IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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MOUNTAIN LIGHT

The Newsletter of the Idaho State Historical Society

A YEAR IN REVIEW AT THE IDAHO STATE MUSEUM

CELEBRATING IDAHO CENTURY FARMS & RANCHES

NATIONAL HISTORY DAY IN IDAHO SEASON RECAP

32 CELLS: ARTISTIC REFLECTIONS ON THE OLD IDAHO PENITENTIARY

The Old Idaho Penitentiary's recent book release, *32 Cells: Artistic Reflections on the Old Idaho Penitentiary*, tells important stories of humanity and incarceration through art. | **More on Page 9** |

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Note: Some background images were generated with AI technology.

IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Idaho State Historical Society is an extraordinary system of cultural and historic resources comprised of the Idaho State Museum and Old Idaho Penitentiary, Idaho State Archives and Records Center, State Historic Preservation Office, and Historic Sites Program. Our vision is to make history essential and accessible through dynamic and gratifying services that inspire, enrich, and engage all Idahoans.

Janet L. Gallimore
Executive Director and State Historic Preservation Officer

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The Idaho State Historical Society Board of Trustees is the policy-making and governance body for the agency, is appointed by the Governor, and has all of the powers and duties established by the Constitution of the State of Idaho. Trustees provide a statewide perspective that informs agency services and serve as a vital communication link to communities.

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A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

BY JANET GALLIMORE

We are pleased to present this special annual report edition of *Mountain Light*. The Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS) is a trusted guide through the state's history and how it has shaped every aspect of our lives, land, communities, government, and people. Please enjoy this robust overview of our accomplishments in the past year.

I am so proud of our extraordinary staff for their service to Idahoans. Our Board of Trustees provides leadership and vital connections to and feedback from Idahoans across our great state. We are indebted to the Foundation for Idaho History for building our ISHS family of supporters. Over 150 Idahoans volunteer their time to support the agency by guiding students in their learning, processing archival items to increase public access to collections, and serving as programming ambassadors. Our work in the last year created deep opportunities for the public to engage in history. This engagement and support result in both immediate and long-term impacts that prepare the agency for future success.

On Thursday November 30, 2023, in Idaho Falls, ISHS Chairman Bill Butticci, board members Dr. Cheryl O'Brien and Jim Johnston, and ISHS staff celebrated the amazing impact that Idaho has had on our national narrative with the launch of *Idaho Experience: Idaho's Nuclear Navy*, a documentary and partnership between the Idaho SHPO, the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program (NNPP), and Idaho Public Television.

On July 1, 2024, Governor Brad Little proclaimed the commencement of the America250 in Idaho Commemoration to include events, projects, and activities celebrating our nation's founding, triumphant history, and promising future. In so doing, he appointed the ISHS as the lead agency for executing the America250 in Idaho Commemoration and creating, planning, encouraging, developing, and promoting initiatives and activities to be held in Idaho to commemorate the 250th anniversary of our nation's founding in 2026. We are grateful to serve in this capacity and with state agency and statewide partners, honor our nation's founding principles, preserve Idaho's historical legacy, and encourage efforts to advance equality, liberty, and justice.

In early 2024, ISHS began the rigorous process of design-build team selection for new exhibitions at the Old Idaho Penitentiary. The state of Idaho received an overwhelming response, inspired by the story of the Old Idaho Penitentiary and its singularly unique place in our national narrative. The ISHS selected the Nassal/nFusion team to guide our team in reimagining the visitor experience and, for the first time, creating a comprehensive interpretive strategy, which we are calling "A City Behind Walls." Through this story and new immersive exhibitions, visitors will encounter a three-dimensional textbook illustrating the evolution of the quest for law and order. It reveals the pursuit of justice, the changing nature of crime, and its consequences across a century when the Old Pen was operational.

We are planning for a new, approved 50,000-square-foot purpose-built Collections and Archives Stewardship Facility at the Idaho History Center. The ISHS cares for and provides access to the state's historical collections, including but not limited to objects, textiles, firearms, tribal collections, furniture, decorative arts, agricultural implements, transportation/vehicles, archaeological materials, and a wide range of historical and state government-related materials and Capitol collections. We are designing this facility for maximum efficiency and proper environmental controls, and we expect completion in mid-2026. We are privileged to create this facility as it is essential in achieving our public service responsibility for the long-term preservation of our irreplaceable collections.

These remarkable initiatives are a direct result of the trust in our agency, mainly due to our commitment to delivering on our promises. Our team's dedication to ISHS values and professional excellence fulfills these promises. We are deeply grateful for the unwavering commitment our members and donors have shown in supporting the Idaho State Historical Society's work in preserving and promoting our great state's history. Your support is invaluable, and we eagerly anticipate your continued engagement.

Thank you!

