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*June 2004*

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JUNE 2004 VOL. 3, NO. 9

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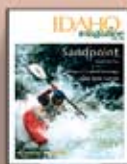
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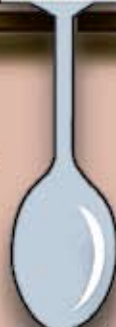


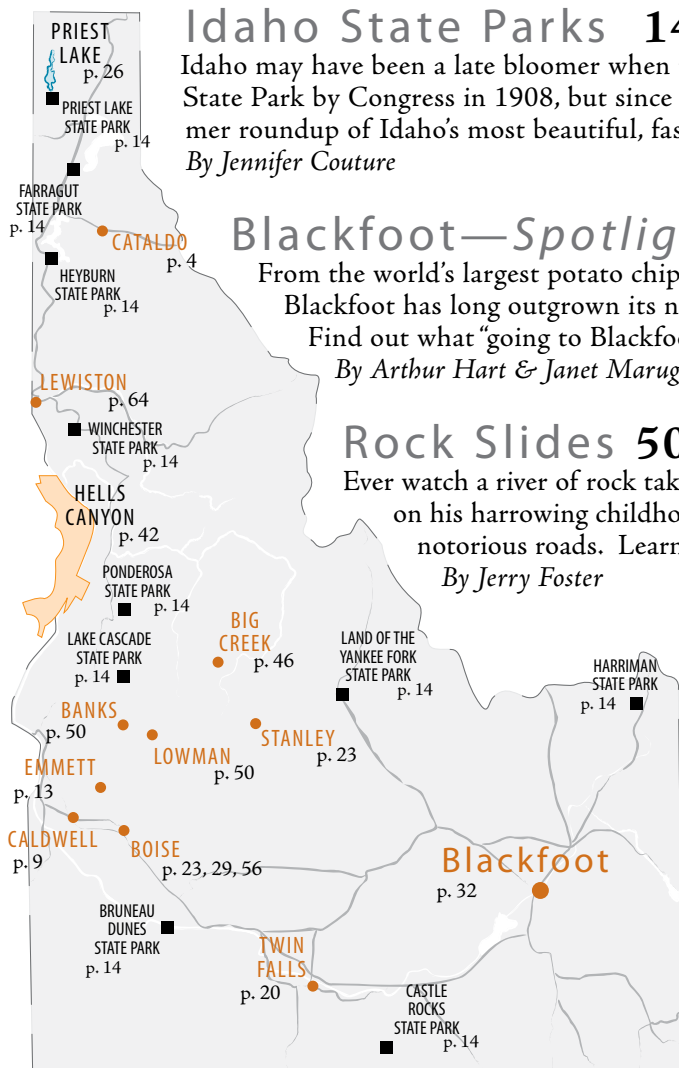
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## Idaho State Parks 14

Idaho may have been a late bloomer when the first state park designation was granted to Heyburn State Park by Congress in 1908, but since then it's done a lot of catching up. Check out our summer roundup of Idaho's most beautiful, fascinating, and popular.

*By Jennifer Couture*

## Blackfoot—Spotlight City 32

From the world's largest potato chip to some of the best outdoor opportunities in the state, Blackfoot has long outgrown its notoriety as home to the Idaho's leading mental hospital. Find out what "going to Blackfoot" means today.

*By Arthur Hart & Janet Marugg*

## Rock Slides 50

Ever watch a river of rock take out the highway in front of you? Jerry Foster fills us in on his harrowing childhood encounter with a rock slide on one of Idaho's most notorious roads. Learn more about this all-too-common natural disaster.

*By Jerry Foster*

*Summer is at last upon us and it couldn't have waited another moment. We hope you planted your tomatoes on time.*

*We're thrilled to have the work of Jerry Foster back in the magazine (Rock Slides, pg. 50). Frequent readers may remember his excellent piece on fire lookouts in our July 2003 issue. This month's piece has all the same charm and twice the drama. Welcome back.*

*The deadline for the 2004 IDAHO magazine Cover Photo Contest is fast approaching, so don't forget to get your brilliant photos to us postmarked by July 31st. Contest rules can be found on the inside of the back cover.*

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Angler tying on a fly on the South Fork of the Boise River

William H. Mullins



# The Cataldo Mission

## *Idaho's Oldest Standing Building*

By Cecil Hicks

High on a knoll overlooking the Coeur d'Alene River in North Idaho is the oldest standing building in Idaho, the Cataldo Mission. Built during the late 1840s and early 1850s by a combined construction effort of Catholic Jesuit Priests (known as Black Robes) and a band of Coeur d'Alene Indians, this large church symbolizes the historical religious connection between two different cultures.

Jesuit priests first came to the Northwest at the request of the Flathead Indians in Montana. The priests, under the supervision of Father DeSmet, soon built a mission church in the Bitterroot Valley. In the 1840s, the Jesuits came to Idaho and a church was constructed on the banks of the St. Joe River, near present day St. Maries. However, annual spring flooding forced this church to be abandoned. A relocation site was selected some thirty miles to the north. This time the mission was built on a hilltop well above the flood plain.

Many of the Coeur d'Alene tribe members during this era embraced Catholicism, partly due to a tribal legend. This legend told

RIGHT: *The Cataldo Mission—Idaho's oldest standing building.*  
OPPOSITE: *An Idaho State Park employee, dressed as a black robed Jesuit Priest, tells visitors how the mission was built.*



PHOTO COURTESY OF CECIL HICKS



of an old Indian chief named Circling Raven, who had a vision that men wearing black robes would some day bring a great spiritual truth to his people.

Using primitive carpentry tools (broad axe, auger, drill, ropes, and pulleys) and building materials from the surrounding mountains and forests, not a single nail was used in the mission's construction. Instead the builders drilled holes with hand drills and drove in pegs. The foot-thick walls were made from grass and mud interwoven and draped over poles that had been inserted into drilled holes in the huge square beams.

When the church was completed in 1853, it measured ninety feet long, forty feet wide, and forty feet from floor to the huckleberry blue paneled ceiling. The mission was designed by the Italian native Father Ravalli, who modeled it



Built during the late 1840s and early 1850s by a combined construction effort of Catholic Jesuit Priests (known as Black Robes) and a band of Coeur d'Alene Indians, this large church symbolizes the historical religious connection between two different cultures.

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ABOVE LEFT: A historical scale replica displaying Coeur d'Alene Indians attending a mass inside the church.  
ABOVE RIGHT: A state park employee answers questions from a group of visiting students.

The next time you're in North Idaho driving down Interstate 90, don't pass up an opportunity to visit the Old Mission State Park.

after the Greek revival architecture style used in religious structures throughout Europe.

The priests named their new structure the Sacred Heart Mission and the Indians called it the House of the Great Spirit. Settlers later renamed it the Cataldo Mission, after a Catholic priest named Father Cataldo who took up residence at the site.

Unfortunately for the Coeur d'Alene Indians, shortly after the church was finished the U.S. Army, under the supervision of Captain John Mullan, began building a primitive road that ran from Fort Benton, in Montana, to Fort Walla Walla on the Columbia River in Washington. This 640-mile military road, which ran right in front of the

mission grounds, opened up a way for settlers and miners to travel to Coeur d'Alene. With the discovery of gold and later silver, an influx of people arrived and changed the life and culture of the tribe forever.

In 1887 Congress created a new, smaller reservation for the Coeur d'Alene Indians, forcing them to relocate some sixty miles to the west. To the tribe's dismay, the Sacred Heart Mission that they had labored so long to build was no longer inside the reservation boundaries. A new Catholic mission was then built at DeSmet.

The Cataldo Mission is now part of the Idaho State Park System and is called the Old Mission State Park. It is located some twenty-four miles east of Coeur d'Alene and a

few miles west of Kellogg. The park is open to the public daily and features a picnic area, an interpretive museum, and visitors' center with a small gift shop. A visit to the museum isn't complete unless you take the opportunity to see a half-hour historical video on the Coeur d'Alene Indian tribe and the Old Mission Church.

The next time you're in North Idaho driving down Interstate 90, don't pass up an opportunity to visit the Old Mission State Park. It's well worth a stop. Learn a little about Idaho's past and reflect on the work that went into building the House of the Great Spirit—Idaho's oldest standing building.

*Cecil Hicks lives in Sandpoint.*

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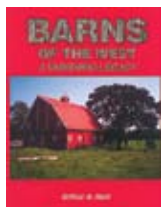
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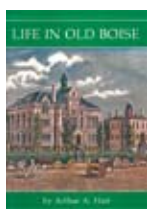
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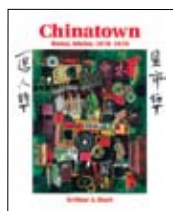
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Arthur A. Hart is Director Emeritus of the Idaho State Historical Society. He has received many awards for his work in history and historic preservation. He is a regular contributor to *IDAHO magazine*.



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# Incident at Morgan Creek

## *Adult Division, First Place*

By Les Tanner

From the *Custer County Weekly Nugget*, July 23, 2003:

*Wilbur M. Pettigrew, longtime resident of Challis, died at home this Monday past, at the ripe old age of 97. Mr. Pettigrew, librarian at the Challis library from 1927-1981, was preceded in death by Maggie, his beloved wife of 66 years. The Spangler Funeral Home in Salmon is in charge of arrangements.*

Everyone in Challis called them "The Twins," but that was just a bit of innocuous small-town humor that everyone enjoyed, including The Twins themselves. They were as unlike as two men could possibly be.

The gene pool from which Will Pettigrew derived had, for many generations, produced tall, broad-shouldered, thin-waisted men. That pool seems to have gone temporarily dry about the time that he came along, however.

In profile, Will looked very much like the state in which he lived, at least between chin and hips. His long, thin neck rested on a somewhat thicker chest, which rested atop a very healthy mid-section. His legs

were rather short, but they were strong and a little bowed, possibly from having to support the rest of the state for so long.

He'd been bald since his early thirties, but whenever the subject came up, Will merely smiled, explaining that the Lord liked his face so much He was clearing a spot on top for another one.

Will's eyes were his most striking feature: the right one was green and the left blue.

On the other hand, Kent Evans fit the description of Will's forebears to a "T." Twelve inches taller than Will, he could easily have been the leading man in a Hollywood western. He was the picture of good health, handsome and muscular, with piercing brown eyes, the weather-beaten complexion of an outdoorsman, and a full head of wavy black hair. From the time he was twelve, Kent had turned the head of every girl and woman he'd ever encountered.

They'd met in the fall of 1917. Will and his

father had moved to Idaho from Colorado that summer; Mr. Pettigrew had taken a job in the mines at Cobalt. Will was living in a small boarding house in Challis so that he could attend school.

Will was the "new kid in town," so on the first day of class, he was the object of considerable attention. Being chubby and short didn't help him at all, nor did the bright red lunch pail with his initials emblazoned on it in big white letters. In fact, the very first thing that anyone said to him was, "Hey, kid, does WMP stand for Wimpy?"

But that was the last of the teasing, because the next person to speak to Will was Kent, by far the most popular boy in the sixth grade, if not the whole school.

"What's your handle?" he asked. "Mine's Kent. C'mon in and sit down." He motioned to an empty desk beside him.

Will's size and shape were of no concern to Kent,

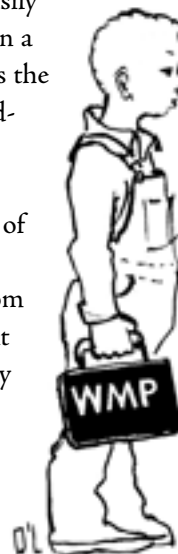


ILLUSTRATION BY DICK LEE

# 2004 Fiction Writing Contest

nor were the oddly colored eyes.

That's the way Kent was, as a boy and later as a man. He had the rare gift of seeing what was inside a person.

The two boys became chums almost immediately. At first, it was hero worship on Will's part. Kent, on the other hand, saw Will as a lonely boy in need of a friend. But as the years went on, the friendship deepened. Will had a wonderfully

four years. As a senior, he was elected president of the student body. And, of course, he was Homecoming King. Twice.

Naturally, girls flocked around him. Much to everyone's surprise, however, he chose the timid Ruth Barton to be his "steady," and the day after commencement, they eloped.

In August, Kent and Ruth moved down to Pocatello, where Kent spent four years at the college there, playing basketball and football, and earning a business degree. In

twenty-four hours, the fire expanded to five thousand acres.

On the afternoon of the 19th, two dusty station wagons came racing into town and skidded to a halt in front of the Sheriff's office.

A man jumped out of the first car just as Kent came out the front door. He could see the fright in the man's face and the stricken looks of the others in the vehicles.

"What's wrong?" he asked. "Has there been an accident?"

"It's our boy," the man said

A man jumped out of the first car just as Kent came out the front door. He could see the fright in the man's face and the stricken looks of the others in the vehicles.

subtle sense of humor, and Kent, forever serious, needed the comic relief that Will always supplied at just the right time. Kent was strong, both physically and emotionally, and provided the support that Will required far more than once.

Will was quiet and intelligent, interested in everything that went on about him. Except for the time he spent with Kent working on high school homework together or out on a camping and fishing trip, Will was a loner. Horribly shy around girls, he didn't have a date until he was twenty-one. He was over thirty when he met and married Margaret Thomas, the only woman he ever dated twice.

Kent became even more outgoing and friendly as time went by. He was Challis High's champion athlete, competing in four sports each of his

1928, the Evans family, which now included two daughters, moved back to Challis. Kent got a job as deputy and, in 1934, was elected Sheriff.

During those same four years, Will had been working at various part-time clerking jobs in Challis. Then, at the advanced age of twenty-one, he was hired to establish a library in town. Without Kent to pal around with, Will spent virtually all of his spare time exploring the nearly limitless lands that surrounded Challis. Before long he knew as much about that country as anyone in the state.

The fire began on August 1, 1950, when lightning hit a dead pine near the headwaters of Camas Creek. It had been smoldering for two weeks when a front blew in from the northwest, and within

breathlessly. "He's lost up by that fire." Kent started to say something but the man rushed on.

"We've been camping up on Morgan Creek, but a ranger came by this morning and told us we had to leave, so we gathered up everything and took off. When we got down to the highway, we discovered that Donnie—that's our boy—wasn't there. We thought he was in their car," he pointed at the other vehicle, "and they thought he was with us. We drove back, but the ranger had the road blocked. He said the fire had crossed the ridge and he couldn't let anybody in. We pleaded with him, but he said it was too dangerous. He radioed for help, and said someone would be on the way pretty soon. But Donnie's in there and..."

"I heard the call," said Kent, try-

ing to speak calmly. "They'll get your boy out of there, I'm sure."

But he wasn't sure at all. That was rugged country, and virtually every male in the county who could wield an axe or a shovel was on the fire lines. In fact, he and Will were the only able-bodied men left in Challis.

"We can take a stab at it, Kent. I know Morgan Creek like the back of my hand."

Kent turned to see Will, who had come over to see what was going on.

"I'm sure Charley'll let us past the roadblock," Will continued. "I've got the Jeep gassed up, and I've always got survival gear in there, you know."

Thirty minutes later, they were bouncing up Morgan Creek Road much faster than either had ever driven it before. Time was critical; Charley had told them the wind had changed directions and the fire was heading toward the area where the campers had been.

During the whole ride, Kent hadn't said a word, but Will understood. Only he and a handful of others had any idea that Kent, everyone's model of the heroic male, was absolutely terrified of fire.

Will had learned about it once when he and Kent had gone swimming. Kent's back was covered with scars, and when Will asked about them, Kent gave up his secret. When he was three years old, a playmate had pushed him into a bonfire. Since then, Kent had avoided open fires at all costs. Even the candles on a birthday cake were enough to bring his phobia to the surface.

Will was astounded by the courage that Kent displayed in agreeing to be part of the search.

They could see flames no more than a mile away when they reached the campsite the man had described. And miracle of miracles, there, sitting on a log as though nothing were amiss, was a small boy.

"Hi," he said as Will and Kent ran over to him. "Have you



ILLUSTRATION BY DICK LEE



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# 2004 Fiction Writing Contest

seen my mommy and daddy?"

"We sure have," said Will.

"They're down in Challis just waiting for us to bring you back."

Donnie took Will's hand, and in less than a minute the Jeep and its three passengers were on the road and headed for town.

And that's when their luck ran out.

The wind stiffened suddenly and the fire began racing toward them almost faster than they could drive. The smoke became so dense that Will could no longer see. He braked to a halt, in spite of the fact that the fire might be on them in minutes.

He could sense the panic rising in Kent, who was doing his best to hold it in for the boy's sake but Will knew Kent might lose it completely at any moment.

The smoke cleared briefly and Will recognized the spot. He and Kent had come across it years before on one of their fishing trips.

"Quick," he said. "The cave behind the waterfall. We'll be safe there."

He jumped out, dragging Donnie with him, but they'd gone just a few yards when Will realized that Kent was not behind them. He didn't want to leave the boy, so he picked Donnie up and rushed back to the Jeep.

