

# NEWS *from the* PLAINS



Volume X, No 3

NEWSLETTER OF THE OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION

July 1996

## MEMBERS INCREASE AS ELKO, NEVADA PREPARES FOR 1996 CONVENTION

*Nevada to Host the National OCTA Convention,  
August 12-18, 1996*

**O**CTA membership in Elko has surged. Elko and Lamoille have 38 members, possibly the highest number in the state. The reasons are not hard to find. More than most people, eastern Nevadans have a sense of kinship with major roads linking the East and the West. The empire roads—transcontinental railroad, the Victory Highway and the Eisenhower—gave Elko its historic and economic foundations.

But there are more immediate reasons for new members in the emigrant trails group. A few years ago the late John Biegler and his wife Corajeau began devoting their free time to identifying pioneer trails in eastern Nevada. Soon they enlisted Paul Sawyer, Bob Pearce, Harry Peterson, Dick Immenschuch and others to search for dim ruts and swales left by wagons between 1843 and 1870. In Elko County alone they had nearly 400 combined miles of the California Trail and the Hastings Cutoff to research. Trails West marked parts of the California Trail in the 1970s, but the Hastings Cutoff was unmarked. The Bonneville Salt Flats section of the infamous cutoff had been the object of excavations, articles and books, but the Hastings route between Pilot Peak and the confluence of the South Fork and the Humboldt was mostly untouched by trail buffs. The cutoff, named for a political promoter interested in seizing California from Mexico, had a short life, 1846-50. Compared to the California Trail, Hastings' route had little travel. But it was emblazoned forever in

(See ELKO CONVENTION on page 6)



## OCTA Events



Here are some of the great events scheduled for the summer of 1996. Contact members or the chapter for details.

- July 12-Aug. 3 Oregon Trail Pageant in Oregon City. Call 503-657-0988 for tickets.
- July 26-28 CA-NV field trip over Carson Pass. Contact Frank Torrich.
- Aug. 12-18 Annual National Convention, Elko, Nevada
- Aug. 21-23 Bike ride from Fort Bridger to Salt Lake commemorates the Donner party's trip west from Fort Bridger.
- Sept. 1 Applegate Trail Sesquicentennial wagon train starts on the Applegate Trail from Winnemucca to Polk County, Oregon. Eight Oregon counties on the route plan celebrations. Contact Carney Pope (541-884-0566) Linda Beauchamp (541-476-5510) for information.
- Sept. 12-14. CA-NV Big Tress Road field trip. Contact Frank Torrich.
- October 19 Northwest Chapter meeting at Fort Steilacoom, Washington.

MERRILL J. MATTES, 1910-1996



## THE EDITOR'S CORNER

**S**UMMER LEAPED UPON US out in Utah with no warning, and practically no spring weather, either. Many of us have already been out enjoying the trails.

Again, we've got an issue overflowing with good stuff. We conclude Robbie Gunstream's saga of his pack trip from Green River to Sutter's Fort that began the April 1995 *News from the Plains*. I think this series has been one of the high points of recent newsletters, and I want to thank Robbie for his tremendous contribution.

Sadly, this issue notes the death of one of OCTA's founders, the irreplaceable Merrill Mattes. The news sparked a laudatory discussion on the Internet's overland-trails mail list (which will be sent to the family) and I'm still getting mail from all over the country noting Merrill's many contributions to the cause of history. I'm very pleased to print Greg Franzwa's eloquent tribute to one of the great scholars of the American West and a great friend to many OCTA members. Readers who don't know Greg should be aware that "The Old Man" is Franzwa's nickname.

I'm printing a letter from Roger Duba of the CA-NV Chapter arguing that the NFP has been using the wrong middle name for mountaineer Joseph Walker. Having personally long used the sonorous "Reddeford" in Captain Walker's moniker, I shall refer to Joseph R. Walker in the future. I suspect Roger is right on this point, but I'm certain there's another side to the argument. I expect we'll hear more about this.

Last month the Arthur H. Clark Company announced a new series, *KINGDOM IN THE WEST: The Mormons and the American Frontier*, naming Will Bagley series editor. The series will consist of a mix of documentary and narrative histories, with a focus on unpublished material. The first volume in the series, *The Pioneer Camp of*

*the Saints: The 1846-1847 Mormon Trail Journals of Thomas Bullock*, which includes the "official trail journal of the 1847 Brigham Young Pioneer company, is now in the hands of the publisher. We're anticipating publication this fall. Anyone with a book proposal for the series should contact me or the publisher.

The Elko convention is shaping up to be a great event. I've signed up to help out with the Electronic Frontiers Workshop and if everything works out, we'll put on three or four presentations on the basics of the Internet and the world wide web, using the net for historical research and public relations, and how to join the O-T mailing list and access the new OCTA web site.

On a field trip for educators across the Hastings Cutoff (sponsored by the *Deseret News*) I heard a teacher tell the story of the Mountain Meadows Massacre. He said when he taught in Paragonah, Utah, administrators directed him not to talk about Mountain Meadows. "Half the kids out there," they explained, "are descendants of John D. Lee!"

The deadline for the October issue of *News from the Plains* has moved from the first to the fifteenth of September, to give folks a chance to recover from the Elko Convention. Speaking of which, I hope to see many of you in Nevada this August.

### OCTA OPENS WEBSITE

Since March, OCTA members Lesley Wischmann and Bob Weir have been hard at work. As I was getting ready to ship off the master for this issue of *News from the Plains*, I found this good news in my email box:

The Oregon-California Trails Association is pleased to announce their new website at:

<http://bobcat.etsu.edu/httpd/octa/OCTA-YEL.HTM>

### NFP SEEKS EDITOR

If you missed the announcement in the April issue, OCTA is looking for a new editor for *News from the Plains*. There are already several applicants, but if you are interested in applying for the position, contact OCTA's Publication Chair:

Rose Ann Tompkins  
1125 West Mission Drive  
Chandler, AZ 85224-2354  
email: [tompkin@primenet.com](mailto:tompkin@primenet.com)

### SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

You can greatly increase chances of publication (and reduce the chance that the editor will alter your meaning) by sending material on computer disk in Macintosh or DOS format. Please save the files in a couple of formats, preferably Microsoft Word, WordPerfect 5.x, ASCII text or RTF formats (**I can't read WP 6.0 files or the more esoteric word processors.**) Enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope to have material returned and a postcard for notification of publication decisions.

## NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

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Next Deadline for *News from the Plains* is September 15, 1996



## WE LOSE A GIANT—MERRILL J. MATTES

by Gregory M. Franzwa

**M**ERRILL J. MATTES, 85, WITHOUT A PEER in the field of Oregon Trail scholarship, died May 5, 1996, of a heart attack suffered at the start of a Sunday morning church service in Littleton, Colorado. He is survived by Clare, his wife of 53 years, and their sons, Warren of Omaha, and John, who lives in Dallas. Other survivors are: his son by his first marriage; David, of Pacific, California; a sister, Betty Graham of Bellingham, Wash.; a brother, Paul, of Kansas City; eight grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. His first wife, Eleanor Shutt Mattes, died in 1941.

Obituaries appeared in the *Denver Post*, *Kansas City Star*, *Omaha World-Herald*, *The New York Times* and other major American daily newspapers.

His *The Great Platte River Road*, published by the Nebraska State Historical society in 1969, personalized the story of the Oregon Trail emigration for untold thousands of readers. The crisp writing style and flawless research inspired books by many subsequent authors.

His magnum opus, however, was *Platte River Road Narratives*, an annotated bibliography of more than 2,000 emigrant diaries, which is now out of print. Mattes doggedly pursued that research over a period of ten years. In the opinion of this writer, that book is the single most valuable work in the entire field of study.

It was during this research period that I met Merrill Mattes. He was on one of his innumerable field trips, visiting every repository which held an overland diary. He was in St. Louis researching at the Missouri Historical Society. I brought several of his titles to a saloon where he signed them for me. Just his name—not even a date!

We became friends. When it became obvious that we were losing miles of ruts due to ranchers and federal agencies that were unaware of their importance, I called him at his Denver-area home to see what he thought about establishing an organization dedicated to trail preservation. He greeted the idea with enthusiasm, and helped put the August 1982 meeting together in Denver that gave birth to the Oregon-California Trails Association.

When the *Overland Journal* was started, Merrill contributed one of the first articles. At the charter convention in Independence, he delivered the best program. The man could not say no to anything that would benefit trail preservation.

A few years ago his wife Clare used gentle persuasion to get Merrill to remove his massive library from their home. Well, actually, he told me that she said it was either the books or her. The Old Man would have asked for a little time to think it over, but he made the wise choice. The books now form the core of OCTA's Merrill

J. Mattes Research Library at the National Frontier Trails Center in Independence.

Bill Watson, president of OCTA at the time, remembers the trip he made to Littleton to pack the 1,300 books to bring them to Independence. Jerry Motsinger, the incoming director of the trail center, was there, along with Dan Holt, his predecessor, and Jim Bowers, Merrill's old friend and OCTA's first treasurer.

"Merrill wouldn't let us take the books from the shelves," Watson said, "He wanted to do it himself, to say good-bye to his old friends."

Motsinger drove the rental truck back to Independence. OCTA and the NFTC dedicated the library on April 6, 1991, with Merrill and the whole Mattes clan in attendance. If they didn't know it before they knew it then—they were with a legend.

With undergraduate degrees in history and English literature, Mattes found good jobs hard to find in the depths of the Great Depression. In 1935 he signed on with the National Park Service, and soon became the first "custodian" of the new Scotts Bluff National Monument in Gering, Nebraska. It was there that he developed a friendship with the pioneer photographer William Henry Jackson, who personally escorted Mattes to the spot where his covered wagon nearly overturned in 1866.

Mattes and his old friend, the late Paul Henderson, led the way toward federal acquisition of the remains of old Fort Laramie, added to the National Park Service system in 1938 and now a fully restored jewel of the NPS.

