Winter Edition December 2024

WASHINGTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

http://wchsutah.org



Photo by Chad Bennion, WCHS Board Member

THE PRESIDENT'S PEN



Ian Crowe, President

Dear Washington County Historical Society Members and Friends:

Another year has come and gone. Time passes, becoming history faster than we can record it, yet that is our purpose and constant struggle.

We had a very productive 2024! The revised Bylaws will be voted on at the annual meeting on January 29, and we are working on a Policy and Procedures document. We created this great newsletter. We have chosen a direction for our web presence. We are making strides working with the county and locals who have libraries of valuable histories and media.

Thank you all! Please stay involved, we need you!

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YOUR BOARD MEMBERS

President: Ian Crowe
Secretary: Loren Webb
Treasurer: Teresa Orton
Webmaster: George Cannon
Vice Presidents: Brad Bennett, Chad Bennion, Maureen Parks, Linda Shogren, Jesse Stocking

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Website Committee



George Cannon, Chairman

History is collected a piece at a time and then, hopefully, preserved somewhere that can be retrieved when wanted or needed. That process occurs in a number of ways. One of those ways is illustrated by a recent sequence of events.

We received an e-mail from a lady who was researching her family history. She learned her great aunt & uncle owned the Odegard's Photo Shop in St. George. She found our website which had a lot of information about the Dixie Photo Shop, but nothing about the Odegards or their business. She wondered if we could give her any help with her history.

The only things I could find were some old advertisements in Dixie Roundup programs and their names in a cemetery list, but that was a start. I forwarded her request to the WCHS Distribution List to see if anyone could provide additional insight and information. The response was immediate. Apparently the Odegard's Photo Shop was very popular in the 1950s .We pretty quickly got a general picture of the Odegards and their business.



Website Committee

That initial information was enough to set up a group of interlinked webpages:

https://wchsutah.org/businesses/odegard-photo-shop.php

https://wchsutah.org/people/maxwell-amy-odegard.php

https://wchsutah.org/homes/maxwell-amy-odegard-home.php

This gives us a place to organize, file, and preserve the Odegard's history where it will be easily accessible to anyone with an interest, but this is just the start. Now we need to gather as much information as possible before it is lost forever.

You can help by spreading the word, contributing what you have, and encouraging others to do the same. You can reach us at webmaster@wchsutah.org. There is also a handy Page Feedback tool on the left side of every blue webpage. Click on that to comment on the webpage you are perusing.

This is a fun example focusing on just one area of our history. There are lots of subject areas already in progress on our website and more to be started.

We are always looking for assistance with this mission!

This and previous editions of the WCHS Newsletter can be found at https://wchsutah.org/documents/documents.php#wchs-newsletters.

HISTORICAL NEWSPAPERS AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE

AT THE NOVEMBER COMMUNITY MEETING, CAITLIN GRIMM FROM SPECIAL COLLECTIONS & ARCHIVES AT UTAH TECH UNIVERSITY, TOLD US HOW TO ACCESS HISTORICAL NEWSPAPERS.

HERE ARE THE INSTRUCTIONS: GO TO LIBRARY.UTAHTECH.EDU > RESEARCH GUIDES > BROWSE OTHER GUIDES > HISTORY > THEN HISTORICAL NEWSPAPERS.

YOU WILL SEE YOU HAVE ACCESS TO WASHINGTON COUNTY, UTAH, NATIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTS. SOME OF THE DOCUMENTS ARE ON MICROFILM, SOME ARE DIGITAL, AND SOME ARE ONLINE.

HAPPY RESEARCHING!

ST. GEORGE ARTS COMMISSION
CITY OF ST. GEORGE RAP recreation • arts • parks
WASHINGTON COUNTY RECREATION, ARTS & PARKS
SORENSON LEGACY FOUNDATION

COMMUNITY MEETINGS SCHEDULE

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS AND PLAN TO ATTEND

The monthly meetings are for WCHS officers, members, and any others interested in Washington County history. It is an opportunity to hear about what is going on with the WCHS and to exchange ideas with others who have similar interests.

