



MARCH
1992

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NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

THE OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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

100 YEARS TOO LATE OR 10 YEARS TOO SOON?

Some Thoughts on The Elephant in the Summer of 1991

by Robby D. Gunstream
photos by the author
unless otherwise indicated



Above: A typical lunch break in central Nebraska - Harlan Wadley relaxes while Jackson enjoys good grass by the side of the road.

As reported in the June 1991 issue of *News from the Plains*, Harlan Wadley of Eugene, Oregon, and I planned to walk The California Trail during the summer of 1991. We left St. Joseph, Missouri, on May 17 hoping to arrive in Sacramento on August 16. Our itinerary included the St. Joe Road to Marysville, Kansas, the Great Platte River Road, Sublette's and Hudspeth's Cutoffs, the Humboldt River Route, and a Sierra crossing via Carson Pass. We planned eighty-two moving days and ten contingency days.

Our interest in making the trip was sourced in several ideas. We wished to

(1) follow as closely as possible the route of The California Trail, (2) commemorate the Bidwell-Bartleson party of 1841, (3) experience a nineteenth-century mode of travel, and (4) enjoy an extended trek. In all, we hoped to obtain

NEXT NFP DEADLINE

MAY 15, 1992

**ROCK SPRINGS
CONVENTION
INFORMATION
SEE PAGES
9 THRU 13.**

a glimpse of the emigrant experience of 150 years ago - physically, psychologically, and aesthetically.

After covering just over 1,000 miles across fifty-four days, we decided to end the trip in western Wyoming, about fifty miles west of South Pass and near the town of Farson. Our primary reason for doing so centered on our inability to stay with our original schedule. Since leaving St. Joseph we experienced delays well beyond what we had expected and by the time we reached Casper, Wyoming, it was clear that we were not going to be able to arrive in Sacramento in mid-August. Our major problems were weather (one of the wettest springs on record), unexpected people-made obstacles (e.g., fences, locked gates, canals), and plain ol' bad luck (e.g., mules throwing shoes at the worst possible times). In spite of our best efforts to keep moving, the unforeseen proved our original schedule overly ambitious and

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the ten contingency days woefully insufficient. By the time we reached Farson (an unscheduled sixteen-mile detour due to two major canals that now bisect Sublette's Cutoff), we realized that we needed to do additional research on the western half of the trail before trying to proceed further.

The eastern half of the trail proved to be the most exciting and enjoyable outdoor experience I have ever had. In spite of the routine of trail life, every day offered something new, groups of days provided variety of climate, terrain, and people. Between St. Joseph and Farson we experienced everything

Several things stand out in reflecting upon our experiences of last summer and, in rereading some of the emigrant diaries-John Banks in particular-I am reminded that ours, both in particular and in general, were neither unique nor new. Our hope of resurrecting something of trail life of 150 years ago did not go unfulfilled and, so, with Banks help, we would like to share several general observations on trail life culled from our trip in 1991, this important sesquicentennial year.

"I now begin to feel what walking is; sore feet and tired legs - poor companions for a long journey ." [May 1]

As walks go, the Great Platte River Road is a difficult one, indeed. In spite leaving St. Joseph in excellent physical condition, we were not immediately prepared for the constant grind that twenty miles or more per day every day imposes. It took ten days to work out the soreness and harden the feet sufficient to actually enjoy the walking. In spite of all the advances in outdoor wear, especially boots and shoes, trekking The Great Platte River Road still requires the movement of legs and feet and imposes its landscape on the body. It remains as relentless today as 150 years ago.

"This morning very wet and stormy, which delayed us until nine o' clock, six being our usual time... [May 14] Rain and very heavy winds constantly blowing. At noon sun showers, rain in very large drops." [May 21]. "This has been the most boisterous day I have ever seen, the wind is raving ." [May 25]

The variables of weather are still alive and well along The Great Platte River Road; with nothing between yourself and the weather but the hat on your head, climate presents a constant source of amazement. One mile north of Hollenberg Pony Express Station we encountered the fiercest rain and wind of the entire trip; another storm caught



Above: The long and lonely road stretches away in central Nebraska.

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from the near-tragic to the completely hilarious daily and often at the same moment. The memories will ever remain vivid: the rain and wind in the valley of the Little Blue... trying to catch Jackson who bolted during a fierce lightning storm five miles west of Mitchell pass... the marvelous introduction to the Platte Valley from the Susan Hail grave... the heat of Wyoming from Casper to Independence Rock... the plush ambiance of "Hotel Lewiston"... South Pass - "beautiful unspeakably." The list is endless. Last summer proved to me that the trail, in all of its splendor and glory, is still there to be experienced--it is still possible to touch it, feel its heat and cold, know its highs and lows, take it as it comes on the trail's own terms.

Below: Harlan Wadley and Jackson enjoy the BLM interpretive marker at the Parting of the Ways.



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us at the George Winslow Grave and served as something of an omen of things to come. We were rained on six out of seven days for the first three weeks of the trip. Severe flooding occurred in Hebron, Nebraska, just after we passed and a tornado nearly wiped out the town of Minitare just before we arrived. Storm after storm delayed, dampened, and discouraged us from St. Joe to Brule; we did not dry out until the glorious transformation that can hardly be described as one ascends California Hill.

"This day was beautiful. How often I think of home, of my parting with father and mother, brothers and sisters, all that constitutes home, with many near and dear friends. May I remember them and their precepts." [May 27]

Homesickness is still contagious in the valley of the Little Blue. It is alternately hot and wet or cold and wet, the miles seem inordinately long, it is the portion of the trip most physically demanding - California seems a long way off, indeed. Homesickness is a deep psychological and emotional trauma that has to be experienced to be understood. The emigrants who turned around and headed east as a result of a combination of physical and emotional exhaustion were battling a very real and complex psychological condition. I wish I could report that, for late Twentieth Century trail travellers, immunity to Homesickness is available; in fact, it seems likely that all trail travellers will come down with it to some degree. Our forebears that turned around and headed home merit our respect and compassion.

"The nature of the country is changed. Today we drank of some springs of pure water. The water in the

Below: Behind schedule, Harlan Wadley, Jackson, and Robby Gunstream end the trip, for the time being, in Farson, Wyoming. photo by Curt Martin



streams is clear and sweet.... More timber than we have seen for many hundred miles, much of it pine of middling size." [June 17] "Roads very hilly, more so than I ever seen. The Rocky Mountains in full view." [June 20]

Travel from Guernsey, Wyoming, to La Bonte Creek represented, for me, the two greatest days of the trip. The family motor car is of no use in this stretch and, accordingly, it is a glorious experience. The trail moves away from the Platte, rolls over hill and dell via many miles of original ruts, and finally, about ten miles north and west of Glendo, gains a high ridge on which it stays for several miles. The ruts are very moving, a few well-placed OCTA and historical markers provide welcome reassurance, and the views are undescrivable. Possibly, a few unmarked emigrant graves are located in this area. Glendo to La Bonte Creek is not a section of trail for the faint of heart: it, alone, is a major physical tour de force, it is quite possible to get gloriously lost miles from anywhere, and La Bonte Creek offers a final problem on an already inordinately long day, the bridges near the La Bonte Pony Express Station having been relocated last spring to the vicinity of New Orleans. (This

section of trail is located on pages 113-115 of Franzwa, Maps of...) For those that enjoy walking or riding the trail, this section is not to be missed. The pine trees of which Banks wrote are still there.

"One would think that men who left home together would in this wilderness feel outside pressure sufficient to bind them together, but such is not the case. ...indeed, we have not always the best spirit among ourselves." [May 28]

The stresses and strains of the trail wore on Harlan

and I as they did the best of friends and families 150 years ago. The constant physical discomfort, both day and night, and the continuous strain of travel due to the variability of campsites, terrain, route, and weather led, as we know from the diaries, to the fraying of nerves; it is no less so today. Add the, er, "challenge" of travelling with mules in a nineteenth century fashion across a twentieth century landscape and, well, let us allow Banks the final word: *"Heard a report yesterday which is confirmed now of a Mr. Everett... having murdered his companion. They were travelling with pack mules."* [July 3] (underlining mine). Fortunately for Harlan and I, it did not quite come to this, but the trail proved a strain at times even for us, the best friends with twenty-five years of mountaineering experience. Before the trip, Banks point about pack mules was lost on me. He was, however, doing more than simply reporting. They do bring out the devil in one and I learned the refined nuance of a vocabulary with which I was previously unfamiliar.

