History of Blackfoot
THE CITY OF BLACKFOOT

Situated midpoint between Pocatello and Idaho Falls at the northern end of the fertile Snake River Valley and bordered by rivers both east and west, the City of Blackfoot has always been alive with the bustle and activity of agriculture and commerce. With 215 days of sunshine and 9-15 inches of precipitation annually, the typical “Zone 4” warm days and cool nights make a perfect environment for the famous “Idaho Russet Burbank Potato.” It is for the innovative imagination of Blackfoot’s early potato farmers that the City is best known as “The Potato Capital of the World.” Whether grown and harvested in a local field or processed in one of the nearby processing facilities, the potato industry has defined and connected the citizens of Blackfoot to an enduring tradition of family values and hard work. While today the City of Blackfoot is landscaped with new parks, playgrounds, and a beautiful lakefront retreat, for most of its just over ten thousand residents, it is the contrast and compliment of these two cultures, farming and industry, that still drives the economy and decision making for the City today.

Yet, like many Idaho cities, it was the freighting and later the railroad business that first helped Blackfoot grow from a dusty stagecoach and wagon station known as Stevens Stage Stop. There, in the summer of 1866, tired and hungry travelers were welcomed and fed by Fredrick and Finetta Stevens in a low
log building just a stones throw from the Blackfoot River. After leaving the Stevens Stage Stop, stagecoaches and wagons went on to the Snake River to what was then Tilford City near the present day “Old Snake River Bridge.” They were ferried across the Snake River by Tilford Cutch and Tom Cosgrove Sr. if they were headed west, if not they continued to the Yam Patch Station (west of the present Kimball hill and old Kimball store) or to Eagle Rock which later became Idaho Falls. The Stevens stage stop was discontinued in 1872 but shortly thereafter, Mr. Stevens and a friend, Major Danilson, opened a general store further north in the present location of the City of Blackfoot. In 1876, the Utah Northern Railroad began surveying through Montana and Idaho. When the original survey was made, Mr. Stevens said it was intended to follow the old freight and stage road down to Riverton, but that this route would cut off the Danilson and Stevens’s store. Major Danilson, a Civil War officer had influence in Washington. He prevailed on the surveyors to change the original survey to make a curve at Gibson so the railroad would stop by the Stevens-Danilson General Store. By 1878 construction on a narrow gauge railway from Ogden to Butte had begun and the track laid in back of the store for a joyous celebration on December 24 of that year when the first train arrived in Blackfoot. According to Dick Stevens, “That is how Blackfoot became a railroad town.” The Stevens-Danilson General Store was used as a depot until a wooden building was built. As a terminal and as the principal supply from the mines of Custer County, Blackfoot became a prosperous and populous community.
CITY OF BLACKFOOT


TERRAIN, GEOLOGY, GEOGRAPHIC AND CLIMATE

Blackfoot’s elevation is 4,504 ft.

The city covers an area of approximately five square miles. It is situated at the northern end of the Snake River Valley in southeastern Idaho. The Blackfoot river flows to the east of us and the Snake River to the west.

Blackfoot is known as a “Zone 4” climate. Temperatures can be expected to range between 13 and 31 degrees in January and between 55 and 89 degrees in July. Precipitation averages between nine and fifteen inches per year and we have 215 days of sunshine each year, sufficient to mature important crops. Sitting in a fertile volcanic soil plain with warm days and cool nights, creates a perfect atmosphere for the famous “Idaho Russet Burbank Potato”. The potato grows to a perfect shape and size and has a perfect texture and taste.

POPULATION

Blackfoot census: 1880 - Males 469 Females 177
1900 - Males 721 Females 606
2000 10,419 people

SCHOOL

Citizens of Blackfoot felt their youngsters needed education, they were just running wild. John and Alice Montgomery offered their home and school began in 1879. Their living room was 18 x 40 and this was the first school.

Blackfoot provides educations for students K-12 and offers programs such as Indian and Migrant education, special education, gifts and talented programs, community education, GED classes, preschool screening, after school programs and vocational education.

Schools in District 55 include; Blackfoot High School, Independence Alternative High School, Mountain View Middle School, Blackfoot Sixth Grade, Wapello Elementary, Donald D Stalker Elementary, Ridgecrest Elementary, Groveland Elementary, I.T. Stoddard Elementary, Fort Hall Elementary, Irving Kindergarten and Early Childhood Special Education.

During the 2004-2005 school year, the Blackfoot School District had a total enrollment of 3,921 students and is located at 270 East Bridge.

The Blackfoot Charter Community Learning Center has five class rooms with 100 students.
WHEN IDAHO WAS A TERRITORY

In 1887 when Idaho was still a territory, Blackfoot was experiencing growth. It was the county seat and also had the Territory Insane Asylum.

Blackfoot had grown to be an important town in the county. It was the headquarters for the U.S. Land Office for the southern district of Idaho and the place for holding U.S. Court for the Third Judicial District of Idaho.

It boasted two brick churches, the Jason Lee Methodist Church built in 1885 and the First Baptist Church had organized in 1884. There was a public school and three teachers, the equal of any in the territory.

From Blackfoot over 3,000,000 pounds of freight were shipped to points in Alturus and Custer counties. The Idaho Stage Line ran from Blackfoot to Challis and the mines of Custer County.

Major Danilson as well as Bunting & Company tipped the scales as the heaviest dealers in general merchandise. Banker, C. Bunting & Company did the largest banking business in Southern Idaho

D. H. Biethan had a furniture and hardware store, Cardon and Son and J.S. Beck were grocery proprietors. Frank Bixby had a stationary and confectionary, W.H. Curtis had a hardware store, George Warren sold fruits and candies, while Mester and his brother Shannon and Perry Anson sold wines and liquors, Parson Jones owned the livery stable and had tip-top rigs and elegant teams and W.H. Behle owned a drug store.

Mrs. Susie Holbrook who had come to Blackfoot November 5, 1883 had a millinery and all the fancy goods that attracted the eye of women. Upon her arrival to Blackfoot, she found a wild pioneer town and seven saloons. A busy and active lady, and a Baptist, it wasn’t long before she located a few Baptist people and it wasn’t long before the Reverend Dwight Spencer arrived in August 1884 to discuss the needs of a church.

The Star restaurant and the Hogan restaurant accommodated people as well as the Commercial Hotel. James McTucker had meat markets in both Blackfoot and Pocatello. R.J. Osborn was a blacksmith and did a big business; William Houtz, Charlie Wood and Marshal Kirkpatrick were principal contractors. R.H. Hopkins was in the lumber business.