Please be aware the Annual Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 29, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. The election for Board Members will take place, and the newly-revised Bylaws will be presented for a vote to accept.

We are assembling a list of those who would be willing to participate in our Society as liaisons representing their cities. We would ask they attend our Community Meetings occasionally and keep us informed of how the WCHS may benefit their efforts with historical projects going on in their cities or organizations.

The Society incorporated this idea several years ago and several cities had representatives who attended the Community Meetings and worked jointly with the WCHS for support of their historical projects. For some reason, it went by the wayside, and the Board would like to restart this project.

To date, **Zola Hunt will represent Enterprise, Susannah Nillson will represent Santa Clara, and Todd Taylor will represent Gunlock**. We welcome them to the Community Meetings. If you are interested in representing your community, please attend the Annual Meeting on Wednesday, January 29, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., and let us know you are willing to participate.

Meet in the downstairs meeting room of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers (DUP) McQuarrie Memorial Museum, 145 North 100 East, St. George, UT.

For more information, check the website at https://wchsutah.org, e-mail info@wchsutah.org, or call and leave a message at (435)275-7409.

Washington County Historical Society Community Meetings schedule:

Wednesday, , January 29, 2025, 10:00 a.m. - Noon (Annual Meeting)

Wednesday, February 26, 2025, 10:00 a.m. - Noon

Wednesday, March 26, 2024 - 10:00 a.m. - Noon



"Out of Sight"
Photo by Chad Bennion

HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Special Projects

David H. & Wilhelmena Cannon Statues Update

The clay statues of Wilhemina and David H. Cannon have been bronzed at the foundry in Salt Lake and are now back in the sculptor's studio in Dixie. There is still work to be done to finish it, but it has really taken shape thanks to the efforts of sculptor, Jerry Anderson, and project manager, Richard Whitehead.

The statues ought to be ready in plenty of time for the dedication of the new St. George City Hall and the plaza where the statues will be placed which happens to be on the property originally platted to David H. Cannon and Angus M. Cannon.

Almost half the required funds have been raised, but we still have a long way to go to reach our $115,000 commitment. We need the help of many more people with donations, large or small. The Washington County Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization and has agreed to accept and handle the donations. Those of you who would like to take advantage and claim your donation as a charitable donation for the year 2024 will need to complete your donation before December 31, 2024.

For information on how to donate, please CLICK HERE.





HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Special Projects

Lynne Clark Photo Collection



LYNNE CLARK

A WCHS Steering Committee was formed consisting of Chad Bennion, Teresa Orton, Maureen Parks, and Loren Webb to work with the Lynne Clark family to assist in the preservation and administration of the extensive media collection of Lynne Clark.

The Steering Committee is currently meeting with the Clark family members on a regular basis to make decisions regarding the media collection in accordance with Lynne Clark's wishes.



"Where They Once Roamed"
by Chad Bennion



"Tracks Through Time"
by Chad Bennion

HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

WINTER IS A GREAT TIME TO VISIT HISTORICAL AND SCENIC SITES IN WASHINGTON COUNTY

BY

CHAD BENNION, WCHS BOARD MEMBER

With the changing of the seasons and the cooler temperatures, winter brings an opportunity to get out and visit places that may be more challenging and less hospitable during other times of the year.

If you like visiting historical and scenic sites in Southern Utah, winter is an ideal time to do it for many reasons.

One: The cooler temperatures make hiking, walking, or riding to sites more enjoyable. There is less concern for dehydration or other heat related conditions that exist during the summer months. Also, the mammal wildlife tends to be more active in the cooler temperatures, plus, there are fewer bugs and other pests out. (Additionally, rattlesnakes will be hibernating, so just avoid bothering them in their dens and you'll likely have a snake-free visit,too!)

If the day does happen to be a little colder than you prefer to venture out on, there are museums, galleries, visitor centers, etc., that you can visit on those days and keep warm and toasty indoors.

