

# The Wagon Tongue

Volume 14

Madison Valley History Association

January 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:** For those of you who have not noticed it yet. Winter is really winter this year. A dry one, to be sure—but cold. This morning, frost mutes the dark timbered flanks of Old Baldy Mountain (aka Ward's Peak), and blizzard-looking gray scarf wraps his bald old head. Brrr.

In October, about 25 MVHA members saw a couple of films about the Beast, the stuffed legend that sits in our Museum. The first was a documentary that suggested the Beast might be a monster out of the Pliocene. The second film was a fictional account by MSU media students. Both films provided entertainment and suggested provocative questions for members to think about. In addition to the two films, the MVHA heard from Jack Kirby, who is descended from Israel Hutchins, who actually shot the beast in 1886. Jack brought the rifle that Israel used. As with all artifacts, it put us much closer to the reality of the event than the fictionalized accounts did. Jack and his family, some of whom were interviewed and appeared in the first film, provided some insights into filmmaking and how documentary artistes sometimes work to generate facts that support their theme.

The Ladies Club Bazar in November was a great success for the MVHA. Our booth managed to take in \$330 in sales of books and decks of cards. Thanks to the MVHA board members and Mona Durham and Karen Shores for manning the booth and making it such a success.

In December the MVHA held its annual Christmas pot luck at the Trinity Episcopal Church in Jeffers. Turkey and Ham was provided by MVHA board members, and the casseroles, salads, stuffing, and desserts were brought by the rest of the membership attending. I think everybody had their fill. I did. The short program after the meal included Lee Robison's reading of a Christmas story written by his great grandmother, Ida McKee. Ida and her husband immigrated to the Madison Valley in the mid 1890s and had a ranch about a mile east and a little north of Jeffers. That ranch is the setting of Ida's story. Larry Love concluded the program by leading us in singing Christmas carols and hymns.

May all Madison Valley Members, their friends and families have a very good and prosperous New Year.  
Your Wagon Master, Lee Robison

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**Schools of Madison County** We left this history with the new addition in Virginia City, MT built on to the school and housing the furnace, heating plant in the basement.

During the Depression, the need for a high school gym became apparent. Basketball was becoming a popular sport and many other districts were getting school gyms with WPA help. "Let's build a gym of our own" said Harvey E. Romey, a member of a pioneer family. So the people went together and built one with volunteer labor. This gym is probably the only gym ever built by a school district in Montana without a school bond issue.

**Schools in the Madison Valley** Up to 1892 all schools were under one school district, District #1, Virginia City, MT. Schools were set up wherever there were pupils to attend them. In 1866 the first building for a school house in the Madison Valley was constructed of hand-hewn logs, 12x18 feet. It was in the A. W. Switzer field between the Odell Creek ditch and Bear Creek near where Jeffers is now. John Belk was the first teacher and there were 8 pupils. The following list of schools was taken from Jimmy Spray's History of the Madison Valley. The second was Big Trees in 1870 one mile east of Jeffers with 16 pupils and the first teacher was Jennie Aikens. The 3rd school was Moore's Creek in 1873, about 4 blocks of where Ennis Main Street is now and the East side of the creek. There were 11 pupils and first teacher was Mrs. William Ennis. The 4th school was Lower Meadow Creek in 1873. It was near where McAllister is now with 6 pupils and first teacher was George Doane. The 5th was Mouth Lane in 1877 one quarter mile east of Valley Cemetery with 8 pupils and teacher, Ella Smith. The 6th was opposite J.B. Jeffers ranch home in 1878 with 8 pupils and first teacher, Anna Woodworth. Schools in the Madison Valley to be continued in April issue with the 7th school again in Jeffers.

**Membership** No new members have joined since October.

**Membership update** Any outstanding 2015 memberships are now 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 January, February or March 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**

**Maureen and Ed Curnow** welcomed a granddaughter, Cordella Eloise Burns, born on Sept. 8, 2015. She is named after her great great grandmother, Roberta Eloise Carkeek Cheney.

**Karen Kilman**, daughter of Pearl and Les Kilman, was selected for promotion to Captain in the U.S. Public Health Service on July 1, 2015. Karen is a 1983 graduate of Ennis High School.

**Sue Ren**, author of the All Shall be Remembered series, was honored in the Madisonian Life Style section on Oct. 15, 2015. Sue has written 6 and is working on the 7th book. She has visited nearly 10,000 tombstones and has visited all 29 cemeteries throughout the county.