In 1959 he was honored by both Nebraska and the federal government, winning the distinguished service award of the U.S. Department of the Interior and Nebraska's Civil Servant award. Two years ago he won the Addison Shelton award of the Nebraska State Historical Society. OCTA gave its highest honor, the Meritorious Achievement Award, to Mattes in during the second annual convention in Oregon City in 1984.

He retired from the National Park Service in 1975, but he certainly didn't lose interest. He was fearful that the Midwest Regional Office of the NPS in Omaha would devote all its emphasis on the Mormons when planning the new trail center in Council Bluffs. He bombarded the superintendent with letters pointing out that the road should properly be known as the North Bank or Council Bluffs road, as well as the Mormon Trail. He was right. Far more "gentiles" than Mormons went west on that trail.

When our company decided to reissue Jackson's *Time Exposure* in 1994, we asked Merrill to write the forward. It was in our hands in a matter of days—a splendid piece of literary craftsmanship with the typical Mattes warmth and intimacy. *Con't on next page.*

Merrill was scheduled to deliver the keynote address at the annual convention in Grand Island last year. He didn't take such responsibilities lightly. Earlier, he had sent several letters to the Old Man, to make certain his facts on the founding of OCTA were accurate. He enjoyed our assessment of his typing—it was even worse than his handwriting, which was plenty bad. But there surely was nothing wrong with his thinking.

Physically, that was something else. We watched when Merrill and Clare arrived at the hotel. Honestly, I wasn't sure he would make it to his room. Frail and stooped, he obviously was unwell. But when it came time to deliver the keynote—ah, that was a different story. He may have looked a little wan, but at the podium he simply sparkled. His talk on the first days of OCTA was warm, friendly and crackled with wit. Many of his remarks sparked uproarious laughter in the packed house. This was the Mattes of old.

So now he's gone. His death creates a void, and we can't help but wonder what can be done to develop the intellectual leaders who will build upon his scholarship. Perhaps it was his hope that somehow his successor would come from the ranks of OCTA—if not now then in future generations.


One thing is certain. We have lost a giant. He will not be easy to replace.

## FULKERSON GRAVE MARKED


The Graves and Sites Committee has marked the grave of Frederick Richard Fulkerson. This grave is located near Devil's Gate on the historic Sun Ranch. The site had long been identified as the grave of one T.P. Baker, but as was explained in a previous *News from the Plains* article, this has been disproved. With the installation of the OCTA marker, the long lost grave of Fulkerson is now correctly identified.

A group of Wyoming Chapter members placed the marker on May 17. A new iron fence was built around the grave the same morning, a fence donated and constructed by Dick Smith of Casper. I would like to thank Dick and the other members for their help in this project. This is the fifteenth OCTA marker to be placed at trail grave sites in Wyoming.

—Randy Brown  
Committee Chairman



## FREDERICK RICHARD FULKERSON



The grave of F. R. Fulkerson was noted by forty-niner J. G. Bruff on July 26, 1849, as he traveled through what he termed "Pass of the Rattle-Snake Mountain to the left of Devil's Gate." The survival of the large granite boulder used as the Fulkerson headstone and the sketch made of it by Bruff allows us to locate this grave precisely.

Frederick Richard Fulkerson, son of James M. and Mary Fulkerson, died July 1, 1847, while en route to Oregon. His father, James Monroe Fulkerson, was born in Lee County, Virginia, August 28, 1802. The family moved west to Tennessee in 1807 and then on to the Missouri frontier in 1817, where they settled in present Cole County. In 1823 James married Virginia-born Mary Ramsey Miller. By 1847 they had seven children. Frederick, their fourth child and oldest son, was born October 11, 1829.

In the spring of 1847 the Fulkersons and many of their relatives became part of an Oregon-bound party composed primarily of members of the Old Florence Baptist Church located near Jefferson City. Some three hundred congregation members joined a wagon train captained by James Curl. The 120-wagon company soon broke into four groups. The group calling itself "The Plains Baptist Church" was captained by the Reverend Richard Miller, who was Mary Fulkerson's brother and the husband of Nancy Leeper Fulkerson, a sister of James Fulkerson.

Accounts of the death of Frederick Fulkerson vary. The Curl family remembered it thus: *Mrs. [Caleb] Curl's [née Margaret Fulkerson] brother took the fever, and Mr. Fulkerson, with two other families remained while the others went on. After nine days the young man, then aged eighteen, died near Devil's Gate. A granddaughter of James and Mary wrote: When crossing the Platte River [Frederick] swam the river below the crossing to ford the stock over, as the river was so swift it tended to wash them downstream. He became so chilled and exhausted that he died and was buried near the crossing.*

When Bruff passed the grave in 1849 he also noted, "Inscribed on a rock above the grave 'J.M. Fulkerson, June 26 '47.'" The inscription, which no longer exists, confirms that the family must have camped for at least a week during the final illness of Frederick Fulkerson. Upon his death a grave was dug at the foot of this rock. According to Bruff, the epitaph was painted on the face of the rock headstone, FREDERIC RICHARD, SON OF JAMES M. & MARY FULKERSON, DIED JULY 1, 1847. AGED 18 Years.

Two weeks later Mary Fulkerson died of mountain fever and was buried atop Names Hill on the Green River crossing of the Sublette Cutoff. Bruff saw this grave on August 7, 1849, and noted the engraving on a sandstone slab above the grave: *Mary, consort of J.M. Fulkerson. Died July 14, 1847.* The site of Mary Fulkerson's grave became a burial ground for other victims of the trail and eventually developed into a pioneer cemetery. All these graves were destroyed by pipeline construction in the 1830s.

The existing inscription, T. P. Baker 1864, now found on the Frederick Fulkerson gravestone, is believed to be the graffiti of a passing traveler. Baker, whoever he was, left another nearly identical inscription on a rock face a half-mile farther on at the bank of the river.

Signing and Funding by

**OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION**

1995

This is a part of your American heritage. Honor it, protect it, preserve it for your children.



Grave on left in the view below... described over it, on Cliff, J.M. Fulkerson.



## REVENUE ENHANCEMENT PLAN—FINAL REPORT

As of May 25, 1996, OCTA had received a total of \$10,611 from the Third Annual Fund Drive (1995-96). The results follow:

Endowment Fund	\$4986
Annual Fund	1947
Designated Funds:	
Preservation	474
Archaeology	220
Trail Marking, G & S	1077
Trail Mapping	499
COED	158
Education	175
Special Publications	1075
	\$10,611

The success of this year's fund raising drive was made possible by the 173 donors (including one corporate matching gift from Citicorp). We extend a heartfelt thanks to those OCTA members who chose to "continue the pace." Here is a list of the most recent donors:

April Hess Townley  
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## SPECIAL EVENTS FILL 96 CONVENTION SCHEDULE

OCTA's National Convention in Elko this August offers a wide variety of special events.

On Wednesday, August 14, the convention opens with the General Membership meeting at 8:15 A.M. At 2:00 P.M. the "Hitching the Teams" demonstration will be an outdoor extravaganza providing the opportunity to learn about harnessing horses and mules, yoking oxen and rigging pack animals—you can see all the authentic equipment and much more during live demonstrations outside the Convention Center with bleacher seating. A colorful narration is promised. Chapter Meetings start at 3:30. The Get Acquainted Social and books and authors night open at 7:00. Amy Warner will finish the day with a special presentation of *As the Wind Rocks the Wagon* at 9:00 P.M.

On Thursday night, after a day of papers, an "Evening of Cowboy Poetry" will feature local artists from the Cowboy Poetry Gathering with the added attraction of OCTA's very own band.

The Awards Dinner at 7:00 on Friday evening will cap a day of field trip adventures.

After Saturday's field trips, the evening's Basque Barbecue will feature authentic Basque food with wine. Dancers from the National Basque Festival will perform at the picnic.

## MATTES MEMORIAL

A memorial fund in Merrill Mattes' honor has been established by OCTA. Donations may be mailed to Box 1019, Independence MO 64051. The revenue will be expended on behalf of the Mattes Library. Clare Mattes has approved a donation of all Merrill's awards, which will be suitably displayed in the library.

—Jim Budde



## ELKO CONVENTION (from page 1)

history because some of the best diaries of westering were composed by travelers who took the supposed shortcut between Fort Bridger and the South Fork. Contributing to its fame was the Donner party, which became dispirited and broken on the cutoff.

Trail hunting itself did not attract many new OCTA members. Biegler, Sawyer and Company organized numerous outings on the trails beginning in the early 1990s. Late in 1992, about 30 people in a caravan of 4x4s traveled the California Trail to Record Bluff on the Bedke Ranch near the Nevada-Idaho-Utah border. Many people on the tour had never heard of OCTA. But Sawyer, the leader, passed out OCTA brochures at a special recruiting site. Record Bluff awed people on the tour. Still-visible names of many overland emigrants—some dating from the 1840s—were cut into the sandstone of the bluff that rises above lively Goose Creek.

A retired Chevrolet-Oldsmobile dealer, Sawyer proved his sales prowess. He also passed out some of the renowned candies he and his wife Phyllis create each Christmas season as tasty works of art. OCTA membership began to rise.

In 1993 a larger caravan of Elkoans headed east in search of the Donner/Hastings Trail. Assembling at Wendover, they drove northeast to the forlorn Silver Island Mountains. They passed Floating Island (the dark saddlehorn-like hill you see rising from the salt flats 15 miles northeast of Wendover) near the site of the Donner party wagon disaster in 1846. On the northwest side of the Silver Island they found traces of the Hastings Cutoff and some red ribbons left by the Utah Crossroads chapter. The trekkers were struck by the desolation of the Salt Flats and massive Pilot Peak in the western distance. They stood on the ground where so many goldrushers and emigrants expected to find water and then learned that water was still a day's travel away at Donner Springs.

