

As with the previous Greenstock music festivals, the land-owner and event organizers went ahead. There was rain in the forecast and concert goers were told to prepare for mud, but the amount of rain caught the campers by surprise. The pasture was already soaked with water before the weekend rains fell.

Arriving at Greenstock, Steve Cochran, a WSU alum with family members in farming, recognized that there were problems with the venue:

The land was not appropriate for that kind of use.... the soft farming soil was not meant for that kind of traffic and use. And once it started raining, it was pretty obvious that things were going to get worse.

From this author's memories, it was a beautiful day when she drove out with friends. The caravan of vehicles (including a VW bus with a V8 engine) reached Kendrick where they discovered they had become a parade. Some Kendrick residents had lined the highway/main street with chairs and watched the vehicles drive through town.

The entrance to the festival was at the top of a hill and below was the promised amphitheater framed by parking on one side and camping. At the gate a Winnebago named "Babe the Blue Ox" had slid/leaned into the ditch where the muddy shoulder of the road had given way. Babe's owners looked on, stunned, and saluted the other people headed into the abyss.

The Daily Evergreen

Friday, April 23, 1993

Suggestions for this weekend....

Finally, yes there is GREENSTOCK. We suggest you stay relatively sober for Candlebox and Running with Scissors. Past that we only have one thing to say...
... Be courteous. If you pack it in, pack it out. Don't start any fights, think before you act, and don't get caught. The police are going to decide from our behavior this time whether or not they pass laws making it impossible to have future Greenstocks. See you there.

News item promoting Greenstock 1993 in *The Daily Evergreen*. Image edited.

muddle hills speckled with tents, small campfires and rain-soaked individuals.

Cochran helped the sound truck, from American Music in Fremont, reach its recording position across the soft field.

So even at this point in the set-up mud was an issue. I ended up working with a small handful of people who [carried] 4'x8' pieces of plywood in front of the tires of the truck. We would lay two pieces down in front of the truck, one for each front wheel, then the truck would slowly move up 8', and we would go to the back and pull up the 4'x8' pieces it had driven off of, and we would walk them to the front. So, we slowly moved the truck across the field to the side of the stage.

More campers and attendees arrived hoping the weather would improve. The music played on as Cochran recalled:

...the headliner band...was Black Happy. I remember... feeling that it was a successful moment because it had stopped raining while they performed, that the event

actually came together, lighting, sound, and performers, and put on a good show. I can't remember how often it was raining, but I recall that it was noticeable when it wasn't....

Come Saturday there was even more water. The mosh pit was ankle deep in mud and the festival was nicknamed "Mudstock." Bands played on and off until 3:30 p.m. People tried to leave but the mud had anchored most of the rigs. Three large tractors

Trapped at Mudstock



Staff photo by Darren R. Balch

The Latah County Sheriff's department declared a state of emergency Monday after several more Greenstock campers were bogged down by mud. A spokesperson said the county won't try to remove more vehicles or lay down gravel in the area until Thursday. Tammy Boston of WSU Student Affairs said the Latah County School District is taking people from the area to the Latah County Fairground by bus, and several WSU organizations such as ASWSU have sent members out to pick up stranded students and bring them back to the university.

Truck trapped in the mud at Greenstock 1993. Photo by Darren R. Balch, Evergreen.

operated by neighboring farmers and residents, including Maury Heier, pulled vehicles free through Saturday night. Then came an announcement that there would be no more music. The risk of electrical injury was too great. The event was canceled but the attendees were trapped on site.

Keith Fuller told the *Moscow-Pullman Daily News* that: "There was nowhere for us to go. We couldn't call anyone or do anything."

Dump trucks were hired to bring in gravel to rebuild the road and get vehicles in axle-deep mud out of the field. Organizers paid \$125 (approximately \$280 today) per load of gravel, and fifty loads were brought in.

This author left when her driver returned to see if anyone wanted to head home early. It was a two-mile hike out to the truck. To save what was left of the road, deputies wouldn't let cars closer.

Many attendees stayed the night. Russ Woolsey, writing for the *Argonaut*, noted: "Camp fires littered the hillsides and those with music instruments played...."

Monday morning arrived and five hundred cars were still stuck. The Greenstock promoters rented school buses from Kendrick to shuttle the remaining festival attendees out. Latah County declared the site a disaster emergency. Almost three hundred people were taken to the Latah County Fairgrounds where they were met by volunteers from St. Mary's Church, Moscow Food Bank, and the Moscow Food Co-op with food, blankets and spare clothes.

One unnamed Latah County commissioner called the Greenstock festival a laughing-stock fiasco. CRP began assessing the damage to the topsoil, which would lead to Chilberg being fined \$32,000 for "flagrant" violations and breaking his contract.

Bill Thompson, Latah County Prosecutor, sent Chilberg a bill on behalf of the Latah County Commissioners for almost \$28,000 to cover costs of the rescue operations. He wrote in part,

It is the position of Latah County that you and the promoters bore the duty to ensure the safety and welfare of all participants....you breached such duty thereby

necessitating the significant expenditures referred to above.

The promoters' insurance company refused to pay any bills. Greenstock had a liability policy and not a property plan, Chilberg said.

The *Argonaut* asked Joe Pursley, one of the organizers, if he planned to help organize Greenstock 1994: "Hell No! and you can quote me on that one."

Notably, a Greenstock Facebook page reported that there was a reunion in 2015 in Enumclaw, Washington. Bands from the original concert series performed.

Conclusion

With all that transpired, it's arguable that no one expected another spring music festival. But once again, spring fever and a desire for outdoor live music won out. Several people bemoaning the loss of Greenstock dreamt of their own event. Not only would it have seven bands, but it would also promote the benefits of hemp, cultivated for industry not recreational use. The spring of 1994 saw the debut of the Hemp Festival at Moscow's East City Park. The *Argonaut* reported:

Saturday marked the birth of a movement in Moscow. Hemp seeds were flung and rock bands sung to voice their support for the legalization of hemp.

Shayne Kimball, one of the organizers, wanted to keep Hemp Fest going and told the *Argonaut*:

We're going to try to do it every year now. We want it in the fall next year. We were just lucky to have the weather we did.

Abby Bandurraga, writing for the *Argonaut*, reflected that weather ended the "mother of the Hemp Festival – Greenstock. Hopefully, Moscow has seen the birth of a new outlet for peaceful advocacy that will not [meet] the same [end]."

Hemp Fest has kept its spring date, and this year celebrated 31 years. Coug Fest also continues. While there is no camping, at present, the Palouse appears to have settled for a smaller outdoor music festival. Hemp Fest has joined the ranks of Renaissance Fair, Rendezvous in the Park and



Jessica Cortright dances during the one-hour period when Greenstock bands were able to perform. Photo by David Johnson, Lewiston Morning Tribune.

others in providing fresh air, live music, and good times for the area's enjoyment.

*Palouse Anthropology is interested in stories about the Palouse music scene in the 1970s-1990s. palouseanthro@gmail.com

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* Palouse Anthropology is a group of researchers interested in preserving the micro-history of the Palouse through the collection and compilation of oral histories for the benefit of researchers and future generations. palouseanthro@gmail.com

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BUILDING GENESEE – ONE BOARD AT A TIME

by Earl H. Bennett, Genesee City Historian

OLD TOWN GENESEE, a mile east of present-day "New Town" Genesee, was platted in 1879. Although it was only a small community, lumber was needed for building homes and businesses. The town was on the prairie, far from any timber resource, and transportation was negligible. Looking back in the *Genesee News* (5/1/1936), Walter Jain described where the lumber had come from and the origins of the city cemetery:

"Joe Bronte first settled near Cornwall, after building a cabin he decided to move closer to Genesee. His abandoned cabin was long used as a stopping place and shelter for people hauling timber from the mountains. This was an open prairie and all materials for buildings, fences, fuel, etc., must be hauled from the mountains, those near what is now Troy being closest.

"A primitive sawmill had been set up was doing a thriving business when the explosion of its boiler brought a tragic death to Mr. Bronte who was camped there that night and had gone into the mill in the morning for warmth. His

body was brought to Genesee for burial and was the first to be laid in the City Cemetery."

After the railroad arrived in 1888, "New Town" Genesee grew rapidly. This growth required a lot more



Farmers Union Producers Company
lumber shed and office pre-1936,
enhanced and colorized. LCHS 6-3-23.

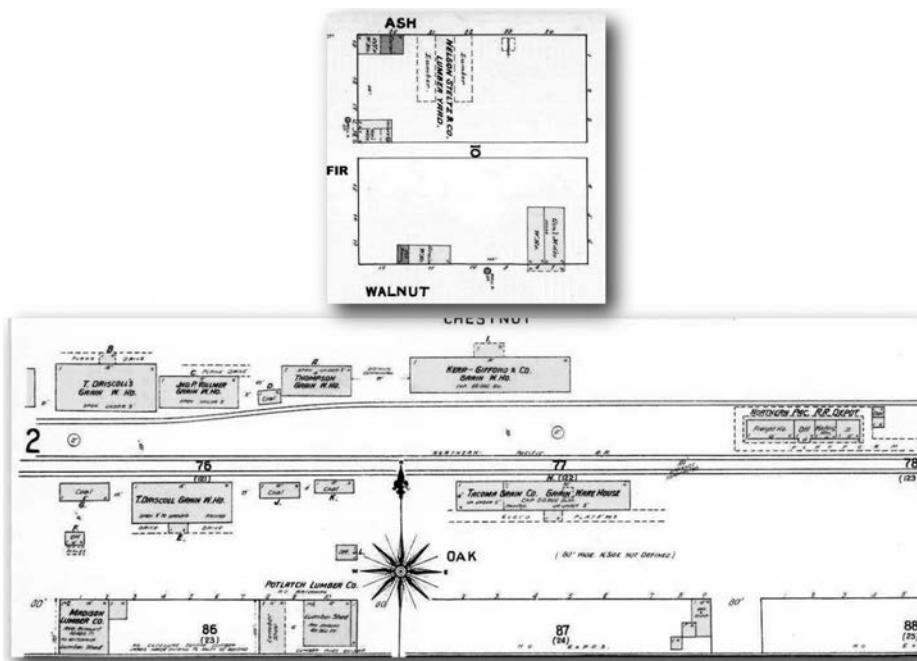


Figure 1. The upper map shows part of the 1891 Sanborn Fire Map of Genesee with the Nelson and Steltz lumber yard. The lower map is from the 1909 Sanborn map showing the Madison and Potlatch lumber yards. *Sanborn Fire Maps, Library of Congress*.

lumber. E. Erickson was selling building materials from a sawmill near Cornwall. Lots of sawmills would spring up near Troy, previously known as Vollmer, after the Spokane and Palouse Railroad reached the town in 1890. The town was literally in the trees at the time.

