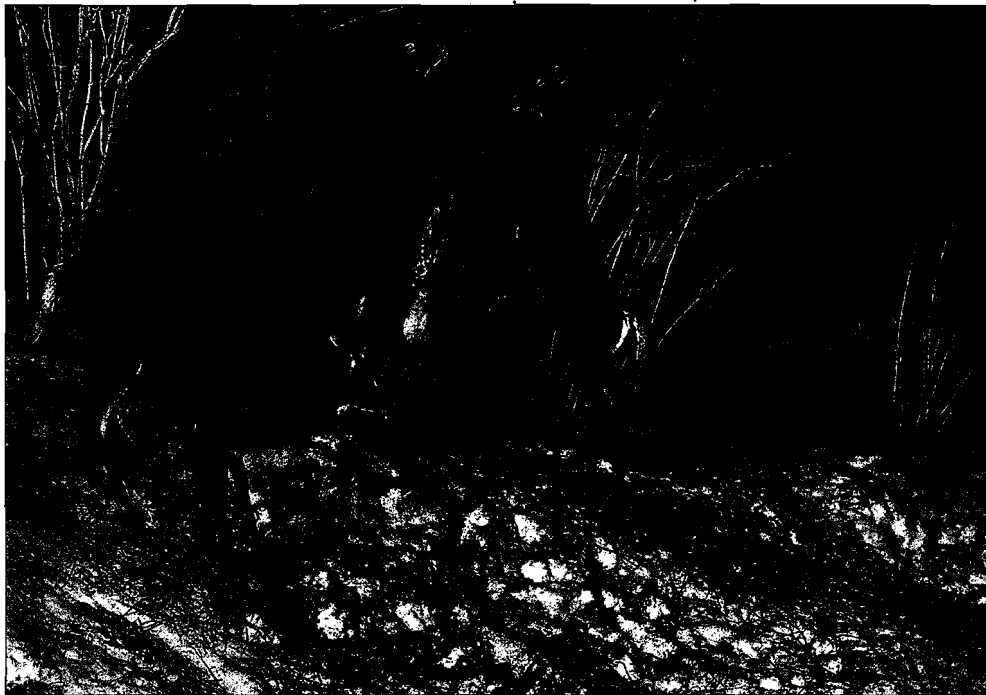


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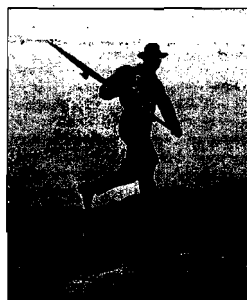
Ross Hall photographed "Boxing Bucks" after a friend tipped him that deer at his ranch duked it out for their does. The photo was published in Life magazine in 1949 and on the cover of London Illustrated.

All photographs provided by Dann Hall and Hallans Gallery. All photos by Ross Hall unless otherwise credited.

IDAHO'S OWN

'The Ansel Adams of Idaho'

Sandpoint photographer amassed 600,000 images and was named one of nation's 10 best



Hall's shot of a nimble logger breaking up a log jam on the Clearwater River was prominently featured in National Geographic in 1949.

BY TIM WOODWARD

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One reason famed photographer Ansel Adams didn't work in Idaho was that Idaho didn't need him. It had its own Ansel Adams.

Adams, whose work is on exhibit at the Boise Art Museum through May 24, was known for his striking black and white images of the American West. That he bypassed Idaho's striking mountain and desert vistas can be seen as a paradox — but it didn't matter. Ross Hall had Idaho covered.

Though most southern Idahoans today have never heard of Hall — he lived in Sandpoint and died in 1990 — he was one of the foremost photographers of his time. His work appeared in National Geographic, Life and other

prominent publications. Eastman Kodak honored him as one of the nation's top 10 scenic photographers. He amassed a catalog of 600,000 images, his photos graced more than 35 million postcards, and his celebrity portraits ranged from Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman to Bing Crosby and Sir Edmund Hillary.

Hall occasionally was compared with Adams. One reviewer, his Boise granddaughter Jonna Weber said, referred to him as "Ansel Adams on steroids."