Kent had just started the motor when Will yanked open the passenger's door.

For an instant, the two men locked eyes, and Will saw the indescribable terror on his friend's face.

"I've got to get out of here!" Kent shouted hysterically. "The fire! Look at the fire! It's going to get me!"

Those were the last words Will was ever to hear from Kent, for as he said them, Kent jammed the car into gear. The jackrabbit start knocked Will and the boy to the ground, and the Jeep roared off into the smoke.

The fire was almost upon them when Will stumbled into the creek. He couldn't see where he was going, but he splashed on, tripping and almost falling twice. Then, over the sound of the oncoming fire, he heard the waterfall. He carried Donnie through the cold curtain of water, and together they tumbled onto the damp moss on the floor of the shallow depression.

Five seconds later, the fire roared across the creek and up the north side of the canyon.

In the tiny park that sits at the intersection of Main Street with U.S. Highway 93 is a ponderosa pine. It's

nearly a hundred feet high now, and at its base is a brass plaque which reads simply: "In Memory of Kenton Robert Evans, 1906-1950." The tree was planted as a tiny sapling by Donnie's parents the spring following the fire, and the plaque was donated by the city of Challis.

Kent's body was found the morning following the fire by the crew searching for him and Will and the boy. Two miles below the last burnt trees, the car had missed a curve and hit a huge rock, killing Kent instantly.

According to the story Will was to tell ever afterwards, Kent had convinced him to take Donnie into the safety of the cave while Kent drove into town for help. Will carried the truth to the grave with him.

Of course, there was a second witness who could have told what really happened that tragic August afternoon.

But nobody ever asked me.

*Les Tanner lives in Caldwell.*



ILLUSTRATION BY DICK LEE



# The Pitch-Forked Boots

*Today was my weddin' day, and my hubby soon to be,  
Had promised he'd love, honor, and cherish only me.  
But was he talkin' true? 'Cause there at the altar  
I stood all alone,  
Just waitin' for an explanation via his fancy mobile phone.*

*And when it came I heard his voice there on the other end,  
He asked for understandin', hopin' sympathy I'd lend.  
Between his sobbin' and the wail of sirens I heard  
these woeful words,  
The saddest string of events I'd almost ever heard!*

*Real early in the mornin' on this very special day,  
He started on the chores with a pitchfork for the hay.  
But in the dark, to his dismay, he stabbed his boots  
to the floor!  
And there he was, nailed to the spot, some twenty  
feet from the door.*

*With no one near he tried to solve the problem unassisted,  
Then in walked trouble with rolled up sleeves, and set to  
work double-fisted!  
Because it was dark and he couldn't see, he struck a  
wooden match.  
But burnin' his fingers he dropped it on a nest of eggs  
set to hatch...*

*Which then caught fire and spread very fast to engulf  
the whole durn barn,  
And worried perhaps the flames would grow to  
consume the entire farm!  
The animals quickly scattered seeking safety out of doors,  
But my intended could not move, bein' fastened to the floor!*

*He called for help from 911 and told them of his plight.  
Without their aid my hapless cowboy would surely*

*lose the fight!  
The panicked animals knocked him down and  
that's when he hit his head,  
Then findin' him pale and very still, the firemen took  
him for dead!*

*A lot of work went into the rescue to free him  
from that floor.  
They noticed all that kept him trapped was the  
pitch-forked boots he wore.  
They asked him why he kept them on instead  
of pullin' them off,  
And this is what he said 'tween gaspin' for air mid-cough:*

*"A cowboy always wears his boots—it's a  
matter of great pride.*

*Had I to be without 'em, 'twould have been  
better had I died!"*

*The weddin' is off 'cause now I know exactly  
where I stand.  
And he can keep his bachelor  
status and his golden  
weddin' band,  
'Cause it's real clear, to me at  
if ever he has to choose,  
'Tween me and pair of cowboy  
boots—I'll be  
one to lose!*

Bobby Hunter

Bobby Hunter lives  
in Emmett.



ILLUSTRATION BY DICK LEE


# STATE PARKS

By Jennifer Couture

**Idaho may have been a late bloomer when the first state park designation was granted to Heyburn State Park by the U.S. Congress in 1908. However, once begun, the process has provided for the growth and creation, enhancement, and safeguard of the natural beauty and wonders of Idaho.**

**Today thirty parks populate the state system. Each Idaho state park has its own unique and individual character. Just a sample of the parks that accommodate camping and are among the most beautiful, fascinating, and popular within the state park system are Ponderosa, Castle Rocks, Farragut, Harriman, Priest Lake, Lake Cascade, Land of the Yankee Fork, Bruneau Dunes, Heyburn, and Winchester Lake.**

**Visiting these parks will yield more than a camping experience, they will reveal many surprising wonders, including a four hundred-year-old tree, sand dunes, ghost towns, archaeological sites, and much, much more.**



## PONDEROSA STATE PARK

### AMONG THE MOST POPULAR OF IDAHO PARKS

Ponderosa State Park is located just outside of the city of McCall. The park covers most of a thousand-acre peninsula that juts into Payette Lake. Nature trails and dirt roads have been developed for visitors' enjoyment. Within the park are arid sagebrush flats, lakeside trails, flat, even ground and steep cliffs, dense forest and spongy marshland. Camping is available in the park.

The park's namesake, the 150-foot Ponderosa pine, is the most noticeable species of tree. Douglas and grand fir, lodgepole pine, and western larch also grow within the park. Birds often sighted include osprey, red-tailed hawks, bald eagles, Canada geese, wood ducks, and mallards, along with a variety of songbirds, woodpeckers, hummingbirds, and ravens. Visitors often spot deer, red fox, beavers, muskrats, and bear. The park is rich in wildflowers, especially along the interpretive trail that winds around Meadow Marsh. The campsites fill quickly in the warmer months—May through September—so advanced reservations are advised.

Call the park at (208) 634-2164. Directions: Take State Highway 55 to McCall; 2 miles northeast of McCall.

# CASTLE ROCKS



Idaho's newest state park features giant granite spires known collectively as Castle Rocks. Congress authorized the National Park Service to purchase Castle Rock Ranch in November 2000. The ranch and its access to the geological area is now under the direction of Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation partnering with the Federal Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service to manage recreation use in all of Castle Rocks.

The 1,240-acre ranch includes examples of early 20th Century ranch buildings, irrigated pasture, and striking scenery. Some spires rival nearby City of Rocks National Reserve and offer exceptional rock climbing. Other recreational opportunities include picnicking, hiking, equestrian trails, and wildlife viewing. Mule deer, mountain lion, bighorn sheep, and the state's first record of ringtail can be found here. Bird watching is superb, with nesting populations of common snipe, sandhill crane, and sage grouse frequently encountered.

Portions of the park are included in the City of Rocks National Historic Landmark. Primitive camping is available nearby in the City of Rocks National Reserve.

Call the park at (208) 824-5519. Directions: Fifty miles south of Burley on routes 27 and 77 to Oakley and Almo, two miles north of Almo on the Elba-Almo Road, then west 1.4 miles on 2800 South (Big Cove Ranch Rd).

# FARRAGUT STATE PARK MOST BEAUTIFUL

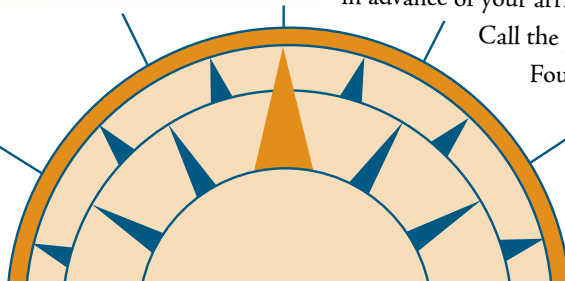
Farragut State Park sits at the foot of the Coeur d'Alene Mountains in the Bitterroot Range. This four-season park offers scenic mountains, pristine forests, abundant wildlife, and the crystal clear, azure waters of Idaho's largest lake, Lake Pend Oreille. Lake Pend Oreille is 1,150-foot deep and offers trophy fishing, sailing, swimming, and wide-open water-skiing.

The park provides groomed cross-country ski trails in the winter, miles of walking trails along the rocky lakeshore, and the opportunity to view the elusive snow-white mountain goat. An amphitheater and spacious group-activity facilities can accommodate large or small outdoor gatherings. Group campsites and day-use shelters can be reserved eleven months in advance.

The scenic forest of lodgepole pine, Ponderosa pine, white pine, Douglas fir, poplar, western larch, and grand fir provides a well-rounded habitat for whitetail deer, squirrels, black bears, coyotes, and bobcats. Common birds include owls, hummingbirds, hawks, woodpeckers, ducks, and Idaho's state bird, the mountain bluebird. The lake provides rainbow trout, lake trout, perch, crappie, bass, and whitefish.

In 1942 the U.S. Navy built the second-largest naval training center in the world on this site. The park has many exhibits about Farragut's role in World War II and other topics. For camping, there is RV, tent sites, or cabins for rent at Farragut. Individual site reservations are available up to 90 days in advance of your arrival date.

Call the park at (208) 683-2425. Directions:  
Four miles east of Athol on State  
Highway 54, near Bayview.



## TEN OF IDAHO'S MOST BEAUTIFUL, FASCINATING, AND POPULAR



# HARRIMAN

## STATE PARK

### BEST FLY-FISHING

Harriman State Park lies in the heart of a sixteen thousand-acre wildlife reserve in the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem.

This sanctuary protects a diversity of birds and mammals similar to those living in nearby Yellowstone National Park and is recognized for its world-class fly-fishing opportunities.



In 1902, officials of the Oregon Short Line Railroad and other investors purchased what is now Harriman State Park—called the “Railroad Ranch.” The rich wildlife habitat has been preserved since the turn of the last century. For seventy-five years, the ranch maintained healthy game, waterfowl, and fish populations, allowing today’s park visitors to observe a rare concentration of wildlife in its scenic, natural surrounding.

Twenty-seven of the original “Railroad Ranch” buildings, from the cookhouse to the horse barns, are still intact, furnished and carefully maintained (during summer there are regular tours of the historic buildings). Fishing, hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking are other ways to experience the beauty of the area. Bring a camera—the Teton peaks are spectacular and there are breath-taking wildflower displays in the sage meadows and pastureland that dominate the landscape. During morning and evening hours, elk, deer, and moose, are often sighted.

In winter, visitors may cross-country ski to the warming house. There are warm springs in the area and the Henrys Fork of the Snake River flows gently year-round, meandering nine miles through park meadows. Fly-fishing on this stream is catch and release only; one-third of the Rocky Mountain trumpeter swan population winters here. Park visitors are reminded not to miss nearby Upper and Lower Mesa Falls while in the area.

Call the park (208) 588-7638. Directions: Eighteen miles north of Ashton on U.S. 20/191.

# IDAHO'S NORTHERN-MOST STATE PARK

## PRIEST LAKE STATE PARK



Priest Lake State Park is about 2,400 feet above sea level, and has an abundance of beautiful scenery and recreational opportunities. Visitors will enjoy the dense cedar-hemlock forests and the wildlife, such as whitetail deer, black bear, moose, and bald eagles. The stately Selkirk Mountain Range towers nearby and numerous streams can be seen.

Noted for its clear water, Priest Lake extends nineteen miles and is connected to the smaller Upper Priest Lake by a placid, two-mile-long water thoroughfare.

Historical references to the presence of Jesuit priests, Indian villages, homesteaders, and logging camps are all part of the Priest Lake experience. The park offers visitors great recreational diversity ranging from boating and fishing to snowmobiling and cross-country skiing.

Located on the northern tip of Priest Lake, Lionhead is a convenient departure point for boaters who wish to explore those pristine waters. This campground was developed for tent camps offering a primitive camping experience. For group camping with up to 50 people, Lionhead is a rustic, isolated retreat. The camp offers a thousand feet of white-sand beach on the lake, kitchen and shower facilities, fire pit, and a chance to see nature at its best. Reservations are taken up to eleven months in advance for this campground.

Call the park at (208) 443-6710. Directions: Follow the signs off State Highway 57 north of Priest River.



Lake Cascade State Park is nestled in the majestic mountains of central Idaho. The lake is popular for all types of boating—prevailing winds on the water make it especially well-suited for sailing and windsurfing. During the summer, rainbow trout, coho salmon, and smallmouth bass and perch can be caught from the shore or by boat. Park visitors may ice fish during winter months.

For world-class kayaking rapids, the North Fork of the Payette River flows to the south of Cascade. Visitors will find a challenging nine-hole golf course on the southeast shore of the reservoir. During winter, there are eight hundred miles of groomed snowmobile trails available to park visitors.

There are three hundred tent and RV campsites scattered around the reservoir. Campgrounds each feature

restroom facilities and drinking water. Cascade provides two group camp areas, Snowbank and Poison Creek. These sites are open grassy areas with few trees, but offer great seclusion for small to medium-sized groups.

Osprey Point is the secluded, yet accessible, site of three group yurts. Visitors may rent two that share a common deck—sleeping sixteen to twenty people. A third yurt nearby adds sleeping for ten. A few tents and RVs can also be accommodated in the camp area. Yurts feature wood stoves for heat, propane lighting, a propane stove for cooking, beds and other furniture.

Call the park at (208) 382-6544 for details. Directions: On State Highway 55 follow directional signage.

## LAKE CASCADE STATE PARK



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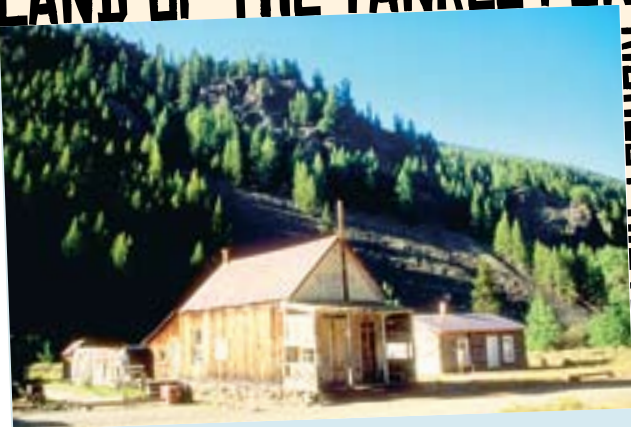
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# LAND OF THE YANKEE FORK

RICHEST HISTORY



Land of the Yankee Fork is located in scenic central Idaho. The Land of the Yankee Fork historic area provides visitors with a chance to experience Idaho's frontier mining history. Managed jointly by the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, the U.S. Forest Service and the Federal Bureau of Land Management, the site combines fascinating history with many recreational opportunities. Although camping is not currently available onsite, the U.S. Forest Service offers camping at several campgrounds nearby.

Recreational activities include fishing, hunting, cross-country skiing, and whitewater rafting on the world-famous Salmon River or backpacking in the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness.

Beginning in 1870, the area attracted gold seekers searching streams and mountains. Within six years, the mining towns of Custer and Bonanza sprang to life. The gold eventually played out leaving both communities ghost towns by 1911—today the bones of old buildings, tales of the miners, and secluded cemeteries are all that remain. The Land of the Yankee Fork Interpretive Center near Challis tells the mining story in a building styled after the old mining mills. Numerous relevant historical activities await visitors who explore this park.

Call the park at (208) 879-5244.  
Directions: Junction of U.S. 93 and State Highway 75.

## —LONGEST CAMPING SEASON— BRUNEAU DUNES STATE PARK



Bruneau Dunes State Park has an attraction unique in the Western Hemisphere. The park includes the largest single-structured sand dune in North America, with a peak 470 feet above the lakes.

The combination of sand, relatively constant wind activity, and a natural trap have caused sand to collect in this semicircular basin for about twelve thousand years. Unlike most dunes, these do not drift far. The prevailing winds blow from the southeast twenty-eight percent of the time and from the northwest thirty-two percent of the time, keeping the dunes fairly stable. The two prominent dunes cover about six hundred acres.

The park contains lake, marsh, desert, prairie, and dune habitats. A sharp eye often is rewarded with a daytime glimpse of lizards and rabbits, or raptors such as owls, hawks and eagles. There is no hunting in the park—except with cameras and binoculars. Motorized vehicles are not allowed on the dunes. The small lakes at the foot of the dunes provide an excellent bass and bluegill fishery. Sport fishing from nonmotorized boats, canoes, rubber rafts, and float tubes is a popular activity.

The Bruneau Dunes Observatory invites a look at the stars. Take advantage of a unique opportunity to see the night sky like never before. Visitors are provided a short orientation program and a chance to survey the heavens through the observatory's collection of telescopes. Bruneau Observatory is considered one of the best "dark sky" sites in North America.

Bruneau Dunes has one of the longest camping seasons in Idaho's system. March often signals the beginning of camping season, which continues with warm weather late into the fall. Shade trees and shelters are abundant in the campground. There are two cabins each renting for \$35 per night, which sleep up to five on bunk beds and futons. The cabins are powered and heated; cook outside on the grill-covered fire pit.

Call the park (208) 366-7919. Directions: Twenty minutes off I-84 near Mountain Home, westbound Exit 112, eastbound Exit 90.