P. C. Colvin advertised New Town's first lumberyard in the *Genesee Advertiser* in 1889. Colvin was also an agent for the Farish Lumber Company. Others selling lumber included Herman Brothers and Cameron Brothers-Larrabee.

In 1890, Colvin was followed by Henry Nelson and George Steltz in Genesee's New Supply Store, which also sold funerary supplies. Steltz



Farmers Union Producers Company plant built by Frank Matz in 1936 on the old Potlatch Lumber Company lot. Farmers sold fuels and lubricants produced by the Standard Oil Company. Enhanced and colorized. *Pacific Northwest Farmers Cooperative Collection*.



Genesee Union Warehouse, hardware and lumber office. Gas pumps used to be where the concrete pad is located. 2014. *Bennett Collection*.

would soon take over the business from Nelson and run it successfully until the early 1900s. Steltz would build a two-story brick office building at the yard that would become the Knights of Columbus Hall. Today, minus the second story, it is the city's warehouse. As a contractor, Steltz built numerous buildings in town. When he died in 1939, he was the oldest licensed undertaker in the Pacific Northwest.

Early on, John Vollmer was advertising lumber supplied by the sawmill of Felland, Edwardson and Sons in Cornwall. The Union Lumber Company was also in town in 1892.

There were two main storage areas in Genesee for lumber. The first was Steltz and Nelson's yard south of Ash Street; it was gone by 1909. The second was south of the present Pacific Northwest Farmers' Cooperative office between Chestnut and Oak streets (Figure 1) in what is now part of Genesee's new baseball field.

John Meyer purchased the L. F. Darr Farming Implements and Building Material Company, which had started in 1900, and sold it in 1903 to the Madison Lumber and Hardware Company. ("Hardware" was dropped from their company name that year). At the same time, nearby property was purchased from John and Mary Brandmeir and R. R. Gray, who owned land south of the Grand Central Hotel. John Meyer would eventually serve as manager in Genesee, while the company's main office was in Moscow. In 1904 they built a large lumber shed. The operation was taken over in 1908 by the Standard Lumber Company, incorporated in Oregon in 1907 (Figure 1).

Over 24 inches of snow in February 1929 collapsed the big roof of Standard Lumber's warehouse. The Mikkelsen

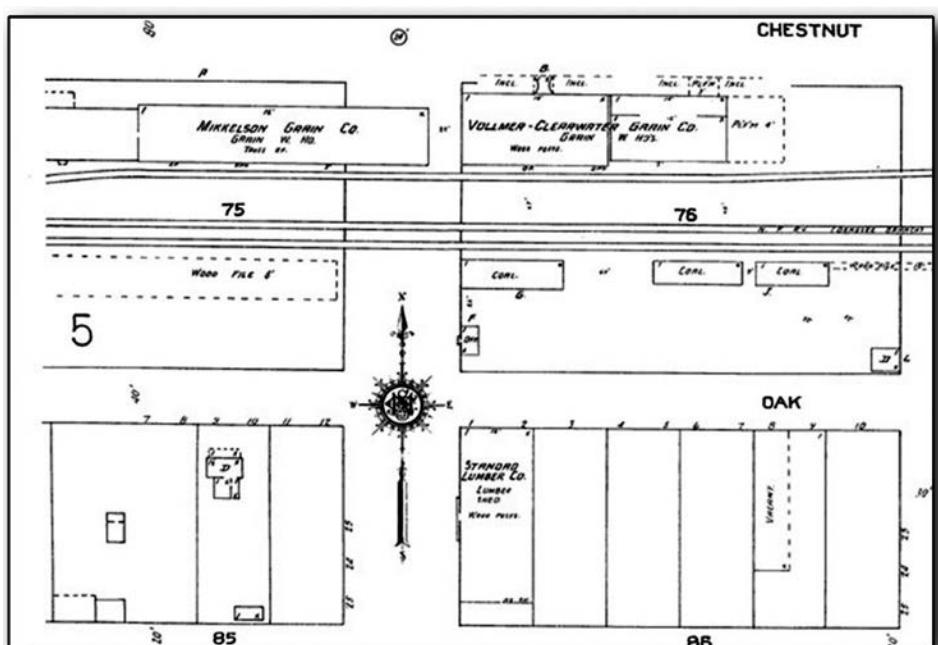


Figure 2. Part of the 1929 Sanborn fire map for Genesee showing the Standard Lumber Company yard and the Mikkelsen Grain warehouse that burned in 1929. *University of Idaho digital archives*.



Inside the Genesee Union sales room in 2014, just before closure. *Bennett Collection*.



above: Genesee Union Warehouse Hardware and Lumber Office. 1987. Enhanced and colorized. *Dave Wager*.

right: Oblique aerial photograph of part of Genesee in 1959. 1. Producers Union lumber warehouse, 2. Producers Union hardware office, 3. Producers Union fuel plant, 4. Baseball diamond, 5. Bleachers, 6. Football field, 7. Beker Warehouse, 8. Railroad cars, 9. Railroad depot. Enhanced and colorized. *Idaho Department of Transportation*.



Company merged with Standard after their elevator burned in May 1929 (Figure 2). In October 1929 Farmers Producers Union Company, a hardware/lumber/supply cooperative, purchased the Standard Lumber Company. A fire burned down the Prairie Flour Mill warehouse in 1951 and almost took the lumber warehouse and office buildings with it.

In 1967, Farmers Producers merged with Genesee Union Warehouse Company. The expanded facility sold just about anything a farmer.builder would need from lumber to hardware. In 2007, Genesee Union merged with Whitman County Growers and formed today's Pacific Northwest Farmers' Cooperative. Farmers, Genesee Union, and Pacific Northwest gas pumps fueled our town for many years, but problems with leaking underground tanks ended the service and the tanks were removed. The store closed soon after. The office and old lumber warehouse were torn down in 2014, making room for the new Genesee Recreational District baseball field completed in 2023.

Another venture in the same area was the Humbird Lumber Company that opened a yard in Genesee in 1903 with J. Christie in charge. Humbird was expanding from their home mill in Sandpoint, Idaho. Potlatch Lumber Company, established in 1900, purchased Humbird in Genesee in 1905. Their office was just east of the Farmers (the former Darr,

Madison, Standard) warehouse with John H. Hudson as manager (Figure 1). Potlatch sold it to the Standard Lumber Company in 1929.

In 1936, Frank Matz obtained a four-year lease from Farmers Union, which had purchased Standard Lumber, to sell Union Oil products. Surface buildings and tanks were erected at the site. Farmers Producers Union purchased the buildings in 1940 and signed a different contract with Standard Oil of California for petroleum products. As noted previously, Farmers and the Genesee Union merged in 1967 and became part of Pacific Northwest Farmers' Cooperative in 2008. Like the hardware store and lumber warehouse, the remaining buildings and tanks were demolished in 2014. This space is now also part of the new baseball field.

Today, with no local hardware store, no lumberyard, Genesee has gone the way of many small towns. Thanks to Bruce Scharnhorst we still have fuel in town. His new "gas station" is a blessing.

Bibliography

Genesee News, 1888-1968, microfilm archive at the University of Idaho Library. See [About | The Genesee News](#)

Gazette News, 1968-1985, available at the Juliaetta-Kendrick Heritage Foundation and Museum, Kendrick, ID. See [Kendrick Newspapers 1950 to 1998](#)



top: Farmers Union Hardware (right) and Standard Oil fuel station (left) with tanks, mid-1940s. Enhanced and colorized. *Pacific Northwest Farmers Cooperative Collection*.

above: Part of Genesee, ID, in 2024. 1. Pacific Northwest Farmers Cooperative, 2. Genesee Community Fire Station completed in 2019, 3. Old baseball diamond, 4. Football field, 5. New softball field #1, 6. New softball field #2, 7. New baseball field (Genesee Recreation District), 8. Genesee Trap and Skeet Association range, 9. Cow Creek, 10. New flagpole. Enhanced. *Google Earth*

A Shave or a Haircut - 2 Bits!



by Earl H. Bennett, Genesee City Historian

Although it was difficult in the 1880s to maintain the level of personal hygiene that we enjoy today, that doesn't mean that people didn't try. In October 1888 the *Genesee Advertiser* noted that Lou Krum had almost finished a barber shop and hairdresser building on Front (now Walnut) Street. The first issue of the *Genesee Advertiser* was published on August 4, 1888 – not bad since the Spokane and Palouse Railroad had only arrived in the new town a month before. By November, Genesee had two barber shops. One was operated by W. W. McClain (second door east of the Latah Hotel, Figure 1). You could get a shave and haircut for 25-cents, or "two bits," each. William Brown was advertising in the paper as a "Tonsorial Artist;" his facility had bathrooms attached if you were really dusty. His shop was in a 12x16-foot building that was part of the Smolt building. Brown was featured in the illustrated "Special Edition" of the *Genesee News* in 1898; he would be a Genesee barber for 16 years.

