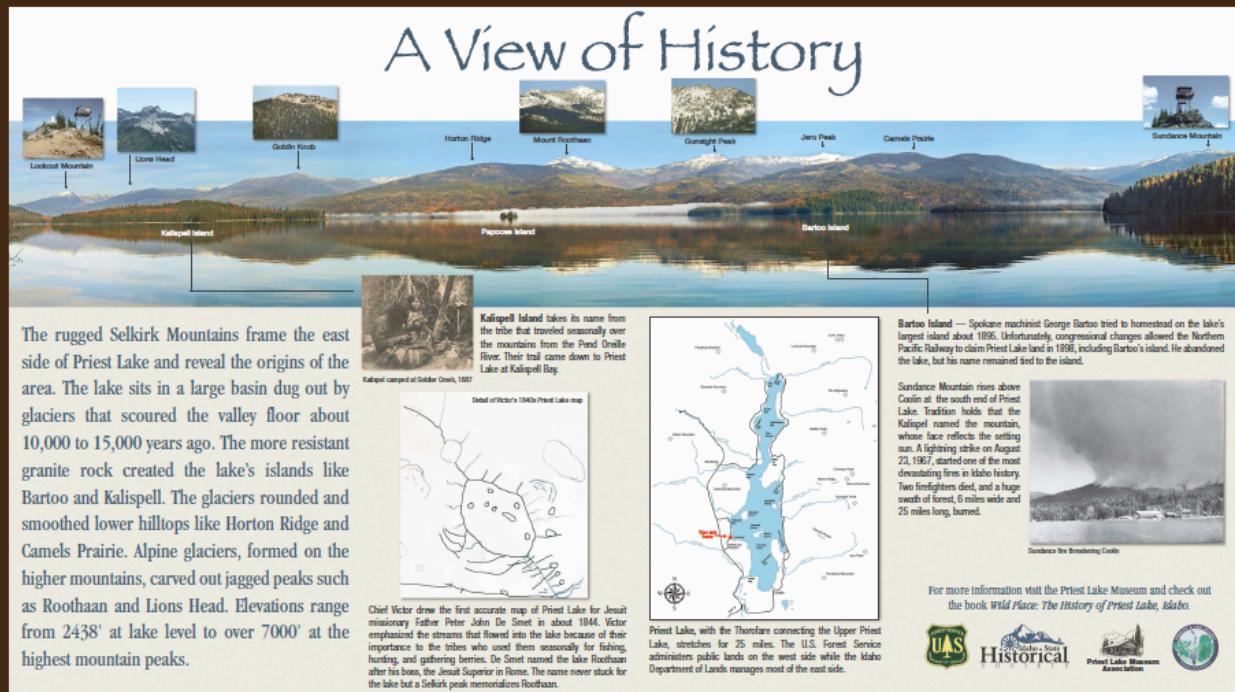


# Priest Lake Museum

## Spring 2017 Newsletter



The Priest Lake Museum installed two outdoor interpretative panels along the Beach Trail this spring. They provide an opportunity to share the heritage embedded in the striking Priest Lake landscape. The panels allow the museum to reach new audiences and inspire more curiosity about the rich history of lake.

**“A View of History”** features a panorama of the Selkirk Mountains taken from the beach in front of the museum by Ed Cushman. Local graphic designer Lori Hartmann inserted close-up images to illustrate the landmarks highlighted with their history. These sites include:

### Sundance Mountain

Sundance Mountain rises above Coolin at the south end of Priest Lake. Tradition holds that the Kalispel named the mountain whose face reflects the setting sun. A lightning strike on August 23, 1967, started one of the most devastating fires in Idaho history. Two firefighters died and a huge swath of forest, 6 miles wide and 25 miles long, burned.

### Bartoo Island

Spokane machinist George Bartoo tried to homestead on the lake's largest island about 1895. Unfortunately, congressional changes allowed the Northern

Continued on

## Dear Museum Friends,

This past summer of 2016 proved to be another busy and exciting time for the Priest Lake Museum. There were about 3,300 visitors who enjoyed our wonderful museum. We give thanks to the many volunteer hosts who served daily to make it possible for our museum to be open. Without the help of these many volunteers the museum would not be open as many days as it is. If you have an interest in helping as a host at the museum please contact either our volunteer coordinator, Elaine Widman at [dwidman@moosbytes.net](mailto:dwidman@moosbytes.net), or the museum.

The museum continued to offer our Heritage Series programs with four presentations at various venues. Many thanks go to Kris Runberg Smith and Tom Weitz who coordinated these most informative events attended by over 130 people. Due to it's "wild" popularity, we just completed a second printing of our newest book entitled, *Wild Place - A History of Priest Lake Idaho*. Kris and Tom, coauthors of this book, compiled a very detailed

history of Priest Lake. The museum now also has hardbound copies of this book available. They make great coffee table books for your lake home!

