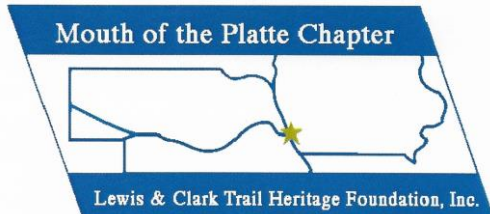


# Mouth of the Platte Chapter Newsletter

Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation

*"Keepers of the Story~Stewards of the Trail"*

November 2023 Edition



Dear Mouth of the Platte Members and Friends,

My thanks to Paula Imes and Harlan Seyfer for continuing to serve as directors-at-large on your Board of Directors and to those who continue to serve as your Board of Directors officers - Ann Woolard as Secretary, Keith Bystrom as Vice President, and Jim Christiansen as Treasurer. These people meet for several hours every month to assess what is happening with Mouth of the Platte and to plan monthly meetings and other MOP activities. Please thank them for this special service.

In that regard, the Board spent quite a bit of time at its November 7 meeting discussing MOP's future. As reported elsewhere in this newsletter, MOP is involved in several projects to restore Lewis and Clark sites in our area. Harlan and Keith, along with Caitlin Campbell and Karla Sigala of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail staff of the National Park Service, have many hours invested in restoring the seven Interpretive Wayside Exhibits. Harlan, Keith, and Jim have lots of hours in tracking the disposal of artifacts from the closed Western Historic Trails Center in Council Bluffs. Keith has also initiated contacts regarding the Sculpture Icons installed with MOP's involvement during the Bicentennial Commemoration – especially the one at Lewis and Clark Landing in downtown Omaha. Ann coordinates MOP's involvement in Butch Bouvier's annual *A Walk through Time* program, lots of other stuff, and untold hours on our newsletter. Lots going on here.

On a mixed note, the October dinner meeting at Pizza King was a great time of reflection on MOP's origins. Darrell and Joann Draper participated with great memories of our early years – including their infamous canoe trip on the Mighty Missouri with Della Bauer and Frank Taylor. John and Jill Lokke shared some previously unknown experiences with Kira Gale that again pointed out Kira's dedication to area history and the Lewis and Clark Expedition impact in this area. The disappointment was the attendance – there were just seven voting members present! That is what triggered the Board's discussion on the future of our monthly meetings.

In those discussions, the Board started an assessment of our monthly dinner/lunch meetings. We are transitioning to lunch meetings on the third Tuesday for November through March. Concerns about attendance were expressed. Program selection, venue selection, and meal options were all discussed. The Board seeks your input on this essential part of our relationship with members. Ann lists Board contact information in this newsletter, so please let your Board members know your ideas, concerns, and other guidance on this issue.

Your Board is proceeding on!

Sincerely yours,  
Don Shippy, MOP President

shippydv@msn.com

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DISCLAIMER: The opinions, information, and views expressed in this Newsletter are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Editor, Mouth of the Platte Chapter, or the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation.

Lewis and Clark cast aside their indecision and left Fort Clatsop on March 23 (five months before Study Group left it), and it has taken us three months to cover the same distance the Corps covered in one. We have not been dawdling just to “smell the roses.” Serious ethnographic study along the Columbia River has exposed us to many tribes and their practices. Notable among those practices have been the differences in burial customs (Cathlahmah scaffold the dead in canoes vs Willacum pile bodies in sepulchers), in manner (very friendly vs wishing “to murder us at any moment”), in dress (fully clothed vs wearing only a breech cloth), in generosity, in home construction (75-yard longhouses vs pits eight feet deep), in language (intelligible with the little Clatsop the crew had learned vs “a kind of conversation by signs”), in cleanliness, in hospitality, in respect for property, in hair styles, in resources, and in fortune -- smallpox and sore eyes hit some tribes harder than others.

At Fort Clatsop we enjoyed three meals per day. Now we’re sometimes sharing the Indians’ “poor pounded fish.” Many Indians are coming down the river, half-starved, bearing tales of privation from farther upriver. We’re uneasy about having enough food as we move forward into the mountains. Finally, the salmon appear and we observe a first salmon ceremony gift of fish to the children.

By the end of March, the mosquitoes that were mercifully absent during the winter have returned with a vengeance.

We’re trying to buy horses, but the Indians are reluctant to sell, even though “This is the Great Mart of this Country.” (Moulton, Vol. 7, p. 129) Prices are “emence”, and sometimes, when we do buy, the Natives creep around at night and set the horses free. We’re worried we won’t reach the Nez Percé before they leave their wintering ground and take our horses with them.

Theft has driven Captain Lewis to distraction. Gass records: “While we were making preparations to start, an Indian stole some iron articles from among the men's hands; which so irritated Captain Lewis, that he struck him; which was the first act of the kind, that had happened during the expedition.” (Vol. 10, p. 213) Lewis reaches such a fury that he threatens to fight, shoot, and kill the Indians and/or burn their houses. The men chose to sleep without a fire one night, so as not to attract Indian thieves (Vol. 10, p. 214). Even Clark admits to stooping below himself: “I used every artifice decent & even false statements to induce those pore devils to sell me horses.” (Vol. 7, p. 147)

In addition, there’s now no wood. Clark observes that, in one village, the Natives “Set in their huts...without any fire....I am half frozed at this inhospitable village.” (Vol. 7, p. 147) At one point, the men are so desperate for wood to make fires that they buy the Natives’ fishing poles to use as firewood, then burn all the wood remaining on a cold morning out of spite for the “villains”. Clark suffers from loss of sleep due to the mice and vermin.

Clearly, our gentle Captains are stressed. Nevertheless, the Captains continue their scientific studies of birds, trees, plants, insects, reptiles, and amphibians, as well as the geography through which they are passing. Even Gass waxes poetic about snakes “as numerous as blades of grass” (Vol. 10, p. 203). While Lewis is camped on Quicksand River, Captain Clark backtracks to explore the Multnomah River. They ask the Natives to draw them maps, which usually happens in the sand, with mountains represented as little sand piles. Study Group’s field trip to Ponca State Park to see the LCTHF maps exhibit (see article, page 4) helped us grasp the difficulties the whites faced in understanding the Natives’ culturally different map styles.

One interesting ethnographic topic dealt with two gambling games played by the Natives, one somewhat resembling “Button, Button, Who has the Button?”, played with bits of bone, and the other played with black and white sticks under a “trencher”, a game that was so complicated the Captains could explain it only superficially. After reading about one tribe [*Skad-datts*] badgering another [*Skillutes*] to play and being roundly trounced, causing them to forfeit all their goods, Study Group decided that gambling addiction is not a respecter of ethnographic boundaries. 4

An interesting reversal in the Corps’ trading activity is that they are now giving hides, skins, pelts, and canoes in exchange for beads, wealth which will be easier to carry back over the mountains. In the main, the few horses they are finally able to procure are laden with gear. The only person consistently riding is Bratton, who is so enfeebled by back pain that he can’t walk or work.

On that ominous note, I leave you, literally, on a cliff-hanger, waiting for the next installment in February 2024! -ADW

### **Supplement to Study Group Notes: Study Group’s Day Off *Reimagining America* Field Trip to Ponca State Park September 27, 2023**



Jim, Paula, Keith, Ginny, Tom, Don, Steve, Ann

Ferris Bueller has nothing over on Study Group. On Wednesday, September 27, we took a day off our sedate reading schedule to load up Steve Wymore’s van and head for Ponca State Park to view the LCTHF *Reimagining America* maps exhibit. Six of the party embarked from Our Savior’s Lutheran Church in Council Bluffs, two from La Vista, and one from Norfolk, motoring for over 90 minutes toward the rustic Visitor’s Center nestled in the woods over the Ponca bend of the Missouri River.

Ann arrived a few minutes in advance of the party and enquired about the map display. She was greeted with blank stares and a cautious reply: “What maps?” All of a sudden the camera focus dissolved, and Ann was Meriwether Lewis in 1805, meeting the Shoshone near Three Forks. “Please believe me! There are seven more people coming up the river and, when they arrive, they expect to see maps!!” Unbeknownst to Study Group, Ponca State Park had had a huge event over the previous



weekend (6,500 visitors), and the maps were occupying space needed for warm bodies. Staff had rolled them back into their travel cases and stowed them securely out of harm's way.

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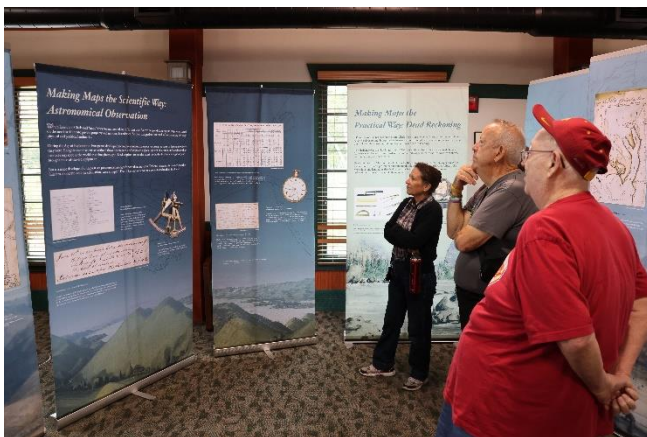
Phone calls reassured reception staff that Study Group was, indeed, on its way, so they scurried around, located the maps, and got them all unrolled just as the remainder of the party arrived. It didn't seem to occur to them to ask "Meriwether" to change clothes with either of the ladies, in case anyone in Study Group was hostile!



Lewis and Clark Meeting the Shoshone

Minus an organizing document, park staff had no way to put the maps in order. William Clark (Keith) Bystrom was a stabilizing influence, as usual; instead of a peacepipe tomahawk, he drew out an Internet-connected smartphone and pulled up a document specifying the maps' proper order. Crisis averted!

The rest of the outing went off without a hitch. We gathered around each map, by turns, and read the text aloud. Individual insights and group discussion poured forth as we examined the documents. This group brings together in one place – wherever we meet – a wealth of personal experience and, literally, thousands of man-hours of individual research. This joint reading was inspirational.



