

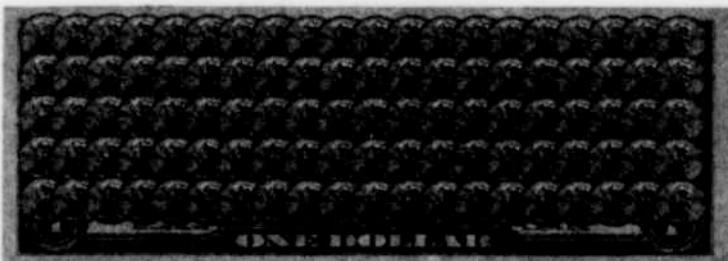
The Morrow County Fair through time

The Morrow County Fair is now celebrating its 99th birthday, with the first fair held in 1913. Other interesting facts below include notation of a three year-cancellation of the fair during World War II.

1913	First Morrow County Fair 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.		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.	livestock and shop projects, judging contests, demonstrations and tractor driving contests. Pole building sheds were erected to accommodate live-stock exhibits for both open class and youth. Volunteer labor was contributed by ranchers and farmers.	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.		new lighting for the grounds to provide illumination for night-time rodeo events and football games. Additional parking areas for the rodeo were accomplished by filling in an area adjoining those grounds.	
1915	Paid out \$1,500 in premium money. Fair held in early September.	1922	Rodeo area was established when L. V. Gentry donated that site for rodeos. The adjoining fairgrounds 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 barracks buildings).	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.	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.	1998	Installation of new bathrooms in Fair pavilion. New eight-inch water main-line from grade school to Fair entrance to accommodate fire protection for the Wilkinson Arena and all out-buildings.
1918	In January the first Oregon State Extension Office was established in Heppner. The 4-H program began in the early 1900s under the supervision of the Extension Service. Lucy Rogers, then school superintendent, was instrumental in helping to activate the county's 4-H program.	1923-1930	County Extension agent and volunteers stage the fair. County court then appointed a three-person fair board to oversee activities.	1942-1945	No Fair was held for three years during World War II.	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.	1999	Through many volunteer hours and fund raising, 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.
1919	County-wide participation was noted as Irrigon won first in community exhibits, and Boardman was awarded the best school exhibit.	1937	Beginning of FFA (Future Farmers of America). The program became an integral part of rural county fairs. Participation included	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.	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 by the Farm Museum.	2001	FFA discontinued in the county
1920	Boardman had its first commercial fair in September; exhibits were then sent express			1949	Beef and Sheep Building built.	1983	Fair growth necessitated installation of sewer lines; by hooking up to the city sewer system outdated septic tanks were eliminated.	2005	FFA started again in Irrigon and Boardman
				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. Expanded areas 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.	1985	Trailer house donated by county court to help with overcrowding.	2007	FFA started again in Heppner. Old dormitory remodeled, new floors, showers installed in outside restrooms. New floors installed in inside bathrooms. Replaced pavilion roof with tin.
						1996	A five member fair board was expanded to seven members, as fair interest continued to grow.	2008	Small animals area built, now a storage area
						1997	Installation of new water mains throughout Fair complex and new water lines to all buildings.	2009	Fair buildings painted. 4-H kitchen extended/remodeled
							Building and moving of rodeo area to smaller profession size rodeo arena and permanent steel spectator seating was added, instigated by the rodeo committee. Community support and volunteer labor helped finance	2010	Eric Chick painted and carpeted football bleachers as a scouting project. High school built a new snack shack and remodeled the restrooms on football field.
								2011	4-H annex roof replaced/repainted. Ticket booth painted. Grounds flooded on June 2. Fire by fair office on Monday, August 15 (fair week).

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