



SEPTEMBER
1991

NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

THE OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 1019, Independence, MO 64051-0519 (816) 252-2276

❄ ❄ WESTERN EMIGRANT TRAILS MAP ❄ ❄

BRAND NEW!

HOT OFF THE PRESS!

"It's terrific!" "Never seen anything like it!"

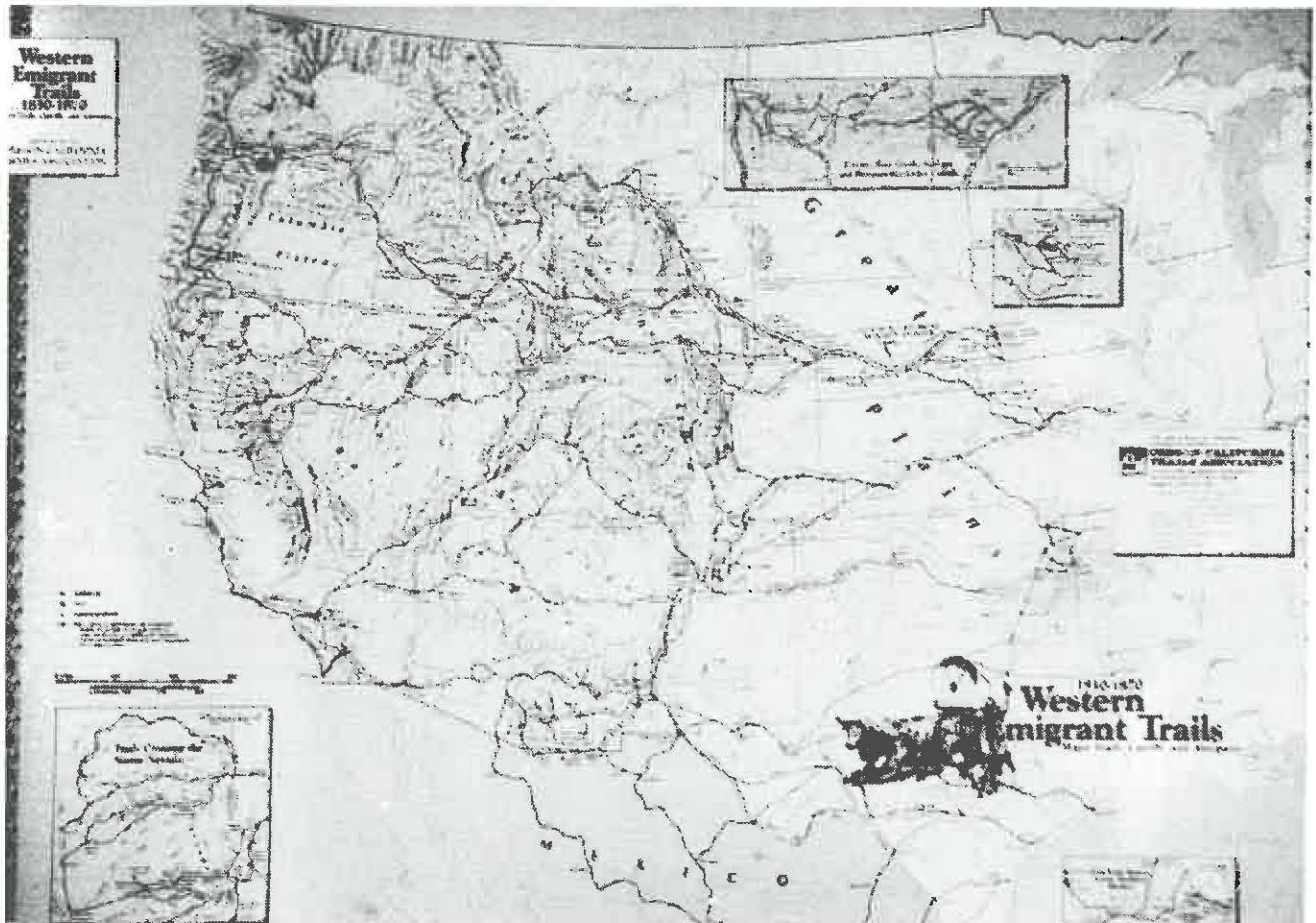
"Every trail buff should have one!" "Looks great!"

"It's about time!" "A tremendous teaching tool!"

"When researching or reading a diary, it's easy to follow the route!"

These are only a few of the many favorable comments made by those who have seen or used the new WESTERN EMIGRANT TRAILS MAP. It was printed and shipped to Sacramento in time for the Convention and received a most enthusiastic reception. And it sold like hot cakes, as they say.

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Why was the map prepared? Well, as a part of the development of the California Hill site owned by OCTA, it was thought a map showing all of the major western emigrant trails, cutoffs, and alternates should be included in the displays being considered. It was also thought such a map should be on display at all historic sites along the trail. But this exact type of map couldn't be found.

The OCTA Board authorized its preparation. In addition to making an excellent display item (with a "YOU ARE HERE" arrow affixed where appropriate), such a map will also be a great teaching aid and be especially helpful as a research aid in following the route of a diarist on his or her way along the trails. Initially, it was thought it would be a relatively easy thing to do the map. It was soon learned quite a bit of time would be required for this comprehensive project. Consequently, it took two years of hard work, research and numerous revisions to finish.

To accomplish the task, the input of many knowledgeable people was asked for and received. They generously gave of their time and talents to

make the map as accurate and complete as possible. Some did more than others. Nevertheless, the work of each was equally appreciated and you should know who these fine people are. They are owed a special thanks for their excellent contribution to this project. Here, in alphabetical order, are their names and home state:

- LaMar C. Berrett, Utah
- Dave Bigler, Utah
- Randy Brown, Wyoming
- Donald Buck, California
- Susan Doyle, New Mexico
- Reg Duffin, Illinois
- Fred Dykes, Idaho
- Walter Edens, Wyoming
- Patricia Etter, Arizona
- Richard & Mary Gehling, Colorado
- Chuck Graydon, California
- Larry Jones, Idaho
- Steven K. Madsen, Utah
- Tom Mahach, California
- Charles W. Martin, Sr., Nebraska
- Merrill Mattes, Colorado
- Tom Hunt, California
- Kim Naden, Nebraska
- Jack Root, Arizona
- Martin Schloo, Colorado
- Glenn R. Scott, Colorado
- Marc Simmons, New Mexico
- H. Rush Spedden, Utah
- Jack Steed, California
- Dana Supernowicz, California
- Jim Tompkins, Oregon
- Rose Ann Tompkins, Arizona
- Lee Underbrink, Wyoming

The outstanding appearance of the Map is due to the excellent work of James A. Bier, a leading Cartographer.

OCTA is undertaking a program to market the map through historical museums, sites, and organizations, both state and federal, as well as those in the educational field. If you know of any entity which would be interested in selling the map, let Susan Doyle, Bob Berry, or Jeanne Miller at OCTA Headquarters know and who should be contacted.

Be sure to order your copy(s) of the Map right away (see box). You will be glad you did. Then help us sell it to others by showing it to them.

Bob Berry, Map Project Editor

BOARD RELUCTANTLY VOTES A DUES INCREASE

On August 13, 1991, the Board of Directors voted to increase the membership dues for OCTA. The Board reluctantly decided to raise the annual dues after a thorough review of expenditures for this fiscal year and the proposed budget for FY 91-92.

There were two principle reasons that led to the need for an increase in OCTA's dues. One reason was the increase in the postal rates that took effect earlier this year. Traditionally, OCTA has relied heavily upon the postal system to maintain the lines of communication with our members. As a result, your annual membership dues provides four issues of the OVERLAND JOURNAL and NEWS FROM THE PLAINS each year as well as periodic mailings for the annual election, membership list, a gift catalog, and the convention announcement. The maintenance of strong lines of communication with the membership is important if we are to continue to protect and maintain the emigrant trails. Unfortunately, it is also costly as we found out last spring when I projected a substantial increase in our mailing costs for the next fiscal year. At the April, 1991, mid-year meeting of the Board of Directors I suggested to the Board that a modest increase in dues would need to be considered. I volunteered to conduct a survey of the dues structures of state historical societies and several other trail-related organizations to determine how OCTA compared with other historical preservation organizations. The survey results showed that OCTA's dues structure was comparable to similar historical-related organizations and not one of the organizations surveyed provided the level of communication with its membership that OCTA provides.

