

# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 14

Madison Valley History Association

April 2016

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat:** Weather in Montana! If the wind isn't blowing, just wait a minute. It'll blow. If it's blowing, well, just wait another minute. It'll blow you away. Well, as long as this is Montana and it's blowing, I will know I am still on the right side of Paradise. Regardless of the wind, things go on.

For some time now, the MVHA has been trying to figure out how to electronically index and catalogue the artifacts, documents, and pictures in our Museum. Thanks to a National Endowment of the Humanities Grant conveyed to the MVHA through Humanities Montana, this project can now begin. Using these grant funds, we have acquired the services of an intern for a few months this summer. This intern will set up a process, begin data entry, and provide training on use the computer application we will be using.

The MVHA is required to match the \$3,000 of the NEH grant. Some of that match will be in the form of cash. But most of it will be in the form of in-kind contributions by MVHA members. You can make your contribution either by taking training on using the cataloging software or by helping with developing more detailed documentation of the museum collection.

Another thing we expect to complete this summer is the new display and storage building. This project has been on hold (speaking of weather!) for the winter to save a bit of money on concrete work. But as of this writing the foundation and floor have been poured. Sometime in the next few months, we will begin putting up the building, and will be looking for strong backs and willing hands to help get it built this spring and early summer.

In May MVHA will have two major events. One of these, our annual highway cleanup, is our contribution to keeping Madison Valley beautiful. This scheduled, weather permitting, for May 14 at 10:00 at the Museum. The second is the MVHA annual membership meeting and pot luck which will be held on May 19<sup>th</sup> at the Episcopal Trinity Church in Jeffers. This is the meeting where members nominate and select MVHA board members.

Further information on these events will be provided at the April 21<sup>st</sup> meeting and should be posted in the Madisonian.

Our April meeting (4:00 PM in the basement of the First Madison Valley Bank) should be interesting. Ken Robison, Montana Historian, will be speaking about the Civil War in Montana and will be focusing on that war's Veterans in the Madison Valley. As usual with our meetings in the bank, please arrive before 4:00 as the bank locks the doors at that time. Your Wagon Master, Lee Robison

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## Madison Valley History Association Raffle

Win a **Larry Zabel** Giclee print on canvas. The print is "**High Mountain Brunch**" **No 1 of 250** and comes with authenticity letter. Print is framed. Drawing is Saturday, August 13, 2016, after the Art Festival. Devonna and Lynn Owens graciously donated this print to the MVHA to use for our summer fundraiser. Thank you to the Owens family. Tickets are \$5.00 each or 5 for \$20.00. Use the order blank enclosed in this mailing to order your tickets or order for your friends, neighbors, family or anyone else who might be interested in this beautiful print. You may also contact any MVHA member to purchase tickets. MVHA is a non-profit organization. You need not be present to win and must be 18 years or older to enter.

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Schools in the Madison Valley will be continued in the July issue with the 7th school in Jeffers.

**History Tidbit** The first major gold strike in Montana was on July 29, 1862 at Grasshopper Creek resulting in the city of Bannock, the first territorial capital.

**Membership** The following are new members since the *Wagon Tongue* went to print in January. Add them to any membership list you are keeping and welcome them to membership. Remind them of the meetings and special events of the MVHA.

**Steve and Nanci Garrett**(F) 406-682-3964  
233 Hayfield Loop Trail  
Ennis, MY 59729

**Joe Gecho**(I) 623-551-9767  
2452 W. Muirfield Dr.  
Anthem, AZ 85086

**Jill Haldeman and Tom Waldron** (F) 231-250-9524  
253 Hayfield Trail Loop  
Ennis, MT 59729

**Anne P. Hocker** 703-314-5137  
P.O. Box 100  
McAllister, MT 59740

**Jeanne (Merica) Miller** (I) 599-2000  
3300 Graf St. #37  
Bozeman, MT 59715

**John T. Peterson** (I) 266-9933  
P.O. Box 75  
Toston, MT 59643

**Membership update** Any outstanding 2015 memberships are now over due. Almost all of you have taken care of business and the MVHA has received your membership. Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2016 membership is due during April, May or June or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are \$5.00 for students, \$10.00 for Individual, \$15.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley. If anyone needs a ride to a meeting and program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

#### **Member News**

Can anyone help the MVHA find **Ruth Paige** or information about her? She is a long time MVHA member and formerly resided at Winston, MT. Her January WT came back as undeliverable and her phone has been disconnected.

Updated information from **Maureen Cheney**

**Curnow.** Maureen and Ed Curnow welcomed a granddaughter, Cordelia Eloise Burns,

born on September 8, 2015. Her parents are Michael Burns and Carina Curnow Burns, longtime Montana residents. Cordelia Eloise was named for her Great Grandmother, Roberta Eloise Carkeek Cheney.

The March 24th edition of *The Madisonian* featured long time MVHA member, **Ted Coffman**, in the LifeStyle page. Make sure you find it and read up on Ted!

#### **Memories**

**Donna Leita Baush** long time MVHA member and benefactor passed away at her home in Ennis on November 8, 2015. Donna was born in Texas on Jan. 18, 1919 to Mr. and Mrs. Donald McDaniel. Her parents moved to Southwest Montana in 1939 when Donna was 19 and Donna worked as a telephone operator in Harrison. There she met and married John Bausch in 1940. The family lived in Harrison before leasing ranches in Ennis and eventually purchasing the home ranch in McAllister in 1946. Donna was a rancher's wife, being a vital part of the ranch operations, preparing meals for family and hired hands. She loved to visit and reminisce about family and recorded an oral history for the MVHA.

**Kathleen D. Wilson** of McAllister passed away Dec. 11, 2015. She was born April 19, 1958, to Thomas J. (Bud) and Donna Wilson. She graduated from Ennis High School in 1976 and spent her life on the family ranch in McAllister and worked as a bookkeeper for local businesses. Kathy was very active in the Friends of the Madison Valley Public Library and helped with all the planning for the current library addition.

**Alice Michelle "Shelly" Segota Boss** of Grand Rapids, Mich. passed away on December 27, 2015. She was born on Jan. 12, 1963 in Ennis, MT to Dan and Virginia (Schabarker) Segota. Shelly attended school in Ennis and graduated from Ennis High School in 1981. She attended the John Roberts School of Modeling in California but soon switched to bookkeeping which she did for the rest of her career. She married Craig Szezepaniuk of Grand Rapids, Mich. They later divorced and in 2010 she married Larry Boss.

**Lloyd Smith, Sr.** passed away on Jan. 1, 2016 at his home in Manhattan, MT. He was born in Conrad, MT to James Nelson and Edna (Stull) Smith. He attended school in Conrad until 8th grade and left home in his late teens following the death of his parents. He got work in the lumber industry near McAllister, MT. He broke horses and worked for ranches in Wyoming and Montana. He married Sarah Mize of Bozeman on Oct. 28, 1940. They moved to a home near McAllister and Lloyd worked for the county road management and worked on the roads after the earthquake. He continued to work with horses and rode many miles in the mountains of the Madison Valley. (cont pg. 3)

*(Memories continued from page 2)*

Lloyd also drove the mail truck between Butte and Ennis for many years.

**Philip H. Hutton** passed away on Jan. 1, 2016. He was born July 7, 1926, to Homer Earl and Myrtle (Foreman) Hutton, the youngest and last of the Hutton family that was raised on the small ranch. You turned in at the Belle Jeffers place, went passed the Dallas Hayden's and at the end of the road was the Hutton place. A left hand turn took you up the hill to Scott and Lucy Hoag's. Phil's sister was Genevieve Hutton James and brothers Victor, Lowell and Wilbur. Phil graduated from Ennis High School in 1944 and went on to Montana State College. He was enrolled in the Army Air Force Cadet Program when it was cancelled at the end of World War II.

On Sept. 10, 1949 he married Eunice Hunt from Butte. After college graduation, they moved to Billings on a job. Their son Mark was born there. In May of 1952, they packed up and moved to Richland, WA. where Phil worked for General Electric and later for Battle Northwest. Daughter Laurie was born in Richland. For 63 years of our 66 years of marriage, we have lived in Richland where Phil passed away. Phil was a retired Mechanical Engineer and in 1973 he was named Tri City Engineer of the year.

.....Memory of Philip Hutton by Eunice Hunt Hutton.  
*Thank you, Eunice, for sharing your memory.*

**Sharlene Wooten Love** passed away Dec. 10, 2015 at her home. She was born March 3, 1935 in Salt Lake City, Utah to Jay Grant and Sadie Anderson Wooten. She spent her childhood alternating between West Yellowstone, MT where her folks owned and operated the Alpine Motel and Salt Lake City where her father had a used car lot. West Yellowstone did not have a high school in the early days so Sharlene graduated from Ennis High School in 1954. She married her high school sweetheart, Roy Alvin Love, in Bozeman on May 22, 1954. They began their married life on the family ranch in Ennis, eventually moving to Farming, Utah where they raised their family.

**Charles Edward "Ed" Clark**, long time MVHA member, passed away on Jan. 12, 2016. He was born on June 30, 1922, to William (Bill) and Emily (Woods) Clark in Ennis, MT. He attended Ennis schools and graduated from Ennis High School in 1940. He enlisted in the Army with his brothers and served in World War II. Ed married Merrilyn Daems in 1951. Ed spent many years guiding on the Madison River and retired in Nov. 1979 after 20 years of government service with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the US Postal Service. Ed was a 50 year member of the Masonic Lodge.

**Charles Conway "Chuck" Bennetts**, long time MVHA member who received Honorary status when he turned 100 years of age, passed away on Jan. 13, 2016. He was born in Virginia City on Dec. 15, 1913 to John and Hetty (Milroy) Bennetts, 7th child of 11 children. Chuck had just celebrated his 102nd birthday at the Front Range Assisted Living Center in Fairfield, MT in December 2015. Chuck worked as a ranch hand and cowboy in the Madison Valley as a youth until the fall of 1937 when he joined the Montana Power to begin what became a wonderful 41 year career working throughout the state of Montana. He kept an alphabetic list of the 109 towns in Montana that he worked in while constructing power lines around the state. His career included long term stays in both Whitehall and Dillon. He also had a short stint in the Army during WWII. Chuck married Hannah Gallagher on Jan. 4, 1941 and they had three children.

As Editor of the Wagon Tongue, my greatest memory of Chuck was the many phone calls to keep us up to date on old time history happenings in the Madison Valley. He was a fountain of information.

**Diane Louise (Ring) Keller** passed away Jan. 15, 2016. She was born March 4, 1951, in Seattle, WA to Gerald and Helen Ring. After graduating from high school, she met and married Ron Handlos in 1971. The couple moved to Ennis and later the marriage ended in divorce and Diane married Stanford (Buzzy) Keller. Diane started cooking for Meals on Wheels in 1985 and managed the kitchen for almost 30 years.

**Kim C. Warburton** of Billings, MT passed away in Ennis on Jan. 22, 2016. He was born May 1954 in Ennis, MT to Gene and Esther Warburton. In 1957 he moved with his parents to Stevensville, MT where he attended school and graduated from Stevensville High School in 1972. Kim worked for Buttery Foods in Missoula, Bozeman, Billings and Moorhead, MN. He was Protein Specialist for Sysco of Montana for many years and won several national awards. He was still employed by Sysco at the time of his death.

**Marian McAllister Morton** passed away Feb. 11, 2016. She was born in Ennis, MT on Mar. 14, 1927 to Owen and Clara McAllister. She was raised along the Madison River. The small town of McAllister, just north of Ennis, was her family's ranch and homestead. The family eventually moved to Polson, MT where she attended high school.

**Marjorie Claire Bowersox** passed away at her home on Feb. 18, 2016. She was born June 23, 1929, in Ennis to Albert Edison and Anne Charlton Barter. She was raised on a ranch in Bradley Basin and attended school in Norris, MT and graduating from Harrison High School in 1947. She married William Dale Bowersox *(continued on pg. 4)*

*(Memories cont from pg 3)*

on June 23, 1948. They spent 10 years on the ranch in Bradley Basin and her remaining years on their ranch on North Meadow Creek. Her work career included waiting tables and working at the talc mine. She took correspondence and night courses to obtain a medical records secretary for the Madison Valley Hospital for 14 years. She was past president of the Medical records Division of the Montana Hospital Association.

**Robert Jesse Endecott** of McAllister, MT passed away on Feb. 19, 2016. He was born in Ashton, ID on Oct. 5, 1944 to Richard and Hilda (Warsany) Endecott. He served in the 716th Military Police Battalion in Vietnam. After the Army, Robert spent several years working for dude ranches in Gallatin Canyon. He started ranching in the Madison Valley in the early 1970s. He married Janet Goggins in 1978 and then worked with her family on the ranch. Bob was active in the Ennis Rodeo Association and helped put on the 4th of July Rodeos.

**Dr. Hugh Alexander Leslie** passed away on Feb. 23, 2016. He was born Dec. 5, 1918 in Deshler, Neb. He attended school in Belvedere, Neb and graduated in 1937. He enlisted in the Army in 1941 and was part of Troop D, 33rd Cavalry, 20th Armed Division in World War II. While on leave, he met Mildred (Arlene) A. Naiman and they were married June 21, 1942, in Baltimore, MD. In 1954 he received his veterinary degree from Colorado State University. Doc and Arlene moved to Ennis in 1955 to establish his vet practice. He also loved to fly his airplane which he kept behind the Sportsman's Lodge. Doc retired in 2013 and was a lifetime member of the MVMA and AVMA.

**Marvin Paul Love** of Townsend, MT passed away March 3, 2016, in Helena, MT. Marvin was born on Nov. 7, 1935 in Sheridan, MT to Paul and Roberta (Angle) Love. He lived in Virginia City, MT for the first 14 years of his life attending school in V. C. His family moved to Ennis in 1948 and Marvin graduated from Ennis High School in 1953. He attended Montana State College and received a degree in range management in 1957. He was drafted into the Army, served in the Signal Corps, was discharged in 1960, returning to Ennis to work at family owned Angle Hardware. In 1962 he returned to MSC and received his teaching certificate, taught in Lewistown, got his Master's Degree at Oregon State University and continued his teaching career in Townsend, MT. He married Terry Sullivan in 1970. They have two sons, Steven and Timothy. He retired in 1997. After retirement, Marvin volunteered at the Broadwater Health Center and at the Townsend schools.

*Memories of your family members and friends are welcome for printing in the Wagon Tongue. The editor does not print full obituaries from the newspapers and uses the Madison County histories and other sources to find additional information. The memories column is intended to be a genealogical record of our departed.*

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**Jess Armitage History** We left Jess as he was making his way home after being discharged from the Army. He was in Idaho Falls, Idaho where he took a train from there to West Yellowstone, MT. There was no public transportation from West Yellowstone to Ennis, so I started to hitch hike home. Fred and Mildred Kirby, very good friends of the Hippes, recognized me, picked me up and took me to the Hippe ranch. I suppose that was the happiest day of my life.

In the winter of 1945-46, Grace and I went to Homestead, Florida to work for Ray Hippe, Grace's brother. Most of the work to be done there was to clean up trees that had blown down from a hurricane the previous fall. After we cleaned up the mess in the orchards, I cleared off more land for additional fields for row crop vegetables and fruit trees. I operated a TD18 Allis Chalmers dozer for knocking down trees which was kind of rough as it was all on coral rock. Spraying the orange groves was interesting as you had to keep watch for Star Spiders that would reach from one row of trees to the other side. In the spring of 1946, Grace, Alice Sue and I headed to California on our way back to Montana as that is where we decided to make our home. Going through Texas near Dallas was the first time I had seen 2-3 inches of ice on power lines. The Chevrolet we bought to make the trip didn't have any floor boards as they had rotted out and that made it hard to stay warm.

The Valley Garden Ranch, about 6 miles north of Ennis was owned by Mr. Hodges, who also owned the Jumping Horse Ranch, and he needed help. Mr. Hippe, Grace's father, applied for the job for me before I got home so I went to work right away. I worked on the Valley Garden Ranch feeding cattle and haying for about 1 year when they offered me the foreman job on the Jumping Horse Ranch. Brian was born on the ranch in 1948. Brian learned to walk quite early, as the house we lived in had a fiber rug and it hurt too much to crawl, so he got up and walked.

I wasn't a cowboy on the Jumping Horse Ranch and only had to round up the cattle when we drove them in to the U.S, forest land for the summer grazing and again when we had to round them up in the fall to bring them back to the hay fields. My job was to see that the men were kept busy and during haying season I would go to whichever job needed help and it was also my responsibility *(cont on pg. 5)*

*(Jess Armitage History cont from page 4)*

to keep the machinery running. In the winter I was also the "chore boy" and did the milking and fed the penned animals. After chores we would load the wagon, or sleigh, if we were going up to the Mountain Ranch, with hay and take it up to the feed lot on the Mountain Ranch. I had a favorite horse I named "Mike" and we had a good relationship. I rode him whenever I had to check on the cows at calving time. I tried roping off him once and about caught a calf. That was too close for me as I was afraid I would catch the calf and didn't know how to get the rope off or if Mike would stand still until I would get the rope off the calf. Claude Windecker, my boss, told me, "I don't care what you do, but I want you to keep the men busy."

One interesting project we sometimes had to do in winter was thawing out water pipes after a good freeze. Most water lines were buried deep enough, about 6 feet, not to freeze but there was always one or so that would freeze up. We would dig a hole down to the pipe every so often, whatever would give us the distance for portable welding machine cables to reach each end of the pipe that was frozen. When everything was connected, we would start the weld-er and the power would heat up the pipe enough to thaw out the pipe. When we discovered that process, it relieved us of digging up a lot of frozen ground.

I stayed on the Jumping Horse Ranch (they used to raise jumping horses before I went to work on the ranch) until Wetmore Hodges, owner of BirdsEye Frozen Foods, sold to Phil Yeckel, an oil man from Texas about 1952. I learned a lot from Claude Windecker, the manager, and enjoyed working for him. Grace had worked for Hodges in Boston before I went to work on the ranch and she thought they were nice people. I think I only received \$300 a month but I got milk, eggs, vegetables and meat. All I had to buy was cold and hot cereal and a new car once in a while. A good place to save money.

Pat Goggins, who now owns Public Livestock yards and a shopping mall in Billings, MT was the herdsman for the purebred cows on the ranch. Chauncey McKee was the cowboy for the commercial herd, Edgar Bright was the summer chore boy and I did anything that anybody wanted me to do. Milking cows in the wintertime was my duty until more men were hired in the spring.

After 6 or 7 years working for Claude Windecker, I thought it was about time to make a change as Claude was leaving the ranch. When I retired from the ranch, Phil Yeckel gave me a chance to buy the house that Hodges built for me. That house is still my Cottage by the Madison in Ennis. Harold Helt had the job of getting the house across the Madison River into the town of Ennis. Harold drove the truck into the river until the water prevented it

from running. Then he used a dozer tractor winch to finish crossing the river. We had a good crowd of towns people sitting on the river bank until the house reached the shore. In 1952-53, I moved to Ennis and bought the Economy store from Roy Wiedenmeyer with \$10,000 down payment borrowed from Mr. and Mrs Hippe. In a couple years Roy wanted to buy the store back, so I sold it to him. I went to work for Sonny Jackson operating a "cat" to make roads for the forest service for a couple of months, then went to work for Angle hardware store. Later I went to work for Fred Nelson who owned the Ford dealership. My first new car sale was to Ken and Adeline Story. While I was working for Fred Nelson, Mrs. Erie, a widow who owned the Madison Theatre, asked me if I would be interested in buying the Theatre. Grace and I decided to buy the Theatre, but of course didn't have any money and would need to buy it on time. Mrs. Erie agreed to do that and I made payments for a long time. Mrs. Erie had a reputation for knowing all of the kid's birthdays so she could charge them adult prices. Jackie Ann Northway Kirtly was our cashier for 25-30 years and was pretty good at that also. About that time television came to our town which affected the movie business quite a bit. I thought we would need to give the Theatre back but she told us that we wouldn't have to pay any interest on the balance. It was still tough to make payments but we had a very nice man, Byron Saunders, who was our projectionist and he would sometimes wait a week or two for his paycheck. I think our first show was either "The King and I" with Yule Brenner or "Ma and Pa Kettle on the Farm." John Wayne was popular at the time and we soon played his pictures. We started by running the Theatre every night, then cut it down to 2 nights a week in the winter time and 6 nights a week in the summer as that is the tourist season in Ennis. Women and children would attend the show while their husbands were out fishing. We would get up about 6:00 am to clean the Theatre and then I would go to work and after dinner we would go to the theatre so Grace could make popcorn and I would rewind the film. The pictures usually ran for an hour or two and then we would go home and do the paperwork. box office reports, etc. We would sometimes rent the Theatre to an outside animal photographer to show their animal shows. We also had promotional shows by donation for the Hospital and free shows for the kids just before school got out. We operated the Theatre until Grace became ill with cancer and couldn't clean any more. Byron had passed away that same year. He had been our projectionist for several years and also helped us clean the Theatre when he didn't have to travel out of town on another job he had. We sold the Theatre in 2001 to a very nice couple that lived next door to us.



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Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat:** It is High Summer in Montana, and the Madison Valley History Museum is in the midst of another season that promises great success in sharing the past of our Valley with our visitors. At the heart of this success is our volunteer docents who take a few hours out of their summer to make themselves available to show visitors some of the interesting things that have happened between Reynolds Pass and the Bear Trap, between Ward's Peak and the Sphinx, from Cliff Lake to North Meadow Creek, from Virginia City to Sterling.

Mention of the ghost town of Sterling reminds me we are headed up there for our July field trip. I don't know how it turned out because I am writing this before the event. But if the success of our other membership events is any example, it promises to be very informative.

This spring, our informative presentations included a review of the history of Montana during the Civil War and a discussion of Paleoindians, the people who lived in Southwest Montana shortly after the end of the last ice age. Both were well attended and very successful.

The discussion of Paleoindians is a part of Conversations Montana, a program funded in part by Humanities Montana. It proved especially popular, except that I have heard a few folks expected to hear about the Indians that Jim Bridger and Osborne Russell and then the miners drove out of the Valley. Well. Ruthann Knudson, the historian who brought us the Paleoindians' story, also has prepared a similar program on who the historic Indians were, and we intend to work with Humanities Montana to see if we can have her come back sometime this fall or winter. Stay tuned.

In our May Membership organization meeting, members present elected John Gecho to the board. John joins Kevin Brenneke, Jim Carlson, Larry Love, Devona Owens, Otis Thompson, and me on the Board. We are looking forward to getting John involved.

Thanks to Marty Brenneke who has served several years on the Board and whose term ended this year.

At the Museum, we are fully engaged in our cataloging project which is funded, in part, by the National Endowment for the Humanities through Humanities Montana. As part of the project, MVHA must provide in-kind assistance, and we are looking for volunteers to help out. This project will eventually provide us with a digital list of artifacts in the museum, but will take considerably longer than the time currently funded by Humanities Montana. So as a part of our contract with the cataloging historian, we will be training volunteers on how to do the data entry. If you are interested in helping in any way, please contact me or other Board Members.

Informative field trips, interesting history discussions, a great history museum (recently visited and praised by MSU historians from the Museum of the Rockies), not to mention this extremely interesting and informative newsletter (thanks Shirley). And all of this wouldn't happen without our members' volunteering time, paying dues, making other contributions, and generally participating to ensure the success of the endeavor. Thanks to you all!!! Your Wagon Master, Lee Robison.

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A little history of Sterling: Located in Madison County was once a thriving mining town—more than 500 people lived there in the 1860's. There were 4 quartz mills made of square stones cemented together with a mixture of lime and horsehair. The remains of one is still standing. The town was 3 miles west of Norris on Hot Spring Creek. The post office opened in 1867 with Andrew Hall as postmaster. from *Names on the Face of Montana* by Roberta Carkeek Cheney

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**Burton, Margie (I)** (406)579-8888  
220 N. Meadow Creek Rd. McAllister, MT 59740

**Dale, John C & Bridget (F)**  
P.O. Box 425 McAllister, MT 59740

**Membership update** 2016 memberships are now due as you receive your renewal application. Almost all of you have taken care of business and the MVHA has received your membership. Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2016 membership is due during July, August or September or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are \$5.00 for students, \$10.00 for Individual, \$15.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

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#### **Member News**

**Ginny Ympa** was honored as volunteer in the Volunteer Spotlight in the *Madisonian* for the April 7, 2016 edition. Ginny cooks for the Senior Center in Pony and helps out on the Pony Homecoming projects.

**Ben Tone** was remembered with a great story in the LifeStyles section of the *Madisonian* for Thursday, April 28, 2016. He will be missed as he made many great contributions to the theatre and the arts.

**Janet Allestad** was the grand marshal of the Virginia City parade on May 28, 2016 to kick off Memorial Day.

**Janie McMillin Wasman** was featured on the *Madisonian* Lifestyles page for her work for the Twin Bridges cemetery board researching the stories of folks who are buried there.

**Shirley and Larry Love** celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on June 11, 2016 with a reception at the El Western conference Center hosted by their children.

**Jan Beekman** was recently published in the *Madisonian* in the *Writing the Wind Stories* from the Tobacco Root Writers. Her *Living in the Madison Valley* was a delightful read.

**Ann and John White** just recently returned from a trip to Africa. They will have some interesting stories to share.

Please keep the editor up to date on any news of our members. History starts yesterday so awards, honors, celebrations or anything that our members do is of interest to history.

#### **Memories**

**Jean Marie Love Marshall** passed away Nov. 22, 2015 at her son's home in Big Fork, MT. Jean was born in 1922 to Elwyn Kingston and Ella Myrtle Berning Love and raised in Preston, Minn. After graduating from St. Olaf College in 1939, she attended the University of Minnesota and received a degree in Nursing Education in 1944. She married Rodney Albert Marshall in 1946 in Preston. The family opened Cousin's Candy Shop in Virginia City, MT. She loved her summers working there. Her husband, Rod, served as Montana State Legislature Representative for two terms from 1994 to '98. Her daughter is MVHA member, Anne (John) White.

**Ruth Hunt Paige** Passed away Feb. 5, 2015 in Helena, MT. She was born on May 1, 1924 to Mr. and Mrs. Ben Hunt. She grew up in Ennis and graduated from Ennis High School. She married Henry Paige on Nov. 1, 1947. Ruth and Henry had three adopted children: 2 sons, Richard and Duane, and 1 daughter, Helen "Chadine" Franklin. Ruth and Henry raised their family in Butte where Ruth was a homemaker, loved to crochet, was a great cook and talented seamstress making clothes for her daughter and her daughter's friends. Ruth was active in the Butte community, generous with her time and charity work, member of TOPS, supporter of the Salvation Army, and member of the MVHA. Ruth will be most remembered for being a foster parent for many years, taking in children awaiting adoption. Her parents and young brother are buried at the Evans Cemetery in Jeffers. Ruth's final resting place will be in Anaconda, MT. *Special thanks to Patsy Eckert for writing this memory of Ruth Paige.*

Editor's note. Ruth was a member of the MVHA for 10 years and received her award certificate last May.

**Nancy Stahr Beardsley Leadbetter** passed away April, 2016. Nancy was born in Cincinnati, Ohio on March 22, 1931 to Robert and Mildred Stahr. She married her life long friend,

(cont on page 3)



*(cont from page 2)*

David Edward Beardsley whose parents owned a cabin up Jack Creek Canyon. After a brief assignment in the Navy in Hawaii, they moved to the Madison Valley in 1954 where David and Nancy ran the Beardsley Stock Ranch on Varney Road. After David passed away, she married Alfred A. Leadbeater.

**Marjean McAtee Tezak** passed away April 3, 2016 in Missoula. She was born June 21, 1935 to Edward Leonard McAtee, Jr. and Dorothy Doyle McAtee. She attended school at Bear Creek School, Ennis Schools, Bozeman Catholic Schools and graduated valedictorian from Ennis High School in 1953. She attended Western Montana College in Dillon, MT and married her high school sweetheart, Joseph Allen Tezak of Sheridan.

**Claire Lucie Wachtler** passed away at University of Utah Medical Center on April 11, 2016. Her parents are Margaret (Lloyd Jones) and Joel Wachtler. Her grandparents are Chester and Joan Lloyd Jones and she visited them in the Madison Valley from the time she was a small child. Her aunt is Lucie (Lloyd Jones) Murphy from Deer Lodge and uncle, Tikker Lloyd Jones of Ennis. Her parents reside in the Jones family home in Jeffers.

**Ben Tone** passed away April 13, 2016 in Bozeman. Ben was born in Prineville, Ore, on April 18, 1921 to Bernard Leslie and Helen Elizabeth (Summers) Tone. Ben's theatre career started at Bennington College in Vermont and then he served in WWII. In the post-war years he finished his degree at Portland University. A friend introduced him to Larry Barsness who had a connection to Virginia City. He, Larry and Harry Smith launched the Virginia City Players in the summer of 1949. During his VCP summers he met Nina Miller and they married in 1958. With a young family, they moved to Bozeman where Ben was offered a full time position in MSU's new theatre department where he worked until his retirement in 1985. Ben was a member of the MVHA until just before his passing. For more on Ben Tone check out the Lifestyles page in the Madisonian.

**Jonnie N. Wiedenmeyer Bigelow** passed away April 18, 2016 at her home in Apache Junction, Ariz. She was born on Feb. 15, 1937 to Jacqueline and Roy Wiedenmeyer. She married Clifford Bigelow. She moved from Montana to Arizona in 1989 to be closer to family. She and Clifford were married for 59 years.

**Terence A. (Ted) McDonnell** passed away on April 20, 2016. He was born to Terence J. and Gladys (McAtee) McDonnell and spent his early years on the family's Cedar Creek, Hyde Creek

and Wall Creek ranches south of Ennis. Tom attended school until in Ennis until 1942 when the family moved to Bozeman. In his early years, Ted worked summers for the United Forest Service and wintered as a cowboy for various ranches in Madison and Gallatin counties. He also spent 5 years in the Navy and in 1955 returned to Montana and went to work for Mountain Bell Telephone. In June of 1955, Ted married Cora Lee Richardson in Livingston, MT. In 2002 Ted purchased a home in Alder where he could hunt and fish in his beloved mountains and streams of Madison county.

**Lois Marie Walsh** passed away at her home south of Cameron, MT on April 23, 2016. Lois was born on October 23, 1932 to George D. and Cora (Millsaps) Shields in Smyrna, Ark. When Lois was very young, the family moved to Linden, Calif. where she was raised and graduated from Linden High School. Lois met her future husband, Gene Walsh, at a wedding in Stockton, Calif and they were married in December of 1950. In 1957 the Walsh family moved to Montana. They started their ranch and later summer pasture in the Centennial Valley.

Lois loved horses and enjoyed trailing cattle and riding in the Madison County Side Saddle Club for 25 years. Lois was a member of MVHA and was instrumental in donating side saddle memorabilia to the Museum.

**Elizabeth (Betsy) Wesley Shirley** passed away at her home on April 27, 2016. She was born in 1923 and grew up in Monroe, Mich. She graduated from high school and went to Arizona in 1942. There she met and married Forrest Shirley. In the summer of 1948 they moved to Montana and settled on Cold Springs Creek near the Madison River. Betsy was special to the MVHA by donating a rocking horse that her special sons played with while growing up. One day Johnny France visited the museum and showed us his spur marks on the shoulders of the rocking horse.

**Betty L. (Althouse) Anderson** passed away on July 8, 2016 two weeks after her 87th birthday. She was born on June 21, 1929 to Clarence J. and Anna C. (Krebs) Althouse in Ennis, MT. She grew up on the ranch on Indian Creek and attended grade school at the Bear Creek School. Betty graduated from Ennis High School in 1946 and attended Montana State College. On July 24, 1949 she married Herb E. Anderson in Choteau, MT. She began her career at the ASCS office in Choteau. In 1954 the family moved to Lewistown, Mt and after raising her children returned to work a secretary at Lincoln and Lew and Clark schools in Lewistown.

**Nathan Miller Adams** passed away on July 10, 2016 at the Madison Valley Manor *(cont on pg 4)*

(cont from page 3)

in Ennis, MT. He was born on April 7, 1934 to Alvin Philip and Elizabeth Miller Adams. In his younger years, Nathan lived in Kenya, India and England as he traveled the world for his investigative reporting. He often visited Ennis with his father who taught him fly fishing. Otis Crooker, who was a friend of his father, gave Nathan his first flying lesson off the air strip behind the Sportsman's Lodge. He moved to Ennis in 2000 with his wife, Annelids 'Hasi' Pirchner Adams.

**Sharron Lynn Gecho** , MVHA member, passed away July 11, 2016 at the family home near Cameron,MT. Sharron was born in Butte,MT on Oct. 15, 1942 to Edwin and Vivian (Richards) Holverson. She attended school in Ramsey, MT and graduated from Butte High School. Sharron ended up in Ennis, MT where she met John Gecho and they were married May 4, 1963. She worked at the Ennis Cafe and Chuck Wagon Cafe and at the talc mine all the while working along side of John at the family ranch.

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Memories of your family members and friends are welcome for printing in the Wagon Tongue.

The editor does not print full obituaries from the newspapers and uses the Madison County histories and other sources to find additional information but cannot find special stories of our departed unless you submit your stories. The memories column is intended to be a genealogical record of our departed.

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**Jess Armitage History** We left Jess after he thought he had retired but son, Brian, wanted to open a real estate office under the name Armitage Real Estate.

While I was in the FNI Real Estate there were several popular, and/or executive type of people that inquired for property. Just to drop a few names there was Michael Keaton, Joe Montana, several CEO's of large companies such as Diamond Shamrock, Union Oil Co., US Steel, a Shau from Sudi Arabia and others from other companies. Anyway, it was interesting to visit with them.

Frank Shaw from Cardwell, MT passed away and his wife, Dorothy, wanted to sell the ranch before fall shipping time and the cattle were still in the mountains on summer range. I hadn't had any luck selling the ranch that quick, so I inquired of a couple friends of mine over coffee one day if they would be interested. John Baush was a cattle buyer and had been for numerous years and Joe Vujovich was an energetic, honest and knew ranching and the livestock business. I had sold his Dad several ranches and was good friends until he passed 4

away, so I knew Joe's background and respected his integrity. They discussed it for a short time when John said "Let's go look at it." I did not have any money to put into it but I told them that if they would buy it, I would put my real estate commission in on it. We all agreed and we were on our way. I advised Mrs. Shaw what I had in mind and she thought it was all right. I wrote her accountant and lawyer to advise them that I would eventually go with them on the ranch and they all agreed that it would be all right. We wrote the offer with John and Joe and/or assigns as buyers, which allowed me to be added to the contract. It turned out to be the best investment I had ever made. Joe did most of the hands on running of the ranch, John knew cattle buyers and ranchers that would be interested in leasing the grass. I wondered what I did? In a few years Joe wanted to sell out and do something on his own to make more money and he did. He invested in property in the Gallatin Canyon. John passed away. That left me and John's widow to run the ranch. We got along fine, but I didn't feel comfortable having the responsibility of operating the ranch so I convinced Donna to sell the ranch in the spring of 2002. We sold the ranch in two parcels. I had the acreage on the river which I sold to the Montana Fish and Game. Donna owned the pasture land and sold it to a conservation buyer that would not allow any subdivision.

I tried not to tell too many lies as I wrote my history, although I might have embellished it a little. I guess I forgot to tell about my personal problems but nobody would be interested in that anyway.

*Editor's note: Thanks to the Armitage family for sharing their father's history. Hopefully it gave some of you an idea of the stories and histories that you can write and share as the MVHA preserves the history of the Madison Valley.*

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**School in the Madison Valley** Continued from the January 2016 issue. The 7th school listed in the Jimmy Spray history was in Jeffers, started in 1880 and remodeled in 1887 with 12 pupils and the teacher was John Carr. The 8th school was Spring Creek in the Varney area started in 1889 with 10 pupils and first teacher was Kate Swanstrom. 9th was the Maynard school started in 1890 located at the southeast corner of the T.B. Switzer homestead with 10 pupils. The Bear Creek School was 10th started in 1891, west of Kilner ranch on Bear Creek with 10 pupils and first teacher was Pearl Howe. 11th was the Upper Meadow Creek in 1891, north of the John Baush ranch with 15 pupils and first teacher Abbie Morris. 12th was Jack Creek started in 1895 about three quarters of a mile (cont on page 5)

(cont from page 4)

from the Hutton home on Jack Creek with 9 pupils and Barbara Wilson as first teacher. 13th was Farrellton in 1907 nicknamed the "Irish College" located between Ennis and Cameron where the road crosses Bear Creek at the foot of a little hill. There were 12 pupils and the first teacher was Bessie Farrell. The 14th school developed was the Ennis school in Ennis. The first four years were taught in the Woodman Hall (currently the old Economy Grocery Store now an empty building on Main Street.) Then it was moved to a building on the hill owned by John Northway and then a frame building was built on the county road under the hill north of the Chamberlin home in 1908. The 15th school was the Lyon School built on a rise above Squaw Creek near the George Barnard ranch. There were 11 pupils and the first teacher was Mrs. Joe Pearson. 16th was the Cliff Lake School in 1912 located on the road to the lake with 11 pupils and the first teacher was Lucy Barter.

The 17th school started was the Corral in 1912 and located on Deer Creek below the George Armitage ranch home. There were 11 pupils and the first teacher was Margaret "Maggie" Kiser. 18th school was the Indian Creek School in 1920 located upstream from the Althouse ranch with 16 pupils and the first teacher was Mae Hanna. The Maynard school and Jeffers school consolidated in 1920.....

Now the editor and the *Wagon Tongue* would like stories of these schools from history and community members so the rest of the stories can be recorded similar to the story that follows. Please send to Wagon Tongue P.O. Box 474, Ennis, Mt 59729.

#### **Cliff Lake School History** by Deb Townshend

Before the large influx of Missourian homesteaders to the upper Madison Valley in 1911 and 1912, the few pioneer families who had settled in that general area had to send their children to Lyon School near Squaw Creek.

In examining the school records and checking with old-timers, one finds a discrepancy as to attendance in the schools. Many of the children listed as going to Lyon School in actual fact went elsewhere—to Cameron or Pony in the winter. It seems that the school census taken in that district took credit for all the children living within its boundary in order to get enough money for the schools needs. The clerk also counted pre-schoolers and "children" already now young men and women.

In 1913, the eight-grade Lyon School was discontinued in favor of Cliff Lake School, District 29 further south in a location more central to the fast growing school population.

Al Womack from Missouri, one of the original homesteaders and the key promoter of the so-called Missouri Flats, worked hard to get the authorities in Virginia City to set up a school district in that part of the country. Most of his neighbors were kinfolk from Missouri with large broods of children.

When permission was granted, Al and a number of others hauled lumber in and built a commodious, one room school house and installed a big brass bell on the peaked shine roof. The building sat by the narrow county road near the Cliff Lake turn off on a corner of Grandma" Dennis land. (Al Womack's mother who had remarried.) Unfortunately the site was not a happy choice because of lack of water. Children, living at some distance, had to ride to school. The horses were left unwatered all day. Many of the pupils hiked over the dusty sage flats, lugging their lunch pails and canteens. Fortunate were the ones whose family boarded the teacher. They could ride with her in the buggy.

Lucy Barter, the first teacher, boarded at the Al Womack's. Some of the later ones boarded with the Neely family.

The school year depended greatly on the weather. It could be April or May before the roads were passable and the teacher was alerted to pack up her books and come. She would stay at least through September and sometimes right up to Christmas if the heavy snows held off.

The parents on the Missouri Flats were determined their sons and daughters would get an education. Big, bull necked "Dutch Henry" Florin (everyone agreed that he was the biggest man they ever saw), whose cabin stood on the wrong side of the Madison River from the school, had a strong hankering for his kids to learn the three R's. So he built a bridge across the river. The narrow, precarious plank bridge provided a convenient crossing for others too, especially lake bound fishermen.

What the students thought about schooling was another matter. "Wes" Womack taught for one year, in 1914, and got disgusted. It seems like the girls were just getting the "teen age stuff"—dancing and the like—and wouldn't do what he wanted. He got mad and quit..told them they could work it with their feet because they wouldn't do it any other way. The bigger children had a respite from the teacher's "dirty looks" at haying and thrashing time when they had to skip school to help their parents.

The families contributing youngsters most regularly to the school were Carter, Conklin, De Winner, Du Berry, Edwards, Dennis, Gillespie, Haldorsen, Hester, Huggins, Mathis, Neely, Ollie, Rogers, Schoenek, Stalcup, Womack and Young.

**For Your Reading Pleasure**

The Mechanics of Optimism Mining Companies, Technology, and the Hot Spring Gold Rush, Montana Territory, 1864-1868 by Jeffery J. Safford This superb history covers the discovery, flourishing, and eventual collapse of the Hot Spring mining district, a part of Montana's exceptional 1860 gold boom.

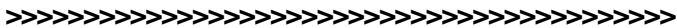
**Looking Ahead**

**July to October** Madison Valley Museum open Tuesday to Sunday from 1:00pm to 4:00pm. Volunteers are still need to keep the museum open during these hours.

**August 27, 2016** Field trip to the old O.C. Whitney homestead with presentation by Larry Love and then on to Gayle and Danette Clark's home north of Jeffers. Meet at Lion's Club Park for car pooling at 10:00am. Participants are asked to bring sack lunch and a chair.

**September 17, 2016** Tentatively planned to have an open house and BBQ at the new MVHA Museum addition. Lots of work still needs to be done so stay tuned.

**October 20, 2016** Back to meeting and program to be announced.

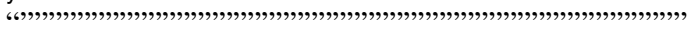


**Historic Plaques for Downtown Ennis Business Buildings**

Zoe Todd and Liz Applegate, both residents of Ennis and members of the Madison Valley History Association, are seeking your help with our Historic Plaques Project. Beautiful plaques containing historical information will be mounted on the outside of the old buildings in downtown Ennis. The exterior placement of the plaques will make it easy for everyone, residents as well as visitors, to appreciate the architecture and story of each building.

We are currently researching the old buildings of Main Street. If you have any information to share such as ownership or tenant names and dates, old photos of interiors and/or exteriors, we'd love to hear from you. We can scan your photos and return your originals, and welcome digital images via email. Another way you can contribute is by making a donation to the Ennis Main Street Historic Plaques account at First Madison Valley Bank.

If you would like to share historical information, or have any questions, please contact us: Zoe Todd (682-4360) Liz Applegate (682-3288 or email: [liz.billapplegate@gmail.com](mailto:liz.billapplegate@gmail.com)). We look forward to hearing from you!



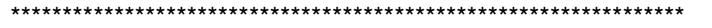
**Mining in Sterling** The culmination of every miner's dream was to locate a mine comparable to the Monitor on Richmond Flats. Someone had grubstaked two miners to drive a tunnel and they worked all winter unknowingly along side of this rich vein. Then one day, while they were outside in the sunshine eating their lunch, a cave-in occurred, exposing this vein. It was four feet in width with six inches of gold wire in the center. The ore assayed at \$6,000 a ton after all specimens were picked out and at the old price of \$19 an ounce. A sample of the ore sent to the World Fair in San Francisco in 1895 received first prize. It took 4 years to mine this body of ore. Cecil M.Reel, reported that his Dad hauled seven tons of ore per trip to Norris

**MVHABoard of Directors**

President: Lee Robison  
Vice-President John Gecho  
Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke  
Secretary: Otis Thompson  
Director: Jimmy Carlson  
Director: Devonna Owens  
Director: Larry Love  
Historian and researcher: Don Black  
Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate  
Meeting and programs held monthly on the **third** Thursday of each month or as scheduled. Watch the Madisonian, posters and your email for details of time, place and program. Board meetings are held on the **first** Wednesday of each month at 10:00am, Museum building from May to September. *The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be October 2016. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed.

Editor: Shirley Love whitneypranch@wispwest.net  
Contributing editors:

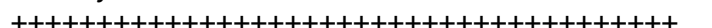
*Madisonian* Obituaries, Lifestyle, and Volunteer spotlights  
*Jess Armitage History* by Jess Armitage  
Sterling history Names on the Face of Montana by Roberta Carkeek Cheney pg 243-244  
*Schools of Madison Valley* Winifred Jeffers Pioneer Trails and Trials pg 915  
*Cliff Lake School* by Deb Townshend Pioneer Trails and Trials pg 911



**Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by the First Madison Valley Bank**



and a ton and a half of coal back to the mine. Old Rock and Him were the lead horses of the six horse team. Many a cold day, his Dad would tie the reins to the dash board and get down out of the wind. The horses knew just where to go. By 1872 most of the ore had been mined and people had left Sterling. W. R. Reel, a Montana miner, bought the land and claims including the townsite where he built his ranch home. The land is now in hay and pasture. The Sterling Post office closed in 1883. Names on the Face of Montana page 244 by Roberta Carkeek Cheney



Don't forget to sell your raffle tickets for the Larry Zabel giclee print "High Mountain Brunch" #1 of 250. You received a printout of the picture in your April issue of the Wagon Tongue. Tickets are \$5.00 each or 5 for \$20.00. Use the order blank enclosed in this mailing to order your tickets. Drawing will be held on August 13, 2016 after the Art's Festival. This is our summer fund raiser for the museum so do what you can to help out.

# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 14 issue 4

Madison Valley History Association

October 2016

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat:** October and leaves still on the trees! Well, we take it as it comes. Next year I'll be eating garden fresh tomatoes at Thanksgiving the way things are going! The Museum is closed for the winter now, but it had a very successful summer, with approximately 330 visitors who signed the guest book. The museum is a service that members of the Madison Valley History Association, working as volunteers, provide to the community and those who visit our Valley.

Because our member volunteers are so important to the success of our Museum, we ended the summer on September 17<sup>th</sup> with an open house and pot luck at the Museum's new building to thank them. Over forty members and people from the community attended and gave hearty thanks to those who make our museum available to visitors. The MVHA board also expressed special thanks to Jynean Skank for her efforts in calling and asking people to host and so keep the museum open. We also thanked Vern and Don Thibodeau for donating and installing a flag pole.

This summer has been a great time for contributions to our museum. Not only have we received some pretty nice cash contributions, but many people have donated papers and artifacts that passed through the hands of Madison Valley residents. We are extremely grateful to all who have made these efforts supporting the preservation of the history of our Valley.

If we properly document our acquisition of these items, they will help enrich our collection. Documentation of each item may seem like a unnecessary bureaucratic bother. But completing the paperwork ensures that legal ownership and responsibility are clearly defined. This however, is only one aspect of why documenting transfer of historic objects is necessary. History is not a bracelet gathering dust in a display case, which is all you have without documentation. History is the story of who wore that bracelet, how they got it, and how it came to be in the Madison Valley. In order to start to put that information together, it is necessary to complete basic donation paperwork on an item—whether bracelet, photograph, hay rake, or anvil—so that historians can begin to put the story together. That is how history lives.

Other examples illustrating why the story behind the artifact or object is important are the MVHA field trips this summer. In July we visited Sterling and saw the old buildings and what was left of an ore milling building. While the buildings were interesting structures, it was the stories that Tim Jackson and Larry Love told us about how and why those buildings came to be there that made our field trip so pleasurable. In August we visited the Whitney and Woodworth houses. I think all who were there were interested in seeing the old houses. But it was the stories told about the people who built them and lived in them that everyone wanted to hear about and talk about. One of the sad things about these field trips is the number of times we hear "I don't know," because the story has been lost with the passing of those who do know, and so the stories that have come down to us is all we have to understand what happened. What we did hear about the people who lived there and the things they did brought some faint murmur of life to these places. And that made the trip enjoyable.

A part of the Madison Valley History Association's and Museum's task is to ensure that, when someone comes looking for information about ranching or any other enterprise that happened in the Madison Valley, we have information to help them write a great comprehensive history. Lee Robison Your Wagon Master

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Our October program was Indians of Montana so the following is a short story about Indian Mattie by Lucille Dixon.

Although many Indians of the old West were feared by people, some Indians came to Virginia City every summer and camped near the slaughter house which was close to the campgrounds at the edge of town. Sometimes as many as seven came on horseback, bringing their tepees and other equipment on a packhorse. They visited the slaughter house and were given meat that could't be sold.

One of the most remembered was Indian Mattie. When she was young she washed for housewives, using an old washboard. She was considered a good worker and the women and gave her food and clothing she could use.

Many of the young children were frightened of her and their parents would say, "If you don't behave, Mattie will get you." One day a youngster was backing around the house listening to the grocery list and backed right into Mattie's arms. He took off in a hurry when he found out where he was and Mattie got quite a kick out of it.

**Membership** The following are new members since the *Wagon Tongue* went to print in July. Add them to any membership list you are keeping and welcome them to membership. Remind them of the meetings and special events of the MVHA.

**Laqua, Diane and Gary (F)** 707-372-5116

P.O. Box 1365

Ennis, MT 59729

**Norman,(Covey) Dorothy(F)** 541-352-6177

6150 Trout Creek Ridge Rd.

Mt. Hood Parkdale, OR 97041-7649

**Montgomery, Gloria and Sidney (F)** 601-955-7274

P.O. Box 144

Ennis, MT 59729

**Mooney, Gerry (I)** 510-697-2907

P.O. Box 652

Ennis, MT 59729

**Robertson, (Covey) Jessie (I)** 801-607-2859

2844 W 620 N

Provo, UT 84601-8226

**Zeman,(Covey) Mary Martha (I)** 541-352-7414

P.O. Box 388

Mt Hood Parkdale OR 97041-0388

**Membership update** 2016 memberships are now due as you receive your renewal application. Almost all of you have taken care of business and the MVHA has received your membership. Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2016 membership is due during October, November, or December or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are \$5.00 for students, \$10.00 for Individual, \$15.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

The Board of Directors has voted to have a membership dues increase in January 2017 so make sure your 2016 memberships are submitted in 2016 as if you are late and pay in 2017 you will be assessed the new amount. All memberships starting in January 2017 will be for the newly voted amount...Student \$10, Individual \$15, Family \$20. Business \$50, Patron \$100, and Benefactor \$500.

The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds to continue

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the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley.

If anyone needs a ride to a meeting and program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

### **Member News**

Brand new MVHA members, **Diane and Gary Laqua**, purchased the 15,000th ticket at the Madison Theatre and received a gift certificate. 15,000+ movie goers have attended movies at the theatre since it opened after remodeling on May 13th, 2013.

MVHA member, **Janet Allstead**, was chosen for the Volunteer Spotlight in the Thursday, Sept. 1, 2016 *Madisonian*. She was honored for her commitment to Virginia City since she moved there in 2012. She loves history and does a lot for history of Virginia city and faithfully drives over the hill to participate in the history of the Madison Valley.

MVHA board member and secretary, **Otis Thompson**, recently had surgery for heart by passes in Missoula. Keep him in your thoughts and prayers as he begins his long recovery.

### **Memories**

**Lynn Renee Moon** passed away on August 5, 2016. She was born in Trenton, NJ on April 6, 1954. She moved to Montana in 1978, fell in love with the country and made it her home. She lived at McAllister and was known for her horses and other pets. She ran a shuttle service for fishermen, bowled on the senior bowling league and always invited the Audubon Christmas bird count folks to check out her bird feeders for their counts.

**Phyllis Dewald Travis Bowles** passed away on August 8, 2016 in Ennis, MT. She was born on October 19, 1935 in New Jersey to Dean and Gladys Travis. She went to school there and worked there until she met Jack Bowles on a dude ranch vacation. They were married Jan. 11, 1959. Their first home was in Big Sky but that was when no one else lived there. In 1960 they moved to the Beardsley Stock Ranch near Ennis where Jack would be manager until 1977. In 1977 Phyllis started a new adventure. She and Ginny Combs partnered up and bought the Ennis Trading Post. After many years she sold the store to stay home and care for Jack. She was a faithful volunteer at the local food bank well into her later years.

**Francis Harold "Hod" O'Donnell, Jr.** passed away August 11, 2016 at the Rosebud Health Care Center in Forsyth, MT. Hod was born on Feb. 14, 1924 in Billings, MT to Francis Harold and Margaret Spurling O'Donnell, Sr. He served in the Navy, married Sadie Deveny on June 29, 1947 and his second career was with Ciba Geigy Pharmaceutical. After his retirement he and Sadie

*continued on page 3*

*(Continued from page 2)*

moved to Ennis. While in Ennis, Hod was president of the Ennis rodeo Association, a Montana Brand Inspector and was actively involved in the Ennis chapter of the VFW. After Sadie's passing, Hod married Kay Zent in Ennis in August 1986. They enjoyed 20 years in Ennis before moving to Hysham, MT in 2006. In July 2016, Hod was honored by the Ennis VFW with a Quilt of Valor for his service to our country.

**Mary Holmes Lielke** passed away September 3, 2016. Mary was born Dec. 27, 1930 in Minot, ND to Ole and Anna Holmes. She grew up on a farm in Lansford, ND and graduated from Lansford High School in 1948. On Feb. 14, 1961, Mary married Walter Lielke. Together they owned a grocery store in Lansford. Soon they moved to Minot and then to Ennis in 1973. She enjoyed following Walt on his numerous bowling adventures.

**Elma "Carolyn" Rutherford Darby**, mother of Toni Bowen, long time MVHA member, passed away September 7, 2016 at the Madison Valley Hospital. Carolyn was born in Rego, Indiana to Merle and Eska Rutherford. She graduated from Paoli High School. She married Paul Freeman in 1940. Together they moved around the world. Carolyn moved to Ennis in 2012 to be closer to her daughter, Toni. Carolyn was an avid golfer and was still taking lessons at the age of 94 with Pat Stoltz at Madison Meadows. Pat claimed that she still had a great swing. She was a good driver and still driving at 96. The DMV had just renewed her license for another 4 years.

Long time MVHA member, **Mary Ann Baker Gorman Alger** passed away Sept. 12, 2016 in Kennewick, WA. She arrived in this world special delivery at the McAllister Post office on Sept. 3, 1928, where her great aunt Annie Thexton McAllister delivered her. Her parents are Annie Thexton Neville and Donald Edward Neville. Her parents made many moves in their married life. Her father was a cowboy and a horse trainer and her mother very willingly went wherever he had a job, be it at a cow camp, training barn, building a river bridge, blasting a tunnel through the Bozeman hill, assembling airplanes, building a dam, freighting, working on a dredge, working on a railroad or driving a mail route. During that time all their children were born with Mary Ann being the oldest. Mary Ann started school in Ennis in 1934. In 1943 the Neville's moved to Bozeman where Mary Ann attended high school for half of the year. She graduated from Ennis High School in 1946. Following graduation she worked as a waitress until she and Vincent "Bud" Baker were married on Sept. 22, 1946. They owned

and operated the Riverside Motel. Mary Ann operated the motel for three years after Bud's death and then sold it. She then enrolled at Vo-Tech School in Billings, MT and graduated as a Licensed Practical Nurse and worked at the Madison County Nursing Home in Ennis, MT until 1984 when she married Jack Gorman. Jack passed away in 1998 and she married George Alger on Sept. 27, 1999. George and Mary Ann were some of the first members of the Madison Valley History Assoc. joining in 2000 and Mary Ann served on the Board of Directors and was secretary from July 2004 until October 2008. She was honored as a 15 year member in 2013.

**Patricia "Pat" Leona Morrison Bammel** passed away on Sept. 24, 2016. She was born Sept. 16, 1924 in Los Angeles, CA to Charles R. and Evelyn Morrison. She graduated from Van Nuys High School in 1943. Pat met her husband in Hawthorne, Calif. and they were married Oct. 24, 1947, in Van Nuys, CA. Pat followed her husband to Oregon, Washington, Utah and they moved to Montana in 1973. They worked a small grocery store in Harrison, MT and worked as ranch managers for 15 years at the Granger Ranches and retired to Ennis in 1990. Pat began working at the Madison Valley Manor part time and worked another 12 years. Pat's favorite pastime was bowling and liked keeping score for bowling tournaments before the automated scorekeeper boards were installed. For 10 years Pat and her husband placed flags on Memorial Day at the Madison Valley Cemetery in Ennis.

Long time MVHA member, **Rebecca Jo 'Becky' Robison Grauman** passed away Sept. 27, 2016 in Las Vegas, NV. She was born Jan. 8, 1952 in Ennis, MT to Wayne Lee and Floral Judy Robison. Becky grew up on ranches in Montana and British Columbia, Canada. She finished her high school education in Canada, then earned her bachelors degree from Montana State University in Bozeman, MT. She married David Grauman on Aug. 3, 1974 in McAllister, MT. She taught for a few years in Harrison and Ennis before starting her family. In August of 1991, the family moved to Moapa, NV where Becky resumed her teaching career.

**Edward G. Williams Sr.** passed away October 5, 2016 in Ennis, MT. He was born Jan. 16, 1936 during the Great Depression in California. He graduated from Lynwood High School in 1954. In 1956 he married Darlene Cross. He worked in construction and carpentry most of his life. After suffering multiple strokes, his family moved him to Ennis to be near son, Ed, Jr. He spent his final years living in Ennis and then at the Madison Valley Manor.





*Continued from page 4*

Elk River was the only place where good, warm comfortable quarters could be obtained. Pierre Bottingeau of St. Anthony built a large hotel there the previous year. These teamsters were, as they should have been, paid liberal wages.

*Otis Whitney story to be continued in January*  
***Wagon Tongue.***

On August 27, the History Association visited the old John Woodworth home, one of the last remnants of a family that had a great deal to do with the early history of the Madison Valley. The first of the family, arrived in the Madison Valley in 1863. This was Ray Woodworth who had been following the gold camps since leaving his Ohio home in 1861. By the spring of 1864, he had bought equipment and seed in Salt Lake City and was farming on river bottom land near Jeffers. Al Noyles, in his [History of Southern Montana](#), claims that Ray was “the first man to farm in the Madison Valley.” There is some local controversy on that matter, but whether or not he was the first, he was among the first.

In the next 4 years two of Ray’s brothers followed him and began farming and ranching in the Madison Valley. In 1865, we find George as a guest at Ray’s farm, and looking around for a place of his own. Then in 1867, John came to Montana. Of these brothers only John stayed in the Madison Valley. Ray eventually moved on to Eastern Washington to settle. George took up ranching near Wisdom, Montana. But John settled here in the Madison Valley.

His ranch was based about five miles north of Jeffers and included river bottom lands and bench lands east of the river. At its largest extent it included property near Cameron as well. About 300 acres of his property was condemned as lakebed when the Madison Dam was built. In 1900, he and his wife, Alice, built a house that still stands and that is still owned and lived in by one of his descendants. In 1911, John hosted a family party at this house to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary of a fourth Woodworth brother, Miles.

Although John was the only brother to settle in the Valley, he was not the only Woodworth. Two Woodworth Sisters, Amanda and Hannah, followed their brothers to Montana, and one of them also settled in the Madison Valley. Amanda married James Saunders in April 1878. Amanda was

5

known, as her niece Ida Woodworth McKee put it, for her “honor of ushering a goodly part of the population of the Madison Valley into the world, many of whom were without a doctor’s service.” Amanda was, in other words, a midwife.

One other Woodworth made their way to the Madison Valley, and that was Ida Woodworth McKee, who was Miles Woodworth’s daughter. She came with her husband and their first six children in 1897, and the Woodworths then living in Montana helped her and her family settle in the Madison Valley. In 1903, they bought the improvements on state land near Jeffers from O.G. Smith, Hannah’s husband. The draw that the Jack Creek Bench Road uses to go onto the bench is still called McKee Gulch.

If you were to look at the most recent census, you would find many descendants of these pioneers currently living in the Madison Valley, but none of them are named Woodworth. John married Alice Miller from Ohio, and though they had no children, they adopted Alice’s niece, Elizabeth Grice. The current owners of the Woodworth mansion are descended from Elizabeth through her marriage to Morris Kilner. There are also still descendants of Amanda Woodworth Saunders and Ida Woodworth McKee in the Madison Valley. *By Lee Robison Great Grandson of Ida Woolworth McKee*  
*Woodworth History continued with Treasure House from Bozeman Chronicle Feb.3, 1991 by Barb Smith*  
***The stately Woolworth mansion has returned to its former elegance.***

When Danette Segota was a little girl, she’d pass by the Woolworth mansion on Ennis Lake and pretend that some day she would live there. The old house fascinated her: it was her dream house although she never thought for a moment her dream would come true.

Today the house overlooking Ennis Lake is indeed hers. She and husband, Gayle, and children spent years restoring the mansion to its former elegance.

“The house has got a lot of history and changes since it was built.” says Danette. “We’ve spent years putting it back like it was.”

Gayle’s great-great uncle John Woodworth built the mansion for his new bride, Alice on a hill overlooking the Madison River in 1900. *Woodworth House history continued in January* ***Wagon Tongue***

**For Your Reading Pleasure** The editor has run out of suggestions or ideas. Please help.

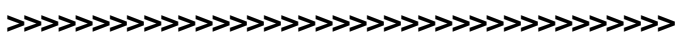
**Looking Ahead**

**November 17, 2016** (To be announced) If you have a suggestion of a program you would like please contact a member of the board.

**November 26, 2016** Holiday Bazaar Ennis Elementary School and Gym Stop by the MVHA booth to pick up Christmas gifts or purchase a Walk of Names Board to remember a family member at Christmas time

**December 15, 2016** Christmas dinner or party

**January 19, 2017** (To be announced) Again if you have a program idea that you would like to hear please contact aboard member

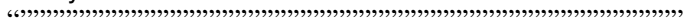


**Historic Plaques for Downtown Ennis Business Buildings**

Zoe Todd and Liz Applegate, both residents of Ennis and members of the Madison Valley History Association, are seeking your help with our Historic Plaques Project. Beautiful plaques containing historical information will be mounted on the outside of the old buildings in downtown Ennis. The exterior placement of the plaques will make it easy for everyone, residents as well as visitors, to appreciate the architecture and story of each building.

We are currently researching the old buildings of Main Street. If you have any information to share such as ownership or tenant names and dates, old photos of interiors and/or exteriors, we'd love to hear from you. We can scan your photos and return your originals, and welcome digital images via email. Another way you can contribute is by making a donation to the Ennis Main Street Historic Plaques account at First Madison Valley Bank.

If you would like to share historical information, or have any questions, please contact us: Zoe Todd (682-4360), Liz Applegate (682-3288 or email: [liz.billapplegate@gmail.com](mailto:liz.billapplegate@gmail.com)). We look forward to hearing from you!



Honorary Member **Hal Pasley** turns 106 on Nov. 12, 2016. MVHA wishes him a Happy Birthday and is printing one of his poems for all to enjoy.

FATHER TIME by J. Hal Pasley

It's been about a year or so,  
Perhaps a few weeks more  
This stranger, whom I've never seen,  
came knocking at my door  
Before I could get on my feet  
To go and let him in  
This man appeared before me  
He was old and pale and thin  
His voice was like a whisper  
his cheeks had sunken in  
His eyes still held a sparkle  
his hair was white and thin  
He said "please don't be frightened"  
I've called on you before  
This is my final visit  
You won't see me any more

**MVHA Board of Directors**

- President: Lee Robison
  - Vice-President: John Gecho
  - Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke
  - Secretary: Otis Thompson
  - Director: Jimmy Carlson
  - Director: Devonna Owens
  - Director: Larry Love
  - Historian and researcher: Don Black
  - Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate
- Meetings and programs held monthly on the **third** Thursday of each month or as scheduled. Watch the Madisonian, posters and your email for details of time, place and program. Board meetings are held on the **first** Wednesday of each month at 10:00 am, First Madison Valley Bank October to April. *The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be January 2017. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed.

Editor: Shirley Love [whitneypranch@wispwest.net](mailto:whitneypranch@wispwest.net)

Contributing editors:

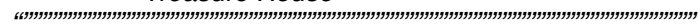
- Madisonian* Obituaries and Volunteer spotlights
- Annie Neville Annie Isabella (Thexton) Neville
- pg 762 *Progressive Years Madison County Montana Vol II*

Lee Robison *Woodworth Family History*

Dan Whitney *Otis Crocker Whitney Family History*

Barb Smith *Bozeman Daily Chronicle* Feb. 3, 1991

*Treasure House*



I've watched you from a distance  
You've lived beyond your prime  
Please let me introduce myself  
my name is Father Time  
You've outlived all your neighbors  
Your friends have long been gone  
You must be rather lonesome  
Why do you linger on  
For years you have defied me  
Now I am leaving you alone  
I'll devote myself to others  
Your future is your own  
For years you've been a problem  
I've mentioned it before  
My patience is exhausted  
We won't discuss it anymore  
I had now regained my composure  
I have one request for you  
Please grant me one more golden year  
I've neglected things to do  
He nodded his approval, smiled  
and said, "I'll make it two"  
He made a quick departure  
and disappeared from view  
I sat, numb confused and weary  
I felt his message was extreme  
Suddenly, I awakened  
Father Time was just a dream

# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 15 issue 1

Madison Valley History Association

January 2017

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat:** Brrrr. After that long, long, long mild fall, Jack Frost brought winter on and is working overtime. I started waiting for spring about four weeks ago. It looks like a long wait. Still not much snow in the mountains though. Every rancher that ever lived here in the valley kept a close watch on those mountains to guess at how much irrigation water they might have for summer. And they did not like the look of things when you could see the gray rock peeking through the snowpack.

A reminder to everyone wanting to renew your membership: this is a new year and the Madison Valley History Association has increased the basic membership by \$5.00. So, Student membership is \$10 a year, Individual is \$15, Family is \$20. For now, the Business and Patron Memberships remain at \$50 and \$100, respectively.

The new year promises to be a great one. At the annual membership pot luck and Christmas celebration, we asked members to write down some ideas for the membership to work on for future presentations and field trips. We garnered a great list. Here are a few:

- George Watkins's story. He arrived in the Madison in 1864, and started ranching on the east side of the river;
- History of the Herrick and Criswell families;
- Visit the talc mine;
- Ranch History of North Meadow Creek (Maybe other areas as well);
- History of the Wall Creek Game Refuge;
- Nature field trip to see Gravelly flowers in the spring (picnic);
- History of Public Lands in the Madison Valley.

These are great ideas. Now we need to find someone to help develop the presentations or plan field trips. So, if you are interested or if you know someone who might have information, let one of the board members know so we can put some of these ideas on the MVHA calendar.

Speaking of calendar, the rest of the winter and the coming spring looks pretty good. On January 19 we will be at the Senior Center to hear a presentation on Cardiac rehabilitation. On February 16, Ken Egan will come to talk about Montana in 1864. On March 17, we will sponsor our annual St. Patrick's Day/William Ennis Birthday Irish Stew Feed at the school cafeteria. In April we are planning to hear a presentation on the McAtees and the Cameron area. And in May we will have our annual membership organization meeting with pot luck.

Sometime this spring—after it warms up a bit—we will begin finishing the new building for display and storage and will start moving into it. Display cases and other fixtures need to be moved in and arranged and populated with our artifacts. In addition some storage space needs to be partitioned off. Lee Robison Your Wagon Master

**Final Museum Report** The MVHA Museum completed a great season for the summer of 2016. The editor did her guest book survey and came up with a few more guests than reported last issue. 417 guests signed the guest book. Montana as usual leads the way with 220 guests with a breakdown of 54 from Ennis, 12 from McAllister, 8 from Cameron and 8 from Virginia City. California is second with 47, Oregon 3rd with 33, Washington 4th with 26 and Idaho with 24. 33 other states had people visit our museum and 13 states were not represented in the guest book. Foreign countries were represented with Korea and Australia with two each and Mexico and United Kingdom with one each. Where are our Canadian guests?

17 folks signed in without a state or country and 3 folks signed in from Mount Pleasant—where ever that is.

This is not a true scientific study as it is only as good as visitors are willing to sign the book and give their location information. And only as good as our volunteers reminding them to sign and counting how many enter under the Family groups. But still a good number for the summer. The only times we had larger numbers was when we were able to keep the museum open all day. We miss a lot of folks who will not stay around for our 1 o'clock opening. We can just continue to advertise and sometimes word of mouth is the best advertising.

**Membership:** The following are new members since the *Wagon Tongue* went to print in October. Add them to any membership list you are keeping and welcome them to membership. Remind them of the meetings and special events of the MVHA.

**Crawley, David & Martha (P)** 406-682-5348

1 Dutchman Trail

Cameron, MT 59720 (Summer residents)

**Membership update** 2017 memberships are now due as you receive your renewal application. Almost all of you have taken care of business and the MVHA has received your membership for 2016. Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2017 membership is due during January, February or March or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue.

**Memberships are now \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor.** If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

The Board of Directors has voted to have a membership dues increase in January 2017 All memberships starting in January 2017 will be for the newly voted amount... **Student \$10, Individual \$15, Family \$20. Business \$50, Patron \$100, and Benefactor \$500.**

The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley.

If anyone needs a ride to a meeting or program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

#### **Member News**

**Jan Elpel**, MVHA member, recently published her historical novel, *Berrigan's Ride*, for the folks of Madison County who know and love the area. See for your reading pleasure column for more info.

**Jan Smith, Vicky Gordon, Keith Axberg and Larry Love**, all MVHA members participated in the Ennis Community Christmas concert, Appalachian Winter, a stirring cantata containing traditional carols. Larry and Jan also sang a duet of the Christmas Song. Keith was in a trio, "The Silent Knights" singing Silent Night and a duet "Lullaby at

Christmas with Barb Pearson. Vicky Gordon was accompanist for the whole concert.

#### **Memories**

**Ralph Dean Davis** passed away on Oct. 3, 2016. Ralph was born in Bozeman, MT to Ralph and Lucille Davis. He grew up in Deer Lodge, MT where his father was a conductor on the railroad and his mother was a school teacher. After serving in the military, Ralph moved back to Deer Lodge where he met and married Ruth Dawn Theriault. He worked at the Kerr Dam in Polson and he was given the opportunity to transfer to Ennis to work for the Montana Power Company down in Bear Trap Canyon at the power plant. He retired from there and he and Ruth spent the rest of their lives in the Madison Valley.

**Doris I March (Cousins) Keyser** passed away on October, 2016, at her home in Billings. She was born to Charles and Maude March on Sept. 25, 1932 in Cathy, ND. She attended country schools and graduated from Carrington High School in 1950. After graduation, she boarded a bus to Alabama to marry classmate and soldier, Thomas C. Cousins. In 1990, Doris married Kerry Keyser and moved to Ennis for two years until Kerry retired from the Highway Patrol and they moved to Billings.

**John Peterson**, MVHA member, passed away on Oct. 12, 2016 in Toston, MT. He was born September 12, 1948 in Blackfoot, Idaho to Mark (Bud) and Phyllis Peterson. John graduated from Ennis High School and during his high school years he was a good ranch hand, cowboy, helped with potato harvests and was an excellent long distance runner in track. He joined the Marine Corps and after his service he headed to Alaska and lived there for 40 years. He worked in the maintenance field, sawyer, logging, trapping, equipment operator, commercial fishing and fish hatcheries.

**Harry Arthur Odden, Jr.**, long time MVHA member, passed away Oct. 12, 2016 in Anchorage, Alaska. Harry was born in Harlowtown, MT on Sept. 25, 1934 to Marguerite and Harry Odden. In 1946 when he was 11 years old, his family moved to Sheridan where he grew up. He graduated from Sheridan High School in 1953 and the University of Montana in 1957. While in college he met his future wife. He moved to Alaska and married his wife, Marian, on July 3, 1958. Harry taught in the Anchorage School System until he went to work for the Goodyear Tire Company retiring from Goodyear.. He spent many of his last years sharing his time between Sheridan and Anchorage and maintained many close friends in both places. When he was visiting in Sheridan, he would drive over to Ennis accompanied (*cont pg 3*)

*(Continued from page 2)*

by Dick Todd to the monthly history meetings. He was an avid historian and MVHA looked forward to his history stories. His mom and dad were active participants of the Madison County History Association, which was the group that compiled and printed *Pioneer Trails and Trials* and *Progressive Years*.

**Phillip Chester Loucks** passed away on October 29, 2016 at the Madison Valley Medical Center. He was born in Plentywood, MT on May 2, 1925 to Harry D. and May (Vannice) Loucks. He was raised on the family farm north of Redstone, MT. He graduated from Redstone School in 1943 and served in the Army Air Corp. Phil married June Phelps on Nov. 2, 1948. Phil has served as Madison County Sheriff and Madison Valley Hospital administrator as well as a Montana Highway Patrol officer.

**George B. (Jud) Foreman, Jr** passed away October 30, 2016 at his home in Ennis, MT. He was born in Petaluma, CA on May 19, 1936 and grew up in Marin County, CA: Sausalito and Mill Valley and attended Cal Berkeley. He served in the United States Air Force and after discharge began working for IBM and then Healthcare Information Systems which led him to meeting Lynn his wife of 23 years. Jud and Lynn have been residents of Ennis for 11 years.

**Kelly Ann Kivlin** passed away on Nov. 4, 2016. She was born on August 22, 1962 to Lois and Bob Kivlin in Baraboo, Wis. She attended college in Madison, Wis. and lived all over the United States before fulfilling her childhood dream to live in Montana. Kelly managed the McAllister Inn restaurant in McAllister, MT at the time of her passing.

**Gerald "Jerry" Morgan** passed away on Nov. 8, 2016 in Belgrade, MT. He was born on June 22, 1935 to Neil Lucas and Mary Ann "Maude"(Wallace) Morgan. The family moved to Ennis, MT when Jerry was 11 years old because of Jerry's asthma. The creative genius of Neil and Maude inspired the "El Western Motel" they built in Ennis in 1946 and it still welcomes fishermen, tourists and hunters today. Jerry graduated from Ennis High School in 1953 and went on to Montana State College graduating in 1957 with a degree in business. After graduation, he promptly moved to Huston, Texas to work for Humble Oil Company. Jerry quickly found out he was not a company man or a Texan but brought back to Montana the best part of the Lone Star State, the love of his life, wife Harriet Inez. They married in Smithville, TX on December 6, 1958 before leaving for Montana. Guaranteeing an audience for the rest of his life, Jerry returned to school and obtained a history teaching degree **3**

and began teaching in 1962 at Willson Junior High in Bozeman, MT and then moved to Manhattan Junior High in Manhattan, MT in 1969. Jerry loved teaching to the very depth of his soul and was eager to return every Monday morning. *Memory submitted by Harriet Morgan. Thank you, Harriet.*

**Ann Balkovetz Storey**, MVHA honorary member, based away November 9, 2016 in Bozeman, MT at the age 102. She was born on July 14, 1914 in Whitehall, MT. A memorial service will be held at a later date and Ann's memory will be printed in a future issue.

**Evelyn June Phelps Loucks** passed away November 10, 2016 at the Madison Valley Medical Center in Ennis, MT. She was born in Scobey, MT on Sept. 19, 1928 to Jasper and Jenny (Severson) Phelps. She was raised on the family farm south of Redstone and graduated from Plentywood school in 1946. Evelyn married Phillip Loucks on Nov. 2, 1948. She followed Phillip to the Madison Valley and Ennis and was cook at the Ennis schools for 25 years. *This is a first for the Wagon Tongue as memories for both Phillip and Evelyn are printed in the same issue as Phillip passed away 12 days before Evelyn.*

**Robert "Bob" Bruce Collier** passed away November 12, 2016. He was born in Oakland, CA to Robert Collier and Mildred Thomas on November 13, 1940. Bob worked at General Motors in Oakland, then became a journeyman in body and framework. He married his wife, Carole, on March 17, 1962 and in 1971 packed up their children and belongings into a produce truck and moved to Ennis, settling temporary at the Stalcup Ranch. Bob secured work at the talc mine and bought a home and settled in Jeffers to raise his family. Throughout his years, Bob worked as a carpenter, mechanic and truck driver, finishing out his years of work being self employed. In his retirement, he enjoyed helping at D & D.

**Ruth Beecher Klatt** passed away on November 19, 2016 at the Madison Valley Manor. She was born July 14, 1924 on a farm in Fullerton, ND where she attended country school before going into Ellendale for high school. She married Cecil Klatt on July 21, 1944 and the young couple moved to the Madison Valley in 1946 after purchasing the Lockhart Ranch up Wall Creek in the Gravelly Range. Ruth was only 22 years old and due to the remoteness of the ranch, she had a lot of hard work with no electricity, no hot water but a steady stream of guests. She canned jar after jar of wild meat and vegetables from her garden. Ruth and Cecil bought a house in Jeffers to be closer to school for their children in 1951. Later after selling *(continued page 4)*



(Cont from page 4) after Otis Whitney established his ranch after buying the "Old Tex" Ranch.) In this cabin Otis and his family, as well as James Saunders, settled for the winter of 1864-65.

One cold night they heard an unfamiliar noise in the house and Mr. Whitney, getting up to see what it was, stepped in cold water. After calling Mr. Saunders, they concluded to carry the ladies on their backs to safety, and after getting their loads in position, they made haste for Whitney Point, which was then called Lookout Point. Upon reaching Odell Creek, it was found to be a raging torrent and the only available abode was a haystack. They remained there for the rest of the night. The next day they managed to get Mr. Whitney started off with the ladies to Virginia City. There he secured accommodations for them for the rest of the winter. He returned to the scene and found that Mr. Saunders had carried all the valuable articles from the house to a place of security. They set to work building a cabin on the West bank of Whitney Creek, situated near Whitney Point about sixty feet southwest of the bridge which is across the creek at the Whitney Place and about thirty feet from it.

*Otis Whitney story will continue in the April edition.*

++++  
***The Woodworth House*** history continued from the *October Wagon Tongue*.

We left the John Woodworth house built in 1900 over looking the Madison River. John and Alice Woolworth did not have any children so the house passed to Harold Kilner, son of Alice's niece, Elizabeth and her husband Morris H. Kilner.

The Clarks inherited the house from Harold and his wife and hope it will always be in the family. Both Danette and Gayle are long time Madison Valley residents: Danette is fifth generation and Gayle is fourth generation. The two have known each other all of their lives. Gayle is a retired shop teacher at Ennis High School and Danette worked for Dr. Losee.

When the house was built in 1900, it cost \$4000 and had the latest in modern conveniences including maid's quarters over the kitchen, a butler's pantry and electricity from a Delco power plant out back.

Woodworth homesteaded the land, about 500 acres six miles south of Ennis to raise cattle, horses and run a dairy. He sold butter in town. Those butter churns and cream cans are still around, Danette says.

In 1905, Ennis Lake dam was built, covering more than 300 acres of Woodworth land in water. The family then harvested large blocks of ice from the lake in winter and sold them in town. The ice cutting equipment came with the house.

"That is one of the things that makes the Clarks' restoration of the mansion so unique." says Danette. "Everything was here. Two generations of everything."

When the Clarks inherited the house, they inherited 91 years of accumulated antiques and junk.

"There were mounds and mounds of junk," Danette says. "In the coal shed, the ice house, the back porch, the basement. We had to take underwear out of the drawers and food out of the cupboards."

The basement was full to the 7 foot 6 inch ceiling with magazines and newspapers—all stacked according to date and tied in bundles with string—paper bags and cardboard boxes, grocery lists, boxes of old photographs, used tin cans, letters and every tax notice ever received, old calling cards and box holders. "They had saved everything" Danette says. "We took pickup loads, horse trailer loads, load after load of garbage, out of the basement."

But the house was also a 91 year old treasure chest full of riches. "There was a little bit of everything" Danette says. "That's what makes it so special. Over time I dug into a trunk and found a quilt. It was wonderful."

Along with many trunks and quilts, there were rooms of mint condition antique furniture and furnishings: a working Victrola they found in a closet under the stairs with records in their original jackets; the antique organ that had to be ferried across the Madison River to reach the house more than 90 years ago; a 100 year old spinning wheel; all the many beautiful carved oak dressers, headboards, buffets and rockers; and an original hanging light complete with the original light bulbs.

There were always surprises. "I found a little boy's train in a secret compartment and I just screamed," Danette says. The train dates back to the 1880's.

Danette also found a ruby ring in the dish towel drawer and old out of date paper money in a box full of papers. Gayle found antique tools beneath an old cot. Under the carpets they discovered old newspapers as old as the carpet. "We just rolled back the carpet and sat down and started reading," Danette says. "We never found anything real exciting in the walls, but the kids left things in the walls for other generations."

Something unusual about the house is that no children ever lived there. That could explain why all the woodwork and furnishings looked as new as the day they were purchased.

*Woodworth house history to be continued in April issue*

*Treasure Home from Bozeman Chronicle Feb 3, 1991 by Barb Smith The stately Woodworth mansion has returned to former elegance*





# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 15 issue 2

Madison Valley History Association

April 2017

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat:** Rain! It is raining! All winter we have praised and wondered about the lack of snow and cursed the drying wind. But, somebody has finally got the rain dance right, and we have rain.

This winter has been a good time for the Madison Valley History Association. On January 23 community members were present to hear Peggy Shumsky give an excellent presentation on the history of cardiac rehabilitation. In February, Historian Ken Egan used his book, *Montana 1864* as a basis for his talk on the year Montana became a territory of the "States." And of course on March 17, the MVHA had its Irish Stew Fund Raiser, which was very successful this year, clearing nearly \$280.

On April 20<sup>th</sup> the MVHA featured John Gecho talking about the McAtee family and Cameron, Montana. In May the MVHA will have its annual membership organization meeting for election of Board members. This meeting will be a pot luck and will feature Lynne Mahan speaking about her relative, Hughie Call, who wrote novels and a memoir about sheep ranching in the Madison Valley. We are also hoping to have a small auction as a fund raiser. The MVHA is looking for a few items to offer at the auction. If you have an item of novel or historic interest please contact one of the Board Members. The June meeting will feature the first woman elected to Congress, Montana's own Jeannette Rankin as presented by Mary Jane Bradbury, an independent scholar and actress.

The MVHA has many projects that it would like to get under way or continue, and we are looking for sponsors to fund or partially fund and, in some cases, manage them. Below is a partial list of possible projects:

- (1) Completion of Cataloging. Last Summer we had a professional historian who got us started cataloging our collection. The MVHA would like to pay someone who would continue with the cataloging. Last year we spent just over \$3,800 for about three months work. We expect that there is about 18 months to 2 years of work left to be done.
- (2) Signage for the museum. This project includes funding and placing a large sign at the highway entrance of the museum. We are not sure of cost for this project but expect it would be between \$2,000 and \$5,000. We are also looking for funding and a manager to work on signs and display captions inside the museum.
- (3) Parking dedicated for overnight parking of tourist motor homes. The MVHA was recently approached about using some parking space for people using motor homes or caravans to tour our Madison Valley. All MVHA would be obligated to provide is parking space. This would mean that we would have people parked near the museum who would likely want to see it and perhaps make small donations. Unfortunately we do not have a parking lot large enough to handle motor homes as well as visitors to the museum.

These are just a few of the ideas the MVHA Board of Directors believes would enhance the Museum and how it serves our community. As always we are looking for your input and assistance in ensuring your Madison Valley Museum is one of the best in Southwest Montana. Your Wagon Master, Lee Robison

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**MVHA Raffle.** Kevin and Marty Brenneke generously donated a 1983 Browning Ducks Unlimited 12 gauge shot gun with case. You will find the picture and information about this gun enclosed with your Wagon Tongue. MVHA is asking all members to help out by selling raffle tickets for this raffle. Clip off the order blank to order your tickets. All we need is your name and address and check for number of tickets sold. List the names and addresses of all folks you sell tickets to on a separate piece of paper. The treasurer and her committee will do the rest and all your tickets purchased will go into the raffle box. Thank you for helping out on this raffle. Money received from this raffle go to finishing the newest building. if you live here or come to visit this summer come by the museum and see the new building. This summer raffle has been our best fundraiser over the past several summers and we thank you for helping.

**Membership:** The following are new members since the *Wagon Tongue* went to print in January. Add them to any membership list you are keeping and welcome them to membership. Remind them of the meetings and special events of the MVHA.

**Carlson, Claude and Claudia** (F) 406-223-1727

P.O. Box 374

McAllister, MT 58740

**Clark, Joan** (I) 682-7441

Ennis, MT 59729

**Cummings, Dan** (I) 581-9007

322 Ennis Lake Road

Ennis, MT 59729

**Membership update** 2017 memberships are now due as you receive your renewal application. Almost all of you have taken care of business and the MVHA has received your membership for 2016. Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2017 membership is due during April, May or June or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. The Board of Directors has voted to have a membership dues increase in January 2017 All memberships starting in January 2017 will be for the newly voted amount...**Student \$10, Individual \$15, Family \$20.**

**Business \$50, Patron \$100, and Benefactor \$500.** If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

If anyone needs a ride to a meeting or program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

**Member News** Long time MVHA member, **Polly Todd**, was selected by her peers to be Queen of Hearts for Valentine's Day at the Tobacco Root Mountains Care Center in Sheridan.

**Cleo Wages**, mother of MVHA member, Jo Thompson, was selected to be Queen for Valentine's Day at the Madison Valley Manor. **2**

**Cecil Klatt** was selected King and he is the brother of MVHA member, Lester Klatt.

**Jules Klinf "Duke" Gustafson** was recently selected to be inducted posthumously into the Montana Cowboy Hall of Fame. Duke was married to long time MVHA member and founder of the MVHA, Shirley Sue Jeffers Gustafson. Both Duke and Shirley are deceased.

The **MVHA** made the Madisonian Lifestyle page with *Celebrating their Founder* and a nice article about the annual William Ennis Birthday Party. All the board members were pictured. Check it out.

### **Memories**

The *Wagon Tongue* has been getting favorable feedback on the memories of our members and long time Madison Valley residents who have passed on. Please help by sharing your stories and memories of deceased members or residents to the *Wagon Tongue*. Obituaries from local newspapers will not be reprinted. We are looking for stories that will expand on the deceased lives, genealogy and contributions, etc. to the history of the Madison Valley. The *Madison County Pioneer Trails and Trials* and *Progressive Years* have helped but not everyone's family history is included there and sometimes there are good stories that have never been printed. You do not have to worry about penmanship, grammar, sentence structure or spelling, so help out if you have a story to tell. Your editor will take care of that. The *Wagon Tongue* does not want anyone excluded or limited to just a few sentences because of lack of stories.

**Denise (Deegee) Keller** passed away on Dec. 15, 2016 in Great Falls, MT. Denise was born May 23, 1946, to Leland (Sport) and Alice Shelton Keller in Butte. While just an infant, the family moved to the Shelton ranch at Cameron owned by her grandparents, Sam and Eula Shelton. The family soon moved to their own ranch south of Ennis and she graduated from Ennis High School in 1964. She went to business school in Billings and then studied fashion design at the Trap Hagen School of Art and design in New York. She was a self taught artist and also studied under several well known artists.

**Edna M. Schoenek Lay**, long time MVHA member, passed away on Jan. 21, 2017 in Las Vegas, NV. She was born on March 23, 1923 to Ferd and Johanna Hubner Schoenek. The Schoeneks built a house at the South boundary of the Missouri Flats. There was a natural spring there and Edna's mother had a big garden and canned vegetables and berries, as well as elk meat and fish. In the summer her father farmed and built trail on Beaver Creek in the National Forest.

*Continued on pg 3*

*Continued from pg 2*

Gradually the Schoeneks accumulated land bought from other homesteaders until their total holdings were 1500 acres. They sold out to Peter Anderson of the Ruby Valley and moved to Ennis, bought the Fitzgerald Hotel and Cabins and operated that for many years. (editor's note: The hotel was then called the Schoenek Hotel. Then was sold to Maurice Hickey..thus the Hickey Motel and the area is now named the Lone Elk Mall.) Edna graduated from Ennis High School in 1941. Edna went on to school to be a chiropractor and married John H. Lay. Edna contributed several stories for the *Wagon Tongue*, lived in Bozeman, MT in the summer and Las Vegas, NV in the winters. *Pioneer Trails and Trials* Edna Schoenek Lay, DC pg 160

**Donna Rae Wagner** passed away Feb. 8, 2017 in Ennis, MT. Donna was born on October 19, 1941 to Donald and Florence Snow in San Jose, CA. She married Robert Wagner in 1961. After moving to San Diego, CA., Donna began working for Hewlett Packard while she attended night school to earn her degree as an electronics technician. She went on to become the first female electronics technician at Hewlett Packard. She eventually moved to Ennis, MT and met John Bouch and spent time between Delaware and Montana. They settled in Twin Bridges, where she was able to fulfill a lifelong dream of working as a librarian.

**George Charles Schabarker** passed away Feb. 14, 2017. He was born in Ennis, MT to Fred and Anne Schabarker. He lived the majority of his life in Ennis and graduated from Ennis High School in 1948. He played on the first football team that was formed after WWII was over. He enlisted in the Marine Corp Reserve and after the Korean War broke out, he went active duty Air Force.

He married Dorothy Wells and moved to Montana. He worked at various ranches, was custodian at Ennis Elementary School, did carpentry work and finished his working career at the talc mine.

The Schabarker family history in the Madison Valley goes back a long way. The early family arrived in Bozeman in 1882 by train. Henry Schabarker was born in Badenbaden, Germany and came to the United States at a young age. He married Lamira L. Schweitzer and lived in New York for some time before coming to Bozeman. They ran the first rooming house in Bozeman. They then moved to the Madison Valley and lived for a time at Meadow Creek on a ranch. George, George's grandfather, grew up to be a cowboy and rancher. In 1894 he married Minnie Helen Buel and they lived on a ranch on North Meadow Creek now owned by Lynn 3

and Devonna Owens. The Owens still call the ranch the "Schabarker Place". Fred, George's father, was born to that union and married Anne Johnson.

*Pioneer Trails and Trials* "Schabarker" by Darlene McDowell pg 159-160

**Rieta Bausch Calvert** passed away on March 13, 2017 at the Danville Regional Medical Center in Danville, Va. She was born in Ennis, MT to Charlie and Mamie Lee Kinder Bausch. She graduated from Ennis High School in 1945. She married Cecil Calvert and resided in Virginia. Her brother is MVHA member David Bausch.

### **Memorials for 2016**

Memorials were given to the MVHA in 2016 in memory of:

Mary Ann Alger

Becky Grauman

Ray Hippe

Marvin Love

Ann Storey

Plan to give memorials to departed family and friends as a way to receive a tax deductible donation and support your museum.

