



Westward Barriers

Monthly Newsletter of the Travelers' Rest Chapter

of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation

PO Box 447 – Lolo, MT 59847 www.travelersrestchapter.org

Keepers of the Travelers' Rest Story – Stewards of the Lolo Trail

The Meeting: Thursday, January 6th at 7 p.m. – Lolo Community Center

The Program: Video Presentation – **The Spirit of Sacajawea**

The Background: Two hundred years after the Lewis & Clark expedition to the Pacific, a new documentary retells the story of Sacajawea, the Indian woman who traveled with them, giving birth on the way and then carrying her infant across the country on her back. The Spirit of Sacajawea reexamines the life and legacy of this woman whose image adorns more monuments than any other woman in US history - this time from the point of view of her own Native American people. Through a mix of interviews, footage shot along the trail west, the original Lewis & Clark journals, and an original score by Native American artists, the Naka Productions team has endeavored to tell Sacajawea's story that both adheres to fact and reaches beyond-to the larger truths of westward expansion and its impact on Native Americans past and present.

Nearly six years in the making, the film was originally conceived as a straightforward exploration of the myths and legends surrounding this celebrated yet essentially mysterious Native American woman. Principal videography along the expedition's route had already begun when the team arrived at Monticello to film the initial Bicentennial Commemoration event in January 2003. Standing in sub-freezing weather for hours, the filmmakers witnessed a display of unity and personal testimony that profoundly impacted their approach to Sacajawea's story. Speaker after speaker talked passionately about the unrecognized role that Native people played in the Lewis & Clark journey. Historians, singers, authors, shamans, dancers, all united to make clear the need for looking at the expedition through a new conceptual lens.

One of the most revered women in American history, Sacajawea has been romanticized and often misinterpreted. Revolving around interviews with her tribal peoples as well as recognized historians, this documentary examines the many controversies regarding her life, how her role in the Lewis & Clark journey impacted her tribes, and how they are surviving today.

YES - IT'S THAT TIME WHEN ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE DUE

Or... 3.5 Dang Good Reasons to RENEW your Travelers' Rest Chapter Membership

1. We're Cheap... for a 'Basic Annual Membership' of \$10 (less than \$1.00 a month) you get so much for so little
 - * But Wait – There's More. We are thinking of throwing in an Amazing Ginsu Knife if you Renew within 48 hours
2. We mail and Email a Concise, Informational and Educational four-page Monthly Newsletter to you nine times a year
 - * And it doubles as a great fire starter for the fireplace or a campfire if you really don't like to read Newsletters
3. We bring some of the BEST History Speakers, Presentations & Video's in the Entire World to Lolo, Montana
 - * This is tougher than you can imagine since some of our speakers shy away from towns with Historic Latrines
- 3.5. You get \$5 Off on all books that we sell. The \$10 Discount on TWO Books pays for a Basic \$10 Membership
 - * Pretty soon we hope to figure out how to pay **YOU** Big Money just for promising to be one of our Members

To Find Out If It Is Time For You To Renew... Just Look at the Message on your Mailing Label

HISTORY CHANNEL PROBES MYSTERY OF LEWIS' DEATH

Review by Ritchie Doyle – Travelers' Rest Chapter Member, Actor, Reenactor and History Prober

The History Channel's new series, called **Brad Meltzer's Decoded**, debuted in December. Each episode stars Meltzer (a bestselling novelist) and his team – trial attorney Scott Rolle, mechanical engineer Christine Mckinley and English professor Buddy Levy – as they investigate mysteries from America's past.

The show producers decided to focus on a single mystery for each hour-long program. The focus of the second episode, titled **"Secret Presidential Codes"**, was the mystery of Meriwether Lewis' death. Though the show considered the arguments for both suicide and murder, Meltzer and his team favored murder as having the highest possibility. They addressed what many already knew, and at least one thing that none of us knew:

- Mrs. Grinder's three different stories of her on-site account at Grinder's Stand (there were no eyewitnesses).
- Lewis' extremely powerful and lethal 69 caliber "horse" pistols.
- The bitter rivalry between Gov. Lewis & Gen. James Wilkinson (the alleged mastermind of Lewis' murder).
- The 1848 Tennessee Monument Committee who unearthed Lewis' remains and whose physician reported that Lewis probably "died by the hands of an assassin".
- The FBI document examiners who, in 1996, concluded that Major Gilbert Russell's hand-written testimony of Lewis' demise and death is a forgery – a faked document.

What we did not know about this mystery is revealed at the end of this program. It appears that Major James Neelly was supposed to accompany (via horseback) and protect Lewis along the Natchez Trace. But he didn't, and he is a 'major' liar. In his account of Lewis' last hours – on which so many (especially Thomas Jefferson) have put so much credence – Neelly states that he was there or nearby when Lewis died. However, the program exposes the fact that on the time and date of the shooting, Neelly was over 50 miles away at a court hearing where he was being sued for past debts. Meltzer concludes that Neelly's account "can not be trusted".