Two: There will be fewer people at the sites and places you visit. Much of our economy here in Utah's Dixie is tourism driven. While we do have visitors year round, the numbers are much higher during the other seasons of the year. Roads and trails have more traffic, the museums, visitor centers, and parks are crowded, and if it's a holiday or "free-fare" day, you can count on being delayed or waiting much longer than what you'll experience during the winter months.

Three: Since the sites are less crowded during the winter, you can take your time and proceed at your leisure--no rush, no crowd, the ability to read a marker, enjoy a display, review an object, item, or formation, take in the view without other people trying to squeeze into the frame of your photos. You can take in a panoramic view in solitude. The winter months give you that kind of an opportunity.

These are some of the reasons why winter is an ideal time to enjoy our scenic and historical sites in and around Washington County.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

WINTER IS A GREAT TIME TO VISIT HISTORICAL AND SCENIC SITES IN WASHINGTON COUNTY (CONT'D)

Photos by Chad Bennion, WCHS Board Member



"After the Storm"



"Disappearing Sunshine"



"Solitude"

Wherever and whenever you venture out, be a good steward and always go prepared. Check weather and road conditions, have an emergency kit for at least 72 hours… you don't have to go very far to get into the wilderness. Have food, water and a full tank of fuel. The unexpected will happen (Trust me, I know! But that's a story for another day.), whether you're in a four-wheel drive vehicle or hiking a trail with a day pack, there will come a time when the unexpected occurs. With a little preparation, those events will be easier to handle and less stressful.

We live in an amazing place with a rich heritage and history. It is a place filled with scenic vistas and panoramic views. Take an opportunity, this winter, to enjoy the history and beauty of our home. You'll be glad you did!

HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

WASHINGTON COUNTY RAP TAX



Submitted by Teresa Orton, Treasurer

WCHS is a RAP Tax Grant Recipient.

Thank you for your support of the RAP Tax!

The Washington County Historical Society (WCHS) has been the recipient of the Recreation, Arts and Parks (RAP) tax grant funds. These funds help the Society to fund important projects such as the Oral History Project, Roundtable Discussions, Field Trips and Walking Tours. We are very grateful these funds are made available to us.

The RAP Tax began 10 years ago as an initiative on the ballot to charge .01 of 1% of restaurant and hotel charges. In the past 10 years, the impact to our county and community has been outstanding. These funds have helped to build and maintain the walking and hiking trails around the county, supported the arts community, local museums, and other non-profit organizations. They have been able to distribute $300 million overall to the Washington County applicants.

We look forward to new projects in our community and through the WCHS partially funded by the RAP Tax.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership renewal is upon us. Annual memberships expire on December 31, 2024, so it is important to renew your membership before the end of the year.

Dues will be collected at the Annual Meeting on Wednesday, January 29, 2025, at the McQuarrie Memorial Museum (Pioneer Museum), 145 N 100 E, St. George.

The Washington County Historical Society has four options for membership:
Annual membership for a single person is $25.
Annual membership for a married couple is $35.
Lifetime membership for a single person is $250.
Lifetime membership for a married couple is $350.

To join, go to the Memberships page, https://washcouthistory.org/membership, and follow the instructions.

You can also join by giving a check made payable to Washington County Historical Society to any WCHS Board member or mailing it to Washington County Historical Society, P. O. Box 404, St. George, UT 84771-0404. Please include your name(s), address, phone number, and e-mail address.

WCHS is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Our tax-exempt ID number is 87-0465878. We appreciate the support of community members who are interested in the history of Washington County.

WASHINGTON COUNTY MUSEUMS



ST. GEORGE DINOSAUR DISCOVERY SITE

The St. George Dinosaur Discovery Site displays the evidence of an Early Jurassic ecosystem that existed almost 200 million years ago. The museum houses thousands of fossilized tracks of dinosaurs and other animals, as well as fishes and plants. Uniquely, the museum was built over the top of the initial discovery site, leaving a large area intact and undisturbed. Additional displays include replicas of the animals that lived here, a mural depicting the area as it would have looked, and several short informational videos throughout the exhibits. The museum also has a working fossil preparation lab where visitors can observe volunteers and staff caring for the fossils. The museum's mission centers on researching, preserving, interpreting, and exhibiting the fossil resources of the area and the story of this specific site. Visit the site to learn more about southern Utah during the Jurassic Period. Admission fee (see website.)