The modern trail-seekers moved on to Donner Springs at the base of the Pilot Peak, the first water west-bound travelers on the cutoff had seen in 80 miles. Some members of the caravan imagined the Donner party members, the last emigrants of 1846, realizing they had made a mistake following Hastings, pondering their fate here 150 years ago. The Elkoans concluded the tour at Big Springs at the base of the Pequop Mountains where the Bidwell-Bartleson Party, the first California overland emigrants, abandoned their wagons in 1841. The tour result: more OCTAns.

In May 1994, a caravan of 32 vehicles with 80 people headed up the California Trail from Elko. They stopped briefly at a Trails West marker at Humboldt Wells, at the BLM California Trails Kiosk in Thousand Springs Valley, lunched at Rock Springs and viewed Record Bluff. After overnighing at Burley, Idaho, the caravan followed the California Trail from its origins—

where the Raft River flows into the Snake—toward Nevada. The group went south to the wondrous City of Rocks (often described in diaries), then to massive Granite Pass, one of the highest points on the entire emigrant trail.

Sawyer and Company have erected Carsonite markers on heretofore unmarked stretches of the California Trail and on prominent sites of the Hastings Cutoff, especially through Ruby Valley and along Huntington Creek. You can see the white California Trail markers near Osino south of I-80 and near Deeth north of I-80.

Several trail buffs have helped Sawyer build an interpretative kiosk on the north side of the Hunter Interchange on Interstate 80, eight miles west of Elko. Sawyer obtained the land, raised the money and recruited the labor force. The monument, commemorating the junction of the Hastings Cutoff and the California Trail, was built the way frontiersmen would have done it—with extensive volunteer cooperation and without tax money. It will be dedicated during the 1996 OCTA convention. Bagpiper Marta Lienhard Vincent will play "Amazing Grace," which befits "Scotty" Sawyer's project. Perhaps the best name for the way-side marker is "Scotty's Place."

## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE DEVELOPS COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC TRAILS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Members of the National Parks Service Comprehensive Management planning team have made numerous reconnaissance trips, visiting each state on the trail corridor. The team's historians, landscape architects, and natural resource specialists used the trips to gather field data on trail resources, meet with landowners and advocates of trail preservation, and share information with historic preservation officers and other state agencies. Perhaps most importantly, the field surveys gave the team an invaluable opportunity to get a feel for the trails themselves and the diverse landscapes that did so much to shape the experiences of early overland travelers.

The team has collected information related to trails history, land use, current management strategies, and interpretation at sites all along the trail corridor.

Digital mapping of the California and Pony Express National Historic Trails has begun, while data collection is now complete. The NPS is working under a path-breaking inter-agency cooperative agreement with the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest Service to manage the trails.



# STRANGE VICISSITUDES OF FORTUNE

## *Across the Sierra in the Summer of 1995*

by Robbie D. Gunstream

*In this, the concluding installment of his overland trails trek, Robbie Gunstream takes us from the Carson River to Sutter's Fort. Over the last two years we've followed Robbie from Green River and we'll miss him and his friends—especially Brewster.—Editor.*

LIKE THE UPPER HUMBOLDT, we pieced together a route from Ragtown to Genoa that approximated the old trail, using by-ways, county roads, an odd assortment of cross-country routes near Lahontan Reservoir and too many miles of Highway 50. After the satisfying miles of original trail in central Nevada, travel through Dayton, Carson City and Genoa, principally along the highway shoulders, was less gratifying. This section, however, does have its charms: the first views of the Sierra, the ruins of Fort Churchill, the Carson Valley, the lights of Virginia City high above the valley floor, and, of course, Mormon Station in Genoa, where we met, quite by chance, Mormon-Carson *afficionado* Tom Mahach.

### THE SIERRA CROSSING

We would be the first to admit that our perspective on the Sierra is a bit skewed. Whereas the emigrants viewed the Sierra as a terrifying final barrier with potentially fatal consequences, we had been eagerly looking forward to our days in the range since leaving the Missouri River. Entering the Sierra was like coming home.

We accomplished the Sierra crossing, our final leg of the journey, in seven days. We alternated between modern highways, forest service roads, and original trail throughout the climb to the Sierra crest and descent into California's Central Valley. The Carson River affords access to Hope Valley, Red Lake and Carson Pass. Caples Lake, which now covers the trail and valley below Covered Wagon Pass, provided a fine, high campsite. Covered Wagon Pass, which at 9600 feet is reputed to be the highest point in which wagons crossed the Sierra, offered especially magnificent views of the Sierra crest, especially to the south. From the pass, a long, sustained descent to the central valley through the western Sierra foothills is a marvel of road building, ridge running, water locating and forest dodging. In descending from Covered Wagon Pass, we lost 8,700 feet of elevation in a day and a half, providing the most sustained down-hill walking of the entire trail. If there is a disheartening side to the final segment of the trail, it is the number of tedious highway miles that must be trav-

elled from Pollock Pines to Folsom.

Carson and Covered Wagon Passes provide a glimpse of just how determined, resourceful, road-hardened and road-weary our emigrant forebears must have been. If the movement of wagons from Red Lake to the top of Carson Pass and vice-versa was not a historical fact, one would doubt its veracity. If we did not know our emigrant forebearers well enough to never doubt their fortitude we would seriously question the report that wagons were, indeed, taken to the top of Covered Wagon Pass. Enjoyable and meaningful days can be spent simply climbing the final portions of trail to the tops of these passes and contemplating

these two testaments to the ability of the emigrants to meet every challenge.

For us, the Sierra proved to be magnificent. We had perfect weather, clear and in the 70s, and from the top of Covered Wagon Pass we were

treated to a view of Mt. Diablo in the California's Coastal Range, a rare sight any longer. We could not have wished for more.

### SUTTER'S FORT

Friday, October 6, found us along the banks of the American River strolling the Jedediah Strong Smith Memorial Trail. The citizenry of Sacramento is to be commended for developing a beautiful pathway through an otherwise urban setting, for preserving an historic route, and for remembering one of the most remarkable Americans. The day was in the upper 80s, the sun shone brightly and that balmy, *manana* feeling hung in the air. For us, of course, there was, finally, no tomorrow. As we walked the final 22 miles we passed the time by enjoying the beauty of the American River, reflecting on the diverse regions of the country the trail crosses, recalling highs and lows, discussing the landscape in detail and remembering the people who had made the trip so memorable. The day symbolized one of the punctuation marks in this journey of life and demarked the completion of a personal epoch. We wondered about our friend Banks and how he was doing in the gold mines and thought of how so many had trod these miles in eager anticipation of the civilization that awaited them at New Helvetia.

Jackie Lewin, OCTA President, wrote to me with a few lines from the journal of John Hawkins Clark, who arrived at New Helvetia on September 4, 1852:

"Only twelve miles to the end of our destination. Our road is side by side with the American River. To our left

*As I watched the sun rise over the mountain top I was thinking of human life; how wonderful it changes and how brief its span. Season after season rolls along, we heed them not, except occasionally to give them a passing thought as milestones in the journey of life. If we have an object in view, we count the distance, we measure time, earnestly looking to the end we push on, scarcely dreaming this is the journey of life. —John Banks, September 1, 1849<sup>1</sup>*



stands Sutter's Fort....Soon the spires of churches and the masts of shipping become visible. The breeze now brings the busy hum of the city together with the voice of steamboat bell, all old but familiar sounds. How earnestly did we gaze at the sight and signs of civilization."

We left the American River at California State University, walked through the campus (yes, with Brewster in tow!), and made our way through two miles of residential neighborhoods accompanied by the honks and "thumbs-up" of supportive Sacramentonians. And, suddenly—almost miraculously, almost incredibly—there before us was Sutter's Fort—the beautiful, majestic, white-walled end to the emigrant experience that we had lived for and dreamed about for so long.

At 5:15 P.M. Harlan Wadley and I walked through the gates of paradise. For me it concluded a long physical and spiritual pilgrimage, settled an overdue account with the past, and enabled me to make peace with the nineteenth century. Waiting for us at New Helvetia was the staff of the Sutter's Fort Living History Program in period costume, OCTA members, relatives, new and old friends. We raised the flag of 1841, which we carried from the Missouri River in honor of the Bartleson-Bidwell party; enjoyed a six-gun salute that sent Brewster ten feet in the air; and engaged in great conversation and splendid moments of laughter with those gathered. In all, it was a perfect ending to a long and arduous journey.

I wish I could report that I was profoundly articulate and provided penetrating insight for those gathered to celebrate the emigrant experience. But, frankly, I was about speechless. I was so utterly grateful that the journey was over, so amazed that we had actually made it, that it was at least a week before I could even begin to reflect on what we had accomplished and what the trip

had meant. Be thankful that you are not part of my family, whose members must now listen to daily recitations concerning life on the road to the Promised Land.<sup>5</sup>

### SOME WORDS OF THANKS

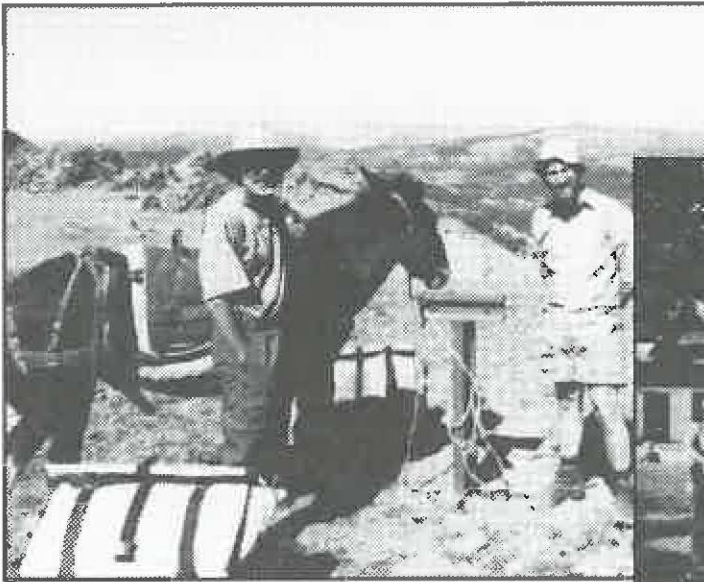
Travel this last summer would not have been possible without the volunteer time, energy, and resources of many people. So, allow us to remember those who worked so hard on our behalf:

- To the members of the Gateway Chapter, who, after sending us into the wilderness of Kansas, never gave up on us and provided encouragement all along the journey;
- To the landowners along the route—the best of all preservationists—all of whom were gracious, always willing to grant permissions, eager to share their knowledge of the route;
- To the Nevada Highway Patrol and Captain Glenn Jewett, for encouragement, cooperation and watchful care over us while we were near Interstate 80;
- To Tom Mahach for sharing his good cheer and immense knowledge of the Mormon-Carson Route;
- To Thomas H. Hunt for sharing information, maps, encouragement and insight all along the California Trail;
- To Martin Griffith—Nevada trail walker extraordinaire—for advice, map marking, encouragement, cheer-leading, scouting, guiding, hilarious stories, and Coca-Cola on a hot afternoon;
- To Eileen Hook and the cast of Sutter's Fort Living History Program;
- And to Brewster, who endured all.

