

Docents Newsletter

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Historical Society of Dayton Valley

June 2008

Summer plans

By Ruby McFarland

Okay, here's the plan. Summer and vacations are roaring down on us, so for the time being we will discontinue our Saturday teachings until fall or the weather cools off and everyone gets summer out of their way. We will have one more Saturday [lecture] in June with Laura Tennant, if she's up to it. She will be telling us about schools and newspapers in and around Dayton. Her lecture will depend on how it will work into her schedule. Otherwise, all you who are able to get away this summer and all those of you who can't – have a wonderful summer. Of course, we still have Saturday and Sunday duty to sit the museum. Check the calendar to select your day to sit.

Docent doings

By Patrick Neylan

Talk about hitting the ground running!!! All of us should be very proud of our efforts and accomplishments during May! This is written a little before the end of the month, but I am sure nothing will change in the next few days. First and foremost we have kept the Museum open every day of the month as promised. Many have participated in two clean up days at the Depot and one at the Museum. Many were able to attend the great lecture series put on at

the Senior Center. Then there was Oodles of Noodles, another success story. Thanks to the efforts of all of us we have a great deal of momentum going and it will surely carry us through the summer and make a positive impression on the Community.

As most of you know, starting in June the Docents will be taking over more hours of the Museum operation as Ruby will change her emphasis. We will be asking your help to set the schedule for the summer as soon as possible. I believe we have enough members that even with vacations and a myriad of other activities, no one should have to run the Museum more than once or twice a month. Please start checking your calendars so we can make a plan soon. [Dayton Museum will be open on weekends only through the summer. Saturday shifts 10-1 and 1-4; Sunday 1-4.]

If any of us don't feel comfortable yet running the Museum alone, we have two wonderful assets to help you out. The first is the incredible film library created by our own reincarnated Cecil B. DeMille, Morgan Webber. We have now reference material on every major topic and display in the Museum as well as the history of the other points of interest in Old Town and the surrounding area. These you can view at the Museum or check out and view at home. As I am not able to attend Saturday functions, I have availed myself of this feature several times to keep up with the rest of you.

The second major asset we have is....each other!! If you do feel uncomfortable at the

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Museum just let me know and we can buddy up a few times. That makes it more fun for all of us as a learning experience. No one knows everything so let's get together and have some fun learning together. Just give me a call, or shoot me an email.

Thanks for all your help making the month of May such a success!!

[Contact Pat via phone at 246-3527, or email at: virginiacitypat@sbcglobal.net]

Dates to remember

By Donna McElroy

June 1: Tour and picnic at Fort Churchill. Be at Dayton Museum by 9:15 on Sunday.

June 14: Schools and newspapers with Laura Tennant, 11:00 at Dayton Museum.

June 18: HSDV general meeting, 12 Noon at Makin' Coffee.

National History Month

By Bob Wallace

The month of May brought with it National History Month, a time to look back at what has gone on around this nation, the state of Nevada, and Dayton Valley. What might be learned about the history of our local area, state and nation, and discuss it with other docents in our group.

This year's subject was President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal program, a series of ideas put to the U.S. Congress shortly after FDR was sworn into office on March 3, 1933, written, debated and enacted by the Congress before that first month was over. Everything else FDR wanted done took the rest of his first

100 days as President of the United States. All that activity in Washington, D.C., set the standard for future administrations to follow in enacting their programs.

The topic I chose to review covered the Civilian Conservation Corps, or CCC. As it turned out, this happened to be FDR's "pet" project, one piece of legislation he kept his eye on until it made it out of the Congress at the end of March 1933.

Within weeks following enactment, thousands of young men were being processed by U.S. Army personnel, both administratively and medically, before they were shipped off by railroads to all sorts of locations around the nation. One of the first problems to come up with all these young men was the number of enrollees who were undernourished when they signed up for the CCC.

Another problem came up within Nevada by virtue of the relatively small population within Nevada in the 1930s. Little more than 7,000 young men from Nevada made it into the CCC, the remaining 24,000 coming primarily from the East, Midwest and South to work around the Silver State during the period of time the CCC ran, from 1933 until early in 1942 when Congress stopped funding the program.

One point of interest in the CCC was that it was its own organization up to a point, but most of the work done by those in the CCC was done under other, older federal government agencies. A total of 59 CCC camps were set up around the state, by far the larger number of those camps being north of the Nye County line, but at various times separate "spike" or "side" camps were set up to avoid lengthy drives from a campsite to a location where work was to be done by the young men. In addition to work assignments on a regular basis, the CCC was also called upon to fight wildfires in Nevada.