## A STELLAR EXPERIENCE

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The Coeur d'Alene Indians were the first inhabitants of the area now known as Heyburn State Park. The park was created from the Coeur d'Alene Indian Reservation when President William Howard Taft, granted 5,505 acres of land and 2,333 acres of water to the state in 1908 for public use. It was an ideal place for an encampment, then and today. The lakes provide an abundance of fish, the marsh areas provide plentiful waterfowl, and heavily timbered slopes and open meadows are an ideal habitat for deer, bear, and upland birds.

Heyburn is the oldest state park in the Pacific Northwest. Much of the early construction was performed by Civilian Conservation Corps Camp SP-1, beginning in 1934. Camp SP-1 members built roads, trails, bridges, campgrounds, picnic areas, picnic shelters, and the Rocky Point Lodge (now the Chat'ele' Interpretive Center).

You can fish for pike, bass, or pan fish in the lakes. Bird watching is terrific at Heyburn, with osprey and blue heron common. Boating, water skiing, sailing, and canoeing are also popular pursuits. Trails for hikers or horseback riders are shaded by four hundred-year-old ponderosa pines. The Rocky Point Marina offers a public boat ramp, store, fuel dock, restroom, and parking.

The park has 132 campsites in three campgrounds: Chatcolet, Hawleys Landing, and Benewah. Sites range from full hookup to primitive camping. A regularly scheduled leisurely cruise on the lakes in Heyburn State Park aboard the cruise boat Idaho is available seasonally.

Call the park at (208) 686-1308. Directions: Near Plummer off State Highway 5.

**HEYBURN STATE PARK**

**WINCHESTER LAKE STATE PARK**  
**BEST PARK TO VIEW WOLVES**



Winchester Lake State Park surrounds a 103-acre lake, nestled in a forested area at the foot of the Craig Mountains, just off US 95 near the town of Winchester. The park offers year-round recreation activities and has a modern campground. Picnicking and hiking are popular summer activities. In winter enjoy cross-country skiing, ice skating, and ice fishing. Winchester has three yurts for rent.

Winters here are long and cold with ample snowfall. Summers are short with warm days and cool, refreshing evenings. Ponderosa pine and Douglas fir dominate the park. Wildlife most commonly seen in the park includes white-tailed deer, Canada geese, raccoons, muskrats, painted turtles, osprey, herons, and garter snakes. Winchester Park offers a unique opportunity to view wolves in their natural habitat. Park rangers can tell you how to see the famous Sawtooth Pack in a nearby enclosure and suggest a visit to the Wolf Education and Research Center.

Fishing is great at Winchester with rainbow trout (planted annually by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game), bullhead and smallmouth bass. Small boats are allowed, gasoline engines are not. RV, yurt, or tent camping sites are available. The forested campground has a modern shower house, an amphitheater. Call the park at (208) 924-7563. Directions: Follow signs from town of Winchester, off U.S. 95.

Please visit the IDPR website for detailed information on all thirty parks within the system at [www.idahoparks.org](http://www.idahoparks.org)

*Jennifer Couture is the Communication Program Manager for the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation.*



# The Mystery of the Missing Cat

By William Studebaker

Who knows what evil lurks in the heart of a dog or how clever he is?

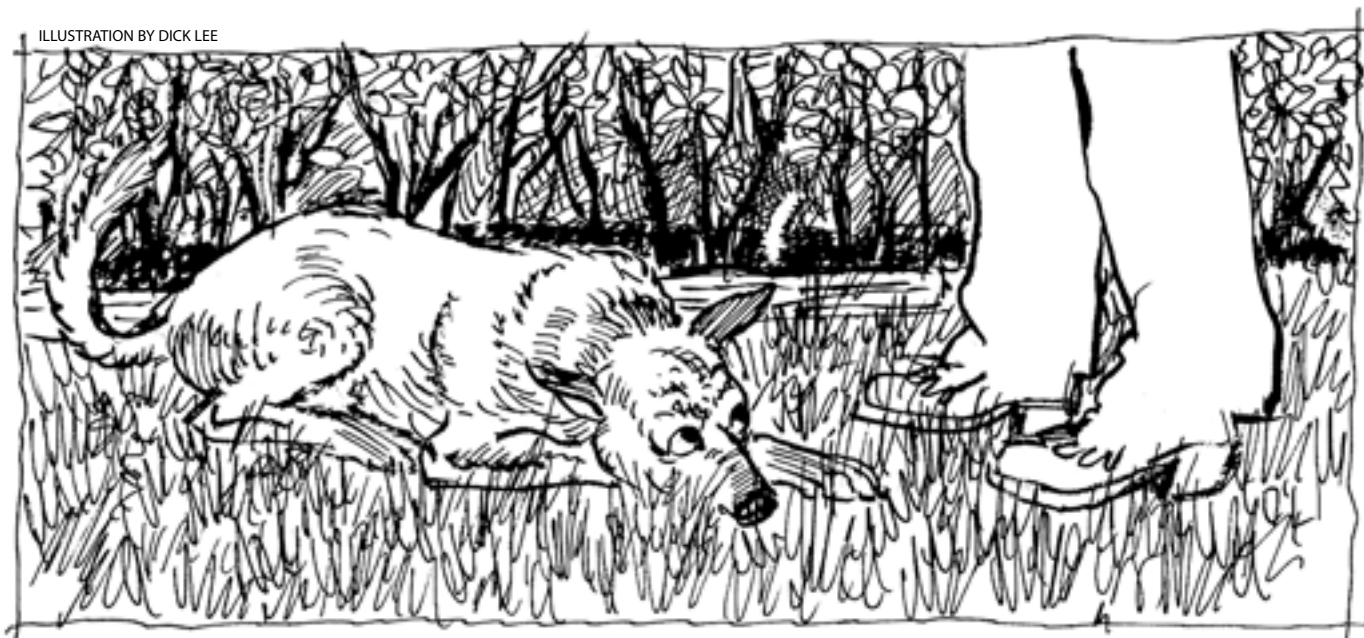
Particularly an old cunning dog with discretion, a dog like Tip. Certainly Field didn't know. In fact he didn't even suspect Tip. But on occasion, I thought I saw in Tip's eye telltale signs of guilt, particularly on the evening we all spent looking for Mister, the missing cat.

Field had already suffered one bad experience with Tip and a neighborhood cat. When Field knocked on the neighbor's door and handed her the blue, sequin-covered collar, there was no use

trying to tell her the cat felt little pain. There was not much purpose in talking about "cats and dogs" either. As I stood behind Field and listened, I wanted to tell the woman to keep her cats home,

[Field] was determined to teach Tip if not to respect cats at least to tolerate them... His theory was simple. Get a six-week-old kitten and let Tip raise it.

ILLUSTRATION BY DICK LEE





to put them on leashes. But dog laws aren't cat laws, so I kept still while Field mumbled out the rest of his apology. Then we turned and went back to his house.

What I took to be a normal, albeit unfortunate, experience between feline and canine became a "cause" for Field. He was determined to teach Tip if not to respect cats at least to tolerate them.

His theory was simple. Get a six-week-old kitten and let Tip raise it.

As Field explained, "You see, canines have an instinct to protect the young of any species.

You know the stories of Romulus and Remus, Pecos Bill? I figure if Tip raises a kitten, he'll get over his hatred of cats."

The kitten Field brought home was pure white, soft, and innocent, and was not in the least fearful nor respectful of Tip. It would walk on Tip while he slept and slap at his ears. Tip responded by snapping and growling. Field or Chlorina would in turn scold Tip. Tip developed a low tolerance and no paternal interest in the kitten.

Tip developed the habit of packing the kitten around. At first Field thought it was playful

and delighted in Tip's cleverness. But it soon became obvious that Tip was packing the cat off and abandoning him in the field, the borrow pit, the orchard, the neighbor's garden. The places became farther away and more difficult to get to.

Each time we found him, he was wet and ratty looking, and mewling pathetically. He obviously had been "carefully" mauled and transported by a large slobbering dog. Tip followed along on these forays, but he didn't seem to share in the joy of finding Mister.

Finally, Field would not



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allow Tip to pack Mister around the house or yard. This changed Tip's behavior, outwardly at least. He gave up trying to pack Mister. Instead he walked astraddle of him. Everywhere the cat went, Tip was sure to follow. With his front legs bowed, he straddled the cat and walked along, his lower jaw quivering. Mister seemed quite content with Tip's attention, until one day when I walked into the backyard and let the gate slam.

come over and help him and Chlorina look for Mister.

"We've looked everywhere," said Field. "Someone must've stolen him. He's simply not around. Tip couldn't have carried him off. He's been tied up in the backyard all day. I didn't untie him until we started looking for Mister."

We looked until dark, but with no more success than he and Chlorina had. As we walked into the yard, I realized Tip had not followed us. He was lying

It had to be simpler than that.

I looked at Tip and what I'd missed before, I now saw: His nose was crusted with mud and his feet were caked with dirt. I scanned the yard around Tip's doghouse. Sure enough, Chlorina's rose garden dipped into one corner of his territory. The soil looked suspiciously loose and fluffy.

I didn't know what I was looking for, but when I saw it, I wasn't surprised. I'd half surmised that Tip had buried

At first Field thought it was playful and delighted in Tip's cleverness. But it soon became obvious that Tip was packing the cat off and abandoning him in the field, the borrow pit, the orchard, the neighbor's garden. The places became farther away and more difficult to get to.

Mister, surprised by the noise, bolted across the yard. His sudden movement triggered Tip, and he dashed after Mister seizing him in the middle of the back. I thought for certain it was going to be a repeat of "Tip and the cat with the blue sequin collar." But Tip stopped suddenly, dropped Mister and started licking him. Tip wasn't exactly wagging his tail, but he gave it a few uneasy flips now-and-again.

Mister was lame for a couple weeks, but he was alive. Then one evening Field telephoned and asked if I would

down with his head on his front legs and paws—his dirty toenails fully flexed. As we walked by, he rolled over on his side as though he were going to sleep. But I could see his open eye following us, and when I spoke to him, his eye stopped and his tail gave an uneasy flip.

As it stood, the disappearance of Mister was a mystery. If he had been carried outside the yard by Tip, I'd have to believe Tip was a hairy Houdini who could unchain himself, then could and would rechain himself, and feign boredom.

Mister and, sure enough, he had. Just inside the garden. I saw a white cat's tail poking out of the ground, wiggling weakly. I hollered at Field and Chlorina, who carefully unearthed the kitten. The shallow grave had not been heavy enough to suffocate him.

Tired and wet from Tip's slobbers, it mewed. As we marched passed Tip, his ears drooped and he gave out a reckoning sigh. More was to come.

*William Studebaker lives in Twin Falls.*

# Motorcycling With (Com)Passion

By Donna Geisler

Get twenty thousand motorcyclists together to support a cause and you can make an impact. That's the drive behind Jerome Eberharter's newly inaugurated Ride to Read Rally, which brings together motorcyclists for an all-day ride from Boise to Stanley and back, with a few "rest stops" and lunch at Redfish Lake along the way. Last year, Eberharter, president and CEO of Boise-based White Cloud Coffee, saw an opportunity to combine his love of motorcycling and his interest in literacy into a fun fundraising opportunity. Granted, Eberharter is far from having twenty thousand riders, but give him a few years, and let's talk again.

After all, it took two decades for

the Ride for Kids—which organizes motorcycle rallies in cities around the country to raise millions of dollars each year for pediatric brain cancer research—to amass the seventeen thousand riders it now boasts. Similarly, the Love Ride, which began in earnest in Los Angeles in 1984, today attracts high-profile celebrities and proclaims itself the largest one-day motorcycle event in the world, with more than twenty thousand riders last year.

Kicking off its first year in 2003, the Ride to Read Rally brought together forty-four riders from around the region and raised \$4,000 for adult and child literacy programs. "This year our goal is two hundred

riders and a lot more money," says Eberharter, who hasn't stopped campaigning for the project since last year's event.

Ride to Read has to compete with a number of motorcycle events for attention. In fact, there are so many rides and rallies that the Southwest Idaho Motorcycle Club coordinates an annual calendar to keep date conflicts to a minimum and the motorcycle community informed of all the ride opportunities throughout the season.

It may surprise you that more than forty-six thousand motorcyc-

*Last stop photo op at the Stanley Library.*



## fun & games

cles are registered in the State of Idaho. According to Ron Shepard, coordinator of Idaho's Motorcycle Safety Programs, during each of the summer months, more than six hundred motorcycle instructional permits are issued.

People get hooked on motorcycling for various reasons, and many take it up when they are young. Some actually make it their vocation, such as semi-retired Harry Kindelberger, who spent twenty-five years with the Boise City Police Department.

long-haired, bearded, leather-clad chopper types are still plentiful, you'll also see politicians—Idaho's first family, Governor and Mrs. Kempthorne, both ride Harleys—lawyers, accountants, engineers, statisticians, IT professionals, and, well, writers, riding the scenic byways around the state. According to the 2003 Media Audit, more than half of the motorcycle owners in the Treasure Valley are between the ages of thirty-five and fifty-four with incomes over \$50,000 per year.

she says. "This way provides an enjoyable social event. It also provides an opportunity for people new to riding to explore Idaho. There are so many scenic areas."

Shepard's love of "the sheer exhilaration and freedom that you can't experience in anything else you do" that keeps him riding and teaching motorcycle safety is echoed by fellow riders. Greg Feeler, an IT manager for Employers Resource in Boise, adds that, no matter your brand or style of riding, there's a commonality

The lure of the road, the spiritual and healing nature of motorcycling, the love of the machine—all have found their way into the literature of our culture...

Kindelberger started out as a motorcycle escort for funerals and special events. "When I talked the Boise Police into having full-time motorcycle officers in 1976, there was one of us, and that was me." Today they have eleven full-time motorcycle officers.

The face of motorcycling is also changing. While the stereotypical

These are people with the resources to give to charitable causes, and what better way to do it than while participating in an activity they enjoy.

Participating in a rally, says Mary Rockrohr, co-owner of Cycle Nuts and Bolts in Garden City, serves multiple purposes. "Everyone is always looking to help somebody,"

in motorcyclists. "For every one of the serious riders I know, riding is a passion that changes their fundamental nature," he asserts. "They are happier people because they have something to be passionate about."

Feeler, who also serves on the national board of directors of the BMW Motorcycle Owners of

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America, rides across the country to participate in national rallies and just for the sheer enjoyment of exploring lesser-traveled roads with time to reflect on his thoughts. For him, there is a spiritual and healing quality about riding, particularly on long distances. With motorcyclists, he feels “our one common characteristic is that we feel fundamentally that we have no control over our lives. Motorcycling is one area where you can feel that you have significant control, not absolutely, but you can consciously take control of your life and assume the risk of it through riding.”

The lure of the road, the spiritual and healing nature of motorcycling, the love of the machine—all have found their way into the literature of our culture and created a calling to those who ride to write about it. That connection between the passion for motorcycling, writing, and reading bring full circle the connection that drove Eberharter to create the Ride to Read Rally with no prior experience

*The way home. Mt. Heyworth watches.*

with fundraising or event planning.

Rockrohr sympathizes with rally organizers. As the sponsoring dealer for the Intermountain chapter of the Harley Owners Group, she knows from experience the difficulties they face. “They are always challenging—trying to orchestrate the camping areas and road closures, suddenly there’s problems with the caterer and you are scrambling to get the glitches out.” In the end it is all worthwhile. “There’s satisfaction that you have helped other individuals who benefit from the organization.” Rockrohr’s own favorite causes are focused on children. “So many don’t have the opportunity to live a normal existence, never mind the blessed existence I have.”

While rides and rallies may be common in southwest Idaho—its long riding season and mountainous terrain make it a veritable motorcycle heaven—few rallies are organized around causes by individuals like Eberharter, who hopes the passion for motorcycling is enough to bring riders from around the state together

for his cause. Now deep in the throes of planning the second Ride to Read Rally, Eberharter remains enthusiastic about the event’s potential success. With the first year behind him and a few stout-hearted volunteers to help, Eberharter continues on his mission to build interest and get riders registered for the June 12th ride.

Feeler, who participated in last year’s Ride to Read, plans to organize a team to attend this year’s rally. “It’s a great excuse to ride,” he says, adding that, for those like himself who are passionate about motorcycling, “the idea that there is a bowl of chili waiting for you 150 miles away is reason enough to go for a ride.”

For more information on the Ride to Read Rally, email [ride2read@whitecloudcoffee.com](mailto:ride2read@whitecloudcoffee.com), or call Jerome Eberharter at 208-322-1166.

