

The Wagon Tongue

Volume 15 issue 1

Madison Valley History Association

January 2017

website: 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