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*Otis Crocker Whitney His Life and Times 1815-1892*

### **compiled by Dan Whitney continues with part 3**

In the January issue, we left Otis Whitney and his family and James Saunders escaping the gorge waters and building a new cabin on the banks of Whitney Creek.

One year later, February, 1866, Thomas Whitney was born in this new cabin. They finished the winter there. At odd spells they managed to move the old Tex cabin from the bank of the river to a spot about 200 feet above the cabin previously erected. They put it up about twenty feet to the west of the creek, using a large flat triangular rock for the doorstep.

There is some confusion about the number and fate of the children of Otis and Eliza. In the *History of Montana, 1739-1885*, in the chapter on Madison County, there is a paragraph on Otis C. Whitney. Therein is made the statement that they had seven children, named Jane, William, Dallas and James, all deceased with Thomas H., Emma O and Ellen Maria living, all born in Montana. In "*The Whitney Family*," by Aylean (Whitney) Harris, granddaughter of Thomas Henry Whitney, she relates that when Thomas was born on Feb. 18, 1866, he had the distinction of being the first white child born in the Madison Valley. She says, "Many cowboys and Indians for miles around came to see this little white baby boy."

Emma married Charles Armitage, Ellen Maria married Elmer Burger and Thomas married Ida Thompson from Wisconsin. *continued on pg 4*

*Continued from pg 3*

Early in the spring of 1865, Mrs. Whitney and daughter, Zelfia Parks, returned to the ranch and started a dairy, the first one in Madison County. As stated before, the Whitney family used cattle to draw the wagons from Lake Pepin to Denver; these cows furnished them an abundance of butter on their journeys. They even sold some of it. After milking the cows in the morning, the bucket of milk was tied to the back part of the wagon. At night they always had fresh butter and buttermilk. After landing in the Madison Valley, Mr. Whitney had about thirty five head of milk cows. It was from these same cows that Mr. Whitney started into the cattle business.

Your author/compiler has found additional details relating to the beginning of the dairy business in the Madison Valley.

O.C. Whitney became one of the first Madisonians to profit from the dairy market. Whitney, like William Ennis, had forsaken the Denver diggings to move farther north. Arriving in the Valley during August, 1864, he purchased the holding of an ex-cohort of Jack Slade. In 1865, after driving his cattle to the Valley from Utah, Whitney started a dairy the following year and soon was "milking about 35 cows". In addition, Whitney turned to the production of butter and in one year he made as much as 5,000 pounds. Selling milk, butter and cheese brought Whitney, in 1866, the handsome profit of seven thousand dollars. Instantly the manufacture of butter and cheese became a chief occupation of Ennis and Whitney's other neighbors.

Over the years the dairy business remained an important income to the Madison ranchers. The dairy business continued to yield a larger return than beef cattle as long as Virginia City remained the Territory's capitol, the gold camps maintained large populations, and the sale of dairy goods did not become overburdened with dairymen. The Madison Valley supported six dairies until the turn of the century. (*"History of the cattle industry in the Madison Valley"* Carl Louis Yeckel, *The University of Montana, 1969*)

In the spring of 1865, Mr. Whitney bought the Odell Hay Ranch from Andrew Odell. It was located a mile up the river. In a few years Mr. Whitney fenced both ranches into one. This gave him, a large ranch on which he put about 400 tons of good hay. By means of this hay, Mr. Whitney entered into the business of buying and selling cattle. *Early Days in the Madison Valley* by James S. Spray

In the winter of 1865-66, Mr. Whitney erected a large two story log house and a Whip saw (saw mill.) That saw mill, on the north fork of Bear Creek, furnished the lumber for this house. The

house contained two rooms downstairs and two rooms upstairs. One winter a huge snowdrift covered the house. The Whitney family remained in bed the next day until a neighbor dug them out of it. Mr. Whitney had been wondering why daylight never came.

Emma and Maria were born in this house. Maria was known as Rie.

In 1866 Mr. Whitney imported the first bull into the valley. It was a thoroughbred Durham. They continued in the dairy business until about 1890. In the latter sixties they made about 5,000 pounds of butter a year, selling it sometimes at one dollar a pound, later fifty, twenty and twenty-five cents a pound.

Mr. Whitney was the first man to raise barley in the valley. His first crop yielded eighty bushels in the acre. They sold for twenty-five cents a pound.

In 1867-68 Mr. Whitney built numerous other buildings near the point of the hill; a bunkhouse, barns and a chicken house. In 1878-79 he erected the present house. At the time of its completion, it was the first structure in the valley. This house was first a three room log house facing east. Next the Ed Pennell house which once stood in the present Morris pasture at the mouth of the Riblett Hollow, was purchased and placed endwise to the north side of the first building. Then a frame room for the kitchen was added to the north end and a wood shed was added to the kitchen. A coat of weather boarding was applied over the whole house, wainscoting was put in and a coat of plaster was applied. This house has three brick chimneys.

Later, in the early eighties, Mr. Whitney erected on the opposite side of the creek, one of the largest barns in the Valley. He added numerous sheds, thus making this barn one of the best accommodations for stock in the Valley. About this time he removed the old George Odell house, which stood at the southeast corner of section nine and at the foot of the Whitney Hill and placed it about seventy-five feet due north of the dwelling house. It was used as a dairy house.

In early days Mr. Whitney purchased a bunch of mustang mares from a party who had brought them from California. Here the bronco busting career of the riders of the valley was begun; Whitney, Joe and Jack Spray, and Henry and Will Thomson. A few of the largest mares became good work horses. They weighed from 1200 to 1500 pounds each. From the early seventies to the early nineties, these animals composed the working stock of the valley. They were the first band of horses purchased in the Valley. In those days the upper portion of the valley was used to range horses and cattle

*Continued from pg 4*

belonging to the citizens of the Valley.

In the next installment of the Whitney history will be the ferry boat business and bridge building.

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### **The Woodworth House history continued from January Wagon Tongue**

Correction: The name is Woodworth not Woolworth as was inadvertently printed in January issue. The computer spell checker did not recognize Woodworth and replaced Woolworth each time it was typed. Thanks to the sharp eyes of Bobby Klatt who brought it to my attention. So much for modern technology!

We left the Clarks commenting on how little wear and tear had occurred to the inside of the house over its first years....

"We've probably put more scratches on the fir woodwork than were ever put on the house in all those years." according to Danette.

The main part of the house hadn't changed much during those 91 years, but it had been added onto. The Clark's goal was to bring the mansion back to its former glory without modernizing it too much. With the help of friends and relatives, the Clarks have done most of the work themselves.

"It means so much more when you can do it yourself," Danette says. "It was so much fun."

They re-roofed, insulated, re-sided and replaced windows—all with materials either identical to the original house or with reproductions. If the Clarks couldn't find reproductions, they made what they needed, matching things like the wood molding that couldn't be replaced.

They began working on the house weekends, nights and summers in 1977, but the major remodeling began in 1986. On Easter Sunday 1990, they moved in. For Danette, her dream had finally come true.

The 5,000 square foot house is heated by sunshine and two pot bellied stoves the Clarks found in the basement, re-nicked and converted to pellet stoves.

Plaster walls were patched and wallpapered. It took 180 rolls of wallpaper and months of looking for paper that fit the Victorian house, Danette says.

The family also built on a two story addition at the back of the house with a large sunroom and laundry room on the lower level and a huge bedroom, walk-in closet and bath upstairs. But they were careful to make addition look like it was part of the original home.

'We arranged the whole kitchen around an original cupboard and the wood cookstove.' according to 5

Danette and the microwave is in an old dumb waiter. "Gayle made all the cupboards," she says of the once fairly cupboard less kitchen. "The panels in the cupboard doors came out so they can be replaced with tin punch or stained glass." Danette has also found a tin punch cover for the dishwasher.

"It's done and we love it." she says of all of the years of hard work on her dream house. "That's been our reward."

The Clarks have a wonderful view of Ennis Lake, but ironically, Gayle says hie great-great uncle would never have built the mansion there if he'd known that just five years later, the lake would drown out most of his acreage.

The MVHA give special thanks to Danette and Gayle for preserving a piece of history and sharing the historical Woodworth house with the MVHA for their field trip series.

Treasure Home from *Bozeman Chronicle* Feb. 3, 1991 by Barb Smith *The stately Woodworth mansion has returned to former elegance*

+++++

### **James W. Saunders continued from January 2017 issue.**

James Saunders was the friend of Otis Whitney and the one who got caught in the gorge with him. We left off with his family and their connections and contributions to the valley.

Mr. Saunders owned a "Man Eater", a deep bay stallion which they said would rather eat a man for breakfast than the choicest of hay. In the latter eighties, Saunders, Sam Smith and George Burns imported "Nosuch" into the valley and each took turns keeping him. "Mingo and "Elton" were quite tame and gentle, but "Man-eater" was a terror.

Besides being a good blacksmith, Mr Saunders was the best cribbage player in the valley. And almost every fall Mr. Saunders had a potato digger's bee. He would have a dozen or more to help him dig his spuds. A potato war would always come about with two generals and the rest volunteers for each side. Then the Irish, known as Murphys, would fly thick and fast in the air. Theodore would drive the team and Tom Whitney would hold the plow. Sometimes it would become a real frenzy.

I said to Jim one day, "Aren't you afraid we will throw all your potatoes away?" "No" he said, "That's what I had you raise them for." If I had space and time I could write a fairly good sized book on those episodes which happened on the old Saunders' place. In the fall of 1903, Mr Saunders sold out to Lee Dillon for \$2,200. He and his family went back to the states where they came from, first going to Bryon, Ohio. There they all stayed except Jim. He went to his old home in Maine. Mr. Saunders only stayed with his sister about one year *continued pg 6*

**For Your Reading Pleasure**

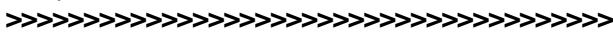
**Montana 1864 Emigrants, and Gold in the Montana Territorial Year** by Ken Egan, Jr. This is the history of the year that Montana became a state. Ken was our speaker at the February monthly meeting.

**Looking Ahead**

**April 20, 2017 4:00pm First Madison Valley Bank** Downstairs meeting room Presentation on the McAtees and the Cameron area by John Gecho.

**May 18, 2017 Annual Membership meeting** pot luck and will feature Lynne Mahan speaking about her relative, Hughie Call, who wrote novels and a memoir about sheep ranching in the Madison Valley. Time and location TBA

**June 22, 2017 4.00pm** Program will feature the first woman elected to Congress, Montana’s own Jeannette Rankin as presented by Mary Jane Bradbury, an independent scholar and actress. Watch for location

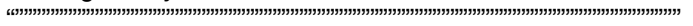


**Historic Plaques for Downtown Ennis Business Buildings**

Zoe Todd and Liz Applegate, both residents of Ennis and members of the Madison Valley History Association, are seeking your help with our Historic Plaques Project. Beautiful plaques containing historical information will be mounted on the outside of the old buildings in downtown Ennis. The exterior placement of the plaques will make it easy for everyone, residents as well as visitors, to appreciate the architecture and story of each building.

We are currently researching the old buildings of Main Street. If you have any information to share such as ownership or tenant names and dates, old photos of interiors and/or exteriors, we’d love to hear from you. We can scan your photos and return your originals, and welcome digital images via email. Another way you can contribute is by making a donation to the Ennis Main Street Historic Plaques account at First Madison Valley Bank.

If you would like to share historical information, or have any questions, please contact us: Zoe Todd (682-4360) Liz Applegate (682-3288 or email: [liz.billapplegate@gmail.com](mailto:liz.billapplegate@gmail.com)).They look forward to hearing from you!



*Continued from pg 5*

and then returned to Bryon, Ohio. During the winter 1904-05 Saunders and one of the boys returned to the valley and stopped at Lee Dillon’s. In the fall of 1905, Mrs. Saunders and the rest of the children returned. Mrs. Saunders bought back the old place for \$4,000. She still owns it. Jim made his home there.

Millard erected the slaughter house and ran a butcher business until 1909. He then sold out his interest to Charley. Charley ran it for a number of years. During the war, Manley Holbert ran it. Later when Peter Hadzor ran the Ennis Meat Market in Ennis, he rented and used the slaughter house. **6**

**MVHA Board of Directors**

President: Lee Robison  
Vice-President John Gecho  
Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke  
Secretary: Otis Thompson  
Director: Jimmy Carlson  
Director: Devonna Owens  
Director: Larry Love

Historian and researcher: Don Black

Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate

Meetings and programs held monthly on the **third** Thursday of each month or as scheduled. Watch the *Madisonian*, posters and your email for details of time, place and program. Board meetings are held on the **first** Wednesday of each month at 10:00am, First Madison Valley Bank October to April. *The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be July 2017. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed.

Editor: Shirley Love whitneytranch@wispwest.net

Contributing editors:

*Madisonian* Obituaries

Dan Whitney *Otis Crocker Whitney His Life and Times* 1815-1892

Barb Smith *Bozeman Daily Chronicle* Feb. 3, 1991

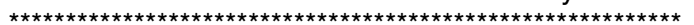
*Treasure House*

James S. Spray James W. Saunders *Early Days in the Madison Valley* pg 218-220

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**Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by First Madison Valley Bank**  
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On Saturday, August 18, 1923, while on a visit to Virginia City with his daughter, Eunice and her husband, Mr. Saunders dropped dead on the street. He was buried in the Jeffers graveyard.

This concludes the James Saunders history



**History Tidbits**

When weary travelers going West reached the mountains, much to their good fortune, they were met by Jim Bridger, the renowned mountain guide. He was a real character but knew the mountains well, and drew a map on a buffalo hide, which served to direct them through the treacherous mountain passes to the beautiful Madison Valley in the Montana Territory. From Aylean (Whitney)Harris

**The Whole Nine Yards** American fighter planes in WW2 had machine guns that were fed by a belt of cartridges. The average plane held belts that were 27 feet (9 yards) long. If the pilot used up all his ammo, he was said to have given it “the whole nine yards”.

# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 15 issue 3

Madison Valley History Association

July 2017

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

So much to do and so little time to do it.

Recently, a member pointed out that the Madison Valley History Association had not completed a task we had committed to do. And it is true that there are many, many things that the MVHA needs to do that take a looooooong time to get done. Although the task identified seemed small, seemingly requiring only minimal attention, it is one of many on a long list to-dos, many of them required just to make sure the Museum is open, clean, neat, organized, and solvent. As was pointed out, nobody has stepped up to get this task done and the Board is kept pretty busy just making sure the basics are in order. So it remains on the list of "Things we need to find time to do." The Board members, indeed the entire MVHA, does appreciate members and others who have ideas for making our Museum and our organization better. Whether your contribution is greeting visitors at the museum for 3 hours or helping build or paint the interior of the new building, or making signs for our displays or a combination of these tasks or others, yours is a contribution that continues to make it possible to preserve and display the history of the Madison Valley. I am sure whole Madison Valley appreciates it.

But there it is; those who step forward to put forth a bit more than others to ensure that the MVHA has a great museum. Last year a member observed that the Museum would be much improved with a flag pole for displaying the Stars and Strips and the MVHA flag. She mentioned it to a board member who brought the idea to the board which thought it would be wonderful. Then she and her husband made it happen. They found the pole, peeled and polished it, poured the concrete and installed the pole at the Museum. As a result, anyone driving down Montana 287 can see the flag whenever the Museum is open. Whether these members feel a special pride in raising the flag on that pole they installed, I could not tell you; but when I raise the flag, I have a sense of pride, because I feel this is the way our flag should be displayed. (Now if somebody will just teach us how to fold Old Glory properly. . . .)

In the last newsletter, I mentioned a few projects the MVHA would like to get done. Accomplishing them requires some time on the part of someone to work with the Board on funding and/or organizing a fundraising campaign, develop a plan, involve other MVHA members, and either complete the work or find someone who can complete it. The projects I mentioned in the last newsletter are only a few ideas. I am sure there are many more things that will improve our museum and our organization. If you think of them, we want to hear them. Hopefully the members of Madison Valley History Association can get them done, and won't have to put them on the to-do list.

AA

**CAMERON** In April, John Gecho presented the monthly program about the McAtee family and the town of Cameron. Cameron was named for the pioneering Cameron family. The settlement was originally known as Bear Creek. Addison Bovey Cameron and his brother, James, took up desert claims here in 1886. Add Cameron had the first post office in his home 1890-93. Later he and Josie had a store and post office on the ground floor of a building and a dance or community hall on the upper floor. At different times the post office was in the home of Frank Kirby and the Boardmans. In 1919 the Cameron store building was purchased by Frank Falbaum, who moved it 6 miles down the road to take advantage of the highway business generated by tourists traveling between Ennis and Yellowstone Park. This angered the Bear Creek settlers and for years none of them would trade at the Cameron store. Does anyone know of the original location of Cameron?

From Names on the Face of Montana by Roberta Carkeek Cheney pg 40

**Membership:** The following are new members since the *Wagon Tongue* went to print in April. Add them to any membership list you are keeping and welcome them to membership. Remind them of the meetings and special events of the MVHA.

**Canals, Schon** (l) 406-599-5557

322 Ennis Lake Rd

Ennis, MT 59729

**Patton, Gordon L.** (F) 406-682-4884

1517 US Hwy 287 N

Cameron, M t 59720

**Membership update** 2017 memberships are now due as you receive your renewal application. Almost all of you have taken care of business and the MVHA has received your membership for 2016. Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2017 membership is due during July, August or September or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue.

**Memberships are now \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor.** If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729. Thank you to all renewing members who generously submitted your renewal memberships at the newly voted amount.

The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

If anyone needs a ride to a meeting or program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

#### **Member News**

One of our newest MVHA members, **Dan Cummings** and his daughter, Corinna Christensen received prizes and a free movie for being the 20,000th ticket purchased at the Madison Theatre.

**John and Toni Scully**, were honored by being Grand Marshals for the recent 4th of July parade in Ennis.

**Dona Lindsey**, was selected as Madison Valley Manor Volunteer of the year for 2017. She has given 40 years of service to the Manor and is a driving force behind the Madison Valley Manor Auxiliary.

**Lester Klatt** was honored in the Madisonian **2**

Volunteer Spotlight for his work on the Madison Valley Cemetery Board for the past 18 years. He developed the map and record of all the grave sites.

**Dottie Fossel** was reelected to the Madison Valley Medical Center Board of Trustees. She has served as Chair of the board for many years and will continue all her work to keep our hospital running smoothly.

**Lee Robison**, MVHA president, organized the 50th reunion of his class, the class of 1967

**Zoe Todd** was honored by the Madisonian under Volunteer Spotlight. She is a founder of the MVHA with 18 years of membership and has given back to the community since 1959 in many different ways most notably starting the Meals on Wheels and helping provide the Christmas dinner at Town Hall for many years.

#### **Memories**

The *Wagon Tongue* has been getting favorable feedback on the memories and genealogical information of our members and long time Madison Valley residents who have passed on. Please help by sharing your stories and memories of deceased members or residents to the *Wagon Tongue*. Obituaries from local newspapers will not be reprinted. We are looking for stories that will expand on the deceased lives, genealogy and contributions, etc. to the history of the Madison Valley. The two Madison Co. books: *Pioneer Trails and Trials* and *Progressive Years* have helped but not everyone's family history is included there and sometimes there are good stories that have never been printed. You do not have to worry about penmanship, grammar, sentence structure or spelling, so help out if you have a story to tell. Your editor will take care of the grammar. The *Wagon Tongue* does not want anyone excluded or limited to just a few sentences because of lack of stories. MVHA wants their history to be recorded and not forgotten.

**Martin (Marty) Crennen** passed away at St. Peter's Hospital in Helena on March 18, 2017. He was born On April 22, 1930 in Billings, MT to Janet and Martin Crennen who lived on a homestead in Musselshell County near Roundup, MT. When Marty was 1 1/2 years of age, his family moved to Gallatin Gateway, MT where his father purchased a farm. Marty attended school in Gallatin Gateway and then after 8th grade, Marty's parents moved to Bozeman, MT so he could attend Gallatin County High School. After high school graduation in 1948, Marty and several friends enlisted in the Navy. Upon discharge from the Navy, Marty enrolled in the School of Architecture at Montana State College. He graduated from Montana State in 1957 and his class was the first to graduate in the (continued on pg 3)



(continued from pg 2)

new Brick Breeden Field House. He married Margaret Ann Olson from Ennis, MT on June 2, 1957. They began married life in Great Falls, MT where Marty worked for Knight & VanTeylingen, Architects. In 1964, the family moved to Helena where Marty joined Joe Campeau in the firm of Campeau & Crennen, A.I.A. He remained a partner for 30 years until his retirement in 1994.

**Kerry Keyser** passed away March 26, 2017. Kerry was born in Butte, MT on Jan. 27, 1929 to S. Emmett Keyser and Thelma Dunbar Keyser. He spent his early years in Butte attending McKinley Elementary school and graduated from Butte High School. During the summer, Kerry spent many of his high school years living with his grandparents on the Silver Sage Ranch in Three Forks that later became a part of the Herbert G. Dunbar Ranches and Development Company. That too was a family business, run with his uncle and cousins as well as immediate family. He attended Montana State College. He married Marilyn Louise Helm on August 7, 1948. They lived on the ranch during their early years until he decided he could make a better living in a big city. His family headed to Billings, MT. In 1956, he joined the Montana Highway Patrol. He was transferred to Ennis in 1966. He was elected Madison County representative in 1976 and had the distinct honor of being the first active duty highway patrolman to be elected to the Montana State Legislature. Kerry rose up through the Republican party to become Minority Whip. His wife, Marilyn passed away unexpectedly in 1981. He retired from the Patrol after a 25 year career. He served on the Ennis School Board for 10 years and was an active member of Lions Club.

**Virginia (Ginny) Schabarker Segota** passed away April 2, 2017. She was born April 7, 1931 in a small house on Ennis Street to Fred and Anna Schabarker. Virginia graduated as valedictorian of her class at Ennis High School in 1949. Upon graduation, Virginia moved to Helena where she worked at Fort Harrison as a typist. She married Dan Segota, who she had met and dated in high school on July 1, 1950 at the Catholic Cathedral in Helena. The couple lived in Butte for a short time before returning to Ennis where Virginia spent the rest of her life. After raising her family, Virginia went to work for the Post Office and retired after 14 years. Ginny then worked at home doing bookkeeping and billing for Dan's contracting business.

**J. Hal Pasley** passed away on April 8, 2017 at 106 years old. He was born in Fulton, MO on Nov 12, 1910 to S.Reid and Myrtle Draper Pasley. He

moved to the Madison County in 1913 at age 3 with his parents. They purchased a ranch from Frank Selby and raised cattle and many other types of livestock. He attended grade school in Jeffers and graduated from Ennis High school in 1928. Hal went on to graduate from Western Montana College in Dillon in 1932. He taught school for 4 years in Cardwell and Harlowton. He married Mary Frances Brown Nelson in 1937. Hal began his second career in the automobile and garage business in Ennis and owned and operated Hal's Chevrolet for 25 years. In the late forties and throughout the fifties, he and his brother, Dar, also operated the Marshall Wells Hardware store in the old Woodman Lodge Hall. Then the site became the Economy Store and presently stands empty. Due to his successful Ennis business, Cadillac asked Hal to run the dealership in Butte in about 1961. He and Mary moved to Butte and she passed away in 1974. He owned that dealership until 1975 when he retired back to Ennis. He married Lucy Kidder Hoag in 1978. Hal had many passions including gardening, fishing and making up poetry which he recited and family members wrote down his poetry and made a booklet of the poems. MVHA is privileged to own a copy and Hal's poems have been printed in the *Wagon Tongue*. Since 4th of July has recently passed, you will find "The July Fourth Parade" in this issue.

**Merwyn Ralph Magee** passed away April 19, 2017 at his home in Ennis, MT. He was born on May 5, 1932 to Ellison and Amelia Sievert Megee in Bozeman, MT. Merwyn lived in Bozeman until 1946 when circumstances brought him to live with his Uncle Ora and Aunt Rose Megee of the Maple Grove Ranch near McAllister, MT. He graduated from Ennis High School in 1950 and lived and worked on his uncle's ranch until 1958. Merwyn married Joanne Cox in 1956. After leaving the ranch, the family moved to Wyoming where Merwyn worked as a camp roustabout in the oilfield until 1962. They then moved to Meeker, Colo. and Merwyn resumed ranch work until 1965. From there, they moved to Kansas City, Kansas and he worked for a veterinary pharmaceutical company for several years and his marriage was dissolved in 1973. In 1975 he met Adrienne Holmes Larson and they married on Feb. 14, 1976. He worked various jobs and worked in the insulation business for 18 years. He retired in 1996 and returned to Montana with Adrienne to live in Ennis. He now needed a hobby and most of you will remember him from the soy candles (Joy of Soy) he made and sold at various events in Southwestern Montana.

*(Memories continued from pg 3)*

**Dr. Ronald Losee (Doc)** passed away on May 14, 2017. He was born on Oct. 29, 1919 in Upper Red Hook, New York on his Granddad Teatro's apple farm. After a memorable childhood, when he was 12 years old, Doc decided that he wanted to be a doctor like his Granddad, Edwin K Losee and Great Granddad, John A. Losee. He graduated from Dartmouth and got accepted to Yale Medical School. He was conscripted into the Army and graduated with my M.D. and as Captain at the end of World War II. Those were troubling times but he came West with his wife, Olive, in a surplus Army Jeep that he painted blue. Daughter, Becky, was born in Kentucky and rode in the back of the Jeep. They discovered Ennis and the Madison Valley in 1949. Ennis needed a doctor and took a chance on this new doctor. Doc started his practice and was instrumental in getting the hospital built. Son, Jonathan, was born in 1950. Doc's story will continue with an article from the *Bozeman Chronicle*.

**Lloyd (Sunny) Smith Jr.** passed away on June 1, 2017. He was born Dec. 16, 1942 in Lovell, WY to Lloyd Sr. and Sarah (Mize) Smith. His parents returned to the Madison Valley when Sunny was one and resided near McAllister. He attended Ennis Schools and graduated from Ennis High School in 1961. Sunny started out working construction and then went to work for the Valley Garden Ranch for 15 years. In 1971 he met Janet Rustad and they were married on July 22, 1972 and in 1978 moved to the CB Ranch South of Cameron where he worked as manager until his retirement.

**Tom Morgan** passed away June 12, 2017. He was born May 12, 1941 in Hollywood, CA to Neil and Maude Morgan. At the age of five, his family moved to Ennis, MT to find a drier climate. His parents built the El Western Motel on the banks of O'Dell Creek just South of Ennis. He attended Ennis Schools and graduated from Ennis High School in 1959. Tom began fishing soon after the age of seven and started guiding fishing trips when he was 15 years old. His brother, Jerry bought Woody's Fly Shop in 1959 from Elwood Combs and Tom bought the shop in 1961. He attended Montana State College and he remained faithful to his fly fishing passion. He met and married Mona King in 1968. In 1969 he moved his young family to Clarkson, WA to sell boats on the Clearwater River. In 1970, he moved his family back to Ennis to help run the motel. His passion for fly fishing lead him to move his family to San Fransisco, CA when he purchased the R. L. Winston Rod Company in 1973. In 1976 Tom decided to move the R. L. Winston Rod Company to Twin Bridges, where it remains a bedrock

of the community. In the early 1980's, Tom and Mona divorced. In 1989, Tom met Pat McPherson and they married the following summer. Pat passed away in the fall of 1991. Tom sold R. L. Winston in the summer of 1991 just as the first sign of MS started to appear. In 1993, Tom was given a third chance at love and met and married Gerri Carlson. Tom always wanted to have a small fly rod company where he could work to perfect the perfect fly rod. Gerri learned to build fly rods and together they created hand crafted fly rods for 22 years. In February 2017, he and Gerry sold Tom Morgan Rodsmiths.

**Glen David Reinhardt** passed away June 16, 2017 at his home in Ennis, MT. He was born on May 15, 1941 in Wabasha, MN to John and Ruth Reinhardt. Glen served in the Army and then the Reserves from October 1959 to August 1967. Glen then moved to Montana where he met and married Loine Crist in 1968 and worked at the Yellowstone Talc mine for 30 years. He and Loine bought the Dairy Queen in 1995 from Larry and Ruby Gleason and worked that business until retiring.

**Christine Adele Jackson** Does anyone have any information on this lady? Obituary was in the *Madisonian* on Thursday, April 6th, 2017 and mass in her honor was held Wednesday, April 5th, 2017 at St. Patrick's Catholic Church. I need birthdate, death date, parent's names, and husband's name and/or maiden name. The only clues I have that she was part of part of the Madison Valley in her services and that she is buried at the Madison Valley Cemetery. Her mother's first name is Frances and quilts connected her to a Grandma Clark.

(Ediror's note) The Memories section of the Wagon Tongue is a genealogical record of folks who spent time in Ennis and the Madison Valley. When folks come looking for their roots, we at MVHA need to have basic information to start looking in the right direction. It is always a thrill when someone comes or calls asking for information and we know our work and research is paying off. If I can find special stories to go along with the genealogical information, I include that in the memories too. But stories are few and far between so not every memory is privileged to have a family story too. As I have requested many times, I need your stories to expand on these histories.+++++

**History Question?** The old Creamery in Ennis was located in the area east of the Riverside Motel (old Baker Motel) and to the west of Lion's Club Park. Bobby (Bates) Klatt and then the Ed Olson family (Margaret Ann (Olson) Crennen) lived there after it was a creamery. MVHA is looking for history of the creamery.



**For Your Reading Pleasure**

The 150 year anniversary of the death of Thomas Francis Meager is being celebrated this year.

Read or reread MVHA member, Gary Forney’s book *Thomas Francis Meager: Irish Rebel, American Yankee, Montana*

and *Immortal Irishman: The Irish Revolutionary who became an American Hero* by Timothy Egan

**Looking Ahead**

**Wednesday, August 9, 2017**, at 10 o’clock at the Cliff Lake school house Fred King (MVHA member) will present his history lecture of the Madison Valley sponsored by Madison River Ranch. You will need to bring your camp chairs and water but there is no Port-A-Potty. Lecture lasts 1 1/2 hours. Invite your friends, neighbors and anyone interested in history.

**Thursday, Aug 17, 2017** Field trip to Talc Mine. Meet at Lion’s Club Park at 9:30 am for car pooling. Bring brown bag lunch, water and good walking shoes.



**Unconventional Dr. Losee** *Bozeman Chronicle* Mar. 20, 2011 Jodi Hausen

Sitting at a computer in the cluttered second-floor office he calls “orthopedic jail,” Dr. Ron E. Losee plays a DVD that recounts his experience as a pioneering rural doctor and orthopedic surgeon. But while the computer may seem a technological leap for the bespectacled, bald 91-year-old, Doc Losee, as most know him, has never shied away from trying new things or speaking his mind.

And the self-narrated slide show, copied many times on a tall pile of DVDs, is evidence that, even at his age, he’s still educating people around the world.

In the late 1960s, faced with a spate of injured college athletes and others from Bozeman, Helena and Butte who complained that their knees “went out,” Losee began developing a physical test to detect a torn anterior cruciate ligament, or ACL, in a patient’s knee. At the time, there were only a few orthopedic surgeons in the state and none in Bozeman or Helena.

That test, commonly referred to by orthopedists today as the pivot-shift test, is also known as the Losee maneuver, according to [eorthopod.com](http://eorthopod.com). But Losee didn’t stop there.

He also pioneered a surgery to repair the ACL damage he detected with his new test. And although the doctor says the surgical treatment for torn ACLs has changed over the years, orthopedists around the world still seek out his knowledge and experience. Last year, in fact, he gave a talk in Bordeaux, France, he said.

His work is world renowned, but as Losee modestly pointed out, he wasn’t alone in his quest to fix bum knees.

“I was just one of the people who was having fun figuring it out,” he said. “I figured out what was going on and how to fix it. It’s wonderful to have the gift from mankind. But if not me, then someone else” would have figured it out.

Ennis medicine in the early days

Losee grew up in the Hudson River Valley about an hour north of New York City and graduated from Yale Medical School. He tried doctoring in some bigger cities, but preferred the quiet serenity of rural life.

**Board of Directors**

- President: Lee Robison
- Vice-President: John Gecho
- Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke
- Secretary: Otis Thompson
- Director: Marty Brenneke
- Director: Jimmy Carlson
- Director: Larry Love

Historian and researcher: Don Black

Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate

Meetings and programs held monthly on the **third** Thursday of each month or as scheduled. Watch the *Madisonian*, posters and your email for details of time, place and program. Board meetings are held on the **first** Wednesday of each month at 10:00am, MVHA office at museum May to September. *The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be October 2017. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed.

Editor: Shirley Love whitneypranch@wispwest.net

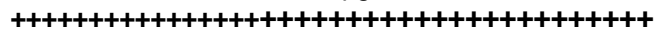
Contributing editors: *Madisonian* Obituaries

Marge Crennen Marty Crennen obituary

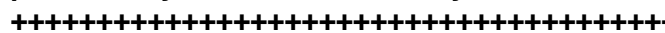
Jimmy Hayden and Otis Thompson *What Happened to the Eagle?*

Jodi Hausen *Bozeman Daily Chronicle* March 20, 2011 Ennis “Unconventional Dr. Losee”

Roberta Carkeek Cheney *Names on the Face of Montana* Cameron pg 60



**Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by First Madison Valley Bank**



In 1949, he agreed to move West and take a job as the only doctor to the few hundred Madison Valley residents. He still has the old blue Jeep, stored in a shed beside his driveway, that brought him, his wife Olive and their baby girl to Ennis. The Jeep is a regular feature in the annual Ennis July Fourth parade.

When he first set up shop, Losee saw patients in the downtown log cabin home on “Poop Creek” (so named the human and animal excrement it carried) where the Losees lived. Patients sometimes used the Losee’s bed, and intravenous fluids were hung from a coat rack or a nail pounded into a wall.

Losee also made house calls, delivering his first baby with the mother lying on a door across two sawhorses.

“I considered myself more of a midwife,” Losee said.

Although Losee practiced medicine for six months before receiving a state medical license, he said the people of Ennis didn’t care.

“Morality was refreshingly far more consequential than legality in that time and in that place,” he wrote in his autobiography, “Doc: Then and Now with a Montana Physician.” “From the day I saw my first patient on Dec. 10, 1949, until my license arrived in the mail in May 1950, no one, not one soul, ever asked to see my medical license, nor my medical diploma. They didn’t give a damn! They tested me in their own way.”

*To be continued in the Oct, 2017 Issue*

# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 15 issue 4

Madison Valley History Association

October 2017

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat:** October is here with frost and snow—not much of either. But in the mountains, the white snow caps and the dark fir and pine timber are patched with the yellow quaking aspens. All of it telling us that Winter is looking down on us. If it isn't the smoke of summer, it's the snow and frigid of winter—gifts of our northern neighbors. Still, we love the loveliness of this Valley.

Summer, as usual, has been good. It looks like our volunteers made sure the museum was open almost every day (except Mondays) between June 15 and September 15. We had 330 people sign in as visitors this summer. This is down from the 390 last year. We are hoping to encourage a few more next year and are working on signage to enhance our visibility to people traveling along Montana Highway 287.

The Madison Valley History Association cannot thank our volunteers enough. We appreciate the few hours everyone takes out of their summer schedules to greet our visitors. Especially a thank-you to Mona Durham who was the member who worked to find volunteers to docent our museum. Mona did a wonderful job.

While we are on thanking people: We should not forget Shirley Love and the efforts she makes to produce this Wagon Tongue news letter. She does most of the writing and all of the administrative work associated with providing this newsletter to the members of the MVHA. Shirley also keeps our membership list, sending notices when individual's memberships lapse and providing a list for the Board to use in its activities. Both of these jobs require a lot of Shirley's time, so the next time you see her, thank her for the articles in the Wagon Tongue and for reminding you when your membership is about to be lost. The MVHA is fortunate to have her helping us.

Finally, we should thank our board members (Kevin Brenneke, Marty Brenneke, Jim Carlson, John Gecho, Larry Love, Lee Robison, and Otis Thompson) who do most of the rest of the work related to keeping the MVHA going. One way to thank them in a way that they would really appreciate is to volunteer to take on some of the tasks they currently do. If, for example, you have an idea for presenting at one of our monthly meetings, develop the idea and let us know when you would like to present. This would relieve the board of one of their tasks and be greatly appreciated.

In July MVHA members had an opportunity to join a Gravelly Flower Tour tour led by former Forest Service employee. About 15 people took advantage of this tour. This was considerably fewer than the number of people attending the Forest Service tour the previous week, but that's a good thing because it made it possible for almost everybody to engage with the tour guide. The MVHA also sponsored a tour of the Talc Mine in August. In spite of some confusion, the tour seems to have been a success for those who attended. In September we were pleased to hear about the Madison Valley's author, Hughie Call, from her cousin, Lynn Mahan. The October program is "Stories from the Past: Growing up in the Madison Valley." Presenters will be members who grew up in Madison Valley. If you did not attend this program and have some "Growing up in Madison Valley" stories please send them to MVHA and we can have a new section for the Wagon Tongue. We have not been able to find something for November. Your ideas and assistance is appreciated.

**Your Wagon Master**, Lee Robison

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**Exciting Elk chase** The following is taken from a letter written by Geo.S. Watkins to his sister, Mat. 2/25/1867

"Exciting elk chase a few days before—Sundown and hands feeding his oxen when he heard a gun shot. He and another man ran for their guns and went after the elk. After considerable running, turned them from the mountains and toward some slick ice. They let the dog go for them and in less than no time we has 25 elk all in a herd on slick ice, helpless. We rushed at them as fast as our limbs would carry us. I arrived first and killed four. The man with me killed two, making 6 for us. Another man saw us after them and came killing two. The Indians following them came in time to kill one—total nine. The Indian told me his legs were "heap sick" and showed how deep the snow had been when he was trailing the elk. He wanted to stay the whole night. I let him stay and gave him supper and breakfast. Brought 6 elk to the cabin to keep the wolves from eating them. I sold over \$100 worth of meat. Having Indian and squaw drying hides will be worth \$40 when tanned."

**Membership:** The following are new members since the *Wagon Tongue* went to print in July. Add them to any membership list you are keeping and welcome them to membership. Remind them of the meetings and special events of the MVHA.

**David and Susan Aced** 682-7949

P.O. Box 399

Ennis, MT 59729

**Charles and Emily Friedman** 310-503-3966

(S)3607 Moose Bay Drive

Island Park, Idaho 83429

(W) 909 Kenter Way

Los Angeles, CA 50049

**Diana Lewis** 951-746-6933

28 Sheffield Dr.

Ennis, MT 59729

**Stanley E. Mainwaring** 685-3561

P.O. Box 534

Pony, MT 59747

**Membership update** 2017 memberships are now due as you receive your renewal application. Almost all of you have taken care of business and the MVHA has received your membership for 2016. Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2017 membership is due during October, November or December or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue.

**Memberships are now \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor.** If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who generously submitted your renewal memberships at the newly voted amount.

The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community. If anyone needs a ride to a meeting or program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

#### **Member News**

**Gary Forney** longtime MVHA member was featured in the Sept. 14, 2017 *Madisonian* Volunteer Spotlight for his interest in Montana history

and his work with the Virginia City Preservation Alliance.

**Zoe Todd**, MVHA founder was featured in the July 13, 2017 *Madisonian* Volunteer Spotlight for her interest in Madison Valley history, support of the museum and her volunteer work establishing the Meals on Wheels and work in preparing the public Christmas dinner for years.

**Don and Martha Scudder**, longtime MVHA members, were featured in the Lifestyle section of the *Madisonian*. The story was about taking flying lessons at age 83. Don is proving that age is only a number.

#### **Memories**

**Christine Adele Jackson** passed away March 27, 2017 of a horseback riding accident. She was born in Ennis, MT on March 27, 1959 to Carl and Frances (Clark) Jackson. She was delivered by Doc Losse. When she was two years old, her family moved to Ketchikan, Alaska where she grew up and completed her schooling. She graduated from Ketchikan High School. She went to college in Ellensburg, Washington graduating from Central Washington University with a teaching degree in special education and was a dedicated special education teacher at Whittier Elementary School in Great Falls, MT up to the time of her death.

(Thank you to all the MVHA members who directed me to Christine's mother, Frances Clark Jackson Young. I was able to get all the genealogy information for this memory. Thank you, Frances, for helping me get all Christine's background information.)

**Carmen Pasley** passed away on August 3, 2017. She was born Jan 24, 1962 in Bozeman, Mt. to Marcella and Clint Cain. She grew up on Cherry Creek in the Beartrap and attended Harrison High School and later transferred to Ennis. She met Rob Pasley and they were married on August 3, 1979. Carmon got a degree in nursing and worked at the Madison Valley Manor. She then worked at the family auto parts store, the Ennis Auto Parts.

**Steve Huber** passed away August 16, 2017. He was born Oct. 8, 1937 in Butte, MT to Carl and Ethelyn Huber. From 1940 to 1944, the Hubners lived in Brandon, a mining town East of Sheridan. He started school in Sheridan and then his family moved to the Hay Camp Ranch a mile North of Jeffers and Steve graduated from Ennis High School in 1955. Upon graduation, Steve received scholarship offers to play football from three schools and chose to go to Montana State College in Bozeman. His real passion was operating heavy equipment so he left MSC and attended a tech school in Weiser, Idaho. He began a *(cont on pg 3)*

(cont from pg 2) life long career of building roads, interstates and when the earthquake hit in 1959, Steve was the last civilian worker at the scene clearing the site for the Army Corps of Engineers. He married Frances Leding in 1959.

A very generous donation in memory of Steve was given to the Madison Valley History Assoc. by the Silver Dollar Bar, proceeds from their poker tournament. Special thanks to the Silver Dollar. And if you have access to the August 24, 2017 *Madisonian* and Steve's obituary, read the "Dedication to my grandpa" by Kelsey Hubner. It is a very special and touching tribute to her grandfather.

**Martha Scudder**, longtime MVHA member and supporter, passed away in Ennis, MT on September 5, 2017. She was a very strong and gracious lady who defied all the odds of her cancer and lived long after her cancer diagnosis.

**Lois Camilla (Sannes) Saier** passed away at her home on Sept. 27, 2017. Lois was born on July 21, 1932 in Williston, ND to Olaf Martin and Twylah Mary (Price) Sannes. The family moved to Portland, OR when Lois was 13. A year later, the family moved to Flathead Lake where Lois attended a two room country school for her eighth grade. Lois attended Missoula High School for her freshman and sophomore years before her family moved to Helena and she attended Helena High for a year. The family finally moved to Billings and settled down. Lois graduated from Billings Senior High in 1951. She worked for Shell Oil Company and in her spare time joined a ski club and started ski racing. In 1955 while at a race in Jackson, she met another skier, Volker Saier, and they were married on May 19, 1956. She began her life as a ranch wife with a big learning curve changing a city girl to country girl. After raising her family, Lois worked for the county at the court house and for 4 years at the *Madisonian*. She used her skiing skills to start a ski club for kids and taught several youngsters to ski. In 1980 she started a flower shop in the School House Gallery building. She worked her business for 25 years. The Flower Shop is now the Bragging Rights Gun Shop. (Editor's note) The Memories section of the Wagon Tongue is a genealogical record of folks who spent time in Ennis and the Madison Valley. When folks come looking for their roots, we at MVHA need to have basic information to start looking in the right direction. It is always a thrill when someone comes or calls asking for information and we know our work and research is paying off. If I can find special stories to go along with the genealogical information, I include that in the memories too. I do not copy obituaries so need stories from others who

have memories of the deceased. Stories are few and far between so not every memory is privileged to have a family story, too. So please help out if you are able. Thank you.

=====

**Museum UpDate**

The guest book has been tabulated and 330 guests signed the guest book this year. Montana always leads the way with 149 guests and 55 of those were from Ennis. More Ennis folks visited this year than last year! California was 2nd with 38, Washington 26, Idaho 21 and the Eastern state with the most guests was Pennsylvania with 9. 26 states had folks visit our museum. Canada, Denmark, Spain and the United Kingdom were foreign countries with visitors.

**Special thanks** to Mona Durham who did all the scheduling. She reported that she did not have too much trouble finding volunteers. **A great big thank you** to all the folks who said yes when Mona called or signed the schedule pages when those were passed around. The most help is from those volunteers who sign up and work a day each week and before you know it, the season is over!

This is not a true scientific study as it is only as good as visitors are willing to sign the book and give their location information. And only as good as our volunteers reminding them to sign and counting how many enter under the Family groups. But still a good number for the summer which was hot and smokey.. The only times we have had larger numbers was when we were able to keep the museum open all day. We miss a lot of folks who will not stay around for our 1 o'clock opening. We can just continue to advertise and sometimes word of mouth is the best advertising.

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**Unconventional Dr. Losee** *Bozeman Chronicle* Mar. 20, 2011 Jodi Hausen Part 2

We left Doc Losee in July 2017 with the statement "They tested me in their own way." At card parties, church, the bars, the barber shop, the Ennis Café, local civic group meetings and "every hour over the telephone company's party lines," local residents tested both Losee and his wife.

"The state's medical examination was nothing compared to the community's inquest," Losee wrote. "Their gossip tended to establish and maintain a decent social behavior; it continued, and when we comfortably accepted it we could happily call Ennis home."

His first knee patient

There's a half-page chapter in Losee's book entitled, "To Linda!" -- an ode to Linda Shadiow, (cont pg 4)





*(cont from pg 5)* was less than a year old when Chief Joseph and his band of Nez Perce Indians passed through Southwestern Montana in their dash for freedom across the Canadian border. The Indians had been engaged in a skirmish with the Army in the Big Hole. It was reported that they were headed for the Madison Valley.

All of the Madison Valley residents were alerted and the men prepared to defend their homes. They took the precaution of taking the women and children to an island in the Madison River, where they were hidden for the night. Mrs. Wiles was one off the children in the group.

As it turned out, Chief Joseph and his band went into Yellowstone Park and down the Yellowstone River, by-passing the Madison Valley. Mrs Wiles could remember when she was a small girl, often passing Indians would stop by the ranch house to trade or ask for something to eat. One time two Indian men stopped and sat down in the front room to talk. "Myrtle" as her mother called her and her older sister, Ida, were playing in their room. These Indians, in the manner of most male Indians, braided their hair in two braids with a braid hanging over each shoulder. As the girls played, Ida picked up a pair of scissors and walking up behind one of the Indians, she cut off one of his braids just below his ear.

As might be expected, the Indian brave was highly indignant at such an act. He leaped to his feet just as Ida dashed out the door and Myrtie ran and crawled under the bed.

Ida circled the house, ran into the front entrance, then into the bedroom, slammed the door and locked it. The brave, close behind her, tried in vain to open the barred door. Both Indians then left the house. As they were leaving, two of Myrtles's older brothers and another young man rode up to the ranch house. They were all armed and this may have deterred the Indians from seeking revenge. At any rate, the braves went on their way and were not seen again.

In 1894 she was married to Sylvester (Ves) Wiles and they homesteaded on Wigwam Creek. The homestead developed to become one of the leading ranches in the valley, raising both cattle and horses. It is the present Foster ranch.

Mrs. Wiles, in the manner of pioneer women, worked with her husband on the ranch. She had no fear of a horse and could handle most of the wildest of them, saddle horses or or teams. Some "old timers" have commented on seeing her drive a wild team and buckboard into Virginia City that many a good skinner wouldn't want to hitch up.

Mrs. Wiles was always active and energetic. All of her life she loved to dance and even at the age of 90, she could still get out on the dance floor and dance.

Thank you to Alice Sue Armitage Wright who sent this piece of history to the MVHA. Her Aunt Virginia worked on the Armitage family history and copied articles that mentioned the Armitage family. Thanks to her we benefitted from a good piece of Madison Valley history and a good Indian story.

## **History of AM Welles, Inc. Company**

In August the MVHA had a field trip to the Talc Mine. It was a great field trip and we learned a lot about this mining company that is an integral part of the Madison Valley. But we also learned that without A.M.Welles trucking the talc to Sappington, this mine would not exist.

This article is from a talk that Ann Hokanson gave to the MVHA in 2014 so is the history up to and into 2014.

Albert Moody Welles homesteaded just outside of Norris in 1913. He came across country from upstate New York near Buffalo with his wife Blanche and his daughter LaVerna. Daughter Gertrude was born in Norris and they later adopted a son, Clinton. The homestead is where the Cold Springs ranch is now located.

He walked over the hills from Cherry Creek to Norris every day to work for the local lumber company in Norris. In 1922 he bought the lumber company where he sold lumber and shipped wool on the railroad. It was known as the Welles Lumber Company.

Albert Welles began trucking in the late 40's. He hauled freight and coal to Ennis and gold from the mines on the Revenue, up the Boaz, etc. to the railroad in Norris.

Shortly thereafter, in 1951, he began to haul talc from the Yellowstone Mine south of Cameron to Norris where it was shipped on the rail headed to Grand Island, Nebraska.

In 1959, the company was incorporated and became A. M. Welles, Inc.

About 1961, Sierra Rock and Talc built a plant in Three Forks to process talc and A.M.Welles began hauling talc from the Yellowstone mine to Three Forks. In the late 60's talc was also hauled from the Beaverhead mine, which is up the Ruby Road to Alder to be put on the rail. A.M. Welles hauled from the Beaverhead until the late 90's.

The company had 3 dump trucks hauling talc at that time. They would haul 2 loads a day at about 7 ton load each. Currently we have 4 trucks hauling 6 loads a day at a 40 ton load capacity. A.M. Welles has been hauling talc for all the mine companies—Sierra Talc and Clay, Cyprus Minerals, Luzenac America, Rio Tinto, and currently Imerys. In the early 60's, the A.M.Welles shop in Norris was built adding to the landscape of Norris.

Grandpa Welles died in 1969 and operations of A.M.Welles, Inc. were turned over to son-in-law, Fred and his grandsons Alfred, David and Rodney.

Alfred soon took over ownership. With his wife Dixie, Alfred began building the company—adding trailers, more trucks and in the late 60's A.M. Welles began building small roads, mostly BLM roads which required hauling gravel and blading it out.

In the early 80's, A.M.Welles was contracted by Cyprus Industrial Minerals to mine for chloride at the Antler mine just outside of Silver Star. At this point more loaders and bigger equipment—such as excavators were added to the fleet. A.M.Welles mined at the Antler for about 10 years, from 1980 to 1990. We returned in the late 90's for about 5 years until it shut down production.

In 1985 A.M.Welles, Inc. bought local fuel distributor McLeod Mercantile. A new convenience *(cont on Pg 6)*

**For Your Reading Pleasure**

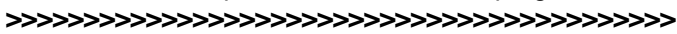
River Runs Through it by Norman McLean. This is a book that has a deep and lasting effect on Montana, its rivers and it’s literary legend

This House of Sky by Ivan Doig or any book by Ivan Doig Both these author were featured by the Elling House Art’s and Humanities Center and the Virginia City Preservation Alliance for their Notable Montana Authors series held at the Frank Bird Linderman Cabin near Laurin, Mt. during this past summer.

**Looking Ahead**

**November 16, 2017 4:00pm** Location and program to be announced. November Monthly MVHA program

**December 21, 2017** time and place to be announced Annual Christmas potluck and Christmas program



Still looking for the history of the creamery in Ennis and additional information on what happened to the eagle. Don’t forget to write to MVHA at Box 474, Ennis or visit with a board member. Someone must be able to help out.

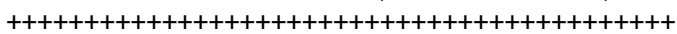
**History of A.M. Welles, cont from pg 5**

store was built in Norris. Fuel deliveries were expanded to Madison and Jefferson counties. Since that time, fuel sites have been set up in Ennis, Harrison, Whitehall and TMC gravel pit in Bozeman. In 1997 McLeod Mercantile bought Conner Exxon out of Whitehall expanding our customer base in Jefferson County. In 2004 McLeod Mercantile bought Elser Oil and added a second convenience store in Sheridan to its business.

A.M.Welles, Inc. also expanded into crushing in the mid 80’s. They now have 3 self contained crushing operations. They operate 2 gravel pits-theDSL pit North of Ennis and the TFZ pit between Logan and Three Forks. In the early 90’s A.M.Welles began bidding at the state highway lettings. Locally they have built the highway from Ennis to McAllister (1995), Twin Bridges to Sheridan (1999) and Ennis to Cameron (1999-2000).They have built roads for various subdivisions including Pronghorn Meadows and Hollowtop Vista. Since then they have had construction projects in Deer Lodge, Columbus and up at the Westfork rest area.

A.M.Wells contracts with Holcim to haul Gypsum from Geyser and Iron ore from White Sulfur Springs.

In 2014 they employed approximately 60 people and could be as high as 115 by midsummer. The owners of the company now are Alfred, his wife Dixie and their son Tim. This is definitely a family affair. Alfred and Dixie are in the office every day. Tim is vice president and day to day operations manager. Alfred and Dixie’s youngest son, Keith, is the road construction superintendent. Tim’s wife, Susan, their daughter Katie and Ann, Keith’s wife, all work in the office. Katie’s husband is the shop foreman. Even Ann’s kids—worked in the store, cleaned the office, etc.



**History of the Flower Shop building** The passing of Lois Saier and reading her obituary prompted me to review the history of her flower shop. The building at 202 1st. St. was formerly the old Cameron School which was near the highway south of Cameron and was moved to 6

**Board of Directors**

- President: Lee Robison
- Vice-President: John Gecho
- Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke
- Secretary: Otis Thompson
- Director: Marty Brenneke
- Director: Jimmy Carlson
- Director: Larry Love
- Historian and researcher: Don Black
- Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate
- Meetings and programs held monthly on the **third** Thursday of each month or as scheduled. Watch the *Madisonian*, posters and your email for details of time, place and program. Board meetings are held on the **first** Wednesday of each month at 10:00am, at the First Madison Valley Bank Sept-May. *The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be January 2018. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed. Editor needs your history stories!
- Editor: Shirley Love whitneypranch@wispwest.net
- Contributing editors:

*Madisonian* Obituaries, Volunteer Spotlight and Lifestyle section.

- Geo. S. Watkins *Letter to his sister*
- Alice Sue Armitage Wright *Funeral given Woman who recalled Indian Troubles in Madison Valley*
- Ann Hokanson *History of A.M.Welles, Inc.*
- Minnie Paugh *Madison Valley A High Mountain Community*

Jodi Hausen *Bozeman Daily Chronicle* March 20, 2011 “Ennis Unconventional Dr. Losee”

**Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by First Madison Valley Bank**

to the present site around 1940 and was used as a private dwelling until it fell into disrepair. Olive Losee bought it in 1970. After much hard work, the School House Gallery opened in 1971. The Pot Shop started later as the result of work done by Fannie Aaberg and Rachael (Rick) Vujovich. The School House Gallery and Pot Shop continued for a number of years. Then Brent Warburton then used it as a potting business until Lois and Chrissy Saier rented the building for their business as the Plant and Flower Shop. When Lois retired, Dutch Martin continued with the Plant and Flower Shop. Now the Flower Shop is in the old Wildlife Museum building formerly rented by the Madison Valley History for their second museum site. The former Plant and Flower shop is now the location for the Bragging Rights Gun Shop and history continues on. The information for this article excerpted from The Madison Valley A High Mountain Community by Minnie Paugh

Editor’s note: If you would like to read the whole article on the School House Gallery and Pot Shop go to the MVHA Website listed on top of pg 1. Find the Wagon Tongue section and look for Volume 5 Issue 4 October 2007 pg 3, 4 and 5. If you have missed any issues or continued articles of the Wagon Tongue, find them on this website.

# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 16 issue 1

Madison Valley History Association

January 2018

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat** I have recently become interested in one of the most common items in our lives apart from ham and eggs and water. It is something so ubiquitous that we see it everywhere—except when our digital device steals our attention. It is in our schools, our living rooms, our libraries, our bathrooms. We see it on almost every business doorway in town, and it's on the table when we sit down to dine in any eatery in Ennis, or Cameron, or Norris—and invariably, it is there in more than one form. When we buy a sack of dog food or move a box of crackers from the store shelf to our shopping cart, we handle it. Used to be, before our devices and computers, it was even more pervasive than it is now. But even now it is an integral part of our time and life. Those very devices stealing our attention from the glory of the world around us would not come to us were it not for this very common, but very necessary commodity of civilization. You can't even pump a tank of gasoline without having to decide whether you also want a slender slip of this stuff. I write of course of the very stuff you hold in your hands as you read this—supposing you are not reading a digital, archived copy via your device. It is paper.

In the course of my interest, it occurred to me that even before railroads made it to Salt Lake City, even before Bozeman made his road up the past the Tongue River into the Yellowstone Valley and then on to the Madison/Ruby mining camps', paper had made its way in bulk into these mountains. And sure enough, what occurred to me is a true occurrence.

We know this because on August 27, 1864, just a short year and two months after the discovery of gold in Alder Gulch a man named John Buchanan published the first issue of the *Montana Post*. Something he could not have done had he not had paper. As it happens Mr. Buchanan brought the paper, the printing press, the typeset and other necessary appurtenances for newspaper making with him, shipping them to Fort Benton by steamboat and from there by wagon and mule to the gold camps. As it also happens, he did not bring enough paper. Everything else he had was in sufficient supply to bring his neighbors the news. But by April Fools Day 1865, he was running short on paper and apologizing to his readers for the quality of the stuff he was printing his news on. Although a sufficient supply was on its way from Salt Lake City, the winter condition of the roads was holding up delivery. Regardless, Buchanan promised to continue publishing even if he had to print the paper on shingles. (*Montana Post*, April 1, 1865)

He must have gotten his paper, because the *Montana Post* published for several years thereafter, and there is no record it was printed on shingles.

Interesting times. Times when people looked at the world a bit differently than we do, a time before UPS and FedEx when expecting freight delivery required patience and innovative thinking on how to continue without the freighted item, should it arrive later than expected. (The week's news on shingles! That I would liked to have seen—fake or otherwise.)

Note: Most of the information in this article is taken from two issues of the *Montana Post*. In addition to the April 1, 1865 issue noted above, the July 14, 1866 issue contains a brief history of the paper's early days and fills in some details on its founding. Your Wagon Master, Lee Robison

**History Tidbit** 1913-13th Legislature passes a law allowing ratification of the constitutional amendment extending to women the right to vote. Jan. 1, 1917—4 years later, the first two women elected to the legislature, Maggie Smith Hathaway (D) and Emma Ingalls (R) began to serve.

**Membership:** The following are new members since the *Wagon Tongue* went to print in October. Add them to any membership list you are keeping and welcome them to membership. Remind them of the meetings and special events of the MVHA.

**Shore, Renata & Steve** 406-682-7177

P.O. Box 1245

Ennis, MT 59729

**Membership update** 2017 memberships are now past due as you receive your renewal application. Almost all of you have taken care of business and the MVHA has received your membership for 2017. Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2018 membership is due during January, February or March or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue.

**Memberships are now \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor.** If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who generously submitted your renewal memberships at the newly voted amount.

The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

If anyone needs a ride to a meeting or program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

#### **Member News**

**MVHA and members Esther Warburton, Jack Kirby, Don "Kid" Neville and Larry Love** made the Lifestyle page of the Thursday, Oct. 26, 2017 *Madisonian* for the Story Hour program presentation at the October History meeting. If you did not get an opportunity to read this, you may read it at the Madison Valley Public Library or at the *Madisonian* archives.

Two MVHA members, **Jan Smith** and **Larry Love** participated in the Ennis Community Christmas Concert before the holidays. Besides singing the cantata with the choir, they sang Winter Wonderland as a duet.

**Willie's Distillery..Willie and Robin Blazer**, MVHA Business members, were featured on the front page of the Jan. 4, 2018 edition of the *Madisonian* **2**

with a story of their business and the Ennis brand gained national attention when Fifty Best, a New York City guide to living, awarded Willie's Bighorn Bourbon Whiskey a gold medal in December 2017.

History is being made on Main Street Ennis!

#### **Memories**

**Minnie Pearl Clark** passed away Oct. 24, 2017 in Ennis, MT. She was born to Maggie on March 22, 2004 in Salt Lake City, Utah joining 8 chocolate Lab brothers and sisters. She came with Melody Clark, activities director, to the Madison Valley in 2013 and became part of the Madison Valley Manor family. Minnie spent the rest of her life bringing joy and comfort to the residents of the Manor. About a year ago, Minnie reluctantly allowed the adaptation of her sister, Mickee Lynn. She taught Mickee the ropes of the Manor. Minnie was loved by all the residents, volunteers, staff and families. She will be missed but not forgotten. She gave her heart to all of those who need it.

**Peter John Traxler** passed away October 26, 2017 in Ennis, MT. Pete was born on May 4, 1946 in St. Peter, MN to Anthony and Monica (Hughes) Traxler. He was a graduate of LeCenter High School, class of 1964. He lived and worked in LeCenter and Mankato, MN until he moved to North Dakota. But it was his move to Montana when he finally found his home, living his last 20 years in Ennis. While in Ennis, he was active in the Elks Club and Trinity Episcopal Church.

**William F. Miller** passed away October 30, 2017 at home near Ennis, Mt. He was born Nov. 25, 1927 in Spokane, Washington. After service with the U.S. Occupational Force in Japan, he returned home to marry Sally. Bill spent his career with Chevron Oil and frequently came to the Madison Valley to camp and fish. Following his retirement, he and Sally built their home near Ennis and for several years were in partnership in the Happy Angler Antiques store. Bill was also a charter member of the Madison Meadows Golf Course Association. Bill is father-in-law to Gary Forney, long time MVHA member.

**Richard L. (Dick) Todd** passed away November 1, 2017 at the Tobacco Root Care Center in Sheridan, MT. He was born at the Todd Ranch on Moore's Creek near "the rocks" west of Ennis, on March 25, 1923. Dick's oldest brother, Jack, attended his first year of school at the 8-Mile School. After that the Todd family children rode their horses 4 miles to Ennis for school. In winter the horses were stabled in town during the day. They had one horse, Ed, who did not like being ridden double, so two children would have to squeeze into the saddle or get bucked off. Dick's mother, Mary, would watch for the children to come over the gap on their horses from school, sometimes in bitter weather. *Cont pg 3*



McAllister, Harry Odden, Pauline Oakwood, Hazel Reyner and Louise Steiner from the Ruby Valley.

The county owes a debt of gratitude to these dedicated workers. And the MVHA and its members appreciate all the work that was done. These books are used a lot.

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In memory of the most famous doctor in the Madison Valley, Doc Losee, the Wagon Tongue will continue with the following history account taken from *The Madison Valley: A High Country Community* by Minnie Paugh

### **Doctors came to the Madison Valley**

The first doctors moved from Bannock into Alder Gulch in Madison County in 1863. Settlers followed the prospectors to the gold diggings, then scattered to the good farm land where they raised root crops and grain for the miners and produced fodder for their livestock. The first men to build crude cabins in the Madison Valley intended to cut wild hay for the freighters and to fatten their worn out oxen and horses. The first wave of settlement included as many medical practitioners as the healthy miners needed. The early doctors must have been rough and ready individuals because the wagon train captains and freighters could handle most emergencies without help.

Pioneers were tough. Orson N. Newman who was the first man to settle his family in the Madison Valley amputated his own big toe after he could not find a doctor willing to solve his bunion problem. (1) John Vetter Sr., who started a shoe and leather shop in Virginia City in 1863, brought with him a well stocked drug kit. The local doctors said it included the best possible selection of remedies to bring to the frontier. Mr. Vetter's nephews and nieces started to settle in the Madison Valley in the 1880's.

The doctors who came to Virginia City, Montana in the 1863 did not lack for good medical training. Dr. Levinus Daems, whose sons, Harry and Lev, homesteaded on Wigwam Creek, graduated from the Medical Department of the University of Paris.(2) He shared his practice with Dr. Erasmus D. Levitt of Bannack who took care of most of their medical practice. Dr. Daems mixed drugs for the other doctors in Virginia City. He was an excellent surgeon when his skill was required.

Dr. Ira C. Smith who arrived in Bannack in 1863 had one of the first practices in the Madison Valley. He visited regularly at the home of a patient at Henry's Lake which was more than a hundred miles from his office in Virginia City. He made his calls to this sick woman even during the snowy winter months.(3)

Dr. Smith traveled in a buggy. He always wore a black suit with a Prince Albert coat and a 4 freshly laundered white shirt. He topped his tall, spare figure with a black silk hat that only partly covered his silky white hair. He died in 1884 when his neck was broken as he was thrown over the dashboard of his overturned buggy. The accident happened on a lonely road in the Madison Valley. This doctor had no close personal friends, but his monument in the Virginia City Cemetery was paid for by popular subscription and is engraved, "Madison County's Tribute to Madison County's Friend".(4)

The first doctor to reside in the Madison Valley was Calvin M. Pinckney.(5) He was the son of the 1864 pioneer Simeon Pinckney. They belonged to a family that earned its living by practicing healing and by farming. He was in the Union Army during the Civil War where he provided medical care to the 5th Michigan Cavalry. Three years of active combat service gave him excellent training for a medical practice on the frontier where most of the practice was treating accidents or controlling epidemics. Dr. Pinckney joined his father at Meadow Creek in 1875. Simeon Pinckney had a small farm and a saw mill on the Washington Bar. The doctor had a wife and two children when he came to Montana. Esther Pinckney became the postmistress at Meadow Creek in 1882.

Between 1875 and 1904 Dr. Pinkney traveled the roads and trails of the Madison Valley giving medical service to his friends and neighbors. When medical problems could be anticipated the Pinckney's took cases such as expectant mothers into their home. The pioneers respected and depended upon him, and he delivered most of the babies born in the Valley during his 29 years of practice there.

Dr. LeRoy Southmayd, who practiced in Virginia City with Dr. Patrick J. Ragan roughly between 1889 and 1899,(6) had a thriving practice in the Madison Valley. This doctor set up hospital rooms in hotels such as the one in Meadow Creek which was owned by George B. Bess. He was a young doctor who left the state in 1898 to serve with the Montana volunteers during the Spanish American War. Soon after his return he took up a practice in his home town, Great Falls, MT. His testimony prevented the execution of Martin Peel for the murder of William Ennis when the case was appealed for clemency in 1899. Dr. Southmayd who had attended to Mr. Peel during a long illness was away at war when the trial occurred.

Thomas B. Marquis was the first medical practitioner to live in the Madison Valley who had a







# The Wagon Tongue

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Volume 16 issue 2

Madison Valley History Association

April 2018

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**From the Wagon Seat** As citizens of 21<sup>st</sup> century Montana, we often forget just how shallow, historically speaking, our tenure in these mountains is. We speak of our land, our home, our way of life, forgetting that this land was home to people long before our grandfathers came looking for furs and gold. We forget that these people had ways of living they too found precious, ways of living that was disrupted and eventually mostly forgotten. There are records of some of these people and their ways, but these are mostly written by strangers, some of whom were often less than sympathetic to the lives of the people they wrote about.

We have the Journal of a Trapper by Osborne Russell that deals with the early fur trappers' interaction with the Native Americans. But Russell speaks from the view of men who saw the Indians as rivals and often as opponents in a deadly killing game. What clues we gain from his Journal about the way the Indians lived is happenstance and usually related to warfare and fighting, since war is how Russell and his pals most often met the Indians.

We also have the diaries and journals of Narcissa Whitman (though this be in Oregon). Her journals, like many written by missionaries coming into a strange country, were at best disparaging, but usually downright condemning of the ways of the Cayuse and Nez Perce she lived among. Though she went among the Indians with her husband to make Christian friends of them, by the time of her killing, her mission had made them enemies. Again the clues she provides to the way of life of the Cayuse and Nez Perce she lived among is colored by her belief that her ways and the ways of her people were defined by God; hence all other ways were evil.

Fortunately, there are oral traditions passed to us through the few people who survived the depredations of the invading culture. But these are limited by their distance in time from when their grandfathers actually lived that life. These oral traditions are also somewhat colored by the tellers' century-and-a-half interaction with the European/American culture that overran their homelands.

About a mile from my home, I know of a lodge foundation (commonly called a tepee circle). It may be gone now since there is a house sitting about where I remember it was when I was a boy. Whether gone or there, like so much about those people, it is about all we have to remember them. Their stories are gone; the way they cooked their foods is mostly burned away; the rules for the games they played are forgotten. How and what they taught their children is a smattering of legend. We have little but a circle of stones; and all it tells us is that at one time in the past people camped near this stream.

This summer the MVHA is planning a field trip to the Wall Creek Game Preserve. The Wall Creek Game Preserve is land where four or five ranches used to be that has been bought by the state and set aside for wildlife. I think this field trip would be a good time to contemplate the ironies of walking land where two cultures—the Native American way of life and the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century ranch ways—have been disrupted by a different culture with new ways of thinking about land use and wildlife. I think it would also be useful to contemplate that none of these ways were/are any better than any other; but that each reflects how mankind tries to solve problems he/she finds when he/she arrives to live on this planet. Finally, I think it might also be a good time to think how the study of and recording of history helps us to carry cultures across time to enrich lives of the generations to come. Your Wagon Master, Lee Robison

**Membership:** No new memberships since the January 2018 issue.

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**Member News** The editor did not find or hear any special member news for this issue. If you know of any member receiving recognition for something or participating in a community event let the editor know.

#### **Memorials given to MVHA for year 2017**

Memorials received during 2017 were for Ann Story, Ginny Segota, Steve Huber, Becky Grauman and Glen Reinhardt. Thank you to members and family who gave memorials. The money goes toward preserving the history of the Madison Valley.

Do not forget to share with family and friends when a loved one passes that a memorial to the MVHA is a great way to remember a departed and have their memory preserved in history. Besides money memorials, another great way to preserve the memory or honor a friend, a family member or a whole family is to purchase a Walk of Names board for the walkways at the museum. As the museum complex grows, there is still room for name boards so request an application and more information at MVHA, P.O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729 or call Larry Love at 406-682-5780 or Otis Thompson at 406-682-7415. Memorial Day is coming soon and a Memorial board might be just what you are looking for to remember a loved one.

#### **Memories**

**Bryon McAllister**, long time member of the MVHA, passed away Dec. 9, 2017 in Bozeman, MT. He was born April 29, 1929 in Midvale, Utah to Donald and Julie (Roundy) McAllister and received his education starting with a BA from University of Utah in 1951, and MA (1955) and a Phd (1966) from University of Wisconsin-Madison. He retired from Montana State University in 1991 and is Professor Emeritus of Mathematics. The family has researched a connection to the McAllisters settling in the Madison Valley but have found none.

**Violet Helen Gilbert Haigh** passed away on Jan. 28, 2018 in Ennis, MT. She was born July 16, 1927 to Art and Henrietta Gilbert in Benton Harbor, Michigan. She earned a teaching degree from Western Michigan University. Vi worked in Yellowstone Park as a telephone operator during summer breaks from college. She loved Montana so much that she moved to Harlowton to teach. She taught at several Montana schools before coming to Three Forks, MT. There she met and married June G. Haigh. They moved to Cut Bank, MT. After raising her family and going back to school for her fifth year degree, the family moved to Ennis, where Vi was a special education teacher. She was active in the Ennis Presbyterian Church and was a Red Cross CPR and First Aid Instructor for over 50 years. Her husband, June, is a long time MVHA member.

**Harvey Eckert**, long time MVHA member, passed away on January 30, 2018 in Ennis, MT. He was born in Great Bend, Kansas to Charles Davis and Sylvia Smalley Eckert. He grew up in Larned, Kansas and graduated from Wichita University. He is an Army Veteran. After many family fishing trips to the Colorado Rockies, he moved to Colorado and then to Montana, moving to Butte where he worked for Bob Ward's, Fran Johnson's Sporting Goods and Cashell Engineers as a surveyor and draftsman. He moved to Ennis in 1986 and married Patsy O'Donnell on May 7, 1986. Harvey worked for the town of Ennis for 24 years retiring in 2011. Harvey was a multi-talented person—an illustrator, an artist and an accomplished guitar player as well as playing banjo, fiddle and dulcimer.

**Henry "Hank" D. Wruck** passed away Feb. 10, 2018 in Bozeman, MT. He was born on March 15, 1932 in Ennis, MT to Henry "Heinie" and Ruth (Cutler) Wruck. He began his education in a one room school near the Montana Power Company dam in the Madison County. The family moved to Norris and he attended school there.

In January of 1945, the family moved to Bozeman where Henry attended Irving school and graduated from Gallatin County High School. (Cont. on pg 3)

(Cont. from pg 2)

Henry enlisted in the U.S. Navy, after honorable discharge, he attended MSC. In 1958 he joined the Bozeman Fire Department, and retired as the Gallatin County Disaster and Emergency Service Director. He and wife, Darlene, were long time MVHA members.

**Darlene F. Wruck** passed away Feb. 11, 2018, one day after Henry. She was born June 7, 1939 in Belgrade, Mt. to James and Elsie (Davis) Francis. The family moved to Manhattan, MT where she attended the public school and graduated from 8th grade. She graduated from Gallatin County High School after the family moved to Bozeman. Following her marriage to Henry, she became a homemaker. After raising her family, she worked for the College of Agriculture at MSU.

**Amy Wilma Orser Swoboda** passed away Feb. 8, 2018 within just a few miles of where she was born. She was born on July 1, 1923 to Artie Orser, world champion bronc rider and Esther Burger Orser at her grandparents' Peaceful Heart Ranch at the base of the Pryor Mountains, 5 miles from Pryor, MT. Amy was a direct descendent of Otis Crocker Whitney, one of the original homesteaders in the Madison Valley. The Whitney homestead still stands near Whitney Point near Ennis, MT. (Editor's note Amy and her family visited the Whitney homestead a number of years ago and it was the highlight of our day to show them the homestead and share delightful Whitney stories with them.) Amy lived her life with a fierce love of Montana and pride in her pioneer background.

Amy attended her first two years of school at the Roosevelt School in Billings and after her mother's death she returned to the ranch where she was born and was raised by her grandparents, Elmer and Maria "Rye" Whitney Burger. Doing her school years she lived with an aunt and uncle while attending the upper Pryor School. Amy often shared her memories of the years spent in this small one-room school and during harsh winters she rode her horse two miles to and from school. In the fall of her eighth grade year she moved to Billings with her aunt and uncle and graduated from the first graduating class at Billings Senior High School in 1941. In February of 1944, she traveled across the United States by train and bus to marry her high school sweetheart, Rudy Joe Swoboda in New Bern, North Carolina, where Rudy was stationed at the Cherry Point Naval Station. After many travels, adventures and homes, Amy and Rudy ended up in Billings, MT. In 2005 Amy and Rudy moved into Westpark Village. Amy perfected the art of homemaking and was a recipe collector. (editor's note: Amy is the mother of

Jaye Swoboda who is a practicing doctor with the Veterans Administration in Bozeman, MT and lives in Ennis, MT.

**Ruth Hepner**, passed away on March 15, 2018 in Dillon, MT. She was born on August 21, 1930 in Wallace, Idaho to Harold and Margaret Hepner. She attended schools in South Dakota, North Dakota, and graduated from Libby High School in Montana. After a year of college at the University of Montana, she received a B.S. in nursing from the University of Maryland in 1962. In 1979 she returned to Montana to take care of her mother at Varney. Ruth was a member of Trinity Episcopal Church in Jeffers.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Doctors came to the Madison Valley** From *The Madison Valley: A High Country Community* by Minnie Paugh

I left off with Dr. C.V. Lowers who started doctoring in Ennis between 1911 to 1921. Before going on with the Paugh story and Dr. McNallan, I was told about a doctor that was missed. Jack Beals called one day and told me the whole story of Dr. Thomas Joseph Fain, M.D. related to Jack on his mother's side. Dr. Fain practiced in Tennessee, but after he married Margaret Earhart, they came to Pony in 1900. In the spring of 1901, they moved to Norris as there was no doctor and there was mining and the dam on the Madison River at McAllister was being built. Dr. Fain drove many miles with a team and buggy in any kind of weather to administer to the workers at the dam and the people of the valley. Jack's mother, Ruth Fain Beals had a letter from Mrs. Bill Fletcher in which she told that Dr. Fain had gone to their home in McAllister, stayed all night, delivered the baby, Donald, and charged \$15. This was in 1906. In 1908 Dr. Fain's health failed and he was bedfast with tuberculosis. The Norris people gave him a gold headed cane with his name and date on it.(9a)

Dr. McNallan gave dedicated medical service to the valley between 1914 and 1930. He is best remembered for the untiring efforts he made to save the victims of the influenza epidemic in December of 1918. He drove from one end of the valley to the other and treated patients everywhere. He went for as much as thirty-six hours without rest other than what he could get during the drives. He hired a driver and made a bed in the back of his car where he rested and slept between cases. During these days of emergency, Mrs. Lawrence Dunn, who was a trained nurse, used her skilled strength to save the community that had to depend on the few people with medical knowledge and courage. Mrs. Dunn had a rather short career as a (continued on pg 4)

*(Cont from pg 3)*

nurse because she was a diabetic before modern methods of therapy were known.

Dr. McNallan was the most successful physician in the state in his treatment of the Spanish influenza. The two cases who died on the Madison, one at McAllister and the other at Cameron, were both dying when they called him. After the epidemic was over he was called upon to meet with the other physicians of the state to tell them about the treatment he had used to bring about this amazing record.(10)

It was impossible to compare the flu epidemic in the Madison Valley to that in Virginia City where ninety people were critically ill by Dec. 6, 1918. (11)

The Masonic Temple there was made into an emergency hospital and the city council set aside \$1500 to bring in doctors and nurses to take care of a community so stricken that even the doctor was down with the flu. The county officials left their offices to take care of the ill and Gov. S. W. Stewart who was a Virginia City citizen, sent his personal medical aid, Dr. E. G. Balsam, U.S.A., of Billings. Dr. Balsam served the community with all his strength until the epidemic broke.

In the Madison Valley work crews of unmarried men were the most vulnerable victims of the epidemic. In 1918 Cunningham and Biering had the largest work force in the valley where they were raising crops on the Bear Creek Bench. M.S. Cunningham asked Mrs. Bertha Miller, who was the mother of Ernest Miller who later started the Elkhart Ranch, to help him. He had already brought all the sick men to one cabin which had a large loft that had to be entered by climbing a ladder firmly attached to its wall. (12) Mrs. Miller requested an ample supply of milk and eggs. She kept all the men alive by making them stay in bed where she fed them nothing but egg-nogs. She was an ample woman who must have found it difficult to climb a ladder to tend her patients, but with a will such as hers, the men were tended.

Dr. Daniel F. Clancy started his medical practice in Montana at Alder where he was under contract to Harvard University to take care of the health of the crews who worked the enormous dredge boats that removed the last of the gold from Alder Gulch.

Dr. Clancy was a native of Boston who had earned his medical degree at Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia. He graduated with letters shortly before coming West to begin practicing. He picked Montana because he had shared a room with a student from Helena who talked about his home state. He arrived in Alder during the winter of 1907 to 1908 and soon met Edna Kiser (13) who

was working there as a trained nurse. "Tot" as her friends called her, had been trained at Long Island College Hospital nursing school with a medical school connection. She attended classes there with medical students She had also graduated in 1907.

She came from a family of Montana pioneers who had homesteaded on the east side of the Madison River. Her father, Ambrose B. Kiser, had been owner and editor of the Madisonian, the county newspaper. Edna was born in Virginia City in 1888. She had attended high school in Virginia City. She had gone on to Bozeman College, then to Pratt Institute before attending nursing school.

Dr. Clancy took private cases and needed to travel out to the ranches to take care of his patients and he found that Tot could help him make his home calls as well as assist as his nurse. She had grown up around horses and could handle a driving team as well as most men, although she was very small and slim. The doctor never felt confident with a spirited driving team and spirited ones were needed to keep in touch with a practice that extended from Lyon at the south end of the valley to Norris. Tot and Dan Clancy were married in 1909.

The Clancys made their home in Virginia City and the doctor commuted to Alder and Ruby to take care of the men who worked on the dredges. His horses were cared for by Johnson at the livery stable and he took good care of the doctor's outfit. The medical equipment needed for diagnosis was simple and drugs were not used as they are in 1970 so the doctor managed very well with what he carried in his medical bag. Tot needed to carry sterile sheets, sterile gowns and gauze. She also liked to have extra bedding to use if the home was not clean. Most cases were obstetrical. The doctor and his nurse were more dependent on their common sense and their ability to inspire confidence in their patient than as a modern medical team.

The doctor's surgical practice was not so complicated then since the usual operations were connected with childbirth, dramatic fractures, and wire cuts. Appendectomy were only performed in dire emergencies. Cars were not capable of modern speeds so accidents were rarely as bloody as those today. Injuries from horses and agricultural equipment were rarely complicated but some cases were referred to hospitals after emergency treatment.

When Dr. Clancy started his practice, telephone calls for medical help were impossible. An exhausted relative would rush into the office and would want the doctor to return *(continued pg 5)*



**For Your Reading Pleasure**

As you are reading about *Doctors Came to the Madison Valley*, plan to pick up a copy of *Doc*. by Dr. Ron Losse and reread or read his account of doctoring in the Madison Valley

**Looking Ahead**

**Sat., May 19, 2018** MVHA annual meeting. Pot luck at Trinity Church in Jeffers at 4:00pm. Election of new board members , approve budget and Summer museum plans

**June, July and August** are still in planning stages

**From Gary Forney:** The Virginia City Preservation Alliance and the Elling House Arts & Humanities Center will again be co-sponsoring a summer series of programs to be held in the Linderman Cabin. The theme of the 2018 series will be "Montana's Millionaires" and will profile the lives (sometimes admirable, sometimes not) of some former residents of the Alder Gulch who made it good..really good! This years schedule will be:

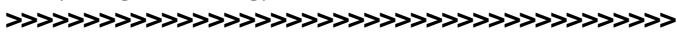
**June 21st** at 6:30pm Henry Elling (Amy Grice)

**July 19th** at 6:00pm Andrew Jackson Davis (Jim Jarvis)

**August 16th** at 6:30pm William Andrews Clark (Gary Forney)

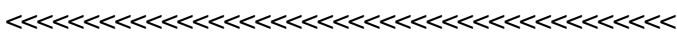
**Sept. 9th** William Boyce Thompson (Christina Koch)

The beautifully restored Linderman Cabin is located at the historic Robber's Roost inn, approximately 4 miles east of Sheridan on Hwy 287. There is no charge to attend these programs. Please visit the Elling House web site ([ellinghouse.org](http://ellinghouse.org)) for more information.



**MVHA Programs**

All programs of the MVHA are recorded and transferred to DVD. If you are interested in any specific program, send your request of specific program or programs and payment of \$5.00 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling for each DVD ordered to MVHA P.O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729



**Development of Ennis Schools (Cont from pg 5)**

became the wife of S. R. Buford, a merchant in Virginia City. The next year Miss Florence E. Switzer taught the school. She later married M.D. Jeffers.

In 1875 a wooden bridge was built across the river.

In 1876 a fairly large school house was built in the Jeffers area and the children from the west side of the river attended there. They continued to do so until 1902 when the Ennis School District No. 52 was established.

The first school term of District 52 was held in a partitioned off part of the Woodman(A.O.U.W) dance hall. The first teacher was Miss Flora Duncan of Sheridan. The second was Miss Kate Sullivan of Butte who married Bert Mitchell of Jeffers, and the third and last teacher was Miss Mattie Jane Ashworth who later became Mrs. Wade H. Lester.

In 1906 school was held in a Northway building on the hill east of Ennis and the teacher was Marie Murphy. The following year a new school house

**MVHA Board of Directors**

President: Lee Robison

Vice-President: John Gecho

Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke

Secretary: Otis Thompson

Director: Marty Brenneke

Director: Jimmy Carlson

Director: Larry Love

Historian and researcher: Don Black

Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate

Meetings and programs held monthly on the **third** Thursday of each month or as scheduled. Watch the *Madisonian*, posters and your email for details of time, place and program. Board meetings are held on the **first** Wednesday of each month at 10:00 am, at the MVHA Museum office April to Aug. *The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be July 2018. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed. Editor needs your history stories!

Editor: Shirley Love whitneypranch@wispwest.net

Contributing editors:

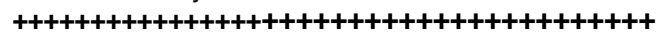
*Madisonian* Obituaries,

Minnie Paugh *The Madison Valley A High Mountain Community* "Doctors came to the Madison Valley"

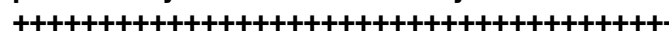
*Pioneer Trails and Trials* "Development of Ennis Schools" Jennings Piper pg 915-916

History Tidbit *Pioneer Trail and Trails* "First Meadow Creek School House" pg 916 Doris Wilson

History Tidbit *Words and phrases BUYING THE FARM* Kevin and Marty Brenneke

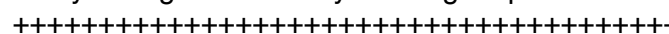


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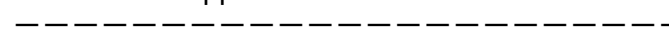
was built on land donated by Mrs. William Ennis on the county road about a quarter mile north of Ennis. Alice Kilner was the first teacher. The building served as a school house until 1915 when a larger building was erected out of cement blocks on the hill at the west end of main street.

In 1920 a movement was on to consolidate the Ennis and Jeffers schools so as to provide a good four year high school . by Jennings Piper



**History Tidbits**

The original Meadow Creek Schoolhouse burned in 1881 and school was held in what is now the old hall with lora Richter Vincent as teacher. In 1901 the people of the district built a new brick-face building, raising all the money to build it by giving parties, dances and suppers. Doris Wilson



BUYING THE FARM This is synonymous with dying. During WWI soldiers were given life insurance policies worth \$5,000. This was about the price of an average farm so if you died, you "bought the farm".



**Membership:** New members since April 2018.

**Brandi & Eric Palmerton (F)**

Ennis, Mt 59729

**Membership update** Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2018 membership is due during July, August or September or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are now \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who have generously submitted your renewal memberships. The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

If anyone needs a ride to a meeting or program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

#### **Member News**

**Polly Todd** celebrated her 90th birthday on May 5th, 2018 with a big party in Sheridan, MT.

**Patsy Eckert** was the volunteer honored in the volunteer spotlight of the *Madisonian* for May 10th, 2018. Patsy gives back to her community through her art.

**Vickey Gordon** was honored as the Grand Marshall of the recent 4th of July parade. Her accomplishments for our community are very many and very admirable.

**Lynn and Devonna Owens and family** were honored for their conservation work and community engagement across more than half a century of ranching and farming on North Meadow Creek area. The story of their award appeared in the July 21st. issue of the *Madisonian*.

**Memorials** Correction: Steve Hubner instead of Huber.

Do not forget to share with family and friends when a loved one passes that a memorial to the MVHA is a great way to remember a departed and have their memory preserved in history. Besides money memorials, another great way to preserve the memory or honor a friend, a family member or a whole family is to purchase a Walk of Names **2**

board for the walkways at the museum. As the museum complex grows, there is still room for name boards so request an application and more information at MVHA, P.O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729 or call Larry Love at 406-682-5780 or Otis Thompson at 406-682-7415. Summer and fall are great times to have a Walk of Names board prepared and mounted on the walkway.

MVHA is a 501(c)3 non profit so all donations are tax deductible.

#### **Memories**

**Elizabeth Marie "Lisa" Hill** passed away on April 1, 2018 in Bozeman, MT. She was born November 22, 1971 to Deneice Keller and Cecil Hill. She grew up in Ennis and Frenchtown.

**Barbie Harmon Durham** passed away April 16, 2018 in the Madison Valley. Barbie was born May 24, 1960 to Bobbi and Orin Harman in Arco, Idaho. She spent her young years in southern Idaho and graduated from Bonneville High School in 1978. She moved to the Madison Valley in 1988 when she married Todd Durham of Cameron. Mona Durham, long time MVHA member, is Barbie's mother-in-law. Barbie enjoyed working and was an extremely active community member. She was a grant writer and served on many boards and was appointed by both Governor Schweitzer and Governor Bullock to the Montana Heritage Commission. She will be remembered in Virginia City for her work for the new Visitors Center. Barbie helped MVHA in our beginning stages of writing grants.

**Karen D. Claassen** passed away on May 6, 2018 at the Madison Valley Manor in Ennis, MT. She was born in Fullerton, Calif. on Jan 3, 1949 to Kenneth and Beverly Claassen. Her dad was a career Air Force officer so her education was gained in California, over seas in France, Missouri and Colorado. She graduated from Colorado State University in Fort Collins, CO. She was not able to pursue her career of social work because she was diagnosed with M.S. She was cared for at home. After her father passed away, Bev moved with Karen and her elderly mother, Esther Zabel, who also lived with them, to Ennis to be near her brother, Larry Zabel, renowned Western artist. Karen and her grandmother, Esther, became residents of the Madison Valley Manor and were together there for a couple years. With her talents of writing, Karen wrote monthly articles for the *Madisonian*. Karen was known for her wonderful smile and for her love of trying to do the many activities at the Manor. She loved to go fishing at Lion's Club Park.

**Shanna Robison** passed away May 22, 2018. She was born in Sheridan, MT on March 7, 1978 to Vern Robison of McAllister and Yvonne (cont on pg 3)



(Cont from pg 2) Conko of St. Ignatius. She spent her early life in the Madison Valley moving cattle on the Robison ranch with her horse Sky and participating in the Ennis Rodeo. When her mother moved to St. Ignatius, her interests turned to pow wows and she learned to do Indian dances. She was talented in sports and played basketball for Northern Idaho College in Coeur D' Alene, Idaho.

