

LATAH COUNTY MUSEUM SOCIETY

Quarterly Bulletin
Kenneth B. Platt, Editor

October 1, 1973
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Help Save Our Yesterdays was the banner around the top of the Society's booth at the Latah County Fair, September 13-15. Under it were displayed early telephones and phone accessories kindly loaned by Mr. Herman Schupfer of Kendrick; a turn-of-the-century Edison phonograph donated to the Museum by Myrtle Hare Nelson (Mrs. Fred) of Moscow and her sister, Mrs. Mabel Hare DeLong; and a wallful of photo mounts prepared by Cliff Ott from early photos and drawings of Latah County towns and historic buildings. Other attractions were a cassette tape recorder playing tapes gathered by Rob Moore and Sam Schrager in the Oral History Project, and a shelf of 15 books by Latah County authors on Latah County subject matter.

As always, Cliff's pictures drew many stops by both old and young interested in reminiscing or in seeing what pioneer scenes looked like. Many school children were intrigued to turn the crank of a 1905 telephone magneto and hear the bell ring "like the old timers did." Other visitors were absorbed with hearing Herman Schupfer's oral history tape account of early experiences of himself and his brother, Otto, in developing the Potlatch Telephone Company at Kendrick and Juliaetta.

Started by R. H. Porter in 1904, the company was purchased by the Schupfer brothers in 1915 after seven years of employment in it. They saw its evolution from two phones at opposite ends of the old Juliaetta tramway to business and home installations in Juliaetta and Kendrick, rural lines using the top strands of homestead barbed wire fences, and inter-connections with other systems giving long distance service to distant places. Alert and resourceful, they kept a step ahead of most neighboring communities in installing each new advance, and having grown up in the

business, they were able to do (and still do) all their own technical work. They gave their subscribers dial phones two years ahead of Lewiston.

The Schupfer phone collection and the Potlatch Telephone Company operations were featured in a 6-page article in the June, 1973, Triangle News, published by the Eastern Washington Chapter, Telephone Pioneers of America, Spokane. On September 16, 1973, the Schupfers were again featured in a similarly detailed article in the Lewiston Tribune. Both articles make very entertaining reading, and are recommended to all who have access to them.

Old telephones are just one of Herman Schupfer's antique collections, housed in the basement of his Kendrick home. His watch collection includes one that will chime the time to the nearest fifteen minutes when a switch in the case is pressed, thus telling time in the dark. It's great to have under your pillow when traveling, Mr. Schupfer states. His phonographs include four different pre-1915 styles of Edison cylinder record table models, as well as one of the first Edison floor models with one hundred good disc records. If your memory goes back that far, you can get reacquainted with Uncle Josh, Ada Jones, and other early recording artists. His old photos and newspaper scrapbooks are still other fascinating treasures.

Mr. Schupfer says he would like to see his collections in our County Museum in due time, subject to possible reservations by heirs. To have them, needless to say, would be our great good fortune. The possibility points up once again our need for additional space.

Manning the Fair booth through three busy days by three- and four-hour shifts were the following: Leonard Ashbaugh, Lura and Ray Berry, Lou Cormier, Don and Mary Evelyn DuSault, Elizabeth Hagedorn, Bill Jacobson, Vaughan McDonald, Rob Moore, Clifford Ott, Jeanette and Kenneth Platt, Harry Sampson, Sam Schrager, Vivian Snow, Lee Stillinger, Jeanette Talbott, and Grace Wicks. Our exhibit attracted many visitors to stop for detailed observation; often some were waiting to get into the

rather small space. Ye Editor believes, in fact, that we got more stop time than any other booth at the fair. A letter already has been sent to the Fair Board emphasizing the county-wide all-age educational value of the Society's programs, and requesting a bigger booth at the 1974 fair.

Some 45 hours of taped interviews of pioneer recollections have been logged by Rob Moore and Sam Schrager since they started the Oral History Project in early summer, they report. These represent approximately 85 home calls, 3520 miles of driving, and 25 different persons recorded. As a bonus, 50 sets of personal history forms have been filled out in these contacts. Too few hours in the day is the main limitation, they have found, as there is no lack of willing talkers.

