



OCTOBER  
1992

# SAVE

# NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

THE OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 1019, Independence, MO 64051-0519 Phone and FAX 816-252-2276

## ARTICLES NEEDED FOR THE *OVERLAND JOURNAL*

by Lois Daniel  
OJ Editor

The *Overland Journal* is always in need of articles and all articles received are appreciated and given careful consideration. The focus of articles should be on some aspect of the emigrant trails or the overland migration in western America. An article must reflect some form of original research or interpretation. It should not be just a compilation of information from modern authors' articles or books (i.e., secondary sources). Original research would include any one or combination of the following:

1) Articles that are based substantially on primary, written source material, both published and unpublished. This would include diaries, journals, reminiscences, letters, contemporary newspapers, government reports and other archival material. It is understood that articles of original research will

usually make use of and have reference to secondary sources, but the main supporting evidence should be taken from primary sources. An exception to this requirement would include articles that interpret, evaluate or analyze secondary sources.

2) Articles that are based on non-literary evidence drawn from the areas of archeology, technology, geology, geography, cartography, field research, statistics or personal interviews.

3) Articles that are themselves primary sources and are supported by primary and secondary sources such as an unpublished emigrant diary edited and annotated especially for the *Overland Journal*.

Requirements of documentation and original resource are not to imply that the *Overland Journal* is a scholarly publication primarily written for academic specialists. Quite the contrary. It is a history magazine primarily designed for the lay reader who is interested in the western overland trails and the migration experience. Nevertheless, even with this lay emphasis, there is a need for original ideas and interpretations that are convincingly documented.

If you have been studying some phase of trail history and have become

The January 1993 NFP will highlight the OCTA chapters. All chapters are urged to send articles and pictures for this issue.

### DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUES OF NFP

Jan. 1993 ---  
Deadline, Dec. 1

Apr. 1993 ---  
Deadline, Mar. 1

July. 1993 ---  
Deadline, June 1

an expert on it and wish to write about it, please contact the *Overland Journal* editor and let's discuss your ideas even if you do not have academic credentials or are not accustomed to writing for publication. Perhaps we can help you put your article together. We have often done this with people who have done valuable research that should not be lost but who are not experienced writers.

To receive a set of guidelines for writing for the *Overland Journal* contact:

Lois Daniel  
3533 Wyandotte  
Kansas City, MO 64111  
telephone: (816) 561-9062

### INSIDE: LOOK FOR

➤ Trail Legislation passes!  
see page 18

➤ Convention highlights  
throughout issue

## THE DONNER PARTY TV DOCUMENTARY TO AIR IN OCTOBER

Some of you know that the producers of the widely acclaimed Civil War series on PBS have been working on a documentary about the Donner Party of 1846 for release this fall on PBS.

OCTA has been notified that the hour and a half documentary will be aired as part of the American Experience series, Wednesday, Oct. 28, from 9:00 to 10:30 P.M. (You will need to check your local PBS station to verify date and time because some stations may run the program at another time.)

You'll be reassured to know that Ric Burns, who headed the project, relied on a number of OCTA's trail experts for review and evaluation. I've read the script and previewed a preliminary version of the documentary. Even in this rough form it was a grabber. I know you will enjoy THE DONNER PARTY. So mark your calendar. You'll not want to miss it.

Don Buck

## NEW NATIONAL TRAILS COMMITTEE

The National Trails committee was activated in Rock Springs. Primary responsibility of this committee will be to work with the Secretary of Interior, the NPS, BLM and USFS to assure that planning and implementation of the California NHT proceeds in a timely and effective manner as prescribed in the National Trails Act. The Interior Dept. proposal to administer the Oregon, California, Mormon and Pony Express NHTs under one unit will be supported. The committee will interface with all National Historic and National Scenic trails groups on matters of common concern.

Chairman Bill Watson appointed a committee that represents every trail state and chapter: Dick Ackerman, Judy Allen, Mike Bateman, Bob Berry, Jim Budde, Tom Hunt, Jackie Lewin, Ron Lund, Ross Marshall, Al Mulder, Doyle Reed, Jeanne Watson.

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Above: Helen Sundell, left, and Bob Berry, right, stand with Estaline Carpenter and her OCTA awards.  
photo by Mike Carnes

## ESTALINE CARPENTER RECEIVES OCTA AWARD

The editor of the Fairbury Journal News, Mike Carnes, attended the presentation of the Honorary Life Membership Award to Estaline Carpenter in Fairbury, Nebraska on July 15, 1992. Estaline was recognized for her many years of dedicated work studying, locating and preserving the Oregon-California Trail and related historic sites in southeast Nebraska. She was instrumental in successfully urging the State of Nebraska to establish Rock Creek Station State Park near Fairbury. Wayne Brandt, superintendent of the park, and Estaline also received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Nebraska Chapter for their special efforts at the 1990 Omaha convention in arranging excellent programs and living history demonstrations during our tour of Jefferson County.

## ADDITIONS MADE TO PADEN COLLECTION

More than 100 pioneer artifacts have been added this year to the Irene B. Paden Collection by her son and his wife, William and Carol Paden of Alameda, California. This significantly increases the gift made in memory of the noted overland trail historian to OCTA.

The new additions include ox, horse and mule shoes, wagon wheel hubrings, tools, a small portable gold scales and six cooking kettles. Several of the kettles were immediately added to the exhibit of life on the trail at the National Frontier Trails Center.

Other objects, many of which will be added to the Paden exhibit area at the NFTC, include a linchpin, wagon bolt,

swivel plate, wagon tongue band, mechanism for a kerosene lamp, a metal candle stick and a horse bit. One unusual artifact is a cobbler's last of cast iron used when shoes needed to be repaired; it has a pointed end to be driven into the ground.

Some of these artifacts were found along overland trails during the 1930s research trips of Mrs. Paden and her family. Others were given to the Paden by ranchers and farmers who had discovered them on their land. Dr. and Mrs. Paden plan to visit OCTA headquarters and the NFTC sometime this fall; they were honored guests when these two facilities were opened in 1990.

Jeanne Watson, Collections Chair

# PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Ross  
Marshall

What a celebration! OCTA's Tenth Anniversary Convention in Rock Springs was truly a grand and enjoyable week! We celebrated especially because:

- This was the tenth (count 'em) convention since Independence in 1983.
- We observed the Tenth Anniversary of the founding of OCTA on August 11, 1982.
- Just a few days before the convention, President Bush signed into law the long-awaited California Trail - Pony Express Trail Bill making each one officially a National Historic Trail.

Nearly 500 of us gathered and enjoyed a marvelous program including an archaeological dig, an enjoyable (except for the hanging) barbecue Friday night and even a float trip down the Green River, stopping at the ferry and trail crossings. The Zanetti drivers got those buses into Pacific Springs.

I would like to express special appreciation to:

- Mike Brown for his hard work over the last three years in planning the arrangements for this convention. And for his attention to detail all during the week. It's been a pleasure working with you, Mike.

- The rest of the Bureau of Land Management staff for their help and support.

- The Wyoming and Crossroads Chapters for their help during the convention.

- Those of the Founders who spoke to the group Wednesday in Ceremonies arranged by Barbara Magerl. Thanks, Greg Franzwa, Merle Wells, Bob Rennells, Jim Bowers, Roger Blair and Merrill Mattes, not only for speaking, but for the wisdom and foresight ten years ago.

- Bill and Jeanne Watson, Co-chairs of the legislative committee who worked and fought so hard for several years to get the trail bill through Congress.