Making Maps the Scientific Way: Ann, Tom, & Jim

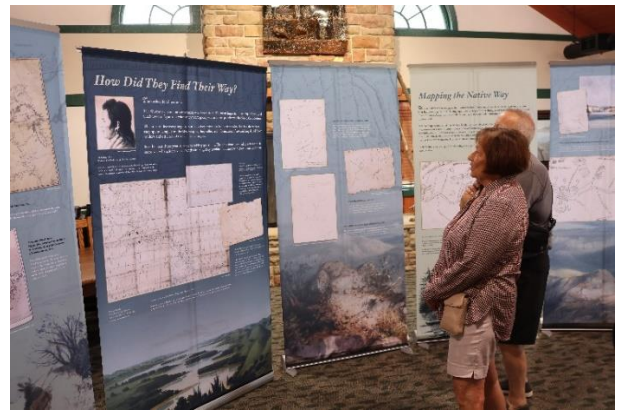


Making Maps the Practical Way: Ann & Ginny





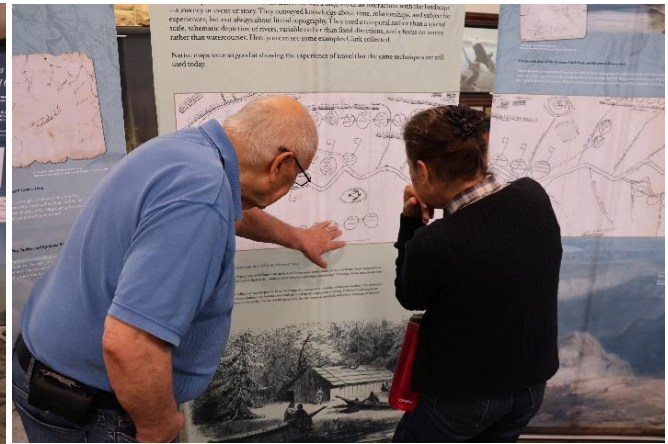
Paula & Steve: Crossing the Rockies



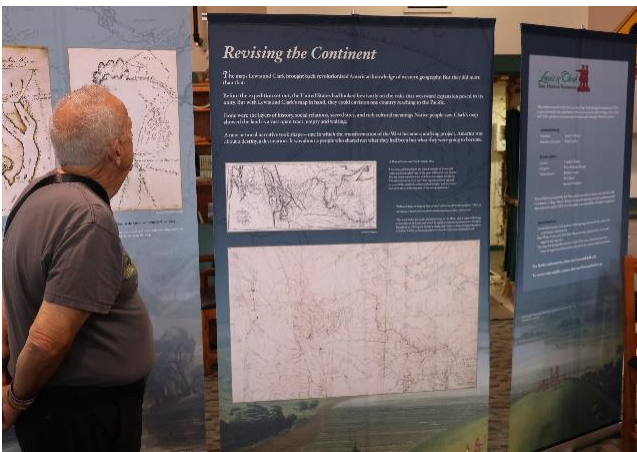
Ginny and Tom: How did they find their way?



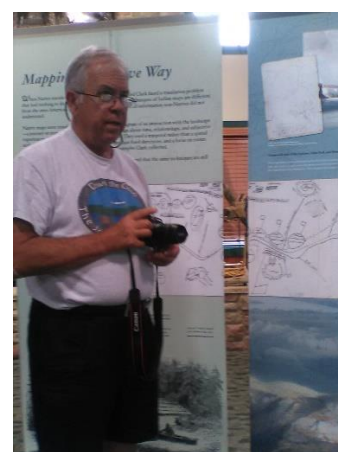
Ginny & Tom: Mapping the Native way



Don & Ann: Mapping by relationships



Tom: Revising the Continent



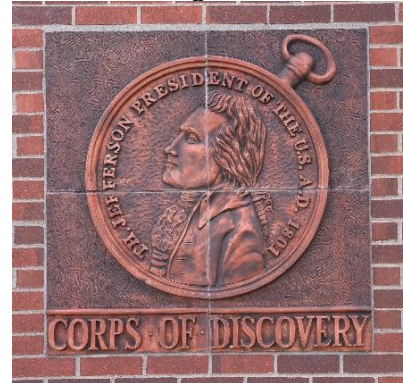
Keith: Proceeding On!



Floor Medallion at Ponca Lodge



Outdoor Nebraska Turkey!



Presidential Medal at I-29 Rest Stop



After we finished the stated purpose of our trip, we adjourned to a lovely little restaurant in the mini-metropolis of Ponca, Nebraska. I don't remember what anyone else ordered from the menu, but Don and I shared a mouth-watering bison burger. You'll just have to make the trip and try it yourself!

### Sioux City I-29 Rest Stop



Sacagawea and Pomp



Men with Pirogue

Deciding to forego the local ice cream, the majority of the party headed back downriver by way of the Lewis and Clark Rest Stop on I-29 near Sioux City, Iowa. The medal above is set into an exterior wall.

Ann lingered in the park to enjoy basking in the sun by the Missouri River and peeking through leaves at the flora and fauna on the Lewis and Clark hiking trail.



Missouri River at Ponca State Park



Hike up for a view of the river

What a great day! Nebraska's share of the Lewis and Clark Trail is an important part of *The Good Life* in our great state. As a favorite bumper sticker says, "The Good Life is Outdoors!" -ADW

**Dinner Speakers: September – November 2023**  
**September 19 (Washington County Museum): Nolan Johnson**

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Topic: *Fort Atkinson Archeology*

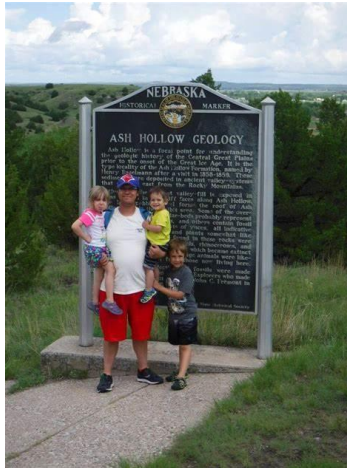
Archeologist Nolan Johnson's business card looks like an historical marker that any modern traveler might spy along some scenic Nebraska byway...the kind that beckons passers-by to pause and reflect on people and events that shaped the landscape we now inhabit. Nolan's live presentation was well worth that pause.



Mike Sweeney

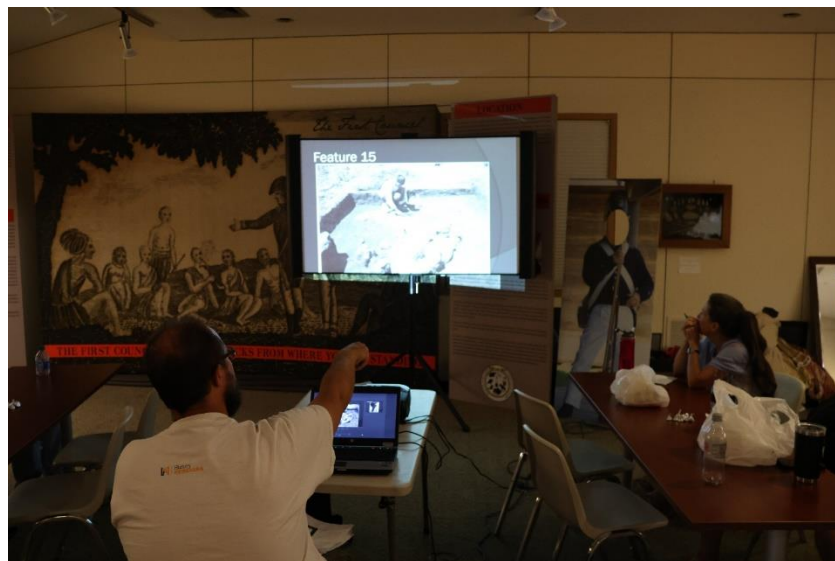


Nolan Johnson and Family



Harlan Seyfer

The evening began with MOP's open access to Washington County Museum's curated displays, graciously made possible by Director Julie Ashton. After members had examined the artifacts and photos, we gathered in the Lewis and Clark room to enjoy a brown-bag meal. As usual, Keith read the *Journals* for September 19, 1803-1806, then Nolan lit up the projection screen with photos of archeological "features" collected and/or recorded at Nebraska's Fort Atkinson.



Archeologist Nolan Johnson worked the Ft. Atkinson dig.

It came as some surprise that "our" Fort Atkinson is the best reconstruction of seven U.S. forts by that name. Nebraska's fort was conceived as part of the Yellowstone Expedition, undertaken to protect the U.S. fur trade from the British. The fort was begun in 1819 as Cantonment Missouri at the base of the

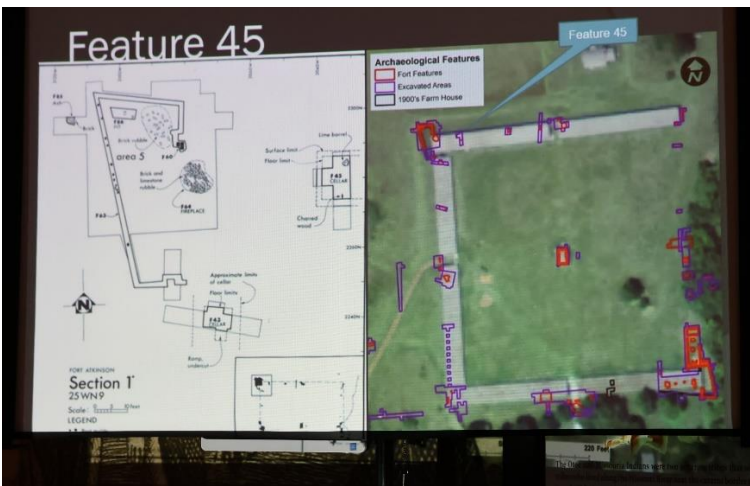


bluffs overlooking the Missouri River. Spring flooding and disease (over 160 soldiers died) in early 1820 rendered that location untenable, so the military removed from the riverbank to the bluff above. 9

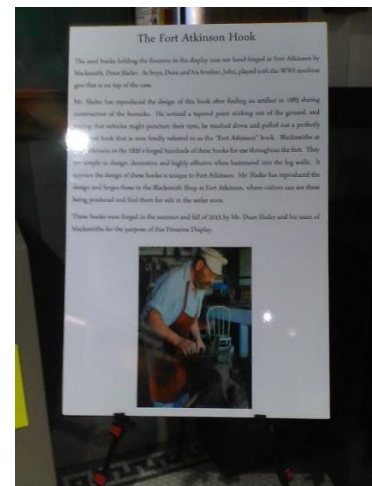


In 1782 the great Presidential Seal with the American Bald Eagle was created. It was soon engraved on many military items and painted in the canton (blue field) of some American flags. Congress never made this flag pattern official, but it was documented as being used many times by U.S. military entities. The official Flag Act of 1794 specified 15 stars and 15 stripes. Two new states entered the union by 1804, but no updated flag act caused them to be represented. President Jefferson directed Lewis to inform the natives how large the new United States was. Lewis repeated 13 times, in every speech to every tribe with which they counseled, "President Jefferson is the great chief of the 17 great nations of America." Why give the Natives a 15-star flag if Lewis emphasized "17 nations"? At some point, the War Department, forerunner of today's Department of Indian Affairs, adopted this American Eagle flag pattern as the flag to give tribal leaders; it became known as the *Indian Presentation Flag* or *Indian Peace Flag*. While the flag pattern carried by Lewis and Clark is not definitely known, archival research indicates that the 17-star Eagle American Flag is likely one Lewis and Clark gave to the Otoe/Missouria on August 3, 1804. The fact that the Eagle Flag was still requested by some government entities past the mid-1800s supports this idea.

Evelyn Orr (2016)



Map locating Feature 45 on the fort grounds



Dean Slader makes Ft. Atkinson hooks (see photo, p. 24)

Initially occupied by more than 1,000 soldiers, the fort was comprised of a barracks quadrangle and log palisade having two bastions, four gates, and two sally ports, the east one of which was a tunnel with a clay floor under the east barracks. The two-foot-thick walls of the powder magazine in the center of the quadrangle were so solidly constructed that they were still standing into the 1850s. 10

Many buildings outside the quadrangle supplied the needs of the fort and its more than 500 acres of farmland: saw mill, grist mill, dairy, distillery, Council House, officers' quarters, sutler store, armorers' shop, several forges, civilian housing, ice house, springhouse, lime kiln, brick kiln, and barns for chickens, dairy cows, beef cattle, and hogs. Though the fort was never attacked before it was abandoned in 1827, wood doesn't last long, and some of the buildings may have burned later. Certainly, fort remnants were disturbed by farming during about a century of private ownership.