The other reason for the dues increase stems from our success. Our last dues increase took effect in early 1988. Since then OCTA's stature as the premier emigrant trail preservation group has grown significantly, but also the

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The WESTERN EMI-GRANT TRAILS MAP is multi-colored and comes in two forms - one folded like a road map (4 1/8" x 8" folded) for ease of carrying and use and the other flat (22 1/2" x 33") for framing.

Either form costs just \$5.00, plus \$1.00 shipping for the folded version or \$1.75 for the flat version - the latter will be shipped in a protective tube.

**You can order copies now from:
OCTA Headquarters
P.O. Box 1019
Independence, MO
64051-0519.**

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by
Ross Marshall

First of all, a warm and well deserved thank you to Tom Mahach, Frank and Mary Ann Tortorich and the myriad of others from the Cal-Nev-Hi Chapter who provided all of us with a very enjoyable and successful convention in Sacramento. Over 500 were registered making it the largest in our 9 year history, and certainly one of the best.

Congratulations especially for:

- The many and varied speakers who presented papers on a wide variety of subjects.
- The trip to Johnson's Rancho under the leadership of Jack and Richard Steed.
- The Tourguide Book with a well written summary of each of the tour to enable each of us to understand what we were seeing.
- The opening night welcoming-social especially for first time attendees (and for the two emigrant ladies who turned out to be Mary Ann Tortorich and Mary Lou Lyon).
- The dinner and visit to Sutters Fort with Captain Sutter (or a reasonable facsimile thereof) in attendance.
- The Radisson facilities which were splendid.
- Finally for the workshops, author's night, the book rooms, and even the Awards Banquet (we will try to start earlier next year!)

We are very proud of the convention committee for their job well done.

Meanwhile, it was not all play for the officers and board of directors. At the board meeting on Tuesday decisions were made, including:

1. To accept a very tight budget for the next fiscal year. Most of our operating budget is financed by dues and other revenue from our members. We need to focus on ways to raise revenue outside the organization, or our budgets are going to get tighter.
2. To accept a proposal from the Nebraska chapter to host the 1995 convention in Grand Island, Nebraska.

3. Three new standing committees were established:
 - A. The Collections Committee chaired by Jeanne Watson to receive archival material like diaries or whole libraries donated to OCTA.
 - B. The Land Acquisition Committee chaired by Bob Berry to handle trail property that we may need to buy or hold temporarily for preservation.
 - C. The National Historic Trails/National Scenic Trails Committee chaired by Bill Watson to handle our relationship with the National Park Service and other Trails groups. (In conjunction with the '93 Sesquicentennial of the Oregon Trail Emigration, an adhoc committee will also be formed of Bill, myself and the chapter presidents to coordinate our plans and activities.)
4. To raise the membership dues by \$5.00 to help ease our budget crunch. Also authorized Jackie Lewin's Membership Committee to print a new OCTA membership application brochure (in four color maybe).

Congratulations to the following new board members and officers:

Kathy Roubal - 3 year term
Jackie Lewin - a second 3 year term
Greg Franzwa - a second 3 year term
Bill Watson - a second 3 year term
Ross Marshall - President
Dave Bigler - Vice President
Jeanne Watson - Secretary
Jim Budde - Treasurer (re-elected)
Tom Hunt - Preservation Officer (re-elected)
Bill Watson - Immediate Past-President

OCTA now has some 3,000 total members, 24 committees, 12 board members and 6 officers. We are a growing and maturing organization, dependent on the volunteer efforts of each member. I look forward to serving will all of you in the coming year.

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corresponding and financial demands of maintaining our organization have grown also.

A cursory examination of the individual membership costs showed that the individual membership cost exceeds \$23.00 per member on an annualized basis. Since over half of our memberships fall under the individual membership (\$25.00 per year) you can see that the difference between the revenues and costs expended has become thin and

this leaves little revenue to support other trail preservation activities.

Therefore, I recommended and the Board of Directors approved an increase in the dues as follows: The Student, Individual and Family categories by \$5.00, the Supporting Category by \$10.00 and raise the Corporate rate to \$1,000 per year effective October 1, 1991.

Jim Budde, Treasurer

Thank you.....

I would like to thank the Officers, Directors and Members of OCTA - my friends - who through their "votes of confidence" have elected me to a seat on the Board of Directors. And also, a most heartfelt thank you to those who supported my nomination for the wonderful Distinguished Volunteer Award presented to me at the Sacramento Convention. I will, to the best of my ability, continue to strive for excellence in the spirit of these two great honors.

Kathy Roubal

REQUEST FOR PAPERS
1992 OCTA 10TH ANNUAL CONVENTION
ROCK SPRINGS, WYOMING - AUGUST 12-16, 1992

Located southwest of South Pass, the Bureau of Land Management and the community of Rock Springs, Wyoming, will host OCTA's 10th annual national convention. Southwest Wyoming is home to over 250 miles of main trail and cutoffs on public lands - including long stretches of trail through country that is essentially unchanged since emigrant days. Besides the multitude of cutoffs, several trails are in the South Pass Corridor - Oregon, California, Mormon, and Pony Express. In addition, the Overland Stage route, Cherokee Trail, and the "Outlaw" trail come through the area. BLM is requesting presentations about Wyoming trails, sites, experiences, and/or public lands issues related to historic trails management.

Some topics which have been suggested to us include:

- Ft. Bridger
- Parting of the Ways
- Incidents at the Green River
- The Sandy "Trio", Dry Sandy, Little Sandy, Big Sandy
- Role of Land Management Agencies for the Overland Trails
- Individual presentations about the Lander Road, Sublette Cutoff, Slate Creek Cutoff, Dempsey-Hockaday Cutoff, Kinney Cutoff
- Development of Cutoffs in Western Wyoming
- Indian-Emigrant Relations
- Crossing the Summit at South Pass

Outlines and abstracts are requested by December 15, 1991. The steering committee welcomes other proposals and suggestions relevant to the region. For more information contact:

Mike Brown
BLM Rock Springs District Office
P.O. Box 1869
Rock Springs, WY 82902
(307) 382-5350

Russ Tanner
BLM Green River Resource Area
1993 Dewar Drive
Rock Springs, WY 82901
(307) 362-6422

**ROSE ANN'S
TWO TRACK**

This issue of NFP wraps up two years as editor. I have learned much in these two years about being an editor as well as about trails.

The Sacramento Convention had much to offer a trail enthusiast, my personal favorite was the hike to Roller Pass in the rain and clouds. The emigrants had days of travel like that too, and the damp air and enclosing mist must have felt good after the searing heat and sun of the desert.

This NFP includes details and pictures from the convention. If you were there you can relive it, if you were not there, perhaps it will inspire you to attend the next one.

The December NFP will concentrate on the chapters. Send your program schedule, others may want to join you! And tell us what you have done, including photos if possible. Each chapter has unique parts of the trail, share what you are doing.

Please remember to include photo and story credits. I cannot give the proper credit unless I have the information. Also, it helps me to receive the copy in typewritten form. If your article does not appear immediately, be pa-

tient. Good response lately has caused some articles to be deferred to a later time. I try to use copy as I receive it, with minimum editing, though space considerations sometimes call for changes.