*Donna Geisler lives in Boise and is a volunteer with Ride to Read Rally. She and her husband purchased their bike last year so they wouldn’t get left behind on rally day.*



# The Magnificent Quilting Ladies of Priest Lake

By Marylyn Cork

There are quilts, and there are works of art that happen to be quilts! And that's the only fair way to describe the kind of bed covering that's created each winter by a little band of needle-handly women in the resort community of Priest Lake. Each quilt they craft is unique, a one-of-a-kind fabric masterpiece. Each has a Priest Lake theme, and each is sold at auction in the spring to raise money for charity. While the charities have ranged from local causes such as the Priest Lake EMT Association to the elementary school to the library and more, primarily quilt proceeds have benefitted the old Coolin Schoolhouse, now the Coolin Civic Center. That somehow seems appropriate. The ladies are utilizing an historic skill to salvage and maintain an historic structure important to the community as a meeting hall.

Starting in 1990, the ladies

*"A Walk In The Woods."*  
Clockwise from left: Quilters Sonja Maloney, Charlotte Jones, Diane Munk, Lucy Storro, Louise Mehlert, and Roberta Knauth.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARYLYN CORK

began stitching and raffling an annual quilt to preserve the old schoolhouse, which the community was in danger of losing. The idea was Lucy Storro's, a long-time lake resident who is still one of the quilters. Tickets were sold to anyone interested in buying.

Before much time had passed, however, Priest Lakers were agreeing that the raffles didn't do justice to the beautiful works of art the ladies were turning out. The Priest Lake Chamber of Commerce then

ery. Applique is the technique of choice, but the embellishments are many, ranging from delicate embroidery that looks for all the world like larch needles, for example, to beads, ribbons, lace, fabric painting, etc. Nothing is verboten if it works in a quilt, and the ladies aren't afraid to innovate.

Last year's "art quilt," actually a four-foot by six-foot wall hanging, was the first "quilt" the ladies created that wasn't large enough to cover a bed. A new member of the

Each quilter was given a vertical strip of cloth measuring nine inches wide by four feet long and a copy of a color photograph of the lake by local photographer Jim Holman. The assignment for each was to interpret a section of the photograph. Any quilting technique from applique on was acceptable and each lady was free to let her imagination run rampant. As always, the special touches were captivating. On a tree branch, Louise Mehlert perched a tiny

Starting in 1990, the ladies began stitching and raffling an annual quilt to preserve the old schoolhouse, which the community was in danger of losing.

offered a venue more reflective of the true value of the work. The ladies now design and create a quilt each year that the chamber promotes as a special item in its "People Helping People Charity Auction," held on Memorial Weekend. Over the past six years, the quilts have brought in almost \$16,000, more than enough to significantly help the Coolin Civic Center keep up with the repairs and maintenance the old schoolhouse needed.

Motifs feature the attributes for which Priest Lake is famous—bears and huckleberries, fish and outdoor recreation, gorgeous scen-

group, Karen Walters, "talked us into it," says Sonya Maloney, the group's coordinator and spark plug. "It was an experiment," she says. The project taxed the ladies' creativity and skill, but turned out well and sold for \$1,500.

owl—actually a button purchased at the five and dime. Karen used a fringed upholstery trim for needles, sewing it to limbs fashioned from black braid. "Sure looks like branches," her colleagues agreed.

Lucy enlisted Priest Lake art-

*This quilt is actually a wall hanging designed from a photograph by Rick Holman, held in foreground by Sonja Maloney.*





*This quilt is called the Priest Lake Album Quilt because it is an adaptation of the Baltimore Album pattern.*

ist Betti Jemison to paint Bishop's Marina, the Leonard Paul Store, and other structures shown in the photo on a square of silk, which she appliqued to her strip. The eight strips, quilted and sewn together to make the wall hanging, did look remarkably like the photograph.

The previous year the ladies had also departed from tradition by having their design, adapted from a pattern called "A Walk In The Woods," machine quilted. The quilting was the donated artistry of Roberta Knauth, who owns a quilting shop called Cedar Mountain Design & Fabrication in Priest River, but who happens to be a member of the Priest Lake Chamber of Commerce. She used a Legacy quilting machine with a fourteen-foot bed that rode over the quilt as she guided it free hand at the rate of eighteen hundred stitches per minute.

"I put in thirty-seven hours on the machine," Knauth noted, "and two thousand yards of thread." Close inspection revealed that the black bear shown peering into a camper's tent, from which a pair of alarmed human eyes stared back, had curly hair. Bruin's 'perm' was effected by Knauth's expertise on the Legacy.

This year, the ladies are again hand quilting (which can



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARYLYN CORK

require as much as three hundred hours of their time), adapting a design known as the Baltimore Album. Their "Priest Lake Album" consists of twenty-five blocks of a yellow fabric so pale it might better be considered a cream color, and again applique is the overall technique. One block, sporting a frog and a lily pad, features a bit of reverse applique as well. Other blocks depict deer, bear, moose, trout, mountains and lake, wildflowers, etc. An Idaho state block shows a mountain bluebird and a syringa blossom with a center of tiny yellow beads applied to a cutout

in the shape of the state. Quilter Charlotte Jones' sister, Helen Brown, embroidered the block's Idaho insignia on an embroidery machine, and also a butterfly Charlotte appliqued to another block. The blocks sewn together and bordered with a strip of fabric ornamented by huckleberries and huckleberry leaves form a queen-sized quilt that measures ninety-five by ninety-five inches. The ladies are hoping it will break their auction record of \$3,800 for a single quilt.

*Marylyn Cork lives in Priest River.*



# The Birth of a RAT

## *Remote Access Terminal*

By Kay Kelley

It's just logical. Becky Logue loves boating. A competent boater understands the importance of navigation. When you are at sea, and a problem arises, the navigator steers the crew to safe harbor.

So it follows that when the same deductive skills are applied to a work situation, and a solution comes to mind, the result is simple, clear, and efficient.

Each time Becky, a Registered Dental Hygienist (RDH) for sixteen years, was with a patient and needed to have information regarding that patient's teeth recorded into the chart, it was necessary to call the dentist's assistant to write in the pertinent information. To Becky, this was not a direct course of action. Two people required for a simple task.

So she asked around. She asked suppliers. She asked dentists. She pored over catalogues and checked out the web. Someone somewhere had surely thought up a method of allowing the RDH to... Access a

*The RAT and its operator.*



ANN HOTTINGER

screen? A computer? Record the needed information without the use of an assistant? “Not so,” was the standard reply, usually accompanied with a slight smirk. “When a better mousetrap squeaks through, we’ll call you first.”

As the years rolled past, Becky talked the problem over with her husband, Mert, a man with a distinct understanding and comprehension of all things mechanical. She discussed an idea with her father. As a picture of the solution began to form in her mind, she went once again into the marketplace, but found nothing to fill the void. More

forming to HIPPA rules for patient confidentiality.

The first step was a pictorial rendering of the idea. The next was a visit with Ken Pederson, a patent attorney. “See if there’s anything like this out there,” she asked. While Pederson was researching the idea, Becky contacted Cliff Seusy of Airtrack Electronics to take the drawings from the pictorial stage to a working model.

Word came back from Ken Pederson that nothing under patent was similar to Becky’s idea: a legal go-ahead for development. The next steps taken were to file for a patent

information received from the RAT just as it would from a mouse or keyboard, and the information is transcribed to a screen within easy view of the RDH who is able to check it for accuracy immediately.

“Sometimes it seems as if this whole idea has been choreographed,” Becky said. “It’s as though doors are opening as we make our way along. It’s weird to be in a business thing, and meet people with the same goals—sometimes the same dreams and nightmares—but it’s happening.”

Recently Becky and Mert took their blended family, Julia, Mattie,

Finally Becky’s dad, Richard Friesen, laid it on the line: “Becky,” said he, “get up out of that chair and invent it.”

discussions, more searches. Finally Becky’s dad, Richard Friesen, laid it on the line: “Becky,” said he, “get up out of that chair and invent it.” And so that is exactly what she did.

“What if I could access with my foot a device to record directly into the file my observations of a patient’s teeth?” she mused. “Both my hands would remain free to complete the examination, the dental assistant would no longer need to interrupt her aid to the dentist to write in the periodontal chart, and the patient’s privacy would be further protected by my not having to relay information orally to the assistant—an advantage in con-

and to form “Beckmer Products, Inc.”

In the meantime, Seusy came up with a functioning prototype, and the Remote Access Terminal (RAT) was on the floor and in operation.

An on-the-floor RAT operates in a manner similar to an on-the-desk mouse. There is a joystick to move the cursor and a left click with buttons to call up numbers one through eight. A computer “hears” infor-



ANN HOTTINGER

RIGHT: *Inventor Becky Logue showing off her creation.*

OPPOSITE: *The computer screen which displays the patient’s periodontal chart.*



Jake, and Johnny with them to Phoenix. While the children visited with grandparents, Becky and Mert attended a dental convention to demonstrate the RAT in operation. "The reaction from the dentists is so much fun," Becky said. "Each time we attend a convention and demonstrate the product you can almost hear people saying 'Well, of course—why didn't I think of that?' It's just so logical."

Now the RAT is definitely in the marketing phase. Mac Lad, an illustrator, has worked with Becky's team to develop a brochure. The word is starting to spread. Becky has received several phone calls from dentists who have learned of the product from colleagues.

Becky is currently working for Dr. Scott A. Wright and Dr. Kenyon Oyler at the Centennial Dental Center in Boise. Both doctors enjoy the newest in technological innovations. The center, doctors and staff, have been supportive of Becky throughout this whole journey.

*Kay Kelley lives in Boise.*

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# BLACKFOOT

By Janet Marugg

Say “Idaho” and most people think “potatoes.” Say “Blackfoot” and most people think “potatoes,” as well. You almost can’t speak of Blackfoot without talking about the potato, the world’s favorite vegetable. Blackfoot is, after all, the Potato Capital of the World, growing one third of this country’s consumption of these popular tubers.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DONI WIXOM

CENTER SPREAD: *Visitors have long been greeted by this local landmark proclaiming Blackfoot as the “World Potato Capital.”*





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# BLACKFOOT HISTORY

By Arthur Hart

The city of Blackfoot takes its name from the Blackfoot River which was named by the famous fur trapper Donald Mackenzie after Blackfoot Indians he encountered in the area. The Blackfoot ranged over a vast area of the northern Great Plains from Canada southward. Only rarely did they venture into what is now eastern Idaho, but in the 1830s they clashed with Nez Perce and Flathead Indians in two bloody battles. The Blackfoot were the scourge of the region because they acquired guns from white traders before other tribes did.

Fur brigades visited the upper Snake River Valley every year after Alexander Henry established Fort Henry in April 1810. Henry's Fork of the Snake is named for him.

On October 8, 1811, a John Jacob Astor overland expedition, led by Wilson Price Hunt and Donald Mackenzie, reached Fort Henry. Their goal was to rendezvous at the mouth of the Columbia River with another Astor party that had come by sea in the steamboat Tonquin. Hunt abandoned his horses at Fort Henry, built canoes, and unwisely started down the Snake, mistakenly thinking his party could float all the way to the Pacific. They



ARTHUR HART

passed the site of later Blackfoot on their way to one of the worst disasters in the history of the fur trade. Their epic journey is described in Washington Irving's *Astoria*, published in 1836.

Nathaniel Wyeth began building Fort Hall on July 14, 1834, about ten miles south of present Blackfoot. On July 27 Methodist missionary Jason Lee's sermon to the Indians marked the beginning of missionary activity in the Oregon Country. Blackfoot's Jason Lee Memorial United Methodist Church has a stained glass window crediting him with delivering "the first Protestant sermon west of the Rocky Mountains." The

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ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: *The Oregon Short Line Railroad Depot, now the home of the Blackfoot Potato Expo; A panorama of Blackfoot's Main Street in 1909.*

LEFT: *The beautiful Blackfoot LDS Tabernacle in a photo taken in 1919. The building now belongs to the city of Blackfoot.*



Indians could only have understood it if someone translated it into sign language. The oldest portion of this historic church is part of the original structure, built in 1885.

Gold discoveries in what is now western Montana, then part of a giant 1863 Idaho Territory that included all of Montana and most of Wyoming, spurred a busy freight route from Salt Lake City to Bannock and Virginia City. This heavy traffic made the building of the Utah & Northern Railroad a feasible project, especially with the encouragement of Mormon President Brigham Young. The Mormons had built Fort Lemhi

in the region as a mission to the Shoshone Indians in 1855, but had been forced to withdraw in 1858. Mormon farmers along the route from Salt Lake City into the upper Snake River Valley were urged to supply the teams for grading the route for new narrow gauge tracks that would enable them to get their crops to the Utah market.

It was the building of the railroad that created the town of Blackfoot. On December 2, 1877, the tracks had reached Franklin, and on December 17, 1878, they were at the Blackfoot River and the site of the new town. The timing could not have been better for ensuring that Blackfoot would become an important transportation center.

A gold and silver rush into the valley of the Big Wood River, 125 miles to the west, began in 1879. Galena ore had to be smelted to separate the silver from the lead, and the closest smelter was in Salt Lake City. Over the next couple of years heavy-duty wagons hauled millions of tons of galena ore to Blackfoot, the



point on the railroad nearest to Utah smelters.

The wild rush into Wood River after 1880 surpassed all earlier mining stampedes in Idaho history, and the infant town of Blackfoot was one of its principal beneficiaries. Nearly all supplies for the mines and the exploding populations of Bellevue, Hailey, and Ketchum passed through Blackfoot. By early 1882 an estimated two million pounds of freight had been transferred from the Utah & Northern at Blackfoot to wagons headed west.

Blackfoot also had rail access to the transcontinental Union Pacific, completed May 10, 1869, and possessed a virtual monopoly of the Utah to Wood River trade until the building of the Oregon Short Line Railroad across southern Idaho. Construction of the O.S.L. began at Granger, Wyoming, on July 12, 1881, but its Wood River branch did not reach Hailey from Shoshone junction until May 1883.

Pocatello, where the Utah & Northern and the O.S.L. lines crossed, became a major railroad center. The narrow gauge tracks of the Utah & Northern were soon converted to standard gauge making them compatible with the other lines to which they connected. Blackfoot itself became an important junction point when branch lines were built later to Mackay and Aberdeen to the west.

Every city in Idaho Territory, before and after statehood in 1890, wanted to be the home of a major public institution. Boise had the capitol and the penitentiary, Blackfoot got the insane asylum and, for better or worse, to the rest of the state thereafter

Blackfoot was synonymous with the institution. The 1884-85 legislature authorized \$20,000 for construction of the asylum with the hope that the good agricultural land at the site would allow inmates to grow crops to help defray the cost of operation.

Before the facility at Blackfoot was ready to receive Idaho's insane in the summer of 1886, they had been housed in the Oregon asylum at Salem. Three years after the move in November 1889, the Blackfoot asylum's main building burned to the ground. Three patients died in the fire, fifty-three were saved, and five escaped. Two had walked twenty-five miles to Eagle Rock (later Idaho Falls) before they were found. There was no insurance on the \$50,000 building or its furnishings.

Hiram French's 1914 History of Idaho tells us that Blackfoot had been known for many years as the "Grove City," because of its beautiful old shade trees. "In 1886 the first trees ever planted in the upper Snake River Valley were set out around the Blackfoot courthouse by Alfred Moyes, and a ditch was constructed for irrigating them. It is said that during the succeeding years excursions to Blackfoot were organized so that people in the nearby regions might have a chance to feast their eyes on this verdure, which undoubtedly was in marked and pleasing contrast with the unbroken expanses of native sagebrush." No editor of a history book today would let that pass. "It is said," would get the author a stinging editorial rebuke: "Who said it? When? Can you cite a source? And 'first tree?'" Early writers of history were fond of



PHOTO COURTESY OF IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

listing firsts, especially “the first white child born in...,” as though that had historic significance. Many places had several claimants to that honor. The same colorful author continued:

“From a little freighting station, where at times the cowboys from the surrounding ranges would come and indiscriminately ‘shoot up’ the place, Blackfoot has grown to its present enviable position of wealth and prominence. It is the center of a profitable agricultural section, an important railway and distributing point, and the capital of Bingham County.” The “shoot ‘em up” reference suggests that the writer was influenced by western movies, for by 1914 most small Idaho towns had a movie theater that showed Western films.

In 1916 Blackfoot had two theaters, the Isis and the Orpheum. One of the city’s current landmarks, listed in the National Register of Historic Places, is the art deco Nuart Theater of 1930-31, built by Fletcher Taylor for \$100,000—a daring undertaking with the Great Depression closing in. Depressed Idaho agriculture in the 1920s had already hit the Blackfoot area hard. The city’s population dropped from 3,937 in 1920 to 3,199 in 1930. Today Blackfoot has over 24,000 people, the same broad and shaded residential streets, and handsome buildings, both historic and modern. These are things visitors have admired about Blackfoot for more than 120 years.

*Arthur Hart is director emeritus of the Idaho State Historical Society.*

# BLACKFOOT TODAY

By Janet Marugg

Blackfoot is an island in a sea of potato fields stretching from the Blackfoot Mountains to the lava flows of Idaho’s great rift on the Snake River Plain. Idaho’s great rift, seen from space satellites, created lava flows nearly 2,500 years ago. The great rift is a 635 square-mile geological phenomenon of fissures—spatter cones, and lava tubes represented by sixty different lava flows and over twenty-five volcanic eruptive events. Fortunately for nearby residents, the volcanic action is over, and the ash deposits have created the perfect soil for crops.

