

Post Falls Historical Society Newsletter

SPRING 2022

President's Message by Kim Brown



Growing Corn in Post Falls, Shoulder high by 4th of July...watching history and corn growing...fun for Kim Brown...Society President.

Society Friends, Members, Visitors and area history lovers:

We love sharing the story of Post Falls! It is on-going effort to share the story of our town with children, family and newcomers to the area to enjoy and appreciate.

May is National Historic Preservation Month....and we are out collecting and preserving local history for the present and future. History honors past efforts, and is the foundation of TODAY!

Recent actions:

Volunteers gear up for upcoming Museum season, May through October. We appreciate them, and anyone who would like to help us. Our heritage preservation depends on individual volunteerism!

Society and Kootenai County Historic Preservation Commission work to celebrate the old Chapin building, now 99 years old.

Expect some kind of "whoop-up" next year.

Society teams up with Sara Pence and the Treaty Rock Elementary School to share local history.

Society and members support the restoration of our area's oldest standing school, Pleasant View. This old building is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Society teams up with Historik to establish a technology platform for the public to enjoy with your hand-held devices.

Society works to preserve family history (see Rodkey Family Museum Display) and connect PFHS graduates to the town's history. That also includes veteran history.

Society works with the Post Falls Chamber to share our local museum with visitors and business leaders. We also participate in the River City Leadership Academy History Day.

Share your "Place Name History" with us. See article on Adkins Family, and the streets named "Adkins, Nellie and Frank." Nellie Adkins was a Charter member of the Post Falls Historical Society.

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Happy spring! Learn more about our activities at postfallsmuseum.weebly.com/ or on our Facebook page!

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President's message...(cont.)

Working with NIC to video tape old timer's histories.

Working with the Post Falls Park and Rec Department to share history with Summer Camp Ka-mee-lin.

The Society became a 501(c)3 non-profit organization in the fall of 1988. We rely on volunteer support, non-profit grants, and old-fashioned elbow grease. If you would like to roll up your sleeves and do something to preserve our history, the door is open to YOU. Our history recognizes the community spirit of individuals and organizations through historic records. History is made and lost every day. While some of our old buildings are gone, we work to share the rich individual and family histories of Post Falls, Idaho.



Place Names of Post Falls!

How do our Post Falls streets get their names? Have you ever heard of Adkins Drive, and Nellie and Frank Drive?

Coming in our next newsletter is an ongoing addition to our "Post Falls Place Names Project" chaired by Society President, Kim Brown.

Send your memories of the Adkins family, Nellie or Frank, or memories of growing up in Post Falls to the Post Falls Historical Society, PO Box 57, Post Falls, ID 83877 or by email to pfhistorical@roadrunner.com.

Frank and Nellie Adkins, c.1946 courtesy of Elaine Adkins Kimball

Our Society Mission

WE **collect** photographs, stories, memories, oral video histories, veterans' information, and artifacts.

WE **preserve** our information in files, in our Past Perfect museum software (a work in progress), in historic signage, and in our newsletter publications.

WE **share** our history at the Post Falls Museum with students, visitors, and newcomers.

We share history with online researchers, in historic presentations and in writing.

Our **VOLUNTEERS** work to achieve all of the above.

You are cordially invited to join us in this important work.

The Museum opens Saturday, May 21st for the season!

Hours: Wednesday 1—4 pm

Thursday Friday Saturday 10 am—4 pm

Post Falls Historical Society Board of Directors

Officers

President: Kim Brown

Vice President: Judith Cowan

Secretary: Joe Butler

Treasurer: Cindy Mead

Board Members:

Ed Adamchak

Joe Doellefeld

Catherine McClintick

Pam Rodkey

Carol Yost

Ted Fredekind (Emeritus)

The Post Falls Historical Society is a 501(c)3 volunteer non-profit organization sharing and preserving local history since 1988.

The board meets at 6 p.m. the third Wednesday of each month. Everyone is welcome and attendance is also available by Zoom meeting.

Thank you for these 2022 membership renewals!