*Brewster enjoys the classic snow slopes along the approach to Covered Wagon Pass. Photo by the author.*







Above: Harlan Wadley and Martin Griffin enjoy Covered Wagon Pass. Caples Lake is in the background. Photo by the author.

Below: A perfect ending to a long journey: Members of the Sutter's Fort Living History Program welcome Harlan, Robby and Brewster to New Helvetia. Photo by Tom Mahach.



## SOME THOUGHTS ON LANDMARKS

Two very important places along the California Trail offer opportunities for commemorating the emigrants. Although old Highway 40 snakes through it, Carlin Canyon, just west of Elko, is still intact and is bypassed by Interstate 80. It would make a marvelous setting for an interpretive center should appropriate government and private groups take on such a project.

Ragtown would be a terrific location for a memorial park commemorating the emigrant achievement in completing the Forty-Mile Desert. Instead of the great trees and water, today the modern trekker is greeted by a barrier to the Carson River in the form of traffic on Highway 50, fences and fields under cultivation. Surely public and private initiatives could result in a few acres set aside to remember the incredible effort required to reach this place and those who gave the utmost farthing in trying to do so.

## WHY?

Finally, let me respond to the single question most frequently asked: Why? Why spend four and a half months apart from your family and the comforts of home, living in a tent, fighting mosquitoes, skinning mules, drinking strange water and eating odd foods, walking 2,200 miles, breathing alkali, getting cooked by the sun, always dirty and rarely really clean. Why accept this? Why do all this? Why not simply take the bus? Why?

The overland emigrant experience lives on not in ruts, historical sites, or landmarks but in the hearts and lives of those of us who call ourselves Americans. To walk any stretch of trail is to quicken the emigrant experience and to bring the diarists alive. To borrow a musical analogy, it is to realize the score. It is to bring to life a time, a place, a

people and their culture. In sharing their experience, the emigrants come alive and speak to us across the years. We can know them and learn the nature of a people who were as tough as nails, who never quit, and who were willing to pay the utmost price for one supreme though abstract idea—freedom.

At daybreak on August 19, 1849, near Iron Point in the vast expanse of the central Humboldt, a weary yet reflective John Banks "thought of the strangeness of human life; how anxious we are for periods of time to pass...." and in a moving eulogy to time, space and this journey of life, he marvelled at sunrise that "... yonder shines the queen of the morning, the harbinger of the king of day; beauty's bright form of hope. Welcome, welcome day." To know the nature of the things of time—That is Why.

## NOTES

1. Quotes in italics are from the diary of John Banks in Howard L. Scamehorn, ed., *The Buckeye Rovers in the Gold Rush* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1965). (This one was printed in the April issue, but it's worth repeating.)

2. In the summer of 1991, Martin Griffith and Jeff Stewart walked the California emigrant road from the Snake River to Tragedy Springs. (For an account of their retrace see their "Seeing the Elephant," *Nevada Magazine* (June 1994), 12-17.) Between our efforts and those of Martin and Jeff, we retraced all but 300 miles of the California Trail during the anniversary year of 1991. Had we but known of each other's plans that year, we could have worked together and modified our itineraries to cover the entire trail. This speaks to the opportunity for OCTA to serve as a forum for trekkers and a clearinghouse for information for those who want to travel the emigrant trails.

# THERE'S MORE TO ELKO THAN GREAT TRAILS

by Charles Greenhaw

**E**LKO IN A NUTSHELL: Perched at an elevation of 5,060 feet and boasting a population 21,000, Elko developed as a freight center for booming mines, and jehu-driven mule teams trucked supplies north to Tuscarora and south to White Pine County. Elko County's vast rangelands, for so long unfettered by fences, made the area a center of the Western Cattle Kingdom. The mystique of the old horse culture endures in the midst of Elko's gold-inspired growth. Northeastern Nevada was once a great wool producer and entire trainloads of wool left the area's railheads for Boston. By 1900, Basque shepherders began making Elko a citadel of New World Basque culture. In 1965, a new technology for extracting microscopic gold resulted in the first gold bar from the Carlin Mine. In recent years, the Elko area has experienced intense mining exploration and discovery. Nearby are the nation's largest gold mines, which produce millions of ounces annually.

The Northeastern Nevada Museum features monthly exhibits by Great Basin artisans and exhibits items of natural history, early Elko, Shoshoni culture, Basque culture, the Pony Express and emigrant trails. It has a fine library of Great Basin books and periodicals, a bookstore and a gift shop.

The Western Folklife Center celebrates western ranch life and conducts the world-famous Cowboy Poetry Gathering the last week of January. The exhibit hall boasts the elaborate mahogany bar of the old Pioneer Hotel, which houses the center. It also exhibits art and craft works of the livestock industry, including aspects of Mexican, Native American and Euroamerican culture. It has a gift store with Western Americana featured.

The Commercial Hotel is a turn-of-the-century building with many layers of Great Basin social history. In 1941, the Commercial joined casino gaming with world-class entertainment, featuring performers ranging from Tommy Dorsey's Orchestra to Sophie Tucker to the Marx Brothers. Bing Crosby, honorary mayor of Elko in the 1940s, was known to hang loose in the Commercial. Its BrandRoom, with walls of emblazoned brands of famous ranches, remains intact, the imprint from a more romantic era when silver dollars and cattle kings abounded.

The Miramonte at 177 W. Court Street was the home of descendants of cattle king Daniel Murphy, one of the members of the 1844 Stephens-Murphy-Townsend wagon train, the first to cross the Forty Mile Desert, the first to climb Truckee Canyon and the first to cross the Sierra Nevada. In passing over Donner Summit the emigrants established the California Trail over which a quarter of a million travelers and goldrushers went west between 1844 and the onset of rail travel. H. H. Bancroft wrote that Murphy owned more land than any other in-

dividual by 1880 with his enormous eastern Nevada ranches.

## RECREATION

Lamoille Canyon, a massive, glaciated defile of the Ruby Mountains, is 20 miles south. It is sometimes termed Nevada's Yosemite. Beautiful Thomas Canyon, with a perpetual snowfield and lofty peaks, channels icy water to Lamoille Creek. The water cascades by aspen groves and into the lowlands through the hamlet of Lamoille, with it bed and breakfast, three taverns and two restaurants cater to visitors.

The Elko area has two golf courses, three casinos and typical rural Nevada waterholes. The town is famous for Basque family-style eateries which emphasize an array of brimming dishes for diners interested plentiful food. The City Park has picnic facilities, a municipal pool, a kid's world, tennis courts and other sports activities. The nearby Convention Center is state-of-the-art.

## TRAVEL

Elko is located on Interstate 80. Salt Lake City is 235 miles east, Reno 285 miles west. Greyhound and Amtrac serve Elko. Skywest Airlines, with 31-passenger Brasilias, has six incoming daily flights from both Reno and Salt Lake City.

## EMIGRANT TRAILS

Elko is centered in a land known by emigrants as the Humboldt Desert. The nearest visible ruts of the old California Trail are at Osino, only 13 miles east of town. Prominent remains of the road can be seen near Emigrant Springs, where the trail descends the mountains toward the graves at Gravelly Ford on the Humboldt. In Elko itself, the trail passed along Mary's River (the Humboldt) through an area now macadamized as Railroad and Commercial Streets. To the northeast are historic emigrant trail sites like Goose Creek and Record Bluff (with 150-year inscriptions), Thousand Springs Valley (where there is an interpretative marker), Humboldt Wells and Halleck, a site noted by many key figures of the western expansion, including Kit Carson, Joseph R. Walker, James Clyman, Peter Skene Ogden and Lansford Hastings. The infamous Hastings Cutoff—made famous by the Donner party—rounded the Ruby Mountains. That trail, beginning at Fort Bridger, cut through the Wasatch, crossed the salt flats, and rejoined the main trail at the confluence of the Humboldt and its South Fork, eight miles west of Elko. Other historic sites to the west include the Greenhorn Cutoff, Gravelly Ford, Stony Point, the Midas Thrust (sketched by Goldsborough Bluff in 1849) and Iron Point, the place where James Reed of the Donner party killed teamster John Snyder.

*Compliments of Stewart Title of Northeastern Nevada*



## KANZA

### NEW CHAPTER FORMS ON THE KANSAS PLAINS

OCTA's newest chapter has adopted the name Kanza. We've had reports from other chapters that they've been busy and we hope to print their chapter reports in upcoming issues.

Until then, welcome!

