

# Ronald V. Jensen Living Historical Farm

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In 1970, former Utah State University President Daryl Chase envisioned a farm that would showcase agriculture “throughout the ages.” The idea began to take shape when former USU agriculture student Ronald V. Jensen purchased the 120-acre Grant Hill Farm outside of Wellsville, Utah and donated it to be used as a living historical farm. Historical buildings across Cache Valley were donated and relocated to the new farm and in some cases, duplications were built based on local models.

Throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, the Jensen Farm underwent numerous personnel changes and financial difficulties that threatened to shut it down. In 1985, folklore professor Jay Anderson was hired as the director of the farm, a position he held from 1985 to 1993. Dr. Anderson oversaw a newly created master’s program where he and graduate students collected historical information on such items as dress, foods, crops and livestock to make the farm more historically accurate. In the late 1990s the Festival of the American West, previously held on the USU campus, was relocated to the museum site. The American West Heritage Center, a non-profit entity, was created and USU stopped administering the program.

### American West Heritage Center

The American West Heritage Center (AWHC) is a living history museum located in northern Utah’s Cache Valley at the foot of the Wellsville Mountains. The AWHC was organized in 1995 when two Utah State University programs, the Ronald V. Jensen Historical Farm and the Festival of the American West, merged to form a non-profit foundation. The AWHC is under a contractual agreement with Utah State University to manage nearly 300 acres of open space, historical buildings and related structures. The foundation’s activities are centered around and focus on the preservation of the living history within the time period of 1820-1920.

The AWHC utilizes its picturesque setting to tell the story of the history of the American West from this time period. This unique story is told through living history and live reenactment venues, school group field trips, summer camps, museum exhibits, live demonstrations, workshops, seasonal festivals and events, student internships, handcart treks (in conjunction with Utah Department of Natural Resources) and other activities that target a wide variety of visitors.

***\*Note: All bios are current and up-to-date as of Summer 2022.***