

Morrow County Fair timeline

1913 First Morrow County Fair was held in the area of what is now the park and museum on Main Street. There were 200 entries of livestock and land products, no premiums were paid.

1915 Paid out \$1,500 in premium money. Fair held in early September.

1918 In January the first Oregon State Extension Office was established in Heppner. The 4-H program began in the early 1900's under the supervision of the Extension Service. Lucy Rogers, then school superintendent, was instrumental in helping to activate the county's 4-H program.

1919 County-wide participation was noted as Irrigon won first in community exhibits, and Boardman was awarded the best school exhibit.

1920 Boardman had its first commercial Fair in September; exhibits were then sent express to Salem for the State Fair. It was the only County Fair that year. Fairs in the south end of the county were held intermittently for a number of years.

1922 Rodeo area was established when L. V. Gentry donated that site for rodeos. The adjoining fair grounds accommodations came about when the county traded the block on Main Street to the city of Heppner in exchange for the disbanded Civilian Conservation Corps site (workers had been housed in barrack buildings).

1923-1930 County Extension agent and volunteers stage the fair. County court then appointed a three-person fair board to oversee activities.

1937 Beginning of FFA (Future Farmers of

America) program became an integral part of rural county fairs. Participation included livestock and shop projects, judging contests, demonstrations and tractor driving contests. Pole building sheds were erected to accommodate livestock exhibits for both open class and youth. Volunteer labor was contributed by ranchers and farmers.

1939 County Fair in Heppner became an annual event after it was relocated to the present day rodeo/fair site. Old wooden buildings from the CCC site were converted into space for fair exhibits and became the permanent site.

1942-1945 No Fair was held for three years during World War II

1946 A wooden barn building became the site of the newly formed Wrangler Riding Club; the club managed a horse show in conjunction with the fair activities.

1949 Beef and Sheep Building built.

1952 Brought about better exhibit space, construction of a large cinder block building, (pavilion). A wooden dance floor was also installed for rodeo dances, community events and other activities throughout the year. Had expanded area of interest, in addition to home economics, land products and livestock classes; flower crafts, arts and hobby interests were added. Restrooms and dressing rooms built, used during football and baseball seasons, as well as rodeo and fair.

1954 Fairs in the north end of the county were discontinued when it became a state law limiting one fair per county.

1955 Dormitory

built for overnight accommodations for those youth exhibitors living some distance from the fair.

1961 4-H snack shack was built on the grounds to provide meals for fairgoers and a source of revenue for 4-H programs by using volunteer labor.

1965 More livestock exhibit space was needed; a steel enclosed barn building was erected. Bleachers seats inside were added in 1966. Though limited in space this barn building has accommodated numerous horse-related events, including cow cutting and other events throughout the years. Additional outside show rings were added.

1968 A south grandstand was built to replace an old wooden structure. A large portion of the rodeo area was seeded to grass, thus accommodating school sports, summer baseball and other events. 1986 re-carpeted.

1975 Building converted from Wrangler Riding Club to house a collection of antique farm equipment donated to the county by Harold Peck. It is now down by the Farm Museum.

1983 Fair growth necessitated installation of sewer lines; by hooking up to the city sewer system outdated septic tanks were eliminated.

1985 Trailer house donated by county court to help with overcrowding.

1996 A five member fair board was expanded to seven members, as fair interest continued to grow.

1997 Building and moving of rodeo area to smaller profession size rodeo arena and permanent steel spectator seating was added;

which was instigated by the rodeo committee. Community support and volunteer labor helped finance new lighting for the grounds to provide illumination for nighttime rodeo events and football games. Additional parking areas for the rodeo were accomplished by filling in an area adjoining those grounds.

1999 Through many

volunteer hours and fundraising the Wilkinson Arena was built to be used for 4-H and open class livestock exhibits. Other times of the year it is available to the public for barrel racing, roping or just riding.

2001 FFA discontinued in the county.

2005 FFA started again in Irrigon and Boardman.

2007 FFA will be in Heppner again.

Lots of good food at the fair



Along with the 4-H Snack Shack at the fair, outside will be Fernando's Mexican Food from Hermiston with delicious enchiladas, burritos, tacos, and much more. The new Shaved Ice vendor coming will be Ron and Judy Peters from California and they have over 20 flavors to choose from. Come and have a cool treat this year!

Another outside favorite is elephant ears; the Carrillo's from Milton-Freewater will also have ice cream desserts available. This year Murray's Drug will have espresso bar drinks - hot and cold. Inside you can have a slice of pizza from Howe's About Pizza. We hope to see you at the Fair where you can get just about any kind of food.

Wrangler COWBOY Breakfast

at the Morrow County Fairgrounds

Sunday, August 20 8:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

\$15.00 family • \$5.00 adults

\$3.00 for 12 and under

Pancakes, Ham, Eggs, Hashbrowns, Coffee, Milk