- The Cities of Rock Springs and Green River as well as Sweetwater County, Wyoming. We have never been more warmly welcomed by local civic groups anywhere!

- The Holiday Inn for excellent facilities and service.

- Larry Jones and Lee Underbrink who got through the awards dinner and raffle in record time Saturday night.

- And last, but not least, to Mary Ann Tortorich and the others at the registration desk for their help and problem solving, always with a smile.

At the board of directors' meeting on Tuesday, planning and discussion centered on the following topics:

1. How to raise revenues to keep up with expanding budget needs.

2. The various activities and events being planned by chapters, local and state organizations for the upcoming 1993 Sesquicentennial of the Oregon Trail.

3. The challenge to implement the provisions of the new Cal-Pony Trails Bill.

4. The several historic trail centers being planned along the trail, in addition to Independence and Flagstaff Hill which are already operating.

5. The continued success of our two quality publications, the *Overland Journal* and the *News From the Plains*, and plans for several new publications.

6. The enormous progress of COED in the past year, enabling us to plan for its use as a research data base soon.

7. Numerous preservation and trail marking projects.

8. The excellent relationships that OCTA enjoys with the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management all along the trail..

In addition to the above, the board voted Elko, Nevada as the site for the 1996 convention.

Congratulations to the new board members and officers:

Mike Bateman - 3 year term

Doyle Reed - 3 year term

James Renner - 3 year term

Susan Doyle - reelected to a 3 year term

Ross Marshall - President

Dave Bigler - Vice President and President Elect

Jeanne Watson - Secretary

Jim Budde - Treasurer

Tom Hunt - Preservation Officer

Bill Watson - Immediate Past President

I want to express my personal appreciation to Bob Berry, Bill Hill, and Chuck Martin as they leave the board after two three-year terms of dedicated service.

Congratulations to all the award recipients at the Awards Banquet, especially Barbara Magerl, Reg Duffin and the Wyoming BLM for Special Achievement.

I am extremely proud of OCTA after 10 years of existence. Not only have we grown spectacularly in number, but we have grown in the eyes of the public and all government agencies as an organization that really cares about the trail. We are respected by all for our knowledge and "partnership personality" in trail preservation matters. The purposes under which our Founders began this organization ten years ago are still the same purposes we serve today. I shudder to think where the trails would be today without OCTA.

**See you in Baker City in '93!**



Left: Jeanne Miller, center, receives the Dorothy Dustin Memorial for OCTA from Betty Scheinost, left and Helen Sundell, Nebraska Chapter President, right. photo by Jim Budde

## TRAIL BITS

### IN MEMORY OF DOROTHY DEVEREUX DUSTIN

The Nebraska Chapter contributed an oil painting by Harold Wilkins of Bellevue, Nebraska to OCTA in memory of Dorothy Devereux Dustin. Betty Scheinost, chapter secretary, made the presentation to Jeanne Miller, headquarters manager, during the chapter meeting at the national convention in Rock Springs, Wyoming. Readers of the *Overland Journal* will remember Dorothy for her scholarly contributions. Friends of Dorothy will always recall her kindly personality and her love of the trail. We all do miss her.

In 1848 Riley Root traveled with 30 wagons from St. Joseph, Missouri, to Oregon, then published his journal as an emigrant guidebook. In the vicinity of the Malheur River, he wrote

"Camped near a sulphur spring where the country can be viewed for a considerable distance all around. Reflecting upon such a wonderful scenery as is here on every side, the mind can hardly appreciate the amount of dynamic adequate to displace and disrupt the surface of the earth so immensely. It appears like a great harrow, fit only for Hercules to use in leveling off the surface of the planet."

Flowery language, all right! And of little use to folks like me who only want to know where's the best campsite, where can we find fuel to cook with, and will there be any water? These guidebooks! At least Mr. Root could prove he had traveled the Oregon Trail. When comparing the accounts in our own guidebook to what actually lay before my eyes, many is the time I've doubted if the author of our book ever set foot in the country he wrote about! Published in New York City, indeed! One more high roller, getting rich at the expense of the "greenhorn" traveler. And believe me, there's plenty.

I'm hoping you all have accurate guidebooks to get you through to Baker City in August of 1993. The OCTA convention just wouldn't be the same without you . . . so be certain to lay your directions well to the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center at Flagstaff Hill in Baker City. I'll be looking for you!

Fanny

### TRAIL BUFF BIRDERS

Would you like to join in a birding outing while you are in a new or different area for an OCTA convention? I believe we could find a local birder guide and find a few new sightings. If you are interested send your name, address & phone to:

Bea Kabler  
5501 Varsity Hill  
Madison, WI 53705  
phone (608) 238-1840.

.....

### MAGNIFYING GLASS MISSING?

While at the Rock Springs convention, studying a Mormon Trail map with Garn Hatch, an unidentified OCTA lady saw us squinting and voluntarily loaned me her little magnifying glass to help us decipher things. I promised to return it to her but though I carried it around with me, I never saw her again and evidently she didn't spot me. I still have her magnifying glass, a very unusual one with a battery light. I will return it to her promptly by mail if she, as a member of OCTA, reads this and gets in touch with me, identifying herself and her address.

If I fail to hear from her I will be afflicted with a guilt complex the rest of my life!

Merrill J. Mattes  
5800 W. Plymouth Drive  
Littleton, CO 80123

## NEWS FROM HEADQUARTERS

Jeanne Miller, Headquarters Manager

The Book Room and author's night were well attended activities at the recent Rock Springs Convention.

In addition to OCTA, the booksellers included the Patrice Press, Jim Mundie Books, Western Trails Press, Trails West Books, Prairie Dog Press, Jack Steed Books, Joe King, Earl Schmidt, the Bureau of Land Management, and the National Park Service represented by the Jefferson National Expansion Historical Association. The Idaho, Nebraska, Texas, and Utah University Presses were represented as well.

For those of you who were not able to attend the convention, OCTA is offering for sale a limited number of copies of the materials which were provided the registrants:

### HEADED WEST

#### Historic Trails in Southwest Wyoming

edited by Mike W. Brown and Beverly Gorny

Printed especially for OCTA's Tenth Annual Convention, this booklet is a series of essays about people, historic sites, graves, and trails in southwest Wyoming. The essays are authored by members of the E Clampus Vitus organization, the BLM, and OCTA.

The 19 articles include fur trappers, Jedidiah Smith, James Clyman, Jim Bridger, discovery of South Pass, Pony Express & Overland Mail, grave of Charlotte Dansie, Name Hill Historic Site, Salt Wells Stage Station, Emigrant Springs, Cutoffs & Parting-of-the Ways, and the Donner Party in Wyoming.

72 pages, 6 3/4 x 10", map \$5

#### CROSSING THE GREEN RIVER ON THE OVERLAND TRAILS

by James William June

Given to those who floated the Green River, this publication is only a small portion of a much larger manuscript, but it includes information about trail-related sites on the Green River between Fontenelle Dam and the town of Green River.

James W. June worked for 33 years for the Wyoming Fish and Game De-

partment, and his work required him to float the Green River twice a year and check on the wildlife. He won an award in 1982 for locating and recording hundreds of historic sites in Sweetwater County.

Comb binding, 8 1/2 by 11", 72 pages, maps, illustrations \$5

### SOUTH PASS TOUR GUIDE SCRIPT

This tour follows the main corridor of the Oregon, Mormon, Pony Express and California Historic Trails from Rock Springs to the Parting-of-the Ways.

