

Snake River Heritage Center

The mission of the Snake River Heritage Center is to bring together and preserve the heritage of the region, to promote the enjoyment of cultural, educational, and historical events.

Museum Board Members

Wes Higgins, President
Lynn Isaacson, Vice-President
Chris Hagans, Treasurer
Gaileen White, Secretary
Dottie Emert, (She Who Does Everything!)
Denise Rasmussen, Scheduler
Ken Walston, Historian

Annual Report from Our President

Wes Higgins

It is an understatement to say 2020 was a different kind of year. Because of the Covid shut-down, our biggest fund-raiser of the year, Fiddle Week, did not happen. The good news is that we are still functioning. We are open to the general public for tours and are planning on being open during our regular hours from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

In spite of the restrictions, much has been happening. The Auditorium, Ball Room, and Tea Room have all been in use for various activities, including rehearsals, recitals, dances, weddings, The Duck Soup Brigade Radio Show, etc. A lot of work has been done in the Auditorium - including new lighting, sound system, carpet, and window coverings - all making our auditorium even better! Currently there is a fund-raiser running to finish the Auditorium lights.

There are new displays throughout the museum, including the "Harris Room" on the third floor. Room has also been set aside on the third floor for several cultural group displays.

Thanks to Alex Chavarria and his Living in the News website, you can also enjoy virtual tours of various areas of our museum. Please check that out. Also look us up on Facebook for regular updates on what is happening.

A special thank-you to the Master Gardeners who have been trimming and caring for the shrubbery.

I want to thank all of you for your support throughout the year, for your donations of time, money, and artifacts. I want to especially thank the hard working Museum Board members who have contributed much to keep our Museum and Heritage Center active and growing. If you haven't visited us lately, please call and set up a tour. Thank you for your support.

It has been my privilege to work with both board members and volunteers in maintaining and improving exhibits in our museum. Starting with:

3rd FLOOR:

A. We were able to complete the "Founders Room". So called because it honors two of Weiser's founding families, the Harris and Scheloske families. The descendants of these two families provided the money and expertise to clean, carpet, and light the room, and also provided the family artifacts and pictures to complete the exhibit. We were able to complete the empty half of

the room with a display of brides and grooms from some of the early settlers of the area. Volunteer Karen Milligan was the designer and decorator of this part of the room.

- B. With the help of a young man completing his Eagle Scout project requirements, and under the auspices of Board Member Lynn Isaacson, we were able to finish an additional room on the third floor. The floor was sanded and refinished by Board Member Gail White. (She also cleaned all the windows.) Volunteer Karen Milligan developed a "Lawyer's Nook" in one end of the room featuring the law books of attorneys Varian and Coulter, along with brief bios of each man. In connection with this, Karen and volunteer Dionne cleaned, boxed, and labeled all the books that have been donated over the years. They are now in storage in the attic (thanks to the boys from the Alternative School.)*
- C. We cleaned out and painted a long unused closet in the Ballroom which is now being used for storage instead of housing spiders. Thanks for your help Jason Emert and Karen Milligan.*

We are about half finished with an "Oregon Trail" display which is centered around a large mounted head of a Plains Buffalo. Gail built us a "sand box" to display a campfire, cooking vessels, and real honest-to-goodness buffalo chips from the Shoemaker Buffalo Ranch in New Plymouth, Idaho. The display is coming along nicely and we have had lots of help from Karen, Lori Mooney, and again, Good Ol' David Bean, who hung that huge buffalo head.

2nd FLOOR:

- A. We were able to acquire over fifty mounts of animals and birds native to Washington County, Idaho, from an estate. Lisa McKnight cleaned all the animal heads, the birds were also cleaned (she shined their little sparkling eyes), and then they were mounted on the wall and in display cases. We were greatly aided by David Bean and Tony Edmondson, who did the actual hanging of the heads. Great big thanks to Lori Mooney, who guided the "hanging", and who made the signage for it. We have applied for, but have not yet received, permission the display the two golden eagles in the collection. (The government has cashed our check, but did not yet send the permit.)*
- B. We now have a "bathing beauty" in the second floor hallway. Scotty's family donated her replica swimsuit from the 1890's, and she (the model, not Scotty) is ready to go wading in the ocean.*
- C. We moved "Wolverine Corner" from the lobby on the first floor to the school room on the second floor. We are in the process of, but have not yet completed, displaying our collection of high school uniforms, etc.*

1st FLOOR:

- A. Our biggest and most spectacular acquisition on this floor is the large display case that was once a part of Frank Mortimer's Stationery & Cigar Store, which was on the corner of State St. and Commercial St. (now a vacant lot, but soon to be a park-like area in front of the Train Depot.). David Bean was the generous donor of this piece of furniture, and he, along with a sizable work crew, transported, installed, and leveled it.*

We have been blessed with a large number of volunteers this year. Lisa McKnight organized a cleaning crew who tracked down and eliminated every spider web, dust bunny, and muggy smudge on all three floors. We have also been helped in our bookkeeping and display work by Verla Smith and Cyndy Smith (No, not the Smith Sisters, and no, not even related.)