With the ranks of the pioneers thinning almost from day to day, it is only too bad we can't field more interviewers to speed the process. For now, however, we have our work cut out for us in just keeping Rob and Sam on the job. Members and friends are reminded that we have yet to raise nearly half of the \$5,750 required to match that amount provided for the project from the state's Bicentennial Fund allotment. We hope the prosperity of 1973 for most farms and businesses in Latah County will enable many to be generous when called on by the project support committee in coming weeks. Since the return to school of Debbie McNeilly, who served as Museum secretary this summer, the Oral History Project office has been moved to space in the Latah County Title Company building, second floor, room one. The use of this space is being generously provided at a \$5 a month utilities charge by Architectural Workshop. Besides more work space, the project now has the services of a full-time secretary provided without cost by the State Employment Office under its training program for unemployed persons.

Monthly business meetings by the Board of Trustees under the energetic guidance of President Wm. T. Jacobson kept Society affairs on the move through the summer. Besides sparking the Fair display effort, the Board during the summer authorized the new paint job that now graces the front porch and steps of the McConnell Mansion, the new carpeting and other improvements in the kitchen and adjoining rooms serving as living quarters for the Curator, and continuation of the Nez Perce Indian exhibit through the current school year to accommodate both grade and high school classes studying Nez Perce culture. Personal invitations to all school superintendents in the County to take advantage of this educational exhibit will be sent this month.

A special Eskimo artifacts exhibit at the Fair was presented under sponsorship of the Society. Cramming a 50-foot trailer, the exhibit was brought to Moscow at our behest by "Alaska Jim" Williams, an Alaskan who collected the great diversity of items during 12 years of living in Eskimo villages. From a full-size seal-skin kayak down to bone needles and walrus ivory fish-hooks and harpoons, the collection illustrated this primitive culture still extant in our biggest state. With this culture now rapidly disintegrating under the influence of modern hunting and fishing equipment, declining seal and whale populations, a wage economy introduced with extensive national defense and oil industry operations in the Arctic, etc., its preservation and showing in such form has timely educational value. The exhibit was sponsored on recommendation of Director Larry French, who found that the Walla Walla Public Schools had engaged it for several weeks and would like to have it again. "Alaska Jim" proved a colorful personality, and his Husky dog and pet Alaskan fox gave added touches of interest. In return for our sponsorship at the Fair, we received \$125 as a share of ticket receipts.

The Society recommended the exhibit for retention in the community as an unusual educational resource. It

could not be more timely, as Alaskan history is a special study topic in certain classes this year. All schools of the County were informed of this unique opportunity, but only Moscow took advantage of it, sending 280 pupils through the exhibit. Other schools did not. The 10-cent student fee was paid by the LCMS from the \$125 earned for us by this exhibit at the Fair. Teachers accompanying class groups were admitted free.

A history of "Co. F. 2nd Idaho Inf. N.G. Lewiston, Idaho" was published in August by our own Clifford Ott. A product of several years' patient delving into all available sources, plus painstaking restoration of old photos and other materials, the 36-page slick-paper edition records the names, ranks, and 1916-1919 service histories of virtually all men who served with this local National Guard unit. Mr. Ott held the rank of Sergeant, and his service as company clerk acquainted him with all members of the company. It also left in his hands copies of many of the official records which make his present history so fully authentic.

Although open to statewide enlistment, the company drew twenty-three Latah County men besides Ott: sixteen from Moscow, seven from Genesee, and one each from Kendrick and Potlatch. One of these was Dudley A. Loomis, for whom the Moscow American Legion Post is named. Loomis was killed in an airplane crash in Texas.

Ex-members of the company still living in this area will find many nostalgic memories among the numerous rosters and the wealth of camp life pictures shown. Families of these men will want the book as a family record. Call Cliff Ott about where to get it.