Multiple excavations have been conducted by the Nebraska State Historical Society since the 1950s. Some of the cellars under the barracks were examined. Most fireplaces had H-shaped limestone bases, so they could serve two rooms, and their superstructures collapsed, leaving piles of hand-made bricks. Other discoveries include brick sidewalks, both outside the fort and around the perimeter of the interior parade grounds; stains on the pale soil, showing where wooden posts supporting some buildings had rotted; and a foundation trench that was used to help hold up the bastion logs.

Nebraska State Historical Society archeologists used geophysical equipment to run electricity through the ground to locate stone foundations. At the southwest corner of the quadrangle, they discovered a unique structure with a rubble foundation, a brick fireplace in the middle of a room, and the only brick-lined cellar at the fort. At the northwest corner, they discovered a privy inside the bastion, and hinges and latches showed the presence of a canon port.

Other artifacts included nails (furniture, flooring, and framing), a pocket knife, a door handle, a blue wine bottle, a clay smoking pipe stem, artillery, musket balls, rifle parts, bullets, jewelry, glass beads, lots of fragments of ceramics in many colors, some even quite fancy, and loads of buttons. Julie Ashton shed some light on this last item. She said museum staff had counted up to 70 buttons on one single military uniform of the period. With over 1,000 men in uniform, she figures there might have been over 70,000 buttons in the fully staffed fort!



Archeologist Nolan Johnson



Counting the uniform buttons



Faith Norwood & Julie Ashton

This meeting was a memorable event that just happened to coincide with Keith's birthday, and it was made even more festive by a variety of cookies, supplied by the Washington County Museum Guild (Thank you, ladies!), and a generous dollop of Tillamook ice cream to go with them, provided by the celebrant, himself. Thanks, Keith! Special guest, Marilyn Hawes, does re-enactments at the fort: see p. 30. Thanks, Nolan, for an evening of fascinating information! (nolan.johnson@nebraska.gov) -ADW



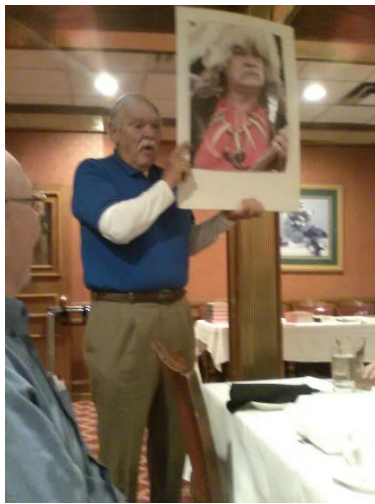
*Topic: Kira Gale and Memories of Mouth of the Platte Chapter Early Years*

My Dad used to say that we all “drag a long tail behind us,” meaning that our deeds and reputations define us long after we have passed. MOP members certainly attested to that at our 2023 Annual Meeting.

The name on everyone’s lips tonight was *Kira Gale*, co-founder of Mouth of the Platte Chapter and “force of nature” by acclamation. Not everyone present had met her, but the following stories shared by attendees brought us all smiles and gave us shared memories, going forward.



Jim Barr



Darrel Draper



Kira Gale



Chet and Sara Worm

**Darrel and Joann Draper:** In 1954, on the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, Darrel was a 6-year-old living on the Weeping Water Creek. Some angel of his childhood pointed out to him that, as governor of the Louisiana Territory, Meriwether Lewis would have technically been the first governor of the incipient State of Nebraska. Darrel, as an impressionable youth, no doubt re-enacted the exploits of the Corps of Discovery on his own creek and at some point made the decision to follow the Captains into a life of military service. Stationed at Stratcom in 1993, Darrel honored a request from his 4<sup>th</sup> grade daughter at Ft. Crook School: a 1-hour presentation on fur trader and Bellevue notable, Peter Sarpy. Once that happened, the cat – or should I say Prairie Dog? – was out of the bag. His repeat performances grew in size and scope until he found himself as a presenter at Fontenelle Forest with Kira Gale in the audience.

In December 2000, Darrel received a phone call from Kira, to the effect that covering Nebraska History “adequately” for the class she was teaching at Metropolitan Community College involved Darrel, who, at that time, was performing re-enactments of J. Sterling Morton for *Humanities Nebraska*. Would he please join her? He did. Four months later, in March of 2001, Kira decided they should team up to form a local chapter of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation. So, team up they did: two years of MOP with Kira as President and Darrel as Vice President. His experience filled in the gaps in Kira’s vast knowledge database: his 1,000 miles of river navigation on the Missouri River and a lifetime of exposure to the military. Is it possible that Kira furthered Darrel’s 2002 decision to re-enact Expedition member George Drouillard? Let’s just go with that supposition.

Around that time, Darrel organized a 2-day canoe trip down the Missouri River in early July. MOP members Della Bauer and Frank Taylor signed onto this trip with Darrel and his wife, Joann. Imagine Della’s surprise on early arising after their first cold night camped on the river to see “NO WATER!” The river had completely vanished overnight! Darrel reassured her that Fort Randall Dam would eventually turn the water back on! (Della categorically denies this!) The rest of that story involved cold wind, wool sweaters, facetious accusations of attempted murder, and shots of brandy, all performed to the refrain, “Lewis and Clark had a lot worse conditions than this, and they didn’t complain!!”



Jim Christiansen



John and Jill Lokke



Steve Wymore

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**John Lokke:** In the 1970s, youthful John was in the habit of searching the crevices of a north Omaha rock quarry for his passion – snakes – and eventually began to record in watercolor paint the landscapes to which his herpetological forays had exposed him – the same hills painted by Bodmer 160 years prior. One “*f a s*” January day in 1998 (f a s = fair after snow), John needed art supplies for a UNO class and found himself in the checkout line at Blick’s Art Store, 78<sup>th</sup> and Dodge, in Omaha behind none other than Kira Gale. Casual notice of the Samuel Seymour drawings in Kira’s hand led to an hour’s intense conversation regarding the Long Expedition. John says it was 85% Kira, 15% him: “I pulled my finger from the dike!!” and her words flowed! A lifelong friendship was born! Kira came to his art shows and invited him to eat dinner at her home. He remembers her “basement stacked to Pentagon perfection” with books of history. They were both involved with the downtown Omaha History Center and together visited the Western Historic Trails Center in Council Bluffs more than once. “She pushed me along – More! More!” he says. Even after John married Jill and they relocated to Wichita, Kansas, he had occasion to see Kira at least annually. In 2003, Kira contacted him with the exciting news that the Engineer Cantonment had been found. Their friendship had come full circle, and the Cantonment, as it happened, was located exactly where John’s herpetological passions found their youthful satisfaction: the rock quarry north of Omaha! He had started out on the same ground as Say, doing exactly what Say had been doing! (You can’t make this stuff up!)

**Jim Barr:** Jim worked with Congressman Bereuter in the 1970s to accomplish three historic honors related to Lewis and Clark: the 1971 official designation of the Lewis and Clark Trail, the commissioning of Meriwether Lewis as an Army Engineer, and the much-belated commissioning of William Clark as an Army Captain. Jim first met Kira in the late 1980s when his daughter was planning a trip to Germany. Kira provided information about Germany for the trip.

**Chet and Sara Worm:** Chet worked for the Army Corps of Engineers. After retirement, he met Kira through her non-credit class at Metro Tech. He remembers that there were six or seven people at the first Lewis and Clark Study Group meeting, which preceded the chartering of Mouth of the Platte Chapter. He accompanied Kira and others on a Lewis and Clark-themed bus trip to St. Louis. (I was glad to finally meet Chet and Sarah: for over two years, I’d been hearing of the Styrofoam cooler Chet bought to smuggle into his house the 20 history books he bought on that trip!)

**Ava Hastert:** Ava sent an e-mail of her memories of Kira and the early days of MOP. Don read it aloud.

**Don Shippy:** Don made a photocopy for each of us of a written history of the early months of Study Group and the founding of the Mouth of the Platte Chapter.

**Mary Jo Havlicek:** Mary Jo remembers the first Mouth of the Platte Chapter meeting in February 2003, a meeting of 83 people at Caniglia’s Restaurant, a walk-on bus tour of Fort Atkinson, Saturday convoys to Omaha’s historic places, and the building of Biddle the Bear. Kira was an integral part of all.



**Jim Christiansen:** Jim remembers lots, but one memory that stands out is a rainy field trip to Homestead National Monument in Beatrice. Kira persuaded him to drive down a muddy, slippery hill, and then began to wonder how they would ever get out of the predicament in which they found themselves! 13

Darrel humorously summed up the evening: “Kira had a knack of leading people into things!” And all who knew her agreed. Kira left a long tail. Where would we be now without this modern-day forceful Pied Piper? Thank you, everyone, for sharing your memories. -ADW

**Minutes of the Mouth of the Platte Chapter Annual Meeting  
October 17, 2023  
Pizza King, 1101 North Broadway, Council Bluffs, Iowa**

President Don Shippy called the meeting to order. We had a quorum. Printed copies of Secretary’s and Treasurer’s Reports were distributed to members. The Secretary’s Report was accepted as presented. Jim’s comment on his Treasurer’s Report was, “We ended the year a lot better than we started it.” Checking: \$2,564.31. Savings: \$2,880.92. LCTHF Grants: \$5,753.48.  
**Motion to approve the Treasurer’s Report: Steve Wymore. Second: Mary Jo Havlicek. Motion carried.**

The MOP Board functioned as the election nominating committee and provided a slate of names of people willing to serve on the Board and as officers: President – Don Shippy; Vice President – Keith Bystrom; Secretary – Ann Woolard; Treasurer – Jim Christiansen; Board Members at Large – Harlan Seyfer and Paula Imes.  
**Motion to elect by ballot of acclamation: Ann Woolard. Second: Steve Wymore. Motion carried.**

The next MOP dinner meeting will be November 21 at 11: 30 a.m. Location and speaker TBD. The Annual Meeting was adjourned. The newly elected Board met briefly afterwards to confirm our next Board meeting as 6 p.m. November 7 at Harmony Court. Bring your own meal.

Respectfully submitted by Ann Dunlap Woolard

**Daniel D. Tompkins  
(1774-1825)**

During the early 1800s, Meriwether Lewis wasn’t alone in being falsely accused of financial wrongdoing. Daniel D. Tompkins was born in Scarsdale, N.Y. He served as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of New York from 1804 to 1807. He was Governor of New York from 1807 to 1817. He favored the War of 1812. As Commander of the state militia, he defended New York from the British. During his trying governorship, he was handicapped by inadequate accounting methods. Throughout most of the rest of his life, Tompkins fought rumors that he had misappropriated funds entrusted to him as wartime governor. From 1817 to 1825, he served as Vice-President of the United States under President James Monroe. The false charges of gubernatorial financial misconduct affected him as Vice-President. He became despondent during his vice-presidency, left Washington for long periods, and wasted his energies defending his character against his critics.  
Politics is a rough business.  
(*The World Book Encyclopedia*, Volume T, 1970, page 254)

**November 15 (Council Bluffs Pizza King): Keith Bystrom and Jim Christiansen**  
*Topic: Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation 2023 Annual Meeting (See August Newsletter)*



On November 8, Keith Bystrom met with Dennis Bryers to discuss Riverfront signage.