Edwin Bryant notwithstanding, it's a four-month trip. Civilization has so encroached upon the old thoroughfare

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that, in the late twentieth century, travel across the country and camping along the path require a strict itinerary. Though the schedule can be worked out conceptually in less time, practically speaking, four months are needed to make the trip enjoyable and to allow contingency time sufficient to keep the frustration to a manageable level.

We were the beneficiaries of the kindness of many, many people during the planning stages and the trip itself. Our gratitude is extended to the Gateway Chapter, especially Larry and Kathy Bunse; to the St. Joseph Museum, especially Richard Nolf and Jackie Lewin; to Gregory M. Franzwa whose books we consulted daily; to Dr. Mike Bateman for advice and maps concerning Hudspeth's Cutoff; and to Thomas H. Hunt for advice and maps concerning the Humboldt River route and Carson Pass. Many, many people arrived out of the clear blue and offered the best of help, including none other than Gene Potter of Casper; we discovered later that others, west of Farson, were on the lookout for us and ready to make our travel more enjoyable, including Karen Rennells in La Barge and R. A. and Ellen Bischoff in Montpelier.

Plans are presently being made for finishing the trail in two trips. First, we hope to accomplish the Farson-to-Wells, Nevada, section during July of 1994;

the team will include Gary Rhodes of Bakersfield, California, Richard Seiler of Arlee, Montana, and "Grandad" himself, Pat Thompson of Glenrock, Wyoming (Pat's walk from Ft. Laramie to Ft. Bridger is reported in the June 1991 issue of News from the Plains). Though this is not yet settled, Harlan Wadley's preference for Oregon may lead to his departure at Soda Springs for the more northerly territory. Second, we have made tentative plans to walk the Wells-to-Sacramento section during August of 1996.

Our difficulties were no greater nor lessor than those of 150 years ago. Although we fell short of our goal in 1991, we proved to ourselves that with a lot of planning and a great deal of resolve, the trails can still be travelled. There are many problems concerning land use, permissions, and new impediments to travel seem to arise daily; for example, you know, of course, that there is now a first-class corral at South Pass that fences the Meeker and Spaulding/Whitman monuments and soon may be a gas pipeline that would deny us and our progeny any opportunity to behold the Pacific drainage as did Hunt, Walker, Bridger, Bidwell, and thousands of other travellers. It is our hope that these

problems can be worked out and the trails as bona fide trails preserved and a continuous thoroughfare developed. Let us not deceive ourselves into thinking that preserving cites and icons is synonymous with preserving the trail; only a genuine route of travel gives meaning and context to the features found along its path.

Although dormant, perhaps, for many years, "The Elephant" can be found in the valley of the Little Blue, at Sutherland Reservoir, at Ayres Natural Bridge, along the Sweetwater, peering from behind Split Rock, and in permanent residence at the Little Sandy crossing on Sublette's Cutoff. He is alive and well and ready to greet and bring out the essential character of all those willing to take him head on. We hope that it will be possible for many people to honor the emigrants by travelling the trails in the years ahead.

Notes:

1. Diary of John Banks in Scamehorn, Howard L., ed., *The Buckeye Rovers in the Gold Rush* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1965).
2. Franzwa, Gregory M., *Maps of the Oregon Trail* (Gerald, Missouri: The Patrice Press, 1982).

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THE TRAIL TO OREGON

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Please send teaching ideas Yes No



NEW OCTA BROCHURE NOW AVAILABLE

The new color brochures are now available from the OCTA headquarters office in Independence. If you feel that you could use some brochures to help explain OCTA to others or promote membership, please contact Jeanne Miller at headquarters.

After the completion of this project, I have a real sense of appreciation for those who developed OCTA's first brochure; it served us well for a number of years. With OCTA's growth, it was time to enhance and update the brochure. Several chapters and various members contributed their ideas as to content and what would best help them in promoting their local membership. I thank them for the time they took.

Several people deserve special recognition for their contribution. The cost of a quality, color brochure would have been prohibitive without the aid of Greg Franzwa. He secured the donation of the film preparation from OSL; paper for 20,000 brochures from Shaughnessy-Kneip-Hawe Paper Company; and printing of the brochures from the John Stark Printing Company (all of St. Louis). These companies were gracious in their donation and a delight to work with.

In addition, Bill and Jan Moeller of Omaha were very generous in donating the use of their photograph "Deep Ruts" near Guernsey, Wyoming, on the brochure cover. The picture of William

Henry Jackson's "Approaching Chimney Rock" on the inside of the brochure was used through the courtesy of the National Park Service. Lastly, I want to thank artist David Mead for designing the brochure and sticking with me through the many proof readings and revisions. He took a personal interest in the project and donated numerous hours past those contracted to enhance the brochure's appearance.

The brochures are already being used for several projects. Jeanne Miller will use them in a large mailing seeking new memberships. In addition, chapters are being asked to place brochures at historic sites in their area in order to make the public more aware of OCTA.

I encourage all of you to take advantage of the brochure and to use it when you tell others about OCTA. Let them know what their membership will do to "PRESERVE the trails used by emigrant travelers going West", "PROMOTE research and education" and "SUPPORT the OCTA headquarters and library in Independence". Let them know that with a membership they can receive the Overland Journal and News From the Plains, as well as have the opportunity to participate in annual conventions, rendezvous and local chapter activities. Please help OCTA grow!

Jackie Lewin, Membership Chair

HAVE YOU SEEN?

Many OCTA members are doing research on trail related subjects, and are busy writing books and articles about their research. Books are frequently reviewed in the Overland Journal, but articles may not be as widely known. The NFP will try to keep the membership up to date on these articles.

Contact the editor if you have information about an article the membership might find of interest.

The following two articles were written by OCTA members.

"**Journeys to the Land of Gold - Emigrants on the Bozeman Trail, 1863-1866**" by Susan Badger Doyle of Albuquerque, NM, gives the brief, dramatic life of the West's most contested emigrant route. It appeared in *Montana, The Magazine of Western History*, Autumn 1991, Vol. 41, No. 4.

"**Traces of the Pioneers: Photographing the Overland Trail**", by Greg MacGregor of Oakland, CA, is a photo essay which includes modern day photographs of trail scenes taken from the viewpoint of one standing on the trail itself. It will appear in *California History, The Magazine of the California History Society*, Winter 1991/92.

In addition, two articles concerning the Donner Party are in the literature that you might want to read. One is titled "**Donner Party Deaths: A Demographic Assessment**" by Donald K. Grayson. It appeared in the *Journal of Anthropological Research*, Vol. 46, No. 3, Fall, 1990. It uses the Donner Party to "... expand our understanding of the roles that sex, age, and social factors play in determining survival and death during a natural disaster". The second article, "**Living Through the Donner Party**", in *Discover*, March 1992, is loosely based on the above article by Grayson.

HELP WANTED FOR OCTA'S JOURNAL AND NEWSLETTER

The Overland Journal and News From the Plains are in need of a volunteer to take charge of advertising for both publications. No experience needed - just a willingness to organize mail solicitations to targeted publishers and booksellers who might be interested in advertising in OCTA's journal and/or newsletter. The job will also entail following up any responses and arranging for ads placed in either publication.

Currently the ads we receive result from inquiries of publishers and booksellers. Our existing editorial and office staff are so overburdened already that no one has the time to reach out to additional advertisers to contact. We are convinced a greater advertising market exists for our publications if only a volunteer would take on this responsibility. You could be instrumental in increasing revenues for advertising and thereby enhance the qual-

ity of our journal and newsletter. If you are interested in volunteering for this important job, please contact Elaine McNabney, Editorial Assistant for the Overland Journal, at OCTA Headquarters by mail or phone.

Don Buck, Publications Chair
NFP March 1992 - page 5

FISCAL YEAR 1990-91 REPORT SOURCES OF OCTA REVENUES

During our annual meeting last August, the Board of Directors reluctantly voted to increase OCTA's annual membership dues. This represented the first increase in dues since 1987 and resulted from the need of covering the increasing operational costs and postal rates. Membership response, as measured by the renewal rates during the fall quarter, has been generally favorable.