The Hall of Pioneers family photo exhibit at the McConnell Mansion will gain several new picture panels this fall, reports Clifford Ott, project head. Of special interest will be the record for the Paulson family, who recently held a reunion in Moscow. Mabel Paulson, now Mrs. Harvey Webber of Portland, will be remembered

by music lovers as the first Latah County native to rise to grand opera fame, singing with the Metropolitan Opera of New York in the early 1900's. The Paulson farm, where Mabel was born in 1886, is just south of the Paradise Ridge divide on the Moscow-Lewiston road about seven miles south of Moscow. The old home is gone, but the site is marked by a small structure over the homestead well on the east side of the road.

BOOK REVIEW

The Un-Covered Wagon is the title of a 174-page family-centered account of Moscow beginnings and early developments, by Alma Lauder Keeling. Granddaughter of William and Priscilla Taylor, whose 1871 homestead bordered present Taylor Street on the north and Johnson Cutoff road on the south, Mrs. Keeling gives us the record of that family and that of Wylie A. Lauder, her father, in their pioneering in the Moscow community. Intended primarily "for home consumption," her manuscript was reproduced in typed sheets and hard-bound in only seven copies. It is available for reading at the University of Idaho library and the Moscow Public Library.

The title relates to the fact that Priscilla Taylor and her then seven children ranging from five to sixteen years traveled in an open wagon from rail's end at Ogden, Utah, to Walla Walla in August-September, 1871, to be met there by William Taylor, who had come from Chicago to Moscow in April of that year and filed his homestead. The oldest child, Elizabeth, was a recent bride whose husband (name not given) accompanied her, bought the team and wagon at Ogden, and drove the rig to Walla Walla, a journey of some 600 miles. An eighth child was born there September 10. The two oldest boys, Will (14) and Abe (12), rode the supply wagon with their father the final 135 miles from Walla Walla to Moscow, while Priscilla and the smaller children rode the "un-covered" wagon with Elizabeth and her husband.

Commenting on this episode, the author gives some vivid contrasts between pioneering conditions and present-day living:

"Sometimes I almost shudder when I think of what was involved in all this! Taking a large family and a tiny baby a week's journey from the nearest town, where there would be no doctor, no drugstore, no grocery store, no nothing! And to what? To a rough log cabin (overcrowded with such a family) with muslin drawn over the openings for windows and a thick old comforter for a door--and a cold North Idaho winter just around the corner! (It was by now nearly November, and that is usually the beginning of winter weather for us here.) But this was the stuff our pioneer forefathers were made of. Sometimes they won; sometimes they lost; but they went on. . . .

"For those pioneers of the 1870's there were no electric appliances and, of course, no electricity; no gas or electric ranges and thermostatically controlled heat; no automatic washers and dryers; no steaming hot water from the tap; no wash-and-wear clothes; no cozy electric blankets to snuggle under on below-zero nights; no wall-to-wall carpeting; no fresh fruit and vegetables at the supermarket the year around; no telephones; no doctors, nurses or hospitals if one became desperately ill; and certainly no radio or television to connect them with the outside world.

"But there was always the tub and washboard over which one could break one's back pecking out a washing for a large family; always the harsh cakes of home-made soap (made from animal fat and the lye from ashes); always the blisters from hand-wringing a big wash; always the carrying of heavy pails of water from the spring or creek; always the slow heating of water on the small cookstove in five gallon coal oil cans with the one side cut out; always the semi-darkness of home-made candles when more light was needed than the coal oil lamp; always the back-freezing fireplace to keep warm by; and the stones heated in the fireplace, and well wrapped, to take to bed on a bitter cold night when

the fire burned low! But this was pioneer life, and was expected. For these pioneers, this was all they had--or could expect to have--for years to come! . . .

"I, myself, have lived on a homestead miles from civilization twice in my life, and I am really thankful for the experience. Once as a child in our own Moscow Mountains, only eighteen miles from town, but a day's journey with a hack and team climbing mountain roads; and on my own homestead down in the sagebrush country of eastern Oregon. I have had a little taste of homestead life and having to 'make do,' but I always knew I had a comfortable modern home to come back to. So these times in isolated places were more like a fun vacation for me. I really enjoyed 'roughing it' for a few months. But real pioneer life was something else."