Open 7 days a week
10:00 AM–5:00 PM
Closed Major Holidays

For more information:
utahdinosaurs.org

2180 East Riverside Drive, St. George, UT 84790
(435) 574-3466 | info@utahdinosaurs.org

St. George Dinosaur Discovery Site



UTAH TECH UNIVERSITY SEARS ART MUSEUM

Located in the Dolores Doré Eccles Fine Arts Center on the Utah Tech University campus, the Sears Art Museum features six exhibits each year, offering a variety of art styles from traditional to contemporary for the enjoyment and education of Utah Tech University students and the community.

The museum also hosts the annual Sears Invitational Art Show and Sale, a popular regional exhibition featuring approximately 100 invited artists and 200 works of art. The Museum has been part of the University since 2004, thanks in part to the efforts of Robert and Peggy Sears. Free admission–donations appreciated.

Open Monday–Friday
9:00 AM–5:00 PM
Closed weekends and school holidays.

For more information: **searsart.com**



155 South University Avenue St. George, Utah 84770
(435) 652-7909 | searsart@utahtech.edu

UTT SEARS ART MUSEUM

LIBRARY

THEN AND NOW

Memories of Places in Washington County and Surrounding Communities

Washington County, Kane County, the Arizona Strip, and the Big Muddy region of Nevada* have experienced environmental, population, and cultural change over time.

The Heritage Cove Project and Utah Tech University Special Collections and Archives are collecting personal memories of specific locations past and present as part of a celebration of the area. We welcome donations of written memories, photographs, and more via the online submission forms below.

Submit your memories at:
https://utahtech.edu/heritage-cove/written-memories

Submissions End July 31, 2025



*Participants must be 18 years of age or older and reside, or have previously resided, in one or more of these regions

For Questions, contact Trevor Cox
trevor.cox2@utahtech.edu
(435) 879-4552

EVENT IN DECEMBER

SILVER REEF MUSEUM

Cosmopolitan Event

Saturday, Dec. 28, 2024 -10 am



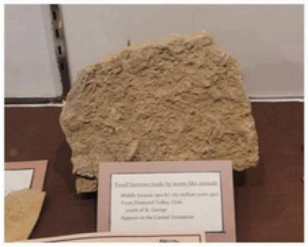
History of Paleontology and Public Fascination with Dinosaurs and Other Ancient Life

Join us for an intriguing lecture that dives into the early history of paleontology and the public's enduring fascination with dinosaurs and other ancient life. This presentation will explore:

- Historical figures who shaped the field
- Fascinating fossil lore and legends from Silver Reef
- The dramatic Bone Wars of the late 19th century
- Other notable events and developments in paleontology

Presenter: **Andrew Peterson, one of our founding board members**







Reservations suggested:

https://tinyurl.com/PaleontologySilverReef

or 435.879.2254 Donations appreciated!

http://silverreef.org

Funded by Utah Legislature

Utah Division of Arts & Museums

Silver Reef Museum
1903 Wells Fargo Rd
Leeds, UT 84746

EVENT IN JANUARY



EVENT IN JANUARY

McQuarrie Memorial Pioneer Museum

DAUGHTERS of UTAH PIONEERS

3rd Weekend Event

Saturday ~ 18 January 2025 ~ 10:00 AM

Pistols of the Old West





Presented by

Robert Singleton

Development of The Handguns in the West by Soldiers, Cowboys, and Townspeople

Beginning in the mid-1830s though approximately 1900, explore the development of revolvers and their myriad of uses, From the first usable revolver the Colt Patterson, to the modem double-action revolvers with swing-out cylinders, learn the evolution of the handgun and conversion from black powder to smokeless powder.

FREE ADMISSION & HANDICAP ACCESS, PUBLIC WELCOME!

