

MARCH
1991

NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

THE OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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



INSIDE: LOOK FOR-

↪ CONVENTION EVENTS
AND INFORMATION

↪ MORE ON MERRILL
MATTES

Left: Merrill Mattes watches as Bill Watson signs papers accepting the Mattes Collection for OCTA. This took place on Friday, November 16, 1990 at the Mattes home in Littleton, Colorado. Subsequent to the signing, 56 boxes containing the library were loaded for shipment to Independence.

photo by Marilyn Holt

MERRILL MATTES DONATES HIS PERSONAL LIBRARY TO OCTA

by Jeanne Watson

On Saturday, April 6, 1991, the Merrill J. Mattes Research Library will be dedicated during OCTA's mid-year board meeting. The dedication, open to all OCTA members, will take place at the National Frontier Trails Center in Independence, where the new library collection will be located.

This research facility contains the 1,400 volume collection of author and historian Merrill J. Mattes of Colorado. The Mattes Collection is a gift to OCTA and has been placed on permanent loan at the NFTC, where it will be available for scholarly research.

This gift was moved in mid-November from Merrill's home in Littleton to the Center, with each volume receiving special handling and boxing. Taking each book down from the shelf himself was the equivalent of saying "farewell" before handing it over to be wrapped and packed. Helping were OCTA members Bill Watson, president; Jerry Motsinger, NFTC acting director; Jim Bowers, first OCTA treasurer; and Dan Holt, former NFTC director and now director of the Eisenhower Library. The packing and loading was completed in time for the crew to join in celebrating Merrill's 80th

birthday with his wife Clare at a nearby restaurant.

The Mattes Collection was appraised by OCTA member Donna Hudgel of Trails West as a contribution to OCTA. It was transported to Independence on November 17 by Jerry, who drove the heavily loaded truck.

Researchers interested in using the Mattes Library collection should write Director Jerry Motsinger at the NFTC, giving time and date of arrival and explaining topic to be researched and how the information will be used, either in a future publication and/or program.

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Bill Watson

It is a pleasure to announce the recent signing of a partnership agreement with the National Park Service, Northwest Region for up to \$10,000 in this fiscal year to cover the costs of materials and supplies used by OCTA in the mapping, marking and interpretation of the Oregon National Historic Trail in preparation for its 1993 Sesquicentennial celebration.

Last November, while I was in Littleton for the packing and loading of Merrill Mattes' library, Peggy Dolinick, NPS, called from Seattle about the possibilities and tight timetable to be met if we were to qualify for this 1991 partnership agreement. With a few quick phone calls, we put together this agreement where the NPS will pay the costs of materials and supplies used on jointly approved projects in exchange for the matching work by OCTA volunteers.

This agreement covers such costs as tools, white carsonite markers, interpretive signs, work gloves, maps and research materials used on these projects. It is essential that the Chapters and Committees keep records by date & time of all volunteer hours spent in planning, training and carrying-out these projects. The volunteer hours to date, by project, will be reported during the Sacramento Convention and given to the NPS for consideration in funding of '92 projects.

OCTA Chapter Presidents and the Chair of the national Archeology, Graves & Sites, and Mapping Com-

mittees were asked to submit a separate proposal and cost estimate by March first, for each 1991 candidate project. The OCTA Executive Committee and NPS Oregon Trail Project Manager will review each project to determine if it qualifies under the agreement, or what changes are necessary for it to qualify.

I have called a mid-year Board meeting at the OCTA Headquarters in Independence, Missouri for 8:30 AM Saturday, April 6th, to review this agreement and the proposed projects. You are welcome to join us. We will break at midday for dedication of the Merrill J. Mattes Research Library in the National Frontier Trails Center.

We have received a number of calls at Headquarters about the dates of our 1991 Convention in Sacramento. The annual Board meeting on Tuesday, August 13th will include a mid-afternoon special session with the Chapter Presidents. The CA/NV/HI Chapter Convention Committee is hard at work on final details of the August 14-18 convention schedule. Please plan to join us in Sacramento. With the CA/NV/HI Chapter's experience hosting the Carson City convention, I know we will have a great time.

Our thoughts and prayers are for the safe and speedy return home of Dr. Kendall McNabney and other Americans involved in Operation Desert Storm.

NOMINATIONS FOR OCTA AWARDS REQUESTED

To assure recognition of members and organizations who make exceptional contributions in furthering OCTA's objectives, nominations are requested for OCTA's Meritorious Achievement Award, Volunteer of the Year Award and National Certificates of Appreciation. These awards will be given at the national convention in August in Sacramento.

The Meritorious Achievement Award, which is OCTA's highest accolade, is presented for outstanding achievements of lasting significance in the service of the organization and trail preservation. Recipients of the award may be individuals or organizations (such as agencies, cities, or private groups).

The Volunteer of the Year Award is presented for an outstanding volunteer contribution by an OCTA member.

National Certificates of Appreciation are given to those who have contributed significantly to the achievement of an OCTA goal.

Nominations for these awards should be sent prior to June 1, 1991, to:

Larry R. Jones
6230 San Luis Way
Boise, Idaho 83709

MERRILL MATTES - SKETCH OF A NOTED WESTERN HISTORIAN

BY JEANNE H. WATSON

Seldom does a noted historian become a personal friend of those who have long admired his work but thanks to OCTA, many now know Merrill J. Mattes as a very special friend indeed. A founding director of our association, Merrill's quiet humor enlivens his scholarship and endears him to us all.

Over the years he has shared his expertise in western trail history through programs at OCTA meetings and articles published in the Overland Journal as well as in personal conversations. Always willing to discuss ideas and exchange information as well as offer suggestions, Merrill, now OCTA's first Director Emeritus, has been a mentor to many aspiring historians. And this willingness to share his knowledge has resulted in the recent gift to OCTA of his 1,400 volume library of Western Americana. The Merrill J. Mattes Library, on loan to the National Frontier Trails Center, will be dedicated and opened for scholarly research on Saturday, April 6, 1991.

Merrill's library represents a life-long devotion to the study of overland trails history that has resulted in six major books plus 75 articles in various historical quarterlies and 200 book reviews. Most OCTA members first became acquainted with him by reading The Great Platte River Road, which has won national awards and honors, so it was a surprise and a thrill to meet him in person at the first OCTA (1983) convention in Independence.

His most recent publication, Platte River Road Narratives: A Descriptive Bibliography of Travel.... 1812-1866, supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities, has received a Silver Spur award from the Western Writers of America. During OCTA's 1984 convention in Oregon City, Merrill received the Meritorious Achievement Award, our highest honor. Other honors include an Award of Merit from the American Association for State and Local History, and two "Best Western

"Merrill's library represents a life-long devotion to the study of overland trails history that has resulted in six major books plus 75 articles in various historical quarterlies and 200 book reviews."

Non-Fiction" awards from the National Cowboy Hall of Fame. In addition, Merrill received a Distinguished Service Award from the US Department of the Interior and was named Nebraska Civil Servant of the Year. At the opening of the National Frontier Trails Center in 1990, he was named OCTA's first Director Emeritus.

Merrill's career with the National Park Service spans 40 years, beginning as a ranger at Yellowstone National Park in 1935 after completing a BA degree in history from the University of Missouri with an MA in English literature from the University of Kansas. From 1935-1946 he served as superintendent of the Scotts Bluff National monument with time out for a fellowship in American history and archeology at Yale University. Other NPS assignments include serving as historian for the Missouri Basin Surveys; regional historian for the Midwest Region; chief planner, Alaska Studies; and chief of historic preservation for the Western Service Center in San Francisco. His last assignment before retirement in 1975 was as chief of historic preservation for the Denver Service Center.

Although Merrill and his wife Clare live in Littleton, Colorado, his contract work plus programs for various professional organizations, take them on many trips throughout the western states each year. Merrill has worked on the state of Nebraska's Historical Resources Management Survey and the NPS Report on the American Revolution Bicentennial Program. His has also re-

searched the history of Fort Laramie Park for NPS and Bent's Fort for the Colorado Historical Society. In addition, he compiled a comprehensive annotated bibliography of Platte River Road Journals for the Nebraska State Historical Society with funding from NEH.