8 1/2 x 11", 40 pages, maps \$5

### FORT BRIDGER TOUR GUIDE SCRIPT

Covers the corridor and area of the Oregon, Mormon, Pony Express, California, Overland State, Outlaw, and Green River Historic Trails.

8 1/2 x 11", 40 pages, maps \$5

NOTE: Postage and handling costs are \$3 for the first book, \$1 for each additional book.

### THE OREGON TRAIL Documentary VIDEO

written and photographed by

Mike Trinklein and Steve Boettcher

Previewed at the 1992 OCTA convention, this four-part documentary on the Oregon Trail covers: Episode 1, Beginnings; Episode 2, Across the Plains; Episode 3, Through the Rockies; Episode 4, The Final Step.

In addition to the emigrant pioneer story that is presented, additional commentary is added through OCTA member/historians, Charles Martin, Sr., Merrill Mattes, William Hill, and Larry Jones.

The video depicts the incredible 2,000 mile walk explaining why a half million Americans ventured west, presents details of their daily struggle to survive, features the western trail that remains today, reveals death on the trail, and explains how the Oregon Trail united East and West.

\$49.95 Postage & Handling \$5.00



## FROM THE EDITOR

The after-convention-letdown is over, along with the fatigue of that busy week. Several of you talked with me about ideas you had and those are always appreciated. It is gratifying to see friends again, make new friends and see and hear about what is going on in the organization. Hopefully, some of that spills over into OCTA's publications and the chapter activities as the months pass until the next convention.

My cameras were busy at this convention again, but they can never quite capture those mental pictures we each tuck away in our personal memory banks. The wonder of those mental pictures is that we each have different ones, plus they stay unfaded and sometimes become better with age.

My mental pictures this time include standing at the Daniel Lantz gravesite looking around at the open space, thinking about how this grave has endured in all that loneliness over the many years.

Another mental picture is the sunset across the Green River the evening of the barbecue, with laughter and singing in the background. In trail days, the banks of the Green must have often heard laughter and singing along with the sunsets.

**Next deadline - December 1.** Keep the articles and pictures coming!

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

August 21, 1992

Dear OCTA Officers & Board Members:

On behalf of myself, the Bureau of Land Management Rock Spring District, Rock Springs Chamber of Commerce, Green River Chamber of Commerce and Sweetwater County, I'd like to thank all of you for a successful convention in Rock Springs. There is a huge list of folks to thank including OCTA's Wyoming and Utah Chapters.

This year's convention added a new dimension to our communities' awareness of the wonderful trail resources we're so fortunate to have. Often times it takes people from outside the area to let us locals know the true value of things in our area we may take for granted.

I'd like to pass along a few observations . . .

First, having OCTA Headquarters handle the money worked great. . . . Jim Budde's expertise, suggestions, and general fiscal responsibility were invaluable. I'd definitely leave ultimate "money" control with him.

Having Jeanne Miller share the registration function was a tremendous asset to me. I simply could not have done this job without Jeanne's patience and assistance. . . .Your entire headquarters staff - Jeanne, Kathy, Elaine, and volunteers are to be credited for a great job.

Finally, I can't say enough about the value of Mary Ann Tortorich's contributions - both before and during the convention. Planning, handling and coordinating registration has got to be the toughest part of doing a convention. Mary Ann's trip to Rock Springs in March put us on track and left me with a trained core of folks to draw from. Having her at the convention was nothing short of a miracle. The Sunday before the convention started, Jude Carino and myself were running around like mad fools - and Mary Ann got us calmed down and everything sorted out. I suggest that OCTA use Mary Ann and Frank as much as they're willing to help and listen to their suggestions.

Again, thank all of you for all the time and effort you put in to making OCTA's 10th Convention in Rock Springs a resounding success.

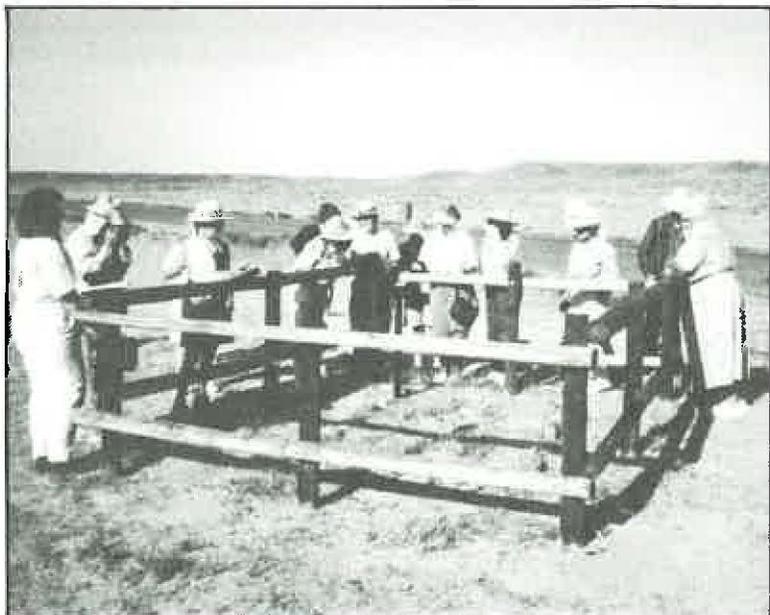
Sincerely,

Mike W. Brown



Above : "Trail Boss" Mike Brown kept the convention in line.

Below: Thursday's Fort Bridger tour at their first stop, the Daniel Lantz gravesite. This grave, protected by a pole fence and with an interpretive sign; is part of OCTA's preservation program.



The OCTA 1992 Convention in Rock Springs, Wyoming this past August was a splendid occurrence, well planned and executed by chairman, Mike Brown and all on his committee. There's nothing quite like the unity in a small town, and that showed with the warm welcome OCTA received in the community. Mike welded together the Wyoming and Crossroads Chapters volunteers, BLM personnel, and Chamber of Commerce volunteers from Rock Springs and Green River into a very effective and efficient convention machine. Great enthusiasm and enjoyment was in store for those who attended.

Registration procrastinators found that the various tours had filled fast, but in spite of those disappointments, there was plenty to keep attendees busy.

Early arrivals participated in such activities as the challenging Lander Road Hike, the hunt for new inscriptions at the Slate Creek Work Day, and the three day Archaeology Field School at Salt Wells Stage Station (a first-time offered activity). By Tuesday evening, August

11, the many arrivals had the opportunity to attend the premier showing of a new Oregon Trail Video. Many took advantage of a special price to purchase the four part video for themselves, after viewing this well done effort to show the trail with authenticity as well as scenic beauty.

With the Board of Directors meeting out of the way on Tuesday, a combination orientation, welcome and gen-

eration. A special part of this meeting was the honoring of those who organized OCTA exactly ten years before. Six of those original founders shared their reflections of that time. It was a special moment in OCTA's history, both then and now. The Oregon-California Trails Association has achieved enormous amounts of work, interest, and membership in its short life, with the original purpose of trails preservation growing stronger (and more crucial) every year.

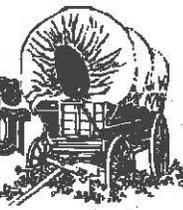
Wednesday afternoon was set aside for the workshops: Archaeology, COED, and Mapping. Following the workshops the various OCTA chapters met to conduct any business they deemed necessary. The day ended with an evening reception to greet convention

first-timers, renew acquaintances and listen to the music of the OCTA Jam Group.

