



WHITMAN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 52, No. 5 – Sept./Oct. 2025

Port Commissioners Donate \$35,000 to the Depot!

The Whitman County Port Commissioners have approved a one-time gift of \$35,000 to the Depot. Steering Committee members **Debbie Sherman** and **Ken Cassavant** met with them on Wednesday, September 3, when they presented an update on progress at the Depot and future plans and financial needs. The money is earmarked for exterior railcar restoration.

WCHS Annual Meeting

Sunday, October 19, 2:00 PM

Endicott Elementary and Middle School (308 School Drive)

"This Wonderful Place: *The Desert of Wheat*
as Seen by Novelist Zane Grey and Other Viewers Since Pioneer Days

PowerPoint by **Richard Scheuerman**; talk by **Alex McGregor**.

This year's program at the WCHS Annual Meeting will feature the efforts of two historians—Whitman County natives and authors Richard Scheuerman and Alex McGregor. Scheuerman credits McGregor with introducing him to *The Desert of Wheat*.

The story, which was written in 1919, centers on a young German-American farmer who faces the challenges of running a large wheat farm and dealing with the IWW (Wobblies) and anti-German sentiment in the United States during World War I. Part of the novel is set in war-torn France, but primarily, "Grey's narrative is rich with descriptions of the wheat fields and rural life, painting a vivid picture of American agriculture during wartime," says Scheuerman. Note that Grey visited the Columbia Plateau and the Palouse in 1917 to gather information for the book.



Come to the Annual Meeting to learn more about *The Desert of Wheat*, which Scheuerman says still offers new insights into the era and the region, even though the story is now over 100 years old. The yearly WCHS business meeting and refreshments will follow.

Depot Days at the PDHC

Running concurrently with the Lentil Festival in Pullman, August 15 and 16, Depot Days at the Pullman Depot Heritage Center was a huge success this year!



Opening events began on Friday; **Jamie Whitman** (Freight Room director) and **Linda Hackbarth** (PDHC Steering Committee chairman) welcomed Chamber Walk of Fame honorees to a ceremony on the Depot grounds. Honored were **Pat and Laurie Caraher, Gary and Sue Schell, Dave Cillay, and Henry Rono**. On Saturday, the Tase T. Lentil 5K Fun Run began in the Depot parking lot at 7:30 AM. Approximately 350 runners participated!



Visitors to the Depot on Saturday also viewed a wide variety of exhibits in the Freight Room, learned about the Depot's Palouse Prairie Project, listened to **Maddie Farnsworth's** collection of train whistles, and sampled recipes made from wheat, lentils, and

garbanzo beans (chickpeas). Work in progress on the train cars could also be seen (see p. 3).

Nominations for Volunteer of the Year are still being accepted by WCHS director **Val Gregory**. Contact her at: (509) 553-9729 or wchsdirector1@gmail.com, or mail a letter of nomination to WCHS / P.O. 67 / Colfax WA 9911-0067.



WCHS at the Palouse Empire Fair

Approximately 482 visitors stopped by the **Jones Schoolhouse** while they were at the Palouse Empire Fair, September 4-7! Mini-lessons and docent-led tours of the schoolhouse were again featured. On Thursday, WCHS volunteer teachers gave fourteen mini-lessons to visiting third-graders; and on Friday, **Schweitzer Engineering** gave three lessons on electricity. The rest of the time, docents led tours of the schoolhouse. They included: Schoolmarm **Krista Boyd**, WCHS president **Mark Clinton, Bridget** and **Greg Harazin**, **Claire O'Keefe**, and **Jim Fitzgerald** and **Nancy Rothwell** (all of Colfax); **Janet Barstow** (Palouse); **Nancy Cochran** (Steptoe), and **Jill Gfeller** (Thornton).

The **Blacksmith Shop** again featured vintage farm tools and machinery—visitors could take a self-guided tour. Most items were labeled with brief descriptions of their use.



Perkins House Upgrades! by Val Gregory

The Perkins house is getting major improvements. It has hired a contractor and painters, and work started in early August. Over the years, the spindles and some of the ornate trim had fallen off the house, and the balcony railings also needed to be repaired.

