

The Jones House

Frank says, “Getting the Jones House was a tremendous turning point in his life. Being given the house and the chance to restore it in Boise recharged my preservation battery.” With help from his wife Kathy and his 3 remaining brothers they were able to restore the Jones house in two years—quite an achievement for a project of that scale. They did most of the work themselves.



Frank thanks Preservation Idaho, Boise City, Local Construct, and their friends who have contributed much to make the project possible. He states, “History can be learned from books and movies, but if you want to experience it, you have to go to a preserved original building. Visiting the Jones House is like “stepping back in time.””



Photo: The Jones House when Frank Eld obtained it.



Photo: Restored Jones House



Photos:
Upper Left: Dining Room before Restoration.
Upper Right: Dining Room during Restoration.
Lower Left: Dining Room after Restoration.

Author

Since retirement he has travelled all across the northern United States and Canada documenting and researching original log construction done by immigrant Finns in the 1890-1910 period. He has published one book *Finnish Log Construction-The Art* and he is currently working on a second book.

ADA COUNTY MAKING HISTORY AWARD

The Ada County Making History Award honors people whose activities today are creating our future history. Ada County is pleased to present its Making History Award to Preservationist Frank Eld restorer of the Jones House and Roseberry General Store and author of *Finnish Log Construction—The Art*.



Frank Eld

The Ada County Board of County Commissioners is pleased to present its Making History Award to Frank Eld for his contributions in preserving Idaho’s history for future generations.

Early Life

Frank was born and raised in Valley County, Idaho. He grew up with 5 brothers on a 160 acre farm, which his father homesteaded when he came from Finland in 1899. He was raised by his mother after his father died when he was eight. His maternal grandparents were also Finnish settlers in the Long Valley.

Farm work took most of the time when he was not in school. They had a few milk cows, which required being home twice a day to milk and limited most school activities. Milking meant getting up early, and in the winter, shoveling snow, watering, and feeding stock, all before school. However, Frank was on the debate team and a thespian during high school. He was also active in his family's church. His summers were spent working on neighboring farms to help support the family and taking care of farm chores such as putting up the hay, cutting firewood, or fixing barb wire fences.

Frank has fond memories of growing up on the farm and states, "Nothing compares to growing up on a farm. It teaches responsibility early on, but also allows a freedom to do things not available in an urban setting." Frank says that he was always interested in building things. His father was a carpenter, but died too early for him to learn from his father, but Frank always had the tools available and loved to use them. He built forts, club houses, and rafts to float Cascade Lake. Frank says, "building is in my blood."

Frank attended one room school houses in Donnelly and graduated from McCall-Donnelly High School in 1964. He also attended Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire for a year before graduating from Columbia

University in New York. He did post graduate work in Millersville College in Pennsylvania and taught both history and industrial arts in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. After teaching for thirteen (13) years he returned to Idaho and started his own business in manufactured housing.

Interest in History and Preservation

Frank's interest in preservation began when he was in 5th grade and his mother and him restored an old pump organ, which originally belonged to his Mom's oldest brother who was killed in World War I, and which came to his farm when his Grandparent's farm was sold. This organ now sits in the Jones House parlor.



Photo: Jones House Parlor

In his high school years, Frank helped establish a temporary museum celebrating the Idaho Territorial Centennial in 1963 at the Donnelly community center. This became the catalyst for the eventual museum he helped found in Roseberry. He bought the original Roseberry General Store building in 1969 when he graduated from Columbia and then spent the next 46 years moving and restoring 25 buildings, including 8 Finnish built log ones, and helping build it to what it is today. During his teaching years, he would spend the summers in Idaho working on Roseberry. During the school year, he helped restore the historic Dewees Tavern for the Trappe Pennsylvania Historical Society.

Frank has had a strong interest in George Washington since he was a boy. Frank states, "George Washington has become my "mentor" if you will." Frank has spent a great deal of time studying him. He says, "No other President has ever come near emulating what he did." When Frank lived in Pennsylvania, he was within a few miles of Valley Forge, which has become his touchstone in all things historical. He tries to go east at least once a year for his "George Washington" fix!

Photo: Frank at George Washington Headquarters at Valley Forge

