For the last two years we have been unable to gather for our Annual Meeting, which has also meant we have been unable to present our "Volunteer of the Year" Award. Volunteers have always provided invaluable assistance to the society, and that has never been more true than during the pandemic!

We are recognizing Denise Thomson as our 2020 Volunteer of the Year for her considerable efforts to make LCHS programs accessible during a very uncertain period. Along with her fellow board member Nancy Ruth Peterson, Denise started a book club and developed the "Harvest Dinner at Home" project.

We are recognizing Lynne McCreight as our 2021 Volunteer of the Year for her decade of service as our bookkeeper and her attention to our finances during the pandemic. Additionally, Lynne has been indispensable to Curator Hayley as she familiarizes herself with the LCHS archives and object collection.

We sincerely thank both of these outstanding volunteers!

Thank you to our 2022 BUSINESS SPONSORS
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August 25, 2021 through February 24, 2022

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Thank you for your support!
This is my final newsletter column as Executive Director and writing it is a bittersweet task. I cannot help but feel nostalgic about the countless memories that I have made over the last eight-plus years, as well as proud of some of the major accomplishments the organization has recorded during that time. The people I have met, the places I have explored, and the history that I have learned will all stick with me for years to come. As this chapter of my professional life closes, and a new chapter for the historical society is about to begin, I hope you will not mind indulging me in a short trip down memory lane.

I was hired in the spring of 2013 to fill the seat vacated by the retirement of Museum Curator Ann Catt. When folks speak of Ann, it is always with a great fondness for her warmth, sense of humor, and deep love of the McConnell Mansion and local history. Attending Ann’s retirement party was my first event with LCHS and I saw just how deep her connection was with the membership. I knew had my work cut out for me! Thankfully, with the guidance of Executive Director Dan Crandall, I found my stride and began the immense task of learning about Latah County’s history. I had to get a move on, it turned out, because Dan was also ready to enjoy retirement. In January 2014, I took over as director and have been a student of local history and nonprofit leadership ever since.

As I comb through our internal photo collection from past events and projects, I am reminded of just how much we have accomplished in the last decade. We welcomed two Smithsonian traveling exhibits to Moscow, and complimented those showings with locally-curated displays, educational programs, and dozens of tours for school children. We grew our audience through creative events and projects, like the Dine Through Time, downtown walking tours, and the Suds with a Scholar fundraiser. We upheld beloved traditions, like the Ice Cream Social and Harvest Dinner, and then when Covid-19 hit, we pivoted to find safe alternatives that preserved the fellowship of our organization.

Becoming a leader of this esteemed organization was made easier with the support I received from so many people. Members of the LCHS Board of Directors, first and foremost, have provided unending encouragement and wisdom, as well as enthusiasm and patience.

They have embraced new ideas, invested in technology and staff education, and generally been excited to see the historical society change and grow. It has been my immense good fortune to work for a board that is keen on looking towards the future, even as we all agree on the necessity of preserving the past. Additionally, Latah County’s Commissioners have been invaluable partners in the work of the historical society. Our society and our county have something special in this partnership, and it is the envy of many throughout Idaho. While I wish that I could list out every individual that has provided sage advice to me along the way, I would be remiss if I did not say special thanks to Mary Reed and Keith Petersen for their decades of dedication to LCHS.
It has been wonderful to support my coworkers in their passion projects, like Zach’s quest to digitize materials, Hannah’s beautiful overhaul of our website, Elaina’s gift for solving historical puzzles, and Hayley’s vision to bring order to our ever-present backlog. I have worked with talented people that have taught me so much. A new roof on the mansion, excellent editions of the Latah Legacy, stronger ties with the University of Idaho, important relationships with fellow nonprofits in the area, increased name recognition for the organization – these items and many more make my list of “things I am proud of.”