One aspect of Taylor family pioneering that certainly was "something else" was their relations with the Nez Perce Indians. As Mrs. Keeling tells it:

"According to her own admission, . . . my mother . . . was deathly afraid of the Indians. When the family first arrived from Chicago that fall of 1871, the whole flat south of the town near where the present Chinese Village now stands--land on which William Taylor had filed as a homestead--was covered with Indian teepees, a sight these curious children from the city had never seen before. It was camas-digging time and the Indians as usual were laying in their supply of camas for the winter. The men were the hunters, bringing in the meat, but it was up to the squaws to dig the kouse and the camas. . . . The bulb was dried in the hot sun and later ground into a sort of flour by their stone pestles. . . .

"While the squaws were busy with this annual chore, the braves were having a wonderful time horse racing and gambling. There was a regular Indian race track out eastward toward the Tomer's Butte area and south of our present cemetery. . . .

"Often the braves of the Indian encampment on Gran'pa Taylor's place would drop in at the most unexpected times to invite themselves to partake of Gran'ma's good cooking. In the Indians' code of conduct this was considered a compliment. How they could so accurately gauge the time, Mother did not know. Perhaps their keen ears heard the ringing of the hand bell which summoned the men in from the field. . . .

"About the time the food was on the table, and hungry men were washed up and about to sit down, the kitchen door would open and in would walk a string of braves, preceded by their obvious leader, and, amid grunts of approval, seat themselves at the long table. . . . When they had cleared the table of everything eatable, they would solemnly rise and seat themselves in a circle on the floor, beckoning Gran'pa to join them. Then the pipe of peace would be passed around the circle. When each had taken a puff, they would as solemnly rise again and march out, with grunts of satisfaction--which probably meant 'thank you' in the Indian way of expressing gratitude.

"If, when they had departed, there was anything left in the pots on the stove, the hungry men and equally hungry children could content themselves with that. If not, Gran'ma would have to start from scratch all over again. . . . I do not wonder that my pioneer mother was not especially fond of the Noble Redman."

In the summer of 1871, the book records, George Washington Tomer (whose homestead took in most of present Tomer's Butte) circulated a petition to establish a school district. School District No. 5, presumably of then Nez Perce County, was granted. A log school-house was built northeast of present Moscow, and Noah Lieuallen, the Baptist minister, was made the first teacher. Says Mrs. Keeling:

"Since no lumber for the floor was available this side of Walla Walla, . . . the men handpacked the dirt floor. Benches for the children were made of split logs with pegged legs, and no doubt the teacher's desk was made

of such material as could be rounded up from among the settlers--perhaps a packing box turned upside down.

"This, I know, was the same log schoolhouse in which my mother started school as a small girl It was several miles from her home, but school children then were not allergic to walking, as they are now. In fact, everybody walked

"This schoolhouse on the Haskins place was at first the only building for a meeting place for the early settlers. . . . At such meetings the need for a well equipped store closer than Lewiston or Walla Walla was agitated. Also, the location of the store was frequently discussed. Some favored the Paradise Valley location, but others thought the store should be more centrally located. Asbury Lieuallen settled the matter by buying the homestead rights and small store of Samuel Neff, and opening a store of his own at what is now the city center of Moscow. His stock of goods consisted to two wagon loads of general merchandise from Walla Walla. Soon after the opening of the store it was thought best to move the postoffice to the store for the greater convenience of the settlers. Mr. Lieuallen was appointed the postmaster. . . .

"Why the name Paradise Valley was not satisfactory for the postoffice in its new setting has been a puzzle to me. . . . Nevertheless, a change in the name seemed to be preferred. . . . After considerable discussion pro and con, one of the settlers suggested that he grew up near a town named Moscow in the East, and why not a Moscow 'out West,' too? Moscow, Russia, was a name of honor for that city's great beauty, and had no red label on it then. Samuel Neff, who loved history, said the root meaning of the word 'Moscow' was 'holy city,' which seemed quite appropriate for the name of the town in Paradise Valley! So Moscow as the name of the already budding community was adopted and is still with us.