J.W. Jones was the editor of “THE IDAHO NEWS” and George P. Wheeler was editor of the “IDAHO REPUBLICAN”. Both papers were published in Blackfoot.
BLACKFOOT’S BEGINNING

In the beginning the Blackfoot town site was nothing but sagebrush, big tall sagebrush!

Longtime Blackfoot citizen, Ruth Stains Ray, said her mother’s family the C.F. Hillards lived on the present S. Oak St. and when C.F. turned the corner from work at night at Main St. and Bridge St.; her mother had to watch for his lantern, as there was so much sagebrush.

It was the land Watson N. Shilling and W.C. Lewis had homesteaded that became the town site for the City of Blackfoot. Thus Blackfoot became one of the earliest points of southeastern Idaho.

The stage and freight lines from Blackfoot to Wood River and from Blackfoot to Salmon River ran regularly from Blackfoot to Arco, Challis and other towns in Custer and Butte Counties, until the railroad built a branch line to Arco and Houston.

The Blackfoot, Houston, and Challis Stage Co. carried mail, passengers and express. It left Blackfoot at 6 a.m. daily for the Lost River Mines, Houston, Challis, Bonanza, Clayton, Custer, Bayhorse and Yellow Jacket.

Alex Toponce was an early freighter that had a stage line from Blackfoot to Challis, Idaho. By the first of June, 1879, he had a four-horse stage line running into Challis everyday, a distance of 156 miles. This distance was completed in just twenty-four hours. He changed the horses every ten to twelve miles. Every fifty miles was a dinner station where drivers were changed. The first dinner station out of Blackfoot was the Big Butte (which can be seen for many miles on the desert west of Blackfoot). The mail contract was the biggest source of revenue for his stages, and when Mr. Toponce was out bid by Gilmore and Salisbury for the mail contract in 1882, he sold his stage line to them for $40,000 and retired from the freighting and staging business in Idaho.

One of the largest freighting and stage companies to operate through southern Idaho was the nationally known firm of Ben Holladay, the “Holladay Overland Mail and Express”. Passengers paid $2 each for their breakfast, dinner or supper and for beds they wrapped themselves in their blankets and slept on the floor at the stations. In 1866, Holladay sold his interests to Wells, Fargo Express Company, who in turn was succeeded by the first of Gilmore and Salisbury. They continued the services until the opening of the Utah and Northern Railway.

The narrow gauge railway from Ogden to Butte was completed to Blackfoot, this made Blackfoot the principal supply from the mines of Custer County. As a terminal, Blackfoot became a prosperous and populous community.

The freighting and railroad business is what made Blackfoot grow.
The newspaper dated June 4, 1898 had advertising for the Oregon Short Line with a time card for south and north bound trains. Trains were busy running through Blackfoot day and night.

**RAILROAD HISTORY**

The Utah and Northern Railway Company was organized in the spring of 1878 and succeeded to the right of the Utah Northern Railroad Company. It was authorized under an Act of Congress of June 20, 1878 to build a line of railroad by way of Marsh Valley, Portneuf River, and Snake River Valley north to Silver Bow, Butte, and Garrison in the Montana Territory. Construction was begun in 1878 and reached Blackfoot, Idaho Territory in December 1878.

It was December 24, 1878 when the first train arrived in Blackfoot. It was a joyous celebration, especially for the children as they were all given fruit and candy. It was written as the train came through Fort Hall, the Indians did war dances, as they had given up their land for the railroad.

The railroad continued to function as a narrow gauge until July 25, 1887, when work had begun about 4:00 a.m. to make the change to standard gauge. At 10:15 a.m. the first broad gauge train left Pocatello and shortly after noon, the train reached Blackfoot where a short stop was made and then the train continued to Eagle Rock (now Idaho Falls) at the rate of 33 miles per hour, and then continued north to its destination at Spring Hill. The entire distance of 243 miles from Pocatello to Silver Bow was changed to standard gauge and completed in less than twenty-four hours. (The Idaho News, July 30, 1887)

The Utah and Northern was operated as part of the Union Pacific System until August 1, 1889, when it was consolidated with the Oregon Short Line and the name changed to Oregon Short Line in 1897.

A new depot was built and dedicated August 13, 1913. Citizens of Blackfoot were very glad when the OSL chose Blackfoot as the site for a new depot. They were proud of the new building that had been constructed with stone from a Rexburg quarry. It featured
hardwood floors and big heavy oak doors. Several hundred people attended the dedication. Several dignitaries spoke and songs were sung. It was very important when, Joel L. Priest, and agent from the Oregon Shortline Railroad from Boise presented the depot and grounds to the City of Blackfoot. They were accepted by Blackfoot Mayor Charles West. There was a six-piece band and dancing was enjoyed until midnight. The building now (2005) houses the Greater Blackfoot Chamber of Commerce and The Potato Expo (a museum about the potato) and a gift shop.
ELECTRICITY

Electric light and power for general use in the county came about 1903. Although the Blackfoot Light and Power Company was given a franchise for supplying power and light to the Village of Blackfoot in 1901 and again October 10, 1902, electric power was not in operation before the latter part of 1903 when a line from Pocatello to Blackfoot was completed. At a regular meeting of the Blackfoot Village Board of Trustees on January 6, 1904, a bill amounting to $120 for electric lights and power for the month of December, 1903, was ordered paid to the Blackfoot Light and Water Company (Minutes of the Village of Blackfoot Book I, page 65). This was the first amount paid by the Village for such service.

TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH

As early as 1866 a telegraph line connected Virginia City, Montana and Salt Lake City, Utah. By 1886 Western Union had 242 miles of telegraph lines in operation in Bingham County.

Telephone service first reached Blackfoot, October 7, 1898 (Bell Telephone Company). The Blackfoot News – October 8, 1898

“The News editor (Percy Jones) was called to the telephone central office Friday at the Blackfoot House and communicated with Mr. Ritter of the Bell Telephone Company at Pocatello, who extended the privileges of the use of the line to the newsman gratis. The rate charged at that time for calls to Pocatello was 25 cents for a five minute conversation.”

February 27, 1901 the Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone Company was given a franchise by the Village Trustees to install and operate telephones in Blackfoot (Ordinance Book No. 1 City of Blackfoot page 25). February 3, 1904 the Village Clerk was instructed to inform the manager of the local telephone company to install a telephone in the home of the Village Marshal, the first record of telephone service in the residence of a village official (Minutes Book 1, page 65). When telephones were installed throughout the village the residence of Colonel John W Jones was given telephone No.1.

