



## Rathdrum Jail Museum

PO Box 227, Rathdrum, Idaho 83858 208-625-0014

Financial contributions in the form of donation and membership are tax deductible

Member of the Rathdrum Chamber of Commerce

## August, 2019 Newsletter

Welcome **August** 2019! Enjoy the bounty of the season — Vine-ripened tomatoes, ripe melon, sweet corn on the cob, and squash are just a few of the favorites. Canning season is also here. **August** was named to honor the first Roman emperor Augustus Caesar (63b.c.–a.d.14). The zodiac signs are Leo (7/23–8/22) and Virgo (8/23–9/22). The birth flowers are the Gladiolus (symbolizes strength of character, sincerity, and generosity) and the Poppy (symbolizes eternal sleep, oblivion, and also imagination). August's birthstone is peridot, which is said to symbolize strength and healing power, protecting its wearer from nightmares and evil, ensuring harmony and happiness.

### HISTORY — DID YOU KNOW

On March 4, 1863, as the Civil War was in progress, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Organic Act, which created Idaho Territory. The new territory, with Lewiston as temporary capital, included the present states of Idaho, Montana, and most of Wyoming. The First Territorial Legislature created five very large Counties: Alturas, Boise, Idaho, Nez Perce, and Sho-shone. When Montana Territory was created on May 26, 1864, it included a large portion of Idaho Territory west of the Continental Divide and east of the Bitter-root Range, which resulted in the panhandle shape of the northern part of Idaho Territory. December 22, 1864, Kootenai County was created with Seneacquoteen named as County Seat; however, no county business was ever transacted there. "Lah-toh" County was also created, made up of everything south of the forty-eighth parallel and north of the Clearwater River, with Coeur d'Alene as its County Seat, but no business was ever transacted there either. The northern boundary of Nez Perce County was then moved north to the southern boundary of Kootenai County, eliminating "Lah-toh." Three years later in 1867, the boundaries of Kootenai County were changed by the legislature to include everything north of Nez Perce and Shoshone Counties. Organizational meetings for the purpose of establishing a county government were held in July, 1881 by two merchants, George B. Wannacott and Marcus D. Wright, who called a meeting of interested residents to discuss that possibility. The first meeting was held in Wannacott's store two miles west of Fort Coeur d'Alene (which was still under construction). When he moved his store to Rathdrum in August, that effectively relocated the County Seat. A petition to create a county government was completed and sent to Governor John B. Neil. The first county commissioners and county officers were appointed and the first official county meetings and court were held in the small store until an official court house was built in 1889. In 1885 Coeur d'Alene tried to sue to get it back, saying that it had never been moved by an official action, but Rathdrum retained its position until 1907 when Coeur d'Alene at last won it away.



In 1905 Kootenai County was divided into Lewis County and Clark County, with County Seats at Sandpoint and Coeur d'Alene, but the law was declared unconstitutional. February 21, 1907, Bonner County was established, with the County Seat at Sandpoint; it included all the area north of Kootenai County. The final lines were drawn January 23, 1914, when Benewah County was created with its County Seat at St. Maries, and Boundary County, with its name describing its location at the border of the United States and Canada, was created with its County Seat at Bonners Ferry.

And there you have it — a state shaped like a pork chop,  
 joined mostly by impassable mountains, and five Northern Counties.  
 Information from: North Idaho's Centennial Limited Edition 1890-1990 and  
 Kootenai County Takes Shape - 1864-1915 by Robert Singletary

Our Rathdrum Jail Museum is open on Saturdays and Sundays from 12pm to 4pm thru August 25. A big THANKS to all the visitors, donors, members, and volunteers. It's with your presence, help, and support that the Rathdrum Historical Society is able to keep the Jail Museum open and available to the community.

Call 208-625-0014 or visit our website:  
[www.rathdrumhistory.com](http://www.rathdrumhistory.com) or Facebook: "Old Kootenai County Jail Museum"  
 for additional information and questions.

**MISSION STATEMENT:**

**To Maintain and Protect Rathdrum's Historic and Cultural Resources for Future Generations**

**RATHDRUM JAIL MUSEUM**  
 Rathdrum / Westwood Historical Society, PO Box 227, Rathdrum, Idaho 83858

**MEMBERSHIP/DONATION: Individual - \$20.00 Family - \$30.00 Business - \$50.00**  
**Contributor / Donation - \$\_\_\_\_\_**

Note: All donations of \$250 or above (in cash or in kind) will be acknowledged on our Donor Wall of Fame in the Community Room as well as on our website.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_