## WYOMING

### WYOMING CHAPTER TREKS AND ADVENTURES

The weather challenged our first Wyoming trail treks. A crew of volunteers has refurbished the old Fulkerson grave at Rattlesnake Pass. The grave site is alongside an old state highway at Devil's Gate. It had fallen into sad shape. Thanks to donations of materials and labor it is now a properly protected site. Randy Brown's detective work resulted in a change from calling the site the T. P. Baker grave to that of Frederick Fulkerson. The second outing, on May 25, saw Dr. Susan Badger Doyle lead a dozen members braving cool weather and lots of spring rain on a trek along the Bozeman Trail. Susan knows all about the trail—and now a lot about the weather. Thanks to CB radios the intrepid rut nuts were able to hear about the trail, even if fog and rain occasionally blurred the view.

A major trek is planned to Rocky Ridge near Jeffery City on June 22. Randy Brown will again lead this trek. This is a 4x4, high-clearance vehicle trip. Folks from outside Wyoming are definitely invited. Contact Randy Brown in Douglas or Lee Underbrink in Casper for details.

Trail segments in Western Wyoming are threatened by natural gas developments. The Bureau of Land Management has a proposal under consideration submitted by Exxon Oil Co. Some of the new wells would be well within the quarter-mile buffer zone—for all practical purposes, right on the Lander Trail. A second proposal would see a 16-inch diameter pipeline cross the Oregon Trail in Sweetwater County near Fontenelle Reservoir. Both projects illustrate the headlong rush by energy companies to develop massive natural gas reserves on public lands in Western Wyoming. Additional developments are planned with thousands of new gas wells.

The National Historic Trails Center, proposed for a bluff above Casper, keeps inching along toward completion. For some months now the cooperative effort between the non-profit National Historic Trails Foun-

ation, the City of Casper and the Bureau of Land Management has seen great progress toward completion of the architectural and engineering plans for the \$5.0 million structure. The Foundation's share of the project is design, construction, installation and maintenance of the exhibits. BLM is to complete the A&E; however, Federal funding ran out so the Foundation will "loan" the BLM \$150,000 to complete the structural design by September 1996. Along with that effort, the exhibit design work is starting the design development phase. Final development of floor plans and elevations is underway. When all current work is completed the exhibit portion of the project will be ready to contract for construction of the exhibits.

Sounds encouraging, right? This state-of-the-art center will portray trails related to early man through the coming of the railroad. The only glitch seems to be the Federal construction money. All of the other work on building and exhibit design will be wasted if the BLM doesn't come through with its long-promised share of the project. Our hats are off to the Foundation. Early on they committed to raise \$4.5 million toward the project. They only have \$1.4 million left to go and they're funding some crucial work. All the engineering and design plans will be completed this fall and the project ready to bid when (or if) construction dollars are made available.

It's exciting to see the models of the building and exhibits. With a little imagination a person can see how this center will be an outstanding tourist magnet that would explain and interpret the importance of the trails. OCTA members' support for the construction funding is appreciated.

—Tim Monroe

## TRAILS HEAD

### EXPEDITIONS AND AN ORAL HISTORY

On April 20 Trails Head joined the Missouri River Outfitters of the Santa Fé Trail Association on a trek from Lexington to Independence. The expedition followed the Becknell route as closely as possible.

On June 6 Trails Head hosted a celebration at the Lone Elm campground, a camping site for both the Santa Fé Trail and the Oregon-California Trail. Barbara Magerl was the master of ceremonies.

An oral history project to record the early history of the chapter is planned. Neil Johnson and Harold Smith, both experienced oral historians, will conduct the interviews.



In the fall, Trails Head plans a trek of the Military Road in Johnson County.

—Mary Conrad

## CROSSROADS

### ROY TEA LEADS TRIP ACROSS HASTINGS CUTOFF

It was in the glorious month of May that Roy Tea and followers set out across the Great Salt Lake Desert trailing the ghosts of Lansford W. Hastings, Edwin Bryant, Heinrich Lienhard, Harlan, Young, the Donners, the Reeds and even "Lucinda." Utah Crossroads members met at the Grantsville Museum early on May 4, 1996 to spend two days exploring the Hastings Cutoff across the Great Salt Lake Desert. After breakfast and a tour of the museum, which contains many emigrant artifacts found on the desert, we loaded into our four-wheel-drive vehicles and followed Roy, our field trip chairman, into the wilderness.

Roy had prepared an excellent booklet, loaded with maps and journal excerpts, which was a wonderful asset as we traveled. He also kept us entertained with interesting historical tidbits. It was fascinating to walk part of the Hastings trail as we traveled toward Timpie Spring not far from the cement plant west of Grantsville. A side trip up the hill to overlook Timpie Point and see the trail below from an eagle's eye view gave a good look at where the trail was going and where we had been. Next, the caravan visited Big Spring on the west side of Timpie Point.

We traveled west through thorny brush; we could often see traces of the trail beside the dirt road. Lone Rock was a significant landmark on the old Lincoln Highway, which paralleled the trail. In some places the trail was clearly visible, creating a aura of the past. Back on the paved road, we passed Burnt Spring, now dry, but also significant for early explorers. Near Horseshoe Springs we turned off the road to see where the trail used by some of the 49'ers separated from the Hastings trail. The gold seekers went east to Dell Springs for good water and a nice camping spot, while the Hastings route continued straight down toward Hope Wells in Skull Valley. Later we stopped to see where the two trails merged. The sharp and well-trained eyes of Maxine Radmall spotted Indian petroglyphs located near the junction of the two roads.

At Hope Wells the emigrants found the last good water before the desert. Here they loaded up on grass and water and we loaded up on the history of the Hawaiians who had colonized the area for the LDS church, calling their settlement Iosepa. The cemetery is about all that remains of the once-thriving community in the desert wasteland, so different from their island home.

The drive across Skull Valley was bumpy, to say the least. It must have been a difficult stretch for the animals

pulling the wagons, but nothing compared to what they would have to face later. The road is not so clearly visible across Skull Valley, but we could occasionally catch a glimpse of it.

We nooned at Redlum Spring on the east side of the Cedar Mountains. The water from the spring is brackish, but the verdure of spring was beautiful, probably much more so for us than it was for the emigrants who crossed in the summer and fall. The jaunt over the Cedar Mountains was bone-shaking even in modern vehicles. At the summit, we explored a bit and got a feel for the country. Some of us walked a little way down Hastings Pass on the west side. We continued by vehicle down the pass and came out on the desert plain, again being able to see and walk part of the trail as it emerged from the pass.

There is no gravel or dirt road across the plain to the Grayback Hill so we left the trail, but Roy kept pointing out the wagon route as we used the available roads. Luckily, there had been rain several days before and the roads were not terribly dusty as we made our way to the base of Grayback. Many of us scrambled up the side of Grayback, which was much steeper than it looked from below. Once on top we could see for miles in both directions. Trail markers helped us locate the wagon route on top and down the west side and out into the Salt Desert. It was fun to explore the top, but then it was time to head for dinner and showers in Wendover.

Sunday morning we met at the dike road across the Salt Desert to go to Floating Island to see the tracks across the salt flats. We decided to take a side trip and visit an ancient Indian cave that Roy had found while working for the state. The cave, which has been "dug" by archaeologists, was interesting to explore and gave us a chance to enjoy the morning air. Then on we traveled to the tip of Floating Island to see the trail. The glare of the salty whiteness and its seeming endlessness gave us a tiny feeling of what the emigrants experienced, but we had plenty of drinks and refreshments and none of their fears, worries or hardships. Crossroads Chapter has marked the trail here and Roy pointed out the route.

Our next stops were at "Bat Point," famous in Roy's history, and Bee-Lee-Loop Valley (would you believe Roy named that too!—ask him about it sometime). We took a look at the trail off Silver Island. We went around the point and then followed the Silver Island road, which may be right on top of the trail. The trail through this area was not on the salt flats but was on good old terra firma, undoubtedly a relief after the soft salt mud. The wagons had to fight their way around hummocks and through greasewood, but the road was pretty good in most places for modern travelers.

Some of us walked through Donner-Reed Pass on Silver Island, while the rest had to drive around on the road. It was a pleasant walk, looking for wild flowers, rust marks and other such diversions. We ate our lunches on the west side of the pass. Roy announced that we were going before some of us had finished our nooning.



Throwing coolers and half-finished lunches into the backs of vehicles, we loaded into the wagons and headed down the road to take the long way around to Pilot Peak. There is no road directly across the eight or so miles of salt flats that still separated us from the water at the base of Pilot Peak. Following Roy "Ab Jenkins" Tea on that road was no easy matter, I'll tell you! We arrived at Pilot Peak much faster than I would have thought possible. Donner Spring was beautiful. Vern Gorzitze and Jerry Dunton had been out prior to the trip and had it all spruced up. The beauty and peace of the place is almost overwhelming, just as the joy of finding water must have been overwhelming to the emigrants. Crossroads members can feel pride in their preservation project to protect Donner Spring. (Thanks, Vern, Al and the rest of you workers!)

The trip was now officially over, but a few die-hards still took a side-trip to Bidwell Pass on the way home. It was a weekend to savor for a long time. While visiting the past, we made memories for tomorrow.

—Lyndia Carter

## COLORADO

### CHAPTER PLANS FOR 1996

Terri Tiehen, Colorado chapter president, presided over a luncheon meeting attended by 20 members on April 20. Terri announced that our Fall Rendezvous is set for September 14 at Fort Vasquez, where a living history program will be presented, followed by lunch at the Dou-

bletree Restaurant in Platteville. Doris Monahan will be the speaker at this gathering.

The chapter learned that construction of E-470 could impact existing ruts on the Smoky Hill Trail and members of this Chapter hope to develop a plan to limit the impact. To date a meeting has been held with the Platte River Constructors at which they agreed to survey the ruts subsequent to OCTA members' flagging of same, which has been done. We are continuing to negotiate and when we know the outcome, we will let people know what we were able to accomplish.