## MOP Board Meeting Minutes Summary

September 5, October 3, and November 7, 2023

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**Treasurer's Report:** Checking: \$2,615.28. Savings: \$2,880.92. LCTHF Grants (2) for Interpretive Wayside Exhibits: \$5,753.48. We owe Hopewell, Mfg. \$1,675 for exhibit bases. We are waiting on an invoice.

**Membership Report:** Northern Plains Region currently has 110 members. Attendance at August, September, and October MOP dinner meetings was quite low. The Board welcomes your suggestions for attracting new members.

**Past Dinner Meetings:** September 19: 6:00 p.m. at Washington County Historical Museum. Program: Archeologist Nolan Johnson on *Ft. Atkinson Archeology*. Power Point presentation of features uncovered during Nebraska State Historical Society archeological digs (see page 8). Desserts provided by WCHM Guild.

October 17: 6:00 p.m. at Council Bluffs Pizza King. MOP Annual Business Meeting. Program: *Mouth of the the Platte History*. Darrel & Joanne Draper, John & Jill Lokke, Chet & Sara Worm, Jim Barr, Mary Jo Havlicek, Don Shippy, and Jim Christiansen all shared wonderful memories. Board Election: Don Shippy, President; Keith Bystrom, Vice President; Jim Christiansen, Treasurer; Ann Woolard, Secretary; Harlan Seyfer and Paul Imes, Members-at-large. Sale of Kira Gale's books yielded \$85.

November 21: 11:30 a.m. at Harmony Court, Council Bluffs. Program: *2023 LCTHF Annual Meeting* in Great Falls, Montana by Keith Bystrom and Jim Christiansen.

**Field Trip:** September 27: Eight MOP members drove to Ponca State Park to view LCTHF travelling maps exhibit *Reimagining America*, lunched in Ponca, and visited Sioux City I-29 Lewis & Clark-themed Rest Stop on return trip.

**Future Dinner Meetings:** December 19: 11:30 a.m. at Harmony Court, Third Floor, in Council Bluffs. Program: *Volunteer Duty at Fort Clatsop* by re-enactor Doug Packard. Arranged by Steve Wymore. Doug spends half his year in the Omaha area and the other half at Fort Clatsop in Oregon.

Appropriate venues for January 16, February 20 and March 19 lunch meetings will be chosen according to the program audio-visual needs. All meetings at 11:30 a.m. We return to evening meetings on April 16 at 6 p.m.

Sometime after January 1, Jean-Claude Overstreet will come to a meeting to re-enact a French-Canadian boatman.

**Lewis and Clark Interpretive Wayside Exhibits:** All bases have been fabricated and delivered to Harlan Seyfer.

Pelican Point (Decatur, NE): Has been erected. (see picture, page 38)

Our Wish to Cultivate Friendship (Two Rivers State Park): Has been erected. We need a photo of it.

Crossing the Mouth of the Platte (Plattsmouth, NE): Panel finished. It has a base and frame. Del Hervey of CCHS will supervise erecting it in late November.

To Make Our Party Comfortable: Design complete. Panel fabrication not yet ordered.

Hunter, Watchdog, Faithful Friend (MRBVC): Old Seaman panel inaccurate. New panel will be designed with new art and text. This work has been delayed by Caitlin Campbell's job change. Waiting for NPS to hire her replacement.

A Great Number of Wolves (Bellevue Bike Trail): Old panel to be discarded. New panel by Big Muddy Workshop.

**Relationships:** Cass County Historical Society: Fund-raising drive for new facilities. Erection of sign pending.

Missouri River Basin Lewis & Clark Visitor Center: September 28 fund-raising dinner netted over \$14,000.

National Park Service Headquarters: Keith Bystrom & Karla Sigala are exploring signage options at L&C Landing.

Omaha Parks and Recreation: Keith & Ann met with Dennis Bryers at L&C Landing to discuss signage cooperation.

Sioux City Lewis and Clark Center: No news. (See page 40.)

Western Historic Trails Center: Harlan, Keith, & Ann are working to discover who makes decisions regarding WHTC.

**Study Group:** Attendance at weekly meetings usually about 10 people. We decided to split our meeting dates between two venues: 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Council Bluffs, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays at Sterling Ridge Retirement Community in Omaha. (see article, page 3)

**Northern Plains Report:** Keith & Ann attended SFTS Fall Meeting on October 1. (see article, page 15)

**LCTHF Board:** Executive Director search under way.

**Newsletter:** Next issue: February 2024. Submissions deadline: February 10, 2024.



**Sergeant Floyd Tri-State Fall Meeting**  
**Nebraska Indian Community College Campus**  
**1111 Highway 75**  
**Macy, Nebraska**  
**October 1, 2023**

15

Someone once said that the Lewis and Clark Expedition was as monumental and far-reaching as mankind taking its first trip to the moon in 1969: both missions intended to discover “what’s out there.” Recently I realized there are other ways we could compare events of a bygone era with modern space exploration. I was put in mind of this at the SFTS Fall Meeting by listening to guest speaker Wynema Morris. Wynema is a governing Board member and full-time instructor at the Nebraska Indian Community College in Macy, Nebraska. She belongs to the Omaha Nation.

In the 1960s, NASA prepared a Voyager spacecraft that they fired out into the black void of space carrying a snapshot of human life on planet Earth, hoping that any alien life forms it might encounter would be able to understand the human symbols and become sympathetically acquainted with our kind...a time capsule to the stars. On October 1, Wynema described for us a sort of time capsule prepared by Francis La Flesche, which he sent to a place that must have seemed to Tribal members as distant as the stars...Germany.

La Flesche was born in 1857 (after Lewis and Clark) to the Omaha second wife of “Iron Eyes”, adopted son of Chief Big Elk (see article, page 29). He was half-brother to notable Native women Dr. Susan La Flesche Picotte and Suzette La Flesche Tibbels. His father worked to ensure that all of his children became conversant with the culture of the whites with whom they had to deal. Francis spent many years in white schools, learned to speak English well, and served as translator. In 1898, Francis was a student in law school. At that time, the Germans were trying to understand the Native American point of view and they wanted someone with institutional accreditation to document it for them. They hired Francis as a professional ethnologist, in fact, the first ever Native American ethnologist. In the course of his work for Germany, Francis collected over 60 Native American items of cultural significance. With the Tribe’s knowledge and cooperation, Francis bought or was given everything he collected for the Germans. He sold these items to the Germans and sent them overseas. These items became known as the La Flesche Collection. They no longer belonged to the Tribe. Wynema mentioned that Francis La Flesche was a somewhat controversial figure, at least in part for this reason.

In Germany, the La Flesche Collection resided in the Berlin Palace. As the years passed and wars racked the European continent, guardians of the Collection decided to remove it to a more secure location. Eventually, the Palace was flattened during World War II. The Collection, however, survived.

As the Germans worked to rebuild their country after WWII, they re-discovered the La Flesche Collection and made a place for it again. In 2007, they reached out to the Omaha Tribe to document the Tribe’s Native understanding of the items in the Collection. Most Omaha Tribe members had forgotten it existed, or never knew about it in the first place. However, some senior citizens did remember hearing of it. The Omaha Tribe has had to undergo a process of rediscovery or re-introduction of these cultural items, as well.



The items in this “time capsule” included a plum pit game played exclusively by Tribal women; war shirts, painted green or blue, both inside and out (the color beige NOT being an authentic war shirt color); a broken smoking pipe that had been repaired (the repair NOT being culturally acceptable); a beaded bag; quillwork in a geometric design (no one having remembered that the Tribe had ever done quillwork); moccasins decorated with eyes; a cradle cover ornamented with two deer; and single-seamed garments (the Omaha being the only Tribe to sew leather garments having only one seam). While the items, themselves, are still in Germany, the NICC has photos of them, some photos being high-detail. Currently, the Collection is on display in the Humboldt Forum in Berlin. It is laid out in glass cases in a Tribal Circle so that the items may be viewed in 360 degrees. Photos of the Humboldt exhibit show a lounge-like seating arrangement close to the exhibit, so that patrons may linger and discuss the artifacts. One striking photo shows artifacts in a large glass case, the glass of which reflects photos of Francis La Flesche. In one reflection, he is dressed in “white” clothing. In the other reflection, he is in Native dress.



Wynema's book



Mike Berger shows art of the collection



Moccasins with eyes



For the time being, photographs of the individual artifacts hang on the wall of the college (NICC) and may be viewed by the public there. This photo exhibition is sponsored by the National Endowment of the Humanities. Wynema and SFTS member Mike Berger (also known as Ishta Muzza – “Gray Eyes”), an NICC employee, are working with Creighton University and Joslyn Art Museum to bring the objects over to Joslyn Art Museum in Omaha, Nebraska. When the time of this visit comes, the plan is to bus the Tribal elders down to the museum to view the artifacts. There is great anticipation among the Tribal members for this event, but there is also great sadness that these visiting items will return to Germany at the end of their American sojourn. If they belonged to an American institution, they would be restored to the Omaha Nation. Our Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) only applies within the United States. Germany’s laws are different. (See article, p.18)

Thank you, Wynema and Mike for sharing this time capsule with us.

ADW

Note: Bev Hines donated her personal collection of Native American artifacts and books to the NICC.



Wynema Morris was the driving force behind the construction of the earth lodge at NICC



Brad Holder’s cake decorated with an earth lodge!



Wynema Morris

## Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA)

As lovers of all things Lewis and Clark, MOP is deeply aware of and interested in the Native American tribes whose presence in the western half of North America facilitated the passage of the Corps of Discovery through Native homelands over two centuries ago. In listening to Omaha Tribe member Wynema Morris talk about the La Flesche Collection on October 1 (see article, page 15), I realized that I didn't fully understand a U.S. law that impacts Native Americans -- a law that I've been hearing about for over 30 years. I went in search of answers and found the following information.

With the increasing interest in anthropology and archeology during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, scholarly studies of Native American cultures led to the wholesale acquisition of Native American artifacts by non-natives, both in the U.S. and abroad. Collecting of artifacts in the 1800s was often done by untrained lay people, and museums competed to acquire both the artifacts and any accompanying human remains. In the main, all of this was done without regard to the sensitivities of living Natives as to the meaning and significance of those artifact and remains. By 1990, U.S. federal agencies, alone, had accumulated the remains of 14,500 deceased Natives in their collections.

One horrific example of insensitivity involved the American Museum of Natural History in New York. In 1897, an anthropologist affiliated with the museum was studying six living Inuit who had come to New York at his request. Within five months, four of the six had died, one had returned home to Greenland, and one child had been adopted by a superintendent of the museum. The child was told that his father had received a proper Inuit burial, but later discovered his father's skeleton on display in the museum.