Janet L Gallimore

Executive Director, State Historic Preservation Officer

STATE HISTORIAN ANNUAL SUMMARY

BY HANNALORE HEIN

The Office of the State Historian supported various agency initiatives and projects in addition to managing a portfolio of work that included oral histories, written articles for external publication, and the administration of other programs and affiliate committees, including the America250 in Idaho Commemoration in FY24.

ISHS Oral History Program

Throughout FY24, the Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS) successfully managed and expanded its reimagined oral history initiative, focusing on completing the COVID-19 oral history collecting program started in FY23. In Q1 of FY24, the agency conducted the final interviews and reviewed and audited written transcripts. The Idaho State Archives (ISA) is preparing to accession these materials into the Oral History Collection formally. This effort highlighted the agency's commitment to preserving Idaho's history through meticulous documentation of the pandemic's impact on the state.

Following the conclusion of the COVID-19 interviews, ISHS strategically shifted focus to new oral history projects for the 2024 fiscal year. A notable achievement was the partnership with Dr. Rachel Miller from the College of Idaho, which transformed an internship opportunity for a single student into a classroom project involving 23 students. This collaboration expanded the scope of the oral history initiative and achieved a 75% cost recovery for the agency's TheirStory™ oral history software expenses. The students completed interviews with prominent citizens of Canyon and Owyhee counties and gained valuable public history skills while contributing to ISA's growing collection. This innovative approach served as a proof of concept for the upcoming America250 oral history initiative, highlighting a model of responsible government that maximizes resources while engaging the community and preserving vital historical narratives. This project underscores ISHS's leadership in fostering partnerships, providing educational opportunities, and efficiently managing resources. As ISHS looks forward to the America250 oral history initiative, it is well-positioned to build on these successes and deliver impactful, community-driven historical documentation.

ISHS Represented in National Publications

In July 2023, the Editor-in-Chief of *The Public Historian*, the academic journal of the National Council on Public History (NCPH), reached out to the State Historian to author a "Report from the Field" outlining her approach to writing a policy paper on the Spanish Flu (developed in 2020) for Governor Brad Little. This policy paper received the NCPH's Michael C. Robinson Award for Historical Analysis in 2023. Hein completed the 35-page report from the Field in November 2023, and it appeared in print alongside her original policy paper in Vol. 46, No. 1, of *The Public Historian* in February. Hein's report made significant contributions to the field of public history. Firstly, it explored historians' role in shaping public policy amid crises through the programs of the ISHS. ISHS navigated the post-2008 recession, aligning with the History Relevance Campaign to redefine history's societal value and develop a legislative outreach program. Her report encapsulates the ISHS's journey and history's power—through the State Historian's policy paper program—to inform, unite, guide policy, and promote informed governance. Secondly, the report describes Hein's workflow, which features traditional research methodology and adaptable project management philosophies and stresses the value of searchable research libraries as a framework for historians to manage multiple projects.

Additionally, the State Historian contributed a scholarly book review to H-Net in April 2024, examining Barton H. Thompson, Jr.'s book, *Liquid Asset: How Business and Government Can Partner to Solve the Freshwater Crisis*. Hein acknowledged Thompson's fresh perspective on the urgent need for innovative management of the world's freshwater resources through public-private partnerships. She praised the book's interdisciplinary approach, which integrated economics, law, environmental science, and history to explore the complex factors contributing to global water scarcity. However, Hein noted that the book's organization and the overwhelming number of case studies may detract from its accessibility to lay readers. This review offered a critical analysis of global freshwater crises, emphasizing the implications for public policy and environmental stewardship. These publications underscore the State Historian's dedication to advancing the understanding of history's relevance in addressing contemporary issues within Idaho and globally.

America250 in Idaho
Throughout the 2023-2024 fiscal year, ISHS made significant strides in laying the groundwork for the state's commemoration of America's semi-quincentennial in 2026, also known as America250. As a co-lead in this effort, the agency developed a strategic framework and brand outlining how Idaho will contribute to this national milestone. This initiative began in the fall of 2022, with collaborative discussions resulting in a comprehensive list of potential projects, including legacy projects, such as a grant program and oral history initiative, and ongoing work that can be branded under the America250 banner.

The work has encompassed the development of critical structures, systems, and processes necessary for a successful commemoration and content creation that situates Idaho's history within the broader narrative of the United States. Additionally, the America250 in Idaho Task Force, a coalition of state agency partners, conceived of an infrastructure framework and robust stakeholder network to ensure statewide representation and engagement. As a State Historian, Hein has been fortunate to actively take part in and represent ISHS at regional and national levels, contributing to broader America250 planning efforts. The work completed during this fiscal year will ensure that ISHS is primed to lead this commemoration through 2026, and achieve its mission and vision, in alignment with its values.