Clarice Crowle and Lee Whitley, co-directors of Smoky Hill Trails Project, displayed photos and a map of Smoky Hill Trail sites. A project to find as many sites as possible is in progress through the cooperation of the historical societies and property owners between here and Leavenworth.

Lee Whitley received a letter from the National Park Service proposing the inclusion of the Cherokee Trail in the National Historic Trails, a goal toward which Lee has worked tirelessly.

Lyn Ryder spoke on "Nancy Morton: Early Travels on Colorado Trails," presenting a detailed history of Nancy Morton's experiences prior to her capture by Indians at the Plum Creek Massacre. Lyn is the author of *Tragedy of the Little Blue* and *Road Ranches Along the Oregon Trail*, and has her own publishing company.

Barbi Dailey opened a get-acquainted discussion with her own reasons for becoming an OCTA member and introduced other members who elaborated on their individual experiences with a wide variety of trails history and interests.

## IDAHO-MONTANA

The Idaho-Montana chapter held a spring meeting April 20 in Pocatello that was very well attended. It marked the eleventh anniversary of our chapter.

After the business meeting Red Perry lead a tour of the Fort Hall Reservation and surrounding trail segments. We went to the marker for Fort Hall that stands on the reservation and were able to watch the mighty Snake River come within yards of the original site.

Red Perry is the Historical Trails Manager on the Reservation. He was born and raised



Left to right: Afton Patrick, Idaho-Montana chapter president, Chilton Phoenix, the first president of our chapter and Mike Bateman, the chairman of the 1997 convention, at the Fort Hall Marker on the Fort Hall Indian Reservation.

very near the Fort Hall monument. He knows this area like the back of his hand and has a wealth of information. We are very lucky to have him involved in the 1997 convention. By the time *News from the Plains* goes out we hope to have gone on two working trips marking the Oregon Trail east of Pocatello. This fall we plan on additional marking near Massacre Rocks and Cold Spring Hill. All this should be marked by next summer for the 1997 convention.

—Peggy Cristobal



The Colorado Chapter mourns the loss of its revered member Merrill Mattes, whose contributions and dedication made the revitalization of this group possible. We miss him.

—Margaret Bowers

## GATEWAY

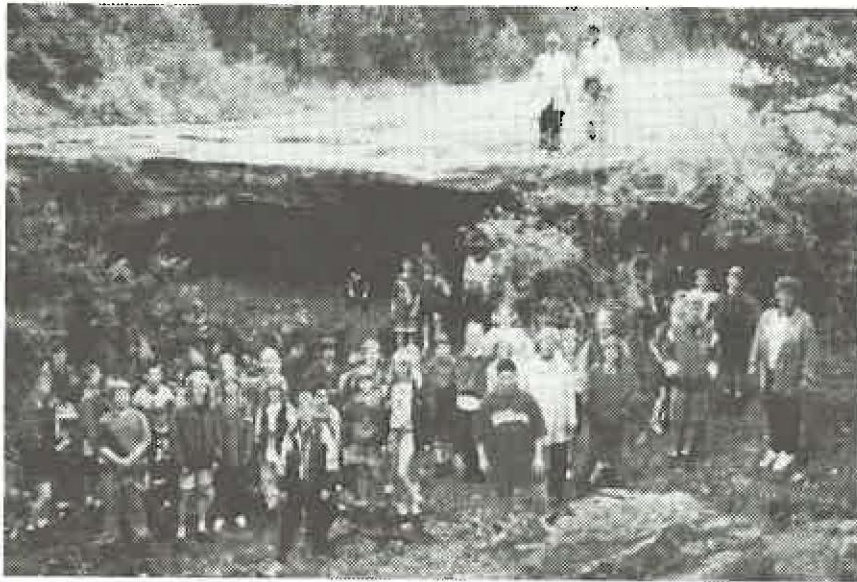
### CHAPTER MEETS IN ST. JOSEPH

On March 22 and 23, the Gateway Chapter, the St. Joseph Museum and the Pony Express National Memorial hosted the mid-year meeting of OCTA's Board of Directors. The weekend started with the dedication one of the OCTA/NPS carsonite posts at St. Joseph's Riverfront Park. Dave Martin, chairman of the chapter's trail marking committee, Mary Knab, president of Gateway, and Jackie Lewin participated in the program along with Mayor Larry Stobbs and Scout Troop 6. The Scouts are earning their Historic Trails Badge by helping to place OCTA/NPS posts in eastern Kansas. After the ceremony, Gateway members Marilyn Taylor and Sarah Elder treated board members to a historic tour of St. Joseph. A highlight of the tour was a stop at the restored Krug-Nill Mansion where the Gateway Chapter hosted a reception. The tour ended at the St. Joseph Museum with a dinner hosted by the museum.

During April, Marilyn Taylor and Jackie Lewin taught a graduate-level class on the Pony Express for area teachers that was offered through Northwest Missouri State University. Part of the class was a tour of the trail from St. Joseph to Marysville, Kansas. Twenty teachers participated in the class and hopefully will be able to share the information with their students.

Gateway and Kanza members helped 47 students from the Bern, Kansas, Elementary School learn about the Oregon-California Trail through their area. Teachers Julie Strathman, Julie Droge and Jackie Olberding had spent some class time working with the students. Students also enjoyed playing the Oregon Trail computer game and became quite familiar with hazards of the trail. The teachers, along with the 1988 Kansas Friend of the Trail winner, Jim Sudbeck, asked Jackie Lewin and Marilyn Taylor

to lead a bus tour of the trail for their students. Also joining in the tour was Jim Sheik, a Gateway member from Bern. A few blocks from the school, the students paused to place a NPS/OCTA carsonite post since the trail passed through the present-day Main Street of Bern. At the Nemaha River crossing, property owner Jim Sudbeck actually drove the bus load of children down to the riverbank for a close-up view of the rock ledge that allowed wagons to cross the river more easily. Even though the day was rainy, the young emigrants persevered and pushed on. They placed another post just past the Nemaha River crossing. The students also visited the new park dedicated to the trails in Marysville, which features a replica rope ferry similar to the one used to ford the Big



*Bern, Kansas, elementary school students gather at Alcove Spring to learn about their state's trail heritage from Marilyn Taylor and Jack Heller (up on the ledge). Photo by Jackie Lewin.*

Blue River. At Alcove Spring, Jack Haller of the newly formed Kanza Chapter greeted the students. He spoke about the site and told the students how local people were working to preserve it. Students then returned to Bern, a little wet but much wiser about what it was like to travel the trail through their area about 150 years ago.

—Jackie Lewin

## NEBRASKA

### CHAPTER ENJOYS SPRING TOUR

The Spring 1996 Nebraska chapter outing was held May 4 in western Nebraska and eastern Wyoming. Stops included Rebecca Winter's new burial site, Chimney Rock, Mitchell Pass, Roubidoux Pass and Trading Post in Nebraska and Register Cliff, Fort Laramie and some very impressive ruts near Gurnsey, Wyoming.

Many thanks to those that attended and all the local OCTA members that helped guide the tour.

There are many points of interest in the Scottsbluff area and it would be a great place for a future national convention.

—Ross Genung



## NORTHWEST

### TRAIL SEASON STARTS IN THE OREGON COUNTRY

The 1996 outing season kicked off with the unveiling of interpretive panels for the Applegate Trail in Lane County, Oregon, with assistance from OCTA members. The Applegate Trail Committee in Lane County has established a 110-mile automobile loop tour centered on Eugene. Other festivities are scheduled throughout the summer to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the first emigrants on the Applegate Trail (or Southern Route) in 1846.

The second Northwest Chapter outing occurred on June 1 near Yakima, Washington. The Wenas Valley, the route of the 1853 Longmire-Biles Wagon Train was explored. This trip was part of a larger effort to understand and document the Naches Trail, an Oregon Trail extension in Washington going from Fort Walla Walla on the Columbia River to Steilacoom, Washington, via Naches Pass in the Cascades.

Planning and organization for the 1998 OCTA Convention in Pendleton, Oregon, is well under way. Chairman Dick Ackerman, with assistance from Lowell Tiller and Carol Ann Buss, has developed preliminary assignments for the convention team and a first cut of the convention schedule. A highlight includes the repeat appearance of the Trail Band, a feature of the 1993 Baker City Convention. In addition to trail expeditions ranging from the Blue Mountain Crossing to the ruts and swales on the Boardman Bombing Range, pre-convention trips to the Snake River, Hells Canyon and the Wallowa Mountains (the Oregon Alps) are planned. We look forward to seeing you all in Elko where we will provide additional information.

—Dave Welch

## SOUTHWEST

### SWOCTA OPEN HOUSE

The chapter can report a slow but steady growth. We now have about 45 memberships, an all-time high. We have lost two long-time members this spring. Jim Carter of Las Cruces, New Mexico, and Paul Etter of Mesa, Arizona, both died in April. We will feel the loss of their contributions in our future activities.

The chapter undertook a second week-long mapping trip on the Southern Trail in New Mexico. Five members and two guests spent the days rut hunting near the Rio Grande. Armed with GPS units, CB radios, a variety of old and modern maps and various diary accounts, the group's first priority was to find where emigrants left the Rio Grande and headed towards Cooke's Peak. Although the general area has been fairly well agreed upon for a

long time, no actual traces of the trail had been found. Don Buck, expert trail sleuth, used the 1849 diaries of William Hunter and H. M. T. Powell to figure mileages from a known point. Using their descriptions of where the canyon left the river bottom and matching it to what we could view of the area, we settled on a particular canyon as a possible location. The next day we walked up the canyon and found the usual signs of wagon travel—swales, rock grooves and rust marks. After crossing the mesa above the canyon, we lost the trail when it dropped into the next large arroyo. We were not able to find any traces until the trail reached Foster's Hole, several miles to the west. The country is extremely broken by ridges and dry washes, and has almost no access by vehicle. We have much work ahead of us. This dry wash leaving the Rio Grande valley is not named on modern USGS maps, so we dubbed it Hunter Wash. Also, it is partially on private land. While we are not saying that this is the way travelers left the river valley, it was one way the '49-ers used. It is very satisfying to be able to make that statement.

