

This month's theme:  
The State Seal



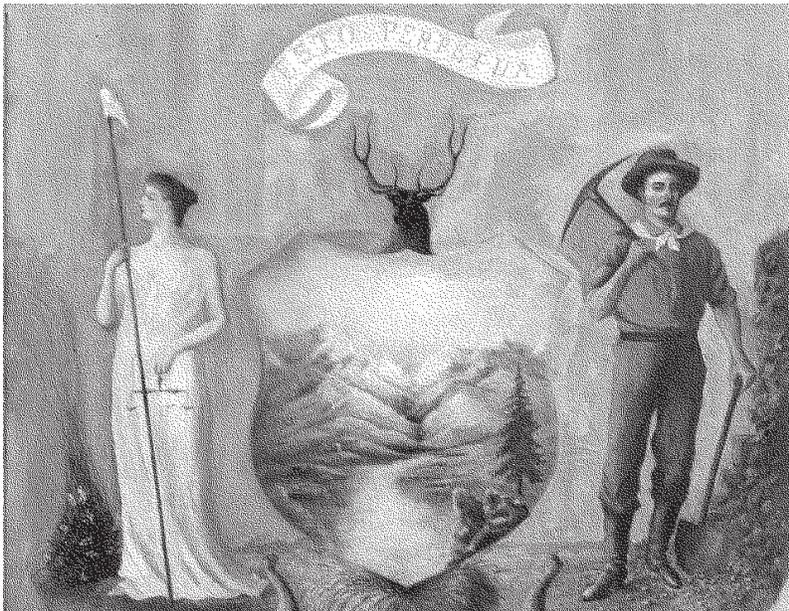
### Contents

Feature	1	Fun page	3
Next month	4		

The Newsletter of the Idaho State Historical Society's Junior Historian Program

# PROSPECTOR

February, 2007



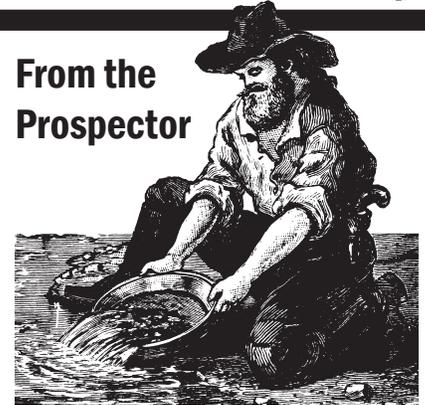
## The State Seal

Every state has a seal that represents its people and its history. Interestingly, Idaho has the only state seal that was designed by a woman. The story of the seal goes back to the 1860's. After gold was discovered in the region, many people traveled to Idaho in the hopes of striking it rich. This increase in population helped us become an official territory in 1863. Nobody's quite sure when Idaho territory got its first seal, but we think the first design was created

by a clerk in the office of the Secretary of State named Silas D. Cochran. This first attempt had a fairly simple design, with an eagle perched on a shield. The shield had a picture of Idaho's beautiful mountains on its face. The first seal didn't last for long. In 1866, territorial governor Caleb Lyon created a new seal. The new design kept the shield and mountains, but got rid of the eagle. Sitting above the shield now was the head of a majestic elk. On either side of the

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### From the Prospector



#### Howdy Prospectors!

The cold winter weather is keeping me inside. My old bones creak and groan if the wind blows too hard. The mule and I have spent the last months huddled under a blanket in front of the fireplace. Even though I don't get out much, these February days are perfect for curling up with a good Idaho history book. Last night I was reading and I came across a picture of the state seal. Now, I've seen that seal a thousand times, but I got to thinking that I really don't know much about it. Who created the seal? Has it changed over the years? What do all those pictures mean? Then it hit me, why not do this month's newsletter on the seal? I hope you enjoy this month's story of the state seal of Idaho.

*Lucky Noah*

## State Seal Continued

shield stood two women. You would think that two tries would have been enough, but the legislature and the people were still not satisfied with the seal.

In 1890, Idaho was officially granted statehood. With this new honor came another chance to design the seal. This time though, instead of letting a government employee create the seal, the legislature had a contest. A prize of one hundred dollars would be awarded to the artist who came up with the best design.

That summer, a young woman named Emma Edwards came to Boise to visit relatives. Emma had been attending art school in New York and she was traveling back to Stockton, California where her parents lived. It is said that Emma fell in love with Boise and its people and decided to make her home in the new state. She began offering art classes to teach the pioneers of Idaho how to paint.

During this time, she also decided to enter the seal contest. Apparently, Emma chose her design carefully. She consulted the legislature

and other prominent citizens to find out what they thought should be on the seal. In 1891, Emma's design was chosen by the legislature and adopted as the official state seal.

If you look closely at the design Emma created, you can see symbols of Idaho's resources and history. For example, farming has always been important to our state, so the

seal features a farmer plowing a field and a horn of plenty bursting with fruits and vegetables. On the right side of the seal is a miner with pick and shovel, and hidden away in the center is a stamp mill, a machine that was used to crush rock in order to extract gold and other precious ore. On the left side of the seal is a woman holding a scale. She represents justice and liberty.

The fact that both the man and woman are of equal size and are standing side-by-side is meant to show equality of the sexes. Other pictures on the seal, like an elk and a syringa, represent the state's flora and fauna.