Mission:
To advance the ideals of the American Revolution – equality, liberty, and justice – through meaningful community engagement and recognize, appreciate, and commemorate Idaho's journey in America's legacy.

Vision:
To celebrate American history and the invaluable contributions of Idahoans to our region, nation, and world.

Values:
Heritage, Education, Respect, Resilience, and Patriotism.

Community Outreach and Engagement
The State Historian engaged in extensive outreach and community engagement throughout FY24, significantly advancing the Idaho State Historical Society's mission. She actively participated in various public forums and events, delivering lectures and presentations on Idaho's history to diverse audiences. These included public presentations on Idaho's political, economic, and gender history, contributions to Boise State University's and Idaho State University's history programs, and participation in panels such as the Boise City Club's "Hidden Histories" series on Chinese history in Idaho. Hein's involvement also extended to media outreach, conducting interviews on topics ranging from the history of county coroners to Idaho's women's history, enhancing public awareness and engagement with the state's history.

Hein's outreach efforts also manifested as active participation in several advisory and steering committees, including serving on Boise State University's Venture College Advisory Board and the Oregon Historical Society's Pacific Northwest History Conference Steering Committee. These roles allowed her to influence the direction of regional and state historical initiatives while fostering collaboration across institutions. Overall, the Idaho State Historian's outreach and community engagement activities during the 2023-2024 fiscal year strengthened the ISHS's connections with the public and educational partners and demonstrated a robust commitment to preserving and promoting Idaho's rich history.

P2023-003, Scholl Party, Idaho State Archives

MRS. SCHOLL'S VIOLET LUNCHEON: A SPECIAL BUNCH OF BOISE LADIES

BY JACKIE GUNN, VOLUNTEER AT THE IDAHO STATE ARCHIVES

As a volunteer at the Idaho State Archives, I lend a hand in processing new acquisitions. Though that often means data entry, I am always looking for the who from Idaho's history – wondering who these characters were that played formative roles in enriching our state. While flipping through a family album donated to the archives a while back, I saw a group portrait. It sits centered on a page, accompanied only by a handwritten caption. Intrigued, I reached for my magnifying glass and leaned in for a better look.

Though silver-haired women from this era regularly gathered for club meetings, sewing circles, and church events, impromptu, on-site photographs like this one were rarely taken. Yet here these ladies are. This is not your period-standard, semi-distant, in-studio portrait. No, it's a come-as-you-are buffet of fourteen countenances - some appear reticent but receptive, others fixed and formidable, and a few elusively enigmatic. I could not help but wonder, "Who were they?"

I opened my laptop and linked to the NewsBank website at the Boise public library's digital resources portal, searching for "Scholl" in past editions of the *Idaho Statesman*. And, there it was in the society section, a brief blurb that mentioned the party date and location, as well as the names of the party co-hosts and participants.

Well, I was hooked. I had to know everything about Mrs. Scholl, her party co-hosts, and the ladies in the photo. Luckily, I could lean in on the resources available at the archives for help. I started with the party co-hosts. Without them, there'd be no party - no party, no photograph. After reviewing biographies of some of Boise's pioneer families (thank you, Jim Hawley, Hiram French, and Nellie Ireton Mills) and by using the *Idaho Statesman* search engine again, the following details emerged. I hope you'll enjoy reading a bit about these Boise ladies who shared each other's company one Saturday afternoon in November 1915 as much as I did.

Ethel Stewart McCarthy and Lillian Cahalan Stewart - Party Co-Hosts; Malinda "Minnie" Scholl - Guest of Honor

Ethel Stewart's grandmother, Malinda ("Minnie") Scholl, raised her on a large farm a few miles outside Connorsville, a town in central Indiana known for its furniture, buggy, and piano pins manufacturing. Once she had earned her teaching certificate, Ethel said goodbye to her grandparents, relatives, and friends and came to Boise, where she joined her father, stepmother, and brother.

Lillian Cahalan Stewart
Family Album, Idaho State Archives

They had all become Boiseans a decade earlier. Her father, George Harlan Stewart, was an attorney and later served as Chief Justice of the Idaho State Supreme Court. Lillian was a year older than Ethel and the youngest of eight Cahalans born to Thomas and Hester. Tom was an Idaho pioneer, attorney, and a prolific storyteller. Born in Boise, Lillian graduated from Boise High School in 1901 and from San Jose Normal School in 1903.

Lillian and Ethel met soon after Ethel arrived in town; by 1904, they were both teaching at Central School. During their time at Central, Lillian started going out with Ethel's brother, Charles. He had returned to town after graduating from Marion Business College in Indiana and was working as a paying teller at Idaho Trust & Savings Bank. They exchanged vows at the Cahalan home at 803 N. 13th Street in June of 1907. Ethel continued teaching and was appointed the school district's first Home Economics director. You can see them all (above), with Charles standing in the two-horse-drawn buggy, Lillian seated to his left, and Ethel seated up front.

