



The Wagon Tongue

Volume 5 Issue 4

Madison Valley History Association, Inc.

October 2007

From the Wagon Seat: The nights are cold, snow is on the mountain tops, there is lots of hunter orange around and the fantastic colors are showing up. Fall has arrived. The MVHA Museum has finished another season with people as far away as Germany, Australia, England and elsewhere viewing our artifacts. I would like to thank Jynean Skank, Mary Ann Alger, Smitty Overstreet and Zoe Todd for a great job as schedulers and a big thank you to all the volunteers who manned the museum. They are the key to keeping the museum open. There were some days that we were not able to be open because of the lack of a volunteer for that day or for even a few hours. Hopefully we can do better next year.

The MVHA is working on our land site. We now have a great well. It is rated at 30 gallons per minute, cold and clear. We are getting a state approved approach put in and will have power put in on a pole. The board is working on getting help to advise us on placement of a building and a future plan. We have some ideas already. If you have additional ideas or different ideas, talk to us or write us a letter.

Any ideas for programs are always welcome. In July the Hutchins Bridge Party was a huge success and \$5000 was donated to the MVHA museum project. A big thank you is in order to all who that helped make this this a success, no matter how small your part may have been. In August Jim Rowe gave a talk on the Rowe Ranch and the Red Bluff Stone House and our field trip to Wall Creek in September was great. Thanks to Smitty Overstreet, Mona Durham and Fred King who stepped up on short notice when the Silver Star trip could not be done. And for October, thanks to Karen Shores for arranging the Committee of the Humanities program with Molly Kruckenberg, Director of the Research Center at the Montana Historical Society and the program on "A taste of Montana: A history of cookbooks and cooking in Montana."

The board would like the MVHA members to become more involved no matter how small a part you might be able to do. This will have to happen if we are going to succeed in our mission statement. The board would like to have as our goal that by spring, we can start working on a building or buildings on our site.

Sometimes a great idea can fail if there is not anyone to implement it. Become involved. In the words of Captains Lewis and Clark, Let us proceed on..... Your wagon master, Larry Love

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History Titbit: Quotes from the '50's" I never thought I'd see the day all our kitchen appliances would be electric. They are even making electric typewriters now."

"It won't be long before young couples are going to have to hire someone to watch their kids so that they can both go to work."

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Member Application Madison Valley History Association, Inc.

P.O. Box 474, Ennis, Mt. 59729

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.

Name _____

Telephone _____ Mailing address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

e-mail address _____ (used only for communication of MVHA info)

(____) Student \$5.00 (____) Individual \$10.00 (____) Family \$15.00 (____) Business \$50.00 (____) Patron \$100.00

Welcome to Membership The following have joined since the July 2007 issue. Please add to any membership list you might be keeping. If you need a complete list of members for your committee work, please contact Shirley Love and she will print you a complete updated list.

Cropper, Carroll (I)

5245 South 3600 West
Taylorsville, Utah 06492

Hinman, LeRoy & Jane (F) 682-7775

774 Bergamo
San Jacinto, CA 92583

McAllister, Kay (I) 587-8317

606 South 5th
Bozeman, MT 59715

Paugh, Patsy (I)

Gallatin Co. Rest Home
1221 W. Durston
Bozeman, MT. 59715

Rohrbough, Miriam & Richard (F) 682-3371

(W) 121 Touchstone Ter
Lake Oswego, OR 97025

(S) 23 Big Bend Rd
Cameron, MT 59720

Thexton, Duane & Le (F) 682-4333

337 Varney Road
Ennis, MT 59729

During this past summer the Madison Valley lost one of the old timers. Frank Vetter sent this to the MVHA and Wagon Tongue.

A Tribute to Dick McGuire

by Frank Vetter

Dick and I were first cousins. His mother and my father were sister and brother. The similarities in our two families were somewhat remarkable, as we each grew up with one brother, a house full of older sisters, and one younger sister. We were badly outnumbered, but somehow we managed to survive.

We were classmates in the same sixth grade class, taught by Violet Burns (later Thexton). We both served in the U.S. Navy in World War II and saw action in the Pacific.

Dick loved the Madison Valley. He left the valley briefly on one occasion, but returned after a short absence. He taught school for a while, but soon reverted to the outdoor life that he loved and made a career as a hunting and fishing guide. Just about a year ago, he said to me, "If I had been born somewhere else, I still would have spent my life here in the Madison Valley."