Elsewhere in this issue is a summary report of Fiscal Year 1990-1991. It seems appropriate to provide a short discourse on the sources of OCTA revenues (in the next issue I will discuss expenses). A cursory examination of the financial report shows we took in a little over \$139,000. This figure is somewhat deceiving because it reflects the gross convention revenues and not the actual gain in net revenue from the convention (revenue minus expenses equals net gain in revenue. If you subtract the convention revenue, a figure of \$82, 592 emerges which reflects the actual new money that OCTA received last year. For purposes of discussion, let's round this figure to \$82,600. During the last fiscal year we obtained this revenue from the following sources:

Membership Dues	\$54,275	63%
Convention Revenue		
(Omaha) *	14,648	17%
Octa Store	9,696	9%
OJ & NFP Revenues	3,940	5%
Donations	2,780	4%
Interest on		
Checking Account	1,361	2%
Net Revenue	\$86,600	100%

**We projected a net gain in revenue of \$10,000 from the Omaha convention, but the actual gain exceeded the projection by \$4,648. I have rounded off the figures to reflect this extraordinary gain.*

As you can see from the above figures, almost 2/3 of our annual revenue is derived from membership dues and it is imperative that this revenue

stream be kept consistent (hopefully it will increase as new members join). The next most important source of revenue is the convention revenue (17%). The Boise and Omaha conventions were exceptional successes from the Treasurer's viewpoint. The Sacramento convention produced \$7,699 in net revenues. The OCTA Store also had an exceptional year, in large part from the convention sales at the Sacramento convention. The remaining revenues; pub-

lications, advertising, donations and interest all contribute to OCTA's continued solvency. The three major items (membership, convention and OCTA Store) contributed almost 90% of the annual revenue which enables OCTA to service its membership, put out the NFP and OJ and carry out its preservation and educational efforts. In the next issue I will discuss the expenses.

Jim Budde, Treasurer

OCTA BALANCE SHEET

<u>ASSETS</u>	<u>September 30, 1991</u>	<u>September 30, 1990</u>
Petty Cash-Indep. office	\$1,000	\$750
Cash in Checking Accounts		
General fund	30,855	42,614
Black Rock/Henderson	345	510
Convention fund	500	17,649
OCTA store account	7,499	0
Cert. of Deposit (Life Memberships)	32,127	40,210
Inventory-OCTA Store	14,779	0
Fixed Assets:		
Furniture & Fixtures	6,648	6,188
Office Equipment	5,619	1,105
Less: Accum. Deprec.	(12,267)	0
Land-California Hill	6,260	6,260
TOTAL ASSETS	\$93,376	\$100,064
 <u>LIABILITIES</u>		
Santa Fe Trail Store Account	\$0	\$0
Accounts payable-convention	1,992	
Payroll Taxes Payable	1,066	671
TOTAL LIABILITIES	3,058	671
 <u>FUND BALANCE</u>		
Retained Revenue Over Expenses	98,893	88,877
Current Revenue Over Expenses	(8,575)	10,516
TOTAL FUND BALANCE	90,318	99,393
TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCE	\$93,376	\$100,964

WHO IS THIS? Or: The Battle of Names and ZIPs

by Elaine McNabney,
Headquarters Volunteer

Today, in my irregular column about OCTA's computer-generated mailings, I shall deal with who you are to OCTA, your name, and who you are to the postal service, your ZIP code.

What you print (PLEASE!) on your renewal card is what will appear on your mailing label, so please take a moment to check your label on this NFP

for accuracy. In the past I have listed Tomoko Amagami as Mr. (she sent me a lovely card to let me know she was a woman in Japan!) and two of our "Jan"s as Mrs.: one let me know immediately he was a Mr. I also have "married" a mother to a son and who knows what other errors. Most members list first and last names of all family members,

i.e., Elaine and Kendall McNabney, but some have written Mr. and Mrs. Whatever. In the worst scenario I face nearly daily, a renewal card arrives with a family renewal but only one of the previous two names listed. I stick to my rule of printing just what is written, wondering if I've hurt some feelings by eliminating a name. Please do let me know of errors in the name(s) on your label. To us, you are real people.

Thanks much to those of you who notice the tiny hyphen in the ZIP code box and add your expanded four numbers. Yes, we are facing that as a requirement soon so when you communicate with us add those four extra digits. You can find them on any utility bill.

In the future you will face another occasional comedy of errors when you receive your renewal letter. We'll be using a computer generated "Dear Whatever." When you check the Dr., Mr., Mrs. or Ms. box on your renewal card, that salutation will appear on your letter. I'm too scared to try to read minds so any cards with no boxes checked will be treated to "Dear First Name". That probably will infuriate some members, and here is my apology in advance. My only option is a "Dear First Name Last Name", and that is worse.

If faced with one of my errors, don't take it out on OCTA and reduce your commitment . . . remember that it is a trained monkey-type volunteer making all the mistakes!

.....

OCTA STATEMENT OF SUPPORT, REVENUES & EXPENSES FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 1991

	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>DIFFERENCE</u>
SUPPORT			
DUES INCOME	\$60,000	\$54,000	(\$5,725)
DONATIONS	<u>1,980</u>	<u>2,780</u>	<u>800</u>
TOTAL SUPPORT	61,980	57,055	(4,925)
REVENUES			
OJ & NFP REVENUE	3,000	3,940	940
MERCHANDISE REVENUES	12,000	16,753	4,753
INTEREST INCOME		4,844	4,844
CONVENTION-ODD YEAR	45,000	56,661	11,661
CONVENTION-EVEN YEAR	8,000		(8,000)
GENERAL CONTINGENCY	30,000		(30,000)
GENERAL CASH	20,000		(20,000)
TOTAL REVENUES	<u>118,000</u>	<u>82,198</u>	<u>(35,802)</u>
TOTAL SUPPORT & REVENUES	\$179,980	\$139,253	(\$40,727)
	=====	=====	=====
	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>DIFFERENCE</u>
EXPENSES:			
OFFICERS	8,850	9,583	733
COMMITTEES	13,630	7,176	(6,454)
HEADQUARTERS	31,250	26,504	(4,845)
PUBLICATIONS *	58,200	37,000	(21,191)
OTHER:	57,300	61,651	4,351
Convention	35,000	48,826	13,826
OCTA Merchandise Cost	4,300	7,466	3,166
Capital Equipment	4,000	4,974	974
Black Rock/Henderson		385	385
Contingency Funds	<u>14,000</u>	<u>---</u>	<u>(14,000)</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>179,980</u>	<u>147,828</u>	<u>(32,152)</u>
EXCESS OF EXPENSES OVER REVENUES	\$0	(\$8,575)	(\$8,575)
	=====	=====	=====

*An additional \$8,675 was spent for special publications during the year but was added to the OCTA Store inventory.

OCTA HAS A FAX

**OCTA now has a
FAX in the office. It is
set to receive orders,
letters, etc. 24 hours a
day. The number is
816-252-2276.**

NEWS FROM THE PRESERVATION OFFICE

The National Trails Preservation Office is delighted to announce the appointments of Norm Wilson to be chair of the Archaeology Committee and Dave Johnson to be chair of the Mapping Committee. Both Norm and Dave volunteered (with a little urging) to accept the challenge of directing OCTA's activities in these two vital areas of concern. As we keep telling our membership, this is an organization which absolutely depends upon volunteerism to keep its programs going. We are grateful that Norm and Dave were willing to assume these respective offices.

Norm Wilson brings to the office experience of a lifetime as a professional archaeologist. He has just recently retired as Chief Archaeologist for the Department of Parks and Recreation for the State of California. Norm assumes leadership of the Archaeology Committee at a time when OCTA's relationship with the archaeological community is becoming more and more important. The trail traces and trail sites are of direct archaeological concern, and OCTA is cognizant of the fact that we cannot properly achieve our own goals in trails preservation without the assistance and support of professional archaeologists.

As Norm assumes his new responsibilities, OCTA would like to recognize and thank Sharon and Harold Manhart for their leadership of the Archaeology Committee during the last two years. Sharon and Harold are not professional archaeologists, but they have had a strong interest in archaeology, and they were willing to put that interest to work on behalf of OCTA. They have served with distinction, and they have contributed to the formulation of policies which give OCTA standing and respect within the archaeological community.

