

What Makes the Stewart Indian School Unique

Stewart is the only non-reservation boarding school created by a state legislature. In 1890 it was purchased and operated by the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Athletics:

- Superintendent Frederick Snyder (Kent Seavey “Historic Resources Inventory Report” p. 24) expanded the sports program with tennis courts and Olympic size swimming pool. Also, inclusion of school in late 1920s in state interscholastic athletic league where the students excelled in basketball and boxing.
- Stewart Hall of Fame honored athletes and coaches from 1915-1975
- Adrien Dennis, Olympic boxing team alternate, was Senior Featherweight Champion at the 1974 San Francisco Golden Gloves
- Adrien Dennis and Billy Turner were called “Stewart’s Dynamic Duo,” “two of the most talented performers in Stewart Indian School’s long boxing history” (from 1978 Sierra Nevada Golden Gloves Program)
- Several boxing, football, basketball, and track championships:
 - 1916 State Football Champions
 - 1937 Stewart won 1st Golden Gloves Boxing Championship
 - 1966 State Basketball Championship
 - 1979 won 7th consecutive State Cross Country Championship
- Source of great pride by Stewart alumni



Sample Exhibit Item: School Boxing Jacket



Sample Exhibit Photo: Stewart's "Dynamic Duo" Billy Turner and Adrian Dennis



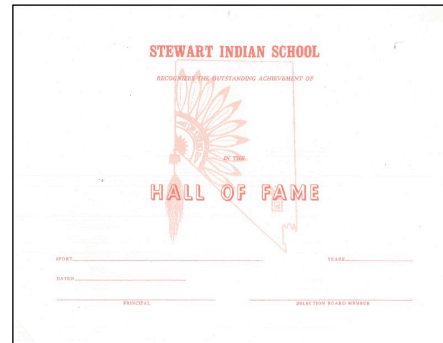
Sample Exhibit Photo: Early Photo of Football Team



Sample Exhibit Photo: Football Team - Circa 1966



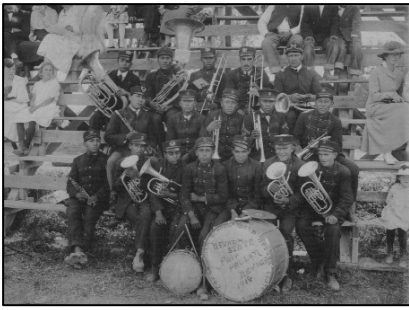
Sample Exhibit Photo: Stewart Indian School Hall of Fame Induction-1975



Sample Exhibit Photo: Stewart Indian School Hall of Fame Award

Stewart Band

- First band instruments were purchased in 1896. The first Stewart band of twenty-one boys assembled in 1896 under the instruction of Edwin Schanandore, an Oneida man educated at Carlisle Indian School who was employed at Stewart. (Seavey p. 15) "...the receipt of band instruments initiated a tradition at the school that would in time make the words 'music and Stewart' almost synonymous throughout Nevada. By 1898 the Superintendent could remark in his annual report that: "So important a feature is our band that it deserves to be treated under a special caption. Its influence, both upon the pupils and parents is no small feature in producing a condition of contentment that is very encouraging."
- In 1916 (Seavey p. 19) "the band was gaining recognition and a sound reputation as a musical unit."
- Band leader Earl T. Laird was hired 1930. (Seavey p. 25) Laird's expertise and devotion over 39 years of service turned the musical organization into a Nevada institution. Composed mainly of Paiute, Shoshone, and Washoe Indian students in 1940, it became the first Indian band to qualify for the National Regional Music Festival, earning a 'superior' rating in that competition. Laird's philosophy was "helping young Indians help themselves through music."
- The band was popular with students, and helped increase student enrollment and kept students in school.
- The first Indian uniforms for the band, made of Hopi sheepskins obtained by Alida Bowler, were fabricated by the Paiute women at the Pyramid Lake Reservation as part of the Wa-Pai-Shone Craft Program in 1940.



Sample Exhibit Photo: Band at the Nevada State Fair - 1918



Sample Exhibit Photo: Band at the Nevada Day Parade - 1940



Sample Exhibit Photo: Band -1979

Stewart Campus

- Superintendent Frederick Snyder arrived at Stewart in 1919 and transformed the campus from a failing school with deteriorating buildings into a horticultural and architectural showpiece. The Stewart campus was considered one of the prettiest in the Indian Service.
- Snyder brought in Hopi stonemasons to build over 60 buildings with multi-colored river stone, teaching students stone masonry.
- To continue establishing the campus as an architectural wonder, Snyder also added landscaping through trees, flower beds, and trellises full of roses to connect the buildings.
- One of the few intact boarding school campuses



