Key Public Services and Programs
Collections and Cultural Resources
Under Management

State Seal painted by Emma Edwards Green, 1893

Lorenzo H. Hatch House in Franklin, built 1872

Original, handwritten Constitution signed 1889

Jefferson Peace Medal ca 1803

Original, handwritten Constitution signed 1889

Lorenzo H. Hatch House in Franklin, built 1872
Archives Records Management

ISHS provides essential management of, and day-to-day access to, public records critical to ongoing legal proceedings at all levels of the Idaho judiciary. These include civil court, criminal court, estate, land, mining, tax, tax appeals, and water rights records vital to legal proceedings in the courts and to the operations of state, county, and city governments, including law enforcement and the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security. Public records in the State Archives also help citizens with their legal rights by accessing vital information from birth, death, marriage, divorce and other records.

Idaho State Records Center

The State Records Center, a non-public facility, was created in 1989 to serve government agencies. The Center creates records management standards and provides secure access, records consultation, training, policies, procedures, certification, microfilming services, agency backup systems, and oversees authorized records disposal. The Center currently provides storage of state and federal records from over 200 agencies.

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)

The Idaho NRHP program is a broad-based activity that identifies, either individually or as part of a district, and evaluates the state’s cultural resources, nominates them to the National Register when appropriate, and provides technical assistance and guidance for public and private sector individuals, organizations, and government agencies. The register recognizes and documents buildings, structures, or places (historic and archaeological sites) of importance to history or prehistory. More than 5,000 Idaho properties are listed in the National Register.

The Certified Local Government Program

This re-granting program is a cost-effective local, state, and federal partnership for diverse communities taking action to preserve their unique historic character. The program provides technical assistance and small grants to local governments and links them with the national historic preservation program established by the National Historic Preservation Act. There are twenty-five certified local governments in Idaho which receive approximately $60,000 annually in project support.

Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program

Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) administers the historic rehabilitation tax credit program, the nation’s largest federal incentive promoting urban and rural revitalization through private investment in reusing historic buildings. This program allows the owner of a certified historic structure to receive up to 20% of the amount spent on qualified rehabilitation costs as a federal income tax credit. This program has generated over $30 million of private construction investment and has aided in the preservation of more than fifty historic buildings in Idaho.

Federal Historic Preservation Project Review (Section 106)

Under the Section 106 review process outlined in federal regulation 36CFR800: Protection of Historic Properties, federal agencies are required to consult with the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) at various points in the review process. The role of the SHPO is to review projects and assist federal agencies whenever federal funding, licenses and permits, or land are involved in a project, and work to avoid or mitigate effects on historic properties. The SHPO has an ongoing caseload of approximately 1,100 reviews per year and an increasing regulatory function related to new energy and stimulus projects.

State Historic and Archaeological Sites Records Management

The SHPO is the state repository for documentation of all recorded historic and archaeological sites in Idaho. The current inventory consists of more than 75,000 historic and archaeological site records. This information is available to researchers and agencies for evaluation of potential project effects on cultural resources.

All historic postcards used in this report are from our Idaho image collection located in the Idaho State Archives. Reproductions of images are available by calling 208-564-2326.


**Educational Programs and Events**

**National History Day in Idaho (NHDJ)**

National History Day is a highly regarded academic program for elementary and secondary school students. The ISHS administers this national program in Idaho and invites students to research and develop topics of local, state, national, or world significance that relate to the annual theme and are historically significant. NHDI helps students develop critical thinking and problem-solving, research and reading, and oral and written communication skills, as well as build a sense of responsibility for and involvement in the democratic process. Annually 1,000 Idaho students benefit from this program.