Most of all, I am thankful for the friendships that have helped to turn Moscow into my home. Like so many new graduates, I thought that taking my first job as curator meant I would spend a couple of years building my resume before moving on. (And indeed more than a few people have told me over the years that they expected as much.) I found, instead, that the people I worked with each day really cared about this community and in turn cared about me. Board members, volunteers, nonprofit colleagues, and society members became my Idaho family. They helped me move houses, they invited me to Easter dinner, they came to my wedding, and they celebrated the birth of my son. I will never be able to adequately express my gratitude to those of you who helped me grow as a historian, as a professional, and as a person.

In closing, I extend my sincerest thanks for allowing me this great privilege to lead LCHS. I am eager to see what exciting new things the next Executive Director will bring to an already great organization. Moscow will remain my family’s home, as my new job is just down the road at the University of Idaho. I look forward to seeing folks at the Farmers Market, along the Latah Trail, or perhaps when they visit the UI Special Collections and Archives. Until we connect again, I thank you for supporting the preservation of local history as essential for a strong and vibrant county.

With deep appreciation,

- Dulce

P.S. – One final note of thanks goes to my dear husband, Tonda, who has moved his fair share of tables and chairs, made emergency pie runs, and been genuinely interested in this work.
Message from the President

My love of history began when a student-teacher at Moscow High School brought history to life for me through interweaving local history of significance into our nation’s past. I have enjoyed many years as a volunteer and several years serving on the board of directors of LCHS. I had looked forward to working more closely with Dulce and it is bittersweet that just as I begin this office, Dulce is leaving for a new position. We have been fortunate to have outstanding Executive Directors, and Dulce will be sorely missed. She gets credit for one of my favorite events, Suds with a Scholar. An engaging lecture and a cold brew- how can you beat that combination? We are planning on two of these gatherings again this summer. While I’m sorry to see Dulce go, I’m happy for her and wish her well in her new job. It’s an excellent opportunity for her. The directors have posted the opening and begun the search process. We will keep you informed of any developments.

I want to thank LeNelle McInturff, our outgoing board president, for the remarkable job she has done these past three years. She certainly got more than she bargained for, and led us with calm confidence through what was hopefully the worst of the coronavirus. I have already called on her for guidance and will gratefully continue to rely on her. Throughout the frustration of COVID-19 our first thought has been safety. We are cautiously optimistic that we will gather together, renew acquaintances, and celebrate history very soon. In the meantime, thank you for your continued support, and be sure to check out the LCHS website. There are many possibilities there under “Resources” for a satisfying history fix: oral histories, old newspapers, vintage photos, our latest speaker series on YouTube, and much more.

Be safe. Stay well. I hope to see you soon.

- Joanne Westberg

Not yet a member of the historical society? Join us!

If you believe in the power of local history to create strong, vibrant, welcoming communities, then we invite you to become a sustaining member of our organization. The generosity of members supports all aspects of our operations, from free public programs and maintaining the McConnell Mansion to keeping the lights on in our research archive.

Join at whatever level you are able; every member enjoys the same benefits - reduced entry fees at events, routine newsletters, a copy of our annual magazine Latah Legacy, and the satisfaction of knowing that you are preserving Latah County heritage.

Visit latahcountyhistoricalsociety.org/join to learn more!
HOW IT'S GOING
HOW IT STARTED
Exploring Historical Roots of Current Events

SOCIETY'S PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS:
PATTERNS OF THE HISTORY OF PANDEMICS
DR. SEAN WEMPE

Tuesday, March 22nd
Kenworthy Performing Arts Centre
7:00pm - doors open at 6:30
Simulcast over ZOOM (find link on our website)
Free and open to the public

Throughout history, pandemics have exacerbated existing inequalities in societies, particularly in terms of race. The talk will focus on the Seven Pandemics of Cholera, the Third Pandemic of Plague, and the ongoing HIV/AIDS Pandemic as examples to help put the current racism and racial disparities associated with the COVID-19 pandemic in context.

