

# Picnicers enjoy holiday gathering

**By Justine Weatherford**  
The big event of Morrow County's Memorial Weekend was the Bergstrom-hosted Pioneer Picnic at the County Fairgrounds' Pavilion Building on Sunday, which attracted about 300 persons. Out-of-county visitors and local residents also enjoyed visiting the County Museum and its restored one-room schoolhouse during the weekend.

The 24th annual picnic demonstrated fine effort by the large group of descendants of pioneers Olaf and Erik Bergstrom. Civic groups who assisted included Legion Post No. 87, the Heppner Soroptimists, the Heppner Garden Club, the Morrow County Merchants' Committee and the Morrow County Historical Society.

After more than 250 guests had signed the registration sheets and were name-tagged by Soroptimists, they enjoyed visiting, dining and hearing the program. Master of ceremonies Gerald Bergstrom presented Heppner's Mayor Jerry Sweeney, County Judge Paul W. Jones, Historical Society Secretary Ruth McCabe, the County Fair Queen and others who were seated with him at the head table. The Fair and Rodeo Queen, Mary Anne Proctor, introduced her four princesses. Rev. Edwin W. Sikes of the Heppner Christian Church gave the invocation.

The program began with a memorial flag-presentation by the Heppner Legion Post under the command of Ed Baker, Lexington, with taps played by Gene Rietmann, Ione, and the audience joining in the singing of "America The Beautiful" accompanied by pianist Ola Mae Groshens. Judge Jones spoke about the recent growth of the county, giving very impressive statistics about the county's agricultural development: It is second in wheat production in the U.S. and is first in potato production in the Northwest (only one county in Maine produces more potatoes); hay and silage production has increased and there are 2,000 acres in various specialty crops. He urged everyone to go view the more than 600 big irrigation circles.

Jones said this is no longer a "small agricultural county," that its total evaluation will soon be considerably beyond the present 500 million dollars. During lunch, Ola Mae and Jo Jean Stevens played duets on the piano.

After folks finished lunching, Gerald Bergstrom awarded four special prizes, courthouse-picture plates, that were donated by the county's merchants' committee.

The first awarded went to the oldest guest present, Mrs. Carl Haphold (Lillie Currin) who was 91 last April. Lillie Haphold is a daughter of George J. and Jenny Currin, Morrow pioneers. She attended Ione schools and Oregon Agricultural College and then taught around this county before her marriage. She taught the 3rd grade in Heppner from 1908 until 1912 and also taught at Lena and up on Balm Fork. Her husband Carl farmed in the Wasco area. He was drowned in 1956. Lillie lives in Portland now near her daughter, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was brought to the picnic by her niece, Mabel Denney, a Portland neighbor; they were guests at the Currin Ranch on Butter Creek until May 31.

Marie Anderson, San Marcus, Calif., was awarded a prize plate for having come the furthest distance to attend the picnic. Marie is a daughter of Heppner's Oma Cox.

Della (Davidson) McCurdy received the prize for the individual who has been married the longest. Her husband Harlan was at home; he hadn't felt up to attending. Both are children of pioneers. They were married in Ione 60 years ago this coming September.

Bernice Nash (Mrs. Lincoln Nash, Heppner) was the lucky recipient of a door prize plate given to the person whose name fell on line 77 in the registration.

After the awarding of the prizes, Gerald Bergstrom introduced Herman Green who, along with other descendants of Alex and Mattie Green, will be in charge of next year's picnic. Some colored slides

and movie film of last year's centennial events in Heppner were projected by Bill Weatherford.

The Morrow County Historical Society displayed a map of the county which had the locations of the 59 old county schools as well as the locations of the graves of pioneers who are buried on privately-owned land and in deeded cemeteries. Bill Weatherford was chairman of the mapping

committee. The society's grave locating committee has put permanent markers on all the known graves that are outside deeded cemeteries. A group of colored snapshots were also shown by the secretary, Mrs. McCabe.

During the afternoon, many visitors and local folk toured the County Museum and the small schoolhouse in Heppner's Main St. Park. Mrs.

Rachel Harnett kept busy visiting with them and answering their questions as only she is able to answer them.