**School Group Programs**

The ISHS offers curriculum-aligned programs for school groups at the State Historical Museum and Old Penitentiary Historic Site. These are participatory learning experiences for students and feature a combination of hands-on demonstrations, close-up examination of artifacts, and thought-provoking activities designed to complement formal classroom learning. A variety of K-12 programs are offered at the State Historical Museum with themes that include Native Americans, fur trapping, Lewis and Clark, the Oregon Trail, pioneer life, mining and ranching, ethnic histories, and the history of Boise. Program themes at the Old Idaho Penitentiary include social justice and weaponry. A Traveling Trunk rental program with themes focused on the State Capitol, Lewis and Clark and the culture of the Nez Perce tribe is also available to schools across Idaho who are unable to visit the Museum.

**Prospector Club**

Designed especially for fourth graders studying Idaho history, the Prospector Club inspires students to actively participate in the study of state history. Teachers can download packets including information sheets, activities, and games to help supplement their Idaho history curriculum. Students across the state are invited to submit projects, articles, and art for publication in the newsletter.

**Brown Bag Lectures**

This series includes nine sessions by celebrated experts on unique aspects of Idaho history, covering a wide range of topics of interest to a variety of age groups. The Brown Bag programs take place the second Tuesday of every month from September through May from noon to 1:00 p.m. at the Idaho State Historical Museum and June through August at the Old Idaho Penitentiary.

**Family Events**

The Idaho State Historical Society features a number of signature events that appeal to families, including the annual Museum Comes to Life festival in September at the State Historical Museum and the Frightened Felons Halloween event at the Old Idaho Penitentiary. Hands on History activities provide participatory learning experiences for families on Saturdays throughout the summer.

**Archaeology and Historic Preservation Month**

Idaho Archaeology and Historic Preservation Month is a statewide educational outreach program offered annually in May. Through partnerships with libraries, historical societies, museums, schools, government agencies, and private companies, thousands of Idahoans learn about Idaho’s cultural heritage through programs about archaeological and historical sites, historic architecture, preservation, and landscapes which have been discovered and recorded throughout Idaho.

**Technical Assistance and Training**

**Pacific Northwest Preservation Field School**

A collaboration between State Historic Preservation Offices of Idaho, Washington and Oregon; the University of Oregon’s Historic Preservation Program; and Washington and Oregon State Parks, the Northwest Preservation Field School is a five-week preservation training course for professionals, graduate students, and interested amateurs. The school attracts participants from across the United States and features a hands-on learning experience working in parks, historic districts, and related locations. The Field School rotates between the three states, benefiting the sponsoring site with significant in-kind preservation work accomplished throughout the course. Field Schools in Idaho have included Harriman State Park (2004), Heyburn State Park (2007), and the Old Idaho Penitentiary (2010).

**Teacher Training**

The Idaho State Historical Society provides summer Teacher Training Institutes to assist teachers statewide in deepening and broadening both their understanding and appreciation of Idaho history. Using ISHS resources, teachers learn new content, work collaboratively with other Idaho teachers, and develop curriculum units for their own classrooms.
Technical Assistance Outreach

The Idaho State Historical Society provides statewide outreach and consultation to local museums, historical societies, libraries, cities and counties, and historic preservation commissions across Idaho on matters related to collections and archival management, records retention, and preservation planning.

Interpretive Facilities and the Idaho History Center

The Idaho State Historical Society provides numerous opportunities to enhance public learning and recreation through statewide interpretive facilities.

The Idaho State Historical Museum, founded in 1907, is located in Julia Davis Park in downtown Boise. Objects from the Museum’s collection tell the story of Idaho from prehistoric times through the fur trade, the gold rush, and pioneer settlement to the present. Permanent exhibitions include the Story of Idaho; Lewis and Clark: the Journey in Idaho; and Journey to the Gold Mountain: the Chinese in Idaho. Special exhibitions are featured throughout the year to appeal to families and related audiences.

