



BOUNDARY COUNTY
Historical Society

P. O. Box 808
Bonners Ferry, Idaho 83805

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Museum Celebrates the Idaho Sesquicentennial

"Did you attend Idaho public schools? Do you pay county taxes? Do you use Idaho water? Have you ever found yourself wondering why the University of Idaho is in Moscow, or why Idaho leans so heavily Republican? If you can answer yes to any of these questions, you are living with the results of decisions made during Idaho's territorial era of 1863-1890, a period when Idaho invented itself." These are the words of Keith Petersen, State Historian and Associate Director of the of the Idaho State Historical Society, inspiring the program that he presented to 45 attendees at the Museum on May 24th.

Mr. Petersen is the author of numerous articles and books on Idaho and the Northwest, including *This Crested Hill: An Illustrated History of the University of North Dakota*; *River of Life, Channel of Death: Fish and Dams on the Lower Snake*; and *Company Town: Potlatch, Idaho and the Potlatch Lumber Company*. Keith is the first-ever recipient of the Idaho Humanities Council's award for Outstanding Achievement in the Humanities. He is currently writing a biography of Northwest road-builder John Mullan, who also hoped to become Idaho's first territorial governor.

by Dottie Gray



The Boundary County Historical Society, Inc. is a 501(c)3 organization.

Current Board Members

Jill Nystrom, *President*
Don Morice, *Vice President*
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Stephanie Tucker, *Treasurer*
Dave Gray
Dottie Gray
John Standal

Sue Kemmis, *Curator*

The Board of Trustees meets at 5:30pm on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Meetings are at the Museum, and the public is invited.



Boundary County Historical Society and Boundary County Museum

Time Capsule

Volume V Issue 2 Summer 2013

Kootenai Tribe Partners with Museum



On April 23rd, a public dedication of an expanded Kootenai Tribal Exhibit was held at the Museum with approximately 40 people in attendance. This exhibit is the result of a partnership developed between the Kootenai Tribe and the Museum during the past several months. The Museum received on loan 65 new artifacts, bringing the total number to 123 pieces, as well as over 50 photographs, all of which help to tell the story of the Kootenai Tribal history and culture. These

items belonged to collections previously maintained by Paul Flinn, Freddie Florea and Nellie Ruckey.

New glass display cases for the exhibit have been acquired through a \$5,000 donation from the Kootenai Tribe and \$3,000 from the estate of Freddie Florea. A mannequin has also been purchased for displaying tribal clothing and a full length headdress. In addition, the Tribe also generously donated \$12,000 for the

development of exhibits and educational programs at the Museum.

Following the dedication, a program was held in Portrait Hall under the direction of Patty Perry and Sue Ireland entitled "Our Heritage and Future". Their program showed how tribal members are embracing the challenge to improve conditions for fish and wildlife while working with the community to recognize and honor shared social values, including riverbank stabilization, enhancing nutrients in the Kootenai River that will benefit the fishery, and the new hatchery now under construction at Twin Rivers.

The Historical Society and Museum appreciates working with the Kootenai Tribe in extending educational opportunities to members of our community. We also sincerely thank Tribal Chair Jennifer Porter and the Tribal Council for their generous contributions to the Museum.

by Dottie Gray

Museum Hours

The Museum is now on our summer schedule and will be open to the public from 10am – 4pm, Tuesday – Saturday.

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Resurrection of The White Caribou Bar

More than a hundred years after Fred C. Fisher opened The White Caribou Bar on Main Street in Bonners Ferry, the white caribou once again graces the front window of the bar. The mystery surrounding its travel during the past century is all part of the newest exhibit at the Museum. The exhibit idea has been kicked around for a number of years between Terry Howe, Howard Kent, Don Morice, Sue Kemmis, and other interested parties. The idea of reconstructing the Bar as a museum exhibit surfaced like thick cream on raw milk. An Idaho Humanities Council grant in the amount of \$2,000 was applied for and received. The Museum began pulsing with ideas and research.