At Foster's Hole we found more trail traces for about a quarter of a mile before again losing it. This was not much trail to find for a week of work, but it is there, and we will eventually find it.

We received the news of Jim Carter's death during the mapping week, which of course affected us. Several of us took a day to travel to Las Cruces for his funeral. Jim was the first one in the chapter to show us some of the trail sites in New Mexico and he had planned to join us during part of our mapping week. He would have been delighted to know of our findings.

—Rose Ann Tompkins

## ROY TEA LOCATES REMNANT OF THE HASTINGS CUTOFF

Looking for evidence of the Hastings Cutoff in Tooele Valley, trail expert Roy Tea has located an intriguing segment east of the road between Timpie Point and Grantsville, Utah. Roy perused 1959 aerial photographs and then confirmed its existence on the ground.

The trail just east of Timpie Point is a beautiful, pristine, undisturbed section of the Hastings Cutoff that is about a half mile long. The trail near the Dolomite Lime Plant has been used by hunters and others.

Tea notes that modern transportation routes have covered up or destroyed portions of the pioneer trails, but modern technology in the form of aerial photographs and airplanes can now be used to locate these abandoned trails.

OCTA members bound for the Elko Convention or joining the pre-convention tours should have a chance to look at this fascinating discovery.



# Announcements

## SOAKED OREGON TRAIL CENTER REOPENS

At 9:00 A.M. on April 15, the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center reopened after flooding closed the center this spring. More than 300 students and 226 walk-in patrons toured the facility that day. Both the children and adult shows were standing room only. The facility sports new lighting, a brighter and lighter floor and walls, reorganized exhibits and a rearranged store. The staff (including two new interpreters) indicated an increased feeling of ownership. Local TV channels 2 and 8 covered the reopening. The kids of McLoughlin School in Oregon City presented the EOTIC with \$500 they collected in pennies and nickels. In three days almost 900 people toured the reopened center. Some 8,700 visitors are scheduled in May and another 63 groups are due from June through September. In July and August the Oregon Trail Pageant will again perform the play *Oregon Fever* at the EOTIC amphitheater on Tuesday through Saturday nights. In 1997 the Oregon trail pageant will unveil a new play by internationally known writer Tom DeTitta.

## IDAHO INTERPRETIVE CENTER STARTED

On Friday, May 3, Idaho Governor Phil Batt and other dignitaries broke ground for a new trails center in Montpelier, Idaho.

Family physician Dr. Paul Daines, Rosa Moorman of the *Montpelier News Examiner*, Craig Evans, Gary Griffin, Jerry Nelson, Mayor George Lane, Louis Pope, John Hurren, Noel Lyman and Rod Jacobsen spearheaded this local project.

Major funding came from Idaho's Department of Transportation as an "Ice Tea" grant. Craig Thomas was responsible for a great deal of work on this grant. Private funds came from the Rich and Browning Family Trusts, which were represented by Carolyn Nebeker. The Louie Swanson Foundation also donated and was represented by Chuck Swanson. Ex-governor John Evans spoke briefly and represented the Governor's Oregon Trail Executive Committee. Michael Bateman represented OCTA and its Idaho Chapter.

The site of this interpretive center is at the Wells C. Stock Park on the corner of Highway 30 and Highway 89 in Montpelier where the emigrants camped on Clover Creek. It will be the first such interpretive site that travelers will find when they enter the state on either of these major highways. The Governor indicated that other interpretive sites are planned for Glenn's Ferry and the Three Island Crossing, Fort Hall and Boise at Highway 21 near the Boise River. The state has also authorized funds for a new Idaho Historical Society Library and Archives Building.

## VIRGINIA DALE WINS GRANT IN COLORADO

The Colorado State Historical Society awarded the community of Virginia Dale a grant to stabilize the town's Overland Trail Stage Station. Over \$30,000 will be used to stabilize the foundation and straighten the leaning walls of the 134-year-old hand-hewn log building built by Jack Slade in 1862. It is hoped that work will begin later this summer.

To help to raise matching funds, an Open House was held at the Virginia Dale Stage Station on June 15. Scheduled events included talks by local historians, a mountain man rendezvous and Doug Kafka's presentation of original tales and poetry of Tom Horn and other western desperados. For more information, send email to [lizabeth@frii.com](mailto:lizabeth@frii.com) or [virginia@moore-information.com](mailto:virginia@moore-information.com) or phone them at 970-416-8678.

## FRIENDS OF ALCOVE SPRING

Duane A. Iles of Blue Rapids, Kansas, reports the creation of the "Friends of Alcove Spring" that will work with the Alcove Spring Preservation Association to support this historic trail site. Memberships range from \$10 for an individual. Those interested should contact Friends of Alcove Spring, Public Square, Blue Rapids, KS 66411.

## MUSEUM OF THE MOUNTAIN MAN OPENS 1996 SEASON IN PINEDALE

The Museum of the Mountain Man located in Pinedale, Wyoming, will open for its 1996 summer season May 1. The museum is open seven days a week from 10:00 A.M. to 6 P.M. daily until October 1, 1996.

The Museum presents a visual and interpretive experience of the romantic era of the Mountain Man and provides a comprehensive overview of the western fur trade's historical significance. Situated in the heart of the country that was once the hub of the Rocky Mountain Rendezvous system (six of the rendezvous were held at the Green River near present-day Pinedale, Wyoming), the museum stands as a monument to men such as Jim Bridger and Kit Carson who were responsible for the exploration of the American West.

Highlighting the summer events is the Green River Rendezvous Pageant, a historic recreation of the events of the fur trade era. The pageant will be presented on Saturday, July 13 at 12:30 P.M. A buffalo feast and free living history demonstration on the life of the nineteenth century Plains Indians are among the many events planned during the weekend celebration.

For more information on the Museum of the Mountain Man or the Green Rendezvous Pageant and activities, contact the Museum at 307-367-4101, Box 909, Pinedale, Wyoming 82941; FAX 307-367-6768.



In the January 1996 *News from the Plains*, I noted a reference to Joseph "Reddeford" Walker in Robby D. Gunstream's article, "Strange Vicissitudes of Fortune." This is yet another in the continued use of the name "Reddeford" as Joseph Walker's middle name, although there is ample evidence it is incorrect.

In the April 1994 issue, a picture showed the text of the historic sign placed at the Raft River by OCTA. Referring to the 1843 party that established the main route of the California Trail, the sign reads: "They were led by mountain man Joseph Reddeford Walker, who had taken the route in reverse when he returned from California in 1834."

For information about Walker's middle name, I refer you to Bill Gilbert's *Westering Man: The Life of Joseph Walker*, University of Oklahoma Press, 1983. Mr. Gilbert addresses the issue of Joseph Walker's middle name with a note on page 7. That note reads as follows:

Since shortly after his death in 1876, he has consistently been referred to in works of all degrees of scholarship as Joseph Reddeford Walker....it is not the right name. He was Joseph Rutherford, not Reddeford, Walker. It is a small, inconsequential error, but an illustrative one.

Walker always formally signed his name Joseph R. Walker. On page 299, Gilbert provides a lengthy explanation of how Walker's middle name came to be Reddeford, rather than Rutherford:

The evidence is overwhelming that the middle name was Rutherford, not Reddeford, as it appears in scores of histories published after his death. A famous Scottish ancestor was the Reverend Samuel Rutherford (see page 25). In America virtually every generation of the family has included some members who bear the given name Rutherford. During Walker's lifetime at least two boys, a nephew and the son of a Missouri neighbor (see page 186) were named for him, both as Joseph Rutherford. In January 1873 John McPhearson, a poet-journalist-pioneer, who had been well acquainted with the family since at least 1848 when he crossed the plains with two of Walker's nephews, published, under the pen name, Juanity, a series of sketches about the Walkers in the Oakland (California) *Transcript*. Three of these six articles were concerned with the adventures of Walker, whom McPhearson formally interviewed at the family ranch. McPhearson introduced his subject as Joseph Rutherford Walker (*Oakland Transcript*, January 15, 1873). As for how he became Reddeford, Walker died on October 27, 1876, at the ranch in Contra Costa county. A week later the *Contra Costa Gazette* (November 4, 1876) published an obituary in which the deceased was referred to as Joseph Reddeford Walker. Very likely the writer heard the name from a family member, then spelled phonetically and incorrectly. It would have been an easy error to make, for the Scotch-Irish, southern Appalachian drawl can be hard to understand.

Douglas Watson lists the obituary among his sources and gives Reddeford as the middle name of his subject. Having no other biographical source, subsequent writers followed Watson's lead. It is a good example of how hardy, once plant-

## Queries and Comments

ed, historical error can be. I am pleased to root out this one, but it is no reason for gloating.

The "Watson" to whom the author refers in the above note is Douglas Watson who wrote *The West Wind: The Life Story of Joseph Reddeford Walker*, published in 1934.

I suppose Bill Gilbert could be wrong but I have discussed this matter with OCTA member Earl Schmidt who has spent a lifetime studying the Walker family. He too, agrees that Joseph Walker's middle name was Rutherford and not Reddeford.

