



Behind the Scenes at the Keller Heritage Center

Volume V, Issue 3

July 2009

Stevens County Historical Society

Yesterday's History ... Our Big Summer Event!

by Larry Fine

Yesterday's History is the annual summer event at the Keller Heritage Center. It's going to be really exciting this year because we've got a lot of different activities lined up.

Of course we will have professionals that will help you evaluate your precious things. There will be evaluators who will be able to assess antiques, collectibles, jewelry, guns and ammunition.


There will be demonstrations of antique wood burning, flint knapping, lavender wand-making, and water dowsing. We've got a couple of other things we're working on that would only make the event bigger and better!

The event takes place on Saturday, August 8th from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The demonstrations will occur from 10:00 AM to 2 PM (approximately).

The antiques and collectibles assessments will take place from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM. There is a \$5.00 charge for each item assessed. For items too big to haul to the event, take some pictures of the item and any unusual features or markings and bring the pictures.

The Keller House will be open for no fee, though donations are always accepted. The house has just been newly repainted and is just beautiful (see article). The regular admission fees apply to the Museum, but the grounds, including the Lookout Tower, are all open to visitors at no cost. If you do go into the Museum, you'll be able to see a preview of the Leno Prestini paintings and exhibits.

This is going to be the best event ever, so mark your calendars!



Yesterday's
History Summer
Event

Keller Heritage Center
700 N. Wynne St.
August 8, 2009
10:00 AM—4:00 PM

Inside this issue:

President's	3
Message	
The Walla Walla to Ft. Colville Road	2
Rambles from the Curator	1
Summer Event	1
Around the Grounds	2
News Bits... Take Note!	2
Contact Us	4

Rambles from the Curator

by Becca Gordon

With the season now in full swing, life has quieted down considerably in my department. Currently, I am working on cleaning and organizing the storage area, with Mike Waits help. This has been a rather long process, but very rewarding as the chaos becomes organized. Towards this effort, I am still in desperate need of white, 100% cotton large sheets or yards of fabric. These are needed to cover and protect the furniture pieces from dust and light damage. I am also in need of 4-5 wall-mountable metal saddle racks, which can be found at Big R for about \$15 each. If anyone can help on either of these items, please contact me or bring them by the museum.

On the new acquisitions front, we

have received a wonderful collection of mortars and pestles made of metal, glass, and ceramic from Frank Slagle. One of these mortars reportedly dates back over 300 years and was used in the first pharmacy of Colville. Once accessioned and cleaned, they will make a beautiful display in the Doctor's Office display. We have also received a Yugoslavian Mauser rifle from Alan Bedford. Mike is currently cleaning, fixing, and preserving this rifle and we hope to have it on display later this summer. Hearty thanks goes to all of our donors!

If anyone has any questions, comments, or suggestions, please contact me at 509 -684-5968 or SCHS_Curator@hotmail.com. Until next time . . .

Around the Grounds by Marvin Ray

With additional available grounds workers, the Heritage Center's landscape has improved very much. Most of the weeding, grass and brush cutting has been finished on the south and east sections of the grounds. The north side grounds work is almost complete.

The Keller House has been painted by Mike Tracy and the house looks GREAT! The Carriage House was painted one year ago as an Eagle Scout project, so now both structures once again complement each other.

Due to the heavy snow this past winter, many types of repair work

have been undertaken and much more needs to be done. Winter snow removal caused damage to rocks and cement block walls along the driveways. Repair work is already underway.

Our donated Indian Tepee was damaged and had major repairs recently. Young people with no respect for history damaged the structure. The tepee was set up by John Goering.

Many very good comments have been received from our visitors this season on the recent improvements, and we would like to thank all who helped with the work or helped facilitate the work.

Tour Guides Needed ASAP!!

We desperately need to fill two tour guide positions at the Keller Heritage Center. We started with a full contingent of guides, but now we are short a guide on Tuesday mornings and Wednesday afternoons. If you can help out, please call the Museum at 684-5968.



Roses, Roses, Roses

Kay Smolden is a Master Gardener and is working on the rose garden. It has really suffered over the years without regular, attentive, expert care. This is going to make a huge improvement to the presentation of the Keller property.