Thursday, August 13 was a big tour day. Several busses headed for South Pass, including those going on the South Pass Hike. For all rut nuts, South Pass

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# WYOMING 92



eral membership meeting kicked off the Wednesday activities. By moving the general membership meeting to the beginning instead of the end of the convention, it gave the first-time attendees a chance to be introduced to those who try to keep OCTA running and to those who were responsible for the conven-



Above: "Survivors" of the rigorous, all day Lander Cutoff hike look sharp for a group photo. Leader of this hike, Larry Jones, is second from right. photo by Shann Rupp



• • • continued

is a trail highlight. It is one of those places where you stand, and look and imagine. At the South Pass Overlook there was a BLM dedication of new markers. Other stops on that tour included the Charlotte Dansie grave, Pacific Springs, South Pass City, and the False Parting of the Ways. Those who took the hike experienced a 5 1/2 mile walk to, over, and beyond the summit. The Fort Bridger tour visited other places filled with history, such as the Daniel Lantz grave, Granger Stage Station, Church Butte, Fort Supply and of course, Fort Bridger.

Nearly everyone still had energy for Author's Night Thursday evening, with time to meet the nineteen OCTA members who had researched the trails and emigrants and written books. It was great fun to talk with the authors, discuss research, and get autographs. The book room got much brisk business that evening and throughout the convention

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*Above: These six original founders of OCTA were present in Rock Springs where they received recognition from the organization and shared their memories of that founding day. Standing, left to right: Roger Blair, Greg Franzwa, and Bob Rennells. Seated, left to right: Merrill Mattes, Merle Wells, and Jim Bowers.*

*Left: OCTA president, Ross Marshall, introduces his spouse, Jana, at the first evening's reception.*

All photographs in this issue by the editor unless otherwise credited.



*Above, right: Doris Dart, left, receives a Certificate of Appreciation from Shann Rupp at the Awards Banquet. Doris has surveyed 84 documents for COED. Shann is the Documents Assignments Coordinator for COED.*

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*Above left: Merrill Mattes and the Oregon Trail marker at South Pass. This marker was placed here many years ago by Ezra Meeker. photo by Lynda Hatch*

*Below: Tour participants gathered at the South Pass overlook for a dedication of new BLM markers. photo by Shann Rupp*



as several dealers provided a variety of trail related items.

Friday was a day for intellectual stimulation. The comfortable accommodations at Western Wyoming College was the setting for the convention papers and presentations. It was a full day of speakers, with emphasis on the trails and sites in southwest Wyoming. Among the lecturers were Fred Gowans with his excellent Fort Bridger talk and William Hartley speaking on the LDS Church "down and back" teams. Randy Wagner took the group on a photographic tour of Wyoming trail sites and Terry Del Bene gave an extremely informative lecture on soldiers guarding the Western trails during the Civil War. Archaeologists Russ Tanner, Dave Vlcek, and Lynn Harrell just about convinced all of us to become archaeologists when they spoke of work at the Salt Wells Stage Station, Names Hill on the Sublette Cutoff, and the inscriptions at the Emigrant Springs site, respectively. Dudley Gardner spoke about the Overland stage route through the Bitter

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*Above: Lynn Harrell, BLM Archeologist, was one of many speakers at the convention. Her topic: "Emigrant Springs on the Slate Creek Cutoff"*

Wildlife Refuge. Excellent field guide-books and informed guides for all trips were provided.

At day's end, weary members gathered for one last time at the Awards Banquet and Raffle. The recipients acknowledged members' applause as they came forward to receive their awards. The evening ended with the suspenseful fun of the raffle and friends said good-bye until next year.

For those hearty souls that wanted more, Sunday offered another Green River float trip as well as five post convention tours: Lander Road, Outlaw Trail/Brown's Park, Overland Route, Sublette Cutoff and Hastings Cutoff/Donner Route/Mormon Trail. On Monday, the last gasp was a 4WD drive tour of Dry Sandy/Parting of the Ways led by convention chairman, Mike Brown. One wonders how he had anything left for leading a tour after his busy week of keeping the rest of us in line.

Along with all this activity, there was the usual heavy use of the book room as browsers looked for additions to their western libraries, the various

OCTA committees trying to fit meetings into any available time slot, the little knots of people pouring over a trail map or discussing a new bit of trail information, and those meeting for a meal together to catch up on "things" since they had last seen each other at some other convention or chapter outing.

Every day seemed full to capacity as we fell wearily into bed each night. The "younger" members wondered how all those "retired" people managed to keep going at that pace, and those "retired" people wondered how to make more time to get to do everything they wanted to do. But rut nuts are a hearty group and the next morning everyone was up and out, anticipating another beautiful day and what it had to offer.

Exhausting? Yes! Stimulating? Very! Informative? Extremely! Fun? Definitely! The Rock Springs Convention had it all.

Every convention seems to be the "best" and this one was no exception. What a hard act to follow!

written by Lyndia Carter  
and Rose Ann Tompkins

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Creek Valley to Fort Bridger and its many fascinating sites. Tricia Coran informatively entertained us with her topic on trail entertainments, such as music, dancing and games. William Barnett topped off the day with a presentation on the Bartleson-Bidwell group and brought to light a letter they carried to Dr. Marsh in California, heretofore overlooked by historians.

For dinner and an evening of entertainment, attendees were bussed to a park on the Green River for a barbecue which included buffalo burgers, singing, dancing, campfire, mounted deputies and other such shenanigans as the sun set over the Green on a beautiful, tranquil evening.

Saturday, August 14 was the last official day of the convention and was as full as any other day. There were repeats of the South Pass and Fort Bridger tours, as well as another first for conventions, a float trip. This was a full day float trip to view the various ferry sites and trail crossings along the Green River, along with the scenic beauty and wildlife of the Seedskadee National



*Above: Longtime OCTA members, Mary and Charles Martin of Omaha, NE celebrated their 61st wedding anniversary by floating the Green with the group. Here they enjoy their anniversary lunch with a riverside view. A bright sun made for dark shadows under their hats, but their smiling faces were under those hats also.*

## OCTA AWARDS PRESENTED AT ROCK SPRINGS BANQUET

### Meritorious Achievement

Barbara Magerl  
Reg Duffin  
Wyoming Bureau of Land  
Management

### Distinguished Volunteer

Bill & Shann Rupp

### National Certificate of Appreciation

Doris Dart

### Certificate of Appreciation for out going Board of Directors

Robert Berry  
William Hill  
Charles Martin, Jr

### Resolution of Appreciation for Convention Chairman

Mike Brown

### Friends of the Trail

California -Donner Truckee  
Trail

James Gouls

Nebraska - California-Oregon  
Trail

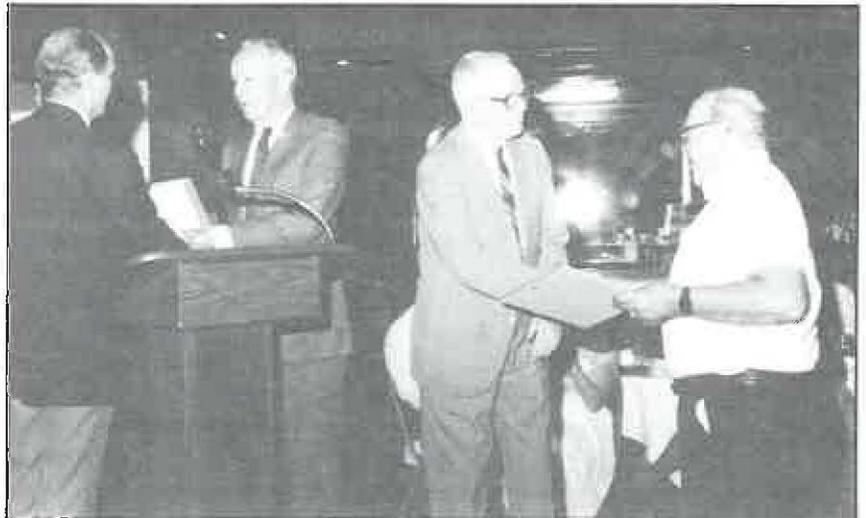
Mr. & Mrs. Leonard Osler  
and Family

Utah - Hastings Cutoff

Freed-Robinson Partners

Wyoming - Oregon Trail-Mor-  
mon Pioneer Trail

John & Leonard Hay  
and Families



### NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

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Rose Ann Tompkins, Editor

*Top: John & Leonard Hays, in center of picture, received the Wyoming Friends of the Trail Award*