**Faye June Oetter Watkins** passed away on June 8, 2018. She was born on June 22, 1929 in Joliet, Illinois to Conrad and Pearl Oetter. Faye graduated from Joliet Township High School and then earned a Bachelor's degree in Voice from the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago, Illinois. On her way home one night during a snow storm, while waiting for her father to come and get her, she met another stranded traveler. He was traveling from Detroit, Michigan with his first new car. He beguiled her with the description of his ranch in Ennis. His name was Jack Watkins. Later they became husband and wife. Jack M. Watkins was a descendent of a long time Madison Valley family starting with George Spencer Watkins who ended up in Virginia City, Montana Territory on June 2, 1864. He did not like gold mining so came to Ennis and found land covered with wild hay. He cut this hay with a scythe and raked it by hand and hauled it to Virginia City selling it for \$40 to \$50 a ton. He was hauling the hay at the same time that William Ennis started his freighting business to Virginia City. George Spencer married Frances C. Lee Fort of Willow Creek, MT in 1879. They had four children Mary Irene, Andrew Jackson (Jack) John Spencer and Catherine. Andrew Jackson (Jack) married Ethel May McCormick. To this union were Joanne, Janice, and Jack M. who married Faye Oetter. The young couple moved around as Jack explored career opportunities but he was asked to return to the ranch to help his family's business. Thus Faye became a rancher's wife with all the various duties. Faye was also involved in many community activities. One of them included singing and while going through Faye's treasures, niece, Cindy Lou, found and donated to the MVHA a copy of the Blue Book of Favorite Songs, property of the Ennis Singing Club dated March 1938. You may see a copy of this book displayed on the piano at the museum as soon as it is cataloged and displayed. Information on Watkins family: *Pioneer Trails and Trials* George S. Watkins, and *George S. Watkins Family* by Cathrine Watkins Carrau pg. 197-198

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Remember: If you have family stories about any of our deceased folks, please submit to the *Wagon* 3

*Tongue*. It is never too late to submit a story. Any piece of history is important. to the Madison Valley.

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**Doctors came to the Madison Valley** From The Madison Valley: A High Country Community by Minnie Paugh Continued from April 2018. The story continues with Dr. Farnsworth...

He remembered the occasion when he received a rushed call to North Meadow Creek. He had only the equipment in his medical bag, because he had no knowledge of the type of emergency he would be handling and he had to walk a quarter of a mile through deep snow. He found his patient had miscarried and would bleed to death if he waited for help or tried to get her out. He did a bare handed curettage and she had no problem with infection.

Dr. Farnsworth preferred to perform his surgeries in Butte at the Murray Hospital. He remembers getting his car high centered in the deep snow of the old highway across the Norris Hills. The highway he followed from Virginia City to Ennis was even worse during some winters. Paris was the halfway point and sometimes a welcome sight. There was a toilet near a cool spring of water where drivers used to cool their horses or their automobile motor with its boiling radiator. A county commissioner names Paris had this facility built at a wide bend in this mountain road.

Dr. Farnsworth's memories of his practice in Ennis are varied. There was a polio epidemic soon after he came to the community. People wanted him to close the schools but didn't want to give up community gatherings. He treated his three patients and left the quarantine alone. He enjoyed buying eggs from Harrison Comely's mother whose ranch house was beside the road as he started back to Virginia City. She loaded his car with vegetables worth twice as much as his eggs. He laughs ruefully about two elderly ladies, sisters, who approached him about the rebates Hiny Rakeman, the druggist, gave him when he prescribed drugs. It was hard to explain to them that Hiny's business and his had no connection and he made no profit from the drugs he prescribed.

A health problem caused the doctor to return to medical school where he specialized in problems of the eye, ear and throat. He could no longer continue the exposure and risks that were a part of his rural general practice. His medical practice followed him to Bozeman where he has practiced since 1948.

Between 1940 and 1942 Dr. Willard Thierfelder practiced Osteopathy in Ennis. He had started a medical degree at Temple University in Philadelphia and in 1947 he returned there to complete it. While he was in Ennis his office was in the (cont pg 4)

**For Your Reading Pleasure**

Please turn in any good book titles you have read lately that would be of interest to our MVHA Members.

**Looking Ahead**

**Sat., August 4, 2018 Field Trip to Wall Creek** Meet 9:00 am Lion’s Club park

**September** date and program to be announced

**October & November** MVHA working on program suggestions from June meeting or any idea you might be able to present.

**From Gary Forney:**The Virginia City Preservation Alliance and the Elling House Arts & Humanities Center will again be co-sponsoring a summer series of programs to be held in the Linderman Cabin. The theme of the 2018 series will be “Montana’s Millionaires” and will profile the lives (sometimes admirable, sometimes not) of some former residents of the Alder Gulch who made it good..really good! The continuation of this year’s schedule will be:

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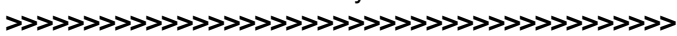
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From Otis Thompson and Roger Stommel:

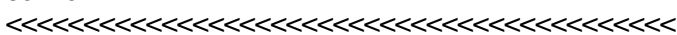
**Cliff Lake School House Summer Speaker Series**

One program left: August 23 7:00-8:00 pm Cliff Lake School House: “Big Horn Sheep.” Join Julie Cunningham MT FW&P wildlife biologist and MSU Prof. Bob Garrott as they share their knowledge and passion of Big Horn Sheep and what is being done with re-location efforts within the local Madison Valley herd.



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(cont. from pg. 3) Bauer Building. In 1974 he has his own Clinic in Forest Grove, Oregon. (16)

A Dr. McLean came to Ennis in 1943 and left because he found a better practice in his home area. Dr. Van Veen came as a result of the work of a Commercial Clubs committee's search for a doctor. He left because he was called back to the Army Reserve in 1948. There was a Dr. Robert Coles who had a practice for a short time but no one seems to remember him.

Dr. Ron Losee arrived in Ennis in 1949 driving an Army jeep. He was accompanied by his wife, Olive and their daughter, Rebecca. He was a native of Red Hook, New York. He took his undergraduate college degree at Dartmouth and his medical school degree at Yale. **4**

**MVHA Board of Directors**

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- Vice-President: Brandi Palmerton
- Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke
- Secretary: Otis Thompson
- Director: John Gecho
- Director: Eric Palmerton
- Director: Lee Robison

Historian and researcher: Don Black

Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate

Meetings and programs held monthly on the **third** Thursday of each month or as scheduled. Watch the *Madisonian*, posters and your email for details of time, place and program. Please call Larry Love 682-5780 for date of board meetings. *The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be October 2018. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed. Editor needs your history stories!

Editor: Shirley Love whitneypranch@wispwest.net

Contributing editors: *Madisonian* Obituaries,

*Minnie Paugh The Madison Valley A High Mountain Community* “Doctors came to the Madison Valley”

Catherine Watkins Carrau *Pioneer Trails and Trials* “George S. Watkins and George S. Watkins” P. 197-198

Mrs. Henry Adkins *Pioneer Trails and Trials* Pg 904

**Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by First Madison Valley Bank**



He did his residency at Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal.(17)

Dr. Losee’s first home and office in Ennis was a log cabin he rented from Mrs. Fay Jeffers, the daughter of the founder of the town. His office furniture at first was an army cot, a card table and the contents of what he called his “cutting kit” (suture equipment.) He was the general practitioner in the Madison Valley from 1949 until 1957 when he returned to Royal Victoria Hospital to specialize in bone surgery and his wife to complete her nursing degree.

During the preceding eight years the Madison Valley Hospital had been built and Dr. Losee had to cope with surgical problems caused by automobile accidents on Highway 287 to West Yellowstone, farm accidents involving machinery, and recreational accidents due to skiing and hunting. It was possible to fly critical cases to the hospital in Great Falls using the airport at Crooker’s Sportsman’s Lodge, but time was an important factor. Dr. Losee knew his hospital needed modern equipment and a doctor trained to handle orthopedic surgery.

To be continued in October with Dr. Losee back in Ennis for the 1959 earthquake.

**16.** Storey, Mrs. Randall. Interview April 1974

**17.** Kuglin, John. Orthopedic Surgeon Seeks to Eliminate Pain, Help Patient to Walk. *Great Falls Tribune July 20, 1969 Montana Parade* p. 2

If you have missed any of the previous parts of any *Wagon Tongue* articles, you may find them on the website listed on the top of page 1.

# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 16 issue 4

Madison Valley History Association

October 2018

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat** Fall greetings from the Madison Valley. The colors of fall are awesome now and winter is coming around the corner. The MVHA Board is still doing it's business and are still looking into the future.

The past season has been an average one. Our regular meetings have been well attended mainly because of the great programs. We had field trips to the Armitage barn and ranch in July which is now the Carroll ranch hosted by Martha Armitage Klauman. Martha did an excellent job of telling her family's history of growing up on the ranch to an audience of about 50. Thanks, Martha. In August, Fred King hosted a tour of the Wall Creek Game Refuge for about 45 individuals. This tour resulted in a story of what history is all about. The Dale Family, MVHA members, who were on the trip to learn more about their family background found out where the grave of their ancestor's twins were buried by way of tour direction of Fred King and grave location by Larry Love. The grave was at the Virgil Lichte house and although the grave has been known about for years, who was buried there was a mystery. The Dale family has since erected a grave marker made by MVHA member, Steve Garrett. Wow. Way to discover history, guys and gals. In September Darlene Neville Rochez gave a program about artifacts of the Jeffers, Switzer, Ennis and Chowning families. Well done, Darlene.

There was no program scheduled for October but there are programs scheduled for November and December.

The MVHA needs to have everyone on board to help keep the museum open, schedule field trips and programs and keep the organization running.

In 2017, 500,000 tourists visited Virginia City during a summer season. We need to figure out a way to get some of these tourists to our museum. If you have any ideas just let the MVHA board know.

It has taken a lot of work and effort for the MVHA board to get interesting programs and field trips on a monthly basis. It would be great for a volunteer committee to be formed for finding programs. With all of the membership having input to this committee, continuing to have programs every month could be achieved. MVHA needs your help in this area for us to continue having a viable organization. It does take a lot of work but many hands make lighter work, but it can be done. Just let the board know of your ideas.

Stay warm, drive safe and don't eat too much turkey. Think about your Madison Valley History Association and get everyone on board. See you around the history corner. Your Wagon Master, Larry Love.

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## **Museum Report for Summer 2018**

The MVHA museum hosted the annual visit of Jenny Brozovich and her 4th grade class on May 10, 2018. The students always enjoy their visit to the museum. The guest book started showing visitors on June 12th and 14th with the official opening on June 16th. The museum closed for the season on Sept.15. The count taken from the guest book tallied in at 263 visitors for 2018. . This is less than the past two years but the second year of fires and smoke in Montana may have kept folks away. Our guest book is only as good as the volunteers who invite visitors to sign in. But what other ways do we have to record individuals visiting? As MVHA members, we need to figure out a way to get more folks to come by on North 287 and stop and visit the museum. Put on your thinking caps and see what kind of ideas might come up.

Remember the museum is always open during closed hours in the summer and all the rest of the year by appointment.

**Membership:** New members since July 2018. MVHA thanks the following for joining and for their support.

**Barnett, Vurnie (I)**  
Ennis, MT. 59729

**Ferris, James & Velora (F)**  
Island Park, Idaho

**Simmons, Diane (I)**  
Ennis, MT 59729

**Membership update** Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2018 membership is due during October, November or December or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are now \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who have generously submitted your renewal memberships. The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

If anyone needs a ride to a meeting or program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

#### **Member News**

**Neil Kent, Lois Daems Miller and Richard Coad**, all were raised near Varney and their birthdays were only 5 days apart. When they were young, all three celebrated their birthdays with one party. As they aged their parties ceased. In 1999, at age 60, the celebrations resumed. In 2018, their 79th birthdays were celebrated. Sept. 13, 2018 *Madisonian*

**Jack Kirby** hosted a 70th year class reunion for members of the class of 1948 on Sept. 18, 2018. Eight of the class of 20 were able to attend. Class members attending were Mona Durham, Emily Watson, Mae Hautier, Lynn Owens, Clarice Wonder Brooks, Bobbi Klatt and host, Jack Kirby. Alumni came from as far away as Billings and Columbia Falls to attend the reunion.

**Esther Warburton** also hosted a "gathering" at her home. When she left her home to run errands on July 12, 2018, there wasn't anything in sight. When she returned later that afternoon, the whole tree 2

was buzzing. Throughout the afternoon, she watched as the swarm of bees became larger and by Friday morning, the thing was solid and about a foot wide. She called for help and it was determined that the swarm was honey bees, not hornets or wasps. Thus the bees were placed in a hive box and took to a place with more bee hives. Everyone got a happy ending, especially the bees and all those involved did not even get a sting.

**Jan and Bob Beekman** were honored in the Volunteer spotlight in the *Madisonian* recently.

#### **Memories**

**Robert B. Goggins** passed away July 9, 2018 in Ennis, MT. He was born in Brooks, MT on May 24th, 1924 to John and Pearl Cook Goggins. He grew up in the Clark's Fork Valley near Fromberg, MT. After graduating from Fromberg High School in 1942, Bob worked a variety of farming and ranching related jobs. One of those was for an apiary that sent him to Harlowton area to work bees. A cute red head named Cora Amdor working at the local soda fountain caught his eye. He asked her for a date the day after she graduated from high school and they were married October 30, 1946. Bob and Cora worked for several prominent Hereford breeders with Bob as herdsman. He and Cora bought their first registered Herefords in 1955 and bought the home ranch in Ennis in 1959 from the Earl Love family.

**Dorothy Allene Gates** passed away July 11, 2018. She was born in Madison, Florida on October 19th, 1930 to Benny DeLoy Wells and Berta Lenora Johnson Wells. She spent her childhood years in Madison, Florida. She then married, had a child and divorced. After her divorce, she met George Schabarker. The majority of their married life was spent in the Madison Valley and Montana. After separating from George, she married Henry (Hank) Madison Gates, with whom she lived happily for the rest of their lives. She was a cook for the Ennis schools for over 12 years.

**Cecil Clarence Klatt** passed away August 17, 2018 in Ennis, MT. He was born on April 20, 1920 in Westport, South Dakota to Louis Klatt and Nellie Hollihan. He grew up along the North and South Dakota border and worked on the family farm. He married Ruth Beecher in Ellendale, North Dakota on July 23, 1944. During February and March of 1946, the newly weds jumped in their Plymouth and made several trips to Montana with the goal of finding a ranch to buy. They ended up purchasing Ben Lockhart's ranch on Wall Creek. He considered himself a cowman and continued to follow the livestock and grain markets for the rest of his life. Needing to be closer to town (continued on pg 3)

(continued from lag 2) for school, they bought a small house and three acres in Jeffers in 1951. In 1958, the Wall Creek ranch was sold and Jeffers became home. After several years of odd jobs, Cecil spent most of the next 30 years working at the Diamond J helping with the many projects that Pete Combs came up with.

One of Cecil's brothers is MVHA member, Lester Klatt.

**Suzie Reints Whitman** passed away Sept. 8, 2018 in Bozeman, MT. She was born October 7, 1943 to John and Erna (Rast) Reints in Jeffers, MT. John and Erna Reints came to the Madison Valley in March 1932 as newly weds. John's uncle, William Reints, homesteaded close to the Bill Armitage Ranch. In later years William Reints bought the John Grady ranch one and a half miles north east of Jeffers and that is how the Reints came to take over that place when William Reints passed away.

John was born in Iowa, raised in California until he was 14 years old, then returned to Iowa. He came to southern Idaho in 1930 for a climate change due to his asthma and there he met Erna Rast. Erna was born in Kulm, North Dakota and when she was 8 months old, her family moved and homesteaded in American Falls, Idaho. On March 17, 1932, Erna and John were married in American Falls, Idaho and boarded a train for Butte, MT. They had to stay in Butte for 4 days before they could catch a train to Norris, MT. From Norris they rode with Vic Anderson on the freight truck to Ennis and they rented a room in the Schoenek Hotel. In the morning, Lou McKean took them to their new home in Jeffers. Neither of them had ever been to Montana before but they fell in love with the country and a few years later they bought the place. The John Grady's called the place the "Cold Springs Ranch" and rightly so as it had good cold water springs that they used for the household and the livestock for many years. They milked cows and then later just raised stock cows. In 1957 they bought the Johnny Olin ranch in Jeffers.

John and Erna had three children, Elso J., long time MVHA member, Jack R., whom the MVHA is still trying to get to join the association and who has continued to manage the ranch after his father passed in 1968, and Susie. Susie graduated from Ennis High School in 1961 and went to hair styling school for a year. She married Clyde Whitman from West Yellowstone, MT in 1962. Susie spent most of her life in West Yellowstone.

**Progressive Years** pg 771-772 *John and Erna (Rast) Reints* by Erna Reints

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Do not forget to share with family and friends when a loved one passes that a memorial to the MVHA 3

is a great way to remember a departed and have their memory preserved in history. Besides money memorials, another great way to preserve the memory or honor a friend, a family member or a whole family is to purchase a Walk of Names board for the walkways at the museum. As the museum complex grows, there is still room for name boards so request an application and more information at MVHA, P.O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729 or call Larry Love at 406-682-5780 or Otis Thompson at 406-682-7415. Christmas and New Year are great times to have a Walk of Names board purchased and ready to be mounted in the spring. MVHA is a 501(c)3 non profit so all donations are tax deductible.

**Doctors came to the Madison Valley** From *The Madison Valley: A High Country Community* by Minnie Paugh. (Continued from July 2018)

The story left off in the July *Wagon Tongue* with Dr Losee knowing his hospital needed modern equipment and a doctor trained to handle orthopedic surgery.

Dr. Losee was back in Ennis when the Madison Valley Earthquake in 1959 (18) brought a flood of emergency cases from the slide area to the little hospital. During this harried experience he was introduced to Dr. Phillip Pallister, the general practitioner at Boulder River School. Later Dr. Losee worked on his days off with Dr. Pallister in a clinic where Dr. Losee tried to correct the orthopedic problems for deformed children among the special needs children who were cared for at Boulder. He tried to relieve them of pain and help them become capable of caring for themselves..

As Dr. Losee became known as an expert in correcting orthopedic problems of the knee, patients started to come to the Madison Valley Hospital from all over the nation. The Doctor handled such surgery for the athletes the teams of the branches of the Montana University System. The Doctor may have stayed in Ennis where he lacks much surgical equipment, stimulating professional contacts, and a good medical library because he enjoys the quiet beauty of the mountain valley and the freedom from social pressure which permits him to enjoy his family and his hobbies. In a larger community he might feel under pressure to join in the activities of the American Medical Association whereas in Ennis no one cares if he had a membership. The Doctor can hope to have time to play his bagpipes and tinker with his model train.

Olive Losee can have her kitchen located over the tipi rings of prehistoric Indians and hope to have some piece of mind as she performs her domestic tasks. (19) (continued on pg 4)

(Continued from pg 3)

Dr. Gene Wilkins joined Dr. Losee in February 1965 to help care for the the general practice in the community. By this time Dr. Losee had become widely recognized as a skilled orthopedic surgeon and was attracting many patients from outside the Madison Valley. A general practice there is still an arduous task since the doctor is never off duty and calls break his sleep and take him away from his meals. Some of the most difficult work is made easier by properly trained people such as Ronald Handlos, a physicians assistant. When he was added to the staff in 1972, he was the first person from the MEDEX Program to work in Montana. He was trained first in the army and then spent a year at the University of Utah. He handles many routine emergencies and saves the Doctor's time for problems which require his skill.

**18** Dr. Alan Iddles, who now practices surgery in Bozeman, was cereal practitioner in Ennis from July 1957 until April 1959.

**19** Dr. Ronald Losee and Olive Losee review this interview in August 1974.

This ends the *Doctors came to the Madison Valley: A High Country Community* by Minnie Paugh.

Dr. Losee retired in 2015 and passed away May 14, 2017.

Dottie Fossil, chairman of the MVMC Board of Trustees provided the following information to bring the history of doctors in the Madison Valley up to date.

Drs. Losee, Wilkins and PA Handlos were followed by a series of doctors who had little help and still many sleepless nights...Dr. Haywood, Dr. Jay Swoboda, Dr. Cindy Sharp, Dr. Patricia Moran, Dr. James Bischoff, Dr. Anderson, Dr. Curtis Blake, and Ben Linderman, Physician Assistant.

The hospital and clinic (now the history museum) moved to a new facility next door to the old one in 2008 and became known as the Madison Valley Medical Center (MVMC).

Dr. R.D. Marks, who is presently our chief medical officer and chief of staff, joined the MVMC in 2009. Dr. Marks, a Clancy native, with his many years of experience in Missoula, began to attract a stable medical staff. Pat Watson and Tabby Phillips, physician's assistants joined the staff for a year or two. Physician Assistant, Marty Hensel joined Dr. Marks in 2010 and in subsequent years, Dr. David Newton, (who as a student from Tulane did a rotation here), Dr. Maura Davenport from Michigan and Krystin Nutt, a nurse practioner, are our present providers. Dr. Newton does endoscopy procedures here. MVMC has a full laboratory and radiology department offering not only X-rays

but CT, MRI, ultra sound, mammography and bone density screening.

Traffic no longer needs to be stopped for the helicopter to land on the highway at the 10 bed critical access hospital and trauma receiving center. Thanks to the generosity of a community member, our Foundation was able to give the funds to build the helipad we have today.

Along with our medical staff we have regularly visiting specialists. Dr. Blair Erb sees cardiology patients; Dr. Jack Hensold sees oncology patients; Dr. Mick Lifson sees gynecology patients; and Dr. Will Helton sees patients needing hearing assistance, all saving valley residents the trip to Bozeman.

Dr. Andy Thomas heads an active physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy department at the Medical Center and serves patients at the Madison Valley Manor. Patients who have surgery in another hospital can come back here to recover and receive therapy. Cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation is also offered. This enables our community members to receive the services that they need locally near their friends and family. It is with the generosity of our community members and mill levy support that we are able to deliver high quality medical care close to home.

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**Searching for History** by Shirley Love, Editor

The two field trips last summer were very productive in learning the history of the well known Madison Valley family, the Armitages and finding the history of another prominent Madison Valley family. John and Bridget Dale attended the field trip to the Armitage ranch and while there they met and visited with Mona Durham and learned that she would be working at the museum the following Tuesday. Looking for family information, John and Bridget went to the museum on Tuesday and visited some more with Mona. Mona suggested that they attend the next field trip to the Wall Creek Game range as that would encompass the area of interest to the Dale family.

At one of the field trip stops, John Gecho, who grew up in the area, pointed out the Ruby Creek drainage and the possible location in the wide spread area that was known as Abe, MT where the Claude and Maude Mulhall Dale, John Dale's grandparents, would have homesteaded. John Dale mentions that his grandparents had lost stillborn twins in their early days. The field trip continued and pretty soon we were at the Virgil Lichte homestead. At a previous field trip in 2009, Smitty Overstreet took us to this old homestead— (continued on pg 5)

*continued from pg 4)*

by now mostly gone—and she pointed out an unmarked child’s grave and told the story that had been passed down that Emma Lichte, Virgil and Clarence Lichte’s mother, had cared for this little grave for the many years before she died. We remembered that it was at the backdoor step and was encircled by white quartz rock. Larry Love, MVHA president, went bushwhacking through the overgrown weeds and found the exact same grave site. The house is now completely gone and even the foundation hard to see. The Dale family is pretty sure that this would be the grave of the still born twins.(1)

As we continue to put the pieces of this history puzzle together, we learned by way of the Pioneer Trails and Trials(2) that Clarence Lichte’s wife was a registered nurse. Her profession helped her care for her family as well as take care of the many emergencies that occurred in the wide spread area of Abe, MT. We also learned that she and Clarence had five children of their own so when Claude and pregnant Maude Dale came for help, they went to Virgil’s home right next door to Clarence. Esther then went there to do her mid-wife duties. When the babies were stillborn, Claude had to thaw the ground for a grave (3) and the twins were buried by Virgil’s home and thus his mother, Emma Lichte cared for the little grave.

Steve Garrett, MVHA member, who has been following this whole family history with his friend, John, decided to make a grave marker for the site. This grave marker is now in place and John’s aunt and uncle will now be forever remembered.

(1) John Dale conversation 10-10-18.

(2) Pioneer Trails and Trials Clarence Lichte pg 109 by Esther Lichte

(3) John Dale conversation 10-10-18

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This story shows what “preserving the history of the Madison Valley” is all about and why your Executive Board works endlessly each month and each year to continue to preserve the history. Hopefully you, as members and readers, will continue to find some more stories such as this to preserve and share.

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The past story of *Doctors in the Madison Valley* made reference to the fact that the Ennis Commercial Club made a search for available doctors when there was no doctors in the valley. Your editor became curious about the Ennis Commercial Club and found a story compiled by Minnie Paugh from the minutes of the Ennis Commercial Club as made available by Lewis Chamberlin, secretary in 1974. Records from Jan.1951 to Sept 1970 are lost.

## **Ennis Commercial Club**

The Ennis Commercial Club which is a member of the Montana Chamber of Commerce was started in 1944 as a means to work out cooperation to improve the community. During World War II the town lost much of its identity because vital people were either in the armed forces or away from the Madison Valley working in the war industry. Soon these residents would be returning and thoughtful citizens felt the time had come for some planning. Letters were written to service organizations in Great Falls, Helena, Bozeman and Sheridan. Ennis people visited as many organizations as they conveniently could to get ideas about how their club should be organized. A meeting was called on December 4, 1944 with Charles Baur as chairman to permit Frank Blair, who is now District judge, to tell about the Vigilance Club in Virginia City and to express his opinions about how the Ennis club should be developed.

An effort was made to make the entire community aware of the starting of the club and of the need for it. As a part of the advertising, students were invited to suggest names in a contest. At the first meeting \$5 was awarded to Dorothy Hungerford for submitting the name which the club had decided to use during it’s second planning session. Elections were held at their first stated meeting on January 5, 1945. Their usual meeting place at this time was to be the Methodist Church. The first officers were Charles Bauer, President; Richard Alsop, first vice president; Hal Pasley, second vice president; and George Hungerford, secretary-treasurer. In 1947 Harold Helt was elected as the second president. The following month the organization sponsored the first Boy Scout troop in Ennis. \$20 was set aside to help the new troop get started. Walter Bryan volunteered to be the first Scout Master. In 1948 the Club spent \$19 to buy him a uniform.

The improvement of the road between Ennis and Virginia City was important to Ennis because it was extremely dangerous, especially during winter. Several Ennis people worked in the county offices in Virginia City. A committee was appointed to push for a new highway since it was a state road. As county commissioner, Charles Bauer, the Commercial Club president, had already been looking for the best possible route for this road.

Rural electrification was vital to the Madison Valley people in 1945. Electric lines were only present where the Montana Power Company could see a profit in building them and where the government had provided lines for an agency such as the Forest Service. A few private lines had *(continued on pg 6)*





# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 17 issue 1

Madison Valley History Association

January 2019

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat** Winter greetings from the Madison Valley. The river is running slush ice and is starting to back up the river from the lake so the gorge might get to Ennis

The MVHA ended 2018 with our Christmas potluck. Special thanks to Kevin and Marty Brenneke for preparing the turkey and to Jo and Otis Thompson for preparing the ham. A big thank you to those who came and brought their favorite dishes. It was great. Christmas stories were shared and special thanks to Bev Claassen for even bringing "show and tell" with her antique Christmas ornaments.

We are now into 2019 looking towards our museum opening on Memorial Day and in June. For the new year we need to improve our membership by including some of the younger members of the Madison Valley so MVHA can preserve their stories. Another idea is working on a plan to get more of the 5,000 folks who visit Virginia City each summer to drive this way and visit our museum. Thirdly is to get a line up of programs and field trips so MVHA can do better than we did this past year by missing a couple months.

MVHA will still need volunteers to work the museum during the summer so look at your calendar right away and make plans. If you live out of the area, plan your trips here to visit or to bring guests by including working a shift at the museum. Lastly we need help to arrange artifacts in the new museum building.

There is always work to be done. If you have ideas, suggestions, or would like to take on a project, please let the MVHA Board know. We have to look toward our membership for help in some capacity.

On Feb. 21 MVHA will be having a program on the history of the Madison Theater given by John Heckler, owner of the theater. Watch for posters and publicity.

Stay warm and Happy Valentine's Day. Your Wagon Master, Larry Love.

**Trinity Episcopal Church.** The Trinity Episcopal Church in Jeffers has been working for the last six years to rejuvenate and restore the old church which is now 116 years old. After a celebration held last fall, the church is ready for another 100 years. Read the article in the September 13, 2018 *Madisonian* by Reagan Colyer to review the progress done in the last six years to restore this piece of history.

Now the *Wagon Tongue* will share the very early history of the Episcopal Church in the Madison Valley.

First services were held in the school house on the east side of the river. Bishop Daniel Tuttle and Rev. E. G. Prout had services about 1874. Trinity Mission was organized and services were held in the Grange Hall until it burned in 1880, then in a hall where Jeffers now stands. It was a two story building. The first story was fitted up for church services and for Sunday School, which was organized by Rev. E. G. Prout about 1885. The second story was used as a community center and dance hall.

The church had a good organ and Sunday School library. The little Mission suffered a loss by fire in 1897.

The present church in Jeffers was built in 1902 while Reverend Chas. Quinney was rector in Virginia City, Montana. He held services in both places. Trinity Mission Church was dedicated September 14, 1914 by Bishop L. R. Brewer. The church was served by ministers from Virginia City until 1914 when Rev. Thos. W. Bennett came as a resident clergyman. He supervised the building of a small rectory and garage in 1915.

In 1918, Rev. Bennett was called to Dillon and clergy of Virginia City again supplied Trinity Mission through 1922.

By Winifred Jeffers for the Madison County History Association pg 886 Pioneer Trails and Trials

## History Tidbit

### HOT OFF THE PRESS

As the paper goes through the rotary printing press friction causes it to heat up. Therefore, if you grab the paper right off the press it's hot. The expression means to get immediate information. Tidbit by Kevin Brenneke.

**Membership:** New members since October 2018. MVHA thanks the following for joining and for their support.

**Duane and Marjorie Gregg (F)**

Ennis, Mt 59729

**Membership update** Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2019 membership is due during January, February or March or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are now \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who have generously submitted your renewal memberships. The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

If anyone needs a ride to a meeting or program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

**Member News**

**Willie's Distillery** owners Willie and Robin Blazer received the Headwaters Resource Conservation and Development award for Veteran-Owned Business of the year. Congratulations Willie and Robin. They are Business members of MVHA.

**Dottie Fossel** is pictured in the Dec. 6, 2018 *Madisonian* speaking to the Jack Creek Preserve Conservation Field School.

**Jan Beekman** is pictured with the Community Choir making beautiful music with her accordion in the Christmas Stroll article Dec 13, 2018 *Madisonian* article.

**Memories**

**Jane Ellen Jeffers Rybus**, long time Madison Valley resident and one of the founders of the Madison Valley History Association passed away October 21, 2018, in North Bend, Wash. She was born on October 19, 1924, in Ennis, MT to Winnifred Chowning Jeffers and Fay Burton Jeffers, both descendants of Madison Valley pioneers. Jane attended schools in Ennis graduating from Ennis High School in 1942. She attended the University

of Montana during World War II. In 1946, she was the first woman elected student body president at UM. Echoing her future feminism, during a June 2007 oral history interview, she said "during the time that I was in college all the men were gone, we women were able to take on men's jobs. Women were empowered during those years and then after the war when the men came home, we lost it"

Jane graduated with a degree in English in 1946 and hoped to go east and become a writer or an editor. Instead she married a returning service man, Henry E. Rybus, and the family settled in Washington State. After her children reached school age, Jane returned to school in Seattle and earned teaching credentials. She taught high school English during the 1960s in Bellevue, Wash. In 1985 she and her husband divorced and she returned to Ennis to care for her elderly mother.

Jane was very proud of her deep roots in Madison County. Her father, Fay, was the son of Myron D. Jeffers and Florence Switzer. Myron was the eventual founder of Jeffers and a rancher who after the Civil War drove cattle to the Madison Valley from Texas. Her mother, Winifred, was grand-daughter of William Ennis and Katherine Schriver. He was the town's founder who initially was a shipper of goods to the mines in Virginia City.

In the early years of the Madison Valley History Association, Jane served as secretary for numerous years and when the museum opened, she was the keeper of the keys to the museum at her home on Main Street. Your editor remembers her best for her love of football. One year Larry was fishing in Canada and I had an extra ticket to a Bobcat football game. I asked her to go with me and she very excitedly accepted even though it was not a Griz game and she wanted to start out the afternoon with a tailgate party. We had a fun afternoon.

**Thomas Wesley Hughes** passed away October 24, 2018 at the age of 95. He was born March 13, 1923, in McAllister, MT to Thomas S. and Emily A. Mackel Hughes. He and his family all lived, grew up and worked on the family ranch near McAllister. He attended the local school and graduated from Ennis High School in 1940. After graduation he worked at local ranches and helped his father on the ranch. In 1944, he joined the Army and was sent to the front lines in France and Germany. He was wounded in his knees by a by a .50 caliber machine gun bullet. He was shipped back to the United States and after surgery and recovery in Washington, he was awarded two Purple Heart medals and returned to the family ranch at McAllister. He spent the next two years on the family ranch. *continued on pg. 3*

His father wanted to retire and suggested that Tom find himself a partner. Tom had already been spending most of his time with the store owner's daughter so this worked out well. On Sept. 16, 1948 he married Darlene Emma Harris. They took over the family ranch from his parents and moved into the old house on the Hughes ranch which had been vacated by Tom's parents. It was tough on the ranch and Darlene and Tom worked side by side raising cattle, sheep, pigs, chickens and always having horses. Tom was the first in the Madison Valley to have Angus cattle. In 1968 they sold the Madison Valley ranch and moved to the Bitterroot up the Sleeping Child where they bought a small ranch and continued to run cattle.

Ranching was taking its toll on Tom from the service injury to his knees. He sold his cattle and took a small engine class at the VoTech and after working for a couple shops he bought the McCullough Chain Saw shop. Standing on cement all day again took a toll on his knees and he again retired only to sell real estate and he and Darlene became snowbirds.

Longtime Ennis resident and former history member, **Barbara McGowan**, passed away December 7, 2018, at the Madison Valley Manor in Ennis. There will be more information on Barbara's life as an obituary is available.

**David Arthur German** passed away on Dec. 19, 2018 in Bozeman, Mt. He was born on Jan 24, 1949 in Jackson, Wy. to Archie and Daisy Germann who then lived and worked on the original Germann Ranch which had been homesteaded on the Buffalo by Archie's father. When David was 5 years old his father moved the family to a ranch near McAllister, MT. David attended local schools in Ennis and graduated from Ennis High School in 1967. He attended the MSU College of Engineering, joined the ROTC and pursued his dream of being a pilot by being accepted into the Air Force pilot training program after graduation. He spent the next part of his life in Alaska where he met his future wife and married in 1980. He worked in California and spent summers working on the Germann ranch and in 1996 relocated his family back to Montana and spent the rest of his life as a rancher.

Longtime history member and Ennis resident, **June Haigh** passed away on Dec. 23, 2018 in Billings, MT. He was born on June 7th, 1924 in Three Forks, MT to Gail and Margaret Haigh. There will be more information on June's life as an obituary is available.

**Barry Leslie Rice**, long time Madison Valley rancher passed away unexpectedly on December 28, 2018. He was born March 6, 1953 to Bob and Bonnie (MacMillan) Rice in Butte, MT. Barry graduated from Ennis High School in 1972. **3**

He then graduated from Montana State University with a B.S. degree in Pre-Vet Science with an emphasis in Chemistry and Animal Science. He was an active member of the Madison County community.

**Charles Emmett Stoltz, Jr.** of Ennis passed away January 4, 2019. His memory will be in the Wagon Tongue in April after more research is done on the long time Madison Valley Stoltz family,

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**Ennis Commercial Club** Continued from October 2018. We left off when the Commercial Club proposed the first general system of street lights. They helped the Ennis Volunteer Fire Department get a night watchman to make night alarms possible. Foster G. Ballard started work on this job on September 5, 1945. Many meetings provided forums for the discussion of ways and means to acquire a water and sewage system. This always led to the unpopular issue of town incorporation. The club appointed its first committee to work for incorporation on May 14, 1946.

Several community services were badly needed. The Ennis young people needed outlets for their social development. They had only the Ski Club and high school athletics. During the war the school band and chorus were neglected. In December 1945 the Commercial Club appointed a committee to look for a location for a youth center but they soon gave up because they could not find a building. Not able to finance a center they used their influence to improve the school's activity program. They helped the Ski Club locate places to house visitors during their ski meet in March of 1946. They sent the school band on a good will tour to West Yellowstone in April 1948. They have worked consistently to pass bond elections for the school and in 1973 they worked for the vocational education addition.

The inability of Ennis to keep a doctor in residence after Dr. Daniel F. Clancy could no longer visit patients frightened all the residents of the valley. Between 1940 and 1948 Ennis had three doctors who stayed long enough to become aware of how isolated they were from the facilities they need to properly care for serious health problems. Dr. Willard Thierfelter came in 1940 as an osteopath and left to get a complete medical education. Dr. McLean came in 1943 and left because he had found a better practice in his home area. Dr. Van Veen came as a result of the work of a Commercial Club committee's search for a new doctor. He left because he was called back to the army Reserve in 1948. On March 15, 1948, after Dr. Van Veen was gone, Ray Kohl's electrified a Commercial club meeting by opening discussion *(continued on pg 4)*



# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 17 issue 2

Madison Valley History Association

April 2019

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat** I guess it is spring. What a late winter with snow, cold and gorge ice. The flowers and grass will be super this year. With spring comes the time for the MVHA to get to work at the museum.

On June 1, 2019 the MVHA will hold the annual meeting along with a potluck dinner. At the annual meeting the MVHA will approve a budget and elect new directors to the board. This year there are 3 positions open. Otis Thompson has agreed to run again but John Gecho and Lee Robison have retired. MVHA need to replace those two and John and Lee are thanked for their contributions and years of service.

Two members need to step up to be directors and help the MVHA continue their mission. Just let a current director know that you would like to join the board. MVHA needs our members to step up and help out.

During May we will start cleaning the museum and setting up new displays. Mona Durham will be the scheduler and you can let her know which days you would be willing to volunteer. Sign up for a day or two. Members are needed at the museum during the hours the museum is open. It is fun, a great way to meet new people and a great way to learn additional history of your valley.

Several tentative programs are planned for summer. There is no scheduled meeting for May. The annual meeting will be held June 1 with potluck and an auction. Bring something that you can donate for the auction. July's program planned is a field trip to the Revenue mine area. In August, MVHA will attend the celebrations for the 60th anniversary of the earth quake. For September, MVHA is planning a history of the golf course with talks by several people.

Remember, MVHA is always looking for ideas for programs, for folks willing to give the programs or even ideas for speakers which we can bring in from outside the area.

Keep the Wagons Rolling, your Wagon Master, Larry Love

Don't Mess with Ennis, MT! John Edmonson, one of the horse thieves, asked Mr. Ennis, "What were you fellows following us for, anyway? Did you think we had some of YOUR horses?" Mr. Ennis, his face set in hard lines, replied, "If you are horse thieves you would steal horses from me as quick as you would from anyone else." Thus was exhibited the pioneer spirit of our ancestors which made Montana a great state! In 1884, or close to that time, Walter and Tim Switzer were riding for cattle close to the old Sawtell place near Henry's Lake, Idaho. Suddenly they met five men armed to the teeth with rifles and six-shooters, and driving about 25 head of horses. The leader of the men engaged the Switzers in conversation and inquired about food and accommodations. Both Switzers noticed a well-marked horse in the bunch, belonging to Harry Thompson of the Madison Valley. The Switzers wisely didn't say anything as they recognized the leader of the men was Con Murphy, famous horse thief, badman and crack shot. Recognition of a stolen horse could have brought instant death. About two days later, a posse from Ennis came through on the trail of the outlaws. After meeting the Switzers, they went on in hot pursuit. Information was exchanged and the posse proceeded south to Rexburg, ID, where the gang was spending the night at the house of Brigham Ricks, under the guise of law-abiding citizens. The posse had managed to contact Ricks the night before and developed a plan whereby he would tell the gang that breakfast would be served in his brother's house across the street. The posse men were stationed at strategic points providing a view between the houses. Con Murphy and his crew started for breakfast and were commanded to throw up their hands. They went for their guns instead and a firefight began. The posse was unscathed but George Munn, a member of the gang, suffered a fatal wound. (He is buried in the Rexburg cemetery.) Con Murphy and the rest of the gang surrendered and were returned to Helena to face trial. Witnesses at the trial of Con Murphy and John and Harry Edmonson from the posse were: William Ennis, George Thexton, Theodore Wilkins, John Brice, George Thorpe and Ben Burns. Later other witnesses from the Madison were called; Richard Coad, William Wagner, Charles Anceny and George Hadzor. Con Murphy escaped from the Helena jail and was believed to have committed other crimes. He was eventually hung by the Vigilantes in the East Helena area. Summarized by Duane Thexton from chapters 2 & 3 of Seventy Years a Cowboy by Philip S. Long, Cypress Books, Billings, MT; Copyright 1976. From the Spring issue of the *Pick and Shovel* newsletter for the Sons and Daughters of Montana Pioneers. Otis Thompson provided the issue and suggested this article. Thanks, Otis

**Membership:** New members since January 2019. MVHA thanks the following for joining and for their support.

**Carolyn Johnson (I)** Ennis, MT 59729

**Membership update** Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2019 membership is due during April, May, or June or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are now \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who have generously submitted your renewal memberships. The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds and membership to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

If anyone needs a ride to a meeting or program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

### **Member News**

**Virginia Black** recently celebrated her 90th birthday and with parties at Lion's Club and Nearly New and she is ready for many more years. Happy Birthday, Virginia.

**Bobby Foreman** suffered a stroke a month or two ago and now resides in Bozeman.

### **Memories**

**Jerry Thomas Churchwell** passed away on February 3, 2019. He was born January 3, 1943 in Spokane, Wash to Thomas Jefferson and Margaret Pearl Peterson Churchwell. He grew up in Phillipsburg , MT, graduated from Phillipsburg High School and started his college career at MSU. He served in the Navy during the Vietnam war. He returned home to Phillipsburg in 1969 where he met Lanelle Garoutte and they were married August 23, 1969. They moved to Dillon where he completed his teaching degree. He worked as a teacher and also worked in mining and logging eventually returning to teaching in Ennis, MT. He was a jack of all trades as he taught calculus, trigonometry, physics, chemistry, biology, business, math and computer programming before he retired in 2010.

**Theodore Edmonds Gildred** passed away on Jan. 3, 2019 at his home in Ennis, MT. Ted was born in 1935 in Mexico City, Mexico to an American developer, Theodore and Maxine Gildred. He went to school in San Diego, CA. After graduating from high school, he graduated from Leland Stanford Jr. University near Palo Alto, CA. He served in the Army. He was U.S. Ambassador to Argentina from 1986 to 1989. Ted and a partner bought the Sun Ranch beginning in the 1970s. Years later, in the early 1990s, having sold the Sun Ranch, he created a ranch community, now called Sun Ranch West, across the Madison River on acreage he had purchased shortly after buying the Sun Ranch. He and his wife, Heidi, helped fund the development of the Madison Medical Center.

**Bobby Ruth Smith Bjork** passed away on Jan. 13, 2019. She was born Feb. 28, 1927 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma to Robert Gus and Almira Rebecka Nichols Smith. She graduated from high school in 1943 and graduated from University of Oklahoma in 1947 where she majored in Radio Speech. While working her first job in Chicago, she met and married her husband, Ted Bjork on Sept. 18, 1948. Careers took them to Wisconsin, Memphis, Tennessee and Birmingham, Alabama. In 1979 Bobby and Ted made a major life change and purchased the El Western Resort in Ennis. Throughout her life, Bobby gave thousands of hours of her time volunteering. While in Ennis, her energy and service was mainly focused on the Madison Valley Chapter of the General Federation of Woman's Clubs. She was local president in 1984-1986 and 1992-1994 and started the "Ladies of the Evening Club" for younger, working women who could not attend daytime meetings. She served as State President, District IV President, Western States Region President and International Liaison Chairman for GFWC International. After Ted's passing in 1997, Bobby relocated to Bozeman and spent 13 years there before returning to Ennis for her final years.

**Laird Alexander Stabler** passed away February 8, 2019 in Ennis, Mt. He was born August 20, 1929 to Dwight Wilbur and Dorothy Alexander Stabler in Los Angeles. He lived in Mar Vista and graduated from Venice High School in 1947 and University of California, Santa Barbara where he studied business and graduated in 1951. He served in the U.S. Coast Guard, married Eloise Butler in 1952, was Vice President of marketing for Sta-Lube, divorced Eloise and in 1978 married Patrica Stabler. He was a long time MVHA member and for many years spent time between Ennis and California and after he became ill spent his final

*Cont. on pg 3*

*Cont. from pg 2*

years in the Madison Valley Manor until his passing. **James Wilson Clark** died peacefully at home in Seattle, WA on March 7, 2019. He was born in Ennis, MT on March 3, 1946, the 5th of eleven children of Wilson and Grace Clark. He attended school in Ennis and graduated from Ennis High School in 1964. He went on to receive his BS in Physics from Gonzaga University in Spokane, WA and his Doctorate from University of Washington, Seattle, WA. He married Elaine Weston in Seattle in 1977. Jim worked at Boeing as a software developer supporting projects such as the 787. Remaining attentive to care for the earth, he chose to walk, ride his bicycle, or use public transit in every situation possible. His sister, Frances Clark Young is a long time member of MVHA.

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This winter of 2019 was a more difficult winter season than many of the recent years and brought Jack Kirby to remember this story he wrote in 2010 about February of 1949...70 years ago.

**February 1949** by Jack Kirby

In 1949 there were 13 family ranch operations south of Indian Creek, 2 west of the river and the rest scattered between the river and the Madison Range. Most did not have easy access to the highway and expected to be occasionally snowbound.

The winter of 1948-49 I spent at the Kirby Ranch, 35 miles south of Ennis, helping my dad feed cattle and with other ranch chores. The winter had been exceptionally snowy with lots of wind and since we were hauling loose hay from the haystacks on the bench, lots of snow shoveling had been necessary. Even though we were using horses and a hay rack on bobsled runners, many trips we had to shovel our way up the hill and then clear more snow on the way down.

February 4<sup>th</sup> came on a Saturday night and, of course, my presence in town was a necessity. Due to the drifting and low visibility on the Armitage Flat I did not travel home at night. I usually stayed at Cloe Paugh's home, in the basement room I had lived in during high school. That night more snow and wind closed the road at the "26 Mile Hill". This was the downgrade 26 miles from Ennis where the highway dropped down toward the Hippe Ranch at Wolf Creek. The Highway Department had a one way snow plow mounted on

a 1½ ton dump truck. There was one stationed in the valley with Joe Wood as the only employee. He operated on a 40 hour weekly schedule so anything that happened after Friday afternoon was dealt with Monday. By this Monday it would have taken much more than a simple snow plow to open the hill. Therefore, the end result was that I was snowbound in Ennis.

My dad had several unused hay stacks in the bottom meadows that were easy to access with out shoveling snow. He also had a tractor loader for clearing driveways and corrals. With milk cows, chickens, and a storeroom full of groceries they were in good shape to be snowbound at their location.

Ennis was cut off from the rest of the world in all directions. The high school ski team (Bill and Titus Bry, Aldrich Saier, and Dean Matzick) were ferried to Norris in a Montana Power "weasel" to attend the State Ski Meet Gil Hansen used cross country skis to go to Virginia City and pick up yeast for his bakery. A native of Minnesota, he was experienced in cross country skiing and had the necessary equipment. The Ennis Cafe, operated by Eleanor Bennetts, kindly allowed me, and several others, adequate credit for our meals. With no deliveries coming in, we did express concern to her citing the decline in the number of cats that frequented the areas behind the cafe.

As time passed there did not appear to be any break in the weather. The whole northern half of the country was at a standstill while wind and more snow closed highways and railroads. Harold Helt and I worked on a solution to several problems. The existing telephone line ended at the Kirby Ranch. Further south, the Olliffe family, Jerry and Winnie Womack, Andrew Schuster, the Halverson's at the Cliff Lake Post Office, Maurice Staggers, and the Neely Ranch were without communications. Ed McAtee offered us the use of horses and tack to try to reach these families. At daylight the morning of February 21, Leonard McAtee trucked us to the top of the "26 Mile Hill" with 3 horses, saddles and a pack saddle for the trip. The accumulated mail for all the families plus the Sun Ranch and

Continued from Pg 3

Shelton's were loaded unto the pack horse. As we led our horses over the drift covering the road, we noted that the snow was packed so hard that hoof prints barely showed. We followed the highway where there were bare spots, used ridges when necessary, cut several fences as needed and arrived at the Kirby Ranch at dark. By highway, the distance was 9 miles, but how many more we traveled would be hard to guess. After spending the night at the Kirby's, Harold rode on to the Cliff Lake Post Office, checked with the Womack's and Olliffe's and returned by evening. All the families were in good shape having plenty of food and other supplies. These were experienced people, used to being snowbound during various winters over the long years they had lived in the Upper Valley. The next day Harold returned to the "26 Mile Hill" leaving the other two horses with us until the road would be opened.

The snow and wind had let up after the 20<sup>th</sup> leaving clear skies and temperatures in the 20 30 range. By February 27 the Highway Department managed to open the roads as far as the mouth of the Upper Madison Canyon. They bypassed the "26 Mile Hill" by opening an old dirt road to the east, abandoned when the highway was rebuilt and paved in the early 30's. A bulldozer, operated by Bert Lockhart, spent a week clearing the big drift from the hill. When the pavement was reached the measurement from the centerline to the top of drift was over 40'.

Writing this now, in the winter of 2010, I am impressed with the equipment and accompanying manpower that keep our highways clear and relatively safe. The increase in the amount of traffic now necessitates this. In 1949 there was no paved road across Reynolds Pass and traffic via West Yellowstone was infrequent. There was no regular attempts to keep the road from Ennis to Duck Creek open before the end of World War II. School busses did not operate south of Cameron, either on the state highway or county roads. Thank you, Jack, for sharing this story

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As we watch the remnants of the March of 2019 melt away and as we go from the

February of 1949 to February 2019, the subject of our Madison gorge comes up and boy, did we have a big one this year.

The Wagon Tongue was able to get this article by **Toni Bowen of Arrow Real Estate** about the gorge.

*Did you know that...* **some people believe the Madison River is the only river in North America to "gorge" this way?** Just what is "the Gorge?"

This is a main source of conversation around Ennis during especially cold weather. Old timers have great stories of cows getting stuck out on ice flows in the middle of the river and the year the gorge took out the old Varney Bridge. I have been fascinated by this phenomenon ever since we moved to Ennis in 1993. It is awesome to witness and hard to understand. I interviewed some of the natives and hydrologists as well, trying to find out the cause. In the winter of 2010, Greg Lemon, Editor of The Madisonian, our local newspaper, wrote an article that pretty much describes what causes the Gorge. He said, "It happens nearly every year. When the temperatures drop near zero and the wind howls mercilessly, the Madison River begins to freeze up. Around Ennis, when the Madison River will gorge becomes big topic of conversation. "Have you seen the river?" someone will ask. "Yeah. She's froze up down by the lake," will be the reply. "Betcha she gorges in by the end of the week." If you search the Internet for Madison River gorging, amongst the stories of big trout gulping salmon flies, you're apt to find a variety of pictures and stories about ice choking the river around Ennis and pushing water out into nearby fields, over-flow sloughs and pastures. Along with the anticipation come the rumors and legends about the uniqueness of the Madison River ice jams. Some say it freezes from the bottom up because the wind blows so hard. But the fact is many rivers around southwest Montana freeze in a similar fashion, said William Locke, professor of environmental science at Montana State University in Bozeman. "It's actually pretty common," Locke said. "Take for instance the Gallatin River," he said. "The most common form of flooding on the lower Gallatin is the result of ice jamming." "However, the speed the ice on the Madison River and the depth the ice reaches are impressive," said Pat Clancy, a former fisheries biologist in Ennis. Every year Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks close the Ennis and Valley Garden Fishing Access sites because of the ice gorging. In a 1921 article in "Proceedings of the Society of Civil Engineers," written by J.C. Stevens about the ice-jamming phenomenon on the Madison River. "It has been stated by local authority that

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| No. | Title                                                             | Date      |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1   | Hal Pasley Part 1                                                 | 13-Mar-08 |
| 2   | A Brief History of Norris (Power Point presentation by Ann White) | 18-Sep-08 |
| 3   | Hal Pasley Part 2                                                 | 20-Nov-08 |
| 4   | John Lounsbury: Nez Perce in Yellowstone                          | 2-Feb-09  |
| 5   | Sandy James                                                       | 21-May-09 |
| 6   | Gary Forney: Discovery Men                                        | 18-Jun-09 |
| 7   | Jeffrey Stafford: Sterling & Hot Springs Mining District          | 19-Nov-09 |
| 8   | Jacqui Moratta: Women of the Bozeman Trail                        | 21-Jan-10 |
| 9   | Toyia Hatten: Montana Herbs                                       | 18-Mar-10 |
| 10  | Don Black: Women of the Madison                                   | 16-Sep-10 |
| 11  | Gary Forney: People vs. Thomas Cover                              | 22-Oct-10 |
| 12  | David Kelley: Hanging Trees & Soiled Doves                        | 18-Nov-10 |
| 13  | Highland Mary Mine & Indians with Joe Smithson                    | 21-Jan-11 |
| 14  | Indians with Joe Bettenger                                        | 24-Feb-11 |
| 15  | Larry Kiefer and Ben Tone                                         | 4-Apr-11  |
| 16  | Branding in Montana                                               | 19-May-11 |
| 17  | Blacksmith Shop                                                   | 23-Jul-11 |
| 18  | Conversation with Ennis & Jeffers Founding Fathers Decendents     | 16-Sep-11 |
| 19  | Don Black: Madison Valley Sports                                  | 20-Oct-11 |
| 20  | Grizzly Bears in the Madison                                      | 18-Nov-11 |
| 21  | Otis Thompson: Thompson Family History                            | 25-Jan-12 |
| 22  | Ringdocus (The Beast)                                             | 26-Jan-12 |
| 23  | Michael Burns: Spokane and the Round Horse Barn                   | 19-Apr-12 |
| 24  | Mystery At the Museum (TV excert on the "Beast")                  | 2-May-12  |
| 25  | Moonshine on the Madison                                          | 21-Jun-12 |
| 26  | Tom Satterly: History of Butte                                    | 15-Nov-12 |
| 27  | Don Black: The Madison County Oil Company                         | 18-Apr-13 |
| 28  | Skiing at Jack Creek with Tom Erdie                               | 28-Oct-14 |
| 29  | Gary Forney: Dawn In El Dorado                                    | 28-Oct-14 |
| 30  | Barbara Hubner Smith                                              | 31-Oct-14 |
| 31  | Larry Love: Angle's Hardware                                      | 31-Oct-14 |
| 32  | Dan Northway & Talc Mine                                          | 5-Dec-14  |
| 33  | Montana Centennial Train 1964-1965                                | 16-Jan-15 |
| 34  | The Mainwaring family with Keith Mainwaring                       | 19-Feb-15 |
| 35  | A. M. Wells                                                       | 19-Apr-15 |
| 36  | Rocky Mountain Demon Wolf (from Destination America TV)           | 27-Apr-15 |
| 38  | Corrina Christensen: Ennis Drug Store                             | 20-Jun-15 |
| 39  | Tom Donovan: Hanging Around Big Sky                               | 16-Dec-15 |
| 40  | Joe Smithson and Early Madison Valley Residents                   | 26-Jan-16 |
| 41  | Ken Robison: Yankees & Rebels on the Upper Missouri               | 21-Apr-16 |
| 42  | Ruthann Knutson: Montana Indians Today                            | 20-Oct-16 |
| 43  | The Cowboy Legend DVD                                             | 7-Dec-16  |
| 44  | Cardiac Rehab with Peggy Shumsky                                  | 19-Jan-17 |
| 45  | Ken Egan and Montana 1864                                         | 27-Feb-17 |
| 46  | John Gecho and History of Cameron                                 | 4-Apr-17  |
| 47  | Mary Jane Bradbury as Jeanette Rankin                             | 22-Jun-17 |
| 48  | Hughie Call by Lynn Mahan                                         | 11-Oct-17 |
| 49  | Jack Kirby, Esther Armitage Warburton, Don "Kid" Neville          | 19-Oct-17 |

# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 17 issue 3

Madison Valley History Association

July 2019

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat** Summer has set in with vengeance. Hope everyone is having a good one with friends, camping, traveling and helping out and enjoying your Madison Valley History Association.

The MVHA is still "rolling along". At our April meeting, Kitty Eneboe gave a great program about her grandfather, Samuel V. Stewart who was a two term governor of Montana in the early 1900s. Kitty is not a member of the MVHA but a community member who has historical roots and stepped forward to share her historical story. MVHA thanks her very much for sharing. At the annual meeting on June 1, 2019, MVHA approved the budget and elected directors to the board. Otis Thompson was elected for another three year term, John Gecho agreed to stay on for one more year and Marty Brenneke was elected to finish a term for one year. Thank you very much for stepping up to serve your organization and continuing preserving the valley history. We need members to be thinking this next year about how they could serve the organization as MVHA needs board members to be the leadership of the organization. Without a board the MVHA cannot function as a 501c3 organization. So be thinking about how you could serve as it is not a difficult job, gives you a chance to meet new people and serve your community.

At the organization board meeting the officers from last year consented to continue their positions...Otis Thompson as Secretary, Kevin Brenneke as Treasurer, Brandi Palmerton as Vice President and Larry Love as President. I thank those individuals for doing a great job. They are the ones who keep the MVHA functional.

The museum opened for the season on June 11. The museum is open Tuesday through Sunday from 1:00pm to 4:00pm. So far this summer, there has been a steady flow of folks visiting the museum as MVHA shares the history of the Madison Valley. Mona Durham is the scheduler so call Mona at 682-4638 to volunteer for a 3 hour shift to help keep the museum open. No one can visit if MVHA does not have a volunteer on duty. It is a fun duty as you greet and chat with guests and show them around to the 3 buildings. And you always work as teams of two so it is pretty easy. And you will discover new displays and things you haven't seen before..

Our programs continue to be great. The July 27th Field Trip was to the Alfred and Sarah Parent homestead. Parents were Mary Kay Frisbee's grandparents and Mary Kay gave an interesting talk about the history of their ranching and mining of the valley. The Frisbees have kept the land in the family and it is a very beautiful area to spend weekends and vacations. After a picnic lunch by the lake, the group met up with Tim and Steve Jackson for a tour of the Revenue Mine area stopping to see several old mine sites as we learned of the mining in that area. Tim also shared the history of the stage coach routes in the area and took us to a grave site of a former passenger who died on the stage coach and they stopped and buried him/her right along the route, so as the story is told. Now our next history question will be to determine who is buried there. Tim took us over hill and dale down to Sterling and some folks in the group continued for a tour of Sterling. Anyone who did not know how to drive Montana backroads does for sure know now.

August plans are to visit the Madison earth quake site for the 60th anniversary of the earth quake. Still in the planing stages as we want to avoid the huge crowds that will be there on the actual date, August 17.

And please remember, the MVHA will continue to need member help and support to continue our mission. Because the current group is getting older each day, we are looking to younger members and volunteers. Encourage your young friends and family to come and help preserve the interesting history of the Madison Valley.

Keep the wagons rolling, Your Wagon Master, Larry Love.

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**The gun raffle of the 1866 Yellowboy Saddle Ring Carbine Little Bighorn Commemorative** continues and not many tickets of the 250 to be sold are still available.. The drawing is still to be determined, sometime after the last ticket is sold. You do not need to be present to win. Get your tickets purchased by sending in your order blank from the April 2019 Wagon Tongue or order by submitting your name, address and phone number and the number of tickets you want to purchase. Tickets are \$10 each. If you sell tickets to friends or family include their names on your order. Mail order and check to MVHA PO Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729. Any proceeds from this raffle go to continued development of the history museum.....

**History Titbit:** Origin of the term **Hog Wash**. Steamboats carried both people and animals. Since pigs smelled so bad, they would be washed before being placed on board. The mud and other filth that was washed off was considered useless "Hog Wash".

**Membership:** New members since April 2019. MVHA thanks the following for joining and for their support.

**Dave Coghill & Son(F)** Vashon, Washington  
Membership update Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2019 membership is due during July, August or September or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are now \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

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### **Memories**

**LeRoy W. Thom** passed away at Hastings, NE. on July 29, 2018. He was born on April 9, 1925 to John and Johanna (Peters) Thom on a farm near Ravenna, NE. Leroy graduated from Grand Island High School in 1942 and was a pilot in the Naval Air Corp during WW II from 1943-45. He married **2**

Jean E. Ballance on Sept. 5, 1948 in Lincoln, NE. He obtained a BS at University of Nebraska in Agricultural Engineering in 1949. He founded the T-L Irrigation Co in 1955 which manufactured hydraulic irrigation systems for farmers in the U.S. and many other countries. He owned and operated the Call Ranch (Bar 7) in the Madison Valley.

**June Gail Haigh**, long time MVHA member, passed away in Billings, MT on Dec. 23, 2018. He was born June 17, 1924 in Three Forks, MT to Gail and Margaret Haigh. June graduated from Three Forks High School. After graduation, he was inducted into the US Marines. and served in World War II. After the war, he returned home to attend Montana State College where he earned a BS degree in Soil Science and later obtained a Master's Degree in Range Science. He worked for the U.S Soil Conservation Service. He married Violet Gilbert. June loved hunting and fishing and if you have been a member of MVHA for a few years, you will remember stories that he submitted to be printed in the Wagon Tongue. June and Les Klatt were a team of volunteers at the museum and received rave complements. Obit provided by Les and Bobby Klatt.

**Melvin J. Hagl** passed away March 19, 2019. He was born on October 1, 1944 in Butte, MT to Harry and Madeline Hagl, Sr. He was a Vietnam War Veteran and earned a Master Carpenter Certification while serving. His first love was his sawmill and he always said that "Sawing was the easiest part."

**Lester M. Kilman**, long time MVHA member, passed away on April 10, 2019 at Bozeman, MT. Lester was born Aug. 15, 1932 in Verona, Wisconsin to Karl and Frieda Kilman. They moved around during his childhood as his father took care of cheese factories and did mining before settling in Pony in 1940. He attended Pony Elementary school and several other local elementary schools as his family moved for work. He graduated from Harrison High School in 1951. After graduation, he joined the Navy and served with the Sea Bees. He met Pearl Neville at the movie Theatre in Ennis. They were married in Jeffers, MT in 1954. They raised their family in Ennis where Les was custodian at Ennis High School for 37 years. They moved back to Pony after retirement and Pearl and Les spent 25 years as snow birds spending their winters in Quartzite, AZ. They moved back to Ennis for Lester's last years.

**Jean Estelle Thom** passed away on April 15, 2019 in Hastings, Nebraska. Jean was born in Lincoln, Nebraska on October 27, 1927 to Hobart "Earl" and Alma Ballance. She graduated from Lincoln High School and attended

*(Cont on page 3)*

(cont from pg 2) the University of Nebraska. On September 5, 1948, Jean married LeRoy W. Thom in Lincoln, Nebraska. Jean helped her husband, LeRoy, start the T-L Irrigation Co. in 1955. She was very active with the company in the early years and was the Corporate Secretary and on the Board of Directors until her death. Jean owned and operated the Call Ranch (Bar 7) in the Madison Valley with LeRoy. (editor's note: I met Jean by way of Smitty Overstreet and Jean and Smitty were avid rock hounds and both had collections of Indian arrowheads).

**Marilyn Marie (Toby) Wilkins** passed away on May 9, 2019 at Madison Valley Manor in Ennis, MT. Toby was born in Arlington, Nebraska on Feb. 3rd, 1929 to Lawrence and Maude Hall. She attended school in Arlington and graduated from high school there. On her 18th birthday, she eloped with the love of her life, Joe C. Wilkins. They lived in Arlington and then Fremont. Toby and Joe moved to Austin, Minn. in 1975. While in Austin, Toby decided to go back to school to attend nurse's training and become an LPN. She worked at a long term care center. In 1990, she and Joe retired to Ennis, MT. She worked at the Madison Valley Manor, the same care center where she later became a resident. She and Joe were very active with the original Senior Center and Meals on Wheels when the Senior Center was in the Ennis Town Hall.

**Donald Norman Clark** passed away May 15, 2019 at the Madison Valley Hospital in Ennis, MT. Don was born May 18, 1928, in Long Valley, South Dakota to Clem and Artie May Clark. In 1938 the family moved to the Madison Valley. He attended school in Ennis. After jobs in Washington and serving in the Army he returned to the Madison Valley working as ranch manager at the Channels Dude Ranch and for the Corral Creek Ranch.

**Carol Jahns Orr**, former MVHA member, passed away on May 29, 2019, in Ennis. She was born in Alhambra, California on June 28, 1923, to Alfred Heinrich and Cecelia Jahns. Carol grew up in Seattle, Washington. She graduated from Roosevelt High School and in 1944 graduated from University of Washington with a BA in Political Science. Carol met her future husband, Arthur (Toby) Orr from Cameron, MT, a Navy pilot, on a blind date. They were married in Seattle, WA on June 30, 1944. When the war ended, they moved to Cameron, MT and ranched together for 20 years. They owned the Bear Creek Ranch (now Sphinx Mountain Ranch) and Antelope Basin Cow Camp. While being a hard working ranch wife, Carol started a club for ranch wives called the Mad Gals. They sold Bear Creek Ranch in 1964 and bought a ranch along

the Madison River which they called Hiverwood. After many years traveling and working, they moved back to the Madison Valley in 1990 and opened an antique shop in Ennis, The Wayfarer.

The Memorial service for **Jane Jeffers Rybus** was held on July 6, 2019. Greta Rybus, Jane's granddaughter presented the following story of Jane that she compiled and sent in to the New York Times which shows the part each of us play in our history.

Our ancestors brought goods and cattle to this valley, making the journey Northward from Texas and Westward from New York, eventually founding Ennis and Jeffers. Their children grew up to marry and raise Jane Jeffers, a child born in 1924. I am one of Jane's three granddaughters, along with Emily and Sarah.

Jane grew up in a ranching family: branding their cattle with a simple outline of a house. Much later I would find the symbol in a booklet of brands in the valley, used to identify animals that strayed.

As a child, she rode horseback, dressed as Robin Hood for Halloween, and went skiing on a little ski hill up Jack Creek.

She left Ennis for the University of Montana in the middle of World War II. Of that era, she said "During my life in college all the men were gone, we women finally were able to take on men's jobs. Women were empowered during those years. After the war when the men came home, we lost it." She joined a sorority and her sisters called her "Jeff". She became the first woman student body president and graduated with a degree in English. She felt freedom.

She dreamt of becoming a writer in New York. But this was a time of few choices, even for ambitious women. Instead, she did what many women did. She married Henry Rybus, a kind and gentle man, but she was an unsettled housewife. She became a mother of three, and for a time, a teacher.

Divorced, in her sixties, she moved back to Ennis, living in the last house on main street across from two saloons, waking occasionally to bar fights. She became the unofficial town historian, an avid reader and bridge player. She looked out windows and watched for deer and birds. She went on archeological digs and took weekend-long workshops on how to pronounce "Sacagawea". Her home is filled with old photos, artifacts, and collected stones.

She grew older and content. Toward the end, dementia quieted her. My father would visit and they would hold hands as he read aloud Wallace Stegner. Always aware of my grandmother's lack of choice, I chose to follow her life with the freedoms of my generation: I graduated from the University of (cont pg 4)

(cont from pg 3) Montana 64 years after she did and left for the East to become a photojournalist.

At the end of each year, the New York Times compiles stories of impactful, notable people who had passed the previous year. They asked readers to submit stories of loved ones who had passed, because the people we love are notable and impactful to our own lives. And Jane was that to all of us: she was our family, our friend and to me a guiding force. She also was someone who showed us how deeply we can be connected to a place. Hiking up Jack Creek, my Uncle Curt said, "Living in Ennis, Jane was at peace." To many of us, Jane was both a person and a place: she was Ennis and she was this valley and all the stories in it.

While we are here to say a final goodbye and mourn Jane, we are also mourning the end of 156 years of our family's presence in this valley. Most of the land, the little house on Main Street, and now all the family who once came to this valley are gone. But that's why, if we think about it, we mourn more deeply because we have lost things we love. But, people like Jane and places like Ennis continue to shape us.: they are why my father, Tom, loves the West; why my mother, Pam, does crossword puzzles like Jane did, and why I remain firm in making my own choices; because I know the stories of my family, this place, and my grandmother. And maybe, while our presence here has waned, Jane and this valley has impacted each of you, too.

from Greta Rybus, Jane's granddaughter

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Rodeo season has come and gone in Ennis but it is time to examine the history of the **Ennis Rodeo Association**. From The Madison Valley A High Mountain Community by Minnie Paugh

The first rodeos were called "bucking contests". They may have been promoted by the saloons in Ennis because they were completely open to the public and only the saloons could have profited from the gatherings of ranchers. The contests were on the main street of the little town. In 1911 or 1912 a corral was built south of Angles Blacksmith Shop where the Gambles Store was in 1974. Bucking contests were held in the corral also without charging admission. During these years, Oz Wingate, who was a bartender in one of the saloons, told Theodore Paugh that he took in as much as a thousand dollars on a rodeo day. Riders came to Ennis for the love of the contest, not for the money, but the saloons gave money for the purses and after a contest the spectators passed a hat so that the riders usually received between \$5 and \$20

for an afternoon. Some of these riders were Bert Vetter, Johnny Kennedy, Fae Selby, Rusty Selby(1) Otto Kirby and Bill Gray.

Sometimes the horses would be started from Larry Dunn's "Sunshine" then from the saloon run by Jack Spray. The animals were held at Wallace Green's livery stable or Arthur Nelson's stable. (Nelsons later bought out Wallace Green.) On one happy occasion a horse escaped the hazers and took his rider up the school house hill and he was finally caught near the rocky point off the road at Eight Mile. Ed Michener was the hazer who caught up with the runaway.

Races were also held on the main street of Ennis. Laurence Jeffers specialized in the "saddle and go." His old horse didn't need its saddle cinched.

Just after 1920 Jack Conners who owned a saloon in Ennis built a rodeo corral south of the Ennis Ball Park (which was laid out about 1910) near where Chick Armitage lived. Si and Ted McAllister were riding at this time. In 1924 the Rod and Gun Club had a rodeo there with a fine group of riders including Powder Face Tom Eckert. "Rich" Richter did the producing himself. Johnny Kennedy bought this corral from Jack Conners and some people remember only the period when Johnny was running it. In 1919 Charles J. Manley started a rodeo at his ranch near Shell Creek Canyon. He used his own rodeo stock and had a show every Sunday in July and August. In 1926 he enlarged the coral and had a few shows with as many as 200 spectators. Dudes attended from the Elkhorn Dude Ranch and from the 9 Quarter Circle. The corral was only used three times.

In the 1930s Emmett Womack built a rodeo arena east of Ennis near the banks of the Madison River. Charles Manley furnished his broncs at first, but later Richter and Ellinghouse produced his show. Emmett was a member of the Rodeo Cowboys Association so his riders were professionals. He established a show date in the middle of June and many world champions rode for him after they finished the Southern rodeo circuit. In 1944 Emmett was injured while breaking a bronc in his corrals. He never was able to tell anyone what had happened to him and he did not recover enough to return to rodeoing.

Amos "Rusty" Selby rode in Ennis rodeos about 1914. He moved to Illinois and started his Diamond Horseshoe Rodeo in 1925 in Tonica. Its permanent home became Cornell, Illinois, 82 miles from Chicago. This was a traveling rodeo often booked at state fairs. It featured television stars such as Roy Rogers. This show closed in 1967. (cont on pg 5)

(cont from pg 4) The annual Ennis rodeo was produced in 1974 by the Ennis Rodeo Association. This corporation grew from a roping club and a racing organization which combined in 1952 to build a modern rodeo arena and race track. The roping club started in 1948 to engage in friendly competition in calf roping contests with small jackpots as prizes. The club never had more than twelve members which included Melvin Icenoggle and Jim Armitage. They had a rodeo in 1949 and 1950 and several jackpot roping contests. They raised their operating funds by paying dues and they encouraged the Madison Valley people to become interested in rodeos after World War II. They held their first rodeo in 1948 in Womack's corrals before they were torn down. The racing organization started in 1951 and held their first meet on a straightway track beside the local airfield. Their quarter horse races were held in Ennis several years until the race track was built at Beaumont near Belgrade by Lloyd Shellhammer. The backers for the Ennis races were Chuck Aaberg, Jim McAllister and Lloyd Shellhammer. Aaberg and McAllister raced their own horses. Some of the best quarter horses in the West raced in Ennis. They had paramutual betting. Chuck was so interested in the arena and track that he brought work crews from the Sun Ranch to work on the construction.

The rodeo association was incorporated as "The Madison Valley Rodeo and Racing Association." Chuck Aaberg was the secretary of the new corporation and he gave much thought to the means by which it could be kept free from business interests in Ennis who might want to schedule rodeos for their profit rather than for the good of the community and the association. Sumner Gerard was the state Senator from Madison County, and he used his position to cause the state legislature to pass a special law to permit the Madison Valley Association to sell A and B stock. "A" stock was for voting and only one share could be purchased by an individual or business. "B" shares were sold to finance the rodeo arena. They were sold in \$10, \$50 and \$100 denominations. Most of the money for the association was raised by the sale of \$10 shares and very few \$100 shares were issued.

The first expenses of the association were paid by loans co-signed by members of the association. Business people in Ennis and neighboring communities as far away as Bozeman were asked to make donations and they supported the activity with great generosity. Their first expenses was the purchase of their rodeo grounds on the terrace east and slightly north of Ennis. They acquired

between 70 and 120 acres from Earl Love Sr in 1952 and laid out a straight away tract before a permanent arena was built.

The sale of shares financed the lumber to build the rodeo arena which was designed and constructed by Melvin Icenoggle. He was the only salaried person working on this community project. At least 100 people in the community gave generously of their time to make the arena possible. They were the businessmen and the laborers from the town as well as ranchers. The major work was done in 1953 under the supervision of Melvin Icenoggle who was shoeing horses in th country. He was an active member of the Roping Club and had had experience working with the crews who built the rodeo arenas in Southwestern Montana. He had been rodeoing all over the West since he was a boy of sixteen. He was required to design an arena which would set inside a circular racing track a half mile long and in between rock bars. Otis Crooker then designed bleachers on skids that could be turned from the racing track to provide seating for the rodeo arena. In 1953 the association held two rodeos and a race meet. The present grandstand was later purchased from the arena at West Yellowstone after their rodeo club went broke. This purchase used all the Ennis funds and the lumber was hauled by members of the of the Rodeo Association supervised by Carl Hubner. The seating was assembled for the 1959 rodeo with Harold Holt in charge of the work crew. Additional bleachers were acquired from Gatton Field at Montana State College when its old seats were replaced. In 1957 the rodeo grounds were valued at \$15,000. It was used by the Roping Club, the Madison High Riders, the Valley Vaqueros and the Side Saddle Club with the permission of the Ennis Rodeo Association.

All the work during a rodeo or race was done by local ranchers and business people. In the first years of the association no passes were issued to the families of the workers. In 1960 a worker received a pass for his wife and three beer tickets. Often the entire family was employed for the duration of the celebration. They handled advance ticket sales, built the floats for the parade, manned booths selling food and refreshments and took care of the stock during the rodeo or race. After the events of the day were over, cleanup crews were needed to ready the grounds for the next day.

Coffee and hot dogs have been sold by the Madison Valley Woman's Club since the concession was given to them in 1959. Irma Manley has consistently worked with this project which has been two booths

(cont on page 6)

**For Your Reading Pleasure**

**An Ornerly Bunch** presents tales and anecdotes compiled from the Montana Writer’s Project. Enjoy pioneer yarns from chapters such as Curious Animals, Tall Tales, Tales of True Pioneers, and many more.

**Looking Ahead**

**August** Field trip for the 60th Anniversary of the Madison Earth Quake Date and time to be announced.

**Sept** History of the Madison Meadows Golf Course Date, time and place to be announced

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2019 Linderman Cabin Speaker Series Held at the Linderman Cabin past Laurin at Robber’s Roost site.

**“Dressing For the Ball” Thurs. Aug. 8, 6:30pm**  
Janet Allestad will be sharing information on the customs and culture of how women would prepare and dress for the balls held in early Virginia City.

**“And a Good Time Was Held by All” Sunday, August 11, 2:00pm** Mark Weber will be presenting an overview of the social life and cultural fabric of the Alder Gulch in the mid-1860’s.

+++++Rodeo continued from pg 5+++++ which were closed and rewired in 1963. The Boy Scouts are responsible for the sale of pop and the Lion’s Club sold the beer. Before 1959 the 4-H Clubs had the food concessions and that time the Buttons and Bowls Club bought the first American Flag carried in the rodeo parade. Adult clubs with concessions kept half of their profit but junior organizations may keep all of theirs. The sheriff has always deputized about ten men to police the grounds. In the early days Denny Wonder guarded the ticket booth. Recently a deputy sheriff has been assigned to watch the ticket booth and the concessions to guard against theft. In the old days the funds were held in the bank vault in Cloe Paugh’s insurance office until the rodeo was over. When it was convenient the board of the association would count the money and bank it in Bozeman. The person who took the money to Bozeman was protected by an armed escort car. In recent years the rodeo takes in about \$15,000 but only about \$1500 is profit. The money is banked in the First Madison Valley Bank. The Ennis Rodeo was and continues to be a local tradition. It links the modern community to its western heritage more colorfully than does any other event. Since the first trail herd came to the Madison County, the Madison Valley has provided grazing for cattle and horses. Fine riders were needed to break and school the horses for the old VF Ranch and to train Morgan L. Morgan’s little Mountain Lilys into the smartest, toughest little horses in the West. Such names as Tom Whitney, Joe Spray, Walter Long

**MVHA Board of Directors**

- President: Larry Love
- Vice-President: Brandi Palmerton
- Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke
- Secretary: Otis Thompson
- Director: John Gecho
- Director: Eric Palmerton
- Director: Marty Brenneke
- Historian and researcher: Don Black
- Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate
- Meetings and programs held monthly on the **third** Thursday of each month or as scheduled. Watch the Madisonian, posters and your email for details of time, place and program. Please call Larry Love 682-5780 for date of board meeting.. *The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be October 2019. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed. Your editor needs your history stories!
- Editor: Shirley Love whitneypranch@wispwest.net
- Contributing editors: *Madisonian* Obituaries, *Memory of Jane Rybus* by Greta Rybus *Ennis Rodeo Association The Madison Valley A High Mountain Community* by Minnie Paugh
- 2019 Linderman Cabin Speaker Series Gary Forney

**Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by First Madison Valley Bank**

+++++ and Frank Daems bring colorful memories to a few of old timers who tell their grand children about the riders when broncs were ridden in the streets of Ennis or on the open prairie.

The rodeo is always enjoyed as a business stimulator by some of the business people of the community. The gathering of friends and neighbors from surrounding communities and states is appreciated by the natives of Ennis and the Madison Valley. With the development of the tourist trade and growth of riding clubs many people support the rodeo for the love of rodeoing and the enjoyment of showing their well trained animals. The Ennis rodeo is a scheduled event on the calendar of several of the Montana dude ranches.

The October issue will continue with the rest of interesting details of the Ennis Rodeo Association and many more well known names from the Madison Valley.

This information has been compiled by Minnie Paugh from the minutes of the Ennis Rodeo Association and interviews with: Melvin Icenoggle, Charles Aaberg, Roy Daems, Ralph and Theodore Paugh, Winnifred Jeffers, Roy Reed, Irma Manley and Frances Womack.

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**History Tidbit** Bear Creek School House was built in 1909 to replace the old one room log building. It now celebrates 110 years.



# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 17 issue 4

Madison Valley History Association

Oct 2019

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat** The MVHA Museum completed another successful season. We had over 400 people from all over the world go through our museum. They all think that our museum is great and very unique. We can all be very proud of our museum.

A big thank you goes out to all the volunteers who help host the museum. And a great big thank you to Mona Durham for keeping us on schedule. Everyone should be thinking about hosting at the museum for 2020. (See Volunteers on pg 6 with the suggestion from Mona)

Liz McCambridge has been working with the history teacher, Mr. Cavan, to get students interested in working at the museum next summer and earning community service credits. Liz arranged a tour this fall to acquaint students with the museum. In the spring, MVHA will be having a museum training workshop for interested students and any MVHA members who would like to attend.

Before the school was out Otis and I hosted JennyB's 4th graders. During the summer Otis and I also hosted the Good Times Camp from Ennis. All the youngsters love the museum and go home with a good history of our valley. Lee Robison hosted a private school from Manhattan this fall so they came a ways to learn the history.

Our last field trip in August for the 60th Anniversary of the Madison Canyon earth quake was well attended with 35+ folks attending. Many good comments were received and the newest video of the 1959 earth quake was well received. If you did not get to attend, it is well worth your time to stop by the visitor center to view it.

We still need your help in getting programs for monthly meeting. If you have a suggestion, let any board member know. If you have a family history you would like to share, just let us know. We do not have a program for November yet and still time to plan for one. The December meeting will be our annual Christmas program and potluck with details to be announced.

The MVHA Board wishes you a great fall, Thanksgiving and Holiday season. See you soon around the history corner.

Your Wagon Master, Larry Love

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**Early Cattle Industry** It is not a very well known fact that the cattle industry in Montana started in Madison County. A man named John Grant had a trading post where the Ruby River empties into the Beaverhead River. He traded with the Indians, many of whom lived in the Ruby Valley, more or less peacefully during the winter. The Flathead tribes, the Bannocks, and the Shoshones, who were normally at odds, tolerated each other in the valley. There were several other traders who lived in this area with trading posts or wigwams during the winters, and they were joined by Granville Stuart and his brother, James, when they came to Montana. Jim Dempsey was among the traders there.

The Stuart boys were unable to purchase some cattle from Grant and when forced to leave the area by the hostile and obnoxious attitude of the Bannock Indians under their six foot five inch chief named "The Rouge" by the whites, took the cattle with them to their new home on the Clark Fork below Deer Lodge. It was from this location that Stuart was given credit for the first development of gold in Montana at Gold Creek. In the spring his cows brought in 34 head of Durham calves. Stuart has been given credit for being the father of the cattle industry in Montana.\*

(Reference: \*Granville Stuart Journals and Reminiscences)

By John C. Seidensticker, M.D.

Pioneer Trails and Trials pg 789

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**TALK LIKE A MONTANAN** The WPA glossary of Montana terms reflected the state's mining and agricultural heritage. Among the terms are: **Bench:** Plain rising above the lowland. **Between hay and grass:** In difficult times, as in the early spring when hay is gone and grass has not come up. **Biddy:** Aged, toothless ewe. **Boot hill:** Cemetery where pioneers who "died with their boots on" are buried. To be continued in next issue.

**Membership:** New members since July 2019. MVHA thanks the following for joining and for their support.

**Randy and Sandy Marr (F) 842-7411**

P.O. Box 214  
Alder, Mt 59710

Membership update Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2019 membership is due during October, November or December or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are now \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

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If anyone needs a ride to a meeting or program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

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**Memories**

**Ed Curnow**, long time MVHA member, passed away May 18, 2019. He was born in Reno, Nevada **2**

in 1937 to Erma and Dick Curnow. He graduated from Reno High School, attended University of Nevada, received a B.A. in History from Peabody College and an M.A. from the University of Montana where his research focused on the History of the Wolf. He met his wife Maureen at a ski hill near Reno, Nevada. He was a Madison River fly-fishing guide for some 34 years and owned Ed's Tackle Sho in Ennis, MT.

**Christine Elenor (Hughes) Sadler** of Virginia City, MT passed away July 6, 2019 in St. Paul, Minn. She was born Dec. 17, 1951 to Elenor and Edward Hughes. She was divorced from her first husband, Charles Sadler. Chris remarried and she and Scott Peterson moved to Virginia City from Minnesota in 2004 after many previous years in Virginia City. Chris was a member of Virginia City Chamber of Commerce and volunteered for numerous events in Virginia City.

**Christopher John Peduzi** passed away on July 11, 2019. He was born in Phoenix, Arizona on September 27th, 1953 to Lido and Katherine Peduzi. His family moved to Sparks, Nevada in 1964 where he graduated from Sparks High school. He married Lisa Greger and Chris was an avid outdoorsman and they had a summer home at Davis Lake for many years. After he retired from consolidated Freightways in 2004, they relocated to Ennis, MT. There they built their dream cabin.

**Joyce Lee (Tate) Wilbur** passed away July 21, 2019. She was born on Sept. 26, 1930 to Gleason and Amy Tate in Coffee Creek, Okla. on Sept. 26, 1930. at age 11, she and her family moved to Southern California. In 1948 she married her first husband, Kenny Davis. In 1949 Joyce and Kenny divorced and in 1951 she married James Kenneth Wilbur. In 1958 Joyce, Jim and son, Richard, left San Diego and moved to Ennis. In 1998 they moved to Sweet Springs, Missouri until Jim passed away in 2006. Joyce then moved back to Ennis which she always considered home.

**Caryl Joan (Hassenfritz) Kensinger** passed away July 27, 2019 at the Madison Valley Medical Center in Ennis, MT. She was born August 31, 1933 in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania to Arlene Lucille (Smith) and George Edward Hassenfritz. She met Bob Kensinger on a blind date and they were married on December 8, 1951. Caryl and Bob traveled to the West many times and retired in Grass Valley, California and began visiting Montana with stays every summer at the West Fork Campground and Cabins. They purchased the Elksbane Lodge on the Madison River. Ultimately they bought a home in Ennis with summers up at Elksbane and winters in town.

*Memories cont. on pg 3*

**Gene (Hautier) Holland** passed away on Thursday, August 8, 2019. She was born on February 18, 1935 in Jeffers, MT to Dora Evagene Barrier and Fred W. Hautier. She grew up in the Madison Valley graduating from Ennis High School in 1953 and moved to California where she joined the Navy. There she met and married J. B. Holland. Gene moved back to Montana, managed the Gateway Cafe, worked at Stacey's Old Faithful. One her proudest accomplishments was graduating from Montana State University in 1983 with a degree in Sociology. In 1992 she followed her sister, Mae Mac Donald to Three Forks, MT which became her permanent home.

**Jeffery Lemuel "Lem" Boyd**, former MVHA member, passed away August 12, 2019, in Montana. He was born in Waukegan, Illinois to Mary L. Kroll and Lemuel Boyd on August 1, 1959. He attended Zion Benton High School graduating in 1977. He earned a degree in chemistry from Southern Illinois University and a Masters degree from the College of Lake Forest. He retired April 1, 2019, from Akzo Nobel after just over 30 years with the company. Lem and his wife, Linda, purchased property in Montana 10 years ago and loved Montana.

**Edmond Mitchell Bouchard** passed away August 29, 2019, at Madison Valley Manor in Ennis, MT. He was born on October 27, 1922, in Ogdensburg, New York to Hector and Minnie Bouchard. He grew up and attended school in Ogdensburg prior to enlisting in the army early in WWII where he initially served under General Patton in North Africa. On August 29, 1959, Ed and Ruth Matzick were married at Williams Lake, British Columbia. After Ed's retirement from the service in 1967, Ed established a fishing guide service on the St. Lawrence River. In 1970 the couple moved to Ennis, MT, Ruth's home town. He served his community as a justice of the peace and for over 20 years as volunteer ambulance EMT.

**John (Doc) Alan Dochnahl** passed away August 31, 2019. He was born on June 12, 1953, in Madison, Wisconsin to Joan and William Dochnahl. He received his forestry degree from the University of Wisconsin and fled west for quiet places and fire lines and landed in Dubois, Idaho. He met Janet Bean there and on June 17, 1978, they married and moved north to Ennis, MT. After his tenure as a timber specialist, woodland sawyer and lumber yard manager he hung out his shingle for Doc's General Service and also became a community volunteer.

**Bill Dringle** passed away on September 9, 2019, in Ennis, MT. He was born March 2, 1938, in Bozeman, MT to George C. Dringle and Dorothy T. Noble. Bill graduated from Harrison High School in

Harrison, MT in 1955 and continued his education at Montana State College in Bozeman, MT. Bill returned to the family ranch at Cherry Creek just outside Norris, MT and married Karen Warburton on October 4, 1958. They sold the ranch in Cherry Creek and purchased a ranch north of Belgrade, MT in 1965 where he was partner with his dad and brother. In 1973 they sold the ranch and moved to Ennis, MT where they purchased the Rainbow Valley Motel. After about 7 years they sold the motel and opened Fan Mountain Real Estate. He was a 3 Rivers Telephone director, Madison County commissioner, built Fan Mountain Inn and contributed to the community by volunteering.

**Lynn B. Owens**, MVHA member, passed away at his ranch on September 25, 2019. He was born to Lloyd and Kate Byram Owens on January 23, 1930. Lynn's parents herded sheep for his grandfather, William Bryan in Grays Lake area of Idaho during the summers. When Lynn started school, his folks quit herding sheep and his father started buying and working on ranches. The family moved about once a year to a new place, including to Blackfoot and Salmon, Idaho and Clinton and McAllister, Montana. Lynn graduated from a one room school in Salmon, Idaho. He attended Missoula Hellgate High School for the beginning of his high school. His family bought the Barney Ranch and land from Charlie Bausch and the Schabarkers in the McAllister area on North Meadow Creek in 1946. Lynn graduated from Ennis High School in 1948. He went to Western Montana College in Dillon, MT until he was drafted into the Army. After his service, he continued his education at Montana State College graduating in 1957 with a degree in Electrical Engineering. He married Devonna Smith, an MSC nursing student from Jeffers, MT in 1958. Lynn worked for Montana Power Company and for the Bureau of Land Management. He fulfilled his dream and moved back to the family ranch in 1966 and continued ranching and was active in the community until his passing.

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**Member News: Don "Kid " Neville** won a blue ribbon at the Madison County Fair for his picture frame which he made and it was framing a painting done by Donna Bernier of Cameron. Check out the article about Kid and Donna in the August 22, 2019, *Madisonian*.

