

WASHINGTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

<http://wchsutah.org>

DON'T LET THIS BE YOU!

Photo courtesy of
Chad Bennion, President

THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

Summer has arrived in Washington County! It's the perfect time to explore our local museums, attractions, and indoor exhibits while the outdoor temperatures soar into the triple digits during the day.

If you plan to venture outdoors across the county, early mornings are ideal. Here are some recommendations:

- Start your day early: Beat the heat by heading out in the morning.
- Stay prepared: Hydrate well and inform someone about your destination and estimated return time.
- Explore local sites: Whether you're visiting Zion, hiking the Vortex, traversing Yant Flat, or checking out dinosaur footprints in the Red Cliffs, plan accordingly.
- Monitor the weather: Stay updated on local conditions to ensure a safe journey. A bit of preparation can significantly reduce stress if unexpected situations arise.

Enjoy your summer adventures, and stay safe while experiencing the historical and scenic wonders our area has to offer!



Chad Bennion,
President

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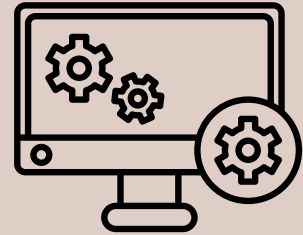
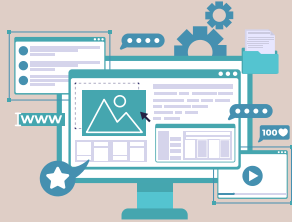
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YOUR BOARD MEMBERS

President: Chad Bennion
1st Vice President: Loren Webb
2nd Vice President: Linda Shogren
Secretary: Maureen Parks
Treasurer: Teresa Orton
Webmaster: George Cannon
Members: Brad Bennett, Karl McMullin,
Jesse Stocking

COMMITTEE REPORTS

WEBSITE COMMITTEE



GEORGE CANNON, CHAIRMAN

Due to some technical glitch, my article in last quarter's WCHS Newsletter didn't make it into the final distributed copy. The article had to do with the "Homes" section of the WCHS website. If you think that would be of interest, you can find the corrected copy of that newsletter at <https://wchsutah.org/documents/WCHSNewsletter2025Mar.pdf>. Also be aware that copies of previous newsletters going back to 1995 are on the WCHS website at <https://wchsutah.org/documents/documents.php#wchs-newsletters>.

This quarter I wanted to highlight a new topic being dealt with on the WCHS website. Early in May, Joya Jensen, a docent at the Hurricane Pioneer Museum, contacted us to see if we knew anything about a time capsule placed in Hurricane by the Sons of Utah Pioneers. She had some information about it, but not the location. Initial inquiries didn't turn up any relevant information.

But it did point out that there was no information on the WCHS website about time capsules. That triggered me to set up a section on Time Capsules in Washington County, <https://wchsutah.org/miscellaneous/time-capsules.php>. As several of us started looking around and spreading the word, several time capsules were identified. In some cases, very little information has been found so far. In other cases, there has been more success. The location of the Hurricane time capsule was found and documented in <https://wchsutah.org/miscellaneous/time-capsules-hurricane-1988.php>. That information is now preserved for anyone in the future who has an interest in the subject.

This is an example of how our history is gathered and preserved. If you have any information about these or other time capsules in or near Washington County, please contact us with that information. And if you have other information about our history that should be preserved, please help us with that also.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Lynn Clark Photo Collection

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

The Steering Committee is currently meeting with the Clark family members on a regular basis. Steps are being taken toward finalization in accordance with Lynn Clark's wishes.



LYNN CLARK

New WCHS Logos Approved

The WCHS Board of Directors approved new logos at the Board Meeting on Wednesday, May 14, 2025. Brad Bennett, Board member and Chair of the Marketing Committee, led the charge for the project. Thank you, Brad, for your creative and technical work.