Clarence Jain was operating the Star Barbershop on the northside of Walnut, and Pil "the Barber" Kempendorf was on the southside in the Creamery in 1903 (Figure 1). That year Henry Meyer



William Brown, one of Genesee's first barbers in 1888. *Genesee News Spec. Ed.*, 1898.

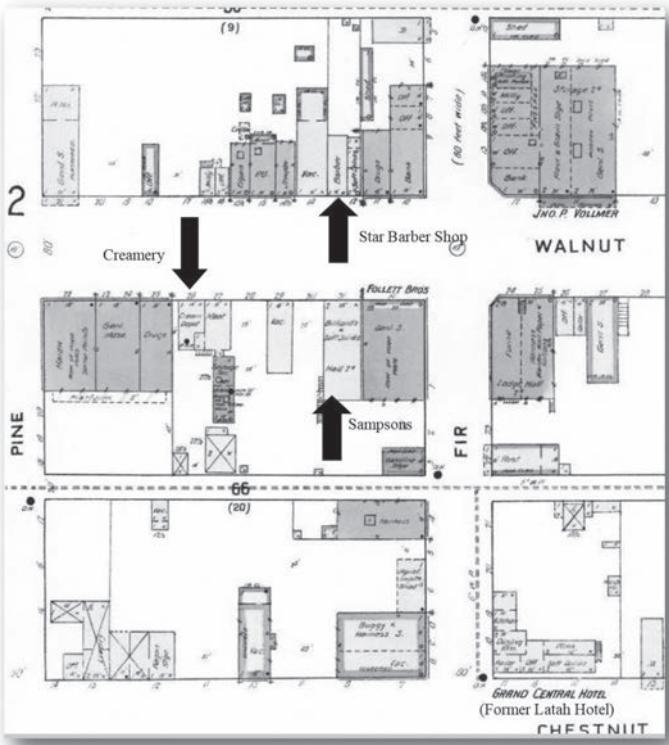


Figure 1. Part of the 1909 Sanborn Fire Map for Genesee. Note Clarence Jain's Star Barber Shop on the north side of Walnut and Sampsons Barber Shop in Elliot Hall, and the Creamery. The Latah Hotel burned in 1888 but was rebuilt and renamed in 1891 as the Grand Hotel. *Partial Sanborn Map from the Library of Congress Digital Collection*.

bought the creamery and Pil sold his business to William Hunter (Hunters Barber Shop). Jain advertised "Clean towels" and would forward wash probably to the Kong Duck laundry on the south edge of town. Jain would install two hydraulic chairs in 1905. Hunter would sell his shop to Johnnie Manley the same year.

In 1911, Jain would sell the "Jain building" located between his barber shop and the Sullivan block (three-part brick building on north side of Walnut, Figure 1) to William Smolt for his confectionary and ice cream shop. This building was a former hardware/saddles store. Jain also sold his barber shop to William Gage. The shop featured the two hydraulic chairs and a connection with the Pullman Laundry Service. Gage would operate out of Sampsons shop across the street during the winter months. Jain moved to Pullman and opened a new barber shop there.

"Save your whiskers for Sampsons" highlighted the first ad for Sampsons Barber Shop in the Elliott Hall (Figures 1 & 2) in 1907. Glenn and Virgil Sampson advertised nice warm baths. In 1912 the Sampsons would move the business to the east end of Rader & Westensee's new brick building. This was the new home for Rader's market and later Rice's City Market, also known as the URM Store and today's Genesee Fitness. William Gilmore started a new shop in the room adjoining the new pool hall in June 1915.

A little competition for the Sampson brothers appeared in 1922 when F. E. Lambert opened a barber shop in the newly dug basement of his remodeled Lambert Hotel (original Alexander building, later the Genesee Hotel, Figure 2). It featured two chairs, a shower, and tub baths and opened in June with C. A. Brown as proprietor. Inflation was on the move; haircuts were now 40 cents and a shave 20 cents. The barbers were Hagan and Stout.

It was a big surprise in 1923 when Lambert traded his hotel for a hardware store in Oregon. The new owner was George Schlerth who changed the name to the Genesee Hotel. Schlerth's addition to the venture was as an undertaker, in partnership with Shorts Funeral Home in Moscow. Unfortunately for Schlerth, his business failed and he went bankrupt. The barber shop closed for a while but was reopened in 1928 by C. A. Baker.



Clarence and Lucille Jain, clipped from a family photo and enhanced. *Jain Family Collection*.



Jain's Barber Shop, labeled as Genesee but could be his shop in Pullman, WA. LCHS 06-03-048.

The first ad pertaining to ladies' beauty treatment was in the *Genesee News* in 1925. It was noted that Mrs. C. A. Miller would do marcelling, manicuring, facials, eyebrow arching, scalp treatments, etc. in the Marcello Beauty Shop in the Genesee Hotel. Marcelling was a relatively new hair style where short hair was waved either by using fingers or a curling iron. Bobbing or having your hair cut short was also fashionable in the early 1920s.



North side of Walnut Street in Genesee showing: 1. Exchange Bank, 2. Drug Store, 3. Smolt's Soda Shop, 4. Star Barber Shop (note barber pole), 5. Hardware Store (1911 – Smolt & Son Confectionary), 6. Jewelry Shop (east end of 3-part brick building). Original from John Lorang, 1910, Genesee Horse Parade. Cropped and enhanced. LCHS 06-02-028.

In 1927 the Genesee Hotel barber shop noted that ladies' hair cutting was a specialty. Not to be outdone, Sampsons advertised that Evelyn Hoefer was doing "Marcelling" in their shop. Audrey Pleiman took her place in 1929. Sampsons was also in the tailoring business, featuring Kahn gentlemen's clothes.

Baker noted in 1932 that the Genesee Hotel was the drop off for the Al Burtch cleaning business in Lewiston. A specialty of his barber shop was mustache curling. Sampsons would also add dry cleaning to their shop in 1934 in partnership with the Moscow Steam Laundry. They added a new permanent-wave-making machine to their inventory and were now a complete beauty shop with Miss Mildred Kinyon as their beauty expert. A one-week special in 1935 was a \$3.50 permanent.

Styles had changed. The *Genesee News* noted in 1932: "1882-Fifty years ago women wore hoop skirts, bustles, petticoats, corsets, cotton stockings, high buttoned shoes, ruffled cotton drawers, flannel night gowns, puffs in their hair, did their own cooking, baking, cleaning, washing; went to church Sunday; were too busy to be sick." "Today women wear silk stockings, short skirts, low shoes, no corsets, an ounce of underwear; have bobbed hair, smoke, paint and powder, drink cocktails, play bridge, drive cars, have pet dogs and go in for politics."

With the repeal of Prohibition in 1935, Glenn Sampson ran the state liquor store in the back of the barber shop. It moved to Hermans in 1939 and '40 and then back to Glenn's shop.

Both Sampsons and Baker's barber shops served men and women until 1941, the last year that the hotel shop is

mentioned in the *Genesee News*. Mrs. Bruce Wardrobe opened a beauty shop in Sampsons in 1943 but moved it to her home two years later. Sampsons Barber and Tailor Shop was now the drop off for Janes Cleaners in Lewiston and later Bill's (Stickler) Cleaning Service.

Little would change in the barber business in Genesee until the 1950s.

In 1957 Eli Rice remodeled his store. After 44 years, Sampsons shop that had been in the east end of that building moved to new quarters in the east end of the Genesee Motor's building or, in other words, on the other side of the wall between Genesee Motors and Rice's. The liquor dispensary also made the move.

Sampsons was now the sole barbershop in town and the brothers enjoyed good business. After over 50 years barbering Glenn sold the shop in 1960 to George Hines, who had been a barber in Lewiston. Two years later Hines sold the business to Clarence Ivie.



The Elliott Building in Genesee c. 1907. Sampsons Barber Shop was the lower right entrance with the fancy barber pole. Upstairs was a stage and seating for the "Opera House." Enhanced photo. LCHS 06-03-078.

Save Your Whiskers
For Sampsons
Everything Neat and Clean
Hot and Cold BATHS
Laundry Forwarded Each Tuesday
ELLIOT HALL BUILDING

First ad for Sampsons Barber Shop.
Genesee News, April 19, 1907.

Virgil Sampson was the first white child born in Old Town Genesee in 1880. He passed on in 1965. Glenn Erastus Sampson was born in 1882 and passed in 1975. Occasionally, the editor of the local paper would add a personal note to the obituary in the paper. Bill Roth, editor of the *Gazette News*, would write:

"Big friendly Glenn Sampson never lacked for companions. This, coupled with the appeal of the barber shop made his shop a natural 'hangout' for many of Genesee's men. It was a special meeting place for several of his contemporaries: Glenn was the last to pass on... they're all gone now, but the town will remember them. Bill Gray, Roy Evans, Bob Emmett, Glenn's brother Virgil, who barbered with him, Roy Emerson and others. There was always laughter, talk, gossip and good-natured joking whenever they all got together. Those who have heard it will never forget the good-natured bantering that went on between Roy Evans and Glenn."

"For me, personally, the barbershop was a mecca of information. Glenn and Virgil could recall accurately just about anything you needed to know about the history of the town. I know because I would go over to ask a question, and Glenn would stop his work to patiently explain exactly how and why a certain incident in Genesee history had come to pass."

"Glenn was a kind and understanding man and always a gentleman in the true sense of the word. He was a friend to me and an asset to the community. From here on, whenever I hear anyone say, 'they don't make things like they used to,' I'll think of Glenn Sampson... they aren't making men like that anymore either."

Ivie moved from the Sampson shop back across Walnut to where the Genesee Café was located. Ivie's Barber Shop was in the new space in early 1964. The state liquor dispensary stayed in the old space until 1966, when it was moved to

Ivie's new shop. Mrs. Kay Morey opened the Genesee Beauty Shop next to the barber shop in 1964.

