



P. O. Box 808
Bonners Ferry, Idaho 83805

Current Board Members

The Boundary County Museum is operated by the Boundary County Historical Society, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The current Board of Trustees is composed of:

Cal Russell, President
Dave Gray, Vice President
Stephanie Tucker, Treasurer
Dottie Gray, Secretary
David Koon, Trustee
Marj Pinkerton, Trustee
Vic White, Trustee

Sue Kemmis, Curator

The Board of Trustees meets at 5:30pm at the Museum on the second Tuesday of each month. The public is invited to attend.

UPCOMING EVENTS

“Stories of the Rails”

Along the Great Northern Railway tracks in the vicinity of the Kootenai River Canyon, there are places where a careful eye might spot visible signs of small mounds of earth dated from years past. These could be remnants of immigrant bread ovens built of rock near railroad camps. Back in the day, all three railroads provided passenger service and maybe even hunting and fishing opportunities. Railroads were used as “on-the-fly” means of catching mail bags with big hooks along the rails bringing or carrying important mail to and from settlers and places far and wide. With the railroads the need of sternwheelers on the Kootenai River became outdated, and mining, logging, and farming took to the rails providing faster and sometimes more efficient transport of goods.

“Stories of the Rails” is a new Idaho Humanities Council grant awarded to the Historical Society to develop stories like these into interpretive signage for the Railroad Courtyard, which is nearing completion. The grant of \$2000 will also be used to construct a large wall map of all three railroads, postal stops, depots, and logging and mining spurs. Nancy Foster Renk, of Flume Creek Historical Services will serve as our Humanities Scholar for this project.

Throughout the winter months, the text committee (Howard, Terry, Sue, Dottie, and Nancy) will be working on telling the stories that go beyond the dates and facts of the railroads, and delving into the ways they impacted people’s lives and helped the settlement of this place we call Boundary County. Grant deadline is May 31, 2015, so stay tuned to the progress of this project.

The Museum is now operating under winter hours, open to the public from 10am to 4pm on Fridays and Saturdays. Summer hours will commence on May 1, with the Museum open from 10am to 4pm Tuesday through Saturday. Haven’t been in for awhile?? Stop by and see the changes.

2015 Memberships Due

If you haven’t joined the Boundary County Historical Society & Museum for 2015, a form is enclosed in this newsletter. Drop it off at the Museum or mail to P.O. Box 808. Memberships are very important to the Museum, both as a significant source of revenue needed to keep our facility open, but also as means of demonstrating public support for this community gem.

Movie Premier at Museum

Mark your calendar for Friday, March 20. The Boundary County Museum served as sponsoring organization for a successful Idaho Humanities Council grant that funded a new film by George Sibley, “The Fish Between the Falls”. This new film is about efforts to save the Kootenai River’s white surgeon. Mr. Sibley is well known for his documentary films, including recent productions about the journeys of David Thompson and the 1910 fire which devastated the central Idaho Panhandle. The March 20 showing at the Museum will serve as the movie premier.



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Boundary County Historical Society and Boundary County Museum

Time Capsule

Volume VII Issue I Winter 2015

MUSEUM FUNDRAISER A HUGE SUCCESS

The fourth annual Night for the Museum fundraiser was held at the Museum on October 25, and was enjoyed by a sold out crowd of nearly 100. This event has become the major public fundraising event for the Boundary County Museum, and this year’s dinner has proven to be by far the most successful. The prime rib and chicken marsala buffet was catered by Jill Nystrom and the Rusty Moose followed by raffles, games, and a live auction with a wide variety of donated items. The event netted nearly \$8,000, a 50% increase over last year’s dinner. All proceeds will directly benefit Museum improvements.

This event is an all volunteer effort on the part of Museum supporters. Past dinners have funded a variety of projects, including an automated fire alarm system for the Museum, exterior door replacements for energy conservation, and a new furnace in the Portrait Hall.

The Museum Board of Trustees would like to thank the many sponsors, donors, and volunteers who made this event a success. Special thanks go out to Jill Nystrom for donating the food preparation and catering, and to Dave Gause for his excellent and entertaining auctioneering during the evening.

Our thanks go out to the following businesses and individuals whose generous donations of merchandise or cash contributions made this fundraising event a success.

GOLD SPONSOR (\$500)

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Foust’s Inc. & Sugar Plum Floral & Greenhouse
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Dr. Mark Barker
Bonners Ferry Log Inn
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Richard & Elsie Hollenbeck
Bill & Fay Morris
Roland & Linda Hall
Rick & Jeannie Alonzo
Under The Sun
Mudslinger Pottery



Mary Ann Kruger, a long-time Museum volunteer, has announced her retirement. Mary Ann has been responsible for all of the graphic design activities including the design of interpretive boards, displays, posters, brochures, and our newsletters. Mary Ann will be sorely missed. Our thanks go out for all her many years of dedicated service.