Brad Bennett
Board Member

COMMITTEE REPORTS

David H. & Wilhelmina Cannon Statues Update by Dr. Richard Whitehead, Project Manager

The David H and Wilhelmina Cannon Statue project is progressing, and we recently were awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Eccles Foundation. We are getting closer to our goal and are reaching out to our friends to consider donating towards this very worthy project. The statues will be positioned in the new City of St George City Hall Plaza when it is completed. Here is a link that explains more about this project. [Click here.](#)

The two life-sized bronze sculpture pieces will be placed in the courtyard plaza of the new city offices under construction opposite the Tabernacle. It is projected by the city that the dedication of the new city complex will be in late October. The bronze sculptures created by renowned sculptor Jerry Anderson are now completed and awaiting placement in October.

The purpose is to honor the women and the hardship and challenges they faced as they were “called” by Brigham Young to move here and settle this area, now St. George. The Wilhelmina and David H. Cannon family was one of the 309 families sent here in December 1861 to meet those challenges and establish a community. One day during some of those hardships, “Willie” as she was called, told David of her discouragement and desire to return to Salt Lake City. She challenged him to find one thing of beauty among this desert landscape infested with snakes, scorpions, tarantulas and unbearable summer temperatures.

David answered the challenge and brought her home some beautiful Sego Lilies he located one day returning from his work. That act touched Willie’s heart and she, like so many others, renewed her commitment to stay and settle this great area. You can view a tale of their story as depicted on a former TV series, Death Valley Days. Go to YouTube on your computer and type in “Death Valley Days, the Sego Lily Story” and you can watch a Hollywood version of the story.

Donations to the project to date cover just over half of the needed \$115,000 to create, cast and place the sculpture piece and its story for public viewing. Anyone is welcome to contribute, but descendants of David and Willie and other early Cannon settlers would find great satisfaction in supporting this project, recognizing their ancestors.

Donations can be made by check or online by clicking here: <https://washcouthistory.org/donate>



COMMITTEE REPORTS

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE



Submitted by
Teresa Orton, Treasurer



We would like to encourage folks to join the Washington County Historical Society and to get involved with learning about our history and working to preserve many of our historical buildings and sites. This is a fantastic way to learn about our area and what is happening in our county. If you are looking for ways to volunteer and serve your community, this is an excellent opportunity to do that. Please join us. Here is a link to join online. [Click here](#).

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We need volunteers!! There are many ways to serve our community, and we welcome all skill levels, talents and enthusiasm. Just a few of the volunteer opportunities:

- TOUR GUIDES FOR WALKING TOURS
- COMPUTER SKILLS WORKING ON WEBSITE UPDATES
- EVENTS - PLANNING AND BOOTH VOLUNTEERS
- MARKETING AND SOCIAL MEDIA
- HELP WITH PHOTO COLLECTION PRESERVATION
- GRANT WRITING
- COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND GOVERNMENT LIAISON
- ORAL HISTORY TRANSCRIPTION
- AND MANY MORE.....

Please contact Maureen Parks, Board Secretary, at parks@infowest.com if you are interested in making a difference in our community by serving in one of these areas.

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.

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.

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

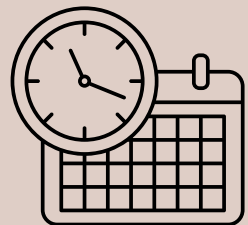
For more information, check the website at <https://wchsutah.org>, e-mail info@wchsutah.org, or call and leave a message at (435)275-7409.

Washington County Historical Society Community Meetings schedule:

Wednesday, June 25, 2025 - 10:00 a.m. - Noon

Wednesday, July 30, 2025 - 10:00 a.m. - Noon

Wednesday, August 27, 2025 - 10:00 a.m. - Noon



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

A comprehensive list of future historical events in Washington County can be found at
<https://wchsutah.org/calendar.php>



WASHINGTON COUNTY MUSEUMS



BRIGHAM YOUNG WINTER HOME & OFFICE

The Brigham Young Winter Home and Office is a historic site where the second president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints lived and worked during the winter months from 1870 to 1877. The home and office were built by Mormon pioneers who settled in the region to grow cotton. Young used the office to prepare temple ordinances and direct the affairs of the church, including the construction of the St. George Utah Temple. The home and office have been restored and furnished to reflect their 1870's appearance. The site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

67 West 200 North, St George, Utah 84770

[churchofjesuschrist.org/learn/locations/
brigham-young-winter-home-and-office](http://churchofjesuschrist.org/learn/locations/brigham-young-winter-home-and-office)

Open Monday – Saturday | 10:00 AM–5:00 PM & Sunday | 12:00 PM–5:00 PM

Free Admission. Guided Tours Available. ♿ First floors only.

