

History is Made Every Day

The exhibit you have just viewed traces the story of Idaho, its capitol, its government, and its people.

Each Idahoan has the opportunity to shape history every day. History is the story of people, ordinary and extraordinary, making individual contributions.

How will you make your mark on history?

Interested in Idaho History?

Visit the Idaho State Historical Museum, the Old Idaho Penitentiary, or the Idaho State Archives. Learn more by going to www.history.idaho.gov or calling 208-334-2682.

Historic Photographs: Order copies of any of the photographs in this brochure—or thousands of other images—from the Idaho State Archives, www.history.idaho.gov or 208-334-2620.

Idaho's Capitol History:

For more on the history of Idaho's capitol you may purchase the summer 2010 special edition (Vol. 3, No. 1) of the Idaho State Historical Society's journal, *Idaho Landscapes*, available at the Capitol Gift Shop.

Tours of the Capitol: 208-334-4855.



The Idaho State Historical Society produced the garden-level exhibit in the Idaho state capitol for the Idaho Capitol Commission.



Idaho State Historical Society
2205 Old Penitentiary Road, Boise, ID 83712
208-334-2682 • www.history.idaho.gov

The Idaho State Historical Society is an extraordinary system of cultural and historic resources comprised of the Idaho State Historical Museum, State Archives, State Historic Preservation Office, and Historic Sites Program. We seek to inspire, enrich, and engage all Idahoans by leading the state in preserving, sharing, and using history and cultural resources relevant to today to inform and influence the future.

The costs associated with this publication are available from ISHS, section 60-202, 5-2011-35000-01.

Governing Idaho

How People and Policies Shape Our State

Governing Idaho

How People and Policies Shape Our State

Welcome to the Idaho State Historical Society's three-part exhibit in the heart of the state's most elegant building, the Idaho capitol. Please take this brochure as a remembrance of your visit to the exhibit.

Architect John Tourtellotte called his capitol a "temple of light," where "the great light of conscience must be allowed to shine, and by its interior illumination make clear the path of duty."

The Idaho State Historical Society is a trusted guide through the state's history and how it has shaped every aspect of our lives—our land, our communities, our government, and our people. As you view this special exhibit, reflect with us how history and preservation foster a sense of place, and connect us all to the past in order to inspire, to educate, and to provide perspective for the future.

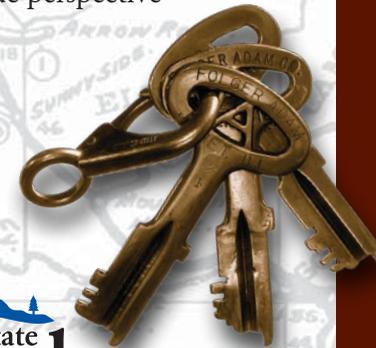
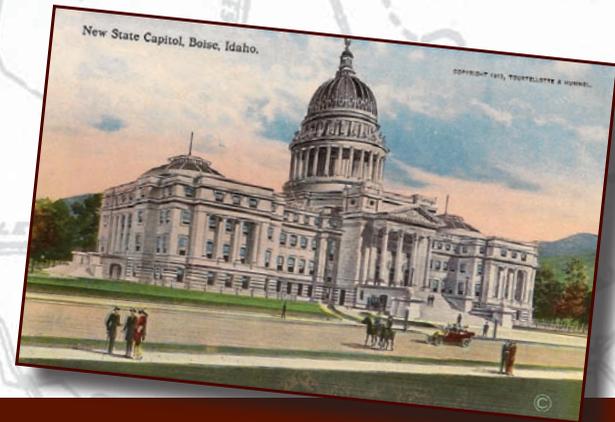


Exhibit Part 1: Idaho's State Capitol

A few days after President Abraham Lincoln signed the law creating Idaho Territory on March 4, 1863, he appointed William Wallace as first territorial governor. Wallace pronounced Lewiston to be Idaho's first seat of government. But even as Wallace made his way to Idaho from the East, the Territory's population had shifted to the Boise Basin. Idaho's second territorial legislature voted in 1864 to move the capitol to Boise City.

continued on next page >

Territorial Capitol

Conceived by Detroit architect Elijah Myers, who had also designed capitols for Michigan, Texas, and Colorado, Idaho's brick territorial capitol seemed spacious when it opened in 1886. For the first time, all three branches of government shared the same structure, an improvement over the mishmash of rented Boise buildings that had hosted territorial offices until then. The four-story building served Idaho's needs well into statehood.