*Center: Chuck Dodd, right, presented the Distinguished Volunteer Award to Shann & Bill Rupp*

*Bottom: Barbara Magerl shows her surprise at receiving the Meritorious Achievement Award from Tom Hunt*

## CONVENTION "FIRST-TIMER" ATTENDS POST CONVENTION TOURS

by David Hopper

Nearly 30 Rock Springs Convention attendees took advantage of the opportunities to go on two post convention 4WD trail tours. On Sunday, August 16th, a twelve vehicle caravan followed approximately 40 miles of the Sublette and Dempsey-Hockaday Cutoffs in the area between the Green River and Kemmerer.

Ably and enthusiastically led by David Vlcek, BLM Area Archaeologist for the Pinedale Resource Area, the tour began at the Names Hill site south of La Barge. A ninety minute site tour of 500 yards of cliff face was conducted enabling tour goers to view hundreds of names dating back to 1827, including the Jim Bridger-1844 engraving as well as the petroglyph of Goldborough Bruff Diary fame.

From Names Hill the caravan proceeded south to Fontenelle Creek where the actual trail was picked up. The group then followed the trail to the Pine Grove Emigrant Campsite, up and over Slate Creek Ridge, then thru Rocky Gap. Just west of the "Gap" the Dempsey-Hockaday Cutoff was picked up and followed up, across and over Commissary Ridge to the state highway north of Kemmerer.

The tour was an all-day affair highlighted by lunch at the new Pine Grove Campsite interpretive sign with panoramic views of southwestern Wyoming from both the Slate Creek and Commissary ridges, and miles of pristine trail thru country that remains today much as it was nearly 150 years ago.

On Monday August 17th, Mike Brown, BLM Outdoor Recreation Planner for the Rock Springs area and Chairman of this year's convention, led a group of trail enthusiasts on a tour from the "False" Parting of the Ways located on Highway 28 several miles west of Pacific Springs to the Little Sandy Crossing site, covering some twenty miles of trail. Stops along the way included Plume Rocks, the Dry Sandy Swales, the Dry Sandy Crossing site (which incidentally was not dry) including the

Morman Wells and Dry Sandy Pony Express Station site, the Parting-of-the-Ways and finally the Little Sandy Crossing site on the Ft. Bridger portion of the trail. Commentary by Mike Brown and Randy Wagner, Oregon Trail Sesquicentennial Coordinator for the state of Wyoming, provided tour goers with a wealth of historical background, stories and anecdotes.

The tour goers remarked that the numerous tours, 4WD and otherwise, were never to be forgotten experiences and thus for them the high points of the 1992 convention. Indeed, the hands-on, first person trail experiences provided many with a new perspective with which to go back and reread the diaries and other sources of these portions of the trail.



*Above: This Pony Express/Oregon Trail concrete post is one of many to be found marking the trail and the lonely vistas in Wyoming. photo by Lynda Hatch*

*Below: Many of these trail medallions have been vandalized over the years from their concrete posts. This one on the Lander Cutoff still remains in a remote area visited by one of the tours. photo by Shann Rupp*





*Left: The OCTA Jam Group entertained several times during the convention. Among the familiar faces during the music at the barbecue was Olive Donaldson on the fiddle and Fred Trende on the harmonica.*

*photo by Wm. Dillinger*

*Below: The trail leads past this landmark, Church Butte, between the Green River crossing and Fort Bridger.*

*photo by Lynda Hatch*

## PRESERVATION OFFICE AWARDS

One of the highlights of the Rock Springs awards banquet was the presentation of preservation office pins in recognition of the work done in COED by a number of OCTA members. As you know, all of the surveying of emigrant documents and the entering of those survey materials into the COED computer database is done by volunteers, and since the Rock Springs convention celebrated OCTA's tenth anniversary, it was felt that special recognition was due to those COED volunteers who have made this program such an outstanding success.

The following is a list of those COED volunteers who were honored with a preservation office pin for their sterling contributions in surveying emigrant documents (number of documents surveyed at the time of the convention follows their names and home state): Don Wiggins (CA) 38, Doris Dart (CA) 84, Darlene Peniston (MO) 12, Herman Zittel (CA) 12, Mary Maag (MO) 15, Rose Ann Tompkins (AZ) 43.



Those honored as database input volunteers were: Don Wiggins (CA) 170, Mary Jo Sprague (MO) 26, Betty Johnson (ID) 38.

In addition to her preservation pin, Doris Dart was the recipient of a Certificate of Appreciation for her outstanding contributions as a COED volunteer. Shann Rupp, a previous recipient of a preservation office pin along with her husband, old Whats-his-name, was also honored for her 77 surveys.

Those recipients not able to be present at the convention to receive their pins, will receive them at their chapter meetings with the thanks of all the rest of us. Volunteerism is what has given OCTA its great success. These efforts are truly appreciated.

Tom Hunt  
National Preservation Officer



*Left: During the float trip on the Green River, several stops were made to view crossing and ferry sites. The swale coming out of the river was quite evident at this stop.*

*Below: It's amazing where you will find a rest room, just when you need it!*

*photo by Lynda Hatch*

**A GREAT  
CONVENTION  
FROM  
BEGINNING  
TO END  
!!!!**



## CHAPTER NEWS

### TRAILS HEAD

The chapter has a trail trek planned in October in Douglas County. In November they will hold their annual meeting.

Chapter members joined Gateway Chapter members on June 13 for a field trip that met to begin the day at the Kansas Museum of History in Topeka, KS. After a tour of the museum led by Robert Keckeisen, Director, the group went to the former site of Uniontown and ferry crossing. The trip continued along the Oregon Trail west, with stops at Vieux Cemetery, Big Elm, Red Vermillion Crossing. Barbara Burgess and Julia Bork acted as guides during various parts of the field trip.

### GATEWAY

In September, the chapter again will have a booth at the Pioneer Days celebration at the Iowa, Sac & Fox Mission near Highland, KS, in order to acquaint people with the purpose of OCTA. Chapter volunteers will man the booth over the two day celebration.

Two chapter members, Jackie Lewin and Marilyn Taylor, have authored a new book, *THE ST. JOE ROAD*. Written in the form of a guidebook, it covers the ferry crossings of the Missouri River in the St. Joseph area and the trail routes through northeast Kansas.

### SOUTHWEST

#### ANNUAL PLANNING MEETING

Chapter members met in July at the summer home of Jim and Marion Carter in Alto, NM to plan for the coming year.