Merrill is a charter member of the Western History Association and life member of the Nebraska Historical Society. He is a founding member of the Society for Historical Archaeology and the Douglas County (NE) Historical Society as well as a co-founder of OCTA. He has also served as Sheriff of both the Denver and San Francisco Westerners.

His other publications include histories of Scotts Bluff National Monument and Fort Laramie Park as well as Colter's Hell & Jackson's Hole for the Yellowstone Nature Association and Indians, Infants and Infantry: The West of Andrew & Elizabeth Burt. He has also written four biographies of fur traders for the book Mountain Men of the Fur Trade. Merrill's contributions to the field of western history and especially to OCTA are deeply appreciated by everyone involved in preserving the heritage of the Overland Trails.

NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

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Rose Ann Tompkins, Editor

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

The 102nd Congress is now in session and getting organized for their new two year session. They, like the rest of us, are primarily focused on Operation Desert Storm and the budget.

There are several key changes in the Senate and House that will impact the California and Pony Express National Historic Trails legislation:

- Senator Wallop, WY, advanced to Ranking Minority Member of the Energy & Natural Resources Committee.
- Senator McClure, ID, Ranking Minority Member of the Energy & Natural Resources Committee, did not run for re-election. Congressman Larry Craig, ID-1, was elected Senator and will join the E&NR Committee.
- Senator Pete Wilson, CA, was elected Governor and appointed John Seymour as California's new Senator. Meanwhile, Senator Cranston, CA, remains in California battling cancer.
- Larry LaRocco is the new Congressman from ID-1 replacing Larry Craig.
- In mid-January, Congressman Mo Udall, AZ, had a serious fall. George Miller, CA-7, will replace

him as Chairman of the Interior Committee. Due to this sudden change, National Parks & Public Lands Subcommittee members and other appointments have not been announced (as of February 5).

--Congressman Norman Shumway, CA-14, and lead sponsor of HR-1109, did not run for re-election, and his replacement is John Doolittle.

HR-1109 died when the 101st Congress adjourned and the Legislative Committee is now working to line-up new lead sponsors in the Senate and House for new California & Pony Express National Historic Trails legislation.

LATE BREAKING DEVELOPMENTS

Congressman Doug Bereuter, Nebraska First District, introduced HR-479 on the California Trail & Pony Express Trails with wording similar to old HR-1109 but without the Wallup amendment.

There is growing support in California including endorsements by city and county governments and historical societies urging addition of the Sacramento-San Francisco leg of the Pony Express route to the trail legislation.

ROSE ANN'S TWO TRACK

This issue of NFP has several items concerning the convention in August. These items are only a preview of activities. You will receive a convention packet as a separate mailing later in the spring. It will contain more detail and your registration material. Please don't think that what you see in these NFP pages is all you are going to get.

Your mailbox will also bring you a ballot for filling the vacancies that will occur on the Board of Directors. The members of the Board make decisions concerning the direction OCTA takes over time. Be sure to vote for those you wish to represent you.

I continue to be pleased with your response to the request for NFP items, and your help in meeting the deadlines. It makes my job much easier. The next deadlines will be:

**MAY 15 FOR THE JUNE ISSUE
AUG. 30 FOR THE SEPT. ISSUE
NOV. 15 FOR THE DEC. ISSUE**

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

DESIGN AWARD

Shaughnessy Fickel and Scott Architects Inc. has received an honor award for Excellence in Architecture for their design of the National Frontier Trails Center. The Kansas City chapter of the American Institute of Architects presented the award. The State of Missouri commissioned this project to commemorate the men and women who passed through Independence along the trails that opened our nation's western frontier. The center is operated by the City of Independence. OCTA headquarters occupies one building in the complex.

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)



**William Henry Jackson
(1843-1942)**

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

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GATEWAY CHAPTER LEARNS ABOUT EMIGRANT FIREARMS

story and photos by Larry Bunse and Jackie Lewin

Gateway members spent a January evening with one of the overland emigrants' most constant companions . . . their guns. In the 1700s and early 1800s, most firearms were crafted by individual gunsmiths working in small shops, but, by the mid-nineteenth century, factories had taken over much of the production. On January 22, Gateway members "stepped back in time" and visited such a gun factory. Ted Hatfield of the Hatfield Gun and Rifle Manufacturers in St. Joseph opened his shop and gave a program on nineteenth century firearms. In the late 1970s, Ted began making muzzle-loading rifles, similar to those used by many overland emigrants. During the ensuing ten years, the Hatfield rifle has gained the reputation as being one of the premier muzzle-loaders produced in the United States with Citations in publications such as Sports Afield, Guns and Ammo and the Wall Street Journal. The majority of the labor in the Hatfield shop is still done by hand. Over the last year they produced a very ornate double barrel shot gun which will be presented to President Bush.



Approximately 30 Gateway members viewed a number of rifles, some actually of the period and some reproductions made by Hatfield. Herb Woodbury and Larry Bunse also brought guns of the emigrant period from their own collections. In fact, Herb Woodbury's gun had been carried on the California Trail in 1849 by his great grandfather, Thomas Hobson. Originally from Raleigh, North Carolina,

Hobson came to Andrew County, Missouri, in 1848 and purchased 1,000 acres of land for \$1.25 an acre. A year later, Hobson must have been stirred by the adventure of seeking gold in California for he joined a wagon train going west. Family tradition states that Hobson crossed the Missouri at Boston. This was a jumping off point just north of St. Joseph at present-day Amazonia. The road from the Boston crossing joined the main trail at the Iowa, Sac and Fox Presbyterian Mission. Herb Woodbury related that his great grandfather was not very successful in his search for gold and returned to Missouri a year later. In Andrew County, Missouri, he resumed farming just north of Savannah on a site which was the highest point in the county.

Top: Herb Woodbury holds the rifle carried by his great grandfather on the California Trail in 1849. It is a cap and ball rifle made in Pennsylvania in 1844.



Bottom: Gateway President, Larry Bunse, left, holds a Model 1836 U.S. Government pistol, a type carried on the trail. Gunmaker Ted Hatfield, right, holds a Hatfield Mountain Rifle, a replica of the Hawkin Rifle in use from 1840 to 1860.

CALIFORNIA/NEVADA/HAWAII CHAPTER OUTINGS CALENDAR FOR 1991

Outings Coordinator: Mary Mueller, 1112 Silver Oak Ct., San Jose, CA 95120

This calendar is for the benefit of OCTA members who may be in the area and wish to participate. Details for pre and post convention tours will be in your convention packet, otherwise contact the trip coordinator to register.

April 6	Johnson Rancho Site (April 13 if rained out)	Wheatland, CA	Jack Steed (916) 922-7038
April 30-May 4	BackCountry Byway Dedication & Work Trip (see details below)	Wells, NV	Tom Hunt (415) 941-0815
May 24-27	Bruff's Camp Work Outing (see details below)	Cohasset, CA	Tom Hunt (415) 941-0815
June 1	Donner Truckee Route - Driving & walking tour of the Truckee Route from Verdi to Bear Valley, CA	Donner Memorial Park	Chuck Graydon (916) 273-4081
June 8-9	40-Mile Desert Tracking - Overnight camping on the Carson Route. High clearance vehicle needed (not 4WD)	Fernley, NV	Jim McClain (916) 265-3541
July 14	Hennes Pass Road - Includes Weber Lake Meadow Lake & Jackson Meadows	Truckee, CA	Doyle & Fiona Reed (916) 753-2759
July 20	Johnsons Cut-off Road & Pony Express Trail. Recent discoveries, inc. Johnson's Pass Route used between 1850-1859.	Meyers, CA	Dana Supernowicz (916) 622-5061
August 12	Hennes Pass Road (Pre-convention tour) - From Verdi, regular passenger car, traveling over dusty roads, follows Truckee Route until Hennes Pass Road branches away.	Verdi, NV	Doyle & Fiona Reed (916) 753-2759
August 18	Johnson's Rancho Site (Post-convention tour) Car caravan from Sacramento to Wheatland	Wheatland, CA	Jack Steed (916) 922-7038
August 19-20	Carson Pass Route (Post-convention tour) - Car caravan following trail opened by Mormon Battalion members, 1848, from Pleasant Valley to Fallon, NV	Placerville, CA	Tom Mahach (916) 644-4384

BACK COUNTRY BYWAY DEDICATION AND WORK TRIP - CALIFORNIA TRAIL - APRIL 30 TO MAY 4

This is a joint outing with the Idaho Chapter to the Goose Creek, Rock Springs, and Thousand Springs section of the California Trail in NE Nevada. The purpose is to help construct a BLM Scenic Byway kiosk, place OCTA carsonite markers along the California Trail, and dedicate this section of the Byway. Dedication will be at the Wine Cup Ranch at 10 am Saturday, May 4, followed by a BLM hosted barbeque lunch at Rock Springs.