FUTURE DEADLINES

**NOV. 15 FOR THE DEC. ISSUE
THEME: CHAPTER ACTIVITIES**

FEB. 15 FOR THE MARCH ISSUE

MAY 15 FOR THE JUNE ISSUE

Rose Ann Tompkins, Editor
1125 W. Mission Drive
Chandler, AZ 85224
(602) 963-3565

JANUARY, 1992 SYMPOSIUMS OFFERED BY TWO OCTA CHAPTERS

Are you planning a winter trip? You may want to keep these two symposiums in mind. Combine your trip to warmer climates with some intellectual stimulation. Both groups encourage participation by both chapter members and others.

The CA-NV-HI Chapter will be holding its first symposium on Saturday, January 25 in the California History Center at De Anza College, Cupertino, California. The Symposium theme will be on the first company of American emigrants to enter California overland, The Bidwell-Bartleson Party of 1841: how they got to California and what happened to them after their arrival.

The purpose of the symposium is to provide a platform for OCTA members to present the results of their readings, studies, or research on the Bidwell-Bartleson party in an informal way to a group of supportive fellow members. A presentation does not require a paper submitted prior to the symposium but we do need to know the title and general type of presentation so the symposium chair can put together the final program. After the symposium, as many of the presentations as possible will be brought together for inclusion in a "Proceedings on the Bidwell-Bartleson Party of 1841". There will be a nominal fee to cover the costs of producing and mailing the "Proceedings".

All those desiring to attend the symposium, whether presenting papers or participating in discussion, please notify the Program Chairman, David Johnson in writing (4048 Partridge Drive, San Jose, CA 95121) no later than Nov. 1st. If you have any questions about the symposium, please call David at (408) 274-3718. As soon as the symposium program has been firmed up, all those who contacted David will be mailed the program and directions to De Anza College's California History Center. Don Buck will be acting as Local Arrangements Chairman and Moderator.

The Southwest Chapter will hold its third annual symposium on Saturday, January 18 in Safford, Arizona. The Graham County Historical Society will help with this symposium.

The chapter provides a forum to present the results of your reading, study, or research in areas of emigrant trails, Southwest history or related topics. A presentation does not require a manuscript, but if the material lends itself, you are encouraged to submit the manuscript at the time of the meeting for inclusion in the "Proceedings".

Contact the Program Chairman, Harland Tompkins, 1125 W. Mission Dr., Chandler, AZ 85224, (602) 963-3565 or the Local Arrangements Chairman, Betty Lee, 8780 S. Raven Ridge, Safford, AZ 85546, (602) 428-1196 to submit a presentation or for more information.

CLOSE-OUT SALE

William H. Jackson Prints

Reproductions of water color
paintings of legendary landmarks:

Crossing the South Platte
(\$100)

Approaching Chimney Rock
(\$85)

Independence Rock
(\$85)

NOW: All three for \$29.95 plus \$3.50 P&H



William Henry Jackson
(1843-1942)



Above: OCTA Preservation Officer, Tom Hunt, stands next to the OCTA marker at the grave of the four men killed by the falling tree at Bruff's Camp.

photo by Virginia Hammerness



Above: "Aunt Hattie" greets her niece, "Anna Mae" after arriving in Sacramento in a convention bound "wagon train".

Dear Aunt Hattie,

Im so glad that you comed to visit usins in August. I coud tel by your fac that you realy enjoyd yourselfs on the mannie trips we took you on. I knod you lov the one wher we shoed you wher the gold mind towns was. An the plac wher the pur Donner Party stad the winter an the Jonsin Rancho wher ther resq party got themselfs prepard to go un hep em. The hard wakin up to Rollr Pas was certnly woth the tim. So prety up in them montins.

An I know you foun intrst in thm talkrs we herd on jus bout evrythun you mitn want to kno. Darnd if I coud pic a favorit subgict.

Whn yo'al left, yous wer in our prayrs sod youd hav a saf jorne hom. Sems a mit quit her now.

Plan on metin up wit yo'al in Roc Sprins in yomin in '92.

Ples rit and let us kno bout the trip to hom.

Lov from California

Yor Nece, Anna Mae

Dear Niece Anna Mae,

I am writing you a few hasty lines before the Pony Express leaves for the West this afternoon to tell you how much it meant to me to see you and your friends. You were certainly right about your Wagonmaster and the rest of his committee. They are certainly hard workers as all 525 of the people attending your fine gathering will attest.

I didn't get to hear all of the speakers since you had four at the same time. Will I be able to read their speeches in the JOURNAL? Do I have to go to Independence to view the video tapes that were being made for the Archives?

Between the fine educational speeches and your wagon trips, I have learned much more about mining and mining towns. I was so relieved to see that you have fine churches and real houses and other buildings. I have greatly enriched my vocabulary with mining and geological terms and understand why so many people have come to California.

I also learned so much more about that ill fated Donner Party of 1846. It was very interesting to see how deep the snow was that winter. I do hope that Dr. Hardesty finds the site of the cabin at Alder Creek like Jack Steed did the Donner Rescue Site Cabin the the Johnson Rancho.

The trip across the Isthmus was faster than the wagon road so I have returned in time to teach another year. I believe it will be my last here. When I meet you in Rock Springs, Wyoming Territory next August, I think that I will continue to California to be near you, my favorite niece.

Love to all.

Aunt Hattie

BOOK NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

Jeanne Miller, Headquarters Manager

OCTA issued two new publications at the convention :

GRAVES AND SITES ON THE OREGON AND CALIFORNIA TRAILS
A Chapter in OCTA's Efforts to Preserve the Trails
by Reg Duffin with additions by Randy Brown

This spiral bound, 71 page, 8 1/2" x 11" book contains a history of OCTA's preservation efforts, and a description of the graves and sites with directions to reach them.

Part One of the book gives early preservation history and credits the volunteers who have begun the research and who have actually done the preservation work.

Part Two is a guide to the actual grave sites and markers. Each one has a special page giving general comments, location, ownership, access and directions. Included is a copy of the wording on each marker.

Black and white photos accompany most site descriptions and OCTA markers are reproduced giving the history. Current landowners are listed when the grave or site is on private land.

Price	\$7.95
P&H	\$1.50

1830-1870 WESTERN EMIGRANT TRAILS MAP
Major Trails, Cutoffs and Alternates
Robert Berry, Map Project Editor.

Information on the map is available on pages one and two of this newsletter.

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Back by popular demand are OCTA TEE AND SWEAT SHIRTS. The OCTA logo is printed on the heart pocket, and on the back of the shirt is a two-color trails map. Available in white or navy blue and in sizes small, medium, large, and extra large:

WHITE TEE SHIRTS	\$9.95 each
NAVY TEE SHIRTS	\$10.95 each
Postage and Handling	\$2.25 each
WHITE SWEAT SHIRTS	\$19.95 each
NAVY SWEAT SHIRTS	\$21.95 each
Postage and Handling	\$2.50 each

BE SURE TO SPECIFY SIZE AND COLOR FOR EACH SHIRT

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All books and shirts may be ordered from:

OCTA
P.O. Box 1019
Independence, MO 64051-0519
telephone (816) 252-2276

STEEPLECHASE FILMS PLANS DONNER PARTY DOCUMENTARY

Steeplechase Films announces the production of THE DONNER PARTY, a one-hour documentary film for national broadcast on PBS in the fall of 1992. Using archival photographs, first-person voices from the time, interviews with historians and descendants, and live cinematography from across the Oregon-California Trail, the film will follow the ill-fated emigrant group as they made their way west. THE DONNER PARTY will be written and directed by Ric Burns, who produced with his brother Ken and co-wrote the PBS series, THE CIVIL WAR. The film is being produced by Lisa Ades and Mr. Burns.

The producers are extremely pleased by the opportunity the film presents to increase public awareness of the western trails. We earnestly join OCTA in their effort to bring both the California Trail and the Pony Express Route under the protection of the National Historic Trails Act.

Currently scouting archives and trail sites from Donner Lake to Salt Lake City, the producers would very much appreciate any information regarding unusual archival material, interview subjects, rare letters and diaries, and any other material that might help to bring the story alive.

Please contact Ric Burns or Lisa Ades at the address and phone number below.

