The Idaho Humanities Council awarded $75,982 in grants to organizations and individuals at its fall board meeting in Boise. Forty-four of the awards include 25 grants for public humanities programs, four Research Fellowships, nine Teacher Incentive Grants, and six Planning Grants. The grants were supported in part by funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities and IHC’s Endowment for Humanities Education. The following projects were funded:

Public Programs:

Boise Art Museum, Boise, was awarded $2,000 to bring Chinese photographer and performance artist Liu Bolin to Boise for an exhibition of his work at the museum and a public lecture at the Egyptian Theater. Bolin is a dissident artist in China, and he will talk about his work and the work of other artists who are using art to make bold sociopolitical statements. The project director is Melanie Fales.

Boundary County Museum, Bonners Ferry, was awarded $2,000 to develop an additional series of interpretive panels that tell the story of the railroad history of Bonners Ferry. The Museum sits next to railroad tracks at an important crossroads in the town. Over the past decades the planners have developed a community behind the museum, and reclaimed a scaled depot with grant support of Burlington Northern. Dottie Gray is the project director.

Council Historical Museum, Council, received $1,000 to develop an outdoor exhibit of a steam-powered sawmill to enhance interpretation of the logging history of the area. Interpretive signage would incorporate historical photographs of a similar sawmill and text about the local logging history.

The project director is Dale Fisk.

Idaho State University, Pocatello, received $1,400 to host a five-session “Humanities Café” off campus that will explore the theme of “Revolutions.” Faculty members will explore this theme from a variety of perspectives in art, literature, history, music, gender study, and other humanities disciplines. Each night over several weeks a panel of scholars will explore a subtheme of “Revolutions” and invite audience members to join the conversation. Jennifer Attebery is the project director.

The Cabin, Boise, received $2,500 to help support its annual “Readings & Conversations” series, which brings four nationally prominent writers to Boise for a reading of their work at the most often, the Egyptian Theater in downtown Boise, followed by a book signing. Presenters in the 2014-2015 series included novelists Erik Larson, Chris Albani, Sherman Alexie, and Karen Russell. Mark Blaxter is the project director.

Boise State University Basque Studies, Boise, received $2,000 to support an evening of talks in Boise's Egyptian Theater billed as “Meet the Basques!” as part of the Jaialdi Basque Festival in July of 2015. The Jaialdi Festival, a major cultural festival featuring music, food, talks, museum events, and other activities open to the general public, occurs every five years. The “Meet the Basques” program will provide an opportunity for audiences to learn more about the history and culture of the Basques. John Bieter is the project director.

Boise State University, Boise, received $1,000 to help support a lecture series on “The Idea of Nature” during the spring of 2015. Presenters include Maria Tatar, professor of folklore and mythology at Harvard University, speaking on “Nature in Fairy Tales”, David Lowenthal, professor emeritus, University College London, speaking on “From Howling Wilderness to the Call of the Wild,” Rebecca Kneale Gould professor of environmental studies, Middlebury College, speaking on “The Nature of a Spacious Life.” Samantha Harvey is the project director.

(See GRANTS, Page 6)

By Patricia Hart and Ivar Nelson

Editor’s Note: Idaho was hard hit by the Great Depression. Economic downturn dogged rural and urban areas alike. Farmers struggled against low prices, heat, drought and insects; home and farm mortgages went unpaid; banks closed; teachers were let go, and millworkers were laid off as demand for timber collapsed. In that climate and like many western states, Idaho benefited directly and significantly from New Deal programs. Between 1933 and 1942, Idaho was headquarters for 423 Civilian Conservation Corps companies living in 270 camps spread throughout the state. The CCC partnered with national and state forests and parks, the soil conservation agencies, national grazing programs, and federal reclamation projects. With an estimated 80,000 enrollees serving Idaho over the period, the CCC had widespread and long-term impact on the state’s economy, its resources, its communities and its people.

With the help of an Idaho Humanities Council Research Fellowship Grant, historian Patricia Hart of the University of Idaho and Ivar Nelson have identified sources related to the CCC in Idaho forests. The project team includes the Idaho State University Libraries’ Department of Digital Initiatives. When completed in 2015, the CCC in Idaho Forest Digital Portal and Finding Guide will give public access to thousands of documents, photographs, memoirs, newspaper and magazine articles, and oral histories related to the work of the CCC in Idaho forests.

This past summer, Hart and Nelson concentrated their research within Idaho and the region, visiting CCC sites and meeting with librarians, U.S. Forest Service personnel, historians, and preservationists. Through this process Hart and Nelson have located a wealth of new material and insights into the workings of the CCC, its impact on land and forests, and on individuals and their communities. They share a few of their recent findings here.

Rafter bobbed their way down the Salmon River in June as we left Highway 95 at Riggins and drove east along the Salmon River Road. We were beginning eight weeks of summer research gathering material about the role of the Civilian Conservation Corps in Idaho forests. Most of the rafter we saw that day were taking it easy on the lower Salmon, not challenging the Wild and Scenic Salmon River upriver and farther east. We knew that the CCC played a central role in the Salmon River road story, and we were heading upriver to make a site visit at the former French Creek CCC camp.

We find concrete slab foundations, stone retaining walls and waterworks in the area now occupied by a Boy Scout camp, formerly the site of Camp F-109. Perched on a dry bench above the river and the mouth of French Creek, the duff-covered remains recall competing visions of resource conservation, wilderness preservation and economic development that marked much of the CCC activity in Idaho.

