



Whitman County Historical Society

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 50, No. 1 – February 2023

A New Chapter for the WCHS Newsletter!

Beginning with this issue, the WCHS newsletter—after 49 years of postal delivery—is moving to an entirely electronic format. New editors **Kathy Meyer** and **Debbie Sherman** (both of Pullman), along with the WCHS Board of Directors, reached this decision in order to save paper, cut mailing costs, and reach a wider audience. Paper copies will continue to be available in Whitman County libraries; and members who do not have email can request that a paper copy be mailed to them. The transition will probably take a full year, as requests for email addresses will be included with membership renewals, which are mailed monthly. If you wish to jumpstart delivery of the newsletter via email, send your email address to WCHS director **Valoree Gregory** (509-553-9729 or wchsdirector1@gmail.com). Non-members can receive the newsletter by email only or by downloading it from the WCHS website (whitmancountyhistoricalsociety.org).

The WCHS Board of Directors would like to thank last year's editor, Travis Greenwood, for his service to the Society. We wish him well as he continues to pursue his PhD in English at WSU.

Greetings from President Mark Clinton:



My first year as your president went by very fast. All of our facilities are bustling with activity. The Perkins House, Roy Chatters Newspaper and Printing Museum, Pullman Depot Heritage Center, Archives, and Trinity Chapel are in good hands with our volunteers. We are looking for a few more people to serve on some of our committees. If you are interested in volunteering, contact WCHS director **Valoree Gregory** (see above) or myself (colfaxclintons@gmail.com).

I would like to thank Theresa Dale for her work at the Perkins House and her years of service volunteering on your Board of Directors. She decided to step away from the director position, effective December 31, 2022. I would also like to welcome Carol Larsen to your board. She has a deep appreciation for Whitman County and will be an asset in lending her voice to the direction of the society.

I hope everyone has a healthy and prosperous 2023. Thank you.

Mark R. Clinton, president of the Whitman County Historical Society

WCHS Board Members for 2023:**Focus:**

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Krista Jones Boyd, Colfax
Pat Flansburg, Palouse
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Perkins House; Jones Schoolhouse; Annual Meeting
Holy Trinity Chapel

Pullman Depot Heritage Center (PDHC)

Membership; Perkins House; WCHS Archives

Oral History; Jones Schoolhouse

PDHC; Jones Schoolhouse; Newsletter

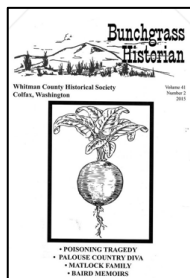
Past President; Cashup Davis Exhibit; Wilson Siding

Vice President; Grants; Wilson Siding

PDHC; Membership

WCHS Project Updates

The **Blacksmith Shop**, which is located on the Palouse Empire Fairgrounds near Mockonema (four miles south of Colfax), is in need of one or two volunteers to plan and direct demonstrations or exhibits during the Fair (Thursday through Sunday each year following Labor Day). Past demonstrations have included blacksmithing, butter-making, old-fashioned laundering, block printing, and spontaneous combustion in grain elevators. At present, the building is set up for self-guided tours during the four days of the Fair. The shop houses an interesting variety of antique farm implements and tools with labels that briefly explain their use. The WCHS Board would love to return to live demonstrations next year, if someone can be found to manage the building during the Fair, particularly a person with an agricultural background. If you are interested in volunteering for this interesting and rewarding task—which requires a relatively small commitment of time each year—contact the WCHS director **Val Gregory**.



A subscription to the ***Bunchgrass Historian*** comes with membership in WCHS. Editor **Ed Garretson**, Uniontown, recently mailed the last issue of 2022. Members can expect three more issues in 2023, and non-members can find a copy at one of the Whitman County libraries or purchase one from the WCHS Archives (see below). If you have written an article for submission for publication, contact Ed at 509-336-3901 or epgir@wsu.edu. *Bunchgrass* articles should focus on topics of interest related to the history of the Palouse region.

The **Cashup Davis Exhibit** can be seen at Center at the Whitman County Library in Colfax. On display is the telescope from the hotel that once sat atop Steptoe Butte, as well as Cashup's top hat and sword. Pictures of the hotel and Cashup Davis can be viewed electronically. A huge thank you to the Davis Family, Washington State University, past WCHS president **Greg Partch**, and the library for helping make the exhibit a reality. Check out the library website (whitcolib.org) for operating hours and stop in to see the exhibit.