The Ferry at Bonners Ferry Sesquicentennial

What a great birthday party we had on December 20, 2014 to celebrate the 150th year of the Ferry at Bonners Ferry. Cal Russell opened the program with the reading of "The Act" that established Edward L. Bonner's rights to establish and maintain a ferry across the Kootenai River at Chulimtah, which made this the first official business of Kootenai County. An agreement had been reached between Chief Abraham of the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho and R.A. Eddy, E.L. Bonner, and John Walton prior to the Act, making all this possible.

Members of the Society provided a bit of fun and humor in a skit called "Boarding the Ferry." Some "footmen" boarded with a pig, a sheep, a duck, and even horse. The present-day equivalent of their fees was charged as they each made their way to the

ramp. For example...a footman alone would have been charged a whopping 50 cents back in the day (1864) but in today's monetary value that would be \$7.35. Dave Gray thought his "talking duck" should get on board free, but the Ferryman (Dottie Gray) charged him \$7.35 for him and another \$7.35 for his duck whether it talked or not. Sue Kemmis needed to get herself and her pig across the river to her mother's house for dinner but found she had to pay \$7.35 for herself and \$2.94 for her pig. Top fees went to the man with the horse that kept horsing around...Howard Kent had to dig deep to find \$22.04 for both himself and his "horse." The ferry ended up leaving the dock a little late!

Bonners Ferry Mayor David Anderson read "The Proclamation" which proclaimed the date and the event. It was signed by Kootenai Tribal Chair Gary Aitken, Jr., County Commissioners Dan Dinning, Walt Kirby, and LeAlan Pinkerton,

and the Mayor himself. Cal proposed a "toast" to the Ferry and then birthday cake (with a photo of the Ferry atop it) was enjoyed by everyone present. A raffle drawing was held for a "one-of-a-kind" framed photo of The Ferry, and Cathy Florea walked away with the prize. Also on sale were 2015 Historic Calendars and Ferry photo holders (Have you gotten yours yet?). All 54 in attendance enjoyed the party.

What? Another birthday party? Boundary County turned 100 on January 23, 2015. If you missed the January 24th celebration, you can read about this super in-the-middle-of-Main Street- gala in the next newsletter!



Happenings At The Museum

There has been much activity at the Museum since the last newsletter. Volunteers and Curator Sue Kemmis have been actively working to improve displays and records for the benefit of visitors and researchers. The total count of artifacts, photographs, books, and archival papers now documented at the Museum total 27,491, with this number growing continually. The oral history project continues, with 206 tapes totaling 568 hours digitized with 90 yet to go. A total of 1,278 visitors stopped in the Museum during the past year, not including attendance at programs. Did you know that 2/3 of the Museum visitors are from outside the county, which begs the question "how do we get our county residents involved?"

Numerous activities and programs have taken place at the Museum during the past 6 months.

The Museum sponsored the premier showing of the film, A Natural Balance – Boundary County, on July 25, with 123 in attendance. The film, produced by the Boundary County Commission, highlights the economy and environment of our county. Copies of this film are available at the Museum gift shop. On September 13, Howard Kent led his History Walk through downtown Bonners Ferry for 32 participants attending the Class of 1964 school reunion. The Class of '64 also donated \$800 to the Museum which funded the interpretative signage for the railroad semaphore now located in the railroad courtyard.

Much to the enjoyment of adults and kids alike, Jack McElroy set up a model railroad display at the Museum in May to highlight the Railroad Courtyard project.

On Saturday, October 4, 32 people gathered at the historic gates of Grandview Cemetery for the first

ever tour of the old section of the cemetery. The tour, organized by the Museum and conducted by Howard Kent, Terry Howe, and Sue Kemmis, visited a number of gravesites of early pioneers along with presentation of family histories and explanations of the symbols found on various headstones. Proceeds from this event were shared equally by the Museum and the Cemetery Association.

Museum volunteers staffed a booth at the December 5 and 6 Christmas craft fair at the County Fairgrounds as a fundraiser. Nearly \$1,000 was raised for the Museum through the sale of books, calendars, cd's and other items from the Museum gift shop.