Mrs. Penny Jacobs took over in 1966, and it would close in 1970. When Bennett's Grocery (the former Follett Store) burned in 1967, the

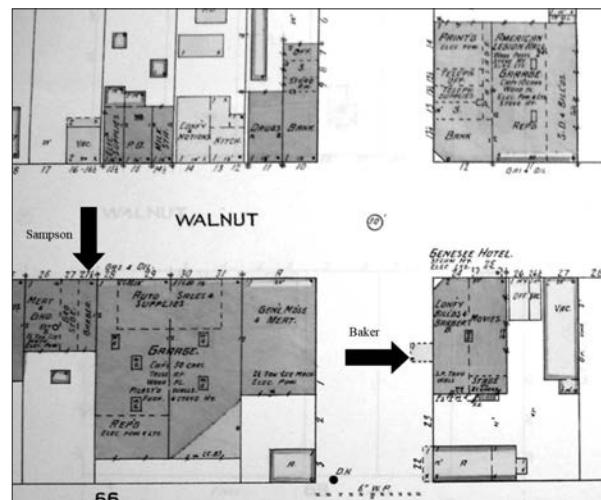


Figure 2. Part of the 1929 Sanborn Fire Map for Genesee. Note Sampsons Barber Shop in Rader's Market (later the URM Store) and Baker's shop in the basement of the Genesee Hotel. Partial Sanborn Map from the Library of Congress Digital Collection.



Originally the Alexander Building and then Lambert's Hotel in 1922 and the Genesee Hotel in late 1930s. Baker's barber shop was in the basement dug in 1922. Enhanced picture from about 1974. *John Luedke Collection*.

heat from the fire was so intense that it cracked the windows in Ivie's shop, the Genesee Beauty Shop, the Post Office and the Burr Building (the old Exchange Bank).

In 1968 Ivie built a new concrete block building for a coin-operated laundry between the Post Office and the Genesee Beauty Shop. The barber shop moved into the beauty shop that closed in 1970. In 1971 Jim Pelfrey took over operation of Ivie's Barber Shop. It closed soon after,



The Clark Family. Top – Lulu, right – Grant (owned Clark's Drug Store), lower left – Esther Clark, middle – unknown, bottom – Dwight, the dog. Note Lulu and unidentified lady's Marcell hair style and Esther's bobbed hair. Taken at the Clark house in Genesee, c. 1930. Enhanced photo. *Courtesy of Iris Manning*.



Glenn Sampson (1882-1975), perhaps Genesee's best known barber. Enhanced photo. *Gazette News, Feb 13, 1975*.

Victoria's Hair, Nails, Tanning and Gift in 2007, and then from 2009 to 2012 by Mane Street Hair, Tanning and More, part of today's Hall's Bar and Brass Lantern Restaurant. The Red Brick Salon was in the three-part brick building from 2018 to 2020, followed by Lou Lou and Company (Lindsay Wernecke) at the same place today. As did a number of the early beauty shops, Lindsay also cuts men's hair and is Genesee's sole remaining barber shop.



In 1964 Clarence Ivie moved Sampsons Barber Shop back across Walnut Street into the building that was the Genesee Café. He would tear down the old barber shop building between the present Post Office (right side of picture) and the Genesee beauty-barber shop in 1968 and build a concrete-block building for a coin-operated laundromat. Today, the old barber/beauty salon is an apartment (white building) and the laundromat is "The Studio." *Bennett picture, 2025*.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Kay Roberts with the J-K Heritage Foundation Museum for providing the picture of Glenn Sampson from the *Gazette News*.

References

The key reference for this article is the *Genesee News* and predecessor papers, 1888-1968. A digital copy of the *News* is available via the University of Idaho Archives, digital collections.

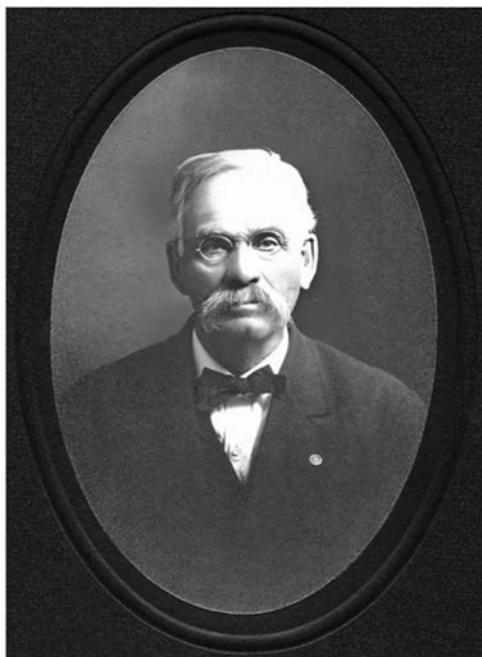
leaving Genesee without a barber to date. Ivie's barber/beauty shop was remodeled as an apartment and the coin-operated laundry is today a studio.

Several beauty shops have served Genesee in recent years. The Pampered Doll started by Cheri Provoncha in 1975 was taken over by Bobi Lewis and closed a year later. The Hair Bender and Silk Worm, owned by Bobi Lewis (later Bobi Cates), opened in 1981 and ran for 10 years where Genesee Fitness is today. Scissors of Awes opened in 1995 and ran until 2005, followed by

Judge Norman Buck

by Earl Bennett

Although not well known in Latah County, Norman Buck was an important personality in our local and state history. According to the *Illustrated History of the State of Washington* (1893), Norman Buck was born in Erie County, New York, in 1833 to Isaac F. and Eliza (Kimball) Buck. They moved to Batavia, Illinois, and Norman was educated in the Warrenville Seminary in Illinois. After moving to Sheboygan



left: Two pictures of Norman Buck. Courtesy of the Nez Perce County Historical Society.

below: The Luna House, an early example of an upscale Lewiston Hotel and later the Nez Perce County Courthouse. (1887) Judge Buck's office was in the back of the former hotel. *Lewiston Tribune*, 2010.



County, Wisconsin, he graduated from the Lawrence Seminary, Appleton, Wisconsin, in 1859. He then attended Albany Law School, New York, and was admitted to practice in all State courts after graduating in 1860.

Buck opened a law practice in Winona, Minnesota, before being mustered into the Union Army in 1862. He joined the Seventh Minneapolis Infantry as a private in the Army of the Cumberland. He fought the Sioux Indians in 1863 and then went to St. Louis where he fought in engagements in Mississippi and Missouri and in the battles of Nashville and Mobile. He was discharged as a Captain in 1865 in Minnesota after serving for three years.

While home on furlough in 1863 he married Francena Medora (Dora) Kellogg. They would have four sons: William Storey, Frank J. (Fritz), Nathan Kimball Kellogg, and Albert "Allie" Willoughby Buck.

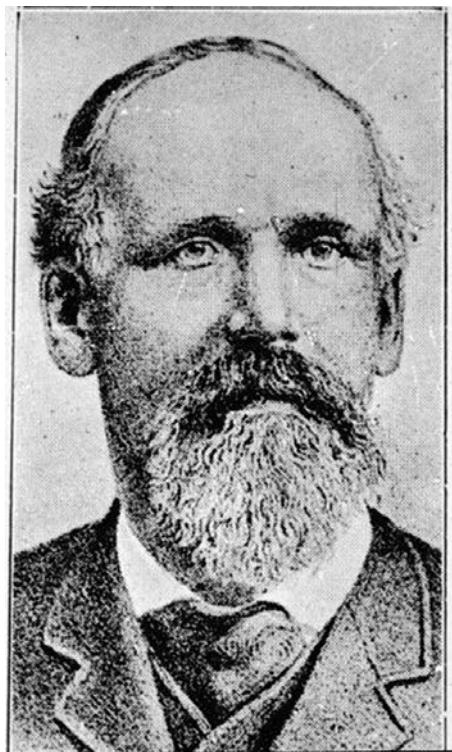
After his military service, Norman returned to Winona, Minnesota, and began his law career as a probate judge and district attorney.

Idaho's Organic Act, passed when Idaho became a territory in 1863, stipulated several political positions appointed by the president of the United States with Senate approval. One of these was the Territorial Attorney. Also, three

justices were appointed for the Territorial Supreme Court. These justices each had a section of the territory where they were the district judge, as well as serving together as the supreme court. In 1878 Buck was nominated for U.S. Attorney for Idaho Territory by President Rutherford B. Hayes and he moved to Lewiston, Idaho Territory. A year later he was appointed justice of the Territorial Supreme Court and reappointed in 1884 by President Chester Arthur. Judge Buck was soon well known and liked by the movers and shakers in Lewiston. He was joined by his wife, Dora, and his sons in 1882.

Judge Buck's office was in the back part of the Luna House, which Nez Perce County acquired for a courthouse. The central wood stove in the office became a place where many Lewiston leaders and the judge enjoyed impromptu meetings.

