
 WASHINGTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

<http://wchsutah.org>



THE PRESIDENT'S PEN



Chad Bennion,
President

To begin, I would like to thank both Linda Shogren and Jessie Stocking for their service on the Washington County Historical Society ("WCHS") Board. I appreciate the work, time, and service they put in on their respective assignments for the organization. Thank you!

At the WCHS Annual Meeting held on January 28, 2026 elections were held to fill four two-year term WCHS Board Positions. Two incumbents, Linda and Jessie, did not seek reelection. The two incumbents, Maureen Parks and Chad Bennion were both voted back onto the board by the membership. For the two remaining seats, Jeff Jennings and Ron Carberry received the most votes and were elected. I want to welcome Maureen back, and welcome Jeff and Ron to the WCHS Board. You can learn more about our newest board members below. I would also like to thank the other candidates who ran for the board.



2026 WASHINGTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD MEMBERS

(l. to r.) Brad Bennett, Jeff Jennings, Ron Carberry, Chad Bennion, Loren Webb, Teresa Orton, Karl McMullin, Maureen Parks, George Cannon

IN THIS ISSUE

The President's Pen
 Meet Your New Board Members
 Committee Reports
 Community Meetings Schedule
 Historic Preservation
 Upcoming Events

YOUR BOARD MEMBERS

President: Chad Bennion
 1st Vice President: Loren Webb
 2nd Vice President: Brad Bennett
 Secretary: Maureen Parks
 Treasurer: Teresa Orton
 Webmaster: George Cannon
 Members: Karl McMullin, Ron Carberry,
 Jeff Jennings

THE PRESIDENT'S PEN (con't)

At the February WCHS Board Meeting officer elections were held. The current officers were retained in their current positions, Chad Bennion – President; Loren Webb – First Vice-President; Teresa Orton – Treasurer; and, Maureen Parks – Secretary. With Linda Shogren not seeking reelection, Brad Bennett was voted in as Second Vice-President. This constitutes the WCHS Officers for 2026.

In my report at the Annual Meeting, I highlighted the organizations many achievements and accomplishments in 2025: Approval and adoption of updated Bylaws -Teresa Orton, Chad Bennion; Dixie Photo Identification Project – Sharon Snow; Quarterly Newsletter – Maureen Parks; Grant Reports – Teresa Orton, Chad Bennion; Local Foundations – Karl McMullin; Washington County Museums Brochure – Linda Shogren; Oral History Project – Loren Webb; David O. and Wilhelmina Cannon Statue Project – Dr. Richard Whitehead; Historic Downtown St. George Walking Tours – Loren Webb; Website Updates and Maintenance – George Cannon Jr.; Spectrum Photo Project – George Cannon Jr., Loren Webb; WCHS Event Booth – Linda Shogren; Toquerville and Virgin Field Trips - Loren Webb; Grant Proposals – Teresa Orton; James Whitmer Historical Association Walking Tour – Loren Webb; Community Updates – Jessie Stocking ; Website Review with Consultant – George Cannon Jr.; Policy & Procedures Project – Teresa Orton; and, Gala & Silent Auction – Brad Bennett, Chad Bennion

Efforts are underway to achieve more in 2026. Within the month we will be announcing the 2026 Gala. Expect to hear announcement throughout the year on this and other matters. Make certain to thank and show your appreciation to our 2025 Gala sponsors:

Our Gold Sponsor *Thank you!*



Our Silver Sponsor *Thank you!*



Our Bronze Sponsor *Thank you!*




Silent Auction Sponsors



Silent Auction Sponsors



Drawing Sponsors *uinta golf*



MEET YOUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

RON CARBERRY

My name is Ron Carberry. My desire to join the Board stems from a personal commitment to serve as an active guardian of our community's unique heritage.