**Dottie Fossel** was recognized for all her hard work which is all community-minded with her position on the Madison Valley Hospital Board of Directors and her work with the Jack Creek Preserve. The article appears in the September 22, 2019, issue of the *Madisonian*.

**Lee Robison** has published his new volume of poetry, *HAVE*. The title of this book suggests one of the strongest thematic undercurrents in this collection. In examining the growth from innocence to experience, these poems look at what possession means and suggests sometimes, that to “have” means being had, and being possessed by what we possess. Look up his new book, visit an author talk and reading, or organize a talk or reading with a group to which you belong.

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**History of the Ennis Rodeo Association**

Continued from July 2019 issue of the *Wagon Tongue*. We left off at Ennis Rodeo being a scheduled event on the calendar of Montana Dude ranches.

Funds for the rodeo arena were raised in 1950 and 1951 when the Madison Valley Hospital was being funded. The same people backed both projects with their money and imaginations. The Ennis Ski Club was also at the peak of its influence as a leader among Montana’s skiing clubs. An example of the Community’s go spirit was Chuck Aaberg’s gift of two buffalo in two years to be raffled for the benefit of the hospital. The animals were claimed and reraffled for the hospital fund until they had earned at least \$2000. The first buffalo was claimed by Shorty Long and was served by the Elks as a barbecue for the benefit of the hospital. The second year when Betty Shaefer of Betties Cafe got the buffalo, she gave the profit she made from her buffalo dinners to the hospital fund. Each facet of the then rapidly expanding community had its particular leaders. The boosters for the rodeo show from the list of officers of the association between 1958 and 1971 were Dan Segota, Chuck Aaberg, Larry Gleason, Parham Hacker, Pete Durham, Max Robison, Dan Leadbetter, Bob Dress, Maurice Hickey, Lloyd Wortman, Tim Merica, Dick Dunning, Neil Morgan, Ed Clark, George Boltz, Bob Goggins, W. Anderson, Virginia Holt and Sherry Merica.

The rodeo parades showed this fusion of interests. Floats were made by local businesses and dude ranches well as riding clubs. A woman usually served as chairman of the parade committee. Two early chairman were Verta Shipman and Irma Manly.

Mike Quinn has produced most of the Ennis shows. He brought proven rodeo stock rather than wild stock so there were fewer accidents. After 1958 Melvin Icenoggle served several years as arena director. Rodeo clowns after 1940 were expected to protect riders from the Brahma bulls as well as prevent dead spots in the program. Since 1962 Larry Gleason had been the rodeo clown. In 1974 the Ennis Rodeo Association left the Rodeo Cowboy Association rather than include bull riding in

their schedule. Their reasons were first, that they demanded the freedom to program their own show, but they also felt this event would force them to add a highly paid bull fighter to their expenses in order to secure the safety of their contestants.

The Ennis Rodeo Association with the association of Whitehall and Three Forks organized the Montana Rodeo Association. It was needed to protect amateur riders from the professionals who sometimes competed in the small rodeos and took all the purses. Riders in the Ennis Rodeo must carry an amateur permit and must live within a hundred miles of Ennis by a rule made by the Ennis Rodeo Association in 1961. When the Ennis rodeos were scheduled in the middle of June it always drew several professional world champions from the Rodeo Cowboy Association This association was formerly the Rodeo Cowboy Turtle Association which worked to improve the purses received by cowboys by pegging them to a percentage of the gate receipt for the show plus the money collected by the filing fees of the riders. During the Depression many purses were set at \$15, \$10, and \$5. When money became inflated the size of the purse did not increase at a fair ratio to living costs. The more recent significance of the association to the rodeo viewer is that the Montana Rodeo Association has been making the schedules in this region for the amateur shows. Leaving the association might embarrass Ennis with too many other rodeos on their July 4th date.

The Ennis Rodeo Association has the tradition of an annual party scheduled in March. All members are invited with three guests. They may bring their husband or wife and another couple as guests. The association provides the meat for the feast and the members bring other food for a smorgasbord affair. The major part of the celebration is that the crowd is provided with all the liquor they can enjoy. The event is in the Sportsmen’s Lodge and the lower level is open for dancing. The crowds fill every corner of the Lodge for the entire evening.

The party is preceded by the election of the following year’s board. The board then picks its president.

This information has been compiled by Minnie Paugh from the minutes of the Ennis Rodeo Association and interviews with Melvin Icenoggle, Charles Aaberg, Roy Daems, Ralph and Theodore Paugh, Winifred Jeffers, Roy Reed, Irma Manley and Frances Womack. From *The Madison Valley A High Mountain Community*.

For any Rodeo Cowboy or current Ennis Rodeo Association member, the MVHA would gladly welcome an update of the history of Ennis Rodeo.





# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 16 issue 1

Madison Valley History Association

January 2018

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat** I have recently become interested in one of the most common items in our lives apart from ham and eggs and water. It is something so ubiquitous that we see it everywhere—except when our digital device steals our attention. It is in our schools, our living rooms, our libraries, our bathrooms. We see it on almost every business doorway in town, and it's on the table when we sit down to dine in any eatery in Ennis, or Cameron, or Norris—and invariably, it is there in more than one form. When we buy a sack of dog food or move a box of crackers from the store shelf to our shopping cart, we handle it. Used to be, before our devices and computers, it was even more pervasive than it is now. But even now it is an integral part of our time and life. Those very devices stealing our attention from the glory of the world around us would not come to us were it not for this very common, but very necessary commodity of civilization. You can't even pump a tank of gasoline without having to decide whether you also want a slender slip of this stuff. I write of course of the very stuff you hold in your hands as you read this—supposing you are not reading a digital, archived copy via your device. It is paper.

In the course of my interest, it occurred to me that even before railroads made it to Salt Lake City, even before Bozeman made his road up the past the Tongue River into the Yellowstone Valley and then on to the Madison/Ruby mining camps', paper had made its way in bulk into these mountains. And sure enough, what occurred to me is a true occurrence.

We know this because on August 27, 1864, just a short year and two months after the discovery of gold in Alder Gulch a man named John Buchanan published the first issue of the *Montana Post*. Something he could not have done had he not had paper. As it happens Mr. Buchanan brought the paper, the printing press, the typeset and other necessary appurtenances for newspaper making with him, shipping them to Fort Benton by steamboat and from there by wagon and mule to the gold camps. As it also happens, he did not bring enough paper. Everything else he had was in sufficient supply to bring his neighbors the news. But by April Fools Day 1865, he was running short on paper and apologizing to his readers for the quality of the stuff he was printing his news on. Although a sufficient supply was on its way from Salt Lake City, the winter condition of the roads was holding up delivery. Regardless, Buchanan promised to continue publishing even if he had to print the paper on shingles. (*Montana Post*, April 1, 1865)

He must have gotten his paper, because the *Montana Post* published for several years thereafter, and there is no record it was printed on shingles.

Interesting times. Times when people looked at the world a bit differently than we do, a time before UPS and FedEx when expecting freight delivery required patience and innovative thinking on how to continue without the freighted item, should it arrive later than expected. (The week's news on shingles! That I would liked to have seen—fake or otherwise.)

Note: Most of the information in this article is taken from two issues of the *Montana Post*. In addition to the April 1, 1865 issue noted above, the July 14, 1866 issue contains a brief history of the paper's early days and fills in some details on its founding. Your Wagon Master, Lee Robison

**History Tidbit** 1913-13th Legislature passes a law allowing ratification of the constitutional amendment extending to women the right to vote. Jan. 1, 1917—4 years later, the first two women elected to the legislature, Maggie Smith Hathaway (D) and Emma Ingalls (R) began to serve.

**Membership:** The following are new members since the *Wagon Tongue* went to print in October. Add them to any membership list you are keeping and welcome them to membership. Remind them of the meetings and special events of the MVHA.

**Shore, Renata & Steve** 406-682-7177

P.O. Box 1245

Ennis, MT 59729

**Membership update** 2017 memberships are now past due as you receive your renewal application. Almost all of you have taken care of business and the MVHA has received your membership for 2017. Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2018 membership is due during January, February or March or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue.

**Memberships are now \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor.** If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who generously submitted your renewal memberships at the newly voted amount.

The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

If anyone needs a ride to a meeting or program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

#### **Member News**

**MVHA and members Esther Warburton, Jack Kirby, Don "Kid" Neville and Larry Love** made the Lifestyle page of the Thursday, Oct. 26, 2017 *Madisonian* for the Story Hour program presentation at the October History meeting. If you did not get an opportunity to read this, you may read it at the Madison Valley Public Library or at the *Madisonian* archives.

Two MVHA members, **Jan Smith** and **Larry Love** participated in the Ennis Community Christmas Concert before the holidays. Besides singing the cantata with the choir, they sang Winter Wonderland as a duet.

**Willie's Distillery..Willie and Robin Blazer**, MVHA Business members, were featured on the front page of the Jan. 4, 2018 edition of the *Madisonian* **2**

with a story of their business and the Ennis brand gained national attention when Fifty Best, a New York City guide to living, awarded Willie's Bighorn Bourbon Whiskey a gold medal in December 2017.

History is being made on Main Street Ennis!

#### **Memories**

**Minnie Pearl Clark** passed away Oct. 24, 2017 in Ennis, MT. She was born to Maggie on March 22, 2004 in Salt Lake City, Utah joining 8 chocolate Lab brothers and sisters. She came with Melody Clark, activities director, to the Madison Valley in 2013 and became part of the Madison Valley Manor family. Minnie spent the rest of her life bringing joy and comfort to the residents of the Manor. About a year ago, Minnie reluctantly allowed the adaptation of her sister, Mickee Lynn. She taught Mickee the ropes of the Manor. Minnie was loved by all the residents, volunteers, staff and families. She will be missed but not forgotten. She gave her heart to all of those who need it.

**Peter John Traxler** passed away October 26, 2017 in Ennis, MT. Pete was born on May 4, 1946 in St. Peter, MN to Anthony and Monica (Hughes) Traxler. He was a graduate of LeCenter High School, class of 1964. He lived and worked in LeCenter and Mankato, MN until he moved to North Dakota. But it was his move to Montana when he finally found his home, living his last 20 years in Ennis. While in Ennis, he was active in the Elks Club and Trinity Episcopal Church.

**William F. Miller** passed away October 30, 2017 at home near Ennis, Mt. He was born Nov. 25, 1927 in Spokane, Washington. After service with the U.S. Occupational Force in Japan, he returned home to marry Sally. Bill spent his career with Chevron Oil and frequently came to the Madison Valley to camp and fish. Following his retirement, he and Sally built their home near Ennis and for several years were in partnership in the Happy Angler Antiques store. Bill was also a charter member of the Madison Meadows Golf Course Association. Bill is father-in-law to Gary Forney, long time MVHA member.

**Richard L. (Dick) Todd** passed away November 1, 2017 at the Tobacco Root Care Center in Sheridan, MT. He was born at the Todd Ranch on Moore's Creek near "the rocks" west of Ennis, on March 25, 1923. Dick's oldest brother, Jack, attended his first year of school at the 8-Mile School. After that the Todd family children rode their horses 4 miles to Ennis for school. In winter the horses were stabled in town during the day. They had one horse, Ed, who did not like being ridden double, so two children would have to squeeze into the saddle or get bucked off. Dick's mother, Mary, would watch for the children to come over the gap on their horses from school, sometimes in bitter weather. *Cont pg 3*





McAllister, Harry Odden, Pauline Oakwood, Hazel Reyner and Louise Steiner from the Ruby Valley.

The county owes a debt of gratitude to these dedicated workers. And the MVHA and its members appreciate all the work that was done. These books are used a lot.

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In memory of the most famous doctor in the Madison Valley, Doc Losee, the Wagon Tongue will continue with the following history account taken from *The Madison Valley: A High Country Community* by Minnie Paugh

### **Doctors came to the Madison Valley**

The first doctors moved from Bannock into Alder Gulch in Madison County in 1863. Settlers followed the prospectors to the gold diggings, then scattered to the good farm land where they raised root crops and grain for the miners and produced fodder for their livestock. The first men to build crude cabins in the Madison Valley intended to cut wild hay for the freighters and to fatten their worn out oxen and horses. The first wave of settlement included as many medical practitioners as the healthy miners needed. The early doctors must have been rough and ready individuals because the wagon train captains and freighters could handle most emergencies without help.

Pioneers were tough. Orson N. Newman who was the first man to settle his family in the Madison Valley amputated his own big toe after he could not find a doctor willing to solve his bunion problem. (1) John Vetter Sr., who started a shoe and leather shop in Virginia City in 1863, brought with him a well stocked drug kit. The local doctors said it included the best possible selection of remedies to bring to the frontier. Mr. Vetter's nephews and nieces started to settle in the Madison Valley in the 1880's.

The doctors who came to Virginia City, Montana in the 1863 did not lack for good medical training. Dr. Levinus Daems, whose sons, Harry and Lev, homesteaded on Wigwam Creek, graduated from the Medical Department of the University of Paris.(2) He shared his practice with Dr. Erasmus D. Levitt of Bannack who took care of most of their medical practice. Dr. Daems mixed drugs for the other doctors in Virginia City. He was an excellent surgeon when his skill was required.

Dr. Ira C. Smith who arrived in Bannack in 1863 had one of the first practices in the Madison Valley. He visited regularly at the home of a patient at Henry's Lake which was more than a hundred miles from his office in Virginia City. He made his calls to this sick woman even during the snowy winter months.(3)

Dr. Smith traveled in a buggy. He always wore a black suit with a Prince Albert coat and a 4 freshly laundered white shirt. He topped his tall, spare figure with a black silk hat that only partly covered his silky white hair. He died in 1884 when his neck was broken as he was thrown over the dashboard of his overturned buggy. The accident happened on a lonely road in the Madison Valley. This doctor had no close personal friends, but his monument in the Virginia City Cemetery was paid for by popular subscription and is engraved, "Madison County's Tribute to Madison County's Friend".(4)

The first doctor to reside in the Madison Valley was Calvin M. Pinckney.(5) He was the son of the 1864 pioneer Simeon Pinckney. They belonged to a family that earned its living by practicing healing and by farming. He was in the Union Army during the Civil War where he provided medical care to the 5th Michigan Cavalry. Three years of active combat service gave him excellent training for a medical practice on the frontier where most of the practice was treating accidents or controlling epidemics. Dr. Pinckney joined his father at Meadow Creek in 1875. Simeon Pinckney had a small farm and a saw mill on the Washington Bar. The doctor had a wife and two children when he came to Montana. Esther Pinckney became the postmistress at Meadow Creek in 1882.

Between 1875 and 1904 Dr. Pinkney traveled the roads and trails of the Madison Valley giving medical service to his friends and neighbors. When medical problems could be anticipated the Pinckney's took cases such as expectant mothers into their home. The pioneers respected and depended upon him, and he delivered most of the babies born in the Valley during his 29 years of practice there.

Dr. LeRoy Southmayd, who practiced in Virginia City with Dr. Patrick J. Ragan roughly between 1889 and 1899,(6) had a thriving practice in the Madison Valley. This doctor set up hospital rooms in hotels such as the one in Meadow Creek which was owned by George B. Bess. He was a young doctor who left the state in 1898 to serve with the Montana volunteers during the Spanish American War. Soon after his return he took up a practice in his home town, Great Falls, MT. His testimony prevented the execution of Martin Peel for the murder of William Ennis when the case was appealed for clemency in 1899. Dr. Southmayd who had attended to Mr. Peel during a long illness was away at war when the trial occurred.

Thomas B. Marquis was the first medical practitioner to live in the Madison Valley who had a





# The Wagon Tongue

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Volume 16 issue 2

Madison Valley History Association

April 2018

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

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**From the Wagon Seat** As citizens of 21<sup>st</sup> century Montana, we often forget just how shallow, historically speaking, our tenure in these mountains is. We speak of our land, our home, our way of life, forgetting that this land was home to people long before our grandfathers came looking for furs and gold. We forget that these people had ways of living they too found precious, ways of living that was disrupted and eventually mostly forgotten. There are records of some of these people and their ways, but these are mostly written by strangers, some of whom were often less than sympathetic to the lives of the people they wrote about.

We have the Journal of a Trapper by Osborne Russell that deals with the early fur trappers' interaction with the Native Americans. But Russell speaks from the view of men who saw the Indians as rivals and often as opponents in a deadly killing game. What clues we gain from his Journal about the way the Indians lived is happenstance and usually related to warfare and fighting, since war is how Russell and his pals most often met the Indians.

We also have the diaries and journals of Narcissa Whitman (though this be in Oregon). Her journals, like many written by missionaries coming into a strange country, were at best disparaging, but usually downright condemning of the ways of the Cayuse and Nez Perce she lived among. Though she went among the Indians with her husband to make Christian friends of them, by the time of her killing, her mission had made them enemies. Again the clues she provides to the way of life of the Cayuse and Nez Perce she lived among is colored by her belief that her ways and the ways of her people were defined by God; hence all other ways were evil.

Fortunately, there are oral traditions passed to us through the few people who survived the depredations of the invading culture. But these are limited by their distance in time from when their grandfathers actually lived that life. These oral traditions are also somewhat colored by the tellers' century-and-a-half interaction with the European/American culture that overran their homelands.

About a mile from my home, I know of a lodge foundation (commonly called a tepee circle). It may be gone now since there is a house sitting about where I remember it was when I was a boy. Whether gone or there, like so much about those people, it is about all we have to remember them. Their stories are gone; the way they cooked their foods is mostly burned away; the rules for the games they played are forgotten. How and what they taught their children is a smattering of legend. We have little but a circle of stones; and all it tells us is that at one time in the past people camped near this stream.

This summer the MVHA is planning a field trip to the Wall Creek Game Preserve. The Wall Creek Game Preserve is land where four or five ranches used to be that has been bought by the state and set aside for wildlife. I think this field trip would be a good time to contemplate the ironies of walking land where two cultures—the Native American way of life and the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century ranch ways—have been disrupted by a different culture with new ways of thinking about land use and wildlife. I think it would also be useful to contemplate that none of these ways were/are any better than any other; but that each reflects how mankind tries to solve problems he/she finds when he/she arrives to live on this planet. Finally, I think it might also be a good time to think how the study of and recording of history helps us to carry cultures across time to enrich lives of the generations to come. Your Wagon Master, Lee Robison

**Membership:** No new memberships since the January 2018 issue.

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If anyone needs a ride to a meeting or program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

**Member News** The editor did not find or hear any special member news for this issue. If you know of any member receiving recognition for something or participating in a community event let the editor know.

#### **Memorials given to MVHA for year 2017**

Memorials received during 2017 were for Ann Story, Ginny Segota, Steve Huber, Becky Grauman and Glen Reinhardt. Thank you to members and family who gave memorials. The money goes toward preserving the history of the Madison Valley.

Do not forget to share with family and friends when a loved one passes that a memorial to the MVHA is a great way to remember a departed and have their memory preserved in history. Besides money memorials, another great way to preserve the memory or honor a friend, a family member or a whole family is to purchase a Walk of Names board for the walkways at the museum. As the museum complex grows, there is still room for name boards so request an application and more information at MVHA, P.O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729 or call Larry Love at 406-682-5780 or Otis Thompson at 406-682-7415. Memorial Day is coming soon and a Memorial board might be just what you are looking for to remember a loved one.

#### **Memories**

**Bryon McAllister**, long time member of the MVHA, passed away Dec. 9, 2017 in Bozeman, MT. He was born April 29, 1929 in Midvale, Utah to Donald and Julie (Roundy) McAllister and received his education starting with a BA from University of Utah in 1951, and MA (1955) and a Phd (1966) from University of Wisconsin-Madison. He retired from Montana State University in 1991 and is Professor Emeritus of Mathematics. The family has researched a connection to the McAllisters settling in the Madison Valley but have found none.

**Violet Helen Gilbert Haigh** passed away on Jan. 28, 2018 in Ennis, MT. She was born July 16, 1927 to Art and Henrietta Gilbert in Benton Harbor, Michigan. She earned a teaching degree from Western Michigan University. Vi worked in Yellowstone Park as a telephone operator during summer breaks from college. She loved Montana so much that she moved to Harlowton to teach. She taught at several Montana schools before coming to Three Forks, MT. There she met and married June G. Haigh. They moved to Cut Bank, MT. After raising her family and going back to school for her fifth year degree, the family moved to Ennis, where Vi was a special education teacher. She was active in the Ennis Presbyterian Church and was a Red Cross CPR and First Aid Instructor for over 50 years. Her husband, June, is a long time MVHA member.

**Harvey Eckert**, long time MVHA member, passed away on January 30, 2018 in Ennis, MT. He was born in Great Bend, Kansas to Charles Davis and Sylvia Smalley Eckert. He grew up in Larned, Kansas and graduated from Wichita University. He is an Army Veteran. After many family fishing trips to the Colorado Rockies, he moved to Colorado and then to Montana, moving to Butte where he worked for Bob Ward's, Fran Johnson's Sporting Goods and Cashell Engineers as a surveyor and draftsman. He moved to Ennis in 1986 and married Patsy O'Donnell on May 7, 1986. Harvey worked for the town of Ennis for 24 years retiring in 2011. Harvey was a multi-talented person—an illustrator, an artist and an accomplished guitar player as well as playing banjo, fiddle and dulcimer.

**Henry "Hank" D. Wruck** passed away Feb. 10, 2018 in Bozeman, MT. He was born on March 15, 1932 in Ennis, MT to Henry "Heinie" and Ruth (Cutler) Wruck. He began his education in a one room school near the Montana Power Company dam in the Madison County. The family moved to Norris and he attended school there.

In January of 1945, the family moved to Bozeman where Henry attended Irving school and graduated from Gallatin County High School. (Cont. on pg 3)

(Cont. from pg 2)

Henry enlisted in the U.S. Navy, after honorable discharge, he attended MSC. In 1958 he joined the Bozeman Fire Department, and retired as the Gallatin County Disaster and Emergency Service Director. He and wife, Darlene, were long time MVHA members.

**Darlene F. Wruck** passed away Feb. 11, 2018, one day after Henry. She was born June 7, 1939 in Belgrade, Mt. to James and Elsie (Davis) Francis. The family moved to Manhattan, MT where she attended the public school and graduated from 8th grade. She graduated from Gallatin County High School after the family moved to Bozeman. Following her marriage to Henry, she became a homemaker. After raising her family, she worked for the College of Agriculture at MSU.

**Amy Wilma Orser Swoboda** passed away Feb. 8, 2018 within just a few miles of where she was born. She was born on July 1, 1923 to Artie Orser, world champion bronc rider and Esther Burger Orser at her grandparents' Peaceful Heart Ranch at the base of the Pryor Mountains, 5 miles from Pryor, MT. Amy was a direct descendent of Otis Crocker Whitney, one of the original homesteaders in the Madison Valley. The Whitney homestead still stands near Whitney Point near Ennis, MT. (Editor's note Amy and her family visited the Whitney homestead a number of years ago and it was the highlight of our day to show them the homestead and share delightful Whitney stories with them.) Amy lived her life with a fierce love of Montana and pride in her pioneer background.

Amy attended her first two years of school at the Roosevelt School in Billings and after her mother's death she returned to the ranch where she was born and was raised by her grandparents, Elmer and Maria "Rye" Whitney Burger. Doing her school years she lived with an aunt and uncle while attending the upper Pryor School. Amy often shared her memories of the years spent in this small one-room school and during harsh winters she rode her horse two miles to and from school. In the fall of her eighth grade year she moved to Billings with her aunt and uncle and graduated from the first graduating class at Billings Senior High School in 1941. In February of 1944, she traveled across the United States by train and bus to marry her high school sweetheart, Rudy Joe Swoboda in New Bern, North Carolina, where Rudy was stationed at the Cherry Point Naval Station. After many travels, adventures and homes, Amy and Rudy ended up in Billings, MT. In 2005 Amy and Rudy moved into Westpark Village. Amy perfected the art of homemaking and was a recipe collector. (editor's note: Amy is the mother of

Jaye Swoboda who is a practicing doctor with the Veterans Administration in Bozeman, MT and lives in Ennis, MT.

**Ruth Hepner**, passed away on March 15, 2018 in Dillon, MT. She was born on August 21, 1930 in Wallace, Idaho to Harold and Margaret Hepner. She attended schools in South Dakota, North Dakota, and graduated from Libby High School in Montana. After a year of college at the University of Montana, she received a B.S. in nursing from the University of Maryland in 1962. In 1979 she returned to Montana to take care of her mother at Varney. Ruth was a member of Trinity Episcopal Church in Jeffers.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Doctors came to the Madison Valley** From *The Madison Valley: A High Country Community* by Minnie Paugh

I left off with Dr. C.V. Lowers who started doctoring in Ennis between 1911 to 1921. Before going on with the Paugh story and Dr. McNallan, I was told about a doctor that was missed. Jack Beals called one day and told me the whole story of Dr. Thomas Joseph Fain, M.D. related to Jack on his mother's side. Dr. Fain practiced in Tennessee, but after he married Margaret Earhart, they came to Pony in 1900. In the spring of 1901, they moved to Norris as there was no doctor and there was mining and the dam on the Madison River at McAllister was being built. Dr. Fain drove many miles with a team and buggy in any kind of weather to administer to the workers at the dam and the people of the valley. Jack's mother, Ruth Fain Beals had a letter from Mrs. Bill Fletcher in which she told that Dr. Fain had gone to their home in McAllister, stayed all night, delivered the baby, Donald, and charged \$15. This was in 1906. In 1908 Dr. Fain's health failed and he was bedfast with tuberculosis. The Norris people gave him a gold headed cane with his name and date on it.(9a)

Dr. McNallan gave dedicated medical service to the valley between 1914 and 1930. He is best remembered for the untiring efforts he made to save the victims of the influenza epidemic in December of 1918. He drove from one end of the valley to the other and treated patients everywhere. He went for as much as thirty-six hours without rest other than what he could get during the drives. He hired a driver and made a bed in the back of his car where he rested and slept between cases. During these days of emergency, Mrs. Lawrence Dunn, who was a trained nurse, used her skilled strength to save the community that had to depend on the few people with medical knowledge and courage. Mrs. Dunn had a rather short career as a (continued on pg 4)

*(Cont from pg 3)*

nurse because she was a diabetic before modern methods of therapy were known.

Dr. McNallan was the most successful physician in the state in his treatment of the Spanish influenza. The two cases who died on the Madison, one at McAllister and the other at Cameron, were both dying when they called him. After the epidemic was over he was called upon to meet with the other physicians of the state to tell them about the treatment he had used to bring about this amazing record.(10)

It was impossible to compare the flu epidemic in the Madison Valley to that in Virginia City where ninety people were critically ill by Dec. 6, 1918. (11)

The Masonic Temple there was made into an emergency hospital and the city council set aside \$1500 to bring in doctors and nurses to take care of a community so stricken that even the doctor was down with the flu. The county officials left their offices to take care of the ill and Gov. S. W. Stewart who was a Virginia City citizen, sent his personal medical aid, Dr. E. G. Balsam, U.S.A., of Billings. Dr. Balsam served the community with all his strength until the epidemic broke.

In the Madison Valley work crews of unmarried men were the most vulnerable victims of the epidemic. In 1918 Cunningham and Biering had the largest work force in the valley where they were raising crops on the Bear Creek Bench. M.S. Cunningham asked Mrs. Bertha Miller, who was the mother of Ernest Miller who later started the Elkhart Ranch, to help him. He had already brought all the sick men to one cabin which had a large loft that had to be entered by climbing a ladder firmly attached to its wall. (12) Mrs. Miller requested an ample supply of milk and eggs. She kept all the men alive by making them stay in bed where she fed them nothing but egg-nogs. She was an ample woman who must have found it difficult to climb a ladder to tend her patients, but with a will such as hers, the men were tended.

Dr. Daniel F. Clancy started his medical practice in Montana at Alder where he was under contract to Harvard University to take care of the health of the crews who worked the enormous dredge boats that removed the last of the gold from Alder Gulch.

Dr. Clancy was a native of Boston who had earned his medical degree at Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia. He graduated with letters shortly before coming West to begin practicing. He picked Montana because he had shared a room with a student from Helena who talked about his home state. He arrived in Alder during the winter of 1907 to 1908 and soon met Edna Kiser (13) who

was working there as a trained nurse. "Tot" as her friends called her, had been trained at Long Island College Hospital nursing school with a medical school connection. She attended classes there with medical students She had also graduated in 1907.

She came from a family of Montana pioneers who had homesteaded on the east side of the Madison River. Her father, Ambrose B. Kiser, had been owner and editor of the Madisonian, the county newspaper. Edna was born in Virginia City in 1888. She had attended high school in Virginia City. She had gone on to Bozeman College, then to Pratt Institute before attending nursing school.

Dr. Clancy took private cases and needed to travel out to the ranches to take care of his patients and he found that Tot could help him make his home calls as well as assist as his nurse. She had grown up around horses and could handle a driving team as well as most men, although she was very small and slim. The doctor never felt confident with a spirited driving team and spirited ones were needed to keep in touch with a practice that extended from Lyon at the south end of the valley to Norris. Tot and Dan Clancy were married in 1909.

The Clancys made their home in Virginia City and the doctor commuted to Alder and Ruby to take care of the men who worked on the dredges. His horses were cared for by Johnson at the livery stable and he took good care of the doctor's outfit. The medical equipment needed for diagnosis was simple and drugs were not used as they are in 1970 so the doctor managed very well with what he carried in his medical bag. Tot needed to carry sterile sheets, sterile gowns and gauze. She also liked to have extra bedding to use if the home was not clean. Most cases were obstetrical. The doctor and his nurse were more dependent on their common sense and their ability to inspire confidence in their patient than as a modern medical team.

The doctor's surgical practice was not so complicated then since the usual operations were connected with childbirth, dramatic fractures, and wire cuts. Appendectomy were only performed in dire emergencies. Cars were not capable of modern speeds so accidents were rarely as bloody as those today. Injuries from horses and agricultural equipment were rarely complicated but some cases were referred to hospitals after emergency treatment.

When Dr. Clancy started his practice, telephone calls for medical help were impossible. An exhausted relative would rush into the office and would want the doctor to return *(continued pg 5)*





**For Your Reading Pleasure**

As you are reading about *Doctors Came to the Madison Valley*, plan to pick up a copy of *Doc*. by Dr. Ron Losse and reread or read his account of doctoring in the Madison Valley

**Looking Ahead**

**Sat., May 19, 2018** MVHA annual meeting. Pot luck at Trinity Church in Jeffers at 4:00pm. Election of new board members , approve budget and Summer museum plans

**June, July and August** are still in planning stages

**From Gary Forney:** The Virginia City Preservation Alliance and the Elling House Arts & Humanities Center will again be co-sponsoring a summer series of programs to be held in the Linderman Cabin. The theme of the 2018 series will be "Montana's Millionaires" and will profile the lives (sometimes admirable, sometimes not) of some former residents of the Alder Gulch who made it good..really good! This years schedule will be:

**June 21st** at 6:30pm Henry Elling (Amy Grice)

**July 19th** at 6:00pm Andrew Jackson Davis (Jim Jarvis)

**August 16th** at 6:30pm William Andrews Clark (Gary Forney)

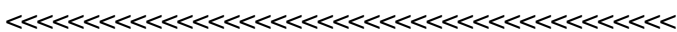
**Sept. 9th** William Boyce Thompson (Christina Koch)

The beautifully restored Linderman Cabin is located at the historic Robber's Roost inn, approximately 4 miles east of Sheridan on Hwy 287. There is no charge to attend these programs. Please visit the Elling House web site ([ellinghouse.org](http://ellinghouse.org)) for more information.



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**Development of Ennis Schools (Cont from pg 5)**

became the wife of S. R. Buford, a merchant in Virginia City. The next year Miss Florence E. Switzer taught the school. She later married M.D. Jeffers.

In 1875 a wooden bridge was built across the river.

In 1876 a fairly large school house was built in the Jeffers area and the children from the west side of the river attended there. They continued to do so until 1902 when the Ennis School District No. 52 was established.

The first school term of District 52 was held in a partitioned off part of the Woodman(A.O.U.W) dance hall. The first teacher was Miss Flora Duncan of Sheridan. The second was Miss Kate Sullivan of Butte who married Bert Mitchell of Jeffers, and the third and last teacher was Miss Mattie Jane Ashworth who later became Mrs. Wade H. Lester.

In 1906 school was held in a Northway building on the hill east of Ennis and the teacher was Marie Murphy. The following year a new school house

**MVHA Board of Directors**

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Secretary: Otis Thompson

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Director: Jimmy Carlson

Director: Larry Love

Historian and researcher: Don Black

Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate

Meetings and programs held monthly on the **third** Thursday of each month or as scheduled. Watch the *Madisonian*, posters and your email for details of time, place and program. Board meetings are held on the **first** Wednesday of each month at 10:00 am, at the MVHA Museum office April to Aug. *The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be July 2018. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed. Editor needs your history stories!

Editor: Shirley Love whitneypranch@wispwest.net

Contributing editors:

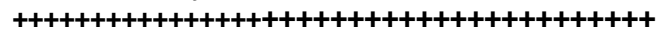
*Madisonian* Obituaries,

Minnie Paugh *The Madison Valley A High Mountain Community* "Doctors came to the Madison Valley"

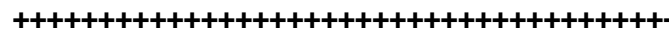
*Pioneer Trails and Trials* "Development of Ennis Schools" Jennings Piper pg 915-916

History Tidbit *Pioneer Trail and Trails* "First Meadow Creek School House" pg 916 Doris Wilson

History Tidbit *Words and phrases BUYING THE FARM* Kevin and Marty Brenneke

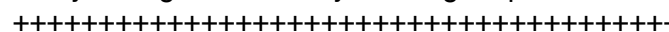


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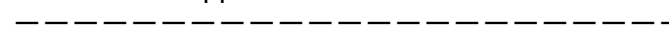
was built on land donated by Mrs. William Ennis on the county road about a quarter mile north of Ennis. Alice Kilner was the first teacher. The building served as a school house until 1915 when a larger building was erected out of cement blocks on the hill at the west end of main street.

In 1920 a movement was on to consolidate the Ennis and Jeffers schools so as to provide a good four year high school . by Jennings Piper



**History Tidbits**

The original Meadow Creek Schoolhouse burned in 1881 and school was held in what is now the old hall with lora Richter Vincent as teacher. In 1901 the people of the district built a new brick-face building, raising all the money to build it by giving parties, dances and suppers. Doris Wilson



BUYING THE FARM This is synonymous with dying. During WWI soldiers were given life insurance policies worth \$5,000. This was about the price of an average farm so if you died, you "bought the farm".



**Membership:** New members since April 2018.

**Brandi & Eric Palmerton (F)**

Ennis, Mt 59729

**Membership update** Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2018 membership is due during July, August or September or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are now \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who have generously submitted your renewal memberships. The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

If anyone needs a ride to a meeting or program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

#### **Member News**

**Polly Todd** celebrated her 90th birthday on May 5th, 2018 with a big party in Sheridan, MT.

**Patsy Eckert** was the volunteer honored in the volunteer spotlight of the *Madisonian* for May 10th, 2018. Patsy gives back to her community through her art.

**Vickey Gordon** was honored as the Grand Marshall of the recent 4th of July parade. Her accomplishments for our community are very many and very admirable.

**Lynn and Devonna Owens and family** were honored for their conservation work and community engagement across more than half a century of ranching and farming on North Meadow Creek area. The story of their award appeared in the July 21st. issue of the *Madisonian*.

**Memorials** Correction: Steve Hubner instead of Huber.

Do not forget to share with family and friends when a loved one passes that a memorial to the MVHA is a great way to remember a departed and have their memory preserved in history. Besides money memorials, another great way to preserve the memory or honor a friend, a family member or a whole family is to purchase a Walk of Names **2**

board for the walkways at the museum. As the museum complex grows, there is still room for name boards so request an application and more information at MVHA, P.O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729 or call Larry Love at 406-682-5780 or Otis Thompson at 406-682-7415. Summer and fall are great times to have a Walk of Names board prepared and mounted on the walkway.

MVHA is a 501(c)3 non profit so all donations are tax deductible.

#### **Memories**

**Elizabeth Marie "Lisa" Hill** passed away on April 1, 2018 in Bozeman, MT. She was born November 22, 1971 to Deneice Keller and Cecil Hill. She grew up in Ennis and Frenchtown.

**Barbie Harmon Durham** passed away April 16, 2018 in the Madison Valley. Barbie was born May 24, 1960 to Bobbi and Orin Harman in Arco, Idaho. She spent her young years in southern Idaho and graduated from Bonneville High School in 1978. She moved to the Madison Valley in 1988 when she married Todd Durham of Cameron. Mona Durham, long time MVHA member, is Barbie's mother-in-law. Barbie enjoyed working and was an extremely active community member. She was a grant writer and served on many boards and was appointed by both Governor Schweitzer and Governor Bullock to the Montana Heritage Commission. She will be remembered in Virginia City for her work for the new Visitors Center. Barbie helped MVHA in our beginning stages of writing grants.

**Karen D. Claassen** passed away on May 6, 2018 at the Madison Valley Manor in Ennis, MT. She was born in Fullerton, Calif. on Jan 3, 1949 to Kenneth and Beverly Claassen. Her dad was a career Air Force officer so her education was gained in California, over seas in France, Missouri and Colorado. She graduated from Colorado State University in Fort Collins, CO. She was not able to pursue her career of social work because she was diagnosed with M.S. She was cared for at home. After her father passed away, Bev moved with Karen and her elderly mother, Esther Zabel, who also lived with them, to Ennis to be near her brother, Larry Zabel, renowned Western artist. Karen and her grandmother, Esther, became residents of the Madison Valley Manor and were together there for a couple years. With her talents of writing, Karen wrote monthly articles for the *Madisonian*. Karen was known for her wonderful smile and for her love of trying to do the many activities at the Manor. She loved to go fishing at Lion's Club Park.

**Shanna Robison** passed away May 22, 2018. She was born in Sheridan, MT on March 7, 1978 to Vern Robison of McAllister and Yvonne (cont on pg 3)

(Cont from pg 2) Conko of St. Ignatius. She spent her early life in the Madison Valley moving cattle on the Robison ranch with her horse Sky and participating in the Ennis Rodeo. When her mother moved to St. Ignatius, her interests turned to pow wows and she learned to do Indian dances. She was talented in sports and played basketball for Northern Idaho College in Coeur D' Alene, Idaho.

**Faye June Oetter Watkins** passed away on June 8, 2018. She was born on June 22, 1929 in Joliet, Illinois to Conrad and Pearl Oetter. Faye graduated from Joliet Township High School and then earned a Bachelor's degree in Voice from the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago, Illinois. On her way home one night during a snow storm, while waiting for her father to come and get her, she met another stranded traveler. He was traveling from Detroit, Michigan with his first new car. He beguiled her with the description of his ranch in Ennis. His name was Jack Watkins. Later they became husband and wife. Jack M. Watkins was a descendent of a long time Madison Valley family starting with George Spencer Watkins who ended up in Virginia City, Montana Territory on June 2, 1864. He did not like gold mining so came to Ennis and found land covered with wild hay. He cut this hay with a scythe and raked it by hand and hauled it to Virginia City selling it for \$40 to \$50 a ton. He was hauling the hay at the same time that William Ennis started his freighting business to Virginia City. George Spencer married Frances C. Lee Fort of Willow Creek, MT in 1879. They had four children Mary Irene, Andrew Jackson (Jack) John Spencer and Catherine. Andrew Jackson (Jack) married Ethel May McCormick. To this union were Joanne, Janice, and Jack M. who married Faye Oetter. The young couple moved around as Jack explored career opportunities but he was asked to return to the ranch to help his family's business. Thus Faye became a rancher's wife with all the various duties. Faye was also involved in many community activities. One of them included singing and while going through Faye's treasures, niece, Cindy Lou, found and donated to the MVHA a copy of the Blue Book of Favorite Songs, property of the Ennis Singing Club dated March 1938. You may see a copy of this book displayed on the piano at the museum as soon as it is cataloged and displayed. Information on Watkins family: *Pioneer Trails and Trials* George S. Watkins, and *George S. Watkins Family* by Cathrine Watkins Carrau pg. 197-198

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Remember: If you have family stories about any of our deceased folks, please submit to the *Wagon* 3

*Tongue*. It is never too late to submit a story. Any piece of history is important. to the Madison Valley.

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**Doctors came to the Madison Valley** From The Madison Valley: A High Country Community by Minnie Paugh

Continued from April 2018. The story continues with Dr. Farnsworth...

He remembered the occasion when he received a rushed call to North Meadow Creek. He had only the equipment in his medical bag, because he had no knowledge of the type of emergency he would be handling and he had to walk a quarter of a mile through deep snow. He found his patient had miscarried and would bleed to death if he waited for help or tried to get her out. He did a bare handed curettage and she had no problem with infection.

Dr. Farnsworth preferred to perform his surgeries in Butte at the Murray Hospital. He remembers getting his car high centered in the deep snow of the old highway across the Norris Hills. The highway he followed from Virginia City to Ennis was even worse during some winters. Paris was the halfway point and sometimes a welcome sight. There was a toilet near a cool spring of water where drivers used to cool their horses or their automobile motor with its boiling radiator. A county commissioner names Paris had this facility built at a wide bend in this mountain road.

Dr. Farnsworth's memories of his practice in Ennis are varied. There was a polio epidemic soon after he came to the community. People wanted him to close the schools but didn't want to give up community gatherings. He treated his three patients and left the quarantine alone. He enjoyed buying eggs from Harrison Comely's mother whose ranch house was beside the road as he started back to Virginia City. She loaded his car with vegetables worth twice as much as his eggs. He laughs ruefully about two elderly ladies, sisters, who approached him about the rebates Hiny Rakeman, the druggist, gave him when he prescribed drugs. It was hard to explain to them that Hiny's business and his had no connection and he made no profit from the drugs he prescribed.

A health problem caused the doctor to return to medical school where he specialized in problems of the eye, ear and throat. He could no longer continue the exposure and risks that were a part of his rural general practice. His medical practice followed him to Bozeman where he has practiced since 1948.

Between 1940 and 1942 Dr. Willard Thierfelder practiced Osteopathy in Ennis. He had started a medical degree at Temple University in Philadelphia and in 1947 he returned there to complete it. While he was in Ennis his office was in the (cont pg 4)

**For Your Reading Pleasure**

Please turn in any good book titles you have read lately that would be of interest to our MVHA Members.

**Looking Ahead**

**Sat., August 4, 2018 Field Trip to Wall Creek** Meet 9:00 am Lion’s Club park

**September** date and program to be announced

**October & November** MVHA working on program suggestions from June meeting or any idea you might be able to present.

**From Gary Forney:**The Virginia City Preservation Alliance and the Elling House Arts & Humanities Center will again be co-sponsoring a summer series of programs to be held in the Linderman Cabin. The theme of the 2018 series will be “Montana’s Millionaires” and will profile the lives (sometimes admirable, sometimes not) of some former residents of the Alder Gulch who made it good..really good! The continuation of this year’s schedule will be:

**August 16th** at 6:30pm William Andrews Clark (Gary Forney)

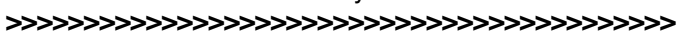
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From Otis Thompson and Roger Stommel:

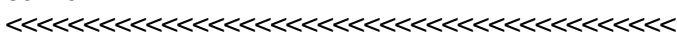
**Cliff Lake School House Summer Speaker Series**

One program left: August 23 7:00-8:00 pm Cliff Lake School House: “Big Horn Sheep.” Join Julie Cunningham MT FW&P wildlife biologist and MSU Prof. Bob Garrott as they share their knowledge and passion of Big Horn Sheep and what is being done with re-location efforts within the local Madison Valley herd.



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(cont. from pg. 3) Bauer Building. In 1974 he has his own Clinic in Forest Grove, Oregon. (16)

A Dr. McLean came to Ennis in 1943 and left because he found a better practice in his home area. Dr. Van Veen came as a result of the work of a Commercial Clubs committee’s search for a doctor. He left because he was called back to the Army Reserve in 1948. There was a Dr. Robert Coles who had a practice for a short time but no one seems to remember him.

Dr. Ron Losee arrived in Ennis in 1949 driving an Army jeep. He was accompanied by his wife, Olive and their daughter, Rebecca. He was a native of Red Hook, New York. He took his undergraduate college degree at Dartmouth and his medical school degree at Yale.

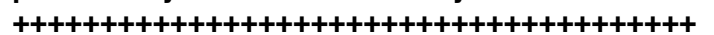
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Contributing editors: *Madisonian* Obituaries,  
*Minnie Paugh The Madison Valley A High Mountain Community* “Doctors came to the Madison Valley”  
Catherine Watkins Carrau *Pioneer Trails and Trials*  
“George S. Watkins and George S. Watkins” P. 197-198  
Mrs. Henry Adkins *Pioneer Trails and Trials* Pg 904

**Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by First Madison Valley Bank**



He did his residency at Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal.(17)

Dr. Losee’s first home and office in Ennis was a log cabin he rented from Mrs. Fay Jeffers, the daughter of the founder of the town. His office furniture at first was an army cot, a card table and the contents of what he called his “cutting kit” (suture equipment.) He was the general practitioner in the Madison Valley from 1949 until 1957 when he returned to Royal Victoria Hospital to specialize in bone surgery and his wife to complete her nursing degree.

During the preceding eight years the Madison Valley Hospital had been built and Dr. Losee had to cope with surgical problems caused by automobile accidents on Highway 287 to West Yellowstone, farm accidents involving machinery, and recreational accidents due to skiing and hunting. It was possible to fly critical cases to the hospital in Great Falls using the airport at Crooker’s Sportsman’s Lodge, but time was an important factor. Dr. Losee knew his hospital needed modern equipment and a doctor trained to handle orthopedic surgery.

To be continued in October with Dr. Losee back in Ennis for the 1959 earthquake.

**16.** Storey, Mrs. Randall. Interview April 1974

**17.** Kuglin, John. Orthopedic Surgeon Seeks to Eliminate Pain, Help Patient to Walk. *Great Falls Tribune July 20, 1969 Montana Parade* p. 2

If you have missed any of the previous parts of any *Wagon Tongue* articles, you may find them on the website listed on the top of page 1.

# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 16 issue 4

Madison Valley History Association

October 2018

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat** Fall greetings from the Madison Valley. The colors of fall are awesome now and winter is coming around the corner. The MVHA Board is still doing it's business and are still looking into the future.

The past season has been an average one. Our regular meetings have been well attended mainly because of the great programs. We had field trips to the Armitage barn and ranch in July which is now the Carroll ranch hosted by Martha Armitage Klauman. Martha did an excellent job of telling her family's history of growing up on the ranch to an audience of about 50. Thanks, Martha. In August, Fred King hosted a tour of the Wall Creek Game Refuge for about 45 individuals. This tour resulted in a story of what history is all about. The Dale Family, MVHA members, who were on the trip to learn more about their family background found out where the grave of their ancestor's twins were buried by way of tour direction of Fred King and grave location by Larry Love. The grave was at the Virgil Lichte house and although the grave has been known about for years, who was buried there was a mystery. The Dale family has since erected a grave marker made by MVHA member, Steve Garrett. Wow. Way to discover history, guys and gals. In September Darlene Neville Rochez gave a program about artifacts of the Jeffers, Switzer, Ennis and Chowning families. Well done, Darlene.

There was no program scheduled for October but there are programs scheduled for November and December.

The MVHA needs to have everyone on board to help keep the museum open, schedule field trips and programs and keep the organization running.

In 2017, 500,000 tourists visited Virginia City during a summer season. We need to figure out a way to get some of these tourists to our museum. If you have any ideas just let the MVHA board know.

It has taken a lot of work and effort for the MVHA board to get interesting programs and field trips on a monthly basis. It would be great for a volunteer committee to be formed for finding programs. With all of the membership having input to this committee, continuing to have programs every month could be achieved. MVHA needs your help in this area for us to continue having a viable organization. It does take a lot of work but many hands make lighter work, but it can be done. Just let the board know of your ideas.

Stay warm, drive safe and don't eat too much turkey. Think about your Madison Valley History Association and get everyone on board. See you around the history corner. Your Wagon Master, Larry Love.

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## **Museum Report for Summer 2018**

The MVHA museum hosted the annual visit of Jenny Brozovich and her 4th grade class on May 10, 2018. The students always enjoy their visit to the museum. The guest book started showing visitors on June 12th and 14th with the official opening on June 16th. The museum closed for the season on Sept.15. The count taken from the guest book tallied in at 263 visitors for 2018. . This is less than the past two years but the second year of fires and smoke in Montana may have kept folks away. Our guest book is only as good as the volunteers who invite visitors to sign in. But what other ways do we have to record individuals visiting? As MVHA members, we need to figure out a way to get more folks to come by on North 287 and stop and visit the museum. Put on your thinking caps and see what kind of ideas might come up.

Remember the museum is always open during closed hours in the summer and all the rest of the year by appointment.

**Membership:** New members since July 2018. MVHA thanks the following for joining and for their support.

**Barnett, Vurnie (I)**  
Ennis, MT. 59729

**Ferris, James & Velora (F)**  
Island Park, Idaho

**Simmons, Diane (I)**  
Ennis, MT 59729

**Membership update** Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2018 membership is due during October, November or December or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are now \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who have generously submitted your renewal memberships. The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

If anyone needs a ride to a meeting or program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

#### **Member News**

**Neil Kent, Lois Daems Miller and Richard Coad**, all were raised near Varney and their birthdays were only 5 days apart. When they were young, all three celebrated their birthdays with one party. As they aged their parties ceased. In 1999, at age 60, the celebrations resumed. In 2018, their 79th birthdays were celebrated. Sept. 13, 2018 *Madisonian*

**Jack Kirby** hosted a 70th year class reunion for members of the class of 1948 on Sept. 18, 2018. Eight of the class of 20 were able to attend. Class members attending were Mona Durham, Emily Watson, Mae Hautier, Lynn Owens, Clarice Wonder Brooks, Bobbi Klatt and host, Jack Kirby. Alumni came from as far away as Billings and Columbia Falls to attend the reunion.

**Esther Warburton** also hosted a "gathering" at her home. When she left her home to run errands on July 12, 2018, there wasn't anything in sight. When she returned later that afternoon, the whole tree 2

was buzzing. Throughout the afternoon, she watched as the swarm of bees became larger and by Friday morning, the thing was solid and about a foot wide. She called for help and it was determined that the swarm was honey bees, not hornets or wasps. Thus the bees were placed in a hive box and took to a place with more bee hives. Everyone got a happy ending, especially the bees and all those involved did not even get a sting.

**Jan and Bob Beekman** were honored in the Volunteer spotlight in the *Madisonian* recently.

#### **Memories**

**Robert B. Goggins** passed away July 9, 2018 in Ennis, MT. He was born in Brooks, MT on May 24th, 1924 to John and Pearl Cook Goggins. He grew up in the Clark's Fork Valley near Fromberg, MT. After graduating from Fromberg High School in 1942, Bob worked a variety of farming and ranching related jobs. One of those was for an apiary that sent him to Harlowton area to work bees. A cute red head named Cora Amdor working at the local soda fountain caught his eye. He asked her for a date the day after she graduated from high school and they were married October 30, 1946. Bob and Cora worked for several prominent Hereford breeders with Bob as herdsman. He and Cora bought their first registered Herefords in 1955 and bought the home ranch in Ennis in 1959 from the Earl Love family.

**Dorothy Allene Gates** passed away July 11, 2018. She was born in Madison, Florida on October 19th, 1930 to Benny DeLoy Wells and Berta Lenora Johnson Wells. She spent her childhood years in Madison, Florida. She then married, had a child and divorced. After her divorce, she met George Schabarker. The majority of their married life was spent in the Madison Valley and Montana. After separating from George, she married Henry (Hank) Madison Gates, with whom she lived happily for the rest of their lives. She was a cook for the Ennis schools for over 12 years.

**Cecil Clarence Klatt** passed away August 17, 2018 in Ennis, MT. He was born on April 20, 1920 in Westport, South Dakota to Louis Klatt and Nellie Hollihan. He grew up along the North and South Dakota border and worked on the family farm. He married Ruth Beecher in Ellendale, North Dakota on July 23, 1944. During February and March of 1946, the newly weds jumped in their Plymouth and made several trips to Montana with the goal of finding a ranch to buy. They ended up purchasing Ben Lockhart's ranch on Wall Creek. He considered himself a cowman and continued to follow the livestock and grain markets for the rest of his life. Needing to be closer to town (continued on pg 3)



(continued from lag 2) for school, they bought a small house and three acres in Jeffers in 1951. In 1958, the Wall Creek ranch was sold and Jeffers became home. After several years of odd jobs, Cecil spent most of the next 30 years working at the Diamond J helping with the many projects that Pete Combs came up with.

One of Cecil's brothers is MVHA member, Lester Klatt.

**Suzie Reints Whitman** passed away Sept. 8, 2018 in Bozeman, MT. She was born October 7, 1943 to John and Erna (Rast) Reints in Jeffers, MT. John and Erna Reints came to the Madison Valley in March 1932 as newly weds. John's uncle, William Reints, homesteaded close to the Bill Armitage Ranch. In later years William Reints bought the John Grady ranch one and a half miles north east of Jeffers and that is how the Reints came to take over that place when William Reints passed away.

John was born in Iowa, raised in California until he was 14 years old, then returned to Iowa. He came to southern Idaho in 1930 for a climate change due to his asthma and there he met Erna Rast. Erna was born in Kulm, North Dakota and when she was 8 months old, her family moved and homesteaded in American Falls, Idaho. On March 17, 1932, Erna and John were married in American Falls, Idaho and boarded a train for Butte, MT. They had to stay in Butte for 4 days before they could catch a train to Norris, MT. From Norris they rode with Vic Anderson on the freight truck to Ennis and they rented a room in the Schoenek Hotel. In the morning, Lou McKean took them to their new home in Jeffers. Neither of them had ever been to Montana before but they fell in love with the country and a few years later they bought the place. The John Grady's called the place the "Cold Springs Ranch" and rightly so as it had good cold water springs that they used for the household and the livestock for many years. They milked cows and then later just raised stock cows. In 1957 they bought the Johnny Olin ranch in Jeffers.

John and Erna had three children, Elso J., long time MVHA member, Jack R., whom the MVHA is still trying to get to join the association and who has continued to manage the ranch after his father passed in 1968, and Susie. Susie graduated from Ennis High School in 1961 and went to hair styling school for a year. She married Clyde Whitman from West Yellowstone, MT in 1962. Susie spent most of her life in West Yellowstone.

**Progressive Years** pg 771-772 *John and Erna (Rast) Reints* by Erna Reints

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Do not forget to share with family and friends when a loved one passes that a memorial to the MVHA 3

is a great way to remember a departed and have their memory preserved in history. Besides money memorials, another great way to preserve the memory or honor a friend, a family member or a whole family is to purchase a Walk of Names board for the walkways at the museum. As the museum complex grows, there is still room for name boards so request an application and more information at MVHA, P.O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729 or call Larry Love at 406-682-5780 or Otis Thompson at 406-682-7415. Christmas and New Year are great times to have a Walk of Names board purchased and ready to be mounted in the spring. MVHA is a 501(c)3 non profit so all donations are tax deductible.

**Doctors came to the Madison Valley** From *The Madison Valley: A High Country Community* by Minnie Paugh. (Continued from July 2018)

The story left off in the July *Wagon Tongue* with Dr Losee knowing his hospital needed modern equipment and a doctor trained to handle orthopedic surgery.

Dr. Losee was back in Ennis when the Madison Valley Earthquake in 1959 (18) brought a flood of emergency cases from the slide area to the little hospital. During this harried experience he was introduced to Dr. Phillip Pallister, the general practitioner at Boulder River School. Later Dr. Losee worked on his days off with Dr. Pallister in a clinic where Dr. Losee tried to correct the orthopedic problems for deformed children among the special needs children who were cared for at Boulder. He tried to relieve them of pain and help them become capable of caring for themselves..

As Dr. Losee became known as an expert in correcting orthopedic problems of the knee, patients started to come to the Madison Valley Hospital from all over the nation. The Doctor handled such surgery for the athletes the teams of the branches of the Montana University System. The Doctor may have stayed in Ennis where he lacks much surgical equipment, stimulating professional contacts, and a good medical library because he enjoys the quiet beauty of the mountain valley and the freedom from social pressure which permits him to enjoy his family and his hobbies. In a larger community he might feel under pressure to join in the activities of the American Medical Association whereas in Ennis no one cares if he had a membership. The Doctor can hope to have time to play his bagpipes and tinker with his model train.

Olive Losee can have her kitchen located over the tipi rings of prehistoric Indians and hope to have some piece of mind as she performs her domestic tasks. (19) (continued on pg 4)

(Continued from pg 3)

Dr. Gene Wilkins joined Dr. Losee in February 1965 to help care for the the general practice in the community. By this time Dr. Losee had become widely recognized as a skilled orthopedic surgeon and was attracting many patients from outside the Madison Valley. A general practice there is still an arduous task since the doctor is never off duty and calls break his sleep and take him away from his meals. Some of the most difficult work is made easier by properly trained people such as Ronald Handlos, a physicians assistant. When he was added to the staff in 1972, he was the first person from the MEDEX Program to work in Montana. He was trained first in the army and then spent a year at the University of Utah. He handles many routine emergencies and saves the Doctor's time for problems which require his skill.

18 Dr. Alan Iddles, who now practices surgery in Bozeman, was cereal practitioner in Ennis from July 1957 until April 1959.

19 Dr. Ronald Losee and Olive Losee review this interview in August 1974.

This ends the *Doctors came to the Madison Valley: A High Country Community* by Minnie Paugh.

Dr. Losee retired in 2015 and passed away May 14, 2017.

Dottie Fossel, chairman of the MVMC Board of Trustees provided the following information to bring the history of doctors in the Madison Valley up to date.

Drs. Losee, Wilkins and PA Handlos were followed by a series of doctors who had little help and still many sleepless nights...Dr. Haywood, Dr. Jay Swoboda, Dr. Cindy Sharp, Dr. Patricia Moran, Dr. James Bischoff, Dr. Anderson, Dr. Curtis Blake, and Ben Linderman, Physician Assistant.

The hospital and clinic (now the history museum) moved to a new facility next door to the old one in 2008 and became known as the Madison Valley Medical Center (MVMC).

Dr. R.D. Marks, who is presently our chief medical officer and chief of staff, joined the MVMC in 2009. Dr. Marks, a Clancy native, with his many years of experience in Missoula, began to attract a stable medical staff. Pat Watson and Tabby Phillips, physician's assistants joined the staff for a year or two. Physician Assistant, Marty Hensel joined Dr. Marks in 2010 and in subsequent years, Dr. David Newton, (who as a student from Tulane did a rotation here), Dr. Maura Davenport from Michigan and Krystin Nutt, a nurse practioner, are our present providers. Dr. Newton does endoscopy procedures here. MVMC has a full laboratory and radiology department offering not only X-rays

but CT, MRI, ultra sound, mammography and bone density screening.

Traffic no longer needs to be stopped for the helicopter to land on the highway at the 10 bed critical access hospital and trauma receiving center. Thanks to the generosity of a community member, our Foundation was able to give the funds to build the helipad we have today.

Along with our medical staff we have regularly visiting specialists. Dr. Blair Erb sees cardiology patients; Dr. Jack Hensold sees oncology patients; Dr. Mick Lifson sees gynecology patients; and Dr. Will Helton sees patients needing hearing assistance, all saving valley residents the trip to Bozeman.

Dr. Andy Thomas heads an active physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy department at the Medical Center and serves patients at the Madison Valley Manor. Patients who have surgery in another hospital can come back here to recover and receive therapy. Cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation is also offered. This enables our community members to receive the services that they need locally near their friends and family. It is with the generosity of our community members and mill levy support that we are able to deliver high quality medical care close to home.

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**Searching for History** by Shirley Love, Editor

The two field trips last summer were very productive in learning the history of the well known Madison Valley family, the Armitages and finding the history of another prominent Madison Valley family. John and Bridget Dale attended the field trip to the Armitage ranch and while there they met and visited with Mona Durham and learned that she would be working at the museum the following Tuesday. Looking for family information, John and Bridget went to the museum on Tuesday and visited some more with Mona. Mona suggested that they attend the next field trip to the Wall Creek Game range as that would encompass the area of interest to the Dale family.

At one of the field trip stops, John Gecho, who grew up in the area, pointed out the Ruby Creek drainage and the possible location in the wide spread area that was known as Abe, MT where the Claude and Maude Mulhall Dale, John Dale's grandparents, would have homesteaded. John Dale mentions that his grandparents had lost stillborn twins in their early days. The field trip continued and pretty soon we were at the Virgil Lichte homestead. At a previous field trip in 2009, Smitty Overstreet took us to this old homestead— (continued on pg 5)

*continued from pg 4)*

by now mostly gone—and she pointed out an unmarked child’s grave and told the story that had been passed down that Emma Lichte, Virgil and Clarence Lichte’s mother, had cared for this little grave for the many years before she died. We remembered that it was at the backdoor step and was encircled by white quartz rock. Larry Love, MVHA president, went bushwhacking through the overgrown weeds and found the exact same grave site. The house is now completely gone and even the foundation hard to see. The Dale family is pretty sure that this would be the grave of the still born twins.(1)

As we continue to put the pieces of this history puzzle together, we learned by way of the Pioneer Trails and Trials(2) that Clarence Lichte’s wife was a registered nurse. Her profession helped her care for her family as well as take care of the many emergencies that occurred in the wide spread area of Abe, MT. We also learned that she and Clarence had five children of their own so when Claude and pregnant Maude Dale came for help, they went to Virgil’s home right next door to Clarence. Esther then went there to do her mid-wife duties. When the babies were stillborn, Claude had to thaw the ground for a grave (3) and the twins were buried by Virgil’s home and thus his mother, Emma Lichte cared for the little grave.

Steve Garrett, MVHA member, who has been following this whole family history with his friend, John, decided to make a grave marker for the site. This grave marker is now in place and John’s aunt and uncle will now be forever remembered.

(1) John Dale conversation 10-10-18.

(2) Pioneer Trails and Trials Clarence Lichte pg 109 by Esther Lichte

(3) John Dale conversation 10-10-18

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This story shows what “preserving the history of the Madison Valley” is all about and why your Executive Board works endlessly each month and each year to continue to preserve the history. Hopefully you, as members and readers, will continue to find some more stories such as this to preserve and share.

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The past story of *Doctors in the Madison Valley* made reference to the fact that the Ennis Commercial Club made a search for available doctors when there was no doctors in the valley. Your editor became curious about the Ennis Commercial Club and found a story compiled by Minnie Paugh from the minutes of the Ennis Commercial Club as made available by Lewis Chamberlin, secretary in 1974. Records from Jan.1951 to Sept 1970 are lost.

## **Ennis Commercial Club**

The Ennis Commercial Club which is a member of the Montana Chamber of Commerce was started in 1944 as a means to work out cooperation to improve the community. During World War II the town lost much of its identity because vital people were either in the armed forces or away from the Madison Valley working in the war industry. Soon these residents would be returning and thoughtful citizens felt the time had come for some planning. Letters were written to service organizations in Great Falls, Helena, Bozeman and Sheridan. Ennis people visited as many organizations as they conveniently could to get ideas about how their club should be organized. A meeting was called on December 4, 1944 with Charles Baur as chairman to permit Frank Blair, who is now District judge, to tell about the Vigilance Club in Virginia City and to express his opinions about how the Ennis club should be developed.

An effort was made to make the entire community aware of the starting of the club and of the need for it. As a part of the advertising, students were invited to suggest names in a contest. At the first meeting \$5 was awarded to Dorothy Hungerford for submitting the name which the club had decided to use during it’s second planning session. Elections were held at their first stated meeting on January 5, 1945. Their usual meeting place at this time was to be the Methodist Church. The first officers were Charles Bauer, President; Richard Alsop, first vice president; Hal Pasley, second vice president; and George Hungerford, secretary-treasurer. In 1947 Harold Helt was elected as the second president. The following month the organization sponsored the first Boy Scout troop in Ennis. \$20 was set aside to help the new troop get started. Walter Bryan volunteered to be the first Scout Master. In 1948 the Club spent \$19 to buy him a uniform.

The improvement of the road between Ennis and Virginia City was important to Ennis because it was extremely dangerous, especially during winter. Several Ennis people worked in the county offices in Virginia City. A committee was appointed to push for a new highway since it was a state road. As county commissioner, Charles Bauer, the Commercial Club president, had already been looking for the best possible route for this road.

Rural electrification was vital to the Madison Valley people in 1945. Electric lines were only present where the Montana Power Company could see a profit in building them and where the government had provided lines for an agency such as the Forest Service. A few private lines had *(continued on pg 6)*



# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 17 issue 1

Madison Valley History Association

January 2019

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat** Winter greetings from the Madison Valley. The river is running slush ice and is starting to back up the river from the lake so the gorge might get to Ennis

The MVHA ended 2018 with our Christmas potluck. Special thanks to Kevin and Marty Brenneke for preparing the turkey and to Jo and Otis Thompson for preparing the ham. A big thank you to those who came and brought their favorite dishes. It was great. Christmas stories were shared and special thanks to Bev Claassen for even bringing "show and tell" with her antique Christmas ornaments.

We are now into 2019 looking towards our museum opening on Memorial Day and in June. For the new year we need to improve our membership by including some of the younger members of the Madison Valley so MVHA can preserve their stories. Another idea is working on a plan to get more of the 5,000 folks who visit Virginia City each summer to drive this way and visit our museum. Thirdly is to get a line up of programs and field trips so MVHA can do better than we did this past year by missing a couple months.

MVHA will still need volunteers to work the museum during the summer so look at your calendar right away and make plans. If you live out of the area, plan your trips here to visit or to bring guests by including working a shift at the museum. Lastly we need help to arrange artifacts in the new museum building.

There is always work to be done. If you have ideas, suggestions, or would like to take on a project, please let the MVHA Board know. We have to look toward our membership for help in some capacity.

On Feb. 21 MVHA will be having a program on the history of the Madison Theater given by John Heckler, owner of the theater. Watch for posters and publicity.

Stay warm and Happy Valentine's Day. Your Wagon Master, Larry Love.

**Trinity Episcopal Church.** The Trinity Episcopal Church in Jeffers has been working for the last six years to rejuvenate and restore the old church which is now 116 years old. After a celebration held last fall, the church is ready for another 100 years. Read the article in the September 13, 2018 *Madisonian* by Reagan Colyer to review the progress done in the last six years to restore this piece of history.

Now the *Wagon Tongue* will share the very early history of the Episcopal Church in the Madison Valley.

First services were held in the school house on the east side of the river. Bishop Daniel Tuttle and Rev. E. G. Prout had services about 1874. Trinity Mission was organized and services were held in the Grange Hall until it burned in 1880, then in a hall where Jeffers now stands. It was a two story building. The first story was fitted up for church services and for Sunday School, which was organized by Rev. E. G. Prout about 1885. The second story was used as a community center and dance hall.

The church had a good organ and Sunday School library. The little Mission suffered a loss by fire in 1897.

The present church in Jeffers was built in 1902 while Reverend Chas. Quinney was rector in Virginia City, Montana. He held services in both places. Trinity Mission Church was dedicated September 14, 1914 by Bishop L. R. Brewer. The church was served by ministers from Virginia City until 1914 when Rev. Thos. W. Bennett came as a resident clergyman. He supervised the building of a small rectory and garage in 1915.

In 1918, Rev. Bennett was called to Dillon and clergy of Virginia City again supplied Trinity Mission through 1922.

By Winifred Jeffers for the Madison County History Association pg 886 Pioneer Trails and Trials

## History Tidbit

### HOT OFF THE PRESS

As the paper goes through the rotary printing press friction causes it to heat up. Therefore, if you grab the paper right off the press it's hot. The expression means to get immediate information. Tidbit by Kevin Brenneke.

**Membership:** New members since October 2018. MVHA thanks the following for joining and for their support.

**Duane and Marjorie Gregg (F)**

Ennis, Mt 59729

**Membership update** Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2019 membership is due during January, February or March or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are now \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who have generously submitted your renewal memberships. The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

If anyone needs a ride to a meeting or program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

**Member News**

**Willie's Distillery** owners Willie and Robin Blazer received the Headwaters Resource Conservation and Development award for Veteran-Owned Business of the year. Congratulations Willie and Robin. They are Business members of MVHA.

**Dottie Fossel** is pictured in the Dec. 6, 2018 *Madisonian* speaking to the Jack Creek Preserve Conservation Field School.

**Jan Beekman** is pictured with the Community Choir making beautiful music with her accordion in the Christmas Stroll article Dec 13, 2018 *Madisonian* article.

**Memories**

**Jane Ellen Jeffers Rybus**, long time Madison Valley resident and one of the founders of the Madison Valley History Association passed away October 21, 2018, in North Bend, Wash. She was born on October 19, 1924, in Ennis, MT to Winnifred Chowning Jeffers and Fay Burton Jeffers, both descendants of Madison Valley pioneers. Jane attended schools in Ennis graduating from Ennis High School in 1942. She attended the University

of Montana during World War II. In 1946, she was the first woman elected student body president at UM. Echoing her future feminism, during a June 2007 oral history interview, she said "during the time that I was in college all the men were gone, we women were able to take on men's jobs. Women were empowered during those years and then after the war when the men came home, we lost it"

Jane graduated with a degree in English in 1946 and hoped to go east and become a writer or an editor. Instead she married a returning service man, Henry E. Rybus, and the family settled in Washington State. After her children reached school age, Jane returned to school in Seattle and earned teaching credentials. She taught high school English during the 1960s in Bellevue, Wash. In 1985 she and her husband divorced and she returned to Ennis to care for her elderly mother.

Jane was very proud of her deep roots in Madison County. Her father, Fay, was the son of Myron D. Jeffers and Florence Switzer. Myron was the eventual founder of Jeffers and a rancher who after the Civil War drove cattle to the Madison Valley from Texas. Her mother, Winifred, was grand-daughter of William Ennis and Katherine Schriver. He was the town's founder who initially was a shipper of goods to the mines in Virginia City.

In the early years of the Madison Valley History Association, Jane served as secretary for numerous years and when the museum opened, she was the keeper of the keys to the museum at her home on Main Street. Your editor remembers her best for her love of football. One year Larry was fishing in Canada and I had an extra ticket to a Bobcat football game. I asked her to go with me and she very excitedly accepted even though it was not a Griz game and she wanted to start out the afternoon with a tailgate party. We had a fun afternoon.

**Thomas Wesley Hughes** passed away October 24, 2018 at the age of 95. He was born March 13, 1923, in McAllister, MT to Thomas S. and Emily A. Mackel Hughes. He and his family all lived, grew up and worked on the family ranch near McAllister. He attended the local school and graduated from Ennis High School in 1940. After graduation he worked at local ranches and helped his father on the ranch. In 1944, he joined the Army and was sent to the front lines in France and Germany. He was wounded in his knees by a by a .50 caliber machine gun bullet. He was shipped back to the United States and after surgery and recovery in Washington, he was awarded two Purple Heart medals and returned to the family ranch at McAllister. He spent the next two years on the family ranch. *continued on pg. 3*

His father wanted to retire and suggested that Tom find himself a partner. Tom had already been spending most of his time with the store owner's daughter so this worked out well. On Sept. 16, 1948 he married Darlene Emma Harris. They took over the family ranch from his parents and moved into the old house on the Hughes ranch which had been vacated by Tom's parents. It was tough on the ranch and Darlene and Tom worked side by side raising cattle, sheep, pigs, chickens and always having horses. Tom was the first in the Madison Valley to have Angus cattle. In 1968 they sold the Madison Valley ranch and moved to the Bitterroot up the Sleeping Child where they bought a small ranch and continued to run cattle.

Ranching was taking its toll on Tom from the service injury to his knees. He sold his cattle and took a small engine class at the VoTech and after working for a couple shops he bought the McCullough Chain Saw shop. Standing on cement all day again took a toll on his knees and he again retired only to sell real estate and he and Darlene became snowbirds.

Longtime Ennis resident and former history member, **Barbara McGowan**, passed away December 7, 2018, at the Madison Valley Manor in Ennis. There will be more information on Barbara's life as an obituary is available.

**David Arthur German** passed away on Dec. 19, 2018 in Bozeman, Mt. He was born on Jan 24, 1949 in Jackson, Wy. to Archie and Daisy Germann who then lived and worked on the original Germann Ranch which had been homesteaded on the Buffalo by Archie's father. When David was 5 years old his father moved the family to a ranch near McAllister, MT. David attended local schools in Ennis and graduated from Ennis High School in 1967. He attended the MSU College of Engineering, joined the ROTC and pursued his dream of being a pilot by being accepted into the Air Force pilot training program after graduation. He spent the next part of his life in Alaska where he met his future wife and married in 1980. He worked in California and spent summers working on the Germann ranch and in 1996 relocated his family back to Montana and spent the rest of his life as a rancher.

Longtime history member and Ennis resident, **June Haigh** passed away on Dec. 23, 2018 in Billings, MT. He was born on June 7th, 1924 in Three Forks, MT to Gail and Margaret Haigh. There will be more information on June's life as an obituary is available.

**Barry Leslie Rice**, long time Madison Valley rancher passed away unexpectedly on December 28, 2018. He was born March 6, 1953 to Bob and Bonnie (MacMillan) Rice in Butte, MT. Barry graduated from Ennis High School in 1972. **3**

He then graduated from Montana State University with a B.S. degree in Pre-Vet Science with an emphasis in Chemistry and Animal Science. He was an active member of the Madison County community.

**Charles Emmett Stoltz, Jr.** of Ennis passed away January 4, 2019. His memory will be in the Wagon Tongue in April after more research is done on the long time Madison Valley Stoltz family,

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**Ennis Commercial Club** Continued from October 2018. We left off when the Commercial Club proposed the first general system of street lights. They helped the Ennis Volunteer Fire Department get a night watchman to make night alarms possible. Foster G. Ballard started work on this job on September 5, 1945. Many meetings provided forums for the discussion of ways and means to acquire a water and sewage system. This always led to the unpopular issue of town incorporation. The club appointed its first committee to work for incorporation on May 14, 1946.

Several community services were badly needed. The Ennis young people needed outlets for their social development. They had only the Ski Club and high school athletics. During the war the school band and chorus were neglected. In December 1945 the Commercial Club appointed a committee to look for a location for a youth center but they soon gave up because they could not find a building. Not able to finance a center they used their influence to improve the school's activity program. They helped the Ski Club locate places to house visitors during their ski meet in March of 1946. They sent the school band on a good will tour to West Yellowstone in April 1948. They have worked consistently to pass bond elections for the school and in 1973 they worked for the vocational education addition.

The inability of Ennis to keep a doctor in residence after Dr. Daniel F. Clancy could no longer visit patients frightened all the residents of the valley. Between 1940 and 1948 Ennis had three doctors who stayed long enough to become aware of how isolated they were from the facilities they need to properly care for serious health problems. Dr. Willard Thierfelter came in 1940 as an osteopath and left to get a complete medical education. Dr. McLean came in 1943 and left because he had found a better practice in his home area. Dr. Van Veen came as a result of the work of a Commercial Club committee's search for a new doctor. He left because he was called back to the army Reserve in 1948. On March 15, 1948, after Dr. Van Veen was gone, Ray Kohl's electrified a Commercial club meeting by opening discussion *(continued on pg 4)*

**For Your Reading Pleasure**

*We Pointed Them North: recollections of a cow puncher.*  
by E.C. Abbott and Helena Huntington Smith  
E.C. Abbott was a cowboy in the great days of the 1870s and 1880's. He came up the trail to Montana from Texas with the long horned herds.. Available at Madison Valley Public Library and through the 4 Rivers Group.

**Looking Ahead**

**Thursday Jan. 17, 2019** No program scheduled

**Thursday, February 21, 2019 4:00pm** At the Madison Theater. John Heckler will present the history of the theater. After the MVHA program is over, folks can stay for the showing of the first motion picture shown at the Madison Theater. Pizza and concessions will be available for a fee. Please make reservations at [ennismovies@gmail.com](mailto:ennismovies@gmail.com) or call 406-682-4023 and leave a message or sign up at the Senior Center. Enough pizza will have to be ordered if you plan to eat.

**March 21, 2019** Tentative plans for the William Ennis Birthday Celebration. Watch for posters and Madisonian publicity.

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**MVHA Programs**

All programs of the MVHA are recorded and transferred to DVD. If you are interested in any specific program, or want to give a recording as a gift, send your request of specific program or programs and payment of \$5.00 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling for each DVD ordered to MVHA P.O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729 Please give a little time before needing it so Otis Thompson can get it recorded.

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(Continued from page 3) on the means for building a facility for a doctor. There was general agreement after the debate that the community needed a nicely equipped house and first aid station for their doctor. After this meeting Harold Holt and Shorty Long visited Dr. Thierfelter who had a practice in Portland to invite him to return to Ennis. Failing in this, they got his suggestions about building plans for the new doctor. The club kept a committee working during the construction of the building to coordinate fund drives and to locate a new doctor. They found Dr. Ronald Losee and persuaded him to stay in Ennis in November 1949. He changed the building plans to make it a hospital rather than a home and an emergency station. This club helped their new doctor acquire x-ray equipment and other necessary hospital facilities. In the 1970s they worked to meet strict Medicare safety standards. Ennis now needs a fireproof building with convalescent facilities, and possibly an extension of the county rest home which is in Sheridan because the sewage system wasn't completed soon enough to make it possible for the federal government to fund the facility in Ennis after a county election had designated it as the location for The county rest home. This club has always concerned itself with the condition of the city dump and has paid for the upkeep of the road into the grounds. They also provided the funds to doze the

**MVHA Board of Directors**

President: Larry Love  
Vice-President: Brandi Palmerton  
Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke  
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Director: John Gecho  
Director: Eric Palmerton  
Director: Lee Robison  
Historian and researcher: Don Black  
Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate  
Meetings and programs held monthly on the **third** Thursday of each month or as scheduled. Watch the Madisonian, posters and your email for details of time, place and program. Please call Larry Love 682-5780 for date of board meeting..*The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be April 2019. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed. Your editor needs your history stories!  
Editor: Shirley Love [whitneypranch@wispwest.net](mailto:whitneypranch@wispwest.net)  
Contributing editors: *Madisonian* Obituaries,  
Winifred Jeffers pg. 886 *Pioneer Trails and Trials*  
Minnie Paugh *The Madison Valley A High Mountain Community* "Ennis Commercial Club"

**Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by First Madison Valley Bank**

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grounds and keep them sanitary. They have worked with the Lion's Club to keep the streets clean and to provide facilities such as a skating rink in the winter, and a town park in the summer. In 1973 they worked with the Airstream Trailers from the Wally Bynam Caravan welcome in the local trailer park and they toured them through the valley.

In 1948 when the Ennis Rodeo Association was trying to build a modern arena, this club raised \$2215 in pledges. They arranged and paid for the radio broadcasts to publicize the rodeo. They also spent \$300 for brochures to publicize Ennis. They have kept up the road sign near West Yellowstone to direct tourists to facilities in Ennis.

In the 1970s the Club is still interested in using their influence to improve conditions into Ennis. They have concerned themselves with the abandonment of railroad service to Norris and have worked to have it restored. When the Montana Fish and Game Commission decided to stop planting fish in the Madison River, it became a heated subject of discussion because the fishing in the Madison River attracts many of the tourists who provide the summer income for many valley people.

Since 1972 the Ennis Chamber of Commerce which is a younger and a smaller organization, has met with the Commercial club. In January 1974 they merged. This is an additional mark of the strength of this club which continues to help Ennis identify the forces which will shape its future before they start pushing the town toward destructive patterns of action. From *The Madison Valley A High Mountain Community* "Ennis Commercial Club" by Minnie Paugh



# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 17 issue 2

Madison Valley History Association

April 2019

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat** I guess it is spring. What a late winter with snow, cold and gorge ice. The flowers and grass will be super this year. With spring comes the time for the MVHA to get to work at the museum.

On June 1, 2019 the MVHA will hold the annual meeting along with a potluck dinner. At the annual meeting the MVHA will approve a budget and elect new directors to the board. This year there are 3 positions open. Otis Thompson has agreed to run again but John Gecho and Lee Robison have retired. MVHA need to replace those two and John and Lee are thanked for their contributions and years of service.

Two members need to step up to be directors and help the MVHA continue their mission. Just let a current director know that you would like to join the board. MVHA needs our members to step up and help out.

During May we will start cleaning the museum and setting up new displays. Mona Durham will be the scheduler and you can let her know which days you would be willing to volunteer. Sign up for a day or two. Members are needed at the museum during the hours the museum is open. It is fun, a great way to meet new people and a great way to learn additional history of your valley.

Several tentative programs are planned for summer. There is no scheduled meeting for May. The annual meeting will be held June 1 with potluck and an auction. Bring something that you can donate for the auction. July's program planned is a field trip to the Revenue mine area. In August, MVHA will attend the celebrations for the 60th anniversary of the earth quake. For September, MVHA is planning a history of the golf course with talks by several people.

Remember, MVHA is always looking for ideas for programs, for folks willing to give the programs or even ideas for speakers which we can bring in from outside the area.

Keep the Wagons Rolling, your Wagon Master, Larry Love

Don't Mess with Ennis, MT! John Edmonson, one of the horse thieves, asked Mr. Ennis, "What were you fellows following us for, anyway? Did you think we had some of YOUR horses?" Mr. Ennis, his face set in hard lines, replied, "If you are horse thieves you would steal horses from me as quick as you would from anyone else." Thus was exhibited the pioneer spirit of our ancestors which made Montana a great state! In 1884, or close to that time, Walter and Tim Switzer were riding for cattle close to the old Sawtell place near Henry's Lake, Idaho. Suddenly they met five men armed to the teeth with rifles and six-shooters, and driving about 25 head of horses. The leader of the men engaged the Switzers in conversation and inquired about food and accommodations. Both Switzers noticed a well-marked horse in the bunch, belonging to Harry Thompson of the Madison Valley. The Switzers wisely didn't say anything as they recognized the leader of the men was Con Murphy, famous horse thief, badman and crack shot. Recognition of a stolen horse could have brought instant death. About two days later, a posse from Ennis came through on the trail of the outlaws. After meeting the Switzers, they went on in hot pursuit. Information was exchanged and the posse proceeded south to Rexburg, ID, where the gang was spending the night at the house of Brigham Ricks, under the guise of law-abiding citizens. The posse had managed to contact Ricks the night before and developed a plan whereby he would tell the gang that breakfast would be served in his brother's house across the street. The posse men were stationed at strategic points providing a view between the houses. Con Murphy and his crew started for breakfast and were commanded to throw up their hands. They went for their guns instead and a firefight began. The posse was unscathed but George Munn, a member of the gang, suffered a fatal wound. (He is buried in the Rexburg cemetery.) Con Murphy and the rest of the gang surrendered and were returned to Helena to face trial. Witnesses at the trial of Con Murphy and John and Harry Edmonson from the posse were: William Ennis, George Thexton, Theodore Wilkins, John Brice, George Thorpe and Ben Burns. Later other witnesses from the Madison were called; Richard Coad, William Wagner, Charles Anceny and George Hadzor. Con Murphy escaped from the Helena jail and was believed to have committed other crimes. He was eventually hung by the Vigilantes in the East Helena area. Summarized by Duane Thexton from chapters 2 & 3 of Seventy Years a Cowboy by Philip S. Long, Cypress Books, Billings, MT; Copyright 1976. From the Spring issue of the *Pick and Shovel* newsletter for the Sons and Daughters of Montana Pioneers. Otis Thompson provided the issue and suggested this article. Thanks, Otis

**Membership:** New members since January 2019. MVHA thanks the following for joining and for their support.

**Carolyn Johnson (I)** Ennis, MT 59729

**Membership update** Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2019 membership is due during April, May, or June or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are now \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who have generously submitted your renewal memberships. The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds and membership to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

If anyone needs a ride to a meeting or program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

### **Member News**

**Virginia Black** recently celebrated her 90th birthday and with parties at Lion's Club and Nearly New and she is ready for many more years. Happy Birthday, Virginia.

**Bobby Foreman** suffered a stroke a month or two ago and now resides in Bozeman.

### **Memories**

**Jerry Thomas Churchwell** passed away on February 3, 2019. He was born January 3, 1943 in Spokane, Wash to Thomas Jefferson and Margaret Pearl Peterson Churchwell. He grew up in Phillipsburg , MT, graduated from Phillipsburg High School and started his college career at MSU. He served in the Navy during the Vietnam war. He returned home to Phillipsburg in 1969 where he met Lanelle Garoutte and they were married August 23, 1969. They moved to Dillon where he completed his teaching degree. He worked as a teacher and also worked in mining and logging eventually returning to teaching in Ennis, MT. He was a jack of all trades as he taught calculus, trigonometry, physics, chemistry, biology, business, math and computer programming before he retired in 2010.

**Theodore Edmonds Gildred** passed away on Jan. 3, 2019 at his home in Ennis, MT. Ted was born in 1935 in Mexico City, Mexico to an American developer, Theodore and Maxine Gildred. He went to school in San Diego, CA. After graduating from high school, he graduated from Leland Stanford Jr. University near Palo Alto, CA. He served in the Army. He was U.S. Ambassador to Argentina from 1986 to 1989. Ted and a partner bought the Sun Ranch beginning in the 1970s. Years later, in the early 1990s, having sold the Sun Ranch, he created a ranch community, now called Sun Ranch West, across the Madison River on acreage he had purchased shortly after buying the Sun Ranch. He and his wife, Heidi, helped fund the development of the Madison Medical Center.

**Bobby Ruth Smith Bjork** passed away on Jan. 13, 2019. She was born Feb. 28, 1927 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma to Robert Gus and Almira Rebecka Nichols Smith. She graduated from high school in 1943 and graduated from University of Oklahoma in 1947 where she majored in Radio Speech. While working her first job in Chicago, she met and married her husband, Ted Bjork on Sept. 18, 1948. Careers took them to Wisconsin, Memphis, Tennessee and Birmingham, Alabama. In 1979 Bobby and Ted made a major life change and purchased the El Western Resort in Ennis. Throughout her life, Bobby gave thousands of hours of her time volunteering. While in Ennis, her energy and service was mainly focused on the Madison Valley Chapter of the General Federation of Woman's Clubs. She was local president in 1984-1986 and 1992-1994 and started the "Ladies of the Evening Club" for younger, working women who could not attend daytime meetings. She served as State President, District IV President, Western States Region President and International Liaison Chairman for GFWC International. After Ted's passing in 1997, Bobby relocated to Bozeman and spent 13 years there before returning to Ennis for her final years.

**Laird Alexander Stabler** passed away February 8, 2019 in Ennis, Mt. He was born August 20, 1929 to Dwight Wilbur and Dorothy Alexander Stabler in Los Angeles. He lived in Mar Vista and graduated from Venice High School in 1947 and University of California, Santa Barbara where he studied business and graduated in 1951. He served in the U.S. Coast Guard, married Eloise Butler in 1952, was Vice President of marketing for Sta-Lube, divorced Eloise and in 1978 married Patrica Stabler. He was a long time MVHA member and for many years spent time between Ennis and California and after he became ill spent his final

*Cont. on pg 3*

*Cont. from pg 2*

years in the Madison Valley Manor until his passing. **James Wilson Clark** died peacefully at home in Seattle, WA on March 7, 2019. He was born in Ennis, MT on March 3, 1946, the 5th of eleven children of Wilson and Grace Clark. He attended school in Ennis and graduated from Ennis High School in 1964. He went on to receive his BS in Physics from Gonzaga University in Spokane, WA and his Doctorate from University of Washington, Seattle, WA. He married Elaine Weston in Seattle in 1977. Jim worked at Boeing as a software developer supporting projects such as the 787. Remaining attentive to care for the earth, he chose to walk, ride his bicycle, or use public transit in every situation possible. His sister, Frances Clark Young is a long time member of MVHA.

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This winter of 2019 was a more difficult winter season than many of the recent years and brought Jack Kirby to remember this story he wrote in 2010 about February of 1949...70 years ago.

**February 1949** by Jack Kirby

In 1949 there were 13 family ranch operations south of Indian Creek, 2 west of the river and the rest scattered between the river and the Madison Range. Most did not have easy access to the highway and expected to be occasionally snowbound.

The winter of 1948-49 I spent at the Kirby Ranch, 35 miles south of Ennis, helping my dad feed cattle and with other ranch chores. The winter had been exceptionally snowy with lots of wind and since we were hauling loose hay from the haystacks on the bench, lots of snow shoveling had been necessary. Even though we were using horses and a hay rack on bobsled runners, many trips we had to shovel our way up the hill and then clear more snow on the way down.

February 4<sup>th</sup> came on a Saturday night and, of course, my presence in town was a necessity. Due to the drifting and low visibility on the Armitage Flat I did not travel home at night. I usually stayed at Cloe Paugh's home, in the basement room I had lived in during high school. That night more snow and wind closed the road at the "26 Mile Hill". This was the downgrade 26 miles from Ennis where the highway dropped down toward the Hippe Ranch at Wolf Creek. The Highway Department had a one way snow plow mounted on

a 1½ ton dump truck. There was one stationed in the valley with Joe Wood as the only employee. He operated on a 40 hour weekly schedule so anything that happened after Friday afternoon was dealt with Monday. By this Monday it would have taken much more than a simple snow plow to open the hill. Therefore, the end result was that I was snowbound in Ennis.

My dad had several unused hay stacks in the bottom meadows that were easy to access with out shoveling snow. He also had a tractor loader for clearing driveways and corrals. With milk cows, chickens, and a storeroom full of groceries they were in good shape to be snowbound at their location.

Ennis was cut off from the rest of the world in all directions. The high school ski team (Bill and Titus Bry, Aldrich Saier, and Dean Matzick) were ferried to Norris in a Montana Power "weasel" to attend the State Ski Meet Gil Hansen used cross country skis to go to Virginia City and pick up yeast for his bakery. A native of Minnesota, he was experienced in cross country skiing and had the necessary equipment. The Ennis Cafe, operated by Eleanor Bennetts, kindly allowed me, and several others, adequate credit for our meals. With no deliveries coming in, we did express concern to her citing the decline in the number of cats that frequented the areas behind the cafe.