Construction began last fall when Don Morice, Terry and Andy Howe, Gene Andrews, Rod LePoidevin, Fred Nystrom and a host of other volunteers began putting boards and nails into more than just ideas. Lumber for the construction was donated by Idaho Forest Group. As the framing continued, energies rose to a high pitch. John Standal set about stripping, sanding, and refinishing the bar behind which Fred spent many hours serving up spirits and engaging conversations. Curtains and canopy were the creation of Marianne Duarte, Carolyn McNeill, Darlene Young, and Sue Kemmis. The menagerie of mounted

NRA Grant Obtained by Museum

You may think that the grants the Historical Society receives all come from historical-type sources. Well, they don't. The Museum is honored to be the recipient of a grant from "The Friends of the NRA". Yes, the National Rifle Association. Funding for these grants is generated locally at their yearly fund-raising dinner and stays local.

The Museum has several older firearms currently in storage, which should be out



animals in the Museum began migrating toward the emerging bar, and of course the white caribou found its prominent position in the window. Using photos of the original bar as his pattern, Fred Nystrom designed the metal signs that hang in the front window. The result is a replica of Fisher's old establishment with the caribou peeking through the front window.

The interpretative boards were designed by Mary Ann Kruger and produced by Fleet Graphics, Inc. The text and photo choices for these boards were overseen by Howard Kent, Sue Kemmis, Mary Ann Kruger and Dottie Gray. The Historian for this project was Nancy Renk of Flume Creek Historical Services in Sandpoint.

The dedication of the exhibit was held on Saturday, May 18th. Special invitations went out to Fred Fisher's extended family members and to those folks who were instrumental in returning

for everyone to enjoy. Thinking outside the box, the grant committee applied for a \$500 grant to construct a display case. Not only was the Museum awarded the grant, but were given an extra \$100 to complete the project.

The next step will be to find the wall space for the new display, then design the case and have it built. Do you know anyone who is handy with wood and has some

the white caribou to Bonners Ferry (Paul Flinn and Tot Smith families). Typical bar fare was served, beer (root, of course) and pretzels, following the dedication.

Our thanks go out to all who volunteered their time and talents toward this project, and to the Idaho Humanities Council for their \$2,000 grant which served as the seed needed for this idea to grow. Our new exhibit is not only an excellent addition to the story that our Museum tells, but also serves as an example of how important and necessary volunteers are for the continued success of our County Museum.

by Dottie Gray

time to share? This would be a nice winter project for that special someone. The Historical Society would welcome your help, as well as ideas for additional grants.

The Historical Society is excited about this opportunity to bring more of Boundary County's history out of the closet and on display for visitors to enjoy.

by Kathy Konek



The Traveling Museum – Outreach to our Public Schools

The Museum Education Committee, consisting of Sue Kemmis, Howard Kent, and Dave and Dottie Gray, were on the move to schools around the county during the months of March and April. The Idaho Sesquicentennial program, "Get Territorial", traveled to all the public school fourth graders as well as Cornerstone School, Kootenai Valley Mennonite School, Mountain View Mennonite School, Home School Cooperative, and McCormick School of Montana. The power point program, designed by Sue Kemmis, teaches how Idaho became a territory with President Abraham Lincoln's signing of enabling legislation on March 4, 1863, what took place during its 27 territorial years, and how we finally took on the geographic shape of Idaho as a state. An evening event was held at the Museum for the public in April, and was repeated during the first week of June during the car show.

Also in April, the committee returned to the public school fourth grades to tell "The



First Trading Post on Kootenai River, shown here in ca.1880

Bonner Story" and how Bonners Ferry derived its name. This is a "pack story" program in which children can see first hand some of the trading post items that Edward L. Bonner may have brought with him to establish his trading post on the north side of the Kootenai River. "Authentic" maps showing such featured places as Senaqueteen and Chelempta were given to all students so they could follow Bonner's story from Walla Walla, WA to Chelempta. The "Faces of History" booklet was also

given to each student during the school visits. This helps them prepare for their field trips to the Museum in late May.

On May 22nd, the committee took the "Story of Naples" to a group of students there. Once again, a pack story with real items, pictures, postcards, and even some "stinky cheese" will bring the story to life. If you haven't heard the story of stinky cheese, ask Sue about it.

by Dottie Gray

From the Curator

The past, winter and spring months have seen the volunteers and myself starting, completing and continually working on many projects in your museum.