One of the most interested visitors was Alton Johnson from Coos Bay, who graduated from Idea School, which preceded the "new" Democrat Gulch School. He has promised to send the museum his diploma from Idea and also a picture of the building where he spent eight years.



COURT WELCOME—Rodeo and Fair Queen picnicers as host Gerald Bergstrom stands to Mary Anne Proctor extends a welcome to her right.

# A look back at the library

**By Justine Weatherford**  
No one has located a complete history of Heppner's Public Library. Some of its history can be reconstructed from various old notes, newspaper articles and library board documents, and there are still citizens in the community who can remember back quite a way into its history.

**HOW IT BEGAN**  
About twenty years after Heppner's 1872 beginning, some of its citizens started a public library. In many communities, it is a ladies' club which takes the first steps; however, men have really been the great library builders. In Heppner, it was two men, O.K. Fitzsimmons and R.E. Riner, who began the library in the fall of 1893.

Perhaps they were nudged by women, but these two canvassed the city for books. They persuaded the Oregon State Library to donate 1,000 books, Fitzsimmons and Riner each gave \$500 to get the library underway. Mrs. Fitzsimmons acted as the first librarian. The library was originally located in part of a small wooden building on Main Street.

**THEN CAME THE FLOOD**  
Somehow, Heppner's young library survived the great 1903 flood. About 1917, it was moved to the old Baptist Church building, which had stood where the Lanham Apartments are now. Jeff Jones, a city councilman, had bought the church building and then sold it to the City of Heppner, and it had been moved from Baltimore Street to the corner of Gale and West Willow streets, where the Christian Life Center is today.

The Gazette-Times of May 28, 1918, reports a fire that destroyed a big part of four city blocks adjoining that intersection (Gale and Willow Sts.) on that date was rated as a \$2,500 loss.

Soon, the library was re-organized and re-established on Main Street in the back of Mrs. Herron's Millinery Shop, which occupied a small wooden building between a two-story rooming house and Schwarz's Butcher Shop, about where the Abrams and Kuhn law office is now. Mrs. Herron acted as the second librarian from 1921 when the library reopened until it was wiped out again by fire on May 28, 1925. (Harold Becket re-

calls watching this early morning blaze.) Before the second opening after the first May 28 fire, the library had been restocked by gifts from citizens and with 300 books given by the Oregon State Library. All the library's books and many beautiful ladies' hats were burned in the second fire.

**MORE CHANGES OF LOCATION**  
After the 1925 fire, it was several years before the library functioned again. It was reorganized and before 1930 was temporarily located upstairs in the Odd Fellow's Building, where the I.O.O.F.-Rebekah lounge is now. Many citizens again helped to stock the shelves. Josephine Mahoney Baker became the librarian. She also wrote for the Gazette-Times.

Prior to 1932, the City of Heppner bought the garage that Walter LaDusire had operated on the corner of Gale and Willow, where the city building stands today. That garage had been sold to LaDusire by a Mr. Hill, who previously operated it.

Back before 1912 and until the 1918 fire, there had been a skating rink on that location—

and how the town's youngsters moaned when it burned down. The city remodeled the LaDusire Garage to include the present shops, the office and a corner library. Josephine Mahoney Baker presided over the move from the upstairs location to the new library (now known as the "old library," where downtown voting takes place). The library stayed in that location for the 28 years following 1932.

**CHANGING LIBRARIANS**  
After Mrs. Baker, Frances Case became librarian. All through the years, many women contributed their time to maintaining the library. After Frances Case gave up the chief responsibility, the library was kept open by a group who shared the load. These volunteers included Madge Thomson, Louise Becket, Hannah Jones and Martha Dick. Records are very hazy for many years—if you can help make the history of the Heppner Library more accurate or more complete,



PRIZE WINNER—Mrs. Carl Haphold (Lillie Currin) holds the courthouse picture plate she won for being the oldest guest present at the Pioneer Picnic. She was 91 last April.



Speakers at the 1960 Library-Museum dedication include (l-r), Rev. Austin McGhee, J.O. Turner, Museum Board Treasurer, Amanda Duvall, Bill Collins, former Mayor, Oscar Peterson, former Judge.

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