As time passed there did not appear to be any break in the weather. The whole northern half of the country was at a standstill while wind and more snow closed highways and railroads. Harold Helt and I worked on a solution to several problems. The existing telephone line ended at the Kirby Ranch. Further south, the Olliffe family, Jerry and Winnie Womack, Andrew Schuster, the Halverson's at the Cliff Lake Post Office, Maurice Staggers, and the Neely Ranch were without communications. Ed McAtee offered us the use of horses and tack to try to reach these families. At daylight the morning of February 21, Leonard McAtee trucked us to the top of the "26 Mile Hill" with 3 horses, saddles and a pack saddle for the trip. The accumulated mail for all the families plus the Sun Ranch and

Continued from Pg 3

Shelton's were loaded unto the pack horse. As we led our horses over the drift covering the road, we noted that the snow was packed so hard that hoof prints barely showed. We followed the highway where there were bare spots, used ridges when necessary, cut several fences as needed and arrived at the Kirby Ranch at dark. By highway, the distance was 9 miles, but how many more we traveled would be hard to guess. After spending the night at the Kirby's, Harold rode on to the Cliff Lake Post Office, checked with the Womack's and Olliffe's and returned by evening. All the families were in good shape having plenty of food and other supplies. These were experienced people, used to being snowbound during various winters over the long years they had lived in the Upper Valley. The next day Harold returned to the "26 Mile Hill" leaving the other two horses with us until the road would be opened.

The snow and wind had let up after the 20<sup>th</sup> leaving clear skies and temperatures in the 20 30 range. By February 27 the Highway Department managed to open the roads as far as the mouth of the Upper Madison Canyon. They bypassed the "26 Mile Hill" by opening an old dirt road to the east, abandoned when the highway was rebuilt and paved in the early 30's. A bulldozer, operated by Bert Lockhart, spent a week clearing the big drift from the hill. When the pavement was reached the measurement from the centerline to the top of drift was over 40'.

Writing this now, in the winter of 2010, I am impressed with the equipment and accompanying manpower that keep our highways clear and relatively safe. The increase in the amount of traffic now necessitates this. In 1949 there was no paved road across Reynolds Pass and traffic via West Yellowstone was infrequent. There was no regular attempts to keep the road from Ennis to Duck Creek open before the end of World War II. School busses did not operate south of Cameron, either on the state highway or county roads. Thank you, Jack, for sharing this story

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As we watch the remnants of the March of 2019 melt away and as we go from the

February of 1949 to February 2019, the subject of our Madison gorge comes up and boy, did we have a big one this year.

The Wagon Tongue was able to get this article by **Toni Bowen of Arrow Real Estate** about the gorge.

*Did you know that...* **some people believe the Madison River is the only river in North America to "gorge" this way?** Just what is "the Gorge?"

This is a main source of conversation around Ennis during especially cold weather. Old timers have great stories of cows getting stuck out on ice flows in the middle of the river and the year the gorge took out the old Varney Bridge. I have been fascinated by this phenomenon ever since we moved to Ennis in 1993. It is awesome to witness and hard to understand. I interviewed some of the natives and hydrologists as well, trying to find out the cause. In the winter of 2010, Greg Lemon, Editor of The Madisonian, our local newspaper, wrote an article that pretty much describes what causes the Gorge. He said, "It happens nearly every year. When the temperatures drop near zero and the wind howls mercilessly, the Madison River begins to freeze up. Around Ennis, when the Madison River will gorge becomes big topic of conversation. "Have you seen the river?" someone will ask. "Yeah. She's froze up down by the lake," will be the reply. "Betcha she gorges in by the end of the week." If you search the Internet for Madison River gorging, amongst the stories of big trout gulping salmon flies, you're apt to find a variety of pictures and stories about ice choking the river around Ennis and pushing water out into nearby fields, over-flow sloughs and pastures. Along with the anticipation come the rumors and legends about the uniqueness of the Madison River ice jams. Some say it freezes from the bottom up because the wind blows so hard. But the fact is many rivers around southwest Montana freeze in a similar fashion, said William Locke, professor of environmental science at Montana State University in Bozeman. "It's actually pretty common," Locke said. "Take for instance the Gallatin River," he said. "The most common form of flooding on the lower Gallatin is the result of ice jamming." "However, the speed the ice on the Madison River and the depth the ice reaches are impressive," said Pat Clancy, a former fisheries biologist in Ennis. Every year Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks close the Ennis and Valley Garden Fishing Access sites because of the ice gorging. In a 1921 article in "Proceedings of the Society of Civil Engineers," written by J.C. Stevens about the ice-jamming phenomenon on the Madison River. "It has been stated by local authority that

Continued on pg 5

**For Your Reading Pleasure**

**Bucking the Sun** by Ivan Doig. "Bucking the sun" is to push against the glare of sunrise or sunset. The "pushful" family at the center of the story is the Duffs, driven from their Montana bottomland to relief work on the New Deal's Fort Peck Dam. Available at Madison Valley Library. or interlibrary loan. Check your local library.

**Looking Ahead**

**May 2019** No scheduled program

**Saturday June 1, 2019 Annual Meeting** Potluck dinner  
Location to be determined. Fried chicken will be the main course. A to

**July 2019** Field trip to Revenue Mine Date and time to be determined

August 2019 Field trip to 60th Anniversary of Madison Earth Quake. Exact date and time to be determined after getting schedule of events.

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**MVHA Programs**

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Continued from pg 4 the Madison is the only river in Montana which overflows from ice gorges during cold weather. This statement is not true. The Ruby, Boulder, and many small streams behave exactly in the same manner as the Madison in this respect," writes Stevens. Some of the characteristics that contribute to the flooding and ice gorging are the shallowness of the river, the low river banks and the relatively steady flow of the water, Stevens wrote. The ice gorge itself comes from a mix of frazil and anchor ice, he wrote. Frazil ice is formed on turbulent rivers when the weather is cold enough to freeze surface water. It looks like shards or chunks of ice in the river. It's also sometimes called slush ice or needle ice. Anchor ice is formed around rocks and cobbles in shallow water and is a result of "a rapid radiation of earth heat from the river bed into space," writes Stevens. It forms most rapidly on dark-colored stones, during clear and cold nights. Larry Love, who is an Ennis native and on the board of the Madison Valley History Association, believes this anchor ice is really what distinguishes the Madison River from others.

But it remains a mystery to me. When I look at the gorged river, I don't think about all those different kinds of ice and slush, I just see the amazing beauty of nature and thank God I live in the middle of so much of it. Thank you Toni, for sharing this story.

**MVHA Board of Directors**

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  - Director: John Gecho
  - Director: Eric Palmerton
  - Director: Lee Robison
  - Historian and researcher: Don Black
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- Meetings and programs held monthly on the **third** Thursday of each month or as scheduled. Watch the *Madisonian*, posters and your email for details of time, place and program. Please call Larry Love 682-5780 for date of board meeting.. *The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be July 2019. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed. Your editor needs your history stories!

Editor: Shirley Love whitneypranch@wispwest.net  
Contributing editors: *Madisonian* Obituaries, Duane Thexton "Don't Mess with Ennis, Mt" *Seventy Years a Cowboy* by Philip S. Long  
Jack Kirby "February 1949"  
Toni Bowen "The Gorge"

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- DVDs for 50 to 56** listed below
- 50 Mona Durham: Growing up in the Madison Valley 16-Nov-17
  - 51 Zoe Todd: Our Honored Dead 18-Feb-18
  - 52 Gary Forney: William Ennis 15-Mar-18
  - 53 Darlene Nevile Rochez: Ennis/Jeffers/ Switzer family history 20-Sept-18
  - 54: Rob Bechhold: Hezekia Stibbs Templeton 15-Nov-18
  - 55 John Heckler: History of the Madison Theater 21-Feb-19
  - 56 Gary Forney: Katherine Ennis 21-Mar-19

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**Little Known Facts about our great state, Montana**

It is technically still illegal for unmarried women to fish alone.

In Fort Benton, a cowboy once insisted on riding his horse to his room in the Grand Union Hotel. The manager objected, so the two exchanged gun- fire. The Horseman was killed and, later, fourteen .44 slugs were found in his body.

Travelers Rest in Lolo was a stopping point on the Lewis and Clark Expedition. It's the only site on the Lewis and Clark Trail that has physical proof of the explorers' presence. From *Pick and Shovel* Newsletter for the Sons and Daughters of Montana Pioneer

No.	Title	Date
1	Hal Pasley Part 1	13-Mar-08
2	A Brief History of Norris (Power Point presentation by Ann White)	18-Sep-08
3	Hal Pasley Part 2	20-Nov-08
4	John Lounsbury: Nez Perce in Yellowstone	2-Feb-09
5	Sandy James	21-May-09
6	Gary Forney: Discovery Men	18-Jun-09
7	Jeffrey Stafford: Sterling & Hot Springs Mining District	19-Nov-09
8	Jacqui Moratta: Women of the Bozeman Trail	21-Jan-10
9	Toyia Hatten: Montana Herbs	18-Mar-10
10	Don Black: Women of the Madison	16-Sep-10
11	Gary Forney: People vs. Thomas Cover	22-Oct-10
12	David Kelley: Hanging Trees & Soiled Doves	18-Nov-10
13	Highland Mary Mine & Indians with Joe Smithson	21-Jan-11
14	Indians with Joe Bettenger	24-Feb-11
15	Larry Kiefer and Ben Tone	4-Apr-11
16	Branding in Montana	19-May-11
17	Blacksmith Shop	23-Jul-11
18	Conversation with Ennis & Jeffers Founding Fathers Decendents	16-Sep-11
19	Don Black: Madison Valley Sports	20-Oct-11
20	Grizzly Bears in the Madison	18-Nov-11
21	Otis Thompson: Thompson Family History	25-Jan-12
22	Ringdocus (The Beast)	26-Jan-12
23	Michael Burns: Spokane and the Round Horse Barn	19-Apr-12
24	Mystery At the Museum (TV excert on the "Beast")	2-May-12
25	Moonshine on the Madison	21-Jun-12
26	Tom Satterly: History of Butte	15-Nov-12
27	Don Black: The Madison County Oil Company	18-Apr-13
28	Skiing at Jack Creek with Tom Erdie	28-Oct-14
29	Gary Forney: Dawn In El Dorado	28-Oct-14
30	Barbara Hubner Smith	31-Oct-14
31	Larry Love: Angle's Hardware	31-Oct-14
32	Dan Northway & Talc Mine	5-Dec-14
33	Montana Centennial Train 1964-1965	16-Jan-15
34	The Mainwaring family with Keith Mainwaring	19-Feb-15
35	A. M. Wells	19-Apr-15
36	Rocky Mountain Demon Wolf (from Destination America TV)	27-Apr-15
38	Corrina Christensen: Ennis Drug Store	20-Jun-15
39	Tom Donovan: Hanging Around Big Sky	16-Dec-15
40	Joe Smithson and Early Madison Valley Residents	26-Jan-16
41	Ken Robison: Yankees & Rebels on the Upper Missouri	21-Apr-16
42	Ruthann Knutson: Montana Indians Today	20-Oct-16
43	The Cowboy Legend DVD	7-Dec-16
44	Cardiac Rehab with Peggy Shumsky	19-Jan-17
45	Ken Egan and Montana 1864	27-Feb-17
46	John Gecho and History of Cameron	4-Apr-17
47	Mary Jane Bradbury as Jeanette Rankin	22-Jun-17
48	Hughie Call by Lynn Mahan	11-Oct-17
49	Jack Kirby, Esther Armitage Warburton, Don "Kid" Neville	19-Oct-17

# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 17 issue 3

Madison Valley History Association

July 2019

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat** Summer has set in with vengeance. Hope everyone is having a good one with friends, camping, traveling and helping out and enjoying your Madison Valley History Association.

The MVHA is still "rolling along". At our April meeting, Kitty Eneboe gave a great program about her grandfather, Samuel V. Stewart who was a two term governor of Montana in the early 1900s. Kitty is not a member of the MVHA but a community member who has historical roots and stepped forward to share her historical story. MVHA thanks her very much for sharing. At the annual meeting on June 1, 2019, MVHA approved the budget and elected directors to the board. Otis Thompson was elected for another three year term, John Gecho agreed to stay on for one more year and Marty Brenneke was elected to finish a term for one year. Thank you very much for stepping up to serve your organization and continuing preserving the valley history. We need members to be thinking this next year about how they could serve the organization as MVHA needs board members to be the leadership of the organization. Without a board the MVHA cannot function as a 501c3 organization. So be thinking about how you could serve as it is not a difficult job, gives you a chance to meet new people and serve your community.

At the organization board meeting the officers from last year consented to continue their positions...Otis Thompson as Secretary, Kevin Brenneke as Treasurer, Brandi Palmerton as Vice President and Larry Love as President. I thank those individuals for doing a great job. They are the ones who keep the MVHA functional.

The museum opened for the season on June 11. The museum is open Tuesday through Sunday from 1:00pm to 4:00pm. So far this summer, there has been a steady flow of folks visiting the museum as MVHA shares the history of the Madison Valley. Mona Durham is the scheduler so call Mona at 682-4638 to volunteer for a 3 hour shift to help keep the museum open. No one can visit if MVHA does not have a volunteer on duty. It is a fun duty as you greet and chat with guests and show them around to the 3 buildings. And you always work as teams of two so it is pretty easy. And you will discover new displays and things you haven't seen before..

Our programs continue to be great. The July 27th Field Trip was to the Alfred and Sarah Parent homestead. Parents were Mary Kay Frisbee's grandparents and Mary Kay gave an interesting talk about the history of their ranching and mining of the valley. The Frisbees have kept the land in the family and it is a very beautiful area to spend weekends and vacations. After a picnic lunch by the lake, the group met up with Tim and Steve Jackson for a tour of the Revenue Mine area stopping to see several old mine sites as we learned of the mining in that area. Tim also shared the history of the stage coach routes in the area and took us to a grave site of a former passenger who died on the stage coach and they stopped and buried him/her right along the route, so as the story is told. Now our next history question will be to determine who is buried there. Tim took us over hill and dale down to Sterling and some folks in the group continued for a tour of Sterling. Anyone who did not know how to drive Montana backroads does for sure know now.

August plans are to visit the Madison earth quake site for the 60th anniversary of the earth quake. Still in the planing stages as we want to avoid the huge crowds that will be there on the actual date, August 17.

And please remember, the MVHA will continue to need member help and support to continue our mission. Because the current group is getting older each day, we are looking to younger members and volunteers. Encourage your young friends and family to come and help preserve the interesting history of the Madison Valley.

Keep the wagons rolling, Your Wagon Master, Larry Love.

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**The gun raffle of the 1866 Yellowboy Saddle Ring Carbine Little Bighorn Commemorative** continues and not many tickets of the 250 to be sold are still available.. The drawing is still to be determined, sometime after the last ticket is sold. You do not need to be present to win. Get your tickets purchased by sending in your order blank from the April 2019 Wagon Tongue or order by submitting your name, address and phone number and the number of tickets you want to purchase. Tickets are \$10 each. If you sell tickets to friends or family include their names on your order. Mail order and check to MVHA PO Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729. Any proceeds from this raffle go to continued development of the history museum.....

**History Titbit:** Origin of the term **Hog Wash**. Steamboats carried both people and animals. Since pigs smelled so bad, they would be washed before being placed on board. The mud and other filth that was washed off was considered useless "Hog Wash".

**Membership:** New members since April 2019. MVHA thanks the following for joining and for their support.

**Dave Coghill & Son(F)** Vashon, Washington  
Membership update Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2019 membership is due during July, August or September or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are now \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who have generously submitted your renewal memberships. The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds and membership to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

If anyone needs a ride to a meeting or program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

**Receiving your Wagon Tongue** Several years ago the MVHA started using non-profit organization postage stamps. The MVHA saves a considerable amount of money since we mail out most of the quarterly newsletter, **The Wagon Tongue**. MVHA did not know that non-profit stamps are not forwarded and if you have a forwarding address during the winter months or any other time, your Wagon Tongue is dumped in the trash. It is not returned to sender so MVHA does not know who you are. Please let the MVHA know by phone to Shirley Love 406-682-5780 or by email to [whitneypranch@wispwest.net](mailto:whitneypranch@wispwest.net) or even to MVHA P.O. Box 474, Ennis, Mt 59729 and the address labels will be updated. Also let MVHA know the approximate date you leave in the fall and the approximate date you will arrive in the spring so the correct address label will be used. Thank you to those who have already provided this information.

### **Memories**

**LeRoy W. Thom** passed away at Hastings, NE. on July 29, 2018. He was born on April 9, 1925 to John and Johanna (Peters) Thom on a farm near Ravenna, NE. Leroy graduated from Grand Island High School in 1942 and was a pilot in the Naval Air Corp during WW II from 1943-45. He married **2**

Jean E. Ballance on Sept. 5, 1948 in Lincoln, NE. He obtained a BS at University of Nebraska in Agricultural Engineering in 1949. He founded the T-L Irrigation Co in 1955 which manufactured hydraulic irrigation systems for farmers in the U.S. and many other countries. He owned and operated the Call Ranch (Bar 7) in the Madison Valley.

**June Gail Haigh**, long time MVHA member, passed away in Billings, MT on Dec. 23, 2018. He was born June 17, 1924 in Three Forks, MT to Gail and Margaret Haigh. June graduated from Three Forks High School. After graduation, he was inducted into the US Marines. and served in World War II. After the war, he returned home to attend Montana State College where he earned a BS degree in Soil Science and later obtained a Master's Degree in Range Science. He worked for the U.S Soil Conservation Service. He married Violet Gilbert. June loved hunting and fishing and if you have been a member of MVHA for a few years, you will remember stories that he submitted to be printed in the Wagon Tongue. June and Les Klatt were a team of volunteers at the museum and received rave complements. Obit provided by Les and Bobby Klatt.

**Melvin J. Hagl** passed away March 19, 2019. He was born on October 1, 1944 in Butte, MT to Harry and Madeline Hagl, Sr. He was a Vietnam War Veteran and earned a Master Carpenter Certification while serving. His first love was his sawmill and he always said that "Sawing was the easiest part."

**Lester M. Kilman**, long time MVHA member, passed away on April 10, 2019 at Bozeman, MT. Lester was born Aug. 15, 1932 in Verona, Wisconsin to Karl and Frieda Kilman. They moved around during his childhood as his father took care of cheese factories and did mining before settling in Pony in 1940. He attended Pony Elementary school and several other local elementary schools as his family moved for work. He graduated from Harrison High School in 1951. After graduation, he joined the Navy and served with the Sea Bees. He met Pearl Neville at the movie Theatre in Ennis. They were married in Jeffers, MT in 1954. They raised their family in Ennis where Les was custodian at Ennis High School for 37 years. They moved back to Pony after retirement and Pearl and Les spent 25 years as snow birds spending their winters in Quartzite, AZ. They moved back to Ennis for Lester's last years.

**Jean Estelle Thom** passed away on April 15, 2019 in Hastings, Nebraska. Jean was born in Lincoln, Nebraska on October 27, 1927 to Hobart "Earl" and Alma Ballance. She graduated from Lincoln High School and attended

*(Cont on page 3)*



(cont from pg 2) the University of Nebraska. On September 5, 1948, Jean married LeRoy W. Thom in Lincoln, Nebraska. Jean helped her husband, LeRoy, start the T-L Irrigation Co. in 1955. She was very active with the company in the early years and was the Corporate Secretary and on the Board of Directors until her death. Jean owned and operated the Call Ranch (Bar 7) in the Madison Valley with LeRoy. (editor's note: I met Jean by way of Smitty Overstreet and Jean and Smitty were avid rock hounds and both had collections of Indian arrowheads).

**Marilyn Marie (Toby) Wilkins** passed away on May 9, 2019 at Madison Valley Manor in Ennis, MT. Toby was born in Arlington, Nebraska on Feb. 3rd, 1929 to Lawrence and Maude Hall. She attended school in Arlington and graduated from high school there. On her 18th birthday, she eloped with the love of her life, Joe C. Wilkins. They lived in Arlington and then Fremont. Toby and Joe moved to Austin, Minn. in 1975. While in Austin, Toby decided to go back to school to attend nurse's training and become an LPN. She worked at a long term care center. In 1990, she and Joe retired to Ennis, MT. She worked at the Madison Valley Manor, the same care center where she later became a resident. She and Joe were very active with the original Senior Center and Meals on Wheels when the Senior Center was in the Ennis Town Hall.

**Donald Norman Clark** passed away May 15, 2019 at the Madison Valley Hospital in Ennis, MT. Don was born May 18, 1928, in Long Valley, South Dakota to Clem and Artie May Clark. In 1938 the family moved to the Madison Valley. He attended school in Ennis. After jobs in Washington and serving in the Army he returned to the Madison Valley working as ranch manager at the Channels Dude Ranch and for the Corral Creek Ranch.

**Carol Jahns Orr**, former MVHA member, passed away on May 29, 2019, in Ennis. She was born in Alhambra, California on June 28, 1923, to Alfred Heinrich and Cecelia Jahns. Carol grew up in Seattle, Washington. She graduated from Roosevelt High School and in 1944 graduated from University of Washington with a BA in Political Science. Carol met her future husband, Arthur (Toby) Orr from Cameron, MT, a Navy pilot, on a blind date. They were married in Seattle, WA on June 30, 1944. When the war ended, they moved to Cameron, MT and ranched together for 20 years. They owned the Bear Creek Ranch (now Sphinx Mountain Ranch) and Antelope Basin Cow Camp. While being a hard working ranch wife, Carol started a club for ranch wives called the Mad Gals. They sold Bear Creek Ranch in 1964 and bought a ranch along

the Madison River which they called Hiverwood. After many years traveling and working, they moved back to the Madison Valley in 1990 and opened an antique shop in Ennis, The Wayfarer.

The Memorial service for **Jane Jeffers Rybus** was held on July 6, 2019. Greta Rybus, Jane's granddaughter presented the following story of Jane that she compiled and sent in to the New York Times which shows the part each of us play in our history.

Our ancestors brought goods and cattle to this valley, making the journey Northward from Texas and Westward from New York, eventually founding Ennis and Jeffers. Their children grew up to marry and raise Jane Jeffers, a child born in 1924. I am one of Jane's three granddaughters, along with Emily and Sarah.

Jane grew up in a ranching family: branding their cattle with a simple outline of a house. Much later I would find the symbol in a booklet of brands in the valley, used to identify animals that strayed.

As a child, she rode horseback, dressed as Robin Hood for Halloween, and went skiing on a little ski hill up Jack Creek.

She left Ennis for the University of Montana in the middle of World War II. Of that era, she said "During my life in college all the men were gone, we women finally were able to take on men's jobs. Women were empowered during those years. After the war when the men came home, we lost it." She joined a sorority and her sisters called her "Jeff". She became the first woman student body president and graduated with a degree in English. She felt freedom.

She dreamt of becoming a writer in New York. But this was a time of few choices, even for ambitious women. Instead, she did what many women did. She married Henry Rybus, a kind and gentle man, but she was an unsettled housewife. She became a mother of three, and for a time, a teacher.

Divorced, in her sixties, she moved back to Ennis, living in the last house on main street across from two saloons, waking occasionally to bar fights. She became the unofficial town historian, an avid reader and bridge player. She looked out windows and watched for deer and birds. She went on archeological digs and took weekend-long workshops on how to pronounce "Sacagawea". Her home is filled with old photos, artifacts, and collected stones.

She grew older and content. Toward the end, dementia quieted her. My father would visit and they would hold hands as he read aloud Wallace Stegner. Always aware of my grandmother's lack of choice, I chose to follow her life with the freedoms of my generation: I graduated from the University of (cont pg 4)

(cont from pg 3) Montana 64 years after she did and left for the East to become a photojournalist.

At the end of each year, the New York Times compiles stories of impactful, notable people who had passed the previous year. They asked readers to submit stories of loved ones who had passed, because the people we love are notable and impactful to our own lives. And Jane was that to all of us: she was our family, our friend and to me a guiding force. She also was someone who showed us how deeply we can be connected to a place. Hiking up Jack Creek, my Uncle Curt said, "Living in Ennis, Jane was at peace." To many of us, Jane was both a person and a place: she was Ennis and she was this valley and all the stories in it.

While we are here to say a final goodbye and mourn Jane, we are also mourning the end of 156 years of our family's presence in this valley. Most of the land, the little house on Main Street, and now all the family who once came to this valley are gone. But that's why, if we think about it, we mourn more deeply because we have lost things we love. But, people like Jane and places like Ennis continue to shape us: they are why my father, Tom, loves the West; why my mother, Pam, does crossword puzzles like Jane did, and why I remain firm in making my own choices; because I know the stories of my family, this place, and my grandmother. And maybe, while our presence here has waned, Jane and this valley has impacted each of you, too.

from Greta Rybus, Jane's granddaughter

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Rodeo season has come and gone in Ennis but it is time to examine the history of the **Ennis Rodeo Association**. From The Madison Valley A High Mountain Community by Minnie Paugh

The first rodeos were called "bucking contests". They may have been promoted by the saloons in Ennis because they were completely open to the public and only the saloons could have profited from the gatherings of ranchers. The contests were on the main street of the little town. In 1911 or 1912 a corral was built south of Angles Blacksmith Shop where the Gambles Store was in 1974. Bucking contests were held in the corral also without charging admission. During these years, Oz Wingate, who was a bartender in one of the saloons, told Theodore Paugh that he took in as much as a thousand dollars on a rodeo day. Riders came to Ennis for the love of the contest, not for the money, but the saloons gave money for the purses and after a contest the spectators passed a hat so that the riders usually received between \$5 and \$20

for an afternoon. Some of these riders were Bert Vetter, Johnny Kennedy, Fae Selby, Rusty Selby(1) Otto Kirby and Bill Gray.

Sometimes the horses would be started from Larry Dunn's "Sunshine" then from the saloon run by Jack Spray. The animals were held at Wallace Green's livery stable or Arthur Nelson's stable. (Nelsons later bought out Wallace Green.) On one happy occasion a horse escaped the hazers and took his rider up the school house hill and he was finally caught near the rocky point off the road at Eight Mile. Ed Michener was the hazer who caught up with the runaway.

Races were also held on the main street of Ennis. Laurence Jeffers specialized in the "saddle and go." His old horse didn't need its saddle cinched.

Just after 1920 Jack Conners who owned a saloon in Ennis built a rodeo corral south of the Ennis Ball Park (which was laid out about 1910) near where Chick Armitage lived. Si and Ted McAllister were riding at this time. In 1924 the Rod and Gun Club had a rodeo there with a fine group of riders including Powder Face Tom Eckert. "Rich" Richter did the producing himself. Johnny Kennedy bought this corral from Jack Conners and some people remember only the period when Johnny was running it. In 1919 Charles J. Manley started a rodeo at his ranch near Shell Creek Canyon. He used his own rodeo stock and had a show every Sunday in July and August. In 1926 he enlarged the coral and had a few shows with as many as 200 spectators. Dudes attended from the Elkhorn Dude Ranch and from the 9 Quarter Circle. The corral was only used three times.

In the 1930s Emmett Womack built a rodeo arena east of Ennis near the banks of the Madison River. Charles Manley furnished his broncs at first, but later Richter and Ellinghouse produced his show. Emmett was a member of the Rodeo Cowboys Association so his riders were professionals. He established a show date in the middle of June and many world champions rode for him after they finished the Southern rodeo circuit. In 1944 Emmett was injured while breaking a bronc in his corrals. He never was able to tell anyone what had happened to him and he did not recover enough to return to rodeoing.

Amos "Rusty" Selby rode in Ennis rodeos about 1914. He moved to Illinois and started his Diamond Horseshoe Rodeo in 1925 in Tonica. Its permanent home became Cornell, Illinois, 82 miles from Chicago. This was a traveling rodeo often booked at state fairs. It featured television stars such as Roy Rogers. This show closed in 1967. (cont on pg 5)

(cont from pg 4) The annual Ennis rodeo was produced in 1974 by the Ennis Rodeo Association. This corporation grew from a roping club and a racing organization which combined in 1952 to build a modern rodeo arena and race track. The roping club started in 1948 to engage in friendly competition in calf roping contests with small jackpots as prizes. The club never had more than twelve members which included Melvin Icenoggle and Jim Armitage. They had a rodeo in 1949 and 1950 and several jackpot roping contests. They raised their operating funds by paying dues and they encouraged the Madison Valley people to become interested in rodeos after World War II. They held their first rodeo in 1948 in Womack's corrals before they were torn down. The racing organization started in 1951 and held their first meet on a straightway track beside the local airfield. Their quarter horse races were held in Ennis several years until the race track was built at Beaumont near Belgrade by Lloyd Shellhammer. The backers for the Ennis races were Chuck Aaberg, Jim McAllister and Lloyd Shellhammer. Aaberg and McAllister raced their own horses. Some of the best quarter horses in the West raced in Ennis. They had paramutual betting. Chuck was so interested in the arena and track that he brought work crews from the Sun Ranch to work on the construction.

The rodeo association was incorporated as "The Madison Valley Rodeo and Racing Association." Chuck Aaberg was the secretary of the new corporation and he gave much thought to the means by which it could be kept free from business interests in Ennis who might want to schedule rodeos for their profit rather than for the good of the community and the association. Sumner Gerard was the state Senator from Madison County, and he used his position to cause the state legislature to pass a special law to permit the Madison Valley Association to sell A and B stock. "A" stock was for voting and only one share could be purchased by an individual or business. "B" shares were sold to finance the rodeo arena. They were sold in \$10, \$50 and \$100 denominations. Most of the money for the association was raised by the sale of \$10 shares and very few \$100 shares were issued.

The first expenses of the association were paid by loans co-signed by members of the association. Business people in Ennis and neighboring communities as far away as Bozeman were asked to make donations and they supported the activity with great generosity. Their first expenses was the purchase of their rodeo grounds on the terrace east and slightly north of Ennis. They acquired

between 70 and 120 acres from Earl Love Sr in 1952 and laid out a straight away tract before a permanent arena was built.

The sale of shares financed the lumber to build the rodeo arena which was designed and constructed by Melvin Icenoggle. He was the only salaried person working on this community project. At least 100 people in the community gave generously of their time to make the arena possible. They were the businessmen and the laborers from the town as well as ranchers. The major work was done in 1953 under the supervision of Melvin Icenoggle who was shoeing horses in th country. He was an active member of the Roping Club and had had experience working with the crews who built the rodeo arenas in Southwestern Montana. He had been rodeoing all over the West since he was a boy of sixteen. He was required to design an arena which would set inside a circular racing track a half mile long and in between rock bars. Otis Crooker then designed bleachers on skids that could be turned from the racing track to provide seating for the rodeo arena. In 1953 the association held two rodeos and a race meet. The present grandstand was later purchased from the arena at West Yellowstone after their rodeo club went broke. This purchase used all the Ennis funds and the lumber was hauled by members of the of the Rodeo Association supervised by Carl Hubner. The seating was assembled for the 1959 rodeo with Harold Holt in charge of the work crew. Additional bleachers were acquired from Gatton Field at Montana State College when its old seats were replaced. In 1957 the rodeo grounds were valued at \$15,000. It was used by the Roping Club, the Madison High Riders, the Valley Vaqueros and the Side Saddle Club with the permission of the Ennis Rodeo Association.

All the work during a rodeo or race was done by local ranchers and business people. In the first years of the association no passes were issued to the families of the workers. In 1960 a worker received a pass for his wife and three beer tickets. Often the entire family was employed for the duration of the celebration. They handled advance ticket sales, built the floats for the parade, manned booths selling food and refreshments and took care of the stock during the rodeo or race. After the events of the day were over, cleanup crews were needed to ready the grounds for the next day.

Coffee and hot dogs have been sold by the Madison Valley Woman's Club since the concession was given to them in 1959. Irma Manley has consistently worked with this project which has been two booths

(cont on page 6)

**For Your Reading Pleasure**

**An Ornerly Bunch** presents tales and anecdotes compiled from the Montana Writer’s Project. Enjoy pioneer yarns from chapters such as Curious Animals, Tall Tales, Tales of True Pioneers, and many more.

**Looking Ahead**

**August** Field trip for the 60th Anniversary of the Madison Earth Quake Date and time to be announced.

**Sept** History of the Madison Meadows Golf Course Date, time and place to be announced

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2019 Linderman Cabin Speaker Series Held at the Linderman Cabin past Laurin at Robber’s Roost site.

**“Dressing For the Ball” Thurs. Aug. 8, 6:30pm**  
Janet Allestad will be sharing information on the customs and culture of how women would prepare and dress for the balls held in early Virginia City.

**“And a Good Time Was Held by All” Sunday, August 11, 2:00pm** Mark Weber will be presenting an overview of the social life and cultural fabric of the Alder Gulch in the mid-1860’s.

+++++Rodeo continued from pg 5+++++ which were closed and rewired in 1963. The Boy Scouts are responsible for the sale of pop and the Lion’s Club sold the beer. Before 1959 the 4-H Clubs had the food concessions and that time the Buttons and Bowls Club bought the first American Flag carried in the rodeo parade. Adult clubs with concessions kept half of their profit but junior organizations may keep all of theirs. The sheriff has always deputized about ten men to police the grounds. In the early days Denny Wonder guarded the ticket booth. Recently a deputy sheriff has been assigned to watch the ticket booth and the concessions to guard against theft. In the old days the funds were held in the bank vault in Cloe Paugh’s insurance office until the rodeo was over. When it was convenient the board of the association would count the money and bank it in Bozeman. The person who took the money to Bozeman was protected by an armed escort car. In recent years the rodeo takes in about \$15,000 but only about \$1500 is profit. The money is banked in the First Madison Valley Bank. The Ennis Rodeo was and continues to be a local tradition. It links the modern community to its western heritage more colorfully than does any other event. Since the first trail herd came to the Madison County, the Madison Valley has provided grazing for cattle and horses. Fine riders were needed to break and school the horses for the old VF Ranch and to train Morgan L. Morgan’s little Mountain Lilys into the smartest, toughest little horses in the West. Such names as Tom Whitney, Joe Spray, Walter Long

**MVHA Board of Directors**

- President: Larry Love
- Vice-President: Brandi Palmerton
- Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke
- Secretary: Otis Thompson
- Director: John Gecho
- Director: Eric Palmerton
- Director: Marty Brenneke
- Historian and researcher: Don Black
- Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate
- Meetings and programs held monthly on the **third** Thursday of each month or as scheduled. Watch the Madisonian, posters and your email for details of time, place and program. Please call Larry Love 682-5780 for date of board meeting.. *The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be October 2019. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed. Your editor needs your history stories!
- Editor: Shirley Love whitneypranch@wispwest.net
- Contributing editors: *Madisonian* Obituaries, *Memory of Jane Rybus* by Greta Rybus *Ennis Rodeo Association The Madison Valley A High Mountain Community* by Minnie Paugh
- 2019 Linderman Cabin Speaker Series Gary Forney

**Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by First Madison Valley Bank**

+++++ and Frank Daems bring colorful memories to a few of old timers who tell their grand children about the riders when broncs were ridden in the streets of Ennis or on the open prairie.

The rodeo is always enjoyed as a business stimulator by some of the business people of the community. The gathering of friends and neighbors from surrounding communities and states is appreciated by the natives of Ennis and the Madison Valley. With the development of the tourist trade and growth of riding clubs many people support the rodeo for the love of rodeoing and the enjoyment of showing their well trained animals. The Ennis rodeo is a scheduled event on the calendar of several of the Montana dude ranches.

The October issue will continue with the rest of interesting details of the Ennis Rodeo Association and many more well known names from the Madison Valley.

This information has been compiled by Minnie Paugh from the minutes of the Ennis Rodeo Association and interviews with: Melvin Icenoggle, Charles Aaberg, Roy Daems, Ralph and Theodore Paugh, Winnifred Jeffers, Roy Reed, Irma Manley and Frances Womack.

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**History Tidbit** Bear Creek School House was built in 1909 to replace the old one room log building. It now celebrates 110 years.

# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 17 issue 4

Madison Valley History Association

Oct 2019

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat** The MVHA Museum completed another successful season. We had over 400 people from all over the world go through our museum. They all think that our museum is great and very unique. We can all be very proud of our museum.

A big thank you goes out to all the volunteers who help host the museum. And a great big thank you to Mona Durham for keeping us on schedule. Everyone should be thinking about hosting at the museum for 2020. (See Volunteers on pg 6 with the suggestion from Mona)

Liz McCambridge has been working with the history teacher, Mr. Cavan, to get students interested in working at the museum next summer and earning community service credits. Liz arranged a tour this fall to acquaint students with the museum. In the spring, MVHA will be having a museum training workshop for interested students and any MVHA members who would like to attend.

Before the school was out Otis and I hosted JennyB's 4th graders. During the summer Otis and I also hosted the Good Times Camp from Ennis. All the youngsters love the museum and go home with a good history of our valley. Lee Robison hosted a private school from Manhattan this fall so they came a ways to learn the history.

Our last field trip in August for the 60th Anniversary of the Madison Canyon earth quake was well attended with 35+ folks attending. Many good comments were received and the newest video of the 1959 earth quake was well received. If you did not get to attend, it is well worth your time to stop by the visitor center to view it.

We still need your help in getting programs for monthly meeting. If you have a suggestion, let any board member know. If you have a family history you would like to share, just let us know. We do not have a program for November yet and still time to plan for one. The December meeting will be our annual Christmas program and potluck with details to be announced.

The MVHA Board wishes you a great fall, Thanksgiving and Holiday season. See you soon around the history corner.

Your Wagon Master, Larry Love

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**Early Cattle Industry** It is not a very well known fact that the cattle industry in Montana started in Madison County. A man named John Grant had a trading post where the Ruby River empties into the Beaverhead River. He traded with the Indians, many of whom lived in the Ruby Valley, more or less peacefully during the winter. The Flathead tribes, the Bannocks, and the Shoshones, who were normally at odds, tolerated each other in the valley. There were several other traders who lived in this area with trading posts or wigwams during the winters, and they were joined by Granville Stuart and his brother, James, when they came to Montana. Jim Dempsey was among the traders there.

The Stuart boys were unable to purchase some cattle from Grant and when forced to leave the area by the hostile and obnoxious attitude of the Bannock Indians under their six foot five inch chief named "The Rouge" by the whites, took the cattle with them to their new home on the Clark Fork below Deer Lodge. It was from this location that Stuart was given credit for the first development of gold in Montana at Gold Creek. In the spring his cows brought in 34 head of Durham calves. Stuart has been given credit for being the father of the cattle industry in Montana.\*

(Reference: \*Granville Stuart Journals and Reminiscences)

By John C. Seidensticker, M.D.

Pioneer Trails and Trials pg 789

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**TALK LIKE A MONTANAN** The WPA glossary of Montana terms reflected the state's mining and agricultural heritage. Among the terms are: **Bench:** Plain rising above the lowland. **Between hay and grass:** In difficult times, as in the early spring when hay is gone and grass has not come up. **Biddy:** Aged, toothless ewe. **Boot hill:** Cemetery where pioneers who "died with their boots on" are buried. To be continued in next issue.

**Membership:** New members since July 2019. MVHA thanks the following for joining and for their support.

**Randy and Sandy Marr (F) 842-7411**

P.O. Box 214  
Alder, Mt 59710

Membership update Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2019 membership is due during October, November or December or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are now \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

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If anyone needs a ride to a meeting or program, call 682-5780 and a ride will be arranged for you.

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**Memories**

**Ed Curnow**, long time MVHA member, passed away May 18, 2019. He was born in Reno, Nevada **2**

in 1937 to Erma and Dick Curnow. He graduated from Reno High School, attended University of Nevada, received a B.A. in History from Peabody College and an M.A. from the University of Montana where his research focused on the History of the Wolf. He met his wife Maureen at a ski hill near Reno, Nevada. He was a Madison River fly-fishing guide for some 34 years and owned Ed's Tackle Sho in Ennis, MT.

**Christine Elenor (Hughes) Sadler** of Virginia City, MT passed away July 6, 2019 in St. Paul, Minn. She was born Dec. 17, 1951 to Elenor and Edward Hughes. She was divorced from her first husband, Charles Sadler. Chris remarried and she and Scott Peterson moved to Virginia City from Minnesota in 2004 after many previous years in Virginia City. Chris was a member of Virginia City Chamber of Commerce and volunteered for numerous events in Virginia City.

**Christopher John Peduzi** passed away on July 11, 2019. He was born in Phoenix, Arizona on September 27th, 1953 to Lido and Katherine Peduzi. His family moved to Sparks, Nevada in 1964 where he graduated from Sparks High school. He married Lisa Greger and Chris was an avid outdoorsman and they had a summer home at Davis Lake for many years. After he retired from consolidated Freightways in 2004, they relocated to Ennis, MT. There they built their dream cabin.

**Joyce Lee (Tate) Wilbur** passed away July 21, 2019. She was born on Sept. 26, 1930 to Gleason and Amy Tate in Coffee Creek, Okla. on Sept. 26, 1930. at age 11, she and her family moved to Southern California. In 1948 she married her first husband, Kenny Davis. In 1949 Joyce and Kenny divorced and in 1951 she married James Kenneth Wilbur. In 1958 Joyce, Jim and son, Richard, left San Diego and moved to Ennis. In 1998 they moved to Sweet Springs, Missouri until Jim passed away in 2006. Joyce then moved back to Ennis which she always considered home.

**Caryl Joan (Hassenfritz) Kensinger** passed away July 27, 2019 at the Madison Valley Medical Center in Ennis, MT. She was born August 31, 1933 in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania to Arlene Lucille (Smith) and George Edward Hassenfritz. She met Bob Kensinger on a blind date and they were married on December 8, 1951. Caryl and Bob traveled to the West many times and retired in Grass Valley, California and began visiting Montana with stays every summer at the West Fork Campground and Cabins. They purchased the Elksbane Lodge on the Madison River. Ultimately they bought a home in Ennis with summers up at Elksbane and winters in town.

*Memories cont. on pg 3*

**Gene (Hautier) Holland** passed away on Thursday, August 8, 2019. She was born on February 18, 1935 in Jeffers, MT to Dora Evagene Barrier and Fred W. Hautier. She grew up in the Madison Valley graduating from Ennis High School in 1953 and moved to California where she joined the Navy. There she met and married J. B. Holland. Gene moved back to Montana, managed the Gateway Cafe, worked at Stacey's Old Faithful. One her proudest accomplishments was graduating from Montana State University in 1983 with a degree in Sociology. In 1992 she followed her sister, Mae Mac Donald to Three Forks, MT which became her permanent home.

**Jeffery Lemuel "Lem" Boyd**, former MVHA member, passed away August 12, 2019, in Montana. He was born in Waukegan, Illinois to Mary L. Kroll and Lemuel Boyd on August 1, 1959. He attended Zion Benton High School graduating in 1977. He earned a degree in chemistry from Southern Illinois University and a Masters degree from the College of Lake Forest. He retired April 1, 2019, from Akzo Nobel after just over 30 years with the company. Lem and his wife, Linda, purchased property in Montana 10 years ago and loved Montana.

**Edmond Mitchell Bouchard** passed away August 29, 2019, at Madison Valley Manor in Ennis, MT. He was born on October 27, 1922, in Ogdensburg, New York to Hector and Minnie Bouchard. He grew up and attended school in Ogdensburg prior to enlisting in the army early in WWII where he initially served under General Patton in North Africa. On August 29, 1959, Ed and Ruth Matzick were married at Williams Lake, British Columbia. After Ed's retirement from the service in 1967, Ed established a fishing guide service on the St. Lawrence River. In 1970 the couple moved to Ennis, MT, Ruth's home town. He served his community as a justice of the peace and for over 20 years as volunteer ambulance EMT.

**John (Doc) Alan Dochnahl** passed away August 31, 2019. He was born on June 12, 1953, in Madison, Wisconsin to Joan and William Dochnahl. He received his forestry degree from the University of Wisconsin and fled west for quiet places and fire lines and landed in Dubois, Idaho. He met Janet Bean there and on June 17, 1978, they married and moved north to Ennis, MT. After his tenure as a timber specialist, woodland sawyer and lumber yard manager he hung out his shingle for Doc's General Service and also became a community volunteer.

**Bill Dringle** passed away on September 9, 2019, in Ennis, MT. He was born March 2, 1938, in Bozeman, MT to George C. Dringle and Dorothy T. Noble. Bill graduated from Harrison High School in

Harrison, MT in 1955 and continued his education at Montana State College in Bozeman, MT. Bill returned to the family ranch at Cherry Creek just outside Norris, MT and married Karen Warburton on October 4, 1958. They sold the ranch in Cherry Creek and purchased a ranch north of Belgrade, MT in 1965 where he was partner with his dad and brother. In 1973 they sold the ranch and moved to Ennis, MT where they purchased the Rainbow Valley Motel. After about 7 years they sold the motel and opened Fan Mountain Real Estate. He was a 3 Rivers Telephone director, Madison County commissioner, built Fan Mountain Inn and contributed to the community by volunteering.

**Lynn B. Owens**, MVHA member, passed away at his ranch on September 25, 2019. He was born to Lloyd and Kate Byram Owens on January 23, 1930. Lynn's parents herded sheep for his grandfather, William Bryan in Grays Lake area of Idaho during the summers. When Lynn started school, his folks quit herding sheep and his father started buying and working on ranches. The family moved about once a year to a new place, including to Blackfoot and Salmon, Idaho and Clinton and McAllister, Montana. Lynn graduated from a one room school in Salmon, Idaho. He attended Missoula Hellgate High School for the beginning of his high school. His family bought the Barney Ranch and land from Charlie Bausch and the Schabarkers in the McAllister area on North Meadow Creek in 1946. Lynn graduated from Ennis High School in 1948. He went to Western Montana College in Dillon, MT until he was drafted into the Army. After his service, he continued his education at Montana State College graduating in 1957 with a degree in Electrical Engineering. He married Devonna Smith, an MSC nursing student from Jeffers, MT in 1958. Lynn worked for Montana Power Company and for the Bureau of Land Management. He fulfilled his dream and moved back to the family ranch in 1966 and continued ranching and was active in the community until his passing.

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**Member News: Don "Kid " Neville** won a blue ribbon at the Madison County Fair for his picture frame which he made and it was framing a painting done by Donna Bernier of Cameron. Check out the article about Kid and Donna in the August 22, 2019, *Madisonian*.

**Dottie Fossel** was recognized for all her hard work which is all community-minded with her position on the Madison Valley Hospital Board of Directors and her work with the Jack Creek Preserve. The article appears in the September 22, 2019, issue of the *Madisonian*.

**Lee Robison** has published his new volume of poetry, *HAVE*. The title of this book suggests one of the strongest thematic undercurrents in this collection. In examining the growth from innocence to experience, these poems look at what possession means and suggests sometimes, that to “have” means being had, and being possessed by what we possess. Look up his new book, visit an author talk and reading, or organize a talk or reading with a group to which you belong.

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**History of the Ennis Rodeo Association**

Continued from July 2019 issue of the *Wagon Tongue*. We left off at Ennis Rodeo being a scheduled event on the calendar of Montana Dude ranches.

Funds for the rodeo arena were raised in 1950 and 1951 when the Madison Valley Hospital was being funded. The same people backed both projects with their money and imaginations. The Ennis Ski Club was also at the peak of its influence as a leader among Montana’s skiing clubs. An example of the Community’s go spirit was Chuck Aaberg’s gift of two buffalo in two years to be raffled for the benefit of the hospital. The animals were claimed and reraffled for the hospital fund until they had earned at least \$2000. The first buffalo was claimed by Shorty Long and was served by the Elks as a barbecue for the benefit of the hospital. The second year when Betty Shaefer of Betties Cafe got the buffalo, she gave the profit she made from her buffalo dinners to the hospital fund. Each facet of the then rapidly expanding community had its particular leaders. The boosters for the rodeo show from the list of officers of the association between 1958 and 1971 were Dan Segota, Chuck Aaberg, Larry Gleason, Parham Hacker, Pete Durham, Max Robison, Dan Leadbetter, Bob Dress, Maurice Hickey, Lloyd Wortman, Tim Merica, Dick Dunning, Neil Morgan, Ed Clark, George Boltz, Bob Goggins, W. Anderson, Virginia Holt and Sherry Merica.

The rodeo parades showed this fusion of interests. Floats were made by local businesses and dude ranches well as riding clubs. A woman usually served as chairman of the parade committee. Two early chairman were Verta Shipman and Irma Manly.

Mike Quinn has produced most of the Ennis shows. He brought proven rodeo stock rather than wild stock so there were fewer accidents. After 1958 Melvin Icenoggle served several years as arena director. Rodeo clowns after 1940 were expected to protect riders from the Brahma bulls as well as prevent dead spots in the program. Since 1962 Larry Gleason had been the rodeo clown. In 1974 the Ennis Rodeo Association left the Rodeo Cowboy Association rather than include bull riding in

their schedule. Their reasons were first, that they demanded the freedom to program their own show, but they also felt this event would force them to add a highly paid bull fighter to their expenses in order to secure the safety of their contestants.

The Ennis Rodeo Association with the association of Whitehall and Three Forks organized the Montana Rodeo Association. It was needed to protect amateur riders from the professionals who sometimes competed in the small rodeos and took all the purses. Riders in the Ennis Rodeo must carry an amateur permit and must live within a hundred miles of Ennis by a rule made by the Ennis Rodeo Association in 1961. When the Ennis rodeos were scheduled in the middle of June it always drew several professional world champions from the Rodeo Cowboy Association This association was formerly the Rodeo Cowboy Turtle Association which worked to improve the purses received by cowboys by pegging them to a percentage of the gate receipt for the show plus the money collected by the filing fees of the riders. During the Depression many purses were set at \$15, \$10, and \$5. When money became inflated the size of the purse did not increase at a fair ratio to living costs. The more recent significance of the association to the rodeo viewer is that the Montana Rodeo Association has been making the schedules in this region for the amateur shows. Leaving the association might embarrass Ennis with too many other rodeos on their July 4th date.

The Ennis Rodeo Association has the tradition of an annual party scheduled in March. All members are invited with three guests. They may bring their husband or wife and another couple as guests. The association provides the meat for the feast and the members bring other food for a smorgasbord affair. The major part of the celebration is that the crowd is provided with all the liquor they can enjoy. The event is in the Sportsmen’s Lodge and the lower level is open for dancing. The crowds fill every corner of the Lodge for the entire evening.

The party is preceded by the election of the following year’s board. The board then picks its president.

This information has been compiled by Minnie Paugh from the minutes of the Ennis Rodeo Association and interviews with Melvin Icenoggle, Charles Aaberg, Roy Daems, Ralph and Theodore Paugh, Winifred Jeffers, Roy Reed, Irma Manley and Frances Womack. From *The Madison Valley A High Mountain Community*.

For any Rodeo Cowboy or current Ennis Rodeo Association member, the MVHA would gladly welcome an update of the history of Ennis Rodeo.







# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 18 issue 1

Madison Valley History Association

January 2020

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat** Happy New Year I hope we can all have a great 2020. This is a brand new year. We ended a decade and have started out with a new decade. The MVHA kicked off the new year and new decade with a program on January 16 on the 1964 Centennial train. Stay tuned for more wagon train stories as soon as we can get old technology up to date with 2020 technology!

In looking ahead into 2020, the MVHA always has work to be done, ideas to think about and finding ways to make the MVHA better. I have confidence that our great membership will make all those things happen. The following is a list of things looking us in the face that need to be fulfilled. The board is looking for help so hopefully you can find a way to assist us. MVHA needs volunteers help in any capacity to help with calling other members, with painting projects, staining the forge building, cutting weeds, scheduling folks for hosting the museum during the summer, becoming a board member, helping display artifacts in the Overstreet Building, finding good ideas for programs and field trips. There should be something on that list that you could take a few hours and do.

In our Wagon Tongue quarterly newsletter, MVHA has the privilege of bringing history stories to you. The folks who wrote these stories had the foresight to put pencil to the paper and put down their history memories and recollections. In just this issue and future ones, Robert Hughes collected and printed stories of McAllister and Meadow Creek history. In this issue you will read a story by James Womack about hound racing in our part of Montana. We are not finished sharing all the history stories that Minnie Paugh wrote and printed. We took all the Jimmy Spray stories and had them published into a book which MVHA has sold many copies. The Jumping Horse Ranch history has been printed and shared with you. The Madison County Trails and Trials and Progressive Years has many family histories and history of the Madison County collected. Most of the folks who wrote all these history stories have passed on. But history did not stop when they passed. More history is being made each and every day. Who is continuing to write family histories? Who among us never did get a family history put into the big blue books? Don't be afraid to jot your memories, recollection and stories down. If you write, MVHA has folks who would be happy to edit your writing and fix spelling, sentence structure and all those things. Or if you don't want to write, it is very easy to record oral histories. MVHA has the recording equipment and would be glad to record your stories. So now you have a new New Year's Resolution! Get that great story written or recorded. Get that family history down for your children or grandchildren.

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Now for the next story: **Hound racing in Montana** by James Womack

The hound racing in Butte, Montana started in the late 1920's. They had what they called "coursing." Coursing was when they took the grey hounds and turned them loose to chase jack rabbits. I don't know how they rated it, but anyway the outgrowth of the coursing with the electric power brought along the mechanical rabbit.

So in Butte, Montana, in the '20's, about 1925, the Highland Kennel Company had a 30 day race meet in the summer. Hounds from all over the western part of the United States as well as the Midwest were brought to Butte to race where they had para-mutual betting. Among the big wheels in the racing business there seem to be the Mudrows. I don't know who the Mudrows were but they had a nice track out on the flat where the big strip is now. My father, Emmett Womack, got interested in the hounds and in a year or two he had race hounds. We would take the hounds to Butte and they would have to be exercised. Every hound got a pound of hamburger a day, sometimes with an egg on it. They raced around and it was quite interesting. We raced those hounds for several years, had a big lawsuit in Butte over the ownership of hounds with a gentleman by the name of H. Joe Chant who was a hound racer. A lot of guys in Butte had hounds and it was very interesting. Then Oscar Dahlberg, who was a brother of Swede Dahlberg, the famous coach, and Jiggs Dahlberg, the famous coach at the University of Montana, was a great hound man and raced his dogs all over the world.

They went to Florida in the winter and California and Arizona.

**Continued on pg 6**

**Membership:** No new members since Oct. 2019.

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2020 ends a decade and begins a new decade as history marches along. This is the 18th volume of The Wagon Tongue and we begin with January 2020 issue 1. As a new year begins we all try to look back and then try to make a new year better in some way. Over the years you have seen slight changes in The Wagon Tongue but for the new year I am going to change the format and start with the history

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stories and place the memories and member news toward the end of issue on pg 4 and 5.

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The *Wagon Tongue* will be sharing stories from **Meadow Creek History, 100 years ago and Now** compiled by Robert R. Hughes, February, 2010.

*The pioneer community of Meadow Creek becomes McAllister. Introduction by R. Hughes*

McAllister, Montana, as you whiz by it, at 60 miles per hour, is only another intersection on the map, or maybe just a crossroad. There is not time to reflect that at one time this was a hub of thriving little community, complete with cows and pigs, roosters that crowed in the morning, and people that got up to do what they had to do to be what we now call being a pioneer. Thousands of little communities were growing up in the western areas of this country one hundred years ago. Yesterday's pioneer is now your neighbor. It is small wonder that McAllister escaped public notice and still attracts only the attention of a few fishermen, hunters and curious tourists.

I don't know where they all went but I hope this work will give readers a slight inkling of why the people of Meadow Creek, now McAllister, got up in the morning. It was a nice place to live. The reader will note that I have made generous use of certain documents authored by others. The lifeblood of a community comes from many different sources and chances of finding essays written in other perspectives is a great stroke of luck. In the following narration I give full credit to the authors and their articles that recorded pieces of Meadow Creek history, as they knew it. It just happens that the subjects for these little articles: McAllister, Fletcher, Wilson, and the Church history, plus my own resurrection of some Hughes history, describes the central community of Meadow Creek as I knew it during the early 1900s and 1920s.

#### CHAPTER ONE

McALLISTER, Written by R. Beals in Pioneer Trails and Trials.

Nearly midway between Norris and Ennis is situated McAllister, Montana, altitude 5050 feet, near the west shore of Meadow Lake. This area was formerly known as Meadow Creek and was settled in the late 1860s. The old Meadow Creek post office was established perhaps in the 1870s. A. M. Berry was the first post master. In 1980, George Bess was postmaster and he also had a hotel.

The first school building was a log structure built in the early 1870s and the first teacher was a Mr. Done. This building burned later and the school was held in the community hall. The hall was enlarged in the early 1900s. In 1901 a brick school building was completed.

**Continued on pg 3**

## continued from page 2

A Methodist church was completed in 1887.

The settlement now known as McAllister was settled in December 1896 on ground bought by Alex McAllister from the Northern Pacific Railroad Company. Mr. McAllister had settled near this spot with his parents in 1871. The post office was established in 1902. Dave Lindsay was the first postmaster.

### CHAPTER TWO By Robert R. Hughes EARLY DAYS

My mother told me that when she first came to the valley in 1903, Upper Meadow Creek and Lower Meadow Creek were developing as two separate communities, and for awhile there were two post offices. The Gibsons had a post office in their house, known as Meadow Creek, which was located about two miles up the South Meadow Creek Road from where the McAllister post office is now. She said that there was really no confusion about mail. Everybody knew everybody else and she seldom went to the post office. Neighbors would bring the mail. Ruth Beals writes in her article, "McAllister" that George Bess had a post office in the hotel. The post office moved around a lot and probably it was in the hotel until Alex McAllister moved it to the store when he built his store about 1902. He added onto his store building in order to accommodate the post office. The community that Alex McAllister nurtured had a general store, service station, rental cabins and eventually the post office. Alex also had considerable hay growing acreage and he built a big barn and a corral system where he produced amateur rodeos on weekends.

The weekend rodeos that Alex produced were rough and tumble affairs. They did not have anything resembling a chute so they did it the hard way. Several husky ranch hands would hold a horse immobile, even if they had to throw it, while more helpers positioned a saddle, if one was used, and then a hopeful cowboy would get on. He had to ride the horse to submission as it probably soon would be somebody's saddle horse or would join the outlaw bunch to be tried again at a later date.

Another event in the weekend rodeo was a horse race. Dad and Jasper would tell stories and snicker about how the Tom Wilson's dirty gray buggy horse consistently beat Alex's Thoroughbred race horse. They also had the story about Frank Sanguin, who couldn't ride a stick horse sober but after a few beers, could ride the worst outlaw horse in the bunch.

The two streams named Meadow Creek are fed by melting snow from the Tobacco Root Mountains. 3

occasional contribution from fresh water springs. The snow waters flow down as North and South Meadow Creek to eventually empty into what is now Ennis Lake. All along their length, irrigation water is taken out of both of these streams for the thousands of acres on the ranches that were founded in this farm and ranch area.

Over the years beaver dams and other natural causes has created a swampy area down where two creeks emptied into the lake and up the creeks for about a mile. If the area had been bigger and more important, like the Mississippi River, I could call it a "delta". However, being in Montana, it remains a "swamp". A short section of the road that went past McAllister and served the area below had to cross this swamp by crossing the corduroy bridge. The "corduroy bridge" went across an extremely soft and swampy stretch caused by poor drainage of South Meadow Creek into the lake. In the early days, when nothing but horses and wagons used the road, it was made passable by cutting short logs and laying them side by side in the approaches on both sides of the wooden bridge that spanned the channel. It was an ordeal to cross even with a team and wagon. The horses stumbled and fell, or their legs went through the cracks, wagon wheels bounced violently. It was almost impossible to ride in the bed of a "dead axle" wagon. In the spring it became completely impassable for a few days during run-off. Those living below were stranded. When people started to try to cross over this monstrosity with automobiles, it became a community peril. Finally work crews were organized to clear out the creek for better drainage and with the county's help, the approaches to the channel bridge were filled with dirt and graded.

I clearly remember using the old corduroy bridge riding in the wagon with Dad when the logs were still there. We hauled ice from the lake over the corduroy bridge for several winters. The road must have improved around 1927 as the Potter Hotel was open for business by that time and "summer" people from Butte had started to build their cabins across the creek. Uncle Tom and Aunt Lora had retired and lived down there. Uncle Tom bought a new Rea automobile every year or two and he certainly added to the pressure to tear out that menace to automobile traffic.

100 years ago, in the 1910 census, the area was listed as Meadow Creek, but by 1960 popular use of "McAllister" as the name forced an official change. The history of McAllister by Dr. Mae Pankey is actually a biography of Alex McAllister. She brings out the important place this stock man, rancher, mercantile dealer,

*(continued on pg 4)*

**(Continued from pg 3)**

keeper of race horses, all around jack of all trades, played in the area and left his family name to a section of Montana.

### CHAPTER THREE

JAMES ALEXANDER McALLISTER—Stockman Madison County by Dr. Mae Pankey

James Alexander McAllister was born at Malad, Idaho, Jan 12, 1868. He was the youngest of three children two boys and one girl, born to James McAllister, a native of Glasgow, Scotland and Elizabeth Powell McAllister born in Wales. His father carried freight between Corine, Utah and Virginia City, Montana as early as 1864. He decided he wanted to live in Montana so he left Idaho bringing his family, two wagons, one yoke of oxen, one team of horses, three extra horses and ten or twelve head of cattle, and arrived at Meadow Creek in the Madison Valley in June, 1871 after being several weeks on the road. They noticed the ranch owned by Don O. Spaulding at Meadow Creek and made inquiries about the location. When they found the land was unsurveyed, they drove to Lower Willow Creek on a tour of inspection. Not being satisfied, they returned to Meadow Creek and bought the Spaulding property, which consisted of 160 acres of land and several log buildings. They immediately went in the dairy and cheese business, making large quantities of cheese. Their market was Virginia City and sometimes they took a load of cheese to Bozeman.

James McAllister was the first white man in the Madison Valley to have white face cattle. He bought his first white face calf from Alex Metzel in the upper Ruby Valley and paid \$50 for it. His dairy cattle were a cross between Hereford and Durham stock and he kept up the strain as long as he was in the business. Aside from his dairy stock, he raised Shorthorn and Hereford cattle and increased his herd to about 150 head.

Alex got all his common schooling at Meadow Creek and in 1888 and 1889 went to school in Valparaiso, Indiana, a popular place for students in those days. On March 4, 1894 he was married to Miss Annie Alice Thexton, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Thexton of Virginia City where she was born. The family was living at the Thexton ranch in the Madison Valley when she was married and that is where the wedding took place. She was educated in Virginia City, Deer Lodge and Madison, Wisconsin. The young couple rented the McAllister home place and lived there for two years after which Alex bought 120 acres from the Northern Pacific railroad at \$1.25 an acre, built a home and settled on the place where he still lives. At this time, he

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had about thirty head of cattle and 25 horses, mostly saddle animals, with which to begin his stock business. With his father and brother, he had bought a section of railroad land in 1889 and he later bought their share and thus added to his land holdings. He also increased his land by homesteading 160 acres. The railroad section cost \$1.40 an acre. He later bought 320 acres on North Meadow Creek, the ranch known as the Pickney place. In 1897 he went into the general mercantile business. He carried on in the same building in which the family lived and it was not long until he had established a good sound business. In 1899 he enlarged his building and again in 1902 when the McAllister post office was established. He built an addition especially for the post office and separate rooms for the residence for the first postmaster, David Lindsay. Mr. Lindsay kept the position only for about six months when he resigned to move to another locality. The next postmaster appointed was a sister of Mrs. McAllister, Mrs Margaret Deyarmon. She was followed by Miss Marguerite McAllister, Miss Marcella McAllister, and Miss Lorena all daughters of Alex McAllister. In 1906 Mr. McAllister enlarged his building again adding more rooms for the use of the family and moving the store into the post office building. He carried a large stock of merchandise and built up his business. He was carrying on his business at the same time and building it up with his own finances.

We will leave Alex McAllister with his business and continue with **Meadow Creek By Robert Hughes** in April 2020 \_\_\_\_\_.

**Memories**The MVHA aspires to have a genealogical record after their passing of all folks who were born and raised in the Madison Valley and anyone who moved here for work, owned a business, or spent considerable time here as each of these folks are part of the historical record of the Madison Valley. Please share your records, stories and other interesting information of those who have passed on to make these records as complete as possible. They will not be forgotten.

**Mary Lou (Zook) Gillan** passed away in Ennis on Oct. 14, 2019. She was born in Traverse City, Michigan on Nov. 26, 1932 to Charles and Vivian Zook. Mary Lou graduated from Shepard High School in Shepard, Mich. She married Eugene (Gene) Gillian on Dec. 1, 1950. She started her career as a bank teller, became a secretary, and eventually she and Gene became owners of Burt Lake Market when they moved to Brutus, Mich. They retired to Belt, MT in the early 1990's and moved to Ennis about 5 years later. Gene and Mary Lou worked at the

**(Continued on pg 5)**

Continued from pg 4 Orvis fly Shop and Mary Lou worked at the Ennis Trading Post and Sundays found Mary Lou playing music for various churches in Ennis.

**Melvin Joseph McKitrick** passed away Oct. 30, 2019 in Ennis, Mt. He was born on March 15, 1947 to Maurice and Ruth Hatch McKitrick in Idaho Falls, Idaho. Mel spent his summers as a child with his grandparents, Joseph and Della Hatch on the Hungry Horse Ranch near Teton, Idaho. Mel's parents settled in Three Forks where he attended school in Logan and Manhattan. He met his wife, Karen Louise Simmons there and they married on March 9, 1966 in Idaho Falls, Idaho. Karen and Mel settled in Ennis in 1968 where he worked as an apprentice barber and opened Mel's Barber Chop. Mel drove the Ennis Schools' longest bus route. For 31 years he drove the 200 mile round trip per day Reynold's Pass route. He also drove the activities bus and he doubled as the stat and score keeper for the Ennis football and basketball teams. In 1987 Mel took over the managerial position of the granger Ranches and he belonged to the Madison Conservation District.

**Robert L. Foreman** passed away on Nov. 28, 2019. He was born on June 26, 1929 at the old Deaconess Hospital in Bozeman, MT to Albert Lee Foreman and Mary Scott Campbell Foreman. The original Foreman family lived in Sheridan MT until his father, Albert, was about 6 years old and the family moved to Virginia City, MT. In about 1903 father, Albert, moved to the Madison Valley and went to work for the Nunn Company which operated a small hydro-electric power plant in the Madison Canyon. The Nunn Company was bought by the Montana Power Company who constructed a new and large power plant. Bobby spent his first 14 years at the Madison Power Plant. His father was employed by the Montana Power Co. until he retired in 1946. From 1944 through 1953, Bob was bedridden with a muscular problem. Bob graduated from Ennis High School in 1947. After getting back on his feet, he graduated from Montana Institute of the Bible in Billings. He met Mary Jo Key there and they were married in Kaycee, WY on August 14, 1960. They made their home in Bozeman. Bob worked as a stockroom clerk for 28 years at Montana State University Electronics Research lab. Bob and Mary Jo were involved with Awana, Sunday School, VBS and summer camps through Child Evangelism Fellowship and Grace Bible Church. They were later employed as custodians at Grace Bible church. Bob was a member of the MVHA for 15 years and MVHA will miss all his history information he shared with us.

**George Parker Mainwaring** passed away at his home in Pony on Nov. 24, 2019. He was born in Jeffers, MT on June 18, 1925 to George and Helen Mainwaring, one of 15 children. He attended Ennis schools and graduated from Ennis High School in 1948. During his early years he logged in the Missoula area, worked for the Department of Transportation in Madison County and farmed and ranched in Madison County including the Sitz, Rice and Brooks ranches.

**Reverend Jean M. Johnson** passed away at Benefis Hospital in Great Falls, MT on Dec. 7, 2019. She was born on Sept. 10, 1955 to Donald and JoAnn Fandrei Johnson in Ellison Bay, Wisconsin. After graduating from Gibraltar High School in Fish Creek, Wisconsin, she attended University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, receiving a BA in 1978. Jean's Master of Divinity from McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, was conferred June 5, 1984. She ventured west serving short term positions in small Montana communities of Whitelash, Wise River/Melrose/Wisdom and Seeley Lake. Jean was ordained as a minister of the word and sacrament by the Presbytery of Yellowstone on Sept. 18, 1984 at the Church of the Big Hole. She accepted the call as a minister of the Madison Valley Presbyterian Church in 1987, serving the Ennis community 32 years before her retirement October 15, 2019.

**Doris M. Daems** long time MVHA member passed away Dec.11, 2019 at the Madison Valley Medical Center in Ennis. She was born in Jeffers, Montana on July 31, 1923 to George and Helen Parker Mainwaring. She graduated from Ennis High School in 1941 and married Jim Daems on March 1, 1942. She lived on the family ranch in Varney until her death. After Jim's passing in 1993, she spent five days of the week volunteering. She spent countless hours helping with resident activities at the Madison Valley Manor. In recognition of the many hours she spent at the Manor, she was awarded the 1995 Volunteer of the Year award by the Montana Health Care Association. She also helped with the Senior Meal program and worked an all day Saturday shift at the Madison Valley Woman's Club Nearly New Shop for many years. Doris was a member of the MVHA for 14 years and MVHA went to her for a lot of historical information. She is missed.

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**History Titbit** The 109 year old turbines at the Northwestern Energy Powerhouse downstream from Ennis Lake began construction to upgrade turbines and generators in October 2019 and project will take a year and half to complete.

**For Your Reading Pleasure** Your editor needs titles of good history books you would recommend. I do not want to list a book unless it has been read and given a good review.

**Looking Ahead**

**February 2020** TBA a program is in the works but not ready yet.

**March 2020** TBA William Ennis Birthday Celebration

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The board decided to print for your information the most current treasurers report for your information.

December 31, 2019

**BALANCES**

|          |             |
|----------|-------------|
| Cash     | \$60.00     |
| Checking | \$496.86    |
| Savings  | \$23,312.67 |

**INCOME**

|                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| DUES              | \$230.00        |
| SALES             |                 |
| Recipe book       | \$15.00         |
| Spray books       | \$36.00         |
| Kerrigan's Ride   | \$16.00         |
| Steam,gas sawdust | \$5.00          |
| Playing cards     | \$15.00         |
| David Smith CDs   | \$10.00         |
| DONATIONS         | \$4.00          |
| INTEREST          | <u>    .99</u>  |
| <b>TOTALS</b>     | <b>\$376.99</b> |

**EXPENSES**

|                                  |                 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| NORTHWESTERN ENERGY              | \$25. 64        |
| K. Brenneke-gift certificate     | \$50.00         |
| Trinity Church-fee for room      | \$25.00         |
| L.Love-post,env,tea,Bazaar table | <u>\$40.12</u>  |
| <b>TOTALS</b>                    | <b>\$140.76</b> |

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**Member News**

**Pearl Kilman** and **Jan Beekman** performed in the recently organized Bell Choir during Christmas celebrations in December 2019. If you did not get to hear them in concert watch for the next performance of the bell choir.++++

**Hound racing (continued from pg 1)**

My father raised hounds for several years and he had some great hounds. His hound, Sonny Montana, won the derby in Portland and we got a check for \$300 or \$400, which in 1933 or '34 was all the money in the world. We got another greyhound by the name of Madison. He was a great dog and my father got 35% and the trainer got 65% and it fed the family for several years. My father had a very unique way of feeding the dogs. Horses were very cheap and he would buy a horse for \$5 and then he would lead the horse into the hound pen and shoot the poor horse between the eyes, split the horse open a bit and then turn the hounds out everyday for a little lunch or a little dinner and they would tear up that horse. Then he'd dig a big hole and bury the bones—the bones are still in the yard down there today. Then in winter, to feed the hounds he decided that not only were bones and meat good, that barley was great for hounds so he had a cook house with an old stove in it and a big tub. He put all those bones and barley in the tub on the cook

**MVHA Board of Directors**

President: Larry Love  
 Vice-President: Brandi Palmerton  
 Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke  
 Secretary: Otis Thompson  
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 Director: Eric Palmerton  
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 Historian and researcher: Don Black  
 Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate  
 Meetings and programs held monthly on the **third** Thursday of each month or as scheduled. Watch the *Madisonian*, posters and your email for details of time, place and program. Please call Larry Love 682-5780 for date of board meeting..*The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be April 2020. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed. Your editor needs your history stories!  
 Editor: Shirley Love whitneytranch@wispwest.net  
 Contributing editors: *Madisonian* Obituaries, *Meadow Creek History* by Robert Hughes *Hound racing in Montana* by James Womack  
**Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by First Madison Valley Bank**

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 stove and made a big stew for the dogs. It would be a great sight to see all the hounds run out there and gobble up that big tub of stew.

Sometimes he had his own hound races at the 4th of July. He was a great promoter. The hounds came out of the box. There were 10 stalls in the box and when the door was opened fast, the hounds came out. He didn't have an electrical rabbit, but our old friend, Rollo Tuttle, had a 1924 Oldsmobile sedan that he had converted to a pickup. So my father had a big fishing pole, an old bamboo pole like we used to use on the Madison. You don't see them anymore, a cane pole with a rope on the end of it and he'd tie a rabbit on the pole, they'd get in the car, rev up the car and run it fast and they would open the box and the hounds would come out. They boys from Butte who understood para-mutual betting would set up in the stands and we'd have a couple days' race meet down by the river in Ennis where the new river bridge is now.

We had another greyhound. In those days they had the hurdle races so my father said the best way to train a hurdle is in a big dog pen. He put two hurdles in there and the hounds liked to play and they'd run around and around and jump over the hurdles. He got a good reputation for great hurdlers. All of that continued until World War II started when my father went off like everyone else to work in the war industry. When he came back ready to resume the hound business, he had an accident with a wild horse and that ended the hounds for us in Ennis, Montana.

My father, old Emmett, decided that he would raise fighting roosters so he brought some hens and some fighting roosters home to Ennis. Pretty quick he had quite a yard full off fighting chickens. It didn't turn out too well so he sold all the fighting chickens to Mrs. Baker, who had a restaurant there, for fryers. I often wondered how the people who bought those chickens were able to eat those fighting chickens. But that is another story.



# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 18 issue 2

Madison Valley History Association

April 2020

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat** In January I had written to all of you to have a great 2020. Things have changed considerably now with Covid-19. I hope all is well with you and that 2020 will still be okay.

The MVHA is kind of in a holding pattern for right now. The board is still going to meet and hold things together. We did not have an April meeting because of the shelter in place directive. We have not decided whether to have an annual meeting in May or if we will even keep the museum open this summer. We will have to wait and see what happens. So for now stay home and stay safe.

The board will discuss what to do with the items that we generally take care of at our annual meeting. We do need a couple of volunteers to step up to be board members. This is a must do item. If you have family or friends visiting when the museum is closed at any time, give me a call and we will arrange a special appointment for them to see it.

We do have a program tentatively scheduled for June 25th with Mary Jane Bradford of the Committee for the Humanities. She will be acting out and speaking on the Real Life of Calamity Jane. This program will depend on the status of the Covid-19 in Montana at that time.

Keep your histories diaries and family stories going and stay healthy and safe. Your Wagon Master, Larry Love.

After our Centennial Train program and after the Bi-Centennial Train program was cancelled due to the Covid-19, your editor has been searching for a good wagon train story and I found one entitled **Recollections** by Mrs. Granville Stuart.

My father was Champion Kinney from Des Moines, Iowa. In the fall of 1863 the Morgans and the Bozarth's living at Rapids, Iowa (they are relatives of Robert Stuart) got a letter from the Stuart Boys in Montana (James and Granville Stuart) that there was a big gold strike in Montana on Grasshopper Creek (Bannack, Montana). The letter created a big excitement in Iowa and George Williams began to get up a wagon train. The Stuart boys said not to start across the plains unless they had a strong party as the Sioux Indians were getting bad.

There were 15 wagons from near Cedar Rapids and by the time they got to Omaha where they were all to meet, there were 26 wagons, most of them two to three men to the wagon and there were several families, some with children.

My father and mother (Champion and Catherine Adella Time Nichols Kinney) were married and this was their honeymoon trip. When they arrived at Omaha, there were about 26 wagons and about twenty young fellows on horseback that had hired a four horse team and a wagon to carry their grub and belongings. Most of the outfit had been trained for the cavalry and had not been called. (More than likely they were skedadalling from the Civil War.) They were all armed with new repeating rifles and ready for any excitement that came their way. The wagon train was heavily armed and prepared to fight the Indians.

When they all assembled at Omaha, George Williams was sick but he kept on inspecting wagons, harness and horses and instructing them how to corral if attacked by Indians. George grew worse and at last called them all together and said he was too sick to take charge anymore, but for them to elect a new captain and he would turn over his maps and everything and they could make it. That night on the bank of the Missouri River, they held an election and chose Champion Kinney for their Captain. All that night he sat beside George Williams' bed in his wagon and although he was burning up with fever, Williams tried to keep his mind on the affairs of the train. He turned over everything to father, and told him to keep a sharp lookout for Indians and not to travel too fast. He gave him a letter from Mrs. Nancy Stuart addressed to her sons, James and Granville Stuart, Grasshopper Creek, Oregon (Territory), and where that was, none of them knew.

They went into Omaha and a doctor said Williams had Typhoid Fever. He gave them medicine and plenty of Quinine and the women folks done everything for him that they could. He kept telling them to stick by Kinney and not to quarrel among themselves and they could reach the promised land. Those days when Williams laid sick were trying ones and caused a gloom over the whole outfit. My mother said that father would just stand by the wagon and chew tobacco as hard as he could and then spit at a stake ten feet away and say "Drat it."

There was lots of work for him to do and all the men took council every evening. My father said that the four days before George died and was buried molded the whole outfit one man.

My father was young, only 26 years old, but he said that four days knocked all the foolishness out of him, and that his only thought was to get that outfit landed safely on to Grasshopper Creek. (Continued on pg 2 end of first column)

**Membership:** New members since January 2020. MVHA thanks the following for joining.

**Mary Oliver** (B) Ennis, Mt 59729

**Membership update** Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2020 membership is due during April, May or June or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who have generously submitted your renewal memberships. The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds and membership to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

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**Receiving your Wagon Tongue** Several years ago the MVHA started using non-profit organization postage stamps. The MVHA saves a considerable amount of money since we mail out most of the quarterly newsletters, **The Wagon Tongue**. MVHA did not know that non-profit stamps are not forwarded and if you have a forwarding address during the winter months or any other time, your Wagon Tongue is dumped in the trash. It is not returned to sender and MVHA does not know who you are. Please let the MVHA know by phone to Shirley Love 406-682-5780 or by email to [whitneypranch@wispwest.net](mailto:whitneypranch@wispwest.net) or to MVHA PO Box 474, Ennis, Mt 59729 if you have a forwarding address and the address labels will be updated. Also let MVHA know the approximate date you leave in the fall and the approximate date you will arrive in the spring so the correct address label will be used. **Thank you to those who have already provided this information.**

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**Recollections** (cont from pg 1) No one on this wagon train had been west of the Missouri before. They left Omaha on the 6th. day of May, 1864. They kept to the emigrant road and of course it was worn. The grass was just starting fine. **2**

They arrived in Alder Gulch on the 24th of September.

The train had several Indian scares, but only scares and no fights. The greatest trouble was to camp where there was no water or grass.

When they reached Fort Hall, they found a regular stampede of wagon trains heading to Alder Gulch, the new diggings in Montana and father's train followed the procession and went to Alder Gulch (Virginia City). He found James Stuart and delivered his mother's letter to him. It had been four months on the way but the boys thought they had made good time. My father remained in Virginia City that winter but came over to settle on the Burnt Fork in 1865. The Burnt Fork place was east of current Stevensville about 3 miles. My father was more of a farmer, freighter and cattle raiser than a miner.

Burnt Fork got its name because of a raid made by the Blackfeet Indians. The Blackfeet were always at war with the Flatheads and this time a large war party armed with Hudson Bay rifles came to the valley to clean everyone out. They attacked St. Mary's Mission and set fire to everything they could find. But the Flatheads and a few whites in the country succeeded in driving them off. The creek was ever after known as the Burnt Fork.

My mother was almost the only white woman there and father built a good log house and stable and began ranching. He brought with him about 60 head of cattle and 20 horses. He cut all the wild hay he could that first summer and the Indians and the few whites laughed at him for doing it and said "Let the horses harvest their own hay." Father had never seen anyone irrigate until he came to the Bitterroot Valley. He was surprised that his horses and cattle running all over the place were fat and did not feed them all winter.

Con Kohrs came to our ranch in 1866 and bought cattle for beef that had fattened on the native grass. He drove them up the Burnt Fork and across the mountain to the area which is now Deer Lodge. (There is a trail known as the Bitterroot Direct which starts near the mouth of Burnt Fork canyon and comes out a few miles east onto Rock Creek. The trail then turns south to a trail heading east into the Deer Lodge Valley.)

Wheat was a good price. My father raises a lot of wheat and some peas for hog feed. They did not think they could raise corn in the valley then. The wheat was taken to Fort Owen and ground into flour and my father freighted flour to Deer Lodge and Phillipsburg where James Stuart (not James B. Stuart) was building a quartz mill.

My first recollection was when the threshers came to thresh the wheat. There were (cont on pg 3)

(Cont. from pg 2) about 20 men in the crew and the machine was run by horse power. The horses going around and around in a circle and the men hauling in the grain and pitching bundles into the machine. We children would all perch on the corral fence like crows and watch the proceedings.

Neighbor women came to help mother cook. The set up a big long table clear across our big living room and mother got out her company linen table cloths washed as white as snow. We borrowed knives, forks, plates, cups and saucers. They brought in benches, chairs, home made stools, boxes and everything on the place you could sit on and pull up to the table.

We always washed and ironed all the window curtains and put them up on the windows white and crisp and nice before the threshers came. Mother scrubbed the pine floors on her hands and knees so it was white and nice to walk on with their dirty feet. There was a big, long bench on the back porch with tin washbasins and roller towels and soap where the men washed and combed their hair. Nearly every man had a comb in his shirt pocket. The men always washed as clean as they could so as to not wipe it on the clean towels.

That table certainly did look nice to those men with dishes and mashed potatoes dressed with cream and butter and platters of fried chicken, roast beef, ham, cabbage, beans, pickles, jelly, pies, cakes, cheese, hot corn bread with honey and coffee and thick cream. If mother wasn't too busy, we children had our dinner at a little table on the back porch. But if there wasn't much help, we waited until the men were through.

When the men came in, they always wiped and cleaned their feet so as to not mess the floor and would say, "My, Mrs. Kinney, you didn't have to put on them nice table cloths for us roustabouts" but they liked it and every white woman was afraid of what the threshers would say about her housekeeping and cooking. Threshing at one house lasted at least three days and every day was just like a party. When it was over at our house, mother had to go and help her neighbors to pay back for helping her. At every house it was just the same..the best of everything for the threshers.

Mother said that there were always a lot of bachelors going east after brides just after threshing. Seeing a nice comfortable home and good cooking made them want a home of their own.

When I was old enough to go to school, I was sent to the school house on Burnt Fork. I had to walk 2 miles. It was always a winter school lasting 6 months, I think. They paid the teacher twenty dollars a month. If it stormed, father bundled us up and

took us to school in a sled and came and got us in the evening. We had some terrible blizzards but rarely ever one so bad that we did not get to school somehow. To miss a day of school was a tragedy. It was so hard to keep a school going and parents were so determined that their children should have an education. When there wasn't enough money to keep the school for 6 months, the neighbors took a collection and made up the difference.

My father usually had ten cows we milked and mother made butter and cheese and father freighted, taking all we had and bought from the neighbors until he had a load. He had six good horses and two wagons he used as a trailer. Then he would start for the mining camps 200 miles away. He sold the produce for cash and that was about all the cash money we had until he sold horses and cattle. And they sold pretty cheap.

About the only amusement we had was church and school programs. We wore white dresses, spoke pieces and had ice cream and cake on the lawn.

Once in 1883, there was a circus in Missoula and everybody in the valley went to that circus. It was a regular exodus. They started the day before in buggies, spring wagons, lumber wagons and on horseback. They had all the children and we each had a dime to twenty cents to buy candy and lemonade. We camped out ten miles out of Missoula. In the morning mother got us up and put on our best white dress, stockings and shoes. The boys got into their best clothes and we all were fixed up so we wouldn't look country. I had a big white hat with cherries on it and a red sash and was prepared to take the town by storm. When we got into town we put the team in the livery barn and already the streets were crowded and people lined along the sidewalk waiting. A man came riding up Higgins Ave. warning everybody to have their horses out of the way and that the parade was coming. My brother, Joseph Kinney, had tied his horse at the hitching post on Front Street, intending to take him to the feed stable after the parade. He was half a block from where the parade would pass.

It was the greatest show we had ever seen or dreamed of. There was a calliope and camels and elephants.

Brother Joe's horse saw the elephants and smelled the camels and did not wait for anything further. He reared, broke his hitching strap and started for somewhere else. My brother found him in the Sleeping Child Hills some weeks later with his brand new saddle kicked to pieces and the remnants of the bridle around the horse's neck. The horse was so frightened he never got over it and was never any good after that.

(Cont on pg 4)

(Cont from pg 3) The circus was such an event that we did not get over it until the railroad came up the Bitterroot and that put a stop to the pioneer days. After that the Bitterroot was just like every other place but only a little better. The End

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The *Wagon Tongue* is sharing stories from **Meadow Creek History, 100 years ago and Now**

Compiled by Robert R. Hughes, February 2010. The introduction and Chapter one through Chapter three were in WT Issue 1, 2020. We left off with Alex

McAllister and his business.....

There was plenty of free range covered with grass and wild hay. In 1880, when his father, James, was in the stock business, cows and big calves sold for \$14; four year old and five year old steers sold right along for \$18-\$20. Alex shipped his cattle to eastern markets, usually Omaha and Chicago. The prices varied from 2.5 cents to 3 and 4 cents a pound. In 1906 prices began to rise and increased considerably for some time. About 1912 cattle brought five cents right on the ground. Alex cut hay on his ground from the beginning of his ownership, and also raised grain—wheat, oats and barley. His peak operations in the stock industry were in 1916 and 1917 when he had 350 head of cattle and 125 horses. At this time he began to decrease the number of his cattle because of poor range. The dry season of 1919 and the following severe winter caused a big loss to Alex and all other stockman in this vicinity. Hay was very poor and during the winter cost from \$35 to \$50 a ton. The fall of 1918 he branded 105 calves. The fall of 1919 rebranded 13 calves. During this period he also lost 50% of his horses. In the years preceding, he lost heavily to horse thieves who drove off a band at a time. His horse brand is M bar J on the right shoulder and monogram JAM , also on the right shoulder. He also had a cattle brand. All brands are registered. After the severe winter of 1919-1920, Alex soon went out of the stock business.

In Virginia City on July 4, 1885, when Alex was 17 years old, he entered a horse in the pony race, 250 yards, and came out the most successful winner. After this he had ponies in the races each year at the July 4th celebrations in Virginia City, placing entries in the 250 yards, 300 yards, and quarter mile races. As time went on he also entered horses at Dillon, Bozeman, Billings, the Madison County Fair at Twin Bridges and the state fair in Helena. He always succeeded in carrying off more than his share of the blue ribbons. About 1910 he entered four horses in a relay race in Helena and rode against the champion lady rider of the world. The relay horses were champions and Alex's 4

horses came out in third place. He owned a black quarter-miler that won races whenever and wherever he was entered. Although he was a quarter-mile horse, he was entered one time in Billings against "Colonel T" a half-mile horse belonging to an Indian and considered one of the best horses in that part of the country, but "McAllister's Black" won the race. This horse was raised at the McAllister ranch and sired by "Virtringa The Second", a Marcus Daly horse, bought from James Henderson, a horseman of the upper Madison Valley. Other stallions owned by Alex were "Harry Bluff", shipped from Missouri and bought in the Gallatin Valley; "Recall" and "Durham" were government horses. All these horses were thoroughbreds. "Mentor Mick" the stallion Alex had at present was raised in Nebraska and is also a government horse. The black horse, named Brownie, so well known throughout the state as McAllister's black, was killed by lightning on the ranch in 1921.

Mr. and Mrs. Alex McAllister were parents of twelve children, six boys and six girls. In order of their birth, they were Elise, Marguerite, Marcella, Rhea, Kenneth, Harold, Laura, Owen, Edward, James, Leonard, and Lorena. Of these at the time of Dr. Mae Pankey's research and writing, seven are living. Kenneth and Harold were twins and lived only a couple of months. Leonard and Lorena are also twins and with Edward and James, live at home with their father. Leona is at the present postmaster. Owen holds a position with the Montana Power Company and with his family lives at the Kerr dam near Polson. Marcella (Mrs. Dave Tudor) lives at Norris and Laura (Mrs. Joe Oliver) lives at Albinon, MT. The mother of this large family passed away in 1934, her death being the result of burns sustained when her clothes caught fire from a miner's candle when she was making a trip of inspection, with visitors, through a mine she owned in Virginia City. Alex McAllister retired from the stock business and closed out his mercantile business in 1930. He keeps 4 milk cows and 30 head of horses including several thoroughbreds. These are nearly all saddle horses.

Politically Alex McAllister has always been a very staunch Democrat. He is now and has always been one of the highly respected citizens of Madison County.

Dated July 20, 1940 by Dr. Mae Pankey

Source of information was Mr. Alex McAllister.

**Meadow Creek History** by Robert R. Hughes will continue in July 2020 with Chapter Four MINING

**History Tidbit** Montana is the oldest state west of the Mississippi River.

### **Memories of Our departed Madison Valley folks.**

The MVHA aspires to have a genealogical record after the passing of all folks who were born and raised in the Madison Valley and anyone who moved here for work, owned a business, or spent considerable time here as each of these folks are part of the historical record of the Madison Valley. Please share your records, stories and other interesting information of those who have passed on to make these records as complete as possible. They will not be forgotten.