Dave Johnson brings to the leadership of the Mapping Committee an interest in the mapping of the overland trails and a great amount of field experience in locating and authenticating the actual emigrant trails. Dave and John Maloney have been involved for several years in locating and mapping the

NFP March 1992 - page 8

route of the Sonora Trail into California, a challenging effort of historic trail research.

OCTA members are encouraged to contact either Norm or Dave if you have concerns about or interest in participating in either the archaeology or mapping programs. Norm's address is: 291 Russell Road, Auburn, CA 95603, (916) 885-4850. Dave may be contacted at: 4048 Partridge Drive, San Jose, CA 95121, (408) 274-3718.

The National Trails Preservation Office is happy to announce that Randy Brown will continue to head OCTA's Graves and Sites Committee. Randy's responsibilities also include the marking of the overland trails. Randy has been one of the leaders in these areas of activity since the founding of our association. We welcome him to another year of service, especially thanking him for his contributions and all of his hard work over these many years. Randy may be contacted at: 1921 Park Drive, Douglas, WY, 82633, (307) 358-5908.

Tom Hunt
Preservation Officer

FROM THE EDITOR

After attending a chapter symposium last month, I was mindful of how much the chapters have to offer to an OCTA member, even those not living in an area covered by a chapter.

OCTA members are a traveling bunch, no telling who might show up at some trail trek or symposium. The Southwest Chapter has at times been joined by a person who just happened along when the group was out on the trail, and once an outside speaker who had never heard of OCTA joined and has added much to the ranks.

Read your NFP! If you see an outing coming up in an area you will be visiting, join in with the chapter. They will welcome you.

Thanks to all who sent material over the months, you are too numerous to acknowledge individually. Keep the cards and letters coming! (And articles and pictures!) I put in as many as I can manage and hope you enjoy them all. I appreciate the words of support and encouragement I have received.

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

CLARIFICATION IN ORDER

In the last NFP the following appeared in TRAIL BITS:

"Do you collect anything special that is trail related? Would you be willing to write to the NFP about your collection? Many of us take pictures and slides, purchase trail books, copy diaries, etc., but there are a variety of other trail items one might collect. Things like wagon wheels, horse/mule/oxen shoes, clothing, postcards, coffee cups, knick-knacks - just to name a few."

It was brought to the editor's attention that the above might have been misinterpreted, and the point is well taken. The following is an attempt at clarification of this matter.

Just in case all might not be aware of it, the collecting of artifacts along the

trails on federal or state lands is against the law. Even on private lands with permission of the owner, private collecting is considered by many to be unethical. There are ways to go about the proper salvage of artifacts; OCTA's Archaeology Committee can assist anyone who needs information on this matter.

The item about collecting was intended to refer to those items made for the purpose of commercial sales, such as pins or postcards. Original items, such as wagon parts or ox shoes might be found at fleas markets or antique stores and are now in the category of "collectibles". Care should be taken in the case of the latter to not encourage the looting of sites to supply a market.

OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION 1992 ANNUAL CONVENTION

August 12-15, 1992
Holiday Inn, Rock Springs, Wyoming



WELCOME TO ROCK SPRINGS!!!

The Bureau of Land Management, Rock Springs and Green River Chambers of Commerce, and the entire community are looking forward to hosting OCTA's 10th Annual Convention.

Rock Springs and Green River are small towns, but we're big on having a good time. And that's our main goal for this year's convention - that you have a good time, see old friends, make some new friends, and see a lot of trail.

This year's convention will focus on the trail and cutoffs between South Pass and Fort Bridger. In southwest Wyoming, the "trail" is actually four trails - Oregon, California, Mormon Pioneer, and Pony Express - in pretty much one corridor. Other trails in the area include the Overland Stage, the "Outlaw" Trail, and the river "trails." The first Grand Canyon river explorations started from Green River, Wyoming.

Because of Wyoming's sparse population patterns, most of the nation's remaining pristine trail on public lands is located here in southwest Wyoming. And because that trail is today, for the most part, like it was 140-odd years ago, it's rough traveling. Those of you who want to get into the "back country" on the post-convention tours are encouraged to bring 4-wheel drive vehicles or high-clearance 2-wheel drives.

In planning the convention, we've aimed at offering a diverse range of experiences. Hence the 3-day hands-on Archaeology Field School at the Salt Wells Stage Station; the work day searching for new inscriptions at Emigrant Springs on the Slate Creek Cutoff; the river float trip down the Green River which at least one group of 49ers attempted (William Manly and crew); and our barbeque on the west bank of the Green River where we'll eat some roast beef and buffalo burgers, and listen to OCTA musicians rekindle the feelings pioneers felt when they had crossed the Green.

So, bring your trail clothes (please, no ties at the Awards Banquet) and be ready to relax and have a good time. See you in August.

Mike Brown, Convention Chairman

**YOUR CONVENTION INFORMATION PACKET WILL ARRIVE SOON.
IT WILL INCLUDE ALL THE DETAILS ON REGISTRATION AND ACCOMMODATIONS.
BECAUSE SOME OF THE EVENTS HAVE LIMITED AVAILABILITY,
SLOTS WILL BE FILLED AS REGISTRATIONS ARE RECEIVED.
DON'T WAIT TO REGISTER!**

MORE CONVENTION INFORMATION ON FOLLOWING PAGES

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

TOURS

Sunday, August 9

- Archaeology Field School at Salt Wells Stage Station

Monday, August 10

- Archaeology Field School at Salt Wells Stage Station
- Pre-Convention Lander Trail Hike

Tuesday, August 11

- Archaeology Field School at Salt Wells Stage Station
- Workday at Emigrant Springs on the Slate Creek Cutoff
- OCTA Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, August 12

- Chapter Presidents Breakfast with Board
- Welcome and Orientation
- General Membership Meeting
- Lunch on your own
- Afternoon Workshops: Archaeology and COED
- Late Afternoon - Chapter Meetings
- Dinner on your own
- Evening - First Timers Get-together followed by Welcoming Social

Thursday, August 13

- Tours
 - (A) South Pass
 - (B) South Pass Hike
 - (C) Fort Bridger
- Dinner on your own
- Evening - Meet the Authors reception

Friday, August 14

- Morning Session - Papers at Western Wyoming College
- Lunch on your own or at the College Cafeteria
- Afternoon Session - Papers at Western Wyoming College
- Dinner and Evening - Barbeque on the Banks of the Green River

Saturday, August 15

- Tours A & C repeated
- Tour D - One day float trip on the Green River
- Evening - Social Hour followed by Awards Banquet, Convention closes

Sunday, August 16

- Tour D - River Trip
- Post Convention Driving Tours:
 - Lander Road (pickup/4WD)
 - Outlaw Trail/Brown's Park (passenger car)
 - Overland Stage (pickup)
 - Hastings Cutoff/Donner Route/Mormon Trail - Fort Bridger to Echo Canyon (4WD)
 - Sublette Cutoff (4WD)

Monday, August 17

- Post Convention Driving Tour
 - Dry Sandy, Parting-of-the-Ways, Little Sandy (4WD)

(A) SOUTHPASS: The tour along Highway 28 will follow the "corridor" of the trails as it heads east to South Pass. Stops include the South Pass Overlook, Pacific Springs, actual South Pass summit where Meeker placed one of his early monuments in 1906, historic South Pass City, the "False" Parting-of-the-Ways, and Farson. On Thursday, this tour will include helping BLM dedicate the interpretive signs at the South Pass Overlook on Highway 28 east of Farson. Mid-morning snack and box lunch included.

(B) SOUTHPASSHIKE: This tour follows the same route as Tour A to the Oregon Trail east of the Summit. Participants will then hike approximately one mile to the Summit and then approximately three miles downhill to Pacific Springs. Stops along Highway 28 sites on return bus depending on time remaining. Wear good hiking shoes and bring water. Mid-morning snack and box lunch included.

(C) FORT BRIDGER: This tour heads west from Rock Springs on I-80. Stops include the Daniel Lantz Grave where Wyoming OCTA members Lee Underbrink and Randy Brown installed a new fence and interpretive sign; the Granger Stage Station; Church Buttes; an important landmark on the Mormon Pioneer Trail; Fort Bridger, where the tour will be met by Dudley Gardner who has been in charge of excavations the past few years; and Expedition Island National Historic Site in Green River. Mid-morning snack and box lunch included.