Since relocating to Washington County in 2024 from the Washington, D.C. area, I have been captivated by the deep history and the enduring pioneer spirit of this region. The early pioneers of the LDS Church left us vital lessons on how to thrive in this landscape—lessons that are unfortunately at risk of being trivialized, lost, or revised in the face of rapid population and commercial growth.

I believe our history must be actively guarded. I am eager to apply my professional skills and a fresh "newcomer's perspective" to preserve our historical records and sites. Furthermore, I am passionate about educational outreach to ensure students learn the true stories that make this place special. Currently, I serve as a volunteer docent at the Silver Reef Museum in Leeds, where I help bring this history to life for visitors.



Professional & Personal Background

- **Military Service:** I enlisted in the U.S. Air Force at 17, serving four years on active duty and one year in the Reserves. I reached the rank of Staff Sergeant (E5) and was honored with the Air Force Commendation Medal in 1980 for meritorious service.
- **Education:** Thanks to the GI Bill, I earned a Bachelor of Arts in Geography from the University of Rhode Island in 1982.
- **Career:** I dedicated 44 years to civil service as a cartographer for the federal government. My work involved compiling and updating aeronautical charts for both NOAA and the FAA. I retired in 2023 as a GS-14 employee.
- **Leadership:** Throughout much of my career, I served in various leadership roles, including Secretary, Chief Steward, and President of Local 2703 of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE).

I look forward to dedicated service to the WCHS and ensure that the legacy of Washington County remains vibrant for future generations.



March 11, 1971

MEET YOUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

JEFF JENNINGS



I was born on June 30, 1953, in St. George, Utah—one of the very first babies delivered in the new Dixie Pioneer Memorial Hospital. While Dr. A.W. McGregor was my mother's primary physician, it was actually his son, Dr. Konrad (or "Dr. Kon"), who delivered me. He remained a lifelong friend of our family.

Education and Early Life

My early school years were a tour of local history. I attended East Elementary through the fifth grade, moved to the old annex for sixth grade, and eventually attended classes in the original Dixie College main building and gymnasium—right where the city splash pad sits today. I continued through Dixie Jr. High and completed my sophomore year at Dixie High School. After serving a mission, I returned home to attend Dixie Jr. College before finishing my studies at BYU.

Career and Family

In 1980, I married Lori Ann Bracken. Like me, she was born in St. George and has deep roots in the Pine Valley area, connecting us to so many wonderful people in this community. We are the proud parents of five children. I spent about 25 years working as a contractor in Southern Utah, where I had the privilege of constructing many buildings—including the Dixie East Apartments (now the Vintage Apartments). However, my background in electronics eventually led me in a new direction. In 1994, I started a telecommunications business that I still operate today. I also own the radio station KJUL here in St. George, which has been a very rewarding and successful venture.

Service and the Arts

Service has always been a cornerstone of my life. I was involved with the Boy Scouts of America for many years, overseeing the advancement program for roughly 400 troops. A personal highlight was receiving the Silver Beaver Award from LaVell Edwards in 2001. For the past eight years, I've shared my love of music with the Southern Utah Heritage Choir. A few years ago, I had the incredible honor of performing in the Sistine Chapel in Vatican City—an experience I will never forget.

Why I'm Here

I have a profound love for this region. Between my own "historic adventures" and the legacy of my relatives, I've developed a passion for collecting local histories. I am honored to contribute to and learn from this esteemed group of historians.



COMMITTEE REPORTS

WEBSITE COMMITTEE



GEORGE CANNON, CHAIRMAN

For those of you who are not very familiar with the WCHS website, I would like to point out a few of the more interesting features that might not have caught your attention. They just give the flavor of the many things you can find on this site.

By far our most visited webpage (after the home page, <https://wchsutah.org>) is the Calendar of Upcoming History Events, <https://wchsutah.org/calendar.php>. Besides listing current events, it has links to every event listed since 2012. That can be useful if you are looking for ideas for an event or want to review information previously presented. Flyers and reference documents are included.