Outing involves camping out at Rock Springs, approximately 60 miles NE of Wells, NV. This is dry-camping, come prepared to be self-sufficient for 4 days. The alternatives are motels or RV parks in Wells. Regular vehicles are permitted, the roads are gravel or dirt. If you cannot participate full time, register for part time. **Registration deadline: April 15.**

BRUFF'S CAMP WORK OUTING - MAY 24-27 (MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND)

OCTA has arranged with Roseburg Resources for the protection of 5 acres surrounding historic Bruff's Camp on the Lassen Trail. We have permission to go in and clean up the logging debris at the site. This will be a self-sufficient dry camp right on the trail on top of the divide just east of the famous Narrows. High clearance vehicles recommended, but 4ED not necessary, keeping in mind the roads are rocky and dusty. There is much debris to be cleared, bring your tools (rakes, hoes, shovels, chainsaws, iron pikes, wheel-barrows, saws, etc.). All are welcome as moral support is important.

Time permitting, we plan to hike from Obe Field Spring over to famous Steephollow to view the dramatic descent and ascent. This is about a 4 mile roundtrip hike - mostly level with some short climbs. **Registration deadline: May 15.**

Dear Aunt Hattie,

I jus cant believe the summer of '91 is closn in so qik, Gessin by now youv heard jus as much bout this her gito gether in California as we'ns have.

My head us swims when I think of al the people you'al ar goin to meet. 'Educatn persons you git listen to red off information bout people an places. They plans to carry you to lots of places to educate an tickle you'n fancy. Not to mention viddles that'll delight your innards. Wagon Master Machach, Tom, says al the plannin is sit an we jus ar to make rough edges sof fer your stay.

Ther'n much fer you to choose to do once you git her. Ther'n the terribl sad plac wher the Donner Family an friends spent a most terribl winter an so many did'n make it. I stil jus weep whil I ponder of 'em pour folks.

You'al be able to visit the site of the plac wher the rescue folks gatherd to leav to help 'em that wer yet aliv to git to lovin care and food.

An meyb fin a lit'l gold in the streams round her whil you ar visitn som of thos gold minin camps. An don't you worry non, Aunt Hattie, thos miners ar't scallwags as 'em newspaper folks mak th'm out to be. Why ther's women an families ther now, with schools an proper churches. Wel yes ther still is those houses an gamin places but not so's you'd notic anymor.

I jus cant wat for you to see the main center of our world, Sutter's Fort.

An mab, if'n you hav the tim to stay on a bit, you can journey to see the bigst town they cal a city. Its on top of big - bigst I ner saw, - shippin boats. Nams called San Francisco.

O, Aunt Hattie, that ther's a scarist town. It's so big an thers folks from al parts of the world. Al difernt siz, shape, color. They al hav a eatin plac so you go an eats what they'n eat if they'n wer wher they com from.

Aunt Hattie, its jus so excitin. Not lik the farm back'n the States, not at al.

I jus could go on an on but beter leav you go. I knoed your'n a packin to leav as soon as you herd snows a meltin on the passes an the rivers they arn't to deep an quik fer the wagons.

Be sur an writ to lit me knoes you ar commin.

My nex writin wil most likly catch you elswer on the trail.

Safe Journey,

Love from California,

Your Niece,

Anna Mae

WHAT GOES AROUND, COMES AROUND

One of the best known pictures of Captain John Sutter is this romanticized painting by Emmanuel Leutze, whose most famous painting is "Washington Crossing the Delaware".

And where did Washington cross the river, standing up in the boat amid all the ice floes? Why, a mile or so below Lambertville, New Jersey, boyhood home of James Marshall.

The Sutter painting is believed to have been done at the fort in 1859. It now hangs at Old Shasta State Historic Park, near Redding, California, but that's another story.



"Washington Crossing the Delaware" was completed in 1851, and is reproduced in every history textbook. Leutze also did the "Westward the Course of Empire" mural in the National Capitol, and about 60 historical paintings, including "Washington Rallying His Troops at Monmouth" and "The Battle of Atlanta".

The site of the Delaware Crossing is Lambertville's chief claim to fame, aside from the well-preserved Marshall home.

It's fun to speculate: If Leutze did visit the fort to paint Sutter, did he meet Marshall? (In reality, Leutze was a studio painter, and probably visited neither site.)

It's items like this that make a picture search interesting -- I came upon this bit of trivia while picking the illustrations for my recently published book, The Gold Discovery: James Marshall and the California Gold Rush.

William C. Dillinger

"JOHN A. SUTTER"

by Emmanuel Leutze
Photo courtesy of the
California State Library
Used with permission

CALL FOR FIDDLERS THREE

All Sacramento bound OCTA musicians should pack their musical instruments (fiddles, harmonicas, guitars, mandolins, etc.) for the August, 1991 Convention. Be prepared to join the OCTA "traditional music ensemble," which will provide background music of American traditional trail music (REDWING, TURKEY IN THE STRAW, SWEET BETSY, etc.) for the social gathering Wednesday evening, August 14. As the OCTA JAM GROUP is an impromptu organization, there may be other opportunities for the group to "render a few more tunes" during the convention. All instruments are accepted. Any questions or comments about the OCTA JAM GROUP? Or any comments about past convention entertainment?

Contact :

Olive Donaldson, P.O. Box 493053, Redding, CA 96049, (916) 221-5521

A CONVENTION EXTRA JOHN BIDWELL

by Mary Lou Lyon

One of the commemorations at this conference will be the 150th Anniversary of the Bartleson-Bidwell expedition into California. It was the FIRST to come to California overland. John Bidwell was a school teacher in Platte County, Missouri when he talked to Joseph Robidoux who described California as a country of perennial spring with boundless fertility, thousands of wild horses and cattle running loose and oranges growing. When asked if they had any fever or ague, he replied that only one man in Monterey had the ague and people went 18 miles to see him shake. Furthermore, both the Spanish and the Indians were friendly and hospitable and the land a paradise.

The Western Emigration Society was formed with the agreement that they would rendezvous at Sapling Grove in May of 1841 to start west. They elected Bartleson as captain because he would not go unless he was elected. The party was made up of 69 people, including men, women and children who had no idea of how to go to California. Then they heard of a company of Catholic missionaries, including Father DeSmet, who were going to the Flathead nation in Oregon Territory. They were to be guided by an old Rocky Mountain trapper, Captain Thomas (Brokenhand) Fitzpatrick. The joined forces with the missionaries as far as

Soda Springs [Idaho]. The route they followed from Westport to the Platte River was the one which was followed later by so many - The Oregon Trail.