As the 20<sup>th</sup> century unfolded, U.S. residential and commercial development led to the desecration of many Native American burial sites. For example, in the 1970s, during road construction done by the Iowa Department of Transportation near Glenwood, Iowa, crews uncovered both Native American and white remains. While the white remains were quickly reburied, some of the Native remains were sent to a lab for study. Native American Maria Pearson decided to take her outrage over this as far as the Iowa Governor's office, and her persistence led to the first legislative act in the United States that specifically protected Native American remains – the Iowa Burials Protection Act of 1976. Many other states were still turning a blind eye to the problem, however. In 1982, near Stockton, California, a residential developer bulldozed a cemetery containing two hundred Miwok ancestral remains with the full approval of the California Courts (case: Wana the Bear v Community Construction).

The fury felt by many Native Americans over this offensive treatment led to development of a six-point legal argument for significant changes to both state and national legislation:

- 1) State Statutory Law: Historically, state laws only regulated and protected marked graves. Thus, Native American graves, frequently unmarked, received no statutory protection.
- 2) Common Law: The legal system established by whites as they settled Native homelands often did not allow for the Native American practices concerning death, disposition of remains, and on-going relationships with the dead and with gravesites. Neither did it take into account any government removal of Native Americans from their ancestral homelands or the fact that many tribes had migrated from other locations within the prior 100-500 years to the land they inhabited when the whites encountered them, meaning their ancestors were not located in the same area.
- 3) Equal Protection: Often, as in the Iowa example above, Native American graves were treated differently from the graves of other races.
- 4) First Amendment: Religious beliefs and practices are protected by the First Amendment. Native American practices concerning death and disposal of remains relate strongly to their



religious beliefs and practices. Desecration of tribal dead infringes on the right to freely practice Native American religion.

- 5) Sovereignty Rights: Native American tribes are sovereign bodies with rights to control their relationships through their own laws and customs. The relationship between the people and their dead is internal to the tribe and under the sovereign jurisdiction of the tribe.
- 6) Treaty: From the beginning of U.S. government relations with tribes, the tribe maintained its rights unless the right was specifically divested to the U.S. government through a treaty. No treaty has ever granted the U.S. government the right to disturb Native American graves or Native American dead.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Native Americans long sought and finally received protection for their human remains, funerary objects, and graves. Maria Pearson's efforts on the federal level after her victory in Iowa, combined with the work of many other activists, led the 101<sup>st</sup> U.S. Congress to pass and President George H.W. Bush to sign into law the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) in 1990.

NAGPRA is a law that establishes the ownership of cultural items excavated or discovered on federal or tribal land after November 16, 1990. The act also applies to land transferred by the federal government to the states under the Water Resources Department Act. However, the provisions of the legislation do not apply to private lands. The intent of the NAGPRA legislation is to address long-standing claims by Federally recognized tribes for the return of human remains and cultural objects unlawfully obtained from pre-contact, post-contact, former, and current Native American homelands.

The Act also requires each federal agency, museum, or institution that receives federal funds to prepare an inventory of remains and funerary objects and a summary of sacred objects, cultural patrimony objects, and unassociated funerary objects. The Act provides for repatriation of these items when requested by the appropriate descendant of the tribe. This applies to remains or objects discovered at any time, even before November 16, 1990.

A program of federal grants assists in the repatriation process and the Secretary of the Interior may assess civil penalties on museums that fail to comply. NAGPRA also establishes procedures for the inadvertent discovery or planned excavation of Native American cultural items on federal or tribal lands. While these provisions do not apply to discoveries or excavations on private or state lands, the collection provisions of the Act may apply to Native American cultural items if they come under the control of an institution that receives federal funding.

NAGPRA makes it a criminal offense to traffic in Native American human remains without right of possession or in Native American cultural items obtained in violation of the Act. Penalties for a first offense may reach 12 months imprisonment and a \$100,000 fine.

The statute attempts to mediate a significant tension that exists between tribes' communal interests in the respectful treatment of their deceased ancestors and related cultural items and scientists' individual interests in the study of those same human remains and items. The Act divides the treatment of American Indian human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony into two basic categories:

- 1) Inadvertent discovery: If federal officials anticipate that activities on federal and tribal lands after November 16, 1990, might have an effect on American Indian burials—or if burials are discovered during such activities—finders must consult with potential lineal descendants or American Indian tribal officials as part of their compliance responsibilities.

- 2) Planned excavations: Consultation must occur during the planning phase of the project. **20**  
For inadvertent discoveries, the regulations delineate a set of short deadlines for initiating and completing consultation.

The repatriation provision, unlike the ownership provision, applies to remains or objects discovered at any time, even before the effective date of the act, whether or not discovered on tribal or federal land. The act allows archeological teams a short time for analysis before the remains must be returned. Once it is determined that human remains are American Indian, analysis can occur only through documented consultation (on federal lands) or consent (on tribal lands). It has necessitated mass cataloguing of the Native American collections in order to identify the living heirs of remains and artifacts and Indians tribes related to them. NAGPRA has had a dramatic effect on the day-to-day practice of archeology and physical anthropology in the U.S. States. Outcomes of NAGPRA repatriation efforts are slow and cumbersome, leading many tribes to spend considerable effort documenting their request; collections' holders are obliged to inform and engage with tribes whose materials they may possess. However, in many cases, NAGPRA has helped stimulate interactions of archeologists and museum professionals with Native Americans that were felt to be constructive by all parties.

In the United States, related legislation protects archeological sites on federally owned lands -- the Archeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA). Privately owned sites are controlled by their owners. Other countries use three basic types of laws to protect cultural remains:

- 1) Selective export control laws control the trade of the most important artifacts, while still allowing some free trade (Canada, Japan, United Kingdom, etc.).
- 2) Total export restriction laws completely shut off export of cultural property (many Latin American and Mediterranean countries).
- 3) National ownership laws declare all cultural artifacts, including those not yet discovered, to be possessions of the nation (Mexico).



This symbol appears on the building of the University Library of Innsbruck, Austria. The symbol is a distinctive marking of cultural property, as defined by the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict.

The German museum mentioned on page 15 came into possession of Omaha cultural artifacts by buying the items in 1898 from a member of the Omaha Tribe who acted with knowledge and permission of at least some members of the tribe. Because there seems to be no modern international legal basis to contest the current ownership of these items, my heart goes out to those members of the Omaha Tribe who yearn to have ownership returned to the tribe. They are doing what is humanly possible to build a bridge between themselves and the Humboldt Museum, so that both parties may learn from the past. MOP salutes their inspirational example of cooperation on this time capsule. -ADW

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native\\_American\\_Graves\\_Protection\\_and\\_Repatriation\\_Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native_American_Graves_Protection_and_Repatriation_Act) (accessed 11-7-23)

## November is Native American Heritage Month

In 1990 President George H. W. Bush approved a joint resolution designating November 1990 "National American Indian Heritage Month." Similar proclamations, under variants on the name (including "Native American Heritage Month" and "National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month") have been issued each year since 1994. For more information: <https://nativeamericanheritagemonth.gov/about.html>



# A Walk Through Time

21

August 26-27, 2023

Rock Hill Windmill Event Center

5910 Ranch Road

Plattsmouth, NE

## The Timeline Trinity



**Gregg Eisenbarth**  
**Rock Hill Windmill Event Center**



**Butch Bouvier**  
**Mastermind & Shipbuilder**



**Margo Prentiss, Del Hervey & CCHS Board**  
**Cass County Historical Society**



**Butch holds court in the White Pirogue**

Words just don't do justice to this living, breathing, wrap-around, 4-dimensional event. Instead of merely talking about it this year, let's walk through it together. Gentle Readers, you may not be able to smell the soldiers' campfires, or hear the blacksmiths' hammer their iron, or taste the mountain men's pemmican, or feel the tightly stretched and drying hides, but you can engage your imaginations, as we join the colorfully costumed re-enactors, and follow their progress through the weekend's edu-tainment.

Re-enactment begins with set-up. Blacksmiths are a crowd favorite. Dean Slader and Tom Bansen assemble the forge:





Tom and Dean assemble the portable forge.



Adding the bellows.



Adding the exhaust hood.



Protecting the work from sun and rain.





The anvil has to be just right.



It takes a trailer and a whole crew of strong men to make this happen.



A handmade wingnut for the table



A Drill



And some fuel, and we're ready to fire up!





A quick change and Dean is ready to teach.



Demonstrating the process: different ways to shape an iron rod.



Ft. Atkinson hook

Dragon hooks

Christmas nail

Butterfly hinge

Hinges and clasp



Tom learned to make battle axes by studying with Tord Berglundh in Sweden. Notice my reflection in the blade!





**Mouth of the Platte display in the Event Center: lots of people cooperated to put this together!**



**Doug & Pat Friedli represented Nebraska City.**



**Cathy & Sherri Bouvier guarded the model fort.**



**Cass County plans to build!**



**Jean-Claude Overstreet & Shirley Enos**



**Everyone loves Shirley's furs!**



**The Atherton Family enjoyed their day!**



**Sterling Fichter as Mountain Man John Colter from the Lewis and Clark Expedition**





Mountain Man Jerry Hagberg tans hides and makes leather clothing.



There are 5 deer hides in this coat Jerry made, 4 tanned with brains, 1 with egg yolk.

Leather coats are heavy!



A Mountain Man sure totes a lot of gear!



These lovely ladies tried on John Wilcox's furs. John's re-enactment persona is "Lizard".





**"Lizard" taught the ladies to shoot black powder.**



**Jean Baptist Charbonneau  
Renee Hunt introduced us to Sacagawea's baby, Pomp.**



**Jean-Claude re-enacts a French Canadian boatman.**



**Major Bob Baker re-enacts 1820s Fort Atkinson**



**Owen Benson at Fort Atkinson**



**A Walk Through Time: All the drama of an earlier age .....with all the comforts of home!**

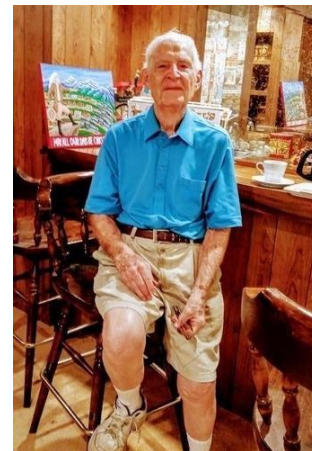




**Renee S. (Langhorst) Caan:** (May 31, 1973 – October 21, 2023) Renee Cann was born in Omaha, Nebraska, to Mary T. and David A. Langhorst. She grew up in Bellevue, Nebraska. Renee attended St. Mary's Catholic School and Bellevue East High School, graduating in 1991. She earned her B.S. in Occupational Therapy in 1996 from Creighton University. For 24 years, she worked with rehab and acute care patients at Methodist Hospital in Omaha.

Renee married James (Jay) F. Cann on October 10, 1998. They had five children, and Renee actively volunteered with the youngsters' schools, dance studios, soccer teams, swim meets, baseball games, and music activities. Renee, herself, played soccer for the majority of her life, both in school and in a co-ed over-30 league. She was active in St. Elizabeth Ann Seton church and parish. She is survived by her mother, Mary, a devoted long-time member of Mouth of the Platte. Mary Langhorst's current address: 1111 Sterling Ridge Dr., Apt. #258, Omaha, NE 68144.

