

# IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY REFERENCE SERIES

MUSIC WEEK

(Advertiser Column By Judith Austin)

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Boise's famed Music Week now in its fifty-second season [1970], has always been a source of great pride to the community. There is pride in having the "original" Music Week, and there is also pride in having the particular kind of Music Week of which this was the first.

Ours is a week in which members of the community produce their own programs, and the artists we applaud are our own friends and neighbors. "Outside" artists have appeared at times, and in the early years of the program they came regularly. But they came from Nampa, from the College of Idaho at Caldwell, from Gooding and Pocatello, and only rarely did a soloist come from out of the area.

Until the war years, Music Week events were held outside whenever weather permitted. One photograph in the Idaho Historical Library files, probably taken in the mid-1920's, shows the site of the performances. A temporary stage was erected each year in front of the Statehouse, and the audience sat on the Statehouse steps. This particular picture shows how much the face of Boise has changed in a relatively short period of time: the site of the railroad depot is in the center of the picture, just above the sign.

A second picture shows not only a later [mid-1930's] and slightly fancier stage, and greater accommodations for the audience with benches built nearly up to the stage, but also one of the most distinctive items used in Music Weeks for many years. Behind the children's orchestra are hung three lanterns, the product of art programs in the Boise schools. Nearly every year for the first half of Music Week's history, these lanterns were carried in parades about the city. Announced plans for the lantern parade on May 21, 1927, were as follows:

The week will close with a colorful pageant representing "The Light on the Mountain," in which vari-colored lanterns and lantern floats will form the principal feature. Plans begin matured call for the assemblage of at least one division of the lantern parade to meet in the hills back of Boise barracks and at a given signal red flares will be lighted and in irregular formation the division bearing the beautiful colored lanterns will stream down over the hill to meet with the main body on Fort Street and thence in a parade around town. If the mechanical difficulties can be straightened out, and the committee believes that this is possible, such a plan will make one of the most beautiful spectacles ever seen in Boise.

Unfortunately, one "mechanical difficulty" that could not be straightened out was the weather; it rained the day before the parade "part of which mired down in the hills and never went through town at all!"

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