

Potlatch Historical Society Newsletter

~Summer 2013~

“Preserving the Unique Heritage of Idaho’s Historic
Company Town”



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- New tank top design now on sale in our City Hall location as well as BlackBird at the Depot. \$18.
- Historical Society exhibition space in City Hall will be open July 20th during the Potlatch Days celebration from 9am to 1pm.
- July 17, 6:30 pm, potluck meeting, all members invited.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings!

It’s summer and the Potlatch Historical Society is as busy as ever. As you enter Potlatch from Highway 95 and are driving toward City Hall, you may now notice a sign on the side of the City Shop. Locally made by Oren at Custom Signs, we now have a sign to “point the way” to the Potlatch Historical Society.

As President, I’ve been busy pushing this and other projects forward. I have gotten potlatchhistoricalsociety.org secured for our group to use, and am currently looking for a webmaster to help us set up a website.

I have also had a personal plate full: a family wedding on our farm. Started back in 1905 by my great grand parents

Ed & Mary Curtis, one of the still standing main attractions is the big barn, once used for housing work horses and their feed/tack. After a year or so of work by wonderful contractors, friends and ourselves, we were ready for the unveiling on the wedding day. We are so proud of this old relic, and of our farm. It’s nothing fancy, but it’s well loved.

To show my appreciation to our membership, I’m inviting you all to join us at the farm for a potluck dinner on July 17, at 6:30pm. I will have a small presentation of the history and you will be welcome to walk around and take photos. The address is 1275 Duffield Flat Road. If you are traveling on Highway 6 (off of Hwy 95

between Palouse and Potlatch) take the state line turnoff onto Duffield Flat Road. We are located 2.7 miles out. If you have questions, call me at 509-595-7684 or email karenrohndesigns@yahoo.com.

Hope to see you there!

Karen Rohn, PHS President



View of the Curtis Homestead and farm at 1275 Duffield Flat Road *taken by Karen Rohn*

THE HAMLET OF HARVARD

Compiled by Halette Meyer

Orville Hamburg originally homesteaded the land that is the present day hamlet known as Harvard. Hamburg sold his property to Homer Canfield, who had moved to the Palouse Valley from Massachusetts.

Harvard, located approximately eleven miles upstream from Potlatch, was founded when the Washington, Idaho & Montana (WI&M) railroad line was expanded from Potlatch through Princeton to the present day Harvard area in 1906. The town of Harvard was dedicated May 28, 1906.

For Homer W. Canfield's cooperation during construction, the WI&M Montana Company proposed to honor him by naming the station Canfield. However he favored "Harvard" rather than his own last name because it rivaled the neighboring Princeton in name. In other historical accounts it is reported that Orville Hamburg said that if a town was to be established on his farm it should be called Harvard. "After all, there is Princeton, a good rival, just five miles up the track."

The Potlatch Lumber Company established shops and logging offices along the railroad line at Harvard. In its heyday, Harvard was referred to as a tranquil trading center - with a hotel, post office, store, livery stable and a few other businesses. Canfield had the town platted. A school and other structures were constructed. Mines, logging camps, and farms in the surrounding area stimulated growth of the small burg. The railroad was established to carry logs from the harvest sites to the sawmill at Potlatch.

All Information from:

From A to Z in Latah County, Idaho: A Place Name Dictionary, Lalia Phipps Boone 1983, Moscow, Idaho, 83843

Company Town Potlatch, Idaho and the Potlatch Lumber Company, 1987, Keith Petersen, Washington State University Press, Pullman, Washington

Latah Legacy, Historical Society Recalls Pioneer Days of The Palouse, Karen Broenneke, p. 23, June 20, 1980, *Idahonian Newspaper*, Moscow, Idaho.



Main Street – buildings identified by Helen (Canfield) Young.

Left Foreground—Unknown building, Hotel, Blacksmith, Livery Stables, Forest Smith Home.

Right Foreground—General Store, Mrs. Pearson's Ice Cream Parlor and Confectionary, Butcher's Shop and Hardware Store (behind tree)

T H E O L D T H E A T E R
C o m p i l e d b y B o n n i e R o h n

When Stan Denison went to work there at the age of 12, in 1944, the theater was owned by Al and Pauline Nygaard. He worked for the Nygaards for 3 years, cleaning three times a week. This entailed sweeping, mopping, cleaning restrooms, cleaning the popcorn machine, stoking the wood burning furnace, opening up and closing. He was paid \$3.00 a week plus all the popcorn he could eat and he and his family could get into the movies for free. It was also Stan's job to put up the marquee at the theater and at the library.