**John Gregory (J. Greg) Smith:** (July 21, 1928 – October 20, 2023) J. Greg Smith was born in Laramie, Wyoming. He grew up on a ranch on the Laramie River at the base of the Medicine Box Mountains. Smith graduated from the University of Wyoming. Wife, Florence, inspired him to remain in Nebraska after a stint in Chicago. (Lincoln was half-way between Chicago and Cheyenne.) During his 70 years in the advertising business, his national clients included the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, American Automobile Association, and the United States Travel & Tourism Administration. His Nebraska clients included the Nebraska State Education Association, Boys' Town, the Omaha Convention and Visitors Bureau, and many others. He was managing editor of *Outdoor Nebraska* (later, *Nebraskaland* magazine). He was executive director of the Old West Trail Foundation. J. Greg created the slogan "Nebraska...the Good Life" and was instrumental in the creation and development of both the National Arbor Day Foundation and the Great Platte River Road Archway Monument. Always a visionary, he based his life on the premise "Wouldn't it be great if...." He is survived by sons Greg Smith and Jeff Smith, who can be reached at [jeff@jgregsmith.com](mailto:jeff@jgregsmith.com).





## Chief Big Elk Statue Dedication Lewis and Clark Landing The Riverfront in Downtown Omaha August 19, 2023



**“It takes great strength to make peace.”** Nearly three hundred souls congregated at the downtown Omaha Riverfront on this glorious summer day to honor a leader who had great strength for peace-making. Big Elk (1770-1848) was the last of the full-blood chiefs of the Omaha (Umóñhoñ) Nation. The welfare of his people is any Omaha chief’s greatest concern: a chief takes care of the people. Chief Big Elk’s burden for his people included guiding them into a difficult new white man’s world, as well as supporting them through smallpox epidemics in the vicinity of modern-day Hooper and Winslow. The Omaha Nation also occupied an encampment near Bellevue, as this whole area of northeast and east central Nebraska was their home. The Omaha people left footprints on this very land, including the Riverfront where the statue of Chief Big Elk now keeps its eastward vigil.

The bronze, larger-than-life-sized statue required years of study and preparation by sculptor Benjamin Victor, who was in attendance. Though the physical creation of the monument took place within his Boise, Idaho, studio, its spiritual preparation grew in Victor’s heart, as he interacted with members of the Omaha Nation. They taught him many tribal truths which guided the molding of Big Elk’s dignified face and frame:

- “We were here first.”
- The Omaha Nation strives to live in harmony with creation.
- “Be good to one another.”
- “We are still here.”

As a visionary leader, Chief Big Elk helped accomplish the perpetuation of the Omaha Nation and inspired the respect we feel today at the statue’s unveiling.

Participants in today’s celebration included both Big Elk’s direct descendants -- Ed and Mike Tyndall – and clan relatives. Dr. Russell Blackbird, of the Earth-Makers clan, addressed the gathering. He spoke of his military basic training at Fort Polk, Louisiana; his personal disinclination to attend college; and his parents’ encouragement to attend college and study diligently. They told him to take the good things of the white people and use them in his life. They said not to take the things that hurt people: jealousy, profanity, putting people down, or acting like you are better than others. One can see the influence of Chief Big Elk and tribal wisdom in this sage advice. Dr. Blackbird went on to spend time after college as an educator in Macy, Nebraska.

As the Omaha Nation came together to remember their relative, visitors respectfully witnessed a number of tribal traditions that enriched the outdoor ceremony. Tribal elders established a ceremonial fire near the earth-hued statue. At the appropriate time, they offered sacred cedar on the fire. Its smoke wafted gently westward on a light breeze as an elder used an eagle feather to guide the smoke in blessing the musicians and speakers. Omaha princesses with tiny bells on their brightly colored dresses solemnly bore gifts of multi-colored blankets to each guest of honor, including Mayor Stothert. As Mayor Stothert offered her remarks, a flock of Canada geese flew directly

overhead, as though they, also, wished to honor Chief Big Elk and the Omaha Nation.

Geese weren't the only aerial observers. As the princesses passed among the guests with their gifts, a drone hovered overhead, quietly recording the ceremony, and auto traffic arced overhead on I-480 on its way toward the city's high-rise buildings beyond. Behind the crowd, nearer the glittering river, a river of foot traffic also flowed – mostly young families with strollers. The elder's prayer, words offered in the Omaha tongue and translated into English for non-Omaha guests, reached even those curious passers-by. And the gentle breeze carried his prayers to those who have preceded us to heaven.

The Omaha Nation gave one final traditional gift to each of us: breakfast in the Luminarium. From this time forward, the Luminarium will welcome all tribal members through its doors free of charge, in recognition of the Nation's special relationship to the Riverfront land. Let us all go into the uncertain future with good thoughts toward one another, in honor of the strength of this peaceful Nation and worthy Chief Big Elk. "I am done." *Wíbthahon!* (translated, this means "Thank you!")

## In the News: Fort Atkinson Candlelight Tour

November 4, 2023



**Light the lanterns at sundown**

Before there was television, there was make-believe. People created their own fun to entertain one another. That old art still lives and breathes at Fort Atkinson. On a Saturday evening, Shirley Enos and I decided to take part in the Ft. Atkinson Candlelight Tour. We were met at the south entrance of the Fort by a military guard and two women in 1820s clothing. The guard told us that the Fort was somewhat on edge because the Arikara had recently attacked whites many miles to the north, and at least six U.S. soldiers had lost their lives in the reprisal. Nobody wanted the local tribes to know of the loss of life; it made the fort residents feel vulnerable.

Yet, life does go on. One of our female guides planned to participate in an upcoming drama, authorized by the command hierarchy as a morale booster. Her lower face was blackened with charcoal in imitation of a man's beard. Under her full-length dress, she showed us a pair of men's trousers and laughingly remarked that it felt odd to be wearing so much coarse fabric between her legs! She still lacked a man's shirt to complete her dramatic costume, so she invited those of us in 21<sup>st</sup> century garb to accompany her on her quest for the critical garment.

The barracks quadrangle was dark, illuminated solely by a row of isolated candle-lanterns, twinkling from the edge of the boardwalk. Our two dozen sets of modern shoes turned the boardwalk into a musical instrument, but not so much as percussion; rather, it groaned and sighed as we made our way past glowing windows, visiting each firelit chamber with doors thrown wide to the calm, clear evening.

At each stop the guide introduced us to the characters inhabiting the rooms. We met the fort doctor, who was wrestling with the serious issue of how to treat a small child's serious ailment: he was too young to bleed and too young for cupping. He finally settled on a course of Peruvian bark. We met an officer eating supper with his daughters, too old for school, but decidedly too young to flirt with the common soldiers! We met the corporals, lounging in their bunks. At each stop, the prospective actress asked to borrow a shirt and complained loudly that some scoundrel had stolen her flask from its hiding place in her hollow book. The corporals endured the indignity of having their possessions tumbled out and searched. No flask.



The fort doctor, pondering a treatment



Spellbound by the story

We met the spinner and learned that her wool was easier to work near the warm fireplace because it grows more supple with heat. She much preferred working wool to working flax because flax has to be kept damp, which is hard on her hands.





Spinning by firelight



A conversation in the library

We visited the library to discuss the upcoming drama. The dark shadow behind our bewhiskered guide was a bookshelf full of books. Officers could read. The run-of-the-mill soldier could not.

We overheard two officers rehearsing their lines for the upcoming play. One of these gentlemen agreed to loan our guide his extra shirt, as long as she would, in exchange, mend the extensive rip in its underarm. Both seemed satisfied with the trade.



Practicing lines for the play -- he'll trade use of his torn shirt for a mending job.

Finally, we visited the forge, where blacksmiths Dean Slader and Tom Bansen worked to complete an emergency order of tent stakes to replace those lost in the Arikara attack. Unaccustomed to working by candlelight, the smiths' progress in completing the order was slow. They were only half done. But, they certainly were looking forward to the upcoming drama!



A warm and inviting view from outside the sutler's store



As we groaned and sighed our way back along the boardwalk and across the grass under the cloudless sky, silver starlight shone on us. Guests stepped into the sutler's store for a memento of the perfect evening. Some remained outside to glory in the star-spangled heavens. All finally made their way into the spacious Council House for a delightful selection of cookies and a hot cup of joe, cider, or chocolate. Marilyn Hawes, who visited our September MOP dinner meeting, was among the re-enactors! (See p. 8) We never did find the errant flask of hard liquor, but, in the end, it didn't matter. After an evening of warm fellowship, well spent, everyone set out for home in high spirits. -ADW

## BISON or BUFFALO?

Mouth of the Platte members enjoyed watching the new Ken Burns documentary entitled *The American Buffalo*. PBS aired it on October 16 and 17, 2023. Because air dates conflicted with our MOP Annual Meeting, a few people at the meeting moaned about having to record the second half of the show for later viewing.

\*\*\*\*\*

*High Plains Journal* article, July 7 – July 13, 2023:

### ***July is Bison Month***

"The National Bison Association, Westminster, Colorado, recently announced the kickoff to July Bison Month, encouraging consumers to add this uniquely American, delicious, humanely raised, supremely healthy protein to their regular diets. While not a federally designated observance, Bison Month is celebrated each July by the bison community and is a time in which bison farmers and ranchers promote the delicious taste of bison burgers, steaks, ribs, and roasts as a summer grilling treat. Finding a local bison producer is possible with the BuySome Bison app, or our online buyer's guide, both available at [www.bisoncentral.com/buying-bison-meat](http://www.bisoncentral.com/buying-bison-meat).

Find bison-specific recipes, nutritional data, cuts, and instructional cooking videos at [www.bisoncentral.com/how-to-cook-bison](http://www.bisoncentral.com/how-to-cook-bison)"

At a meeting of the American Philosophical Society, on Friday the 21st inst. the following gentlemen were elected members :

David Ramsay M. D. Charleston S. C.  
Capt. Merewether Lewis of Virginia.  
Mr. Robert Gilmore, jun. of Baltimore.

This brief newspaper notice is remarkable for several reasons. The *Aurora General Advertiser* (aka *The Philadelphia Aurora*) was published in Philadelphia from 1794 to 1824. It was founded by Benjamin Franklin Bache using type given him by his namesake grandfather.<sup>1</sup> The article appeared on Wednesday 26 October 1803.<sup>2</sup>

Lewis's membership nomination to the American Philosophical Society (APS) was sponsored by President Jefferson, who at the time was president of the Society.<sup>3</sup>

The new members – other than Merewether (as spelled here) – of the APS are mostly forgotten today. David Ramsay, M.D. of Charleston (b. 1749, d. 1815) was active during the American Revolution. When the British captured Charleston, he was on their most-wanted list and was held prisoner for the duration of the occupation, nearly a year. Later Ramsay was a delegate to the Continental Congress from 1782 to 1786. Always active in South Carolina politics, Ramsay died in Charleston in 1815.<sup>4</sup>

Not much is known about Robert Gilmore Junior. He paid taxes, probably on property, in Baltimore from 1800 through 1808.<sup>5</sup> In June 1802 he married Elizabeth S. Cooke in Baltimore County.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Aurora General Advertiser," *George Washington's Mount Vernon*, access 2023-08-13, <https://www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-encyclopedia/article/aurora-general-advertiser/>

<sup>2</sup> "At a meeting of the American Philosophical Society...", *Aurora General Advertiser*, 1803-10-26, p. 3(1), access 2023-06-13, <https://www.genealogybank.com/doc/newspapers/image/v2%3A109D8DE5BAE5ED38%40GB3NEWS-1115EC2E25798568%402379890-1115EC2E6FA2A420%402>

<sup>3</sup> Jackson, Donald, *Thomas Jefferson & the Stony Mountains: Exploring the West from Monticello* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1981), *passim*; Thomas Jefferson' Monticello, *Lewis and Clark*, accessed 2023-05-23, <https://www.monticello.org/thomas-jefferson/louisiana-lewis-clark/>

<sup>4</sup> "Ramsey, David," *Appletons' Cyclopedia of American Biography, 1600-1889*, Vol. 5, p. 166.