There is a lot of information about Schools in Washington County. For example, check out East and West Elementary Schools. Of particular interest are the many class photos: <https://wchsutah.org/schools/east-elementary-miscellaneous/east-elementary-classes.php> and <https://wchsutah.org/schools/west-elementary-classes.php>. Can you find your class or those of your friends?

In addition to references to **history books**, there are a lot of books that are online in their entirety: <https://wchsutah.org/documents/documents-books.php>. Some interesting examples are: <https://wchsutah.org/churches/stake-hurricane1.pdf>, <https://wchsutah.org/documents/nancy-book6.pdf>, <https://wchsutah.org/documents/larson-stg-police-book.pdf>, and <https://wchsutah.org/documents/liston-musicians-book2.pdf>.

There are also several early **telephone books** at <https://wchsutah.org/documents/documents.php#phone-books>. They are interesting because you can find listings before we had area codes or even prefixes. In the earliest ones they didn't list addresses because everyone knew where everyone else lived and worked.

The Aviation in Washington County section has the page most often accessed by people outside of Washington County: <https://wchsutah.org/aviation/navigation-arrows.php>. This document explains those mysterious cement arrows that appear in four different places in our county.

These are just a few examples of what you can find on the WCHS website. I hope it will whet your appetite to search out other subjects of interest to you. Even better, I hope you will get interested in sharing the knowledge of history that you have so that others can share in that knowledge.

AMERICA 250!

Washingtons Unite: Washington Counties Collaborate for America's 250th Anniversary

Washington Counties across the United States are joining together in a national collaboration known as Washingtons Unite, an initiative celebrating America's Semiquincentennial and honoring the legacy of George Washington through a shared work of art.

The collaboration brings together counties bearing the name Washington to create a handcrafted quilt composed of individual squares designed and sewn by someone in each county. Every square reflects its history, character, landscape, or values while contributing to a larger, unified whole. Over the course of the next year the quilt will travel the country.

Stronger Together

Like the nation itself, the quilt is made up of pieces that are distinct yet inseparable. Each square is different, crafted with care and intention, reflecting the individuality of the communities that created it. When stitched together, the individual squares form a unified work of art, stronger and more meaningful than any single piece alone.

In much the same way, George Washington guided an emerging nation toward unity. His leadership emphasized service over self-interest and collaboration over division, values that made it possible to build something enduring. This traveling quilt carries that legacy forward, reminding us that America is stronger together

Washington County, UTAH's Quilt Square

Eleven quilt blocks were submitted for the contest sponsored by the Washington County Historical Society. Teresa Orton, Society Treasurer, led the charge for the project. The quilt block selected to represent Washington County, Utah, was sewn by Tammy Salzman, whose craftsmanship represents the community's contribution to this national collaboration. The block includes a cotton bole, a beehive, and a landscape of blue skies and mesas. (see next page)

As a resident of Washington County in the southwest corner of Utah, I've always appreciated the history behind our "Dixie" nickname, which comes from the Southern families who taught early pioneers to grow cotton here. When designing the quilt block, I wanted to capture both our culture and our horizon. I used specific sky textures as a nod to those who see contrails as "chem trails," and I drew inspiration for the red rock mesas from the stunning view of Zion and Apple Valley as you head down Highway 9 into Hurricane.

Traveling Exhibit

The completed quilt will travel to each participating county, allowing residents and visitors to experience how their local story fits into this shared national tapestry.

The quilt will be on display locally – date and location to be announced later.

AMERICA 250! (cont'd)



Tammy Salzman, a member of Valor Quilters of Southern Utah, submitted the winning quilt block.



The winning quilt block showing off Washington County.



Eleven beautiful quilt blocks were submitted for the contest.



Judges were Maureen Parks, Linda Shogren, Arlene Mills, Teresa Orton, and Sue Blazzard. WCHS Board Members, George Cannon, Loren Webb, and Karl McMullin approved the selection.