Steeplechase Films
2095 Broadway #503
New York, NY 10023
(212) 724-8350

**1992 OCTA
Convention**
Rock Springs, Wyoming
August 12-16, 1992

AWARDS PRESENTED AT BANQUET

Meritorious Achievement

Donald Buck
Jack & Richard Steed
Charles Graydon
Trails West

Distinguished Volunteer

Kathy Roubal

Certificate of Achievement

Pat Perry

Certificate of Appreciation for outgoing Board of Directors

Donald Buck, 1986-1991
George T. Watkins III, 1988-1989

Past President's Award

William C. Watson

Resolution of Appreciation for Convention Chairman

Thomas Mahach

Friends of the Trail

California - Johnson Crossing
Bill Waggerhause &
The Damon Ranch

California - Johnson Rancho
Carroll & Harold Wilson
and Families

Utah - Hastings Cutoff
and Donner-Reed Trail

Dean R. Stephens

Wyoming

Bob & Karen Rennells

We also presented George T. Watkins III a special Bookplate which was made for the diary collection he donated to OCTA.

Larry Jones,
Chairman, Awards Committee

NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

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Rose Ann Tompkins, Editor

TWO ORIGINAL DIARIES DONATED

Two previously unknown overland diaries have been given to OCTA and will be added to the Merrill Mattes Research Library at the National Frontier Trails Center. Both manuscript diaries were presented at the annual meeting in Sacramento.

During the festivities at Sutter's Fort, Robert E. Booker of Sonora donated his grandfather's diary about an 1850 overland trip via the Carson Pass. Written in pencil by William H. Booker, it describes a trip from Independence April 24 to Hangtown August 14 with 13 men and 13 wagons. The Booker family history dates back to Prince Edward County, VA. The donor, who learned about OCTA through a newspaper story and contacted headquarters, is a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows and participated in a 1940s ceremony at the IOOF grave above Red Lake, taking a bellows-powered hand organ for the event. Mr. Booker has an 1875 photograph of his grandfather that he will have copied for OCTA.

The second diary, also written in a small pre-printed leather covered day book or "Remembrancer", was given to OCTA during the annual banquet by Clyde Arbuckle of San Jose. It tells of an overland journey in 1849, apparently from Illinois, but the author is unknown. According to the donor, this unsigned manuscript diary was found along the trail; the last entry is for Bare (sic) Valley on the Truckee route. Since it shows little evidence of having been out in the weather for any length of time, it may have been picked up shortly after it was lost. The inscription inside gives the names of several people who owned this diary before it was given to Mr. Arbuckle, noted teacher of California history in the San Jose area.

OCTA is indeed pleased to be given these two overland diaries to help preserve the history of the westward migration. Other similar donations would be welcome and donors can contact the OCTA headquarters in Independence.

Jeanne Watson, Collections Chair



Above: Tom Mahach, with arm on sign, was the Convention Chairman and also guide of the post-convention tour over Carson Pass. Here he is speaking to the tour group at one of their many stops.
photo by Shann Rupp

OCTA CONVENTION IN SACRAMENTO A SUCCESS

by Mary Lou Lyon

The CA-NV-HI chapter of OCTA, a Member of the Conference of California Historical Societies, worked hard for the last several years to host the nationwide Oregon-California Trails Association in the most successful convention in the nine years of the organization. The total attending were 525 with 65% being first timers.

The registration area was full of activity as everyone arrived and received their packet of information, samples of goodies, and unique nametag with event tickets tucked safely inside.

The campus-like layout of the Radisson was a "California Touch" and the weather cooperated with cooler than

Below: Mary Ann Tortorich seemed to be everywhere. As one of the convention planners, she knew the answer to every question - or where to go to find the answer! photo by Mary Lou Lyon



normal days, pretty but not scorching. We even had a shower on Wednesday evening at the First Timers Reception which did not dampen the enthusiasm of the group, but did cancel some of the planned activities... after the group was welcomed by "Anna Mae" and "Aunt Hattie". Anna Mae has been corresponding with her beloved aunt in the NEWS FROM THE PLAINS for the past year, encouraging her to come to California with the wagon train bound for the convention. They met on the stage with appropriate fervor and Aunt Hattie was instructed on what to expect at the five day convention.

On Wednesday morning and all day Friday, speakers filled the air in four different rooms with a variety of topics. It is the 150th anniversary of the Bartleson-Bidwell Train, the first to come from "the states" over the trail west, so "Mr. Chico", Ted Merriam from Chico, commemorated that event. Twenty four speakers covered many aspects of the end of the trail into California and the Gold Rush, including some on the Donner Party. On the latter subject, Dr. Donald Hardesty of the University of Nevada, Reno who led the "dig" at Alder Creek last summer, shared his findings, including the fact that the site of the cabin was not where it was been touted to be. A descendent of a Donner Party survivor shared her family information with us, sparking many questions from the audience.



Above: At Donner Pass, Amos, the trail dog, waits patiently for his companion, Chuck Graydon (in center), and Greg Franzwa to finish their visit so the real fun can begin! The rainy day was no deterrent for those who wished to hike to Roller Pass.

Thursday and Saturday, bus trips were made, half days to the site of the Johnson's Rancho which sent the first rescuers to the Donner Party. It has been rediscovered by Jack Steed who has written a book about it and also gave a talk on Wednesday. It is interesting that no one had tried to find that site until Jack and his son Richard began the search on the Bear River. Remnants of the adobe wall of the house remain. The Steed's dedication and interest in this aspect of history was evident.

Another bus went to Donner and Alder Creek to learn more about that

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Left: Rainshowers may have dampened the patio area at the Radisson, but it left those attending the reception for convention first-timers undaunted. One person is testing for raindrops as visiting continued under the overhangs.

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tragic site. A third tour concentrated on the pass area, hiking from Donner Pass to Roller Pass. The Thursday hike accompanied by Channel 13, Sacramento who filmed part of the walk. A fourth trip to the Gold Country, covered Highway 49 from Coloma to Jackson included the Sloughouse Cemetery, the tailing wheels which are from the later period of hard rock mining, and the Gold Bug Mine at Placerville.

The two book and display rooms were busy places as buyers as well as lookers filled them during spare moments. The OCTA Headquarters did a brisk business, having several new items to interest everyone. The raffle items were on display and tickets sold well.

Thursday night was "Author's night" when the many OCTA authors were available to sell and autograph their books. It was also a Press Release night. Ric Burns who with his brother made the recent series on the Civil War for PBS as well as several hour episodes for the American Experience Series, and Lisa Ades, the producer for their

new endeavor made the announcement that they were working on the Donner Party and the California Trail. They have already photographed from Independence, Missouri to Salt Lake City to fill in with the historical photographs and illustrations they are using. Mary Ellen Jones, of CCHS who recently retired from Bancroft Library is doing research for them in the McGlashan

papers which she processed when they came into the library.

Friday night was a Living History night at Sutter's Fort with greetings from Sutter himself. Many of the inhabitants of the fort were going about their daily living skills for the edification of their guests from OCTA. Among the highlights of the evening was the receiving of an original trail diary by William H. Booker. It was donated by his grandson, Robert Booker. Part of the convention raffle was also held, with the board members acting as "runners".