We don't know when or how Ethel met her future husband, Charles P. "Mac" McCarthy, but we do know that Mac arrived in Boise in 1903 with his Harvard Law School degree in hand and a job in place working for Senator Borah. In September of 1909, Ethel and Mac took the train to Connorsville so that Minnie, her husband Benjamin, and the local Stewart relatives could attend their nuptials.

At the time of Minnie Scholl's visit in the fall of 1915, Lillian, Charles, and their precocious six-year-old daughter Betty lived at 1310 Hays Street, while two blocks up on Fort Street, Ethel, Mac, and their two little girls, Marion and Elizabeth, were settling into their newly constructed home. Minnie's two-month stay in Boise must have flown by. Too soon, she'd be traveling home to Indiana. But, before that train whistle blew, Ethel and Lillian honored her with a Violet Luncheon.

The Luncheon Guest List – Not a Shrinking Violet in the Bunch

Mary Pendergast McCarthy
Residence: Mary lived in an upstairs apartment at Ethel and Mac's home at 1415 W. Fort St.

Priscilla Greenhalgh Stowell
Residence: 523 Hays St.

Mary Graveley Coffin
Residence: 1403 Franklin St.

Mary Druf Rose
Residence: 408 N. 15th St. (Demolished)

Margaret Charlton Cyrus
Residence: 1309 W. Hays St.

Bessie Braden Whitney
Residence: 1415 W. State St. (Demolished)

Mary Duncan Reel
Residence: 1210 N. 11th St.

Delia Tyne Cuddy
Residence: 1204 N. 11th St.

Mary Gildea Davis
Residence: 1119 N. 11th St.

Elizabeth Bechtel Nusbaum
Residence: 1519 W. Jefferson Street (NRHP)

Anna Cunningham Goldtrap
Residence: 1216 Franklin St.

Ella Halpin Danskin
Residence: 317 E. Bannock St.

Mary Kloser Sonna
Residence: 121 E. Main St. (NRHP West Warm Springs Historic District)

All were transplants to this western oasis, whether they came in the prime of their lives or arrived in their sunset years. They took different routes to get here and had their own unique experiences along the way. But, once settled here, they left a mark in the Gem State we still feel today.

Like a carefully crafted quilt, their contributions were both practical in securing their daughter's college education and ethereal in fostering fellowship and personal fulfillment. These ladies were following a national trend and preparing their daughters for adulthood through their spiritual, cultural, and community circles.

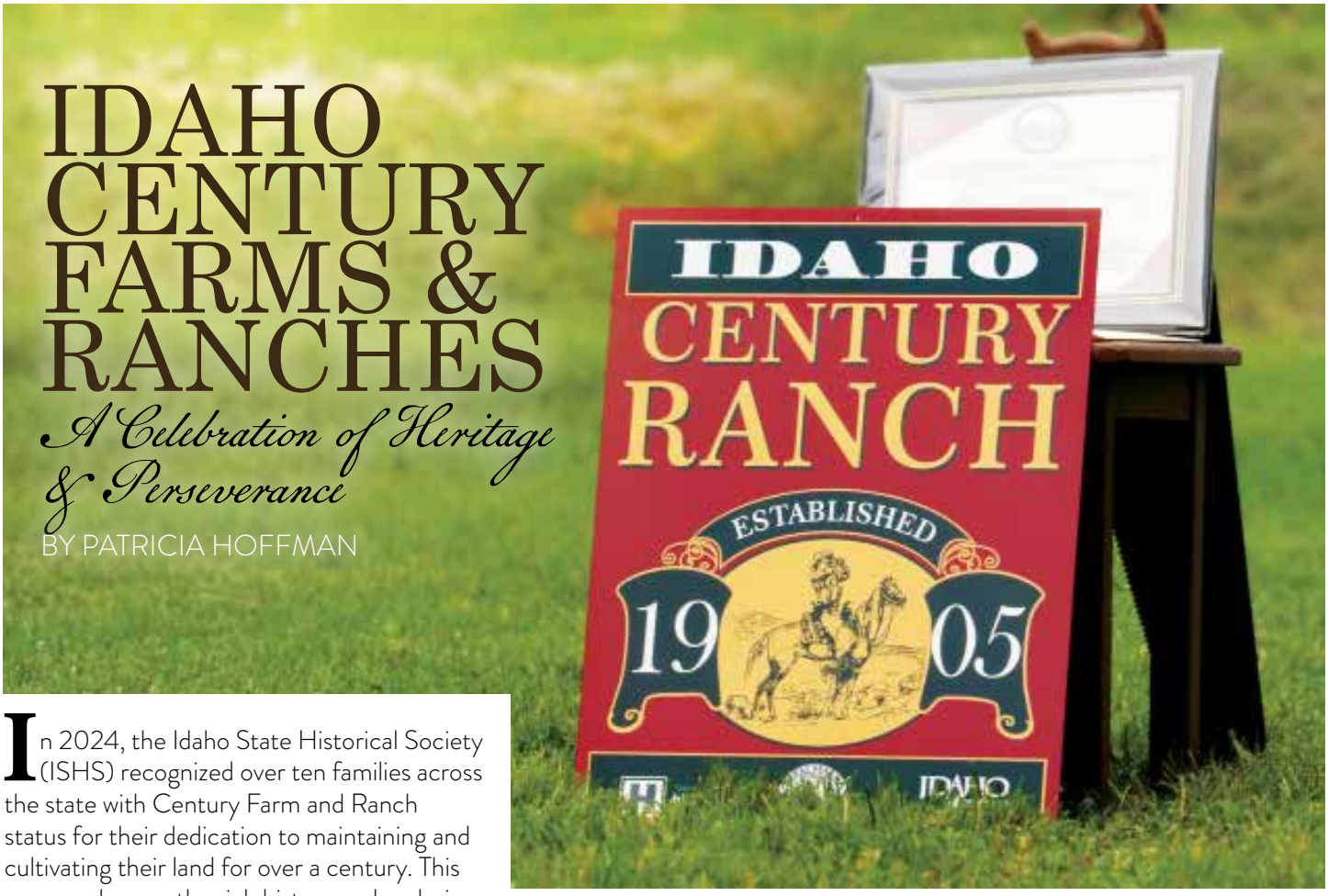
So many of these stories await to be uncovered in the carefully cared-for materials donated to the archives.