Emma's design stood untouched for over 50 years. In 1957 though, the legislature again decided to update the seal. Paul B. Evans and Caxton Printers were commissioned to do the job. Although many of the images were redrawn, this latest version of the seal retains the features that were created by Emma Edwards.

The next time you see the state seal, take a closer look. The many images placed in that small circle are all important symbols of the state's history. ♦



*Emma Edwards, designer of the Idaho State Seal*



# The Fun Page

## WORD SEARCH

H U C K L E B E R R Y W R E W B X  
 L A M E Y M U D A L Y V C X H T K  
 M A O W N S F P H N I N D M I R U  
 L O E V B I P U A X A H R Y T N S  
 G E N S V A R M B D M R I Y E C F  
 E T E A L Y R G E J E C B V P G G  
 R W B O R E M R E A B C E X I Q S  
 T S O I G C A E B R K S U F N P J  
 E S T A J U H N X M E Y L T E O Y  
 A N H A Q P S G C T Z P B R S T Q  
 H Z Y S R S Y R I N G A J V G A Z  
 I E W J M G W N H H D Y R R U T Z  
 X G L C Q T A O R H T T U C R O Y  
 Y A V R D P C R J T U H G O R L K  
 K J L K J N A X N K B R U L P J O  
 N R G A L F H N E E W T P C X I S  
 X Q C N C M P J S E T A Y X F K I

APPALOOSA  
 BLUEBIRD  
 CUTTHROAT

FLAG  
 HAGERMAN  
 HUCKLEBERRY

MONARCH  
 PEREGRINE  
 POTATO

SEAL  
 SQUAREDANCE  
 STARGARNET

SYRINGA  
 TROUT  
 WHITEPINE



## Next Month's Activities

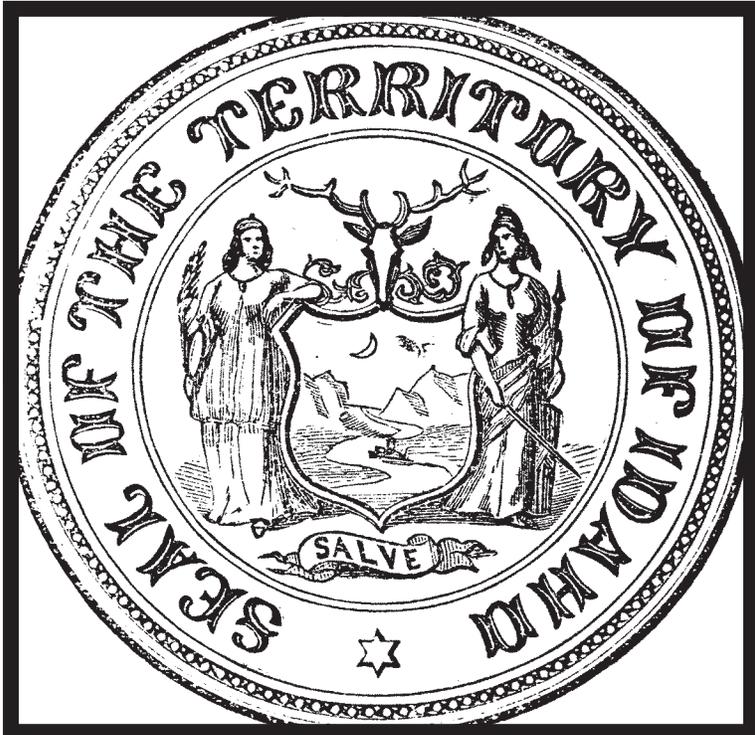
**W**ell, we've told you all we know about the state seal of Idaho, but we need your help so that we can learn more. Pick from one of the activities below or make up your own state seal project and send it in to our Prospector Headquarters. We'll take some of your best work and print it in next month's magazine. Remember to include your name, where you're from, and the name of your Prospector Chapter. We can't wait to see what you send in!

**New Symbols:** There are already many state symbols. We've got a state flower, a state tree, a state bird, a state fish, a state song, a state dance, a state fossil, a state vegetable, a state horse, a state fruit, a state gem, and even a state raptor. There's always room for more though. Give us your ideas for a new state symbol. What would be the state reptile? Do we need a state ice cream flavor? How about a state sport? Gives us your ideas and some pictures and we'll print all we can in the next issue.

**City Symbols:** Everybody can recognize our country's flag and most 4<sup>th</sup> graders can identify the flag of Idaho. But what about your city flag? Just like the state, almost all cities have flags and seals. What does the flag where you live look

**License Plates:** Another way we show off our state prides is with our automobile license plates. In the last few years, Idaho has added many interesting plate designs. If you want to show off your love for Idaho wildlife, skiing, or Lewis and

Clark history, the Department of Transportation has a plate for you. If you could have any kind of Idaho license plate on your car what would it look like? Design your own personal Idaho plate and show us what you'd like to celebrate about our great state.



*The Old Territorial Seal*

like? Do a little research and report back to us with a copy for the rest of the Prospectors to see.

Send in your work by March 16<sup>th</sup> to:

Prospector Club  
Lucky Noah  
Idaho State Historical Museum  
610 North Julia Davis

Drive  
Boise, ID 83702

Or email it to us at  
kzwolfer@ishs.state.id.us.