**Devarold Llewellyn Smith Selkirk** passed away on Nov. 14, 2018 in Clyde Park, MT. He was born in Minneapolis, MN to Harry and Thelma Smith on Feb. 2, 1931. He moved to Montana with his mother and sisters in 1940. On the first day of school, his mother sent him wearing clothes that he wore in Minneapolis going to school—short pants and very thick glasses. Some kids beat him up the first day and he never wore either to school again. He was a talented flute player and he graduated from Ennis High School in 1949. He then joined the Army paratroopers Division 101. After serving his country, he lived for many years in Detroit, Michigan where he was a machinist. He changed his name to Selkirk in 1959. He said he was tired of being called Smitty. His first wife died of congestive heart failure in the late 1970s. He then married Dyvonne who passed away from cancer in 2010. He lived in Livingston, MT for many years. Memory submitted by sister, Devonna Smith Owens.

**Lura Belle Pearson Milkovich** passed away on Jan. 16, 2020 in Ennis, Montana. She was born on September 16, 1927 in Butte, Montana to Charles Warner and Mary Cusick Pearson. After being raised and educated in Butte, MT, Lura married Mark Milkovich on June 19, 1948. Lura started her teaching career instructing grades 5 through 8 in one room of a 2 room school house. She did this without a college degree, a war era exigency. She obtained her college degree later at the College of Great Falls and taught 3rd grade for 10 years at Ennis grade school. She taught another year to help children with learning disabilities. In her 50's she attended college to complete instruction in calculus and for years she volunteered in Head Start to instruct needy children.

Laura also began painting at an early age and attended the Art Institute of Chicago but she was mostly self taught.

**Melvyn LeRoy (Lee) Sprout** passed away on Jan 21, 2020 at the Madison Valley Manor. He was born in Chicago, Ill on April 16, 1941 to George and Elaine "Gretchen" (Bovee) Sprout. The Sprouts moved to Wilsall, MT and eventually settled in 5

Ennis. Lee attended school in Ennis and graduated from Ennis High School in 1959. After graduation, he attended Western Montana College in Dillon, Mt. and Montana State College in Bozeman. After serving in the army, he ran the Enco Station in Ennis. He married Jody Wortman in 1966. In 1971, he began driving for A.M. Wells and worked there until his retirement in 2007.

**Janis Lee (Clark) Albro** passed away on Feb. 24, 2020 in Scottsbluff, Nebraska. She was born Feb. 16, 1937 at Ennis, MT to George Wilson and Grace Lucille (Althouse) Clark. She attended school in Ennis, MT and graduated from Ennis High School in 1955. She attended nursing school at the Columbus School of Nursing in Great Falls, MT. She worked as a Registered Nurse both full time and part time in hospitals, long term care facilities and in home health care throughout her life. Janis' nursing career was a proud part of her identity as a caregiver. Janis married William Albro on Sept. 3, 1960 at Laurin, MT They moved to Nebraska and she lived most of her adult life in Nebraska, Colorado and Arizona. Janis is a sister to MVHA member, Francis Young.

**Dan Joe Leadbetter** passed away Feb. 26, 2020. Dan was born March 4, 1934 in Fort Lupton, Colorado to Charles and Jean Leadbetter. He met Deborah Lichenberg at Colorado A&M and they were married in 1955. They moved to the Valley Garden Ranch in Ennis in 1957, raised their family and in Sept. 1999 moved to Four Corners, MT on the Gallatin River. Debby passed away Dec. 17, 2010. On Feb. 14, 2013, he married Gail Anderson from the Hayhook Ranch in the Shields Valley. Dan was a cowboy and always the cow boss. He was happiest in the saddle working cattle on the ranch or team roping in arenas around the country.

**Edgar Icenoggle** passed away Denver, Colo. on March 15, 2020. He was born on March 26, 1934 to Melvin and Lila (Nichols) in Twin Bridges, MT. He graduated from Ennis High School in 1952 and graduated Montana State College in 1957 with a degree in Animal Nutrition. While attending, he was part of the MSC rodeo team, competing in bulldogging and for a time led the nation in that event. After serving in the army, Edgar married Sharon Sylvis on January 14, 1961 in Bozeman, MT. Edgar was the manager of the Peavey plant in Miles City, MT. He continued to work for Peavey which was sold to ConAgra and he operated a small local feed store in Belgrade for several years before retiring. Larry Love remembers playing back yard basketball with the Icenoggle boys, Edgar, Bill, and Bruce. They lived across the street from the Loves on East Fagin Street in Ennis. *(cont. on pg 6)*

**For Your Reading Pleasure** “The historian will tell you what happened. The novelist will tell you what it felt like” E.L. Doctorow (1931-2015) In *Time* magazine

Your editor looked for a novel that had to do with the Madison Valley and a friend placed this novel in her hands. Madison River Country A historical fly fishing novel by Sid Eliason. It is available at Madison Valley Public Library. Check it out. Lots of name dropping of local folks and places and lots of fishing lore. A fun read.

**Looking Ahead**

**June 25, 2020** Tentative program by Mary Jane Bradford of the Committee of the Humanities acting and speaking on The Real Life of Calamity Jane. TBA

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The board decided to print the most current treasurer’s report for your information.

**MVHA Treasurer’s Report**

March 31, 2020

**BALANCES**

|          |             |
|----------|-------------|
| Cash     | \$60.00     |
| Checking | \$308.85    |
| Savings  | \$24,730.64 |

**INCOME**

|               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| DUES          | \$235.00        |
| DONATIONS     | \$520.00        |
| INTEREST      | \$1.04          |
| <b>TOTALS</b> | <b>\$756.04</b> |

**EXPENSES**

|                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| NORTHWESTERN ENERGY  | \$24.68        |
| Larry Love-Hebel DVD | \$67.00        |
| <b>TOTALS</b>        | <b>\$91.68</b> |

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**Memories** (continued from pg 5)

**Edward Gordon Sheffield** passed away April 2, 2020 at the Madison Valley Medical Center in Ennis, MT. Gordon was born in Jackson, Wyo. on October 11, 1934 to Ben and Pam Sheffield. The family later moved to the Madison Valley and bought the Windy Water Ranch. Gordon graduated from Ennis High School in 1952 and after a brief time in the Marines, he settled in the Madison Valley where he worked with his family on the Windy Water. Gordon also worked as a guide for hunting and fishing. On January 22, 1966 he married Kathy Kriewald. Most of Gordon’s career was spent as a contractor. He got his start with Ed Miller doing construction in the Gallatin and Madison Valleys. After his start, he went on his own and continued as a contractor in the Madison Valley until his retirement.

**Neil Kent** passed away April 23, 2020. His memory will appear in the July issue of the *Wagon Tongue*. **6**

**MVHA Board of Directors**

President: Larry Love  
Vice-President: Brandi Palmerton  
Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke  
Secretary: Otis Thompson  
Director: John Gecho  
Director: Eric Palmerton  
Director: Marty Brenneke  
Historian and researcher: Don Black  
Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate  
Meetings and programs held monthly on the **third** Thursday of each month or as scheduled. Watch the *Madisonian*, posters and your email for details of time, place and program. Please call Larry Love 682-5780 for date of board meeting..*The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be July 2020. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed. Your editor needs your history stories!

Editor: Shirley Love whitneypranch@wispwest.net  
Contributing editors:*Madisonian* Obituaries, *Meadow Creek History by Robert Hughes Recollections* by Mrs. Granville Stuart  
History Tidbits pg 6 provided by Kevin Brenneke  
**Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by First Madison Valley Bank**

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**Member News**

**Anita Ames** celebrated her 97th birthday on April 8, 2020. Happy birthday, Anita

**Patsy Ecket’s** bird photos were displayed in the Community section of the March 12, 2020 *Madisonian*. The article was “Migration Food, flight, physiology and fortitude” by Keely Larson of the *Madisonian*.

Business member, **Willie’s Distillery**, is making hand sanitizer at their distillery in Ennis to help fill the need for hand sanitizer. Thank you, Willies!  
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**History Tidbit** **PASSING THE BUCK/THE BUCK STOPS HERE** Most men in the early west carried a jack knife made by the Buck Knife Company.

When playing poker, it was common to place one of these Buck knives in front of the dealer so that everyone knew who he was. When it was time for a new dealer, the deck of cards and the knife were given to the new dealer. If this person did not want to deal, he would “pass the buck” to the next player. If that player accepted, the “buck stopped here.”

**BARRELS OF OIL**

When the first oil wells were drilled they had made no provision for storing the liquid so they used water barrels. That is why, to this day, we speak of barrels of oil rather than gallons. From Kevin Brenneke

# The Wagon Tongue

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Volume 18 issue 3

Madison Valley History Association

July 2020

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

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**From the Wagon Seat:** Yes, we are still in lockdown. It looks like from the news and the order of the governor that things are not improving. Madison County numbers are shooting up so now it looks like the MVHA will have to shoot for 2021 to start programs. In the meantime, I hope that everyone is well, wearing your mask and staying safe. This would be a great time to sit down and write your family histories or historical events of the Madison Valley. MVHA can put them in the Wagon Tongue or make them into programs for 2021. Stay safe and look forward to 2021. Your Wagon Master Larry Love  
**Meadow Creek History by Robert R. Hughes** 100 years Ago and Now. Last issue, April 2020 Chapter three James Alexander McAllister by Dr. Mae Pankey was completed. (Editor's note..if you have misplaced your April and January 2020 issues and want to reread the first three chapters or if you are new to the MVHA you may find these back issues on our website listed above.

## **CHAPTER FOUR, MINING** by R. Hughes

Economic hard times in the 1880s and the early 1900s plus an extended drought caused unrest in the eastern seaboard and middle-west, triggering a migration to the exciting gold fields and homesteading opportunities opening up the West and northwest.

Alder Gulch, just over the hill to the west of Meadow Creek fueled Montana's most exciting placer gold rush, and the Revenue hill with its rich gold mines bordering the Meadow Creek area to the North were attractive destinations for migrating land and gold seekers. Meadow Creek, situated in between those two industrious areas, did not go unnoticed by the ambitious settlers.

The Monitor Mine was famous for having produced some fantastically rich ore during its productive years. One special deposit yielded some ore that assayed six thousand dollars a ton "*The mine superintendent, Roger Knox, sent a sample of this ore to the World's Fair in San Francisco in 1895 and received first prize.* (Source: <http://www.deq.state.mt.us/AbandonedMines/linkdocs/techdocs/117Ctech.asp>).

My Uncle Ed was employed in the Revenue Mine about 1901 or 1902. During rescue operations, after some kind of a blasting accident, he severely smoke damaged his lungs, dying of pneumonia in 1908. My Uncle Bill also worked in various mines on the Revenue Hill, including the Monitor.

Hard rock mining on the Revenue Hill in the early days was not easy, one factor being that the rich ore was close to the surface. Even when available, pneumatic tools could not be used due to the vibration. The drilling had to be done by hand with a short handle, two point hammer called "single jack". A "double jack" was a long handled eight-pound hammer but it could not be used in the stopes and drifts because of low ceilings. The single jack had a leather thong loop which went around your wrist and if you became adept enough, you could release your grip on the handle on the down stroke and whip the head of the hammer down on top of the drill without jarring your hand.

The drills were of tempered steel with hand forged star points. All of the steel for a shift had to be sharpened for the next shift. Miners who learned how to sharpen steel to just the right temper qualified for top pay and a top job. The steel had to be tempered just right so as to not break or flatten. Uncle Bill was an expert, having worked in both the Revenue and the Monitor mines. The drills were of various lengths; short for starting holes which were replaced with longer ones as the hole got deeper. Each time, after hitting the drill, you had to lift the drill with the other hand and turn it slightly in order to break out a clean hole down which dynamite sticks could be tamped. Every once in a while it was necessary to pull the drill out of the hole, clean the hole with a little long handled spoon and pour in a little water in order to keep down the dust and perhaps make the solid rock drill easier.

In 1938 and 1939 Uncle Bill and his son leased the Monitor mine property. The old mines on the hill had been abandoned long enough that the remote owners were glad to lease them to anybody who wanted to try their luck. The price of gold had gone up to 32 dollars an ounce and the hard workers (Continued on pg 2)

**Membership:** New members since April 2020.

MVHA thanks the following for joining.

**Jennifer Anderson**, Bozeman, former member has rejoined. Welcome back Jennifer.

**Membership update** Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2020 membership is due during July, August, September or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who have generously submitted your renewal memberships. The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds and membership to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

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**Receiving your Wagon Tongue** Several years ago the MVHA started using non-profit organization postage stamps. The MVHA saves a considerable amount of money since we mail out most of the quarterly newsletters, **The Wagon Tongue**. MVHA did not know that non-profit stamps are not forwarded and if you have a forwarding address during the winter months or any other time, your Wagon Tongue is dumped in the trash. It is not returned to sender and MVHA does not know who you are. Please let the MVHA know by phone to Shirley Love 406-682-5780 or by email to [whitneypranch@wispwest.net](mailto:whitneypranch@wispwest.net) or to MVHA PO Box 474, Ennis, Mt 59729 if you have a forwarding address and the address labels will be updated. Also let MVHA know the approximate date you leave in the fall and the approximate date you will arrive in the spring so the correct address label will be used.

**Thank you to those who have already provided this information.**

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(Continued from pg 1) could pick over the old mines, inside and out, sort out good ore, run the waste dump stuff through a screen and send to the smelter. Unemployed cousins like myself and my 2

brothers could come along at their own risk and take their chances on striking it rich. What actually happened was that we barely made groceries if we worked hard and carefully.

The Monitor Mine adjoined the Revenue and Uncle Bill knew that ore had also been left in it, up near the surface. Being near the surface, the rock was all broken up dangerous to work in there because there was no solid ceiling like it would have been farther down. The drifts (tunnels) left by the old timers were only big enough to crawl through on hands and knees. The mining procedure we had used consisted of scraping and picking ore into a sack and dragging it back out to the entrance, carefully. Any unwise bump on the ceiling might bring the whole thing crashing down on your head. This is what they were doing when I joined the crew.

Real trouble developed only a few days later. I had learned enough to identify good ore by that time and had been given a spot of my own to clean out. My brother Ed had another spot, also John and Uncle Bill. Lewis may have been outside sorting ore. All at once we heard this crash and rumble and a cry for help. Uncle Bill was buried. He was pinned down by a big rock. I don't know how John got him out of there but pretty quick he came out, dragging his Dad with him. Bill was a tough old character and refused to go to the doctor. He crippled around for a while with what must have been broken ribs, but he didn't believe in lying around much and soon was back on the active list.

We wanted to get rich, but not that badly, so we picked up our tools and sent what ore we had to the smelter.

*Editor's note: On page 19 of the original manuscript there is a photo of the old Monitor Mine. There is not enough clarity to try to reproduce it for this article. The original manuscript can be found at the Museum Research Room and available after the museum opens again.*

*Chapter Five, Homesteading by R. Hughes continues in the October 2020 issue.*

**Memories of our departed Madison Valley folks.**

The MVHA aspires to have a genealogical record after the passing of all folks who were born and raised in the Madison Valley and anyone who moved here for work, owned a business, or spent considerable time here as each of these folks are part of the historical record of the Madison Valley. Please share your records, stories and other interesting information of those who have passed on to make these records as complete as possible. They will not be forgotten.

**Molly Cummings Minot Cook** passed away on April 2, 2020 at the age of 102 (Continued on pg 3)



(Continued from pg 2) in her Greenwich, CT home. She was born August 5, 1917 in Seattle, WA to Wilbur L. and Marian (Engle) Cummings. Her father had been sent to Seattle as Judge Advocate during WW I. Molly moved with her parents to Greenwich, CT when the war was over. She attended Greenwich Academy, Rosemary Hall in Greenwich, CT and then Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, NY. Her mother taught her to fly and Molly obtained her pilot license at the age of 18 and flew her own plane in many intercollegiate air meets.

In 1939 she married William Minot who was in the Navy and Molly joined the Civil Air Patrol. She taught aerial navigation and communications to the enlisted Air Corps Cadets. After the war, Molly attended classes at the New York School of Interior Design and New York School of Modern Photography. Mr. Minot passed away in 1963 and Molly married Hobert Cook. After Mr. Cook's passing, Molly took over the management of the family cattle ranch in the Madison Valley in Montana. Many of our old-timers will have remembered Marian Cummings and her ranch, the Corral Creek Ranch. MVHA members, John Scully and Larry Love, both worked during their high school years for Molly's mother, Marian, as a "jack of all trades" mowing and trimming her lawn and any other tasks she needed doing. They both can share interesting stories of their time working for Marian.

**Ron Holt** passed away on April 12, 2020 at his home in Oklahoma. He was born in Ennis, MT in 1959 to Earl and Alice Holt. He attended school in Ennis and graduated from Ennis High School in 1978. He graduated from Montana Tech with a degree in Petroleum Engineering. He held many jobs throughout his 32 year career with Schlumberger, an international oilfield service company.

**Kenneth W. Hall** passed away April 22, 2020 in Ennis, MT. Kenneth is remembered by the MVHA for helping form a vision and plan to start a museum for the Madison Valley. A memory of Kenneth will be printed when necessary genealogical information such as birth date and parent names, etc. are determined.

**Rodger Neil "Cub" Kent**, long time MVHA member, passed away on April 23, 2020 in Ennis, MT. He was born on the Kent Ranch at Varney on August 26, 1939 to Rodger Gillespie Kent and Ruth Marie Althouse Kent. Neil's father, Rodger Gillespie Kent was born in Butte, MT August 23, 1908, son of Fred and Esther Gillespie Kent. When Rodger was three years old the family moved to a ranch at Pony, MT. In 1914 the Kents purchased a ranch on Wigwam Creek at Varney, MT and moved there. **3**

Rodger attended school at Varney and went to high school in Butte and Ennis. He graduated from Ennis school in 1930. On Dec. 31, 1933 he married Ruth Althouse and they lived at the Kent ranch at Varney. The Kents had two sons, John Frederick (known as Jack) and Rodger Neil. Rodger and Ruth took over the ranch after the death of Rodger's father, Fred, and continued to raise cattle.

The Kent boys grew up on the ranch. They helped with the cattle and raised bum lambs. The Varney school consolidated with District No 52 at Ennis and both boys attended school in Ennis.

Neil graduated from Ennis High School in 1957 and graduated from Western Montana College in Dillon with a degree in secondary education in June of 1962. During summers Neil worked for the Thexton Ranch, the Beardsley Ranch, the Ennis Fish Hatchery and for the Forest Service. He was drafted into the Army in 1962 and attended an electronics school at Fort Bliss at El Paso, Texas. He spent the most of his time at a missile base at Treynor, Iowa. He returned home in October a little late for obtaining a teaching position. He had an opportunity to take flying lessons and spent 6 months in Helena learning to fly. While trying to decide whether to teach school or continue with the flying, he was offered a position at the First Madison Valley Bank which was newly organized. He took the bank job and has been there since. Neil was a member of the MVHA for 20 years and was treasurer of the Board of directors for many of those years. He was a very valued member. *Kent Family history from Progressive Years Madison County Vol II page 748-749 Rodger and Ruth (Althouse) Kent written by Ruth Kent.*

**Sherry Ruth (Armstrong) Henry** passed away at her home in McAllister on May 10, 2020. Sherry was born to James and Ruth (Baker) Armstrong in Bozeman, MT on January 18, 1950. Her childhood and youth were spent in Seattle, WA where she graduated from Tyee High School in 1968.

Each summer her family would make a trip to Montana and the Madison Valley where her father and mother were raised, to visit family. In 1982, Sherry left Seattle to make her home in the Madison Valley where her family roots were. Shortly after arriving in Montana, she met her future husband, John Henry. They were married on her birthday, January 18, 1987. Sherry is a niece to long time MVHA member, Kate (Armstrong) Robison.

**Ronal Edmond Miller** passed away on May 23, 2020 at the Madison Valley Hospital in Ennis, MT. Ron was born on Jan. 25, 1946 in Groton, SD. When Ron was 14, his family relocated to Everett, WA. *(Memories cont on pg 4)*

(*Memories continued from pg 3*) where Ron attended high school graduating in 1964. After high school he went to school to become a machinist. In 1973 he moved his family to Bozeman and then Belgrade. He began working for Kenyon Noble Lumber Company and began his career of 33 years working his way up to the Roof Truss plant. While working in the lumber yard in Bozeman, he met Judy and they were married in March, 1979. In 1994 Ron and Judy bought property in McAllister, MT and built a house there and moved permanently to McAllister in 2009. During retirement Ron became very active in the community.

**Dorothy (Garrard) Dougherty** passed away on June 5, 2020 at the Madison Valley Manor in Ennis, MT. She was born to Fritz and Vera (Sweetland) Garrard on November 6, 1927 in Havre, MT. She graduated from Park County High School in Livingston, MT in 1945. Dorothy was a Home Economics major attending Montana State College from 1945 to 1948. Dorothy married David Dougherty on June 27, 1948 in Livingston. They lived in Ennis from 1950 to 1960, spent one year in Portland, OR and moved to Seattle, WA where they lived for 25 years. After retiring from the Seattle area, Dorothy and David returned to their home in Ennis that they had kept for all those years.

**John "Randy" Green** passed away on June 12, 2020. He was born in Salamanca, NY on May, 23, 1951 to Bernard and Phyllis (Perry) Green. He completed his education at his birth place and served in the U.S. Army, spending nearly 3 tours with 101st Airborne Division in Vietnam. He started his higher education while in the Army through the University of the Americas and completed Bachelor's and Master's degrees at Colorado University in Boulder, CO. He was in the construction business for many years. His mother-in-law is long time MVHA member, Beverly Claassen.

**Pamela Elizabeth Parsons** passed away on June 13, 2020 in Ennis, MT. She was born on April 3, 1958 in Columbus, OH to Frank and Jeanne Parsons. The family soon moved to Lucketts, VA where Pam and her sister, Barbara enjoyed country life on a small farm. After high school Pam did some modeling and a job at Loudoun Travel lead her to travel and a trip to Paradise, MT in the 1990's. Several Montana vacations later found her a second home in McAllister, MT. Waitressing at the Bear Claw in McAllister was her first Montana job. In 2004, she and a friend took over the West of the Madison in Ennis, MT. After a few years, she went to Connecticut and on to Mesquite, NV. She returned to Montana full time and worked as a bookkeeper for

several business and went full circle ending up at the McAllister Inn, formerly the Bear Claw where she worked until her illness.

**John David Ellingsen** passed away May 15, 2020 in his favorite town, Virginia City, MT. John was born in Great Falls, MT on May 17, 1947. John attended school in Great Falls and graduated from Great Falls High in 1965. He went on to Montana State University in Bozeman, MT in the ROTC program and graduated with Bachelor's degree in industrial arts and a Master's Degree in history. John's memory was best recorded by Nick Gerock of the *Bozeman Daily Chronicle*, Dec. 14, 2002.

John Ellingsen remembers the first time he came here in 1952. The hills around town were mostly barren of trees, picked clean over the decades by miners in need of wood. The buildings leaned, wasting away under the Montana sun.

And the town was largely deserted, save for a few old miners who had long since quit working claims.

The 5-year-old Ellingsen revered the Virginia City, founded in 1863 when gold was discovered in Alder Gulch, from the day his mother and John first visited. "That's when I really got hooked on the place," Ellingsen, 55, says. "And I made my mother bring me back every year."

Little did that young boy know that he'd end up spending his life saving Virginia City. For three decades, Ellingsen has preserved the historic buildings in Virginia City and rebuilt Nevada City, another mining town just down the road.

"It's not a job with John," says Randy Kleindorfer, Virginia City operations chief. "It's his life, for sure."

On one of those early trips, Ellingsen and his mother met Charles Bovey, a wealthy Great Falls businessman with a passion for history who first came to Virginia City in 1944, and, like Ellingsen, was enamored with the town's buildings.

But Virginia City was crumbling to the ground. As Bovey looked around town, he discovered a man pillaging the back wall off an old building for firewood. "He said, 'They're only good for firewood anyway and we're helping the town out,'" Ellingsen says of Bovey's encounter. "And he said, 'What do you care? You don't own it so mind your own business.'"

Bovey started buying downtown buildings and the artifacts that came with them, sometimes for back taxes or as little as \$100. That's all they were worth, townspeople agreed, and they were eager to sell.

"The word got around town quick that there was a sucker in town who had a lot of money and liked old buildings," Ellingsen says. Bovey eventually gave Ellingsen keys to the historic buildings, inviting them to look around. He also began (*continued pg 5*)

(continued from pg 4) relocating old buildings from around the West in Nevada City. John was committed to eight years in the Army because of his time in ROTC, but Bovey told Ellingsen to come work for him when he got out of the Army. The Vietnam War wound down, and in 1972 Ellingsen was able to join Bovey.

He has never had another job, never married, never moved away.

In Ellingsen, Bovey found the perfect partner—someone just as passionate about history with the hands-on skills to save and reconstruct buildings.

They set about building Nevada City from buildings salvaged around the West, with the help of a few hired ranch hands.

In Virginia City, Bovey didn't want to build a town, just keep the buildings there from falling down.

Bovey instilled his theory of a "suspended state of deterioration" into Ellingsen, meaning a building's condition should be held in check, but not restored. Walls lean, roofs sag and the wood continues to fade under the sunlight.

"Anybody can build a building that looks old, but to have a real one is something else," Ellingsen says.

What makes Virginia City so special compared to other mining towns, however, are the artifacts, Ellingsen explains. The town has one of the best collections of "new old stock," or old things still in the original box, in the country.

When Bovey found out that a woman had dozens of pairs of old shoes from a Lewistown department store that went broke, he bought them. The coffee house has a violin machine, one of only six in the world, Ellingsen says.

And Ellingsen's favorite building, the McGovern Dry Goods store, still has ladies underwear sitting exactly where it was in the 1940s when the two sister shopkeepers closed the door to go take care of an ailing brother. "It's a true time capsule," he says.

Ellingsen and Bovey didn't just work on buildings. They dove into historic research, looking over newspaper accounts, land records and fire insurance maps. Ellingsen interviewed old timers who had spent their lives in Virginia City, trying to piece together the overall puzzle of the town. They went through mail left behind by shop owners. Letters from distributors

sent to grocery store owner S.R. Buford sometimes had labels for a new line of vegetables. Ellingsen says about one in 1,000 contained a label, but there were enough that they painstakingly fit the labels on cans for the store displays that tourists see today.

Bovey subsidized Virginia City to the tune of \$200,000 a year, a loss he was willing to endure to see the town saved. Then in 1978, Bovey died, leaving the estate to son Ford Bovey, who shared his father's love of history, but got into financial difficulties.

Virginia City faced its end. Creditors wanted their money, and the artifacts drew the attention of auction houses like Sotheby's and Christie's. The buildings, too, caught the eye of a Japanese company and others who wanted to construct an old West town elsewhere. It was Virginia City's darkest hour, Ellingsen says, and the stress wore on him.

"We were faced with the very grave danger that all these artifacts would be auctioned off. ... Ford was hounded almost every day," Ellingsen says.

Ellingsen started a drive in 1989 to get the state to buy Bovey's properties in Virginia City. That first year he got into the Capitol, the next year he talked to a local legislator and by 1995 Rep. Karl Ohs carried a bill that died by a single vote in the House on the last day of the session. It looked like Virginia City's treasures were coming up for sale.

"I got diabetes," Ellingsen says. "The doctors told me it wasn't from eating too much sugar, it was from stress - mainly the stress of what would happen to this place."

Finally, in 1997, the Legislature voted to buy all of Bovey's properties for \$6.5 million, including artifacts and trains.

Ellingsen became an instant bureaucrat, working for the state's Heritage Preservation Commission. Gone were the days of working on the buildings. Although he'd never touched a computer before 1997, today he spends most of his time in front one while directing a crew of 14 who work on buildings.

He also gives tours, spinning tales about the people who made Virginia City famous.

Kleindorfer says tourists often rank Ellingsen's stories as the highlight of their visit to Virginia City.

(continued on pg 6)

**For Your Reading Pleasure**

Jim Bridger Mountain Man a biography by Stanley Vestal This book contains a detailed and insightful biography of Jim Bridger. Author paints a bold and authentic picture of a brave explorer and a richness of the American nation when it was still young. Readers..your editor needs your book ideas in the history category to pass along to the other readers. Please help.

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**Looking Ahead** No MVHA activities planned until further notice.

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**(Memories continued from pg 5)**

“They don’t say the buildings, or the theater,” he says. “I’m sure some people don’t like his humor, but it’s not offensive to anybody, and it’s not boring to anybody.”

Virginia City Curator of Collections Pat Roath is responsible for keeping track of more than 250,000 artifacts. She says she’s amazed Ellingsen alone kept track of so many historic objects all those years. “In some ways I think it was hard for him when we all came here,” she says. “It was his baby.

“It would kill John to move or go anyplace else.”

*Editors note: Pat Roath, former MVHA member, eventually left Virginia City and continued her career at the Museum of the Rockies in Bozeman.*

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**History Tidbit** *Words and phrases every day! But do you know how they came into being?*

**CURFEW** The word “curfew” comes from a French phrase “couvre” which means “cover the fire”. It was used to describe the time of blowing out all the lamps and candles. It was later adapted into Middle English as “curfeu”, which later became the modern “curfew”. In the early American colonies homes had no real fireplaces so a fire was built in the center of the room. In order to make sure a fire did not get out of control during the night it was required that by an agreed upon time, all fires would be covered with a clay pot called a “curfew”.

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John Ellingsen’s memories brought the history of Virginia City, MT to my thoughts. It is the county seat of Madison County and was the first town incorporated in Montana in 1864. This famous Montana town was first named Varina, in honor of the wife of Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy. But a local judge, G.G.Bissell, refused to write the name in a legal document, declaring he would “be dammed first” a sentiment which would likely have been echoed by many Civil War Veterans in the area, for whom the memory of the conflict was still a fresh and emotional memory. Bissell wrote “Virginia” at the top of the legal document and so the name was established and later it was known as Virginia City.

**MVHA Board of Directors**

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- Meetings and programs held monthly on the **third** Thursday of each month or as scheduled. Watch the Madisonian, posters and your email for details of time, place and program. Please call Larry Love 682-5780 for date of board meeting..*The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be October 2020. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed. Your editor needs your history stories!
- Editor: Shirley Love whitneytranch@wisptest.net
- Contributing editors: *Madisonian Obituaries*, *Meadow Creek History by Robert R.Hughes* *Progressive Years Madison County, Montana Vol II* *Rodger and Ruth (Althouse) Kent pg 748-749* *Bozeman Dailey Chronicle* Nick Gerock Dec. 14, 2002 *John Ellingsen Preserving Virginia City* History Tidbits pg 6 provided by Kevin Brenneke *Names on the Face of Montana* Roberta Carkeek Cheney Virginia City pg 270

**Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by First Madison Valley Bank**

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In May 1863 six prospectors led by young Bill Fairweather arrived in the hills along the Madison River. Henry Edgar, a member of the party, wrote in his journal, “We crossed the Madison and came up...Wigwam Gulch..camped beside Bald Mountain..killed an elk..remained during the afternoon and overnight to dry and smoke the meat. On May 26, 1863 they had arrived in a gulch. Fairweather and I were to make camp and stand guard...About sundown, Bill went across the creek to picket the horses..saying ‘There’s a bit of bedrock projecting..we better go over and see if we can get enough money to buy a little tobacco.’ So Bill took the pick and shovel and I took a pan and crossed the creek..while I was washing down the dirt, he scratched around in the bedrock with his knife.’I found a scad.’ I called back. ‘If you have one, I have a thousand,’ and so I had. We spent the next morning measuring the ground and staking it off. ‘What shall we call this gulch?’ So I called it Alder Gulch on account of the heavy clump of alders along the creek. This strike caused a gold rush to the gulch and Virginia City sprung up and boomed. The town was laid out in June 1863 and within 8 months there were 500 dwellings, including stores and saloons. By the fall of 1864 there was 18,000 folks in Virginia City. Names on the Face of Montana Roberta Carkeek Cheney pg 270.

# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 18 issue 4

Madison Valley History Association

October 2020

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat:** The fall colors were very special this fall but have been blown away by now. Unfortunately Covid-19 is still here! The MVHA is still in the hold mode. The museum has been winterized thanks to Harold White. MVHA will not be having the annual Christmas party. One board position is vacant due to a resignation and MVHA needs someone to step up to the plate to fill that position. Please call a current board member to volunteer. Right now the only board activity is the monthly meeting required by our by laws. As a member, you are invited to attend any board meeting so come and check us out. The next board meeting is Nov. 6th at 10:00am at the museum to pay bills and make plans for upcoming year. When spring arrives, MVHA will have some museum cleaning to do and if Covid is over, monthly meeting plans will be made. So for now, have a cautious holiday season, stay safe and wear your mask. We will beat this Covid-19 as the old timers did for the Spanish flu epidemic. Your Wagon Master, Larry Love

As a change of pace, your editor found the **Meadow Creek** history by Minnie Paugh in *The Madison Valley A High Mountain Community*. It is interesting to get a little bit of a different look of Meadow Creek from a different set of eyes.

The building of the Elkhorn Road Ranch in 1863 by Orson N. Newman family started this community even though they moved away in 1867. Mines were developed immediately at the headwaters of both branches of the stream and water was diverted by 1866 for the mines, saw mills and the small ranches. There was a local market for dairy products, dressed out meat, and grain. Some of the earliest grain raised there was hauled to Virginia City for the Gilbert Brewery.

In 1869 this community got the first post office in the valley and the first formal church service was in the home of Don O. Spaulding. The Methodist minister, George Comfort, preached this sermon and he was followed by the great circuit riders "Brother Van" and Rev. F. A. Riggin who were frequent visitors. The average attendance at the Meadow Creek services was between 25 and 35. It is not surprising that Mrs. George Doane who the first public school teacher was able to start a successful Sunday School the same year in 1873. Some of the size of the congregation was because without an Ennis Lake one of the best fords along the river was near the North end of the valley. This is the reason it was possible for E. A. Maynard to attend the New Year celebration at the Newman home in 1864. This was probably the first public gathering in the valley. Mr. Maynard said as many as fifty men attended and at least twelve women. The charge was \$2.50 including supper.

The academic school that started in 1873 continued after modern school buses made it practical to move small children to Ennis. The location of the building changed as the Meadow Creek population shifted. The center of the community might well be considered at the intersection of Spaulding Lane which became the route of Highway 287 and the Meadow Creek Road. James Alexander McAllister built his store building east of this point in 1896. (3) He added a warehouse to his store in 1898. The official opening of the McAllister Store was October 7, 1898 when there was a dance attended by people from the whole valley. At this time George B. Bess had his hotel under construction along the present route of the highway. It opened March 31, 1899. J. F. Drew built a blacksmith shop which he sold to Joe Davis who added a barn to this business. Three residential buildings were under construction. The Methodist minister, Rev. F. A. Guiler, was happy to discover that the small acreage which he was given to farm to increase his living from the church produced wonderful potatoes and gave him 500 bushels to the acre.

The church sponsored at Meadow Creek was one of the intellectual centers for the valley before 1900. Their young people were attending the Montana Wesleyan University at Helena to complete their educations. Fred L. Gibson who was part of the community and a teacher in the public school completed his law degree at the University of Nebraska and graduated in the first 10 in his class. In 1899 he was elected to the Montana Legislature at the age of 24. Most of the other young people became ministers as did Samuel "Sammy" Fletcher, or they returned to their farms to be well informed active citizens. Charles M. Bauer, who became the first mayor of the town of Ennis in 1957 came from this background.

In 1929 the community started to break up. A district superintendent of the Methodist Church sold the parsonage without consulting the local committees. He raised \$500 to buy a small parsonage in Ennis. About the same time the McAllister Store closed. In 1934 Bill Harris built his store at the intersection and his father, Jake, started a tavern which his wife, Emma, supplemented with a lunch room. This family also built tourist cabins, but the community was not the same

*Continued on pg. 2*

(3) *Madisonian*: May, 1892 Footnote is a 3 as 1 and 2 appeared in earlier pages of chapter *Communities develop*.

**Membership:** New members since July 2020.

MVHA thanks the following for joining:

**John and Sheila Lake** Cameron, Mt

**Membership update** Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2020 membership is due during October, November or December or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who have generously submitted your renewal memberships. The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds and membership to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

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**Receiving your Wagon Tongue** Several years ago the MVHA started using non-profit organization postage stamps. The MVHA saves a considerable amount of money since we mail out most of the quarterly newsletters. MVHA did not know that mail with non-profit stamps are not forwarded and if you have a forwarding address during the winter months or any other time, your Wagon Tongue is dumped in the trash. It is not returned to sender and MVHA does not know who you are. Please let the MVHA know by phone to Shirley Love 406-682-5780 or by email to [whitneypranch@wispwest.net](mailto:whitneypranch@wispwest.net) or to MVHA PO Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729 if you have a forwarding address and the address labels will be updated. Also let MVHA know the approximate date you leave in the fall and the approximate date you will arrive in the spring so the correct address label will be used. **Thank you to those who have already provided this information.**

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**Meadow Creek history by Minnie Paugh cont from pg 1**  
The Community Welfare Club of Meadow Creek had been organized by the women for the purpose of maintaining the church property and keeping up the cemetery which was on the land given to the community by John Ormiston and William

Fletcher in 1887. It is on the hill west of the intersection with a view over the valley. This group tried to provide the community with a center. The ladies ate a sumptuous dinner together once a month with their husbands in attendance if they were needed. These feasts and their community parties were well attended and supported by the whole valley if support was needed. The church became Presbyterian then closed for lack of attendance. The store and post office are still open at the intersection as the Johnson's Grocery and Motel and the tavern is now the McTanna Inn.

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**Meadow Creek History by Robert R. Hughes 100 Years Ago and Now.** In the last issue July 2020 Chapter Four Mining by Robert Hughes was completed. We finished with the Hughes family mining and Uncle Bill was injured in the Monitor Mine. They wanted to get rich, but not that badly, so they picked up their tools and sent what ore they had to the smelter..... If you have missed the first four chapters of the Hughes story, you are welcome to find them on MVHA website listed on pg 1.

**CHAPTER FIVE HOMESTEADING** by R. Hughes

By 1910 most of the prime homesteading acreage suitable for locating ranch homes in the South Meadow Creek area, had been claimed. Sometimes adjoining acreage, usually isolated, was still available. Opportunistic follow up homesteaders could file on specific land which they knew they could sell as soon as they proved up on it. The following personal experience of my folk's homestead life is offered as typical of that era. My folks, Tom and Emily, were living on their homestead on Leonard Creek. Homesteading must have figured prominently in their plans when they got married in 1908.

My sister, Marjorie, wrote in one of her articles for the *Montana Standard*: "Tom took any kind of work to support his rapidly growing family. He hauled freight taking supplies to mines like the Sunnyside and Revenue, returning down the chute like roads with ore. He ran the Savage Grade with six to eight horses and a two-ton load, the sled and wagon "rough locked."

Emily sent a postcard to her sister-in-law, Mrs Bert Rich, in Sumas, Washington, June 20th, 1910 in which she is shown sitting on the front steps of the homestead cabin, holding baby Edwin. The text reads as follows: "Dear Mattie, Believe you owe me a letter. Seems strange I don't owe you. We are all real well. Tom is still freighting. Baby is real well and good. He has two teeth. Lots of love, Emily."

continued from pg 2 They must have lived there until my oldest brother was about four years old as one of his first memories is of being in a cabin with a horse trough outside and a small creek with willows. He remembered a small building with no floor which Dad had built on or over the creek. This was probably a "cooler" for keeping fresh milk and foodstuffs. Typical to homesteads, two room shacks were erected to be lived in long enough for the homestead to be proved up on.

(Editor's note: The original manuscript shows copies front and back of the post card described above and can be seen at the museum research room once it has reopened.)

In Emily's own words: "We homesteaded on Leonard Creek and there were times I would not see another woman for months." The dog's name was Curley. She often remarked what a comfort Curley was for her when she was alone so much.

It was not all work and no play, however, Marjorie continues, "On Sundays baseball was the entertainment after a hard week's work. Tom was a noted pitcher. According to his cousin, Walter Vincent, a game was extended until the following Sunday to allow Tom time to recover somewhat from a broken jaw he received from a bad ball."

Two more children were born before the homestead was sold, I think, in 1914. There was no official recording of births for these three children, as well as the next one. When birth certificates were required for employment or citizenship, we all had to obtain sworn statements from people who knew we had been born.

They could not stay at the homestead in winter. Woodcutters and moonshiners, maybe, could survive the bitter cold and deep snow in those mountains, but they could come out on snowshoes when they wished. Leaving a young bride there with two little ones, was definitely not in the cards. Tom was scratching for subsistence money, wherever work could be found, and had not a chance of getting back to a snowbound mountain cabin every evening. A couple of rental cabins were available down at the Meadow Creek community, now becoming known as McAllister, which provided the solution for most winters. The family lived in at least two of these cabins which came with the additional comfort of being neighbors to Bill Else and his wife. Bill was a blacksmith but even more important was that his wife served as the community midwife at a time when the arrival of the doctor in time for a baby's birth was problematical.

#### **CHAPTER SIX: THE TV RANCH** by R. Hughes

"Thomas Vincent, Allen Vincent, and Jasper Vincent settled in the Madison Valley as ranchers

about 1885 to 1890. Eventually two daughters, Jennie Vincent McDowell and Flora Vincent Miller also came to Meadow Creek to live". (Source: Ina (Hughes) Kirkman, 9th generation historian)

Lewis writes in his article "Meadow Creek Days" that Tom Vincent and A. J. McDowell left Oskaloosa, Iowa about 1882, wandering around working at various places, eventually ending up in Meadow Creek, Montana. In the late 1880s the Richters of Virginia City had done well in the brewery business and they owned some attractive ranch property in the South Meadow Creek area of Madison Valley. They also had an attractive daughter who helped shape the future of a considerable chunk of the Madison Valley when she married the wandering Tom Vincent. The Richter property became the TV Ranch and under Tom and Lora's management became influential, successful and prosperous. Their influence on the area, especially Meadow Creek, continued for all the rest of their active ranching experience and also after they moved to their retirement home on lower Meadow Creek. Over time and with common usage, Tom Vincent and Lora Richter Vincent became Uncle Tom and Aunt Lora to everybody. A thumbs up from them was a big help if you wanted to do something of importance in the Meadow Creek area.

Thomas S. Hughes came to Montana at age sixteen according to his own recollection. This indicates that he came west in 1900 if 1884 is his correct birth date (May 15). Other information indicates that Tom was part of a migration when Tom's dad, John Wesley, moved the bulk of his family west from Iowa in 1900.

The two oldest brothers, Edwin and William, had gone to Montana around 1898 and were working in the mines and looking for opportunities to begin ranching. Bill's son, John, relates that the two brothers walked from Bozeman to Meadow Creek with an over night stay at a stage stop near where the Madison River Bridge was later constructed. They had to wade the river. Their destination was the ranch of their uncle, Tom Vincent. Uncle Tom needed strong, energetic help to work his ranch. His nephew, 16 year old Tom Hughes, liked horses, ranch life, mountains and wasn't afraid of hard work or hard winters. He decided to stay. He was employed on the TV Ranch most of the time until 1919 when Tom Vincent and Tom Hughes became partners on the Hughes home ranch.

Tom Hughes also liked the competitive atmosphere of the ranch's recreation facilities. Uncle Tom (Vincent) never got famous for paying high wages but he knew how to keep his young men around. Walter Vincent, another nephew, *continued pg 4*

*continued from pg 3* told that Uncle Tom had a baseball diamond and track field in his meadow, horseshoe pits and a swimming hole by the buildings and a pool table inside. Walter also said that Tom (Hughes) was a whiz at all those sports and was undisputed champion. Adding to his popularity was his talent for playing old time music on the fiddle and he was always asked to perform old time dances at the McAllister community hall. **Chapter 7**

**The Old Road** will continue in the January 2021 issue

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Since our world, our country, our state and Madison County is going through the Covid-19 epidemic, this seems like an appropriate time to learn about another epidemic that happened 101 years ago.

### **Spanish Influenza Epidemic 1918-1919**

By Orlean Daems Bassett

“Flu” has become a well-known word in our modern world. But when we of Madison County first heard “influenza” it had a dreadful significance, sweeping the country with incredible swiftness and deadly complications.

My twin sister, Lenore, and my cousin, Florence, and I were attending high school in Virginia City. Our home economics class was soon making masks of gauze to wear in school and in town. But their merits were never proven. My cousin was the first person stricken. Her mother and later my mother came in to care for us.

We were all very ill and left for our home in the Madison Valley as soon as we were able. All schools were closed. By then the epidemic was sweeping the valley.

Our own community of Varney was soon a community of very ill families. Since my father had always kept a supply of drugs and the library of his father, Dr. Daems, our home was the focal point for treatment. My father, taking what he considered a cure-all and preventive of respiratory troubles, was never stricken. This cure was his own garlic syrup.

I was an excellent rider and had a beautiful little black mare, Mauritz. I raised and trained her and she knew, as well as I, every foot of our community. She knew where the snow drifted deepest and where the glare ice was hidden. So I became nurse, cook, chore girl and the one means of communication in our neighborhood. My father had the only fever thermometer and I carried it, I might say with prayers, on all my daily rounds.

My father had me keep a record of every patient. These he passed on to Dr. McNallan of Virginia City, who came out three times each week or as often as possible in the bitter winter weather. With these records he could decide who needed a personal call. This saved him time and much

needed energy. Dr. McNallan was a dedicated physician. A warm friendly man with a good sense of humor. Our home was under a hill impossible to reach that winter except by foot and much sliding. He told my dad ““Harry, my medical school never taught me to visit my patients on the seat of my pants.”

Our medicines were the ones we always used—quinine, syrup of ipecac, rhubarb syrup, garlic syrup and whiskey. The latter could only be bought by prescription at Ranks Drug store in Ennis.

One of our neighbor boys, Earl Bennetts, worked hard taking care of the outdoor needs of families such as feeding stock, cutting wood and carrying water. When the flu finally reached him, he was a very ill young man who surely merited a good neighbor award. At his illness another neighbor boy, Bennie Thompson, took over. He never did take the flu and the chores he performed for neighboring families under the most difficult conditions were surely “beyond the call of duty.” Years later when he was a prosperous man in eastern Washington, we talked of that time—talked with pride and a great deal of humility. I hope his special place in heaven has an added glory for that trying time.

There were no deaths in our immediate community, but one of the local girls, Bernice Wiles, who was married and living in Bozeman and expecting her first child, died of influenza. So our sorrow and sadness transcended the long siege of trying illness. Harry Bennetts, working for a family in the upper Cameron country came with an urgent request for help for the flu stricken family, husband, wife and two little girls. I volunteered and helped them back to health. So the influenza left the valley.

That winter of 1918-1919 was one of the hardest of my early memory. Snow and more snow was driven by icy north and south winds. The gorging Madison River covered meadows and isolated livestock and lives were risked getting them to higher ground. But always nature seems to bring recompense in times of special trials. That winter the northern lights flamed and flickered with unusual brilliance and beauty across our northern skies guiding me home.

*Pioneer Trails and Trials Madison County Montana*

pg 863-864

### **Memories of our departed Madison Valley folks.**

The MVHA aspires to have a genealogical record after the passing of all folks who were born and raised in the Madison Valley and anyone who moved here for work, owned a business or spent considerable time here as each of these folks are part of the historical record of the Madison Valley. Please share your records, stories and other interesting information of those who have passed on to make these records as complete as possible. They will not be forgotten.

*continued on pg 5*



*Continued from 4*

**Edna Mae Dugosh Dunning** passed away April 16, 2019. Edna was born in Pleasanton, Texas on Aug. 23, 1939 to Frank and Irene Richter Dugosh. Her twin sister was Evelyn Fae. They lived on the farm in Jourdanton, TX. Edna graduated from Jourdanton High School in 1957. She and her sister moved to San Antonio, TX and lived at the Catholic Women's Association. She attended San Antonio College of Business graduating in 1959 with an Associate's Degree in Business. After college she worked at USA Insurance Co. It was in 1959 at a Texas rodeo that she met Dick Dunning and they were married in 1961 in San Antonio and they moved to Chicago, Ill.

**Marshall Ray "Mick" Mainwaring** passed away March 3, 2020, in Oregon at Riverbend Hospital. He was born in Ennis, MT on Feb. 9, 1929 to George and Helen Parker Mainwaring. He had eight brothers and six sisters.

Mick lost his hearing as a child from the effects of Scarlet Fever, which caused him difficulty in school. After completing eight grade, he began working, starting to train his first colt at age 13. Mick became a professional horse trainer and his deep love and respect reflected in the incredible connection he had with animals. In 1963 he married Julia O'Neil and they moved to Oregon in 1976. Julia died in 1985 and he found companionship with Josephine Kingsley.

**Doris "Deb" Biesterfeld Townshend**, 19 year member of the MVHA, passed away August 24, 2020, at her home in New Haven, CT. She was born in Mineola, NY in 1922 to Mathilde and Chester Biesterfeld. She is a graduate of Wilmington Friends School. She went on to graduate with a BA with a major in child psychology, from Mount Holyoke College. On a train bound for college she met Henry "Harry" Townshend Jr., New Haven, who was on board returning to Dartmouth College. They married in June, 1942 and were inseparable for 70 years until Harry's passing in 2012. Deb had a passion for writing which she did from an early age to well into her 80's, producing 11 books and many articles for newspapers and newsletters.

The Beaverhead Ranch (the Burt Heltzel homestead) up the West Fork near Cameron, Mt. was a much loved summer home June to September for over 40 years. They found themselves immersed in the history and activities of the Madison Valley. Starting in July of 1986, Deb wrote a column "Up Our Way" for the *Madisonian* in which she knit the past and present together. She said she wanted to paint a picture of life in the 19th into the 21st centuries to lay a basis for present day people and places. Deb is also

known for her outdoor spirit and spent a lot of time hiking while Harry fished. She is the founding member of the WOWS (Women of the Wild) formed in 1999. Deb and Harry were also instrumental in saving the old iron bridge across the Madison River known as the Hutchins bridge getting it placed on the national register of Historic Places and led fund raising efforts for its restoration. There is a bench by this bridge dedicated to "Deb and Harry" for their community contributions. Plan to stop by and pay your respects to them next time you go past the Hutchins bridge. As a side note, the group led by Deb had so much fun with their fundraising that the event lasted for several years after the bridge was restored. The Madison Valley History Association was the benefactor of the proceeds during the time we were working to develop our museum in Ennis. Deb and Harry are so much appreciated for their efforts toward the MVHA Museum.

**Phyllis Kay Wasick**, MVHA member, passed away on Sept. 9, 2020 in Ennis, MT. She was born Feb. 13, 1932 to Avis and Kieth Wasick in Somerset, Colorado. Her parents moved to Hatch, New Mexico when Phyllis was eight years old and she always called New Mexico home. After completing her childhood education, Phyllis attended the University of Denver. She met Milan Lewis Wasick on a blind date in College. They were married Feb. 2, 1951 and lived in California and raised their family there. After raising her family, she spent 27 years working for the Gilroy Unified School District Administration Center in the business office. Upon retirement in 1989, Phyllis and Milan traveled across the United States looking for "the most beautiful place" to settle for their retirement. They chose Ennis where over the years they had many adventures fishing and camping. After her husband, Milan passed away, Phyllis spent the next 30 years embracing her life in Ennis and contributing to the community in so many ways. She was elder for the Presbyterian Church, a founding member of the Food Bank, member of the Madison Valley Public Library Book Club, member of the Madison Valley Woman's Club and volunteered at the Nearly New, member of the Friends of the Madison Valley Public Library, served on the board of the Madison Valley Public Library and volunteered to read to first grade students at the school. During the summer months Phyllis was always a faithful volunteer at the Madison Valley Museum. In 2001, Phyllis was awarded the Citizen of the Year in recognition of her contributions and tireless efforts to be of service to others. Phyllis was always one of those people who always "stepped up to the plate" where ever help was needed.

*continued on pg 6*

**For Your Reading Pleasure**

**Killers of the Flower Moon The Osage Murders and the birth of the FBI** by David Grann This is not about Montana history but is a good history account of the Osage Indians in Oklahoma and the beginning years of the FBI. It is meticulously researched and masterfully spun chronicle.

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**Looking Ahead** The MVHA has been contacted to see if MVHA would be interested in sponsoring the Chuck Wagon Cook-off next July or August by MT wagon masters who have competed nationally. This has been previously been held in Virginia City. MVHA would have to raise \$2000 before the event to cover expenses: \$500 to each of 3 wagon masters and \$500 for other expenses. The board feels that this project would require help from the membership for fundraising, advertising and manning the museum during the cook-off weekend. Please consider how you would help with this fundraiser. We appreciate any input and assistance. Replies can be made to Kevin Brenneke, Treasurer at [loon@3rivers.net](mailto:loon@3rivers.net) or to MVHA P.O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

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**Memories continued from pg 5**

Long time MVHA member, **Richard C. (Dick) Lee**, of Bozeman, MT passed away on Oct. 3, 2020. He was born in Seattle, WA. on August 30, 1940, to Clyde and Marion (Williams) Lee. He grew up in Billings, MT, attended Billings Senior High School and graduated from the University of Montana in Missoula, MT in 1963 with a degree in music education. He married Rosemary Mitchell of Buchanan, MI. in 1963. He accepted a teaching position in Sacramento, CA. After retirement in 1998, he and Rosemary moved back to Montana first to Virginia City, MT and then to Bozeman, MT. Music always played a big part of Dick’s life and he will be remembered in the Madison Valley as he played his string bass and sang with the Ennis Community choir.

**Richard “Dick” Dunning** passed away Oct.15, 2020. He was born in Miles City, MT to Forest and Beatrice Tucker Dunning on Dec. 27, 1935. He was raised in eastern Montana and graduated from Billings Central Catholic High School in 1953. He attended Montana State College in Bozeman, MT and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Husbandry in 1958. He was one of the 11 founding members of the MSC Rodeo Team. He worked at the Sun Ranch in 1956 and fell in love with the Madison Valley. He was drafted into the Army and was stationed at San Antonio, TX where he met Edna Mae Dugosh. After time in Chicago, **6**

**MVHA Board of Directors**

President: Larry Love  
Vice-President: Brandi Palmerton  
Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke  
Secretary: Otis Thompson  
A new Director to replace John Gecho who retired  
Director: Eric Palmerton  
Director: Marty Brenneke  
Historian and researcher: Don Black  
Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate  
Meetings and programs held monthly on the **third** Thursday of each month or as scheduled. Watch the Madisonian, posters and your email for details of time, place and program. Please call Larry Love 682-5780 for date of board meeting..*The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be January 2021. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed. Your editor needs your history stories!

Editor: Shirley Love [whitneypranch@wispwest.net](mailto:whitneypranch@wispwest.net)  
Contributing editors: *Madisonian* Obituaries,  
*The Madison Valley A high Mountain Community* by Minnie Paugh *Communities Developed* pg 2-4  
*Meadow Creek History* by Robert R.Hughes  
*Spanish Flu Epidemic 1918-1919* by Orlean Daems Bassett  
*Pioneer Trails and Trials* pg 863-864  
*First Frost* by Lee Robison from *Have* pg 83

**Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by First Madison Valley Bank**

in 1964 they moved to Ennis. Edna Mae worked at the bank and Dick at a grocery store while they built Fan Mountain Meats, a custom and wholesale meat packing plant. After retiring from the meat plant, they continued to work in the cattle industry by feeding cow and calf pairs and steers.

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Lee Robison, past president of MVHA and Meadow Creek resident is a poet and his most recent work of poems **Have**, contained this poem:

First Frost

Summer’s gone when poems lilted  
fibber tunes of thing for another—  
danced wings over water, laved  
self and soul in willow swamp.  
Those liar airs, clotted even water—  
Bright little singings. Nothings.

Nothing left but winter.  
Water, in silver chaos glints under sun,  
voiceless noise beyond gale-strewn timber.  
Winter makers making water make ice  
—no baptism, no cleansing—

Winds shriek.

# The Wagon Tongue

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Volume 19 issue 1

Madison Valley History Association

January 2021

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

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**From the Wagon Seat: Happy New Year!** Hopefully 2021 will be a happier and healthier year. The MVHA is still in a holding pattern. We are paying our electric bill monthly, publishing the *Wagon Tongue* and collecting membership payments as they come due.

As we read the Meadow Creek History by Robert Hughes and others, we appreciate what has been written and recorded. If these folks and others who provided articles for the Trails and Trials and Progressive Years, shared stories with their families, wrote books like the Early Days in the Madison Valley by Jimmy Spray had not taken time to sit down and write history as they remembered it, we would not have it and all would be lost.

As history continues on, this would be a good time to sit down and jot some of your ideas and thoughts — a good time to get your family history recorded before you forget it. It does not have to be a whole book, or even a whole article. Just ideas so when we open up again, we can help you form them into a program, a field trip, an article for the *Wagon Tongue*. If you live on an acreage or a homestead, now would be a good time to research the history of your area. Do not let us lose the history that is going on right now.

MVHA still is looking for a board member. Just ask someone if they are interested or better yet, just volunteer yourself. We will get through this crisis and come out stronger because of it. So stay safe, wear your mask, social distance and get your vaccine. Your Wagon Master, Larry Love

**Some Ennis Pioneers and their Experiences** by Winifred C. Jeffers We celebrate William Ennis on his birthday-March 17. Happy Birthday ,William Ennis, the founder of Ennis, Mt. This story is by William Ennis' granddaughter.

Grandma Ennis had educated herself for a teacher and had probably taught a few terms before she married William Ennis in 1861. When Grandpa returned to Ohio to bring Grandma and their 20 month old daughter, Jennie, out west, Jennie was cutting teeth. In May 1865 they started with the wagon train. Since Jennie had been sick and needed care, a doctor accompanied the train for two days. The doctor had said that if the baby did not improve they would have to turn back to Council Bluffs. She improved and the family continued on. They arrived in Virginia City August 10, 1865, after 96 days on the road.

When Jennie Ennis was four years old, her mother would set her on an old gentle horse to go into the river bottom for the milk cows in the evening. One evening the horse stumbled and she slid off. There were no trees or fences to climb up on to get back on the horse, so she had to lead him home.

Grandma wondered why she was so late bringing the cows in so she got up on the fence to look and could see the horse, but because the grass was so tall, she could not see Jennie leading him. She took Will, the baby, and started to walk toward the river bottom. She could hear Jennie crying so she put Will down into a badger hole so he could not crawl away and walked on faster to see what had happened.

Jennie wasn't hurt. She was only disappointed not to have brought the cows up on time. She was put back up on the horse and went for the cows again. Will was where Grandma had left him.

In about 1872 Grandpa Ennis took his family to Yellowstone Park. There were only trails in the Park, so all rode horseback. Jennie and Will rode double and are believed to have been the first white children in the Park.

Grandpa Ennis was always freighting a good deal of the time. Grandma wanted a corral small enough to catch the horses easily so she decided to go to the timber and bring the poles for it. She put a small box on the running gears of a wagon, in which she fastened little Will and holding Jennie on her lap, she drove to the timber and cut poles for her fence, which she brought home in the evening. After several trips, she had sufficient posts and poles for the corral.

When a little girl, Jennie Ennis walked to school which was held on the east side of the river, where Jeffers is now. There was a makeshift bridge across the river but no road across the river bottom, so Jennie had to walk on the rail fences when the river gorged. She walked on the lower rail, holding on to the top rail for balance. When the gorge was particularly bad, Grandma (Mrs. William Ennis) went to the river to watch Jennie safely across and watching from the west bank when she came home from school.

Indians! When Jennie was about 6 years old and her brother, Will, was about 2, five Indians came to the Ennis place one day when Grandma was alone with the children. The Indians indicated that they wanted to eat, so Grandma set food on the table for them. She feared that they planned to do her and the children harm, so she went out to a shed and loaded a muzzle loading gun. She put it through a window into the bedroom. She gave Jennie a can of

(Cont on page 6)

**Membership:** New members since October 2020.

MVHA thanks the following for joining:

**Colleen Durocher** Vaughn, MT 59487

**Membership update** Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2021 membership is due during January, February or March or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who have generously submitted your renewal memberships. The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds and membership to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

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**Receiving your Wagon Tongue** Several years ago the MVHA started using non-profit organization postage stamps. The MVHA saves a considerable amount of money since we mail out most of the quarterly newsletters. MVHA did not know that mail with non-profit stamps are not forwarded and if you have a forwarding address during the winter months or any other time, your Wagon Tongue is dumped in the trash. It is not returned to sender and MVHA does not know who you are. Please let the MVHA know by phone to Shirley Love 406-682-5780 or by email to [whitneypranch@wispwest.net](mailto:whitneypranch@wispwest.net) or to MVHA PO Box 474, Ennis, Mt 59729 if you have a forwarding address and the address labels will be updated. Also let MVHA know the approximate date you leave in the fall and the approximate date you will arrive in the spring so the correct address label will be used. **Thank you to those who have already provided this information.**

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**MVHA Member News.** I could not find much member news for this month as we are all still staying close to home and none of our ordinary activities are occurring. But I did find this: Over past years, the Ennis Booster Club has awarded an Honorary "E" to community members who have

been exceptional supporters of our youth athletes. A year ago the Booster Club reinstated the tradition and the person selected for 2020 was MVHA member Vurnie Kay Barnett. She started keeping stats for the volleyball team in 1985 or 35 years of stats. Congratulations, Vurnie Kay.

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In the October issue, the **Meadow Creek History by Robert R. Hughes Chapter 6, the TV ranch** was concluded and Tom Hughes was performing old time music on his fiddle at dances at the McAllister community hall.

**CHAPTER SEVEN THE OLD ROAD** by R. Hughes

Ruth Beals mentions in her article "McAllister" that George Bess had a hotel and post office at Meadow Creek in 1902. The hotel was a stage top for traffic going through McAllister to Virginia City and Ennis. When we moved to our ranch property in 1919, deep ruts marking where the abandoned stagecoach road ran from the community of Meadow Creek out through the field and across the Northeast corner of our ranch property. At an earlier time this route from McAllister, through Fletcher Creek and up the Virginia Grade over the Continental Divide and down the other side to Alder Gulch, was a shortcut to Virginia City favored by wagon traffic and stagecoaches.

Virginia City had retained the County Seat when the capital moved out so there was still considerable activity requiring presence at the Court house or other places where official business was conducted. Although popular with stagecoach travelers, the automobile traffic found the route up through Fletcher Creek and the Virginia Grade to be very rough and steep. This was a shorter route to Virginia City rather than going through Ennis, but Ennis was gradually becoming the destination of choice because Ennis was growing and prospering while Virginia City was on the decline. When it came time to upgrade roads due to the increased commerce going to Ennis the shortcut road was abandoned.

My sister Marjorie wrote in one of her newspaper articles about a breaking cart our Dad made in the earlier homesteading days. It was two wagon wheels with a board for a seat and a tongue long enough so that the frantic colts couldn't kick the driver's head off. Seldom did anyone want to be a passenger but Fred Lade wanted to go to Virginia City for a marriage license. He was marrying Dad's sister, Lora. Fred said they made the four hour trip in two hours, hog tied the broncs to a hitching rack and ate a twenty-five cent meal. Fred wasn't sure whether to get the license or arrange for his own funeral.

*(continued on page 3)*

*(Continued from page 2)*

Robbing a stagecoach was a popular road agent activity in the late 1860s. However road agents mostly worked in the Alder Gulch and Bannack areas and coaches coming from McAllister generally had little to fear. Still that must have been a primary consideration when deciding to make that trip. One can only imagine traveling this primitive road from Meadow Creek through Fletcher Creek to Alder Gulch during the time when road agents could be springing out from behind every bush or boulder. Small wonder that people with business in Virginia City took the longer but safer route to Ennis and over the hill.

Since there never had been any official right of way established through the various private fields for the old road, it just sat there and faded away. Up in Fletcher Creek, an area thick with brush and boulders, as a boy, I could fantasize the stagecoach rocking and careening up the Virginia grade, just two jumps ahead of the robbery-bent horsemen. There are no markers along the road that says Sam Jones was robbed of 12 ounces of gold at this spot, maybe because both sides were in a hurry to be somewhere else. By 1920 the ruts marking the route through our field were barely distinguishable and were due to be plowed under because my family needed a crop of wheat or barley. Hardly anybody bothered to notice that a bit of history was going under for the last time. Traces of the old road could still be found up through what had been the Schoenberger homestead, Fletcher Creek, and of course, the infamous Virginia grade. It is still used by loggers, cow herders, power-crews, hunters, and a few tourists with curiosity about the history of the locality.

The old hotel was still standing in 1919-1920 but was being used as a resident instead of a stage stop. George Bess and his family owned and had lived in the hotel and operated the post office and stage depot for years but they now moved on and were renting the hotel out. Thomas S. and Emily Hughes (my family) lived in it just prior to moving into the ranch in 1919. It had become our place of residence due to its proximity to school and to the place that was to be our home ranch. The kids could go to school and Dad was near to where he was building a house, a granary, and a chicken house on the property that was to be the Hughes home and ranch for the next 50 years.

The road from Norris to Ennis that became more popular and put the old stagecoach road out of business went right past our place. It went through several modifications before becoming hard surfaced with asphalt. In 1919 when we moved to

the home ranch, the route was hardly more than a dirt road traveled mainly by team and wagon. I suppose the early autos that were starting to use it about that time created pressure to upgrade it, which was done the first time about 1928 or 1930. In 1934 and 1935 a rock crusher was set up on the McAtee Hill and upgrading on the road started again. Maurice McDowell tried to keep corrugations out with a small, horse drawn grader for a few years until the asphalt process came along. Maurice and Bing Ellinghouse served as school bus drivers when McAllister District 48 was consolidated with the Ennis schools, about 1940.

#### **CHAPTER EIGHT: THE FLETCHER STORY** by Edith Evans Fletcher (*Mrs. Wm. A Fletcher*)

William A. Fletcher was born in Watertown, NY, March 24, 1829. Sometime in the early '50s he came to Nebraska. We have a letter dated in 1856 that his mother wrote to him there, beautifully written and with many Bible quotation and signed, "Your affectionate but unworthy mother."

His wife passed away in Nebraska and he returned to New York with their infant daughter. Later he came west again and located in Bannock, Montana, but in 1863 stampeded to Virginia City—the gold rush was on. In 1865 he returned to New York and in March 1866 was married to Ellen Gordon. From Council Bluffs, Iowa, they came via wagon train back to Alder Gulch. They were three months in the crossing and had many hardships. This was their honeymoon trip and she kept a diary which has been typed and most members of the family have a copy. Mr. Fletcher followed the butchering business and had a shop at Summit and also one at Nevada City. The latter one was run by his brother, John Townsend Fletcher. In March 1867, a daughter, Blanche, was born. A year or two later he took up a claim out in the Madison Valley and the creek flowing thru this area still bears the name Fletcher Creek. Two more of the family, Samuel and Mary, were born. Sometime in the early '70s he bought a relinquishment to a ranch down on the river bottom and the family moved there and two more girls were born there, Winifred and Ruth. For a time he also rented the Spaulding ranch and his name sake, Wm. A. Fletcher was born there in March 1883. That fall the house burned to the ground and the baby was wrapped in a feather bed and thrown from an upstairs window—with no ill effects at the time except almost smothering to death. The family then moved back to the river log cabin and in November of 1886, Carl was born.

Mr. Fletcher still followed the butchering trade—ran a wagon to surrounding areas—Red Bluff and Sterling were big mining districts (*continued on pg 4*)

(Continued from pg 3) at that time.

Grandma Fletcher used to tell us of frequent visitors from the Bannock Indians—they were a friendly tribe and used to like to camp near the slaughter house as meat was handy.

I should have mentioned earlier that John T. Fletcher took up a claim on Norwegian Creek and for a few years the two brothers were together there and two more daughters were born there—Margaret in 1872 and Florence in 1973. There was now a family of nine children—six girls and three boys. In 1892 he bought the Shelton ranch where we lived for so many years and is now Tommy Hughes’s new home. Mr. Fletcher passed away in May 1905 and Ellen Gordon Fletcher in November 1919.

Two of Grandma Fletcher’s brothers—Leon and Chas Gordon—came to the valley in the early 70’s and settled on a ranch still known as the Gordon Place. Grandpa Fletcher had a sister, Dorasca Fletcher who married John Ormiston and they were early valley settlers. They were known as Aunt and Uncle Johnny to everyone. She was so immaculate and scrubbed and scoured all her life—even the boardwalk leading to the kitchen was without a speck of dirt. The hill is still “Uncle Johnny’s Hill.

Tom Vincent and Jack McDowell came to the Madison Valley from Iowa in the spring of 1882. Later Allen Vincent and Jasper Vincent settled there. Jasper married Mary Fletcher and in November 1887 Tom married Lora Richter. Her father, Chris Richter, was also a pioneer—first connected to the brewery in Virginia City with Henry Gilbert. I remember my Aunt Lora Vincent telling of Mrs. Slade’s ride into Virginia City in a vain effort to save her husband, Jack Slade, from the gallows. Later Mr. Richter took up a ranch in the Madison Valley near the mountains. A family, McGees, lived there now. Mr. and Mrs. Vincent celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in November 1947. She passed away the following year and he died in March 1955.

My father died in 1890 and my mother and I came to Montana. In 1891 my mother and Jack McDowell were married. For the first few years they worked for Dan Spaulding who had a big sheep ranch..

(continued on page 6)

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**Memories of our departed Madison Valley folks.**

The MVHA aspires to have a genealogical record after the passing of all folks who were born and raised in the Madison Valley and anyone who moved here for work, owned a business or spent considerable time here as each of these folks are part of the historical record of the Madison Valley. Please share your records, stories and other interesting information of those who have passed 4

to make these records as complete as possible . They will not be forgotten.

**Dorothy “Polly” Clark LaDue Todd**, long time MVHA member, passed away October 25, 2020, in Sheridan, MT. Polly was born in Louisville, KY on May 3, 1928. When she was 2 months old, she was adopted by Charles and Dorothy Clark LaDue and was brought up as an only child. She arrived in Sheridan by train in July 1928. Her first home was at Sunnyside which is up Wisconsin Creek. When Dorothy was a preschooler, her father commented that her “long coal-black braids were as black as polliwog.” Dorothy was nicknamed “Polly” for the rest of her life. She went to grade schools in Sheridan and Louisville and returned to Sheridan to graduate from 8th grade in Sheridan. At 11 years old, Polly was an accomplished horsewoman. She showed three and five gaited horses in competitions. The Brown Ranch was her second home. She attended Sheridan High School for her Freshman and Sophomore years. Her junior and senior years were spent at Shattuck St. Mary’s School, an all girl school boarding school affiliated with the Episcopal church in Faribault, MN. Polly was the president of the Equestrian Team. Polly also spent part of her life on a sheep ranch when her father and his brothers formed the LaDue Sheep Company. The sheep company had two to three bands of sheep, 1500 sheep in a band. She talked about lambing season, shearing and shepherders taking the sheep to summer range. The sheep were trailed 50 miles to the Ruby Reserve and the Black Butte areas.

Polly met Richard (Dick) Todd in Ennis/Sheridan and they were married on Nov. 23, 1947 in Sheridan. They lived at the Todd Ranch near Ennis until they moved to the Ruby side in 1948 and spent their life in Sheridan, MT. MVHA member, Zoe Todd, is Polly’s sister-in-law.

**Vicki Mae Robison McNally** passed away November 21, 2020 in Grand Forks, BC Canada. Vicki was born in Jackson Hole, WY. on Sept. 9, 1942 to Wayne and Floral Robison. Vicki’s father served in WW II and was discharged in 1954. He met Mrs. Alice Orr at a livestock sale in Idaho Falls and she told him of a beautiful ranch for sale in the Madison Valley near McAllister on North Meadow Creek. Wayne looked at the ranch, returned home, sold his property in Idaho Falls, bought the Green Acre Ranch in the fall of 1945 from D. Dillenberg. In March 1946, the family moved to McAllister, MT where Vicki grew up. Vicki attended school in Ennis graduating from Ennis High School in 1960. She continued her education at Montana State College in Bozeman, Mnt graduating in 1964 with a degree in Secondary Education. After graduation, she joined her parents who were managing the Gang Ranch in (cont on pg 5)

(cont. from pg 5) British Columbia. It was there that Vicki met Curtiss McNally and they were married in 1964. Vicki and Curtiss spent their working years managing ranches around Kelowna, BC eventually retiring to Grand Forks, BC in 2007.

Vicki's husband, **Curtiss Hugh McNally** passed away June 26, 2020, in Grand Forks, British Columbia. Vicki's sisters, Dixie Marosok and Jerry Wing are MVHA members as well as her deceased sister, Becky. who was a member until her passing.

**Cleo Parker Stroud Wages** passed away on November 27, 2020, at the Madison Valley Hospital in Ennis. She was born on December 26, 1928, to Jesse Vernon and Eliza Vera Parker in Hibbard, Idaho. Cleo went to grade school in Hibbard before attending Madison High School in Rexburg, Idaho. She married Daryl James Stroud on July 10, 1946, in Butte, MT and they made their home in Idaho Falls, Idaho.

By 1953, they moved their family to West Yellowstone, MT for 3 years before returning to Idaho Falls. In 1963. They officially made the Madison Valley their home as they developed the Slide Inn where they constructed a gas station, hamburger stand, grocery store, cabins and a trailer park. Their hamburger stand seated six thousand people 6 at a time. In 1974 they sold their business on the Madison River and settled 4 miles west of Ennis. Her husband, Daryl, passed away in 1992 and in 1994, Cleo went on a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Her second mission was shared with her new husband, Lynn Anderson. Lynn passed away in 2007 and Cleo later married another long time friend, Eldora "Doke" Wages. He passed in 2009.

Cleo's daughter, Jo, and her husband, Otis, Thompson, are long time MVHA members.

**Charlotte Sue (Mason) Johnson** passed away December 6, 2020. She was born on February 23, 1930, to Gladys (Bowen) and Jim Mason in Yale, Oklahoma. Charlotte attended Quay High School in Quay, Oklahoma. During her high school years she met Wayne Johnson and they were married on July 20, 1947. In 1959, Charlotte and Wayne moved to McAllister, MT and in 1964 they bought the McAllister Store and cabins. Charlotte operated the store and cabins and became the McAllister Postmaster in June, 1971 and worked there until her retirement in 2005.

**Wayne Alfred Johnson** passed away December 12, 2020, only 6 days after Charlotte's passing. He was born on January 20, 1929, to Hazel (Hoskins) and John Johnson in Yale, Oklahoma. He grew up in Yale and after his marriage to Charlotte in 1947 they traveled extensively for 9 years as John was a

welding x-ray technician. After they moved to McAllister and bought the McAllister store and cabins, Wayne worked as a ranch hand and school bus driver for the Ennis School from 1974 to 1995. Wayne was also a State Brand inspector and enjoyed selling turquoise jewelry.

**Linda Lee Secora Roberts** Former MVHA member, of Virginia City, MT passed away on Dec. 13, 2020. Linda was born August 5, 1946, in Whitehall, MT to Lee B. and Mary (Richards) Secora. At an early age, her family moved to Ennis where she attended school and graduated from Ennis High School in 1964. She continued her education at Montana State University. While at MSU, Linda met Gary Broeder and they were married on May 13, 1966. The family moved to Billings in 1974 where they lived for many years. After her divorce in 1996 from Gary, she moved to Virginia City where she designed and built her own home. Linda was ordained as an Episcopalian priest in 1996. Linda met Chris Roberts and they married in September, 1999. They commuted between Virginia City and Great Falls before moving to Papillion, NE in 2003. In 2005 she received a liver transplant and returned to Virginia City in 2009. MVHA's best memory of Linda and Chris was when they helped put together a float for the 4th of July parade in the early 2000's.

**Jack Lewis Northway** passed away on Dec. 13, 2020. Jack was born on Nov. 9, 1927 in Ennis, MT to John S. and Nora (McKean) Northway. As editor of the Wagon Tongue I always search for family history in the Pioneer Trails and Trials and Progressive Years or any where else available. It is always interesting to learn about how a family got to Ennis, Montana. The Jack Northway family started in Cornwall, England. John S. C. Northway married Emma Woolcock and with their first children in tow in 1890 or 1891 they moved to America to Marysville, MT. where John Northway worked at the Drum Lemmon Mine. From there they moved to the Trerise ranch on the Cameron Bench in 1898. John Northway worked on various ranches in the valley. He homesteaded on Moore's Creek and later sold the land to Jennie W. Chowning. He built a home west of Ennis on a hill and also built and ran a saloon nearby. Son, John S. C. (Jack) married Nora McKean and our Jack Lewis Northway was born. When Jack was asked if he came from here he always loved to exclaim, "I was born one block behind the Longbranch!" In 1950 he and Kathryn G. Gould were married. Jack was very involved in the community. After working for the Ford dealership and garage in Ennis, he and Kathryn owned and operated Northway Oil for over 30 years.

## For Your Reading Pleasure

**Bozeman's Backyard- Names in the Madison, Gallatin and Bridger** By Dr. Jeff Strickler Names on the land also tell stories. They tell history, ecology and the hopes and dreams of people who came before us. This book is published by the Gallatin History Museum and can be purchased there or at [www.gallatinhistorymuseum.org](http://www.gallatinhistorymuseum.org).

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**Looking Ahead** The MVHA has been contacted to see if MVHA would be interested in sponsoring the Chuck Wagon Cook-off next July or August by MT Wagon Masters who have competed nationally. This has been previously held in Virginia City. MVHA would have to raise \$2000 before the event to cover expenses: \$500 to each of 3 wagon masters and \$500 for other expenses. The board feels that this project would require help from the membership for fundraising, advertising and manning the museum during cook-off weekend. Please consider how you would help with this fundraiser. We appreciate any input and assistance. Replies can be made to Kevin Brenneke, Treasurer at [loon@3rivers.net](mailto:loon@3rivers.net) or to MVHA P.O. Box 474, Ennis, Mt 59729.

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(Continued from page 4)

His place was sort of a half-way house for freighters and many stopped overnight. The Spaulding Lane (between N. Meadow Creek and the corner south) was notorious for the mud and a team was kept handy to pull other vehicles out of the mire. I used to walk to school thru the lane and I can remember getting stuck also. Many tramps were on the road then and occasionally an unusually rough looking customer would give us a scare. They always stopped for a handout. In Iowa my mother had been fond of mutton but after life on a sheep ranch, she changed her mind.

Tom Shirley was another old settler. He drove stage for years—Miles City to Virginia City and later Miles City to Helena. He used to tell me many hair raising adventures. One was wrapping his horses' feet in gunny sacks as he knew of some Indians on the warpath and he drove his route by night.

Some of the early settlers were the Ennis family, Jeffers, Watkins, Pinkey. Calvin Pinkey was the county doctor for a good many years. He and his wife also ran the Washington Bar Post Office—the same building I think that Mr. Bowersox now lives. The Bess family had what is known as the Meadow Creek post office and it was down under the hill—about half a mile south of what is the John Bausch place. Others were the McAllisters, Scoenbergers, Ed Gleason, Higbee, and Hawkins — the latter

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## MVHA Board of Directors

President: Larry Love  
Vice-President: Brandi Palmerton  
Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke  
Secretary: Otis Thompson  
A new Director to replace John Gecho who retired  
Director: Eric Palmerton  
Director: Marty Brenneke  
Historian and researcher: Don Black  
Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate  
Meetings and programs are currently suspended due to Covid-19. Please call Larry Love 682-5780 for date of board meetings. *The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be April 2021. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed. Your editor needs your history stories!  
Editor: Shirley Love [whitneypranch@wispwest.net](mailto:whitneypranch@wispwest.net)  
Contributing editors: *Madisonian* Obituaries,  
*Meadow Creek History* by Robert R. Hughes  
*Some Ennis Pioneers and their Experiences* by Winnifred C. Jeffers. *Pioneer Trails and Trials* p. 862  
*Wayne Lee & Floral Judy Robison* by Floral Robison  
*Progressive Years* pg 696-697  
*John Sylvanus Charlecom Northway* by Wilma Rowe  
*Pioneer Trails and Trials* pg142

## Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by First Madison Valley Bank

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ran the saw mill. This is all we can remember and hope it can be of some interest to folks who read it. *Meadow Creek History* by Robert Hughes will continue in April 21 with Chapter Nine Ranching.

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(Continued from page 1) powder with instructions to open the stove, throw the can into it and run when she gave her the signal. Jennie was terrified but she had to do as she was told. Grandma put Will in his high chair in the bedroom and tied him in it.

After eating, the Indians smoked, passing the pipe from one to the other. Two young bucks sat bolt upright, a middle aged one inclined his head but the two older men bowed their heads real low. The Indians left without doing any harm to the family.

Bill Hamilton, a friend of the family and an Indian scout, told the Ennis family that the three Indians who inclined their heads outvoted the two who would have killed them.

My grandfather, William Ennis, tied the gun which had been loaded, to a fence post to shoot it off as it had been so heavily loaded.

Jennie Ennis married Charles W. Chowning and they were my parents. Jane Rybus, MVHA founder, is a daughter of Winifred C. Jeffers.



# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 19 issue 2

Madison Valley History Association

April 2021

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat:** We are living in an era of very strange times. I hope everyone is safe and have their masks still handy. Due to COVID-19 and for the safety of our volunteers, the MVHA Board of Directors has decided to keep the museum closed until further notice. If and when we open up again, we will need volunteers to do the scheduling and hosting the museum. So think seriously about helping out when we do find that the time is right to open up.

Hopefully the summer will open up and be more enjoyable as time marches on. There will be no Annual meeting, no monthly programs and no field trips. If conditions change, MVHA will let you know. Watch for posters, newspaper notices and emails.

The Wagon Tongue has been sharing stories with you from folks who had the foresight to sit down and write family stories and history of the Madison Valley or stories of their growing up where ever that might be.. We need your stories for the Wagon Tongue to get these stories recorded and passed along. If you have a family manuscript or stories from you or your ancestors, let Shirley know. You do not need to be a professional writer. Just get your thoughts, ideas and stories down. We will do editing, spelling, punctuation and grammar corrections for you so there will be no worries there. In fact the modern computers do all that work for us now days so it is pretty easy!!

If you have any questions or ideas for the MVHA, feel free to call any board member to let them know. The Board of Directors wishes everyone a great summer. Wear your mask and stay safe. Your Wagon Master, Larry Love

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The January issue celebrated the birthday of William Ennis but this issue will share a newspaper clipping of William Ennis untimely death. From *Alder Gulch Times*, Virginia City, Montana, Friday, June 22, 1900. **Fifteen Years at Hard Labor** was the Sentence Pronounced by Judge Parker at 9 O'clock This Morning Upon the Slayer of William Ennis. THE PRISONER CONVEYED TO THE PENITENTIARY by Under Sheriff Hill Shortly After Sentence was Pronounced. In Passing Sentence the Judge referred to the Great Age and the Poor Condition of the Prisoner-The Sentence Virtually Means Life imprisonment-Report that the Jury at One Time Stood 10 for Acquittal to 2 for conviction.

The crime for which Martin Peel has for the second time been found guilty was the shooting of William Ennis, a highly respected resident of Ennis, the leading town of the Madison Valley on Saturday afternoon, June 18, 1898, in front of the Madison house in Virginia City, Montana. Ennis was not killed outright, but lingered until the evening of July 4th. when he died from the effects of the wound.

The trouble between the two men dates back into the early days of this county and was undoubtedly greatly exaggerated by Peel, who is a very excitable man and imagined all kinds of things were going to be done to him by Ennis. The immediate cause of the shooting was the burning of the Ennis hall by parties unknown a short time before the murder. A great deal of talking was done in the Madison Valley about the burning of the hall, which resulted in someone going to Peel with the story that Ennis suspected him of having set fire to it and that he was organizing a mob to hang Peel.

Peel laid the matter before Lew L. Callaway, then county attorney, and demanded that both William Ennis and his son, W. J. Ennis, both be arrested for conspiracy against his life. County Attorney Callaway carefully investigated the matter and found Peel's fears to be unfounded, declined to put the county to the expense of prosecuting the Ennises when there was no evidence whatever on which to base an action.

Just before the shooting Peel went to Judge Parker and tried to get him to take action against the Ennises, but the Judge very properly informed him that he could do nothing for him. Peel then went down town from the court house and a few minutes later fired the fatal shot.

Peel was tried at the December 1898 term of the court and although his attorneys made a hard fight, setting up the plea of insanity, the jury found him guilty of murder in the first degree and Judge Parker sentenced him to be hanged on Friday, May 5 of next year. The defendant's attorneys, however, appealed to the supreme court and secured for him a new trial on an error in the court's instructions and the second trial began Tuesday morning of last week and lasted nearly a week, the result being that the jury came in last Monday morning, after being out 42 hours with a verdict of murder in the second degree.

The court called the convicted man before him at 9 o'clock this morning and sentenced him to 15 years in the penitentiary, which for a man of his age—70 years—practically means imprisonment for life.

*Continued on pg 2*



World War One must have been shortly after we moved to the ranch when I saw a group of men walking up the road toward Ennis. Mother told me they were soldiers coming home from the war. (Armistice Day was Nov. 11th, 1918) They had to walk from the rail head at Norris to their homes in the Ennis Area. Mother made them sandwiches and filled their canvas water sacks at the pump in the yard.

Dad and the two older boys immediately got busy building a small bunk house for the boys. It also had a pot bellied stove that did a good job heating the bunkhouse but since no one would volunteer to get up and build a fire you learned to get dressed rapidly and maybe even go the few steps to the house half dressed. Mother would fix a bed for me in the house during bitter cold weather. Long johns were on 24-hour duty during those winter days.

It would be several years before the cow herd, grain crops, chicken and pig production equaled what the family needed to live on. What was later to be a substantial herd of cattle started out as four milk cows. Of special importance was a Holstein named Spot. She had twin calves at least every other year and filled a five gallon bucket with milk twice a day.

Spot helped us survive. As the milking herd grew, we separated milk from the cream with a hand cranked separator and sold the cream to the "Creamery Man" who came once a week. The skim milk was fed to the pigs out in the pig pen. We had thick cream for our cereal and super thick cream, skimmed off of the top of the thick cream, that we used on pancakes. When the pigs were close to butcher time, we would fatten them with liberal helpings of grain and soon would be able to add fat pork with home grown potatoes to our diet. Now days that kind of a diet is lethal, but we didn't know any better so it didn't hurt us.

I don't remember how long we lived in the original house but as soon as Dad could arrange the money thing, he had Paul Schonick build an extension to the house which really helped. It enclosed the pump so that we had hot water inside and more than doubled the kitchen floor space. We became quite comfortable with the large wood and coal burning range heating the area that was now our dining and living area.

I was asked the other day what I would count as the most important development of my lifetime. I suppose it was invented prior to my lifetime(1915) but as a development, electricity didn't hit our house until about 1930. Our first attempt at electricity was a 24 volt Wind Charger system. Brother Lewis took a correspondence course and became an electri-

tion overnight. We soon had wires running everywhere and little direct current bulbs glowing dimly where kerosene (called "coal oil") lamps had been. We only had two batteries, wired together, and on long winter evenings our batteries lasted until about supper time and when the lights got dimmer and dimmer until we had to light the kerosene lamps to see what was on the table. I remember doing school work on the kitchen table, probably 8th grade and freshman in high school, with both a kerosene lamp and a DC bulb going at the same time. I told Lewis that I had to light the lamp so as to see his bulb. In spite of my scoffing, when Montana Power came in with the real thing, Lewis was able to put in adequate wiring for our needs at that time. There was no inspection or anything so it worked, it was ok.

Lewis and I pooled our resources and bought an automatic washing machine. Our poor mother, bless her soul, had been washing clothes by hand, with scrub board and galvanized tub, for too many years. The first one was powered by a gasoline engine to wash, but the wringer had to be turned by hand. We soon upgraded that model when electricity came to a new Maytag, electric wringer and everything. That was the one that could tear your arm off if you were not careful. Ralph Nader would have had a field day in those times.

Dogs lived outside and were fed table scraps. There was an opening into the crawl space under the house and the dogs slept there most of the time. In really bitter cold weather, Dad would let them sleep in the house but they had to stay on a rug near the door.

### **Chapter Ten School and Schooling** by R. Hughes

Ruth Beals says in her article "McAllister" that the school house was built In 1901. It was moved in about 1940 to the West a short ways, to adjoin the community hall and to serve as part of that facility. The community hall, old school building, everything was torn down about 1950.

When I went to school there, the McAllister School was one room with one teacher for all eight grades. I went to the red brick McAllister schoolhouse for eight years, graduating from the 8th. grade in 1929. There were only two of us, Malvin Estes and myself, in my class and we went all through grade school at McAllister and then high school at Ennis together.

Phyllis Mills Speck, who went to the McAllister school for three years in the 1920s, says in her Wagon Tongue article that "I attended the little one-room for those three years—grades 4th, 5th and 6th." I don't remember Phyllis for sure but we must have both been there at the same time, perhaps in the same grade. Some shelves in (Cont pg 4)

(Continued from pg 3) one corner of the room served as our library. Well worn text books were in the library and were used by each grade when it reached that level of learning. Doris (I don't remember her maiden name) Wilson was my second or third grade teacher and young Harry Wilson, who lived across the road, used to come over and build a fire for the new "school marm" in the pot bellied stove that occupied the center of the room. They were married some time later and lived the rest of their lives in the house that Doris wrote the article about the pioneers who first occupied the Wilson place.

I am not so sure about the layout inside the schoolhouse. I remember bookshelves in the Southeast corner. This was the library. Desks and tables for the students filled up the floor space except for the teacher's desk and the stove in the North end. The desks were different sizes and were moved around to fit the student. Each grade had a floor area according to the size of the class. As noted above, there was only Malvin Estes, in my class so we never took up much room. We went through all eight years together.

Outside, another building, the woodshed stood to the South end of the school building. The teacher was responsible for building a fire in the morning but it was the duty of the older boys to bring wood and coal around and inside as needed during the day. At each side around the woodshed were two outhouses, one for the boys and one for the girls. They always managed to get upset at Halloween time. Also, there was not enough money for toilet paper; Montgomery Ward and Sears Roebuck catalogs had to do. Continued with Chapter Eleven The Deuble-Wilson Place by Doris Wilson in July issue.