Find your story in the archives!

IDAHO CENTURY FARMS & RANCHES

A Celebration of Heritage & Perseverance

BY PATRICIA HOFFMAN



In 2024, the Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS) recognized over ten families across the state with Century Farm and Ranch status for their dedication to maintaining and cultivating their land for over a century. This program honors the rich history and enduring legacy of Idaho's agricultural pioneers, and is a cornerstone of the ISHS's efforts to preserve and celebrate the state's agricultural heritage.

The families and farms recognized this year include:

- Armstrong-Zita Farm, Nancy Armstrong, McCammon, Idaho
- Arnold Homestead, Patricia Cash & Mark Kelley, Grangeville, Idaho
- Frostenson Family Farms, Bobi Frostenson, Fairfield, Idaho
- John & Grace Gibson Farm, Philip & Lisa Yost, Grace, Idaho
- Houck Farms, Jeffrey Hood, Bonners Ferry, Idaho
- Lickley Family Ranches, Lickley Family, Jerome, Idaho
- John Henry Meiners Sr., Karen Meiners Modersitzki, Bancroft, Idaho
- Shaw Homestead Ranch, Sue Beitia, McCall, Idaho
- Sonnen Family Farm, Steven and Sue Sonnen, Greencreek, Idaho
- Thompson Farms of Arbon Idaho, Tyler Thompson, Pocatello, Idaho
- Fred & Pearl Yost Farm, Philip & Lisa Yost, Grace, Idaho

Through the stories of these families and communities, the program highlights the achievements, courage, and passion that have shaped Idaho's agricultural landscape. These narratives connect people to their past and foster a sense of identity and place that guides them through life.

By sharing the events, stories, and ideas that are meaningful to this community, the Century Farm and Ranch program helps people discover their place in time. It highlights the importance of family, resilience, and the deep connection to the land that defines Idaho's agricultural legacy.

The tradition of recognizing Century Farms and Ranches dates back to 1937, when New York became the first state to officially acknowledge farms and ranches that had been operating under the same family for 100 years. This initiative gained significant momentum during the United States Bicentennial in 1976, when several states, inspired by the national celebration, established their Century Farm and Ranch programs. In most states, the requirement for the award is that the property must have remained in the same family continuously for 100 years or more and currently be a working farm or ranch; some states require a minimum number of acres or annual agricultural sales. Today, 43 states have such programs, each celebrating the perseverance and legacy of their agricultural communities.

The ISHS, in partnership with the Idaho Department of Agriculture, established Idaho's Century Farm and Ranch program in 1990 as part of the state's Centennial Celebration. Over 475 farms and ranches have received this designation since the program's inception. The award recognizes the importance of Idaho's farming and ranching pioneers and honors the families who have kept their land in continuous agricultural production for a century.