DAVID H. & WILHELMENA CANNON STATUES DEDICATION

The two life-sized bronze sculpture pieces of David H. & Wilhelmena Cannon will be placed in the courtyard plaza of the new city offices and dedicated on Friday, April 3, 2026, 9:00 a.m. The address is 61 N. Main Street, St. George UT.



COMMUNITY MEETINGS SCHEDULE

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS AND PLAN TO ATTEND

Step into the stories that shaped southern Utah with the Washington County Historical Society—your gateway to the rich pioneer heritage of St. George and beyond. Whether you're tracing family roots, exploring historic homes, or diving into the lives of early settlers, WCHS offers a treasure trove of photos, biographies, walking tours, and community events that bring the past to life. Run entirely by passionate volunteers, the society is a hub for preservation, education, and local pride. Join the effort, explore the archives, or attend a live reenactment—there's no better way to connect with the spirit of Dixie.

The monthly Community 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.

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>, or e-mail info@wchsutah.org, or call and leave a message at (435) 275-7409.

Washington County Historical Society Community Meetings Schedule

Wednesday, March 25, 2026 - 10:00 a.m. - Noon

Wednesday, April 29, 2026 - 10:00 a.m. - Noon

Wednesday, May 27, 2026 - 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>



HISTORICAL PRESERVATION – FIELD TRIP

DRIVING/WALKING HISTORICAL TOUR IN HURRICANE

Submitted by Loren Webb,
WCHS 1st President and
Field Trip Coordinator



Hurricane Historical Sites Field Trip Held on Saturday, March 14

The public was invited to participate in a free field trip to four historic sites in Hurricane on Saturday, March 14.

Participants met at the Hurricane Valley Heritage Museum (Hurricane Pioneer Museum) at 10 a.m. The tour began there under the direction of Museum Director Phylis Lawton. That portion of the tour highlighted how the city of Hurricane was founded and developed.

The group then walked across the street to the historic Bradshaw House. That tour was led by two museum docents.

Next, the group drove to the "Hurricane Fort," where Hurricane educator and storyteller Reuben Wadsworth led a session. Some participants chose the option of climbing a short hill to reach the actual site. The final stop on the Historical Society tour was the Hurricane Canal Monument. Reuben Wadsworth shared the history of the Hurricane Canal at the trailhead where water first reached the Hurricane Bench in August 1904.

All photos by Loren Webb and Reuben Wadsworth.



Participants on the field trip to Hurricane historic sites on March 14, 2026. (Photo by Reuben Wadsworth)



Plaque for Hurricane's first family, Thomas Maurice Hinton, northwest of Wells Fargo Bank.

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION - FIELD TRIP (cont'd)

Hurricane Pioneer Museum



South and east side of the Hurricane Valley Heritage Museum Building (aka Hurricane Pioneer Museum)



Director Phyllis Lawton, right, hands out inscribed pens to the participants as prizes.



Hurricane Pioneer Museum Director, Phyllis Lawton, left, provides insights to staff and visitors.

Bradshaw House



The Bradshaw House



A docent demonstrates a woman's examining table.



Participants view 20th century posters of Hurricane, UT, doctors.



A docent shows a donated telephone.



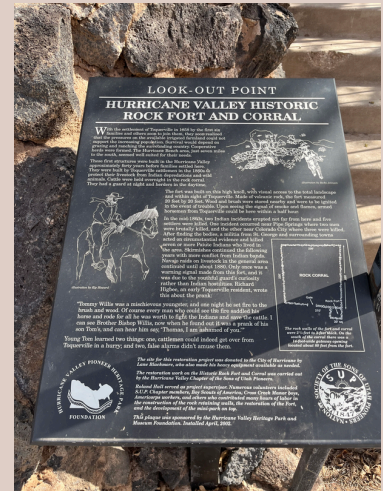
A docent and tour participant enjoy a moment in the kitchen.

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION - FIELD TRIP (cont'd)

Hurricane Valley Fort



WCHS participants listen to Reuben Wadsworth at the Lookout Point or Hurricane Fort.