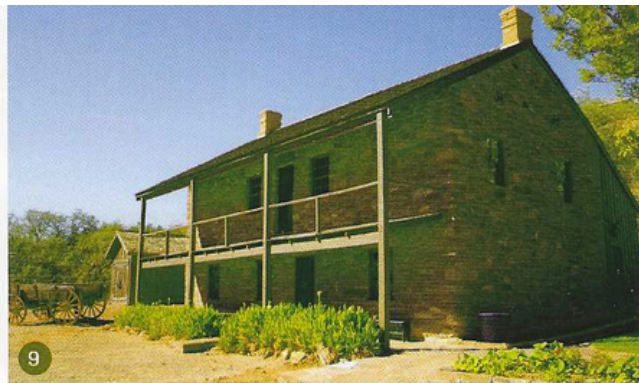
ST GEORGE TABERNACLE

The St. George Tabernacle was built between 1863 and 1876 by pioneers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Not long after the establishment of St. George, Brigham Young directed settlers to construct a building where they could worship. They began construction in June 1863 using local red sandstone and labor that was either donated or funded by their tithing donations. Settlers from all over southern Utah Territory either worked on or provided goods for the tabernacle's construction.

It was completed in 1876. It has a clock and bell tower that stands 140 feet tall, features a gallery, an organ, and exhibits of artifacts. Concerts, community celebrations, worship services, special conferences, and other events have been held here.

18 South Main St., St. George, Utah, 84770 | (435) 677-6230

churchofjesuschrist.org/learn/locations/st-george-tabernacle

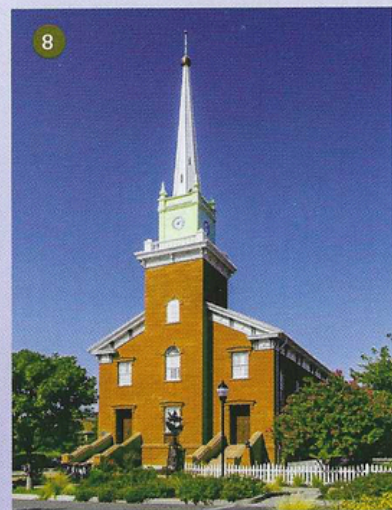


THE HAMBLIN HOME

The Hamblin Home in Santa Clara, Utah is a historic site that honors the legacy of Jacob Hamblin and his family. Jacob Hamblin was a missionary who dedicated his life to serving among the Native Americans in southern Utah, Nevada and Arizona. He built the stone home in 1863 after a flash flood destroyed their previous residence at Fort Clara. The home served as the headquarters for the Southern Utah Indian Mission and welcomed many visitors, including Brigham Young and John Wesley Powell. The home and its furnishings have been carefully restored to reflect their 1860s appearance.

325 Hamblin Drive, Santa Clara, Utah 84765

churchofjesuschrist.org/learn/locations/hamblin-home



HISTORIC PRESERVATION



Spotlight on Santa Clara City

Submitted by Susie Nilsson,
Santa Clara Liaison to WCHS

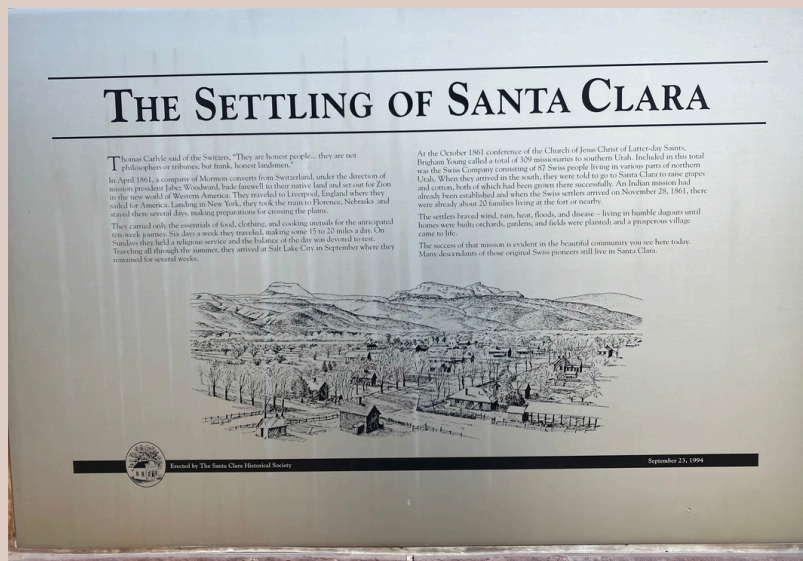
Santa Clara, Utah - a charming town nestled just west of St. George, that truly captivated me. Its history is remarkably rich and deeply layered, offering a fascinating journey through time.

