



Behind the Scenes at the Keller Heritage Center

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January 2008

Stevens County Historical Society

2007 Annual Christmas Tour Report

by Janet Thomas

The 2007 Keller House Christmas Tour was a **huge** success!! The theme Let it Snow was apparently quite prophetic – as snow it did. It was beautiful for the tour and the decorations breathtaking.

We had the best publicity ever. The Statesman did several articles and we even had a nice write-up in the Home section of the Spokesman-Review. Radio and cable stations got the news out as well, along with the usual fliers. We are very grateful to all those that participated in getting the Tour news out.

The number of people who worked on the decorations are far to numerous to mention. Marlene Fredricks again provided the vision and recruited Shelly Graham, who provided the fan-

tasy forest and gift extravaganza. The museum had a history of Christmas Trees designed by Rebecca Gordon, the new Curator and her mother. If her work at Christmas is any indication of what she can do we will see truly wonderful things from her in the future. Rose Burns lead the charge in the Learning Center. And we could hardly top those terrific decorations provided by the Kindergarten students from Astor School.

In addition to spectacular decorations, the mood of the visitors was wonderful. There was so much visiting, enjoying the decorations and museum and house. We raised a little extra money for the Society by selling members' favorite cookie recipes in the Learning Center. This is something we

will do again next year, since so many people really enjoyed it. Dig out those favorite recipes and get ready to share!

This year we had a first. We were trying to figure out a way to have seniors from the nursing home visit when Pinewood called and had an idea. They brought several from one of their units down with families and escorts. They spent a wonderful evening in the Keller House enjoying the sights and sounds and their families. It proved that we could do it and we hope to do something similar next year.

This year we also added hours to the schedule and many people took advantage of them. We had a good crowd on Saturday. (See 'Tour,' p. 2)

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Check it Out!

The Stevens County Historical Society's web page is getting updated! We are really excited about the new changes that should make the website more inviting, secure and easier to navigate. Grady Knight has been working very, very hard getting it all done. If things aren't perfect yet, wait a little while and come back again.

The website address is <http://www.stevenscountyhistoricalsociety.org>. Be sure to bookmark the site and let your friends know that some of the wonderful things our Museum has to offer the community is available to them anytime, online.

Are you online??

Help us conserve the Historical Society's resources by receiving your newsletter by e-mail. Send us your e-mail address to schs@plix.com and you will begin receiving your newsletter with the next edition. The newsletter will be in pdf format so that anyone will be able to read it, since almost everyone has Adobe Acrobat reader. Thank you in advance!

Around the Grounds

by Marvin Ray

The winter months are slowly losing their energy and spring is on the way!

Spring time always means a tremendous amount of work and preparation for the May 1st opening of the Keller Heritage Center.

Museum displays must be cleaned and new displays must be created or rearranged to entice visitors to come and see what has been changed and added. Older visitors can then tell their friends, relatives and acquaintances how nice the museum looks. Above every-

thing else, they can tell them how much history one can learn about the area. Did you know that the Colville area was the first inhabited area by white people within the state of Washington? The first fur traders arrived in 1811.

Ivan and Vera, our grounds crew, worked from April 1st until November 30th to repair and rebuild all of our rock walls and trails. They created rock planters and flower beds, cleaned out bushy areas and raked pine needles, grass and leaves on a continuous daily routine. They also did the watering. We

are so glad that Career Path Services matched them up with us.

The Keller House exterior will need to be painted this year, as the paint is peeling. The carriage house must also be painted. The two buildings are almost 100 years old, after all! We will need to get help to complete the painting. Our Board members are getting too old to climb the tall ladders. Pittsburg Paints and Haney Lumber Co. have provided the paint for the two buildings. If anyone can help paint the buildings, please contact Marvin Ray at the Museum.

CURATOR'S NOTES

by Becca Gordon

Ahhhh, another year is upon us! As I am settling into my role as Curator, I have started the process of finding new Assistant Curators. So far, Marvin Ray has agreed to be an assistant for the Lower Grounds Buildings and the Military displays. Angie Wylie is the new assistant for the Native American displays. I am currently seeking willing volunteers to fill the following assistant positions: Lookout Tower, Keller House and Carriage House, and General Assistant Curators. Anyone interested can contact me at home at 509-738-2951 or by email at NorwishArchy@hotmail.com.

My assistants and I have been hard at work preparing for the upcoming season. Renovations to Mr. Keller's room have been proceeding nicely. The old wallpaper is off; the ceiling tiles have been replaced by drywall; and the walls and ceiling are being prepped for painting. By the time the museum opens, the room should be painted and the floors refinished.

New for this year in the Keller House will be a canning display in the

Butler's Pantry and Kitchen areas. This display will feature several canning kettles, a variety of canning tools, and a selection of canning jars. In the Museum, work is continuing on the Native American displays, mostly rearranging items and correcting some errors that were brought to my attention last fall. The Barber Shop display has been rearranged and will be opened up for visitors to enter. This will allow for better viewing of the many wonderful items in the display case. More shelves and possibly an additional display case will also be added to accommodate the various artifacts currently on display. The Dress Shop and General Store are also undergoing some small alterations.

As you go through the museum this season, please feel free to make suggestions for improvements or for future displays. I am seeking display ideas to replace the current Music Room display. Suggestion boxes will be located throughout the museum and in the various outbuildings. Until next time . . .

Got a Little Extra Time on Your Hands?

Volunteer!! Maybe you know someone else you could volunteer too. We are always in need of tour guides and other help, especially with spring coming on and so many projects in the works. Maybe you know someone who would be willing to donate equipment that would help complete a project well, and in record time. Any of these things would be so helpful to the Historical Society.