When you come to visit, you will see that we have once again moved a few of the objects around; this is to make room for our growing collection. We've had objects donated for the Kootenai Tribal exhibit. We've constructed The White Caribou Bar exhibit. We've paid tribute to the past and present Undertakers of Boundary County. During these months we have taken in many donations of objects and photos, the collection grows daily. We are nearing 21,000 inventoried into the Past Perfect software. The museum has partnered with the Herald in

providing photos for the upcoming book to be published for the All Class Reunion; all classes from 1913 through 2013 will be represented. Museum volunteer, Evelyn Smith, has taken on the project of continuing the class photos to be hung in both the High School and the Museum; so with scanning and constructing, all classes are ready to be printed to hang. If you would like to contribute funds to help print your class, donations can be made to the Museum.

Museum to read and enjoy the poetry written by the 4th graders.

The 2013 summer season has begun and we are looking forward to sharing more of our Boundary County history with the people who visit our community museum.

Come on down to the museum to visit or volunteer. Help us in researching and preserving Boundary County history.

Sue Kemmis



What's Happening at the Museum

The Museum Board of Trustees voted to publish this newsletter on a semi-annual rather than on the current quarterly basis. This cutback is due to budgetary issues, particularly with the cost of printing and mailing. Publication dates will be May 1 and December 1. Advance notice of Museum events will be submitted to the Bonners Ferry Herald and Mike Weland's website, newsbf, and will also be posted online at bonnersferymuseum.org.

Free admission to the Boundary County Museum is now part of our history. Due to rising operating costs, the Board of Trustees voted to charge a nominal admission fee to the Museum. The fee has been set at \$2.00 per person with a maximum family rate of \$5.00. School groups will continue to be admitted free as will current members of the Boundary County Historical Society. All the more reason to keep your membership current.

Stop by the Museum and take in the new Kootenai Tribal Exhibit and The White Caribou Bar. Both exhibits add significantly to the story of our history and culture, and are examples of our ever changing and improving Museum. While you are there, check out the new Main Street entry doors. Bonners Ferry Glass & Cabinet was awarded the contract to replace the old double entry doors to the Museum and Portrait Hall with single doors, and close off the entry to the Annex. The new entries are handicap accessible and much more energy efficient. Proceeds from last fall's fund raising dinner paid for this capital improvement.

A big thank you goes out to Kathy Konek who has assumed responsibility for the weekly "Do You Remember" column in the Herald. Not only does this column emphasize our local history, but also provides good advertising for the Museum. Great job, Kathy.

Check out the food concessions area during this year's county fair. Under Jill Nystom's direction, Museum volunteers

will host a baked potato bar during all four days of the fair. The main course will be.....baked potatoes with all the toppings, including chili. Ice cold soft drinks and water will also be available. All proceeds will support Museum projects. Be sure to stop by for lunch and/or dinner any day during the fair. And, we will need volunteers to help with this fundraiser. If you're interested, contact Jill Nystrom at 267-1950, John Standal at 267-9677, or Sue Kemmis at the Museum.

A big thank you also goes out to our many volunteers. These are the folks that make things happen and continue to grow our Museum. We have a great cadre of dedicated, enthusiastic, and hard working volunteers, but more are needed. Two positions are vacant on our Board of Trustees. These positions are critical as the Board determines policies, procedures, and direction for the Museum. Over 20,000

artifacts, photographs, and written documents have already been added to our computerized data base, with thousands yet to go. Documents are always needed to greet museum visitors and direct traffic. And, the list goes on. No experience is necessary and your only reward is the knowledge that you are helping our Museum and community grow. If you are interested in volunteering, contact Sue Kemmis for more information.

by John Standal

The fourth grade students at Valley View created poems based upon the "Bonner Story," which Sue, Howard, Dave and Dottie took to each of the classrooms during the month of April. All poems are now on display at the Museum in Portrait Hall. Come in and enjoy what the children learned from this story opportunity.

Bonner only wanted to be an
Old salesman who sells tea
Not only to you but to me
Never wanted to be a farming man
Edward soon built a ferry on the very
River that runs through our town
Still beautiful every day of the year
For this you and me thank
Edward L. Bonner who built a ferry on this very
River, yes the Kootenai
River 'tis yours and mine it was made for
You and me.

by Ally