Plaque at the Hurricane Valley Historic Rock Fort and Corral

Reuben Wadsworth provides insights to participants at Hurricane Fort.



Hurricane Canal

Reuben Wadsworth tells about the history of the Hurricane Canal.



Reuben Wadsworth points out information about the Hurricane Canal Monument site.



WASHINGTON CITY HISTORICAL MUSEUM BEGINNING MARCH 20



Washington City Historical Museum 25th Anniversary & Grand Re-Opening

“Left Behind by the First People”

Features our newest museum exhibit with on-loan artifacts from the Clare and Jane Paxman family. Other displays teach about the Paiute, Shivwits, and other Native tribes that lived in Southern Utah.

After completing restoration projects, we invite you to discover all that's new throughout the former schoolhouse built in 1909! We also honor our pioneer ancestors who settled here in 1857 to raise cotton, the citizens who built the community and our military veterans.

Sponsored in part by:



**Hours: Monday - Friday 10:00 am – 2:00 pm
25 E. Telegraph Rd. Washington, Utah (435) 986-4228**

ACTIVITY IN MARCH



Presents

Color and Light

A Spring Arts Celebration

Saturday, March 28, 2026, 4:00–7:00 pm

Heritage Hall, 25 East Telegraph Street
(northeast corner of Main & Telegraph)

Washington, UT

Free and open to the public

WashingtonCityArtsCouncil.com



Old School & Museum (25 E Telegraph)
Washington City Utah

MCQUARRIE MEMORIAL MUSEUM EVENT IN MARCH



3rd Weekend Event

Saturday March 21, 2026 10:00 AM

Utah Old Time Fiddlers



The Utah Old Time Fiddlers are celebrating 50 years of playing and entertaining, and we guarantee to leave our audiences smiling! We are the Dixie Chapter, and you will see us performing for city festivals, family parties, care and senior centers, Tuacahn - anywhere where people love to listen and sing along to great old time music. Many of our members have entertained professionally and have won awards for instrument competitions in the Western US.

We are proud of our Dixie pioneer heritage and look forward to performing songs they loved at the museum!

FREE ADMISSION & HANDICAP ACCESS, PUBLIC WELCOME

McQuarrie Memorial Museum

145 No. 100 East, St. George, UT

Phone (435) 628-7274

Events supported by grants from:



MCQUARRIE MEMORIAL MUSEUM EVENT IN APRIL



3rd Weekend Event

SATURDAY **April 18, 2026** **10:00 AM**

Victorian Dress Program



Dixie Miller will show us what it took for Victorian ladies to be fashionable. She will focus specifically on the late Victorian years from 1880 to 1900 and explore how our pioneer ancestors adapted these fashions for everyday life. The exhibit will feature original clothing and accessories, highlighting both the elegance of the period and the practical modifications made for life on the frontier

FREE ADMISSION & HANDICAP ACCESS, PUBLIC WELCOME!

McQuarrie Memorial Museum

145 North 100 East, St. George, UT

Phone (435) 628-7274

Events supported by grants from:



MCQUARRIE MEMORIAL MUSEUM EVENT IN MAY



3rd Weekend Event

Saturday May 16, 2026 10 AM

GHOST TOWNS IN WASHINGTON COUNTY



Loren Webb, retired educator and journalist, will speak on Grafton, one of the most picturesque ghost towns in Utah, along with telling about three lesser known ghost towns of Ft. Harmony, Hebron and Shunesburg.

FREE ADMISSION & HANDICAP ACCESS, PUBLIC WELCOME!

McQuarrie Memorial Museum
145 North 100 East, St. George, UT
Phone (435) 628-7274

Events supported by grants from:



SILVER REEF MUSEUM EVENTS IN MARCH - SEPTEMBER

SILVER REEF MUSEUM

Cosmopolitan Event

Saturday, March 21, 2026 - 10 AM



From Isolation to Inundation

Let's take a road trip together! A road trip through southern Utah and a road trip through time. It's been 100 years – an entire century – since tourists discovered southern Utah. As we review the impact of tourism on southern Utah, we will see some familiar scenes and discover a few surprises! How did the "Land No One Wanted" become "The Land Everyone Wants to See"?