Sample Exhibit Photo: Construction of the Old Gym - Circa 1938



Sample Exhibit Photo: Landscape near Superintendent's House



Sample Exhibit Photo: Landscape near Administration Building



Sample Exhibit Photo: Landscape near Trellis

Students from Many Tribes Attended From 1890-1980

- Originally intended to educate children from the great Basin Tribes (Washoe, Northern and Southern Paiute, and Western Shoshone), but eventually led to the acceptance of children from tribal nations throughout the West.
- Students came from over 336 different hometowns, including all of Nevada's Indian colonies and reservations, and reservations from every western state.
- For many students, Stewart offered a protection from the intolerance they experienced at public schools. Also, students shared a sense of cultural and spiritual beliefs.
- In later years, Stewart had a reputation as a supportive environment for American Indians which made it a popular off-reservation school. In the 1970s there was a waiting list to be accepted.



Sample Exhibit Photo: Students in front of Planter



Sample Exhibit Photo: 1st Grade Class - 1946



Sample Exhibit Photo: Papago Indian Club at the Nevada Day Parade



Sample Exhibit Photo: Early Photo of Students

Vocational Training: Ranching not Agricultural like Other Boarding Schools

- "Stewart may be the best example of a vocational training campus." (Letter of Intent for Stewart Historic District, 2015)
- Stewart taught trades like masonry, domestic service, carpentry, metal working, blacksmithing, harness making, cobbling, tailoring, mechanics, and cattle ranching.
- Jack's Valley Ranch provided a working ranch for students to learn ranching skills.
- Majority of students came from rural communities and families lived and worked on ranches in the area.



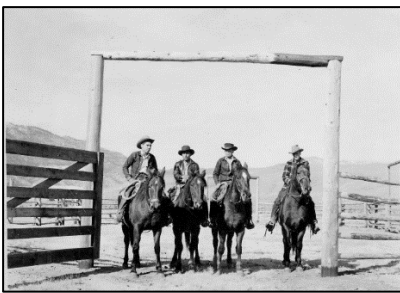
Sample Exhibit Photo: Cobbler Shop



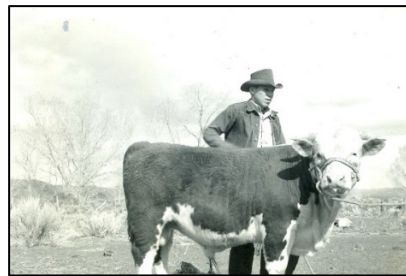
Sample Exhibit Photo: Sewing Class



Sample Exhibit Photo: Nursing Students



Sample Exhibit Photo: Ranching



Sample Exhibit Photo: Ranching



Sample Exhibit Photo: Ranching

Resistance

- Students go on strike 1894; tribes force Superintendent W. D. C. Gibson to pay students for their labor
- Parents resist sending second daughter to Outing Program in CA
- Cathleen Cahill's study of employees of the federal Indian education system—students demonstrated resistance by going into Indian Service after Stewart to be able to work with their communities and broke up government's intention to break up tribal relationships (Bonnie Thompson's Dissertation p. 177)



Sample Exhibit Photo: Students Building



Sample Exhibit Photo: Students Taking a Break



Sample Exhibit Photo: Students Farming

First Female Superintendent in BIA

- Alida Bowler was the first female Superintendent in the Indian Service. She served as Superintendent at Stewart from 1934-1939.
- Bowler changed the curriculum to emphasize Native heritage, traditional crafts, and presented their culture to the public through performances. Bowler nurtured the talents of students through Indian clubs to express their traditional songs, dances, and art, and encouraged them to explore their Indian identity.
- Bowler started a livestock training program at Stewart and on the reservations in response to Nevada's Indian communities.
- Bowler served as the Indian Agent for almost the entire state of Nevada, and worked to help tribal councils get established and fight for their legal rights in the courts, and encouraged Stewart students to get involved in political issues.
- Bowler also worked hard to overcome racial prejudice in Nevada by desegregating schools in Elko in 1935 and Battle Mountain in 1936, and fought to desegregate schools in Lovelock, Smith Valley, and Yerington.