Kay is more than willing to accept donations of vintage, heritage or period roses, or newer roses. Please contact the Museum and leave a message if you would like to donate—684-5968.

News Bites & Other Notes

...Jodi Roberts is putting together new brochures for both the house and the grounds, so guides won't have to remember so many details about all our new displays.

...The Courthouse display is almost done. It's been cleaned, part of it has been reinstalled and we hope to have the remaining parts of the displays in by the fall.

...Fort Colville Days went well and we had 70 people attend. Geno Ludwig gave a fabulous early history of the Walla Walla to Fort Colville Military Road (see article).

...Ed Erickson of Stagecoach Antiques loaned the Museum a McClellan Saddle. This is the saddle that was adopted by our military in 1859 and not retired until the cavalry was retired. Make sure you get to see it!

...Microsoft donated five licenses and copies of Office Suite Professional Plus. This is a great asset to the Museum, which would have cost us hundreds of dollars if we had to purchase this ourselves.

...We've updated our security plan, making needed improvements to protect our artifacts and at the same time make less hassle for those who work at the Museum.

...The big Prestini Project is only one year away!

The Walla Walla to Ft. Colville Road

In the mid-1800s, Walla Walla was the economic hub of Eastern Washington. Spokane would not take over as the heart of the Inland Empire until after the railroad reached the town of Spokane Falls in 1881.

Until that time, all goods coming into the Colville Valley came up the Columbia River to Walla Walla and were then transported north by pack train or wagon to Fort Colville or nearby Pinkney City.

This route was the Ft. Walla Walla to Ft. Colville Military Road, which was constructed by the US Army in 1859. It was the first engineered road in the State of Washington, built to send supplies to the newly constructed military outpost.

With the defeat of the allied Indian coalition at the Battle of Four Lakes and the Battle of Spokane Plains by Colonel George Wright in 1858, the Army decided it needed a military presence in the Col-

ville Valley. Fort Colville was constructed to protect the early settlers and intruding gold prospectors.

The Ft. Walla Walla to Ft. Colville Military Road followed a system of Indian trails that had been in use for centuries. All of the tribes of Eastern Washington were related to their neighbors by marriage, so these trails were used by them to trade and socialize with each other.

The coming of the horse to Eastern Washington in the late 1700s revolutionized transportation for the Native Americans. They could now travel farther and faster, and they could transport a much greater weight of goods such as salmon from Kettle Falls or buffalo from Montana.

Horse traffic along the original route of what would become the Ft. Walla Walla to Ft. Colville Military Road widened the trail and provided a heavier flow of Native

American traffic along its segments.

Fur traders entered the Colville Valley in 1800, when David Thompson of the Northwest Fur Company sent two men named LeGrasse and LaBlanc into the area to determine if there were enough valuable fur-bearing animals in the area to build a trading post there.

Thompson sent Jaco Finley and Finan McDonald to build a fur trading fort called Spokane House at the mouth of the Little Spokane River in 1810. Later, the first Fort Colville was built near Kettle Falls in 1825, and Spokane House was abandoned.

Furs from Eastern Washington were transported by boat or by pack train to Fort Walla Walla and then on to Fort Vancouver near the mouth of the Columbia River. From there, they were shipped across the Pacific Ocean to India and China. These pack trains followed the established Indian

President's Message

by Janet Thomas

Those of you who haven't been to the museum or the grounds lately have missed a real treat - five spotted fawns spend some time every day on the grounds. Cute is not enough to describe them.

Tour guides are once again doing an outstanding job. An illness in the family caused our newest tour guide to have to leave before the season is over. Also, someone who had signed up for two shifts a week found it was bit too much leaving us with two shifts uncovered. One is a morning shift and will only last through

August and the other is an afternoon shift and will last through September - ANY TAKERS?

Other volunteers are also doing a great job keeping the organization and the facilities going. They do all kinds of things and from the look of things I say they do it pretty well.

Wouldn't it wonderful if money was no object? We could do all of those things that need to be done and now. We have space and storage needs, the library is overflowing, and the grounds

could become a showplace for the public to enjoy. There are also program needs, and the list goes on and on. The house is always in needs some kind of work. So much has been done the last two years, and yet there is so much yet to do. She will be 100 next year and there is so much to do to have her looking fresh and repaired by then.

