

# Priest Lake Museum

Spring 2013 Newsletter



## LURING TOURISTS

### Early Resorts on Priest Lake

Priest Lake resorts were advertised as early as 1900. One ad for Coolin reads “There are two hotels which can accommodate a large number of people and tents, fully equipped for camping purposes, can be secured for any length of time at very reasonable rates.” Many sportsmen preferred the “fishing camps” dotting the north end of lake, mostly tents and a wooden boat for rent. As an increasing number of tourists found the lake, resorts began to add more amenities. Here’s a look at just a few of these lakeside getaways established before 1940.

#### Forest Lodge

One of the first resorts to attract visitors was Sam Byar’s “Forest Lodge” at the mouth of the Thoroughfare. Byars built a two-story lodge in 1914 on his homestead. The main floor had a dining room, large kitchen, living room, one bedroom and screened porch. There were seven bedrooms upstairs. It was a profitable business – tourists could rent by day, week or entire

summer. Later he added four cabins, a barn and icehouse and maintained a large garden to supplement the fish and venison served to guests.

Silent star Nell Shipman and her crew stayed at Forest Lodge in 1922 while their compound at Mosquito Bay was being built. The primary clientele, however, were doctors, dentists and other professionals from Spokane who made the resort headquarters for their hunting and fishing trips.

#### Lone Star Ranche

Harry Angstadt’s Lone Star Ranche near Bear Creek was advertised as a “haven between Coolin and Mosquito Bay.” The rambling log lodge had a big living room, dining room, kitchen and two bedrooms downstairs. Upstairs

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## Dear Museum Friends,

The museum's board of directors and volunteers have been very active this past year preserving Priest Lake history, raising funds for our new book project, making improvements to the museum, and planning for the 2013 summer season.

In June 2012, Arcadia Publishing released the popular book *Priest River and Priest Lake – Kaniksu Country*. The book has 240 historical photographs of Priest Lake and Priest River. Board member Jeanne Tomlin was a co-author of the book, selecting and writing the captions for the lake photographs. The University of Idaho Archives--Digital Images series, recently put many of these photographs on-line. We have also added a virtual exhibit to the museum's website, where you can view photographs and objects from the museum's collection. Check out [www.plmuseum.org](http://www.plmuseum.org).

With a grant from Priest Lake People Helping People, the museum labeled plants in the nature garden and placed signs for outdoor exhibits. The Forest Service installed a Blister Rust interpretive sign along the trail in front of the museum. A wooden bench, made by Carlos Landa, was also set in the nature garden.

Our fundraising for the new history book project has been a tremendous success, raising almost \$40,000 to date. I want to thank the museum supporters who organized and hosted fundraising events and all the individuals and businesses that contributed to this worthwhile project. Dr. Kris Runberg Smith has submitted a draft of the manuscript to the publisher and the illustrated book should be released by the spring of 2014.

The special use permit with the U.S. Forest Service, which authorizes the museum association to operate the

building as a museum and maintain the nature garden, was recently renewed for a 20-year term. We are grateful for the help of Debbie Butler, USFS Liaison, in guiding this permit through the administrative process.

I want to thank the museum's supporters and volunteers for your memberships, and donations of time, labor, money and materials – all of which help make the museum such a wonderful place to visit or serve as a volunteer. I also want to thank retiring museum board members Jeanne Tomlin, JoAnn Becker and Steve Booth for their contributions to the museum's success; and welcome Mary Driscoll and Chuck Willits to the board.

*Tom Weitz, President  
Priest Lake Museum Association*

*The Priest Lake Museum Association was founded to preserve and promote the rich heritage of the surrounding region. The newsletter is published annually and edited by Jeanne Tomlin.*

### DID YOU KNOW?

Game warden Long reports the planting of some 30,000 spotted trout in Priest Lake. This is the first planting of this species of trout in Priest Lake. *Priest River Times*, Sept, 1937

George Hill announced the acquisition of the Luby Bay Resort from Mr. and Mrs. Robert Timm. Both units will be operated by Hill as an expanded resort area. *Spokesman Review*, June 19, 1960

were four more bedrooms. Over time he built an additional five cabins for guests. Harry's wife, Belle, frequently entertained guests with her piano and poetry. When the lodge burned in 1926, inventory included a library of classics and a phonograph with 500 records.



before water reached our knees." She described the cabins as rustic, but homey with an enclosed porch across the front. A trail led to the outhouse in the woods.