Generations of agricultural ties are mortared firmly into the historic brick buildings that line Blackfoot’s streets. There are no malls here; shops and professional practices are tucked neatly into older homes with Victorian charm. Local groups and students use the old Nuart Theater for plays and musical productions, and the fire department still blows a noon whistle.

History cuts deep into the soil of the surrounding area. In Bingham County east of Fort Hall, you can still see the ruts of wagon wheels made while traveling the Oregon Trail nearly two hundred years ago. Idaho’s Oregon and California Trail Association (OCTA) is completing a project this year, marking Goodale’s Cutoff with metal markers through what is now Bingham County. As Bingham County’s seat, Blackfoot residents play a big part in preservation of historically important places that Idahoans cherish and can call our own.

One of the most famous old buildings in Blackfoot is a nondescript brownstone building that was once the old Oregon Short Line Railroad Depot. It now houses the Idaho Potato Exposition and

OPPOSITE: *The tree-lined drive that led to what was then called Blackfoot’s “lunatic asylum.”*

LEFT: *An early photo of Blackfoot’s Main Street. The popular Isis Theater can be seen in the background.*



PHOTO COURTESY OF DONI WIKOM



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE IDAHO POTATO EXPO

LEFT: A postcard from the Blackfoot Potato Expo. The expo has many notable exhibits, including the world's largest potato chip.

BELOW & OPPOSITE: The Eastern Idaho State Fair, held each summer in Blackfoot, is considered by many to be the premier fair in the state; The entrance to the fairgrounds.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DON WINKOM

Blackfoot Chamber of Commerce. This unique potato museum showcases the potato industry through historical exhibits and displays. The gift shop sells potato-related products from pressed potato-blossom bookmarks to potato hand cream.

Other communities in other states boast the largest ball of string, or the longest piece of straight Manzanita wood, so it's not surprising that the residents of Blackfoot boast the world's largest potato chip, according to the *Guinness Book of World Records*.

Potato cellars dot the farthest edges of the town site and flourish throughout the county. Today, the potato cellars are built with metal and modern materials, but many of the old sod cellars still stand and, as a testament to the strength of life in the area, are still being used.

The Snake and Blackfoot rivers are both a boon and a bane for Blackfoot. Rapid melt of snow regularly results in the Snake and Blackfoot rivers flooding. Combine a deep snow year with good spring rains and a flood is nearly guaranteed. The latest "hundred-year-flood" was in 1997. In some places, waters were five feet deep and a mile out from what is normal for the rivers' banks.

These rivers are important to area wildlife as well as domestic animals and humans. Wintering bald eagles are a common sight preceded and followed by numerous species of migrating birds, making the Snake River Plain a mecca for bird watchers.

These same rivers make Blackfoot a little-known sportsman paradise. Outdoor recreation activities abound from the Blackfoot Mountains to Hell's Half Acre National Landmark, to the Blackfoot and Snake rivers. Here is proof that there is more than meets the eye in the Great Basin Desert.

Blackfoot is also geographically situated for easily accessible recreational opportunities in the nearby Fort





Hall Casino, Sun Valley, Craters of the Moon National Monument, Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks, and Salt Lake City.

Not only an angler's dream because of the confluence of the Snake and Blackfoot rivers, the town of Blackfoot also has a lake. Jensen's Grove is a man-made lake formed by diverting the Snake River to accommodate Interstate 15 and is a hot spot for Blackfoot's boat and beach enthusiasts in the summer months. Just north along I-15 is Blackfoot's golf course, one of Idaho's best. Strolling around the Greenway system which links the community of Blackfoot with the Snake River is nearly a year-round activity.

Winter skylines are touched with hoar-frosted cottonwoods looking both comical and sacred at the same time, and it's clear to see why the town was briefly called Grove City before officially being named Blackfoot. The small community of Groveland is nearby, still carrying the arborous title. Other nearby settlements include Riverside, Thomas, and Wapello.

When the snows fly, and some years this is well before Halloween, snowmobiles explore the winter

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PHOTO COURTESY OF DONI WINDOM

ABOVE: The art deco Nuart Theater built by Fletcher Taylor in 1930-31 for \$100,000.

wonderlands along the Wolverine Creek and Long Valley snowmobile trails where people camp during the long days of summer after the farm chores are done.

Seasons are rich and everyone knows it's Labor Day weekend when more than 200,000 people roll onto Main Street to visit the Eastern Idaho State Fair. One of the finest agricultural fairs in the country, it's not just for vegetables anymore. Nightly entertainment has recently featured such notables as Rascal Flatts, Three Doors Down, and Def Leppard. The best in carnival rides, horse racing, and rodeos are well-attended attractions. Still, it maintains its small town feel because anybody can enter whatever it is they are proudest of: flowers, photographs, and even cookie jar collections.

The Eastern Idaho Fair Grounds are used for other events throughout the year. In June, the American Kennel Clubs in nearby Idaho Falls and Pocatello converge on Blackfoot for an AKC Licensed Dog Show. Pups and their people from all over the United States compete for points on the road to Westminster. If you've ever wondered what a Rhodesian Ridgeback or a Chinese Crested looks like, this is the place to go. It is one of the largest, friendliest and best-attended dog shows in Idaho.

State Hospital South settles on forty acres of park-like grounds at Blackfoot's edge. The air smells of rain-

kissed sage and soil as the trees leaf out into spring, the healing tonic for patients in the beautiful buff-colored buildings, standing peaceful and proud.

Blackfoot residents are proud of the community swimming pool where everything from swimming to scuba diving is taught year-round. Regardless of the weather, the swim team practices under the Temcor, an all-aluminum geodesic dome, a noticeably different building in the community.

What's next for Blackfoot? Agribusiness plays a big part in Blackfoot's economy, but another large employer is the Idaho National Engineering & Environmental Laboratory (INEEL). Since Blackfoot is directly between

Idaho Falls to the north and Pocatello to the south, there are possibilities for a regional airport that would serve both of these communities.

The identification of I-15 as the "Technology Corridor," puts Blackfoot in a perfect strategic position. Flanking I-15, from Pocatello north to Rexburg, the Eastern Idaho Technology Corridor constitutes a unique collection of assets providing a rich environment for technology-based companies.

But the core of Blackfoot's economy still depends on agriculture. Potato processing companies such as Nonpareil and Basic American Foods are still going strong, as are farm equipment companies like Spudnik and E.M. Tanner & Sons.

With a vibrant business environment, an industrious and well-educated workforce, and costs of doing business that are among the lowest in the nation, increasing numbers of companies are discovering that Eastern Idaho is a great place to grow a business.

Many professionals trained throughout the country, from scientists to doctors, are finding a home in Blackfoot, preferring the rural peace, the low cost of living, lower crime rates, and high quality of life. Blackfoot has a wonderful alchemy, where the newest in technology meets the age-old earth and sky. Blackfoot is as it has always been: a place where the future meets the past.

*Janet Marugg is a freelance writer.*

# BLACKFOOT CALENDAR OF EVENTS!

## January

Winter Festival at Jensen Grove

## February

Mayor's Ball

## March

St. Bernard's Antique Show

Blackfoot Community Players Musical

## April

Easter Egg Hunt at Jensen Grove

## May

Cinco de Mayo Celebration

Salute to High School Seniors

## June

Golf Tournament

Blackfoot Pride

Ranch Rodeo

High School Rodeo

Gem State Cluster Dog Show

Trapper's Association Show

## July

Summer Festival and Fireworks at Jensen Grove

Horse Shows

## August

Bingham County 4-H Fair

Shoshone-Bannock Festival (Fort Hall)

## September

Eastern Idaho State Fair

Paint Horse Show

## October

Potato Harvest

## December

Christmas Tree Fantasy

Community Live Nativity Jensen Grove

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# Hells Canyon

## *A Canyon Of Challenges*

By Dennis Lopez

Tom Roach was hardly a river-boat gambler. In fact he was the epitome of conservatism in his speech, manners, dress, and the way in which he ran Idaho Power as its president for more than twenty years. But when it came to the idea of building three hydroelectric dams at Hells Canyon, he was ready to gamble all against the federal government.

It was the early 1950s. The growing conflict in Korea was placing a demand for war materials on the aluminum and defense plants of the West. The federal government was proposing to build a single six hundred-foot-high dam on the Snake River in Hells Canyon to ensure that, as the Columbia system had provided in World War II, there would be adequate electricity to power the war effort.

There were those who early on were prepared to support the government in that effort, including Tom Roach. But in exchange, he wanted a slice of the electric “pie” for Idaho

RIGHT: *Hells Canyon Dam.*

OPPOSITE: *Former Idaho Power President Tom Roach.*

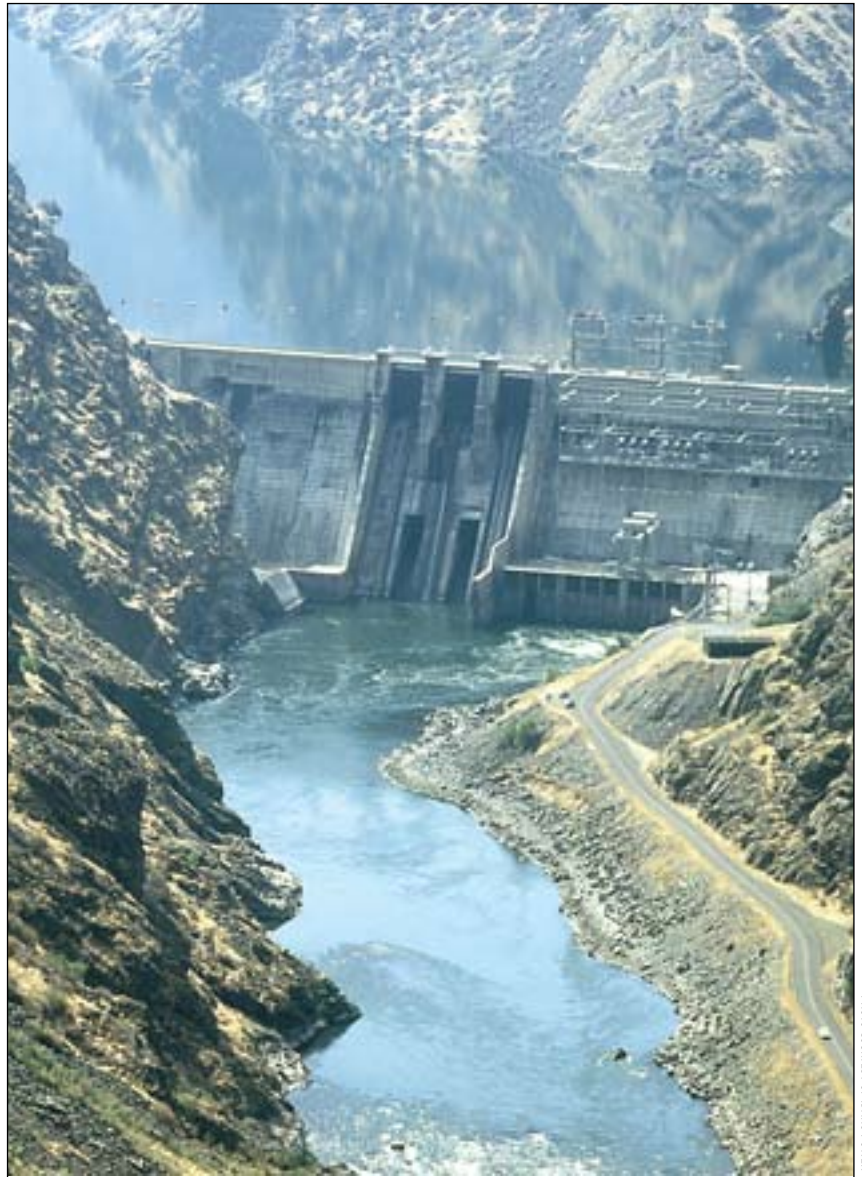


PHOTO COURTESY OF IDAHO POWER

Power and his present and future customers. The federal government was not willing to provide that slice.

By the time 1951 ended, Roach was on the offensive, saying the federal government was working at placing roadblocks in Idaho's pathway to growth. The lines were drawn in the sands of the Snake River. What had begun as a public-private opportunity had become a head-on collision. The public vs. private power fight was on.

The good-versus-evil mentality of the McCarthy era was now being focused upon Idaho Power. However, rather than Communism, the focus of the attack was on socialism—the government running what could be operated more efficiently by private enterprise.

Tiny Idaho Power was thrust into the national spotlight. Support for, or opposition against, the government's high dam at Hells Canyon was the source of bitter conflict both within the region and the nation. Idaho and Idaho Power were in the eye of a public policy storm.

For the next four and a half years, Idaho Power worked at obtaining a license from the Federal Power Commission (FPC) (the predecessor to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) to build three low dams in Hells Canyon. This combination ultimately proved to be technically the most competitive with the government's proposed High Mountain Sheep Dam. The government's single dam would generate more than eight hundred megawatts and

would create a reservoir ninety-three miles long. Most of Hells Canyon and the upstream communities as far as Farewell Bend, Oregon, would have been inundated.

In 1955, the FPC finally granted Idaho Power the license it needed to proceed with construction. Although the government's high dam was still a possibility, Roach took a calculated risk and began construction on Brownlee Dam. He took that risk knowing that had the Supreme Court invalidated Idaho Power's FPC license, or if Congress decid-

...to say that three dams would be built was one thing. To actually build them, was quite another.

ed to authorize the building of a high dam, his company would not be able to assert any valid claims against the United States for the recovery of construction costs.

Ironically, it was the government that finally settled the issue. When Congress rejected the fourteenth and last bill for the construction of a high Hells Canyon dam in 1958, it laid to rest the threat of the government rescinding Idaho Power's FPC license for the three-dam Hells Canyon project. Tom Roach's gamble had paid off. Idaho and the region would have a

large-scale hydroelectric project operated by private business rather than by the government.

But to say that three dams would be built was one thing. To actually build them, was quite another.

The idea of building a dam in Hells Canyon was not new. In fact, Sinclair and William Mainland, known in Idaho history simply as the Mainland Brothers, attempted to build a thirty thousand-kilowatt plant at Oxbow. With seven million borrowed dollars they began building their project at Oxbow in 1908.



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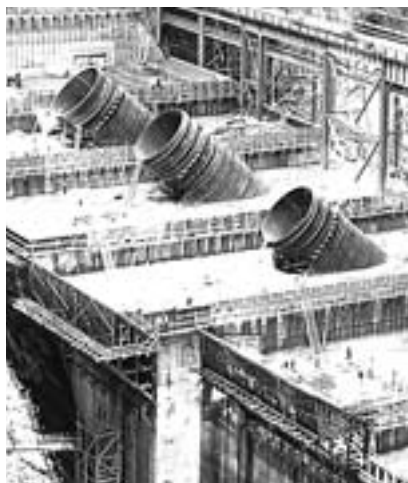


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ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: *Workers building Hells Canyon Dam; The early stages of construction; Oxbow Dam.*

OPPOSITE: *Brownlee Dam.*

Their idea was to dam the narrow stretch of river at the tip of the thumb of land that makes the “oxbow” in the river and then build a tunnel through the thumb to bring water to the plant’s turbines.

“Cities will grow,” their brochure said. “Homes without lights will be flooded with radiance. The engineering skill (used at Oxbow) marks a new epoch in the social and industrial life of the region.”

Regrettably they were better writers than builders. By 1911, they were nearly broke and the project was abandoned.

For Idaho Power it would be a different story. The granting of the FPC license started the construction clock running. The terms of the license required that construction of Brownlee Dam start within one-year of the effective date of the license (Aug. 4, 1955) and the project com-

“It was a dream job. I had every problem you could imagine,” [Alworth] said. “We had thirteen miles of Union Pacific railroad, and nine miles of Oregon state highway to deal with. We had elementary schools, teachers, and school buses. We had a supermarket...the problems weren’t unusual. Just new.”

pleted within three years. Oxbow had to be underway within four years of this date and completed within two years.

Ground would have to be broken at Hells Canyon within six years and work completed three years thereafter.

Logistically not much had changed since the Mainland Brothers attempted to build in Hells Canyon. None of the small communities nearest the job site could support the hundreds of workers, their tools, machines, food, fuel, transportation, and supplies. There was no way

workers could commute to the job site, so terraced areas for house trailers were built.

Ultimately the job site became a small city unto itself. For over a decade, Idaho Power and contractors worked in Hells Canyon to meet the demanding schedule created by the FPC license.

Bob Alworth, a former Idaho Power property accountant, described the process of meeting the logistical challenges in the remote canyon.

“It was a dream job. I had every problem you could imagine,” he said.



PHOTO COURTESY OF IDAHO POWER



"We had thirteen miles of Union Pacific railroad, and nine miles of Oregon state highway to deal with. We had elementary schools, teachers, and school buses. We had a supermarket...the problems weren't unusual. Just new."