There are always so many needs and so many problems to solve it is sometimes hard to see the wonders that are ours. And there are many. MANY!



Please Remember Marvin



Marvin Ray, a long-time volunteer here at the Museum, has been having some health problems recently. He is scheduled to have heart surgery next month and we would very much appreciate it if our Museum friends would take a moment to keep Marvin in their thoughts and prayers for a speedy recovery.

trail that became the Ft. Walla Walla to Fort Colville Military Road.

In 1836, the first Protestant missionaries arrived in Walla Walla. Marcus and Narcissa Whitman built a mission called Waiilatpu. Two years later, Elkanah and Mary Walker, accompanied by Cushing and Myra Eells, traveled north from Walla Walla to establish another mission. They followed the same well-established route to Fort Colville.

There, they met with Archibald McDonald, chief trader at the fort, who advised them to construct their mission among the Spokane Indians near what is now the community of Ford. They called it Tshimakain. McDonald was a Catholic, like most of the French-Canadians, so he did not want Protestant missionaries near his fort.

On Sunday, September 16, 1838, Reverend Cushing Eells preached his first sermon to a gathering of Indians on the banks of Peyee Creek in what is now Chewelah.

Catholic Jesuit missionaries traveled all over the northwest. Father De Smet first visited the Colville Valley in 1845, when he went to Kettle Falls. On the way south along the route, he stopped at a village being built by about 70 families of mixed French-Canadian and Cree blood. The village included a chapel, which Father De Smet named St. Francis Regis. This was the beginning of what is now Chewelah.

In 1854, Joseph Morrill, a teamster for Angus McDonald at Fort Colville, discovered gold in the Columbia River. News of the discovery soon reached every mining camp in the region, and prospectors scurried to the Columbia River and its tributaries. The Columbia River Gold Rush had begun!!!

Hundreds of prospectors came up the future Ft. Walla Walla to Ft. Colville Trail and invaded Indian lands. The Shwayip (Colville) Indians closed their lands to prospectors in August of 1855. Encroaching miners would be killed, which did not actually occur until 1858.

The miners complained to the government, and a column of 157 soldiers was sent north from Fort Walla Walla in 1857 to protect the prospectors. This ill-equipped military contingent, under the command of Colonel Edward Steptoe, was defeated at the Battle of Rosalia. One year later, Colonel Wright avenged this defeat.

In 1859, military Fort Colville was built near Mill Creek, northeast of the present town of Colville. The road constructed to ship supplies

A Huge Thank-You!!

We know he doesn't want a big deal made about what he's done, but we just have to send out a HUGE thank-you to Mike Tracy for the beautiful job he did painting the Keller House. Our treasured lovely lady has not looked so pretty in a new dress in a long while! Haney's and Pittsburg Paints teamed up to donate the primer and the paint, and we send out another huge thank-you to them as well.



Mike painting the back porch of the Keller House.

to this new post followed that same well-used route. It was widened by the Army to accommodate wagons, but the route was essentially the same.

From 1859 until the arrival of the Spokane Falls and Northern Railroad in 1889, The Ft. Walla Walla to Ft. Colville Military Road was the main artery of transportation into the Colville Valley. The ancestors of many current residents of the Colville Valley arrived here via this road.

Today, many parts of the Colville Military Road are still in use here in Northeastern Washington. The road follows Interstate 90 from Sprague Lake to Reardan. There, it turns north and becomes Highway 231 along Spring Creek and Chamocane Creek past Walker's Prairie and Springdale. It then becomes Long Prairie Road, Farm to Market Road, Heine Road, Tetro Road, Duncan Road, Dry Creek Road, Zimmer Road, Marble Valley Road, Twelve Mile Road, and possibly the Townsend Sackman Road.

Stevens County Historical Society
P. O. Box 25
Colville, WA 99114

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Membership Application & Renewal

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

Choose One:

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

Payment Enclosed: \$_____

Name:_____

Address:_____

Cut out, enclose payment and send to:

Stevens County Historical Society
P. O. Box 25
Colville, WA 99114

How to Reach Us

Office Hours: Mon., Wed., Fri. 10 AM to 1 PM

Phone/Message Number: (509) 684-5968

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.