McQuarrie Memorial Museum
145 No. 100 East, St. George, UT
Phone (435) 628-7274

Events supported by grants from:

CITY OF ST. GEORGE RAP

Utah Division of Arts & Museums

Washington County Recreation, Arts & Parks

EVENT IN FEBRUARY

McQuarrie Memorial Pioneer Museum

Daughters of Utah Pioneers

3rd Weekend Event

Saturday ~ February 15, 2025~ 10:00 AM

NEW CASTLE RECLAMATION PROJECT—Rescheduled



JERRY ATKIN, Author & Presenter

Jerry wrote about the New Castle Reclamation Project which was a water project that was proposed around the New Castle area in Southern Utah.

FREE ADMISSION & HANDICAP ACCESS, PUBLIC WELCOME!

McQuarrie Memorial Museum
145 No. 100 East, St. George, UT
Phone (435) 628-7274

Events supported by grants from:

City of St George RAP

Utah Division of Arts & Museums

Washington County Recreation, Arts & Parks

EVENT IN MARCH

McQuarrie Memorial Pioneer Museum

DAUGHTERS OF UTAH PIONEERS

3rd Weekend Event

Saturday March 15, 2025 10:00 AM

THE MORMON BATTALION:

TUNES ALONG THEIR TRAILS



Kevin Henson and Denny Watts Henson have researched the Mormon Battalion for 25 years. Kevin will share what's been learned about their music and instruments. The Henson's will also use their computer software to show the Battalion trails of 1846-47. Come to this interesting presentation to follow their footsteps and sing along!

FREE ADMISSION & HANDICAP ACCESS, PUBLIC WELCOME!

McQuarrie Memorial Museum

145 North 100 East, St. George, UT

Phone (435) 628-7274

Events supported by grants from:

RAP

ST. GEORGE HISTORIC WALKING TOURS RECAP

SUBMITTED BY LOREN WEBB, WCHS SECRETARY



ANCESTOR SQUARE BLOCK

Tour was led by Loren Webb

16 People Participated

The photos show Mulberry Inn where co-owner Peggy Armour showed the participants interesting architectural aspects of her historic home, which now serves as a bed and breakfast. She also told stories about the home and its occupants as well as about surrounding homes on the block, including the Whitehead home, which the Armour family also owns.





ST. GEORGE HISTORIC WALKING TOURS RECAP (CONT'D)

SUBMITTED BY LOREN WEBB, WCHS SECRETARY



TOWN SQUARE BLOCK

Tour was led by Tom McArthur, Jr.

15 People Participated





PIONEER COURTHOUSE BLOCK

Tour was led by Bruce Pickett.

10 People Participated

GREEN GATE VILLAGE

Tour was led by Susan Crook.

13 People Participated



SILVER REEF GHOST NIGHT RECAP

OCTOBER 25-26, 2024

Photos by Chad Bennion, WCHS Board Member









Our very own Loren Webb, WCHS Board Member,
made a great ghost!

ESCALANTE NO. 2 WELL EXPLOSION MEMORIAL DEDICATION

Compiled by Loren Webb
Sons of Utah Pioneers Cotton Mission Chapter Board Member
Washington County Historical Society Board Member



Loren Webb, left, and David Peterson, right, Sons of Utah Pioneers Cotton Mission Chapter, pose at the new memorial plaque for the Escalante No. 2 oil well explosion site following the November 9, 2024 dedication.

The site of the Escalante No. 2 oil well explosion that killed nine people instantly at 9:40 p.m. on March 6, I935, was dedicated in St. George on November 9, 2024, by the Sons of the Utah Pioneers Cotton Mission Chapter (SUPCMC) beginning at 3:00 p.m. Leah Cottam, only 24 years old at the time of the tragedy, was the I0th victim.

The dead included Olive Bleak Snow, Leah Cottam, Joseph Lamoni Empey, Jr., Cail Adolph Nicholson, and Ray B. Nelson all of St. George, Charles D. Alsop, owner of the Escalante No. 2 well, his wife, Mary C. Alsop, William "Billy" Maloney, Chester Flickinger, and Joseph F. Kitterman.