(D) GREENRIVERFLOATTRIP: Participants will bus to the Green River, board rafts, and drift down the Green River for several miles. The float trip will be guided by Hatch River Expeditions from Vernal, Utah - the most experienced river outfitter in the West. Stops at trail crossing, ferries, and historic sites. No rapids or whitewater. This stretch of the Green River is part of the Seedskaadee National Wildlife refuge with a healthy population of deer, moose, antelope, beaver, eagles, pelicans, etc. - so bring your camera. Lunch included.

Remove This Supplement And Place In Your 1992 Catalog

OCTA CATALOG 1992



Oregon-California Trails Association
524 S. Osage/PO Box 1019
Independence, MO 64051-0519
Telephone & Fax: 816-252-2276

COVERED WAGON WOMEN

Diaries and Letters from the Western Trails 1840-1890

ed. by Kenneth L. Holmes

Eleven volume set, each approximately 300 pages, bound in linen cloth, gold-stamped spine, printed on ivory laid paper.

This set contains the diaries and letters of women braving the western trails during the 19th century westward migration. All are transcribed as written without internal editing, and each is introduced and footnoted by the editor. Each volume holds 10 to 20 documents. The final volume (XI) will contain a cumulative bibliography of primary and secondary sources, an analytical index to the series and a geographical gazeteer.

Vol I-1840s; Vol II-1850s; Vol III-1851; Vol IV-1852, California Trail; Vol V-1855, Oregon Trail; Vol VI-1853-1854; Vol VII-1854-1860; Vol VIII-1862-1864; Vol IX-1864-1868; Vol X-1874-1890

Volumes ordered by entire set	\$25.00 ea
Volumes ordered singly	\$30.00 ea
P&H first book	3.00
each add. book	1.00

THE DONNER PARTY RESCUE SITE

Johnson's Ranch on Bear River

by Jack Steed

Robert Berry's OJ review says: "This book...tells the story of Johnson's Ranch--the first evidence of civilization many emigrants saw after crossing the Sierras north of Lake Tahoe and entering the Sacramento Valley....not much was known about the place until the interest of a father and son from Sacramento was aroused...Jack and Richard Steed...finally located the long lost site of Johnson's Ranch." Included is a history of the ranch, the role it played in connection with the survivors of the Donner party and the story of the Steeds' search for the site.

paper	\$11.95
hardback	\$19.95
P&H	3.00



THEY SAW THE ELEPHANT

Women in the California Gold Rush

by JoAnn Levy

Quoting from Charles Martin's OJ review: "This interesting and informative book sheds light on an overlooked facet of gold rush history...[it] is filled with quotes from women's reminiscences, letters and diaries...[covering the] journey, arrival, living conditions in San Francisco, women in the entertainment business and women's role in civilizing California." Excellent information is presented in a lively fashion to give a well-rounded view of these early pioneers.

hardback	\$25.00
P&H	3.00

POWERFUL ROCKEY

The Blue Mountains and the Oregon Trail

by John W. Evans

From Farewell Bend to the Umatilla and from 1811 to 1860, this meticulously researched book makes very clear why the emigrants so urgently pressed on--crossing the Blue Mountains before the snows began. Evans uses lengthy diary quotes, U.S. Quad maps and photos to accurately present this most difficult segment of the route to Oregon. This is a significant contribution to trail literature and will be of special interest to those attending the 1993 convention in Baker City, Oregon, situated directly on the trail studied by Evans.

paperback	\$22.95
P&H	3.00



THE WAGON TRAINS OF '44

A Comparative View of the Individual Caravans in the Emigration of 1844 to Oregon

by Thomas A. Rumer, foreword by Merrill J. Mattes

Rumer examines every facet of the 1844 migration; geographical, genealogical and psychological. Included are chapters on preparation for the migration, organizing companies, rains of 1844, health, leadership and emigrants.

hardback	\$35.50
P&H	3.00

THIS EMIGRATING COMPANY

The 1844 Oregon Trail Journal of Jacob Hammer

ed. by Thomas A. Rumer, preface by Aubrey L. Haines

Newly discovered, this previously unpublished journal written by a devout Quaker makes a major contribution to the history of the western migration to Oregon and California between 1843 and 1866.

This journal reveals new information: one of the few day-to-day narratives known from the 1844 emigration, one of the first "northsider" wagon trains to proceed up the Platte River and the party who pioneered the route to Donner Pass.

hardback	\$35.50
set of both Rumer books	64.00
P&H first book	3.00
P&H ea add book	1.00

Corrections-1992 Catalog



pg 10 Astoria out of print

pg 11 Bound for Idaho paper only \$16.95

pg 15 Great Platte River Road hardback now \$37.50

PRE-CONVENTION ACTIVITIES

August 9, 10, 11 - Sunday, Monday, Tuesday Archaeology Field School

If you've ever wanted to be an archaeologist or see what one actually does, now's your opportunity!

Join a team of BLM and Western Wyoming College professional archeologists in the continuing excavation of the Salt Wells Stage Station on the Overland Trail. Participants will be bused each day from the Rock Springs Holiday Inn to the site where they will learn and use techniques of surface mapping, stratigraphic profile mapping, artifact recovery, and provenience recordation. Buses will return to the Holiday Inn each day.

August 10 - Monday - Lander Road Hike

Participants will camp out Sunday night in the area of the LaBarge Meadows and on Monday will hike approximately 8 miles over the Lander Road to Smith's Fork through the Bridger Teton National Forest. The hike is very strenuous over rugged terrain to approximately 9000 feet elevation. Interested hikers must pre-register with Larry Jones, 6230 San Luis Way, Boise, ID 83709. People must supply their own transportation.

August 11 - Tuesday - Emigrant Springs-Slate Creek work day

Look for new (unrecorded) inscriptions!

Join BLM archaeologists/historians for a one-day session at Emigrant Springs on the Slate Creek cutoff. Participants will be bused to the site where they will assist with recording emigrant inscriptions and search for new inscriptions in the area. BLM historical investigations began at the site in 1989 when several hundred names on an emigrant register were recorded. The Slate Creek Cutoff was first used in the 1852 emigrant season.

POST-CONVENTION DRIVING TOURS

Most of the post-convention tours are set for Sunday, August 16th heading in all directions so that people can participate as they drive home. There is no fee for the post-convention tours, though people must supply their own transportation and meals. Please contact the individual tour leaders to sign up.

Sunday, August 16th

Lander Road (pickup/4-wheel drive)

Contact: Dave Vesterby
BLM Pinedale Resource Area
P.O. Box 768
Pinedale, WY 82941

Outlaw Trail/Brown's Park (passenger car)

Contact: Henry Chadey
413 Fremont Avenue
Rock Springs, WY 82901

Overland Stage (pickup)

Contact: Walter Edens
1814 Park Avenue
Laramie, WY 82070

Hastings Cutoff/Donner Route/Mormon Trail - Fort Bridger to Echo Canyon (4-wheel drive)

Contact: Lamar Berrett
1032 East 400 South
Orem, UT 84058

Sublette Cutoff (4-wheel drive)

Contact: Dave Vlcek
Pinedale BLM
Pinedale, WY, 82941

Monday, August 17th

Dry Sandy, Parting-of-the-Ways, Little Sandy (4WD)

Contact: Mike Brown
P.O. Box 246
Rock Springs, WY 82902

PAPERS SCHEDULED

- Tricia Coran - - - - - "Dancing and Other Pursuits on the Oregon Trail"
Terry Del Bene - - - - - "War of the Rebellion in Nebraska and Dakota Territories"
Dudley Gardiner - - - - - "The Overland Stage Route West"
Fred Gowans - - - - - "The Story of Fort Bridger"
William Hartley - - - - - "Life on the Mormon Trail in Wyoming, 1861"
Lynn Harrell - - - - - "Emigrant Spring on the Slate Creek Cutoff"
Russel Tanner - - - - - "Salt Wells Stage Station"
Dave Vlcek - - - - - "Names Hill on the Sublette Cutoff"
Randy Wagner - - - - - "Crossing Wyoming on the Oregon Trail"

ACCOMMODATIONS

Convention Headquarters are at the Holiday Inn. OCTA has a block of rooms reserved at the Holiday and the Holiday's "sister" the Comfort Inn across the street. Rooms are available until July 20 or until full. Rates are:

Holiday Inn ** - \$55.80 per room up to 2 people, \$6 per additional person

Comfort Inn ** - \$45.80 per room up to 2 people, \$5 per additional person

The Comfort Inn also has a limited number of converted apartments available as "suites". Rates are:

\$41.80 - one bedroom \$51.80 - two bedroom \$61.80 - three bedroom

**** Senior Citizen Discount** - Both the Holiday Inn and Comfort Inn will give a 10% discount on rooms and meals in the Holiday Inn Restaurant to members of AARP. OCTA members must present their AARP membership card to receive discount.