*Left is Belle Angstadt at Lone Star Ranche and Forest Lodge below. Paul Jones Beach and Jim Parsons, Sr. on front cover.*

**Paul-Jones Beach**

Leonard Paul and Stanley Jones bought 47 acres just north of Coolin in 1922 and opened their resort with two log cabins and a houseboat. It soon expanded to 16 cabins, each with a Can't Sink 'em rowboat. A big diving tower and slide with a swimming platform was installed. Once a week there was a "get acquainted" wiener roast and beach bonfires often attracted the locals for sing-alongs as well.

**Camp Sherwood**

Richard Handy filed for a homestead on the lake's south end, a favorite campground of the Kalispell who fished in nearby Soldier Creek. Handy built a large frame house, planted fruit trees and was adding tourist cabins when he died suddenly in 1907. Wife Ida bought the Idaho Inn in Coolin to support herself while son Harry managed the Camp Sherwood until his death in 1949.



Wurth Coble recalled his family rented the big house in 1929 for \$40 a month. "My dad would fish in Soldier Creek and mother would cook the brook trout on the wood stove." Ann Cassill Esslinger has fond memories of her carefree summers during the 1940s, "There was a sandy beach and the lake was so shallow we could wade out a long way

Cabins at Paul Jones Beach ranged from \$6.50 a day to \$50 a

week and included inside bathrooms with hot and cold running water. Bedding was available for \$1.50 extra. When WWII came along they were unable to get caretakers or repairs so it was sold and later developed into private lots.

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*Granite Creek Resort*

*If you get nostalgic for those "good old days", check out the Granite Creek Resort north of Reeder Bay. Under third generation management of Matt Stevens and Melissa Quilter, they have worked hard to restore the original cabins built in 1931 without changing the rustic charm. Residents who hold a lifetime lease enjoy the simple lifestyle and friendly community.*

### Elkins

It was first a homestead, then a fishing camp when logger Ike Elkins took over the Reeder Bay parcel in 1931. The original cabins were constructed with cedar logs from the Pine Creek fire and tamarack from his mill for flooring. Tenants got water from wells situated on the grounds and used wood ranges, iceboxes and outhouses. Cabins rented for \$2.50 to \$3.50 a day depending on size.

By 1936 the resort had a lodge and 32 cabins and it became a family business for wife Sue and children Al, Jan and Joan who pitched in during busy summer months. It was open seasonally for fishermen, and Elkins recalled “I had a team of horses to pull cars through the mud down to the resort, then I’d have to pull



them back out. The road was so bad but they didn’t have to fish very long to get their limit in those days.”

*by Jeanne Tomlin*

## Makeover for Museum Nature Garden



from the former Bismark Ranger Station and a rustic bench, the garden is a peaceful place for learning and contemplation.

In the museum’s nature garden efforts have focused on renewing native specimens in typical settings, labeling plants with common and scientific names and defining the paths. Ten types of trees, twenty-six types of bushes or low growing evergreens and sixteen “pretty little flower specimens” stand next to posts bearing their labels. This year volunteers will continue replacing winter or drought kills, weeding, and installing about thirty more plant species and their labels.

With the addition of the flagpole

*by Arly Sue Hagman*

# BOOK SUPPORT

## SPECIAL THANKS TO DONORS FOR THE PRIEST LAKE HISTORY BOOK

The following friends generously support our efforts to publish a history of Priest Lake with Washington State University Press in 2014. Please check this list and let us know if we have omitted your name or do not have your name listed correctly for the book. If you have not contributed, and wish to do so, there is still time to donate.

### Benefactor \$1000 and over

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**STILL TIME TO SUPPORT THE PRIEST LAKE HISTORY BOOK**

We invite you to support an exciting book to be published by the Priest Lake Museum in collaboration with Washington State University Press. A lasting legacy, this comprehensive, illustrated, and documented history of Priest Lake will include accounts from the early Kalispel Indian trails to the ferocious 1967 Sundance fire. To make a financial pledge or donation, please complete and return this form:

Name as you would like it to appear: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Benefactor \$1000 and over      \_\_\_\_ Supporter \$100 to \$499

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Mail to: Priest Lake Museum Association, P.O. Box 44, Coolin, ID 83821.