BLACKFOOT’S OLDEST CONTINUOUS BUSINESS

First American Title Company is the oldest continuous business in Blackfoot that is still owned by the same family, the Stufflebeams. This year they celebrated their 100th anniversary of being in business.

May 5, 1884, William G. Stufflebeam and his son William Herman arrived in Blackfoot. They purchased a stock ranch twenty-five miles south of Blackfoot. William Herman later completed the Blackfoot Hotel in 1886. Herman had worked in the office of the Secretary of the Treasury during President Cleveland’s administration. He went over to
the courthouse in Blackfoot and copied all of the records and sorted them geographically to make a complete file. (They still have the original file). He then began writing abstracts for the various lenders and real estate agents in Bingham County.

Opening for business in 1905, W. Herman named his business “The Blackfoot Abstract Co.”. He later changed it to “Bingham Title and Trust” and finally as it is known today, “The First American Title”.

One hundred years later First American Title has eighty employees in the Blackfoot offices. They have a total of 37 offices in Idaho, Montana, and Washington that employs a total of 536 people. The regional administration office is located at 195 S. Broadway and ground was broke for a second office located at 168 W Pacific in 2002.

Dwain H. Stufflebeam, a son on W. Herman is owner of the business. His son Quinn is also affiliated with the business, keeping it in the family for three generations.

The picture was taken in 1914 at the Blackfoot Abstract Co., now First American Title Co. Second from left is Ruby Williams Stains, then Ruth Hilliard Stufflebeam who ran the company after Herman’s death. W. Herman Stufflebeam who is standing began the business in 1905. Herman’s son Dwain continued the business following his mother’s death in 1983. (This picture is courtesy of the Bingham County Historical Society)
BANKING IN BLACKFOOT

The first bank in Blackfoot was a one-story, lava rock structure with a sandstone front on Northwest Main Street. At the time of its construction, it was doubtless an impressive addition to Main Street. The building was erected in 1895 and opened for business in 1896.

The building has its unmodified façade with its buff and rose-buff stone and it is still impressive in the modernized street that has grown up around it. The nomination form for historic places, describes the physical appearance as: “the upper façade of the left, bank portion of the building is extended a few feet above the right, store-front portion. The parapet so formed is further dignified by a rectangular pedimented stone cornice ornament inscribed ‘BANK’. ” The transoms in the bank façade have been filled in recent years and the door was modernized. The façade of the store front probably assumed its present, plate glassed appearance in 1912 when a new front was reported for the Brown-Hart General Merchandise Store which then occupied it.
Charles Bunting was a pioneer to Blackfoot. He had operated a general store since the 1880’s and a private bank since 1881. His new bank failed the year after it was built. There was considerable statewide publicity that accompanied the failure. Bunting had served as State Treasurer and his bank was a depository for state and county funds. Bunting died shortly after the demise of his Blackfoot bank.

The following article appeared in the Blackfoot paper, April 30, 1898. The headline read, “State vs. Bunting Bank” with the subtitle “To Be Appealed to the Supreme Court At Once”.

The case brought by the state against the receiver of the Bunting Bank to recover the $12,000 of state money on deposit in the institution at the time of the failure is involved in some interesting complications.

Judge Standrod recently decided the case against the state on grounds that funds, though they might be characterized as trust funds, were so co-mingled with the money of the bank, that they could not be followed. A motion for a new trial was filed, but the state had not taken steps for appealing the matter at once so as to get an early decision. J.H. Hawley was preparing the appeal.

It was testified at the Bunting Insurance Case, that, although the Bunting and Co. Mercantile establishment carried a $40,000 stock, it was owing the Bank $22,000.

D.W. Standrod and Co. a banking institution that was formed in 1899 became the new owner. Standrod was a prominent Pocatello banker, a District Judge and was on the
committee to draft the Idaho Constitution at the 1889 convention. He had interests in a number of banks throughout southeast Idaho. They included banks at Mackay, Albion, Malad as well as Pocatello and Blackfoot.

In 1912 Standrod constructed a new bank at the corner of West Main and Bridge Street. Standrod operated his Blackfoot bank until its closure in 1923. C.W. Berryman and W.F. Berryman, both leading citizens, ran his Blackfoot bank.
John G. Brown was another prominent businessman and the Brown-Eldridge general merchandise store opened in Bunting’s storefront in 1897. Brown resided at 190 N Shilling Avenue and his home is now the Bingham County Historical Museum.

1905: First National Bank of Blackfoot
2005: Banks and Credit Unions in Blackfoot include the following:
   Bank of Commerce – 208 W Judicial
   Key Bank – 15 N Ash
   U.S. Bank – 9 S Ash
   Wells Fargo Bank NA – 109 S Broadway
   Zions Bank – 1350 Parkway Dr
   State Farm Bank – 99 S Main
   Washington Federal Savings – 715 W Judicial
   I.S.U. Federal Credit Union – 58 N Broadway
   Idaho Central Credit Union – 498 N Meridian
   Westmark Federal Credit Union – 575 Jensens Grove Dr

FRED THOMAS DUBOIS

Fred Thomas Dubois is probably one of the most controversial men in the State of Idaho, but he is also one of the most important men. Without the Honorable Fred T. Dubois, Idaho would not have gained her statehood. Idaho became a state on July 3, 1890.
Idaho was his adopted state and Blackfoot was his legal residence. He had come as a young man of 31 years to the Idaho Territory from Illinois. He had graduated from Yale University in 1872. His brother Jesse was a doctor at Fort Hall when Fred arrived to the Idaho Territory. Fred went on a three-month cattle drive and then accepted various positions at the Fort Hall Indian Agency.

President Chester Arthur appointed him as the U.S. Marshall of Idaho, August 25, 1882. This is when he became involved in the anti-Mormon agitation over polygamy. He was the head of the anti-Mormon party of Idaho and made several arrests. Louis Clements wrote, “Among the Mormons he is remembered as one of their chief persecutors. He was paid for each conviction”.

It was because of Dubois’ efforts that Mormons were disfranchised of the right to vote. It wasn’t until 1881 that House Joint Resolution No. 7 passed the legislature to rescind the law prohibiting Mormons t vote legally. It was on the ballot in 1882 and passed once again. Both times it was presented by Representative Patty McDermott, D-Pocatello.

He won the election as a Territorial Delegate to the Fiftieth Congress in 1886 and again in 1888 for the Fifty-first Congress.

When the Idaho Territory was being dissolved, Dubois worked very hard and was determined that five of our northern counties would not be annexed to the State of Washington.