Being a tour guide has its advantages too. You get to visit with other members of the Society, you receive a complimentary membership in the Society and you will receive the Newsletter. When the Museum is quiet and during the times we have no visitors, you might even be able to get a little work done on a project of your own, like crocheting a baby blanket or other handiwork craft.

Don't wait! Call 684-5968 to volunteer (leave a message).

Tour, Cont. from p. 1...

Anyone who did not come to the tour missed a real treat. The dates next year is the first Saturday and Sunday in December. Put it on your calendar

now so you don't forget it and don't miss it!

President's Message

by Janet Thomas

We had a wonderful Annual Membership meeting in October. In addition to the business meeting we had a presentation of Jane McDonald visiting with Mary Walker. Both of the women were here in the 1840's and spent time together. It was insightful and well done and portrayed the content of conversations between the women.

Work has continued through the winter on several projects. The Prestini Project by The Heritage Network continues with SCHS Librarian Glendine Leonard chairing it. It should be a wonderful effort.

We have added three board members. Angie Willey, Grady Knight and Rebecca Gordon have joined the board and each bring unique skills and interests to the board and are all making great contributions.

Rose Burns has taken the assignment of membership and is working to get everything up to date and recruit new mem-

bers. She, along with board members Janet Labrecque and Rebecca Gordon are working on a Spring Roundup. They are first concentrating on corporate memberships/sponsorships.

The Historians, Juanita Bronson and Ann Dodge continue to do research for people. They draw on Larry Fine's Native American resources also. Recently between the Historians and Larry about 150 pages of family history were sent to a man in Florida. Not all cases are that dramatic, but there is almost always something for everyone. Indexing of various documents goes on all the time. By the way, if you want to read a book, scrapbook, document or some similar document and make a list of what you find call us.

I noticed the new curator, Becca, putting the upstairs document, picture and textile room in order. That will take a long time, but she has gotten a great start. She has also named new assistant curators who

have been approved by the board. Angie Willey will serve as an assistant in the Native American Area and Marvin Ray will curate the Military display and the buildings and contents on the lower grounds. Of course he is also in charge of maintenance and repair and the grounds themselves.

We are worried about the price of gas and the impact that could make on travel and visitors. We are hoping to find ways to get local people to visit the museum, house and grounds. If you have not come to the Center for a while you should visit. It changes all the time and is well worth spending an afternoon from time to time.

As always we need tour guides. As little as 3 hours a week for three months would be a regular shift. Fewer hours, substituting, alternating with other guides, are all choices that would make a huge difference in keeping the museum open. It is truly a wonderful place and records our history.

The Leno Prestini Project

Who is Leno Prestini, you ask? Leno was a self-taught artist who lived and worked in Clayton. He was eccentric, adventurous, talented, serious, moody and could be the life of the party. He was a complex yet simple person, whose paintings were vivid in color and imagination. Two of his larger paintings currently hang in the history room at the Old Schoolhouse.

Leno also worked in clay and many of his terra cotta works grace a variety of buildings in the Pacific Northwest.

The Prestini Project Committee of The Heritage Network, to which the Museum belongs, is currently in the planning stages of exhibits, a book and a DVD that will feature Leno's works.

Three historical societies have already committed to hosting and exhibit in 2010 featuring Leno's works.

We, the Stevens County Histori-

cal Society, will exhibit many of his paintings and other items. The Loon Lake Historical Society will display photos and items from some of his adventures that took place in our area, such as diving in Loon Lake with his homemade diving helmet and equipment. They also have photographs and the skis of Leno's friend, Burton Stewart currently on display in the history room at the Old Schoolhouse. They hope to develop a photo display of the local fireplaces that Leno built in our area.

The Clayton-Deer Park Historical Society will display some of his paintings and personal items. CDPHS is also interviewing many people who knew Leno personally when he lived and worked in Clayton.

The Loon Lake Historical Society also has a six-minute video detailing the project that is available for viewing. You can contact the Loon Lake Histori-

cal Society if you or your group would like to see it or if you or your group would like to participate in the project. To learn more and watch the progress of the fundraising efforts, you can visit www.lenoprestini.com on the Internet. You can also contact the Loon Lake Historical Society at 233-2222. Leave a message and someone will return your call.

This article was adapted from an article that appeared in the February 2008 Historical Happenings published by the Loon Lake Historical Society. Used with permission.

Stevens County Historical Society

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Behind the Scenes at the Keller Heritage Center Newsletter is a publication of the Stevens County Historical Society for its members. It is published four times a year, in January, April, July and October.

How to Reach Us

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Email: schs@ultraplix.com

Website: www.stevenscountyhistoricalsociety.org

Address: P. O. Box 25
700 N. Wynne St., Colville, WA 99114

Museum Hours:

May & September: 1 PM to 4 PM

June, July, August: 10 AM to 4 PM (Mon.-Thurs.)
1 PM to 4 PM (Fri.-Sun.)

October through April: Museum & Keller House Tours
By Appointment.

Research Library Hours:

Wednesday: 10 AM to 1 PM

Thursday: 1 PM to 4 PM (limited services)

If you need other hours, please call the museum to arrange a different time.

Membership Application & Renewal

- New Membership
- Renewal (membership expires on date on label)

Choose One:

- Senior/Student.....\$10.00
- Single Membership.....\$20.00
- Family Membership.....\$25.00
- Business Membership.....\$35.00
- Sustaining Membership.....\$100.00 yearly
- Patron Membership.....\$500.00
- Life Membership.....\$2,500.00

Payment Enclosed: \$_____

Send your name, address and payment to:

Stevens County Historical Society
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