Judge Buck's First Judicial District included most of north Idaho, including Nez Perce County (Lewiston), Idaho County (Mount Idaho) and Shoshone County (Pierce). The first Shoshone County courthouse at Pierce, built in 1862, was replaced when the county seat was moved to Murray in 1884, and then to Wallace in 1898. Lewiston would be the center of the north Idaho judiciary. As the territory's population grew and changed, mostly due to new

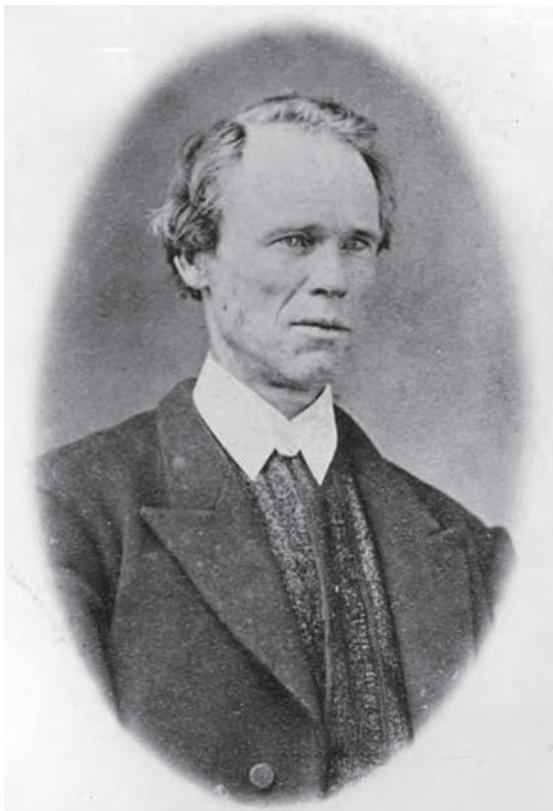


Noah Kellogg who, along with a jackass, discovered the Bunker Hill Mine. *Find a Grave.*®

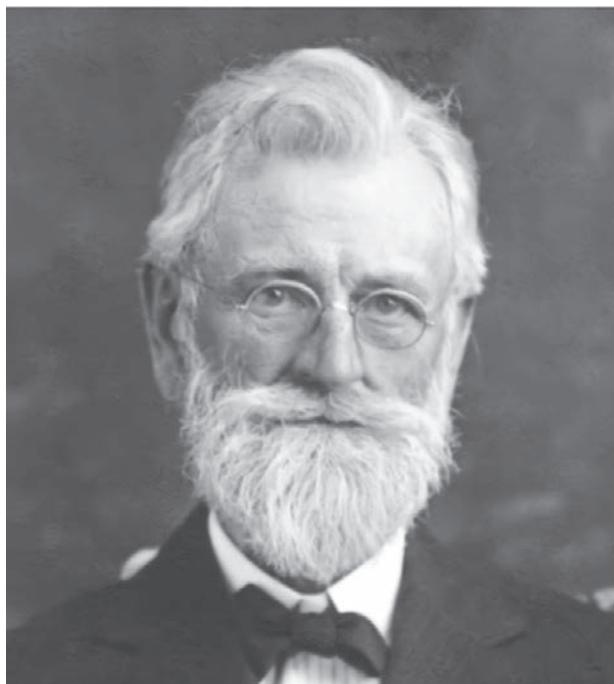


Murray courthouse. Jail is the small building on the right. *Postcard.*

mining discoveries, new counties were formed. Judge Buck held court in each of the county seats and once a year met with the other two judges at Boise as the Supreme Court of Idaho Territory. A great deal of the first district litigation was related to mining.



David M. Fraser was a successful merchant in Lewiston and Pierce. *Find a Grave.*



John H. Evans, the father of "New Genesee." *Ancestry.com*.

No surprise then that Judge Buck is perhaps best known for his judgment in the trial in Murray over the discovery of what would become the world-famous Bunker Hill and Sullivan Mine on Milo Creek above present-day Wardner, Idaho. An out-of-work carpenter, Noah Kellogg, was "grubstaked" by Dr. J. T. Cooper and O. O. Peck, merchants in Murray, Idaho Territory, to prospect for minerals in 1885. Under the agreement Cooper and Peck would get half of whatever Kellogg found. The grubstake included a stray jackass that Kellogg would claim actually found the mineralized outcrop.

Kellogg's later cohorts, Phil O'Rourke, Dutch Jake, Cornelius "Con" Sullivan and Alec Monk, loudly proclaimed that the mineralized outcrop was found after the grubstake

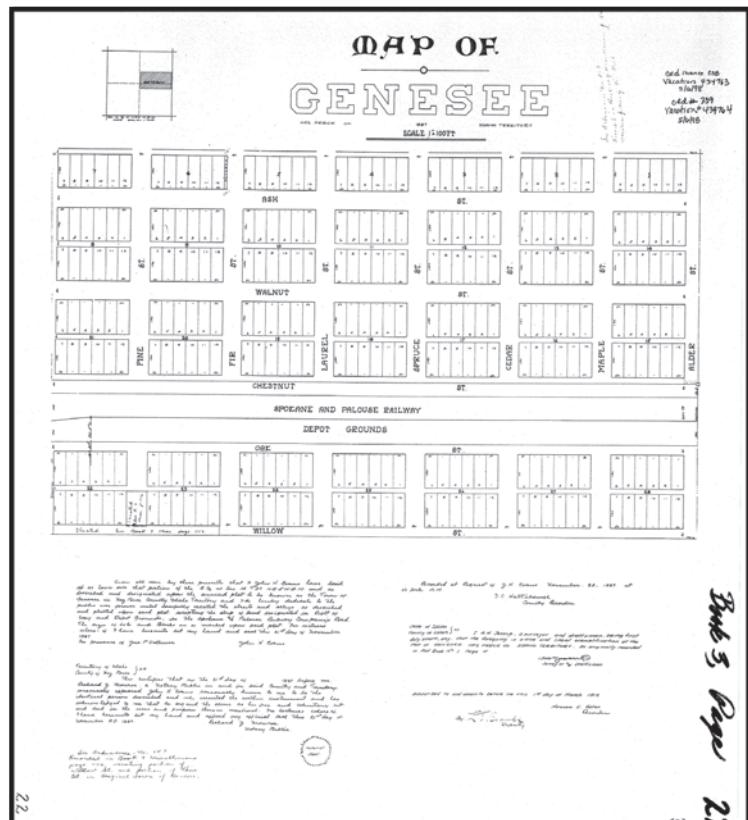


Figure 1. Plat map of the “Original” section of New Town Genesee, by John H. Evans, 1888. *Latah County Courthouse records*.

agreement had passed. At the ensuing court trial in Murray the jury agreed and said that Cooper and Peck were out of luck. In a rare turn of events Judge Buck reversed the jury decision. As noted in the judicial record, "From the evidence of the witnesses, this Court is of the opinion that the Bunker Hill mine was discovered by the Jackass, Phil O'Rourke and N. S. Kellogg; and as the Jackass was the property of the plaintiffs, Cooper and Peck, they are entitled to a half interest in the Bunker Hill and a quarter interest in the Sullivan claims." His decision was appealed to the Supreme Court of Idaho Territory which, in a short opinion, affirmed Buck's decision in February 1887.

So, what was the demeanor of this man? William Stoll, one of the attorneys for Cooper and Peck, described him as follows, "Judge Buck spat a mouthful of tobacco juice upon the floor. This was a mannerism of the judge, the only outer expression he ever gave to excitement within." Seems a bit crude today, but in those days everybody chewed and spat the "juice" on the floor and, although expressionless, Buck ruled his court with an iron hand.

Another interesting case was the murder of David M. Fraser in Pierce, IDT, in 1885. Fraser was a respected merchant in Pierce and Lewiston. He was stabbed to death in Pierce, and the primary suspects were seven Chinese miners who were arrested for the deed. A local sheriff's deputy was on his way with five of the suspects for a trial in the Murray courthouse when they were met by a band of masked vigilantes who hung the five men. When Judge Buck was told of the hanging, he said that the case had been settled out of court. This is one version of the story, there are several others, but all have the same result.

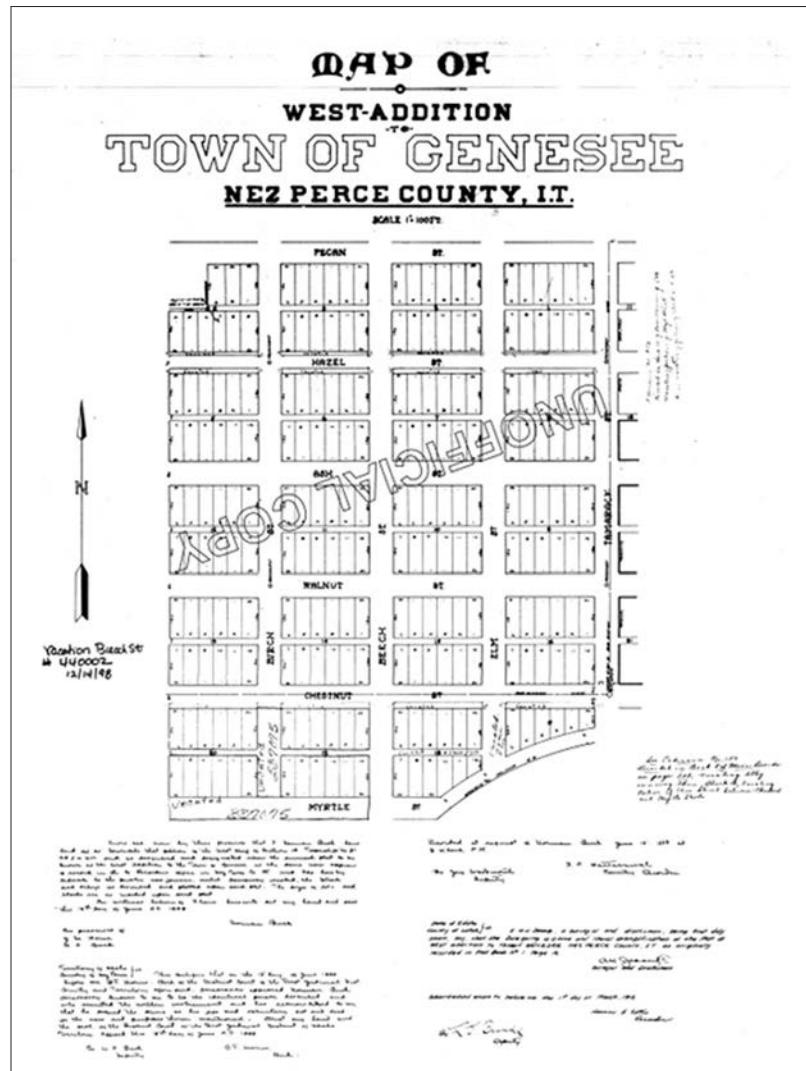


Figure 2. Plat map of the Western Addition to the Town of Genesee, by Judge Buck, 1888. *Latah County Courthouse records.*