During the 1920s and 1930s, local boosters from Lewiston in western Idaho and Salmon in eastern Idaho wanted an east-west transportation corridor through the middle of the state. Especially vocal were successive chambers of commerce in Salmon, who created a regional campaign “to boost the Salmon City-Lewiston” road, as the Idaho County Free Press reported in their August 31, 1933 edition. The Chamber opposed the expansion of the Idaho Primitive Area, newly created in 1931, because

(See CCC, Page 7)
News & Opportunities

IHC elects new board member

The Idaho Humanities Council recently elected University of Idaho English Professor Scott Slovic to join its board of directors. He will attend his first board meeting in February of 2015. Currently serving as Chairman of the English Department, Slovic is a specialist in nature and the environment and strengthens the university’s Wilderness studies programs in environmental literature and writing. He is the author of more than 200 articles and author, editor, and co-editor of 17 books, including Seeking Awareness in American Nature Writing: Henry David Thoreau, Annie Dillard, Edward Abbey, Wendell Berry, and Barry Lopez (1992), Going Away to Think: Engagement, Retreat, and Eccentricity (2008), and several textbooks and anthologies. He holds a B.A. from Stanford University and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from Brown University. Prior to joining the U of I faculty in 2012, he taught five years at the University of Nevada, Over the years he has also held Fulbright grants to teach and study in Germany, Japan and China. He serves on the editorial board of Orion magazine, one of the foremost environmental journals in the nation. He fills a northern Idaho academic vacancy left by University of Idaho Provost Katherine Aiken, who served two terms on the IHC board, including a term as chair.

Register now for NEH grant writing workshop at BSU

Boise State University in cooperation with the Idaho Humanities Council will host a National Endowment for the Humanities Grant Writing Workshop on Tuesday, March 10, 2015. 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., at BSU’s Student Union Building Lookout Room. The workshop is free but advance registration is required.

John Cox, Senior Program Officer with the NEH, will offer an overview of NEH grant programs, including public program grants, Challenge Grants, NEH Summer Stipends, for scholars and teachers. On a first come-first served basis, Cox also will offer 20-minute, one-on-one private consultations with prospective applicants between 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. on March 10 and discuss strategies for developing strong applications.

Idaho Humanities Council Executive Director Rick Ardinger also will be on hand to provide a brief overview of IHC grants, including IHC Research Fellowships for humanities scholars.

NEH grants typically go to cultural institutions, such as museums, archives, libraries, colleges, universities, public television and radio stations, and to individual scholars.

To register for the morning workshop, or to reserve a slot for an afternoon private consultation, prospective participants should register online at www.research.boisestate.edu/NEH or contact BSU Office of Sponsored Programs, at 208-426-5732.

Project exploring the musical art and history of corridos culminates in book and CDs

Nuestro Corridos: Latinos in Idaho, Idaho Latino History through Song and Word, 1863–2015

Published in a bilingual edition, Nuestro Corridos features two CDs (27 corridos) and an illustrated spiral-bound book, edited by Nevárez-Schachtel and Kathleen Rubinow Hodges, with all the words to the corridos and the interpretive text in both Spanish and English.

Corridos are songs that explore “news of the day.” For many, a traditional corrido is a ballad, or “a song that tells a story with a message,” according to Errol Jones, BSU Professor Emeritus of Latin American history, who wrote a Foreword to the book. But many Mexican and Mexican-American communities interpret the purpose of corridos differently. “Naturally, since so many Mexicans are immigrants themselves or come from immigrant families,” Jones writes, “the theme of immigration is a popular corrido topic.”

Nevárez-Schachtel met musician and composer Juan Manuel Barco in 2006 at a Latino Arts and Culture Festival in Portland, and, with the help of an IHC grant, brought him to Boise for a series of “how-to” corrido workshops, where he taught a number of prospective corrido writers from across southern Idaho the tradition of the Mexican corrido. After the workshops, Nevárez-Schachtel organized public concerts where the workshop participants shared their newly written corridos. Following the concerts, Nevárez-Schachtel set to having the corridos professionally recorded.

Stay tuned for news about IHC’s Distinguished Humanities Lectures in Coeur d’Alene and Boise in the fall, and other activities throughout the year through IHC’s website.

No wonder January is such a big month.
Get your tickets now: Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Diane McWhorter to speak in Idaho Falls, April 9

Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Diane McWhorter, author of *Carry Me Home: Birmingham, Alabama* and the CSC’s *The Climatic Battle of the Civil Rights Revolution*, will be the speaker at the IHC’s 8th Annual Idaho Distinguished Humanities Lecture and Dinner Thursday, April 9, 2015, 7 p.m., at the Shilo Inn in Idaho Falls.

The event is generously supported in part by the William J. and Shirley A. Maeck Family Foundation, Teton Toyota and Volkswagen, Bank of Idaho, the Post Register, Idaho Public Television, INI, Barnes and Noble, Melaleuca, and KISU Radio.

Currently a Harvard University professor, McWhorter is an American journalist and commentator who has written extensively about race and the history of civil rights in America. *Carry Me Home* was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for General Non-Fiction and the J. Anthony Lukas Book Prize in 2002. It also won the Southern Book Critics Circle Award, is one of *Time* Magazine’s All-Time 100 Non-Fiction Books since 1923, and made the “Best Books List” in the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Newsday*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Publishers Weekly*, *Library Journal*, and *American Heritage*. She is a long-time contributor to the *New York Times* and has written for the op-ed page of *USA Today*, Slate, and many other publications.

“The Year of Birmingham,” 1963, was a climactic turning point in America’s long and civil rights struggle. Demonstrators young and old faced down police dogs and fire hoses in huge nonviolent marches protesting segregation and American apartheid. Ku Klux Klansmen retaliated by bombing homes, hotels, and other places, including the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, killing four young black girls.