The exhibit is supported by the **Fix-a-Clock Fundraiser**. Clockmaker **Jim Martin**, Spokane, (jamesmart55@hotmail.com) who has more than 50 years of experience, restores vintage clocks and photos in return for a donation to the Cashup Davis Fund (Jim is the great-great grandson of Cashup Davis). Two of Jim's rescued clocks are on display at the Perkins House, and more can be seen on YouTube.

Holy Trinity Chapel is available to rent for a small wedding, funeral, recital, tours, or a similar event. Please contact **Pat Flansburg** (509-878-1826 or pflans@gmail.com) if you are interested. The chapel, a former Episcopal church, was built in 1896. Both its original interior and exterior have been carefully maintained, with no changes over the years. Additionally, it features one of only seven lich gates (shown at right) in the United States. It is located at 105 E. Alder Street in Palouse.



The **Jones Schoolhouse**, which was originally built at Dusty, was relocated to the Palouse Empire Fairgrounds thirteen years ago by the Fair Board. WCHS offers tours and mini-lessons there during the Fair, as well as full-day fieldtrips that recreate a day in the life of a one-room school circa 1895, the year it opened its doors. Fieldtrips can be tailored to fit your group's needs and are available in April, May, early June, late September, and October. There is a limit of 25 "students" for each. To arrange a fieldtrip for your class or group, or to volunteer at the schoolhouse during the Fair or fieldtrips, contact **Kathy Meyer** (509-432-1336 or klemeyer@gmail.com), **Krista Jones Boyd** (509-553-9525 or kristaaboyd@yahoo.com), or **Val Gregory** (509-553-9729 or wchsdirector1@gmail.com).



If you have an old apple tree whose variety is unknown and that you think might qualify for the **Lost Apple Project**, contact apple detective and Pullman native **David Benschoter**, Chattaroy, at 509-238-5150 or dbens23@gmail.com. The project seeks to identify and preserve apple varieties in Eastern Washington, Northern Idaho, and Oregon that were once thought to be extinct. Benschoter and his volunteers have found 29 such apple varieties since he discovered the "Nero" growing on Steptoe Butte in 2015. He estimates that over 17,000 named varieties of apples once grew in North America, of which approximately 4,500 survive today. Newly grafted apple trees (both heritage varieties and re-discovered varieties), as well as grafting wood, are for sale and can be pre-ordered now for availability later this year. See the Lost Apple Project FaceBook page for details. The cost is \$30 per tree for WCHS members and \$35 for nonmembers.

An exhibit on the “**Lost Women of the Library**,” by **Donna Potts**, has recently opened at Neill Public Library, located at 210 N. Grand Ave. in Pullman. It focuses on the women who founded the library in 1922. Their names were once thought to be unknown, but Donna’s research has uncovered them, along with other fascinating information about their lives. The exhibit runs through the end of February. You can also access her podcast on the subject at audible.com.

Membership in WCHS makes a wonderful gift! Print out the membership form—for yourself or for someone else—at the end of this newsletter, fill it out, and mail it; or renew your membership on-line at whitman-county-historical-society.square.site. Your name or that of the recipient of your gift will be added to our roster by membership chair **Sally Burkhart**, Garfield (959-635-1497 or sburkhar@lycos.com). Questions about membership can also be directed to **Donna Potts**, Pullman (785-317-2469 or donnal.potts@gmail.com) and Carol Larsen. Members receive subscriptions to the *Bunchgrass Historian* and to our bimonthly newsletter, and they are also eligible for reduced prices for select WCHS events and merchandise.

The **Objects and Artifacts Collection**, newly headed by **Lyndsay McCall** of Palouse (readmccall@yahoo.com), is looking for volunteers to help sort items after their recent move from the Gladish Building in Pullman to space above the Mercantile (214 N. Main) in Colfax. Thank you to **Austin** and **Laura Storm**, Colfax, for making it available to WCHS at no cost.

The WCHS **Oral History Project** has been revived under the supervision of **Denise Mahnkey**, Pullman. If you have memories concerning the history of the Palouse to relate—or know someone who does—contact her at 208-892-4542 or dloceanlover@hotmail.com.

The **Perkins House and Cabin**, located at 623 N. Perkins Ave., Colfax, acquired a new director in October: **Ronda Penwell** of Colfax (Ronda.penwell@csd300.org). It once again hosted the Annual Vintage Christmas Open House, which was held on Saturday, December 3, during the Colfax Winter Fest. The house, which was built in 1886 by Colfax founder James A. Perkins, was decked out for Christmas with period-appropriate Victorian decorations. Harp music was provided by **Hannah Strong**, Oakesdale, and refreshments of cookies and hot chocolate were available to the over 100 people who attended.



Ronda teaches history at Colfax High School and is the advisor of its History Club, whose members help regularly at the Perkins House and with other WCHS projects. Their efforts are greatly appreciated!