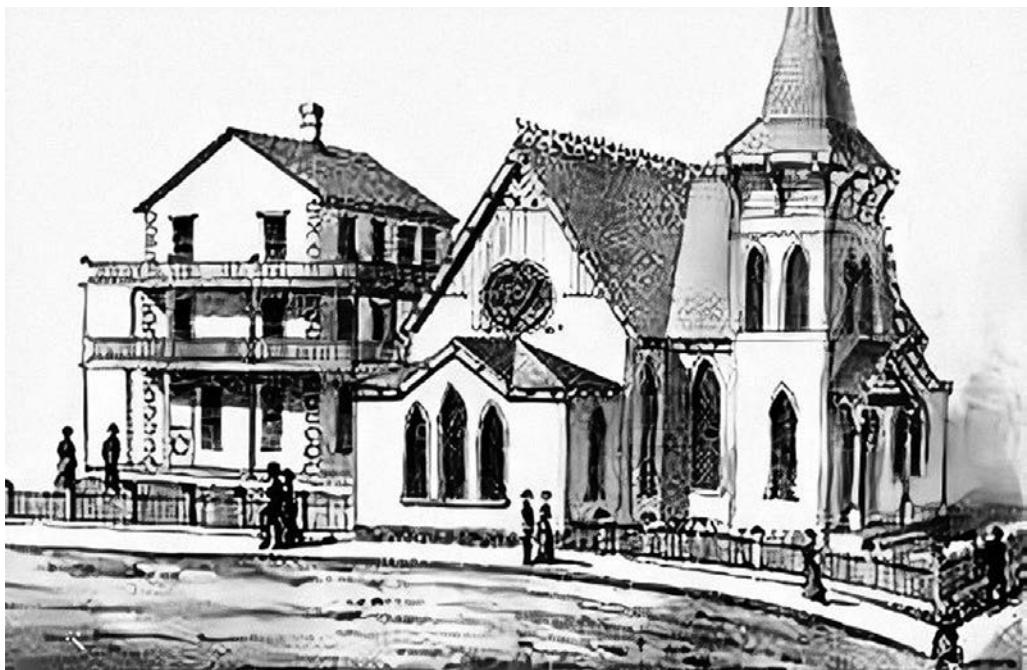
The history of "New Town" Genesee began on May 10, 1875, when James O. Patterson and his wife Amelia received title from the General Land Office, signed by Ulysses S. Grant, to the south half of the northeast quarter and the north half of the southeast quarter of Sec 14, T37N, R 5W. This property was sold to John H. Evans on July 16, 1880. On November 21, 1887, Evans platted "New Town" Genesee, excepting land designated for the Spokane and Palouse (S&P) Railway Company right of way and depot grounds. On January 18, 1888, John and Mary Evans sold much of the platted site to the Spokane and Palouse Land Company under direction of John Vollmer, local agent for the S&P. This was known as "Original" Genesee and consisted of 28 numbered blocks including a northern row of 7 half blocks, each with 6 lots, followed to the south by three rows of 7 full blocks, each with 12 lots (Figure 1). The railroad would arrive in New Town on June 1, 1888.

Having moved to Spokane in 1888, Judge Buck was aware of the arrival of the S&P in "New Town" Genesee that same year. Buck purchased land next to the Original Townsite on May 14, 1888, and platted the West Addition in Genesee on June 13, 1888 (Figure 2). He was acting as the trustee for the original owners of the property, James McNaught and Thomas Oakes, both representing the Northern Pacific Railroad, John Evans, and himself. The title was in Buck's name, and he was acting for the other principals in disposing parcels of the West Addition.

Buck would sell or donate lots in the West Addition for the Catholic, Lutheran, and Congregational churches, lots on both sides of the school, the City Park below the school, the Farmers Alliance, land for the city sewage system, land for a Latah County highway, as well as many lots to our early citizens. He essentially doubled the size of the town.

Lewis Collegiate Institute was founded by the Methodist Church and opened in Lewiston in October 1882. It was named for Meriwether Lewis of Lewis and Clark fame. Classes were held in a small building on the corner of Idaho and Eugene Streets (today's 7th Street), two blocks south of Main. There were two classrooms, one on the main floor and the other above, reached by an outside stairway. Reverend Levi Tarr was the school president and was assisted in teaching by his two qualified daughters. Two of Judge Buck's sons attended, and Judge James W. Poe, Judge Buck and John Vollmer were on the Board of Trustees.

The school bought a three-story building built for a linseed oil mill but never used for that purpose. The building was moved to Chambers (today's 11th Street) and Main Streets and was used for three years as a school and church. A



Lewis Collegiate Institute (later Wilbur College). Methodist Church on the right and former linseed oil mill on left. This was the first college in Idaho Territory. *Courtesy of Steve Branting.*

new church was added next to the school building. The corner was known as Piety Corner, as the Methodist Church was flanked by the Presbyterian and Episcopal churches. Lewiston's public school was just west of the churches.

Lewis Collegiate Institute was the first college in Idaho Territory and had a library with some 1,000 volumes. Unfortunately, tuition and donations from the Methodist Missionary Society

could not support the school and it was financially failing. Hoping for more local support, the name was changed to Wilbur College in 1887 after a well-to-do church member. That failed, and the school closed after only four years of operation. Judge Buck made sure that no debts would discredit the institution. For example, he and the other trustees of Wilbur College raised some \$900 for the college in 1888 by transferring land held in Genesee owned by the school. The church was torn down in 1916

would pit Fred Dubois (R), the U.S. Marshall for the Idaho Territory and all for statehood, against the incumbent John Hailey (D) and Judge Buck (Independent and strongly for annexation to eastern Washington). Buck would win in annexationist Latah and Nez Perce counties, but Dubois would become the Territorial candidate for Congress, in part by removing the Mormon vote (mostly D) in south Idaho



Methodist Church on the corner of Chambers (now 11th Street) and Main Streets. Part of Wilbur College. *Courtesy of Steve Branting.*

and replaced by the Carsow Medical Clinic (today's Serenity Treatment LLC and Valentine, Olofson and Stoffer attorneys).

Another one of Judge Buck's contributions to our area's history is related to annexation/secession. After becoming a territory in 1863 and until statehood in 1890, there were numerous attempts to separate north and south Idaho. Part of the contention regarded the "stealing" of the territorial capital from Lewiston by Boise in 1864 and the geographic/geologic separation of the north and south parts of the territory that greatly impeded travel and communication. The 1886 election for Territorial Representative to Congress

via the Mormon Test oath that he had sponsored. Dubois would successfully lobby President Benjamin Harrison for Idaho statehood, which was granted on July 3, 1890. Giving north Idaho the University of Idaho in 1889 removed some of the annexation fervor in the panhandle.

Buck and family moved to Spokane Falls in 1888 where he practiced law until 1892, when he was appointed Superior Judge of Spokane County, serving from 1892 to 1896. Buck was elected to the Washington House of Representatives in 1908 as a Republican from Spokane County. He was quite ill at the time and would not complete his term. Norman Buck passed away at his home in Spokane on August 20, 1909, at the age of 76. Although he spent many years in Spokane, Norman Buck and family members are buried in Normal Hill Cemetery in Lewiston, Idaho.

Acknowledgements:

Thanks to Steve Branting for information on Wilbur College and Mary Romero with the Nez Perce County Historical Society for the pictures of Norman Buck.

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The Carssow Medical Clinic was built in 1916 on the site of the Methodist Church. Today it is a clinic and law office and retains its original design. *Google Earth, Street View*.



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Maude Town Davis RN

Professional Nursing in the Pre-Antibiotic Era

by Helen Jones Wootton

My mother, Shirley Town Jones, grew up in Latah County along with her 24 first cousins. These cousins spanned two generations, my mom and her brother being the youngest, and the oldest ones being their parents' age. As these older cousins aged and their own children scattered, Mom became the person who managed their affairs.

Maude Town Davis was the oldest surviving Town cousin and managed her own affairs most of her life. To my brothers and me, she was sort of a great aunt who always attended our family gatherings, and always brought her scrumptious pecan pie. I knew she was an RN and that the family respected her advice, and she was one of the reasons I always wanted to be a professional nurse. However, I never knew her story until late in her life.

As my own mother aged and began to need more of my help, she needed me to help her help Maude. Eventually I was the one who managed Maude's affairs and I realized I would have to write her obituary. Interviewing her, I finally learned her story.

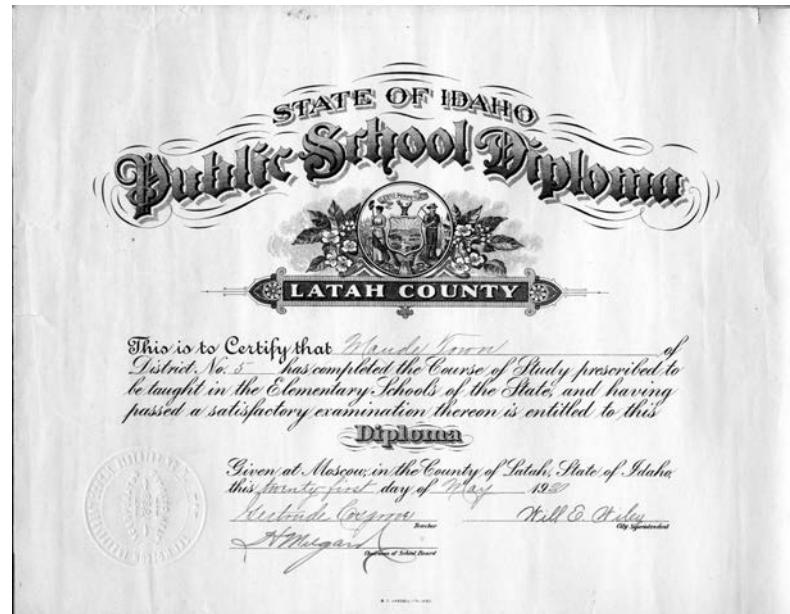
Her baptismal name, I learned, was Luella Maude, but she never ever used that name, just Maude. She was born July 28, 1905, to Sherman and Luella Burr Town. Her parents were living at the time with extended family in what the Town family calls "the old home place." That house was built by Maude's pioneer grandparents, Lucien and Gertrude Finch Town, around 1875. It is still standing, a big white house on what is now North Mountain View Road, and has been lovingly maintained.