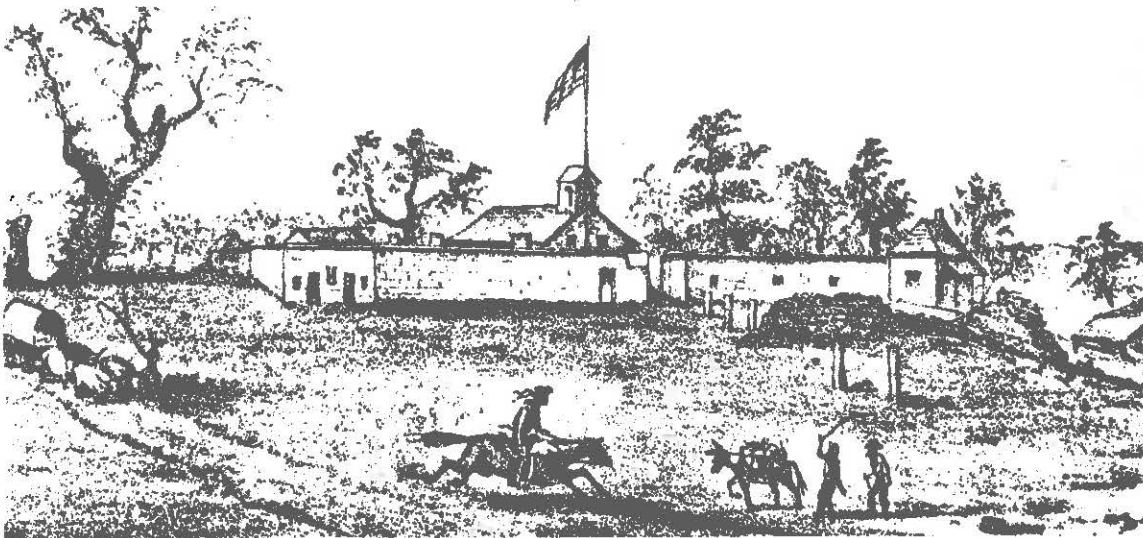
After leaving the Oregon bound missionaries, they turned southwest towards Salt Lake. In the Salt Lake desert, they abandoned their wagons, continuing on foot with oxen, horses and mules carrying their supplies. They followed the Humboldt River into the Nevada desert, then going along the eastern flank of the Sierra were the first settlers to cross into California, probably over the Sonora Pass. As their supplies gave out, they ate their oxen and mules, crows, a fat coyote and almost anything they could find. Among the men was one young mother, Nancy Kelsey, and her child, who followed her husband wherever he led. They had many hardships trying to scale the Sierra Nevada and did not know that they were already in California as they came down the western flanks of the Sierra into the San Joaquin Valley until an Indian guided them to the ranch of Dr. John Marsh on the eastern side of Mt. Diablo. They arrived at his ranch on November 4, 1841.

Some of the party returned to the San Joaquin Valley to trap while others went to the Pueblo de San Jose where they were arrested and put in jail. Marsh went down and procured passports from General Vallejo for all of them except Bidwell, who had given him the list of their party. He proceeded to charge each man \$5 for the passports although they were free from the Mexican Gen-

eral. Bidwell went to San Jose himself to procure a passport and he, too, was jailed. Finally, getting his passport, he set out for Sutter's Fort with three companions, which journey took eight days because of the winter rains and the flooded land. They arrived at the site where Sutter planned to build his fort on November 28, 1841, being greeted by the hospitable Sutter and Jimmy Johns of their party who had become separated from them in the mountains. Johns had arrived at Sutter's site just before the rest of them found Dr. Marsh.

Sutter employed Bidwell to go to Bodega and Ft. Ross until he could finish removing the property he had bought from the Russians who were leaving California. Fourteen months later, Bidwell moved to Sutter's Hock farm in the Sacramento Valley. Meanwhile, Sutter had build his fort and armed it with the cannons bought from the Russians. He employed everyone who wanted a job whether or not he needed them. This kept him in financial straits, but he was building up his empire.

Later, Bidwell bought the Rancho Chico where the town and State College are today, and became one of the leading citizens of the state of California. The Bidwell Mansion he built for his bride has been restored and is supported by a volunteer organization. One of the speakers at the conference will tell us much more about the General and his part in helping to build the state of California.



*Sutter's Fort
as it was in
1848*

**OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION
1991 ANNUAL CONVENTION
RADISSON HOTEL, SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA
AUGUST 14-18, 1991**

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Tuesday, August 13

- OCTA Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, August 14

- Chapter Presidents Breakfast with Board
- Morning Sessions - Papers
- National Committee Chairs Lunch with Board
- Afternoon Workshops: Archeology; COED; Mapping
- Dinner on your own
- Evening - First Timers Get-Together followed by Welcoming Social

Thursday, August 15

- Tours:
 - (A) Truckee-Donner
 - (B) Gold Country
 - (C) Truckee-Donner/Roller Pass
 - (D) Johnson Rancho
- Dinner on your own
- Evening - Meet the Authors reception in Book Room

Friday, August 16

- Morning Sessions - Papers
- Afternoon Sessions - Papers
- Late Afternoon - Chapter meetings
- Dinner and evening - Sutter's Fort - program and dinner

Saturday, August 17

- Tours repeated
- Social Hour followed by Awards Banquet

Sunday, August 18

- Morning - General Membership Meeting
- Post Convention Car Tour - Johnson Ranch (limited)

Monday and Tuesday, August 19 & 20

- Post Convention Car Tour - Carson Pass

TOURS

(A) **TRUCKEE-DONNER:** bus tour with stops at Gold Run, Summit Meadow, Donner Pass, Donner Lake State Park, Alder Creek Donner encampment site, and Emigrant Gap.

(B) **GOLD COUNTRY:** bus loop through the Mother Lode country along Highway 49 with possible stops at Kennedy Mine tailing wheels, a docent led tour of Gold Bug Mine, a visit to Coloma plus photo stops along route.

(C) **DONNER/ROLLER PASS:** bus tour identical to Tour A except it includes a hike from Donner Pass along the Pacific Crest Trail to Roller Pass and back. It will then do as much of the remainder of Tour A as time permits.

(D) **JOHNSON RANCHO:** half-day bus tour to the site of the historic Rancho, the first house reached from the Donner Pass and Donner party rescue headquarters.

PAPERS SCHEDULED

- John Bidwell Museum, Bidwell's Historic Trip and Contributions to Western History.
- Robert Chandler, Wells Fargo & Company "Coming Through".
- Dr. J. Kenneth Davies, Mormon Gold: The Story of California's Mormon Argonauts.
- Dan Evans, Wales Bonney - Emmissary to the Donners.
- Charles K. Graydon, The Truckee-Donner Route.
- Powell M. Greenland, Relics of the Gold Rush Country.
- Donald L. Hardesty, Recent Donner Camp Archaeology.
- JoAnn Levy, Through Panama to California.
- Benjamin E. Lofgren, Geology of the Mother Lode.
- Mary Lou Lyon, Perambulations Through Northern Mining Districts.
- Kenneth N. Owens, The Mormon-Carson Route Over the Sierra.
- Bob Pruett, Family Stories of the Road to California.
- Richard L. Rieck, Plains, Hills and Mountains -- Gold Rush Trails and Elevations.
- Earl Schmidt, The Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus.
- Frances M. Smith, Gus Pearson Goes to California.
- Jack Steed, The Johnson Rancho Site.
- Vivian Velasquez, Gold Rush Music.
- John Wickham, Hoosier Overlanders in the Gold Rush.
- John Yurtinus, With the Mormon Battalion to California.

WATCH YOUR MAILBOX!

**YOUR CONVENTION INFORMATION PACKET WILL ARRIVE SOON.
IT WILL INCLUDE ALL THE DETAILS ON REGISTRATION AND ACCOMMODATIONS.
IF YOU PLAN TO STAY AT THE RADISSON HOTEL, BE ADVISED THAT WE LOSE
OUR BLOCK OF ROOMS AFTER JUNE 14.**

If you wish to register early, you may contact the Radisson Hotel at
500 Leisure Lane, Sacramento, CA 95815, (916) 922-2020 or 1 (800) 333-3333.
Special OCTA room (compatible persons take note) rates are \$65 plus tax.

CONVENTION WORKSHOPS

Three workshops will be offered Monday afternoon, August 14 at the convention. The following is a brief outline of each.

ARCHAEOLOGY

This workshop will cover the comprehensive topic of Archaeological Survey, the first of the field methods used in Archeology. It is the process of searching a defined area, finding and recording systematically all evidence of human behavior. This is more complicated than it seems.

Members of the OCTA Archaeology Committee will lead instruction in four major areas: survey goals and planning steps prior to field work, preparation of research design, field survey and recording, and curation procedures will be briefly outlined. Participants will spend 40 minutes at each of the "stations". Also included will be instructional material for each participant.

The fee for the archaeology workshop is \$5.00 per person to help defray cost of printed materials.

Tours will visit several sites of archeological interest. At the Donner site, archeologists from the Univ. of Nevada at Reno will be excavating the Donner cabin, which is not where it was presumed to be all of these years.

COED

This workshop is for those volunteers who are, or would like to become volunteers in the Census of Overland Emigrant Documents (COED) program. The goal of COED is to survey and record in a computer database essential information from all known documents written by emigrants during their overland journey west. Volunteers are needed in all phases of the program, including locating documents in local and regional repositories, surveying the actual emigrant documents and entering surveyed material into the database system. COED volunteers can work in groups or alone. No chapter affiliation is necessary to volunteer and previous knowledge of the trails is not necessary.