He led an unsuccessful fight to prevent the repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act. In 1896 Dubois walked out of the Republican convention and helped to found the Silver Republican Party. He announced in 1901 he was joining the Democratic Party and he remained a democrat until his death.

His last positions were appointments by President Woodrow Wilson in 1914 and by President Calvin Coolidge in 1924. He passed away of bronchial pneumonia on Valentine’s Day, February 14, 1930. He and his two daughters are buried here in Blackfoot at the Grove City Cemetery.
Lois Bates relates the following story. In my youth, I spent a lot of time in a little community south and east of Blackfoot called Riverton. This is where my grandparents lived on an eighty-acre farm. Little did I realize I was growing up in a very historical part of Blackfoot. Many years later, I learned this was where Blackfoot’s first stage coach stop was, where freighter wagons were parked overnight and the first saloon was located. Dick Stevens enlightened me with many stories. Some of these I would like to share with you.
BLACKFOOT’S FIRST STAGE STOP AND THE STEVENS FAMILY
By Lois Bates

You could see the stagecoach’s wagon wheels roll, listen to the hoof beats and smell the dust as it arrived at the Steven station. “WH-O-O-A THERE…Whoo-o-a.” The stagecoach in the summer of 1866 came to a stop beside a low log building, a stones throw from the Blackfoot River.

Dusty passengers were glad to climb down from the stagecoach at the Stevens Station, after hours of bumping over rutted trails, through tall sagebrush.

The early day station for stagecoaches and wagons was built by Fredrick Smith Stevens when he arrived here April 4, 1866. He and his wife Finetta lived in their wagon-box until their log stage stop was built. Their son Fred was born in the new station Sept. 18, 1866.

Fred and Finetta Stevens, youngest son Richard (called Dick) shared the following stories with me:

I asked, “How was the stagecoach station heated?” He replied, “In the fall, winter and early spring, the two-room log building was heated by a fireplace in one end.” Amelia H. Garrett Kirkpatrick did the cooking for those who stopped for a rest or a meal. Steaks and stews, fried chicken, fresh vegetables and eggs were offered to the travelers. The food was available as it was raised by the Stevens. The travelers were hungry and welcomed the hearty food.

In back of the log station was another small log cabin; Dick said they called it “Bummer’s Retreat”. This is where the stage coach drivers rested and slept.

After leaving the Stevens Stage Stop, stagecoaches and wagons went on to the Snake River to what was then Tilford City. Tilford City was near the present day Snake River Bridge at the end of West Bridge Street. They were ferried across the Snake River by Tilford Cutch and Tom Cosgrove Sr. if they were headed west, if not they continued to the Yam Patch Station (west of the present Kimball hill and old Kimball store) or to Eagle Rock which later became Idaho Falls.

Tilford City consisted mainly of a house and barn. The barn served as a Post Office. Mail was placed in the cracks of the barn where it would be picked up by the stagecoach drivers and delivered to the nearest Pony Express Station.

The Stevens stage stop was discontinued about 1872. By 1874, Blackfoot was growing. That same year in 1874, Fredrick Stevens and Major Danilson, opened a general store in the present location of Blackfoot. Merchandise you would find at the general store would be tobacco, gin, hay and supplies for freight wagons before they crossed the Snake River.

About 1876, the Utah Northern Railroad began surveying through Montana and Idaho. When the original survey was made, Mr. Stevens told me it was intended to follow the old freight and stage road down to Riverton, but this would cut off the Danilson and Stevens’s store. Major Danilson, a Civil War officer had influence in Washington. He prevailed on the surveyors to change the original survey to make a curve at Gibson so the railroad would stop by the Stevens-Danilson General Store. By November 18, 1878 the rail was laid in back of the store. “That is how Blackfoot became a railroad town” Dick Stevens said. Their store was used as a depot until a wooden building was built.
His story of how the Blackfoot River was named is interesting. “A young Indian by the name of Johnny Pandeki (Shoshoni) asked dad if he could be a cow puncher and so dad put him on. (Johnny was later named Johnny Stevens as the Stevens adopted him or let him use their name). Johnny told the Stevens the story of how one of the Indian scouts learned the Blackfoot Indians from Montana were on the way to attack them. An ambush was set up in the woodland on the south side of the river where they waited. As the Blackfoot Indians jumped their horses into the river – bingo, there were dead Indians that were floating in the river. Most of the horses did get out. Because of the victory the river was known as the Blackfoot River.

Dick said he was a bookkeeper at the First National Bank. He told how he would go get gold for the Indians and later sent their checks to them. He said there was a fussy old cashier when Johnny came in one day to cash his check. The cashier said, “I don’t know you. You have to get someone to verify who you are.” He pointed to Dick Stevens and said, “That’s my brother.”

He reflected on his days in the two-story red brick home built in 1888 near the old log stage station. “My dad built our red brick home the same year as the court house was built in Blackfoot, in 1887. The brick for the courthouse and for our brick home was molded and kilned on our place. Father bought the furniture for our new home and for the courthouse at the same time in Ogden and Corinne, Utah. The furniture arrived by rail.

In her book, “Letters of Long Ago” Agnes Just Reid on page 104 quoted her mother Emma, “the passing of the Stevens family into the new house was made of a parlor, dining room and fine furniture” – dated January 15, 1888.

The Stevens ranch home was well known throughout the area and was a gathering place for the early Snake River Valley residents to dance, socialize and have parties. After all there were not many homes in 1888 that had wooden floors.

Dick recalled the days when families in their wagons came through the area. He said his companions were a horse and a dog and that he learned to read at the age of four.

He told of how Bingham County celebrated the first Fourth of July. The celebration he described was told to him by his mother. The year was 1867 and the location of the celebration was at Tilford City. About fifty people living at various stage freight stations decided a celebration was in order. The woman of the households got together and by pooling pieces of their dresses, made an American Flag and ran it up a makeshift flag pole.

At dawn, quantity of gun powder was placed on a flat surface. A blacksmith anvil was placed upside down over it. The gun powder was lit by means of a torch fastened to the end of a long fishing pole. There was a flash of light and a large-sized boom, causing the anvil to fly into the air.

For the Fourth of July parade, everyone dressed in the most out-landish costume they could find. It was called “The Horribles Parade”. Next came a picnic followed by dancing at the end of the day. Music was harmonica and fiddlers. Dick Stevens said this was the first and only Independence Day celebration in the area that he knew of until after 1874.

There is a small peak east of Blackfoot named Stevens Peak and I asked Dick how the peak became named Stevens Peak? He related that when his father was going to build a new home, they asked dad where he was going to build it and dad pointed to the
peak and jokingly said, “Right there!” He was just making fun, but the peak became known as STEVENS PEAK and to this day carries that name.

SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN

David Henry Biethan, (called D.H.) arrived in Blackfoot in 1882 from Iowa. Susan Elizabeth Holbrook arrived in Blackfoot one year later, in 1883 with her parents and four brothers from Illinois. Her mother ran a boarding house. D.H. and Susie were married in 1885.

When this young couple arrived in Blackfoot, it was a small frontier town with a hotel, rooming house, saloons, general store, blacksmith shop and the walks were boards and the roads were dirt. When it rained and in the winter the dirt became holes and ruts and were drifted in with snow and in the summer, the wind created dust.

At the time of their marriage, D.H. was a harness maker. Later he began a general store on Northwest Main Street where he sold groceries, hardware, shoes, furniture and even coffins. The cost was $40 per coffin. (The embalming parlor was next door.) The basement of his store served as a mortuary.

He served as Treasurer for the City of Blackfoot for two terms and was a member of the first City Council. He helped to organize the Eastern Idaho District Fair Board and was instrumental in securing a building of the Utah-Idaho Sugar Company factory in Blackfoot.

He owned stores on both sides of West Pacific Street from Broadway east to the alley and three stores on Northwest Main.

By 1910, the Biethan’s owned the first “two story” house in Blackfoot. They also had the luxury of having indoor plumbing.

He and Susie had a son Howard and three daughters, Sue, Leonore, and Winefred. Susan died in 1935. D.H. was quite lonely and in 1937 he decided to drive to Ann Arbor, Michigan to see his daughter Sue. He died while there at the age of 80 and is buried in the Grove City cemetery. He was in business 55 years in Blackfoot.

One story, he is noted for was when he gave Susan away to an Indian. It seems one day an Indian came into the Biethan store and asked to buy Susie. The Indian said, “Me buy. How much?” D.H. replied “No sell!” The Indian kept coming in the store and every time repeated the same questions and every time got the same answer “No sell!” One day just to get the Indian to quit pestering him, he said, “fifty horses!”

Several weeks later Susie was baking bread and heard quite a commotion in the corral. Suddenly the back door flew open and the Indian came in and said, “Me buy” and grabbed her. It was said Susie was scared half out of her wits and picked up the stove.
poker. The Indian immediately backed away and tripped and sat down in the rising bread dough. He soon got up and left.

The next time the Indian came into the Biethan General Store he told D.H. “Me no buy!! She devil.”

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**Ad for Biethan's General Store:**

**There is nothing new under the sun but at D.H. Biethan's.**

You will find a big line of goods most of them new.

- New dress goods, new trimmings,
- New laces, embroideries and linings,
- New overskirts, underskirts,
- New wool and silk,
- Shirt waists, new coats, new handkerchiefs,
- New jewelry.

**NEW**

- Ladies' shoes, men's shoes, children's shoes. The best line of rubbers that are made. Don't forget that the rubbers we have sold for the last two years, Banigan & Wouasquatucket, have worn twice as long as any other brands.

**NEW**

- Men's clothing, boys' clothing, children's clothing. Gloves, overcoats, etc.

**NEW**
INCORPORATION

JANUARY 16, 1901 – A majority of taxpayers had signed a petition that had been presented to a Board asking the town site of Blackfoot be incorporated as a village. There were inhabitants to the number of two hundred or more that were residents of the territory that had been described in the petition.

The following persons were appointed as Trustees for the VILLAGE OF BLACKFOOT: David H. Biethan, Clarence E. Kinney, J.W. Jones Sr., Henry C Dippel and C.W. Berryman.

JUNE 26, 1907 – A resolution providing for the recognition and creation of this village into a city of the second class was introduced and passed on June 26, 1907. The City of Blackfoot was officially formed. It was later recorded at the Bingham County Courthouse on March 24, 1909.

JANUARY 16, 2001 – Blackfoot Mayor R. Scott Reese made a proclamation to recognize the efforts of those who contributed and those who continue to contribute to make Blackfoot the great place it is. The Mayor appointed a centennial committee to plan a celebration and a monthly activity throughout the year to celebrate 100 years of incorporation as a village.

BLACKFOOT WAS LIKE A MELTING POT

They came from all over to help create the early frontier. They came bringing their knowledge, seeking adventure, to mine for gold, religion, to homestead or for their health.

The following men made a name for themselves in the early days of Blackfoot.

WATSON N. SHILLING – came from Ohio. He received a patent on his land in 1882 from the U.S. Government. He is known for two historic events: (1) He was a Calvary man that served under General George A. Custer in the Civil War. He received word of Custer’s death and it was his wire to Salt Lake City that sent the message across the nation of “Custer’s Last Stand”. (2) He was instrumental in the railroad coming through the Fort Hall Indian Reservation. He was a trader that had been licensed by the government on the Fort Hall Indian Reservation 1874 – 1885. Shilling left his mark in Blackfoot. There is Shilling Street, a Shilling Addition, the Historic Shilling District and a restaurant, “The Shilling House”. Shilling Sixth Grade School on Shilling Avenue was later changed to the Blackfoot Sixth Grade.

HENRY “RUBE” DUNN – Cumberland, England; a stage coach driver and stockman.

WILLIAM HENRY BEHLE – (Pronounced Bailey) Prussia, a doctor and drug store owner.
DR. F.W. MITCHELL – California; Supt. of Insane Asylum, also a doctor.

FREDERICK S. STEVENS – England, Steven’s Stage Coach Stop, store owner and rancher.

FRED T. DUBOIS – Illinois, Idaho Senator that was instrumental for the shape of Idaho and gaining Statehood.

JOHN GUTHRIE BROWN – Tennessee; businessman and Blackfoot store owner.

JAMES DUCKWORTH – Preston, England; owner of 7 ranches, a successful sheep rancher.

M.N. AUSTIN – Kansas; first greenhouse.

JOHN C MILLICK – Wisconsin, business man and owner of the Millick building (corner of Bridge and Main St.)

FRANK & ROSA PACINA – Czechoslovakia; Shoe store owners. (Repaired shoes as well as sold them)

ROBERT N WEST – Canada; Blackfoot’s first Mayor.

FREDERICK C CHRIST – Pennsylvania, Jeweler.

PEOPLE OF EARLY BLACKFOOT

1895 – Alpheus and Susan Fox Bennet Whitten, bought one of the first two ranches in existence between Blackfoot and Eagle Rock. The Whitten ranch grew to several thousand acres and included raising purebred cattle and thoroughbred horses. The home site became a prominent “oasis” in the valley with a spread of 300 fruit trees.

