

A CAPITAL OLD SONG unknown songwriter 1871

WAY OUT IN IDAHO unknown songwriter ca. 1883

BLACKFOOT'S BOOM IS COMING unknown songwriter 1887

ED TRAFTON'S SONG Ed Trafton 1890?

RAILROAD MEN'S HOBO SONG unknown songwriter early 1890s?

SONG OF THE TETON Benjamin Wood Driggs and David E. Smith 1912

DOWN WHERE THE LOST RIVERS FLOW Flora Mason Foster 1918

PAL PINTO AND IDAHO Bob Spritzer Late 1910s?

TETON PEAKS unknown songwriter 1920s?

Gary will have CD's & Interpretive booklets

For sale 20 April 2023

7 PM

Afton Civic Center



Gary Eller

Nampa, ID

Gary Eller grew up playing American roots music. After 30 years working as a nuclear scientist at Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, he retired in Idaho. There, Gary focused on the roots music of his new home, bringing life to Idaho's history through his compilations, interpretations, and performances of the region's songs. He has published 18 interpretive booklets with accompanying CDs pertaining to the history and culture of early Idaho, most recently about stock handlers. He is a 2020 recipient of an Idaho Governor's Award in traditional arts and a very active member of the Idaho Humanities Council's Speakers Bureau.

Photo courtesy of artist

BEAR LAKE MONSTER

Charles Rich (?), ca. 1871



Although putatively about the Bear Lake monster of Native American and pioneer legends, the song in fact is a terrific political parody which uses the monster as an allegory for the federal government or for Mormonism, depending upon the listener's point of view. Mormon Bishop Charles Rich, a well-known practical joker, likely wrote the song, after sending letters to the *Deseret News* claiming to have seen the monster.

***If you doubt this gentleman's word,
You might as well doubt mine.***

MANY THANKS TO

**The Idaho Humanities Council for
financial support and encouragement.**

**The Star Valley Historical Society for the
invitation to share early Idaho songs.**

**Individuals, libraries, museums and archives across
the world where many early Idaho songs were found.**

**Idaho songsters who created wonderful
windows into Idaho's past.**

**Donations to Idaho Humanities Council &/or Star Valley Historical
Society will be gratefully accepted**

THE MORMON QUESTION

unknown songwriter 1857

Controversy raged in the 1840s and 50s concerning the “Mormon Question”, primarily about polygamy. In 1857, the Federal government appointed Alfred Cumming to replace Brigham Young as the Utah territory governor. The U.S. Army was to escort him to Utah. In response, the Mormon’s raised a militia to oppose



A Mormon wagon train
in Echo Canyon, Utah

the Army. The “Utah War” thankfully was resolved with minimal bloodshed. *The Mormon Question* song, cleverly skewering the Army using the melody of *Yankee Doodle*, likely was sung during the conflict by militia members.

*There’s a great commotion in the East about the Mormon question.
The problem is, to say the least, too much for their digestion.*

STAR VALLEY ROSE MORGAN

unknown songwriter late 1890s?

On August 13, 1896, Butch Cassidy's Wild Bunch robbed the Montpelier, Idaho, bank. According to legend, proceeds were to pay lawyers to get gang member Matt Warner out of the Salt Lake City jail. Prior to that, Warner spent a winter in Star Valley on the Wyoming-Idaho border, masquerading as a rancher looking for land. There he courted and wed fourteen-year-old Rose Morgan (1883-1903) without revealing his real identity.



**The Wild Bunch, Ft. Worth, 1900.
Standing: Bill Carver and Harvey Logan (Kid Curry).
Seated: Harry Longbough (Sundance Kid), Ben Kilpatrick (Tall Texan) and Robert Leroy Parker (Butch Cassidy)**

***One day she met a stranger, a reckless wandering man.
Who said, "I am a rancher – disprove it if you can.***

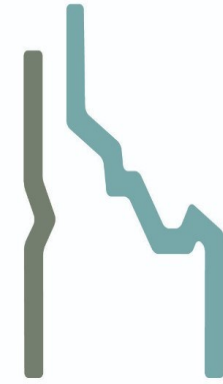
Early Songs of East Idaho and North Utah

Star Valley Historical Society

**Afton, Wyoming
April 20, 2023**



**Presented by
Gary Eller**



**IDAHO
HUMANITIES
COUNCIL**

Public is invited free of charge

Afton Civic Center

20 April 2023 7 PM

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