



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

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The Rathdrum / Westwood Historical Society was incorporated in 1999. Our mission is to gather information and items relevant to early Rathdrum Idaho history. We are specifically dedicated to the running and maintaining of the historic Kootenai County Jail Museum. Our society is interested in preserving this building while making it available to the public for tours. Within the museum are exhibits that offer a window into the past. These items have been donated by many people who would like to offer a glimpse into Rathdrum's past. As a society we aim to preserve the heritage of Rathdrum while educating and enlightening the public. We continue to seek information on people and events relevant to the early history of Rathdrum and North Idaho.

Why Study History

Authors: Jennifer Llewellyn, Steve Thompson, Publisher: Alpha History URL: <https://alphahistory.com/what-is-history>

In today's world, where the focus is very much on today and tomorrow, the value of history is often questioned. Many people are skeptical about the practical worth of history and question the relevance, usefulness, and/or practical value of studying things that happened long ago thinking that history has little or no bearing on their lives or in the world today.

History requires a complex range of skills

Many people with a negative or dismissive view of history think it involves simple memorization and recall of facts and dates, but little else. Anyone who has studied history at higher levels will tell you there is much more involved. History requires you to acquire and utilize many skills such as developing the ability to locate, study, and interpret written and visual material in order to extract evidence and meaning. They must be adept at contextualization, analysis, problem-solving and critical thinking and should be strong communicators to express/share their findings clearly and effectively. History also draws on and utilizes knowledge and ideas from many other disciplines, including politics, legal studies, economics, sociology, philosophy, psychology, the sciences and the arts; these skills and knowledge can be extremely useful, both in employment and in the study of other subjects.

History teaches lessons about past, present and future

For as long as human beings have studied history, cynics have dismissed it as a curious indulgence, a quaint but worthless fascination with vanished societies and dead people. This attitude was typified by American industrialist Henry Ford, who in 1916 said, "History is more or less bunk [nonsense] ... the only history worth a damn is the history we make today". Ford's negative view, while not uncommon, is narrow and misguided. History certainly does require study of the past, which enhances your understanding of the modern world. Most history courses focus on timeless themes and issues; for example, the ways in which people, communities, and nations interact, the nature of power and leadership, the difficulties of government and economic management, the impact of war and conflict on societies, and the relationships between different classes, wealth, capital and labour. These themes, issues and challenges remain a constant in human societies; only the people, places and details change. History also provides an essential context for understanding the modern world. It is impossible to understand modern Russia and China without understanding how these societies have been shaped by imperialism, war, revolution, communism and the Cold War.

History teaches you to research and interpret

To be a successful historian or history student, you must first become a good researcher. Research is the skill of locating and gathering information and historical evidence from many different places. This evidence can be found in a variety of forms, including documents, visual material, physical artifacts, oral and digital sources. Historians apply their knowledge and skills to locate sources and to extract information, evidence and meaning from them. They think critically about every piece of evidence, testing and evaluating its reliability, credibility, usefulness and significance. All this makes historians skilled at locating, handling and evaluating information. Skills like these are not just valued in history, they are in demand in academic disciplines and a range of professions.

History teaches you to think and problem-solve

History can be extraordinarily complex. It requires a great deal of detective work, careful thought and problem-solving. As historians locate information and evidence, they begin to build up an understanding and a 'picture' of the people, event or society being studied. As they delve deeper into the past, historians almost always find unanswered questions, unclear information or missing pieces of evidence and after finishing his or her research, the historian must start looking for answers. At this point, history becomes akin to assembling a gigantic jigsaw puzzle, except there is no picture to serve as a guide and some of the pieces are missing. The historian must weigh up their evidence, think logically and laterally, then develop credible and justifiable arguments or theories.

History teaches you to communicate

As in other humanities disciplines, historians must be effective communicators and must develop and refine techniques to share their findings and conclusions. Historians communicate in many different ways; prominent historians publish the findings of their research as books; academic historians often write articles for scholarly journals, where they are peer reviewed before publication. Historians can also articulate their findings in newspaper or magazine articles, interviews, lectures, symposiums, conferences or on the Internet. History students usually outline their conclusions in essays and term papers, book reports, document or image analyses, oral presentations, performances, projects, slideshows and examinations. All require you to develop a range of communication skills. These skills are used and valued in other academic disciplines, as well as various fields of employment.

History prepares you for many professions

One criticism often made of history is a perceived lack of value in the career market. This is an unfair representation of how useful and highly regarded history qualifications are. The skills and knowledge acquired from studying history are valued by many professions. As effective writers and communicators, many history graduates become successful journalists, copywriters, authors, editors, content managers and marketing professionals. Being able to locate, organize and manage information has enabled many history graduates to become outstanding researchers, librarians, information managers and administrators. Many history graduates also complete additional study to become lawyers, diplomats and public officials. Politics is another career path for history graduates, some of whom have risen to high office. History is also a useful platform for a career in the military or police forces or for further studies in economics, business management, records management, social work or psychology.

History creates good citizens

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, history helps create thoughtful people and good citizens. History students spend most of their time studying people and societies, learning what it means to be human. They learn the value of things like ethics, empathy, diversity and social justice; also, learning the risks and dangers of certain ideas. They learn about the timeless issues and problems that affect human societies, both past and present. This equips history graduates to understand and work with the people in their own world. Studying history also creates thoughtful and active citizens who are willing to participate in the political process or in their own communities. Many history students are also endowed with healthy skepticism and have a willingness and capacity to question their own world and perhaps find ways to make it better.

A big THANKS to our 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. We are now closed on weekends until spring; however, for questions or if you want to schedule a group tour, please contact us:

Call 208-625-0014 or visit our website:
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

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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

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