



City Park looking toward downtown Coeur d'Alene, between 1905 and 1908. Railroad machine shops are on the left. The depot on the right was located about where the entrance to the Independence Point parking lot is today. Rec-1-59

Private Park, Public Park

A Story of Coeur d'Alene and Its First Park

By Jonathan Mueller

Editor's note: The following is an excerpt from a book landscape architect Jonathan Mueller is working on. The title of the book is Private Park, Public Park – A Story of Coeur d'Alene and Its First Park. The book explores the national municipal park movement in relationship to the history of Coeur d'Alene's Blackwell/City Park. This article looks at how the owners of the Electric Line Railroad developed what became known as Blackwell Park (and then later City Park), as well as other regional parks, to increase traffic on the railroad. This was an innovative outlook that was con-

sistent with linked-park-system-thinking first put forward by landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted as part of his work for Buffalo, New York in 1868, not far from where a man named F.A.Blackwell, and our initial park namesake, first got started in business.

The Coeur d'Alene and Spokane Railroad secured a right-of-way through Fort Sherman military reservation along with 20 acres on Lake Coeur d'Alene for a depot site and park from the U. S. Interior Depart-

ment. This, together with an adjacent 20 acres of the reserve given to the City by the federal government for a lakefront park, established a de-facto 40-acre park that existed on the north shore of Lake Coeur d'Alene. In 1903 the Coeur d'Alene and Spokane Railway (C&SRL) opened an electric rail line from Spokane to Coeur d'Alene. F.A. Blackwell with new partners and new business affiliates participated in a merger of the C&SRL with three other local transportation concerns to create the Spokane & Inland Empire Railway (S&IER) to function as an umbrella company. The intent was to expand access to more outstanding tourism sites while also keeping an eye on cargo and ongoing resource extraction. Rail lines were eventually extended to Hayden Lake in 1906 and Liberty Lake in 1907. There were also efforts to push lines to the south into the Palouse and to link with the transcontinental Milwaukee Road at the south end of Lake Coeur d'Alene. The spur lines to the lake sites were initially accomplished with the focus of tourism and hospitality and a mindful outlook for access to forest resources.

In a separate venture Blackwell announced he had acquired an option on the improvements and property at the NE corner of 1st Street and Sherman Avenue in Coeur d'Alene for the construction of a new destination hotel that he eventually christened the Hotel Idaho. He engaged in a feasibility analysis for construction and operations. Blackwell recruited the aid of William Dollar of the Exchange Bank who was also treasurer of the C&SRL. They sought additional investors to move the project forward. The numbers on first costs and operations looked good but they encountered minor difficulties in closing on the property. They managed to finally close and started construction in the spring of 1905 with a stated goal of opening on July 4th. The hotel was shaped like an "H" with an architectural expression of "Spanish Mission" style. The facility had 70 rooms, a dining room, ballroom, meeting rooms, and a barbershop. It had steam heat, was fully electrified, and each room had windows with a view. Initial costs were estimated at \$60,000.00, but later publicity noted final costs were in the range of 100,000 1905 dollars. True to Blackwell's word, the facility opened on the 4th of July.

Going forward, the strategy emerged where Blackwell and his new partners engaged in systems thinking to capitalize on the 'place-place' landscape of northern Idaho and portions of the adjacent Spokane River valley to create

the appearance of a 'system' of tourism destinations in the form of parks. While the reader may consider this concept to be a bit exuberant and perhaps a function of "Blackwell-hype", the February 27, 1909 issue of the Electric Railway Journal essentially confirms this. It describes the civic benefit and impact of a collection of five (5) major recreation sites accessible by Blackwell and partners' S&IER rail system. It is referred to as the "Inland Empire Park System" comprised of:

- Manito Park - Spokane, WA Pleasure Ground
- Recreation Park – Spokane, WA Reform Park
- Liberty Lake Park – Liberty Lake, WA Pleasure Ground
- Blackwell/City Park – Coeur d'Alene, ID Pleasure Ground
- Bozanta Tavern – Hayden Lake, ID Private Resort

They did this as a means to promote the region and increase ridership.

What may also be of interest for the reader, beyond the 'systems' discussion put forth here, was the emergence of Blackwell/City Park's role as a catalyst, and a model of success for others to emulate. At this time, Blackwell/City Park had been in use for almost 5 years. People in the surrounding communities have had a chance to see it, make use of it and to enjoy the fun at the lake. As a result, others moved forward with their own planning, design, and local improvements. The timing of these subsequent collective improvements was not coincidental. A rail-affiliated improvement company was formed at Liberty Lake.