This coming summer of 2017 is shaping up to be another great season for us!

- The museum has installed two new interpretive signs along the lake shore trail in front of the museum. One sign includes a panoramic view of the Selkirk Mountains and gives a brief history of the area. The other gives a history of the museum cabin. We have plans for additional signs to be placed at various locations around the lake as well as to update the signs on the museum grounds. The museum received grants from the Idaho State Historical Society and Priest Lake People Helping People to help us fund this project.
- We will once again be hosting the Priest Lake Heritage Series of four programs at various locations around the lake. Kris Runberg Smith and Tom Weitz will once again be giving presentations. For the first time we have the exciting privilege of

hosting the Kalispel Tribe at the Coolin Community Hall. They will present a program on the history of the tribe at Priest Lake. Check out the Priest Lake Chamber summer calendar for dates and locations of these programs.

- Again this summer, Kris Runberg Smith will facilitate the Priest Lake Story Corp Program. Family members and friends will be given the opportunity to share personal stories about lake that will be preserved for future generations.

Information about all of these programs are included in this newsletter.



I would like to personally thank each of our board members as well as the many volunteers for all they do to make the Priest Lake Museum a very wonderful organization. Finally, I would like to thank each of you who are receiving this newsletter for your continued support - your dedication of financial resources and time are vital to our success.

Looking forward to this summer!

**Mike Rydbom, President**

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

# Heritage Series 2017

<p><i>Take a walk on the Beach Trail to check out the new outdoor signs.</i></p>		<p><b>July 12 Coolin Community Hall @7:00</b>  <b>Government Shaped Priest Lake / Priest Lake Shaped Government</b>          presented by Kris Runberg Smith</p>
	<p><i>Stop by the Priest Lake Museum to see the exhibit on the Luby Bay Guard Station built by the CCC.</i></p>	<p><b>July 19 Priest Lake Library @7:00</b>  <b>Invading Army: The Civilian Conservation Corps at Priest Lake</b>          presented by Kris Runberg Smith</p>
<p><i>Sign up to interviewer your favorite Priest Lake person for StoryCorps.</i></p>		<p><b>July 26 Coolin Community Hall @7:00</b>  <b>History of the Kalispel Tribe at Priest Lake</b>          presented by the Kalispel Tribe</p>
<p><i>Pick up a hardcover copy of Wild Place: The History of Priest Lake for a special Christmas gift.</i></p>		<p><b>August 2 Priest Lake Library @7:00</b>  <b>Gold!!!</b>          presented by Tom Weitz</p>

**Bring your friends and family for a special evening ...**

**A great way to learn about the lake!**



*Continued from page 1*

Pacific Railway to claim Priest Lake land in 1898, including Bartoo's island. He abandoned the lake but his name remained tied to the island.

The second panel, **"History of the Luby Bay Cabin,"** focuses

on the museum's home. It celebrates the extraordinary cabin built by the Civil Conservation Corps men in the 1930s and outlines a timeline about the development of Luby Bay. These include:

### 1910s--Cottages in the National Forest

The Recreation Residence program began at Priest Lake in 1907 when vacationers could get an annual permit to build a rustic cabin. The Museum sits in the middle of the Luby Bay Summer Cottage Tract, privately owned cabins on land administered by the United State Forest Service. While annual fees and regulations changed over the years, permit holders' cabins are still required to blend in with the forest so the shoreline remains natural.

### Late 1920s--A Home for Forest Service Families

Vacationers flocked to Priest Lake in the 1920s so the Forest Service stationed a ranger along the shore to assist them. Jim Ward took on the job and his family moved into the Luby Bay Guard Station, a decrepit houseboat pulled up on the beach. They were delighted when the CCC log cabin replaced the houseboat. Forest Service

families continued to live in the sturdy cabin year-round until 1989, when it became home to the Priest Lake Museum.

### 1935--Building the Luby Bay Cabin

Two truckloads of young men from the Kalispell Bay Camp came to work on the cabin under the direction of local experts like Fulton Messmore. He instructed the CCC recruits how to cut and notch the western larch logs, then to plane and varnish them. He taught them to split cedar shakes for the roof and to use rocks they gathered to create the remarkable fireplace. The Forest Service deemed the Luby Bay cabin as "one of the best pieces of work to be found anywhere."

The Priest Lake Museum received two generous grants to help cover the panel expenses, one from the Idaho State Historical Society and another from Friends Helping Friends. The museum invites you to stop by this summer to check out the new panels, check out the exhibit on the history of the Luby Bay guard station, and take time to enjoy the nature and history that surrounds us.