Maude's mother died of scarlet fever when Maude was only seven, and she was raised primarily by her grandmother, Gertrude Town. She went to school the first six years at Moscow's Ursuline Academy, then to the old Russell School through the ninth grade. (This was a frame structure on Third Street, not the current brick building.)

After two years at Moscow High School, she transferred directly to St. Joseph's Hospital School



A collage made for Maude's room in the nursing home: her photo, her nursing school classmates, her nursing cap and pin. Photo by Elaina Pierson.



This certificate acknowledges that Maude Town finished 8th grade and can go on to High School, the higher education of the day. Courtesy of author.



After two years of High School, this certificate acknowledged Maude was qualified for nursing school.
Courtesy of author.

of Nursing in Lewiston. After rigorous training under the watchful and critical eyes of the nursing nuns, she graduated September 15, 1927. She passed the tests to become a registered nurse in December of 1927. (Idaho had begun registering and licensing nurses in 1911.) Maude proudly maintained her RN license for decades.

She worked general duty at both Gritman and St. Joseph for two years, then was proud to become a "special duty nurse" taking care of patients in the hospital and home who required more care than was available in the large, multi-bed wards of the hospitals.

Maude met her husband, Cecil O. Davis, when she took care of him after a tonsillectomy. Adult tonsillectomy, even with modern anesthesia and antibiotics, is a bloody, painful ordeal. We can see why Cecil required a special duty nurse!

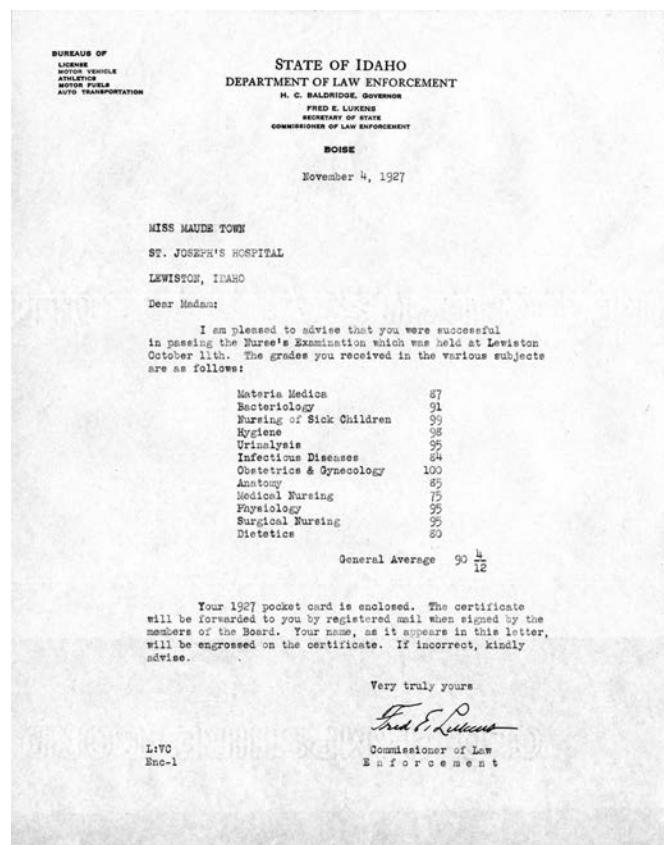
Cecil and Maude married in 1929. Cecil was a heavy equipment operator, running the huge steam-operated shovels that were the earth movers of the day. (Maude told me Cecil helped to build Dworshak Dam and that is what I put in her obituary, but I realize now she meant Grand Coulee Dam because steam shovels were obsolete by the time Dworshak was built.) Maude traveled with Cecil to various construction camps throughout the Northwest until they had to put their daughter in school. After that, she only traveled summers.

After Cecil died in 1975, Maude moved to an apartment in Moscow Hotel, where she continued to live independently until age 94. She particularly enjoyed the young people who lived and worked at the hotel and the ones who delivered her prescriptions and groceries.

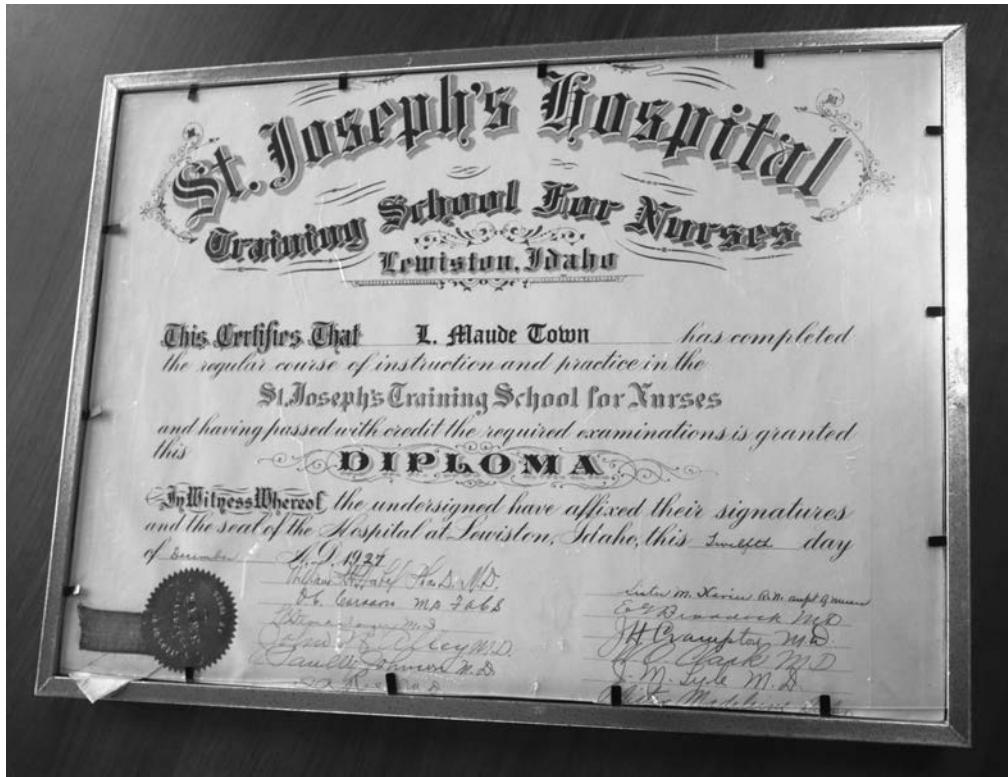
Maude's only child, Barbara Jean, died suddenly of an asthma attack in 1999. Barbara and I were in close contact over the years and she used to reassure me that I would not have to take care of her mother when she was no longer independent, as she would bring her to California with her.

Barbara's death was a crushing blow to Maude, one she would not have survived without the love and support of her pastor and friends at the Methodist Church. She survived, but was

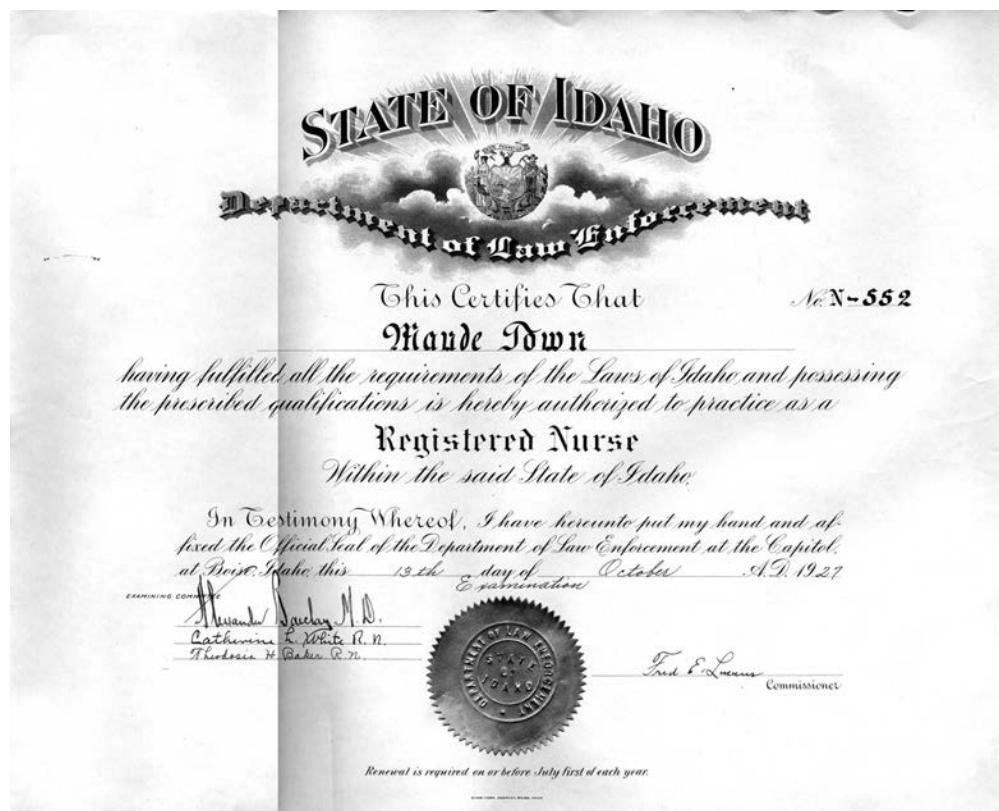
never the same, and I had to take over more and more of her affairs. A few months after Barbara's death, Maude made the



This letter from the State of Idaho Commissioner of Law Enforcement lists the results of Maude Town's nursing board exam that qualified her to be a registered nurse in Idaho.
Courtesy of author.