Stan's brother, Earl, was in charge of returning the films to Genesee. Charles Andres was responsible for starting the furnace and keeping it going in the winter when it wasn't movie night. Bud Onshutes was in charge of running the projectors. Rosemary Andres sold the tickets at the box office.

There were movies on Wednesday nights and Saturday matinees and evenings. There was always a 50 pound barrel of popcorn waiting to be popped. The Nygaards sold the theater in the early 1950's to a Mr. Parkins.

Thanks to Stan and Julie Denison for reliving these memories for the Historical Society.

Did you know...that the theater was once a boarding house? But that's a story for a future edition of the newsletter!



Irwin Minden standing in front of the old theatre - *from photo donated by Marcella Minden Stone*

C O N N E C T E D T O T H E P A S T . . .
T E N N I S . . . A N Y O N E ?
C o m p i l e d b y K a r e n B i z a k - M a r r

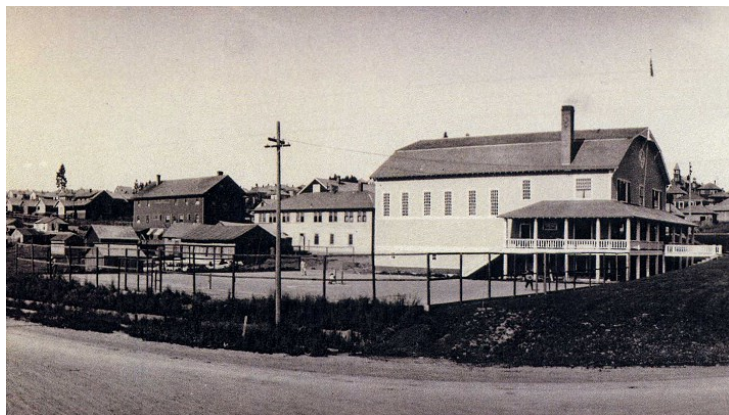


Recently Potlatch Boy Scout Troop 358 members have been seen working on the old tennis courts in town. Built in 1979-80, they had become a maze of weed filled cracks. Matt Hacker decided to organize this renovation for his Eagle Scout project. He hopes the courts will be completed by July 13, 2013 for a ribbon cutting ceremony.

But did you know that these were not the first tennis courts in Potlatch? In Keith C. Petersen's book, *Company Town*,

he mentioned that the town gymnasium was constructed in 1916. "In 1918 the company added some of the finest outdoor tennis courts in the region, and for years Potlatch hosted the Idaho State Tennis Tournament." If possible, Matt would like to see a tennis tournament during Potlatch Community Days in July and a Youth Tennis Camp in August.

So far, the scouts have raised \$16,100 of the \$18,000 needed for the project. If you'd like to help Matt with the new tennis courts, contact him at tenniseagle358@gmail.com. Donations are also accepted at Harvest Foods, Junction Lumber, or US Bank in Potlatch.



The tennis courts were located outside of the large gymnasium building in the photo. City hall would be located to the right of the gymnasium.



Boy Scout Troop 358 working on the "new" tennis courts. *Photo courtesy of Cathy Perillo*

*"Preserving the Unique Heritage
of Idaho's Historic Company
Town"*

Potlatch Historical Society
PO Box 5
Potlatch, ID 83855

Potlatch Historical Society
Officers
Karen Rohn, President
Bonnie Rohn, Vice-President
Halette Meyer, Secretary
Janice Palmer, Treasurer
Karen Bizak-Marr, News Editor

Annual Dues: \$30/Household
Lifetime Member \$125
Meetings 1st Wednesday of the month
at City Hall, 7 pm

Potlatch Museum - Located in City Hall
City Hall Hours: 10:30 am-5:30 pm
(Closed 1-2pm for lunch)
For Information, call City Hall at:
208-875-0708

See us on Facebook at
"Potlatch Historical Society" or at
potlatchhistoricalsociety.org

DO YOU KNOW ... ?



Do you know any of the people in this photo? Do you know any stories connected to this picture? If so, please contact the Potlatch Historical Society at:

P.O. Box 5
Potlatch, ID 83855



PHS '42' written on the basketball