The fee for the COED workshop is \$5.00 per person to help defray cost of printed materials.

More information on the COED program is found on page 14.

MAPPING

Special arrangements have been made with Michael Lunt, Chief of Maps and Surveys, U.S. Forest Service, Region 4, and Kent Malan, OCTA member and retired cartographer with the U.S. Forest Service, to present a seminar on mapping techniques, map reading, and the new mapping technology. This seminar will include: different types of maps and how to read and use them; aerial photos and mapping, "Back to the Future" technology; infrared imagery; use of computers in mapping; satellite imagery, and imagery analysis.

The fee for the mapping workshop will be \$25.00. Included in the fee are the workshop manual, a pocket stereoscope, and map-measuring tools. Workshop is limited to 50 persons. (The fee simply covers the cost of the material that will be provided to you.)

This is a rare opportunity for trail buffs to learn the very latest about mapping technology and the use of maps from two experts in the field.

ROLLER PASS

On September 15, 1846 the Joseph Aram party guided by Chief Truckee and with Charles Imus as Captain were the first to bring wagons up this hellish slope. The outfit was probably the lead unit of the 1846 migration.

One week later, on September 22, 1846, one month before the Donner families became snowbound at Alder Creek, a pioneer by the name of Nicholas Carriger arrived here and began the herculean task of surmounting the incline. The Carriger caravan consisted of eight wagons and the accompanying NFP Mar 1991 - page 12

entourage of livestock. Caleb Greenwood was their guide.

It is generally accepted that the Aram party was the first to bring wagons over this pass. Although credit for use of a log roller device at the top has been attributed to Carriger, it is likely that Aram used some variation of the same method.

Besides a diary Carriger later described his experiences here in a document he entitled "Recollections". He relates that all eight wagons were drawn up by use of chains and ropes passing over a roller fashioned from a peeled log located at the summit. A total of

twenty four yoke of oxen were used to accomplish the task and the entire process consumed two days.

At the time of this happening, besides being physically exhausted, Carriger was under great mental stress. Both his father and his sister-in-law were dying and his wife was ready for childbirth.

Carrigers' crude windlass, or traces of it, stood for many years at the top of the pass and was used by other emigrants during following years.

Later users of the pass initiated an angled switch-back route up the slope

continued on next page • • • •

beginning with a sharp deviation to the right as they approached the base. Rust marks left by iron wagon tires are still visible in places to mark the trace of their passage.

As travel over the route increased, the beautiful meadow near the base was sometimes crowded with wagons awaiting their turn to ascend the terrifying incline.

From the top of the pass the trail continues on westward between Mt. Judah and Mt. Lincoln. Then it passes down a watershed ravine toward Marys Lake where it converges with the Coldstream and Donner Pass routes continuing on to the west through Summit Valley.

As a part of Tour C of the convention, you can visit Roller Pass. The walk to the Pass is an easy paced hike of five miles round trip on the Pacific Crest Trail. The hike starts at an elevation of 7000 feet and reaches 7800 at Roller Pass. The entire trip is through beautiful country with spectacular views and the Pass itself is an awesome sight. Wear good hiking shoes and bring water and a small pack to carry your provided box lunch.

CONVENTION TOURS WILL BE POPULAR

Four bus tours are scheduled for the 1991 OCTA Convention. Participants will have their choice of two of the four tours, as the same tours will be run on two separate days (Thursday and Saturday). 1991 will mark the 150th Anniversary of the first overland wagon train to the Pacific Slope. The convention will honor this historic event; the dual themes of the convention will be the opening of the Truckee-Donner Trail and the 1849 Gold Rush.

All bus tours will have trained OCTA guides and participants will receive a copy of the texts used by the guides. Box lunches will be provided.

Tour A - Truckee/Donner Trail. It will go along I-80 from Sacramento to Donner Summit and then over to the Donner campsite at Alder Creek. There will be a scripted commentary on the history of the opening of this, the first of all the wagon train crossings of the Sierra Nevada. Stops will be at Gold Run, Summit Meadow, Donner Pass, Donner Lake State Park, the site of the actual Donner encampment at Alder Creek (north of Truckee), and, on the return trip, Emigrant Gap. There is a two-year archaeological dig going on at the Donner campsite on Alder Creek, and the tour will visit the dig site for a presentation by the archaeologists.

Tour B - Gold Country. It will take a loop through the Mother Lode country along historic Highway 49. There will be stops at the Kennedy Mine Tailing Wheels in Jackson, guided tours through the Gold Bug Mine near Placerville, and a visit to Coloma, the site of the gold discovery at Sutter's Mill. There will be photo opportunities elsewhere along the route, and the tour passes through many other interesting and historic gold rush towns.

Tour C - Donner/Roller Pass. This tour will be identical with Tour A except that it will include a hike from Donner Pass along the Pacific Crest Trail to Roller Pass and back. This tour will then do as much of the rest of the other Donner Trail tour as time permits.

Tour D - Johnson Rancho. A half-day visit to the rediscovered site of the Johnson Rancho is the highlight of this tour. As the first house reached on the Truckee/Donner Trail, the Rancho was headquarters for the Donner party rescue as mentioned in many diaries.

Pre-convention tour. Monday, August 12, Doyle and Fiona Reed will lead a car caravan over Henness Pass. The trip will start in Verdi, Nevada, follow the Donner/Truckee route up over the hills to Hoke Valley and then bear north and west to follow the route over the Sierra. This route was more important for gold miners than for emigrants and later was a major freight route to the Comstock Lode in Nevada. The history is interesting and most of the road is still being used. Warning: The road will be very dusty.

For more information and to sign up, contact the Reeds at: 328 12th St., Davis, CA 95616, (916) 753-2759

Post-convention Tour. Sunday, August 18, Jack Steed will be the guide to Johnson Rancho. This car caravan will start after the OCTA General Membership meeting that day. The tour will take most of the rest of the day.

Post-convention Tour. Monday and Tuesday, August 19 & 20, Tom Mahach will lead a car caravan to follow the trail opened by the Mormon Battalion members in 1848 from Pleasant Valley, CA (near Placerville) to Fallon, NV. One highlight is a hike to West Pass on Tuesday morning. (The hike is a steep climb at a high elevation). Overnight camping is available at Emigrant Meadow below West Pass. For non-campers, discount condominiums will be available at Kirkwood Lodge at Kirkwood Ski Resort below West Pass. Contact Tom at (916) 644-4384 if you need lodging at Kirkwood.

Cost of pre-convention and post-convention tours is \$10 per person. You provide your own transportation and meals.

PRESERVING OUR HISTORIC OVERLAND

TRAILS:

The Story of OCTA
by Ruth Anderson,
39 pages, 8 1/2" x 11"

Written by OCTA's Historian, this soft-cover book tells the story of the founding of OCTA and the growth and preservation activities during the first five years.

\$5.00

plus \$1.50 P&H

OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION

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

COED UPDATE

Surely, one step at a time, like the steady plodding of those oxen hooves, COED is moving ahead and making progress. Volunteers for the program have completed the surveys of 346 documents, with 133 being done since March 1990. The state by state breakdown is as follows:

Arizona	24
California	63
Colorado	13
Iowa	6
Idaho	22
Illinois	187
Kansas	1
Missouri	20
Nebraska	3
Nevada	1
Oregon	2
Wyoming	3

Last fall the Federated Genealogical Societies published an article on COED in their quarterly magazine, *The Forum*. This magazine has a readership of about 61,000 and COED received numerous requests from people seeking information or offering to copy materials they had which would be of interest to the program. Others were willing to write accounts of family history to be preserved in COED's collection of emigrant accounts. As a result of the article, OCTA and COED have gained 9 new members.

For those who are not familiar with COED, it is an OCTA volunteer program whose goal is to survey and record in a computer database essential information from all known documents written by emigrants during their overland journey west. These documents will cover not only the main corridor through South Pass to Oregon and California, but also the Mormon route to Salt Lake City, the southern trails to California and other routes such as the Denver Road and Bozeman Trail. The database will become a useful research tool for historians, genealogists and trail buffs.

