

Logan, Montana

Logan, Montana began its life as a way-station for the stage line between Bozeman and Helena. The way-station called Canyon House was, at one time, run by Thomas Dunn. While the exact location is unknown, one source has it along the river bottom about a half mile east of present day Logan.

In 1883 the Northern Pacific built its line between Bozeman and Helena and in a short time rendered the stage route obsolete. In 1889 the Northern Pacific built a spur line from Canyon House to Butte. The name of the division point and station was changed to Logan, but Northern Pacific continued to use CH (Canyon House) as the telegraph call sign for the station. Northern Pacific then built a roundhouse and maintenance station at the junction of the Butte and Helena lines.

All those railroaders and maintenance men needed homes and so, on October 20, 1892, William and Mary Flowers submitted a plat for the Town of Logan. The plat was recorded on June 10, 1893 and the Flower's paid \$10 Gallatin County to create a new town.

With the influx of railroad men and their families, Logan grew. The Northern Pacific Addition to the town (on the north side of the tracks) was platted in 1895. The Riverview Addition (south of Highway 10 and north of the school) shortly after, and lastly, the Milwaukee Addition (south of Highway 10 and west of the school), which was platted in 1911.

Children of the businessmen and railroaders first went to school in a wooden one-house school on the south side of town. It was Gallatin County's first school district, school district #1. In 1900 a new two-story frame school house was built. It was located just east of what is now the parking lot of the Land of Magic. In 1905, Mrs. Kilbride had 25 pupils from at least 18 different families.

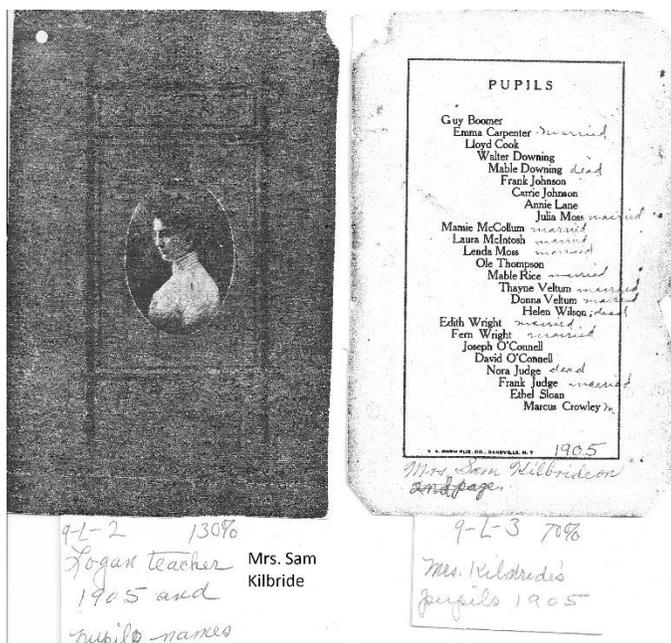


Two-story school house next the Episcopalian church from a postcard c. 1915. Courtesy of the Headwaters Heritage Museum.

The growth of the community continued, prompting the construction of a brick school house in 1922. Eight lots in the Riverview Addition as well as land to the south was purchased from Joseph & Catherine Malin by Gallatin School District #1 in December 1921. The first classes were held in the fall of 1922.



Rear of Logan brick school house after 1925 earthquake. Courtesy of the Headwaters Heritage Museum.



A souvenir from 1905 when Mrs. Kilbride had 25 pupils. Courtesy of the Headwaters Heritage Museum

The school suffered major damage from the 1925 earthquake with its epicenter near Clarkston, but was repaired. Classes continued until the early 1980s and students were sent to either Manhattan or Three Forks. The school building had a series of owners up to 2002 when Bruce and Mary Weber bought the school and surrounding land.

Bruce, who had been working at Flatiron Mandolin and Banjo Company, decided to “pursue his own vision and to remain in Montana” when Gibson Guitar decided to move Flatiron to Nashville. He formed Sound to Earth, Ltd and his company worked out of his barn, then a workshop in Belgrade. The demand for the company’s instruments grew, as well as its product line, including twenty new mandolin designs.

After purchasing the Logan School House and the adjoining gym, Bruce had it renovated to accommodate an approximately 10,000 square foot manufacturing space and a deluxe apartment.

According to their website, “in 2004, the Weber shop moved to the old Logan school which is located about 25 miles west of Bozeman. The spacious school building, built in 1922, had many big windows, wood floors and the Gallatin River right across the road. With the extra space came new acoustic instruments. Bruce designed and built his Archtop and Shallow Carved Guitars introduced in 2005. Next, a core group with Bruce in the lead, designed and introduced the Weber line of resonator guitars in 2007.”

In 2012, the Bruce sold his company to Two Old Hippiess Guitar company, which includes the Bedell and Breedlove line of acoustical instruments. Bruce and his craftspeople have relocated to Bend, Oregon, where Bruce guides the manufacture of the Weber line of instruments.



Photo by Patrick Finnegan

Leaving the Logan School House for sale and ready for a new era in its life.

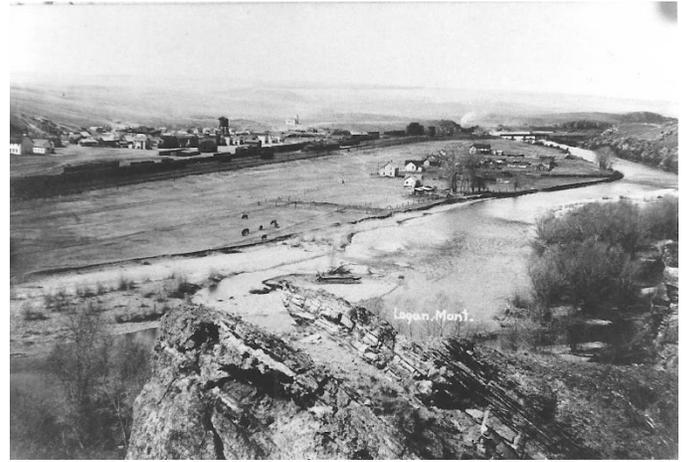


Photo of Logan from across the Gallatin River, taken between 1909 and 1922. On the left edge is the two-story school house next the Episcopal church. The Catholic Church is on the hill in the center. Courtesy of Headwaters Heritage Museum.

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About the author: Patrick Finnegan has been writing about local history since 2002 after discovering the world of family genealogy. Patrick has been a member of and Treasurer for the Three Forks Area Historical Society for over 15 years. He has published two books, including *Taylor Made: Gallatin County's First Census*. His monthly column, *The Archivist's Logbook* is published in *The Lewis and Clark Journal*, a free newspaper delivered to Three Forks area residents.