In 2003, the Ada County Historic Preservation Council initiated the County Treasure sign program to raise public awareness of the historic sites and structures located within the County and to encourage private owners to preserve them for future generations. This program honors historic sites each year by placing the special County Treasure sign on their property for a two-month period. Suggestions for nominations are solicited from local historic preservation commissions and societies and the general public.

2009-2010 Award Winners

According to the 2000 Phase III Ada County Study, Kuna began as the Fifteen Mile House stage station where the road to Silver City crossed the Oregon Short Line Railway Company right of way. When the line began operation in 1883, a station was placed at that point and given the name "Kuna". According to Wikipedia, many people thought that Kuna meant "the end of the trail", but Charles S. Walgamott in his memoir of his adventures in the late 1800s in southern Idaho entitled "Six Decades Back.", cited the origin of the name as a Shoshone Indian word meaning "green leaf, good to smoke".

A settlement grew up around the station and flourished as supplies for Boise City, Idaho City, Placerville, Centerville, and Silver City were transported by wagon from the station at Kuna. Then the railroad built a branch line from Nampa to Boise in 1887 that bypassed the station at Kuna and the town slowly evaporated until there was only a railroad siding and a few scattered farms.

Farming was very difficult in those days as water was mostly available only from wells or hauled by barrels from the Snake River many miles away. Then the U.S. Reclamation Service built the Boise Irrigation Project and plentiful supplies of water became available in the Kuna area in 1909. In May of 1909, 100 years ago, modern Kuna began with a lottery for the sale of more than 200 lots in the newly platted town. Chances on the lots cost $100 each. Modern Kuna was then incorporated in 1915.

We are commemorating the 100th anniversary of this beginning for modern Kuna by recognizing as county treasures four homes from that early era plus a cottage from the depression era.

From these homes in the southern part of the county, we go to the most northwesterly part of the county for a farmhouse on CanAda Road for our sixth treasure.

The County Treasures sign will be placed at each of the properties during the period shown.

Taylor House
Built in 1910 and located at 623 Franklin in Kuna, this residence represents one form of the "Craftsman" architectural style which was especially common in early Kuna. It has been reported that it was originally a farm house with large orchards.

Atkins House
Built in 1911 and located at 425 West Fourth in Kuna, this residence represents another form of the "Craftsman" architectural style.
About the Council
The Council was created on August 25, 1988 to preserve and enhance cultural and historic sites throughout Ada County and to increase awareness of the value of historic preservation to citizens and local businesses. Currently the Council is composed of nine volunteer members that commit to serve a three-year term and are appointed by the Board of Ada County Commissioners. This and other publications of the Ada County Historic Preservation Council are available from our website at http://www.adaweb.net/historicPreservationCouncil.aspx.

Keller House
Built in 1915 and located at 423 North Locust Avenue in Kuna, this residence represents still another form of the “Craftsman” architectural style which was especially common in early Kuna. It has been reported that it was built by the owner of the Kuna newspaper and that his widow continued to live in the house until the 1960s.

Snethen House
Built in 1915, at about the same time as the “Craftsman” style homes in Kuna, this home at 6670 North CanAda Road at the opposite end of the county appears to have elements of both the “Four Square” and “Queen Anne” styles of architecture. It has been reported to have been a farm house from then until recently.

Kindred House
Also built in 1915 and located at 629 North School Street in Kuna, this residence represents yet one more form of the “Craftsman” architectural style which was especially common in early Kuna. This time it is built with brick instead of wooden siding. It has been reported that in 1920, first grade class for forty four students was taught in the living room by Vertice Hostetler.

Sumner/Wilson House
Built in 1930, early in the Great Depression, and located at 361 West Fourth Street, this home is of a much simpler architectural style with considerably less ornamentation than the earlier "Craftsman" style. It may represent a transition to the "Tudor Revival" style of architecture that was coming into vogue about that time.

This program receives federal funds from the National Park Service through the Idaho State Historical Society. Regulations of the U.S. Department of the Interior strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental federally assisted programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, religion or handicap; any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility operated by a recipient of federal assistance should write to: Director, Equal Opportunity Program, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127. The subject of this publication has been funded in part with federal funds from the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policy of the Department of the Interior.