A 2015 calendar project was developed by Sue Kemmis, Howard Kent, and Dottie Gray as a fundraiser for the Museum. In addition of early photographs of Boundary County for each month, each day of the year has an event that occurred 100 years ago. 200 copies were printed and most have been sold. A few remaining copies are still available at the Museum gift shop for \$10.00 each.

The Museum was recently named as the sole beneficiary of the estate of Michael Ross McCall. Mr. McCall, a longtime collector of vintage and antique collectibles, passed away on September 26 after an extended illness. A memorial service was held in his honor at the Museum on November 1. His wish was that his estate benefit the Boundary County Museum. Some of the collectibles will be incorporated into Museum displays with the remainder to be sold at a public auction and garage sale later this year. Mr. McCall's generous donation will be used to support future Museum development.

The Docherty family donated a newly constructed display cabinet

Curator's Corner

2014 was a very busy year for the staff and volunteers of the Historical Society. It is amazing what can be accomplished by a few individuals. Over 2,190 hours of volunteer time were put into educating school students and the public, the creation of the railroad courtyard, exhibits, programs, field trips, fundraising, accessioning artifacts and photos, and inventorying the archives. The Museum building is filled with fascinating artifacts, history and personal stories for all ages. The collection grows daily.

The purpose of the Museum is to collect, preserve and share Boundary County history. A new avenue of sharing and educating has been a Facebook Page. Each day, the Museum has shared a "Tale" of something that happened during the day and relating it to a photo or "tale" from the past. The response has been fantastic! So many people have enjoyed the stories and have offered further information and family history. We have enjoyed being able to share this way. This year, 2015, Boundary County becomes 100 years old. A lot has happened in those hundred years. Come in to the Museum and learn the county's history and share your family information and photos with us. A big "Thank You" goes out to all those volunteers mentioned. Also, "Thank You" to the County, those businesses and the many individuals who help fund the Museum, it could not survive without you!

Thank you for your continued support!!

in memory of Beverly Docherty. The cabinet was donated to display dresses belonging to Christine Dehlbom, which had been previously donated to the Museum by the Docherty family. The eighth annual spin-in was held at the Museum on January 17. 11 spinning wheels were in action during the event providing an opportunity for the public to enjoy a bit of nostalgia. Our thanks to the "spinners" for sharing their talents at the Museum. Keep abreast of happenings at the Museum by visiting our website www.bonnersferrymuseum.org or on our Facebook page. All upcoming events are listed, as well as news regarding the Museum.

Boundary County Historical Society ~ Annual Membership Meeting

The Annual Membership Meeting was held on Nov. 11, 2014 in Portrait Hall. On the agenda was the annual financial report which continues to show that our funding expectations do not meet our expenditure needs. This year we faced heavy expenses due to sewer and water line replacement which caused the Board to authorize transfer of funds from the Flex Account to the Checking Account. Cal expressed deep concern for the financial situation facing us.

Annual Reports prepared by Sue highlighted many successes in our fundraising attempts, improvements to the facilities, grants, and programs offered throughout this past year. Programs include the Dean Yonque Mining Program, Opening Day Program, Cemetery Walk, Natural Balance-Boundary County program, History Walk, as well as the usual school programs. Our Museum was visited by 1,278 visitors, and the admission fee resulted in \$1,613. Grants in process include George Sibley's "Fish Between the Falls" movie project, the Idaho Humanities Council Grant for "Stories of the Rails," and the final loose ends of the BNSF Grant for the Railroad Courtyard.

Cal Russell, Dave Gray, and Dottie Gray were elected to three year terms. Cal was elected by the Board of Trustees as President, Dave as Vice President, and Dottie as Secretary. Other Board members include Stephanie Tucker, Treasurer, David Koon and Marj Pinkerton as Trustees. The resignation of Jill Nystrom from the Board, left one position vacant, which has been filled by appointment. Vic White had expressed interest in this position, and was appointed at the January Board of Trustees meeting.

A special meeting of the Board of Trustees was held on Nov. 18, 2014 for the purpose of discussing a budget for the upcoming year. Marj Pinkerton and Dottie Gray were appointed as signers on the Mountain West Bank accounts, along with Stephanie Tucker. Stephanie recommended changing the Society's fiscal year to coincide with the calendar year. She believes this will simplify our budgeting process and reporting in a more timely fashion. The Board voted unanimously to write a Bylaw amendment to this effect, and another to change the date of the annual membership meeting from November to February. A special membership meeting was held on December 9, 2014 to act upon these bylaw changes. Both were approved by unanimous vote. The fiscal year will now be January 1 to December 31 of a given year.

At our next meeting, let's have standing room only! The Board would like more input, better attendance, and continued support from all Society members.