Ed & Julie Adamchak
Sally Barnett
Bob & Dorene Berard
Donna Rae Bradley
Lew & Kim Brown
Kathy Camyn
Fay Carpenter
Judy Cowan
Joe & Cindy Doellefeld
Margret Evenson
Ed & Nancy Frazey
Ted Fredekind
Jim Guy
Ken Koentopp
Monte & Marisol Martin
Kevin & Linda McGrath
Cindy Mead
Warren & Dana Merritt
Charley & Phillis Mixon
Richard Nordstrom
Fred & Mary Ostermeyer
Lisa Peterson *
Christina Petit
Jane Robertson
Pam Rodkey & John Robertson
Royal Neighbors of America, Post
Falls Chapter *
David & April Rudy
Shelley Ruff
Suzanne Schmidt
Chuck Smith
Kathryn Tesar
Bert & Kerri Thoreson
Sonja Uihlein
Rhonda Wilks
Carol Yost

**Welcome new members!*

**Thank you for the donations
made in memory of members
and volunteers John Robertson
and Donna Rae Sweeney.**

Would you like to join?

Support from our members allows us to keep the Post Falls Museum open and educate the community. Renew today!

Remembering Our Military Veterans



Russel Lee Watson, Staff Sgt. U.S. Army, was killed in Action in Vietnam in 1967. He grew up with his parents, Harold and Marie Watson, sister, Mardell, and brothers, Robert and Rocky in Post Falls.

Arthur Nehlich, U.S. Army corporal, serving from 1942-1945. He was at the following German POW camps, Stalag 7A, Moosburg, Bavaria, Krumbachstrasse Work Camp, in Munich, Stalag 3C Drewitz, Brandenburg, Prussia.

Mr. Nehlich and his wife Florence came to Post Falls in 1955. He worked at Kaiser Aluminum, and the Rainbow and Husky station as a mechanic. He opened his own shop in 1973. The couple had two daughters and two sons.

May is dedicated to National Preservation Month

Also known as Historic Preservation Month, the month celebrates the nation's heritage through historic places. Organizations across the country promote a variety of activities on the local, state, and national levels. Whether you are interested in touring historical sites or helping to preserve the history in your backyard, there is something for everyone. We have business history, veteran history, family history.

Not only are the places worth preserving, but the stories behind them are, too. Everywhere we go, there is more to discover. Whether the story is found in archives or attics, peeling back the layers of time helps us understand the past.

How To Get Started

- Learn about volunteer opportunities in your area. You might be able to rehabilitate historic buildings or sort

archived material.

- Check your attic, basement, garage, or other outbuildings. Do you have historical documents or photos that may contribute to your community's history?
- Visit local museums and learn the history of your community. Then learn even more. Find out about the heritage of the area before your town's charter.
- Explore the history of a single building. What businesses took up shop over the years? How has it transformed? How has it been preserved?
- Discover parts of your city you've never seen before! Get lost and study the architecture. Speak to the people in the neighborhood. Seek the untold stories.
- Join a preservation organization.

These are just a few ideas to get you started.

Memory Lane leads to Post Falls

By ELLI GOLDMAN HILBERT
Coeur d'Alene Press
(Reprinted with permission)

POST FALLS — A lot was happening in Kootenai County on Nov. 7, 1964, but for Vancouver, Wash., resident Chuck Smith, it was the beginning of 57 beautiful years of marriage to his wife, Linda Rae.

At 18, Linda couldn't legally marry without parental permission in Washington, but Idaho allowed it, Chuck said during a phone interview with The Press. "She had informed her mother that someday she'd like to marry me," Chuck said. "But her mother rejected the idea right away and wanted her to marry someone else." Linda and her mother argued over it for a few months, and then Linda surprised Chuck with a carefully hatched plan.

"She told me about Idaho, that you could drive over to Coeur d'Alene and pick up a marriage license, then drive to Post Falls to get married," Chuck said. "She had it all planned out and it caught me by surprise. We laughed about it over the years, that she was a conniver. It was almost a kidnapping," Chuck said with a chuckle. "Coeur d'Alene was a marriage mecca back then."

The couple was rather old-fashioned, he said. Making the trip in separate cars, they brought two good friends, Wayne Eads and Larry Alexander, who served as witnesses.



Chuck and Linda Smith, on their wedding day, November 7, 1964, in the living room of the late Justice of the Peace Gretchen Rollis, in Post Falls. **Courtesy of Chuck Smith**

The wedding ceremony was conducted by the late Justice of the Peace Gretchen Rollis in the living room of her home in Post Falls.