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MVHA has received a copy of *The Tales of a Pioneer* by Henry B. Daems donated by Lois Daems Miller. Because it covers a lot of the history of Montana, the Wagon Tongue will start with Chapter Five east of the Madison. ....

In attempting to draw a sketch of the early days of Montana, I find it is impossible to do so without including the names of some of the settlers of the Madison Valley. They are the foundation upon which was erected the reputation and honor of the Treasure State.

I will start east of the Madison River with Osborn B. Varney. He first settled on Trail Creek and he owned a large band of horses and had corrals at Varney Springs. His cattle were branded with a V on the left shoulder. Varney Springs were named after this noteworthy pioneer.

After a time Mr. Varney joined forces with T. J. Farrell who also owned a band of horses. His corrals were at Eight Mile House, eight miles from Virginia City, thus it derived it's name.

As partners, Mr. Varney and Mr. Farrell acquired a very tract of land on the east side of the river and named it the VF Ranch. VF was the brand they adopted and their stock was branded on the left thigh. Together these two men owned about two thousand horses which they grazed on both sides of the Madison River. They sold a great many horses to the United States Government. Also to the Italian Government for calvary purposes.

On the VF Ranch in those days you could see to your heart's delight all the bucking you could possibly want. Many were the cowboys unseated while breaking horses for the government. It was a thrill for the spectators who gathered from far and near to see the broncs sunfish and throw their riders. Many were the pleasant days spent by the onlookers at the old VF ranch.

Mr. Varney was a notably pleasant man who made everyone welcome. He was among the few who never had any enemies and in turn was a friend of everybody. He served as County Commissioner for a number of years and one of the pioneers of the state of Montana whose names will live forever.

T. J. Farrell too will be remembered as one of Montana's noteworthy pioneers. He was Sheriff of Madison County and in that capacity served the country well. He took his obligations serious and executed his duties to the fullest extent. He also operated a freight line between Virginia City, Montana and Corinne, Utah. His horses were used for drawing the large Murphy wagons required for the hauling of all types of goods between the two points. He operated a livery stable and the hotel at Virginia City. Mr. Farrell was a man who had many "irons in the fire" but he was never too busy to lend a helping hand or word of encouragement to his neighbors.

The town of Ennis is a monument to Mr. William Ennis, another of the true pioneers of Madison Valley. He operated a ranch at Ennis where he raised horses and cattle. Mr. Ennis is credited for having opened the first store in the valley of Ennis. He was a man of high principals and was loved by all.

Mrs Ennis was a remarkable woman in so many ways that it is difficult to single any one characteristic as outstanding. She never turned a deaf ear to a hungry passerby and those whose path she crossed were fortunate. She possessed the quality of being a true neighbor and such is the spirit of Montana.



**For Your Reading Pleasure**

In memory of "Dr. Jeff": **The Mechanics of Optimism Mining Companies, Technology, and the Hot Spring Gold Rush, Montana Territory, 1864-1868** by Dr. Jeffery J. Safford This superb history covers the discovery, flourishing, and eventual collapse of the Hot Spring mining district, a part of Montana's exceptional 1860 gold boom.

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**Looking Ahead** Virginia City has decided to do the Chuck Wagon Cook-off which MVHA had been asked to sponsor so MVHA will not be doing it this year. Kevin Brenneke, Treasurer, will be contacting the MVHA members who made donations to sponsor the cook-off. You will be able to decide what you want done with your donation. Thank you for stepping up to help even though Covid-19 continues to make our lives crazy.

The museum will be closed until further notice to help protect our volunteers from contact with visitors who may be coming from other states and countries. There will be no programs or field trips this summer as there is no venue open to use for programs and field trips may exceed limitations on crowd sizes and not be able to comply with social distancing regulations.

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(cont from pg 4) Mrs. Jennie Chowning, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ennis, is the oldest Post Mistress on the Madison in point of service. She still operates the ranch of her father. She is a charming lady who inherited the qualities of good neighborliness from her Father and Mother. She is everybody's friend, always ready and willing to assist to the best of her ability any needy enterprise or benefit in the community.

Mrs. Chowning has one daughter who is now the post Mistress at Ennis, succeeding her mother when she retired. A brother, William Ennis, passed away several years ago.

The pioneers of Jeffers, Montana erected a well deserved monument to the memory of Myron D. Jeffers. He was a rancher, cattle owner and sheep owner and was one of the substantial citizens of the substantial citizens of Madison Valley and Madison County. His aggressiveness won him position of leadership among the early settlers.

Andrew Switzer, also of Jeffers was another of the hardy men who made Montana his home. He too was a rancher and a cattleman of the Madison Valley. He was a jovial gentleman and in spite of the hardships suffered during the early days, he kept his good humor alive. He could recount many of the trials endured by the pioneers who crossed

**MVHA Board of Directors**

- President: Larry Love
  - Vice-President: Brandi Palmerton
  - Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke
  - Secretary: Otis Thompson
  - A new Director to replace John Gecho who retired
  - Director: Eric Palmerton
  - Director: Marty Brenneke
  - Historian and researcher: Don Black
  - Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate
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- Editor: Shirley Love whitneypranch@wispwest.net  
 Contributing editors: *Madisonian* Obituaries,  
*Alice and Joe Gecho* by Alice Gecho pg 810-811  
Progressive Years  
*Alder Gulch Times* Virginia City, Montana Friday, June 22,  
 1900 Fifteen Years at Hard Labor (Martin Peel story)  
Meadow Creek History by Robert R. Hughes  
Tales of a Pioneer by Henry B. Daems Chapter Five east  
 of the Madison Pg 8-10.

**Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by First Madison Valley Bank**

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the plains infested with hostile Indians. He passed away several years ago but his honor, his kindness and friendship still lingers in the memories of the early residents of the Madison Valley.

Andrew Switzer had a brother, Chuck, and everyone who knows him cannot help but have a feeling of admiration and love for this gentleman of sterling qualities. As I am writing this, he is still with us. This is July, 1942. Chuck is over ninety years old and can still tell many interesting tales of the days of Territorial Montana.

Let us pay tribute to William Mitchell and his brother, Henry, early pioneers and settlers. They were both ranchers and stockmen of the Madison Valley at Jeffers. Both of these men were upright and loyal citizens of Madison County.

John Woodworth is another man who keeps coming back in memory. He was a cowman, horseman and Veteran of the Civil War. Johnny hailed from Jeffers and though there are no monuments in his honor he will never be forgotten. What a time we used to give him on the roundup of horses and cattle. We continuously tried to get his horse to buck him off by working a rope under his horse's tail. Johnny was a good sport and never got angry at our capers.

Chapter Five of *Tales of a Pioneer* will continue in the July 2021 issue with John Levenes.

# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 19 issue 3

Madison Valley History Association

July 2021

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat:** WOW! What a hot summer!! The Board has decided that the museum will stay closed for this summer and into the fall due to the COVID-19 and the possibility of the Delta variant getting to our community. Hopefully 2022 will have us enjoying a better year.

We did have a great program arranged by Lee Robison and the Elling House on August 5 about Nancy Russell, wife of renowned artist, Charlie Russell. Mary Jane Bradford of Montana Humanities presented the program. This will kick off our MVHA programs. Looking ahead, hopefully MVHA will be able to find programs to present on a monthly basis this fall and into 2022. We will have the Old Time Christmas Pot Luck and program in December. We are in need of programs for September, October and November.. If you have an idea for a program or would like to present a program, let one of the board members know.

MVHA will be trying to get back on track for 2022. In order to open the museum in June, MVHA needs a scheduler to coordinate the volunteers. Field trips will be planned and programs will be scheduled with some help and ideas from our members. And for the May 2022 annual meeting, members need to step up to the plate to replace any retiring board members.

Stay calm, cool and collective, Your Wagon Master, Larry Love

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Tales of a Pioneer by Henry B. Daems. In the April 2021 issue, we left you with John Woodworth. Johnny, poor boy, has passed on but left many memories of his fine citizenship for the pioneers to remember. John Woodworth is the passing of time.

John Levenes, an early settler and pioneer established a ranch on Odell Creek on the east side of the Madison River. He was a man of conviction and whatever he undertook to do was well done. The Levenes Ranch is a monument to his memory. Also locating a ranch on Odell Creek was Sanders Ward, a stockman—both cattle and horses. He was a very busy man for when you met Sanders, he always made this remark, "I am so hell-fired busy I have no time to smoke." However if you ever met him without his pipe in his mouth, it would be accidental. A jolly, good citizen who was liked by all.

Another settler on a ranch on the east side of the river was C.C. Witnew. He raised horses and cattle. He raised a large family and was an honored citizen of Madison County who was respected by all.

A first class blacksmith, James Saunders, was also a horse owner and cattleman of long ago. He was considered by all as a man of good cheer and loyalty. He always looked on the bright side of all troubles and was kind and cheering to everyone. He had no enemies. Friend to all and his passing left many sorrowing pioneers behind. James, happy go lucky James Saunders is no more.

Old Timer, James Spray, was popular with everyone. On his ranch he raised horses and cattle and took great pride in his stock. He was a God fearing man and could quote any passage from the Bible at any time. As a Democrat, he was ready at all times to lock horns with a Republican if the opportunity presented itself. The latch string was out to all who visited his ranch but if a stranger came to his place, Mr. Spray would ask him immediately if he was a buffalo killer. If the answer was yes, Mr. Spray would tell him quickly that no one who killed buffalo could stay at his place. He disliked cribbage thoroughly and also barred cribbage players from staying at his ranch overnight.

Good natured Henry Riblet was another of the stalwart pioneers who located a ranch on the east side of the Madison River. There he raised cattle and horses. Henry was noted for the pranks he could play on his neighbors. If Henry could get a joke on a fellow, he was at the height of his glory. Although he was a good joker, well met, he remained a friend to all.

*(Continued on pg 2)*





(Continued from pg 2) mill on Wigwam Creek, hauling lumber to Alder Gulch and Virginia City by ox team.

Another pioneer of Montana to take root on a ranch on Wigwam Creek was Mr. Rusler.

Richard Bickford retired on a ranch on Lower Blaine Spring Creek. He was a pioneer who although white married a colored woman who had been left widowed. Mr. Bickford was criticized by many but in spite of that he was highly respected.

Another settler on Lower Blaine Spring Creek was William Cooley who owned a large herd of cattle and numerous horses.

A tribute left to a worthy pioneer is Moran Creek. It was named after a Mr. Moran who settled on a ranch along the creek.

Mr Driggs, familiarly known as Body Driggs, established a ranch on Moran Creek. He was a proud man and willed to the State of Montana a spirit of everlasting friendliness toward all.

Coming to Montana as a Hudson Bay Trapper in 1849 was George Thorpe who was one of the founders of our great state. He was a white man who married a Shoshone squaw and settled on Moran Creek. He raised a large family to carry on his name for the winning of the West. He owned a large number of horses and cattle.

Charles Johnson located a ranch along a branch of the Madison River. This ranch was later purchased from Mr. Johnson by George Thexton who was a pioneer blacksmith in Montana. The Thexton ranch is still owned by his grandchildren. It is a fine ranch and produces fine horses and cattle.

Among the most heard of pioneers of Montana was Slade who had a ranch on the west side of the Madison River. He also located on Slade Creek, about five miles east of Virginia City. Mr. Slade was a perfect gentleman when he was sober but a demon when drunk. At this time we will just list him as one of the pioneers of Montana.

Olla Walton was a man of good standing all through the Madison Valley. He had no enemies. His virtues were many and his outstanding personality made him friends wherever he went.

One of the first farmers to raise wheat in this locality was Mr. Rose. He was a proud rancher of the Madison Valley who located on the bench west of Ennis. Tales of a Pioneer to be continued in Oct.

In the April issue, **The Meadow Creek History by Robert Hughes Chapter Nine Ranching and Chapter Ten School and Schooling** got us caught up on Robert Hughes and his younger childhood years Now we are ready for Chapter 11.

**Chapter Eleven The Deuble-Wilson Place (Meadow Creek) 1964** by Doris Wilson 3

John Jacob Deuble was born in the Black Swamp country at Liverpool, Medina Co., Ohio, on January 28, 1840, the oldest son in a family of eleven children. At the age of sixteen, When the next older brother was able to do the home chores, he left for a more adventuresome life. For some years he drove oxen teams for overland freight companies between Omaha and Denver, walking in relay. He also drove a wagon train for Bill Cody, (continued on pg 3)

(Cont from pg 2) finally stopping near Denver to prospect for gold. When his partner was killed in a mine shaft, Deuble decided to go to the Montana Territory which had just been opened up for homesteading.

He arrived in Montana in 1863 and selected his 160 acres in the bottom land just south of the Madison Range. His first cabin was located just south of what is now known as Noth Meadow Creek and near a good spring and well sheltered from the north wind by brush. He soon moved it about half a mile to the south after he awakened one morning to find that beavers had built a dam in the creek and flooded the cabin with a foot of water. In 1873 he built a larger house, which had two downstairs rooms and a large attic. He was assisted by Will Clark (grandfather to Ed Clark) who later lived in Ennis. J. A. McAllister told of coming from school at noon to play on the logs as the house was being built. The older children ran back to school when the bell rang, leaving him on the top log. He was afraid to come down by himself so he stayed there crying until the carpenters returned from their lunch. A well was dug just west of the house, with a team being used to scoop out the soi so it wouldn't be necessary to dig so deeply by hand.

In about 1875-76, Mr. and Mrs. E.A. Maynard (grandfather to Ed) who lived east of the river, came by team and stayed the night with Mr. Deuble. The next day the three started by team to Fort Benton where they boarded a raft to float down the Missouri River. The raft was tied to the bank at night so the passengers could prepare their evening meals. The Maynards were going back east to visit relatives and Deuble was going back to be married.

Sarah Kurfess, was a pioneer school teacher in Wood County, Ohio and returned to Montana December 24, 1880. The new log house was ready and the couple was now parents of a son, John A. who was born on October 25, 1880. On March 17, 1883, another son, Paul E., was born, There was a bad north blizzard when Paul decided to come into the world, so Mr. Deuble went horseback facing into the wind to Harrison where the nearest doctor was located. He did not know that just a mile or so ahead of him a neighbor was also going (Cont on pg 4)

(Cont from pg 3) for the doctor as they too were expecting the stork. Both babies arrived safely.

The Bannock Indians were friendly and camped along the creeks on their way to and from the hunting grounds. The Deuble boys could remember the Indians trailing down the slopes of the hills to make camp. Their mother, when she thought she would be alone for any length of time, would bake up plenty of sweet food so if the Indians did come begging, she could lower the windows from the top and hand the food down to them. At one time an Indian child was very sick and the father came to get her to help. The child got well and the Indian gave Mrs. Deuble a pair of beautifully beaded moccasins, which are still in the family's possession.

At the time of the Big Hole Battle the settlers expected Chief Joseph and his war party to come through the Madison Valley as that route would have been the easiest. They hurried to Virginia City to obtain guns and ammunition with which to protect themselves. The women and children were to be put in the Deuble cellar and the men were to use the house as a fort and shoot from between the logs. Fortunately Chief Joseph decided to take a much more difficult route. Needless to say, many of the guns were never returned. At that time the cellar must have been dry. Later, before being drained about 1924, the water was about four feet deep.

Deubles, being close to school, boarded the teacher and they also had a young hired man who stuttered badly and was bashful who was so smitten with the teacher that he wanted to work for his board so her could be near her. One of the memories of the Deuble boys was the long, long row of cedar posts that the young man cut and piled that year. Many of those posts are still in use and in perfect condition. At one time Deuble had approximately 125 head of horses on the place. An old newspaper pasted to an upstairs wall of the house stated that the horse range for the V F Ranch (Varney and Farrel) extended from the Madisonian Range to Henry's Lake so it is probable that the Deubles also turned his horses out to the range.

The Deuble brand was a JD on the right hip. Apparently the pioneers had their choice of brands and as a rule picked their initials or most any symbol which took their fancy.

During World War II, when scrap iron was being collected, a plow was found in a stream bed which had apparently been made from old wagon tire irons welded together. It is not known if Mr. Deuble did the iron work himself. The plow is now in a museum in Virginia City.

As a small boy John remembers a rattle snake coiled up by the chicken coop. He stood so still his 4

folks thought he was charmed by it, but he said he was just to frightened to move. Walter Vincent said his mother killed a rattler by the southeast corner of the house. In the last fifty years no poisonous snakes have been seen on the place.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Deuble were most helpful in getting a Methodist Church started in the community although they were both Lutherans. They donated land fro a school house.

The Deubles left their Meadow Creek ranch permanently in the early part of 1891. The land was rented to various people until 1909 when it was sold to Pete Morrison. In 1912 it was purchased by T.J. Wilson for \$5000 and is still owned by that family. As it was conveniently located to a small store, post office, school and church, the house has always been inhabited and at least 28 different families have called it home.

Note: The original manuscript for this article is on file at the Merrill G. Burlingame Special Collections, The Libraries, Montana State University, PO Box 173320, Bozeman, Montana, 59717-3220 Phone (406)994-4242. Collection 100- McAllister, Montana Collection 1869-1964 . It may be viewed there or photocopies are prepared for a charge.

**Chapter Twelve: More about the Church** by Robert Hughes

In 1932, Mary B. Lindsay wrote a history of the McAllister church and the original manuscript of her article is also on file at the Merrill G. Burlingame Special Collections, Also please see Rose Megee's update to Mary Lindsay's article. Published in *The Wagon Tongue*, Volume 4, Issue 1, January 2006

I remember the outside geographical layout of the church and school area as it was when i went to school in the 1920s. The church was farthest west and is still in the same place as it was built. The South Meadow Creek road has been mostly straightened out where it used to take a small S curve there and the community hall and school house were tucked into the S curve. Everything is gone now and just where the old buildings stood would be hard to find if you did not know where to look.

A house (parsonage) for the minister and his family was next to the church on the east side and then a large building (community hall). The old community hall had a nice dance floor area with a stage on one end. We (the school) held our Christmas Programs in the hall. I remember the last few of the old time dances that were held there. My Dad and Myrtle McDowell were the music. Uncle Tom claimed all the lumber when the old hall was demolished. I don't know if he owned the property or had paid for the lumber when the (Cont on pg 5)

(Cont from pg 4) hall was built. The parsonage house was moved and used as a kitchen for the community hall for years. It is gone now too.

I remember that at least two families lived in the parsonage after they no longer had a minister. I know that the Estes family lived there. There may have been other families who lived in the old house. Eventually, sometime in the early 1930s, it was moved over and attached to the community hall. Both buildings were torn down not long after that. The 15 or 16 acres that had belonged to the parsonage was an attractive bonus for a minister to live there, as he could keep a cow or grow a garden to augment his ministerial services. It was abruptly sold without a vote or approval of the community and this effectively made the church obsolete. Church earnings alone were not enough to support a minister and his family. Mary L. Lindsay says that this was done by District Superintendent, Jesse Lacklen, around 1928-29. This left the community without access to the cemetery and it was 10 years before the right of way was bought back and returned to the community.

*The Wagon Tongue* will continue In October with Chapter 13 By Dr. Mae Pankey and the Addendum: Meadow Creek History...Meadow Creek and Montana Power by Robert Hughes and Marion Morton.

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**Memories of our departed Madison Valley folks.**

The MVHA aspires to have a genealogical record after the passing of all folks who were born and raised in the Madison Valley and anyone who moved here for work, owned a business or spent considerable time here as each of these folks are part of the historical record of the Madison Valley. Please share your records, stories and other interesting information of those who have passed to make these records complete as possible. They will not be forgotten.

**Betty Jean Neely** passed away April 3, 2021, at her home in Alder. She was born Dec. 4, 1940. Her maiden name was Thorn. She grew up in California and is step-mother to MVHA member, Karen (Neely) Marinos. More Neely family history will be printed in a future issue.

**Thomas "Tom" Strauss Lehman** passed away in Missoula, MT. He was born on Feb. 4, 1937 in Chicago, Il to Lawrence and Sue Lehman. Tom was raised in Colorado, graduated from Colorado A & M in 1960 and then managed the family ranch in Ennis until it sold in 1967. He moved to Bozeman where he was involved in business. He joined Lions Club in 1961 and served as president of the Ennis and Bozeman Gallatin Empire Lions Clubs. He

married Judy Comstock in 1996. He spent his retirement in Seely Lake, MT and Missoula, MT.

**Dennis Swier** passed away on April 11, 2021. He was born July 3, 1961, to Lorance and Rose Sweir in Phoenix, AZ. The family moved to Denver, CO and he graduated from Denver Christian High School in 1979 and studied to become a master electrician. After a divorce, he moved to Montana to continue his employment in the electrical field. He married Terri and he continued his electrical career and owned Sweir Electric in Ennis until he retired due to health reasons in 2020.

**Elaine Elizabeth (Ignatius) Forsberg** passed away on April 23, 2021 at the Madison Valley Manor in Ennis, MT. She was born on March 10, 1928, in Duluth, MN to Ray and Emma Ignatius. Elaine attended public schools and graduated from Denfeld High School in Duluth, MN. Elaine married Vern Forsberg in 1948. Vern served in the U.S. Marine Corps so they moved around the country a lot and their children were each born in a different state. The family moved back to Duluth, MN in 1964 and to Minneapolis in 1966. She had many interests and worked outside the home and also owned her own gift shop. In the early 1970 she and Vern parted ways and she moved to Sarasota, Florida to be near two of her daughters. Again she kept busy working and in 1985 she married Harold Forsberg, her widowed brother-in-law and gained five adult step-children. After Harold passed way and after visiting her family in Ennis over the years, Elaine decided to live in Montana. She immediately became an active member of the Ennis community and there was no slowing down until her 90's and then she became a resident of the Madison Valley Manor where she had spent so many years working as a volunteer. She will be missed by many Madison Valley friends.

**Kelly Faye Johnson** passed away on April 24, 2021, at the Madison Valley Medical Center in Ennis, MT. She was born on July 18, 1970 in Denver, CO to Joyce and Jim Johnson. Kelly moved to the Madison Valley in 2014 to be with Landon Padgett. She worked for Bozeman Physical Therapy in Belgrade, MT. She tired of the daily drive and worked for the remainder of her life in Ennis, MT.

**Catherine Joane Reed Yochim Sullivan** passed away on April 25, 2021 in Ennis, MT. She was born in Butte, MT on October 23, 1937 to Phillip Henry and Catherine Minnie (Rolando) Reed. She graduated from Butte High School in 1955 and Married Walter Mark Jochim on May 10, 1955. Joan retired from Woolworths and went to work for Herbergers for many years. She married Thomas (Tom) Lloyd Sullivan in Ennis. (Cont on pg 6)

**For Your Reading Pleasure**

**Forty Years a Fur Trapper on the Upper Missouri**

The Personal Narrative of Charles Larpenteur, 1833-1872. This life record is one of the most important sources of information concerning the fur trade of the Upper Missouri in the nineteenth century.

**Looking Ahead**

**September 23(?) 25(?) 2021** Program or maybe even a field trip idea. Nothing is planned but ideas or suggestions are welcome

**October 21, 2021** Program ideas or suggestions welcomed

**November 18, 2021** Program ideas or suggestions welcomed

**December 21, 2021** Old Time Christmas Potluck and program.

The museum will be closed until further notice to help protect our volunteers from contact with visitors who may be coming from other states and countries.

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**Historic McAllister Church** by Lee Robison

Dear MVHA Members: Apparently the Church that sits beside Meadow Creek Road in McAllister is to be sold. This may seem to be no large tradgey in our time of spiritual obliviousness. But the Church's sale lead to its removal from where we know it belongs, those of us who have lived around it and have driven past it and its shadow of memories every day will lose part of our hearts where those shadows move remembrance.

Forty-four years ago, my soon-to-be wife saw the white McAllister Church with its bronze domed steeple, sitting behind its screen of cottonwood and willow, and decided that if she was going to marry a Montanan in Montana it would be in a real Montana Church. Her determination to marry in the McAllister Church was reinforced when she learned that my grandparents, Zora McKee and Frank Armstrong were married there sixty years before.

There are many others from our community who spoke their vows under the eves of the McAllister Church. I like to think that they, like me, would prefer that the Church remain a part of the community, a sort of a reminder of happy times.

The McAllister Church has been a part of McAllister for nearly a century and a half. One of the first mentions of it that i can find is a notice in the January 26, 1895, *Madisonian* where the Meadow Creek correspondent reported that "revival meetings are in progress at the M. E. Church." This was when the Church was still M.E. (Methodist Episcopal) when McAllister was known as Meadow Creek and when there was no Ennis Lake in the Meadow Creek Bottom. Some say the only thing still around 6

**MVHA Board of Directors**

- President: Larry Love
  - Vice-President: Brandi Palmerton
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  - Director: Marty Brenneke
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- Please call Larry Love 682-5780 for date of board meetings. *The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be October 2021. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed. Your editor needs your history stories!
- Editor: Shirley Love whitneytranch@wispwest.net
- Contributing editors: *Madisonian* Obituaries, *Meadow Creek History* by Robert R. Hughes *Tales of a Pioneer* by Henry B. Daems Chapter Five *East of the Madison* Pg 8-10.

*Historic McAllister Church* by Lee Robison

**Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by First Madison Valley Bank**

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in McAllister from those times are a few haunted, rotted logs from Jack Slade's cabin.

It is true that the Valley has other historic churches. But those do not hold in their shadows the names of worshipers and neighbors of the last 130 years of McAllister, Montana's history. These shadows of remembrance are the true value of the McAllister Church.

It is a Madison Valley historic landmark and should be placed on the National Register of Historic buildings.

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A "**Save the Church**" Drive has started. To get more information about this drive and to sign the "Save the Church" petition call Zoe Todd (MVHA member) at 406-682-4360 or cell at 406-498-0676 or Marlene (Dutch) Martin at 406-682-4045.

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*(cont from pg 5)* **Memories**

**Ralph C. Northway** passed away on June 22, 2021. He was born in Helena, MT on July 24, 1937 to William H. and Agnes M.(Chesnik) Northway. Ralph graduated from Ennis High School in 1956 and joined the U.S. Air Force. After the Air Force, he was a business man in Miles City, MT. On a trip back to Ennis, he met and married Alice Randell. They bought and operated the Alder Steakhouse for many years until retiring to Sheridan, MT.

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**History Tid Bit** 25 different rodeos are held through out the state of Montana and one is in Ennis.

# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 19 issue 4

Madison Valley History Association

October 2021

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat:** Unfortunately COVID-19 is still around so still use your mask and social distance.

MVHA had a very informative field trip to the historic Daems Ranch on September 18. Thanks go out to the Daems family for presenting this program. MVHA has a program with local author, Gary Forney about his latest book on November 18th. Watch for posters, email notice and phone calls. The board has not decided what to do about the Old Time Christmas Potluck as we keep track of the COVID-19 numbers and determine safety.

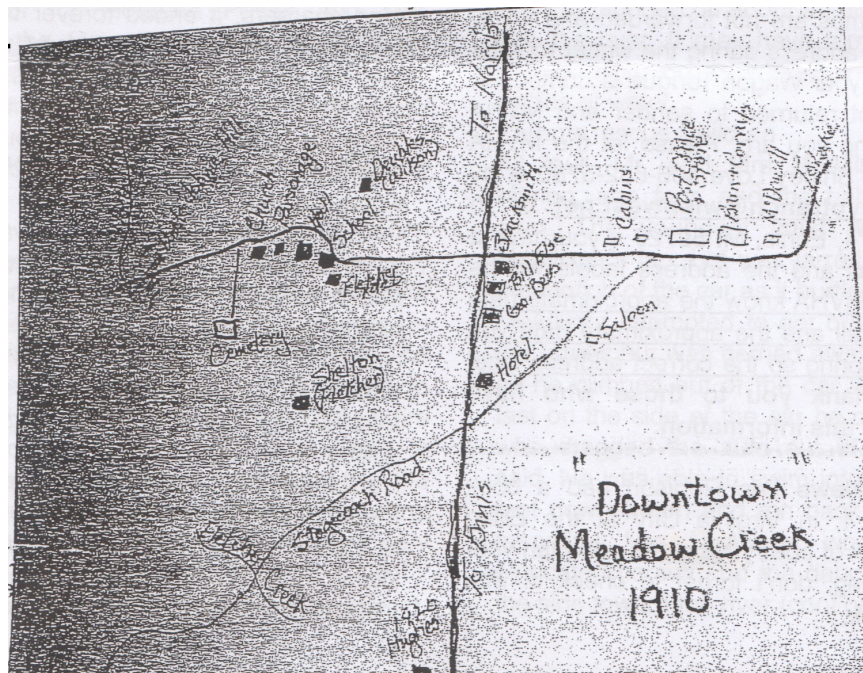
Because of lack of program ideas, MVHA will remain dark in 2022 until April. In the meantime be thinking about programs and field trips for 2022. You can be working on your family history and thinking about sharing that with the MVHA. MVHA needs your histories and help in keeping the museum open again in 2022. Ideas for programs and seeing our valley's history is always welcomed. Hopefully by April 2022, MVHA will be able to get active monthly again.

In the mean time, stay safe. Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas. Your Wagon Master, Larry Love

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Guess what! COVID-19 does not prevent the Wagon Tongue from being published! We left off in July with Chapter 12..More about the Church by Robert Hughes. We have **Chapter 13 Map of "downtown " Meadow Creek/McAllister area—About 1910**

Dr. Mae Pankey has related in her article "James Alexander McAllister—Stockman, Madison County" that James McAllister (Alex's father) was looking for a place in 1871 to settle on what would support his dairy and cheese business and provide a location for his stock ranch. The choice of bottom land formed by the two Meadow Creeks just before they emptied into the lake turned out to be appropriate for what he needed and also situated so that son, Alex, could expand and prosper with a thriving community center.

100 years ago downtown Meadow Creek was busy with stagecoaches and freight wagons plying the route from Bozeman to Virginia City. The cumbersome six and eight horse team freight wagons would soon be obsolete. However the high speed rubber tired replacements for the freight wagons also sometimes stoped on Saturday night to take in festivities in the community hall.



**Membership:** New members since July 2021.

MVHA thanks these folks for joining:

**Marilyn L. and Robert L Hinman**

**John and Ginny Owen**

**Membership update** Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2021 membership is due during August, Sept. or October or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who have generously submitted your renewal memberships. The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds and membership to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

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**Receiving your Wagon Tongue** Several years ago the MVHA started using non-profit organization postage stamps. The MVHA saves a considerable amount of money since we mail out most of the quarterly newsletters. MVHA did not know that mail with non-profit stamps are not forwarded and if you have a forwarding address during the winter months or any other time, your Wagon Tongue is dumped in the trash. It is not returned to sender and MVHA does not know who you are. Please let the MVHA know by phone to Shirley Love 406-682-5780 or by email to [whitneypranch@wispwest.net](mailto:whitneypranch@wispwest.net) or to MVHA PO Box 474, Ennis, Mt 59729 if you have a forwarding address and the address labels will be updated. Also let MVHA know the approximate date you leave in the fall and the approximate date you will arrive in the spring so the correct address label will be used. **Thank you to those who have already provided this information.**

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**MVHA Member News** Lee Robison had a book signing on Sept 4, in Virginia City at the Elling House for his book of poetry *Have*. As you plan your Christmas shopping, don't forget to check in with Lee about his book.

## **Addendum: Meadow Creek History**

*Meadow Creek and Montana Power* by Robert Hughes and Marion Morton

The history of Meadow Creek and McAllister would not be complete without reporting about Montana Power. Everybody who has researched the subject only a little knows that what is now Ennis Lake at one time was a lush hay land and the neighboring ranches hauled tons of hay home to store in stacks and hay mows. Montana ranches in the winter require prodigious amounts of feed for their ever-expanding herds. Most of this feed was and still is, fed to stock in the form of natural grass (wild hay) and/or alfalfa in its various forms of curing.

In order to get the influence of Montana Power to Meadow Creek, I might get to the question that has often been asked of me, "What has been the most important development in your life time?" My answer to that is "Electricity." That surprises most people because they have always had electricity. The Montana ranch where I was raised did not get power until about 1930. We were a year or two behind most of the valley in becoming electrified due to our isolated location requiring that a special line that had to be run up the road from McAllister to our house. We were the only house in the neighborhood for a long time and finally Bob Wilson built a house across the road.

Everyday inconveniences that made living so tough became immeasurably better. That was when my brother and I pooled our resources and bought a shiny new Maytag washing machine, wringer and everything, for my mother. Montana Power not only ended our experimentation with 12 volt direct current wind chargers, it ended forever the galvanized tub and scrub board that so many wives had slaved over for a multitude of years. This same tub was an item of importance Saturday night at bath time. We threw those tubs as far as we could over the dump when our new bathroom, complete with running water and tub, became active.

The old hand pump out in the yard which froze up in winter was replaced by the hum of a little electric pump sending water to the house and indoor plumbing. A modern bathroom with toilet tissue replaced the out house and Sears Roebuck catalogue. Sticking a piece of bread into a pop up toaster was better than burning your eye brows pulling a burned piece of toast out of the oven. Radio and then television became commonplace. People were really becoming spoiled and they liked it. Power was here to stay. Outside the house and kitchen, power made some popular changes too. Instead of shivering on the back porch (cont pg 3)

(cont from pg 2) and peering into the moonlit yard with a shot gun under your arm, one click of a little switch illuminated the whole yard and that unlucky skunk out by the chicken coop. Some genius invented a little device that turned the lights on at dark if you wanted. Without electricity we could not have displays like Las Vegas and Reno. Yes, and with due respect to the automobile industry, television and everything that came during my lifetime, I say "Electricity" is the most important. Generally it made all those others possible. Montana Power brought us a whole new world.

The Madison River flows from Yellowstone Park to Three Forks, Montana. Pioneer ranchers fed their livestock on hay from the lush bottom lands of the river.

Montana Power utilizes the river to provide the valley with all the wonders of an electrified land. The Madison River is now recognized as one of the finest fly fishing streams in the country, spawning a whole new industry.

There was another side to Montana Power to which we never gave a thought. How about the people who made and delivered the power? We knew of course that there was a dam built in the canyon that held back the water to make the lake and that there was a power plant down there that made all this electricity that we used at home. Occasionally we impressed visitors by taking them over the perilous road down the canyon to the dam and powerhouse. We knew that people lived there making electricity for us but we never stopped to think that they had their own small world.

Marion McAllister was born in Dr. Clancy's office in Ennis to Mr. and Mrs. Owen McAllister. Owen was chief operator for Montana Power and Mrs. McAllister was the former Clara Box from Pony. From then until the 6th grade, Marion's world was the Madison canyon. Her memoirs tell the story best.

#### **MY FIRST MEMORIES BY MARION (McALLISTER) MORTON**

I was born in Ennis, Montana and spent the first 12 years of my life near the Madison River. My father worked for Montana Power and the power plant was on one side of the river and our house on the other. A swinging bridge connected the two. The company decided to build another house next to ours and when they were blasting some rock, a fire started. In seconds the entire mountain was in flames. The men said they couldn't fight the fire because there were too many snakes. The wind blew the fire away from our house so we were very lucky.

My first memory of my parents was the day our 3

car went in the Madison River. I was told that the steering wheel broke. The road which is parallel to the river is very narrow. If you meet a car going the opposite direction, one of you must back up to an area where you could pass.

I was sitting in the back seat, but my brother who was fourteen months old was on my mother's lap.

I remember Mother trying to get me to roll down the window so I could climb out of the car. She was already out. Before my father could get my brother out it was too late.

(Note: The following account of this accident appeared in the *Madisonian*)

Infant Son of Owen and Mrs. McAllister Dies after Car Plunges into Water.

A child is dead and his mother on the verge of collapse as the result of an accident in which an auto plunged into the Madison River half a mile below the dam of the Montana Power Company Tuesday evening.

The child is Owen Silas McAllister, Jr., 14 month old son of Mr. and Mrs. Owen "Si" McAllister. The father is chief operator at the Madison power plant.

The child died yesterday morning from exhaustion and from water in his lungs, the death certificate signed by a doctor with the authorization of the Madison County coroner, shows.

#### **Steering Gear Breaks**

The accident happened when the tie-rod on the steering gear of McAllister's auto came unfastened as he and his wife and their two children were driving to their home at the power plant. They were driving along a narrow grade which follows the river from the Madison Lake bridge down to the power plant.

The car plunged off about an eight foot embankment into the river. It may have turned over once but it settled down on its wheels in about five feet, six inches of water.

#### **Parents rescue Children**

All four—Mr. and Mrs. McAllister, their daughter, Marion, age four, and the baby were in the front seat. The youngest child was riding on Mrs. McAllister's lap, but was jarred out of her grasp by the motion of the car as it hurtled down the bank.

McAllister attempted to get out of the car and help the others but was carried away by the swift current as he climbed out of the car window. The water is fast on the side of the car he crawled out, the men who dragged the auto out of the river yesterday said. He was able to swim into the bank about 200 feet downstream and ran back up the bank. In the meantime Mrs. McAllister, working heroically, had extricated herself and the daughter from the car on the side toward the river

(cont on pg 4)

(cont from pg. 3) bank and had swum to land with the older child.

McAllister swam to the car and brought the baby from the car while Mrs. McAllister went to a telephone. A doctor came while the parents worked hurriedly over the unconscious baby. The child revived and was believed to be recovered until his condition became worse early yesterday morning.

Funeral services will be held at the Episcopal church at Pony Friday afternoon at 2 o'clock. Burial will be in the Valley View cemetery near that Madison County town.

Note; The newspaper account differs in a couple details from how Marion remembers.

(1) She thinks she was in the back seat, in as much as she remembers her mother telling her to roll down the window. Being only four years old, she could have been tossed into the rear seat when the car rolled.

(2) Going for a telephone is questionable. More likely another car came along.

Marion continues: To get to our house, you had to cross the Madison River on a swinging bridge and I remember being afraid I might fall into the river.

We had a washing machine with a wringer to squeeze most of the water out of the clothes but they had to be hung outside to dry. One time my mother stepped on a porcupine while hanging out clothes on the clothesline.

Another time I remember she got her hair caught in the wringer.

We had a telephone but there were 15 people on the party line.

Rattlesnakes were a problem and my father used to shoot them.

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The *Wagon Tongue* will continue in January 2022 with *The McAllister Family* by Marion Morton  
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*Tales of a Pioneer* by H.B. Daems left off with Chapter 6 West of the River and one of the first farmers to raise wheat in the valley, Mr. Rose. Gallagher also located a ranch south west of Ennis. He was of Irish descent and no finer Irishman ever lived than he. He was noted for his wit and good humor and was called the "it" when it came to the "witty Irishman". Anyone in distress was always assured help from the hand of Gallagher.

Coming from Belgium in search of a new way of life was Mike Tise who located on a ranch north of Ennis. He was a hard working pioneer who raised cattle and hauled hay to Virginia City at \$30.00 a ton. Many is the time his load overturned on the steep and narrow way.

If ever there was a Christian gentleman who crossed the plains it surely was Fletcher. He was a pioneer of Montana and settled on the at Meadow Creek, raising cattle and horses. His good deeds were many and he lived by the creed: "Do unto others as you would be done by." His reputation for honesty and Godliness was spread through out the vicinity and his neighbors regarded him with the highest of respect.

Have you ever shaken hands with a vice? Such was the grip of the hand of a pioneer called David Phiel who located at Meadow Creek. He was known for his powerful grip. It was a lasting experience to shake hands with this man.

Chris Richter was a wonderful old Dutchman who also settled on a ranch on Meadow Creek. He was a pioneer of Montana and I would trade many of my earthly possessions for a drink of his beer at this very minute, if I could. He raised cattle and horses.

Editor's note: This finishes the two chapters on settlers of *East of the Madison River and West of the River*. In the original manuscript, Daems included the Ruby Valley which I did not include.

MVHA get questions about Indians in Montana and Madison Valley so will do Chapter 10 of Indians of Montana In *Tales of a Pioneer* by H.B. Daems in the January 2022 issue.

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**Letter to the Editor**

MVHA just received a letter and family history from Karen Marinos, MVHA member, who lives in Butte. As editor, I want to include this sooner than later as we have finished the Robert Hughes Meadow Creek history and will finish the McAllister family history by Marion Morton next. Just want to whet your appetite and get you all thinking about your own family history and getting it written down and recorded. This is how history and stories are preserved and we all play a part even if you did not start out in the Madison Valley. Even if you do not live here, you have stories that might connect to the Madison Valley or to your interest in the Madison Valley.

September 29, 2021, Dear Shirley:

Hi! My name is Karen Marinos and my maiden name was Neely. We have corresponded in regard to the Neely family and enclosed you will find a write up I have done. It seems long but briefly describes their lives and history of the Neely Ranch and more importantly, the lives of Thomas and Ruth Neely.

I thoroughly enjoy searching my family history of which is very rich in the Madison Valley with the Neely's, Kennedy's and Daem's families.

We are always tickled to stop at the Museum as well as read *The Wagon Tongue*. We have met many wonderful people and heard



(cont from pg 4) many great stories. I love the ability to go online and pull up the Madisonian clear back into the late 1800's, access to libraries and the wonderful books printed including the *Pioneer Trails and Trials* and the *Progressive Years*. Blessed to own the last two as so much is written about loved ones and all they did to shape Madison County into what it is today.

In closing, once again a big Thank You to all of you who are a big part of keeping our ancestors alive through The Wagon Tongue, the museum, monthly stories from families which often includes a field trip. I know I am not even tapping the ice berg on all you do but once again Thank You,

Editor's note: The Betty Jean Neely memory in July issue is related by marriage to Karen but the Harry Edwin Neeley in this issue is no relation. (Spelling of last name is different.) Thank you Karen for keeping the Madison Valley history alive.

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**Heart of Neely Ranch** by Karen Marinos

I am the great-grand daughter of Thomas Vern Neely (Vern) and Ruth Autumn Sexton Neely (Ruth)

I am often asked about the Neely Ranch and the family. I spent most of my years growing up on the Ranch and have found memories. I often find myself going back in time and wishing I would have taken more notes and lots of pictures. My earliest memories and through stories told with me at about 14 months was that I was living at the ranch with my mom and dad as they were helping with all the needs of the ranch and were there the night of August 17, 1959, when the earthquake hit. It changed everyone's life that night and many lost their lives to this quake and the geographics changed and formed what is now known as Quake Lake. My Dad along with others helped to keep all calm at the ranch as well as to aide in searches involving those who may have been out on Cliff Lake camping somewhere. There were two deaths recorded that occurred at Cliff Lake in the North end of the lake. Heart of Neely Ranch continues Jan,'22

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**Memories of our departed Madison Valley folks.**

The MVHA aspires to have a genealogical record after the passing of all folks who were born and raised in the Madison Valley and anyone who moved here for work, owned a business or spent considerable time here as

each of these folks are part of the historical record of the Madison Valley. Please share your records, stories and other interesting information of those who have passed to make these records complete as possible. They will not be forgotten.

**Harry Edwin Neeley** passed away August 22, 2021. He was born to Tom and Alice Neeley in Sioux Falls, SD. He obtained the rank of Eagle Scout in High School and married his high school sweetheart, Val Rae Hill and spent 50+ years as an ordained Episcopal priest serving parishes in Wyoming, California, Nevada and Montana. He was the founder of the Dillon and Sheridan Wood Banks and gave winter warmth to hundreds of families in Beaverhead and Madison counties.

Longtime MVHA member, **David (Dave) Ramon Hale** passed away on July 4, 2021. He was born in Mobridge, SD. to a railroad man, and school teacher, Raymond Ramon and Emma Lou Gullickson Hale. He developed his wandering spirit as he traveled west with his family following the railroad. He attended Fergus County High School and met and married Patricia Weingart who he called Pattie and we in Ennis knew her as Pat. Dave worked as a crane operator building bridges throughout Montana and Idaho. When children were old enough for school, they ended up in Trout Creek, MT where they bought a service station and trailer park. Dave did logging and built another bridge at Trout Creek. In 1961 they moved their growing family to Winnett, MT and built a successful 300 cow/calf ranch there. He salvaged telegraph poles along a railroad line between Three Forks and Harlowton. After moving to Ennis, he leased the Jack Creek ranch for several years before retiring to build his house with some of the railroad logs.

**Jack Rudolph Reints** passed away Sept. 3, 2021. He was born to John and Erna (Rast) Reints on April 29, 1935 at the family home in Jeffers, MT He grew up on the Reints 7Y Bar Ranch where he lived all of his 86 years of life. Jack's parents came to the Madison Valley in March 1932 as newly weds. John's uncle, William (Bill) Reints had homesteaded 12 miles south of Cameron on the Armitage Flats which is close to the Bill Armitage place. In later years, Bill Reints bought the John Grady ranch one and a half miles north east of Jeffers and that is how the John Reints family came to purchase that place. The Gradys called the place "The Cold Springs Ranch" and rightly so as it had good cold water that they used for

**For Your Reading Pleasure**

**Rascals, Ruffians and Rebels Profiles from Early Montana** by Gary Forney If you like stories about women and men of grit, with motives both pure and evil, you will find someone to love or hate between these pages.

**Looking Ahead**

**November 18, 2021** Gary Forney, local author and MVHA member, will be discussing and signing his latest book (See above)

**December, 2021** Old Time Christmas Potluck and program will not be held this year

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(Memories cont from pg 5) household and livestock. They milked cows and later raised stock cows. In 1957 they bought the Johnny Olin ranch in Jeffers. Jack was passionate about farming and ranching and dedicated his life to that hard work. In 1956, at the age of 21, he joined a sheep shearing crew and traveled with them through Montana, Idaho and Nevada and returned home in 1957 to run the family ranch. Trailing cattle for summer grazing, 20 miles on horseback, from Jeffers to the forest at Johnny Gulch, near the talc mine south of Ennis, was one event Jack looked forward to every year. And then he and friends and family would trail them home again in the fall. One of the highlights of his farming was he got to grow malt barley for Budweiser Brewing. Jack was a bachelor and continued to manage the ranch after his father's death in 1968.

Progressive Years John and Erna (Rast) Reints pg 771-772

**Ward Joel Jackson** passed away at his home in Glendive, MT on September 11, 2021. Ward was born September 5, 1950 in Ennis, MT to Peter and Johnneta Jackson. He started school at Norris, MT, transferring to Harrison Public Schools when the Norris school closed, graduating with the class of 1969. He enrolled at Montana State University. In 1970 he took a quarter off to calve out his beloved Hereford cows. Having taken the quarter off, the US Army changed his plans and drafted him. He returned to MSU after an honorable discharge in 1971. On August 27, 1973, he and Virginia "Ginny" Lee Frye were married. Ward graduated from MSU in 1974 with Bachelor of Science degree in Range Ecology and was just one quarter short of a Master's in Range Ecology and Mathematics. After college he was a rancher and active in the Masons in Pony, Society of Range Management and Montana Stock Growers. He served as County Commisioner for Madison County from 1995 to 1999

**Marion Paul Christensen** passed away September 13, 2021 in Ennis, MT. He was born on

**MVHA Board of Directors**

President: Larry Love  
Vice-President: Brandi Palmerton  
Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke  
Secretary: Otis Thompson  
Director: Steve Garrett  
Director: Eric Palmerton  
Director: Marty Brenneke  
Historian and researcher: Don Black  
Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate.  
Please call Larry Love 682-5780 for date of board meetings. *The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be January 2022. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed. Your editor needs your history stories!  
Editor: Shirley Love whitneypranch@wispwest.net  
Contributing editors: *Madisonian* Obituaries, Meadow Creek History by Robert R. Hughes Tales of a Pioneer by Henry B. Daems Chapter Six *Wast of the Madison*.

*Addendum: Meadow Creek History Meadow Creek and Montana Power* by Robert Hughes and Marion Morton

**Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by First Madison Valley Bank**

February 26, 1938 in Vernal, Utah to Marion and Violet Eva (Francis) Christenson. In 1957 Paul moved to Bozeman to work for Lewis and Jarboe herfords. He continued on with Pearl and WL (Leo) Jarboe at the Lemon Place out of Central Park.

On June 18, 1960, Paul married Sharon Kae Kalkas in Bozeman. In 1967, Paul bought a dairy at Waterloo, MT. In 1974 the family returned to the Gallitin Valley to what would be their family home off Gooch Hill Road. Paul transitioned his career to construction in Bozeman and then to Ennis in 1991, later adding a rental business which is still an active business in Ennis.

**Dan M. Lindsey** passed away Sept 18, 2021 doing what he loved..riding horses in the mountains. Dan was born March 20, 1958 to Vergil and Dona Lindsey in Pullman, WA. He was raised in Idaho and Montana and graduated from Ennis High School in 1976. He earned a Petroleum Engineering degree in 1980 from Montana College of Mineral Technology. He married Debbie Birdsley on Dec. 19, 1981 .

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**Get out your Montana map.** Each of the following is a clue to a town in Montana. More next issue

- 1. A former TV Sheriff
  - 2. Multiple Tableware
  - 3. Civil War general
  - 4. A small horse
  - 5. 7th US president
  - 6. A hill standing alone
- Answers in January Wagon Tongue

# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 20 issue 1

Madison Valley History Association

January 2022

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

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**From the Wagon Seat** A new-year is under way. 2022 will be a prosperous one for all. The MVHA has been very quiet because of the COVID-19 but hopefully we will be right on course pretty soon.

William Ennis, founder of our Ennis, was born on March 17 on St. Patrick's Day. MVHA would like to have a program for our meeting at that time. If you have any ideas for a program or would like to give a program let a MVHA Board member know and we will get it on the schedule.

Hopefully the COVID-19 will subside and MVHA can open our museum for Memorial Day and then in mid June. So plan on volunteering at the museum this summer. MVHA will also need a scheduler to step up and call our members for help at the museum.

I have shown the museum to a couple of families since closing before the pandemic and there is still a lot of interest. MVHA needs your ideas for speakers for programs or for field trips and any idea is very welcome. History will show that we have survived COVID-19 and things will get better. In the mean time wear your masks, get vaccinated and keep an open mind. Your Wagon Master, Larry Love

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Despite COVID-19 the *Wagon Tongue* is still being published and starting our 20th year. We left off in October with finishing the Robert Hughes Meadow Creek History and starting the Memories of Marion (McAllister) Morton which continues in this issue. If you are new to membership or are missing any Wagon Tongue issues, you may access back issues by going to the history website listed above in the heading on this page.

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*Through the Eyes of a Pioneer* by H. B. Daems left off in October with Chris Richter, a wonderful old Dutchman, settling on a ranch on Meadow Creek.

MVHA gets questions about Indians in Montana so Chapter 10 *Indians of Early Montana* from *Through the Eyes of a Pioneer* by H. B. Daems will give some insight.

Due to the resentment of the Indians toward the white man invading the territory, it was necessary for the early settlers to be on constant guard at all times. They had to protect their families. The first arsenal of Montana was located at Virginia City. Edmonds of Nova Scotia was store keeper of this Government Arsenal where muskets, cannons and large heaps of ammunition were kept. These were guarded closely but were available for emergencies.

One day in 1876 word came by carrier that the Sioux Indians had killed General Custer, General Reno and all the soldiers. Virginia City and the surrounding communities were filled with terror and panic. The residents of the territory went into swift action when it was reported that the Sioux were headed for the Bozeman Pass and coming our way. It would not take them long to reach Virginia City and there was little time for preparation. Miners were rapidly granted arms by the guards of the Arsenal. The report, however, proved to be false and the story had been highly exaggerated. Gen. Reno had suffered no loss of which to speak. Gen. Custer and his entire regiment had on the other hand not fared so well. They were massacred on the Little Rosebud in the Yellowstone Valley.

The Sioux under the leadership of Sitting Bull coursed towards Miles City instead of the Bozeman Pass and there had to surrender to General Miles. That ended the Sioux war for a time.

The next great Indians scare was that of Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce. Chief Joseph had a battle with the men who were on the Big Hole. The Indians trekked from the Big Hole to Camas Prairie, then on the Henry Lake through Targhee Pass and down the Yellowstone. They were closely followed by General Howard and surrendered to General Miles near Miles City. About 75 men at Virginia City organized to go out and give battle to the Nez Perce to keep them from the city.

(Continued on pg 3)

**Membership:** New members since October 2021. Last two were gift memberships. MVHA welcomes you to membership.

**Bob and Shirley Bayley**  
**Betsy and Charles Wilson**  
**Marty Hensel**

**Membership update** Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2021 membership is due during November or December or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who have generously submitted your renewal memberships. The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds and membership to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

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**Receiving your Wagon Tongue** Several years ago the MVHA started using non-profit organization postage stamps. The MVHA saves a considerable amount of money since we mail out most of the quarterly newsletters. MVHA did not know that mail with non-profit stamps are not forwarded and if you have a forwarding address during the winter months or any other time, your Wagon Tongue is dumped in the trash. It is not returned to sender and MVHA does not know who you are. Please let the MVHA know by phone to Shirley Love 406-682-5780 or by email to [whitneypranch@wispwest.net](mailto:whitneypranch@wispwest.net) or to MVHA PO Box 474, Ennis, Mt 59729 if you have a forwarding address and the address labels will be updated. Also let MVHA know the approximate date you leave in the fall and the approximate date you will arrive in the spring so the correct address label will be used. **Thank you to those who have already provided this information.**

**Member News Bob Beekman and John White** helped the Ennis Schools with helping their bees, bee hives and the production of honey into a success. Their expertise and encouragement enabled the students and their bee hives to produce enough honey to have a good harvest this year.

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**The McAllister Family** by Marion Morton (Continued from October 2021) WT finished in October with Marion explaining how to get to her house.

Twelve children were born at McAllister, MT to Alex McAllister and Clara Nox, my grandparents.

A relative of Anne's was a blacksmith in Virginia City, MT at the time when the vigilantes hung the sheriff.

Alex's father drove a stage from Salt Lake City to Virginia City, MT. McAllister, MT was named after my grandparents who owned the general store and post office.

Things I remembered about the McAllister Ranch: 1) Warm bread baked in a wood stove; 2) A well outside with a pump and a metal dipper for drinking water; 3) Playing in the hayloft; 4) Sleeping in a feather bed; 5) Watching Grandpa put sheep dip on a horse whose skin was torn by barbed wire; 6) My father told me a colt was raised in the separator room, which is where cream is separated from the milk. Its mother died so it was raised as one of the family 7) Alex and Anne had two sets of twins but one set died of diphtheria. Two other children died at the same time; 8) Grandpa McAllister raised quarter horses and when my father was 10 years old, he, on his horse, won the record for the quarter mile.

Things I remembered about my grandparent's home: Taking baths in a tub in front of the wood stove. Water was brought in from a well outside. The outhouse used Sear's catalog for toilet paper. Grandma made hooked rugs and my great Grandma, next door, made handmade quilts. Grandpa made ice cream on the back porch. But when he killed the chickens, I remembered I didn't like that. Ice was delivered daily and a root cellar was used to keep vegetables, like potatoes, cool. I've been told that my Grandmother McAllister nursed the president of Montana Power back to health when he fell while fishing in the Madison River. He was grateful and asked Grandma what he could do for her. She said, "It would help if you could give my number one son a job." He did and my father worked for Montana Power until he retired.

*(cont on pg 3)*

Cont from pg 2) My grandmother burned to death while going through a mine she owned. My father was badly burned while working on a hot switch but his life was saved because the miracle drugs had just been invented—sulfa and penicillin. Montana Power paid all his hospital bills and gave him his job back when he got home after a one year hospital stay.

I remember something my grandfather said, “It is always good to change political parties every now and then because it takes the new political party a little while to find the feed bag.”

My father was the oldest of twelve children.

**The McAllister Family** by Marion Morton will continue in April 2022 with *School Days*.

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(Continued from pg 1) *Indians of Early Montana*

Those who volunteered to go on horseback and they supplied themselves well with a Cannon and enough ammunition but most of the men jumped into Camas Creek. It was later reported that all that shown was their heads above water. There were 3 men in the group who gave battle, those being Father Kelly, George Thexton and Stevens.

Stevens was a veteran of the Civil War and took his duties as a soldier seriously. The Indians captured all but one of the horses of the men who went. The only horse returning was one owned by W.W. Norris and that had been ridden by Tom Baker. The red warriors had also captured the cannon.

Captain Norwood of Fort Ellis, Bozeman who was one of the best Indian fighters in the Territory saved the Virginia City volunteers from being massacred. He recaptured the cannon and took enough horses for the men to arrive safely home.

The Indians from Camas trekked to Henry’s Lake where Sawtell and Gilman had stables, sheds, houses and fishing boats. They burned down the buildings and stole all of the horses. The owners miraculously escaped and came on in to Virginia City. Word was received in Virginia City that Chief Joseph was coming from the Madison Valley. All the residents of the vicinity hurried to Virginia City and made arrangements for the women and children to be put in the Court House. It was, however a false alarm, but I am telling you this situation was a grave and serious one. The Indians went through Targhee Pass and once again Virginia City was spared an onslaught by the warriors.

George Thexton, William Hood and Fred Kohls were sent as couriers from Virginia City to the upper part of the Madison Valley. They reported that Chief Joseph and his warriors had gone and were on their way through Targhee Pass to Yellowstone. The soldiers in the battle at Camas were badly and 3

seriously injured. They were brought to Virginia City to the Sister’s Hospital where they received immediate attention and constant care but it came too late. They both passed away from their wounds and were buried on the hill they did so much to defend.

Virginia City had several bad Indian scares but no actual fighting ever took place. The early settlers were not always at sword’s end with the Indians and many of the associations were friendly.

It was a wonderful sight to see Tendoy’s band of Indians, the Bannock tribe, arrive at the east end of Virginia City.

The Shoshone Tribe was also welcomed as they were friendly. Mayor Jim, a Mormon with two Indian wives was with the Shoshone Indians and he became, by virtue, a very popular figure with the residents of the city. Most of the pioneers were friends to Tendoy.

*Through the Eyes of a Pioneer* Chapter 10 Indians of Early Montana will be continued in April 2022

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**Memories of our departed Madison Valley folks.**

The MVHA aspires to have a genealogical record after the passing of all folks who were born and raised in the Madison Valley and anyone who moved here for work, owned a business or spent considerable time here as each of these folks are part of the historical record of the Madison Valley. Please share your records, stories and other interesting information of those who have passed to make these records complete as possible. They will not be forgotten.

**Marie Geib Griffin** passed away September 17, 2021, in Camarillo, Calif. Marie was born on February 4, 1927, to Ann and George Geib in Santa Barbara, Calif. She grew up in Santa Barbara and graduated from Santa Barbara High School in 1944. She attended University of California Santa Barbara where she graduated with a degree in Sociology. In 1949 she married her husband, Russel Griffin. They moved to Camarillo and co-founded Griffin Brothers Mortuaries with Tom and Mary Griffin. After retirement and as empty nesters, they traveled in their motor home, they discovered Jack Creek in Ennis, MT. Ennis became their second home, opening the door to the Big Sky Country for her family that they will cherish and enjoy long into the future.

**Nancy Irene Stewart** passed away Sept. 27, 2021 in Napa, Idaho. She was born Nov. 26, 1945 to Fred and Laverna (Welles) Hokanson in Norris, MT. She grew up in Norris where she attended grade school and then high school in Harrison, Tt. Nancy married Gaither Stewart on June 2, 1962. (cont pg 4)

(cont from pg 3) at the old Norris School house. They built their first home in Ennis and spent time in Challis, Idaho where they studied to become missionaries. They continued their missionary school in several communities in Idaho. Nancy contributed to her community by supporting the elderly, playing organ and piano at her church and she became a talented quilt maker.

**Jessie Clark** passed away on October 1, 2021. She was born on October 21, 1923, to Pearl and Earl Love in McAllister, Mt.

Jessie's family goes back to Jessie's grandfather, James M. Love, who started out in Stella, Missouri. Seven children were born to James and Margaret (Hinton) Love in Stella and one son was Earl N. who is Jessie's father.

All the older children grew up and began their schooling in Stella. Earl's father, James, joined the Western movement with his family moving through Berthoud, Colorado and then Belfry, MT. Their grade schooling continued when they resided at different places. The family came to Norris, MT in Madison County by train in 1916. Grandfather, James, leased the L.L. Gordon in the valley. Father Earl married Pearl Cassidy and leased various ranches in the McAllister area and then purchased the old Shewmaker ranch one mile north of Ennis and lived there until selling in 1957. Jessie grew up on this ranch and in 1938 married Bobby (Bob) Victor Clark. Jessie lived most of her life in Montana.

**Jefferson Chowning Jeffers**, MVHA member, and the last native descendants of the Ennis and Jeffers families, passed away October 3, 2021, in Bellevue, Wash. He was born on July 7, 1923, to Leola Winnifred (Chowning) and Fayette (Fay) Burton Jeffers in Ennis, MT. He was the great grandson of William Ennis, the founder of Ennis. The family lived on their Jack Creek ranch outside of Jeffers, MT.

The family grew alfalfa and grain crops and raised chickens, hogs and some sheep on the land inherited by his father, Fay, from his grandfather, Myron D. Jeffers. Ranch life ended when a dam upstream failed and flooded many Jack creek properties. The family escaped but lost many animals. Their crops depended on water from a flume which was destroyed by the flood and banks eventually foreclosed on the ranch.

As Jeff was entering 5th grade, the family moved from Jack Creek to live in the home of great grandmother, Katherine "Grandma Ennis,, just north of the gazebo in today's Grandma Ennis Park. Later the family moved east, across the street to live to live in the home of Jennie Ennis Chowning, who was his grandmother. This house has recently

been bulldozed into the basement and replaced by a commercial structure. Jeff graduated from Ennis High School and WWII interrupted his college years.

After his military service finished, he and several Ennis pals sailed from Seattle to Alaska and worked on the gold dredges near Fairbanks until winter freeze up. He registered for classes at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks. While in college, Jeff met his future wife, Jeanne Lesh and after graduating in 1949, they were married. They moved to the Columbia River Valley to begin his teaching career in Washington and Oregon. In 1963 the Jeffers family moved back to Alaska and Jeff worked for the state department of Education. After retirement, Jeff and Jeanne moved to Bellevue, WA.

**Glen Walter Schroeder** passed away October 9, 2021. He was born December 10, 1949, to Ross and Lillie Schroeder in Hallock, Minn. and was raised in nearby Pembina, ND. He completed a degree in forestry at North Dakota School of Forestry, served in the Marine Corp and moved to Williston, ND and worked for Bell Telephone. He married Jean Lindseth in June 1972 and in 1977, he joined the U.S. Border Patrol and relocated to San Diego, Calif. After 30 years with the Border Patrol, Glen retired in 2006. Glen and Jeannie first discovered the Ennis Area on their honeymoon and after his retirement chose to make their home there. Glen loved to hunt and was active in the Ennis Lion's Club.

**Stephen Thomas Gough** passed away October 15, 2021. He was born on September 25, 1946, to Thomas Addison and Helen Peatross (Seawell) Gough and was raised in San Francisco, California by an Irish family from the mining town of Butte, MT. Childhood held many memories and after high school he became a butcher's apprentice was cut short by joining the Marines on a dare from his boss and co-worker. After his service, he joined the San Francisco Police Department in 1969 and became an original member of the newly formed undercover Tactical Squad in 1971. As a young boy, Steve discovered Olympic weight lifting within the pages of a Strength and Health magazine. As an adult, Steve joined the Sports Palace in San Francisco and weight lifting became his life pursuit. He met his future wife, Gale, while there.

When he finally retired to Montana with his wife, Steve continued to coach strength athletes from around the country. He and Gale ended up living in McAllister, MT. His Dad had read a story to him as a child about John Colter and this compelled him to write a historical fiction story about Colter and he published his first book *Colter's Run*.

**Roger Gilbert** passed away October 21, 2021. He was born September 13, 1939, to Thomas Gilbert and Lorraine (Sherman) West in Billings, MT. He was raised in Las Vegas, Nev. and graduated from Las Vegas High School in 1957. He attended Idaho State University, He met and married Joy in Jackson Hole, Wyo. in 1967. He worked in the construction industry on projects throughout the West. He spent his life in pursuit of perfecting skiing and raising fly fishing to an art form. He spent his final days in the place he loved the most, his 41 acres in Montana on the Madison River.

**Tater James Shows** passed away October 31, 2021 at his home. He was born on December 23, 1963 in Ennis, MT to Gene and Mary Shows. Tater grew up in Ennis doing all things outdoors from hunting to fishing with his dad and brothers.

He attended elementary school in Ennis and graduated from Ennis High School in 1982. After he graduated, he went to school in South Dakota and rodeoed until he suffered a career ending injury and he worked for the talc mine and a ranch in the Ennis area. In 1993 he reconnected with his girl friend, Debbie, eloped to Coeur'd' Alene, Idaho. He was committed to his real job of being a line equipment operator for Rocky Mountain Contractors, giving them 20+ years of dedicated work.

**Glenn David "Dave" Legg** passed away November 15, 2021. He was born on May 12, 1957, in San Diego, Calif to Glenn Ronald Legg and Patty Marion Halvorson. Dave graduated from Kearny Senior High School in San Diego, Calif. in 1973. He attended San Diego Mesa College and earned his AA degree in 1977. He then attended San Diego State University and graduated in Physical Education in 1980. David "Coach" Legg's professional life was dominated by coaching. He coached at many schools in Calif until moving to Montana in 2011 and coached for the Bozeman Bucks American legion team for five seasons. Most recently Dave served as a substitute teacher for the Ennis schools.

**Cora Mae Amdor Goggins** passed away on November 29, 2021. She was born on March 3, 1929, to Earl and Cora Hamel Amdor in Harlowton, MT. She grew up in Harlowton, Sand Springs and Miles City as her father worked for the railroad. She graduated from Harlowton High School in 1946. She worked at the local soda fountain through school and a good looking, red headed young man was a regular patron. The day after she graduated from high school, the young man, Bob Goggins asked her for a date and before long they were married on Oct. 30, 1946. In 1948, they moved to Bear Creek at Cameron, MT, where Bob was the herdsman for 5

Orr Herefords. Cora made a deal with Mrs. Orr to cook the noon meal for the crew all summer, making enough so Mrs. Orr had leftovers for supper that night. In lieu for payment, Mrs. Orr gave Cora a Hereford steer. They feed the steer and, showed him at the Winter Fair and sold it for \$1000. Cora always said that was the best paid cooking gig she ever had.

In 1959, Bob and Cora bought ranch a mile north of Ennis from Earl Love, Sr., where they raised their family and Hereford cattle. Cora was noted for her cooking and baking skills. Cora was active in her church, Cub Scouts and 4-H. She volunteered at the Madison Valley Public Library, Madison Valley Manor and the Woman's Club Nearly New Shop and numerous other community endeavors.

**Patrick Robert McKay** of Virginia City, MT passed away Dec. 8, 2021 in Austin Texas. He was born on Sept. 21, 1983 in Bozeman, MT to Gary and Patty McKay. He graduated from Ennis High School in 2002. After high school he worked with his father in the insulation business. Patrick was a talented musician and his affection for music took him to Austin, TX where he worked for various music festivals.

**Lois Daems Miller**, MVHA member and long time resident of Belgrade, MT passed away Dec. 22, 2012. She was born Sept. 2, 1939 in Virginia City, MT to Roy and Gladys Daems. Lois lived in Varney, MT and attended school in Ennis, MT where she graduated in 1957. After high school she attended Western Montana College and earned her elementary teaching degree in 1959. While at Western, Lois met Guy Miller and after he returned from the service, they married June 11, 1959. They lived in Willow Creek and Three Forks and Lois taught 2nd grade in Willow Creek. They moved to Livingston and then Belgrade. Lois did volunteering and community work in Belgrade and Bozeman. She was honored with the Gallatin Valley Habitat for Humanity Outstanding Volunteer for her more than 1277 hours of volunteer time. In 2020 they moved to Fort Benton, MT.

Lois Daems Miller donated the booklet *Through the Eyes of a Pioneer* by H.B. Daems to the MVHA

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**History Tidbits** *SHIP STATE ROOMS* In the early days traveling by steam boat was considered the height of comfort. Passenger cabins on the boats were not numbered. Instead they were named after states. To this day, cabins on ships are called staterooms.....Submitted by Kevin Brenneke JOHN JACOB DEUBLE, early pioneer to Meadow Creek, drove wagon train for Buffalo Bill Cody in the late 1860's..... submitted by Don Black

**For Your Reading Pleasure**

*The Adventures of the Mountain Men* True Tales of Hunting, Trapping, Fighting, Adventure, and Survival Edited by Stephen Brennan

**Looking Ahead**

**March 17, 2022** William Ennis Birthday Plans too be announced.

Plans to reopen the museum late May and June

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**MVHA Year end Treasurer’s Report**

December 31, 2021

Kevin Brenneke, treasurer

**Balances**

Cash \$60.00

Checking \$1,393.09

Savings \$25,614.18

**Income**

Dues \$2,950.00

Name Board \$50.00

Sales(books,etc.) \$122.00

Donations \$2,703.00

50/50 Drawing \$9.00

Savings Interest \$2.46

**Total** \$5,836.46

**Expenses**

Northwestern Energy \$290.14

3 Rivers phone \$163.15

Property Insurance \$2,099.00

Property Tax \$193.30

Misc Supplies \$350.73

Mont. Corp report \$20.00

**Total** \$3,116.32

+++++Memories cont from pg 5

**Lester Lee Klatt** passed away on January 8, 2022.

He was born on October 7th, 1927 near Winship, SD to Lewis “Leuie” and Nellie (Hollihan) Klatt. He attended the country school for eight grades which was a mile across pasture land and further along on farmland. Most of the time he and his brothers rode horseback or walked to school. The family were farmers and raised cattle, sheep, horses, pigs, chickens, ducks and turkeys. They also grew wheat, barley, oats, corn, millet and hay. Before being old enough for the farming, Lester was delegated to herding cattle in unfenced grasslands and he had old Fritz to ride.

He attended one year of high school in Barnard, SD, two years in Ellendale, ND and one year in Missoula graduating in 1945. After high school Les attended Montana State College for one term, took various jobs in Seattle, Bozeman and Ennis. In Ennis he met his future wife, Bobby Bates and married in 1953. He worked for Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Bowdoin National

(Cont next column)

**MVHA Board of Directors**

President: Larry Love

Vice-President: Brandi Palmerton

Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke

Secretary: Otis Thompson

Director: Steve Garrett

Director: Eric Palmerton

Director: Marty Brenneke

Historian and researcher: Don Black

Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate.

Please call Larry Love 682-5780 for date of board meetings.

*The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly.

Next issue will be April 2022. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed.

Your editor needs your history stories!

Editor: Shirley Love whitneypranch@wispwest.net

Contributing editors: *Madisonian* Obituaries,

*Meadow Creek History* by Robert R.Hughes

*Through the Eyes of a Pioneer* by Henry B. Daems

Chapter *Ten Indians of Early Montana*

*The McAllister Family* by Marion Morton

**Printing of this Newsletter was generously**

**provided by First Madison Valley Bank**

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Wildlife Refuge before ending up at Great Falls

Commercial College followed as an office manager

for the Lincoln/Mercury Dealership. After retirement

he and Bobby moved back to Ennis in 1974 where

he was very active in the community.

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**Get out your Montana map.** Each of the following is a

clue to a town in Montana. Answers from October, 2021

1. A former TV Sheriff...Dillon
2. Multiple Tableware ..Three Forks
3. Civil War general.....Sheridan
4. A small horse.....Pony
5. 7th U.S. President...Harrison
6. A hill standing alone...Butte

+++++

Hint: to limit your looking for towns around the state,

start at Ennis and look outward in widening circles

with each issue getting further from Ennis.

Each of the following is a clue to a town in Montana

1. An African explorer
2. A double overpass
3. Bought from Indians for \$24
4. Type of bean
5. A big stone
6. Colorless corridor

Answers in April Wagon Tongue

**History Tidbit** Prohibition began on January 17,

1920.



# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 20 issue 2

Madison Valley History Association

April 2022

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

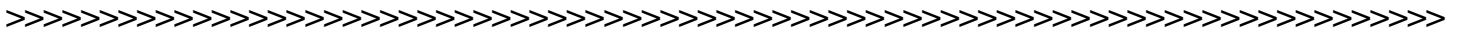
**From the Wagon Seat** Hopefully COVID-19 may be in our rear view mirror. With that in mind, we should start normal MVHA activities..meetings, field trips, an annual meeting and opening the Museum over Memorial Day and start the summer season mid June around June 15th. MVHA will need a volunteer or two to call and schedule for volunteers to work each shift at the museum which is 1-4pm Tuesday to Sunday with the museum closed on Monday. Let me or any board member know if you are willing to volunteer. If every available member could take a day or even better a day each week, our summer tourist season will be over before we know it.

In May MVHA will have a field trip and the annual meeting. The annual meeting is the time to elect board members. Please let the MVHA Board know if you would like to run for a board position. It really does not take much time and MVHA needs all your good ideas. Stay tuned for meeting dates and times. As always, if you have ideas or suggestions for the MVHA, let us know. Remember, every idea is a good one and MVHA will work in as many as we can.

Your president will be traveling to Seattle for some doctor's appointments and may not be around for the first part of the summer but will be back as soon as possible.

Stay safe, help get things back to normal after our recess for COVID and have a good summer.

Your Wagon Master, Larry Love



An interesting piece of Madison Valley History...**The Shewmaker Dairy Barn** by Verta Shewmaker Shipman

My parents operated a dairy after moving to Ennis after my father had ranched and freighted with a six horse team from Norris for years. He also carried mail from Ennis to Varney and Cameron and back, three times a week. That is when I learned to drive, perched up on the mail sacks. There was an old barn on the North side of Ennis Street just across from the US Forest service property. We milked cows there as well as using it for a horse barn. That building was removed and a house which is still standing, was moved from the area where our big barn is now located. When the barn was built in 1928 and 1929, there was only three pieces of occupied property south of it: the Fagin property, now owned and occupied by Martha and Edgar Stewart; a house built for Jack and Nora Northway and now occupied by Ermin Shanks; the Armitage property now owned and occupied by Chick and Sis Armitage; an old barn south of the Ed and Norma Miller property which has been demolished and there is a vacant lot there now. The balance of the area was alfalfa field and willows.

We grew up delivering milk for 10 cents a quart or 5 and 8 cents if you took a gallon or more. The big barn could stall twenty or more milking cows. We had milked as many as thirty head twice a day, but the average milking herd was eighteen or twenty. We did have a milking machine and later on an electric separator.

We used glass bottles that had to be washed, sterilized and cooled before the milk could be bottled and delivered. The cream was sold to a creamery, located in the back part of the Economy Grocery Store, which was where the Poole Hall is now located on Main Street in Ennis. We churned our own butter, made our cottage cheese and had ample cream and milk for our needs. Cats, dogs and pigs enjoyed it too.

*(Continued on pg 2)*

**Membership:** New members since January 2022. Last one was a gift membership. MVHA welcomes you to membership.

**Sandra Jennings**  
**Mark McClain**

**Membership update** Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2022 membership is due during April, May or June or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who have generously submitted your renewal memberships. The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds and membership to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

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**Receiving your Wagon Tongue** Several years ago the MVHA started using non-profit organization postage stamps. The MVHA saves a considerable amount of money since we mail out most of the quarterly newsletters. **MVHA did not know that mail with non-profit stamps are not forwarded and if you have a forwarding address during the winter months or any other time, your Wagon Tongue is dumped in the trash. It is not returned to sender and MVHA does not know who you are.** Please let the MVHA know by phone to Shirley Love 406-682-5780 or by email to [whitneypranch@wispwest.net](mailto:whitneypranch@wispwest.net) or to MVHA PO Box 474, Ennis, Mt 59729 if you have a forwarding address and the address labels will be updated. Also let MVHA know the approximate date you leave in the fall and the approximate date you will arrive in the spring so the correct address label will be used. **Thank you to those who have already provided this information.**

**Member News** Zoe Todd, long time MVHA member, is opening her new, used, reused, misused and abused store at Valley View Storage, Unit 41 (behind True Value) 3rd Saturday of May 10-2 through spring and summer. Go check it out and have a good chat.

**Shewmaker Dairy Barn** (cont. from pg 1)

We had metal milk racks that held six quart bottles and we walked and carried them from house to house for delivery. In 1928 my family bought a new Model A Ford 4-door sedan. Then we had a "hey day" because we put canvas in to protect the seats and we got to deliver milk in real style. We had lots of help too—"because no one wanted to hand carry the milk."

Ernie Erickson and Milton Moots were two boys who lived with us, worked for their for their board and room and helped with the cows and milk delivery.

Daddy had rented pasture across the river in the summertime and we would ford the cattle at milking time. I would wash the udders off and we hurriedly put cows in the stalls so they would be clean before we attached the milking machine; otherwise, we had to take a bucket of warm water to wash off the udders.

During summer season, many fishermen were camped on the river banks, Daddy would milk some of the cows right there and would sell the milk at the campsite for their convenience. One lady stepped up and asked Daddy if the milk was fresh. Daddy responded, "Lady, it was green grass 30 minutes ago." *Progressive Years Madison County, Montana* Volume II pg 860-861

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**The McAllister Family** by Marion Morton  
*Continued from the January 2022 WT* finished in January with Marion saying I remember something my grandfather said, "It is always good to change political parties every now and then because it takes the new political party a little while to find the feed bag." My father was the oldest of twelve children.

**School Days**

My mother had to go to Rochester, MI to have a kidney removed so I started the first grade in Pony, Montana where my mother's parents lived. Sargent Harris was my first boy friend and we walked to school together. On our way home we walked through the mud so Grandmother would put my shoes on the oven door to dry them.

When Mother returned from Rochester, my Dad hired a teacher to teach me and 3 other children.

We lived at a Montana Power camp on the Madison River and our school house was a small cabin.

The camp was seven miles from the nearest town..Ennis..so every Saturday we would go in for groceries and a movie.

When I was in sixth grade, my father was badly burned and had to be in the hospital in Butte. School in Butte was very different from the (cont. pg 3)

(cont from pg 2) Madison. We had a woman principal who used a horsewhip on anyone who got out of line.

Marion continues that her high school education was at Polson, Montana and that she graduated from the University of Montana, majoring in Home Economics and Music. She had fun in college, pledging Sigma Kappa Sorority and becoming the Sweetheart of Sigma Chi. After graduation she applied to the airlines for employment and was hired by Pan American as a stewardess. For Pan American, she flew South America and Alaska. Marion was out of the canyon and Montana Power about as far as she could get.

On Alaska flights when we only had passengers in one direction, the pilots taught Marion to fly instrument. She is qualified to fly with a commercial pilots license and helicopter rating.

**Out of Gas**

The following is an excerpt from Ella Savina's account of what Marion herself calls an unforgettable experience:

Marion's 2nd husband was a doctor, a widower with two children who shared the love of flying. They always had their own plane, a seaplane which they traded every few years for a bigger faster one. It was a great life, flying south for the winter and here and there cross country whenever the notion struck them. Marion says that often when they landed in a dry country like Kansas, people gathered around and look at the pontoons quizzically and ask "What kind of a plane is that?"

What Marion herself says was the most unforgettable experience was when Marion and her 10 year old daughter were coming back from a visit in Montana to Seattle. The engine sputtered and quit just as they were approaching the Cascades. She had no time to consider how terrified the child must have been. She later heard Karen telling friends that she prayed all the way, confessed her sins, and told everyone that she loved them, just in case they didn't make it. Marion was busy talking to emergency radio and trying to guide the crippled plane to the nearest lake which happened to be Lake Sammamish.

Marion didn't know it at the time but she learned that a friend and her husband were in the air overhead. Hearing Marion's transmissions, they circled overhead until they knew she was down. Her friend said "You sounded like it was just an everyday occurrence." That soft voice again!

When they reached Lake Sammamish, Marion then faced the problem of where to land. There were swimmers on one side of the lake and a boat launch on the other. Between the two, there were

no people, but it is full of bushes. By using full flaps the plane got enough to get over the the bushes.

When Marion got out of the plane, she could see that the tail was covered with gasoline. What had happened..the young man who had filled their tank in Chelan had put the cap back on without noticing that the chain that was attached to the cap was wound around the neck of the tank. Thus the cap was on lopsided and gas began to leak immediately.

Marion now lives in a retirement home in Bothell, Wash. Her daughter is planning a family reunion for the McAllister family in the summer of 2011. Not many families can boast that their name is on the map. To tourists on their way to Yellowstone Park, McAllister, Montana is only an intersection in the highway. If you stop, there is a post office, a restaurant, a bar and a small motel and the Montana imprint left by Alex and Anne one hundred years ago. The generations following Alex and Anne can be proud of their legacy.

Editor's note: Marion Morton has passed away and this concludes the *Meadow Creek History* by Robert R. Hughes and the addendum *Meadow Creek and Montana Power* by Robert Hughes and Marion Morton.

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***Through the Eyes of a Pioneer by H. B. Daems***  
***Chapter 10 Indians of Early Montana*** left off with most of the pioneers were friends to Tendoy.

A visit to an Indian camp was always a source of pleasure to me. I never tired of these visits. One day while visiting I noticed a woman with some eggs contemplating how to cook them. My curiosity was fully aroused as to how she would cook those eggs. The Indians always made a very small fire in all of their cooking. She raked away the wood out of the ashes and made a little hole and then carefully put the eggs in to the cavity. They cooked in a surprisingly short time. The bread, fowl, and fish were cooked in this same manner. You would be surprised to see the amount of oil that comes out of a fish when it is cooked like this. They also smoke their food at the same time they are cooking it.

The women would pick gooseberries and raspberries and sell them to the people in Virginia City. The Big Buck Indian sold or traded the Buffalo skins, Beaver skins, and other furs. I have never seen an Indian with a Bear skin because of their great fear of the animal. They used to bring great numbers of antelope, deer and elk skins. They were always tanned by the Indians. They were great for trading for horses and took much pride in their horses. They also kept a lot of dogs, some of them badly inbred with the coyote and were vicious.

(cont pg 4)

(cont from pg 3) The Indians thoroughly disliked the Chinese and were not hesitant in making their hatred known. When asked what they thought of the Chinese they would reply "No like 'em. No good. Part black and part dog."

The Chinese would feed their departed dead once a year. The Indians would wait until they had vacated the Chinese Cemetery and then they would sneak in and rob the graves of the drink and food. They would drink the whisky from the little hand painted bowls the Chinese had made to nourish their dead.

**Chapter 11 More about Indians by H. B. Daems**

As long as I am on the subject of Indians I have a couple of short stories.

In our saloon at Virginia City we have a bartender by the name of Tood. He was quite a practical joker and liked to stir up excitement. It didn't take too much imagination to start a commotion as the miners were ready and willing at all times to take on a dare or make a bet.

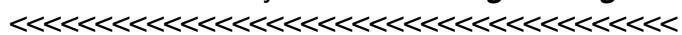
One of the most regular customers of the saloon was a fellow we call Fighting Steve, an Indian. One day Tood told Fighting Steve that he would give him a dozen drinks for free if he could lick a big buck Indian coming down the street. "All right" said Steve. He sauntered down Main Street to meet his captive and he figured there was no easier way to get his allotment of whiskey so easily.

Steve swaggered along, feeling mighty sure of himself. He met the Indian in the middle of the street imagination and the Indian tried to walk around Steve. Steve stepped in front of him. The buck then stepped aside again and again Steve stepped in front of him. Spectators were on hand by the dozen and after what appeared to be a new form of jiggling, Steve began to get riled up and took the situation in hand by biting the buck. The buck then turned the tables and did the same thing to Steve. It appeared that the buck was eating Steve up. You never heard such hollering in your life. It was Steve doing the high tone hollering. It was only natural that a crowd gathered and it took 12 miners to separate the fighting Indians. After they were parted, Steve came back into the saloon. Tood met Steve with a drink and sized him up pitifully as he said, "Steve, here is your drink. You earned it." Steve muttered something under his breath at the bartender in a gentle manner and replied, "I would not fight him again for a whole barrel of whiskey."

As the buck went on his way down the street, a miner gave him \$2.00 and the Indian answered with a grunt. The next day the Indian came back down the street and saw the miner and he walked up to

him and said "You give me \$2.00. I whip 'em bad man today too."

Another tale involves Judge Spratt. He was always a jolly fellow. He was a lawyer who had his office over the Content Corner. He was a very brilliant lawyer and loved his work and was loved by all. He was honest and kind. One of the things that made Judge Spratt so popular with his towns people was his sense of humor. He had the ability to turn anything into an amusing event. The next Indian story will be continued in the July issue of the **Wagon Tongue**.



**Memories of our departed Madison Valley folks.**

The MVHA aspires to have a genealogical record after the passing of all folks who were born and raised in the Madison Valley and anyone who moved here for work, owned a business or spent considerable time here as each of these folks are part of the historical record of the Madison Valley. Please share your records, stories and other interesting information of those who have passed to make these records complete as possible. They will not be forgotten.

**Ron Lee Pfau** passed away on Jan 13, 2022. He was born on Sept. 3, 1936 to Eusebius and Rose (Kohlar) Pfau in Stevensville, MT. He graduated from Stevensville High School where he played football, basketball, track, and baseball.

After graduation, Ron joined the US Navy and served in the Korean War. He went to the Arctic to help with the DEW line. After the Navy, Ron attended college at Western Montana College where he pursued a degree in elementary education. Ron met his first wife, Cody Townsend while at college. Ron started his teaching career in Twin Bridges, MT. While he was teaching, he also continued his education and received his master's degree from WMC and his administration credentials from University of Montana. He became principal of Twin Bridges Elementary

In 1979, Ron moved to Ennis to begin a new role as the principal of Ennis Elementary. Ron also taught PE and coached 5th and 6th grade basketball and high school track. In 1980, Ron married Sandra Frazier.

**Judy K. Statham Miller** passed away January 19, 2022. She was born August 12, 1944, in Rigby, Idaho to Clyde and Leith Statham. She graduated from Rigby High School and her first job was at the Atomic Energy Commission in Idaho Falls. In 1964 she married Bill Gavin. After stops in Bozeman, MT, Albuquerque, NM, San Francisco, CA where Judy worked as a legal secretary. In 1978, Judy and Bill divorced and Judy moved to Bozeman, MT and worked for Binder Construction.

(cont pg 5)

(cont from pg 4) Judy worked for Montana Urethane Systems Supply and met Ron Miller and they married Mar. 23, 1979. She and Ron bought a place in McAllister, MT and after retirement they moved to McAllister. Judy became very involved in the community of Ennis and left her mark there.

**Robin Gail Hensley Blazer**, long time MVHA member through her business, Willie's Distillery, Inc., passed away January 27, 2022. Robin was born November 24, 1975 to Robert and Susan Hensley in the Crow Creek Valley of Broadwater County, MT.

She graduated from Broadwater County High School in Townsend, MT in 1994. She attended the University of Montana in Missoula. While there she met her future husband, Willie, and they were married in December 2020. Robin, Willie and girls moved to Ennis, MT in January of 2007. Robin worked with the Madison County's Economic Development Council where she was instrumental in organizing the trout themed Fish out of Water art installation and the Madison Marathon. Robin was very persistent in researching the distillery business and she and Willie started their Willie's Distillery in one of the old buildings on Main Street Ennis where their business exists.

Editor's note: The current Willie's Distillery location was formerly a Texaco gas station with numerous owners..Fred Nelson, Larry Gleason, Tiny Oliver to name a few. It was also a Subway sandwich shop before Willie's was built.

**Ann Laszlo** passed away at her home in Bozeman on January 31, 2022. Ann was born in New York City to Jeffery and Carolyn Granger. She attended Horace Mann and Brearley schools and received a degree in mathematics from Bryn Mawr College. During WWII she volunteered as a nurse's aide. After the war ended she met and married her husband, Andrew Laszlo. Upon the passing of her father in 1983, Ann assumed ownership of her family's ranch south of Ennis, MT becoming the third generation of her family to do so. The stewardship of the Granger Ranch was a passion for her and she delighted in both its history and progress.

**John A. Tallant** passed away February 13, 2022, in McAllister, MT. John was born September 30, 1960, in Waynesville, MO to Lewis Derrall and Doris Ruthilda (Bordes) Tallant. After many adventures around the United States, he fell in love with the Big Skies of Montana where he lived the last 20 years of his life with his wife, Sabrena "Beanie" Kay Tallant.

**Rolland (Rollie) Charles Hebel** passed away on March 16, 2022. He was born on March 10, 1932 in Columbia County, WI to Theodor and Myrtle Hebel. Rollie came to Montana in 1984 and

cowboyed at the Diamond O Ranch near Dillon. In 1952 Rollie joined the Army. In 1954 Rollie returned to Montana and settled in the Madison Valley. Rollie worked at Imerys Talc mine until his retirement. In 1999, Rollie married Dorma Miller and the two moved onto Rollie's property near McAllister. Rollie and his son, Rusty, raised strawberry roan Belgian Draft horses and showed them at the eastern Idaho Fair in Blackfoot only missing the fair twice, or the Bicentennial Wagon Train in 1976 and the Montana Cattle Drive in 1989. Rollie was very involved with the Montana Draft Horse and Mule Association. Rollie and Dorma's vacations always included wagon train rides in the mountains with friends and horse shows. Rollie presented a program on the Wagon Train to the MVHA and was scheduled to speak again but his declining health prevented him presenting that program.

**Katherine "Kate" (Armstrong) Robison** passed away at her home on March 18, 2022. She was born on April 19, 1927, to Zora (McKee) and Frank Armstrong in Ennis, MT. Zora was a native of the Madison, one of the second generation whose parents came to Montana following land and gold. When Kate was two, the Armstrongs moved to Kansas. After returning with her family back to the Madison, she attended schools in Ennis and graduated from Ennis High School in 1946. After high school Kate worked for a bank in Twin Bridges for two years. In 1947, at a dance in Ennis, she met Max Robison. They were married on March 28, 1948. They lived in a small house across the creek from Wayne Robison's ranch house.

After their third son was born, they moved to the old Squires place. Max bought two sections of farm and hill land. There they made a ranch and a home. Each summer Kate and Max drove their cows and sheep to summer pasture. Their sheep were the last large band to graze in the Madison.