The Old Idaho Penitentiary, built in 1870, is located in the Old Penitentiary Historic District in east Boise. The site began as the territorial prison and grew to a complex of several distinctive buildings that was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973. Visitors can imagine life in sandstone cell houses, see the contrasting beauty of the historic rose gardens, and view Solitary Confinement, Death Row and the Gallows. Special exhibitions are located throughout the site, including the world class J. Curtis Earl Memorial exhibition which features Bronze Age artifacts to 15th and 16th century swords, 500 year old firearms and modern automatic weapons. This exhibit shares the story of arms and their relationship to events throughout history.

The Historic Franklin properties date from 1872 and include the Lorenzo Hill Hatch house, John and Ann Doney house, Franklin Cooperative Mercantile Store, and the Relic Hall. These historic properties, listed in the National Register of Historic Places, provide a unique orientation to travelers along the Pioneer Byway in southeastern Idaho and a comprehensive overview of the region’s history. New interpretive exhibitions in the Hatch and Doney serve schools, travelers, family reunions, and other events held in southern Idaho and northern Utah. This site is managed through a community partnership with the Franklin Pioneer Association, and the city of Franklin.

Stewardship of State Cultural Resources

The State Historical Museum provides collections management for the State of Idaho’s 250,000 objects, including activities such as cataloging, photo documentation, preservation, in-coming and outgoing loans to organizations throughout the state, and environmentally-controlled storage.

The State Archives provide archival management for the State of Idaho’s 90,000 cubic feet of public records including photographs, manuscripts, maps, books, periodicals, and oral history interviews. Services include cataloging, digitization, preservation, Inter-library Loan services, and environmentally-controlled storage.

The Rock Creek Station and Stricker Home site dates from 1865 and includes the Stricker House, Rock Creek Store, a pioneer cemetery, and numerous outbuildings. This historic site, added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1980, tells the comprehensive story of the rural area south of Hansen, which served as an early transportation center for the Oregon Trail, Overland mail stage route, and the Kelton Freight Road. The site features hands-on learning through special events and a house museum; new interpretive exhibitions opened in 2010. The site is managed through a community partnership with the Friends of Stricker.

The Pierce Courthouse was built in 1862 by Shoshone County. Interpretive exhibitions at this site tell the story of exploration of the Clearwater River area and prospecting and mining in what was then Washington Territory. The Courthouse is managed through a community partnership with J. Howard Bradbury Memorial Logging Museum.

The Research Center at the State Archives and the ISHS Administrative offices are located in the Idaho History Center. The State Archives provide public access and assistance using a variety of historical collections. Assistance is offered both to on- and off-site researchers via the internet, phone, and U.S. mail. In most instances, researchers are able to obtain photocopies, photoprints, digital files or audio files of pertinent materials.
The State Historic Preservation Office manages the Archeology Survey of Idaho and its western repository, providing collections management for the State of Idaho’s 30,000 archeological collections, including inventory, cataloging, and environmentally controlled storage.

The Idaho State Historical Society provides preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction management services for the State of Idaho’s sixty-one historic buildings. This includes planning, maintenance, and treatment in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

**Award and Recognition Programs**

**Idaho Century Farm and Ranch Program**
A collaboration between the Idaho State Historical Society and the Department of Agriculture, the Idaho Century Farm and Ranch Program recognizes families who persevered through physical hardships, natural disasters, and economic hard times to settle this great state. The program recognizes a farm or ranch owned and operated in Idaho by the same family for at least 100 years, provided that at least 40 acres of the original parcel of land has remained in agricultural use throughout that time.

**Idaho Heritage City Program**
A collaboration between the Idaho State Historical Society and the Association of Idaho Cities, the Idaho Heritage City Program recognizes cities in Idaho that encourage preservation and interpretation of their cultural heritage. Special designation as an Idaho Heritage City acknowledges efforts undertaken by municipalities to preserve the unique fabric of their community, making it a distinctive place to live and work, and an attractive place for economic investment.