In *Carry Me Home*, McWhorter, the daughter of a prominent Birmingham family, weaves together police and FBI records, archival documents, interviews with black activists and Klansmen, and personal memories into an extraordinary narrative of the personalities and events that brought about America’s second emancipation.

Tickets are available NOW for purchase online at www.idahohumanities.org under “IHC Events,” or by calling the IHC toll free at 888-345-5346. General tickets are $45. Benefactor tickets are $575, offering an invitation to a pre-dinner reception with McWhorter in a private home and preferred seating at the dinner and lecture. IHC always recommends reserving tickets early as the event often sells out.

The evening will begin with a no-host reception at 6 p.m. at the Shilo Inn. Dinner will be served at 7 p.m. with McWhorter’s talk to follow. Copies of *Carry Me Home* will be available from Barnes and Noble onsite and McWhorter will be available for signing afterwards.

Since 2008, the IHC has brought top historians, journalists, and other writers to Idaho Falls for the annual event. Previous speakers include presidential biographer Robert Dallek (2008), Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Laurel Thatcher Ulrich (2009), Western American historian Elliott West (2010), National Book Award-winner Timothy Egan (2011), Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Rick Bragg (2012), bestselling author Alexandra Fuller (2013), and Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Isabel Wilkerson (2014).

IHC to honor historian Judy Austin for Outstanding Achievement

The IHC will honor former Idaho Yesterdays editor Judy Austin with the council’s award for “Outstanding Achievement in the Humanities” at a wine/dessert reception and ceremony on Thursday, February 26, 7:00 p.m., at the Basque Center of Boise, 601 Grove Street. The award, which includes a $1,000 honorarium, will be presented to Austin, honoring her career as an editor, consultant, and resource for projects exploring Idaho’s history. Austin joined the staff of the Idaho State Historical Society in 1967, and served for 35 years, most notably as editor of Idaho Yesterdays, the weekly journal of Idaho history, until the print magazine was discontinued in 2002. *Idaho Yesterdays* was the magazine devoted to Idaho history scholarship, and during her years as editor Austin became a mentor, writer, bibliographer, co-author, consultant, and general encourager to countless researchers, young and old, engaged in exploring the history of Idaho and the American West.

Today she remains a resource to the ISHS, Idaho Public Television, Idaho Legal History Society, and to other cultural institutions and many scholars. She is active in the Conference of Historical Journals and the Western History Association, from which she has received two high honors.

Born in San Diego in 1940, Austin moved with her family to New York City in 1949, when her father began a doctoral program and later served on the faculty of the Teachers College at Columbia University. After graduation from high school, Austin went on to earn a B.A. with honors at Duke University and returned to New York to earn an M.A. in the history of education at Columbia. In 1962, she accepted a job as an editor at the Teachers College Press, where she edited a series of booklets on state history for high school students. Most of the authors she worked with were staff in state historical agencies. One of her authors was legendary Idaho historian Merle Wells, who became mentor, model, and friend when he hired Austin in 1967 to join the staff of the Idaho State Historical Society.

Having worked with Austin on various projects and programs over the years, BSU Emeritus Professor Robert Sims, Boise, says “Anyone doing research and writing on Idaho history benefits from Judy’s support.” Idaho anthropologist Dot Gilley thinks Austin “deserves to be regarded as a state cultural treasure.”

During her tenure as editor, Conley says ISHS publications “rivalled or surpassed those of other western states and rivaled or surpassed those of other western states and were a source of pride for Idahoans.”

Idaho Public Television’s Bruce Reichert concurs. “Judy has been our ‘go-to’ person for as long as I can remember... whenever we needed verification of some nugget of historical rumor. She kept us from making fools of ourselves on more than one occasion.”

Sometimes acknowledged and often not, behind countless articles, essays, books, and documentaries exploring Western history is Austin’s guidance and encouragement.

In addition to her work with the ISHS and other organizations over the years, Austin was a founding member of the Idaho Humanities Council and clearly demonstrates outstanding achievement in the humanities.”

Anyone interested in attending the February 26 reception and award ceremony can reserve tickets at the Idaho Humanities Council at (208) 345-5346, or at Deb@idahohumanities.org.

IHC has presented its award for “Outstanding Achievement in the Humanities” annually since 1986. Previous recipients of the award have included independent historian Keith Petersen, Twin Falls County Historical Society Director David Adler, Moscow writer Mary Clearman Blew, Idaho poet William Studebaker, Nez Perce elder Horace Axtell, former Lewis-Clark State College English Professor Keith Browning, Idaho State University History Professor Ron Hatzenbuehler, Basque Museum and Cultural Center Director Patty Miller, Boise Independent School District Administrator and history teacher Russ Helfer, CSC anthropologist Alan Marshall, Idaho Public Television’s Peter Morrill, and others.

(See NEWS, Page 8)
Bestselling writer Jess Walter gave the IHC’s 11th Annual Northern Idaho Distinguished Humanities Lecture at the Coeur d’Alene Resort in early October. Walter spoke to an audience of over 460 about how reading fiction teaches readers the power of empathy and how to see the world through other eyes.

Earlier in the day, Walter spoke to several hundred Lake City High School students about stories from his 2013 collection, We Live in Water. Prior to speaking at the Resort that evening, Walter also greeted dozens of Benefactors at the beautiful lakefront home of Denny Davis and Kathy Canfield-Davis, sponsored in part by the Hagadone Corporation.

Enormous thanks goes to longtime supporter Marc Brinkmeyer and the Idaho Forest Group for generously sponsoring the event. IHC thanks media sponsors Idaho Public Television and the Coeur d’Alene Press for promoting the event, and Barnes and Noble for facilitating book sales (with a portion of the sales going to support IHC programming).