You'll find evidence of ancient civilizations with intriguing Native American sites and petroglyphs, providing a tangible connection to the area's earliest inhabitants. This is juxtaposed beautifully with the more recent history, exemplified by the well-preserved Jacob Hamblin House, a significant landmark showcasing the pioneer spirit.

The town's Swiss heritage is palpable; evident in its meticulously maintained, tree-lined historic district. The level of detail dedicated to preserving and interpreting this history is truly exceptional. Santa Clara might boast the most comprehensive collection of historical interpretive signs I've encountered in any small Utah town, making exploration both easy and engaging.

I highly recommend beginning your historical exploration at Heritage Square (3020 Santa Clara Drive). This beautifully landscaped area, centered around a charming Swiss-built house, offers a captivating outdoor museum. Numerous signs, plaques, markers, and artifacts bring the stories of Santa Clara to life, painting a vivid picture of its past. It's a truly immersive and enriching experience.

I hope this inspires you to visit!



HISTORIC PRESERVATION



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](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



HISTORIC PRESERVATION

HELP UPDATE UTAH'S HISTORICAL MONUMENTS & MARKERS DATABASE!

The Utah Historical Society is launching a crowdsourcing initiative to update and enrich the Utah Monuments and Markers Database, a vital resource maintained at the direction of the state legislature. We need your help to ensure that all of Utah's historical markers—especially those installed in the last 30 years—are documented and accessible to the public.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Many historical markers across Utah are missing from the database or lack updated photos and details. By participating, you'll help create a more complete and accurate record for students, researchers, and history enthusiasts. This is an easy way to contribute to preserving and sharing Utah's rich history!

To learn more about our efforts to improve the database and why this project is so important, check out our presentation on [Utah's Monuments and Markers](#)

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

We're inviting community members to help by:

- ✅ Filling out a quick online form about historical markers in your area
- 📷 Taking and submitting updated photos of markers
- 🗣️ Sharing this initiative with others who may be interested

It's a simple, no-cost way to make a lasting impact on Utah's historical record. Plus, with summer bringing warmer weather, it's the perfect time to explore and document the history in your community!

Follow this link to the online form: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/IFAIpQLSey6uNrxKkxtxhxJgB6SKJvN9Je0wtKVcdhyIlrGtDXHSI7cA/viewform>

Your participation will help ensure that Utah's monuments and markers remain a well-documented part of our state's heritage. Thank you for your support in preserving Utah's history!

EVENT IN JUNE

SILVER REEF MUSEUM

Cosmopolitan Event

Saturday, June 28, 2025 - 10 AM



Artwork by Brian Engh

Dinosaurs & fossils in Red Cliffs Desert Reserve

Discover the fascinating prehistoric world preserved in the rocks of Red Cliffs National Conservation Area (RCNCA) and Red Cliffs Desert Reserve (RCDR). Lead Paleontologist Andrew Milner will highlight over 100 fossil sites in the area, many showcasing rare dinosaur tracks and traces from 200 million years ago. Some of these unique fossil localities provide valuable information about dinosaur behaviors and other animals that live alongside them.



Andrew Milner is the lead Paleontologist & Curator, at St George Dinosaur Discovery

Andrew has studied fossils in Utah since 2001, publishing over 70 scientific papers. His work focuses on ancient trackways and early dinosaurs of the American Southwest. He's conducted fieldwork across North America—from Utah and Quebec to British Columbia's Burgess Shale—and works closely with federal and state agencies to protect fossil sites. His recent discovery of a rare Early Jurassic bonebed in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area is considered his most significant find to date.