Ultimately problems were overcome by engineering, common sense, and ingenuity. For example, a twenty-three-mile-long road had to be built before equipment could even be moved to the site for the Hells Canyon Dam.

Transmission lines to carry the power from the canyon were built on grades as steep as forty percent. Because of these extremes, helicopters were employed to move and place the seven thousand-pound transmission towers. In fact, helicopters proved so efficient, they were able to put ten of these towers, totaling 750,000 pounds, into place in an area that within three miles, rose from 1,700 feet to 6,000 feet,

in just over thirty and one-half hours of flying time.

Helicopters also were used to move equipment and personnel in and out of the pristine wilderness areas where building roads was not allowed.

In October 1967 Hells Canyon Dam, the last of the three to be constructed and the last in Idaho Power's string of hydro projects on the Snake River, produced power. Tom Roach was there to turn the switch.

It is ironic that today the complex that bears his name, the Thomas E. Roach Hydroelectric Complex, is known almost universally simply as the Hells Canyon Project.

Now the project that was conceived amid great controversy is again in the eye of another storm. The license that Tom Roach obtained almost half a century ago will expire next year.

The nearly fifty-year-old proj-

ect is being closely examined by federal and state agencies, Native American tribes, and organizations who want its next fifty years to reflect the changing times and conditions of the 21st Century. Idaho Power has proposed spending \$365 million to offset the effects the project may have on fish, wildlife, water quality, and recreation.

How this debate will be resolved remains an open question. What are not in question are the benefits that the Hells Canyon complex has brought to Idaho and to the region in terms of plentiful power, recreation, fish and wildlife habitat, and flood control.

As it was for Tom Roach, Hells Canyon remains a canyon of controversy and challenges more than half a century later.

*Dennis Lopez works in the corporate communications department of Idaho Power.*

# Big Creek Rebirth Day

By Barbara Michener

Flying over Idaho's landscapes in small aircraft always sends chills of exhilaration through me. At a thousand feet adrenaline rushes as the ground passes underneath and launches me toward spiritual musings. While floating through the jagged peaks of the Sawtooth Mountain Range I've looked eye-to-eye with tormented wind-twisted junipers standing with their feet in snow, deformed as though they were wound up and wrung out like wet dish rags. Bending to biting winds at the ten thousand-foot elevation they hang on in exchange for life. Gliding through the White Cloud Peaks, massive rock formations stand proud like old white-haired men cloaked in wisdom from eons of existence.

Knowing how I love to fly, my husband Roger bought a special trip as part of my fifty-sixth birthday celebration. This backcountry breakfast fly-in took us to Big Creek Lodge in the Payette wilderness, located about twenty miles north of Yellowstone. In past years I've celebrated many birthdays floating the Middle Fork of the Salmon River, so flying into the same country promised a mountain-top

view of the rugged terrain.

On a hot July morning Roger and I drove to the Caldwell Airport, passing mint fields, their luscious scent carried to me on a slight morning breeze. We both looked forward to our return trip to the mountains we love.

On a hot July morning Roger and I  
drove to the Caldwell Airport, passing mint  
fields...We both looked forward to our  
return trip to the mountains we love.

Steve and David, the two private pilots from whom Roger bought the trip at a fund-raising auction, met us on the airfield. Everything was in first-class shape. The small, two-seater Super Cubs sparkled with fresh white paint and newly-padded interiors. The pilots stroked their machines proudly as we circled them. Having flown in Super Cubs in Alaska, we felt comfortable with the planes' capabilities. The Cub is a great backcountry plane, needing very little runway to take off. Superior engine power allows it to climb at a steep pitch to clear trees and mountains and to

make tight turns.

After Steve and David did their walk-around inspections, we loaded for the trip. I climbed into my plane, squeezing into the passenger seat located directly behind David's. The plane was just wide enough for my body. As I attempted to lower myself

back in the seat, I noted a one-inch pipe rising about a foot out of the floor. Sitting down required straddling this piece of metal. My knees touched the back of his seat and leaned on the metal sides of the fuselage. As I raised up to get the seat belt, my hair brushed the ceiling. I tried to imagine Roger settling his six-foot frame into a similar tiny space in his plane. I filled my seat stuffing my purse and jacket against the fuselage wall to my left.

OPPOSITE: *The Super Cub was totaled after losing its right wing, propeller, and wheel strut.*

## front porch tales

David explained the metal between my legs. A handle to insert into the floor stick was clipped into the ceiling on my right side. Together they could be used to control the plane in an emergency. I had no interest in controlling the plane and sought no emergency, but reached up and touched it, acknowledging its presence.

We taxied to the end of the runway. Roger's plane took off ahead of us, pushing itself up over the mint fields. David revved the engine going through his checklist—power on, fuel on, flaps working. He radioed the tower he was ready for take off and powered the engine. We were off the ground as I counted one, two, three seconds. I relished the loud hum of the engine and felt the surge of power as the force pressed my body against the seat.

I quit flying lessons just after I had completed my mid-length solo flight in 1985. Concerned about being responsible for other people's lives I knew it would take me years to become comfortable as the pilot in charge. I decided to let others, more capable and experienced, do the piloting.

Cool morning air offered a smooth flight into Big Creek. We saw new country and some familiar places, including the Stolle Meadows salmon trap where Roger worked for my dad, and where we spent our honeymoon.

We landed at Big Creek Lodge at nine a.m., just in time for breakfast. The bacon and eggs, hash browns, pancakes, and fresh coffee tasted especially good in the high mountain air. We immersed ourselves in the alpine setting, walking around buttercups and watercress growing at the edge of a stream and warming ourselves in the morning sun. Bluebirds flashed through the air. A red-tailed hawk soared over the ridge top we had just cleared for landing. Tall meadow grass hid elk sign, as



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An advertisement for the Idaho Magazine Foundation. It features a cartoon character with large eyes and spiky hair peeking over the top of a large, tilted white sign. The sign has the text "IDaho magazine" at the top. Below that, it says "Please donate to the Idaho Magazine Foundation". Further down, it says "Sponsor subscriptions for schools!" and "Share Idaho with future generations." At the bottom of the sign, it says "For more information, please call 336-0653 or 800.655.0653". The background is green.



## front porch tales



PHOTO COURTESY BARBARA MCHENER

*Hikers inspect the crash site.*

horses grazed in the distance. It was a scene of peace and relaxation we didn't want to leave.

However, summer heat dictated that we be off the ground by noon, since high temperatures make takeoffs difficult in the thin mountain air. Flights get bumpy and dangerous as the temperature rises.

We squeezed ourselves back into the planes and Steve and Roger took off first again. David taxied our plane to the uphill end of the runway,

checked the gauges and waited a few seconds, as you always do for prop wash turbulence to dissipate. The plane felt a little squirrely, pulling back and forth, as soon as we started down the runway. It fish-tailed as we gained speed; loss of control

became more pronounced. At about thirty-five miles-per-hour, almost airborne, the plane veered sharply to the left. I knew something was wrong but thought David would correct it.

Once you are airborne you have more room to maneuver. It's contact with the ground that worries a pilot. David tried to get the plane straightened out by applying the brakes. We were going so fast there was not enough weight on the tires and the brakes weren't grabbing the graveled runway.

In the silence of uncertainty, I recognized fear sitting in front of me and danger approaching ahead of us. Seated in the fuselage with the tail tilted down, what lay ahead of the plane was out of my sight. I could only watch the ground passing by out the side window and knew we were headed for the tree-covered mountainside.

It became obvious that he'd failed to correct the plane when David exclaimed, "Oh, S—!"

If he was worried, so was I. Pilots don't like to scare their passengers so they don't express their fears openly. We were going to crash if he couldn't get the plane stopped before we hit the trees. Eight, twelve, and twenty-four-inch pine and spruce ran toward us.

As we hit the first tree, sounds filled my consciousness—metal sounds of scraping and tearing. A tire exploded as it bounced off a rock. The propeller dug into the packed ground, twisted and recoiled like an empty pop can. Fuel-filled wings cut trees off waist high, jagged branches scraping down



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the side of the fuselage. Branches cracked, breaking through my left window. Windows caved in on both sides. Crunching metal came at me from left, right, and above. I threw my arms up to protect my head. The right side of the plane caved in, the roof pinched down onto my head and body. That damned steering handle clipped on the roof grazed my head and left its mark.

*All is still...quiet. Stunned, I sit re-gathering my mind, processing information. I am still here, still in the plane.*

*I hear David's voice,*

*"Steve, I'm down."*

*And to me,*

*"Are you OK?"*

*"I think so, are you OK?" I reply.*

*"Yes."*

*I look around inside the plane. No blood. I do an inventory of my body. It seems to be all together. No pain. I must get out. Open the door. Damned seat belt. I need to undo the seat belt. Fear of fire shakes my fumbling hands. "Hurry."*

*I see David out of the plane. I'm alone, strapped in, struggling to escape. People come running from the lodge. Hands reach in through the open door to help me get out. They guide me a few steps from the plane and I sit down on the grass. A woman hiker brings a medical kit,*

*"She's not bleeding anywhere," she says.*

*Several people walk around me and the wreck. David surveys the plane muttering to himself, "I can't believe it. I don't know what happened. It just pulled left, I couldn't stop it."*

*Suddenly Roger appeared in*

front of me. He took my arms afraid to hug me, not knowing if I was hurt. "I'm alright," I assured him. I'm glad he's here. He gives me strength and courage.

Roger and Steve were already in the air down the canyon when they got David's message that we were down. Then David shut off the power and electrical immediately to avoid sparks that might ignite a fire. Roger was wearing earphones to listen to the pilots talk and must have been sick, not knowing whether we were alive. But kneeling in

**I look around inside the plane. No blood. I do an inventory of my body. It seems to be all together. No pain. I must get out.**

front of me there, he could see I only suffered a bump on the head and scratches on my arms. At that time I didn't know about the four people who had died just two weeks earlier at the end of this airstrip. I heard they turned too sharply, lost control, and crashed into the mountain. No one survived.

One's chances of walking away from a plane crash with minor scratches and bruises are not that good. We were very fortunate. The lodge contacted a pilot up the Salmon River who was willing to fly Roger and me back to Caldwell. Like being thrown from a horse and getting back on, one hour after the crash I climbed back into a six-passenger Cessna and gritted my teeth for our flight out. The veteran pilot warned us that it might be a rough takeoff because of

the midday heat. Roger still jokes about the bruises on his leg where I dug my fingernails in as we took off. David and Steve flew home in the remaining Super Cub, planning to drive in through McCall to pick up the totaled plane the following week.

I have no need to lay blame for the near disaster. This time we were lucky. Perhaps David could have waited longer on the runway to avoid possible prop wash. Or maybe it was a wind gust, or a weak tire strut that no one could see or anticipate. He will be a better pilot because of this accident. I

will be more appreciative of the time I have left in my life.

I've been asked if I will fly again. "Absolutely," I reply. I won't miss the view of the mountaintops, rocks, trees, and high mountain lakes. I continue to run rivers, ride horses, and drive my car to work, all equally as risky. There are too many things I want to do and see to crawl into a secluded shell of presumed safety. Having both lost a parent when they were in their fifties, Roger and I decided at that time to pack as much into our lives as we could muster the energy to do. My birthday trip to Big Creek was indeed a day of rebirth for my spirit. This close encounter with death encouraged me to add to my lifetime "to do list."

*Barbara Michener lives in Boise.*



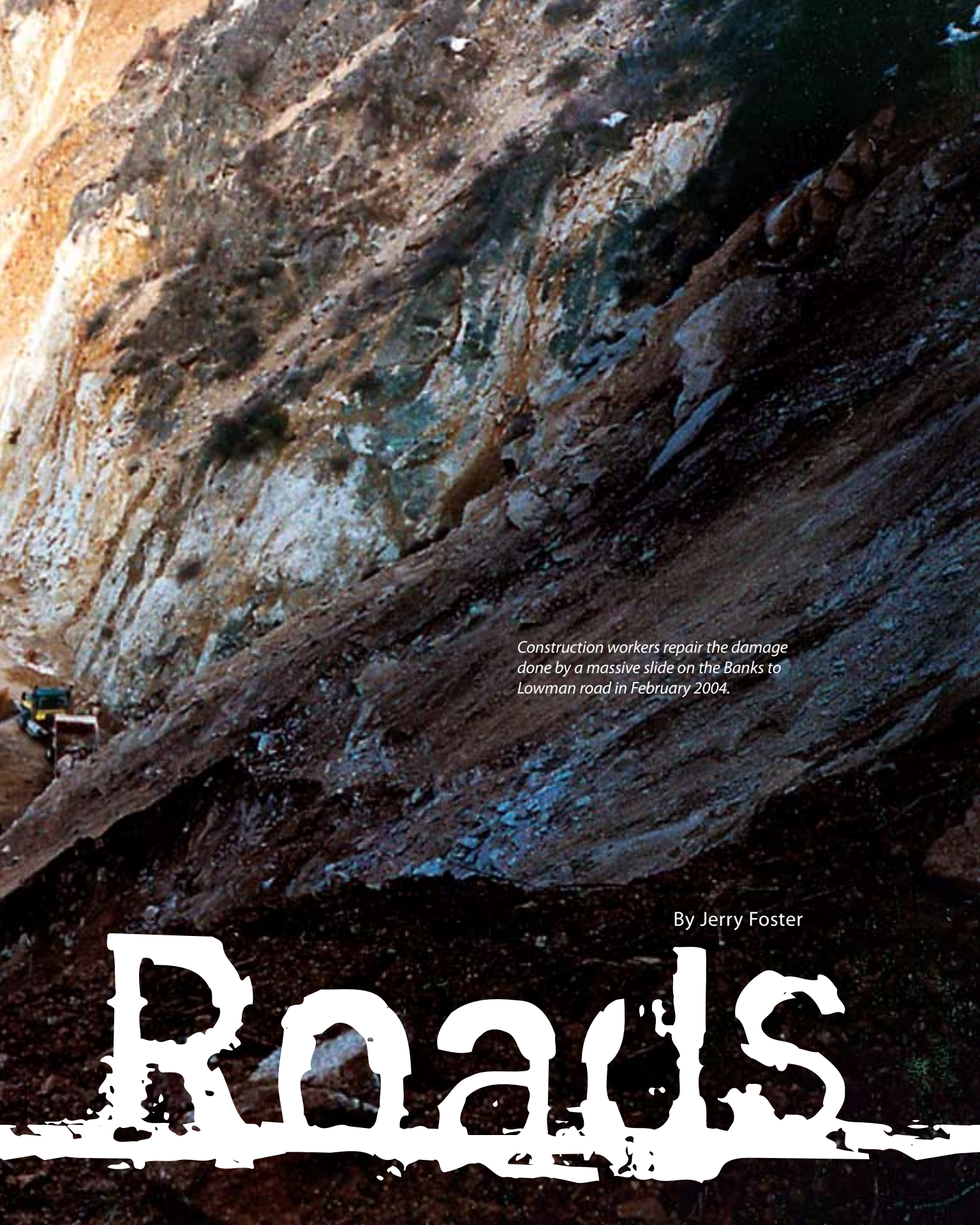
An aerial photograph of a winding road through a rugged, mountainous landscape. The terrain is rocky and sparsely vegetated with small evergreen trees. Several construction vehicles, including a yellow front loader and several white trucks, are visible on the road. The road curves through the valley, and the surrounding cliffs are steep and rocky.

# Just Part of the Adventure of Living in Idaho

PHOTO BY RON GIBRON

# Risky





*Construction workers repair the damage  
done by a massive slide on the Banks to  
Lowman road in February 2004.*

By Jerry Foster

# Roads





PHOTO COURTESY OF IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

*LEFT: A construction worker is dwarfed by a pile of rubble five stories high at the center line of the highway.*

*OPPOSITE: A car is impaled by a log carried onto the highway by a rock slide on State Hwy. 55 near Banks in early 2004. No one was seriously injured.*

**M**y mother and I were driving down the Banks to Lowman Road one spring evening in 1960 when I was twelve. We were taking the old Buick downriver to a mechanic because its reverse gear had gone out. The car shook and rattled in reverse but refused to roll.

In those days, the river road was thirty-three miles of washboard misery; a single lane blasted out of the side of a deep canyon. It followed the South Fork of the Payette River out of Lowman and climbed out of the piney canyon and arced upward over the broad, grass-covered paunch of the mountain, then turned in and out of the folds of the ravine-wrinkled uplands. A thousand feet below, the river surged silently through a narrow bed of boulders. Far above, the headlands were bare and rounded like the heads and stooped shoulders of aged giants, lined up east to west.

A few weeks earlier, when the old Buick still had reverse, we had driven on the same road. The sun was still setting on the road, but it was dark in the canyon. From the backseat window I saw—what? Tire tracks leading straight up to the edge? I pressed my nose and forehead against the glass. “Look at that,” I shouted. “There’s a light down there!”

We stopped and got out. Far below we could see the mangled remains of a car lodged against a large boulder. The car had rolled most of the way to the river, and a turn signal still throbbed faintly like a weak pulse. We had to drive several miles to report the accident, but there was little hope. The driver undoubtedly died before hitting bottom.