The IHC is grateful to Benefactors for their added generosity, including the following firms and individuals that purchased Benefactor Tables: Idaho Forest Group, Hagadone Corporation, Internmax Networks, Jo Ann and K.V. Nelson, Paine Hamblen, Coeur d’Alene Press, Idaho Public Television and the Margaret Reed Foundation.

Thank you also to Diversions Window Coverings, Sarah McVey, George and Juli Ives, Sandy and Jeanne Emerson, Kenneth and Mary Thompson, and the University of Idaho—Coeur d’Alene for contributions to the student scholarship program.

We thank IHC Coeur d’Alene board members, Jo Ann Nelson and Mike Kennedy and the planning committee: Andrea Partington, Cindy Haagenson, Erin Davis, Fran Bahr, Melody Melton, Nancy Fligan, Virginia Johnson and Kathleen Schmidt, whose dedication to the humanities in their community made the evening possible. Lastly, tremendous thanks to Karen Yother for her instrumental assistance in helping to arrange, plan, and coordinate the event.

1. Novelist Jess Walter spoke to IHC’s largest audience ever in Coeur d’Alene.
3. Friends of the IHC meet at the Benefactor Reception in the home of Denny Davis and Kathy Canfield-Davis.
4. Walter and his wife meet Denny Davis and Kathy Canfield-Davis.
5. Kay Nelson shares a moment with humanities booster Virginia Johnson.
 Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Isabel Wilkerson gave the IHC’s 18th Annual Distinguished Humanities Lecture and Dinner in late October to an audience of over 500 at the Boise Centre. Wilkerson spoke about her prize winning book The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America’s Great Migration.

Before the event Wilkerson was welcomed at the posh 17th-story offices of Holland & Hart for the Benefactor Reception.

The IHC thanks its underwriters for helping make a very successful evening. Thank you to Major Event Sponsor Holland & Hart, and Event Co-Sponsors University of Idaho College of Law and Boise State University. In addition, IHC’s media sponsors The Idaho Statesman, Boise State Public Radio and Idaho Public Television were tremendous media partners.

An additional thank you goes to Barnes and Noble for facilitating book sales at the Boise Centre, with part of the proceeds going to support IHC programming.

The IHC also is grateful to the following firms and organizations that purchased Benefactor Tables: University of Idaho College of Law, Boise State University, Holland & Hart, the College of Idaho, the Idaho Statesman, Boise State University History Department, Futura Corporation, and Idaho Public Television.

Thank you to the following very generous individuals and organizations who helped share the evening with students through their donations to the student scholarship fund:


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GRANTS  
(Continued from Page 1)

Bud Moore Legacy Film Team, Missoula, Montana, and independent documentary producer Karen Day Zak received $3,000 to support production of a documentary about silent film actress/director Nell Shipman, who produced several silent films in and around Priest Lake in the 1920s. The grant is administered by the documentary is about Shipman as a nearly forgotten pioneer female film director and the challenges women faced in the film industry then and now. Karen Day Zak is the project director.

The University of Idaho, Moscow, was awarded $3,000 to help support a talk by Dr. Ronald C. McCurdy, a professor of music at the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music, during a showcasing of the work of Langston Hughes. Held during Black History Month in February 2015, McCurdy will present a multimedia concert performance of Langston Hughes’s kaleidoscopic jazz poem suite, “Ask Your Mama.” Howard Grimes is the project director.

The Idaho Shakespeare Festival, Boise, received $3,000 to help support “Shakespearean,” an educational outreach touring program, presenting fully staged and costumed productions of William Shakespeare’s work in schools across Idaho. Comedy of Errors performances were followed by question/answer sessions. An online study guide is made available, and additional educational workshops are offered to explore themes and issues in more depth. The project director is Christine Zimowsky.

The Idaho Writers Guild, Boise, received $1,500 to help support a writer’s conference, May 14-16, 2015, at the Boise Centre. About 20 authors, literary agents, professional editors and publishing experts will present a series of workshops, readings, and interactive discussions. The $1,500 is a matching gift from Arts Northwest. The project director is Diane Conroy.

The Museum of Idaho, Idaho Falls, was awarded $3,000 to help host a traveling exhibition titled “Real Pirates: The Untold Story of the Whydah from Slave Ship to Pirate Ship” from May 8 – November 28, 2015. The exhibit, developed in partnership with the National Geographic Society, tells the story of the slave ship and its capture by pirate captain Sam Bellamy in 1717. That ship sank off the coast of Cape Cod. Stories from Bellamy’s pirate crew help illustrate the 18th century world of slavery, piracy, trade, and commerce. The project director is David Pennock.

The Twin Falls County Historical Society, Twin Falls, was awarded $1,200 for a photo archive project. The museum has historic photos that will be digitally saved, printed and mounted, and preserved. The preserved photos will be used in museum exhibits and made available to the public for viewing in binders and a digital format. The project director is Bob Sobotta.

The Latah County Historical Society, Moscow, was awarded $1,350 for a newly designed oral history project. The project will focus on oral history interviews about regional experiences from the mid-twentieth century through the most recent decades. The resulting archival resource will be available to researchers and the general public. Dulce Kersting is the project director.

The Salmon Arts Council, Salmon, received $2,000 to help support the third annual celebration of the History of Lemhi County Conference in June 2015. The theme is “The History and Culture of Mining in Lemhi County,” and will feature three lunchtime lectures, one evening lecture and a day-long group tour of the new-abandoned mining community (and mines) of Leesburg. The project director is Caroline Stivers.

The Northern Pacific Depot Foundation, Wallace, was awarded $1,230 to help create a display of antique and vintage Wallace promotional and souvenir items. The new display will include photographs of street scenes and the businesses that the items were from. Shauna Hillman is the project director.

