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This is part of an occasional series by the Sanpete County Travel and Utah Heritage Highway 89 Alliance on the people and places along U.S. Highway 89.

## **RESTORED HALL IN FAIRVIEW READY TO HOST DANCES, CONCERTS, AND CONVENTIONS**

*By Christian Probasco  
For the National Mormon Pioneer Heritage Area*

FAIRVIEW, UTAH—A recently restored dance hall built in 1927 will become a major entertainment venue for central Utah, according to local officials and businessmen.

The dance hall—officially known as the “Lionel L. and Clista Lasson Peterson Dance Hall”—will be dedicated on Feb. 4 at 6 p.m., followed by an open house from 7:30 until 9. However, the hall has already hosted a Christmas party, play rehearsals and the “Shining Star Awards” recognizing the city’s outstanding volunteers.

Lionel and Clista Peterson, prominent Fairview residents in the 30s through the 60s, were the parents of Cleone Eccles, whose husband, Spencer F. Eccles, is chairman of the George and Dolores Eccles Foundation.

The Eccles Foundation donated \$500,000 toward the project.

City planner Dave Taylor says the city wanted to create a first-class entertainment center that would attract performers from around the nation.

He and other Fairview officials also intend the hall to host parties, meetings, weddings, conventions, movie shows and the same sort of dances that made it famous in its heyday.

Their vision for a restored social center was realized with a huge addition on the building’s east side that includes a new stage, dressing rooms, storage rooms, a kitchen and a giant, high-ceilinged basement.

The city also installed a high-definition video projector, banks of stage lights and a powerful, high-fidelity sound system.

“We’ve got six 800 watt speakers and two big woofers,” Taylor says. “You can run up to 24 microphones through the studio. We’re set up for internet, cable and Wi-Fi feeds. We can handle any kind of production.”

The brick building, which was built around the floor of an earlier wood-frame dance hall known as the Eclipse Pavilion, was completely overhauled. The electrical, plumbing and heating systems were modernized. The roof was replaced and the walls were seismically retrofitted. The floor was restored and the restrooms were refurbished.



**Eclipse Pavilion:** The modern dance hall was erected around the dance floor from the wood Eclipse Pavilion, which was constructed in 1895. The pavilion was torn down because it was a fire hazard.



**Dave Taylor in the bandstand:** City planner Dave Taylor stands in the restored maple bandstand above the west end of the dance floor.

Flat screen televisions were added to the dressing rooms so entertainers could watch the stage as they prepared to perform.

The work was completed by contractors Valley Builders of Gunnison with grants and loans from Utah's Community Impact Board and private donors.

Taylor says he was originally hesitant about restoring the building. His mind was changed by a documentary by local filmmaker Bill Raddatz of resident's reminiscences about the hall. The video can be seen at:

<http://www.local10.tv/videoplayer.php?source=rtmp:/vod/DanceHall&type=vod>.

"After I saw that," Taylor says, "I said, 'we can't not restore the hall.'"

Most of what locals remember about the hall—the lighting, the steel roof beams, wall mirrors, benches and the cupped bandstand above the west end of the hall—was restored to its original condition. Taylor wanted burn marks on the floor where the wood stove once sat left in place.

"I told (our contractors) not to sand out any of the history," he says.

The nearly-completed hall hosted the Shining Star Awards on Dec. 18. This year's winners were

volunteers Pat Richins, Shirlene Rasmussen and Eddie Cox, president of Fairview-based Centracom Interactive Communications, and chairman of the committee that oversaw the restoration.

"There's a pioneer spirit here," Cox told the crowd as he accepted the award. "I can feel it."

After the ceremony, Cox gave much of the credit for the restoration to Taylor, whom he said, "looked after all the details to keep the project on track."

Taylor was quiet about his accomplishments but was clearly relieved to be finished with the bulk of the restoration work.

"The committee asked for the best and we gave them the best," he said. "The hall should be good for another 150 years."

For information on the dedication or open house, contact Fairview City at 435-427-3858.

For more information on the MPNHA or Sanpete County, contact Christian Probasco at 435-851-6485 / [eprobe2002@yahoo.com](mailto:eprobe2002@yahoo.com) or the Sanpete County Travel Office in Manti at 435-835-6877 / 1-800-281-4346 / <http://sanpete.com/pages/travel>.

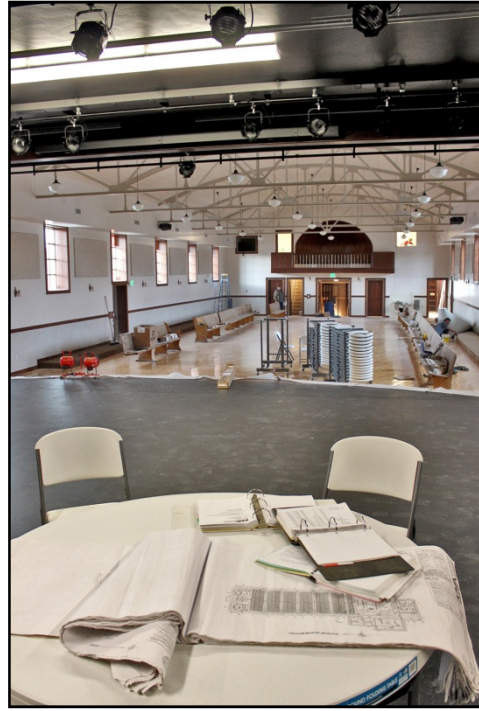
*Photographs by Christian Probasco*



**Cox receives Shining Star:** Eddie Cox (L), president of Fairview-based Centracom Interactive Communications, and the chairman of the committee that oversaw the restoration, receives a shining star award on the new stage of the Fairview Dance Hall on Dec. 18 from Cliff Wheeler, president of North Bend Entertainers, which raised funds for rebuilding efforts. Wheeler was the founder of the annual award ceremony honoring outstanding local volunteers.



**Dave Taylor inspects floor:** City planner Dave Taylor examines burn marks where a stove once warmed the dance hall. The floor is the only remaining element of the Eclipse Pavilion constructed in 1895.



**Finishing the dance hall:** A week before the Shining Star Awards on Dec. 18, crews were still putting the finishing touches on Fairview's dance hall. Toward the end, they were working around the clock. Mayor Jonathan Benson said during the ceremony that the hall had just "blossomed in the last 24 hours."



**Roof replaced:** Contractor Gunnison Valley Builders began restoration work on the dance hall a little over a year ago. They replaced the roof over the summer. They added an addition on the east side which doubled the hall's floor space. The building's electrical, plumbing and heating systems were also upgraded and the walls were strengthened to withstand a strong earthquake.

*Photograph courtesy of the Fairview Museum of History and Art*