**Esto Perpetua Award**
A signature program of the State Historical Society since 1999, the Esto Perpetua award honors significant contributions to the preservation and promotion of Idaho history. It takes its name from Idaho’s state motto meaning “Let It Be Perpetual.” Each year organizations and individuals are recognized for professional accomplishment, public service, volunteerism, and philanthropy. Award winners exemplify excellence in preservation through innovation and demonstrated commitment to the education, protection, and interpretation of Idaho’s cultural or natural assets and the integration of these assets into community life.

**Community Enhancement Grants**
The Community Enhancement Grant Program assists cultural and historic organizations through matching grant funds to realize their respective missions. Throughout the state, this program strengthens community efforts in preservation, interpretation, education, and heritage tourism.

**Publications Program**

**Idaho Landscapes Journal and Idaho Yesterdays e-Journal**
Idaho Landscapes is the state’s only peer-reviewed journal of popular scholarship. Published jointly by the Idaho State Historical Society, Boise State University, and Idaho State University, Idaho Landscapes is the print companion to the e-Journal Idaho Yesterdays. The print magazine and the online journal work together to provide the best writing and photography concerning history and culture in Idaho and the Intermountain West.

**Histor-e ISHS Electronic Newsletter**
The electronically delivered Histor-e began in the summer/fall of 2007 as a way of keeping members, statewide affiliates, stakeholders, and other constituents knowledgeable about Idaho State Historical Society activities, upcoming events, and news of awards or other timely/urgent matters that need action. Histor-e is produced every other month and includes links to the ISHS website and pertinent partner websites.

**Mountain Light Newsletter**
Mountain Light is the newsletter publication of ISHS that advertises programs and highlights accomplishments of the Society. It is a key membership benefit and is published three times a year, with the Society’s Annual Report acting as one issue.
The Idaho State Archives holds the most comprehensive collection of Idaho and regional history materials in the state, including:

- 90,000 cubic feet of manuscript and state archives material, such as the personal papers of Senator William E. Borah; records of the Territorial government; gubernatorial papers from George Shoup through Dirk Kempthorne; records of the Idaho Soldiers’ Home; and records of the Women’s Challenge Bicycle Race, a national qualifying event for women cyclists that was originally sponsored by Ore-Ida, a Boise-based company.

- 5,000 motion picture films and videos, including a 16mm copy of a 1916 film celebrating the 10th anniversary of the town of Buhl in south central Idaho, footage of a 1935 National Geographic Society expedition on the Salmon River, and promotional films produced by the Idaho Department of Commerce (1960s-1990s).

- An extensive oral history collection with some 2,500 individual interviews (audio and video formats), with projects documenting such topics as African-Americans in Southeast Idaho, Czechoslovakian Culture in the Buhl-Castleford Area, Women and Political Activism in Idaho, 1945-1980, Saddle making in Idaho, Bureau of Land Management in Idaho, and Veterans History Project.

- Over 40,000 rolls of microfilm available for reproduction, including Idaho newspapers dating from 1863 to present, county-level records (land and property, citizenship, court, vital and tax) dating from 1863, Sanborn fire insurance maps for many Idaho cities, Idaho death certificates (1911-1937), federal census schedules (1790-1930), theses and dissertations on Idaho topics, and a variety of materials related to Idaho history and purchased from the National Archives.

- Over 1 million photographic images (prints, negatives, slides, and transparencies), including images taken by E. Jane Gay during the allotment of lands for the Nez Perce Indians; the life work of Boise photographer R. Harold Sigler; images from the Sherwood family, pioneer settlers of the Henry’s Lake area of Idaho; and inmate ‘mug shots’ from the Idaho Territorial/State Prison.

- 423 cubic feet of archaeological materials from state and private lands and 399 cubic feet of archaeological materials from federal land. These collections include donations to the Idaho State Historical Society but are mainly derived from archaeological studies being performed by federal agencies. The Western Repository meets the requirements stipulated for such federal collections.

- 83,000 prehistoric artifacts, faunal remains, and sediment samples; 31,000 historic artifacts from over 4,000 archaeological sites located in the ten-county area of southwest Idaho.