Research Fellowships:
Tara Penry, BSU Professor of English, Boise, received $3,500 to support research on the life and work of 15th century fiction writer Bret Harte and the way his fiction addressed national reconciliation and social cohesion in the U.S. after the Civil War. Her research will culminate in a book.

Keith Petersen, Idaho State Historian, Moscow, received $3,500 to assist with research on the story of how the state of Idaho got its unique name. He notes that Idaho’s state boundaries have had serious political, economic, and cultural repercussions over time, and that many stories about the boundaries are exaggerated and distorted and passed along as fact.

Brandy Schrand, Assistant Professor of English at the University of Idaho, Moscow, was awarded $3,000 to support research for a book about Frank B. Robinson and the rise of “Psychiana.” Robinson’s own self-help “psychological religion” that was invented in Moscow, Idaho, during the Great Depression. Though nearly forgotten today, Psychiana became the 7th largest religion in the world within five years, many seeking self-help in the forlorn days of national economic strife of the 1930s.

College of Southern Idaho Anthropology Professor James Woods, Twin Falls, was awarded $3,500 to support his participation in an international conference in Pachuca, Mexico, with anthropologists from the litic art and science of flintknapping, the experimental study of making and using ancient stone tools to interpret and understand the anthropological past. Flintknapping was pioneered by the late Don Crabtree, a native Idahoan who was a mentor to Woods and many others. Woods continues to practice and demonstrate flintknapping as a method of studying ancient cultures.

Teacher Incentive Grants:
The IHC awards grants of up to $1,000 to K-12 teachers and educational organizations to enhance teaching of the humanities in the classroom. The following grants were supported by IHC’s Endowment for Humanities Education.

Judy Barbera, Garden City Public Library, Garden City, received $1,000 to help purchase new books for its Bells for Books program, a mobile literacy program of the library. The program serves low income children and their families in the Garden City area, including the immigrant and refugee population, whose primary language is not English.
they saw it as a threat to the road and commercial development.

Forest Service managers were split on the road project: Regional Forester Evan Kelley from Region 1 north of the Salmon River contended that the road-building project had “little to commend it except the booster spirit of bit a relative few.” His counterpart in Region 4 south of the Salmon River, Richard Rutledge, dismissed opposition to the road as “abstract and hypothetical.” Thanks to wilderness historian Dennis Baird, we know Kelley’s retort: If Rutledge’s support of the Salmon River road project wasn’t itself “abstract and hypothetical,” he shot back, “I’ll eat blubber.”

The “Good Road Boosters” won the first round, and the Idaho Primitive Area was not extended to block the river road construction. Political pressure transmitted through politicians such as Idaho Congressman Creamer was again efficacious. CCC was assigned to build the Salmon River road between Salmon and Riggins. By 1935 CCC companies assigned to build fire trails and fight fires in the summer were reassigned to winter CCC camps at French Creek in the west and Ehenezer (Cove) Creek in the east. Work began in earnest to blast the road along the river and right through the center of Idaho.

Idahoans had heartedly embraced the freedom that automobiles provided. The possibilities for tourism and commerce seemed limitless, and with Idaho having one of the lowest fatality rates from auto accidents per capita in the country, road improvement seemed not only advisable but also positively necessary to the state’s wellbeing and economic recovery.

On the other hand, wilderness advocates Aldo Leopold and Bob Marshall joined other conservationists who felt strongly that the automobile and unlettered road building threatened what little was left of wild America. They created the Wilderness Society in 1935 to help prevent precisely the road projects into wild areas that the Salmon River road project proposed (the Wilderness Society later successfully fought the Wilderness Act of 1964, which fifteen years we celebrated in 2014).

The debate about wilderness challenged natural resource conservationists. While most were strong supporters of the CCC, the question of roads penetrating wilderness divided them. And here was a first-hand example of the CCC building a road through the center of Idaho.

Wilderness advocates, forest conservationists, and others feared it as a threat to the road and commercial development.

The construction of public land, road access, and natural resources, as shown in contemporary debates over sage hens in southern Idaho and mega loads on Highway 12.

As we drove the winding river road back toward Riggins, we stopped at the Manning Crestvie Bridge that spans the Salmon River downstream from the French Creek Camp. The Manning Bridge is as recognizable a CCC-built structure as any in the state, named after a CCC enrollee who died in a fall from it. The one-lane, 240-foot wooden bridge built in 1934 has been used by generations of rafters to reach the takeout several miles upriver at CAREY Creek and to access the back road to Warren and Bergdorf. Without much fanfare, the U.S. Department of Transportation plans to demolish the Manning Bridge and build a concrete span nearby, in order to facilitate the passage of larger vehicles.

The contest between conservationists, wilderness advocates, and boosters were remote from the concerns of the deserters in the desert.

Likewise, national debates were not priorities for unemployed Idaho craftsmen and loggers, who possessed work experience in trades and who, as Local Experienced Men (LEM), could train and supervise the generally unskilled young men at CCC camps. It meant getting to work at a time when unemployment was at a national all-time high. Military officers facing layoffs were pleased to be reinstated to provide oversight and discipline for the enrollees at CCC camps. Small business owners and farmers who supplied the many camps eventually became strong supporters of the program. Out-of-work teachers coached weekend students toward literacy and perhaps a high school diploma. Supervisors, medical personnel and service providers—the CCC economic stimulus reached deep into local communities and economies, offering steady work during a decade of economic turmoil.

The CCC enrollees and employees may not have known what “conservation” meant, but everyone knew that the forest resources were in deplorable condition, destroyed by massive overcutting, stream degradation, fire, insects and disease. Franklin D. Roosevelt made forest conservation a top priority when he created the CCC. The Forest Service, just 25 years old and short the Troubles, suddenly acquired a fine collection of materials about McCall and Valley County, including paper versions of the Cascade News and the Payette Lakes Star newspapers. In contemporary debates over sage hens in southern Idaho and mega loads on Highway 12.