To the show's credit, it does not declare "case closed". Indeed the case is still open and will probably remain unsolved – unless the National Park Service (which manages the Natchez Trace, Lewis' Grave and Lewis' Monument) ever agrees to allow Lewis' remains be exhumed and examined, as many scholars and over 200 Lewis descendants have long petitioned for.

Travelers' Rest Chapter – Membership Information

* Please check your mailing label to determine if it is time for you to Renew your Membership

Please send in the requested information listed below and make your check payable to the Travelers' Rest Chapter:

Send Payments To: Travelers' Rest Chapter · PO Box 447 · Lolo, MT · 59847

____ New Member ____ Renewal ____ Address Change **2011/01**

Name _____ Date _____

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

____ Scout (Student) \$5 ____ Private (Individual) \$10 ____ Platoon (Family) \$15

____ Interpreter \$25 ____ Corporal \$50 ____ Sergeant \$75

____ Captain \$100 ____ General \$500 ____ Jefferson (Lifetime) \$1,000



Travelers' Rest State Park Update – Loren Flynn, Park Manager: Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP)

It's New Years' Resolution time! Our 2011 resolution at Travelers' Rest State Park is to set an all-time park attendance record – and that would be a great 10th anniversary present for this unique and very special place that opened in 2001. The record attendance so far was in 2005 – the peak of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial – when 25,000 visitors came through our gates (5,000 of them in a 4 day period!). Visitation for 2010 was a little more than 22,000. So with an increase of 15%, we can set an all-time high for this park – 5 years after the end of the Bicentennial, when many people expected us to be an afterthought.

How can you help? Well, it begins by spreading the word about the Park, and attending the 8th annual Winter Storytelling Series, which runs every Saturday at 11:00 a.m. from January 8th through the end of March. This will be the first in a series of programs to celebrate the past decade of hands-on education and careful interpretation that have become the hallmark of Travelers' Rest State Park. And then please set aside some quality time to visit the park with friends, family, kids and especially bring your out-of-town visitors who would love to know more about our local and regional history. This Resolution is not the same as losing 20 pounds or watching less television, but maybe it is a resolution we can all enjoy keeping!

- Saturday, January 8, 11:00 a.m. – Josiah Pinkham, Nez Perce History
- Saturday, January 15, 11:00 a.m. – Frances Vanderburg, Winter Stories
- Saturday, January 22, 11:00 a.m. – Tim Ryan, Salish Geomythology
- Saturday, January 29, 11:00 a.m. – Louis Adams, Salish Stories
- Saturday, February 5, 11:00 a.m. – Vernon Finley, Kootenai Stories
- Saturday, February 12, 11:00 a.m. – Tony Incashola, Salish History
- Saturday, February 19, 11:00 a.m. – Allen Pinkham, Nez Perce Stories

* Remember – The Travelers' Rest State Park Education Auction Fundraiser is January 21, 2011. Tickets are available at the State Park office or from any TRPHA board member.

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Scott Sproull - Newsletter Editor & President



Video

Presentation

Thursday, Jan 6th

7:00 p.m.

Lolo Community Center

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From the Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition Edited by Gary Moulton:

[Jan. 6, 1806 entry by Captain Meriwether Lewis at their Fort Clatsop Winter Quarters west of today's Astoria, Oregon]

Capt Clark set out after an early breakfast with the party in two canoes as had been concerted the last evening; Charbono and his Indian woman were also of the party; the Indian woman was very impotunate to be permitted to go, and was therefore indulged; she observed that she had traveled a long way with us to see the great waters, and that now that monstrous fish was also to be seen, she thought it very hard she could not be permitted to see either (she had never yet been to the Ocean).

[Jan. 8, 1806 entry by Captain William Clark along Ecola Creek and Ecola Bay at today's Cannon Beach, Oregon]

... proceeded to the place the whale had perished, found only the Skelleton of this monster on the Sand between 2 of the villages of the Kil a mox nation; the Whale was already pillaged of every valuable part by the Kil a mox Inds... this Skeleton measured 105 feet. I returned to the village of 5 Cabins on the Creek which I shall call E co-la or whale Creek, found the nativs busily engaged boiling the blubber, which they performed in a large Squar wooden trought by means of hot Stones; the oil when extracted was Secured in bladders and the Guts of the whale... The Kil a mox although they possessed a large quantities of this blubber and oil were so prenurious that they disposed of it with great reluctance and in Small quantities only; insomuch that my utmost exertion aided by the party with the Small Stock of merchindize I had taken with me were not able to precure more blubber than about 300 wt. and a fiew gallons of oil; Small as this Stock is I prise it highly; and thank providence for directing the whale to us; and think him much more kind to us than he was to jonah, having Sent this monster to be Swallowed by us in Sted of Swallowing of us as jonah's did.