- 32,000 maps, including a series of hand-drawn and hand-colored maps prepared by Idaho’s first surveyor general, Lafayette Cartee, State highway maps, fire insurance maps for a variety of towns and businesses, and blueprints and architectural plans from the state’s premier architectural firms, such as Tourtellotte and Hummel.

- An open-stack reference collection of book and periodical titles for the study of regional, state, community, and family history.

The Western Repository of the Archaeological Survey of Idaho documents and holds the archaeological collections from a ten-county area in southwest Idaho. All materials are identified, stabilized, conserved, labeled, archivally packaged, and electronically documented and are available for educational use in exhibits and scientific studies. Collections include:

- 62 linear feet of associated documents such as catalogs, field notes, photographic materials, analysis records, final reports, and maps. Materials are mostly generated by large research projects at important archaeological sites as Silver City, Idaho City, the Mary Hallock Foote House, and Givens Hot Springs.

- Archaeological site context materials such as faunal and plant remains and soil and charcoal samples. These collections provide important sources for future analytical techniques relative to studying environmental as well as cultural change.
The Idaho State Historical Museum is Idaho’s official state historical museum that holds, preserves, and documents Idaho’s largest collection of material culture with over 250,000 artifacts, including:

- **30,000 objects in the arms and armament collection.** The collection features objects from the Bronze Age to those used today for sport, law enforcement, and military purposes. It also includes medieval arms and armor, Revolutionary War and Civil War artifacts, an 1883 Gatling gun on its original carriage used on the Western frontier, 19th century pistols and rifles used in the West, and WW I and II rifles, pistols, machine guns, mortars, and cannons.

- **15,000 artifacts documenting Idaho’s agricultural industry,** including a threshing machine used in a northern Idaho dry land farming operation, saddles from Idaho makers throughout the state, and sheep shearing equipment.

- **25,000 clothing and textile artifacts,** including inaugural gowns of former governors’ wives, over seventy-five quilts representing many eras and patterns, military uniforms from the Civil War through today, and a stage costume belonging to Paul Revere of “Paul Revere and the Raiders” in the 1960s.

- **55,000 artifacts in the household and domestic collection representing all aspects of home life,** including food service, preparation and processing, cleaning, furnishings and the dishware used by Governor Shoup and his wife.

- **60,000 pieces of tools and equipment representing many Idaho industries including a hydraulic giant from Idaho City, a hard rock drill from the Yellow Jacket Mine in Lemhi County, an iron lung used by a Boise hospital to fight polio, an autoclave used in the Japanese internment camp at Minidoka, and a Fresno scraper from Morrison Knudsen Company.**

- **15,000 transportation artifacts and objects used on land, air, rail, and water,** including a stagecoach used to carry passengers in southwest Idaho, the “Gospel Coach” a customized mobile home used by a traveling preacher and his family, and the Leata, a gas-saving car developed in Post Falls Idaho during the 1970s.

- **5,000 recreational artifacts,** including toys, sporting and outdoor equipment, and games. Skis, polo equipment and Miss Nara, Idaho’s Japanese Friendship doll are included in the collection.

- **5,000 artifacts representing Chinese immigrants that settled in Idaho,** including one of the largest apothecary collections outside of China with prescriptions, recipes, objects, and ingredients from the Ah Fong family, local herb doctors from the late 1800s through the 1960s.

- **5,000 Native American artifacts** with items such as a 2,800 year old sage bag found in a dry cave in Owyhee County and Nez Perce Chief Looking Glass’s tomahawk pipe found on a battle field during the Nez Perce war.

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The Idaho State Historical Society is an extraordinary system of cultural and historic resources comprised of the Idaho State Historical Museum, Idaho State Archives, State Records Center, and Historic Sites Program. We seek to inspire, enrich and engage all Idahoans by leading the state in preserving, sharing, and using history and cultural resources relevant to today to inform and influence the future.

Governor C.L. “Butch” Otter
Janet L. Gallimore, Executive Director

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