Saturday night was the Banquet and Awards night. It was a gala affair with plenty of food and drink. Music was provided (as it was on several occasions) by the OCTA JAMMERS as they went from table to table with their folk music. Awards were given to many as they were honored for their dedication to a segment of the trail or other laudable undertaking. Several private land owners are always honored for their dedication in preserving the trail

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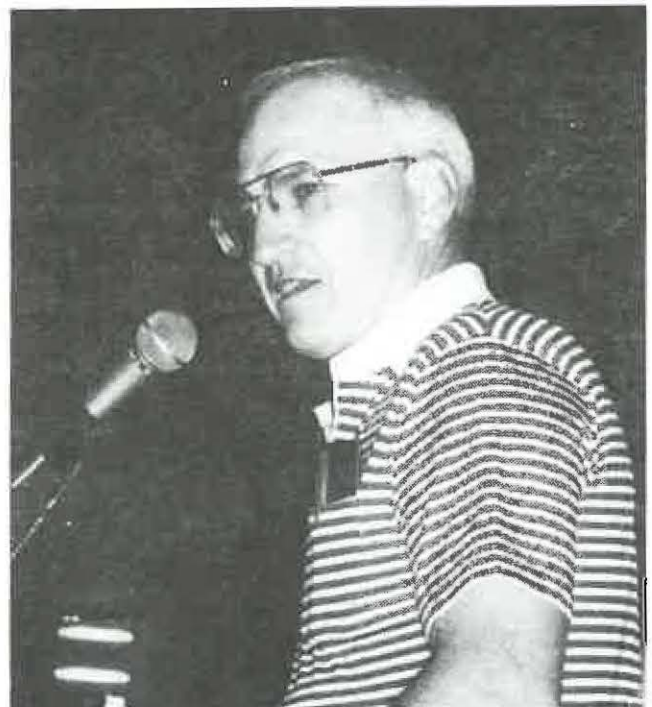
Right: Convention attendees enjoyed an evening at Sutter's Fort where the food was plentiful, the company pleasant and the setting was unique.



Left: The OCTA JAMMERS entertained the banquet attendees with folk music. Each table received a "seranading".

Below, left: The end of a bus tour with a bag handy to collect the trash, just one of the many details the tour organizers covered so well. photo by Mary Lou Lyon

Below, right: Newly elected OCTA President, Ross Marshall, ended the membership meeting and the convention on Sunday morning.



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and allowing OCTA to come in to mark it and visit the sites. Another original hand written trail diary was given to OCTA by Clyde Arbuckle. The author of this diary is unknown. Also honored was George Watkins for his donation of trails accounts he has collected over the years. All these items will be added to the Merrill Mattes Research Library in Independence. The evening ended with

the remaining items of the raffle being awarded to the lucky ticket holders.

The membership meeting on Sunday morning wrapped up the convention. The new Board of Directors were seated and officers for the coming year elected.

Pre and post convention tours were offered to those who wanted something extra. The pre-convention tour was a

one day trip over Henness Pass led by Doyle and Fiona Reed. Jack Steed led a post-convention tour to the Johnson Rancho site for those who were not able to go on one of the earlier tours. There was also a two day post-convention tour over the Carson Pass route, led by Tom Mahach, the Sacramento Convention Chairman.

NOTICE TO COED SURVEYORS - PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

A lot of us are becoming aware that it is getting more difficult to find published diaries. Probably 70% of the diaries written are unpublished. Those of you in Utah have an excellent source to tap in the LDS files. And there are those of you VIPs who can get into Huntington! Yet another source is available: people's attics and basements!

It is vital that we find these valuable documents before people unwittingly toss them out or there are no links to the past. A year and a half ago I put an article in our local paper asking for diaries. Only four persons responded, BUT - one of those calls resulted in locating an original 1850 diary. Those of you who attended the Sutter's Fort barbecue at the convention in August know the end result: OCTA is going to publish the diary, the owner has become a member of OCTA - and he has donated his diary to OCTA for safekeeping in a climate controlled vault! That led to a follow-up article in which I had the opportunity to ask again for diaries.

How about trying something similar in your area? There's nothing like finding an original diary to spark your interest in surveying. You can write

your own release or use the sample below as a guide if you wish. You need to be prepared to supply the newspaper with 2 or 3 pictures and to tell them your personal interest in OCTA. In my case, they asked for pictures of areas closest to the readers, so I used one of Big Trees Carson Valley Turnpike and one of Caples Lake. They like pictures of you on the trail. The newspaper titled my article: "Overland Trails Lead Couple Into the Past". The front page banner title was: "Emigrant Trails Blaze New Paths for Jamestown Pair".

Many people are totally unaware of OCTA and the fine work we are doing, and an article of this sort helps get the word out. I surveyed the aforementioned diary, but if you feel you haven't the time or inclination to survey, just getting a copy for somebody else to survey would be a great service!

It would be interesting to hear from any of you who follow through with this action and to learn the results.

Carry on!!!

Shann Rupp
COED Central Documents
Assignment Coordinator

Here is an example of what you could submit. I also mentioned that I understood owners of diaries might not wish to release the documents from their possession, and so if they preferred, I was willing to do the surveying at their home.

"The overland trails used by early (name state) emigrants still bear the ruts and rust on rocks of wagon wheels that rolled over them more than a century ago. Seeing the living history in these trails inspired (name), a (town) resident, to become more involved in preserving the history of the trans-Mississippi western migration for posterity.

The Oregon-California Trails Association is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation, appreciation, and enjoyment of all the trans-Mississippi migration trails west. These are the trails that made our country an ocean to ocean nation. OCTA is presently engaged in marking the trails as a means of preservation of our national heritage.

As a member of OCTA, (name) is looking for diaries, journals, and letters written by emigrants as they came overland. One function within OCTA is the Census of Overland Emigrant Documents - known as COED. The purpose of COED is to glean information from the overland documents, mainly 1840's through 1860's, and record the information in a computer database. Historians, genealogists, and trail buffs will be able to tap this source.

Anyone who has original documents pertaining to the emigrant trails can call (name) at (phone #) ."



Above: Those who attended the barbecue at Sutter's Fort during the convention enjoyed the numerous living history parts of the evening.

photo by Mary Lou Lyon



Jeanne H. Watson has received a 1991 Certificate of Commendation from the American Association for State and Local History for her book To the Land of Gold and Wickedness - The 1848-59 Diary of Lorena L. Hays. This was one of 68 such national awards given for work in state and local history at the AASLH annual meeting in Dearborn, Michigan, on August 24.

Left: A living history demonstration at Lassen Volcanic National Park included this "emigrant family".

LASSEN PROGRAM

story and photo by Doug Crary

OCTA members and others interested in the westward emigration will be pleased to learn of the "appearance" of Peter Lassen at an evening slide program in Lassen Volcanic National Park, California on July 12. Part of the 75th anniversary celebration of the establishment of the park, it featured Rene Waybye Lassen, a nephew (four times removed) of the famous pioneer and trail-founder.

Rene, a school teacher in Copenhagen, gave an interesting, well-researched program on Peter's early life in his native Denmark, coming to American when he was about 30, and arriving in California about 10 years later. The talk was based on the book Rene wrote, **UNCLE PETER, THE STORY OF PETER LASSEN AND THE LASSEN TRAIL**. In his preface, Rene writes ". . . he became the Pioneer, who was able to get along with the Indians, to help lost immigrants, and to travel around, finding new trails where the immigrant parties and their livestock and wagons could find passage into California."

As an interesting sidelight to Rene's evening program, two rangers and a ranger's daughter entertained a large crowd of campers and park visitors in

the woods near the amphitheater, during the afternoon. The three, dressed in the clothing of the emigrant period, portrayed a family that had been traveling west in their covered wagon -- and there was a real one there! The "husband" demonstrated his cap-and-ball musket, and even let a youngster fire it. He treated the spectators as though they

were fellow emigrants, and queried them about their experiences during the long and difficult trip. His "wife" followed suit, and mentioned many of their problems, especially as they involved the women. In the meantime, she baked a batch of biscuits in a very large covered iron pot in the fire circle; members of the audience tasted the finished product and pronounced it quite palatable.

To get further immersed in western history, a number of the campers walked some distance on a portion of the Lassen-Noble Trail, not far from the Manzanita Lake Campground, where the two programs had been presented.

THE TRAIL TO OREGON

A 50-minute video for pioneers of all ages.

Everything you view in **THE TRAIL TO OREGON** was recorded on actual sites along the trail from Missouri to Oregon.

This is the only video that shows the **Columbia River Route** as well as the complete **Barlow Road**. Settlement scenes from the **Willamette Valley** are included to complete this accurate historical documentary. Typical instrumental music and personal interest tidbits from emigrants enhance the program.