From 2nd and Sherman looking west. On the right is the Coeur d'Alene Trust Bank and next to it is the Idaho Hotel. In the distance is the Electric Line Depot. It was just a short walk from the depot and park to the hotel, circa 1910. CDA-11-15



The Hayden Lake depot with the Bozanta Tavern on the right. Electric train service to Hayden Lake began on August 15, 1906. The photo was probably taken shortly after the tavern was built in 1907. TrR-1-97. Thirteen trains ran daily between 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. from Spokane to Coeur d'Alene in 1907, departing Spokane mostly on the hour. Seven trains made connections to Hayden Lake during the summer months, which were reduced to three in winter. Fares at that time were 2½ cents per mile for single journeys, compared to 3 cents on steam railroads, and commuter tickets reduced the fare by half. (from Inland Empire Electric Line: Spokane to Coeur d'Alene and the Palouse, by Clive Carter)

With their connectivity now in place, this new concern developed a 35-acre waterfront parcel with a dance pavilion, bathhouse, public beaches, a 500-foot floating pier and a number of water-based play devices for beach users. Coincidence? Not at all. Enlightened self-interest.

The Bozanta Tavern

The new line to Hayden Lake was constructed in support of resort development, again with a separate improvement company. It eventually connected to the Bozanta Tavern which was planned and designed by one of Olmsted's sons. The architect for the project was Kirtland Cutter. John Charles Olmsted, the elder of the "boys", was the lead for the development of the general plan and was from the firm we've previously mentioned, the Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects. Sons, John C. and Frederick Law, Jr., both apprenticed with the elder Olmsted and carried on his practice after his death in 1903. One of John's areas of responsibility with the firm was the northwest United States. John assisted the City of Spokane with their system plan and specific park designs for a select number of new and remodeled parks. He consulted with the University of Idaho on the location of their new Administration Building after the first was consumed by fire and made general recommendations on the adjacent grounds as well. John Charles Olmsted also had the distinction of being elected the first president of the American Society of Landscape Architects in 1899.

The Bozanta Tavern was a private facility on the west shoreline of Hayden Lake, eight miles north of Coeur d'Alene and was developed for a more affluent clientele, primarily from Spokane. The involvement of the Olmsteds was significant. The proposed general plan produced a site offering one of the first golf courses in the region, as well as lawn tennis, croquet courts, a bowling green, floral displays, bathhouse, beach and boating activities, and hotel accommodations.

J. P. Graves and the Rail Conglomeration

Prior to formation of a parks board and the passing of a general park levy in 1907, the City of Spokane constructed a dance pavilion in 1905 looking out on Manito Park's major pond. In addition to dancing, it featured the showing of motion pictures nearby. At this time a zoo was added as the major park attraction. The park was re-dedicated in 1905 and re-named as Manito Park. Again, the timing was beyond coincidental. In the history of the park it is noted one J.P. Graves owned a major portion of the land the park was later expanded into. He donated 80 acres of land for inclusion in the park boundaries before it was renamed from Montrose Park to Manito Park. This was done with certain concessions related to infrastructure improvements the City was to make. Graves extended trolley lines and created a transit terminus at the park's edge to allow inexpensive transport up to the South Hill from downtown Spokane. This is the same J.P. Graves who later became president of the new conglomeration of interurban rail entities when Blackwell stepped aside from the direct leadership but continued to serve as a board member. Prior to this time in 1905, Blackwell and Graves were still friendly competitors in the local transit market. It seems they had more in common than just an understanding of the railroad business. With the passage of a levy, the City of Spokane initiated and completed upgrades to Manito Park that began in 1910 and were completed in 1913. They added flower gardens, playgrounds, tennis courts, a bowling green, a level ball field, and improved access roads for carriages and motor vehicles. The City also developed the new A.M. Cannon Park at this time. Up to this point, Liberty Park was the only Spokane Park offering extensive floral displays comparable to Blackwell/City Park. Liberty

Park, while unusual in its site character, did not match the Place-Place Landscape setting of Blackwell/City Park. In any event, this 'systems' thinking of a park system merged with a rail system dramatically expanded leisure choices for residents, and the marketability of the region as a rail destination.