1891 – Brothers, Joe and Walter T. Bithell homesteaded 160 acres in the Wapello area. Irrigation was their first concern, but cattle was their business. In 1905, Joe took over the Red Barn Livery Stable on West Bridge Street as well as the City Stables on Northwest Main St.

1905 – Leslie Richard Clegg was in business for 58 years. He helped his father-in-law build a furniture store and then bought the building in 1916. It became the Clegg Furniture and second-hand business. He served as a city councilman, and was president of the Chamber of Commerce. He was a friend to the Indians. After fifty-eight years in business he passed away in 1974.
CYNTHIA LEE GRAHAM KINNEY – was a pioneer in the field of education. She taught school in Blackfoot for thirty-two years (1921-1954). It was estimated she taught more than 8,000 students.

1894 – John Bond and his sons John Jr., Garfield and Tom came to homestead in Blackfoot. They had a brief sojourn in California and in the Teton Basin. They are credited with taking the first scraper full of dirt to open the People’s Canal and helped in the irrigation development. The brothers opened one of the earliest feed and grain businesses in Blackfoot. They also raised stock. Tom Bond wrote history and had articles and fiction published.

THE EASTERN IDAHO STATE FAIR
By Lois Bates – 2005

It was one hundred three years ago, the folks in Blackfoot brought their produce, fruity and livestock to be judged and win monetary awards.

From 1902 until 1917 annual fairs were held under the direction of the Southeastern Idaho Fair Association, a group of men who organized themselves into a stock company.

The following chronology tells of Blackfoot’s Eastern Idaho State Fair.

1902 – The first fair was held. It was a very successful event. Gottfred Malm supervised the poultry division.

1904 – There were many apple orchards and several varieties grown. L.J. Porter from Porterville (Groveland – Rose area) exhibited 30 varieties of apples that he had raised. He also exhibited peaches, plums and a pear. The IDAHO REPUBLICAN reported on the apples, “not a worm nor speck to mar their beauty and usefulness.”

Premiums in 1904 were $2 for first place and $1 for second place. Winners listed were: Prof. Chas Johnson, Jonathon and Wallbridge apples; L.D. Wilson, Wolf River and Missouri Pippin apples, Italian prunes and Bartlett pears; John Millick who owned the Millick building on the corner of Bridge and Main St (now painted yellow) for his largest and heaviest pear. Presto Burrell, placed second for his Yellow Egg plums while Gus Powell took first place for his Peuauhee apples.

It was interesting to read the State Hospital South then called “The Idaho Asylum” sent tobacco they had grown both green and dry. They also entered egg plants that were 6 inches long and 8 inches in diameter, spinach, celery, asparagus, popcorn melons, apples and pears.

October 13, 1904 was considered Children’s Day and all children under 14 years of age “in charge of parent or guardian” were admitted free.
J.H. Brown from Era, Idaho had advised he would have horn silver and gold ores for the mineral exhibit. The Mackay Commercial Club had been invited to send an exhibit from as many mines as they could. Byrd Trego was superintendent of the minerals.

Spectacular exhibits that year were Mr. Quinn’s white corn stalk that was 14ft. high. His cabbage heads were 43 inches in diameter and weighed 26 pounds. E.F. Nichols, brought in a 6 foot tomato vine that held a bushel basket of tomatoes.

The featured attraction in 1904 was a lady balloonist.

1906 – The first Merry-go-round powered by a steam engine arrived. An editorial in the paper encouraged everyone to attend the fair, “even if it interfered with business”.

1908 – THE VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY erected a tent on the grounds as a “rest room” for woman and children. The fair management paid $250 for electricity for the fair grounds. Fair manager Kathy Gavin stated in 1996 the electricity bill for the month of September was $9,000 and that did not include the carnival and all its bright lights as they have their own generators. EISF manager, Doris Wallace reported the September light bill for 2004 was?
1911 – Winners of the baby contest were Robert Shoemaker Jr., Askel Arnsen, Thelma Cox, Gertrude Fisher and Ralph Dixey Jr.

1915 – When days of prohibition and the moonshine flowed swiftest from the dealer’s briefcase to the consumer’s secret pocket, there was scarcely any disorder or drunkenness at the fair, just a little bootlegging going on.

1917 – September 14, Citizens were marching off to war. Families bid farewell to the First Idaho Field Hospital Corps. Blackfoot boys were Tom Bumgarner, Frank DeKay, Ernest Scannell, Bernard Stevenson, Louis Simmons, Bill Clayton, Charley Cummings and Bert Penington.

1918 – Financial reasons closed the fair for the first time.

1919 – The fairgrounds were put up for sale. The Farm Bureau realized the value of the fair and urged the people of the county to purchase the grounds. Business men and farmers alike responded and the grounds were purchased co-operatively.

1920 – The fair resumed directed by the BINGHAM COUNTY FARM BUREAU. At the close of the fair that year, the grounds were sold to Bingham County.

1921 – The main attraction was a simulated Indian attack and a balloon ascension. The fair was produced by a board of directors that had been appointed by the county commissioners.

1925 – March 5, the 18th session of the State Legislature authorized the creation of the fair districts. The Eastern Idaho Fair District was the first and remains the only fair district created by the State. It is now the EASTERN IDAHO STATE FAIR.

1926 – Carl E. Johnson became the first president of the fair board. A position he held for thirteen years, until 1939.

1931 – J.C. “Doc” Sorensen was made manager until he resigned in 1936. Eric Sundquist was the next fair manager. Eric had been born in Sweden.

1933 – The depression cancelled the fair. Folks were just too broke to celebrate. Farmers could hardly give their produce away.
Eric Sundquist – EISF Manager from 1936 until the 1940’s
While manager, the new grandstand was built, the office was built, the new livestock barns, and the new commercial building.

1938 – The new grandstand was built.

1939 – Luella Prouse Murdock, office manager and secretary to both Doc Sorensen and Eric Sundquist arranged for a potato picking contest between Lewis Barrow, Governor of Maine and C.A. Bottolfson, Governor of Idaho. Governor Barrow won as Idaho’s Governor had hurt his hand. Potatoes had been planted in front of the new grandstand.
1939 - Secretary Luella Murdock on porch of first fair office.

1940 – The new administration building was erected. Due to six entire days of rain, the fair showed a deficit.

1942-43 – Fair was cancelled. There were defense travel restrictions because of World War II. The commercial building burned because of a boiler fire. It had been used to dehydrate potatoes that were shipped overseas for the military. During WWII German war prisoners were kept at the fairgrounds.
It was interesting that in 1943 the 4-H fair was held. It was very successful and it was evident the people here considered fairs very important.