Holiday Inn
1675 Sunset Drive
Rock Springs, WY 82901
(307) 382-9200

Comfort Inn
1670 Sunset Drive
Rock Springs, WY 82901
(307) 382-9490

When making reservations at the Holiday Inn and Comfort Inn, be sure to identify yourself as an attendee of the Oregon-California Trails Association Convention. This will ensure you receive the special room rates.

ALTERNATE ACCOMMODATIONS

OCTA also has reservations for blocks of room at the following motels. All OCTA members must identify themselves as attending the Convention to receive the special rates.

The Inn at Rock Springs - Rooms available until July 15th

\$40.00 - single \$45.00 - double

\$5 Senior Citizen discount per room, per night. People must identify themselves as senior citizens when reserving the room and present AARP card when checking in.

The Inn at Rock Springs, 2518 Foothill Blvd., Rock Springs, WY 82901
(307) 362-9600

La Quinta Inn - Rooms available until July 27 or full

\$36.00 to \$49.00 - depending on number of people in room

La Quinta Inn, 2717 Dewar Road, Rock Springs, WY 82901
(307) 362-1770 or 800-531-5900

Outlaw Inn - Rooms available until July 15th or full

\$51.30 - single \$60.30 - double

Outlaw Inn, 1630 Elk Street, Rock Springs, WY 82901
(307) 362-6623 or 800-522-6623

KOA Campground - Spaces available until May 30th or full

The KOA Campground has set aside a variety of spaces, hookups, and sites ranging from \$12 to \$23 per night. Rates are for 2 people. KOA Value Card Discount honored.

KOA Campground, 86 Foothill Blvd., Rock Springs, WY 82901
(307) 362-3063

RAFFLE DONATIONS NEEDED

If you have been to an OCTA convention you know that the raffle always creates excitement, especially when someone happens to have about six lucky numbers! We are looking for trail oriented books, diaries, painting, embroidery, etc. Convention chairman, Mike Brown, already has a couple of exceptional items, but more are welcome. This is a donation with the funds raised earmarked for trail marking and site identification. If you have something you would like to donate, send it to:

Lee Underbrink
c/o Masek Sports
3200 W. Yellowstone
Mills, WY 82644-1089

**See you in August in
Wonderful Wyoming!**

CALL FOR FIDDLERS THREE

All Rock Springs bound OCTA musicians should pack their musical instruments (fiddles, harmonicas, guitars, banjos, madolins, etc.) for the August 1992 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 12 and the barbeque on the banks of the Green River on Friday 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 about past convention entertainment? Contact: Olive Donaldson, P.O. Box 493053, Redding, CA 96049, (916) 221-5521

WORKSHOPS

Two (possibly three) workshops will be offered Wednesday afternoon, August 12 at the convention.

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 \$10.00 per person to help defray costs of printed materials and shipping.

ARCHAEOLOGY

This workshop will summarize the previous three days' field school for people who were unable to participate in the excavations. Artifacts from the Salt Wells Stage Station excavation will be displayed. Members of the Archaeology Committee and instructors from the Field School will discuss field methods and information learned from the work done at Salt Wells.

The fee for the Archaeology Workshop will be \$5.00 per person to help defray costs of printed materials.

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 Rock Springs.

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, 1992, to:

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

SCREENING OF DONNER PARTY DOCUMENTARY

If all goes well in the editing room, there will be a special screening of the Donner Party documentary on Friday, August 14 at Western Wyoming College. The film would be shown in conjunction with papers. The documentary is scheduled to air on PBS stations across the country late this year.

Co-producers Ric Burns and Lisa Ades and their Steeplechase Films crew have been working on the project for over a year. Ric and Lisa attended last year's OCTA Convention in Sacramento. Many OCTA members have assisted Steeplechase with guided tours of the Donner Party route and information.

Ric Burns was filming the final sequences in the snow at Donner Pass as this article was being written. Keep your fingers crossed!

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE INFORMATION

For a free OCTA travel information packet about sites to visit on your way to and from Rock Springs, and for a free Wyoming highway map, write:

Rock springs Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 398
Rock Springs, WY 82902

Be sure to tell the Chamber you're coming to Rock Springs for the Convention.



DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE OVERLAND ACCOUNT?

by Kathy Roubal

Many of us, through our study and personal enjoyment of the trails have collected copies of emigrant diaries, journals, letters, reminiscences, etc. They help to enrich our understanding of the overland experiences and teach us just what it was like to travel by covered wagon or pack train. They come in all types from short, sketchy notes to long, detailed daily entries with nothing escaping the eagle eye of the writer. Some are humorous and some are serious. Sometimes I wonder just what those emigrants would have thought if they knew that 150 years in the future, a large group of people, some, their descendents, would be preserving the words they wrote by lantern or campfire light!

The Census of Overland Emigrant Documents (COED) committee is doing just that. We've been recording the things the people the emigrants saw as they made the long journey to Oregon, California, Colorado, Salt Lake City and all those western stops along the way.

COED volunteers are finding it harder to find new material to survey. Most of the documents that are readily available have now been completed. Volunteers are becoming more dependent on interlibrary loan which doesn't always work, and have given much of their time and money searching for and copying emigrant narratives. Now, more often than not they are coming up empty-handed.

Even if you don't have the time or interest in volunteering for the COED program, you may still be able to help and not have to get involved on a permanent or in-depth basis.

Do you have a favorite emigrant diary or account? Would you be willing to make a copy of the document and donate it to the COED project for surveying? Would you be willing to allow a COED volunteer who lives near you to borrow a book, transcript or copy of an emigrant journal from your collection? You can help the COED program move on to reach the goal of building the database into a research tool that will be unequalled in size or scope.

NFP March 1992 - page 14

If you think you can help, here is what we need. The document must be for an overland journey (no railroad or stage travel) across the plains within the years of 1840 to 1866. While we do extract the names of people mentioned in the entire document (including the time before and after the actual journey itself) we are most concerned with the pages of the document that cover the trip across the plains. This would be from the "jumping off" to the place where the emigrant reaches a destination. The documents can be published or unpublished; typed transcripts or copies of an original; edited or not. Currently we are surveying documents of travel along the Platte River corridor. However since we will be expanding our coverage in the next few years to include all the trails, we will accept documents for any route.

The COED Committee would greatly appreciate your help and you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you have contributed to this important OCTA project! Please contact Kathy Roubal (708) 345-7128 or Shann Rupp (209) 984-3401 before sending any copies. Kathy or Shann will check to make sure that your intended donation has not already been surveyed.

AND---APPLAUSE PLEASE---

Many thanks to the volunteers who give of their time to work on the COED project. Because of them, surveys have been completed on nearly 500 documents. The COED database will be available for viewing at the convention in Rock Springs this August. Come by for a look, but in the meantime, if you run into one of the COED volunteers, please give him or her a well deserved pat on the back for a job well done.

As of January 1, 1992, 485 surveys have been done by the following volunteers:

Ann B. Doolen, IL; Arthur C. Hope, ID; Claribel A. McClain; Charles Little, CA; Charlie Martin, NE; Donald D. Sanford, CA; Doris Dart, CA; Donald E. Wiggins, NV; Darlene I. Wilcox, ID; Darlene Peniston, MO; Donovan Yingst, ID;

Elizabeth Ebbott, MN; Eddie Bateson, CA; Evelyn Osborn, CA; Eloise Crary, CA; Kathy Orr, WY; Ethel Sullivan, MO; Erwin Thompson, CO; F. Robert Shellenberger, CA; Fenwick Hill, CA; Gerald A. Motsinger, KS; G.W. Edwards, TX;

Henry D. Boppart, KS; Henel F. Bryant, WY; Herman Zittel, CA; Helen Crowley, CA; Helen Smith, CA; Helen V. Holmes, OR; Judy Allen, CA; Jamie Ring, WY; Janece H. Thorton, ID; Joy L. Cassidy, ID; James W. McClain, CA;

Kathleen A. Roubal, IL; Karen S. Quinton, ID; LuAnn Darling, CA; Mary E. Maag, MO; Milton Otto, CA; Mary Jo Sprague, MO; Marjorie Nefstead, CA; Nona Kimball, WY; Ormie Lamson, CA; Pat Barrett, ID; Pat Brace, CO;

Phyllis Harding, CA; Pat P. Jensen, CA; Rose Ann Tompkins, AZ; Randall E. Ham, CA; Robert E. Lee, AZ; Rochelle Brannian, IA; Ralph Jensen, CA; Shann Rupp, CA; Shirley Fraker, ID; Virginia Stanton, CA; Bill J. Willson, ID.