What emerged from a railroad business standpoint was a greatly increased ridership. The average daily passenger total on the Electric Line jumped from 400 in 1904 to over 2,000 in 1906. This land-based system was also linked to a water-based concern, the Red Collar Line, which allowed people to disembark from the Electric Line and ride a steamboat south on Lake Coeur d'Alene to Harrison, St. Maries or St. Joe City, depending on how rugged an experience the tourist might want. At the height of its operations, the Red Collar Line had numerous lake boats in operation on Lake Coeur d'Alene. The ridership numbers continued to climb to where railroad gross revenues reached a peak in 1910 and then dipped slightly to an average of pre-1910 numbers for the next four or five years. This wouldn't have been so bad, but expenses increased

during that interval which hampered the net profits and resulting operating capital.

Setback In Coeur d'Alene

One aspect of long-term profitability and pressure on operating expenses came as a result of an incident in 1909. Because of the Allotment Act of 1909, lands on the Coeur d'Alene Indian Reservation were opened for selective sale and settlement through a lottery. As a result of region-wide communications a major influx of potential homesteaders flooded the area and rode the trains on the days of the lottery. Because of this influx, on July 31, 1909, there was extreme pressure to maintain timely arrivals in Coeur d'Alene. As it turned out, there was a mix-up in the switching procedures of parallel tracks at certain locations, and a non-standard departure of one train from Coeur d'Alene. The result was a head-on collision between two trains at or near the Gibbs station. The approximate contemporary location is near the intersection of Lakewood Drive and Northwest Boulevard at the Riverstone development in Coeur d'Alene.



The Coeur d'Alene and Spokane Railway and the Coeur d'Alene & St. Joe Transportation Company (the "Red Collar" line) jointly established rail/steamer service and fares between Spokane and Harrison and other steamer destinations beginning in 1904. The railway-owned, deep water dock at Coeur d'Alene allowed railside access to the boat. The "Shoshone Flyer" the name of the Spokane-Coeur d'Alene boat train, left Spokane at 9:00 a.m. and connected with the 10:00 a.m. lake steamer to Harrison to meet the OR&N train to Wallace. Once clear of Spokane, the train ran 31 miles in 34 minutes, an average of 55 mph. Passengers for an earlier steamer to St. Joe river towns caught the 8:00 a.m. train from Spokane. The 1:10 p.m. train from Spokane connected with a third steamer, to Harrison and St. Maries. Matching connections between boat and train were made in the westbound direction. These integrated arrangements generated considerable revenue for the railway for several years. (from Inland Empire Electric Line: Spokane to Coeur d'Alene and the Palouse, by Clive Carter)



On July 31, 1909, two crowded trains collided at Gibbs station about 1½ miles from Coeur d'Alene. The motorman of the eastbound stopped his train when he saw special No. 5 approaching around a curve. The westbound collided at a speed of about 25 mph. Its leading motor car was telescoped, only twelve feet of the body remaining above the floor, the heavier motor car riding over the lighter vehicle. Workers from nearby Stack-Gibbs lumber mill rushed to help the injured. Medical staff were dispatched from Coeur d'Alene Hospital while physicians and nurses arrived from Spokane within an hour by special train. (from *Inland Empire Electric Line: Spokane to Coeur d'Alene and the Palouse*, by Clive Carter)

Seventeen people were killed and over one hundred were seriously injured. After a series of investigations and reviews, there were mixed findings. One said the

S&IER was completely responsible for the incident, while another found two critical employees made the decisions on switching and sequencing in conflict with established protocols and that led to the accident. Through 1912, the S&IER paid out \$345,488 in compensation to victims and their families. Litigation in the matter was not finally settled until 1916. Needless to say, the Electric Line never fully recovered from this.

In addition to this challenge, there was the arrival of another agent of change and challenge to railroad profitability bringing its own 'system' to bear on the Inland Northwest and all of America. This agent of change was no less revolutionary than the railroad, and took the form of the individually owned, and mass-produced motor vehicles with internal combustion engines. For Blackwell, Graves and partners, their layered systems were in place and functioning. Their goal of increasing ridership moved along nicely, but not without challenges. However, as with all things America, the change continued to march on. The motor vehicles and the resulting new transportation systems along with mass production of fuels gave Americans greater choice in how they travel and changed our landscape of living forever.

All About Railroads

When we found out the Northern Pacific Railway Historical Association convention is going to be held in Wallace Sept. 14-17, 2016 we decided to get onboard with the railroad theme this year. We are publishing John Wood's revision of his 1984 book *Railroads Through the Coeur d'Alenes* for release by late summer. John has been working hard adding new photos and revising text. He will also be our speaker at the annual meeting Saturday April 30 at the Hayden Lake Country Club, the site of the historic Bozanta Tavern.