"There have been so many conflicting stories on how Moscow got its name that I almost heritate to add this version to it. But this came to me direct from the

daughter of the man who had, perhaps, as much influence as anyone here in choosing the new name. That was Mrs. Lillie Lieuallen Woodworth, whose father, Almon Asbury Lieuallen, bought Mr. Neff's small store and opened up the first real general merchandise store in Latah County. I assume she heard the story of the naming of Moscow many times as she was growing up here, and should know."

William Taylor had been trained as a mason in his native Ireland, before coming to America at age eighteen. During slack seasons on the farm he plied his trade in surrounding communities, even in distant Walla Walla. His normal work day in this arduous occupation was from 6:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., and when working at Lewiston he customarily rode horseback to Moscow each Saturday night after quitting time, and back down on Sunday evening. In later years this building trade skill led to his going into brick making in Moscow with his son-in-law, Wylie A. Lauder. Taylor bricks were advertised in the Moscow newspaper before 1885; in 1885 Lauder & Clough advertised 200,000 bricks for sale; in 1886 Wm. Taylor and his son Tom advertised bricks; and in 1888 bricks were advertised by Taylor & Lauder, in this case Tom Taylor.

The brick plant of T. J. Taylor and W. A. Lauder was located back of the present Beta house on the northern edge of the U. of I. campus, just off Elm Street, where evidence of the old clay pit still can be seen. Mrs. Keeling recounts:

"Anyway, it was this brick plant of T. J. Taylor and W. A. Lauder that furnished the brick for Latah County's first courthouse, built in 1888-89, which stood for almost seventy years until it was bulldozed down to make way for the fine new building we now have on the hill overlooking the city of Moscow. . . .

"Once when speaking about Washington State College in Pullman, Dad casually dropped the remark that he and uncle Tom furnished the brick for the College's first administration building on the campus, built in 1893.

This building, still standing, is now called the Foreign Language Building. . . .

"What has interested me most about my father's brickyard is the fact that he and my mother's brother, Tom Taylor, also furnished the brick for our own first beautiful Administration Building on the University of Idaho campus. . . . About the building of the first Administration Building on our campus this is what Emery W. G. Emery: History of Moscow says:

'When the bids were called for by the first regents for laying of the foundation in 1891, the contract was let to Taylor and Lauder for \$10,000.98. The foundation was to be of native granite, six feet wide at the base, and laid with Portland cement on hardpan.'

"He adds that when this was completed bids were again called for, for the building of the west wing, on July 8, 1892. He says: 'The contract was again awarded to Taylor and Lauder, a well-known firm of builders in Moscow.'

Mrs. Keeling's book makes easy reading but difficult reviewing. Intended primarily for family use, it seems to assume much knowledge of family members, ages, etc., which leave the outside reader floundering. One reads the whole book, for example, to learn the names of her seven aunts and uncles--even then one escaped this reviewer both as to name and as to sex. Frankly introduced in the Foreword as partially autobiography, the book actually has much of this flavor throughout. The historic content is found more as incidental information than as primary objective.

Nevertheless, there are enough pockets of good ore to keep the reader digging, as we trust the foregoing excerpts will convey. The Un-Covered Wagon is well worth the few hours it takes to read it, and we only regret it was not published in a larger edition.

A new hand at the helm will take the Society through the last three months of 1973. The unexpected transfer of President Wm. T. Jacobson to Wallace during the last week of September brought 1st V. P. Kenneth B. Platt up as his successor. We are already missing Bill's no-fuss handling of everyday Society affairs and the many hours of time he devoted to this. But we must pick up and go on, meanwhile wishing him good fortune in his new assignment.

As President ad interim, Mr. Platt asks your continuing cooperation and support in all Society matters. The presidency brings heavy added responsibilities on top of his jobs as editor of the Bulletin, chairman of the Publications Committee, and Society publicity writer. Especially demanding over the next three months will be the work of the Oral History Project support committee, charged with raising the \$2,500 still needed to fully match the Bicentennial Fund grant for this project. Obligations outside the Society also will demand much of Mr. Platt's time through this period.

The one week's notice given Mr. Jacobson of his transfer allowed no time for a special meeting of the Trustees to review our situation and plan for possible readjustments. Present programs and committee assignments will be continued until the next annual election, to be held early in January, 1974.