Volunteers will survey a wide variety of emigrant documents, both published and unpublished, including dia-

ries, journals, logs, guides, reminiscences, autobiographies, letters and newspaper accounts. We estimate that there are about 3000 documents to be surveyed and anticipate that previously unknown emigrant documents will come to light as COED volunteers publicize the project and canvas local sources for relevant materials.

Information being recorded into the database includes:

-Basic bibliographic data about the document surveyed including the author, title, date, publication information, location of original document and manuscript description.

-Information about the emigrant's journey, such as place and date of departure and arrival, whom traveled with, number of family members, mode of travel, routes taken and places mentioned enroute.

-All names mentioned in the document, with vital statistics about that person's place of origin, gender and party traveled with. The roster of names will also note all deaths, births, marriages, graves and names registered which the emigrant has mentioned.

-Interaction with the various Indian tribes encountered along the way, such as attacks, friendly meetings, trading, paying tolls, etc.

Eventually, as the COED data is collected, researchers will be able to query the database to find references to names of individuals or entire wagon trains, or to discover primary sources for material related to a particular time period, geographic location, family, emigrant route or wagon train.

Currently we have a number of volunteers collecting survey data and entering the data into the computer database. But there is much work to be done and many more volunteers are needed. By participating in COED you gain valuable insight into the emigrant experience as well as being part of an important OCTA program. Other than a sincere interest in the COED program,

ACTION ALERT HOPE VALLEY FUNDING

Tom Hunt, National Trails Preservation Officer, requests that all OCTA members write to their U.S. Congressman and to their two U.S. Senators to request federal funding for the completion of the Hope Valley land purchases.

Funds have been appropriated for this purpose in the last two sessions of congress--thanks to your letters--and this should be the last year that such a request for letters on this project will have to be made. Congress, rather than appropriating the needed funding all at once, has chosen to spread the purchase out over a number of years. Roughly two-thirds of the funding has already been appropriated.

This is a willing seller - willing buyer proposition. There is no condemnation involved, and the owners have expressed the desire to sell to the federal government in order to keep the land from being developed. OCTA is directly involved because the Mormon-Carson Trails, Johnsons Cutoff (over Luther Pass), and the Big Trees Route all pass through this spectacularly scenic Sierra Nevada valley.

Please do take the time to write. This part of our trail preservation efforts is close to being completed. It is important to get it finished up in this current session of congress.

At this time, there is no specific appropriations bill number to which to refer. Simply ask that the funds be appropriated from the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

no previous knowledge or chapter affiliation is necessary. If you live in an area that is too far away from the trails to be able to participate in weekend field trips, or do trail mapping, then COED is an ideal choice to put your interests into motion. At the convention workshop, we will provide all the necessary materials to get you started as a volunteer and cover both the survey and database input phases of COED.

Kathy Roubal

IDAHO CHAPTER WORKING WITH BLM

IOCTA and OCTA have signed a cooperative management agreement with the Elko District BLM. The agreement assures OCTA's involvement in the Elko District BLM development of a California Trail Back Country Byway between the Wine Cup Ranch, Nevada, and City of Rocks, Idaho.

IOCTA and OCTA will:

1. Assist the BLM in installing signs, marker, and interpretive sites.
2. Assist BLM in developing a self-guided interpretive brochure.
3. Recognize BLM as a partner in all publications and materials associated with the California Trail Back Country Byway.
4. Continue maintenance of existing trail markers and install new trail markers as needed.
5. Coordinate all activities with Trails West Inc.

As a result of the agreement, IOCTA and the CA-NV-HI Chapter will be participants in an outing to the area April 30 - May 4. The combined

chapters will be placing carsonite markers, supplied by OCTA, along the California Trail between Goose Creek and the Wine Cup Ranch. An interpretive kiosk will be dedicated near the latter site on Saturday, May 4. Following the dedication, BLM will host a barbecue at Rock Springs.

In addition to the California Trail outing, tentative plans have been made for a June trip along Goodale's Cutoff just west of the Craters of the Moon National Park, and a fall excursion along the same trail to the Syrup Creek Divide. Final plans for these two trips will be made at the annual meeting in April.

Congratulations go out to Larry Jones, Wally Meyer, and Burt Silcock. On September 13, 1990, Governor Cecil Andrus presented the trio a Take Pride In Award at a luncheon held in the State Museum. They were recognized for their ongoing cooperative efforts to foster awareness and appreciation of Oregon and California emigrant trails. The award is sponsored by the Idaho Centennial Commission and there are a number of categories. The three won first place in the Public-private partnerships division.

UTAH CROSSROADS HAS ITS FIRST ANNUAL MEETING

Nearly one hundred members and friends of Utah Crossroads turned out on January 24, 1991 for the first annual membership meeting of OCTA's newest chapter which was held at the Salt Lake County Commission Chambers.

Feature of the meeting was the illustrated lecture, "The Overland Emigrant Trail Revisited," by Tom Hunt, National Preservation Officer. The Utah chapter also elected officers for 1991 and heard a report on activities now planned for the coming year.

Earlier that day, Tom Hunt with Al Mulder and Dave Bigler of the local chapter visited Brigham Young University at Provo to see original overland diaries acquired in recent years by the school's Harold B. Lee Library.

New chapter officers are Albert Mulder, Jr., President; Lyndia Carter, Vice President; Morris Goates, Secretary; and Peter H. DeLaFosse, Treasurer. David Bigler was named chairman of OCTA's 1994 Salt Lake City Convention. Maxine Hanks will be Public Information Officer on the chapter board.

Al Mulder announced the May 24 appearance of Jeanne Watson, who will address the chapter on the Carson Pass Trail and her book, To The Land of Gold and Wickedness. He also announced field trips being planned for the year including: the 1841 trail to the Bartleson-Bidwell Party in Utah, the Salt Lake Cutoff to the Silent City of Rocks, and the route of the Bryant-Russell Party in 1846 from Bear River to Weber River.

The chapter directors confirmed for 1991 are: Randall J. Wilson, Archaeology; Steven K. Madsen, Education; Rush Spedden and Roy Tea, Field Trips; Vern Gorzitze, Graves & Marking; F. Garn Hatch, Legislative; Dr. Jay M. Haymond, History & Archives; Kent B. Malan, Mapping, and Will Bagley, Publications.

David Bigler

NORTHWEST ENJOYS SEPTEMBER OUTING

The September outing of the Northwest Chapter again brought us to the top of the beautiful Cascade Range and the part of the Barlow Road from Barlow Pass to the end of the Oregon Trail at Oregon City. This portion of the trail was the most imposing that those hardy emigrants were to encounter on their exodus to the Oregon Country. Few ever forgot this part of their memorable journey.

Jim Tompkins gave us a fascinating word picture of the trail from Barlow Pass, to the Pioneer Woman's grave, and on to Summit Meadows. Here we saw the graves, the meadow and the old foundation of Summit House where the carved rocks still hold their messages of long ago.

After lunch we crawled around Laurel Hill and it's various descents. It seemed as awesome to us as it must have to those tired, weary travelers who were only 50 miles from their dream and yet so far from the bottom of Laurel Hill. We all agreed, Laurel Hill's reputation was not over blown. It was all too real.

On Sunday, Cliff Glover guided us along the road to the Foster House where we were given a tour of the facility. We followed the road and the Kickapoo Trail to McIver Park where we lunched. Cliff then led us on down the road to many sights that included Feldheimers ferry and ford, the Baker cabin, Abernathy Green, and the Trail's End at Oregon City.

Jim and Cliff did an excellent guide job and those who attended thoroughly enjoyed the two day outing.

Lowell Tiller

TRAILS HEAD TREK LAWRENCE TO TOPEKA

On Saturday, Oct. 13, a total of twenty three took part in the day long journey. Beginning in Lawrence, KS, wagonmaster John Leamon provided commentary using CB radios in each vehicle. Numerous Oregon Trail markers were seen throughout the day.

The trekkers followed near the trail route on city streets in western Lawrence. On W. Sixth Street an Oregon Trail sign is on the south side of the road. Highway 40 generally follows the trail route from Lawrence to Topeka, but the trekkers made numerous excursions onto side roads.