Data entry volunteers are: Betty Johnson, ID; Mary Jo Sprague, MO; Don Wiggins, NV.



OCTA PINS

A handsome new pin has been produced using the OCTA logo in color.

Available with a pin or a tack fastener. Be sure to specify.

Cost:	\$5 ea
P & H	\$1
25 or more	\$4 ea
P & H	\$5

Order from: **OCTA**
PO Box 1019
Independence, MO
64051-0519
816-252-2276

CHAPTER NEWS

TRAILS HEAD

Meeting held at new Museum

Over 130 people turned out for the January 23 meeting, held at the Arabia Steamboat Museum, a facility which opened in November in Kansas City's River Market Area. Dr. James Pope of St. Louis presented the program, "To the Trailheads by Water", emphasizing the role of steamboats along the Missouri River in the pioneer era.

The fully loaded Arabia sank in 1856, just upriver from Kansas City, and remained buried under tons of earth after the river changed its course. Several previous attempts to locate and salvage the boat were unsuccessful.

The museum boasts "200 tons of treasure", reportedly the world's largest collection of 1850's steamboat cargo, from fine china and champagne to guns and hardware.

Before the meeting, members visited with the family who successfully located and excavated the boat, and watched the staff working on artifacts. Many of those present for the event, hosted by the chapter, were from the general public.

More than 80 members and friends met for dinner and visiting together at a nearby restaurant before going to the museum. Hopefully, the chapter will increase their (and OCTA's) membership count from the interested turnout to this event.

Barbara Magerl

Right: David Hawley, right, one of the owners and excavators of the Arabia, demonstrates the original machinery to (left to right) Dr. James Pope, Fannie Pope, and Bill Bullard, chapter president.

photo by Barbara Magerl

WYOMING

New Officers

President: Pinky Ellis
Vice President: Jude Carino
Secretary: Lavida Hileman
Treasurer: Brock Hileman

The chapter met on February 12. Lavida Hileman shared her tales, slides and hiking experiences from the Sacramento Convention and especially the hike from Donner Pass to Roller Pass.



SOUTHWEST

New Officers

President: Doyle Reed
Vice President: Jim Carter
Secretary/
Treasurer: Sheri Lee

The Chapter will have an outing in southwest New Mexico on April 25-26. Participants will visit remote areas of the Southern Route from the Playas Lake area into the Animas Valley.

Contact: Pat Etter, 1051 S. Dobson Rd. #218, Mesa, AZ 85202.

COLORADO

Hoping to re-activate

Merrill Mattes and Jim Bowers are issuing an invitation to all Colorado OCTA members to a chapter meeting on Saturday, June 6. The meeting will include a visit to the longhorn ranch of Bob Schultz, south of Parker, Colorado. A segment of the Cherokee Trail, which went from the Arkansas River to Pueblo, will be seen in its pristine form.

The hope is that this meeting will begin a move to get the chapter into an active state again. Contact:

Jim Bowers
450 S. Otis St.
Lakewood, CO 80266 or

Merrill Mattes
5800 W. Plymouth Dr.
Littleton, CO 80123

Jim and Merrill also want the entire membership to be aware that OCTA members Tom & Cathy Lawry and Rich Dais will be leading a vehicle trek from Independence, MO to Portland, OR in the summer of 1993. If you want more information on this, you may contact the Lawrys at 2013 S. Elkhart St., Aurora, CO 80014.



GATEWAY

Ross Marshall speaks

The Chapter's January 14 meeting was held at the Robidoux Row Museum in St. Joseph with 28 members and guests present.

Following the business meeting the group was addressed by National Present Ross Marshall. His comments referenced OCTA's historical background and the current objectives of the National and Chapter organizations. In addition the present status of the California and the Pony Express Trail bills was presented with encouragement for all to continue any contacts or dialogue with their Congressional representatives. The remainder of his program was devoted to the subject of River Crossings by the emigrants.

Following the program refreshments were served and everyone had an opportunity to renew acquaintances and talk about those aspects of OCTA that are of personal interest.

March meeting in Kansas

On March 10 the Chapter will meet at the Troy, Kansas Library with Librarian Cindy Blanton who will present a slide program on Northeast Kansas. Grace Jeschke will discuss Genealogy Resources of Doniphan County and Northwest Missouri. Both ladies are active in the Doniphan County Historical Society, the Iowa Sac Fox Museum and other history oriented activities.

Francis Peniston

NEBRASKA

Program set for April 26

The chapter will present a program at the Nebraska Museum of History, 15th and P Street, Lincoln, NE on Sunday, April 16, 1992 at 2 P.M.. Elizabeth Bergstrom has entitled her slide presentation and talk "Trail Travel From the Women's Perspective". Members are encouraged to bring friends and guests.

Spring trail trek on May 30

The Chapter's Trail Committee has scheduled a spring trail trek on May 30, 1992, leaving from Lexington, NE to follow the Oregon-California trail westward. Chapter members will receive additional information as soon as plans are finalized. If others are interested, please write or call Helen Sundell, 939 So. 106 Plaza #304, Omaha NE 68114, (402) 397-9794.

Helen Sundell

Below: OCTA President, Ross Marshall (center), is welcomed to the Gateway Chapter January meeting by members Wolk River Bob Breeze (left) and Herb Woodbury (right). The meeting was held in the historic Robidoux Row in St. Joseph Missouri.

photo by Jackie Lewin



NORTHWEST

Planning for '93

Jim Renner, pictured at right, is an OCTA member and trail preservationist working full time preparing for the 1993 Oregon Trail Celebration. Under his title of Director of Interpretative Projects for the Oregon Trail Coordinating Council, he's responsible to see that a multitude of things are accomplished by the spring of 1993.

One project that has high priority is the updating of all the interpretative historic sites and kiosks along the main stem of the Oregon Trail in the state of Oregon. This includes all new panels at most of the present interpretative locations and the construction of several new kiosks. In addition to these duties, he helps coordinate the activities of other groups, agencies, and volunteers, all working toward the grand celebration of '93.

When he is off the job, he works for the Northwest Chapter, where he is the Trail Restoration Committee Chair. His early spring project will be the placement of Carsonite Trail Markers across the Boardman hiking segment of the

report and photos
by Dick Ackerman



trail. OCTA volunteers are playing a major role in helping the State of Oregon prepare for the '93 celebration and to help make it a success. **This includes the 1993 OCTA Convention in Baker City, Oregon.** Make your plans now for attending a fun and informative convention.

Support to Trails Conference

In the fall of 1991, the National Park Service held a Trails Conference at Menucha Lodge, 20 miles east of Portland, OR, with the Northwest Chapter acting as local arrangements host. Several members worked behind the scenes to see that everything was available as needed to help the conference run smoothly. From shuttle service to audio-visual aid and creature comforts like apples and popcorn, help was available from the member volunteers. There was also an opportunity to participate in the conference when time permitted and all of the volunteers gained a greater understanding of the National Trails System. Thanks are due to chapter members Addie & Stanton Rickey, Norman Linburg, Lowell Tiller, Elwin Shibley, Jim Tompkins and Dick & Trudy Ackerman.

Left: Chapter President Lowell Tiller (right) meets with Oregon City Mayor Dan Fowler (left) to discuss plans and preparations for the 1993 Oregon Trail Celebration. This includes dispersement plans similar to what the pioneers experienced after the travelers reached Oregon City. Chapter members are working with groups and agencies across the entire State of Oregon and without our volunteers, some of these projects would never get done.