New funding support for 1974 and subsequent years now is within reach from County tax receipts, under an authorization passed by the State Legislature at its last session. This legislation raises the former \$3,500 per year limitation for direct County support of the Museum to \$9,000. While it is not expected that we will get the full authorized increase in the first year, we hope for approximately half of it. The \$3,500 per year previously received has met utilities and maintenance costs at the Mansion and paid the annual 3-month salary of the Director plus modest additional costs. An increase, therefore, should be almost wholly applicable to buying urgently needed new office

equipment, hiring additional secretarial help, improving display space and displays, etc.

The following current budget situation report will give a more graphic idea of just how close-hauled the Society's operations are, under present funding limitations.

Balance on hand 1/1/73	\$1,891.36
Total receipts 1/1 to 9/22	<u>3,864.42*</u>
Total	\$5,755.78
Total operating costs 1/1 to 9/22	<u>4,850.25</u>
Balance to 9/22/73	\$905.53

April-September Museum visitors totaled 636. This figure included 510 from Latah County (194 children, 316 adults), 45 from other parts of Idaho, and 89 from out of state. So far this year the number of visitors is running at double the rate for 1972.

New members enrolled since the publication of the last Bulletin include Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Delamarter, Miss Mildred Haberly, Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Hoffman, Mrs. N. D. McCroskey, Moscow High School Library, Mr. Robert Searfoss, and Mrs. D. R. Theophilus, all of Moscow; Mr. Paul Harsch, Bozeman, Montana; Mr. Bobbie Roy Kennedy, Sandpoint; Mr. Floyd Otter, Fresno, California; and Mrs. Paul H. Tobin, Potlatch. These are in addition to a number of membership renewals. Membership now totals 176. The membership chairman would welcome suggestions about potential members. If you know of anyone who should be contacted about joining the Society, please let us know. Drop a card to us at the Mansion, or call the Curator at 882-1004 or the membership chairman at 882-4227.

*Includes the full \$3,500 available from County

Needed - More COUNTY in Our Society

At present we have 176 members listed, including 25 new this year. This represents a healthy increase, but not enough members, old or new, are from outside Moscow. University population aside, the Moscow community includes only a little more than half the County population, whereas 77% of our members resident in the County have Moscow addresses. We have no members in Juliaetta, Deary, Harvard, Princeton, or Viola. Other communities list from 1 to 12, compared with Moscow's 119. Somehow we have not yet shown enough people in other parts of the County that our program is for the whole County. In fact, we have more members in other states plus other parts of Idaho (29) than in all of Latah County outside Moscow (28).

So, what can we do about it? We are hopeful, of course, that contacts being made through the Oral History Project will carry more membership interest into our unrepresented and under-represented communities. The Society's letter soliciting support for this project, soon to be sent to several hundred County families, should spark further interest. But there is a well-proved axiom that nothing beats person-to-person contact by a satisfied customer, when selling a product.

Taking all these factors into account, now is the time to make a special push for new members. Take a copy of the Quarterly Bulletin to a friend who should be a member but isn't, and show him what he is missing. Fill your car with prospective new members next time you visit the Museum. Explain to schools, granges, clubs, etc., that the Society is gathering and preserving historic pioneer items of all kinds for Museum display and future study. Talk about the urgent need for people all over the County to chip in their own local pioneering experiences and things, to help make up the total record we want to save.

Be a modern explorer, filling in the white spaces on our membership map.

LATAH COUNTY
MUSEUM SOCIETY
110 South Adams Street
Moscow, Idaho 83843

Non-profit Organ.
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 161
Moscow, Idaho

Mr. and Mrs. John Talbott
513 Taylor
Moscow, Idaho 83843

The annual fall potluck dinner will be held Monday evening, October 29, at 6:30 at the Mansion.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

The annual business meeting of the Latah County Museum Society (formerly the Latah County Pioneer Historical Museum Association, Inc.) will be held at the McConnell Mansion at 12:30 p.m. Saturday, January 5, 1974. The meeting agenda will include the annual reports of officers and committee chairmen, election of officers for 1974, and such other business as may be appropriate. Potluck dinner--bring a hot dish, salad, or dessert sufficient for six people.