Her books are available at all libraries in the county and at the Madison Valley History Museum.

**Doris Daems** had a nasty fall in early December. She is recovering at the Madison Valley Hospital. I know she welcomes visitors, a phone call or a card during her recovery. Get well soon, Doris. She got home from the hospital on Thursday Jan 14. Give her a call at 682-4839.

Editor's note: Member news of our members is welcomed. The editor finds as many news items as possible by visiting with members and reading local newspapers but I am sure some are missed. Please get any story or item to the editor. History and stories are being made every day. Please share them.

#### **Memories**

**Thelma Aileen (Shorty) Neely**, age 89, passed away on June 24, 2015 in Salt Lake City, Utah of natural causes after a long battle with several long-term health conditions. She was born Thelma Aileen Latimer on August 25, 1925 in San Francisco, Calif. Burial was at Larkin Sunset Gardens in Sandy, Utah. She spent most of her adult life in Utah. On May 3, 1951 she married Monta Vern Neely, the third marriage for both of them. In June 1951 she and her three children, Aileen Huitt, Carroll Thomas and Eugene Thomas moved from Layton, Utah to join Monta on the Neely Ranch at Cliff Lake, Montana. Due to her short stature she was then known by the nick name of "Shorty". She and Monta lived year round on the ranch so her children boarded out in Ennis, MT in the winter with Mrs. Emma Clark so they could attend school. A son, Ronald Jay Neely was born to this marriage on Sept. 2, 1958 in Ennis, MT. In January 1959 Shorty and her three youngest children returned to Layton, Utah. Aileen Huitt Johnson remained in Montana with her husband Joseph Johnson and their baby son, Joseph Lee Johnson. Shorty and Monta were divorced in December 1959. After spending some time back in California and a few years in Denver, Colorado, Shorty spent the rest of her days in Salt Lake City, Utah. Memory written by Carroll Thomas Cropper, daughter Dec. 15, 2015.

**Robert (Bob) Louis Goettle, Jr** passed away on Sept. 3, 2015 in Ennis, MT. He was born on Dec. 2, 1952 to Bob Sr and Marjorie Goethe. Bob loved hunting, fishing, camping and being in the great outdoors. He was the main maintenance man at the Madison Meadows Golf Course.

**Mary Jean Moll** of McAllister, MT passed away Sept. 17, 2015 in Bozeman, MT. She was born on August 16, 1944 to Willard and Irene Pinter Park in the San Francisco Bay, Calif. area. She met her husband, William Moll, there. Mary worked in banking in various parts of the West until her retirement to Montana in 1999.

**James Russell "J.J." Johnson** passed away on Oct. 1, 2015 in Bozeman, Mt. He was born in Great Falls, MT on July 9, 1944 to Grace (Miller) and Cecil Johnson. He graduated from Great Falls High School and after serving in the Navy for two years, he returned home and began working for the Anaconda Company. After many occupations, he ended up with the Montana Power Company and his career took him to Ennis. He eventually retired from PPL and spent his retirement years in the Madison Valley.

**Margaret "Peggy" McMullen Todd** passed away on October 10, 2015 at the Madison Valley Manor in Ennis. Peggy was born in Livingston, MT on March 16, 1922 to Louis and Adelaide Forshaw McMullen. She was raised in the (*mem. cont. pg. 3*)

## **Memories cont from page 2**

Gallatin Valley and after her father passed away, her early years were spent at the foot of Lone Mountain where her widowed mother rented cabins to tourists. Her mother took her family to Los Angeles during the school year. Peggy graduated from Walt Whitman High School in 1940 and attended Art Center of Los Angeles where she pursued her interest in drawing and painting. The war years took her to Seattle where she worked as a draftsman for Boeing. After the war, she headed back to Montana and worked for the Bear Creek Ranch where she met I.L. Gene Todd and they were married on Aug. 22, 1948. Peggy was active in PTA, served on the Ennis Planning Board, and worked for Dr. Wilkins and Dr. Losee. Her best contribution to the town of Ennis was making sure the book mobile came from Helena to Ennis. She took painting classes and at age 55 she received a degree in English from Montana State University. She is a charter member of the Ennis Arts Association.

**Phyllis Julia Plath** passed away Oct. 21, 2015 in Portland Oregon. She was born in Calumet, Mich on July 22, 1937, and attended Michigan Technology University and spent her career as Manager of Physicians Medical Laboratories in Portland and Anchorage. After retiring she moved to Ennis and was involved with many community organizations including the MVHA. She helped the MVHA with the early organizational steps of incorporation and 501c3 applications.