Almost 200 people gathered at the site to watch a "full shoot" of the well to release the oil from its geologic prison, according to David Peterson, SUPCMC dedication chair. As the six I0-foot torpedoes were lowered into the shaft, the last one self-ignited, thus exploding the remaining five torpedoes, creating a tremendous explosion and fire that was easily seen in Hurricane.

During the dedication ceremonies, David Peterson, the person largely responsible for obtaining permission from Utah State Trust Lands to erect two monuments on the northwestern edge of the Ft. Pearce Industrial Park, conducted the ceremonies.

Roy Taylor, president of the SUP Cotton Mission Chapter offered the opening prayer and CMC Board member Loren Webb led the Pledge of Allegiance. A musical number, “America the Beautiful,” was provided by Santa Clara Friends, followed by remarks by St. George City Councilwoman Natalie Larson. She was followed by retired geologist and Cotton Mission Chapter member Royce Griffin.

ESCALANTE NO. 2 WELL EXPLOSION MEMORIAL DEDICATION (CONT'D)

Griffin is quoted by St. George News reporter E. George Goold, as saying that at the time of the explosion, "Everybody in town, in St. George, could hear it. It was a huge explosion. It left a crater in the ground, it blew a crater 30 feet deep and broke that rig into pieces. It just messed everything up." A later investigation of the event by Justice of the Peace Harold S. Snow and Washington County attorney Orval Hafen concluded it was an accident.

Their report said that 70-I00 curious onlookers and investors as well as company personnel, were crowded around the rig waiting for the hoped for oil to shoot to the surface. Instead, six torpedoes full of dynamite and nitroglycerin, hanging from a post off of the rig, somehow exploded. Body parts and pieces of the deceased were gathered and buried on site.



Kimberly Empey Christensen spoke on behalf of the Empey family.



Cheryl Campbell spoke on behalf of the Cail Nicholson family.

ESCALANTE NO. 2 WELL EXPLOSION MEMORIAL DEDICATION (CONT'D)

The closing prayer was offered by Tammi Jensen, great granddaughter of oil well explosion victim, Joseph Lamoni Empey Jr.

The historical site and memorial is open to the public; the address is at the end of a dead-end street at about 475 Quality Drive in the Fort Pierce Industrial Park in St. George.

David Peterson spoke on miracles that occurred up to dedication of the site. He was followed by Brent Estes, great grandson of Olive Bleak Snow, who dedicated the memorial markers and the plot.

The Santa Clara Friends sang a closing musical number entitled, "It is Well With My Soul."

Dave Moody of Silver Reef Brewing provided fresh root beer refreshments following the ceremony.



Betsy Winters and Richelle Pearson, cousins, spoke on behalf of the Snow/Bleak families.



Patti Brown, a direct descendant of the Cottam family, quoted extensively from various news articles written at the time of the 1935 tragedy. Those articles were all compiled in a family history book compiled by her mother, Ellen Raye Cottam Brown, entitled Biographies and Autobiographies of Heber Charls and Asineth Jarvis Cottam and Their Ancestors, Cottam, Jarvis, Foster, Forsyth, and published in December 2003.

ESCALANTE NO. 2 WELL EXPLOSION MEMORIAL DEDICATION (CONT'D)

Lori Cottam (front), Lea Cottam Thompson, Patti Brown, and Ryan Brown, descendants of Lea Cottam, pose following the dedication.





The Santa Clara Friends sang two numbers, "America the Beautiful," and, "It Is Well With My Soul."

ESCALANTE NO. 2 WELL EXPLOSION MEMORIAL DEDICATION (CONT'D)



Poster of the Escalante No. 2 oil well prior to its explosion on March 6, 1935.

THE MEMORIAL IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.
THE LOCATION IS AT THE END OF A DEAD-END STREET AT ABOUT
475 QUALITY DRIVE IN THE FORT PIERCE INDUSTRIAL PARK, ST. GEORGE.



From Your
Washington County Historical Society Board of Directors