Susan Doyle outlined a trip on part of a Mormon trail near Bluff, Utah. That trip is scheduled for mid September. An invitation was made to the Utah Crossroads Chapter to join us.

Other plans include:

4th annual trails symposium - late February

Southern Route through Cook's Pass in New Mexico - March

Mapping workshop weekend on Beale Road near Flagstaff, AZ - May

More details on these trips will be available later.

# UTAH CROSSROADS

## ADVENTURES ON THE SALT LAKE CUTOFF

Word of the successful journey on Hensley's Salt Lake Cutoff from the City of the Great Salt Lake to the junction with the California Trail near the Silent City of Rocks has been recently received. Forty-nine (a significant number perchance) denizens of the fair city and its environs and several sojourners from sundry locations through the West arrived safely and located the juncture of the two roads. The two-day journey was completed without loss of life, illness, or serious accident. None of the twenty vehicles in the company was lost and members of the company suffered little hardship other than the choking dust of the trail. Interviews with the wayfarers indicate deep satisfactions with the venture.

Thus the chapter reports its spring outing, held May 30-31. Trail guides and researchers includes several experts and a special issue of the *Crossroads* newsletter and a general membership meeting were prior mental preparation for the excursion.

Thousands of emigrants who left the California Trail at Fort Hall to make a side trip to Salt Lake City to rest and replenish supplies used the cutoff for several years. The trail was pioneered by S.J. Hensley in 1848 and opened for wagon travel by Mormon Battalion veterans returning from California to join their families in Salt Lake Valley. Their journals were used as references on this fieldtrip.

Our caravan left Salt Lake City and traveled along modern roads in Bountiful and Farmington, roads which were laid over the original trail in many places. Bluff Road and other country roads through farmlands west of Ogden also followed or closely paralleled the old cutoff trail. Stops along the route were frequent at points of interest. Reading of the journal excerpts and other commentary kept interest high.

At Hampton's Ferry in northern Utah, where emigrants had to cross the

Bear River, a local historian had prepared an informative display on the history of Hampton's ford-ferry-bridge and the restored stage-station and inn there. At Rocky Ford on the Malad River, the only place to safely cross the Malad River, we were met by the property owners, who treated us to local history and lore. They were also our host at Toponce Spring, further down the trail.

The convoy was able to parallel the trail west of Tremonton, Utah, and through the Hansel's Mountains and Hansel's Valley, named in honor of Hensley but incorrectly spelled. Highway 42 took us due north of the trail and to a dirt road leading to Pilot Spring, where field trip participants searched for and found trail ruts.

Sunday morning the group gathered in Almo, Idaho, to hear information and then drove through the silent dignity of the City of Rocks. We hiked to the top of Pinnacle Pass in the ruts of the trail. Then driving west, we reached the top of the pass that led the emigrants west into Nevada. Returning to the City of Rocks beneath the Twin Sisters, trek participants searched for and located the junction of the Salt Lake Cutoff and the California Trail, a discovery that brought deep satisfaction, serious marking of the spot with available materials, some clowning, and many photographs.

From that point, the caravan was able to retrace much of the original trail through Emigrant Canyon (seeing ruts often) and the Raft River Narrows. The areas of Cassia Creek and Clear Creek were traversed, with reading of the "Battalion boys" journal excerpts along the way. Near Emigrant Spring we took our last close-up examination of wagon ruts.

At the Cedar Creek stage station ruins, our journey ended. We expressed much appreciation to our trail guides, and with fond and reluctant farewells to compatriots of the trail we separated into our various "cutoffs" home.

Lyndia Carter

# NORTHWEST

## JUNE OUTING

A June 20th outing visited Brownsville, one of Oregon's oldest towns. The day included a wagon trail breakfast, a visit to the Linn County Historical Museum, a walking tour of the town, dinner and slides about the Santiam Wagon Road.

On June 21 the group visited the Menefee Ranch. There was an informative discussion on the Free Emigrant Road used in 1853-54 and the Oregon Military Road. The afternoon included a visit to see ruts of the Free Emigrant Road.

## JULY OUTING

This July 24-26 outing included a Friday meeting with archaeologist Phil Minthorn who had discovered some good ruts.

Saturday was the marking of approximately three miles of trail, including ruts located on Pendleton Ranches Inc. Property which is operated by Cunningham Sheep Co. The day ended with a pot luck and music. A good time was had by the almost 30 attendees.

## HAVE YOU SEEN?

"The Mormon-Carson Emigrant Trail in Western History," by Kenneth N. Owens appeared in *Montana, the Magazine of Western History*, Winter 1992, Vol. 42, No. 1. Kenneth Owens is professor of history at California State University, Sacramento, CA and is an OCTA member.

"Absalom Benton Harvey's Diary: February-September 1864," appeared in *Cochise Quarterly*, Volume 16 (Fall & Winter 1986). Though the writer was going west to east, it can be valuable for retracing certain places on the western part of the Southern Trail.

## COLORADO

Denver, Colorado is the place where OCTA was born. It was where the "Founding Fathers" convened and where then Congressman Jim Johnson registered OCTA as a tax-exempt educational organization. Nevertheless, progress of the Colorado chapter itself has not been exemplary, partly because our 80 (plus or minus) members are scattered over a state seven times the size of Switzerland, and in Colorado early trail remains are in short supply. We met at Fort Morgan on the South Platte Trail over a year ago and that seemed to have exhausted our collective efforts until Jim Bowers (OCTA ex-treasurer) came up with the idea of a field trip to Bob Schultz's Prairie Canyon Longhorn Ranch and Wildlife Refuge, located south of Franktown on Highway 83, and about 25 miles southeast of metro Denver. Chapter head John Dailey and Secretary Marjorie Walker seconded the motion and Bob Schultz okayed the idea.

The ranch's big attraction for OCTA is the fact that one of its wonders is a beautifully preserved section of the old Cherokee Trail - the most common north-south route connecting Denver on the South Platte with Pueblo on the Arkansas River. This was essentially the route first followed southward by the Long expedition of 1820 enroute home via the Arkansas River, after first ascending the South Platte. In 1849 this was also the route of Cherokee Indians from Georgia, heading northward to join the California Gold Rush up the North Platte - and thus left their name on the route, also know to early mountain men as the "Trappers' Trail" between Bent's Old Fort and Fort Laramie.

The turnout of 55, including about 25 from OCTA, showed up on June 6. We extended invitations to the Denver Westerners and members of CAMP (Council on America's Military Past). Bob Schultz and his son Randy, complete with Stetons, cowboy boots, and saddle horses, pasturing longhorns, and the distant Rocky Mountains provided atmosphere for the occasion.

Though the ranch headquarters has an idyllic collection of old barns and NFP October 1992 - page 16

dwellings, we convened in a new building best described as a cross between a big garage and an art gallery. First thing on the program was a caravan up rough terrain to a plateau where we had a trail lecture by Lee Whiteley of Littleton, and a hike over the Cherokee Trail and later State road, with well-defined ruts. After returning for mid-day chow (everybody brought their own) we had an informal meeting and map study led by Lloyd Glasier of the Parker Historical Society and an illuminating talk by Glenn Scott, U.S.G.S. retiree of Denver and creator of beautiful maps of Eastern Colorado historic trails superimposed on U.S.G.S. quadrangles.