Plus, there are cracks and peeling paint. So, these things are being fixed. The missing pieces are being replicated, cracks are being sealed, and the house is being primed and painted with the same colors as the last paint project. The project is costing \$100,000, but 75 percent of that has already been raised. So, more help is needed to finish the project. You can give through the qr code at the right, or you can donate by mail to WCHS, PO Box 67, Colfax WA 99111.

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL HISTORY

Perkins House operates on donations.
We appreciate your generosity!

<https://whitman-county-historical-society.square.site/>

Become a member
of the Whitman
County Historical
Society. or scroll
down the page
to support your
favorite projects
directly!



!! THANK YOU !!

Tenting at the Depot!

Work has begun on the train cars at the Pullman Depot. The first step was surrounding the passenger car and caboose with framework for heavy-duty plastic so that the peeling paint and rust can be sandblasted off the exterior of the cars and so that they will be protected from the weather. The deteriorating metal can then be repaired, and painting with appropriate railcar/automotive paint will begin. Windows replicating the original ones with curved corners will also be installed. If you would like to “purchase” a window—which will feature your name—contact fund-raising chair **Debbie**



Sherman at 509-334-7389 or jdjsherman@msn.com. Don't wait—more than half are already spoken for! Once restored, the passenger car should look much like the photo at left (but with more windows).

~~~~~ Pocket Prairie Tea Party ~~~~~



Mark October 19 on your calendar for the first Pocket Prairie Tea Party at the Pullman Depot! This is a fundraiser for the Depot's Palouse Prairie Project, located on the bank by the parking lot, which has been planted with sturdy, water-efficient native plants. Native American herbal tea will be served, along with yummy treats and confections, some of which will use local native plants. Speaking on growing native plants will be **Cheri Clausen**, president of the Weiser, Idaho, Depot, as well as two officers of the White Pine chapter of the Idaho Native Plants Society, **Penny Morgan** (president) and **Steve Bunting** (treasurer).

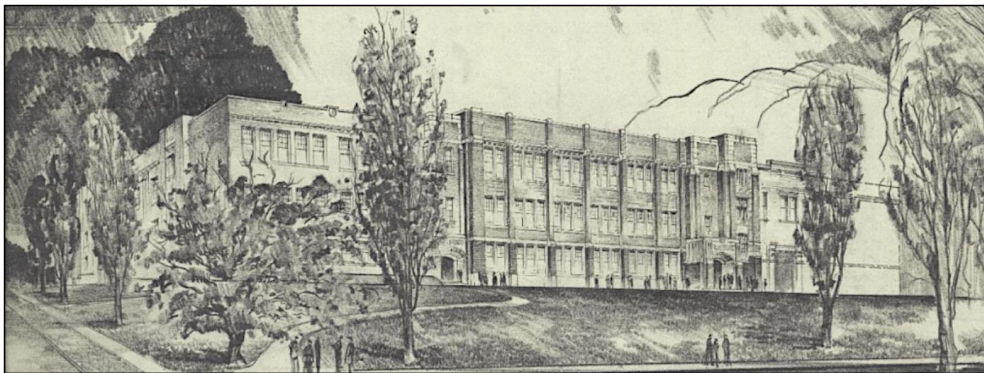


Seating for this very special event, which will be held from 2:00 to 4:00 PM, is limited. Tickets are \$15. Wearing a hat is encouraged but not required. For tickets contact **Jamie Whitman** at 509-332-1005 or [jwhitman97@yahoo.com](mailto:jwhitman97@yahoo.com).

## WCHS Archive Forced to Move

Pullman's longtime community center, which has housed the WCHS Archive well over 25 years, is closing, announced the Friends of Gladish Board of Directors during the last week of August. Tenants have until September 15 to leave.

The closure comes after months of publicly announced financial troubles. In December of 2024, the board revealed that the Gladish Community & Cultural Center was in a financial crisis; it put the building up for sale in July.



Originally consisting of three buildings, the oldest parts of the facility were built in 1892. In its early years, it served all of Pullman's students, but it was converted to Pullman High School in 1913. (Above is a drawing of the building from 1933.) In 1972, the "new high school" on Greyhound Way replaced it; however, the School District did not sell the Gladish Building to the Friends of Gladish until 1996. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been poured into its maintenance and restoration over the years, especially the last 29. It has hosted countless public events, private gatherings, plays, and concerts; and it has housed a wide variety of schools and offices, non-profit organizations, and private companies.

WCHS was forced to relocate the Archive in only a little over two weeks. The new location is at the Community Congregational United Church of Christ on 525 NE Campus Street in Pullman. WCHS appreciates their willingness to help! Thanks also to the Steptoe Grange Hall and the City of Rosalia for showing the Society other possible locations.

## Featured Museum: WSU Museum of Anthropology



The Museum of Anthropology at Washington State University in Pullman is located on the first floor of College Hall, on Glen Terrell Mall. It was established in 1957.

More than 30,000 artifacts from throughout the world, dating from ancient to modern times, are housed by the museum. They are organized geographically (North America, Latin America, Africa, and Oceania). Permanent exhibits include the Robert E. and Priscilla K. Nason collections of Native American Art, African Art, and Latin American Art. In addition, the museum