For information on spring registration for the NPRHA convention in September contact Shauna Hillman at 208-752-0111 or email, npdepot@gmail.com

The Museum's feature exhibit opening April 1 will explore the development of railroads in the Coeur d'Alene Region, their economic impact, their demise and how their legacy still impacts us.

To learn more about this area's railroad history check out these Museum publications at bookstores or www.museumni.org.

Inland Empire Electric Line: Spokane to Coeur d'Alene and the Palouse, by Clive Carter. 248 Pages, 8 1/2" x 11", hardbound \$39.95.

The Milwaukee Road Olympian: A Ride to Remember, by Stanley Johnson. 334 pages, 8 1/2" x 11", hardbound \$39.95.

The Milwaukee Road's Western Extension: The Building of A Transcontinental Railroad, by Stanley Johnson. 558 pages, hardbound \$74.95.

Spokane International Railway: Idaho's Main Line to Canada, by Clive Carter. 224 pages 8.5 x 11, hardbound \$49.95.

White Pine Route: The History of the Washington, Idaho and Montana Railway Company, by Thomas E. Burg. 400 pages, 8 1/2" x 11", hardbound \$49.95.

Although this book is not solely about railroads it has good information about Spirit Lake area railroads. *Historical Spirit Lake, Idaho and Vicinity*, by F. Keith and Jan Spencer 256 pages, 8.5" x 11", hardbound \$34.95

Museum News

From the Board President

At their regular meeting on January 12th, the Board approved the recommendation of the Nominating Committee to appoint Pattie Strub to fill the Board position vacated by Mark Stromberg, until elections for Board members are held in April. Becoming part of the board for several months will allow Pattie time to familiarize herself with the Board responsibilities, museum mission, goals, programs, and members. WELCOME, PATTIE! Board terms for four members will expire in April. If you, or someone you know, who is a team player with skills to complement our already experienced board would like to serve on our board, please contact Dorothy at the Museum. She can give you an information packet or you can go to www.museumni.org and click "The About Us" tab. Review this page and all the links to learn more about the Museum.

The board members have volunteered to be on committees and are meeting frequently to finalize the long-range planning in anticipation of a capital campaign for a new building. We hope to have this accomplished by April 30th for the Annual meeting. A BIG THANK YOU to all who took the time to complete our survey. The survey results, feasibility study outcomes and input from everyone will help to guide hard decisions facing the board as to the location and footprint of a new building - very exciting times ahead for the museum.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR for the Annual Meeting - April 30th. More details will be forthcoming on the event. Please note April 30th is a Saturday. The Board feels moving the annual meeting to the weekend may help to draw more folks and allow us the time for a full event.

About 100 people attended the Open House Nov. 7. The event gave a glimpse of what has been cataloged and stored at the blue storage building and even upstairs in the museum. We were very pleased with the attendance and comments by everyone.

Many of you have been asking me about the progress on another storage building. The board has been riding the waves with finding storage for our artifacts and books. Nothing has been finalized, but we do have possibilities and will keep everyone posted when a decision is made.

The Chapel ornament turned into a fundraiser to help fund a new roof on the Chapel. I hope everyone purchases the Chapel ornament and considers donating to the Chapel project.

Connie McGee, Pres. MNI Board

Cash Donations

Helen & Jack Yuditsky
Helen Branson
Don Gumprecht
Richard & Shiree Wandrocke
Siegried Kirchner
Sherman & Nancy Garner
Ray & Eleanor Grannis
Wayne & Faye Sweney
Sons of Norway
Maurice Johnson

Building Fund Donations

Helen & Jack Yuditsky
Don Pischner
Jerry Boyd
John Harreld
Margaret Fickeisen



Board members Dave Walker and Frank Darlington in the Museum's off site storage building during the Nov. 7 Museum open house.

Serve on the Board

The Museum of North Idaho's nominating committee is seeking applicants to fill positions on its nine-member nonprofit Board. There are four positions opening for the April election.

For more information please contact the Museum at 664-3448 or email dd@museumni.org for a packet. Board members are elected by the membership in April.

Survey Highlights

We sent out about 700 surveys and 122 people completed the survey. This information will assist us with our long range planning.

Here is what we found out.

Purchase a building in downtown Coeur d'Alene and remodel it - 32% as a first choice, 49% as 2nd choice and 1.35% as a 3rd choice.