Following the program Virgil Hughes of the nostalgic "4th U.S. Artillery" fired Bob's "3/8 scale Army Model 1841 6 pounder cannon". Then, after a tour of sites occupied by prehistoric Indians and early homesteaders, the expedition and the day ended. After enduring chill winds at the outset, the day ended up calm, with a spectacular mountain sunset.

Merrill J. Mattes

## NEBRASKA

### SPRING TRAIL TREK

Several local residents joined the Nebraska Chapter trail trekkers as we continued to follow the Oregon-California Trail across Nebraska, beginning at the site of the Pat Mullally Road Ranch south of Lexington. On May 31, 1992, we were greeted by the Lexington Chamber of Commerce before we left to follow the trail. Led by our able "trail boss", Bob Berry, we stopped at nine road ranch station locations to hear diary excerpts and comments by Charles Martin, assisted by Clyde Wallace of Lexington. A highlight of the trek was the stop at the Dan Smith West Road Ranch Station. The building is still extant and preserved by the owners of the Lower 96 Williams Ranch where the station is located. Before our final stop at O'Fallon's Bluff, west of North Platte, Wayne Roch of Hershey, Nebraska led us into his farm pasture to walk on undisturbed trail ruts. The chapter gained several new members as a result of this most successful trail trek.

Helen E. Sundell

*Below: Lee Whiteley, left, explains to Colorado chapter members about the Cherokee trail route during their June outing. photo by Jim Bowers*



## MONUMENT REDEDICATION AT THE OREGON TRAIL AND ST. JOE ROAD JUNCTION

by Larry Bunse, President,  
Gateway Chapter

On Sunday, August 16, 1992, a rededication was held at the two stone monuments marking the approximate junction site where the St. Joe Road joined the Oregon Trail coming from Independence. The granite monument dedicated is known locally as the Bremen Monument, or sometimes, the Fred Prell Monument, after the nearby town, and the individual most instrumental in its erection in June, 1935. The other monument marking the junction was rededicated last year on the 50th anniversary of its erection.

The Bremen (Fred Prell) monument was erected in 1935 next to a county road running past Mr. Prell's farm. The stone is engraved:

**LEST WE FORGET  
OREGON TRAIL  
1827-1875  
DEDICATED 1935**

Below the stone is a plaque which reads: "ERECTED BY SCHOOL DIST'S. 60, 100, 110, BREMEN EV. LUTH. SCHOOL AND TOWN OF BREMEN, KANS." Fred Prell, a local farmer and historian, and his sons organized the community effort to erect the monument on his land. The dates on the monument are a bit in question, as they do not really reflect the main period of

## MATTES IS LATEST LEGEND

The Summer, 1992 edition of *Buckskin Bulletin*, newsletter of Westerners International, honored Merrill Mattes as its latest "Living Legend". This is an ongoing series in this newsletter. The page-long article about Merrill Mattes was written by another OCTA founder, Jim Bowers.

The current president of Westerners International, Reba Wells of Phoenix, AZ., is also an OCTA member and active Southwest Chapter member.

emigration on the trails. According to Jackie Lewin and Marilyn Taylor in their book *THE ST. JOE ROAD*, the first date was probably chosen because the first wagon train crossed the continental divide on the overland route in 1827. The significance of the 1875 date has not been discovered.

This year's ceremony was sponsored by several local historical organizations, spearheaded by Duane Durst, curator of the Hollenberg Pony Express Station Museum, and he opened the ceremony by welcoming well over 100 people to the occasion. Local members of the National Pony Express Association made a horseback presentation of flags of the United States, Kansas, and the NPEA. Mrs. Bernice Stohs unveiled the monument and spoke about the stone's history. Mrs. Stohs, daughter of Fred Prell, had also unveiled the monument at its original dedication in 1935.

One highlight of the occasion was the arrival of a covered wagon owned by Dave Bowhay of Beatrice, Nebraska. The wagon was pulled by two draft horses and accompanied by foals and several riders on horseback.

Dr. Ramon Powers, Executive Director of the Kansas State Historical Society, gave a brief speech on the history and significance of the trails through northeast Kansas. I closed the ceremony with a speech introducing OCTA and its role in trail preservation. I also commented on the importance of introducing our young people to the exciting historical events which have occurred in their own backyards.

This event was followed by a buffalo burger barbecue at the Hollenberg Pony Express Station Museum.

At the original dedication ceremony in 1935, Fred Prell said:

"To those that have walked and traveled over this trail, this act of ours will mean but little. To those of us who are here and those to come, it will mean much if we can take from those early pioneers the lessons of faith, courage, sacrifice and determination to make good."

Those words have just as much meaning for us today.

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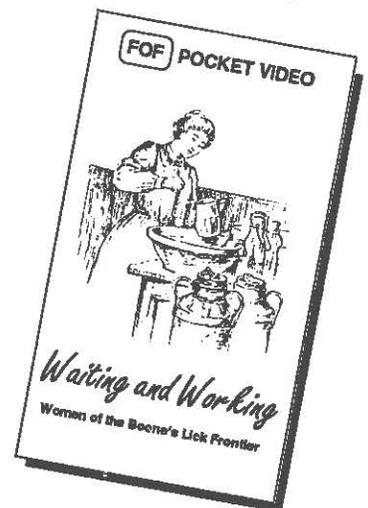
### *Waiting and Working*

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## TRAIL LEGISLATION CAMPAIGN SUCCESSFUL

We are delighted to report that legislation designating the California National Historic Trail and the Pony Express National Historic Trail became law on August 3 when President Bush signed bill HR-479. This marks the end of a six year legislative campaign to achieve this status for these historical trails. They will now be protected as are the Oregon, Mormon, Santa Fe and Lewis & Clark Trails.

This successful project was a team effort. Special thanks to our 20 enthusiastic committee members who spent many hours doing grass roots politics. And, many thanks to the OCTA members who delivered 300-500 letters and phone calls to Congress every time we needed them. OCTA could not have achieved this goal without all your help.

In order to pass the legislation, a compromise was written into the report language, as worked out by Senator Harry Reid of Nevada and Senator Malcolm Wallop of Wyoming. (See that report language below.)

The route of the California National Historic Trail covers about 5,700 miles of trail and includes all route and cutoffs, extending from Independence and St. Joseph, Missouri and Council Bluffs, Iowa, to various points in Oregon & California including the Applegate-Lassen route. Between 1841 and 1865 more than 200,000 pioneers followed these trails.

The new Pony Express National Historic Trail is approximately 1,900 miles long including the original as well as subsequent routes between St. Joseph, Missouri and Sacramento, California and may be extended west to San Francisco.

OCTA's work is not finished. We need each OCTA member, including the committee members, to send thank you notes to your Senators and Representatives. Also, when you vote in November, please remember these elected officials who provided the needed legislative support.

What happens next? During the next two years, the National Park Service will make an interpretive study of

the California National Historic Trail to precisely identify the actual routes, the historic sites and ruts plus recommend interpretive center sites. Their report will be issued for public review and comment. OCTA's new National Trails committee will support and monitor this planning and implementation process.

SENATOR WALLOP's CONCERNS AND SOLUTION delivered on June 24 to the Committee on Energy & Natural Resources:

"I am extremely reluctant to recommend passage of the House passed bill (HR-479), which would allow the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture to use condemnation authority on lands or interests in lands within the exterior boundaries of federally administered areas.

I do not take issue with the historical significance of either the Pony Express or California Trails - both are meritorious and are an integral part of the story of the settlement of the western states.

