# The Heritage Network
# Board of Directors
# March 16, 2026

The meeting was called to order by President Joe at the Stevens County Historical Society Museum.

**Preset:** Rette Bidstrup, Bill Sebright, Sue Richart, Joe Barreca and Janet Thomas, secretary

**October Minutes:** The minutes of the last meeting in 2025 were reviewed and corrections made. Sue moved and Bill seconded approval of the minutes as corrected. Motion carried.

**Next Meeting:** The April meeting will again be held at the Museum.

**Financial Report:** Treasurer Sue gave her financial report. Copies given to members. THN currently has $12,774.70 in its checking account.

**Election of Officers**: The slate of officers from last year were nominated and approved and will serve for the next year.

**Indian Agency Cabin:** Chaplains from the Providence have asked for a tour of the Agency and will visit on April 25th at 4:00 PM. Don McConnell will be there to provide information.

Installation of lighting in the cabin is moving ahead. The first phase is outlets, which will provide inside lighting. The overhead lighting will follow.

A round oak table has been found and it will be checked out for size and if it fits it will be repaired and installed. Don McConnell indicated that it would be appropriate for the cabin and for the era.

As soon as the weather will allow for installing concrete, the steps will be installed. Charlie and I have agreed on a design. The steps, both front and back, will have a concrete frame and topped with wood. If the wood wears and becomes unsafe, it will be replaced on the same concrete frame. Charlie has picked a vendor for at least the frame.

The decision hasn't been made yet about an open house on Memorial Day weekend.

It is thought that the cabin will again be a member location for the Salish event in September.

The couple living across the street will not be living in Africa again, but will go to visit. They increase their interest in the cabin. They have been encouraged to visit the cabin if they want to and sit on the porch is they want to. They have asked for information about the cabin and want to be able to give information to people dropping by. It might be good to have them as resident tour guides. Time will tell.

**Historical Society:** The University of Idaho has asked to visit the museum in Colville. The department who dates trees wants to drill the historic school house on the grounds. They saw it when they visited to date the cabin in Chewelah.

The display of uniforms will no include military women. Opening is the first of May. A little house may be coming to the grounds.

**Clayton/Deer Park:** Robert Whaley donated a *Spokesman Review* Census Atlas. It was published just after the Panama Canal opened in 1914. It contains a lot of information on the construction of the Panama Canal. Two pictures of the Culebra Cut were passed around along

with a cribbage board. The cribbage board belonged to Bill's Grand Uncle Frizbee. It was carved in 1910 with the inscription, "In memory of 3 years lost in the big cut." (Culebra Cut)

*Brick, Lime and Moonshine,* is a book written by a "local" author, Victoria Ventris Shea. Clayton, Deer Park, Loon Lake, Chewelah, among other Eastern Washington cities were mentioned. Leno Prestini and the Washington Brick and Lime Company were included. Wally Lee Parker, Karen Meyer, and the Clayton/Deer Park and Loon Lake Historical Societies were acknowledged as contributors.

Many local people worked at Uranium City processing ore from the Dawn Mine. It is still a cleanup site.

Laura Chamberlain has started a new newspaper in Deer Park. It is 11" x 17" in color. Don Birch is doing an Out of the Past map of Arcadia Orchards and wants to find a map of the main canals. Sur suggested the USGS maps for 1941.

**Research Update:** The Washington State Library contract to digitize The Chewelah Independent has been signed. The initial contract called for the $5600 or so for digitizing over 100 years of the newspaper and an additional $12,000 for creating the metadata. The metadata discussion was never addressed during our prior discussions with the state, and I told the State Library that THN couldn't agree to it. The contractor has recently allowed the State Library to digitize newspapers without metadata, and that is what will happen with The Independent. Currently, the papers should be done by the end of the year.

Sue continues to work on her GIS project. The school districts are fairly confusing and are taking some time to figure out. Right now, it appears there were no schools in Whitman County prior to its formation. There were at least seven schools in Spokane and its daughter counties while they were part of Stevens County. There was at least one school district number 14 in Okanogan County and its daughter county of Chelan, while they were part of Stevens County. In 1890, after Okanogan County formed, the County School Superintendent renumbered schools, going from School District 1 to 21, with School District 12 not identified. Ferry County had two Stevens County school districts 77 & 78, which became its School Districts 1 and 2. In 1911, thirty-four school districts were dropped from Stevens County and renumbered with School District Number 15 Calispel, later called Cusick, keeping that number. The last of the school consolidations occurred in 1972, when School District 18 Millville was added to Colville, and School District 27 Blue Creek was added to Chewelah

**Washington State Historical Society:** Joe Barreca will be receiving the David Douglas Award for 2026 to recognize his work on the Bicentennial of Hudson's Bay Fort Colvile. The award will be presented at the Annual History Awards Ceremony on April 25th at the Washington State History Museum in Tacoma. Do Johnathan Neem will be the keynote speaker. Honorees include Jacqueline M. Cook of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation for a lifetime achievement award. Costs will be $20 for members and $30 for the public.

The Washington State Historical Society will hold their Annual Conference in Spokane this October 8th through the 10th. https://www.washingtonhistory.org/across-washington/special-projects-and-events/pacific-northwest-history-conference/ The call for proposals is now closed. They will include discussion of AI in history by Larry Cebula.

**Colville Post Office:** The painting of fur trappers arriving in a birch bark canoe in the post office has been approved for $23,000 in renovation. it is tedious work that needs a professional hand. The painting in use was chosen from a large number of ideas that were submitted.