**Ernie Bigelow** passed away October 25, 2015 in Forsyth, MT. He was born on Dec. 9, 1939 in Virginia City, MT to Ed and Jean Bigelow. He grew up and went to grade and high school in Ennis and worked on many ranches in the Madison Valley at a young age. He married Donna Munns from Alder and they lived in Utah and Idaho. After a divorce, Ernie moved back to Montana, married Gloria Butkay. He worked for Western Energy in Colstrip from 1982 until he retired a few years ago.

**Jeanne Hardy** passed away Nov. 11, 2015 in Bozeman, She was born August 2, 1925 and raised in Los Angeles, California. She worked for GTE now Verizon for 45 years and moved to Montana soon after retiring and built a log home in the Madison Valley.

**Edna Schumacher** passed away on Nov. 12, 2015 at her daughter's home in Bozeman. She was born Nov. 12, 1929. Edna was a long time Ennis resident and touched many lives helping at the Food Bank, at the Nearly New Shoppe and sitting for children and pets. I cannot find much information so a few memories from local residents would be wonderful to honor this special lady.

**William "Bill" Struckman** passed away Nov. 15, 2015. He was born Oct. 1, 1939 to

William F. Struckman and Arlene Mitchell-Struckman in Big Springs, Neb. He grew up on a ranch, served in the Army, met his wife in Mexico and they married on April 4, 1970. He and his family vacationed in Ennis yearly and moved permanently upon his retirement in 1995.

**Thomas Miller** passed away on Nov. 21, 2015. He was born to Frank and Mildred Miller of White Sulfur Springs, MT on July 17, 1932. They moved to the Madison Valley shortly after where Thomas grew up on their ranch. He served in the Marine Corps and married Dorma Hiatt on Dec. 15, 1956. He then spent the rest of his life on his ranch in McAllister as rancher, outfitter and brand inspector for the Madison Valley.

**J Lynn Hill** passed away on Nov. 27, 2015 at the Madison Valley Medical Center. He was born to Edith Curtis and Lynn Finlayson Hill in Eureka, Utah. He graduated from Spanish Fork High School in 1957 and joined the U.S. Army. On June 12, 1959 he married Colleen Hill. Lynn's favorite thing to do was fish and for many years they went to Montana at least once or twice a month until they got a cabin up Jack Creek. After his retirement in 2006, they moved permanently to their present home in McAllister, MT.

**John Wesley Rice** passed away on Nov. 27, 2015 in Lake Havasu City, Ariz. He was born to Kenneth and Flora Rice on March 26, 1944 in Bowman, N. D. He spent his early years in Wyoming and Colorado. He graduated from Dakota Wesleyan University, Mitchell, S.D. and attended graduate school at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, TX. He met Linda Lanz during college and they were married June 3, 1967 in Chamberlain, S.D. After graduate school, they moved to Montana to pursue John's love of hunting and fishing. John worked at Rio Tinto Talc Mine in Cameron for 35 years.

**Leon Homer Thexton** passed away Nov. 30, 2015. He was born May 27, 1957 in Long Beach California. He graduated from Ennis High School in 1975. He served in the U.S. Army and his love of fly fishing brought him back to the Madison Valley and he spent the next 39 years floating the Madison River and introduced hundreds of folks to the beauty of the Madison River.

**David Milton Sorvig** passed away Dec. 12, 2015 at the Fair Meadow Nursing Home in Fertile, Minn. He was born on July 11, 1929 to Otto and Agnes (Halvorson) Sorvig in St. Paul, Minn. He graduated from Cookson AC High School in 1947. On Sept. 22, 1951 he married Joan Johnson in Thief River Falls, Minn. In 1981 David moved to Ennis where he met and married Claudia Mae Breshears on June 5, 1987. To be closer to family, David and Claudia moved to Maple Lake, Minn., where they settled into retirement life in 1991.

The December MVHA meeting is always a Christmas party with good food, Christmas carols and Christmas stories. Over years the Christmas stories were repeated and there were no new ones. This story is from Lee Robison and advertised as a surprise for the program. So we are sharing it with those of you who missed the dinner and are curious about the surprise.