That same year a sled runner had sliced through Dorothy Rekow’s boot and filleted her foot. Her mother stuffed her and the other three kids into the car and drove seventy miles down river to the Emmett hospital. On their way back,

the Rekow’s met a logging truck on the river road. Mrs. Rekow pulled as far to the edge as she dared, and stopped. Heavy with logs, the truck couldn’t stop and couldn’t pull over enough to keep from hitting the carload of Rekow’s. Mrs. Rekow thought the truck was going to push her and the kids over the edge. It was only a glancing impact, but it shook the car and Mrs. Rekow.

With both events fresh on her mind, my mom was taking it easy that evening. She eased the Buick around hairpin curves at about ten miles-per-hour and accelerated up to twenty-five on the straightaways.

We were more than half way to Garden Valley, not far past the old Carpenter Ranch, when rocks pelted the road in front of us. That was common, and still is. Normally, we’d wait for them to stop and then drive around the big rocks or ease over the small ones. You just couldn’t risk ramming a rock through your oil pan miles from the nearest phone and hours between passing cars. More rocks bounced and rolled in front of us, some of them basketball-sized. A small one hit the car and one the size of a car engine slammed into the road and ricocheted into the shadowed canyon. Mom stomped on the brakes and looked uphill. She couldn’t believe what she saw: A river of dirt, trees, and car-size boulders was sliding, almost free-falling, down the slope.

Three or four car-lengths in front of us, the road suddenly fell away. It

simply disappeared.

It sounded like the end of the runway when airliners take off. A ravine that hadn't been there seconds ago suddenly widened, dissolving the road and eating its way toward us like a rip tide, fast as a man could walk.

Mom struggled with the shifter, desperate to find the "R." She moved the shifter's red line back and forth across the gear until it caught. The car shuddered. So did we. The transmission jerked and the faded-green Buick burned rubber like a hotrod. I've wondered how many miles of tread my mom burned off the tires as she peeled out in reverse, backing up the car that hadn't backed up in weeks.

My mom was too short to see over the steering wheel, and I don't know how she saw over the seat to back up so fast, swerving from one side of the road to the other. I was ready to jump out when she stomped on the brakes again and slid to a stop. Whew! She scared me more than the slide did.

Now, fast forward to Friday night, February 20, 2004. The phone rang at

patch for permission to lock the lines open so that no electricity could pass through the switch. The night was cold, cloudless, and black as obsidian, and Fraser knew it would be dangerous enough to repair the lines in a slide area—he didn't want to also worry about electrocution.

He drove slowly, inspecting the poles and lines. Mile after mile, everything looked fine until six miles west of Lowman. There his headlights revealed a mountain in the middle of the road.

Fraser shined his spotlight into the canyon. The pole was gone, but he couldn't tell anything about the wire other than it was down. The sound of gravel and rocks rattling down the hill returned his attention to the rocks piled five stories high on the road, and made him nervous.

But he had to find the next pole, so he climbed up through the maze of freshly strewn boulders. At the top, the beam of his lineman's light revealed that this rock pile was a hundred yards wide, but he still couldn't see the next pole. He worked his way back through the boul-

ders and drove back to the reclosure switch and called his boss, Hugh Egbert, who arrived around midnight. They climbed over the mound together and finally found the next pole.

The next morning, linemen in tethered harnesses disconnected the lines and freed them from the debris field. Remarkably, the lines were still intact. The linemen tightened the lines between the poles on each side of the slide, allowing the lines to stay elevated and taut despite the loss of the pole destroyed in the rockslide. Power was restored to Lowman by late morning.

But there was still the problem of that mountain being where the road used to be. The Boise County maintenance budget couldn't begin to handle the cost of cleanup, so Boise County commissioners quickly declared the road a disaster and appealed to the state, which in turn appealed to the feds for emergency funds. Because of the emergency nature of the job, the state awarded a contract without bid to Western Construction Co. of Boise, the company that had widened and paved the road

**More rocks bounced and rolled in front of us, some of them basketball-sized.**

Scott Fraser's home in Emmett. It was dispatch. The twenty-year veteran Idaho Power lineman learned that Lowman was blacked out, and efforts to reset the reclosure switch that had automatically turned off the power had failed. Fraser got into his truck and headed upriver, wondering if a car had crashed into a pole. While fueling in Garden Valley, dispatch called again. Someone had reported a slide on the Banks to Lowman Road.

Fraser continued upriver to the Lowman reclosure switch and called dis-

PHOTO COURTESY OF IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION







RON GIBRON

LEFT: A track hoe works the 2004 Banks-Lowman road slide.

OPPOSITE TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: The top of the 400-foot scar illustrates how the mountain has fallen away; A bulldozer pushes rock toward the loader; A crew works a slide on White Bird Hill.

OPPOSITE BOTTOM, LEFT TO RIGHT: Workers break up a boulder that came down on Highway 14 in 2001; A slide covers Greer Grade on Highway 11 in 1984.

guy's wife. I had to put the most experienced guy on the job, and that was me. But you have to realize that I didn't want my boss calling my wife either."

Ron used a track hoe to build the road because the pile was too steep and rocky for a dozer. Over and over again, he extended and retracted the twenty-seven-foot boom, raking out boulders with the big teeth on the bucket. He kept looking at the scar above him, wondering if he should be there, watching for the trickle of pebbles that almost always precedes a slide. "My heart rate was up because the biggest concern is not what's on the road, but what's above it," he says. "You can't get away from the danger."

But you can do everything you can to avoid it. So Ron and Ed Whitman, a subcontractor, decided to make sure that the scar had finished making deposits. Ron loaded a hundred orange sticks of dynamite into a backpack and they angled their way across and up the ridge to the top of the scar. Ron taped the dynamite into bundles of six, sometimes twenty. He inserted the pencil-shaped primers into the ends of the sticks, and Whitman and his crew rappelled over the edge and buried the bundles under protruding boulders.

When the men were clear, Ron attached the lead wire to the battery-

~~I had to put the most experienced guy on the job, and that was me. But you have to realize that I didn't want my boss calling my wife either.~~

between 1988 and 1993.

This winter's slide remediation was like coming home to one of Western's foremen, Ron Gibron, who began his construction career on this road sixteen years ago, a road that—until then—had changed little since being blasted out of the side of the mountain in 1917.

On his first day at this slide, Ron sized-up the job. Dirt and boulders had given-way four hundred feet above the road—that's equivalent to a forty-story building—and had piled debris fifty feet high at the highway's centerline. It covered three hundred feet of roadway. Over the next two weeks, his trucks would haul away more than forty-two thousand cubic yards of dirt and rock—enough to cover a football field twenty feet high—and that doesn't count the debris distributed down a thousand feet of slope below the road.

Ron knew they'd need to put a couple of Caterpillar D-8 dozers up there,

one pushing dirt toward the road in one direction, and the other pushing dirt in the other direction. Big front-end loaders—Cat 980s—would load trucks on each side of the slide. They figured a lot of rocks would be too large to load, even for the 980s, so they would put a hydraulic ram on the west side. What is a hydraulic ram? Imagine a giant woodpecker on tracks. With a thirty-foot neck and a thick metal beak, it can jackhammer Geo Metro-sized rocks into mere components. Days later, deep inside the pile, they would find a rock as big as a full-sized pickup and so heavy both dozers had to work together to move it. No problem for the rockpecker. It would chisel it down to size.

But first, someone would need to cut a pioneer road over the top of the slide so the dozers could operate safely up there. Ron decided to do it himself. "I have the most experience of anyone up here. I didn't want to have to call some



RON GIBRON

powered detonator, and then held both buttons down until the red light came on.

"Fire in the hole!" he shouted, and released the buttons. Hell blasted out of the side of the mountain—fire, flying debris, and clouds of dust—followed by the familiar rustle of rock and soil rushing down the slope. They blasted for two days and thought that ought to do it.

But they were wrong.

A dozer operator was just about to climb up the pioneer road when another thousand yards of rock and dirt broke loose and clattered down the mountain. Like Ron said, "You can't get away from the danger."

It took fifteen days, sixteen dump trucks, and twenty-five workers to clear the road. Afterward, Ron returned to his old ranch house along the Salmon River, just north of the town of Salmon, to spend some time with his wife, Tara, and the kids. Two-week cleanups are rare, even in a state that averages sixty road closures per year.

Even though rockslides are common in Idaho, blowing and drifting snow, wildfires, and wrecks are more likely to close roads, according to

PHOTO COURTESY OF IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



PHOTO COURTESY OF IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

state highway maintenance engineer Dave Jones.

According to Jones, the Banks to Lowman Road is not the most troublesome byway in Idaho, despite the massive February slide. Measured in terms of consequences, Highway 95 probably is the most problematic because closures between White Bird and New Meadows require motorists to go five hundred miles out of their way. The canyon is always calving off rocks in that area, but the maintenance guys just get a loader and clean it up. It is usually not enough to close the road, Jones says, but when it happens, it's big, and affects a lot of traffic because 95 is the state's major north-south arterial.

Highway 95's troublesome twin is the other north-south corridor, Highway 55. The stretch between Banks and Cascade, like the Banks to Lowman road, was blasted out of the side of the mountain. The foaming rapids of the North Fork of the Payette River—so cherished by rafters and sightseers—are the byproduct of highway construction on one side of the river and railroad construction on the other.

Closures on this stretch are quite serious because the road carries so much traffic. "My wife and I always carry a cribbage board when we travel Highway 55," Jones says. "It generally only takes a few hours to clean up most slides, and there's nothing you can do but wait."

Rocks on the road are an everyday occurrence on Highway 75 between Stanley and Challis, and on Highway 93



PHOTO COURTESY OF IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

between Challis and Salmon. Jones said his highway maintenance men have a truck with a blade on it. They drive the rock patrol up and down the highway, and when they come to rocks, they just lower the blade like a big hockey stick and knock the rocks into the ditch.

One of the most beautiful drives in Idaho is along Highway 13 between Grangeville and Kooskia, where the Harpster Grade clings to the side of a cliff as it drops from Camas Prairie down to the Clearwater River. Like Highway 55, it is sandwiched between a cliff and the river. Jones rates this short stretch, along with several others, as just a notch above nuisance.

Rain and melting snow freeze in the cracks of rocks, fracturing them even further. Saturated soil provides less support on steep embankments, allowing rocks to run wild like kids on the last day of school. Rockslides occur more frequently during wet winters, but they can happen any time.

They're just another part of the adventure of living in Idaho.

*Jerry Foster lives in New Plymouth.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION





# Brunswick Migration

## *Confessions of an Old Boise Junkie*

By John Davidson

Public houses, a.k.a. pubs, saloons, grog shops, taverns, etc., have long been central to the social fabric of towns and cities worldwide. They're where ideas are hatched, deals made, thirsts quenched, and loves sparked—or lost. Literature would be lessened by their absence. Music would suffer a huge setback. And even though I haven't had a drink in almost fifteen years (having drunk for a family of four for close to twenty), the thought of a town without pubs is as sad to me as the "Town Without Pity" is in the great Gene Pitney song.

Speaking of pubs: does the name Old Boise Saloon ring a bell? Can you picture an elegant Brunswick back bar, along the lines of the majestic beauty Al Berro installed in the Bouquet at 1010 Main? If you can recall the collection of Idaho memorabilia once housed in the Old Boise, the occasional beer mug sailing through the air, platters of hand-carved roast beef, ham, and turkey

*The entrance to the Old Boise Saloon in 1969. The brass doors were rescued from the Carnegie Library in Caldwell.*



PHOTO COURTESY OF BRASS INC./ROD DAVIDSON



PHOTO COURTESY OF BRASS INC./ROD DAVIDSON



LEFT: *The Brunswick back bar in the Turnverine Building shortly after it was moved from Caldwell.*

BELOW: *The main dining hall at the Old Boise Saloon.*

hundreds of old picture frames, a dozen National cash registers, love seats, senate desks, wooden post office boxes with miniature combination locks, hand painted tin signs advertising everything from Camel cigarettes ("Nature in the Raw is Seldom Mild!") to Zorn's Corn Remover ("Your feet will say

...where ideas are hatched, deals made, thirsts quenched and loves sparked—or lost...the thought of a town without pubs is as sad to me as the "Town Without Pity" is in the great Gene Pitney song.

offered up by a joyful Hawaiian woman named Mama Ho, chances are pretty good you're a native here, either that or you've lived in the capital city a good portion of your life.

From 1969 to 1973 the Old Boise Saloon, brainchild of my father, Rod Davidson, and his partner, Chas Allan was housed in the Turnverine Building at the southeast corner of 6th & Main. My mom, Pat Davidson, coined the name "Old Boise," which Joan Carley would later adopt for her holdings in the downtown core. Some think Joan C. came up with the "Old Boise" theme, but I'm happy to report it was Mom who proffered the moniker.

Together, Mom, Dad, and Chas scoured the state for antiques, treasures, historical pieces. Once word

got out that good money was being paid—and, more importantly in those lean times, bar tabs offered—for what was often thought of as junk back then, treasures started appearing in earnest.

Kenny Poe—not a tab man—hailed in Italian marble salvaged from the opulent restrooms of the old Pinney Theatre. Mom located the stately brass doors that hung in the entryway of the Old Boise; they had been rescued from the Carnegie library in Caldwell before it was torn down. Ornate brass light fixtures that had illuminated the Idaho Statehouse before they were replaced with fluorescent tubes, once again cast their soft glow.

After they had gathered these signature items—not to mention

'Ahhh") and much more—they employed artists and craftsmen to transform the one-time gymnasium-cum-print-shop into a remarkable space housing their stellar collection



PHOTO COURTESY OF BRASS INC./ROD DAVIDSON

of memorable and historically-significant Idaho pieces. The back bar, centerpiece of all, was a majestic Brunswick fashioned from quarter-sawn golden oak. It had been transported around the Horn in the late 1800s and survived the tough trip from San Francisco to Silver City without incident. Once installed at the elegant Idaho Hotel, the massive piece from across the continent bore witness to the entire panoply of a thriving western boom town: mangy dogs, mud-caked miners, slick-talk-ing swells, and ladies of the night.

When the mines played out and the throngs dispersed, the Brunswick was transported to the Dewey Palace in Nampa. Then, remarkably, it was moved from the Dewey Palace to the TicoTico in Caldwell, remarkable because the move took place not long before the Palace burned to the ground, destroying so many of the treasures that were housed there.

My father, the savvy Scotsman, spotted the bar while plans were being drawn for the Old Boise. Armond Villines was the proprietor of the TicoTico, down the way from the El Cruzero, the Crossroads; these bars served to slake the thirst of blue-collar workers in Canyon County.

Full-time pool shark, part-time raconteur, Armond was skilled in the art of bank shots, wise in the way of deals. The one he struck with Dad was a beauty as it turned out. Dad wanted the back bar, badly. Armond was willing to part with it under the condition that he take the whole package—back bar, furniture, fix-

tures, lease. Nothing concerning chronic headaches inherent with the bundle was mentioned.

Dad just wanted the Brunswick. They talked about it, argued, went back and forth like the horse traders they were before finally reaching an accord: Rod could have the back bar, solo, for \$5,000; or he could relieve Armond of the whole kit for \$3,500. The Scotsman in my father prevailed. Before Armond would sign the contract he insisted they play three games of pool for a hundred a game on the table which Armond spent the bulk of his free time practicing. When finished, Armond tucked the folding money in his wallet, signed the contract and left. He never returned to the TicoTico.

So now our family owned a Caldwell watering hole in a part of town where gunshots and knife play weren't unheard of. It was 1968. Before the ink was thoroughly dry, Dad got a call at three in the morning informing him that a former patron of the bar was in the morgue, shot dead by a cranky husband. The caller requested that Mr. Davidson come to Caldwell and take care of some paper work. A bullet that missed the deceased lothario took out a mirror on the back bar then lodged in the brick wall. Armond rested easy for a change.

Jake Jones took over the operations at 6th and Main in the late 70s, and pretty much destroyed the original back bar by having it whittled it down to make it fit in a room six sizes too small for it.

Until that strange decision was made, the bar had stood among antiques and treasures in a room tailor-made for items of substance and grace. The Turnverine's auditorium, once the central gathering spot of a bygone society devoted to health, music, singing, and civic duty, contained it nicely.

A glow emanated from the old Brunswick, from the brass and marble that surrounded it. Anyone who has ever stepped into the Old Boise will remember its soaring ceilings, the beautiful balcony and stage enclosed by wrought iron, the various hardwoods used throughout. Somewhere on the walls, under layers of paint and wallpaper, are charcoal sketches depicting scenes from the real Old Boise: an ice wagon, the Natatorium on Warm Springs Avenue, old City Hall.

**T**hirty-five years ago Mama Hobent over the oven in the kitchen of the Old Boise Saloon and lifted a pan of hot, fragrant buns out of the oven. She buttered one up for me and said, "Here you go, boy, Mama takes good care of you," then laughed that laugh that made you smile to hear it.

