



Idaho's Liberty Bell

KEY FACTS

Idaho's Liberty Bell is both a nationally significant symbol and an important Idaho historic artifact. First brought to Idaho in 1950, the bell traveled communities throughout the state before being formally presented to the people of Idaho. More than 75 years later, following a comprehensive professional restoration, the bell is traveling Idaho again as a signature legacy initiative of America250 in Idaho. Its story connects Idahoans to the nation's history and to the ideas of liberty, self-government, civic responsibility, and participation that have shaped our country.

A NATIONAL STORY

The original Liberty Bell was cast in 1753 for the Pennsylvania State House, now Independence Hall. Its inscription—"Proclaim Liberty Throughout All the Land Unto All the Inhabitants Thereof"—helped transform a working bell into one of the nation's most enduring symbols of liberty and self-government.

In 1950, the U.S. Treasury Department selected the Liberty Bell as the emblem of its Savings Bonds Independence Drive. Full-size replicas were commissioned for the states and U.S. territories. The bells were cast by the historic Paccard Foundry of France, whose craftsmen carefully measured the original Liberty Bell to create historically accurate replicas.

IDAHO'S LIBERTY BELL

Idaho's bell arrived on May 28, 1950, and traveled communities throughout the state as part of the national campaign. The replica bells traveled aboard custom 1950 Ford R-5 flatbed trucks equipped with loudspeakers promoting the purchase of U.S. savings bonds.

On July 5, 1950, Idaho's Liberty Bell arrived in Boise and was formally presented to Governor C.A. Robins and the people of Idaho. It was exhibited for a short time at the Idaho State Museum in Julia Davis Park before being permanently installed at the Idaho State Capitol on November 19, 1951.

For generations, Idahoans have encountered the bell through school visits, family trips, public ceremonies, and civic events. For more than 75 years, its location at the Capitol has made it one of Idaho's most recognizable and accessible public artifacts and one of the few Liberty Bell replicas in the nation that visitors can still ring.

PRESERVING AN IMPORTANT IDAHO ARTIFACT

After decades of exposure to Idaho's climate, the bell's wooden yoke and supporting structural components required professional conservation.

The restoration was entrusted to Paccard-Christoph Foundry, successor to the historic French foundry that cast Idaho's bell in 1950. The foundry's knowledge of the original Liberty Bell replica program, specifications, materials, and conservation techniques made it uniquely qualified to undertake the work.

The conservation included restoration of the bell's wooden yoke and improvements to its structural supports, hardware, anchoring, and weather protection to ensure its long-term preservation.

Returning the bell to the descendant of the foundry that created it 75 years earlier honored the craftsmanship of the original program while ensuring that an important Idaho artifact received the highest level of professional care.



THE IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S ROLE

The Idaho State Historical Society's role is preservation, stewardship, research, and interpretation. ISHS helped lead the professional conservation effort and researches and interprets the bell's national and Idaho history so that the public can understand not simply what the artifact is, but why it matters.

Historic artifacts provide tangible connections to the people, places, events, ideas, and values that shaped our communities and our nation. Idaho's Liberty Bell provides that connection in a particularly powerful way: Idahoans can encounter a historic artifact directly while learning about the national movement that brought it to Idaho and the generations of Idahoans who have experienced it since.

A COLLABORATIVE STATEWIDE EFFORT

The restoration and statewide engagement initiative brings together the America250 in Idaho Advisory Council and Ambassador Program, Idaho State Historical Society, State Treasurer's Office, Idaho Transportation Department, , Kendall Ford, and Reading Truck. The partners have contributed to the bell's conservation, transportation, public presentation, and statewide travel.

The 2026 tour is conducted under the direction of Senate President Pro Tempore Kelly Anthon and Speaker of the House Mike Moyle through the America250 in Idaho Ambassadors Program.

THE BELL TRAVELS IDAHO AGAIN

There is an important connection between the bell's original journey and its role in America250. In 1950, Idaho's Liberty Bell traveled the state before being presented to the people of Idaho. In 2026, it is traveling Idaho again.

The statewide tour brings the bell directly to Idaho communities, accompanied by interpretation that tells both the national story of the Liberty Bell and the history of Idaho's own replica. By taking the bell beyond the Capitol grounds, the tour gives Idahoans across the state an opportunity to experience this important piece of history firsthand and connect their communities to Idaho's place in the larger American story.

AN AMERICA250 LEGACY

The restoration of Idaho's Liberty Bell is intended to last well beyond the 250th anniversary. It preserves an important public artifact, renews a tradition of taking the bell directly to Idaho communities, and strengthens Idaho's connection to the larger American story.

More than 75 years after it first traveled the state, Idaho's Liberty Bell continues to give Idahoans an opportunity to encounter history directly and to consider what liberty, civic responsibility, and self-government have meant across generations—and what they mean for us today.



IDAHO STATE
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