### **Christmas at the Briar Bush**

*Then came warmer days at the Briar Patch Ranch. The snow melted away, leaving the landscape bleak and bare in the yet cold sweeping winds, except on the tops of the mountains where the snow still lay white and gleaming. And Christmas drew near.*

One evening as the sun was sinking behind the mountains on the other side of the valley, and every one was busy with the evening chores, a wagon groaning and creaking under a heavy load was heard away out on the rocky roadway. The driver was singing a joyful song, and now and then giving his horses a kind word of encouragement.

"Oh, its daddy, it's daddy," the children chimed, happy and dancing in glee.

They were so delighted that they played tag and other frolicsome didoes until the crunching wagon with its heavy load of what proved to be logs for fuel drew up on their side of the creek.

"Hello, Daddy," they greeted and ran to meet him. "What you got there on top o' the logs, Daddy?" questioned Tom as the wagon stopped in the woodyard.

"Why son, that's a Christmas tree." answered Father as he patted each child on the shoulder with a kind word of greeting.

"A Christmas tree! A Christmas tree!" they chanted. "Goody, Goody."

The older boys took the horses to their oats and hay in the squatty stable.

Standing by the hot kitchen range, father cast admiring glances around the snug and orderly kitchen, with its comforting welcome, and exclaimed. "This is something worthwhile. I pity the man who knows not the joy of a welcome homecoming and happy greeting of rollicking children."

Bob and George popped a large panful of popcorn to string into ropes for garlands. Charles brought in a pail full of red wild rose berries. And the family sat in kitchen, near the warmth of the range to string ropes of popcorn and rose berries.

They stood admiring the decorated tree, they were startled by horses neighing in the yard.

"What's that?"

"Why, it's Uncle John and his funny stage coach," Charles said from the window. "I wonder who he has inside?" he said thoughtfully.

"Santa Clause," Susie said.

But when they threw on their coats and caps and ran outside to see who Uncle John had brought in his stage coach, it wasn't Santa Clause. It was their Grandma and Grandpa Sterling who had come for a Christmas surprise to the Bonnie Bright family. And there too, were Aunt Mary and Cousin Maude.

"Well, Well," exclaimed Grandpa, staring at the decorated Christmas tree, "What have we here."

"My, My," said Gramma, "What a pretty tree."

"A fine tree," said father, "I was cutting logs for fuel, so I had the pick of trees from the whole mountain side."

"Well, I swan? And you needn't ask anybody if you could?" (Ed. Note: "I swan" was a 19th century expression popular in Southern USA.)

"No, they are free for the taking."

"Well I swan?" exclaimed Grandpa, removing his big fur coat.

The next morning mysterious packages were found here and there on the Christmas tree. Some were labeled for Grandma and Grandpa. Each of the boys got a present labeled "from Grandpa." And each of the girls got a present labeled "from Grandma."

After the contents of the packages were examined and compared there were many shouts of "thank you, thank you."

When Charles, Bob, and George went that morning after the gifts had been distributed from the Christmas tree, to feed the horse, they raced each other to see who would be first to pat and caress Prince and Molly who had been gone all week on a wood hauling and Christmas tree finding expedition.

What was their surprise to see standing by Bell in a usually empty stall was a strange cream pinto pony with large brown spots on his sides and back, and although he was not blind, he had one white eye.

With a thrill George rubbed the pony's soft nose, and as he did so, his hand happened to brush against something on the halter. This proved to be a card which was inscribed "A Christmas gift to the family from Dad. This is Pete the Pinto."

Bob seized the pony's mane in one hand and sprang upon his back where he sat in delight as he thought what a brick his Dad was to give them such a fine Christmas gift. The boys petted and patted and climbed all over Pete the Pinto, then remembered their manners and raced to bring the good news to everybody else and to thank their Dad.

"Yes, boys," answered Father. "You deserve a good horse. While I was away cutting wood, you took good care of Mother and the children. Faithfully did you do chores and also did good work in school."

After breakfast, the children took their grandparents to show them the "briar patch." It was an important briar patch because, on the day the family moved onto the ranch,

(Continued on page 5)

*(Continued from page 4)* it snagged Susie's new Gingham dress and tore it. So Mama and Charles named the ranch Briar Bush.

Christmas at Briar Bush Ranch came to end with flickering lamps and cookies, while Grandpa told stories about Christmases when he and Grandma were children. The children sang songs they had learned for the school Christmas program. Then there was silence and darkness under the high white peaked mountains that seemed like a vast wall shielding the Ranch and the Valley from outside plunder.