Kate and Max liked to have friends visit them in the mountain camps where they grazed their sheep and cattle. They got away from the towns and highways and enjoyed the calm of the mountains. There were always friends to help celebrate the end of the drive to summer pasture And in the fall, friends to help them with the roundup. Memory written by Kate Robison *Progressive Years* pg 694-695.

**Eileen Ruth Walters** passed away at the Madison Valley Manor in Ennis, MT on March 26, 2022. She was born to Gus and Marie Biederman in Kansas City, Missouri. They moved to Southern California in 1955. After her husband's passing, she moved to Cameron, MT in 2005. Eileen belonged to several community organizations and was very supportive of many Madison Valley events.

**For Your Reading Pleasure**

**Ivan Doig** is one of Montana’s famous Western writers and from Wallace Stegner, he inherited the informal title “Dean of Western writers”. He writes non-fiction as well as historical fiction. I am choosing Work Song as this novel is set in Butte, Montana. You might want to start with Whistling Season before Work Song. The Madison Valley Public Library has a collection of his books and will help you get started

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**Looking Ahead**

**Wed. May 18**, Annual meeting 4:00pm Senior Center

**Sat. May 21**, Field trip to Alton Ranch. Car Pool from Senior Center at 10:00am

Watch for posters, news releases, etc., for MVHA starting up meetings, field trips, and museum opening.

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**MVHA member, Maureen Cheney Curnow recently sent information to help tell the rest of the story about our Indian neighbors.**

There are certainly historical works which present a well rounded view of Indians of early Montana and Wagon Tongue readers will want to refer to them. My purpose here is only to relate a few memories of Indian women in early Montana as told to me, my sister, Karen Cheney Shores and our Mother, the well known western writer Roberta Carkeek Cheney who spoke of the neighboring Indian women in her *Storeys and Carkeeks: Spanning 20th Century Montana*. (The MVHA does not have a copy of this writing in the Research Room at the Museum. but you might find it at your local library.)

***Strong Coffee for the Shoshone women***

Lillie Randall Storey was the daughter of a covered wagon pioneer, Sarah Hudson Randall. Lillie was born in Sterling, Montana in 1868 and later ranched with her husband Amos Story on Bear Creek, near Cameron, MT. She held water rights and homesteaded land in her own name and passed those on to her children Pearl Storey Carkeek and Bessie Storey Sandiland. Lillie Storey was well known as a midwife in the Madison Valley and delivered 51 babies—as well as assisting at any medical emergencies such as accidents at the sawmill up Mill Creek. She communicated with the local Shoshone women—particularly those who lived near Corral Creek and Indian Creek. The Shoshone women depended on her strong coffee to drink just before they went off alone to have their babies. She took them steaming pots of hot coffee and white blankets when she knew a birth was imminent in one of the teepees. She occasionally assisted the Shoshone at a difficult birth. (Cheney, pp 18-19)

**MVHA Board of Directors**

- President: Larry Love
  - Vice-President: Brandi Palmerton
  - Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke
  - Secretary: Otis Thompson
  - Director: Steve Garrett
  - Director: Eric Palmerton
  - Director: Marty Brenneke
  - Historian and researcher: Don Black
  - Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate.
- Please call Larry Love 682-5780 for date of board meetings. *The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be July 2022. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed. Your editor needs your history stories!
- Editor: Shirley Love whitneytranch@wispwest.net
- Contributing editors: *Madisonian* Obituaries, *The Shewmaker Dairy Barn* by Verta Shewmaker *Shipman Progressive Years Vol II* pg 860-861 *Meadow Creek History* by Robert R. Hughes *Through the Eyes of a Pioneer* by Henry B. Daems Chapter *Ten Indians of Early Montana, Chapter 11 More About Indians* *The McAllister Family* by Marion Morton *Strong Coffee for the Shoshone Women* by Roberta Carkeek Cheney pg 18-19

**Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by First Madison Valley Bank**

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**Get out your Montana map.** Each of the following is a clue to a town in Montana. Answers from January 2022

1. An African explorer...Livingston
2. A double overpass...Twin Bridges
3. Bought from Indians for \$24...Manhattan
4. Type of bean...Lima
5. A big stone...Boulder
6. Colorless corridor...White Hall

Hint: to limit your looking for towns around the state, start at Ennis and look outward in widening circles with each issue getting further from Ennis.

Each of the following is a clue to a town in Montana.

1. An animal home
2. Next door to heaven
3. To split
4. Large snake
5. Civil War general
6. Napoleon’s Jail

Answers in July 2022 Wagon Tongue

**History Tidbit**

What Montana city had the largest population in 1917, making it the biggest city between Minneapolis and Seattle?

- A. Butte, with around 90,000 people.

# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 20 issue 3

Madison Valley History Association

July/October 2022

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat** Greetings MVHA members: My name is Brandi Palmerton and I am honored to be your your new president. I am a native of Ennis. I am a Pasley and by choice a Loucks.

The MVHA had an amazing summer season planned. Regrettably, due to unforeseen circumstances, we were unable to open this year. Basically, with all the excess water run off after a down pour of rain that impacted so many Montana communities, a natural spring sprung to life. It flooded the museum crawl space, splashing all hopes of opening. Your board members worked tirelessly to stop and avert this disaster. Unfortunately approximately \$6,000 was spent to rectify the problems. It took over a month to pump out the water and another month to dry it out. We needed to make sure there was no mold for obvious concerns for the board, volunteers, guests and all MVHA artifacts.

Honestly without the help of some amazing people donating, resources and funds, this could have been a catastrophe. A huge thank you to this generous community, board and members. I am extremely grateful for the amazing team of board members. They are truly rockstars in my eyes. This would have been overwhelming if not for their support, encouragement and words of wisdom.

Moving forward there is hope for an open door policy. Any ideas that members have to improve the museum and suggestions for programs will be heard and discussed by the board members. So please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions, comments or concerns.

Thank you for all your contributions and support. Your Wagon Mistress, Brandi Palmerton

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Hello to our loyal supporters,

Unfortunately, once again the MVHA has not been able to open our museum this summer. For two years COVID kept us closed but this summer, after exceptional spring rainfall, we experienced flooding in the crawl space under the main museum building. The flooding was not from any broken pipes but came in under the foundation from the hillside above. A person donated two pumps to help eliminate the water. Pumping lasted approximately a month as water continued to come down the hill above. After no more water was found coming into the crawl space, the Board of Directors hired a restoration company who used many fans and 2 dehumidifiers to further dry the area to prevent mold from growing. We have now been assured that no mold is in the crawl space or in the building above. We have also hired a contractor to dig a ditch to divert any future water from entering the crawl space. We are anticipating expenses of approximately \$5,000 to \$10,000 to solve this unexpected situation.

We, on the Board of Directors, thought you all should know what we are doing with some of the money you have given us as membership fees and donations. Thank you all. MVHA Board of Directors

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Montana's First Election by Gary Forney

With election day 2022 just ahead of us, this seems an appropriate time to look back on the first election held in Montana and the excitement it generated.

The Territory of Montana was created by Congress in May 1864 and Sidney Edgerton was appointed to serve as Governor. Among Edgerton's first actions was to authorize a census of the new territory for the purpose of determining legislative apportionment. Edgerton, however essentially disregarded the census and made his own apportionment when the tally revealed that Madison County was entitled to virtually all the legislative seats. Edgerton's motives were based less upon charity than political realities. Nevertheless, the date for the election was set for October 24, and the mudslinging began in earnest. *(Continued on pg 6)*

**Membership:** New members since April 2022. MVHA welcomes you to membership.

**Jolene Ewert-Hintz**

**Membership update** Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2022 membership is due during July, August, September or October or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who have generously submitted your renewal memberships. The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds and membership to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.

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**Member News**

The MVHA Board is very appreciative of all the folks who faithfully purchase memberships each year and help out in any ways that they are able. So in this and future issues of the Wagon Tongue, the Wagon Tongue will recognize years of membership for all the members starting with:

- 24 years of membership:  
**Mona Durham**
- Bobby and Lester Klatt** (Lester deceased in 2022)
- 23 Years of Membership
- Ruby and Larry Gleason** ( Larry deceased 2014)
- Larry Kiefer**
- Don "Kid" Neville**

**Chapter 11 More about Indians by H. B. Daems**

We left off in the April 2022 issue with Judge Spratt and we will continue with the next Indian story....

One day the Judge was standing on the street and he saw an Indian walking down the street to Content Corner. The Judge went upstairs and came down with a silk stove-pipe hat in his hand. No one knew just what the Judge intended to do with the hat but sensing that there was something in the air, it did not take long for a crowd to assemble. As the young Indian approached the Judge he very gravely handed the hat to the Indian. The Indian looked the hat over and studied it from all sides, trying to grasp what it was all about. He looked at the Judge solemnly then pulled out his pocket knife and proceeded to cut the top out of the hat. He then placed it on his head, pulling his hair through the crown and letting it hang down his back.

A band of horse thieves known as the Indian Braves used to pass through Virginia City enroute to the Reservations of the band and the Shoshone Tribes. There they would steal their horses and go on to the Crow Reservation and pick up some more horses. Stealing horses back and forth was an every day occurrence and nothing unusual about it.

You could buy any kind of animal skin from an Indian with the exception of the bear. Beaver skins sold for \$1.50 a pound by the tribe. A good buffalo hide could be had from \$3.00 to \$4.00. A deer skin sold for \$4.00 if it was a good one. To be the proud owner of an antelope hide all one needed was \$2.00 and muskrat hides were 10 cents apiece. Mink sold for a fabulously low price of 24 cents in those good old days.

It seemed senseless to go duck hunting in those days because Indians would go out and hunt and sell the ducks to you for two bits a pair. They sold fish by the pound. All kinds of wild berries sold cheap. Because the Indians loved choke cherries so well, they would not sell them to the white man. They would gather these berries and would crush them, seeds and all. After they were crushed, they were rolled into small balls and set to dry. In the winter time, the Indians would boil up some of these balls of choke cherries and drink it for soup. They also used them for medicine among the tribes and seemed to bring relief from colds and many ailments.

(cont pg. 3)



(Cont from pg 2) I was quite friendly with the Indian Doctor from the Bannock Tribe and he came to my place often. He was one of the most interesting characters I have ever had the privilege of meeting.

One day I asked the Doctor what his cure was to save a man's life from a snake bite and he replied, "Come, I show." He took me to a spring on the ranch where there was a clump of nettles. He picked some and went through the motion of making pulp out of them. He told me to place the pulp of the stinging nettle on the snake bite and then he smiled, "Heap Well." I have never been bitten by a rattler but if I ever do and there is no other alternative, I think I would try this old medicine man's cure.

White Bear had the reputation among white men and the Indians that could not be surpassed. One day a young Buck from Canada asked me the whereabouts of White Bear, the great medicine man. I told him that I thought he was last headed up in the Madison canyon and he told me if he knew where he had last camped, he could find him. He told me that he had just spent \$5000.00 in Canada doctoring and that if he did not find White Bear he would die. From the appearance of that Indian, I agreed with him. He was nothing but skin and bones and you could not see a vein in his arms. He, to me, looked as if he had no blood in his veins to show. I said to myself, "Last stages of Consumption." I truly doubted that he would not live long enough to make a trip to White Bear.

After a month's absence he came back, a perfect specimen of an Indian and from his looks, he had changed into a new man. He said "White Bear, he heap good Doctor."

I asked him what the great medicine man had given him and he told me he had boiled him some herbs. When I asked the Buck if he had known White Bear before, he told me that he had not but that he had heard many times over of him. I was curious to know how he had learned of White Bear way up in Canada and he said, "All Indians know White Bear, he heap good medicine man."

White Bear was blind in his old age and finally passed away on the Reservation. He was a powerful doctor among the Bannock and the Shoshone Tribes and his reputation spread countrywide. He was deeply missed by the white population who had the pleasure of having known him. May he rest in peace.

Virginia City was fortunate in not having any hostile encounters with the Indians and I guess one of the reasons was probably the large number of miners along famed Alder Gulch and also the citizens of Virginia City. My contention is that the early settlers of Montana were a peace loving people who

conducted themselves in such a manner that the Indians soon began to respect them and value their friendships.

This ends Chapter 11 of *Through the Eyes of a Pioneer* by H. B. Daems. Hopefully these couple chapters by this early pioneer gives you some insight of Indians in early Madison County and early Montana that several members had requested.

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As the month of October comes to an end, all the farmers and ranchers of Montana and the Madison Valley have their hay and grain crops harvested and ready for the winter months. The story *Early Agriculture* by Layne E. Carlson from *Pioneer Trails and Trials* seemed appropriate and interesting.

In the spring of 1864 George Washington Nyhart and his wife, Mary, my great-great-grandparents arrived at the "diggings" called Virginia City, Idaho Territory, one wagon of over one hundred, all coming west to make their fortunes in the gold fields. George staked his claim and began to accumulate the valuable yellow, but he knew that there was another kind of gold, one more satisfying to a Dodgeville, Iowa farmer, waiting for someone to claim it—the fine rich Montana soil along the Beaverhead River.

In 1867 George and his brother in law, William Linder, who had come west with him, took out the first homesteads of the area, near Point of the Rocks.

George started ranching by raising horses to supply the many new settlers and wagon trains coming into the valley and soon had a herd of several hundred.

His son, Jordan, took an active part in running the ranch and foresaw a future in cattle raising and gradually replaced the horses with high grade Hereford cattle. He invested in more fertile valley land and until at his death he and his sons owned some 20,000 acres of the finest cattle raising land in America, and were running some 2500 head of the finest beef in the world, Montana "Treasure Steaks" on the hoof.

Yes, George Nyhart struck it rich when he quit gold mining and invested in the golden grass of Montana.

In 1911 my grandfather, C.J. Cox arrived in the Twin bridges area. He had left his home in North Carolina at sixteen. His journeys took him to South Dakota where he worked as a horsewrangler and a fire fighter on the prairie. He had aspirations of settling in South Dakota, but found the law required that he be twenty-one before homesteading. He moved westward and arrived here with the intentions of working in the Butte mines. An acquaintance persuaded him to seek employment on (cont pg 4)

(Cont from pg 3) the ranches of the Beaverhead Valley. Oddly enough, the first ranch the seventeen year old worked on is part of the ranch he owns today. Grandfather first worked for a man named Tom Magee for two dollars a day. That was during the haying season and duties consisted of loading hay with a pitchfork onto a wagon, hauling it to the stack yard, pitching the hay onto large nets and finally hoisting it onto the stack by means of a one arm derrick. The bringing of one load per hour was considered to be a good rate. Earlier two arm derricks were used, but Grandpa had never observed one of those in operation.

Other machines used in the haying operations included riding mowers and scatter rakes. The mowers were John Deere or McCormick Deering purchased from the local dealer for \$52.00. These were pulled by two draft horses and if the ground was not uneven or rocky and the hay wasn't laying too flat or too wet, a man could mow ten acres in a day. A man could rake almost twice as much hay as a man could mow. This was because mowers had a five foot cutter bar while rakes were ten feet wide. Less breakdowns incurred with rakes than with mowers. Grandpa also mentioned other farm machinery. At the time of his settling in Twin Bridges, only a few riding plows were to be found. These were possessed by the wealthier farmers. The majority of farmers used the walking plow. This plow was a wooden framed implement with a cast iron share, moldboard and and a landsiding. As riding plows were introduced in larger numbers, the "California Special", a cast iron plow with no tongue became the dominant type. This plow was hitched to the four horse teams by means of double trees. A John Deere plow was introduced. This superior plow had a tongue and utilized steel parts where necessary. Three horses were hitched to the John Deere plow and two acres could be turned in a good work day.

Grain harvesting implements included the binder and thresher. Horse drawn binders could cut and bind thirteen to fifteen acres per day. One or two men followed the binder and shocked the grain bundles. This consisted of setting the bundles on end with the grain head at the top in a manner which hastened drying the grain. About six bundles would make one shock and allowed for loading the bundles on a wagon when dry. Grandpa said that a "green kid" he was told by an older hand that he should shock the grain as fast as the binder could cut it. This he did and day's end, saw him shock the last bundle of fifteen acres of barley. The boss was 4

surprised and amused to find Grandpa had done . such a day's work. He told Grandpa that he would have been satisfied if the grain had been shocked in three days. Needless to say, the older hand had a good laugh

The first threshing machines were powered by horse sweeps. Grandpa remembers a steam thresher owned by Fred Seidensticker which proved superior to the sweep powered machines. The dried shocks were loaded onto wagons and hauled to the thresher. The bundles were pitched into the machine. The threshed grain was sacked and hauled to the granary.

Grandpa estimated that crop production was about one third that of today. This was because of early farming techniques, lack of fertilization and lack of capital. Manure was the only fertilizer available and spreaders weren't present in the early 1900's.

Early Agriculture to be continued in January 2023 issue with cattle, horses and sheep.

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**Memories of our departed Madison Valley folks.** The MVHA aspires to have a genealogical record after the passing of all folks who were born and raised in the Madison Valley and anyone who moved here for work, owned a business or spent considerable time here as each of these folks are part of the historical record of the Madison Valley. Please share your records, stories and other interesting information of those who have passed to make these records complete as possible. They will not be forgotten.

**Zena Beth McGlashan**, MVHA member from Butte MT passed away on June 22, 2022. Born in State College, PA on July 19, 1939, to Evelyn Jones and Donald McGlashan, Zena lived in several states during the end of WWII because of her father's military service. Her father accepted a position at the Montana School of Mines in Butte, MT when Zena was in second grade. She graduated from Butte High School in 1957. In 1961 she received her B.A. in Journalism from the University of Montana. She wrote for many newspapers and magazines throughout her life. She earned her MA in Mass Communications, her Ph.D from the University of Iowa. She specialized in editing, reporting, graphics, history, media and cultural diversity and women's studies. In 1989 she moved back to Butte. In 1994 she started Wordz & Ink publishing and published "The M&M in Butte, Montana and other Faces: Photography by Harley E. Straus." In 2010 she published Buried in Butte, a book she spent many years researching and writing. In 2019 she wrote "The Watchman's Daughter" an afterward included in the 2019 printing of The Biography (cont pg 5)

*(cont from pg 4)* of F. Augustus Heinze: Copper King at War.

**James "Jim" O'Donnell** passed away July 6, 2022, in Ennis, MT. He was born in Elkhorn, WI on Feb. 12, 1946 to Harold and Norma Dehoney O'Donnell. The family moved first to Ennis and then to Butte, MT where Jim attended school and graduated in 1967 from Butte High School. He married Peggy McDermott and they moved to Seattle, WA where he learned the trade of "Glazing" from his father-in-law. He installed many windows in several Seattle, WA skyscrapers. After his retirement, he moved back to Montana. He is a brother to the father-in-law of MVHA member, Patsy Eckert.

**Robert James "Bob" Luebke** passed away on July 14, 2022, in Ennis, MT. Bob was born in Forest Grove, OR and grew up in Klaber, WA. After high school, he attended Centralia College and studied animal husbandry at Oregon State University in Corvallis, OR. He served in the US Army from 1952 to 1954. He entered the Veterinary Medicine program in 1954 and graduated with a doctorate in 1958. He worked as a veterinarian in California, retiring in 1987. He and his wife traveled in their RV around the Western states finding them in Ennis in 1988 where they built a home and lived for 33 years.

**Arnold H. Rosdahl Sr.,** passed away on August 4, 2022. He was born in Billings, MT on July 24, 1936 to Arne and Bernice Rosdahl. After his Junior year of high school, he served three years during the Korean War. He met Mary Davis at a dance in Dillon, MT and they were married in Sheridan, MT on August 16, 1958. Arnie was a passionate and talented rancher and was ranch manager of the Combs Cattle Company for 19 years and 18 years with the Bar 7 Ranch.

**Virginia (Pearl) Black** passed away August 18, 2022, in Ennis, MT. Virginia was born on March 13, 1929, to Charles and Bessie (Yokum) Pearl in Saint Joseph, MS. At the age of four, the family moved to Ten Sleep, WY and later to Worland, WY. She graduated from Washake County High School in 1947. She married Dale Black on October 26, 1947. Dale and Virginia farmed and ranched in Wyoming until 1968 when they moved to Wilsall, MT and then to Ennis, MT. They managed the Sun Ranch at Cameron, MT until 1990 when they moved into the town of Ennis. Virginia was the Activities Director for the Madison Valley Manor for 21 years, was a 50 year member of the Madison Valley Woman's Club, active in the Lion's Club and was a very active member of the Madison Valley History Association for 16 years. Virginia has continued to purchase a membership to MVHA for her son, Dee, and when I, the Wagon Tongue editor, visited Virginia in

the hospital after she had a fall, I left with memberships for 3 new members for the MVHA. that she generously purchased. She will be missed.

**William "Bill" Dale Bowersox** passed away at the Madison Valley Hospital on August 31, 2022. He was born in Glendive, MT on August 12, 1926, to Roy and Reba Bowersox. The family moved to South Meadow Creek when Bill was a young boy. They bought a ranch on North Meadow Creek where they raised turkeys, sheep and cattle. He attended grade school at North Meadow Creek and graduated as valedictorian at Ennis High School. Bill met his future wife, Marjorie Barter, at a dance in Norris, MT and were married on June 23, 1948. They moved to Bradley Basin into a house owned by Don McKinnon with no running water or power. He worked on Marjorie's mother's ranch and Peter V. Jackson's ranch. After deciding to purchase his dad's place, they moved back to North Meadow Creek and lived with his Dad. Bill moved a house from Norris to McAllister and remodeled it. To make ends meet, he drove the North and South Meadow Creek school bus routes for Ennis schools for thirty years.

**Stanley Charles Klaumann Sr.,** passed away on Sept. 6, 2022 at the Madison Valley Manor in Ennis, MT. He was born on April 29, 1929 to Virgil (Red) and Mary Ruth Ollason Klaumann in Monterey, CA. In 1934, the family moved to a cattle ranch near Hollister, CA. Stan killed his first deer at age 10. He graduated from Hollister High School in 1946 and served four years in the National Guard. In 1945, Stan met Janice Tranberg and on March 17, 1949, they were married. Stan worked alongside his dad on the family ranch until 1962. The family moved to the 4R Ranch in Paradise Valley, NV. Besides owning and managing his own cattle ranch, Stan operated a hay contracting business involving the entire family. In 1995, he and Janice moved to Ennis, MT where he worked at Antler Designs and continued to return to Nevada during the summer for the hay season.

**David Wayne Gates** passed away Sept. 11, 2022. He was born Oct. 13, 1946 in Billings, MT to Anita Gustafson and Henry Gates. He lived in Molt, Absarokee and Columbus, MT before his family moved to the Carkeek Ranch near Cameron, MT in 1961. David attended Ennis High School, attended Boys State as a junior and served in the Army National Guard after high school. David worked for ranches in the Madison Valley, the Cameron Store, Madison County Road Department and for 9 years for Luzenac Talc Mine. After retiring from the mine, he formed his own company Gates Grader Service. David is the son of long time MVHA member, Anita Ames.

**For Your Reading Pleasure**

No book selected for this issue. Need your ideas!!

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**Looking Ahead**

Watch for posters, news releases, etc., for MVHA starting up of meetings, field trips, and museum.

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(cont. from pg 1) As the political campaign began to take shape, it became clear there were minority factions within each of the dominant parties. Within the Republican (or Union) party were the far-right Radical Republicans including Governor Edgerton and his nephew, Wilbur F. Sanders. Similarly within the Democratic Party was a splinter faction known as the Copperheads. The Copperhead Democrats were strongly pro-Southern in their sympathies and probably represented a number of followers equal to the Radical Republicans. Regrettably, and unnecessarily, Edgerton set a turbulent course for territorial politics by painting all Democrats with the same brush.

Edgerton accused anyone who supported the Democratic candidates as being traitors to the cause of the Union. Wilbur Sanders, a candidate for the post of Territorial Delegate, warned that “if the so-called Democrats get into office, not even a breath of air would go untaxed..and one would not be able to go from Virginia City to Nevada City without encountering a tollgate. The recently established and unabashedly Republican *Montana Post* advised that men should vote the Union or “stay at home”

By at least one objective measurement, the federal census of 1870, the rhetoric of Edgerton and Sanders was greatly exaggerated. Although some population shift may have occurred between 1864 and 1870, the federal census of 1870 documents 18,306 white males residing in Montana, of which only 1,584 were “natives of the Confederate states” Historian Clark Spence maintains that the Republicans could have formed a powerful alliance with the Union Democrats had Edgerton been willing to compromise.

In what had to have been a bitter disappointment to Edgerton, the election return resulted in only a one seat majority to the Democrats in the House, and the election of Democrat Sam McLean as Territorial Delegate. All of Madison County’s Democratic candidates were elected.

Governor Edgerton did his best to grasp victory for his nephew by withholding the certification of McLeans’s election until returns from the precincts he claimed were affiliated with Madison County were filed. After some delay, approximately 2,000 ballots-unanimously supporting Republican candidates were announced to have arrived from Fort Union, 6

**MVHA Board of Directors**

President: Brandi Palmerton

Vice-President: Marty Brenneke

Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke

Secretary: Otis Thompson

Director: Steve Garrett

Director: Eric Palmerton

Director: Larry Love

Historian and researcher: Don Black

Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate.

Please call Larry Love 682-5780 for date of board meetings. *The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be January 2023. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed. Your editor needs your history stories!

Editor: Shirley Love whitneytranch@wispwest.net

Contributing editors: *Madisonian* Obituaries,

*Through the Eyes of a Pioneer* by Henry B. Daems

Chapter *Ten Indians of Early Montana, Chapter 11*

*More About Indians* pg 30-32.

*Montana’s First Election* by Gary Forney

**’Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by First Madison Valley Bank**

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**Get out your Montana map.** Each of the following is a clue to a town in Montana. Hint: to limit your looking for towns around the state, start at Ennis and look outward in widening circles with each issue getting further from Ennis. Answers from April 2022

1. An animal home...Deer Lodge
2. Nexr door to heaven... Silvergate
3. To split...Divide
4. Large snake... Anaconda
5. Civil War general...Sheridan
6. Napoleon’s Jail...Water Loo

New clues 1. Early U.S. foreigner

2. Grounds keeper
3. Get on your knees and\_\_\_\_\_.
4. Large forest
5. Famous British Prime Minster
6. Line of Toiletries

thus overturning the election of McLean and two Madison County legislators. Much to their credit, Nathaniel Davis and James Tufts—the Republicans who would have been seated—met with Edgerton and protested what they firmly suspected as an attempt at election fraud. Edgerton relented and election results were certified as prior to the questionable Ft. Union ballots. It was later determined that at no time during 1864 was there ever more than 300 persons living at Fort Union and that the settlement was actually located well outside the territory’s boundary. It wouldn’t be the last time that there would be “irregularities” in a Montana election.

# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 21 issue 1

Madison Valley History Association

January 2023

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat** Welcome back, avid Wagon Tongue readers. Did you hear the juicy gossip about me, Brandi Palmerton, being the first female MVHA president? Unique and honored experience if I say so myself.

Sadly not much to report during the off season. The museum is currently closed. However, your continued support and assistance come spring and summer time will be greatly appreciated.

The museum open door policy is having success and cataloging is being completed. However, the board is asking for proper documentation with all donations. The board apologizes for the cancellation of the annual Christmas potluck. It was determined that the expense of procuring a facility to host our party would be prohibitive. Wishing everyone health and happiness during the coming year. Hope to see everyone in 2023.

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The *Wagon Tongue* had planned to continue Early Agriculture in this January issue but but when this Jack Creek Ski Story was presented just in time for ski season, plans were changed. We will get back to farming in the spring!

## Jack Creek Ski Hill by Tom Erdie

I was born and raised many many years ago in Ennis, leaving in the fall of 1960 to begin undergraduate schooling at Western Montana College in Dillon. As I advance in years (that syndrome of too many birthdays) I have a deeper appreciation of having had the good fortune of growing up in the Madison Valley. While there are any number of pleasant memories of those years in Ennis and in the valley, one such memory relates to the used-to-be ski hill "up Jack Creek" in the 1950s. The ski hill undoubtedly operated before my being introduced to skiing there in what I think was the winter of 1949. That introduction came in the form of a major ski event sponsored and conducted by some big North American Junior Ski Association group (e.g. amplified Scandinavian music, including the wonderful yodeling, flags flying, hamburgers, hot dogs, a crowd of people and all the hoopla one might associate with today's major ski events at least to a youngster of six or seven years of age). The events included the slalom, the downhill and even a huge (to this kid) ski jump and the associated competitions. That day was the start of interest in skiing for me. Playing basketball in high school stifled further skiing, when as a sophomore my basketball skills became productive in the eyes of the coach (about 1958).

So here I will attempt to draw a picture for the reader as to events of a twelve year old and a day skiing at Jack Creek.

## The bus

For most kids, the transportation was an old bus, painted grey with a box on top for hauling skis and poles. A ladder on the side was used for accessing the box on top. Being the kid "up in the box" to load the gear was something of a sought after job. The bus would be parked on the north side of mid-main street and leave on a scheduled time, perhaps about 8:00 a.m. getting to the hill, unloaded and ready to ski by 9:00. That included a stop in Jeffers to pick up several skiers, including Kevin Williams Brenneke, her brother Bun and Terry Merica (there may have been others I have forgotten). If so, please excuse me. The trip more often than not included putting on chains. The "putting on" of chains was accomplished while warm and dry with more enthusiasm than was taking them off later in the day, for the return to town when being wet and cold were apparent. Even so, being young did not prevent an actual contribution to applying the chains. This was my introduction to applying chains to a vehicle and that became a valuable skill later in life.

The bus driver most often at the wheel for my trips to the hill as I recall, was Ralph Northway. Ralph had a brother Bill but while Bill did ski, I don't recall Bill on the bus. Both brothers were quite accomplished skiers. Another often found driver was Claude Angle. Any bus driver had to have an extra dose of patience and driving the ski bus was no exception, appreciated more in my advanced years than at the time. A special note involving Ralph and recognized at that time was Ralph having rather unique bindings from any other bindings I ever witnessed. I came to know them as "long tongs" and that was exactly what they were. . . leather tongs that must have been 30-40 inches long wrapped around each foot. (Cont on pg 2)

**Membership:** New members since July/October 2022.edition of WT MVHA welcomes you to membership.

**Joe Wright** membership purchased by his parents.

**Membership update** Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2022 membership is due during October, November, December or January or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with membership fee to MVHA at P. O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

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**Member News**

**Jan Beekman** had an article in the Nov. 10, 2022 *Madisonian* announcing a Woman's Club writing contest. Jan also submitted for printing a piece of her own poetry entitled *Unlock your Creativity*. MVHA members can use this as a calling for members to write their family histories or a history of the location of the Madison Valley in **2**

which they grew up. No contest, just share your history with the readers of the Wagon Tongue.

**John and Bridget Dale's** niece, Kara Dale of Sheridan has been nominated to the US Air Force by John Tester. A nomination from a member of Congress is a student's first step in applying to the various military academies in the United States. Congratulations, Kara.

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**Jack Creek Ski Hill (Cont from pg 1)** Ralph would sit out in front of the cabin putting on his skis, wrapping those tongs around and around, I'm sure in some specific manner. There was no safety release in case of a fall and skiing at maximum speed, whether downhill or slalom was Ralph's way. Once a person had their skis on, they only had to ski off the knoll in front of the cabin to the lift below, about 30 yards down a slight hill. Slight until one had to climb up to the warming shack from down by the tow. The climb could be avoided by taking a detour on the South edge of the hill leading to the front door of the warming shack.

**The Hill.** The hill had a very small footprint. I believe the land was a lease from the Forest Service while perhaps being privately owned today. An inquiry to the Forest Service is pending, but as of this writing no response has been received. The hill was narrow, perhaps only a couple hundred yards of skiable surface in width. The length of the hill I estimate to only be between 300 and 400 yards. One got on the lift at the bottom of the hill and got off at designated spots. One designated spot was called "the family trail." It was called the family trail because the families with minimal skills got off at the family trail. The hill had a markedly steep incline from the family trail exit to the top. The cable was "five feet" or so feet off the ground due to this sudden increase incline. This presented a problem to the younger, lighter in weight skier to get the cable down to the needed height off the ground so the cable could be grabbed. A bigger skier was needed to grab on to the cable and pull it down so the smaller skier could "quickly" grab it and continue on up the hill. If the space got to long before smaller skiers could grab on e.g. wet slippery gloves, the smaller skier could find themselves suspended a couple of feet in the air for an additional thrill at no additional cost. This was all readily accepted by all parties.

**The lift.** The lift consisted of a cable approximately one and half inches in diameter along with the motor to turn the wheel containing the cable. The skier simply had to grab the cable with the hands and hang on to be propelled up the hill. That is over-simplifying the lift and getting up the hill. Most skiers, at least in the beginning and first use of the lift, did so with leather gloves and grabbed the cable by "slowly" clamping down with glove hands to avoid the inevitable jerk if done

(cont page 3)

(cont from pg 2) too quickly. That worked fine until leather got wet and slippery and the skier became unable to clamp hard enough to keep the cable from slipping through the gloves. Then the "tow hook" became the saving grace to the slippery gloves. The tow hook certainly worked. But it was most unsafe, which after description the reader will shake their head in disbelief. Picture a flat piece of steel, about a ¼ inch thick, about 1 ½ inches wide and eight inches long. At one end are two pins about an inch apart welded/soldered in to place. The lift cable would be placed between the two pins and then the steel "handle" would be squeezed into the cable and held as to hold the skier's hands to give relief from having to squeeze as with gloves only. The gloves could be wet but the tow hook overcame the slipperiness. The tow hook could only be used by a person old enough and strong enough to do all the mechanics necessary and not at all safe, so the hook would be used by only a certain population of skiers (older with strength). The tow hook was on a belt around the waist from with a "string" to allow the hook to hang while the skier placed the hook and then backed off to allow the full weight on the cable and "simply" let the lift pull you up the hill. Now the rest of the story - the cable ran up the hill for maybe 500 yards (not accurate but sufficient for the description). The cable was kept off the ground by poles (shortened telephone poles) placed on the vertical every 50 feet (again an estimate) with automobile wheels attached on the pole between the skier and the pole with the cable riding in the groove of the spinning wheel. The skier had to get around these vertical poles at each interval. This was accomplished by the skier extending their arms so the body was arms-length from the next pole and then with important timing, pull themselves with moment upward toward the pole, releasing the grip on the cable, going around the pole and grabbing the pole from the uphill side to continue the ride. This sequence was repeated at each pole in order to get up the hill. While one could get off anywhere they wanted, there was a desire to get off at designated places. There might for example be ten or more of these poles (idlers) between jump off places. The clean track under the cable might be likened to a groomed cross country track, easy to follow and remain upright. And. . .this procedure was learned and practiced successfully by everyone that skied there. Amazing! This was viewed by the typical skier as practical and not that difficult, however . . . there were problems. The single biggest problem in my mind, was that the cable was constantly twisting. The twisting effect had the adverse effect of grabbing the skier's apparel for example, whether the gloves or the garment was held under the arm. The cable would then grab the article of clothing (glove or jacket) with the skier unaware of what was

happening until wanting to extend ,the arms to get around the idler, usually to avoid the next phase which was crashing into the pole/idler. The skier might feel the glove twisting but not a jacket. One did not want their hand in the glove that was going to go through that wheel. One classmate and frequent skier, had long hair worn below the waist. Yes, her hair behind her got twisted up in that cable and the hair was pulled from her head. One comment from a skier that day at a recent class reunion in recalling that event stated, ". . . and you could hear her scream all the way to Ennis." That hair was in the cable for a long time until it wore off. And guess what, there was never to my knowledge anyone getting sued.

The lift description, to be overly simplified, was the cable attached to a motor at the bottom of the hill just below the "warming shack or cabin." The gas driven motor sat on the ground with the cable attached to a large "bull wheel." The bull wheel was connected to the motor in such a manner as to be parallel to the ground and directly above the motor and turned in a clockwise direction. The cable sat within the outside perimeter of the wheel, the motor turned the wheel and the cable was thus moved up the hill around the idlers as previously described. The motor had to be movable forward and back to keep the cable taut. General maintenance, i.e. check the oil and alignment with the idlers would be done. The motor is believed to have been gas versus diesel.

As in running any motor there were inevitable shutdowns but usually back online in acceptable and tolerated time frames. There were three men that I recall that took the job of keeping this tow working. The three I recall were Claude Angle of Angle Hardware in Ennis, Ted Piper from Montana Power and a Mr. Stevens who was manager of the talc mine. I am sure there were others but these are my recollections. I don't recall Stevens ever skiing and Piper seldom. Mr. Angle made his share of runs.

**The Warming Shack** The Warming Shack was just that, a board shack and the only building in the operation. The building sat just above the motor for the lift where skiers prepared for skiing by stowing their gear helter skelter inside, including extra gloves and sack lunches. The building was approximately thirty feet long and twenty-five feet deep. There was a wood burning stove in the middle of the room. There were two spaces in the rear of the building divided from each other. These areas were seldom used but served as a food serving area for an event, such as certified races, with the second area being for general storage of race gates and such. The stove was surrounded by folks wanting to warm up, everyone wanting to get close to the warmth after making a few runs. There were always folks around the stove, including skiers and non-skiers up for the day (cont pg 4)

(Cont from pg 3) to socialize. Here was a spot for visiting once a week with folks watch and you never saw otherwise during the week. Perhaps even meeting people you may otherwise never have known. The building was not insulated and the 1 by 6 boards for siding with the open ceiling did little to retain the heat. The most memorable issue with this warming shack was the smell of gloves and mittens being warmed up and dried next to the “grilled cheese” sandwiches or such being warmed up. It was not an offensive smell but quite unique. There was the constant effort to fit more gloves and sandwiches onto a very small area of stove top. An ample supply firewood was always available. Firewood availability was never an issue and not to a twelve year old, particularly when it just seemed to “be there” when needed (one of those thankless jobs that someone took care of).

#### **Odds and Ends**

The hill need packing with each new snowfall, as any ski hill does. There was no packing machinery but packing remained a necessity if skiing was to be an enjoyable experience. The packing was done by “everyone” wishing to ski. Every skier would participate in the packing exercise. There was always some who would whine and try to avoid participation but it was always known whether one was out there or not. The drill was to have all skiers line up, one behind one and other so that one’s ski tips were at the back end of the skier in front. The line would hopefully be quite long across the hill. The job was to then side-step up the hill to cover and “pack” the skiable area. If there were not enough skiers to cover the skiable area, another pass would be made to fully cover the area. There would be lift discounts made for the participants, but it was known that “you will help pack.” A size-able area north of the lift and from the bottom of the hill and upwards for probably 100 yards. In today’s terms, the packed area was about the size of a football field.

Ski equipment for the younger group was quite basic. My skis had no edges on the bottom side. It was not practical to apply metal edges, so some of us had “adhesive tape” applied where the metal edges would have been found. It worked as a replacement and stayed on long enough to be practical and replacement was quick.

Mention was made earlier of the socializing that took place. A social circle did exist with the folks on the hill on any given weekend. The camaraderie showed up on occasions when someone needed help. One example was when a friend of mine broke a ski received for Christmas on the first day of use. Someone, without any fanfare, replaced his skis at no cost with a pair of used skis but immediately for use to keep. If someone lost a garment on the tow, there was someone there with a replacement for at least the day. Ralph Northway and Steve Clark, both quite a bit older than me, volunteered to change out my

bindings. Steve took me to his grandfather’s major woodworking shop to conduct the change over. Ralph came to my house basement with minimal tools to change bindings. Otherwise there was no off-the-hill socializing.

This type of sharing and socializing might be apparent only while on the Jack Creek ski hill, with no such effort being made during the week. The road from the main Jack Creek road was single track. I don’t recall any turn outs. If someone got stuck or was in need of help, assistance was given without thought of the situation being an inconvenience to others.

I do not know when the operation of the hill stopped. I stopped skiing in 1958 due to conflict with basketball. There was no hard rule about not skiing if playing basketball, but if injury had been sustained, one’s basketball pursuits were over. I have heard that the lift at some point was converted to a poma lift (the twisting cable must have been remedied). In any case, I feel so very fortunate to have had the wonderful experience of skiing at Jack Creek.

Thank you Tom, for sharing your history and memories of Jack Creek Ski Hill. This is how history is recorded for future generations.

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**Memories of our departed Madison Valley folks.**The MVHA aspires to have a genealogical record after the passing of all folks who were born and raised in the Madison Valley and anyone who moved here for work, owned a business or spent considerable time here as each of these folks are part of the historical record of the Madison Valley. Please share your records, stories and other interesting information of those who have passed to make these records complete as possible. They will not be forgotten.

**Lorraine Janet (Esau) Heese** passed away September 16, 2022, at the Madison Valley Hospital in Ennis. She was born Feb.1, 1937 to Helen and David Esau on her rural parental farm near the community of Dorintosh, Saskatchewan, Canada. Grade school education took place in a traditional one room country school. She left home at the early age of sixteen to enroll at the Swift Current Bible Institute where she spent three years in biblical studies. High school was completed at Caronport and Rosthern Junior College. Three years later she graduated from the University of Saskatchewan School of Nursing with an RN degree. While there she met and married Paul Heese and they married on June 8, 1963. They moved to Winnipeg, Man. where Paul studied dentistry. While there, she was employed in neurosurgical nursing and later became recovery room head nurse. In 1965, they moved to Fessenden, ND. where they raised their family. Lorraine was instrumental in obtaining property in the Madison Valley. They were (cont pg 5)



(cont from pg 4) part time residents beginning in 1995 and becoming permanent residents in 2006.

**Clifford Frank Bigelow** passed away October 2, 2022, in Mesa, AZ. Clifford was born on April 15, 1937, in Virginia City, MT to Edwin and Jean Bigelow. Cliff graduated from Ennis High School in 1955. Cliff moved from Montana to Arizona in 1989. Cliff was a meat cutter and Safeway manager most of his life. He managed a restaurant with his wife, Jonnie, for several years in Whitehall, MT. They also managed restaurants in Helena, MT and Phoenix, AZ. Cliff and Jonnie retired in Apache Junction, AZ.

**Anna (Marti) McClellan** passed away on October 15, 2022. Anna was born April 20, 1929, to Frank and Carmen Marti and raised in Tracy, CA. She attended Jefferson School and Tracy High School and married Haynes McClellan on Nov. 16, 1947.

The Marti/McClellan family farmed the Tracy area for many years. Anna worked as an Interior Designer and owned and operated the Daisy Dress Shop until 1977. In 1978 Haynes and Anna moved to Ennis, MT where she owned and operated the Family Store. Upon her retirement, Anna became an extremely talented potter and continued crafting and designing pottery. Anna was a very faithful member of the Ennis Arts Assoc. where she continued to do pottery and share her skills.

Longtime MVHA member **Dixie Lee Robison Marosok** passed away on October 25, 2022. She was born on a snowy day after a five mile horse back ride from a cow camp to the Idaho Falls hospital on Oct. 17, 1935 to Floral (Judy) and Wayne Robison.

She grew up on the family's Green Acre ranch near McAllister, MT at the foot of Mount Baldy. Dixie helped her father tend to the ranch by riding, branding and driving the buck rake. Dixie graduated from Ennis High School in Ennis, Mt. and went to college earning a teaching certificate. She got her first teaching job in Sheridan, Wyo. There she met James Marosok and they married in 1958. Dixie spent 53 years as a special education teacher and diagnostician. She continued her education with a Master's Degree in Education from Eastern Montana College in Billings, MT. MVHA members in Dixie's family include Jerry Wing who is her sister, Lee Robison is her nephew, and David Grauman is her brother-in-law.

**Wes Orr** passed away October 29, 2022. He was born October 14, 1940 to Ross and Luella Orr. He grew up in Spearfish, SD. From 7th grade until graduation from high school, Wes worked for his Dad who was a plumber, worked for a hardware store and delivered newspapers. On weekends he worked for a dairy delivering milk, ice cream, butter, etc, to local grocery stores and restaurants. One summer he worked highway construction through the Badlands of South Dakota. Wes worked for two local fish hatcheries and a local SD Fish and Game biologist. He graduated from Colorado State University in 1962, Wes worked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at Federal Fish Hatcheries in 4 states ending up in Montana. He married Diane in 1964 and moved to Ennis in 1973. The Ennis fish Hatchery produced 13 million eyed rainbow fish eggs and was producing 40 million eggs when Wes retired in 2000. The fish hatchery was pretty much his

life and he was inducted into the Northwest Fish culture Hall of fame and the National Fish Hatchery Hall of Fame.

**Joseph Henry Gillispie** passed away on November 2, 2022, at his home in McAllister. Joe was born in Falls City, Nebraska on Nov. 19, 1927 to Dr. James Charles and Rose Mary (Redfern) Gillispie. Joe attended elementary school in Falls City. When he was attending High School, he got special permission from his parents at age 17 to enlist in the Navy. On Nov. 16, 1945 he graduated from Hospital Corps School. Even though he was stationed at Pearl Harbor, he was allowed to graduate from Falls City High School in May of 1946. Joe always said that his mother bribed the principal with hams so he could graduate and get a high school diploma while serving in the Navy. After his Navy years, Joe attended Kansas State University and Peru State College in Peru, Neb. graduating in 1951. Seeking adventure, Joe signed up to work for Atlas Construction-Morrison-Knudson in Casablanca, French Morocco. Upon returning to the US, Joe married Marcene McCunn on June 6, 1953, in Clarinda, IA. Joe was a pharmaceutical representative for Carroll, Dunham Smith and then worked nearly 40 years for Schering-Plough which is now Merck. After Marcene passed, Barbara Christensen and Joe were married in June of 1983. After 10 years in Nebraska, Barbara and Joe moved west to Big Sky, MT. Joe began a woodworking hobby. In 2015, the Gillispies moved to McAllister, MT.

**Kathleen Adele Geisler Worley** passed away November 7, 2022. Kathy was born Jan. 14, 1944 to Lloyd and Gladys Gentry Geisler. She was born and raised in Burbank, CA. and graduated from Burbank High School in 1961. She met Dwight Worley and were married in 1963 in Las Vegas, NV. The Worley family moved around throughout the years for Dwight's work. They settled in Ennis, MT in 1980. They purchased Bettie's Cafe on Main Street and operated the restaurant for 10 years. Kathy had a longtime love of antiques and enjoyed refinishing furniture and treasure hunting. She had a long and successful career in the field and sold antiques in various booths and stores in Ennis and Bozeman.

**John (Jack) F. Kent** passed away Nov. 12, 2022. Jack was born in Varney, MT on May 10, 1935 to Roger and Ruth Kent. He was raised on the family ranch in Varney. Jack attended elementary school in Ennis and graduated from Ennis High School in 1953. After high school, Jack joined the Army and served in Germany. After ending Army life, John helped build the Ennis Lake Dam and the original Ennis hospital. On Nov. 22, 1962 Jack married Marjorie (Marge) Thomas Martello. Jack and Marge purchased the family ranch from his parents. Ranching was his calling but he also served in other community organizations. Planning board and elder for the Presbyterian Church, a Mason, an elk, a Shriner, Search and rescue, Rodeo Club and VFW. After many wonderful years on the ranch, Jack and Marge moved closer to Ennis.

**Ronald Lee Clark** passed away on Dec. 2, 2022. He was born Oct. 12, 1938 in Bozeman, Mt to Bobbie Victor Clark and Jesse Love Clark of Ennis, Mt. He attended Ennis schools until age 12 years at which time

(cont pg 6)

## For Your Reading Pleasure

The Last Green Valley by Mark Sullivan who is a Bozeman author. WW II story of hardships and failure and being resilient and relentless. Martel family leaves the Ukraine to find a better life.

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## Looking Ahead

Watch for posters, news releases, etc., for MVHA starting up of meetings, field trips, and museum.

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**Memories** (*Cont from pg 5*) the family moved to Southern CA. They settled in Lakewood, CA where he attended MacArthur Elementary School, Bancroft Jr. High and graduated from Lakewood High School. Ron enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves and entered Camp Pendleton for Basic Training. After he finished his Marine Corps commitment, Ronald began working at Knotts Berry Farm in Buena Park, CA where he drove stage coach carrying passengers on scenic rides. It was there that he met and married Johnnie Holland. After several years, his love of horses took him to Wildomar, CA where he re-habilitated Race Horses. After his time with the race horses he began working for Kaiser Steel as a Supervisor of Welding. When his girls were grown, he was able to return to Montana and "semi-retire working in Dillon, MT where he had his home. He worked for L.S. Redi-Mix until fully retired and he was then able to spend his time with his horses, fishing and hunting. Ron is a brother to MVHA member, Sandy Jennings and a cousin MVHA member, Larry Love.

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## Skiing in the Madison Valley

by Minnie Paugh pg 140  
Your editor had a space to fill so looked further into skiing in the Madison Valley. Recreational skiing started in 1935 when a group of young people agreed to meet regularly in Cedar Creek Canyon. They did not have a formal organization when they built a rope tow in Cedar Creek Canyon about a mile above the Thornton and Miller homes at an open spot then known as Thornton Park. Their skiing was on the lower face of Fan Mountain. Long runs could have been developed there on the higher slopes but use proved they would be open to both wind and sun and the snow would have often been too crusted for good skiing. The people most often on these slopes were Claude, Bud and Winifred Angle, Max Matzick and his daughters Ruth and Maxine, Chet and Chub Schendel, Ed Maynard, Harold Miller, Lewis Chamberlin and Fay Oswald. This group also skied in Hoag's field and near Hebgan Lake.

Fay Oswald, whose example did much to build a strong ski club, had skied with the earliest skiers in the Madison Valley. He learned with West Fork Kelly in the upper Madison. The settlers there used skis for winter transportation and to run their trap lines when that was their major source of money to improve on the living they could take from their ranches. Pictures of I. A. Hutchins on snow shoes exist and one view shows he and his brother-in-law on skis with a live mountain sheep in ropes between them. The animal was captured for the Montana exhibit at the Chicago World Fair. Their snow shoes were actually large home made skis.

## MVHA Board of Directors

President: Brandi Palmerton

Vice-President: Marty Brenneke

Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke

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Director: Steve Garrett

Director: Eric Palmerton

Director: Larry Love

Historian and researcher: Don Black

Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate. Please call Larry Love 682-5780 for date of board meetings. *The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be April 2023. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed. Your editor needs your history stories!

Editor: Shirley Love whitneytranch@wispwest.net

Contributing editors: *Madisonian* Obituaries,

*Jack Creek Ski Hill* by Tom Erdie

The Madison Valley A High Mountain Community by

Minnie Paugh *Skiing in the Madison Valley Pg140*

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**Get out your Montana map.** Each of the following is a clue to a town in Montana. Hint: to limit your looking for towns around the state, start at Ennis and look outward in widening circles with each issue getting further from Ennis. Answers from July/Oct 2022

1. Early U.S. foreigner...Emigrant
2. Grounds keeper...Gardiner
3. Get on your knees and...Pray
4. Large forest Big Timber
5. Famous British Prime Minister...Churchill
6. Line of Toiletries.....Avon

New clues in the April issue

**Life begins at 80.** There is good news for you. The first 80 years are the hardest. The second 80 is a succession of birthday parties.

Everyone wants to carry your luggage and help you up the steps. If you forget your name or anybody's name, forget an appointment, promise to be two or three places at a time, or spell words wrong, you need only to explain that you are 80.

At 80 you can relax with no misgivings. You have a perfect alibi for everything. Nobody expects much of you. If you act silly, it is your second childhood. Everybody is looking for symptoms of a softening brain.

It's a great deal better than being 65 or 70. At that age, they expect you to retire to a house in Florida and become a discontented, grumbling has-been.

But if you survive until you are 80, everyone is surprised that you are alive, that you can walk, and that you can reveal lucid intervals.

At 70 people are mad at you for everything, at 80 they forgive you for anything. If you ask anyone, life begins at 80.  
From *Napa Valley Division NewsLetter*.

**History Tidbit** The local Madison Valley newspaper, *The Madisonian* published their first edition Nov. 1873 and they are celebrating 150 years of publication.

Congratulations to *The Madisonian*

# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 21 issue 2

Madison Valley History Association

May 2023

website: [www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Visit MVHA on Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

Our mission is to develop a museum to house and preserve collections of artifacts, tapes, photographs and stories of historical importance to the Madison Valley and interpret them through display and education.

**From the Wagon Seat** Dear Members,

Our last program regarding William Ennis and Saint Patrick's day was a success. We had approximately 20 members and a few new faces attended. A special thank you to Zoe Todd and Liz Applegate for putting on this program. I appreciate all the support, input and suggestions. The MVHA Annual Meeting will be held in May. The Museum is still closed currently but much progress is being made and we are anticipating opening around mid June.

We are still looking for volunteers to help run the museum this summer and new members and ideas for upcoming program ideas and tours. Hope to see you all soon!! Thank You, Brandi Palmerton

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The Madison Valley A High Mountain Community by Minnie Paugh *Skiing in the Madison Valley* pg 140

As a filler for the January 2023 issue, your editor found a skiing story to accompany the Jack Creek Ski Hill by Tom Erdie. April has not brought spring to the Madison Valley yet and the folks are still skiing so skiing history will continue. (continued from pg 140)

When homesteaders came to the Missouri Flat country in 1910 as a result of a promised land survey, old timers such as Paul Schoenek and Vern Neeley made their own skis of white pine, molding the tips in a wash boiler on the stove. With these skis, they ran trap lines at least thirty five miles long and were able to stay out three days or longer. Mrs. Vern Neeley used such skis when she served her community as a midwife. When Janet McAtee interviewed her about her life on the Missouri Flats before 1914, her replies implied that she considered the ordeal of walking to a neighbor's home on skis as much as a hazard as the major problems that might be involved in delivering the new baby. She took only the most necessary trips during that part of the winter when the snow was deep on the Missouri Flats.

Organized recreational skiing was unknown to the old timers but the pictures of Thomas Brook prove that before the World War I young men came to his cabin to enjoy winter sports bringing modern looking skis, snow shoes, and toboggans. He had a homestead near the present Jack Kirby ranch on the West Fork.

In 1938 a formal club was organized by the recreational skiers and they decided to build their second tow in Jack Creek Canyon near the Diamond J Dude Ranch and additional skiers who became active members of the ski club were the Jack Rouse's, the Dallas Hayden's, the Ralph Brownell's (He was the manager of the power house at Ennis Lake), the Hoag's, the Saier's, the Hutton's, and Jeff Jeffers, Buster Saunders, Janice Watkins, Ray Kohls Jr., Ray Olson, Ann Wilsey, Merlin Stock, and Duke Gustafson.

Dorothy Thompson who later married Ed Maynard gave the project financial assistance while she was a guest at the Diamond J. Members of the club remember the informal parties in the members' homes after the skiing was over.

The Ennis Ski Club had a great deal of talent among its members. Claude Angle and Ralph Brownell working together could get the best possible performance from mechanical equipment. They kept the tows operating and set up efficient timing devices for ski meets. The Jack Creek Center was the first in the state to have a broadcasting system. This was invaluable to the efficient operation of a tournament and emergencies handled by the ski patrol. It also provided the luxury of alpine music with which to ski. They took moving pictures of the 1957 tournament on the Jack Creek Ski Run.

Julie "Duke" Gustafson was an expert skier when he joined the club and talented beginners could copy his wonderful skiing form as well as profit from his instructions. He knew skiers from the ski circuit who were willing to visit the Jack Creek Center when it was starting.

Several families who joined the club were so dedicated that their children became competitive skiers. The most outstanding were Volker and Alarich Saier, Billy and Tommy Bry, Dean Matzick, the younger brother of Ruth and Maxine, Claude and Bud Angle, Ralph Northway and George Shabarker. The cousins, Virginia, Jane and Shirley Jeffers were good competitive skiers and popular at any ski tournament. (cont pg 2)

**Membership:** New member since January 2023 edition of the Wagon Tongue. MVHA welcomes you to membership;

**Kelly Carkeek** Membership purchased by Connie Goodwin

**Membership update** Just check your address label on the envelope and you can easily tell if your membership is paid or which month you are due. Your membership is good for a full year from the month you purchase it and you are not penalized for submitting early. If your 2023 membership is due during April, May, June, July, or if you are past due, you will find a membership renewal form included with this issue. Memberships are \$10.00 for students, \$15.00 for Individual, \$20.00 for Families, \$50.00 for Businesses, \$100.00 for Patrons and \$500 or more for Benefactor. If you are inviting someone to join or if you want to purchase your membership before it is due, just write your name, mailing address and type of membership on a slip of paper and mail with the membership fee to MVHA at P.O. Box 474, Ennis, MT 59729.

Thank you to all renewing members who have generously submitted your renewal membership. The MVHA Board of Directors appreciates all memberships that are purchased and your support as this allows them to have funds and membership to continue the work of developing a museum in the Madison Valley and arranging programs for the community.....

**Receiving your Wagon Tongue** Several years ago the MVHA started using non-profit organization postage stamps. The MVHA saves a considerable amount of money since we mail out most of the quarterly newsletters. **MVHA did not know that mail with non-profit stamps are not forwarded and if you have a forwarding address during the winter months or any other time, your Wagon Tongue is dumped in the trash. It is not returned to sender and MVHA does not know who you are.** Please let the MVHA know by phone to Shirley Love 406-682-5780 or by email to [whitneytranch@wispwest.net](mailto:whitneytranch@wispwest.net) or to MVHA PO Box 474, Ennis, Mt 59729 if you have a forwarding address and the address labels will be updated. Also let MVHA know the approximate date you leave in the fall and the approximate date you will arrive in the spring so the correct address label will be used.

*(cont from pg 1)* **Skiing in the Madison Valley by Minnie Paugh**

They added sparkle both to their team and to the center where they skied.

From 1945 until 1960 the club was part of the Northern Rocky Mountain Ski Association which is a regional branch of the National Ski Association of America. Ralph Brownell of Ennis was first vice-president of the Assoc from 1945 to'46 and Eugene

Saier from 1950 to'51. In 1960 Mr. Saier was on the Constitution and by-Laws Committee and the Committee for Junior Skiing of the National Ski Association.

The Ennis Ski team attended the 1945 NRMSA tournament at Elkhorn Hot Springs near Dillon where Ennis skiers walked off with the lion's share of tournament ribbons. Duke Gustafson was first in the class A downhill and slalom and Claude Angle was second in downhill. Virginia Jeffers won the women's slalom and was second in the downhill. Volker Saier won first in the men's class B downhill and Bill Bry tied for second. (American Ski Annual, 1945-1946 Pg 223-225.)

The club hosted the 1946 NRMSA tournament and the experts reported the Jack Creek Ski center the best run yet used for a Montana meet. The run was a mile and a quarter long with a 1000 foot drop which was the best available before the Big Mountain Center was developed at Whitefish. Audrey Roth set the runs and forerun the women's course. Betty Woolsey, who was a member of the Olympic Team forerun the men's course. Eugene Saier, chairman of the race committee) was assisted by Bill Bry and Ralph Brownell. They succeeded in setting up a timing system so that race results could be reported back to the officials immediately. The banquet was served in the Masonic Hall in Jeffers and was followed by a public dance. (American Ski Annual, 1946-1947 pg 303-4.) Montana trained skiers did not show too well in this meet competing against Dr. Amos R. Little of the Search and Rescue Section of the Continental Air Forces. Duke Gustafson placed third in the men's Class A division and his wife, Shirley Jeffers Gustafson placed in the downhill and slalom. Alarich Saier and Tommy Bry were winners in the junior slalom.

In 1947 Dr. Amos R. Little and his wife competed at the Mount Belmont Highballer Trail near Marysville. Volker Saier was first in B class and Alarich Saier in C class. The first annual MRMSA Junior ski Meet was on Butte's Beef Trail where the Ennis team was successfully represented by Billy and Tommy Bry and Alarich Saier.

The Ennis Public School had accepted skiing as a major athletic sport by 1947 and students could take the ski bus for 25 cents to the Jack Creek ski Center on Wednesdays and receive free ski instruction. Ennis was the first school in the state to do this and when it was successful, the Bozeman schools adopted the plan. The Club ran the bus for about five years. Members of the club collected second hand ski equipment for the beginners. *(continued on pg 3)*

(cont from page 2) Equipment became a problem because young people did not take care of it unless they were carefully supervised. In 1954 the club authorized Claude Angle to salvage usable parts and sell anything for which he could find a market. The bus became a problem in a different way. Bus drivers were the only people paid by the ski club. Insurance was also expensive because of the amount of liability such a function required. The old bus was sold in 1960 and a newer one was rented on request.

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As the month of April comes to an end, skiing is about over and the farmers have been busy all year. The *Wagon Tongue* will continue with **Early Agriculture by Layne Carlson** which was promised but skiing stories got in the way. You will note that a lot of the story references the Ruby Valley where Layne Carlson's family resided. The Madison Valley had the same early agriculture happening at the same time but no one wrote a Madison Valley story.

Cattle were few in early days. Thousand of horses and sheep were raised. It was not uncommon for the average farmer to own twenty-five or thirty head of horses and larger operators owned hundreds. Many ranchers ran five or six bands of sheep. Approximately fourteen hundred sheep made up a summer band and a winter band contained two thousand head. Those cattle that were present were mostly of Shorthorn breeding. Some Herefords were also owned. Sheep were generally of the Columbia, Hampshire or Rambouillet breeding. The breeds of horses varied. Draft horses included the popular Percheron, Belgians, Shires and some Morgans. Grandpa referred to a category of horses he called "Knot heads". These were horses of mixed breeds and ill dispositioned in many cases. These accumulated on the open range.

Almost everyone owned hogs for family consumption. These hogs were turned loose in the grain stubbles in the fall, allowed to fatten on the shelled and uncut grain, and finally butchered and cured or sold. A beef was usually butchered at the beginning of winter and eaten during the winter months. Such meat couldn't be preserved for summer use as could pork. If a beef was to be butchered during the summer months, three or four neighbors would share the meat so consumption could win the race against spoilage. In 1916 my grandfather filed for homesteading at the land office in Twin Bridges. He homesteaded 320 acres on what is now part of the East Bench Irrigation Project, built a sod roofed log cabin and fenced his property. The local land commissioner had pocketed his filing fee and thus my grandfather's homestead was not registered with the State Land Office in Helena. Grandpa went to Helena, refiled, came home and reached

an "understanding" with the local land commissioner. Others in the valley had also been cheated, but fortune had it that the original homesteaders were able to retain their property because no one else had come along and filed on the land. Homesteading provisions included building a house and farming at least 20 acres per year for 3 years.

At the end of three years, the filer could prove up at the court house in Virginia City and the land would become deeded. Time served in the Army counted into the three years required for homesteading. Grandpa leased his homestead to a neighbor and registered for the Army on April 5, 1917. In 1919 he returned from Germany and proved up on his land.

At Montana State College, he took courses in animal husbandry, black smithing and bee culture during the other months, the family lived on a twenty acre farm at the site of the present day ranch. Grandpa was engaged in bee keeping too until the honey prices fell. The first livestock my grandfather owned was a horse given to him by his father-in-law and a cow given to him by a neighbor. The generous neighbor agreed that Grandpa could pay if the cow had a calf. He soon acquired nine milk cows and bought 10 head of poor quality Herefords for \$45.00 apiece.

Ranchers vaccinated cattle against Black Leg. Calf scours, the black death of today, was unheard of as were a myriad of other animal diseases that occur now.

In the early part of this century many of the cattle in the Whitehall, Twin Bridges and Sheridan area were taken to the Upper Ruby for summer grazing. In the 1900s there were only two range fences in the area. The public land of the Upper Ruby was open grazing for all who wished to use it. Most of the cattle in the area were contracted for the summer grazing season for \$2.00 per head to two real cowboys—the Marshall brothers. These men would conduct a drive in the spring, picking up herds as they went and take them to the upper Ruby. They tended these cattle and trailed the cattle back to the valley leaving each rancher's cattle at their respective ranch. Grandpa estimated that in those early days three times as many cattle were summered on the lush grasses of the Upper Ruby drainage as there are today. The establishing of these lands as Forest Land in 1906 brought an end to this practice.

Grandfather had no trouble obtaining credit from the local businesses and was able to carry on through times when money was scarce. In the fall, when crops and livestock were sold, the bills were paid and credit for the next year established. Grandfather obtained his initial production capital by working for wages. These amounted to about \$40.00 per month for a ranch hand. Sheep herders received \$50.00 per month.

(cont from pg 3) In relation to land and machinery costs, these wages were even better than they are today. A good sized ranch could be equipped with machinery for \$2,000.00 in the early 1900s.

Mortgages were unheard of in this country—trust was the only factor employed in lending money. Interest was in the vicinity of 6% and loans were generally of a moderately long term nature. With the introduction of the Federal Farm Loan, money could be borrowed at 4% interest.

Marketing was similar in many respects to marketing today. Sale of livestock was accomplished through contracts with an order buyer. No direct shipping was practiced. Calf prices were in the \$.04-\$.05 per pound range. Lambs sold for \$.08 per pound and hogs sold for \$.06. The stock were generally driven to the stock yards in Twin Bridges for shipment on the daily freight train. The Madison Valley went to stock yarda in Norris and shipped from train there.

While cattle prices were low in the years surrounding 1911, other prices were quite different. Barley sold for a phenomenal \$2.00 per hundred weight while hay sold for a mere \$6.00 - \$7.00 per ton. A good team of horses could find new homes for \$350.00 - \$400.00. Lumber sold for \$15.00 per thousand board feet.

Irrigation was necessary on most crops in the Twin Bridges area. Early water laws required that water rights be recorded with the land. Water was decreed at a later date and usually amounted to one miners inch per acre. In 1883 the Co-OP Ditch was constructed. This community project had a 1200 miners inch capacity. Today it has three times the original capacity. The water commissioner was responsible for measuring proper water rights into proper ditches. No ditch walkers were employed. Some water rights on my grandfather's ranch date back to 1866.

Taxes were minimal in the 1900s as income tax had not been introduced. The only taxes paid were the property tax and a road tax.

Early day dry land farming techniques were practiced to a limited degree. Grandpa, while dry farming wheat, was hailed out in 1914. His yield was still in excess of 50 bushels per acre. Dry land farmers utilized summer fallow extensively. The Graham Hoeme plow was the main implement used by dryland farmers.

Times have changed, but agriculture has kept up with the pace. When Grandpa acquired his first tractor, an International-McCormick in 1935, he undoubtedly felt he had made a great leap forward from the power lacking in the old Blue Boy steam engine.

We can admire the farmer and rancher of yester-year and what he was able to accomplish with his limited mechanization and his hard work.

By Layne Carlson From *Early Agriculture* p 787-789

## Pioneer Trails and Trials Madison County 1863-1920

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### **Early Cattle Industry**

It is not a very well known fact that the cattle industry in Montana started in Madison County. A man named John Grant had a trading post where the Ruby River empties into the Beaverhead River. He traded with the Indians, many of whom lived in the Ruby Valley, more peacefully during the winter. The Flathead tribes, Bannocks and Shoshones, who were normally at odds, tolerated each other in the valley. There were several other traders who lived in this area with trading posts or wigwams during the winter and they were joined by Granville Stuart and his brother, Jim, when they came to Montana. Jim Dempsey was among the traders there.

The Stuart boys were unable to purchase some cattle from Grant and were forced to leave the area by the hostile and obnoxious attitude of the Bannock Indians under their 6 foot 5 inch chief named "The Rouge" by the whites. They took what cattle they had with them to their new home on the Clark Fork below Deer Lodge. It was from this location that Stuart was given credit for the first development of gold in Montana at Gold Creek. In the spring his cows calved and added 34 head of Durham calves to Montana. Stuart has been given credit for being the father of the cattle industry in Montana. By John C. Seidensticker, M.D .

### **Pg 789 Pioneer Trails and Trials Madison County 1863-1920**

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### **Memories of our departed Madison Valley folks.**

The MVHA aspires to have a genealogical record after the passing of all folks who were born and raised in the Madison Valley and anyone who moved here for work, owned a business or spent considerable time here as each of these folks are part of the historical record of the Madison Valley. Please share your records, stories and other interesting information of those who have passed to make these records complete as possible. They will not be forgotten.

**Dale Duane Stratton** passed away on February 17, 2023 in Hancock, MI. He was born September 30, 1931, in Litchfield, MI. He grew up on the family farm and graduated from Litchfield High School. He volunteered for the Army in 1950 and served during the Korean Conflict.

He met Kathleen Jean Blount while hitch hiking home on leave from Camp Atterbury in Indiana and they were married on Oct. 25, 1951. After ending Army life in 1953, Dale attended barber school and soon was running his own barber shops for 62 years. He moved to Ennis, MT to be near his daughter, MVHA member, Renata. Shore. When they needed help at Mel's Barber Shop, he stepped up and barbered during the pandemic. (cont pg 5)

**Doris Anita (Gates) Ames** passed away on March 14, 2023 in Ennis, MT. She was born on April 8, 1923 in Stanwood, WA. to Bror and Hulda Gustafson. Her folks immigrated to America from Sweden in the early 1900's.

In 1924, the Gustafson family moved to Montana. Anita and her two brothers went to a rural school through 8th grade and Anita received her GED through the mail from the American School of Chicago.

In 1945, Anita married Henry Gates in Columbus, MT. She and her family moved to Cameron, MT in 1961. Anita loved working on the McKnight Ranch, the Carkeek Ranch and the Wellman Ranch. She always milked the milk cows providing many families with milk and cream. She also worked 20 years for Cyprus Talc Mine sorting talc and later as a janitor. In 1972 she and Henry divorced and on July 14, 1990 she married Ken Ames and lived in the Ennis area for the rest of her life. After Ken passed away, Anita joined the Senior Companion Program and for 16 years helped many seniors in the Madison Valley as she loved helping people. She also loved horseback riding, bowling, dancing, cards and games. She won the Senior Ladies Bowling State Championship in 2003 and qualified for the National Championships where she placed 6th in 2004. She was an active member of the Madison Valley History Association and was into her 23rd year. She was a faithful volunteer at the museum. She played Scrabble at the Manor until shortly before she passed.

**Delynn M. Grube** passed away on March 14, 2023, in Ennis, MT. He was born on November 11, 1937 in St. Anthony, ID to Merle and Evelyn (McKerigan) Grube. He grew up on the family ranch near Ashton, ID. While in high school, he moved to Stevensville, MT to help out at the family's dairy farm. After deciding to cut his high school career short, he enlisted in the Navy. He later joined the Idaho National Guard and served active duty in the Army before being honorably discharged. He returned to Montana and worked seasonally for several years as a corral boss, wrangler, ranch manager, hunting guide and broke horses for the Elkhorn and Nine Quarter Circle ranches in Gallatin Gateway, MT. It was there that he met and married Nancy Terwilliger. He continued to work seasonally for the Nine Quarter Circle, Bar N and Deep Well ranches with the winter months spent driving truck and working as a snowmobile guide. After his family came along he worked as a heavy equipment operator for the National Park Service in Yellowstone Park making that his career and retiring from Yellowstone National Park. In his spare time he worked as a brand inspector. In retirement, he made Ennis, MT his permanent home and eventually moved into the Madison Valley Manor.

## **A Brief History of Library Activity in Ennis, MT.** By Roberta Carkeek Cheney 1986

For some fifty years, beginning in 1914, there was library activity in Ennis with an on-again-off again history. The Womans Club has always supported a library as one of its major on-going projects.

The earliest organized library was housed upstairs above the Chowning store and first Ennis Post Office. It was run with volunteer help—the Woman's Club members taking turns keeping the library open, usually two afternoons a week. From 1950 to 1973, there was no City Library.

In 1973, the library was reorganized and Ennis Mayor Robert Storey, appointed Phyllis Ellerton, Peggy Maitin, Richard Wenger, Ron Pederson, May Magle and Margaret Daems to a Board of Directors. A solid financial base was established with assured income from the city and the Woman's Club. Space was provided, rent free, in the Bauer Apartment building just across the street from the old Methodist church. Volunteers remodeled, refurbished, and furnished the first stable library effort in Ennis.

Some three years later, the Bauer building was torn down and in 1976 the Library was moved into the Clancy house. This building has historic significance, being the oldest one in Ennis. It began as a one room log cabin moved over from Virginia City and placed first near the corner now occupied by Bettie's Cafe. William Ennis, owner, moved the cabin to its present location about 1882, added a lean-to kitchen and lived there. Later Dr. D.F. Clancy and his wife, the former "Tott" Kiser, bought the house, added some rooms, and ministered to the health needs of the area. The building was covered with lap siding and remodeled in 1930. Catherine Potter Armitage arranged for the library to occupy the Clancy home.

The Clancy Memorial Library officially opened on April 29, 1976 with Beth Pendleton as librarian. It was so named because of the cooperation and contributions of the Clancy family. The Madison Wrangler 4-H Club under the leadership of Claudia Dotson made the attractive sign board for the front yard.

In 1979, a committee was appointed to raise money to purchase the Clancy building. Again the Womans Club rallied to the cause with volunteers and substantial donations. By January 1980, enough money had been raised so the City of Ennis could buy the Clancy home to give the Library permanent quarters. The library now contains about 7,500 volumes. It is open three days a week, Monday, Wednesday and Saturday, 1 to 5 o'clock for a total of 12 hours. The circulation averages some 850 books a month but in 1985, 1,130 books were checked out.

## For Your Reading Pleasure

Bad Luck Way by Bryce Andrews who describes life on the remote, windswept Sun Ranch in SW Montana.

## Looking Ahead

**Sat. May 20, 2023** Annual meeting and potluck

Trinity Episcopal Church in Jeffers 12:00 noon Names A\_G Dessert, H to N side dish to go with ham, O-Z Salad. Plans are to open the museum in mid June.

**Volunteer needed** Your editor of the Wagon Tongue is having to stop her work on the Wagon Tongue due to aging printers making the job difficult. MVHA needs to find a volunteer to take over this job. This consists of writing and typing the Wagon Tongue, getting it printed at the Madison Valley Bank, stapling each newsletter, stuffing the envelopes, putting on address labels, stamps and mailing. You will be assisted in getting started. Let Shirley or any board member know of your interest.

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(cont from pg 5) **Library** Assistant librarian, Louine Abrahamson, conducts a story hour for children once a week and a summer reading program that has involved as many as 45 youngsters in the Book Worm Club. In one summer, they read Woman's 825 books.

High school students and writers use the library for research. As a member of the Broad Valley Federation with headquarters at the Bozeman Public Library, the Ennis library with the aid of a Microfiche reader can locate and use the inter-library loans to get books and information into the hands of patrons very quickly. The McNaughton Book Service Plan has been in operation since 1974. It enables the library our library to choose two new books a month. These books may be purchased at a nominal sum or returned. The plan is popular with readers as it places much new material in their hands.

Reading materials for the visually and physically handicapped persons are provided through the Montana State Library. Our library has the applications for this service and signs authorization slips which make it possible for these people to get material directly from the State library. Special large print and talking books are available. Tourists and fisherman, as well as local residents, use the library. A library is free and there are no fines. Outsiders often comment on the number and variety of books available at the Clancy Memorial Library in Ennis. Nursing Home residents check out books regularly. There are over 800 Paperbacks and a file of *Madisonians*. Wilson Clark rebuilt the stairway so the upper floor is now available as a reading room as well as shelving a collection of Romance books.

The Womans Club currently pays \$300 a month in support of the Library and makes additional donations as needed. To take a closer look at the history behind this library, we looked into the minute books of the organization. The earliest mention of library business in the Womans Club minutes, as ferreted out by Catherine Armitage, was in 1913. Rules were set up: 25 cents for a library users card: two two books only to be taken out at a time: members to take turns keeping the library open. Names of volunteers and a list of each person who bought a 25 cent card was recorded.

## MVHA Board of Directors

President: Brandi Palmerton

Vice-President: Marty Brenneke

Treasurer: Kevin Brenneke

Secretary: Otis Thompson

Director: Steve Garrett

Director: Eric Palmerton

Director: Marty Brenneke

Historian and researcher: Don Black

Graphic Design and Facebook: Liz Applegate.

Contributing editors:

*Madisonian* Obituaries

*Early Agriculture* pg 787-789 Layne E. Carlson

*Pioneer Trails and Trials*

*Early Cattle Industry* pg 789 John C. Seidensticker

*Pioneer Trails and Trials*

## Printing of this Newsletter was generously provided by First Madison Valley Bank

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No mention of where the library was to be located. In February 1915 after all the bills were paid, there was 4 cents left in the library fund.

In 1917 the Womans Club spent \$31.15 for books and in 1920 they spent \$20.25. However most books were donated and those were also recorded. In 1923 the Womans Club paid \$11 for a book case and in August of that year appeared the first record of paying for "tending the library" \$2.50 to Mrs. Hopkins. The library seems to have been discontinued in December 1926.

In 1939 the Club decided they could support a library if a suitable building could be found. In April the library was started and minutes record a list of people who donated books. It was to be housed in the upstairs of the Chowning store and over the post office. It was to be open one or two days a week and each member was to donate services until a librarian could be secured. In May Cleo Hutchins donated books and Mrs. Vincent was appointed librarian.

By September of 1940 the room was ready; drapes had been purchased: volunteers had cleaned, painted and built shelves. The library was officially opened on October 19 and the announcement was made that it would open every Saturday from 2 to 5 o'clock.

Books were donated by Mrs. Best and the school was asked for any surplus children's books. Mrs. Vincent said she could not serve as librarian. In 1941, Mrs. Werbien made a sign for the Library and the Womans Club allowed \$15.25 for book repair. Frances Womack was appointed to put on a play or entertainment to raise funds for the library. The Club authorized funds to pay for a subscription to the Book of the Month. The rent was \$1.50 a month and paid regularly by the Club. Mrs. Hippe gave some books. By 1941 interest in the library had waned so the Club voted to close it and give all the books to the school. In October of that year the room was used by the Red Cross.

The library reopened in 1942 with a 40 book donation from the County Library. 18 books were donated by Mrs. Bates. The school was to use the library on Fridays from 3 to 5. And look at what we have now.





# The Wagon Tongue

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Madison Valley History Association

October 2023

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Madison Valley History Association

[www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org](http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org)

Facebook: "Madison Valley History Association"

## From the "Wagon Seat"

It's great to climb up on the wagon seat to greet you all again! We missed the summer issue due to the resignation of our loyal twenty year editor, Shirley Love. We now have a new person who has graciously agreed to become the editor. Her name is René Livingstone-Comer and we welcome her and know she will continue the newsletter very well.

Again, this spring the museum experienced some water in the crawl space under the main building but it was handled with sump pumps and diligent attention from the board members. Happily, the museum was open and well attended from mid-June to mid-September and I thank all who helped out. Please let us know if you have information you would like to have added to the newsletter such as financial information and how you can help the board keep the organization viable.

Happy fall to all of you. - President, Brandi Palmerton

## Upcoming Presentation

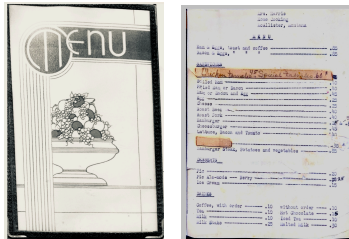
"A Mother's Journey: The Life of Lucy Meriwether Lewis Marks" will be presented at the Ennis Senior Center on November 2nd at 4pm and is hosted by the MVHA. This is a Humanities Montana program with Mary Jane Bradbury as the presenter.

The story of Thomas Jefferson's Corp of Discovery is engrained in the history of our nation and essential to our understanding of the past. The story of Lucy Meriwether Lewis Marks - the mother of Meriweather Lewis - remains unknown, yet it offers critical insight into our understanding of the intrepid explorer. A woman both of her time and ahead of her time, Lucy was determined to fulfill the role expected of upper-class women at the turn of the 19th century while remaining independent and dedicated to her own pursuits. She managed a large plantation household, which included dozens of enslaved people, and followed her passion for healing and the natural world, all while remaining fiercely devoted to her son. Historic interpreter Mary Jane Bradbury unveils the story of this remarkable woman and the indelible impact she had on one of the key players in the formation of the United States.

*Mary Jane Bradbury is a historic interpreter and scholar who brings history to life for audiences of all ages. She is an artist in residence for the CM Russell Museum in Great Falls and the Montana Historical Society in Helena.*

## **The Harris Family of “The Harris Inn” at Meadow Lake near Ennis**

By Darlene Harris Hughes & Colleen Stewart Durocher



The Harris Inn at Meadow Lake, now Ennis Lake, was established in 1919 by Jacob and Emma Harris. Jacob was born in September 1871 at the family home on Hevroy Island near Bergen, Norway. On his voyage to North America in 1888, Jacob stopped in South Africa to visit his brother Martin. Jacob landed in Quebec, Canada in June 1888 and from there he migrated to Sioux Falls, South Dakota and then on to Butte, Montana in 1900. While living in Butte, Jacob met his wife, Emma Tackmier and they were married in February 1903 at the Norwegian Lutheran Church in Butte, Montana.

Emma was born June 1887 in Marinette, Wisconsin. Her family was large and her father worked as a logger from very low pay. He needed his sons to help with the work. It was difficult to feed everyone, so he sent Emma to live with an aunt in Saint Joseph, Missouri at a young age. In 1901, Emma traveled with her aunt via covered wagon from Missouri to Montana. She was working at her Aunt Mary's boarding house in Butte when she met Jacob. Jacob and Emma's only child, William, was born in Butte in February 1905. From 1900 until he left Butte in 1919, Jacob worked as a mining engineer, owned a blacksmith shop, and until 1918, operated the Harris Tavern. In 1919, Jacob and Emma moved to the Madison Valley and built the Harris Inn. The Inn consisted of multiple cabins and a house overlooking the lake. The cabins were small and rectangular with one window and a door. There was no indoor plumbing. The Harris's provided food, lodging, and fishing excursions for the guests. Jacob maintained the boats and guided the fishermen while Emma did the cooking and managed the guest cabins. Prior to the establishment of the Harris Inn, there were no overnight accommodations available at the lake. Anyone wishing to spend the night had to find a spot along the lake to camp.

William Harris remained in Butte after his parents moved. After graduation from Butte High School and later, Butte Business College, William worked at the service department at Murray Motors.

In August 1925, William married Rena Paul. Rena was born in Walkerville, Montana in August 1905. Her family was originally from England. William and Rena remained in Butte after their marriage and William started an auto paint shop. Rena gave birth to their first child, Lois, in October 1926. The couple moved to the Madison Valley to help his parents run the Harris Inn. William helped

Jacob maintain and operate the boats and escort fishermen and Rena helped Emma cook and maintain the cabins.

In July 1930, William and Rena's second child, Darlene, was born in the house at the Inn overlooking the lake. Rena went into labor and luckily there was a doctor visiting the Inn. He was a family friend from Butte. The doctor was out fishing at the time, so they brought him in off the lake to deliver the baby girl. After the birth, he went back out fishing.

In 1932, William and Rena built the Harris Cash Grocery at McAllister. William operated an auto paint shop at the location as well. He later converted the auto paint shop to a four rental unit in the next few years and he built three more guest cabins for summer rental. They had guests from all over the United States who visited year after year to recreate on the lake. Many became lifelong friends.

Jacob and Emma decided to sell the Harris Inn in 1934. They sold the Inn to Dick Alsop and moved to McAllister where they operated the Rainbow Tavern until their retirement. After the Alsop's sold the Inn, it became The Clute Camp. The location is still referred to as Clute's Landing. In the 1940s, Emma opened a small roadside cafe from her home called Mrs. Harris' Home Cooking. It was frequented by the numerous traveling salesmen who passed by on their way from Butte and Bozeman as well as the local people from the valley. Emma was an exceptionally good cook. She was known for her wonderful pies and homemade breads. She started out doing all her cooking on a wood stove before she finally got an electric range years later.

During World War II, William and Rena moved to Anaconda, Montana. William worked in the ACMC Blacksmith Shop for two years. Rena worked at the Coldwater Shoe Store. They were both volunteer members of the USAF Air Defense Team Ground Observer Corps.

After two years in Anaconda, William and Rena moved back to McAllister and resumed running the McAllister Cash Grocery. They remained at the store until April 1964 when they sold the business to Wayne and Charlotte Johnson. In June 1960, William and Rena purchased the Wilson place on Meadow Creek. The Wilson's, from Butte, used it as a summer cabin. William and Rena enlarged the cabin and made it their residence. They retired there after selling the McAllister store and cabins. They spent their time gardening and prided themselves on their beautiful yard and flowers.

\*Jacob passed away in 1962 at the age of 91

\*Emma passed away in February 1975 at the age of 87

\*William passed away in December 1984 at the age of 79

\*Rena remained at the Meadow Creek home until August 1987 when she sold and moved to Hamilton to be closer to Darlene

\*Lois passed away in August 1989 at the age of 62

\*Rena passed away in October 1997 at the age of 92

\*Darlene, age 93, is living in Hamilton Montana

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*Richard J. Rankin*  
*September 27, 1932 - September 15, 2023*



Richard J. Rankin entered eternal peace on Sept. 15, 2023, just ahead of his 91st birthday, passing peacefully at home surrounded by loved ones. Cremation has taken place. A memorial ceremony will be held at the Brundage Funeral Home on Veteran's Day, Dick and Donna's 61st wedding anniversary, Nov. 11, 2023 at 11 a.m.

Born in Mingo, Iowa on Sept. 27, 1932, Dick moved to Montana with his parents Tom and Flossie Rankin, nine siblings,

and champion black Percheron stallion in 1936. Rankins settled on the Wigwam Ranch on the Madison River at Varney. The family built a log home and had a successful cattle and sheep ranching operation. Dick graduated as Salutatorian from Ennis High School in 1951 and joined the US Navy during the Korean Conflict. He returned two years later and enrolled in Billings Business College graduating with a degree in Business Accounting and was instrumental in starting the first Circle K at the college. He worked for a large CPA Firm in Billings and was later employed by a large CPA firm in Las Vegas, Nev., until he returned to Ennis in 1962 to open his own accounting, insurance and real estate company.

He met his wife, Donna Balkovetz, on a blind date to the Virginia City Players. They were married on Nov. 11, 1962, sharing almost 61 eventful years together. Some folks still

remember the Chivaree friends held for them to celebrate their marriage. In addition to his business in Ennis, he worked in Madison County law enforcement and served as coroner and as Justice of the Peace in Virginia City. He was producer and manager of the Ennis Rodeo for several years. In the fall of 1969, the family moved to Dillon upon purchasing the Barrett Agency and continued to build a successful insurance and real estate business and family. Dick is survived by his wife Donna, and their three daughters- Peri (Andy) Suenram of Dillon, Richelle (Robert) Galiger of Three Forks, and Rita Principe of Billings. Dick and Donna have eight grandchildren and three great grand daughters.

He loved the outdoors and exploring with his family, bouncing around in his Willy's Jeep fishing and hunting. In the 70's he encouraged and helped his daughters in their endeavors, raising and showing Appaloosa

horses throughout Montana and neighboring states, becoming President of Montana Appaloosa Horse Club.

He was a devoted Master Mason holding many offices at the Dillon Lodge along with Fraternal Grand positions in Commandery and the York Rite Bodies. He was a member of the Order of Eastern Star holding offices in Virginia City Chapter and Mizpah Chapter in Dillon where he was Worthy Patron for several years and held Grand office in 2008.

Dick took great pride in his business, community service and family. He and Donna enjoyed annual vacations to Las Vegas attending the NFR and touring. He cherished his time with his family and rarely missed an event. Perhaps his greatest source of pride, and his most notable accomplishment of all, was 90 years as a serviceman, husband, Dad and grandfather.

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**From "The Progressive Years, Madison County Montana, Vol II 1920-1950"**

**Paul Tillinger, Jr.**

Paul Tillinger Jr. was born on May 26, 1928 in Ennis, Montana, the son of the late Paul Vendal Tillinger, who came from Noemec, Austria Hungary and Veronika, who came from Sutmara, Austria Hungary. His parents first settled in the Madison Valley on December 1, 1927. They leased the Ennis Homestead, where they lived for three years, then moved to the Gilmer ranch south of Ennis, which they leased until 1933. They then moved back to the Ennis Homestead and purchased it. In 1936 they bought the Robert Wilson ranch near McAllister.

Paul grew up in Ennis and attended Ennis grade school and high school, graduating in May 1947. He helped operate both ranches. They operated a dairy in Ennis and ranched on the Robert Wilson place, where they raised cattle, hay and grain. Paul took over both places when his father became ill about 1960. His father died at seventy-seven on June 14, 1971, and his mother Veronika, followed her husband in death at age seventy-one, August 11, 1972. Paul continued to operate both ranches after his parents died. In December 1977 he sold the Robert Wilson ranch to Ben Johnson Montana Properties, which is now known as Trout Dale Homesites.

Paul is active in Search and Rescue and has been an active volunteer fireman since the early 1950s. He is the last active charter member. Paul has one sister, Veronica T Baker and two nephews, Randal and Wendal, who reside in Ennis. They help Paul on the ranch.



*Paul Tillinger Jr. when he graduated from high school, 1947.*



*Paul Tillinger Jr.'s father and mother, 1964.*

### **Gotfred Arnston**

Gotfred Arnston was born in Viking, North Dakota on July 24, 1891. He attended the University of North Dakota majoring in pre-med. During the homestead boom era, he came to Eastern Montana and settled near Circle. While homesteading there, he married Laura Rould. They left there during the drought years and came to Madison Valley, settling on the old Jim Cameron ranch on Bear Creek, in 1927. Mr Arnston started ranching operations and continued that until he became associated with the Arthur Storey ranch. Mrs Arnston died in 1928.

In the 1930s, Mr Arnston settled permanently at the Arthur Storey ranch and has remained there ever since faithfully stewarding the property after the respective deaths of Arthur and Lillie Storey. In 1970, "Arnie" joined Melborne (Storey) and Robert MacNab on a trip to Europe with special emphasis on visiting Norway, the land of his forefathers. Arnie won friends from Scandinavia to Italy with his Cameron Western hat and his genial manner. The highlight of the trip for him was in sharing a glass of champagne with Princess Christine of Sweden.

He celebrated his 90th birthday at a function in Gallatin Canyon in July of 1981. His many friends and well-wishers came from Madison and Gallatin counties and as far away as Washington, DC. Throughout his life, Gotfred Arnston has been one of the best known, well-liked, and faithful residents of the Madison Valley.



*Gotfred Arnston*