*Help Illustrate the Book*

*With all the museum's photographs, we only have a few pictures of families enjoying the lake's resorts before 1960. Can you help us with these or other images we should consider?*

**New Exhibit Features Prohibition**



*Have you ever wondered how "moonshine" whiskey was made? Come see the museum's temporary exhibit titled Prohibition and Moonshining at Priest Lake. Photographs and objects, including three stills, from Priest Lake's infamous moonshining era will be on display. Lewis "Pete" Chase's hideout and still, where his famous Uncle Pete's Monogram whiskey was produced, will be recreated. The exhibit opens Memorial Day.*

Priest Lake Museum  
Association  
P.O. Box 44  
Coolin, Idaho 83821

Priest Lake Museum is a volunteer 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Our financial support comes from memberships, monetary/in-kind donations and the sale of Priest Lake-related books, DVDs and other Museum-related items. There is no paid staff. The Museum is maintained and operated by a dedicated corps of volunteers.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**YES, I'd like to become a member (or renew an existing membership)!**

- |                         |                |                        |               |
|-------------------------|----------------|------------------------|---------------|
| _____ Gold Club         | \$500 or more  | _____ Silver Club      | \$400 - \$499 |
| _____ Baritoe Island    | \$ 300 - \$399 | _____ Kalispell Island | \$200 - \$299 |
| _____ Eight Mile Island | \$100 - \$199  | _____ Four Mile Island | \$ 50 - \$ 99 |
| _____ Twin Islands      | \$25 - \$ 49   | _____ Papoose Island   | under \$25    |

**YES, I'd like to make an additional donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_**

This gift is: In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Please acknowledge this gift to:

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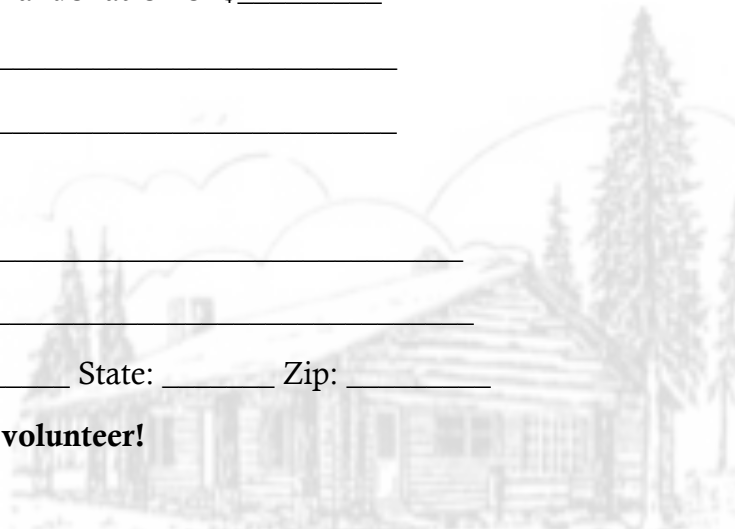
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**YES, I'd like to become a (new) volunteer!**

I'd be interested in:

- |               |                                  |
|---------------|----------------------------------|
| _____ Hosting | _____ Nature Garden & Facilities |
| _____ Display | _____ Newsletter                 |
| _____ Other   |                                  |



## Museum Hours

The Priest Lake Museum is open from Memorial Day weekend through the end of September. Museum hours are 10 to 4 daily, Tuesday through Sunday from mid-June through Labor Day, and 10 to 4 on weekends in early June, and in September after Labor Day. The museum is closed Mondays, except holidays.

## Volunteer Opportunities

Host volunteers are needed for the 2013 season. If you are interested in hosting for a few hours at the museum, please complete the form in this newsletter, or contact the Volunteer Host Coordinator at 208-443-0210 or 509-993-4445.

Volunteers are also needed to transcribe oral history recordings, help with our collection management system, and assist with the nature garden.

## 2013 Board Members

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### Priest Lake Museum Association

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