Sonnen Farms

Thompson Farms

Shaw Homestead Ranch

Lickley Family Ranches

Armstrong-Zita Farm

32 CELLS

Artistic Reflections on the Old Idaho Penitentiary

BY JACEY BRAIN

Old Idaho Penitentiary staff have worked to research and publish a new book that highlights the prison's history through art. *32 Cells: Artistic Reflections on the Old Idaho Penitentiary* features the work of over 70 Idaho artists from 2016 to 2020, the first five years of the 32 Cells art show. The 200-page, hardcover keepsake includes nearly 140 show pieces presented in full color, along with many examples of historical artwork from the operating years of the prison made by resident craftsmen and creatives.

32 Cells began as a collaboration between the Old Idaho Penitentiary and Swell Artist Collective in 2016. The event's name is inspired by the number of available cell doors to hang artwork in the site's #4 and #5 Cell Houses. The show paired local Idaho artists with true stories of men and women who worked or served time at the penitentiary, and each year culminated under a different theme. Celebrating its tenth year in 2025, discussions of a compendium or coffee table book began in the first couple of years of the show. Through a groundswell of community support and with special thanks to Evermore Prints in Boise and the many participating artists, Old Idaho Penitentiary historians completed the project in 2024.

Idaho designer Kristin Cullen of Interval design studio joined the team during the book's development, along with editors Colleen Brennan, Judy Austin, and Idaho State Historian HannaLore Hein. The Idaho Commission on the Arts and Idaho Humanities Council provided financial support for the project.

Over 13,000 men and women served time at the Old Idaho Penitentiary, and each person's story supports the universal truth of humanity that everyone has complicated circumstances, emotions, and experiences that shape their lives and ultimately form the story of their incarceration and the prison as a whole. Art is an expression of humanity and self, and this book, along with the annual show, is a showcase of the connections between stories of the past and perspectives of the present. The 32 Cells art show, a well-attended highlight of the penitentiary's annual programming, exemplifies the commitment of the Old Idaho Penitentiary to partnering with the local creative community to present history to new audiences that may not connect as easily to text and photographs. The 32 Cells book is a unique format for preserving this local artwork for future generations.

Readers will find a wide array of stories from the site's history in this book, from the show's first year featuring its most prominent stories and residents, including the men executed during the prison's operating years, to tales of escape attempts and residents' hidden creative talents. One such story details the life of Harley Carringer (#8204), known as a master of his trade for his "squawky"-making abilities. Squawky was the residents' commonly used term for homemade prison booze. One piece in 32 Cells depicts Old Selam, the prison's mightiest horse, often ridden by the wardens. Around Christmas 1901, Bob Meeks (#574), a cohort of the infamous Butch Cassidy, stole Selam during an attempted escape. A week later, after Meeks' apprehension, a second resident stole Selam to ride to freedom (this time successfully).

Artists receive initial research material, including historic photos, as they begin developing original pieces for the art show each year. Thanks to the wealth of information available to researchers at the Idaho State Archives, through the *Behind Gray Walls* podcast, and thanks to the work of Old Idaho Penitentiary staff, many artists follow these leads to uncover as many details as possible. Artist Jaki Katz said of this process, "Getting to know Ed Miles and George Hamilton (not their real names!) made me realize that, just like me, they were simply people who had both sides to their nature."

32 Cells: Artistic Reflections on the Old Idaho Penitentiary is now available at the Old Idaho Penitentiary and Idaho State Museum retail stores, and online at store.history.idaho.gov.

ISHS Members receive 15% off!

p1984-15-5, Idaho State Archives

A YEAR IN REVIEW AT THE IDAHO STATE MUSEUM

BY SARAH PHILLIPS

In FY24, the Idaho State Museum welcomed nearly 35,000 visitors into our galleries. Our dedicated staff developed meaningful programs, curated impactful exhibition experiences, and proudly served thousands of students and teachers across every region of the state!

Our Community Day program continues to offer opportunities to celebrate Idaho's cultural diversity through performances, activities, and programming. In September 2023, the museum hosted its second annual ¡Fiesta! Celebrating Idaho's Hispanic Heritage, commemorating Hispanic Heritage Month, and highlighting the Latino community in Idaho. Museum staff worked closely with our local partners—Idaho Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Ballet Folklorico Mexico Lindo, and Ana Maria Schachtell—to produce an event that celebrated Hispanic culture through performances, music, crafts, and food. A special pop-up exhibition, *Idaho Corridos: History in Song*, showcased the corrido, a traditional Mexican song style that has evolved in Mexico and the United States as an essential form of story telling. Over 1,000 visitors came to the museum to celebrate.

In January 2024, we welcomed 1,035 visitors to the museum to honor the rich traditions of Asian cultures for our Lunar New Year Community Day. Partnering with local schools and organizations, like the Idaho Chinese Organization, the event featured a community art show, traditional tea service demonstration, special pop-up exhibition, and performances by the White Lotus Dancers, Traditional Chinese Dancers, Kuna Kung Fu, the Boise Modern Chinese School, and Renaissance High School—all of which reflected the spirit of the Lunar New Year.