Although the Perkins House is closed during January and February, it will be open the rest of the year on Saturdays and Sundays from 10 AM to 2 PM.

Built in 1916, Pullman's Northern Pacific Depot (330 N. Grand Ave.), was purchased by WCHS in 2018 and renamed the **Pullman Depot Heritage Center**.



Thanks to generous donors and dedicated volunteers, monies raised to fund this restoration have repaid the purchase price, repointed bricks, and replaced foundation blocks. Four anonymous donors have contributed more than \$725,000 total since 2019; and these funds, utilized as noted above, will also provide matching funds for two Washington Heritage Grants. The group's next restoration project begins this spring; it will replace the current metal roof with clay tiles exactly like those that originally capped the building. To volunteer for one of the many committees working on restoration and operation at the Depot, contact director **Linda Hackbarth** (208-627-3460 or lindahackbarth39@gmail.com).

Last fall, the Depot was able to resume its pre-pandemic program series, which alternates between "Palouse People" and "BookTalks." November's program featured five graduate students from the WSU History Department's "Fallen Cougars Project," which is supervised by Professor **Raymond Sun**, Albion. Cassie Crisman, Jessica O'Rourke, Madison Barben, Samantha Edgerton, and Kyley Canion Brewer each spoke about a different WSC student or alumnus who gave his life in service of his country during World War II. Researching the lives and service of these men elevated them from mere names on casualty lists to relatable people whose lives were heroically cut short. Fallen Cougars are featured annually on Veterans' Day at the Depot, with different men highlighted each year.



In December, another annual event took place at the Depot: the second Christmas Train Car Bazaar. It was held on the first three Saturdays of December, beginning on the third of the month. That same day, Santa also "arrived"—via the train car—for Pullman's Festival of Lights. Led by the men of the Sigma Epsilon fraternity at WSU, participants sang holiday songs, then marched to Pioneer Square on Main Street for Pullman's annual tree lighting ceremony.

The Depot's next BookTalk will feature Trevor Bond, Pullman, speaking about his new book, *Coming Home to Nez Perce Country: The Niimiipuu Campaign to Repatriate Their Exploited Heritage*. Dr. Bond is Associate Dean for Digital Initiatives and Special Collections at WSU. His talk will take place in the Freight Room at the Depot on Thursday, February 23, at 7:00 PM. Masks are encouraged but not required. Watch our FaceBook page for the opportunity to reserve your spot or contact **Kathleen Ryan** (509-592-3901 or Kathleen.a.ryan@gmail.com).

The Freight Room at the Depot is open every Saturday from 1:00 to 4:00 PM. There is at least one new exhibit there every three months or so. It is also available to rent for meetings and small gatherings. Drop by regularly to see what's new, and meet our spring semester intern, **Kyley Canion Brewer**. She hails from New Zealand and is currently working on a PhD in History at WSU. To volunteer on the Freight Room committee (also called Events and Education), contact **Jamie Whitman** at 509-332-1005 or jwhitman97@yahoo.com.

The **Roy Chatters Newspaper & Printing Museum** is located at 110 E. Main St., Palouse. The name doesn't indicate that it is also a museum of Palouse history in general and houses an extensive collection of Whitman County newspapers that are available for researchers' use. These two aspects provide volunteers with many on-going projects when not demonstrating centuries-old printing methods to visitors. Genealogical research can also be pursued there.



Two projects are especially extensive. Palouse historian **Don Myott** is going through the collection of Palouse newspapers, dating back to the late 1800s, and noting articles of historical significance. A searchable database will be created from his list, which will greatly assist researchers. The Print Museum receives frequent queries about Palouse businesses, people, and events; and its volunteers are excited to speed up the process of finding information.

Alex Otero, director of the Whitman County Historical Society Archive (see below), spends the majority of his Saturdays at the Print Museum, working on another much-needed project. The collection of Colfax newspapers was incomplete and in disarray after the 1996 flood, which left nearly two feet of water in the museum. The Archives also had an incomplete set, and the Whitman County Gazette donated many boxes of newspapers from its basement when the newspaper office moved to another location. Alex took on the task of inventorying all three collections and assessing their quality, then assembling a collection of the best, which will be stored at the Palouse Museum and available for research. A bonus of this project has been his noting of articles that might prove useful for the *Bunchgrass Historian* or other purposes.