Ross Hall in his prime. Cameras have changed, but many of his photos remain timeless. (Photo by Hazel Hall)

GET YOUR OWN PRINT

Archival quality prints of his photos are available through Hallans Gallery in Sandpoint. The phone is 208/263-4704.

See ROSS HALL, C6



TIM WOODWARD

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An evening with the Vinyl Preservation Society

Its goals are to preserve music recorded on vinyl, educate people about it and entertain them with it. Boy, do they succeed.

For Boise, the crowd in the bar of the Modern Hotel was about as varied as they come.

At one end of the bar, a white-haired man stolidly sipped martinis. At the other, a woman in her 20s shared a table with a young man in dreadlocks. In between were individuals and couples of varying ages and persuasions.

At the front of the room, a 68-year-old man played records on a ... turntable. Anyone foolish enough to have brought a CD player or iPod might have risked bodily harm.

The occasion was the monthly meeting of the Vinyl Preservation Society of Idaho. Its purpose: to preserve music on vinyl recordings, educate the public about it and entertain people with it.

Never having attended a meeting, I had no idea what to expect. The diversity of ages and interests surprised me. And I certainly wasn't expecting anyone like Tom Ventris.

Ventris was the 68-year-old man spinning records. A retired medical malpractice investigator, he's been collecting records for decades. The theme for the evening was pre-1960s music, and Ventris was perfect for it. His specialty is rockabilly, which he defined as "a blend of western and rhythm and blues. It's what we had before we had rock and roll."

Ventris has scads of rockabilly records, which he carries in special cases. He has autographed photos of virtually all the rockabilly stars — Eddie Cochran, Carl Perkins,

See RECORDS, C8

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SEE MORE OF ROSS
HALL'S WORK
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All photographs provided by Dann Hall and Hallans Gallery. All photos by Ross Hall unless otherwise credited. So many people thought this 1934 photograph of downtown Sandpoint looked like Bedford Falls in the Christmas classic, "It's a Wonderful Life" that Hall named it after the movie. It's the best selling of all his photos.

ROSS HALL

CONTINUED FROM C1

Unlike Adams, known mainly for landscape photography, Hall shot thousands of landscapes, streetscapes and photos of ordinary people. Some of his people pictures are reminiscent of Norman Rockwell paintings.

Born in Texas, he suffered from rheumatic fever as a college student and was advised by his doctor to choose a sedentary profession. His choice was to take over a photography studio in Sandpoint and devote himself to photographing Idaho and the West, on perches from precarious treetop scaffolds to mountaintops in sub-zero cold.

"He was anything but sedentary," said his son Dann, curator of the Hallans Gallery in Sandpoint.

Dann Hall has devoted years to organizing and digitizing his father's work. It never fails to impress him:

"One of his assignments was to do a 200-foot mural, so he did a 360-degree



Sandpoint's Ross Hall was famous for his photographs of people, wildlife, winter scenes, streetscapes and landscapes, including this stunning shot of Priest Lake in North Idaho.

panorama of his favorite mountain range in Canada. He had two studios that at one time employed nearly 100 people. He had the contract for the Farragut Naval training site, and at one time he and his staff were hand-processing nearly a million prints a year."

Some of Hall's images were destroyed in a flood, and thousands were discarded without his knowledge, leaving a current total

of 60,000. Their range and quality remain impressive:

► Winter scenes. One of the best known is of snow-encrusted trees high above a moonlit Lake Pend Oreille. He stayed there all night in bone-chilling cold to get the time exposure just right.

► Wildlife. Deer "boxing" on their hind legs, for example. Again, an all-nighter in the dead of winter.

► People. Loggers, cowboys, anglers, water skiers, kids, neighbors. His signature greeting, memorialized on a wall in Hallans Gallery: "Howdy, neighbor."

Dann Hall would like his father's work to be better known in southern Idaho.

"I'd love to do a show in Boise," he said. "If somebody called, I'd definitely be interested."

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