The happy couple dined at Cedars Floating Restaurant following the wedding and then enjoyed their first night together at the Flamingo Motel on Sherman Avenue in Coeur d'Alene.

It was a day to remember.

The Nov. 7, 1964, edition of The Press touted several projects nearing completion at Farragut State Park. Water and sanitation were almost complete throughout the park, and the Girl Scout Amphitheater was ready for sod to be installed.

The University of Idaho football team continued "domination over" Washington State. A harvest festival took place that night at Hayden Lake School, offering a turkey dinner costing adults \$1 and kids 50 cents.

Elvis Presley and Ann-Margret were starring in Viva Las Vegas at the Wilma, the local movie theater. Snow tires were advertised for \$9.88 at Montgomery Ward Auto Service Center on Lakeside Avenue, and a two-bedroom apartment was available for rent at \$50 per month.

But for Chuck, the day was all about his new bride.

"I'm the one who took that beautiful 18-year-old girl and married her," he said.

The Smiths returned to Vancouver, where they had to "face her mother's wrath," Chuck said. "She took quite a while to warm up, but eventually she did."

The Smiths welcomed three daughters, Michelle, Lisa and Laura, between 1970 and 1979. The family enjoyed an active life, punctuated by family dinners, friends, hosting numerous exchange students, road trips and summer vacations of camping and fishing.

Following Linda's passing last Nov. 21, Chuck and his daughter Michelle, who lives in Queensland, Australia, hit the road — or rather, the lane. Memory Lane.

Chuck and Michelle sought help from the Post Falls Historical Society. Ted Frede-



Chuck Smith and his daughter Michelle Henderson visiting the Post Falls Museum on January 18, 2022.

Courtesy of Post Falls Museum

kind, Cindy Mead and Joe Butler were instrumental

in tracking down what had become of Rollis, the justice of the peace, Chuck said.

Rollis passed away in 1979, and the "tiny house" the Smiths had been married in was no longer there. Between Fredekind, Mead and Butler, they "pinned down where the Rollis house had been," at 211 E. Second Ave. in Post Falls, Chuck said.

Chuck and his daughter stayed at the Flamingo Motel last November and revisited Cedars Floating Restaurant.

"The Flamingo was exactly how I remembered it," Chuck said. "The rooms were unique, just like they were in 1964."

Cedars had changed some during the past 57 years. Lucky enough to have Laura as their server, she was familiar with the restaurant's history. Chuck learned that mere weeks after the Smiths celebrated their marriage, the building had been condemned and the restaurant closed for a year as an extensive remodel was done.

"It was a different experience back then," Chuck said. "But I had the same good prime rib dinner."

Now back home in Vancouver, Chuck said the trip "was something I had to do; it is part of my grieving process. I wanted to see (Post Falls) again."

"It's hard to explain how special it was visiting Post Falls — the place where Mom and Dad started their grand adventure together," Michelle said. "It was especially precious getting to share this walk down memory lane together with Dad."

Visiting Post Falls triggered many memories, bringing both laughter and tears, Michelle said.

"I could see Mom smiling, in my mind's eye," Michelle said. "I'm certain that she was watching, happy that we made the trip together."

Join us for the annual Ice Cream Social at the museum
after the Post Falls Festival Parade on July 9th.

Visit the museum and see the new exhibit about Helen Rodkey. The display was arranged by Society board member and museum volunteer Pam Rodkey.

Join the Post Falls Historical Society Today!

Membership in our society allows us to keep our museum open and available to the community.

Invite your family, friends and neighbors to join as well!

Together we can preserve our past for the future.

Make membership/renewal checks payable to **Post Falls Historical Society**

Mail to:

Post Falls Historical Society

PO Box 57

Post Falls ID 83877

☐ **Renewal** - *Thank you!*

☐ **New Member** - *Welcome!*

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Membership Level: (Check one)

_____ **Individual \$20**

_____ **Family \$30**

_____ **Business/Contributor \$100**

I'm interested in helping!

_____ **Board Member**

_____ **Education**

_____ **Events and Activities**

_____ **Museum Host**

_____ **Other:**

Visit the Post Falls Historical Society Museum at 101 E 4th Ave, Post Falls, ID 83854

Contact Information: Museum: (208) 262-9642

pfhistorical@roadrunner.com or postfallsmuseum.weebly.com/