The incredible influx of manpower of the CCC, already in Idaho in 1933, helped restore a vigorous forest to the state. Forests devastated by the Great Fire of 1910, 1931, and 1934 and overcut by the timber industry were replanted by the CCC; forest fires were greatly reduced, giving forests the opportunity to regenerate and rapidly spreading tree diseases were slowed. CCC-built roads opened access to forests for firefighting and also served recreationalists, rural residents, and private businesses.

The CCC also had direct and diverse impact on local communities and economies, which lead us to some of our most productive societies of local history–newspapers. McCall Public Library’s quiet backroom houses a fine collection of materials about McCall and Valley County, including paper versions of the Cascade News and the Payette Lakes Star newspapers.

For some towns, however, the coming of the CCC brought an unwelcome influx of young outsiders who often outnumbered the inhabitants. The resulting relationship between local towns and CCC boys was not always smooth. Indian enrollees worked on tribal projects and could live at home. But new federal non-discrimination policies for black enrollees encountered some resistance. Idaho originally had sixteen camps in the nation, California, a much larger state with a larger population, was first. Federally funded CCC work programs in Idaho built fire lookouts, trails, roads, structures, and parks, fought fires and blister rust, planted trees and strong thousands of rules of backcountry telephone lines.

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NEWS

(Continued from Page 7)

Do you have photos or stories about the CCC in Idaho?

With the support of an Idaho Humanities Council Research Fellowship, Patricia Hart and Ivar Nelson have been traveling throughout Idaho visiting people, libraries, and archives large and small to research stories of the Civilian Conservation Corps in Idaho. They have gathered more than 200 personal accounts of CCC enrollees and staff at Idaho CCC camps, and they say they would be delighted to get more.

A recent talk at the University of Idaho about their research attracted an audience of nearly 200, and Hart and Nelson say they welcome other invitations for them to speak elsewhere in Idaho about the CCC or the CCC digital portal.

“We keep running into people who have photographs, letters, stories, and diaries about the CCC in Idaho,” Hart says. “Thus far, we have arranged for them to be donated to the U of I library at the owners’ request.”

Hart and Nelson look forward to hearing from anyone who has information about a CCC enrollee or staff member who was at a CCC camp in Idaho. They can be contacted at psh@uidaho.edu or ivar@moscow.com.

NEWS

(Continued from Page 3)

The book explores the history and mythology of the Old West as lived and told in Owyhee County, Idaho, the largest and least inhabited area in the lower 48 states, and thus known as “The Big Quiet.” From violent mine wars of the 19th century to contemporary environmental disputes, people in the West have battled over the role of government and notions of their American identity in determining the question of who decides how to use the arid land of the West, and how it influences Western identity. In the early 20th century, historian Frederick Coulter theorized that interactions on the Old West frontier formed American characteristics of rugged individualism, democracy, aggression, and innovation. While “New” Western historians of the late-1970s attempted to debunk Turner’s theory, the myths of the Old West prevail, as people crave identity offered in Western themed novels, films, and tourism—more than they crave historical facts. Showdown in the Big Quiet demonstrates how the “Old West” speaks to the history, and for their willingness to share those sources with historians and the wider public.

A wealth of documentation about the CCC was produced in the 1930s through government’s aggressive promotional campaigns employing newspapers, photography, film, and radio. Once implemented, every agency involved generated periodic reports. Newspapers large and small picked up national stories and wrote their own local coverage, while enrollees carried small lightweight Kodak cameras, kept simple diaries and wrote letters home about their experience. However, after the nation entered World War II and New Deal programs were ended, not much was written about the CCC until the 1980s, when intensive research and oral history initiatives with CCC survivors took place in recognition of their fiftieth anniversary.

We are entering a critical moment in the preservation of resources related to the CCC in Idaho. Although very few CCC enrollees and employees are still living, Forest Service employees, historians, CCC alumni volunteers, and history society workers who collected materials and conducted interviews with participants are still active, although many are approaching retirement. Their knowledge could be lost.

The preservation of their work on the CCC is urgent because of drastic funding cuts to all government agencies, especially evident in the little time available to forest historians, archaeologists and architectural historians to store and work with archival material.

Many of the significant issues challenging the nation in the 1930s are still topics of national debate today, including conflict over control and best use of public lands; debate over wilderness preservation and commercial development; public policy toward western lands and forest management; forest fire policy; job training and education of youth; and the role of outdoor recreation in society. In various ways, the CCC dealt with all of these and shed light on public policy today.

Fortunately, there is a renewal of interest in these topics and dedicated history conservationists throughout the state and the region committed to sharing their knowledge and collections digitally with the public. We look forward to our continued collaboration with them and with the University of Idaho Library as the CCC in Idaho Forests Digital Portal becomes a resource for all to share.

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“A new,” and how the power of Western mythology moved from background to central character in the evolving narrative. The book explores 19th century range wars, the story of Claude Dallas, the controversy over the Saylor Creek Bombing Range, the establishment of the Owyhee Canyonlands, and more. Bieter is co-director of BSU’s Center for Basque Studies and author of An Enduring Legacy; A History of the Basques in Idaho. Showdown is available for purchase online at www.ttupres.org.

Three new histories of Lewiston published

Lewiston historian Steven D. Branting has published three new books through The History Press that explore the rich past of Lewiston, Idaho. The first, Lost Lewiston, Idaho: Elegies and Bygone Places, explores the architecture of historic structures and places in Lewiston that today are all but forgotten due to new development, urban renewal, and other efforts in the name of progress. The book is well illustrated with photos of buildings and places and those individuals responsible for constructing them or tearing them down. The second book, Hidden History of Lewiston, Idaho explores the lesser-known events that had a large impact on the history of the town.