During the past two years, the museum has had several visits from railroad historians Lloyd Palmer and Alan Zimmerman, who have shared information and pictures. The two became interested in Palouse's railroad history and have hiked and driven many miles to locate and document the three railroad lines. They explored abandoned grades, taking many photos of what can still be found in the surrounding countryside. These photos—along with numerous maps, aerial views, and other historical images—have been assembled into an outstanding album titled *The Railroads of Palouse City*, which they donated to the museum. We are very grateful for their gift of this valuable reference book. A copy is also available at the WCHS Archive.



The Print Museum is open Saturdays from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, except in October and January. Admission is free, but donations are happily accepted. As it is staffed entirely by volunteers, there are rare times when the museum might be closed. To arrange a visit on a day other than Saturday, or to make sure the museum will be staffed on the day you plan to visit, call director **Janet Barstow** (at left) at 509-330-0353.

St. Ignatius Hospital in Colfax hosted the WCHS 2022 Annual Meeting on Sunday, October 9. The primary order of business was the approval of the 2023 slate of officers and board members (see p. 2). Owners **Austin** and **Laura Storm** gave the program, describing their ongoing efforts to restore the building and their ideas for its future. Tours of the old hospital followed, with approximately 20 attendees participating. Although the building is reputed to be haunted, no ghosts were spotted by anyone (during the tours that day, anyway).



Ghost tours of St. Ignatius are available year-round, offered daily in the Fall before Halloween, on Friday and Saturday evenings in the Spring, and most Saturdays during the rest of the year. The cost varies from \$25 to \$125, depending on the length of tour. Private tours can also be arranged. Go to Colfaxhauntedhospital.com for reservations and payment. WCHS Director **Val Gregory**, Steptoe, is in charge, aided by eight able volunteers. While not a direct project of WCHS, the Society acts as fiscal agent for St. Ignatius.

The **WCHS Archives**, directed by **Alex Otero**, Colfax (425-228-0125 or wchsarchives@gmail.com) are located in the Gladish Building, 115 NW State Street, Pullman. Alex and other volunteers—particularly **Annette Pettinger** and **Lou Vyhnanek** (both of Pullman)—sort and organize donations to WCHS (especially photographs); they answer and research queries that come in several times a week and assist visitors; and they see that donations that do not pertain to Whitman County history are “re-homed” to appropriate locations. They are also busy digitizing materials in the Archive and placing them online for easier access by the public.

The Archive is open every Wednesday from 9 AM until noon. You can also make an appointment by contacting Alex.

With any luck, the **Wilson Siding Project** will soon be known as the **Palouse Center for Agricultural Innovation & Technology**. Now in the early stages of development, the project was initiated by **Alex McGregor** (Pullman), **Greg Partch** (Garfield), **Jeff Pietala** (LaCrosse), and **Dave Hoyt** (Pullman). It has received two grants, one from Innovia and another from Gesa, to fund a feasibility study for the proposal, which seeks to convert a former McGregor Company fertilizer warehouse on State Route 270, near the state line, into an agricultural museum. Both the Latah County Historical Society and WCHS will be involved—the latter as its fiscal agent for the next two years.

2023 Calendar

February 15	WCHS Board Meeting, Pullman Depot Freight Room
February 23	BookTalk, Pullman Depot Freight Room (Trevor Bond, <i>Coming Home to Nez Perce County</i> —see p. 5)
March 15	WCHS Board Meeting, Perkins House, Colfax
April 19	WCHS Board Meeting, Print Museum, Palouse
April 21-22, 29, May 6	Vintage Quilt Show, Pullman Depot
May 17	WCHS Board Meeting, Pullman Depot Freight Room
June 21	WCHS Board Meeting, WCHS Archive, Pullman
July 19	WCHS Board Meeting, Perkins House, Colfax
August 16	WCHS Board Meeting, Pullman Depot Freight Room
August 17-19	Depot Days, Pullman Depot Heritage Center (concurrent with the Pullman Lentil Festival)
September 7-10	Palouse Empire Fair (mini-lessons at the Jones Schoolhouse and exhibits and/or demonstrations at the Blacksmith Shop)
September 16	Palouse Days
September 20	WCHS Board Meeting, Print Museum, Palouse
October	Annual Meeting, TBA
October 20, 21, 27, 28	Haunted Palouse (new horrors at the Print Museum)
November 15	WCHS Board Meeting, Pullman Depot Freight Room
December 2	Pullman Festival of Lights (Santa Comes to Pullman via the Depot)
December 2	Winter Fest, Colfax (Christmas Open House at the Perkins House)
December 2, 9, 16	Christmas Train Car Bazaar at the Pullman Depot
December 20	WCHS Board Meeting, Zoom

MEMBERSHIP: Be a part of the exciting future of Whitman County, or share its history with a friend or relative! Join, renew your membership, or give a gift membership.

- | | | | |
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| <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: _____

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