Sample Exhibit Photo: Indian Club



Sample Exhibit Photo: Alida Bowler with Students

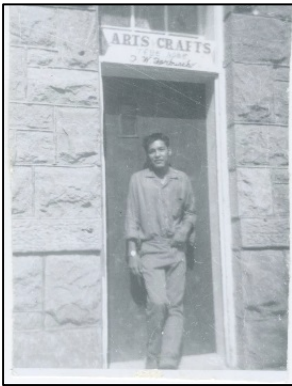


Sample Exhibit Photo: Alida Bowler with the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribal Council Members

Indian New Deal

- Wa-Pai-Shone Craftsman Co-op was created in 1936 by a group of seniors at Stewart as Wa-Pai-Shone Craftsmen, Inc. It was an "Indian cooperative" in accordance with Nevada state law. The original trading post was at Stewart and it served as the headquarters. Eventually there were also trading posts in Crystal Bay on Lake Tahoe's north shore, Death Valley, and Bishop, CA. It had 155 cooperative members and a net worth of \$6,000. Approximately another \$9,000 was paid to craft makers during the first five years of operation. In the beginning only Great Basin artists could sell their work and all proceeds from the sale of items went directly back to the artisans. One document (1940) states that buckskin and beaded items were made by Paiute craftswomen, while most basketry was made by Washoe and Shoshone craftswomen. Also for purchase were woodcarvings "from Nevada's mountain mahogany" made by boys at Stewart enrolled in a special stone- and wood-carving program named Tebe Nobe. By 1947 the Co-op expanded to include Navajo-made crafts.
- During the Indian New Deal, Stewart became a model of progressive-era education.
- The "Indian Botanical Institute" was a progressive idea at Stewart too:

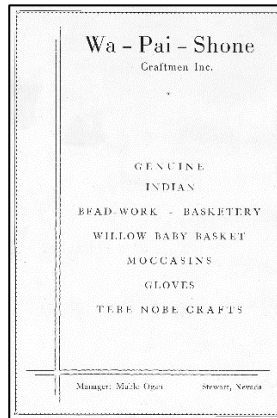
- Gather, grow, and make native food and medicinal plants available for researchers
- Classify, preserve, and show distribution of these plants
- Use science to study medicinal, nutritional, and other effects of the plants
- Study the economic value of the plants
- Gather data pertaining to the usage of the plants through historical and library research.
- Stewart students collected, cultivated, and studied the plants to recognize the important contribution Native people make through their traditional knowledge.
- Plans were made to use Stewart's garden plots and to build a hothouse using geothermal energy for heat.



Sample Exhibit Photo: Tebe Nobe
Arts and Crafts Building



Sample Exhibit Photo: Students Gathering
Flowers



Sample Exhibit Photo: Wa - Pai - Shone
Advertisement - 1946 Yearbook



Sample Exhibit Photo: Student with Basket in front of the
Wa-Pai-Shone Trading Post

Navajo Program

- Some of the Navajo students were among the Navajo Code Talkers of WWII. After they served honorably, the federal government determined after the war ended that they deserved the opportunity to get an education and Indian boarding schools were chosen to accommodate them.
- At Stewart, the program was instituted in 1947 and by 1958 over one half students of the 613 students enrolled at Stewart were Navajo.
- Entire dormitories were set aside because there were so many Navajo students. There were 147 students ranging in age from 12-20, accompanied by interpreters.
- The Navajo Program was a special five-year curriculum designed by Hugh O. Tyler. This curriculum was a five year schedule. The first three years concentrated on academic studies with one hour each day devoted to vocational training. The fourth and fifth years the curricula was half-day academics and a half-day vocational training. After the fifth year, the school attempted to place the students in jobs at the entry level. The project expanded to include six and eight year programs.
- The pupils participated in athletic activities and had their own Navajo Band.
- After the Navajo Program, the off-reservation boarding schools opened up enrollment to students from any tribe who could qualify as eligible.



Sample Exhibit Photo: Navajo Sports Club - 1949



Sample Exhibit Photo: Navajo Class - 1950

Military Training

- Following the model of Carlisle in Pennsylvania, Stewart was organized through strict control and regimentation. Students wore stiff wool uniforms and were given numbers and had to line up by their number, marching everywhere.
- Every moment was regimented by bells and bugle calls.
- Sergeants were recruited from the student body to maintain order and minimize truancy.
- The boarding school curriculum taught a sense of Americanism and civic pride.
- Many boarding school students chose to go into military service.
- Over 20-30% of adult Indian males served in WWI, although they were not given US citizenship or the right to vote until 1924.
- Some of Nevada's tribes had mixed feelings about serving in WWI.
- Over 90 students enlisted in the armed services during WWII. In 1942, 23 members of the football team enlisted in military service together.



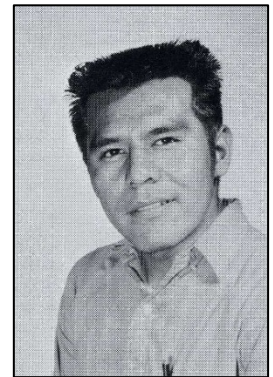
Sample Exhibit Photo: Unidentified Student – World War I



Sample Exhibit Photo: Enlistees – World War II



Sample Exhibit Photo: William Domingues – Class of 1952 – Korean War Veteran



Sample Exhibit Photo: Otis Nick – Class of 1964 – Honored at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C.