A diverse collection of tales, the book tells the humorous and harrowing history of the community through a series of brief stories of people and incidents of the town. The third book, Historic Firsts of Lewiston, Idaho is a collection of stories of unprecedented events, accolades, and incidents in Lewiston from its founding to present day. All three books are available from The History Press at www.historypress.net.

New volume of Nez Perce stories published


(See NEWS, Page 9)
The book comes from a quote by Jack London: “Better to drink life in one flaming hour and reel before the sun than sip pale years and cower before oblivion.” Author Mike Blackbird also was an Idaho State Senator, serving three terms from 1986-1992, and now retired in Post Falls. The book is available for purchase online at www.ridenbaugh.com.

C of 1 historian publishes new book on 19th century missionaries

Steven Maughan, College of Idaho professor of history, has just published Mighty England Do Good: An Omnibus of Missionary Histories. The book, which Maughan notes is the first in a series on missionary history, has just been published.

The next deadline for Idaho Humanities Council grant proposals is September 15, 2015. IHC strongly recommends that prospective applicants contact staff to discuss their project ideas before completing proposals. Grant guidelines and application instructions are available on IHC’s website at www.idahohumanities.org, or by calling 208-345-5346.

Remember to send back that envelope…

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Idaho teachers of all grades and disciplines are invited to apply to attend the Idaho Humanities Council’s 2015 weeklong summer institute on the literature, art, and music of “The Harlem Renaissance,” scheduled for July 12-17, 2015, at the College of Idaho in Caldwell. Successful applicants will receive lodging and meals, texts, and the opportunity for optional college credit. Those traveling more than 250 miles one way may be eligible for a modest travel stipend. Community college teachers also are eligible to apply. The deadline for online applications is April 1.

Supported by the IHC’s Endowment for Humanities Education and the National Endowment for the Humanities, the interdisciplinary teacher institute will explore the explosion of African-American culture in New York City during the 1920s and 1930s that reverberated throughout American culture in literature, art, music, theater, and more during the 20th century. Teachers will study works by novelist Zora Neale Hurston, poet James Weldon Johnson and Langston Hughes, jazz musicians Fats Waller, Duke Ellington, Jelly Roll Morton, Louis Armstrong, actor Augusta Savage, performer Josephine Baker, and learn about some of the key social political ideas of the time.

The Harlem Renaissance promoted a new sense of racial consciousness, ethnic pride, black identity, and the development of an artistic movement. The Renaissance inspired social and political activism that eventually flowered in the civil rights movement. The Harlem Renaissance helped America redefine how it saw African-Americans, as the Great Migration brought many more African Americans to relocate from the rural south to the urban north, expanding economic horizons, and inspiring thoughts of a more equal, cosmopolitan, and intellectual African American community of cultural innovators.

While inspiring new cultural innovations, the Harlem Renaissance at the same time fueled a rediscovery of African American folklore traditions, bolstering a greater sense of heritage and identity. Presenting scholars so far include Florida International University English Professor Heather Russell (Miami), a Zora Neale Hurston scholar, Grammy Museum Director and music historian Robert Santelli (Los Angeles), and Robert Santelli’s Assistant Director Cindy Stein.

In addition to attending daily lectures and panel discussions, participants will attend special evening keynote presentations, view documentaries and Hollywood films, view an African American photographic collection of the Sawtooth-Salmon Wilderness, and share ways of teaching the Harlem Renaissance in the classroom.

The online application deadline is April 1, 2015. Interested teachers must visit www.idahohumanities.org to apply online, or contact the Idaho Humanities Council with other questions at (208) 345-5346, or cindy@idahohumanities.org.

Sawtooth Interpretive Association receives $10,000 award

The IHC, ISHS, and IHT annually selects an Idaho museum or interpretive association that has demonstrated leadership in working collaboratively with other community partners to create a variety of programs to educate a diverse public audience. SIHA is well deserving of this award.

Although Stanley, a small community, the Sawtooth Interpretive and Historical Association has demonstrated what can be accomplished by a determined group of folks through partnership,” said Richard Erdinger, Executive Director of the Idaho Humanities Council. “The IHC has supported a summer lecture series and other good humanities projects and programs over the years, and this award is made in recognition of that good work.”

A formal award ceremony will be held in June 2015 at the Redfish Lake Visitor’s Center.

Series to explore the experience of Vietnam War veterans

In commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War, the IHC and Ada Community Library are partnering on “Read Me Treasure Valley,” the annual southwest Idaho-wide communitywide reading of the same book. This year’s selection is Fatal Light, a spare but powerful novel about Vietnam, penned by veteran Richard Currey. In addition to the novel, Read Me Treasure Valley activities will include book discussions about Fatal Light at area libraries, several lectures about the Vietnam War, a writing workshop, and the showing of a documentary film.

Published in 1988, Fatal Light was praised by such writers as Philip Caputo, Jim Harrison, Tim O’Brien, and other writers as a groundbreaking novel and an elegy for an America torn apart by the experience of the War. Currey spent four years in Vietnam as a medic with the Marines. The book was reprinted in a commemorative anniversary edition with a new introduction by the author. Currey, who resides in Washington, D.C., often teaches writing workshops to veterans.

Author of several novels and a collection of stories, Currey will visit Boise on March 18, to read from and talk about his book, and will lead a writing workshop for veterans and others at The Cabin on the following day.