CHAPTER SYMPOSIA SUCCESSFUL

Report and photo by
Robert E. Lee

The **SOUTHWEST CHAPTER** held its 3rd annual **TRAILS SYMPOSIUM** January 18 at Safford, Arizona and it was a great success. Over 80 people were welcomed to the meeting room of the Old Armory in Safford by Spencer Brinkerhoff, President of the Graham County Historical Society, which hosted the event. Among those attending were OCTA members and other interested persons from seven states.

Betty Lee was in charge of local arrangements with the assistance of many local members from the historical society. Harland Tompkins, the chapter president, was the program chairman and moderated a superb list of eight speakers. All were chapter members except one invited speaker.

Interest in Southwest trails was heightened by talks from James Byrkit of Flagstaff, AZ on "The Palatkwapi Trail", and Patricia Etter of Mesa, AZ on "Views on the Southern Route".

A paper on "Journey with the Donner Party" by Doyle Reed of Davis, CA was most appropriate since most in the audience are very aware of the California trails. Susan Doyle of Albuquerque, NM spoke on "Intercultural Perspectives of the Bozeman Trail" and was well received. The invited speaker, Robert Trenner of Tempe, AZ, gave us an interesting contrast on trails with his topic "Route 66 in Arizona: A 20th Century Trail"

Don Buck of Sunnyvale, CA, gave an interesting and informative talk and slide presentation titled "Trail Tracking: Identifying, Verifying & Plotting the Emigrant Trails thru Nevada & California". He has worked many years to develop this system for his trail use. Robert Lee of Safford, AZ told of his search for family in "Getting the Scoop on my Great-grandparents: How OCTA Helped".

Perhaps the most engaging presentation was given by Aubrey Haines of

continued next page, column one •••••

NFP March 1992 - page 18



Above: Jim Byrkit of Flagstaff, AZ, leads off the speakers at the SWOCTA Trails Symposium.

Below: David Johnson of San Jose, CA, speaks to the attendees of the CA-NV-HI Symposium.



Report and photo by
Patricia Loomis

The Bidwell-Bartleson party was the first organized group of emigrants to cross the mighty Sierra into California, but it was not the first party to reach California in the fall of 1841.

This fact was brought out by speakers at the January 25th Symposium held on the De Anza College campus in Cupertino, CA, and attended by some 40 members of the **CALIFORNIA-NEVADA-HAWAII CHAPTER**.

Earl F. Schmidt of Palo Alto reminded the group that the first world-circling United States Exploring Expedition sailed into San Francisco Bay October 19, 1841, led by Navy Lt. Charles Wilkes. The same month, Lt. George F. Emmons, under orders of Wilkes, led a party including a horticulturist, botanist, mineralogist and artist overland from Oregon through the Siskiyou mountains to Sutter's Fort. This party included the family of Joel Walker, (older brother of Joseph R. Walker) "the first American immigrant family" to arrive in California, Schmidt said.

Steve Born of Granada Hills spoke on the Workman-Rowland party which came over the southern route from Santa Fe, arriving in Los Angeles November 5, 1841, the day after the Bidwell-Bartleson party reached Marsh's rancho in the San Joaquin Valley. Both William Workman, long-time trader at Taos, and John Rowland, wealthy resident of New Mexico, were suspected by the Mexican government of complicity in revolutionary schemes with the Texans, and therefore were anxious to leave the area. Also in the party were Albert G. Toomes and Isaac Given, both of whom settled in Northern California, while Workman and Rowland remained in the southland and shared ownership of the vast Rancho La Puente in Los Angeles County.

Don Buck of Sunnyvale and David Johnson of San Jose planned the symposium and both welcomed chapter members attending. Buck led off the

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Tucson, AZ, historian, author and lecturer, on "Ezra Meeker, Publicist for the Oregon Trail". Aubrey is always captivating and he emphasized the fact that Ezra Meeker must be given credit for starting the interest in remembering the trails westward.

There was enthusiastic response given to all the speakers. The lunch period was utilized to visit the Graham County Historical Museum in a nearby building and rewarded those able to view 100 years of local history and historical artifacts.

Following the symposium, the chapter members enjoyed a delightful dinner Saturday night at The Three Amigos Restaurant in Safford, then assembled at the home of Bob and Betty Lee for a chapter meeting and election of officers.

For the first time, the symposium was followed by more activities for those who had traveled the many miles to Safford. On Sunday morning, January 19, Archeologist Betty Lee guided a group of 21 hardy souls on an exciting trip to prehistoric Indian ruins in the Pinaleno Mountains. This 50 room, two story village was of boulder stone construction and is now almost completely hidden in an overgrowth of mesquite and catclaw. All were interested to learn that people inhabited this mountain pediment from about 799 to 1450 AD and that old trails surrounding the base of the mountain connected various ancient settlements.

A "proceedings" of the symposium will be available in the near future, similar to those published following the first and second symposia.

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program with an explanation of the great migrations figuring in the early history of California. He noted Oregon was far better known than California in 1841, saying "Oregon had a viable road by that time and California did not", plus the Sierra was "an enormous road block".

Buck pointed out the Bidwell-Bartleson party idea "got started in a tavern in Westport, MO" where farmers and merchants gathered evening and where they heard glowing reports of life in California from trappers, including Antoine Robidoux. Buck also spoke on John Bartleson, controversial captain of the Bidwell-Bartleson party. Information obtained from a descendant of the captain indicated he was 54 when he started for California and "had no intention of staying". Bartleson returned east in 1842 and died in 1848.

Johnson gave highlights of the Bidwell-Bartleson party's struggle to reach California, especially after splitting off from the missionary party going to Oregon, and having to abandon their wagons in eastern Nevada.

In the panel discussion portion of the symposium, Johnson spoke on the party's route over the Sierra and showed slides of the area. He said William G. Paden tried to trace the route, but there is much disagreement concerning his findings.

Doyle Reed of Davis spoke on the CROSSROAD CHAPTER'S two-day trek over a portion of the Bidwell-Bartleson route through Utah last fall, using the diaries of John Bidwell and Jimmy Johns to calculate mileages and locate old campsites. A dubious bonus on the trip for Reed was four flat tires!

Other speakers on the panel were Donovan Lewis of Placerville who is researching the Bidwell-Bartleson party for a chapter in his book, Pioneers of California; Dick Dyer, retired Columbia College teacher from Sonora, who talked about the Kelsey family; and Patricia Loomis of San Jose who spoke on party members Grove Cook and James Peter Springer.

Dyer noted the Kelseys were semi-literate, and that Ben became the unspoken leader of the party because of a seemingly good sense of direction and ability to pick the best route.

Ben and Andrew participated in the Bear Flag uprising and Nancy, Ben's wife, provided some of her clothing to make the flag which still serves as California's state banner. The Kelseys settled originally in the Napa Valley north of San Francisco Bay. Here Andrew was killed by Indians and the town of Kelseyville was named for him. Ben and Nancy moved to Southern California where Ben died in 1888, and Nancy, the lone woman in the party that came over the Sierra in 1841, died in 1896. She is buried on a ranch in remote Cuyama Valley in northern Santa Barbara County, Dyer said.

Loomis contrasted Springer and Cook, both of whom settled in the Santa Clara Valley, noting Springer "was probably the best educated of the whole party", and Cook had little or no formal education.

Springer was a family man, member of the state legislature where he kept a careful watch over state spending. He was a one-man Chamber of Commerce, making several trips back to Missouri to recruit emigrants.

Cook was not a family man, although he was married twice and fathered two children. He made and lost fortunes; was well-liked for his wit and generosity; was the first to own any part of world-famous New Almaden Quick-silver Mine; died poor in 1852 and was buried in an unmarked grave in Santa Cruz. The grave has since been marked by the CA-NV-HI Chapter of OCTA.

Those at the Symposium were unanimous in their wish to hold future such programs and discussed various possible topics before adjournment.

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CA/NV/HI

Lassen/Yreka Trail In June

Tom Hunt will lead a chapter outing on June 26-28 on the Lassen/Yreka Trail. This visit to the last pristine segment of an emigrant trail through a major river canyon will include one day of hiking into the inner Pit River Canyon. This leisurely eight mile round trip hike is mostly on flat terrain. Partici-

pants will take their lunch and water while they enjoy this beautiful canyon with no man-made visual intrusions.

Another day will be spent driving to the Yreka Trail which is little known in trail literature. A marker may be placed by the chapter during this visit.

For more information on this outing and how to sign up, contact Tom Hunt, 950 Old Trace Road, Palo Alto, CA 94306.

OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION

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