1944 – The fair was revived. Board member, J.K. Smith managed the fair in 1944 and 1945.

1948 – Ruth Chapman Hartkopf, office secretary since 1943 was appointed as EISF manager and served that position until she resigned in 1964.

1952 – EISF CELEBRATED THEIR GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY.

1965 – It rained for six days and created a disaster for the EISF.

1998 – The Idaho commodity pavilion featured all kinds of Idaho products. “IDAHO” the cloned mule from the University of Idaho at Moscow was on exhibit.
2002 – The 100th anniversary was celebrated with the theme “100 YEARS OF WOW!” Lunch was served to the media and topped off by cutting a birthday cake. The Idaho cowboy Donnie Gay a bull rider was featured.

2004: The EISF increased in size to 90 acres. 
- Record attendance 212,000
- 500 employees hired for the fair.
- The concession stands hire and pay their own employees.
- Two full stages for free entertainment.
- A large area for concessions called “the food court”.
- A large carnival area to the west.
- A tunnel to the West event arena.
- A rodeo always begins on Labor Day at the EISF.
- Demonstrations and food contests are held.
- Buildings feature many antiques, art, 4-H projects, photography, quilts, commercial businesses and more.
- A demolition derby always closes the EISF.
Mayor West

Robert N. West, the first mayor of Blackfoot, and his wife, Eva, were married in Illinois, and ended up in Blackfoot because the climate was said to be better for his health. This was the case for many of the early residents of Blackfoot.

While in Blackfoot, Mr. West was partners with Boyle Brothers and West Hardware. He served on the school board for many years, belonged to the Methodist Church, and was a member of many clubs in Blackfoot. He served as Blackfoot's first Mayor from 1909-1911, and again from 1913-1915. By Leo Wallace
Depot built in 1913 is now the home of the Idaho Potato Museum.

By 1887 when Idaho was still a territory, Blackfoot was growing rapidly. It was the county seat for Bingham County and the home of the Territory Insane Asylum, the headquarters for the U.S. Land Office for Idaho’s Southern District as well as the sight for the U.S. Third Judicial District Court. On the land homesteaded by Watson N. Shilling and W.C. Lewis, Blackfoot became a lively pioneer town with seven saloons, a livery stable, a bank and an assortment of retail and general merchandise stores. The City also boasted two brick churches and a public school equal to any in the territory. Western Union had 242 miles of telegraph lines in operation in the county and over 3,000,000 pounds of freight were shipped annually to points in Alturas and Custer counties by the Idaho Stage Line.
On January 16, 1901 a majority of the town’s taxpayers signed a petition calling for Blackfoot to be incorporated as a village with David H. Biethan, Clarence E. Kinney, J.W. Jones Sr., Henry C. Dippel and C.W. Berryman appointed as Trustees. Anticipating growth as a new city, the village trustees issued franchises to Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone Company and Blackfoot Power and Light Company in 1901 opening the way for residential telephone and electricity. The cost of a five minute conversation to Pocatello was 25 cents at that time and a bill amounting to $120 was paid for the City’s lights and power in 1904. It was not until June 26, 1907 that a resolution for the recognition of the village as a city was presented and passed. Later recorded at the Bingham County Courthouse on March 24, 1909, Mayor Robert N. West became the first official Mayor of the City of Blackfoot and served from 1909 to 1911 and then again from 1913 to 1915.
One of early Idaho’s most important and controversial figures, Fred Thomas Dubois claimed Blackfoot as his legal residence. A graduate of Yale University, he came to the Idaho Territory from Illinois at age 31 and accepted a position at the Fort Hall Indian Agency just south of the City. He was appointed the U.S. Marshall of Idaho on August 25, 1882 and became actively involved in the anti-Morman agitation over polygamy being paid for each arrest and conviction. It was because of Dubois that early Mormons were disenfranchised of their right to vote. He was elected as a Territorial Delegate to the Fiftieth and Fifty-first Congresses and was instrumental in Idaho gaining statehood and keeping the northern panhandle counties in the state of Idaho. He and his two daughters are buried in the Blackfoot Grove City Cemetery.

The Honorable Fred Thomas Dubois
What began as a small gathering in 1902 to show and judge the results of the season’s harvest, with only short lapses during the 1933 Depression and World War II in 1942 and 1943, the Eastern Idaho State Fair continues to be the most significant and best attended civic event in the City of Blackfoot and Bingham County. Held annually beginning on Labor Day weekend in September, the Eastern Idaho Fair was the first and remains the only fair district created by the State. Today the fair’s Board of Directors has expanded the grounds to cover 90 acres within the City limits, employs over 500 employees and boasts well over 200,000 attendees annually.

1906 The First Steam Powered Merry-Go-Round comes to E.I.S.F.
In 1905, W. Herman Stufflebeam opened his door as “The Blackfoot Abstract Co.” by copying and sorting records from the County Courthouse and writing abstracts for various lenders and real estate agents in the area. Later changed to “Bingham Title and Trust” and then to “The First American Title Company” as it is known today, it is Blackfoot’s oldest continuous family-owned business. In 2005, the Stufflebeam family and their 536 employees in 37 offices across three states celebrated their 100th anniversary.
Known to the agricultural community as the birthplace of modern potato equipment, it was two early Blackfoot businesses, Milestone and Spudnik, who pioneered and manufactured the first automated potato equipment that revolutionized the future of Idaho’s famous potato industry. Milestone, Inc. began in 1961 when Owen K. Ward, Merthan Miles and Scott Brown engineered and developed the first potato seed cutter. Replacing hand cutting, the massive quantities of seeds prepared by the automated cutter made large scale potato farm production possible. The thirty-five machines built that first year were manufactured by Earl M. Tanner of Blackfoot. In the year 2000 E. M. Tanner and Sons purchased Milestone and still manufacture and sell the equipment worldwide from the same location in Blackfoot today.