THE TRAIL TO OREGON VHS video was researched, videotaped and produced by Oregon History teachers Gene and Betty Comfort and is currently being used in schools and homes in Idaho and Oregon and Washington.

The 50-minute format is divided into two 25-minute segments.

Program 1: Missouri to Fort Hall Program 2: Fort Hall to the Willamette Valley

Commended by: Gregory Franzwa and Oregon Council for Social Studies

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Person ordering (Please print) _____

Street address _____

City State Zip _____

Phone _____

Date _____

Number of videos ordered _____ \$25.00 each

Total cost \$ _____

Please send teaching ideas Yes No



ARCHAEOLOGY COMMITTEE REPORTS FORT HALL SITE NEEDS HELP

Eight of 15 members of the Archaeology Committee were in Sacramento for the annual committee meeting. Many items were on the agenda, and full copies of the minutes are available to any member on request for the OCTA office in Independence.

Highlights of the meeting centered on a review of the 1991 Archaeology Workshop. Sixty people attended and received the 4-part workshop notebook, covering research design and project planning, mapping and survey, curation of material and report writing. Additional copies of the notebook can be obtained from the OCTA office; the cost is \$5.00 plus postage.

The preservation of Fort Hall is of increasing importance as we approach the 150th anniversary of the Oregon-California Trail. The present condition of the Fort site is questionable. The Shoshone Bannock Indian Reservation retains the property and is interested in preserving the site, but lacks funds to manage the site. The Bureau of Reclamation manages the water level of the reservoir which abuts the Fort site. The BuRec should be urged to conduct test excavations in the area to determine the actual boundaries of the historic fort and to assess threats to the site. OCTA members are free to write to the Bureau to ask that this be done:

Max E. Van Der Berg,
Regional Supervisor of
Water, Power & Lands
Bureau of Reclamation, Pacific NW
Region
Box 043-550, West Fort St.
Boise, ID 83724-0043

The Committee reviewed the Altamont Pipeline project which proposes to put a pipeline across South

Pass, the corridor which contains the historic trail pass. An alternative route is available to the Altamont Company. While this has been a much discussed by the OCTA Board and the Wyoming Chapter, the Archaeology Committee stated its unanimous opinion by way of a motion:

The OCTA Archaeology Committee urges the OCTA Board of Directors to oppose any pipeline corridor through South Pass, and to support locating the Altamont pipeline through the Jeffrey City alternative route. This is in keeping with OCTA's stated objective of "... establishment of a historic preservation system to monitor and protect the western overland trails from outside threats." (8/12/87 - Board of Directors).

The following people have ended their service with the committee: Betty Lee, Sharon Manhart, Hal Manhart, Mary Oman. New members of the committee are Russ Tanner and Tim Tweedie.

Sharon Manhart, Past Chairman

*Below: Bill Rupp (left) talking with Goose Creek Canyon ranch owner, Bud Bedke.
Photo by Shann Rupp*



Photographs in this issue were done by the Editor unless otherwise noted.

RAFFLE DONATIONS

One of the most enjoyed parts of OCTA's convention is the Raffle, which grows each year. This year's donors are gratefully acknowledged below:

Joy Cassidy
Eloise Crary
Doris Dart
Virginia Hammerness
Joann & Leroy Jackson
Mary Ann Kelley
Ormie Lamson
John Loomis
Pat Loomis
Mary Lou Lyon
Milt Otto
Tammy Pruden
Bill Rupp
Shann Rupp
Frances Taplin
Rose Ann Tompkins
Frank & Mary Ann Tortorich
Norm Wilson

Books from:

Arthur Clark Co.
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William Hill
Thomas Hunt
Nebraska Book Press
Edgar & Virginia Stanton

Several things were left with no name attached and those donations are also appreciated and a personal thank you is given by the committee.

Shann Rupp

CHAPTER NEWS

NEBRASKA

A new project is underway to canvass all publications in the Nebraska State Historical Society in order to prepare a list of all trail diaries and where they can be found. No such list exists at the present time.

NEW OFFICERS:

Chairman: Helen Sundell
Vice Chairs:
West Central: Kim Naden
Southeast: Estaline Carpenter
East Central: Russ Geneng
West: Joe Fairfield
East: Bob Berry
Secretary & Membership:
Betty Scheinost
Treasurer: Charles W. Martin
Preservation: Kim Naden

TRAIL TREK #6

On June 15, a Trek westward from the Susan Hail gravesite, a few miles northwest of Kenesaw, NE was conducted under the leadership of Trail Boss Kim Naden, with tidbits of interest from Charlie Martin. The trail along the Platte River was followed to Fort Kearney and beyond. Several trail markers were placed at the location of trail remnants.

Clyde Wallace, an authority on the Plum Creek Massacre and other trail matters in Nebraska, pointed out all of the relevant sites involving the Plum Creek incident and told the story of the affair as well.

Helen Sundell

*Right: Tom Hunt (in center with arm raised) talks to hardy group who visited City of Rocks during the joint chapter work outing.
photo by Shann Rupp*

IDAHO & CA-NV-HI

A COMPLETE OCTA OUTING 1000 SPRINGS, NEVADA APRIL 30-MAY4, 1991

Yes, the BLM Backroad Dedication, OCTA and BLM sign and marker installations, a surprise side tour to the City of Rocks, outstanding cooperation and fellowship among Idaho and CA-NV-HI Chapters of OCTA and the full gamut of mother nature's offerings provided the complete OCTA outing.

A couple of workers, who were present before any of us arrived, warily watched us pitch tents and set up camp. We hope they are still there; a pair of Red-tailed hawks. Bird lovers got a treat watching the pair of hawks tend their nest.

Two work crews of OCTA/BLM people began sign and marker installations on Wednesday. By Thursday afternoon, about 70 carsonite markers had been installed on the trail and a number of BLM road markers and signs had been placed on the BLM roadways. The publicized kiosk had not arrived (the Idaho Chapter will help to install it at a later date), so most of the work was completed Thursday. Tom Hunt promised an unscheduled trip to City of Rocks via Goose Creek Canyon, if it did not rain at the campsite. It didn't rain at the campsite, but unknown to us, it did rain all night at Goose Creek Canyon!

Friday morning a group of innocent followers joined Tom for the trip to City of Rocks. As we slithered and squirmed out way through the mud in our 4WD vehicles, we marvelled at Tom's calm voice as he repeatedly said over the CB, "You may want to be a little watchful here; the road's a little slippery." Even when Milt Otto's truck, in which Tom was riding, tried to go down the road sideways Tom's calm voice advised of "possible skidding". All six vehicles made the trip without serious mishap and some of us who lagged at one of the stops had a chance for a friendly and informative chat with Bud Bedke, owner of the Goose Creek Ranch and a good friend of OCTA. The City of Rocks didn't sparkle the way it usually does, due to an overcast sky, but none of us felt cheated. The "City" is always a great experience no matter what the climate.

Speaking of climate, during our stay at Rock Spring, the weather threw at us everything it had to offer. Early in the week, the nights were quite cold. Wednesday night we had some rain. Thursday, the final few carsonite markers were installed with snow and rain pelting the workers. Thursday night was cold, but nature really let go on Friday night. Temperatures dropped into the teens! Even the lucky ones in

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campers and trailers came up with frozen things. John Tiernan's eggs, carefully stored in an egg carton near his tail gate crystallized, and as Tom Hunt prepared to shave he found that his "Ice Blue" pre-shave had turned to Blue Ice.

The sun shone on the opening portion of the dedication ceremonies. There was a strong wind, but most of us had pretty well thawed out. We heard briefly from Rodney Harris and Mike Penfold, both with the BLM, and Tom Hunt, OCTA's Trails Preservation Officer.