Just east of Clinton Lake two Oregon Trail markers are on Highway 40. At this point the trail crossed what is now the present highway and headed southward. A spring was in this vicinity. Just south of the trail sign on Trailriders Road is the Kanwaka School (now a residence) with the merry-go-round still standing in the front. Back on Highway 40 a trail sign can be seen after going by Stull Road. John Leamon said that this sign may be premature as the sign probably should be on the next ridge.

The trek went north to Lecampton to visit the Lane Museum. Before the group reached Lecampton, John pointed to the site of Ft. Titus which was not a frontier fort. During a fight between pro-slavery and anti-slavery individuals, the residence of Titus, a pro-slavery advocate, was so battered that locals came to call the house Ft. Titus. The trekkers toured Lane Museum and various historic buildings in Lecampton.

Continuing on Highway 40 to Big Springs, Iona Spencer of the Lane Museum again spoke to the group. The original building of the United Brethren Church was south of the present highway. A wall of this structure, which was built in 1856, can be seen. That building burned in 1892.

Big Springs is mentioned in numerous trail diaries, though often in generic terms, as "the spring". Pauline Fowler said that Louise Barry in The NFP Mar 1991 - page 16

Beginning of the West mentions Big Springs four times. Many believe that the old and new trail routes split at Big Springs and some trail travelers called this split "the fork". The later-used route went up the hill toward Tecumseh and on to Topeka to Pappin's Ferry. The older route continued south of the river to the ford which is near the present town of Rossville.

At Big Springs a stone building which was a stagecoach stable still stands east of a small store. This stable was operated more recently as a museum, but is now closed. The Pickins Hotel which was east of the stable is gone.

The group stopped at the road side park on Highway 40 east of Big Springs. At this park there is an historical marker for Coon Point Campground, though the actual camping ground was one to two miles northwest of the marker.

Upon leaving the park, the trek proceeded to a section of the original Highway 40 and traveled on this narrow section. Wide enough for just one vehicle! Many were impressed to see that some of these narrow paved strips still exist!

When going over I-70, the wagonmaster pointed out the path of the trail on the ridge. There is an Oregon Trail sign for travelers on I-70. On a country road near there, John again noted the ridge the trail used. Part of this ridge had been cut out during the construction of Stubbs Road.

In the rural area of Tecumseh the trekkers stopped at Leo Pellant's house where we saw ruts in his yard. Leo spoke to the group about the varieties of prairie grasses which he maintains in the area of the ruts. Each spring when Leo burns this prairie area, the three distinctly rutted areas can be seen prominently.

Douglas Wallace, author of Things Ended and Things Begun: A History of Tecumseh, Kansas 1854-1974, spoke to the group about the surrounding areas. In the Tecumseh area large numbers of burr oaks dating to before emigrant arrival in this area still survive. The group traveled a section of old Highway 40 which was still in use until the late 1950s and visited two old houses in the Tecumseh area with Douglas giving a

history of each. One house, on the south side of Highway 40 was built in 1859 by Eli Hopkins from North Carolina. Southern in style, it was a grand mansion of Tecumseh in the 1860s.

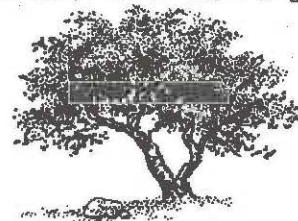
An Oregon Trail marker was dedicated in Tecumseh in the 1920s. The stone marker is located at Fourth and Tecumseh Road. Some believe that the main route of the trail went from Big Springs to Tecumseh, while others believe that a branch took that route.

The trek entered Topeka from the east on Second Street and then made numerous turns to follow the trail route as near as possible, viewing many Oregon Trail markers in place. The group stopped to see the Santa Fe overhaul shops, where the railroad renovated all its passenger cars. Near Crane and Harrison, they viewed the site of Pappin's Ferry. A ferry site did not necessarily operate in just one spot, but moved up and down the waterway as conditions dictated.

At the western edge of Topeka, the Pottawatomie Baptist Mission is located beside the Kansas Museum of History. An Oregon Trail marker is located at the entrance to the museum. The mission, completed in 1850, still stands at the original location and the exterior has been restored to its 1850s appearance. As a mission, the structure was used primarily as classrooms and dormitory rooms. The purpose of the mission school was to acculturate the Indian children to Euro-American vocational skills. Girls were taught to weave and sew, while boys were taught farming. Some of the children's graffiti still remains on the interior walls. The mission closed in 1861 and an 1867 attempt to revive the mission failed.

After taking most of the day to travel from Lawrence to Topeka, the trekkers returned to Kansas City via I-70 in about an hour.

Mary Conrad
Editor, "Trails Head Tidings"



Pending national Board approval, the Arizona Chapter of OCTA voted to change its name to the Southwest Chapter. This will more accurately reflect its membership.

SOUTHWEST CHAPTER FOLLOWS THE BUTTERFIELD TRAIL

Saturday noon, January 19, we boarded our stages at Lordsburg, NM and headed east along I-10 toward our first destination of Cow Spring stagecoach stop. We headed 'em up and moved 'em out so fast that our outrider didn't have time to get into place. The next thing we knew we were missing a coach. Eventually we found the missing coach with a broken wheel and having no wheelwright in the caravan we had to seek help at the nearby trading post. Underway once more but still missing two coaches, we feared that Apaches may have headed 'em off at the pass. They had but our wily veterans escaped and rejoined our party later.

At Cow Springs we saw the spring itself and it is still in use by the owners of the private ranch on which it flows. There are no remains of the building itself, but there is a wall which the present owner feels was likely built from the rocks of the old station. Always guarding the spring is a big old Great Horned Owl high in a cottonwood tree near the water. He patiently allowed us all to photograph him from various angles while we hooted and whistled to get him to look at the cameras. We reboarded our stages for the next station west: Soldier's Farewell.

Four miles before Soldier's Farewell the road took us close by a ranch house where we were joined by an energetic critter we called 'Black Bart'. Ole Black Bart was some kind of dog, built a lot like a greyhound and ready to run. He ran the four miles out to the remaining foundation of the state stop and dam. This building too was of rock and the walls still standing are about two feet high. Down in a little draw northeast of the structure were remnants of the dam. We wandered

about the site and we wondered about its name. Some of us followed the trickle of water back to where it seemed to spring from the rock. Others were looking for pot sherds and tin cans. The sun was near setting so we headed back to Lordsburg for vittles and a bunk, Black Bart beside us all the way back to his ranch. He probably ran nine miles that afternoon.

After dinner we gathered in the bunkhouse of our lead stage driver, Jim Carter, for a business meeting.

On Sunday morning a new stage joined us, Ed and Mary Jo Sprague from the Gateway Chapter. We proceeded to the north edge of town by the railroad tracks to view the site of what

We had to walk an eighth of a mile from a ranch road over to the site. Much of the rock foundation remains here, some of it as much as four feet high. Steen's Station is located on the property of a Duncan, AZ rancher, Fred Zumwalt. He and his ranch foreman, Floyd, met us and took us on an uphill hike to see the gravestone of John James Giddings, 1821-1861, who was killed somewhere in the area by Indians. After thanking Mr. Zumwalt and Floyd for the guided tour and for breaking into Spragues' stagecoach where Ed's keys were locked inside, we all parted company until our trails cross again in a couple of months.

In mid-March we will continue our retracing of the Butterfield-Overland Stage route and stations as it moved westward into Arizona.

We had 13 members and 7 guests present for all or part of the weekend. We thank the Carters for the organizing and running of the trip. Great weather, great company, and GREAT COUNTRY!

Sheri Lee



Above: Chapter president, Harland Tompkins, stands in the ruins of Stein's Peak stage station. These wall remnants of the Butterfield station are located at the mouth of Doubtful Canyon in SW New Mexico, a few miles north of I-10 at the New Mexico-Arizona border.

had been Barney's Station. From there we traveled back south to the ghost town of Shakespeare. The owner, Janaloo Hill, met us in period dress at the gate and gave us an enjoyable \$2 tour of the remaining buildings.

At 10:30 we left the ghosts of Shakespeare and once again went west to Stein's Peak Station. Stein's was originally named Steen's on the older maps (at least it was on my 1880 map) for Major Steen who had camped nearby.