Dick lived and died doing what he loved to do. Who can ask for anything more? To borrow a line or two from a well known motion picture about fly fishing, "In the end, all things converge to one--and a river runs through it." We don't know much about that great land where my cousin Dick has gone--only that which is told to us in the scriptures--but one thing we can be sure of: a river runs through it! He wouldn't have it any other way.

Following is a poem written by Dick when he was a young man. My Mountains

by Dick McGuire

Oh, to leave the crowds behind me,
Leave behind all worry and care,
To seek the sanctuary of my mountains,
And the feeling I get when I'm there.

When again I've journeyed upward,
Savoring every breath of alpine air,
Ah, such splendor! It's the mountains,
And the feeling I get when I'm there.

My majestic mountains all around me,
Vista after vista beyond compare,
Words can't describe the grand elation,
And the feeling I get when I'm there.

When the city life surrounds me,
Life's problems more than I can bear,
Thoughts of my mountains resurrect me,
With the feeling I get when I'm there.

And when my life has ended,
Should I climb to who knows where,
May the path lead me to my mountains,
And the feeling I get when I'm there.

Editor's note: This poem was first published in the Madison Valley Trail and Trials page 961.

Intentionally left blank for the back of the Membership Application.

Ennis Class of '57 holds 50 year reunion

The Ennis class of '57 held their 50 year reunion July 2-4. A dinner and cocktail party was held at the Bill and Karen (Warburton) Dringale home. The class also rode in the parade on the Fourth of July. Members attending: Lois Dames, Karen Warburton, Patty Robison, Hallie Pasley, Mary Frisbie, Richard Coad, Neil Kent, Tom Jones, Bernard Jones, Jack Whitman, and Wayne McDaniel. Unable to attend: Patsy Paugh, Ann Pasley, Mary McAtee, Roy Estes, and Dolly McCollum. Deceased: Bezzie Baker, Martha Carpenter, Grant Cudney, Don Nies, and Jim Etchemendy.

Mr. and Mrs. Dave Dougherty and Madeline Scully also joined us.

Submitted by Lois (Daems) Miller

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The Town Crier by Edna M. Schoenek Lay

The year was 1927. My parents had recently bought the Fitzgerald Hotel and six cabins from Frank Fitzgerald and we had moved from our homestead in the Upper Madison Valley (Missouri Flats) to Ennis. I was four years old; my brother, LeRoy, was eight and a half. That property is now called the Lone Elk Mall. Porter Nelson's garage and filling station was directly across the street. None of the streets in Ennis were paved. All of the roads in the Madison Valley were dirt roads.

I was playing alone in the front yard in the shade of two cottonwood trees. My mother had admonished me not to go outside of the yard. All of the school aged children in the community were in grade school or high school that day.

My attention was drawn to a noise up the street. A young man came running down the middle of Main Street yelling as loudly as he could. He was shouting words I did not understand. He kept running east and repeating the sentence over and over. The imprint that this incident left on my young mind was that the young man was very excited and exhilarated, and the message he was telling everyone who could hear him was very important.

The mail was brought to Ennis one a day and delivered to the Post Office around 4:00 or 4:30pm. Mrs. Jenny Chowing was the Postmistress. She sorted the mail and put it in people's boxes. The newspaper, the Montana Standard published in Butte, was distributed along with letters the day after the young man made his run.

The important news was in the paper-- "CHARLES LINDBERGH HAD FLOWN ACROSS THE ATLANTIC OCEAN NONSTOP AND LANDED SAFELY IN PARIS".

He was the first person to accomplish this amazing feat. Everyone who read the news was excited. And they told the folks who didn't get the newspaper. It seemed like the whole town was excitedly talking about this event.

My parents explained the news to me and my brother. I recalled that these words were the words the young runner was shouting. In time I

came to realize that the young man had heard the news on the radio somewhere in Ennis. (I think there were very few radios in Ennis in 1927.) Most of the people got the news the next day from the newspaper. And it was one of the most important events in aviation history. The young man had voluntarily assumed the role of "THE TOWN CRIER" for five or ten minutes in our little town of Ennis.

I do not know the young man's name. If any of you who are reading this article ever heard of this event and if you know who he was, please send the name to the MVHA or the Wagon Tongue and it can be published in a future issue.