The museum hosted two nationally touring exhibitions this past year: *So Ready for Laughter: The Legacy of Bob Hope* from The National World War II Museum and *Courage and Compassion: Our Shared Story of the Japanese American World War II Experience* presented by Go For Broke National Education Center. These two exhibits allowed the museum to create engaging programming by hosting special performances, roundtable discussions, and community events related to their themes as well as foster new partnerships with local and national organizations.

During the run of *So Ready for Laughter*, the museum partnered with the Intermountain USO and the Idaho Veterans Chamber of Commerce to present a live show and tribute to Bob Hope's military performances, featuring singing, dancing, and segments of Bob Hope's comedy taken directly from his wartime radio and USO shows. Throughout three performances in April 2024, local actors and ISHS staff dazzled 489 attendees. One visitor shared that the program "restored my faith in humanity."

The opening of *Courage and Compassion* offered an avenue for both the celebration of Japanese American culture and the commemoration of this era in American history. In May 2024, over 250 guests attended the exhibition's grand opening, enjoying traditional Japanese drumming performances by Sanha Taiko, a roundtable discussion, and gallery tours. Discussions were moderated by Kurt Ikeda, Chief of Interpretation and Community Outreach at Minidoka National Historic Site, and featured Dr. Emily Anderson, Research Consultant from Go For Broke National Education Center; Jim Jones, former Idaho Attorney General and Supreme Court Justice; and Teresa Tamura, Author of *Minidoka: An American Concentration Camp*.

Museum staff developed a number of smaller exhibits, many of which were co-curated with our community partners. These exhibits told the stories of Hollywood star-turned Idaho resident Maureen O'Hara, featured art created by veterans from around the country, and highlighted how a sense of community bloomed in Boise's Chinatown.

The Idaho State Museum's Collections and Exhibitions team works diligently to care for over 50,000 objects related to the history of our state. We carefully steward these artifacts and are eager to acquire items that help preserve and share Idaho stories for the future. Some of our exciting additions this year include:

• The military uniform of George Koyama, an Idahoan of Japanese descent who served in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. The 442nd was a segregated Japanese American unit, remembered today for its brave actions in World War II.

• An electric guitar, used and signed by the rock band Paul Revere and the Raiders. The band formed in Boise and reached the height of popularity in the 1960s and 1970s. The band is known for memorable tunes like "Kicks," which is featured in Stories from Idaho in the Albertson Family Foundation Galleries at the museum.

• Collected works of John Collias, a comprehensive collection of materials and artworks from the life of artist John Collias. The collection spans Collias's early education, his time as a commercial artist for marketing campaigns, and his career as a successful independent artist.

A signature piece from this collection is a large-scale mural showcasing Idaho's unique story. This piece was commissioned in honor of the 1990 Idaho Centennial.

The museum welcomed more than 10,400 students throughout the year. Our newly revamped Homeschool Day program served 1,023 participants, with many students seeing the museum for the first time. Between traditional on-site educational programming like field trips and our off-site programs, such as our popular Traveling Trunk program, museum educators were able to support learning throughout our state.

GEM (Guide, Engage, Mobilize) teen interns worked with museum collections and education staff to develop a teen-curated exhibit, *Raising Gems: Childhood in Idaho*. This paid internship program for high school students allows teens to get a behind-the-scenes look at museums, exhibit development, and community engagement. GEM interns also hosted Teen Takeover, a by-teens, for-teens event during national Civic Season. This free annual event empowers students to create fun and meaningful programs for their peers. "I adore this program (as if that wasn't already obvious), and I had so much fun doing it this year," said one of this year's GEM interns. "It has genuinely given me so much insight into how museums work and has made me so excited to adventure into a field that could take me down this path."

NATIONAL HISTORY DAY IN IDAHO

SEASON RECAP

BY MAGGIE FULLERTON

National History Day (NHD) celebrated its 50th anniversary this year, and the Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS) sponsored the 41st National History Day In Idaho (NHDI) program season.

On April 6th, 2024, 269 students from every corner of Idaho, along with their families, friends, and teachers, buzzed around the tree-lined campus of the College of Idaho in Caldwell to compete at the NHDI State Contest. There were nerves, excitement, and relief as the students successfully completed their interviews with the judges. The judges spent hours discussing, deliberating, and ranking the entries, as well as submitting nominations for special prizes. At that afternoon's awards ceremony, the top entries received 118 medals and ribbons, and six students earned $60,000 in scholarships to the College of Idaho.