JEAN A. LEE

Jean A. Lee of Overland Park, Kansas, died suddenly on September 10, 1990. Jean, was an active member of OCTA. Her husband, Dr. James G. Lee Jr. was the president of the Trails Head Chapter of OCTA in 1990. The chapter Board members remember her as a very gracious hostess at the board meetings, enjoying her as a sweet and funny woman. The chapter has purchased a book for the Headquarters library in her memory.

Born in Madison, Wisconsin, Jean attended Kansas State University. She was active in a number of organizations and had lived in the greater Kansas City area for many years. Besides her husband, she is survived by a son, two daughters, and eight grandchildren.

CHAPTER NEWS

GATEWAY

The Research Committee met on January 8 to examine microfilm of several early St. Joseph newspapers and discuss the feasibility of cataloging overland emigrant outfitters from these sources. They also discussed commencing organized mapping on the St. Joe Road later this spring.

Future meetings include:

May 7 - 7 pm - Robidoux Row, 3rd & Poulin, St. Joseph - Tish Haynes, coordinator. Joy Baker, dressed in costume as Pelagie Robidoux, will read her paper written in the form of a diary

July 9 - 7 pm - Robidoux Landing Riverfront Park, St. Joseph - Francis Peniston, coordinator. John Ostertag will present a program on early river transportation on the Missouri River.

September 10 - 7 pm - Pony Express Museum, 914 Penn, St. Joseph - Jackie Lewin, coordinator. Dr. Robert Corder will share his research in compiling a list of emigrants who "jumped off" at St. Joseph. The election of officers is also scheduled.

SOUTHWEST (formerly Arizona)

The chapter will hold a planning weekend July 13-14 in Strawberry, AZ. The trails symposium will not be held in June as in past years, but next January.

The 1991 officers are:

Harland Tompkins - president
James Carter - vice-president
Wilma Haines - secretary
Sheri Lee - treasurer

WYOMING

At the Sept. chapter meeting, Paula Taylor, assistant curator of the Wyoming State Museum gave a program on single women who homesteaded in Wyoming. Dressed in period clothing, she demonstrated mannerisms and etiquette of the time.

The February meeting speaker was Jack McDermott, speaking on John Baptiste Richard and "Reshaw's Bridge".

On March 13 Pat and Bruce Peterson will give a program "Oregon Trail Walk", featuring a slide presentation of the retracing of the Oregon Trail on foot, done this past summer.

The 1991 officers are:

Ron Lund - president
Kathy Orr - vice-president
Lois Salz - secretary
Bill Cisneros - treasurer

NORTHWEST

COED volunteers are attempting to locate all published and unpublished overland migration documents in libraries in Oregon and Washington. Ella Mae Young is chapter coordinator for COED.

The chapter Board of Directors met on Dec. 5, 1990. Among other items, the board approved for installation the following plaques and signs: 1-fence and sign the Sarah King Chambers grave, 2-install a historical plaque near Levi Scott's grave, 3-install a plaque near the Otter Death Camp location noting the tragedy which took place there.

The annual membership meeting was held on Jan. 26. The plan of the meeting was to discuss trail activities, preservation and restoration proposals and the initial planning for the 1993 convention in Baker City, Oregon.

TRAILS HEAD

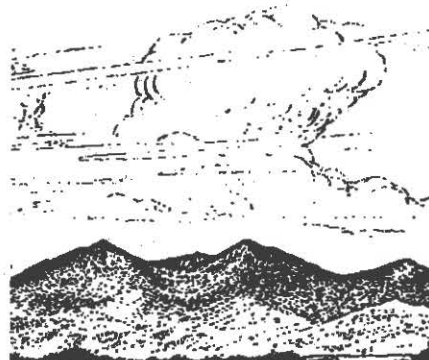
The chapter held its annual meeting in November at the National Frontier Trails Center. The program included a showing of the movie that is shown to visitors to the center. Jerry Roy spoke on the history of the Lone Elm Campground.

The chapter reports that at the close of 1990 they had 62 memberships representing 87 individuals.

The 1991 officers are:

Bill Bullard - president
John Leamon - vice-president
Judy Budde - secretary
Henry Boppart - treasurer

Chapter News can also be found on pages 5, 6, 15, 16, 17, and 19.



CAL/NV/HI MEETS IN EL MONTE ---

---THEN HEADS FOR THE MOJAVE DESERT

by Jack Root and Tom Hunt

The first California/Nevada/Hawaii Chapter meeting ever held in Southern California was a success by any measure. An enthused and friendly group of about eighty chapter members packed the charming museum of the El Monte Historical Society on Sunday, Feb. 17. (El Monte is in suburban Los Angeles, for you outlanders). They came from all over California and some from far-off Arizona and Nevada.

The morning session was devoted to a brief chapter meeting, chaired by Vice President John Townley, in which the attendees dutifully voted for a change in the chapter bylaws for which no wording was available. The change passed unanimously (we are now all waiting to see what we voted for) and this action of both brotherly understanding and blind faith in the word of our chapter leadership set the tone for the rest of the proceedings. The chapter meeting was followed by a question and answer session and then a slide presentation by Tom Hunt on the proposed Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area along the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon portions of the Applegate-Lassen and Nobles Trails in northwestern Nevada.

Following a very delicious and filling box lunch served right at the Museum, the afternoon session was devoted to a slide presentation by Dennis Casebier on the Mojave Road and his many years of devoted labor to preserve the historic trails of the Mojave region. This was followed by a talk on the Mormon Trail from Salt Lake City to Southern California by Todd Berens, and a talk by Neal Johns on prospective chapter outings along the southern trails. There was considerable interest expressed in having more trail outings in

Southern California, and Neal expressed his willingness to organize and lead some more of these in addition to the one he volunteered to lead in conjunction with the El Monte meeting. In between these presentations, a drawing was held for door prizes.

The chapter is most grateful to Dennis, Todd, and Neal for taking the time to prepare presentations of special interest in the Southern California area. Interest was expressed by everyone present in scheduling future chapter meetings below the Tehachapis.

A special vote of thanks goes to Vivian Davies, who volunteered to organize the El Monte meeting and who did most of the work to see that it was such a great success. All OCTA activities--whether they be chapter meetings or outings--depend on the work of such volunteers. We were particularly fortunate in being able to have the meeting at the El Monte Historical Museum. It was a lovely setting, and the Museum collections were of great interest to everyone. Our thanks to the staff and docents of the Museum for hosting the event--especially to Marie Schaefer, Acting Curator--and to the City of El Monte for opening the Museum for us on a Sunday and for allowing the chapter to use these wonderful facilities free of charge.

There will doubtless be other chapter meetings in southern California; the first was a memorable one for all who were able to attend.

Thirty-three intrepid OCTA members escaped the greater LA freeway network and headed out over Cajon Pass for the beauty and (relative) solitude of the Mojave Desert. As directed by trail boss Neal Johns, we assembled

at 1 pm Monday, Feb. 18 at Baker, CA, "fed, gassed and ready to go". Our objective was a segment of the nearby Salt Lake City to Los Angeles (Old Spanish) Trail.

Sixteen assorted 4WD vehicles transported the party over terrain ranging from blacktop to exceedingly rugged washes and gullies. After visiting Salt Spring, a good pool to this day, overnite camp was in scenic Red Pass. Red Pass is close to the boundary of Ft. Irwin -- where those tank crews you see on the evening news trained for their job in the Middle East. The night was cold and the skies were clear and star-filled. Sleep came easily.

The next morning our caravan headed northwest over the old trail to Kingston Spring, where we "nooned". After lunch and a bit of scavenging in the ruins of an old foundation we proceeded to a nearby water source known as Coyote Holes. Nearby was the mailbox -- placed in such remote places by the "Friends of the Mojave Road", an organization that identifies, preserves and protects the desert trails. We all signed the register.

Continuing northeasterly over the washes and gullies, we finally hit blacktop (Excelsior Mine Road) and viewed a fine swale at Emigrant Pass (yes, another one). A short distance west is the trail landmark known as Resting Spring, still flowing at 78o F. The ranch owner graciously allowed the tired 20th century emigrants to rest overnite.

Many thanks to Neal Johns and his local experts, Hal Steiner and Pete Panattoni for guiding us on a marvelous sampling of the Old Spanish Trail.

SEE YOU IN SACRAMENTO!

OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION

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