By Ida Woodworth McKee, edited by Lee Robison. *This story comes from a larger work and in itself is much longer. I have made some changes to fit this, out of context, version.*

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**Jess Armitage History** We left Jess in October where he got his first experience of Army life.

I thought I had met the most powerful man in the US Army the way he was ordering us around, but come to find out he was only a cadre non-commissioned officer from Fort Bliss, Texas which was an old Calvary outfit where he was trained to be tough. I guess he was also trained to scare us. He did a good job of it. From San Pedro we were sent to Medford, Oregon to start our basic training. I was assigned to 91st division. "LET ER BUCK" was our insignia. We went on a few forced marches, but they weren't bad as it was pretty country and at least we got outside and off the base. We were ordered to wear rain coats when it was raining but the rain in Oregon was cold so we would put our heavy overcoats under the rain coats. That was soon found out and we had to take off our overcoats. I was assigned to the 363rd infantry Regiment. I was in the Service Company where I was in charge of servicing and maintaining the ammunition trucks. The maneuvers were near Bend and Wagon Tire, Oregon. That was desert country where they had portable showers once in a while. I was lucky as I drove the warrant officer around to the different check points and when he would get tired, I was the first one to the showers. He wanted me to apply for a Warrant Officer position but as usual I wanted to stay with my buddies. After maneuvers we were moved to Camp Adair, near Corvallis, Oregon. That was nice country to hike through. Lots of timber and the Rouge River was usually close by.

Grace joined me there and soon followed me and soon followed me to Fort Benning, Georgia where I was instructed as to the principles of the Internal Combustion Engine. That was interesting as we had good instructors and also the Paratroopers trained next door and we could watch them jump off of the towers while we were sitting in class. During this time Grace and I lived in a one room apartment 5

with a gas counter stove for cooking and a very small table to eat on and no cupboards. Grace immediately found work in the Muscogee Textile Mill oiling the machinery so she could get out of the apartment. It wasn't long after that we returned to Corvallis and then I was heading overseas to Italy and the war zone. It took us 11 long days to sail to Oran, North Africa where we were trained for a couple of weeks and then sent to Naples for a couple of days then on to Rome where we were in the War Zone for sure.

Just north of Rome was our first taste of battle. We were told to dig in our fox holes as we might need them that night. The pup tents for sleeping were erected close by for convenience. We slept pretty good until about midnight when someone shouted "BED CHECK CHARLEY COMING IN" and we did not know what that meant until a small airplane throttled down and came right over us and started shooting. We all ran for our fox holes and I jumped in mine. All of a sudden another soldier jumped in on top of me. Said he couldn't find his. I was mad for a minute or two and then I realized that he would get his first and I would be safe. Chicken! We had several BED CHECK CHARLEYS after that but we were better prepared. We were headed north toward the Apennine range of mountains. There were numerous battles before we reached our winter headquarters at Loiano, Italy. It was nice mountain country, cold and not much wind but we were right in the battle area and got bombed quite often. One minor incident was when we were bombed at noon and several of us were having some kind of lunch upstairs in the building where I had my service department. The ceiling had been bombed out so we put single boards across the raft-

ers to get into the various rooms. When the bombing started, we all jumped up and wanted to go downstairs. My friend, Sanford, started across and got half way across when he turned around and headed back towards us. We asked him where he was going and he said, "I don't know but I got to go someplace." We got him turned back around anyhow. The bombed out building where I slept had one room in pretty good shape so I made my this domicile. It was also close to the church so I thought that would be an advantage. Anyhow I decided when it was my turn to go, there wouldn't be anything tangible that would protect me and I was ready whenever He wanted me. Come to find out, it was the Priest in the church that was spying for the Ger-

mans and giving them information, During the winter I was asked to take information to General Livesley, Regimental BIG boss, at headquarters, I believe in Florence, Italy, concerning our operations and what, if any, problems we were having. I told him what I was told to tell him. *(Continued on pg. 6)*

### For Your Reading Pleasure

Last Bus to Wisdom by Ivan Doig This is Ivan Doig's last book before his untimely death in April 2015. 11 year old Donel Cameron is being raised by his grandmother in Montana. When she can no longer care for him, she sends Donel off to her sister in Wisconsin, and Donel is in for a rude surprise. Read it and find out! This novel is a great way for Doig to finish off his career. Doig is author of 15 previous books. There are those of us who do remember the era, it was also nostalgic and a great read.