SAVE THESE DATES

Wednesday, June 15th
Life in Potlatch, a Company Town

Wednesday, July 20th
The Fascinating History of Hanford Nuclear Site

at the Latah County Fairgrounds
The next time you’re in the area, be sure to check out the McConnell Mansion’s new landmark sign at the corner of 2nd and Adams Streets. Megan Biggs, a student of design at the University of Idaho, created the vision for the sign. She had this to say about it: “This design concept focuses on the mansion’s main visual features: its verticality and its quirky details. It uses three typefaces —Craftsman, Hadriano, and Corbel— to communicate those key concepts. Craftsman is a digital adaptation of an Arts and Crafts era 1901 magazine letterhead. Its tall x-height, open letterforms, and handcrafted details make it a legible and well-suited main font. Hadriano was designed by Frederic Goudy, who was famously influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement, making it a historically appropriate typeface. Its shorter x-height contrasts Craftsman and improves legibility. Corbel, the sans serif, mimics Hadriano’s proportions, rounding out this cohesive and versatile type system. Finally, the sign incorporates the house’s architectural details such as color, the flower-like symbol, and pointed sign posts to create a sense of unity and inevitability. The main sign’s materials were selected for their durability, but the technical details are under the expertise of the sign maker.

“This concept was also created with the visitor experience in mind. The phone number on the sign gives potential visitors a clear ‘next step’; they won’t need to Google to know how to proceed in making an appointment. Even more, the extra interpretive signage’s short paragraphs and visual hierarchy create an entry-point for visitors who may be intimidated by information overload. Segmenting the information into two smaller signs also addresses this issue. Finally, accessibility is at the forefront of this design. The color contrast meets ADA guidelines, and the type size was prioritized for those with low vision.”

University of Idaho Professor of Art and Design, Delphine Keim, had her graphic design class create nearly 20 designs for us to choose from.

Silver Creek Signs based in Coeur d’Alene brought the design to life with careful attention to detail.

City North American moving company helped us out by transporting the sign from Coeur d’Alene to Moscow and storing it for us until it was ready for installation by Latah County's maintenance department.

Funding for the sign fabrication came from Latah County Community Foundation and Idaho State Historical Society.

Our thanks to everyone involved in making this project a reality!
Happy 2022 from the crew at LCHS! We have been busy these past few months, gearing up for increased visitation to the McConnell Mansion. We closed the Mansion in January to do some deep cleaning, organize the storage closets, inventory and catalog artifacts, and rotate some of the art and textiles on display. Things are much more accessible in storage now, and the attic and basement are next on the list. I’ve done some organizing of the Centennial Annex as well, where our backlog of donations is filled with interesting treasures just waiting for their home in our permanent collection. This means I’ve been accessioning a lot. The other side of the coin is that I’ve also been deaccessioning duplicates, broken items, and unrelated things with the help of the Collection Committee. This has helped free up some storage space to make room for new items.

Last fall we did away with our antiquated collection management system and implemented a much more user-friendly system. This has helped immensely in managing and accessing the collection. It also provides greater access for the public to do research into what is already in our collection. Additionally, we have two student interns, one from UI and one from WSU working on semester projects.

A big shout-out goes to the Moscow Central Lion’s Club for installing shelves in one of our closets. The shelves are a much better use of space and will provide storage for our oversized archival boxes. We really appreciate all of our community partners.

Thanks go out to our wonderful volunteers. As the weather improves, we will receive more McConnell Mansion tour requests – please reach out if you’re interested in becoming a docent. Also, please let us know if you’re a long-time county resident because we are increasingly receiving photo donations without identifying information. If you could possibly identify places or people we want to know!

Lastly, I want to thank Dulce for her tireless work this past decade serving the public and LCHS. I am so fortunate that we got to work together for a very short eight months and I learned a lot from her. We celebrate her next opportunity, but know she will be greatly missed.

- Hayley
We build good citizens, strong communities, and satisfying lives.

Thank you to all those who donated these historic recipe challenge kits.

More than 40 adult and youth bakers participated in our historic recipe challenge during last fall’s county fair. Keep an eye on this year’s fairbook for our next challenge!

Volunteers assembled about 425 meal kits for our Harvest Dinner at Home fundraiser. More than half were donated to area foodbanks. We hope our Harvest Dinner will be in person once again.

Thank you to all those who donated to LCHS during this year’s Alternative Giving Market of the Palouse. Your generosity makes all the difference!

March 2022