

Portage Chronicle



Reporting the events of the Portage Route Chapter, Great Falls, Montana

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A New Look for the Chapter

Phil Scriver

With the election of a new president the Chapter is moving in a new direction. Like every other organization the Chapter must carefully plan its activities around its checkbook balance. However, we are very fortunate to have some other assets to draw upon. Those assets include an inventory of sales items, donated artwork and reproduction rights to smaller size replica bronzes of the Sacajawea statue at the federal courthouse.

To more carefully track those assets and our checkbook the Treasurer is diligently working to load the Chapter's finances onto the computer using Quick Books. We will soon be in line with the new list of requirements mandated by the IRS (and past president Steve Kubick can quit harassing everyone about it).

Although the Treasurer, Dave Pidcock, loudly complains "but I was an English major" President John Toenyes persists with his push to get the finances computerized.

John, being a long time business owner, thinks everyone on the Board should have a job so he has made a variety of assignments to help get a better handle on our finances and to develop a budget for the Chapter's future activities.

One group is to examine all the donated artwork and develop a plan for selling some or all of it. Another group will develop a plan for marketing the Sacajawea bronzes. These two groups potentially will generate funds for the Chapter's work for several years to come. There were a total of six major committees and task forces established. Each one is chaired by a Board member who will then go to the membership as needed for help. Additionally, every Board member is tasked to come up with events or activities to generate money or further our mission of education and promoting the Lewis and Clark legacy.

My personal tasking was "Communications and Promotions" which includes such things as brochures, flyers, maps, etc. the Chapter has or needs; this newsletter; and marketing planning.

It may appear that the organization is driven or controlled by finances, but in reality what the planning process has done is require project planners to include

the means of funding any expenses incurred in their activity. A project without a budget and clear source of funding simply can't be done. To say the expenses will be paid from the Chapter treasury won't work either.

Re-Live the Journey

Ella Mae Howard

All you have to do is grab your toothbrush and pajamas, and join Barb Kubick and Ella Mae Howard for

this all women's trip of a lifetime---a five day four night trip on the Wild and Scenic Upper Missouri River. We



will float through the spectacular White Cliffs area as well as the dramatic Missouri River Breaks, and visit several of the camps where Lewis and Clark stayed. We will marvel at ancient tipi rings and rock art sites and gaze upon some of the same scenes captured by Karl Bodmer's pens and brushes. We will visit Frank Hagadone's well-preserved homestead, located in some of the most remote country in the lower forty eight.

Look forward to evenings when you will join Barb and Ella Mae around the campfire to talk about Lewis and Clark, and those who came later to this remarkable country--like the steam boaters and the homesteaders. Be prepared to eat marshmallows roasted over the campfire and sing the wonderful old song made famous by Gene Autry---"Don't Fence Me In."

Barb and Ella Mae with the help of River Odysseys West are doing this trip for the benefit of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation's Bill Sherman Library. Five hundred dollars of the cost of the trip will be donated directly to the library.

For trip details and costs on this all women trip, contact Ella Mae at ellahoward@q.com or call River Odysseys West at 800-451-6034.

Re-creating Lewis and Clark

Phil Scriver

Who first recorded using the Expedition Journals to find historic locations in our area of the Trail? Who put up that Lewis and Clark sign out on the east end of 10th Avenue South?

These and many more questions will be answered in the coming years as a group of people who have spent a long time studying Lewis and Clark in our area put together a history of what has been done here.

Lewis and Clark have become a basic part of our heritage, but it took a great amount of work from many people over a lot of years to make it happen. This project was started to ensure that legacy continues.

The group will research files from the Chapter, Honor Guard and Interpretive Center along with personal files and their own memories to get on paper the most complete history possible of what has been done and by who since before the city of Great Falls was even established.

Upcoming Events

--Continuing Education, LCIC, at 2 pm & 7 pm; 1/11, 2/8, 3/8, 4/12

--Sherman Breakfast; March 19, 2011

--All Women Missouri River Float; this summer

--Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center Anniversary, May 1

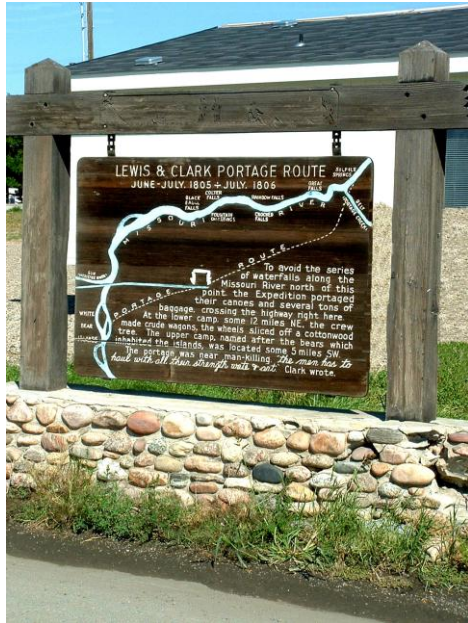
--Annual Lewis and Clark Festival, June 24-26

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Chapter Volunteers for the Sherman Library

Sue Buchel

At our annual meeting in September, the Portage Route Chapter membership re-affirmed its support of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation's Sherman Library and Archive, which is located in the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center. The Foundation has experienced budgetary challenges and currently has no staff position dedicated to the Library.

We need membership help to fulfill our pledge of support! If you have the time and inclination to help staff the Foundation office and work on projects that maintain the library, please call Sue Buchel, our chapter's coordinator, at 788-8923, or email at retireinmt@yahoo.com. We can find a time and project that would match your interests and skills.

Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center volunteer John Rider already assists most mornings (thanks, John!) so we primarily need to fill afternoon slots. Help us keep this resource viable and help the Foundation at the same time!

Several Tours Planned for the Summer

Phil Scriver

As we have done for the past several years we are now planning for this summer's tours. Although specific tours are planned by various Lewis and Clark groups, each tour is open to anyone that might be interested in participating.

The Honor Guard is looking at a tour to see the updated fort at Fort Benton this spring and another one to Lost Lake over in the Geraldine area. There is also talk of a tour to view the remnants of the Mullan Road in the Cascade/Sun River area and another hike up on Fort Mountain.



As the details are formalized on each one of these adventures information will be provided.

Some of these tours may not sound like Lewis and Clark tours, but a good connection can be made to each place. In addition you will get to see some very interesting parts of our geography without the concern for getting lost (some trips go to quite remote areas).

Trail Plans and the Eastern Legacy

Sue Buchel

In a December 1, 2010 letter to LCTHF membership, President Stephanie Ambrose Tubbs encouraged all members to provide Service on the Eastern Legacy Special Resource Study being conducted by the National Park Service. This article helps our Chapter members understand what this study is about and how they can participate.

First, the National Park Service is involved in TWO separate planning processes at this time: the Eastern Legacy Study and a Comprehensive General Management Plan for the current National Historic Trail.

The following are excerpts from the website: Eastern Legacy Study:
(<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=32773>)

The National Park Service has been directed by Congress to conduct a special resource study to assess the suitability and feasibility of adding the Eastern Legacy sites associated with the preparation and return phases of the Lewis and Clark expedition to the existing Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. The existing Trail extends west from Wood River, Illinois for approximately 3,700 miles to the mouth of the Columbia River in Oregon and Washington. The study area for the Eastern Legacy extends from Wood River, Illinois along the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and will include additional sites and overland routes followed by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, whether independently or together, prior to and following the 1804-1806 expedition.

The planning team will review and consider existing conditions, previous studies that have identified significant sites, public input regarding desired conditions for these sites and will then assess the suitability and feasibility of extending the Trail to include Eastern Legacy sites. Public input plays a critical role in this process and we invite you to participate in this study. Once the study is completed, Congress will make the final determination of what, if any, action it will take regarding an extension of the existing Trail.

The National Park Service began holding public meetings in the Fall of 2010. Interested parties can check the website periodically for updates on the study, public meeting announcements and to view documents that are open for public review and comment (see the left-hand column of the webpage for links). There will be multiple opportunities throughout the process for the public to provide comments and input on this noteworthy study. The General Management Plan is available on the web at
(<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=15829>)

Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail announces the start of a long range, comprehensive planning effort and invites your participation. The initial comment period for this study has started, and will extend through October 30, 2010. Other formal opportunities to provide comments will occur during the alternative review phase of the process and following the publication of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. To view the status of this plan, follow the links on the left-hand column of the website.

Who better to provide comments than those of us intimately involved with the trail and knowledgeable of the history of the Lewis and Clark Expedition?

Two Selected for Sherman Award

Phil Scriver

Two long-time Portage Route Chapter members will receive the Sherman Fellow Award during ceremonies at the annual Bill Sherman breakfast March 19. Don Peterson and Larry Epstein were selected for their contributions to the Chapter and the National Foundation. Both have devoted many hours to keeping the Lewis and Clark legacy alive by serving as tour guide to groups visiting sites across our region.

Don and Larry have such a wealth of knowledge of these locations it is hard to believe they were not on the original trip in 1805-1806. A trip to Camp Disappointment and the Two Medicine Fite Sight "could not happen" without Larry, a past president of the National Foundation. Don Peterson recently won the Distinguished Service Award from the Foundation, but is better known for his tours that combine Lewis and Clark history with other aspects of local area history. Who else can mix Lewis and Clark, homesteaders, and his boyhood into one brief stop along the highway?

A Special Thank You

Phil Scriver

Sometimes things just seem to move so fast that we forget how we got started. Another element of the changeover of our bookkeeping to Quick Books is that Chapter membership will be added to that system. This is a significant change from how we have been operating.

Darlene Fassler has been our membership secretary for more years than I can remember. She has almost singlehandedly kept very good track of exactly who has paid and when, along with addresses so that information on Chapter events could be sent to the membership. Because of her we all knew who belonged to the Portage Route Chapter.

As we move to the new system I pass along to Darlene my personal thank you for a terrific job well done. I am sure the rest of the Board (past and present) agree.

Take a Self-Guided Tour Along the Levee

Phil Scriver

When planning your recreational activities for the coming summer, be sure to take a day and make the 40 mile drive to see the river levee in Fort Benton. In Fort Benton you will find a wide range of history including Lewis and Clark, fur trade, steamboating, homesteading, early day agriculture and much more.

Take in the two museums and BLM visitor center, then a leisurely stroll along the levee with a series of interpretive signs. Finish with a tour of the re-created old fort which includes the oldest building in the state of Montana.

You will see a microcosm of the state's history and understand why Fort Benton is billed as the birthplace of Montana.



Interpretive sign on the levee discusses Lewis' reunion with Sgt Ordway in 1806.



ABOVE: Overlook on hill above Fort Benton; view to south is site of original Fort Benton (Fort Lewis)

BELOW: Marker designating the starting point of the Whoopup Trail north to Canada.



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