Building a New State Capitol

Over time, the limitations of the territorial capitol, including a lack of indoor plumbing, spoke to the need of a new statehouse. Legislators created the Idaho Capitol Building Commission to oversee construction.



The Commission held a competition for the capitol's design and awarded first place to local architect John Tourtellotte. Construction began in 1905. Cost overruns plagued the project. In 1909, cost-conscious legislators proposed a much shorter dome than Tourtellotte designed, prompting the architect to call the principal adherent of a truncated dome "the dupe of incompetent men." Tourtellotte won the argument and the result is the capitol's stately dome, bathing the interior with sunlight. To save money, the capitol would open without the two wings Tourtellotte planned.

On January 7, 1913, more than 1,500 people gathered at the new capitol for its first public event, the inaugural ball of Governor John Haines.



Adding the Wings

Only six years after the grand opening, the capitol was overcrowded and the legislature approved addition of Tourtellotte's wings. To make room, workers demolished the old territorial capitol.



Construction began in September 1919 and was completed in time for a gala "housewarming" attended by 6,000 people on January 3, 1921. The nearly seamless expansion featured woodwork, plaster, and marble similar to the central structure. Most visitors did not recognize that the building had been constructed in two phases.

Renovation and Restoration

In 1998, Governor Phil Batt created a new Capitol Commission charged with preserving, restoring, and rehabilitating the capitol. By that time the building, again cramped, showed the effects of more than 80 years of use.

In 2006, the building closed for restoration and expansion. Contractors built two new underground wings to provide space for offices and hearing rooms. They brought in marble from around the world to match the original, and crafts people from around the country to restore twentieth century ornamental flourishes.

By the time of the \$120 million project's completion, workers had returned to original beauty John Tourtellotte's temple of light, while adding the space required for Idaho's twenty-first century needs. In January 2010, a restored and enhanced state capitol reopened to the public. The successful completion of the largest historic preservation project in the state's history honors Idaho's founders and demonstrates the importance of investing in our heritage; it stands as a permanent beacon and model for the limitless opportunities to preserve and share Idaho's history.



Exhibit Part 2: Governing Idaho

Idaho's Indians had a complex governing system that differed according to tribal group. Governmental order helped them adapt to a wide diversity of environmental conditions. Life changed dramatically as westward expansion brought Euro-Americans to traditional homelands. President Lincoln created Idaho Territory in response to the gold rushes that brought miners, traders, and merchants into the country.

Despite some challenging problems of territorial leadership—one acting governor drank himself to death; another absconded with the entire territorial treasury; a third depleted funds intended to meet Idaho's treaty obligations—Idahoans created a number of lasting improvements, including roads, the capitol, a penitentiary in Boise, and a university in Moscow.



Statehood

In the late 1880s Idaho almost disappeared as the result of an attempt to annex the northern part

to Washington—an act that passed both houses of Congress and would have become law with the President's signature—and the south to Nevada. Compromise finally brought the various sections together so Idaho could be admitted as the 43rd state on July 3, 1890.

After decades of growth, spurred by the development of irrigation in the south, Idaho faced two world wars and the Great Depression. Much construction undertaken in this period became part of the infrastructure Idahoans continue to use.

Following World War II, Idaho's government modernized as the state's economy shifted from domination by extractive industries to one supporting technology, service businesses, and tourism. New Idaho-based businesses such as Albertsons, Morrison-Knudsen, Simplot, and Micron grew to become major players in world markets. Public works projects, particularly dam building, transformed the Gem State's landscape.



Exhibit Part III: America's System of Government

Americans built their government on a simple but profound principle: power comes from the people. Idahoans, like citizens in other states, decide issues by casting their votes directly—direct democracy, or through electing representatives—representative democracy.

The U.S. Constitution gives specific powers to the federal government. For example, only the federal government can declare war, make treaties, regulate trade between states, and coin money. Other governmental responsibilities are reserved to the states or the people themselves. Because the U.S. Constitution is the "supreme law of the land," state constitutions cannot conflict with the federal constitution.

Both the federal and Idaho governments are composed of legislative, executive, and judicial branches. The Idaho Constitution declares the specific powers and responsibilities given to each branch.

Government services touch the lives of every Idahoan every day. Thousands of dedicated public servants—Idaho's state employees—ensure that these services reach everyone in this vast state.