Maude Town's diploma from St. Joseph's Hospital Training School for Nurses, signed by members of the Board. Photo by Elaina Pierson.



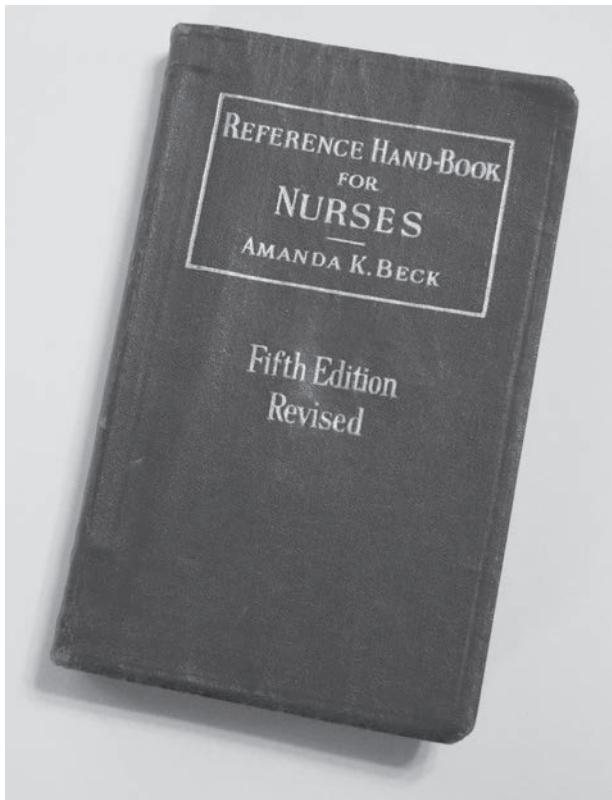
Certificate N-552 from the Department of Law Enforcement authorizes Maude Town to practice as a Registered Nurse in the State of Idaho. Annual renewal was required. Courtesy of author.

decision to move to Latah Care Center. She was still competent mentally and was able to help me decide what to do with her belongings as I cleaned out her apartment. Her nursing paraphernalia and personal records I boxed up and kept at my house. Maude soon began to slide into dementia and the nursing home would often call me to come and calm her down. It was sad and stressful for me to see her decline, and she finally died soon after her 96th birthday in 2001.

I have often regretted that I never asked her much about her actual nursing career. Only lately, as I am trying to downsize, did I take a good look at the things in her box that I had saved these decades ago, and I found there is a lot of history there. I have her cap and pin and her professional certificates, her personal hypodermic syringe and needles that she carried, her portable baby scales, and her reference handbook.

This little handbook is especially interesting. It is literally pocket size, less than 300 pages, and provides a snapshot of medical / nursing knowledge of the day. *Reference Hand-Book for Nurses* by Amanda K. Beck was published in 1927 and was in its fifth edition. It is exceptionally well written, and the author quotes from the findings of well-respected medical conferences and professional articles.

Amanda Beck was educated in one of the nursing programs that were instituted by the great Florence Nightingale (1820-1910). Nightingale was highly educated in a time when women were usually not, and she was skilled in mathematics and data analysis. She was also very compassionate and was driven to take up the cause of nursing wounded British soldiers in the



Maude Town Davis's little red nurse's handbook includes some handwritten notes. *Photo by Elaina Pierson.*



Cecil Davis, the man whose tonsillectomy led to marriage with his nurse Maude Town. *Courtesy of author.*

Crimean War (1853-1856). She was able to use her analytical skills to demonstrate that the high mortality rates of wounded soldiers were not due to their wounds but due to contagion. She instituted rigorous sanitary practices in the hospitals and concentrated nursing care on good nutrition, cleanliness and fresh air. Mortality rates plummeted. After the war Nightingale continued to apply data analysis to a wide variety of health care issues and is recognized as the founder not only of modern nursing, but also modern sanitary practices, modern nutrition, and modern hospital practices. She also established nursing schools based on what she had learned about effective nursing.

Amanda Beck's little handbook clearly shows those principles, with large sections on nutrition and sterilization of instruments and disinfecting operating rooms. The object was eliminating contagion and led to important discoveries as to the germs that cause contagion.

The germ theory of disease had begun to eclipse the “evil humors” theory of disease by the late 1800s, and this little

... the nursing principles established by Florence Nightingale were strong:
Compassion for the sick and suffering;
Providing comfort through listening,
human touch, a clean environment,
and good nutrition;
Careful observation and analysis.

book even mentions specific germs identified with specific diseases, including the typhoid bacillus, the pneumococcus in pneumonia, and the tubercle bacillus in tuberculosis, for example. However, the tone of this book does not give these germs much credit for the disease. They are usually mentioned as “exciters” of the disease, not the actual cause. One important outlier was the increasing acceptance of vaccination to prevent smallpox.

Although the germ theory did support the dramatic change in sanitation and soap-and-water cleanliness, plus the necessity for sterilizing instruments, the treatments and medicines for disease remained much the same. The underlying philosophy is highlighted by this quote from the book in the nutrition section:

“It is true that a high percentage of illness is caused by an accumulation of wastes in the body. It is also true that protein foods leave a higher percentage of waste material in the body than any other class of foods. It follows, then, that an overuse of protein foods overworks the excretory organs and tends to weaken them. The weakened excretory

organs are unable to take care of the waste products, and as a result the system is affected by poisonous wastes which are produced by putrefaction in the intestines. A person in this

condition is more liable to have rheumatism, gout, kidney and liver diseases than one in normal condition."

Beck's handbook gives very detailed and accurate descriptions of the symptoms of diseases, how the diseases progress, and even the dying process. However, the treatments outlined reflect the above underlying assumption of the failure of waste removal. There is a special emphasis on keeping the wastes removed from the body by every route. There are packs and wraps that cause sweating, even blistering! There are laxatives, diuretics and emetics (agents that cause vomiting). There are over a dozen types of enemas with instructions for how to prepare them, including such concoctions as:

Egg white and turpentine enema,
Molasses and milk,
Ox gall-Castor Oil-egg white,
Magnesium sulfate-glycerine-hot water,
Turpentine-olive oil-asafetida-egg white,
Starch water,
Whiskey and black coffee, and
Peptonized milk-alcohol-“pinch of salt.”

In fact, the thirty pages of the “most important drugs” are mostly about those things.

Curiously, there are a number of actual poisons listed. Arsenic was used as a tonic for anemia and chronic disease, with helpful discussions of fatal overdoses. Creosote was an internal antiseptic for purulent bronchitis (more helpful warnings about fatal overdose). Strychnine (*Nux vomica*) is still available (on Amazon, yet) as a nerve stimulant. Doses of heavy metals like lead and silver and mercury were advised for a variety of ailments! No wonder there was an old saying “Cured of my disease, I died of my physician.”

It was desperation that caused the promulgation of such awful “cures.” And a kind of willful blindness at accepting new ways of thinking caused the huge delay in accepting that microscopic organisms could actually cause disease and that there was a need to discover ways to kill those organisms without killing the patient.

Sir Alexander Fleming's discovery of penicillin came a year after Maude graduated, in 1928. Astoundingly, it was an



from top: The portable baby scale that Maude used in her practice. *Photo by Elaina Pierson.*

Hypodermic syringe and needle with cleaning rod used by Maude Town in her practice. *Photo by Elaina Pierson.*

Maude's hypodermic needles (sterilized) used in her practice. *Photo by Elaina Pierson.*



Maude Town Davis *Courtesy of author.*

oddity, soon forgotten! It was not until 1939 that scientists began to realize it might have a use in treating disease! And it took the massive injuries of WWII before they realized what a miracle drug penicillin was.

There are over a dozen types of enemas with instructions for how to prepare them, including such concoctions as:

Egg white and turpentine enema,
Molasses and milk,
Ox gall-Castor Oil-egg white,
Magnesium sulfate-glycerine-hot water,
Turpentine-olive oil-asafetida-egg white,
Starch water,
Whiskey and black coffee, and
Peptonized milk-alcohol-“pinch of salt.”

I have a personal history with the life-saving ability of penicillin. I was born in 1943 and very early on began developing awful ear infections. I had a tonsillectomy and adenoidectomy and simple mastoidectomy when just a tiny baby, all in an attempt to cure the ear infections which doctors feared would spread to my brain. At one point my dad and I both developed scarlet fever. Nowadays this is a simple complication due to the streptococcus that causes most bacterial ear infections, and it is easily treated with the penicillins. But then, before penicillin, it was a dreadful disease progressing to rheumatic fever, which caused heart disease, and also to the kidneys, causing nephritis. Dad and I were quarantined, with a warning sign in our front yard. Eventually as we got sicker, the Spokane health department decided to isolate us in the “pest house.” My grandmother, who had a ranch thirty miles north of Spokane, told my mother, “People die in those places!” and spirited both of us off to her ranch where she nursed us back to health.

When I was 18 months old, I had another severe ear infection that was so bad I was in Sacred Heart Hospital in Spokane, scheduled for an operation to clean out the infection and, with it, the tiny organs of hearing in both the middle ears. This would have left me stone cold deaf. My doctor came into the room the night before and told my mother that the Army had this new drug they were crazy about and he was going to try to get some. He did, it was penicillin, and I was dramatically better by morning.

These dramatic cures by penicillin began an explosion of scientific medical knowledge that continues exponentially today, in all fields of science.

The science of pharmacology and disease was weak in Maude Davis' 1928, but the nursing principles established by Florence Nightingale were strong:

Compassion for the sick and suffering;
Providing comfort through listening, human touch, a clean environment, and good nutrition;
Careful observation and analysis.

Science is strong in modern nursing. Nurses have available medications and treatments unimaginable 100 years ago in Maude's world. But the Nightingale principles still remain strong and are why nursing continues to be the most trusted of all the professions in our country.

Sources

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