About the presenter:

Lisa-Michele Church's professional background includes more than 30 years of public and private service as a corporate attorney and community historian. She served in the Cabinets of two Utah governors and was general counsel to a Fortune 500 company. Lisa-Michele is a published historian by avocation and passion. Having grown up in California and Utah, she is interested in vernacular architecture, 20th century mom-and-pop businesses such as motels, cafes, and grocery stores. She speaks often around the west on topics such as tourism, iconic neon signs, vintage apartment buildings, motel histories, and road-building throughout Utah.



Reservations suggested:
You can scan the QR code,
Visit <http://silverreef.org>,
Or call 435.879.2254


Silver Reef Museum
1903 Wells Fargo Rd.
Leeds, UT 84746



Silver Reef Museum Schedule Cosmopolitan Events

Saturday, April 25, 2026

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

"White Pocket Update"

Presenter: Marc Deshowitz

Saturday, May 23, 2026

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

"Archaeology Exploration on the Green River"

Presenter: Jim Aton with Jerry Spangle

Saturday, June 27, 2026

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

"Unique Biodiversity of Washington County "

Presenter: Marshall Topham

Saturday, July 25, 2026

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

"Murders & Massacres in Southern Utah"

Presenter: Doug Bowen

Saturday, August 22, 2026

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

"Utah in the Movies"

Presenter: Phil Tuckett.

Saturday, September 26, 2026

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

"Geology of Moqui Stones"

Presenter: Dr. Marjorie A. Chan

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

ACTIVITY IN APRIL

Juanita Brooks Conference and Lecture Series



17 April 2026
City Hall at Town Square
61 S. Main Street
St. George, UT



Juanita Brooks HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

JuanitaBrooks.org

JUANITA BROOKS 2026 CONFERENCE & LECTURE SERIES

Juanita Brooks (1898–1989)

Historian, author, and educator, was a trailblazer in the field of Southern Utah history. She is admired for her immense courage in addressing difficult subjects within her community.

The Annual Juanita Brooks Conference

Aiming to honor her legacy, the conference will continue to instill the value of history and its accurate preservation. In conjunction with the Juanita Brooks Lecture Series, this Conference will be an all-day gathering of scholarship and community.

The Annual Juanita Brooks Lecture Series

Reaching the 40th Lecture deserves a celebration. In honor of this milestone, we would like to extend a special invitation to all previous speakers 1984-2026 to join us for a special evening of thanks and honor following the conference. Without their contributions to the preservation and sharing of history, the series would never have reached this 40th lecture.

Please RSVP for this event at thebrooksmuseum@gmail.com

Schedule of Events

17 April 2026

8:45am
Welcome

9:00am-12:00pm
Presentations

12:00-2:00pm
Lunch (food trucks)

2:00-4:30pm
Presentations

4:30-5:00pm
Panel Discussion with former Lecture Series speakers

5:30-6:30pm
Reception for Lecture Series speakers

7:00-8:00pm
Lecture Series
Speaker: Lyman Hafen,
St. George Tabernacle

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:



April 17, 2026

This will be an all-day gathering of scholarship and community honoring Juanita Brooks and her legacy of the accurate preservation of history.

The annual Juanita Brooks lecture will be held in the evening. Please RSVP for this event at thebrooksmuseum@gmail.com.

The conference will be held at the St. George City Hall at Town Square, 61 S. Main Street in St. George.

The 40th Juanita Brooks Lecture will be held in the St. George Tabernacle, 18 S. Main Street in St. George.



Statue of Juanita Brooks at Town Square, St. George, UT.

The Washington County Historical Society members championed this project.