For most of the students, this was the culmination of a yearlong process. NHD is a project-based learning program where students research a historical event through the lens of an annual theme and then create an individual or group project in one of five creative categories: documentary, exhibit, paper, performance, or website. Every project also includes required written materials: a short paper where the students explain their research and development processes, and an annotated bibliography where students briefly explain how they used each primary and secondary source. Each school year, thousands of students statewide create NHD projects.

Those who wish to compete enter their regional contest, hoping to qualify for the State Contest. This year's theme of "Turning Points in History" asked students to consider how something, or someone, causes change in the world. Through each of their unique projects, these young scholars demonstrated that a turning point can be an event with a global impact or a person who inspires a handful of others.

Since 1984, countless Idaho students have honed their research, writing, critical thinking, analytical, and presentation skills through the NHD program. ISHS has been the sponsoring institution throughout that time, supporting educators as they guide their students through the process, and administering the competitions for the hundreds of students who elect to compete each year.

This past spring, 710 students from 15 counties presented their work at regional contests around the state. NHD Idaho added a fully virtual regional contest to the calendar to increase access and accommodate any student statewide who could not attend their in-person regional contest. There was also a virtual participation option at the State Contest.

Fifty-two students qualified for the National Contest after earning a spot as one of the top two entries in each individual and group category in the Junior (6th-8th grade) and Senior (9th-12th grade) Divisions. Forty-seven students, along with three teachers, ultimately made the trip to Maryland. The Idaho State Historical Society and its partners generously covered the registration fees for all of the participants, and awarded 21 travel stipends to make the trip easier.

In June, almost three thousand students worldwide spent a week swapping pins, meeting new friends, visiting Capitol Hill and other sites around D.C., and presenting their work to judges and the public. There are 56 NHD affiliates globally, of which Idaho is one; most of the fifty states are represented, along with territories and countries around the globe.

Special recognition goes to Clara McBride from Idaho Falls, who placed first in the entire Junior Division for the Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers Prize, sponsored by the National Endowment for The Humanities. Her website, "Collapse of Galloping Gertie: A Revolutionary Turning Point in Suspension Bridge Design," was selected for her excellent use of historical newspapers as primary source evidence and can be viewed at https://00-51210445.nhdwebcentral.org/.

In the Junior Division, Brea Hill from Compass Public Charter School in Meridian won the Outstanding Affiliate medal for her paper, "Operation Mincemeat: How a Homeless Man Undermined Nazi Germany." Brannia Busoy from Renaissance High School in Meridian received the Senior Division's Outstanding Affiliate medal for her website, "From Excluded to Exotic: How Chop Suey Changed American Opinions on Chinese Cuisine."

Idaho NHD students at Nationals in Washington, D.C.

Teachers appreciate NHD as a way for students to "become excited about their topics and passionate about sharing what they learned with the judges," and as a vehicle for educators to work "with the students on a sustained project that promotes so many literacy and critical thinking skills." According to one student, "NHD is an awesome opportunity to share our knowledge of history and showcase our skills."

As we prepare for our 42nd year of NHD in Idaho, we appreciate the support of ISHS's partners in helping us fund classroom implementation and program administration. Come join us at your local competition in spring 2025 to see how tomorrow's historians interpret the theme "Rights and Responsibilities in History." Find out more at history.idaho.gov/nhdi.

Extra-ore-dinary trash...

BY DAN EVERHART

Construction crews recently discovered an archaeological treasure trove while excavating a new utility trench through the Assay Office lawn as part of our ongoing building project. These observant workers uncovered a historic refuse deposit (also known as a trash dump) with thousands of individual artifacts. Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) archaeologists quickly began evaluating the find and conducting salvage excavations. Most recovered artifacts were equipment used for the assay process. This multi-step procedure determined the quality of silver or gold ores, which miners would bring as samples to Boise's Treasury Department facility for refinement and evaluation.

This process used several vessels, including crucibles, scorifiers, and cupels, which would be superheated in the building's basement smelting furnaces. SHPO archaeologists found hundreds of these containers during the excavation.

Most of the artifacts, including a Union General Service button dating to the mid/late nineteenth century, were found fragmented and broken. These items, along with refuse such as animal bones, broken glass, ceramic fragments, nails, grommets, tacks, and a small bell, were likely discarded during the 1870s, the heyday of the mining era and the first decade of the Assay Office's operations in Boise.

While finds like this are exciting, these artifacts are important because of the information they provide. Most were broken and will not be featured in a museum or look interesting on display but are invaluable to those who can use them to piece together the past. Please remember that artifact hunting on federal lands is illegal and any archaeological excavation on state lands, including the Assay Office grounds, requires proper permits. The context of these interesting archaeological finds is as important as the items themselves and should be excavated by professionals and shared with all the citizens of Idaho.

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IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
2205 Old Penitentiary Road
Boise, ID 83712-8250

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MOUNTAIN LIGHT

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