Joseph Rutherford Walker is buried in Alhambra Cemetery in Martinez, not far from my home. Before his death, Walker directed that his headstone should read:

BORN IN ROAN COUNTY, TENN—DEC 13, 1798  
EMIGRATED TO MO—1819  
TO NEW MEXICO—1820  
ROCKY MOUNTAINS—1832  
CALIFORNIA—1833  
CAMPED AT YOSEMITE—NOV 13 1833

Author Gilbert allows that perhaps Walker permitted himself to brag just a little in that last line. But, Gilbert says Walker, "did not add, as most would have, that he was the very first to see that marvelous valley of the Sierra which may still be the most wondrous one we have. There is a feeling that Walker presumed that anyone who had a sense of history would be able to imagine what it must have been like to camp at Yosemite in the fall of 1833. Therefore, people could form some notion of the kind of man he had been and what was important to him." Gilbert should, of course, have modified his statement to read that Walker was the very first *white* person to see Yosemite. As one who has stood on the edge of that "wondrous valley" many times, it does indeed convey the kind of man Joseph Walker was.

Roger L. Duba

San Rafael, California, Member CA-NV Chapter, OCTA

I stopped at Nebraska City on the way to St. Joseph and the OCTA Board Meeting and couldn't find the Old Fort Kearny blockhouse, which I've seen several times before. Asking at the site, I found it was torn down a couple of years ago due to bad dry rot. I'm sure our Nebraska members knew this, but it was a surprise to me. On my way home, I followed the trail through Kansas all the way to the Nebraska state line and found two new parks with Oregon Trail themes being built. The Oregon Trail Nature Park is just northeast of Belvue, Kansas. The second is west of Marysville, where US 36 crosses the Big Blue River. It has a replica of a ferry with interpretive plaques about the trail.

That's about all I know, but thought I would pass this info along for what it's worth.

Roger Blair



## THE READING TRAIL

by Lyndia Carter

One hundred fifty years ago this summer, the Donner party and others came west, crossing Utah and Nevada on the infamous Hastings Cutoff. In honor of the Donner party, David Lavender has written a wonderful new book. I'm sure that you will want to read this one. *Snowbound: The Tragic Story of the Donner Party* (New York: Holiday House, 1996) will hold you spellbound. Written especially for young people, this book tells one of emigration's most tragic stories in a way that will catch you up in the drama of this ill-fated journey. There is absolutely nothing boring about this book. Lavender is a fascinating author; his research is accurate, but he is a good story teller and he shows that true stories can be every bit as good as made-up ones. The story of the Donners, Reeds, Eddys, Breens, Graves and all the people traveling in that wagon company is one of the best stories imaginable, but it is true. Through the pages of this book, you will travel across the plains and watch them make the decisions that will lead them to disaster. You will struggle with them as they hack their way over the Wasatch Mountains of Utah, you will feel thirst and fatigue as they stagger across the waterless Great Salt Lake Desert, you will want to urge them to stop quarreling and start cooperating as they meet problems and frustrations along the Humboldt River in Nevada and you will want to help them over the pass through the Sierra Nevada before the snow closes it. You will suffer with the starving families in the camps at Alder Creek and Donner Lake and experience the desperation of those who left their loved ones to struggle through the snow to get to help. You will cheer William Eddy. The rescue of the stranded families is very interesting, too. You are going to like this well-illustrated book.

In keeping with the theme of 1846, *Torrie* by Annabel and Edgar Johnson (New York: Harper and Row Perennial Library, 1960) is an excellent novel about a fourteen-year-old girl who goes to California with her family in 1846. Fortunately, they did not take the Hastings Cutoff, but decided to follow the standard California Trail, after deciding that following Hastings would be a mistake. Torrie, like many young people, is having a difficult adolescence. Her parents can't do anything right and her brother is an absolute pain. She is furious when she is told the family is leaving their home in Missouri and

going to California; she even tries to run away so she won't have to go. That fails, so she decides to pout all the way. But things happen on the trail that cause Torrie to change and see things in a different light. Girls will enjoy her terrible crush, her finding of true love and the way she develops into a young woman that she genuinely likes to be. The trail is hard, but Torrie, with the help of a loving family and a special friend, finds the strength to make an unforgettable journey. This book, written many years ago, is quite timeless. It may be hard to find, so try several libraries—it is worth the search. It is not always historically accurate, but you get a good feel for overland history and the ever-present struggle of growing up.

This next book is not about trails and covered wagons and oxen, but it is about emigrants. *Across America on an Emigrant Train* by Jim Murphy (New York: Clarion Books, 1993) is one of my favorite non-fiction books for

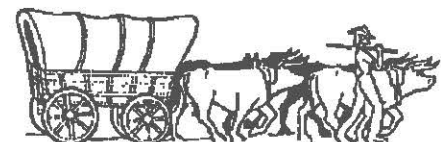
young people. As the railroads pushed west, more and more emigrants took the trains as far as they could before switching to covered

wagons. After 1869, rails spanned the nation and emigrants could cross the country in trains and only had to depend on wagons to get where railroads had not yet been built. Emigrant travel by train may have shortened the time to travel west, but as you will find it was still a great adventure filled with many discomforts. The book is loaded with illustrations and old photographs. You will learn how the railroad was built across the country—the part on crossing the Sierra Nevada Mountains is really great—and what it was like to travel by train in crowded cars, to have meal stops, to pass through railroad towns and to meet people from not only America but from foreign countries who had come to the West to begin a new life. You will read about buffalo hunts from the train cars. One person you may recognize traveling west on the emigrant train is Robert Louis Stevenson, who wrote the classic *Treasure Island*. Using very interesting details, Jim Murphy allows us to journey with the emigrants to the west by rail.

Have fun on the reading trail,

—Mrs. C.

## Buffalo Chips





### CLASSROOM OF THE QUARTER

*This issue salutes Janet Krakauer's fifth graders at the Duke Middle School, 3716 Old Erwin Rd, Durham, NC 27705. She writes: I have enjoyed the Buffalo Chips page in News from the Plains. Even though North Carolina is a long way from the wide open spaces of the West, our unit on the westward movement and the "Wild" West is one of the children's favorites.*

I begin by reading aloud Henry Martyn Pomeroy's journal of his trip from Nebraska to California in 1859. Henry was my great-great-uncle, and I think that helps the kids feel as if they are seeing the trail through the eyes of a real person. We mark on a map the landmarks and camping spots that are mentioned in the journal. This year, I also used *Overland Journal* articles to plot the elevation of landmarks along the trail. This gave us a nice profile of Henry's journey. To help the children visualize what the landscape of the western states looks like, we show a couple of videos, *The Oregon Trail* and *The Wind Rocks the Wagon*. When Henry reached Fort Laramie, he mailed letters home. I had the children pretend they were also writing to their families at home. Their "post cards" from the trail, indicated that they had picked up a lot of details of the overland journey.

We do many other activities to give the children first-hand experiences that connect them to the West. We learned about horses and used one of our art periods to draw live horses at the farm owned by one of our families. We also tried our hands at panning for gold. At first, the children didn't believe that I could mix my flakes of gold with sand and find them again. However, we found that with a little practice, we could separate the gold from sand. The children enjoy using their knowledge of the trail when playing "Oregon Trail" and "Gold Rush" on our computers.

Another aspect of our unit is learning about some of the colorful and courageous characters of the Old West. The children choose characters to research and then presented a short monologue in the role of their character. The presentations are a part of our "western shindig" night to which we invite the children's parents. The evening features a pot luck supper of western foods. I usually manage to locate some real buffalo burger and this year I made a buffalo-shaped meat loaf for the supper. The evening ends with a sing along of western songs and some dancing. This year, the Spanish teachers taught the children a dance from northern Mexico. In all, we learn a lot and have fun doing it.

I'm sending a couple of pages from our school newspaper that gives a "kids-eye-view" of our western unit. This year, a number of the kids have gotten intrigued with cutting silhouettes. I hope you can use some of this for Buffalo Chips.

—Janet Krakauer



### HENRY'S JOURNAL

by Elizabeth Williams, Anna Stagg, Paul French  
and Jenny Halperin

"Today the going has been hard, the oxen have tender feet, and the going is very slow..."

Do you know what it's like to travel west to Oregon? We learned about many of the hardships and experiences that pioneers faced as they as they forced themselves onward into the Wild West. We read aloud a journal written by Henry Pomeroy, Janet's great-great-uncle. He left an eye-witness account of his trip from Nebraska to California. Henry started his journey with a lot of hope and faith in the Gold Rush time. His journey began in 1859 towards the end of the Gold Rush. In his journal he lists the number of miles that he traveled each day, making it so that we can keep a map of his travels. He traveled along the Oregon Trail speaking of the highlights of his trip. The most interesting sights included Chimney Rock and the interesting and intriguing Platte River. We soon had become quite involved in Henry's travel through the West. After about six months Henry finally reached Placerville, California. He had taken with him few foods, and he was glad to get fresh meat. He had finally reached his goal of traveling west. In conclusion, we have enjoyed Henry's Journal throughout his travels. It gives us an idea of how the Westward Movement changed our lives today.



Pioneers by Kelly



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## WHAT'S NEW IN THE *News*?

- ☞ There's more to Elko than trails and this issue showcases some of the attractions available at this year's annual convention. Page 1, 5, 6, 10.
- ☞ Greg Franzwa celebrates Merrill Mattes. Page 3.
- ☞ Fulkerson grave correctly identified and marked. Page 4.
- ☞ "The Strange Vicissitudes of Fortune" take Robby Gunstream and Brewster to Sutter's Fort. Page 7.
- ☞ OCTA welcomes its newest chapter, Kanza, from the plains of Kansas. Page 11.
- ☞ Announcements describe what's up. Page 16.
- ☞ Comments and Queries—letters to the Editor. Page 17.
- ☞ Lyndia Carter is back on the Reading Trail. Page 18.
- ☞ Buffalo Chips Rides Again! Page 19.

## LATE BREAKING NEWS

*News from the Plains* editor Will Bagley will speak at the Presidio Chapel in San Francisco on July 31 at 7:30 as part of the sesquicentennial celebration of the arrival of the ship *Brooklyn* at Yerba Buena.

Bagley will discuss Sam Brannan's role in the conquest of California, while local expert Lorin Hansen will describe the adventures of the *Brooklyn* pioneers.