There were also in the audience many Nevada and out of state dignitaries and common folk with whom the OCTA members were encouraged to mingle. The pervading friendly atmosphere made the "mingling" process a very natural thing to do. Buses provided transportation from the Wine Cup Ranch (once owned by Jimmy Stewart) to Rock Spring with running commentary provided by BLM and OCTA volunteers. At Rock Spring, the BLM and local people provided a great BBQ. More brief remarks were made by Billy Templeton, new Nevada State BLM Director, Dustin Stedham, present owner of Rock Spring, the CEO of Sierra Pacific Resources, and other dignitaries.

We'd like to think that we heard it said that there is a real distinct possibility that the ownership of Rock Spring might move to the public sector in the

near future. Tom Hunt was the last speaker and just as he reached the place in his talk where he mentioned that between 250,000 and 300,000 emigrants might have camped at this very spot during the overland treks, the heavens opened with rain and snow. Tom hastened to complete his remarks, but one might wonder if the original trail buffs may have wanted the present day trail buffs to remember some of the hardships along with the beauty of the trail.

Our thanks goes out to all who helped . . . OCTA members from two chapters who worked long and hard, but still had time to socialize around a very appreciated evening campfire. A very special thanks to our friends in the BLM who made us feel very welcome and who provided much in the way of materials and physical labor. We should also give thanks to Trails West, Inc. for Pioneering the trail marking process with their familiar and sturdy historical markers. Those of you who missed this trip missed the "complete outing". Not to worry, however, because with OCTA, we always seem to top our best efforts.

Bill Rupp

Below: Participants in Bruff's Camp work outing pause long enough for a group picture.

photo by Shann Rupp

CA-NV-HI

Sept. 28: The chapter will dedicate a marker for Grove C. Cook, a member of the Bidwell-Bartleson Party of 1841. This will take place in Santa Cruz, CA. Cook is buried in an unmarked grave in Evergreen Cemetery.

BRUFF'S CAMP OUTING

An historic campsite on the California side of the Lassen Trail has been cleared of debris and marked by some 40 OCTA volunteers from the California-Nevada-Hawaii Chapter. The work was done on a three-day outing over the Memorial Day weekend.

The campsite is that of J. Goldsborough Bruff, Captain of the Washington City Company of 17 wagons and 66 men who left St. Joseph, Missouri in mid-May, 1849, and nearly perished in the mountains almost within sight of the Sacramento Valley and Lassen's Rancho.

Forty-five year old Bruff, whom George Stewart called "one of the best captains" of the 1849 migration, spent the winter on the ridge, north of Chico, between Deer and Mill Creeks.

Men hired by Lassen occupied the site that became known as Bruff's camp. These men were sent to the mountains to cut timber and split shingles for Lassen's proposed town in the valley.

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Below: Jo Arnold loads her wheelbarrow at Bruff's Camp
photo by Mary Mueller



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Bruff was angered by the callousness of the shingle men to the suffering of the emigrants. He wrote that animals and property abandoned on the trail were confiscated by "these mountain pirates-gleaners on the misfortunes of their brother emigrants."

Bruff's men were anxious to reach the gold fields and so he volunteered to remain in the mountains to guard their wagons and possessions until help could be sent up from the valley settlements.

No help came and storms began with rain and snow.

The camp where Bruff lived from October 21, 1849 until December 31 when he moved to a cabin a few miles down the trail, is marked with a monument erected in 1967. A common grave of four men killed by a falling tree was marked by Trails West in 1977.

Lumbering interests had cut the trees in the area and slash from the cut, plus new growth had all but obliterated the campsite. With the assurance of the Roseburg Resource management and Richard Jenkins, State Forest Service Ranger, that the five-acre area would be protected, OCTA's preservation officer, Tom Hunt, led the cleanup project which involved piling up brush and tree limbs for burning this fall, clearing out some of the new growth trees to make paths, and fashioning log fences around the monument and the graves.

An OCTA marker at the grave was dedicated the final day of the outing.

Chapter members set up camp in the forest just north of The Narrows, a razorback section of the old trail where the ridge drops steeply hundreds of feet into the dark canyons of Mill and Deer creeks.

The Narrows, widened for logging trucks, did not seem as threatening as it did to the wagon drivers in 1849. Charles Gray noted the "immense abyss" on either side of this narrow curving section of the ridge (from which) "we could look down thousands of feet . . . large trees at the bottom look'd like shrubs, and masses of rocks like pebbles."

Bruff described The Narrows and other points along the trail, and drew sketches which fill his "Gold Rush" journal. Everything interested Bruff and he didn't want to miss anything. Consequently, the Washington City Company was a longtime getting to California.

Some of the rugged OCTA members, after hours on the end of a rake, shovel or chain saw, or carrying armloads of brush and dragging tree limbs to the piles, hiked down into Steep Hollow, another section of the old trail that claimed both animals and wagons.

Enroute the trail crosses Obe Fields where Bruff lived from January until finally stumbling out of the mountains and down to Lassen's in early April, 1850. During this time he lived in a tent near a cabin belonging to an emigrant family named Roberts. Some OCTA members believe they have found the location of this cabin.

The trail cuts through a grove of black oaks in a park-like setting, and the spring rains had brought out the wildflowers. The hikers saw scarlet fritillaria, Indian paintbrush, several of the Brodiaea, buttercups and larkspur. The dogwood was in Bloom at Bruff's camp and along the dirt road that lies atop the old Lassen Trail on the ridge.

Forests of Ponderosa and digger pines and Douglas firs hug the steep canyon walls, parting below Bruff's camp to provide the emigrants' first view of the great Sacramento Valley.

Herds of deer were in migration from lower meadows to mountain feeding grounds during the chapter outing and as many as 25 were seen near camp.

The nightly campfires, the weather, the full moon and the gorgeous scenery contributed to the fellowship and the feeling of accomplishment that made for a memorable outing.

Pat Loomis

• • • • •

IDAHO

Goodale Cutoff

The Chapter made a trip in June to the Goodale (Jeffrey's) Cutoff through the Crater of the Moon National Monument. The sections we saw were on private property and an area of the park with locked gates.

Fred Dykes of the Idaho Chapter has done a lot of research and traveled the Goodale Trail. He was our guide and told us about the trail.

We spent the morning on a section of the trail on the ranch of Les Broadie. We had permission to go on his land; he opened his gates for us and accompanied us on this part of the trip. He told us about the trail history as told to him by the previous owner of the ranch. Mrs. Martin had owned it since the 1880's. She had information about the wagon trains and told him about the grave of an eight year old girl bitten by a rattlesnake. Her grave has rocks piled on it. We talked about fencing and putting a marker on it.

There was a stage station there on the ranch, and a number of mines nearby. The area had 2200 people at one time. Mr. Brodie knocked down old buildings that looking back he wouldn't have destroyed. Our attitudes and priorities change as we realize our past can't be rebuilt.

The afternoon was spent following a section of the trail within the locked boundaries of the park. It contains their water supply and they need to protect it. We had a very good man with us from the Park Service to give their information on this area. We followed the trail here and on out of the park boundary.

This must have been a very heart rendering sight for the emigrants as it came into their view. Even the stoutest hearts must have faltered.

It was an interesting day and well attended.

Janece Thornton

UTAH CROSSROADS

May 18: The trail of the 1846 Bryant-Russell pack party was followed by 31 members from near Evanston, WY to the mouth of the Weber Canyon in Utah. Guides Dave Bigler and Rush Spedden pointed out significant landmarks. The trip ended with a journey down the Weber River to historic "Ogden's Hole".

May 20: Fifteen members turned out for preservation work on the Munsee homestead south of Donner Springs. Although the cabin isn't technically a trail site, it is located at a significant emigrant spring and a valuable historic resource. A tin-sheathed roof frame was built to cover the structure in order to prevent further deterioration of the roof and the house was fenced off to prevent cattle from using the site.

A return visit a month later found that the new roof frame had been demolished by winds of up to 100 mph. Fortunately, the State Division of History has awarded a grant to support stabilization of the cabin. With a new design for the roof frame, a new day has been scheduled for repair, Oct. 12.