DRAFTED IN 1968, CURREY JOINED THE NAVY IN AN EFFORT TO AVOID THE ARMY INFANTRY. HOWEVER, THE NAVY TRAINED HIM AS A MEDIC AND FOR JUNGLE WARFARE, AND PLACED HIM WITH THE MARINES.

In preparation for Currey’s presentation, “Read Me Treasure Valley” will offer other programming about the Vietnam War for veterans, their families, and the general public, including three public lectures about Vietnam and the war at Boise Public Library’s Hayes Auditorium by Boise State University History Professors Shenton Woods and David Walker on February 12, 18, and 19. In addition, area libraries will host several discussions of Fatal Light, moderated by noted Boise writer Alan Heathcock. The program will culminate with a March 30 showing at Boise’s Egyptian Theater of the documentary film Braver: Common Men, Uncommon Valor, about the experience of young U.S. Marines at the 1968 siege of Khe Sanh, produced by Boiseans Ken and Betty Rogers. The film showing is a project in partnership with the Idaho State Supreme Court Alternative Justice Program.

For more information and a complete schedule of activities for Read Me Treasure Valley, visit the Idaho Humanities Council website at www.idahohumanities.org.

Read Me Treasure Valley is supported in part by the Idaho Humanities Council through a special grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and in partnership with the Ada Community Library, The Cabin, the Boise Veterans Administration Hospital, Idaho Supreme Court Alternative Justice Program, and several veterans organizations.

New NEH publishing grants to promote “popular” scholarship

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) announces a new grant opportunity that encourages the publication of nonfiction books of general interest and appeal. The new NEH Public Scholar awards support well-researched books in the humanities conceived and written to reach a broad readership. Books supported through this program might present a narrative history, tell the stories of important individuals, analyze significant texts, provide a synthesis of ideas, revive interest in a neglected subject, or examine the latest thinking on a topic. Most importantly, they should open up important and appealing subjects for wider audiences by presenting significant humanities topics in a way that is accessible to general readers.

The NEH Public Scholar program represents a long-term commitment of NEH to encourage scholarship in the humanities for general audiences. The grant program forms part of a new agency-wide initiative, The Common Good: The Humanities in the Public Square, which seeks to demonstrate and enhance the role and significance of the humanities and humanities scholarship in public life.

The Public Scholar program is open to both independent scholars and individuals affiliated with scholarly institutions. It offers a stipend of $4,200 per month for a period of six to twelve months. The maximum stipend is $50,400 over a twelve-month period. For more information, see www.NEH.gov.

Idaho Humanities 10

This summer’s institute will explore the music of Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington, the poetry of Langston Hughes, the novels of Zora Neale Hurston, and more.
IHC warmly thanks Idaho Humanities Council Donors!

Contributions made between August 1, and December 31, 2014

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In Memoriam

In memory of William E. Augustine
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Throughout the state, IHC programs spark conversations that illuminate and reflect upon human experience in an atmosphere of empathy and critical respect, while supporting the education and research that make such discussions productive. These events help us draw lessons from the past and present to inform our actions and shape a promising future for generations to come.

Chuck Guilford, Boise

Idaho Humanities 11
What Are You Reading?

Reader: Lin Tell Cannell
Occupation: Author and historian. Retired administrative analyst, Orofino
Book: Frontier History Along Idaho’s Clearwater River: Pioneers, Miners & Lumberjacks by John Bradbury

This book champions the human element of Idaho’s past. As I read, I am meeting a few Nimiipu, some gold miners, a number of Chinese people looking to turn a profit before going back home, criminals bent on stealing and vigilantes bent on stopping them permanently. There are river boaters, farming families, politicians, Mormons and loggers and, since these divergent people often don’t see eye-to-eye, I marvel at the resilient human spirit in all.

When I first began reading this book I thought that it might come up short of documented history, since it has neither source notes nor index. But there is a bibliography, the author has a straight-up writing style, and, notwithstanding its title, the stories cover Idaho’s genesis in the interior Northwest in addition to its history. The book is chock full of stories about Idaho’s past, entertaining and enlightening. Idaho’s past is filled with adventures and hardship that continue to resonate with us today.

Reader: Jennifer Attebery
Occupation: Professor of English and Chair, Dept. of English and Philosophy, Idaho State University
Book: Miss Lost Nation by Bethany Shultz

Schultz Hurst won the 2013 Robert Dana-Anthing Prize for Poetry with this volume of witty, thought-provoking works. Her poems are brief but always meaty—at the same time that they make you smile, you experience a moment of aha! or ouch! Schultz Hurst’s poem’s reflect on ordinary moments and the ethical issues presented to us daily, in our relationships with parents whom we now literally look down upon, our response to the youth waving a roadside fast food advertisement, or the way we internalize constructions of gender. Throughout, the Western landscape is a subtle backdrop.

Reader: Bruce Ballenger
Occupation: Professor of English, Boise State University
Book: Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs: Living and Writing in the West by Wallace Stegner

When I first moved to the Northern Rockies from New England nearly thirty years ago, I remember an afternoon in late spring that first year when I finally found the words that named a vague discomfort I felt living here. We were living in Montana at the time, and driving south toward Yellowstone. “I find this place intimidating,” I said to Karen. “Everything is just too big. It’s a picture that’s too big to frame in my head.” Many years later, after my mother-in-law—a woman who had lived her entire life in Connecticut—visited us in Boise, we heard what she said about the landscape here: “It looks like somebody bombed the place.” This week I rediscovered Wallace Stegner’s explanation for all of this when I returned to his essay collection Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs: Living and Writing in the West. He writes that to live in the West, you “just have to get over the color green.” He also notes that early Eastern writers lacked the palate for describing what they encountered in this country, and could only find the words for what seemed absent. Few writers write better than Stegner about what they missed, and this essay collection remains the work of Western literature that most opened my eyes.