Addendum: Years later as an adult I was in the St. Louis Airport as a passenger between planes. In the central area of the building there was a small airplane suspended from the ceiling from wires and cables. I walked to get closer and on the side of the plane was printed: "The Spirit of St. Louis". I was amazed and mildly shocked by the small size of the plane. Then I saw a plaque on the wall. I moved closer and read it. It was indeed the plane that Lindbergh made his world famous flight in from an airfield on Long Island, N.Y. to Paris. I thought of the runner in Ennis and his excitement. I wondered how that little plane could carry enough gasoline to fly that far.

More years passed and I saw the movie, "The Spirit of St. Louis", the story of the famous flight with James Stewart playing the part of Lindbergh. Five business men in St. Louis put up the the money to have the plane built, and thus it was named. It was explained how the plane was designed with multiple gas tanks. Lindbergh and two men in San Diego planned it and built it, an amazing example of American ingenuity!

More years passed and I saw the "Spirit of St. Louis" in the Smithsonian Building displaying the History of Flight, in Washington, D.C. It had been moved from St. Louis.

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The Madison Valley lost a very incredible woman in late summer and the following article will be printed in the memory of this woman, **Olive Losee**.

THE SCHOOL HOUSE GALLERY AND POT SHOP Compiled by Minnie Paugh from interviews with Fannie Aaberg and Olive Losee.

The School House Gallery and Pot Shop provides an outlet for the artists and craftsmen in the Madison Valley Community. An increasing number of local people have been doing paintings, water colors, and sculpture in talc, metal and wood since they have been able to get instruction during the winter from individual artists and from the Montana Institute of the Arts, usually referred to as the MIA. During the summer tourists have been buying the local arts and crafts in preference to mass produced souvenirs. Everything is produced by a Montana artist or craftsman, and is sold on consignment.

(Continued on page 4)

School House Gallery and Pot Shop continued from page 3.

The shop is open from May through December. Olive leases it on a commission basis. Terry Wilkins, the niece of Dr. Gene C. Wilkins, had it for one season; May McConochie, Olive's sister from Middletown, Connecticut, has had it for two. The Gallery is used for art shows and makes a rallying place where visiting artists can give instruction. A favorite instructor is Ray Campeau of Bozeman who is from the Bozeman City Schools. A third use of the Gallery is to provide equipment and art supplies. The potters especially need to share their kiln.

The School House Gallery was opened by Olive Losee in 1971. The Pot Shop started later as a result of the work of Fannie Aaberg and Rick (Rachael) Vujovich.

Olive Losee, who really made the center possible is the wife of Dr. Ronald Losee, the orthopedic surgeon. She had long been interested in the development of a culture center. She favored a library more than a craft center, and tried to acquire a little store building on Main Street beside Moores Creek. She did not want to involve enough money to take the pleasure from the enterprise, nor did she want public help. Almost by chance she earned the kind of money she wanted.

Olive is a graduate nurse with a great deal of practical experience. She was also extremely interested in the moving picture industry although not all all interested in becoming an actress herself. When the moving picture production crew for "The Little Big Man" used Virginia City as one of their production sites, they were required to have a nurse on their set whenever they were working. Since they could not find a nurse in the community, Dr. Losee called Olive back from a vacation she was having with her family in Connecticut. She returned partly as a service to the community, and partly for the experience. It was a work experience all the way. The bus for the production crew picked her up at 5:45 am. along with the crew who were housed at the Sportsman Lodge in Ennis. They all came home after the shooting was over--possibly at 8:00 in the evening. Olive saved the money she earned and invested it in Walt Disney stock which was an excellent investment.

The Gallery building has been located in Ennis for years. It had been used as the Cameron School which was near the highway south of Cameron. It was moved to Ennis about 1940 and was used as a private dwelling while it fell into disrepair. By 1970 it was a community eyesore and a source of water pollution. The building was always attractive, and when it was placed on the market, Olive bought it with her savings. She says she did it because of "being environmentally concerned and hoping to set a good example of how a little cleaning up, landscaping, and paint can improve 4

a small corner of the community."