Reservations suggested:

<https://tinyurl.com/DinosaurTravels>

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

SILVER REEF EVENTS IN JULY, AUGUST, & SEPTEMBER

Silver Reef, Utah, is a unique ghost town in Washington County known for being the only place where silver was commercially mined from sandstone. The town boomed in the late 1800s, reaching a population of over 1,500 during its peak from 1878 to 1882. Today, visitors can explore the remnants of the old mining town and the Silver Reef Museum, which is housed in the restored Wells Fargo Express building.



Saturday, 7/26/2025, 10:00 - 11:00 am

Silver Reef Museum Cosmopolitan Event

"Lost in a Mine" by John Skinner.

For information, call the museum at (435)879-2254.

Saturday, 8/23/2025, 10:00 - 11:00 am

Silver Reef Museum Cosmopolitan Event

"Zane Grey & the Mormons" by Fred Esplin.

For information, call the museum at (435)879-2254.

Saturday, 9/27/2025, 10:00 - 11:00 am

Silver Reef Museum Cosmopolitan Event

"Using LIDAR to Investigate Faults, Fissures, and Scrambling Routes"

by Tyler Knudsen.

For information, call the museum at (435)879-2254.

EVENT IN SEPTEMBER



Experience the excitement of Dixie Days, a week-long celebration honoring the rich heritage and strong community spirit of St. George. With events and activities for all ages, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

Week Highlights:

- Dixie Round-Up Rodeo – A beloved local tradition featuring thrilling rodeo action
- Parade – Enjoy festive floats, performers, local groups, and lively animals, hosted by the Lions Club.
- Carnival – Experience thrilling rides for all ages.
- Drone Show – Enjoy a spectacular display of lights and visuals as drones light up the night sky.
- Dixie Trek – Explore different historical areas around town and discover the rich history of St. George.
- Concert in the Park – Sit back and enjoy live music in a beautiful outdoor setting.
- Golf Tournament – A competitive event for golf enthusiasts.
- Film Screening – A special community movie event.

Dixie Days Festival – Saturday, September 20th

9AM – 2 PM

Vernon Worthen Park

- 4K Run – Kick off the festivities with an fun run through historic downtown St. George.
- The Downtown Farmers Market – Browse locally grown food and locally made artisanal products.
- Live Entertainment – Enjoy performances from local musicians, and entertainers.
- Pickleball Tournament – Compete or cheer on players of all skill levels in this fun sport.
- Petting Zoo – Get up close with friendly animals, perfect for kids and families.
- Tractor Rides – Take a scenic ride around the park while viewing the rodeo livestock.
- Bouncy Houses – A fun-filled area for kids to jump and play.
- Photography Exhibit – Explore a collection of stunning local photographs showcasing the beauty and history of St. George.

Free Admission to:

- Sand Hollow Aquatic Center
- Thunder Junction All-Abilities Park Train Ride
- St. George Carousel
- SunTran Bus Services

For more information, please go to the website: https://sgcityutah.gov/activity/special_events/dixie_days/index.php

ODE TO WASHINGTON COUNTY

Submitted by Maureen Parks, Secretary

I asked Gemini to write a poem about Washington County.

Here is the stunning result:

Where red cliffs rise and the sun holds sway,
In Washington County, a vibrant display.
From Pine Valley's cool, forested height,
To Snow Canyon's ancient, volcanic might.

The Virgin River, a ribbon of green,
Carves canyons deep, a spectacular scene.
St. George, the hub, with its welcome warm,
A desert oasis, weathering the storm.

Here pioneers toiled, with faith as their guide,
Transforming the wilderness, side by side.
Now golf courses bloom, where mesquite once grew,
And vibrant communities, fresh and new.

The scent of creosote after desert rain,
A whisper of beauty, easing all pain.
Dixie's proud spirit, enduring and grand,
A sun-drenched paradise, sculpted by hand.

So come, breathe the air, feel the warmth on your face,
Discover the magic of this timeless place.
In Washington County, where red rocks inspire,
A haven of beauty, setting hearts afire.

Photos courtesy of Chad Bennion, President