<sup>5</sup> "Robert Gilmore, Jr., in the Baltimore, Maryland Tax Records Index, 1798-1808," Ancestry.com, *Baltimore, Maryland Tax Records Index, 1798-1808* [database on-line], access 2023-08-10, <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/1884:4203>.

<sup>6</sup> "Robert, Jr. Gilmore," in Jordan Dodd (Liahona Research) compiler, *Maryland Marriages, 1655-1850*, Ancestry.com, Maryland, U.S., *Compiled Marriages, 1655-1850* [database on-line] access 2023-08-10, <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/85231>.

# Book Review

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*Patriot Improvers* by Whitfield J. Bell, Jr. (1997)

*One Grand Pursuit* by Edward C. Carter (1993)

In an effort to better understand the American Philosophical Society, I phoned the Society and asked them to recommend a book about the history of the organization. They did, in fact, recommend two.

*Patriot Improvers* gives the history of the Society from the birth of the idea through the year 1769, when it consolidated, more or less, into its current form. *One Grand Pursuit* thumbnails the early years and attends more fully to the society in its consolidated form.

***Patriot Improvers*:** In 1727, Benjamin Franklin established a small group of men to discuss trade improvements, calling the group The Junto. Though The Junto did not last long, it demonstrated Franklin's enthusiasm for stimulating conversation centered on improvement of self and society. In 1728, Cadwallader Colden tried to start a "Voluntary Society for the advancing of Knowledge" in Boston. This, too, failed. In the 1730s, both Franklin and Colden discussed the Boston Medical Society separately with their friend John Bartram, a farmer, seedsman, and botanical traveller with an extensive network of international correspondence. In 1739, Bartram wrote to Peter Collinson, London agent of the Library Company of Philadelphia, suggesting the establishment of a society of "ingenious & curious men" to study "natural secrets [,] arts & scyances." Collinson replied that such a society would only work among neighbors, not among strangers, and that the fledgling American colony wouldn't be able to support it. The idea was dropped.

In 1742, Franklin tried and failed to raise support for Bartram's botanical expeditions. In 1743, Franklin helped Bartram develop the outlines of a learned society, which Franklin then printed, and the two of them began to circulate the printed idea to their friends and correspondents. The two-page printed proposal includes such particulars as location (Philadelphia), number of members (at least seven, one each of Physician, Botanist, Mathematician, Chemist, Mechanician, Geographer, and Natural Philosopher), meeting frequency (monthly or more often), subjects of study (numerous and wide-ranging), correspondence with such societies in London and Dublin, quarterly abstracts of proceedings sent through the postal system free of charge, dues, procedures for rule-making, annual printed sharing of discoveries, and record-keeping. Colden responded enthusiastically. By the winter of 1743-44, the American Philosophical Society (APS) had been organized and by March 1744 had met three times. By April 1744, nine Philadelphians formed the core group and others were clamoring to join. Collinson in London was anxiously awaiting the Society's first publication.

By 1745, scholars in Europe were asking about the Society, but it was already languishing. Franklin wrote to Colden, "The Members of our Society here are very idle Gentlemen...they will take no Pains." Bartram also wrote to Colden, "we may very easily [carry on with more diligence] if we could but exchange the time that is spent in the Club, Chess & Coffee House for the Curious amusements of natural observations." As printer, Franklin was anxious to publish the Society's papers. As postmaster, he had the authority to circulate any papers free of charge. However, nothing happened, and by 1747 the group had gone dormant, and would remain so for more than 20 years.

Another precursor to the APS was the Young Junto formed in 1750, involving William Franklin (Ben's son) and schoolmaster Charles Thomson. Almost nothing is known of this group's history before 1757 because no written records are extant, but the group was patterned after Ben Franklin's Junto of 1727, just without Ben Franklin. Membership was limited to twelve, visitors were not admitted, proceedings were kept secret, experiments and demonstrations were not performed at meetings, and absences were subject to fines. The group had no intercolonial aspirations. The Young Junto



met on Friday evenings for discussions, debates, and declamations, although members frequently chose to pay a fine to avoid delivering an address. By 1759, membership was down to eight, only two or three attended meetings, and nothing was being accomplished. By early 1761, members were considering dissolution. However, in the summer of 1761, the five remaining members renamed themselves 'The Junto', rewrote their bylaws, elected new members, and devoted themselves to revival. Although the minutes of the meetings between 1762 and 1766 do not exist, the group was still meeting vigorously when the minutes resume in 1766. The 1765 British Stamp Tax gave "purpose and urgency" to the society's discussions. On 13 December, they changed their name to "The American Society for Promoting and Propagating Useful Knowledge, held in Philadelphia" (AS).

By 1767, the change in the political milieu led to such discussion topics as securing the port of Philadelphia, promoting agriculture, distilling persimmons to replace West India Rum, currency questions, manufacturing, economic reform, and other practical developments. By early 1768, the American Society was actively seeking to recruit members and urgently applying itself to the task of improving agriculture, creating inventions, and substituting the love of useful knowledge for members' dissolute habits.

By 1768, also, the members of the 1743 American Philosophical Society, which had not met for over 20 years, were stung into action by not being invited to participate in the new American Society. They decided to revive the APS. Political gamesmanship ensued. APS proposed uniting the two groups, to which AS agreed with some stipulations. The APS ignored the stipulations and voted all AS members into the APS. The AS rejected that vote and began to vote onto their membership list such luminaries as Ben Franklin, John Bartram, and others from England, the West Indies, and other British colonies. It was generally understood that one man could not be a member of both societies.

Throughout 1768, the AS again rewrote its rules, continued discussing subjects of immediate value, principally concerning agriculture, and accumulated so many specimens that they had to order a cabinet to hold them all. In the Fall of 1768, the AS absorbed the Philadelphia Medical Society and elected Benjamin Franklin as president. Finally, in 1769, the two remaining societies (APS and AS) united and assumed the name "American Philosophical Society, held at Philadelphia, for Promoting Useful Knowledge" (APS).

At the time the two societies joined, there were 365 total members, 244 American and 21 foreign. By 1800, there were 150 additional foreign members. After the merger, the APS conducted observations of the transit of Venus and published the findings in the British Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions*, which garnered the study an international reputation. When the findings were finally published in the first APS *Transactions* in 1771 and shared with other European learned academies, they responded with copies of their own publications, establishing an exchange that continues today.

The American Revolution was a difficult time for the APS. Politics divided the members, meetings ceased, and the Library and Museum collections were scattered. Benjamin Franklin spent from December 1776 to September 1784 in Europe. While that contributed to the "languishing state" of the APS, it allowed Franklin to cultivate his relationships with scholars throughout Europe. They sent him their publications, which he forwarded to the APS. When Franklin returned to the U.S., his actions were pivotal to restoring the health of the APS. First, he reminded the members of the Society's roots and purposes by presenting two exciting scientific papers. Then, he presented the motion to approve construction of Philosophical Hall. Finally, he supported the construction of the hall with a generous financial contribution and a loan. The rest of the 1780s saw the publication of a second volume of *Transactions* (1786), the establishment of the first Society prize (£200), a gift of state property to the Society for its hall construction project (1785), and construction of Philosophical Hall (1785-89). The first meeting of the APS in Philosophical Hall took place on Friday, November 20, 1789. From 1789 to

1794, the APS occupied the southwest corner of the second floor while the University of Pennsylvania occupied the rest of the building. For 18 years beginning in 1794, Charles Willson Peale, artist, investor, educator, and museum keeper, lived in Philosophical Hall with his large family and maintained America's earliest successful museum. At that time, Philadelphia was the nation's capital. In 1793, the Society coped with the yellow fever epidemic. Later in the decade, Federalists and Jeffersonian Republicans fought for control of the national government, but the Society managed to go on with business as usual by avoiding religion and politics. Jefferson won the election of 1800. In 1802, the APS needed more room for its museum, so the Society rented space in the State House.

Beginning in about 1799, Dr. Caspar Wistar began to hold dinners in his home for Society friends, eight at a time. The focus of these parties was on the high quality of the conversation, rather than the food and drink. After Wistar's death in 1818, his Society friends continued the tradition, and it continues today.

"Whenever possible the American Philosophical Society actively fostered the scientific relationship that had been established with the federal government during the Lewis and Clark expedition. When Major Stephen H. Long [a member of the Society] led his 1819 Expedition to the Rocky Mountains, the Society, at the request of the Secretary of War, suggested subjects for scientific investigation and nominated people to accompany the party. Long thanked the Society, and with official approval sent a collection of plants to Philadelphia. Later a number of the Long Expedition's scientists' reports were published in the *Transactions*. The Society performed a similar service in the planning of the United States Exploring Expedition of 1838-1842, or South Seas Expedition, as it was then commonly called....[It brought] home natural history collections of unprecedented proportions that helped develop the first great federal institutions of science – The United States Botanic Garden, the National Herbarium, The Naval Observatory, and The National Museum (Bell, "APS as NAS," 171)." (*One Grand Pursuit*, pp. 24-25)

While *One Grand Pursuit* continues the history of the APS to 1993, the remainder of the book is beyond the scope of our Mouth of the Platte studies. I do recommend it for interested readers. It can be accessed for free on Google. -ADW

Patriot Improvers:

[https://www.google.com/books/edition/Patriot\\_improvers\\_1743\\_1768/dKBKSiIICH8C?hl=en&gbpv=1](https://www.google.com/books/edition/Patriot_improvers_1743_1768/dKBKSiIICH8C?hl=en&gbpv=1)

One Grand Pursuit:

[https://www.google.com/books/edition/One\\_Grand\\_Pursuit/iV0GqW1cIJYC?hl=en&gbpv=1](https://www.google.com/books/edition/One_Grand_Pursuit/iV0GqW1cIJYC?hl=en&gbpv=1)

(Both accessed 10-17-23)

**Coming Up in the February 2024 Issue: a look at the role of the American Philosophical Society in the Long Expedition: *Science and Survival at Engineer Cantonment***



New Pelican Point Wayside Exhibit





### Clarification

August Dinner Meeting speaker Denny Leonard achieved American Mountain Man “Hiverano” status in 2010 and has since repeated all 20 requirements, some many times over. This fact was omitted from the August 2023 coverage of his wonderful presentation!

Thanks to  
**MARY LANGHORST**  
for making the arrangements  
for Study Group to meet  
twice monthly at Sterling  
Ridge Retirement  
Community!

Thanks, also, to  
**DELLA BAUER**  
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to the Heritage meeting  
room and supplying all the  
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*50 Documents*  
and to the folks who  
purchased them!