The issue is condemnation authority, I am well aware that to date, the authority has never been utilized for a Historic Trail. Both Secretaries have worked with local interest groups and governments to sign and develop the Historic Trails under their respective jurisdiction and wisely have avoided the use of condemnation as a tool to preserve remnants of a historic trail. I have been assured that the Secretaries have no intention of using condemnation authority on these two trails.

What worries me is that 20 years from now I will not be here and a Secretary may change his mind. Therefore, I have submitted report language which says that the Committee expects that 6 months prior to any use of condemnation that the Congressional delegation is notified prior to any action being taken. This is the only solution I can find that will afford protection for the interest of the private property owner. Otherwise, the House and the Senate will never agree and the Historic Trails System will never be ex-

Report from  
Jeanne & Bill Watson, Co-chair

panded. This would be very unfortunate because clearly it is a worthwhile program."

REPORT LANGUAGE for H.R. 479 - CALIFORNIA and PONY EXPRESS TRAILS

"H.R. 479 to amend the National Trails System Act to designate the California National Historic Trail and Pony Express National Historic Trail as components of the National Trails System.

The Committee notes that within the exterior boundaries of federally administered areas the Secretaries of jurisdiction may acquire lands or interest in lands by written cooperative agreement, donation, purchasing with donated or appropriated funds, or exchange in accordance with provisions of the National Trails System Act as amended. To date, neither the Secretary of the Interior nor the Secretary of Agriculture has utilized condemnation authority relative to historic trails and the Committee does not foresee circumstances where this would change. In the event that the Secretary decides to exercise his authority, the Committee expects that the Congressional delegation will be notified six months prior to the use of condemnation authority for the acquisition of lands or interest in lands along the California or Pony Express Trails, especially in the States of Wyoming and Utah."

#### Committee members:

Earl Schmidt - Murphys, CA  
Dick Ackerman - Salem, OR  
Ruth Anderson - New Ulm, MN  
Mike Bateman - Pocatello, ID  
David Bigler - Sandy, UT  
Mary Brotherton - Northridge, CA  
Carol D. Cahill - Coronado, CA  
Susan B. Doyle - Albuquerque, NM  
Porter French - Grinnell, IA  
Curtis Grant - Modesto, CA  
George Ivory - Salt Lake City, UT  
Lois Johnson - Santa Maria, CA  
Steve Larmore - Alamo, CA  
Ron Lund - Casper, WY  
Eugene Potter - Casper, WY  
Art Randall - Casper, WY  
James Shea - Phoenix, AZ  
Burt Silcock - Meridian, ID  
Rod Stock - Reno, NV  
Don Buck - OCTA/NPEA Liaison

To amend the National Trails System Act to designate the California National Historic Trail and Pony Express National Historic Trail as components of the National Trails System.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

#### SECTION 1. DESIGNATION OF TRAILS.

Section 5(a) of the National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1244(a)) is amended by adding the following new paragraphs at the end thereof:

"( ) The California National Historic Trail, a route of approximately five thousand seven hundred miles, including all routes and cutoffs, extending from Independence and Saint Joseph, Missouri, and Council Bluffs, Iowa, to various points in California and Oregon, as generally described in the report of the Department of the Interior prepared pursuant to subsection (b) of this section entitled 'California and Pony Express Trails, Eligibility/Feasibility Study/Environmental Assessment', and dated September 1987. A map generally depicting the route shall be on file and available for public inspection in the Office of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. The trail shall be administered by the Secretary of the Interior. No lands or interests therein outside the exterior boundaries of any federally administered area may be acquired by the United States for the California National Historic Trail except with the consent of the owner thereof.

"( ) The Pony Express National Historic Trail, a route of approximately one thousand nine hundred miles, including the original route and subsequent route changes, extending from Saint Joseph, Missouri, to Sacramento, California, as generally described in the report of the Department of the Interior prepared pursuant to subsection (b) of this section entitled 'California and Pony Express Trails, Eligibility/Feasibility Study/Environmental Assessment', and dated September 1987. A map generally depicting the route shall be on file and available for public inspection in the Office of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. The trail shall be administered by the Secretary of the Interior. No lands or interests therein outside the exterior boundaries of any federally administered area may be acquired by the United States for the California National Historic Trail except with the consent of the owner thereof."

#### SECTION 2. STUDY PROVISIONS

The Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter referred to as the Secretary) shall undertake a study of the land and water route used to carry mail from Sacramento to San Francisco, California, to determine the feasibility and suitability of designation of such route as a component of the Pony Express National Historic Trail designated by section 1 of the Act. Upon completion of the study, if the Secretary determines such route is a feasible and suitable addition to the Pony Express National Historic Trail, the Secretary shall designate the route as a component of the Pony Express National Historic Trail. The Secretary shall publish notice of such designation in the Federal Register and shall submit the study along with his findings to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the United States House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the United States Senate.

Sarah King Chambers was born July 25, 1823 in Madison County, Ohio, to Naham and Serepta King.

In the spring of 1845, she, along with her husband, Rowland, and their children Margaret and James, joined other members of the King family on their migration west. Their destination was the Willamette Valley of Oregon, for a new beginning in a land which held great promise.

With about 1,000 other emigrants and 200 wagons, the King party chose to follow Stephen Meek in an ill-fated attempt to cross central Oregon on their way to the upper Willamette Valley, near present-day Eugene. Meek convinced them that this new route would avoid many hazards of the Blue Mountains, the restless Cayuse Indians, and the perilous journey down the Columbia River.

Their group became known as the "Lost Wagon Train of 1845." Not really lost, but desperate for water in these high deserts, they abandoned their plans for a new route and turned north toward the Columbia River and the established trail to Oregon. They arrived at the mission in The Dalles in October in a most deplorable condition.

Sarah could not complete that journey. She died on September 3, 1845, and was buried here, alongside the "Terrible Trail." The cause of death was not recorded in contemporary accounts.

There were twenty-three other known deaths along the cutoff route from where they left the Oregon Trail at the crossing of the Malheur River (in present-day Vale, Oregon) until they rejoined the Oregon Trail at the mission at The Dalles.

1993 OCTA Convention  
Baker City, Oregon  
August 11-14

'94 - Salt Lake City, Utah  
'95 - Grand Island, Nebraska  
'96 - Elko, Nevada

From *TRAIL UPDATE*,  
newsletter of the  
Northwest Chapter

*Excerpts of a letter from our president  
Lowell Tiller to Randy Brown, Graves  
and Sites Chair.*

You shamed Dick Ackerman and I into activity which two old goats our age should be wise enough to avoid but apparently are not. We did the Sarah Chambers grave as befits an 1845er who died on the Meek Cutoff.

We drove 800 miles, one day's hard labor, two motel nights, ate six meals, put out a lot of blood, sweat (it was hot there) and tears, plus out of pocket money for supplies.

The bit to drill the holes for the fence hardware was the wrong size. We had to improvise. The log fencing was not quite right. We had to improvise. The bit did not fit the brace. We had to improvise. Once we got there, the grave did not fit our railing. We had to improvise. The hardware was not right in length or size. We had to improvise. There was no water there, nor was there any road to the grave site. We had to improvise.

The telephone company donated the hardware. Dick and I provided the transportation, meals and motel. We provided a whole bunch of improvises. We provided all the blood, sweat and tears.

Take note - we also had out of pocket expense of \$2.50 for two dozen night crawlers with which we caught ten twelve inch rainbows after the work was done. It was a tough part of the trip but someone had to do it.

The OCTA sign put at the Sarah King Chambers grave reads as shown at left.

# **OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION**

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