Olive got busy. She bought an old truck, put on a surgical mask and long protective rubber gloves and cleaned away the accumulated debris of a lifetime. Soon Fannie Aaberg and Rick Vujovich were working with her. They wanted to become financial partners, but Olive thought they should all do their own thing. She still did not know for sure what she wanted to do with the building. Fannie and Rick were already taking lessons in ceramics at the Ketterer Art Center in Bozeman and knew they wanted a pot shop. They rented the shed beside the Gallery for their pottery equipment. When they learned that the old building was too loosely constructed to hold heat during the winter, they rented Jack Smith's garage. When his estate is settled, they may have to move, and they and Olive would like to acquire the VFW Hall for a more complete culture center. Neither the Pot Shop or the Gallery can now be adequately heated during the winter. The potters use a barrel stove which burns wood, with a small backup oil burner to supplement it at night.

Several MIA interest groups would like to share a culture center. The MIA art group included Peggy Todd and Janet McAtee. The music group which centers around Faye Watkins, Bobby Brand, and Jean Hanson, has already produced recordings.

In the summer of 1974 Olive's School House Gallery sponsored two programs. The MIA Little Festival drew artists from several communities together and permitted local people to see demonstrations by Ennis craftsman as well as visiting artists. The Gallery sold much of its stock to the visitors. Olive sponsored a showing of "Shakespeare in the Parks" which is produced by the drama club at MSU and is funded by the Montana Arts Council. An audience of 200 people viewed this full length play which was presented on Olive's vacant lot south of the Gallery. In 1973 this program attracted only 80 people, which suggests more people are becoming aware of the facility.

The pot shop is independent of the School House Gallery, although the Gallery is their sales outlet. After Fannie and Rick got their basic training in ceramics, they considered means by which they could finance the purchase of their kiln and other major pottery equipment. They decided to try putting on an antique auction.

The auction took a lot of thought and work. Antique junk was systematically located all over the valley with great care to use the resources closest to Fannie and Rick's home ranches. They searched for old dumps wherever a home-stead cabin may have been located. They found many things in the coolies and draws on Bear Creek and on the Sun Ranch. Leonard McAtee at the Cameron Store let them search the old McAtee dumps. Rick went into the Antelope Basin.

(Continued on page 5)

The School House Gallery and Pot Shop (cont. from page 4)

They were looking for objects which might be converted into rustic looking planters and other conglomerate decorations. They drew their friends and relatives into their game. Husbands fretted about having to haul their treasures back to the dump after the sale. Such thoughts caused them to season the collection with some genuine antiques which they considered real value; for example, a still from the prohibition era. They put in practical items such as second hand mattresses, sofas, and baled hay from the Vujovich Ranches.

They had attractive hand bills made for advertising and spread them over the neighboring towns in the Ruby Valley and in Bozeman. They mailed the handbills to people they thought would be interested. They also bought a notice in the Madisonian and had time on the Bozeman radio station.

The crowd who came to their sale startled and delighted them. It ranged from the antique dealers to the long haired communities in Virginia City and Bozeman. The later group bought all the mattresses and clothes such as a suitcase full of army uniforms. Antique dealers and buffs were delighted with the artistic garage. This junk sold sometimes without reason, because the genuine antiques were the least popular items, although the fine old still they had found twisted among willows and weeds where it had once produced moonshine sold to Jack Vujovich for \$190. The hay brought a good price because good hay is hard to locate in May.

People seemed to really want such things as the old horse shoes, crushed buckets, and wooden nail kegs that Sandy McClune and Barry Bowersox helped them find around Meadow Creek. They had salted boxes of near trash with a few interesting items and these sold. Bleached bones made most collections look good to buyers. Rick had used an old brooder reflector to center such material attractively as a patio decoration. This may have suggested the use for the mixed boxes. They even sold an old telephone box garnished with apple green paint and bastardized with a modern dial phone type receiver.

The auction cleared \$1,100. This bought their kiln and the other supplies to start producing pottery for the Gallery. They have a large electric kiln and four potting wheels. They do attractive bowls and traditional things, but get pleasure from beads, pendants, patio chains and other wall hangings that sell well from the Gallery. These decorations can be primitive hand forms which are easy to do while visiting. Fannie and Rick find their production problem is finding the time to fire the kiln to complete their pottery. They enjoy their hobby and like to share it with others, but it is apt to be a master potter who does the demonstrating for the public at events such as the MIA Little Festival.