Congratulations to

**Keith Bystrom**

on his election as  
**Treasurer**

of

*Humanities Nebraska*



For information contact:  
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Website:  
[www.LewisandClarkVisitorCenter.org](http://www.LewisandClarkVisitorCenter.org)  
Address:  
100 Valmont Drive  
P.O. Box 785  
Nebraska City, NE 68410  
Telephone: 402-874-9900

Our last event of 2023 will be *Christmas with the Birds* on Wednesday, December 27, from 10:00 a.m. to 3 p.m. It's a fun event for kids: making their own bird feeders out of recycled pop bottles, pinecones frosted in peanut butter, and popcorn strung onto string.

Butch Bouvier has built a winter enclosure so he can keep working inside it through the cold weather. We plan to start moving the first logs for the reproduction Camp DuBois Fort this week. We hope to cut the ribbon on the first of the five Camp DuBois log cabins this year! (See model fort pictured on page 25 of this newsletter.)

**We will be celebrating our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2024. Stay tuned! There will be a special event planned later.**

For information contact:  
Amanda Gibson  
Education Coordinator  
lcuser@siouxcitylcic.com  
712-224-5242



*It's All Right Here*  
Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center  
Betty Strong Encounter Center

Website:  
<https://siouxcitylcic.com/>  
Address:  
900 Larsen Park Road  
Sioux City, Iowa 51103

**Percy's Pals:** Students in Percy's Pals will be divided into two groups, based on school grade (K-2 and 3-5). Students will meet once a month to engage in a series of scientific adventures inspired by the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Programs may include things like making salt or candles, recording plant and animal varieties, and compass and celestial navigation. Percy is our pelican mascot made of recycled scrap metal by artist, Dale Lewis.

**Kids' Club Adventures:** A youth travel club for Middle School students. The Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center will provide supervision and transportation for a series of out-of-town adventures which will increase students' cultural awareness and encourage a love of the humanities. This group incorporates the spirit of The Corps of Discovery's engagement in new cultural experiences. Day trips in this series may include the Arbor Day Farm, Mitchell Prehistoric Village, and the Planetarium at Wayne State College.

**Young Historians:** This group, designed for High School students, will teach the science of historiography and develop students' understanding of public history. Students will engage in researching, writing, and presenting history using the latest trends in historiographic methods. We are hoping to partner with the National History Day program so students may earn a chance to present their work in Washington, D.C.

**Growers' Academy:** Funded by CF Industries, this new program will allow area students to learn the skill of producing their own food. Instruction will focus on topics such as sustainable agricultural practices, nutrition, and community responsibility. Produce raised by the Growers' Academy will be free and available to the community throughout the harvest season. At the end of the growing season, students and representatives from CF Industries will celebrate with a picnic, highlighting foods raised by the Growers' Academy.

**Family Camp:** The Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center will periodically host Family Camp events, where families can engage in some fun and educational activities together. We encourage those attending to include their extended families, as well! Activities may include game nights, ice cream socials, camp outs, or nature walks.



In preparing this issue, I was reminded afresh of the dramatic impact one individual can have on the world. Examples abound. Whether it is Thomas Jefferson spear-heading the exploration of the Louisiana Territory, Benjamin Franklin establishing the American Philosophical Society, Francis La Flesche preserving cultural items by sending them to a safe place, Butch Bouvier building a barge, Wynema Morris answering a persistent e-mail from a German museum, or Maria Pearson persistently knocking on the Iowa governor's door.

It's this last item that particularly struck me during this quarter. National TV news this fall has focused on the political infighting in the U.S. Congress and two devastating international wars that concern many in the U.S. The men and women who make up our legislative body are the voice of the U.S. electorate – you and I. Now, more than ever, the decisions they make will determine the course of our nation and of the rest of the world – for better or worse. The following information is condensed from a pamphlet printed by Focus on the Family, *You Can Make a Difference: A Citizen's Guide to Political Action*, and was extracted from *The High Cost of Indifference*, edited by Richard Cizik (copyright 1984 by Regal Books).

One of the great misconceptions still prevalent in our society is that individual citizens cannot make a difference. However, history is replete with examples of seemingly insignificant people having a dramatic impact on their government and their world. Few citizens have the time, inclination, or opportunity to become thoroughly familiar with every aspect of the political process. Fortunately, this is not necessary. A government official, a veteran of about 20 years on Capitol Hill, once said: "If the average member of Congress received as many as half a dozen letters scrawled in pencil on brown wrapping paper, it would be enough to change his vote on most issues." According to a survey of top congressional staffers by *The Washington Magazine*, the most influential factors in the decision-making process of members of Congress were (in order of priority): 1) a member's political philosophy, 2) constituent opinion, 3) office mail, 4) the White House position, 5) party leaders, 6) press back home, 7) Washington lobbies, 8) the national media. These results reveal the importance placed on constituent thinking. Messages from constituents serve more as triggers than as persuaders, unless the member's opinion is not yet formed. In some cases, a letter may actually change a legislator's mind, particularly when he/she is wavering on an issue. Do not become discouraged if, following your literary effort, the member's vote is still unfavorable to your position. The next time the vote may go your way. Basic rules:

Concentrate on your own delegation.	Be accurate.
Confine your letter to one specific legislative subject.	Be courteous.
Ask legislator to tell you his position on the matter.	Point out any moral issues involved.
Write in your own words.	If you have expert knowledge, share it.
Be brief.	Say "well done" when deserved.
Give your reasons for taking a stand. Avoid emotion – use facts and illustrations.	Always keep copies of correspondence.
Do not assume that your legislator is well-informed about a given issue. Explain the situation. Include the bill number or popular title.	If your legislator responds, disagreeing with you, write back promptly refuting his arguments and once more asking him to take the position you favor.
Be constructive.	Use correct forms of address.
Ask for a response.	Try to get together with others.
Be timely. Write when you first learn Congress will consider the issue.	Above all, do NOT get discouraged.

You can also register your opinion by a telephone call. Briefly state your position and ask for a reply from the congressman. It's okay to call the local office, as they will inform the Washington office. In addition to writing federal laws, Congress has the power to conduct investigations, monitor federal agencies, impeach federal officials, declare war, approve treaties, raise or lower taxes, appropriate money, approve top federal agency and judicial appointments and all armed forces officer appointments, and a two-thirds majority in each chamber will override a Presidential veto.

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## **Mouth of the Platte Chapter Activities**

### **Weekly:**

#### **Lewis and Clark Study Group**

(You need not be a MOP member to attend study group.)

Meets: Wednesday, 9-11 a.m.

1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> weeks: Our Savior's Lutheran Church  
600 Bluff Street, Council Bluffs, Iowa

3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> weeks:

**Sterling Ridge Retirement Community (Theater Room)**

**1111 Sterling Ridge Drive (126<sup>th</sup> and Pacific Street)**

**Omaha, Nebraska 68144 (402-281-0472)**

Contact: Jim Christiansen (402-657-4600)

### **Monthly:**

#### **MOP Chapter Dinner**

(You need not be a MOP member to attend dinners.)

Meets: Third Tuesday of the month

November 21: Keith Bystrom and Jim Christiansen

Topic: LCTHF 2023 Annual Meeting in Montana

Location: Harmony Court, 173 Bennett, Council Bluffs

Time: 11:30 a.m.

Meal: Firehouse Subs (\$10 pay Jim Christiansen)

December 19: Doug Packard, Re-enactor

Topic: Volunteer Duty at Fort Clatsop

Location: Harmony Court, 173 Bennett, Council Bluffs

Time: 11:30 a.m.

Meal: TBD

January 16: TBD

February 20: TBD

March 19: TBD

Contact: Don Shippy 402-740-7851 or shippydv@msn.com

### **MOP Chapter Board Meetings:**

Meets: First Tuesday of the month

December 5: 6 p.m. (Ann's house)

January 2: 6 p.m. (TBD)

February 6: 6 p.m. (TBD)

### **Annually:**

#### **June: Lewis and Clark Festival**

[Lewis and Clark State Park, Onawa, IA](#)

#### **July: White Catfish Camp Dinner**



Trail cam deer

## **Upcoming One-time Events**

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**Our Chapter:** See list of Dinner Speakers at left

<https://www.facebook.com/MouthofthePlatte/>

### **Other Chapters:**

#### **Sergeant Floyd Tri-State:**

President: Doug Davis: [xjewelerdoug@hotmail.com](mailto:xjewelerdoug@hotmail.com)

Next meeting: April 2024

**Southern Prairie:** [SouthernPrairie@lewisandclark.org](mailto:SouthernPrairie@lewisandclark.org)

[www.facebook.com/SouthernPrairieRegionLewisandClark](https://www.facebook.com/SouthernPrairieRegionLewisandClark)

President: Dan Sturdevant (816-679-5925) [dan@sturdevantlawoffice.com](mailto:dan@sturdevantlawoffice.com)

### **National Organization:**

**(LCTHF Calendar)**

**LCTHF 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting:** September 23-27, 2024

Location: Charlottesville, Virginia

Info: [lewisandclark.org](http://lewisandclark.org)

[Link to Lewis and Clark Activities Descriptions](#)

Jefferson's America: Zoom talk-Julie Fenster: Nov 19, 3pm

Boathouse Holiday Party, St. Charles, MO: Dec. 2, 4-9pm

### **Other Organizations:**

**Cass County Historical Society Museum:** Tues-Sat 12-4.

[Link to other Cass County Special Events](#)

**Durham Western Heritage Museum:**

Tues-Sat 10-4. Sun 12-4.

[Link to Bus and Walking Tours](#)

**Fontanelle Forest:** 8-5 [Fontanelle Trading Post](#)

Nebraska's Deep Roots-Trading Post Bicentennial: to Dec 2024

**Fort Atkinson Living History:** (See p. 30)

**Historic Downtown Plattsmouth Association:**

[historicdowntownplattsmouth@gmail.com](mailto:historicdowntownplattsmouth@gmail.com)

**Missouri River Basin Lewis and Clark Visitor Center:**

Monday – Saturday 10-4. Sunday – 12-4 pm

Christmas for the Birds: December 27, 10 am – 3 pm

First Day Hike: January 1, 2024

Brown Bagging with Birds: Every Friday noon in Jan/Feb

Native American Artifacts Show: March 9

Saturday with a Soldier: April 13

**Mormon Trail Center at Winter Quarters:**

M-Sat 10-8, Sun 12-8.

**Nebraska History Museum Special Exhibitions:**

Tues, Wed, Fri, Sat 9-4. Thurs 9-8. Sun, Mon closed.

Piecing together the past: to June 2024

**Pow Wows in Iowa:** [www.powwows.com](http://www.powwows.com)

**Sarpy County Historical Museum:** Tues-Sat 10-4.

**WanderNebraska:** to May 2024

**Sioux City Lewis and Clark Center:** Tues-Fri 9-5 Sat-Sun 12-5

Nancy Gillis on Women in the Fur Trade: Nov. 19, 2-3 p.m.

Dan Holtz on Story Songs of NE & Great Plains: Nov. 26, 2-3 pm

**Sioux City Public Museum:**

U.S. Military Medicine History: Nov. 16, noon

**Sgt. Floyd River Museum and Welcome Center:**

**Washington County Museum:** Tues-Fri 9-5. Sat 9-1.