We have just acquired the Frank and Elizabeth Cada contribution. We are working cataloging the nearly 1000 items they have donated. (Remember, Elizabeth had celebrated her 102nd birthday before her death this past spring. The Cada family has been in Washington county much longer even than Elizabeth's long and adventurous life. Look forward to seeing what displays we can come up with.)

Thank you for letting me serve on this board and be a part of preserving the history of our area.

Dottie J. Emert

The auditorium at the Snake River Heritage Center has been quieter than in years past because of the pandemic. We had several scheduled events that were forced to cancel. Though not seeing a lot of audience, there has been activity! In the past year we have made a lot of progress in our upgrades. We saw the completion of our new stage lighting that was added to our state-of-the-art sound system, During this process all of our electrical work was brought up to code in the auditorium and below, in the dressing rooms. We also had two boy scout eagle projects that benefitted the auditorium; one was in February of 2020, when Gabriel Rasmussen replaced the carpet, and the other was in August 2020, when Isaac To'omalatai organized a crew to install all new window coverings, With all of these wonderful upgrades, we look forward to inviting performers, presenters, and others to use our beautiful and unique venue for the benefit of promoting our great culture and heritage. Many thanks to all of those who donated and worked so hard to see these improvements!

Meanwhile, the auditorium is beginning to see students and adults return with the Weiser Youth Symphony meeting for rehearsals and now, the vocal studio of Victoria Arriero-Thomas making its home at the SRHC. In addition, the Duck Soup Radio Brigade holds rehearsals and has three shows scheduled for this year. Check out each of these performing groups on the Facebook pages for more information.

Denise Rasmussen, Scheduler and Board Member

Frank Mortimer Fundraiser

There is so much to say about Frank Mortimer. He was a carnival performer, a businessman (Weiser Newsstand), he created and ran Mortimer's Island (Oregon Trail Park), and was a prospector (Iron Mountain). Mortimer was a well-known, well-liked entrepreneur in the early days of Weiser.

His name is still fresh in peoples' memories from his contributions to our town's history. Frank Mortimer passed away in 1957 and was buried without a headstone at Hillcrest Cemetery. It was brought to the attention of the Snake River Heritage Center - Weiser Museum that Frank only had a metal plate marking his grave located alongside that of his wife, Helene. She passed away prior to his death, and he made certain she had a beautiful stone. We voted to honor Frank Mortimer and hold a community fundraiser starting October 14, 2020. **Weiser Signal American** ran an informative article, and we posted announcements on our Weiser Museum Facebook site. Within three (3) weeks, we had exceeded our goal! It was amazing and we were thrilled so many wonderful members of our community (past and present) donated enough to purchase a headstone marking this remarkable man's resting place. Enough was raised to clean Helene's stone so they will both shine in honor of their memory. Flowers, a celebration of his life, and setting the stone were also able to be covered by generous contributors. Facebook dispersing of the funds took from the end of October to after the first of the year. The price had increased in that time, but no worries. We will just not use the Facebook donation site any more, especially if we need to get the money in a specific amount of time. We thank you all so much, Our breath was taken away by your generosity.

Lisa McKnight

THE YEAR OF 2019-2020 HAS BEEN VERY CHALLENGING. FROM OCTOBER OF 2019 TO SEPTEMBER 2020 WE BROUGHT IN \$20,400.00, AND HAD EXPENDITURES OF \$48,500.00. WE HAVE BEEN VERY BLESSED BY LOTS OF EXTRA CONTRIBUTIONS ENABLING US TO KEEP GOING. WE ARE SO THANKFUL TO EVERYONE WHO HAS BEEN SUPPORTING US. HOPEFULLY WE WILL HAVE A BETTER YEAR TO COME.

CHRIS HAGANS, TREASURER

Our Annual Public Board Meeting will be held at the Snake River Heritage Center on Wednesday, May 12th at 5:30 p.m.

Snake River Heritage Center

Membership Application

2021

We greatly appreciate all assistance that members are able to contribute. Contact us for other ways you can help SRHC in its maintenance and growth.

Lifetime Membership: \$300

Family Membership: \$25

Business Membership: \$75

Name_____

Mailing Address_____

Email Address_____

SNAKE RIVER HERITAGE CENTER
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SNAKE RIVER HERITAGE CENTER

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