Sept. 21-22: A planned trip to mark the sesquicentennial of the Bartleson-Bidwell Party across Utah from Soda Springs, ID to Pilot Peak, NV.

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TRAILS HEAD GATEWAY

The chapters held a joint trip on June 8. Members met at the archeological dig at the rear of the Pony Express Museum in St. Joseph. Mike Fisher provided information on what the dig has revealed to date.

The ultimate stop was at the Hollenburg Pony Express Station west of Marysville, Kansas. Duane Durst, the curator, provided information about Mr. Hollenburg's life as well as the story of the station, which was also a supply post for emigrant trail travelers.

The building has been lifted onto I-beams while the archaeological dig has proceeded. Many artifacts have been found in areas beneath the present six rooms of the station.

NORTHWEST

Roseburg Outing - May 18: Ella Mae Young was the guide for 27 chapter members along the Old Applegate Road. At the stops, she read from the many accounts of early day travelers. At Yoncolla there was a guided tour of the Charles Applegate home. The day ended with dinner at the Wolf Creek Inn.

Barlow Cutoff - June 8: Patty Moore was the guide for some 20 trail followers who followed the Barlow Cutoff through Sherman County, OR. This cutoff left the main trail after the John Day River crossing to connect with the Barlow Trail near present-day Tygh Valley. It reportedly saved several days on the journey.

Blue Mountain Hike - July 27: Mary Oman led a seven mile hike on the Oregon Trail west of LaGrande, OR. By hiking in a reverse direction (west to east), the group was able to travel downhill most of the way while having appreciation for the emigrants who were going uphill. Mary read excerpts from journals to add to the experience.

September 14-15 is planned for a Blue Mountain Restoration Party. The plan is to open a 2 1/2 mile section of the trail for hiking. This project is covered by the recent grant agreement between OCTA and the NPS.

October 19 is the day planned for a tour of Oregon City. Participants will be given a tour including the last miles of the Barlow Road, the Landing where emigrants using the river route unloaded their rafts, the End of the Trail Interpretive Center and the McLoughlin House National Monument

SOUTHWEST

The chapter held a success planning meeting July 13 in Strawberry, AZ. The schedule for the next year was set as follows:

Oct. 5-6: Overland Road, Flagstaff to Prescott. This little known segment of road has been extensively researched by Jim Byrkit who will be our guide. Contact person, Harland Tompkins, (602) 963-3565.

Jan. 18-19: Third Annual Symposium in Safford, AZ. See page 5. Contact persons, Betty Lee, (602) 428-1196 or Harland Tompkins.

March 7-8: Trail from Sears Point to Yuma, AZ, including the Yuma Crossing of the Colorado River. Contact persons, Reba Wells, (602) 992-0339 or Sheri Lee (602) 299-7143.

April 25-26: Trail through Animas Valley and Playa Lake in southwest New Mexico. Contact persons: Paul & Patricia Etter (602) 964-3967, or Jack & Ruth Root, (602) 760-0903.

The planning weekend also included a 4WD trip to view Fossil Creek Canyon and short hikes to see the wagon road that led into the Strawberry Valley from the high country, and the mail trail that led from Camp Verde to Payson.

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WYOMING

The chapter scheduled a trip in the Fort Laramie or Douglas area for September 14 with Randy Brown as the leader.

Much of this issue's CHAPTER NEWS was gleaned from past chapter newsletters. This way of passing on chapter doings is not the best as it is often quite dated by the time you read it. I urge the chapters to send in up-to-date information on future plans as well as stories and pictures from past trips (if they have not been reported). The December Issue of NEWS FROM THE PLAINS will focus on the chapters, so let's hear what you are doing!

DEADLINE - NOVEMBER 15

the Editor

MONUMENT REDEDICATED

Half a century ago, national officials joined with residents of Washington and Marshall counties in Kansas to dedicate a marker at the junction of the Independence and St. Joseph Trails. It had been 100 years since the Bidwell-Bartleson Party had traveled the trail in 1841. On August 11, 1991 the 50th anniversary of that monument dedication, the marker was rededicated. Since this occurred during OCTA's convention, Bill Watson, president, asked that the Gateway Chapter send a representative in his place. Frances Peniston, a past president of Gateway, attended.

Duane Durst, Curator of the nearby Hollenburg Pony Express Station, was the master of ceremonies for the afternoon program, with approximately 200 people attending. He charged the younger participants to observe the marker centennial in the year 2041 in some special way.

Ray Ellenbecker of Marysville, Kansas, related the role that John Ellenbecker (Ray's father), Ezra Meeker, Howard Driggs and others played in the marking of this and other trail sites.

Frances Peniston gave a brief description of OCTA and its purposes. He also related a history of the first wagon train and included another sesquicentennial observation; the division of that train at Soda Springs, Idaho, which took place on August 10-11, 1841.

Dr. Ramon Powers, Executive Director of the Kansas State Historical Society, gave a broad but concise overview of the emigrant trails, noting that Kansas will celebrate the Oregon Trail Sesquicentennial in 1993.

The program ended with the unveiling of the monument by Rose Knedlik and Sophia Wahlen, daughter of the original landowner, Tom Hora, who gave the land for the marker. As done fifty years ago, the children from the Immanuel Lutheran Church School in Bremen, Kansas, sang "God Bless Our Native Land" and "America the Beautiful".

Frances Peniston

NOTES FROM A "HAS BEEN"

During the Awards Banquet in Sacramento, Dick Ackerman ended his comments while presenting my past President's plaque with: "Bill, what I'm trying to say is that you are now a has been!" In my new role, thanks to your votes, I will continue on the board and on Ross's officer team. Jeanne and I will continue to Co-chair the Legislative Committee.

During his Presidency, Dick set-up our temporary headquarters and made the marvelous selection of Jeanne Miller to run it. We are most fortunate as she is a skillful manager and excellent OCTA representative. Building on what Dick started, I helped open the NFTC and dedicate our national headquarters. It was fun to help acquire the Irene Paden Trail Artifacts Collection. It was a thrill to help pack and dedicate the Merrill Mattes Research Library and the George Watkins Collection now housed in a side wing of the Mattes Library.

Working with the National Park Service, we received our first grant, \$10,000, that provided maps, tools, 300 carsonite posts and five interpretive signs to help OCTA prepare the Oregon Trail for its Sesquicentennial.

Many active members have contributed so much to OCTA. Jackie Lewin reports 1,935 OCTA memberships, including 647 family, or about 2,950 total members. Kathy Roubal reports that COED surveyors completed 365 diaries and this project is now several years ahead of schedule. Chuck Martin, Jr. and his Committee's updated long range plan will serve as a compass

for the OCTA board for many years to come. Lois Daniel, OJ Editor, is producing high quality quarterly magazines and Rose Ann Tompkins, NFP Editor, has enhanced its style and layout.

Bob Berry and the Nebraska Chapter volunteers provided an educational, entertaining and successful '90 Omaha Convention. And many thanks to Tom Mahach and the CA/NV/HI Chapter volunteers who worked equally hard to prepare that exciting '91 Sacramento Convention with a record breaking 525 attendees.

However, the California Trail and the Pony Express Trail legislation is bogged down in the Senate by concerns about protecting the rights of leaseholders. Many thanks to members of the Legislative Committee for all their help and to each of you who wrote letters to Congress.

As these notes are being written, the new Board has been asked to vote on a significant philosophical issue. The first item concerns national support for the Altamont Pipeline compromise route recommended by the Wyoming Chapter. The second question is should we go further, be more activist and pursue all available appeal processes in Wyoming and elsewhere. In my opinion, the outcome of this vote will strongly impact future relations with private landowners. There are no easy answers to this one.

With so many OCTA members busily working on such a multitude of projects, it has been an inspirational two years for me as President. Even with all your help, I would not have made it without the support and understanding of my wonderful wife - Jeanne.

Bill Watson



Right: Frances Peniston speaks to group at the rededication of the junction marker, where the St. Jo and Independence Roads joined.

*photo by
Darlene Peniston*

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