Orville Rundell was there at the huge ash cutting board, carving a baron of beef, proffering succulent slices on the end of saber-sized knife, "Here, you go Johnny, this will put meat on those bones." Uncle Frank "Bugs" asked me to run next door to General Restaurant and get him a utensil for mixing sauce and later handed me a plate of spaghetti that

PHOTO COURTESY OF BRASS INC./ROD DAVIDSON



*Mama Ho and Orville at the serving line in the Old Boise Saloon.*

was like nothing I'd ever tasted. The smells that wafted out of that kitchen, up to the offices where Dad and Chas and Jackie Allan worked, were wonderful, just like in the cartoons where a wisp of scent enters the nostrils of some lucky soul and they're swept away...

For a kid of fourteen, having the run of such a grand place was heaven. I'd get sent over to the Cactus Bar to deliver messages or fetch a thirsty worker who'd eased over for a drink. In those days the Cactus was populated with old soldiers who would come over from the Idaho Vets

Home at Fort Boise, turn their pension checks in for tabs, then motor back to those stately grounds via Yellow Cab. Taxis, fire engines, long white ambulances with flashing red lights: they were part of the Cactus experience back then. As the aging vets were getting close to the end of their hitch, the ambulance sometimes provided a final ride.

Orville or Frank would send me over to Pioneer Tent and Awning for an unusual item such as a cast iron cornbread pan or a ladle large enough for giants. Sometimes I'd go just because it smelled so good. They

made tents and saddles in there, awnings and all sorts of camp gear. The canvas and leather smells would greet me at the door and in a second I could imagine myself on a trip in the high country with one of the packers who frequented the place.

They wore Filson coats and logger boots and they smelled a lot like McCall. Best of all there was a fascinating gizmo where the clerk would put orders into a brass cylinder that hung over the counter on a taut line that ran to different parts of the building; he'd give a sharp yank on a cord and send it flying off with a whir and clack. It knocked me out, every time.

Before we opened the Old Boise, five or six cars parked around 6th & Main constituted a crowd. Once those beautiful brass doors were opened to the public, though, things changed. Attention was drawn to the architectural beauty of the Turnverine Building and others around it, which might have helped stop the insanity of laying waste to them. The urban ruination of our town was in full swing back then and I'm enormously grateful to visionaries like Mom, Dad, Chas Allan, and Joan Carley. We owe them and all the others who helped save what they could of our architectural treasures. Far too many of our great buildings perished during that ill-advised attempt to modernize downtown. The buildings in Old Boise fared pretty well actually. Most



## who we are

*The exterior of the Old Boise Saloon at the corner of 6th and Main streets. in 1969. The Pioneer Tent & Awning horse still presides over Old Boise.*

of the greats remain standing.

Since the Old Boise shut its doors, numerous businesses have come and gone from that location—bars for the most part, with the occasional restaurant thrown in. The pub trade is tough. Those who make it deserve respect. The Cactus and Bouquet, Tom Grainey's and Humpin' Hannah's, they're the exceptions. Faye Pengilly, of Pengilly's Saloon, has seen more of them come and go than perhaps anyone in town. Her memoirs would be a trove.

It's all memories now, of

watching my family, a crazed bunch of Idaho natives, who fought, frolicked, laughed, and loved in that space we inhabited for such a short, sweet time.

The card on a bouquet we received from a well-wisher when we opened the Old Boise says it all. "Let it be said in the years to come that this was where legends roamed and phantoms prowled."

For me it will never be anything less.

*John Davidson lives in Boise.*

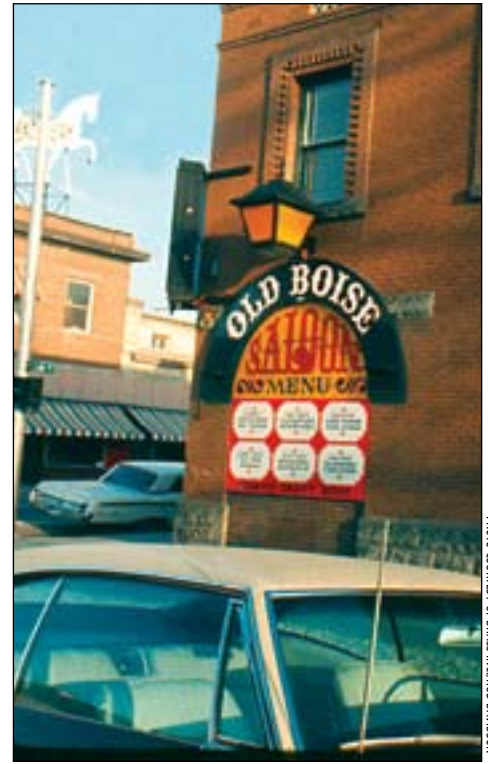


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### June 3-5 Special Olympics Idaho State Summer Games, Pocatello

Special Olympics State Summer Games at Holt Arena. Over 750 athletes from over 40 teams around the state join almost 300 coaches for two full days of cycling, athletics, powerlifting, basketball, and aquatics competitions. A picnic and victory dance round out the festivities. Admission and Entry is Free. Contact Special Olympics Idaho 208 323-0482

### June 4-6 Western Days, Twin Falls

Family-oriented event featuring a carnival, two days of music, arts and crafts show, food booths and a parade. Held at the Twin Falls City Park. Free admission. Contact Twin Falls Area Chamber of Commerce, 208 733-3974

### June 5 4th Annual Community Flea Market and Yard Sale, Challis

Lower Main Street and throughout the community. Maps to individual yard sales will be available at the main event at the 'Y' Intersection. This is a community flea market. Find just about anything and everything you're looking for! Contact Challis Area Chamber of Commerce 208-879-2771.

### June 5-6 Hells Canyon Days Bull-A-Rama and Antique Farm Toy Show, Cambridge

Festivities include a breakfast, square dancing, sidewalk sales, barbeque, car show, antique power equipment show, Cambridge Museum open house, Weiser River Trail events. The Annual Farm Toy Show at

Cambridge High School is a unique opportunity to buy, sell and trade new and antique farm and construction toys and collectibles. Rodeo events at the Bull-A-Rama include barrel racing and team roping. Contact Cambridge Commercial Club, 208 257-3461

### June 5-6 Murphy Outpost Days, Murphy

Pioneer skills and lost art demonstration, horny toad race and food. Fund raiser for the Owyhee County Historical Museum. They have sheep dogs, soap making booths, horse hair braiding events, wall branding sessions, pinecone basket weaving, a pie shop, and Indian dancers. Contact Owyhee County Historical Museum 208 495-2319

### June 10-12 Weiser Valley

Round-Up, Weiser Known for years as the "Best Show in Idaho," Contact Weiser Chamber of Commerce 208 414-0452

### June 12-13 Timberfest, Sandpoint

Held at the Bonner County Fairgrounds, Timberfest celebrates Idaho's timber heritage with logging competitions, truck driving contests, educational exhibits, arts & crafts, kids' activities and a Saturday night dance. Admission is \$5. Contact the Sandpoint Chamber of Commerce, 208 263-0887



## June 5-Riggins Annual Bigwater Blowout

Bring your friends and your family to experience the season's BIGGEST WATER! There will be many raft companies with licensed guides ready and waiting to take you on the river, as a minimum donation gets you an all day pass for rafting with any company. Other activities include a Dutch Oven Cook-Off, an "After Raft Party" and entertainment. Contact Salmon River Chamber of Commerce, 208 628-3563

### June 5-6 Horseshoe Bend Banjo Contest & Festival, Horseshoe Bend

Join us in Horseshoe Bend for the annual Horseshoe Bend Banjo Festival. Cash prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd places in both the adult and youth divisions. Pre-registration for competing is recommended, however walk-ins are also welcome. Ride the Thunder Mountain Line railroad out of Horseshoe Bend. Contact Horseshoe Bend Area Chamber of Commerce 208 793-2363

### June 6 Warhawk Air Museum D-Day Invasion, Nampa

Color Guard, round table discussion with veterans who were there or in WWII. Refreshments are served. Hours 10am to 2pm. Contact Warhawk Air Museum 208 465-6446

### June 14-19 Gem County Cherry Festival, Emmett

Cherry pit-spitting and pie-eating contests, quilt show, fun run, and carnival. The festival also features a big parade, kids parade, coin scramble, entertainment bands, fiddlers, food, expo, car show and lots more! Contact the Gem County Chamber of Commerce 208 365-3485

### June 27 Ironman , Coeur d'Alene

The Ironman Triathlon is a 2.4 mile swim, 112 mile bike and 26.2 mile run. The Coeur d'Alene race features 80 qualifying spots for the Ironman World Championship race held annually in Kona, Hawaii. Contact Coeur d'Alene Chamber of Commerce 208 664-3194

Do you have a special event in your town in the coming months? Drop us a note with the vital information and we'll make sure friends and neighbors across the street and across the state know about it. All functions must be free to the public, or darned cheap. Events charging admission fees are welcome to purchase ad space to help sponsor this page.

### Write: IDAHO magazine Calendar of Events

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# june 2004 calendar of events

1-8/7	International Folk Dance, Rexburg	17	Shoot-out, Wagon Ride & Dinner Show, Ririe
1-30	Quilt Show, Council	18	Celtic Music Concert, Lava Hot Springs
1-30	Free Tours of Historic Bown House, Boise	18	Lead Creek Breakfast, Mullan
2	Motorcross, Preston	18-19	American Cancer Society Relay for Life, Nampa
2-4	Kootenai Tribe Pow Wow, Bonners Ferry	18-19	Car d' Lane Classic Car Show, Coeur d'Alene
3-4	Yacht Club Annual Yard Sale, Priest River	18-19	Idaho's Wildest Rodeo, Mackay
3-30	Idaho Falls Community Band, Idaho Falls	18-19	Snake River Story Swap, Idaho Falls
4-5	Greek Food Festival, Boise	18-19	Zoo Docent Rummage Sale, Idaho Falls
4-5	Circle the Wagons Banjo Gathering, Caldwell	18-19	Father's Weekend Craft Fair, Island Park
4-6	Horse Expo, Sandpoint	18-19	Dairy Days, Wendell
4-6	Post Falls Days, Post Falls	18-30	Idaho Falls Chukars Professional Baseball, Idaho Falls
5	Cowboy, Music, Art & Poetry Festival, Rigby	19	Jefferson Parade & Stampede, Rigby
5	D.A.R.E. 4th Annual BBQ, Caldwell	19	Sawtooth Relay, Stanley
5	Free Fishing day, Statewide	19	Skandinavian Midsommar Celebration, Idaho Falls
5	Teton Dam 26-Mile Marathon, Rexburg	19	Garden Tour, Mountain Home
5	Mud Bogs, Lewiston	19	Mario D'Orazio Scholarship Golf Tourney, Challis
5-6	Wing & Wheels Air & Car Show, Bonners Ferry	19	Demolition Derby, Preston
5-6	Clearwater Valley Amateur Rodeo, Kamiah	19	Pig-In-The-Park/Junebug Craft Faire, Harrison
5-6	Outpost Days, Murphy	19	2nd Annual Fundraising Hawaiian Luau, Pocatello
5-13	Old Fort Boise Days, Parma	19-20	Shoshone Silver Buckle Trap Shoot, Pocatello
10	Sunbird/Senior Ice Cream Social, Rexburg	20	Dynamic Dad's Day Celebration at the Zoo, Boise
11	Great Gatsby Garden Party, Boise	21	Bridge the Years/Ride the Wall, Enaville
11	Opera in the Plaza, Coeur d'Alene	21-26	National Oldtime Buckskin Congress, Caldwell
12	Timberfest, Sandpoint	22	Free Concert in the Park, Post Falls
12	Idaho City Arts & Crafts Festival, Idaho City	22	Anatone Days, Anatone, WA
12	Dolly's Subway Motorcycle Run/Pig Roast, Rigby	23-25	Rodeo & Parade, Newport
12	Dr. Doolittle Day at the Zoo, Idaho Falls	23-8/18	Ketch'em Alive (summer concerts), Ketchum
12	Live History Day/I-Farm, Jerome	24-26	Idaho Days, Franklin
12	North Idaho Timberfest, Sandpoint	24-26	Frontier Music Festival, Kooskia
12-8/21	Coeur d'Alene Summer Theatre	24-9/2	Great Garden Escape, Idaho Botanical Garden, Boise
12-13	Eagle Fun Days, Eagle	25-26	Idaho Days & Pageant, Franklin
12-13	Fiddle Fest, Post Falls	25-26	Teddy Roosevelt Commemoration, Worley
12-13	Thunder Over the Prairie Airshow, Hayden	25-27	Newport Rodeo Weekend, Priest River
13-9/3	Jazz at the Winery, Caldwell	25-27	Lewis & Clark Discovery Faire, Lewiston
14-19	Idaho High School Rodeo Finals, Pocatello	25-27	Mackay Rodeo, Mackay
15	Along the River Free Summer Concerts, Idaho Falls	26	Fall Creek Enduro Motorcycle Race, Swan Valley
15	I Made the Grade Bicycle Ride, Clarkston, WA	26	Relay for Life, Idaho Falls
15	Concert on the Green, Rexburg	26	Habitat for Humanity Pig Roast, Pinehurst
15-19	Cherry Festival, Emmett	26	Portneuf Greenway Riverfest, Pocatello
15-8/31	Snake River Concerts, Idaho Falls	26-27	Rodeo, Bonners Ferry
15-9/1	Boise Hawks Baseball, Boise: Memorial Stadium	26-27	Mt. McCaleb Arts & Crafts Festival, Mackay
16-19	Dairy Days, Meridian	26-27	Great American Train Show, Boise
17-19	Jazz in the Canyon Weekend, Twin Falls	27	Idaho Botanical Garden Tour, Boise
17-19	Lewis & Clark Symposium, Lewis-Clark State College	27-28	Senior Pro Rodeo, Horseshoe Bend
17-20	Gyro Days - Lead Creek Derby, Wallace	29	Summer Sounds at Park Place, Pend Oreille
17	Taste of Idaho, Idaho Falls	29	Relay for Life Golf Scramble, Coeur d'Alene
		30-7/4	Idaho Quarter Horse Show, Caldwell





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# The Mud Wagon

By Arthur Hart

Our historical snapshot this month shows a classic Idaho “mud wagon” of the kind used for more than fifty years on some of the roughest roads in the West. Unlike the elegant Concord coaches, built in Concord, New Hampshire, the kind used by Wells Fargo and other pioneer stagecoach lines, the homely mud wagon was built by local blacksmiths and wheelwrights in small Idaho towns. The Idaho State Historical Museum has a very similar one.

These tough little coaches had no springs. In their place was a suspension system of heavy leather straps called a thoroughbrace that allowed the coach to sway forward, backward, and sideways, taking up some of the shock of bumps in the road. Needless to say, passengers arrived at their destinations considerably shaken, exhausted, and

dusty. It was an ordeal, but the only alternatives, before the railroads came, were to ride your own horse or walk.

This photograph, taken in Lewiston soon after 1890, shows a stagecoach labeled “Idaho, Nevada & California Stage Co.,” with the added letters U.S.M., telling us that the owners also had a contract to carry the mail. By the early '90s, north Idaho was served by the Northern Pacific, Union Pacific, and Great Northern railroads, but many interior or Pacific Northwest towns still needed the stagecoaches to connect with each other and the railroads.

Clues to the date of this picture can be seen in the style of clothing worn by the passengers and the bystanders outside the Raymond House. This leading Lewiston hotel was built in 1879, but the electric wires

strung across the outside of the building tell us that our photo dates from 1890 or later. That is when north Idaho got electric lights. The telephone wires overhead are from a decade earlier. One Lewiston merchant had installed a local telephone system in 1878, probably Idaho's earliest.

Mud wagons like this, and even the more graceful Concord coaches, averaged only five miles-per-hour or less on long hauls. There were stops every ten or twelve hours (hence the name stages) to put on fresh horses, or to allow passengers to have a meal.

The railroads would soon make stagecoaches a thing of the past, although they still served some small Idaho towns as late as 1920.

*Arthur Hart is director emeritus of the Idaho State Historical Society.*

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#### Instructions:

Mail entries to **Photo Contest, IDAHO magazine, 4301 Franklin Rd.,  
Boise, ID 83705.** Entries must be postmarked by **JULY 31, 2004.**

Please **DO NOT** send originals. Send a color or black/white print (minimum 6"x9"). If you  
would like the print returned, you must include an appropriate-sized, self-addressed  
envelope with sufficient postage.

In order to be eligible, each  
entry must have at least one  
person in it, though the  
person need not be the  
primary subject. Each entry  
must be taken in Idaho and  
submitted by the  
photographer. Both color and  
black/white, indoor or  
outdoor photos are  
welcome, although  
preference will be given to  
color images. Historical  
photographs may be  
submitted by the person or  
agency owning the photo.  
Computer altered images will  
not be considered.

**IDAHO**  
magazine

**Attention: Photo Contest**

4301 W Franklin Rd  
Boise, Idaho 83705  
(208) 336-0653





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