

# Former Publisher Gives Border Days History of Events

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The following article was written by John Olmsted, former co-owner of the Free Press and long-time Border Days supporter.

## ABOUT GRANGEVILLE BORDER DAYS

**BY JOHN L. OLMSTED**  
Most live and progressive towns and cities have at least one entertainment each year. Grangeville, Idaho has its GRANGEVILLE BORDER DAYS. The first performance was in 1912 and has been an annual event ever since except for the World War Two years.

Border Days, on the border of the wide open ranges, was first held in open pastures near Grangeville — no corral, no seating facilities for spectators. Saddling was done in the open.

Border Days was first strictly for the local working cowboys who made their living "cowboying". Later it was incorporated with a County Fair. After difficulty with the weather the date was changed to the weekend nearest to the Fourth of July. It is now known as Grangeville Border Days and Celebration. It is not only for the enjoyment of Idaho County residents but has become "Homecoming" for former residents and High School reunions.

Most outstanding of Border Days performers are Mr. Guy Cash an Idaho County native and Jackson Sundown, a highly respected Nez Perce Indian, who got their start in the rodeo circuit in the Grangeville Border Days. Jackson Sundown rode "Cyclone", a wild horse that been refused by a White man. Sundown rode him "to the finish", according to reports. Sundown, also, on the same day, rode "Duke of Tolo", a big red bull that had thrown another rider. Sundown went on to the Pendleton Roundup to win the National Championship. A bronze statue of Jackson Sundown, by A. Phimster Proctor, stands in the Denver (Colorado) Civic Center. Mr. Sundown was also the model for the Indian rider in the picture by Parrish, of "The End Of The Trail". There has also been said that a statue of Sundown is in the RCA building in New York City. But this has never been verified by this writer who made an extensive search for information for the 80th anniversary edition of the IDAHO COUNTY FREE PRESS, Grangeville.

The other World Champion from GRANGEVILLE BORDER DAYS, Mr. Guy Cash, now living in Nez-perce, Idaho, about 24-miles from Grangeville, Mr. Cash has taken many prizes at rodeos in Pendleton, Oregon, Calgary Stampede, Canada and Madison Square Gardens, where in 1938 he won the World's Champion

Saddle Bronc Rider trophy. Mr. Cash was widely known for his ease in the saddle when riding a wild horse, his hat in one hand waving to the applauding audience. Mr. Cash still owns and rides a saddle horse.

GRANGEVILLE BORDER DAYS, originally for the local working cowboys, was run under the RCA rules for a number of years. It was later returned to amateur status by wishes of the local public to give the area cowboys a better chance at the purse.

Grangeville Border Days has been growing in entertainment features. A Main Street parade is held each of the three days, street sports for the youngsters, hotdog and bingo-stands will again be in Grangeville for the 1976 BORDER DAYS.

Improvements at the Border Days arena have been made annually. Jim McGowan, stock contractor, for Border Days for a number of years, says the corral, chutes, arena and seating facilities are the best of any rodeo he stocks in the Pacific Northwest.

The slogan "Cut 'Em Loose" has been used for each yearly event and has a patent number registered in the U.S. Patent Office.

One of the most popular events is the Wild Horse Ride. Five to seven wild horses are turned out of the chutes, with a rope attached. One man handles the rope and one man, carrying the saddle. Together they at-

tempt to saddle the cayuse, in the open and one man to ride the critter to a designated line. This has proven to be a crowd pleaser.

Each year Border Days directors feature special attractions for the rodeo and parade. There have been bagpipers, four-horse hitch of matched Belgians, 30 youths riding bareback with no bridles, 21-dog hitch half block long, requiring a PA system between the lead-dog and the musher. A local girls riding group, Kooskia Saddlers. There have been many interesting attractions.

The original Border Days band - known as Grangeville Cowboy Band, under the direction of Mr. Jack Running, was outfitted in woolly chaps and ten-gallon hats. It is said that before a man could get a job in Grangeville he had to be able to play a musical instrument. This 30-piece was widely known. The band made a trip to Thermopolis, Wyoming, had invitations to horse shows in Chicago, the Elks Convention in Los Angeles and appeared at numerous places in the Northwest. Now the Border Days Band is made up of High School and Elementary students and local musicians.

Each year a contest is held for girls within the Central Idaho area for Queen of Border Days. They compete in horsemanship, poise, self-expression and personality. They make three appearances before the unnamed judges. One ap-

pearance is at a Chamber of Commerce dinner meeting. The Queen and two Princesses is announced at the day's performance of the celebration, and rodeo. These three appear at five other rodeos, Fairs and public meetings during their reign.

Grangeville Border Days is a subsidiary of Grangeville Chamber of Commerce, founded in 1906. Each June the directors, their wives, royalty, the competing princesses and

chaperone, the rodeo officials and wives, the stock contractor his wife and right-hand-man are entertained at a Border Days banquet by the Grangeville Chamber of Commerce. This banquet officially starts the Border Days and celebration.

The Grangeville Chamber of Commerce and the Grangeville Border Days are regulated by a set of by-laws for each organization and incorporated under the incorporation laws of the State of Idaho.