These three people have created a little cultural center for the community through their initiative

and hard work. As Olive says "we made our little dream come alive." They now enjoy a sense of pride that they did it themselves with the encouragement from their spouses.

Editor's note: The School House Gallery and Pot Shop located at 202 1st St. continued for a number of years. Then Brent Warburton used it as a potting business until Lois and Chrissy Saier rented the building in about 1979 for their business as the Plant and Flower Shop. (article taken from The Madison Valley A High Mountain Community by Minnie Paugh and donated to MVHA by Katherine Armitage)

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Continuing Montana Trivia: Get your Montana Atlas or Road Map out. Find the Montana town that best fits each clue. The past issues were limited to towns close to the Madison Valley or mainly in S. Central Mt. Now the whole state is fair game!!

1. Ancient Greek wreath worn by heroes.
2. A closing for clothes with a D instead of a B.
3. Easy chair
4. Abundance of timber
5. A famous cannery
6. To hit a girl
7. Sugared hay
8. A wild animal and a place to stay
9. A famous composer
10. A Breezy piece of meat
11. To take a trophy
12. A brand of cigarettes
13. A small boy friend
14. An oven
15. A kind of tree

Answers printed in next issue of Wagon Tongue and available at the November MVHA meeting.

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Old McAllister Post Office Safe donated to MVHA

The MVHA Museum recently acquired the safe from the old McAllister Post Offices. This safe was passed down from post master to postmaster and housed at the various post office locations..usually in someone's house..until it was no longer needed at the permanent location in McAllister. While MVHA members visited with Wayne Johnson who donated the safe, they learned that there were Post Offices at Washington Bar and Meadow Creek. From Names on the Face of Montana by Roberta Cheney, we learned that Washington Bar had a post office July 1884-1896. George Cope was the original postmaster. Later, Esther Pinckney also served. Washington Bar was a mining camp of the gold rush days. Meadow Creek had a post office opened in 1869 with Waity Walton in charge; the office served the area later taken over by McAllister. The Meadow Creek office closed in 1883 and reopened 1886-1908. Ranches in the area ranged from the Tobacco Root Mountains to Ennis Lake. McAllister Post Office was established in 1902 with Davis Lindsay as first postmaster.

For Your Reading Pleasure

Dreams, Dust and Depression by Philip S. Long

A story of the depression in Montana in 1929 written by Walter Long's nephew and Lucille Wellman and Ethelyn Hubner's cousin. Copies available at local libraries.

So Long Cowboys of the Open Range by

Truman McGriffin Cheney with Roberta Cheney
Three copies available at Madison Valley Public Library and Thompson-Hickman Library in V.C. as well as many libraries around the state.

Looking Ahead

November 8 4:00 pm Don Black of Jeffers and Great Falls will speak on the Sedition Act and some colorful Madison Valley characters who were involved at that time.
First Madison Valley Bank downstairs meeting room*.

December 14 4:00pm Annual Christmas Party
Speaker yet to be confirmed. First Madison Valley Bank downstairs meeting room*.

January 11, 2008 4:00pm Gary Forney speaking on his latest research and book. First Madison Valley Bank downstairs meeting room*.

* If you arrive after 4:15 or so and doors are locked go to the drive in teller and they will unlock door for you. There is an elevator for handicap access and drop off can be made as close to the door as possible in the drive in lane.

Madison Valley History Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 474
Ennis, Montana 59729

Madison Valley History Association, Inc. Board of Directors

President: Larry Love

Vice President: Jim Carlson

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Secretary: Mary Ann Alger

Director: Shirley Love

Director: Smitty Overstreet

Director: Otis Thompson

Meetings held monthly on the second Thursday of each month. Watch Madisonian for details of time and place and program.

Board Meetings are held the 1st Wednesday of each month

The Wagon Tongue will be published quarterly.

Next issue will be January 2008.

Editor: Shirley Love

Contributing Editors:

Lois Daems Miller Ennis Class of '57

Edna M. Schoenek Lay "Town Crier"

Minnie Paugh The Madison Valley A High Mountain Community for the "School House Galley and Pot Shop"

Zoe Todd "Montana Trivia"

Frank Vetter "A Tribute to Dick McGuire"

Roberta Cheney Names on the Face of Montana

The Wagon Tongue welcomes articles of historical significance from any of the MVHA members or interested public.

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