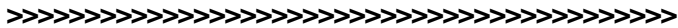
### Looking Ahead

**February 25, 2016 4:00 pm First Madison Valley Bank downstairs meeting room** McKee Family in the Madison Valley presented by Lee Robison. Note the date change (4rd Thurs instead of 3rd Thurs. )to accommodate Lee's schedule.

**March 20, 2016 2 to 5 pm Ennis Elementary School Lunch Room** Celebrate William Ennis Birthday with annual Irish Stew dinner.

**.April 21, 4:00 pm First Madison Valley Bank downstairs meeting room** Montana and the Civil War by author Ken Robinson

**May 19, 2016** Membership pot luck and annual meeting Time and place to be determined.



### Jess Armitage History cont from page 5

I had on a clean uniform but I had lost a pocket button somewhere along the trip so I was worried about that. He never said a word. The Army is more worried about your dress than the condition of your health. The Service Company Commanding asked for volunteers to deliver a "flame thrower" that had been repaired to the front lines. Since I was getting bored, I volunteered and was lucky to make the complete trip. I could drive within about 2 miles of the post, then I would have to walk the rest of the way to the command post to deliver the flame thrower.

It was an interesting walk down and through a valley where I met several ladies carrying bundles of brush on their heads for fire wood.

I was going up the hill on the other side of the valley when the shooting started. It was fortunate that I remembered to take my rifle with me when I started walking. It was bulky and the flame thrower was heavy. I dropped the flame thrower and grabbed my rifle to fire back, but low and behold I had forgotten to put a clip in the rifle and didn't have any with me. Lucky me, the shooting stopped and I continued on my way up the road. I saw a soldier and asked him about the shooting and he said that it was our guys shooting at the enemy. I suppose if I had shells I would have shot one of our soldiers. My luck is still holding! When I reached the "Command Post" and delivered the flame thrower, I started back down the road. Someone hollered for me to get off the road as the enemy was looking right down the road. I received the Bronze Star for this? It was a very narrow road with just room for a Jeep. All of a sudden it came to me that this is the road we came down a couple of nights before with just black out lights to guide us to deliver a truck load of soldiers to the front.

In the spring of 1944 we started down the mountain to cross the Po Valley and Po River to head towards the Swiss border. The Po Valley was mostly river and white sand. I still don't know why the commanding officer had us stop for the night on that white sandy bottom. Everything was peaceful and we were about to go to bed

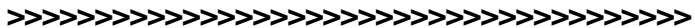
### MVHA Board of Directors

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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, First Madison Valley Bank conference room Oct. to April. *The Wagon Tongue* will be published quarterly. Next issue will be April 2016. Articles of historic interest and memories of the departed are welcomed.  
Editor: Shirley Love whitneytranch@wispwest.net  
Contributing editors:

- Madisonian* Obituaries, Lifestyle, and Volunteer spotlight
- Jess Armitage History* by Jess Armitage
- Virginia City School First in the Territory* by Lucille Dixon
- Pioneer Trails and Trials* pg. 896
- Schools in the Madison Valley* by Winifred Jeffers *Pioneer Trails and Trials* pg.915

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



when a couple of airplanes came overhead and started strafing and shooting at us. I crawled in between the tandems on one of the ammunition trucks. I guess I thought that if the shells started exploding they would blow up not down. Anyhow, I got out of there and was talking to some guys when the planes came back again. Another fellow and I jumped across the river, only about 10-15 feet across, to get under a bank of dirt for protection and didn't get wet at all. After the shooting and bombing was over we tried to get back and neither one of us could jump that far, so we had to walk through the water. Adrenalin at work, I guess.

From there we went to Triest, Italy for a couple of weeks, then on to Milan, Italy. That was one of the nicest cities I saw in Italy. While we were in Milan, it was announced that the war in Europe was over. We were sent back to Naples and were prepared to be shipped to the Pacific to help the situation over there. We were placed on the beach with our duffel bags waiting for a ship to take us to the Pacific war zone when it was announced that the war was over with Japan also. The commanders then gave us our "numbers" for our position in the lineup to be shipped back to the U.S.A.. It took us only 3 days to return where it took us 11 days to go over to Europe. I was discharged in Salt Lake City, Utah, I gave away my duffel bag and anything else I could dispose of as I was THROUGH with the Army. I had to wear my uniform home so I still have that. I took a bus from Salt Lake to Idaho Falls, Idaho. We leave Jess as he is making his way home to Montana. Continued in April.