



NEWS RELEASE

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ALL IDAHOANS INVITED TO SHARE IN CELEBRATION OF IDAHO STATEHOUSE'S 100TH BIRTHDAY, 2 P.M. MONDAY, ON SOUTH STEPS

BOISE (July 8, 2005) – Presidents of the United States have campaigned there. Deceased governors, U.S. senators and distinguished jurists have lain in state. Demonstrations and rallies of just about every size and type have been held there. And fire almost spelled its doom.

All of these are descriptions of Idaho's most famous address – the Idaho State Capitol building – better known as the Idaho Statehouse, which gets a 100th year birthday party starting at 2 p.m. Monday, July 11, on the south steps.

The public birthday party – complete with a large three-dimensional birthday cake in the form of the Statehouse and additional sheet cakes to make a piece of birthday cake available to up to 2,000 visitors to the building that day being served beginning at noon – is part of a month-long celebration to help recognize the 100th birthday of the venerable building.

A formal birthday ceremony will begin at 2 p.m. with comments by John F. Kane, Idaho Capitol Commission chairman. After the National Anthem by the Idaho National Guard's 25th Army Band and a flyover from the Idaho National Guard, Idaho State Historical Society Executive Director Steve Guerber will speak followed by comments regarding the status of the Idaho Capitol Restoration project by Capitol Commissioner Andrew Erstad. Gov. Dirk Kempthorne will then make remarks and Kane will close the proceedings and invite those attending to join in the cake celebration.

Also included in the month-long recognition is an historical photographic exhibit commemorating many of the historical events that have occurred within the walls and

Idaho Statehouse Birthday Celebration 1

upon the grounds of Idaho's most famous building. Construction on the central building and dome of the Statehouse began in July, 1905 and final construction was completed 10 years later. The east and west wings were added in 1919-1920.

"If only the walls of this building could talk, what tales they could tell," said the Historical Society's Guerber. "You can't help but wonder how many laws and proclamations have been signed by Idaho governors there, or how many laws the legislature has enacted."

The photographic exhibit, which is on display in the 1st floor Rotunda of the Statehouse, remembers many of the milestone moments, not only of the building's construction, but also of the events held within its walls and on its grounds. "The Idaho Statehouse has been the focal point of so much of Idaho's history of lawmaking and governance," Guerber said.

In addition, the photo gallery will show other milestone events such as former U.S. senator William E. Borah lying in state in 1940 and presidential candidate Dwight D. Eisenhower campaigning with nine western state governors in 1952. More recent photography includes a scene from a fire in 1992 that gutted the attorney general's suite and required 2 1/2 years of detailed reconstruction to restore the area to historical accuracy.

Throughout July, guided tours of the Statehouse will be provided Tuesday through Saturday at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. In addition, students from RiverStone Community School in Boise will be conducting interviews with people who have worked in the Statehouse, past or present, or who have special memories of events associated with the Statehouse. These interviews then will be compiled into an oral history document by the Idaho State Historical Society.

Guerber said special invitations have been issued to more than 200 former legislators who are still living throughout Idaho to visit the Statehouse again during the commemoration events and to participate in the oral history project.

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