Milestone develops the first automated potato seed cutter
In the late 1950’s potatoes were moved in gunny sacks with potato forks by slow, back-braking labor. In 1957 two Blackfoot brothers, Carl and Leo Hobbs, invented a self-propelled “swing boom piler” to automate piling potatoes in potato cellars and later that winter also invented the “scooper” automating the removal of potatoes from the cellar. In that same year the Russians launched their first Sputnik satellite. The Hobbs brothers changed the “t” in Sputnik to a “d” and called their new line of equipment “Spudnik” which made sense since potatoes are often called “spuds.” Their machinery caught the potato industry’s attention much like the Russian satellite caught the attention of the world. During this period potato processing began to flourish, requiring greater mechanization to handle the large volume of potatoes produced. Today Spudnik Equipment Company, LLC manufactures a full range of potato equipment including pilers, scoopers, conveyors, sorters, eliminators, bulk beds, evenflows, planters, hillers, windrowers, and harvesters in a modern 126,000 square foot manufacturing facility just west of the City of Blackfoot.
1962 – Spudnik Offices and Manufacturing Facilities

2006 – Spudnik Offices and Manufacturing Facilities
In 1946, two twin brothers from New York, Harold and Robert Abend, started with an idea of shipping Idaho potatoes to New York City and repackaging them under the name Nonpareil, a French word meaning, “having no equal.” By September 1959, the demand for quality Nonpareil fresh packed potatoes was so great that Harold moved to Idaho and built a facility and began operations to ship direct from Blackfoot. Expanding the operation to produce potato starch and flakes in 1973 and then dehydrated and sliced potatoes in 1978, a full time manufacturing division was formed in 1986 for dehydrated food service potatoes. Today Nonpareil is a modern, progressive, and dynamic organization farming over 13,000 acres and employing nearly 500 employees in three different divisions all located in Blackfoot with an additional processing facility in O-Neill, Nebraska.
The economic stability of the City is evidenced by the longevity of more than a handful of family owned and operated businesses whose power of ideas expressed by action have built and maintained a bigger and better Blackfoot.

What began in 1934 as “Kesler’s Cash Store” next to the home of F. C. Kesler, for 73 years and four generations has been a family owned and operated grocery store occupying an entire city block. The grocery store, currently owned by Jack Kesler and his sons, Bob and Kelly, now houses a unique 8000 square foot greenhouse.

Jake and Viola Collard first opened Blackfoot Appliance and Furniture in the fall of 1948 in the building which is currently Blackfoot City Hall. Moving twice to larger locations to accommodate growth, his grandson Mark Collard now operates the recently remodeled store which offers design services as well as flooring, furniture, appliances, and electronics.
When Stan and Doris Richardson opened the doors in 1951, Stan’s was a busy restaurant and lounge, truck stop, casino, and gathering place for discussing news and current events. Frequently the meeting room for community clubs and organizations still today, their son Greg opens at 6:30 a.m. for morning coffee shop talk and old fashioned hometown cooking.

When Gareth Ogden purchased the store in 1954 the sign read, “O.K. Rubber Welders”. Today his sons Jerry and Roland offer the same hometown service doing business as “Ogden’s Tire Factory.”
Rupes Burgers was purchased by Vaughn and Carol Rupe in 1961 and then re-opened in 1987 by their son Kevin and his wife Jana. A new building was completed in the same location in 2000 and today Rupes Burgers offers a full service and take-out menu along with their original car-hop service.

Bob Moldenhauer purchased the book store on the corner of Broadway and Pacific from Lloyd Ralphs in 1962 and renamed it M & H Office Supply. His son Rocky and Dawn Moldenhauer still operate the business today in the historic Bridge Street ZCMI building built in 1931 with 13,000 square feet of retail space and a new scrap book shop. Dawn affectionately says the name now stands for “Mine & His” Office Supply.
The Shilling House, named for its location on North Shilling Street, has been a place of hospitality and good food for over 117 years. Built in 1890 and purchased by the Henscheid family in 1964, the historic Italianate style dwelling serves as a location for public events, fine dining, and special occasions.

In more recent years, the City’s success at attracting and maintaining high quality industrial and manufacturing jobs is evident by the growth and success of two other major corporate residents, Basic American Foods and Premier Technology, whose contribution to the business community of Blackfoot is measured not only by amount of dollars added to the local economy but also in their generous support for civic events and citizen neighbors.

Residents of the City of Blackfoot and surrounding areas also enjoy an assortment of other amenities as well as quality healthcare and educational opportunities. School District 55 has an enrollment of approximately 4000 students and includes a Division 4A High School and an alternative High School, Mountain View Middle School, eight elementary schools and a Center for Early Childhood Special Education. The City has a County Hospital licensed for 25 critical care patients, a dialysis center, a surgery center
and an extended care facility employing 23 full-time board-certified physicians and 120 visiting specialists. Additionally the Blackfoot Medical Clinic provides quality healthcare from one of the largest multi-specialty clinics in Southeast Idaho complete with an Urgent Care Clinic and a new weight training/physical therapy and fitness facility. The City of Blackfoot maintains ten miles of greenbelt and over 100 acres of municipal parks that include a small lake, a soccer complex, a disc golf course, a skate board park, and lighted tennis courts. Citizens of Blackfoot and surrounding communities enjoy an 18-hole municipal golf course and an Olympic size swimming pool with a seven field baseball and sports complex under construction. Surrounded by mountains and bordered by two rivers make biking or hiking and hunting or fishing an easy after work or weekend activity. The abundance of natural resources and the energetic business environment make the probability for progressive but managed growth in the area inevitable. Understanding that the citizens of Blackfoot continue to have a nostalgic yearning for their rural past, as leaders of this historic community we make it our ambition to pattern modern economic planning and development decisions after the same imagination and risk as did those that came before us.
LIST OF BLACKFOOT’S MAYORS

1909 – 1911 - Robert N. West (First Mayor)
1911 – 1913 - L.M. Capps
1913 – 1915 - Robert N West
1915 – 1917 - E. T. Peck
1917 – 1919 - A. B. Stephens
1919 – 1921 - N. J. Thorstenberg
1921 – 1931 - E. T. Peck
1931 – 1935 - Edward Thoreson
1935 – 1941 - J. H. Andersen
1941 – 1942 - Merrill C. Boyle
1942 – 1945 - Earl J. Miller
1945 – 1947 - J. Cecil Sandberg
1947 – 1949 - Einar M. Nelson
1949 – 1949 - Merrill C. Boyle
1949 – 1951 - Frank Smith
1951 – 1958 - Earl J. Miller
1958 – 1959 - L.R. Jeppesen
1959 – 1963 - Elvin A. Lindquist
1964 – 1965 - Louis F. Haller
1965 – 1969 - Gareth Ogden
1970 – 1977 - Delwin C. Daniels
1980 – 1981 - Howard Packham
1982 – 1985 - Delwin C. Daniels
1986 – 1994 - C. Dean Hill
2005 – 2014 - Mike Virtue
2014 – Present - Paul M. Loomis
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Ron Hatzenbuhler – ISU Professor

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Written by Ginette Manwaring with the help of Lois Bates - 2007