displays rotating exhibits, including a current one on the archaeology of the Pacific Northwest.

The museum is open to the public and admission is free. Hours during the school year are 10 AM to 4 PM, Monday through Saturday; and 1 PM to 4 PM on Sunday. The museum's hours may fluctuate in the summer. Please contact [madison.pullis@wsu.edu](mailto:madison.pullis@wsu.edu) or call 509-335-3441 if you are interested in visiting.

Field Code Changed



**Sid Pierson** has been a member of the Steering Committee for the Pullman Depot Heritage Center since 2018. His keen interest in Whitman County's history stems from his grandfather, whose family purchased a homestead farm in the St. John/Hay area in 1903.



Sid is past owner of Sid's Pharmacy, located in the Pullman Care Community. After graduating from Pullman High School, he earned degrees in zoology and psychology from Washington State University, then served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War. His interest in trains stems from his military service; he was originally interested in flying but was assigned to trains instead. Afterward, he returned to Pullman and earned a degree from WSU's School of Pharmacy. He served twelve years on the Pullman Schools Board of Directors and was a member of the Executive Directors Committee of the Washington School Directors' Association.

When asked why he volunteers at the Depot, he said, "The community supported my pharmacy for many, many years, and volunteering is one way to give back. Besides, I like trains!"

### 2025 Calendar

|                |                                                                     |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Oct. 19        | WCHS Annual Meeting, 2:00 PM, Endicott Elementary and Middle School |
| Oct. 19        | Pocket Prairie Tea Party, Pullman Depot Freight Room, 2:00 to 4:00  |
| Nov. 20        | WCHS Executive Meeting 6:00 PM, Pullman Depot Freight Room          |
| Nov. 20        | PDHC Steering Committee Meeting 7:00, Pullman Depot Freight Room    |
| Dec. 6         | Perkins House Christmas, Colfax, time TBA                           |
| Dec. 6, 13, 20 | Train Car Holiday Bazaar, times TBA, Pullman Depot                  |
| Dec. 18        | WCHS Board Meeting, Zoom                                            |

***Please Renew Your Membership!*** If you haven't done so already, please respond to the membership renewal request you may have recently received in the mail. Or, consider membership as a gift for a friend or loved one. Fill out the form below and mail it to the address at the bottom, or go to the WCHS website ([whitmancountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://whitmancountyhistoricalsociety.org)).

**MEMBERSHIP:** Become a part of the exciting future of Whitman County Historical Society!

- |                                                |        |                                                 |                 |
|------------------------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Membership | - \$30 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining Membership. | - \$ 75         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Membership     | - \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron Membership      | - \$100 or more |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business Membership.  | - \$60 | <input type="checkbox"/> Life Membership        | - \$500 or more |

Name of continuing or new member, or gift recipient: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of giver, if applicable: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I'd like to make an additional donation: ☐ \$25.00 ☐ \$50.00 ☐ \$100.00 ☐ other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Please direct my donation to:**

- |                                                  |                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greatest Need           | <input type="checkbox"/> Roy Chatters Newspaper and Printing Museum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Holy Trinity Chapel     | <input type="checkbox"/> Pullman Depot Heritage Center              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Perkins House and Cabin | <input type="checkbox"/> WCHS Archive                               |

Note that WCHS is a 501c 3. Your gift is tax deductible. Total Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Send to:** WCHS Membership Chairman PO Box 67 COLFAX WA 99111