Build at the City Park next to the Human Rights Building (Railroad substation), using museum funding, with a multi-year lease on City-owned land - 77% as a first choice and 7% as a 2nd choice and 15% as a 3rd choice.

Build a new building in downtown Coeur d'Alene - 13% first choice, 36% as a 2nd choice and 3% 3rd choice.

Roughly 22% of respondents had ideas for other options such as constructing a new building on properties in Riverstone, the Education Corridor, and east Sherman. Enlarging the existing building at the current location was also suggested.

A larger (15,000 to 20,000 sq. ft.) Museum building at the Coeur d'Alene City Park - 76 respondents or 68% were in favor, 25 or 23% were neutral and 8 or 7% were opposed or had no comment.

A stand-alone museum was favored by 57% .

"Cultural Center" shared by other entities was favored by 43% .

36% were opposed to sharing with the Human Rights Educational Institute, 36% were neutral and 23% supported the idea. Several comments stated the missions were different and should be kept separate.

The Museum's photo collection had the highest interest followed by special exhibit openings and lectures.

I.H.T. Grant Received

We received a matching grant for \$7,500 from the Idaho Heritage

Memorials

- For Roy Schenkenberger from Maxine Hulick and Mel & Jackie Schmidt
- For B.R. Svendsgaard Family from Mae Ann Henderson
- For Patti Wilhelm from George Wilhelm
- For M.W. Witham from Lloyd Witham
- Dick Smart from Dr. & Mrs. Kenneth Wright

All memorial donations go into the Endowment Fund. The endowment is important to the financial health of the Museum and your help in building the endowment will ensure the Museum's future.

To make a memorial donation use the form on the back of the newsletter.

Trust to go toward the \$33,600 we need to replace the Chapel roof.

The 2015 projects, including the restroom, painting, step repair and other repairs came to nearly \$65,000. Thanks to the Ace Walden estate and the donations we received we were able to cover the work.

The Chapel Preservation Fund holds all income from and donations to the Chapel. It is used to support ongoing costs, preservation and maintenance. Please contribute to the Chapel Preservation Fund. You can use the form on the back of this newsletter. For more information call 208-664-3448 or email: dd@museumni.org

Chapel Ornaments

After expenses the Chapel ornaments netted about \$2,400. The funds will go toward the match for the Idaho Heritage Trust grant for the Chapel roof. Ornaments are available for \$19.95 at the Museum. We extend our appreciation to Kathy Arneson for getting the ornaments made.

Chapel Donations

Denny & Kathy Arneson
Janet Carpenter
Mike & Kate Dolan
Bruce & Colleen English
Michael & Carol Griffin
Dwight & Martha McCain
Judy Meyer
Barbara Rostad for A.S. Rostad
Connie McGee

Annual Meeting April 30

The Museum's annual meeting and banquet will be held on Saturday April 30 at the Hayden Lake Country Club. Mark your calendar. A change in the bylaws allows us more flexibility in selecting a date.

John Wood will speak about railroads in the Coeur d'Alene Mining District. The Museum and John are working to publish a revised edition of his popular book, "Railroads Through the Coeur d'Alenes". It will be released this summer.

The program and ballot will be mailed out in early April.

Artifact Donations Since November

Jack LeGore: North Idaho Accordion Band uniforms from 1952-54. Worn by Jack LeGore. Joe Carbonetto was the band leader.

Larry O'Leary: Mustache cup, circa 1890, belonging to William LaForest Jacobs.

Trudy Dasovick: Panoramic view of Blackwell Lumber Co. and crew at Fernwood, Idaho, about 1915.

Bruce Dawson: 1910 Calendar plate from E.J. Masters, Family Liquor Stores, report card from Bryan School, letter and certificate from Walter Butler Co., 1943 during the building of Farragut.

2016 Lecture Series

Coeur d'Alene Public Library and the Museum will host "Historical Characters of The Inland Northwest" by Robert Singletary.

The series begins Thursday, February 18, and continues on the fourth Thursday of each month with the last lecture on November 17.

Library Hosted Benefit

The Coeur d'Alene Public Library hosted a performance of the musical, "Living Through the Fire" – based on incidents from the Big Burn of 1910 – featuring players from the Coeur d'Alene Summer Theatre (CST) and a lecture by Robert Singletary about the historic blaze. 200 people attended the Jan. 15 event raising \$913 for each group.



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Museum of North Idaho Mission Statement

The Museum of North Idaho collects, preserves and interprets the history of the Coeur d'Alene Region to foster appreciation of the area's heritage.

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