



Meriwether Lewis

Field Notes



William Clark

From the Badger State Chapter of the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc

October 2010

Wisconsin's Chapter ~ Interested & Involved

Number 36

During this time in history: (May 1806)

(The source for all entries is, "The Journals of the Lewis & Clark Expedition edited by Gary E. Moulton, U. of Nebraska Press, 1983-2001.)

May 7, 1806, Nez Perce County, Idaho, Sgt. Gass: "All the Indians from the Rocky mountains to the falls of the Columbia River are an honest, ingenuous and well disposed people; but from the falls to the sea-coast, and along it, they are a rascally, thieving set."

May 10, 1806, near Orofino, Idaho, Lewis: "We proposed exchanging a good horse in rather low order for a young horse in tolerable order with a view to kill it. The hospitality of the Nez Perce chief, Broken Arm, revolted at the idea of an exchange, he told us that his young men had a great abundance of young horses and if we wished to eat them we should be furnished with as many as we wanted...This is a much greater act of hospitality than we have witnessed from any nation or tribe since we have passed the Rocky mountains. In short, be it spoken to their immortal honor it is the only act which deserves the appellation of hospitality which we have witnessed in this quarter..."

May 13, 1806, near Kamiah, ID, Lewis: "The Nez Perce people have immense numbers of horses; 50, 60 or a hundred head is not unusual for an individual to possess."

May 22, 1806, Camp Chopunnish, ID, Sgt. Gass: "These Indians are the most active horse-men I ever saw; they will gallop their horses over precipices, that I should not think of riding over at all..."

May 27, 1806, Camp Chopunnish, ID, Lewis: "...Whenever we were in want of meat chief Hohastillpilp requested that we would kill any of his horses we wished; this is a piece of liberality which would do honor to such as the best of civilization; indeed I doubt whether there are not a great number of our countrymen who would see us fast many days before their compassion would excite them to a similar act of liberality..."

Badger State Chapter Picnic Or "Where the ~~Buffalo~~ Bison Roam"



Photos by Cathy Wagner

By: Jack Schroeder

It seemed like we were travelling through the rolling hills of Southern Wisconsin on a hot summer day until we got to Catnip Hollow. Then as we drove down the curving driveway, a small herd of grazing bison slowly appeared on our left, and it felt like we were 700 miles away, in the rolling hills near the Missouri River at Fort Mandan.

Our gracious hosts Dr. Mark Koepl and Cheryl McGamery had invited our chapter members to convene the annual chapter picnic at their home and bison ranch south of Mt. Horeb. Mark and Cheryl are committed to restoring and preserving the prairie conditions that are natural to their property. Maintaining a herd of about 30 bison is a part of their efforts.

When I arrived (a little late as usual), the members were lazing in the shade on a slope above the farmhouse. Mark was telling the attentive crowd about his deep interest in the history of the American west, especially of the natives of the prairies, and their indispensable companion, the bison.

We were high enough on the hill that the summer breeze was perfectly comfortable, adding to our delight to be in such a charming place. Mark told us that the bison were fairly easy to raise, since they were once a large native population in southern Wisconsin. They are well-adapted to the climate (unlike some of us), and the local forage keeps them strong and healthy.

We straggled out of our shade and walked a short distance to the meadow, where the full sun and heat of a July day made themselves felt. Mark told us that the annual cycle of bison life revolved around the birthing season, which occurs normally in April and May.

The calves were a blond or biscuit color compared to the dark brown and black of the adults. Nearly a dozen of the calves were scattered on the hillside, usually not far from their mothers. The old bull wasn't visible at first, but he rose from a dusty wallow, and was quite clearly larger than the others. He didn't seem to take much interest in us, but the fence suddenly seemed a little flimsy.

The herd did not gradually approach us as they had when Jim and I were there on an earlier day. At that time, they casually drifted over to where we stood and stopped quite close to us. I think the size of our group made them wary this time.

Mark said that when the herd was first established, he tried to control the animal's movements with farm equipment, but that proved to be frustrating and futile for all involved. He said that as he came to understand their character and habits, he stopped trying to control them. These social animals have complex dynamics between the herd members, and their evolution has created a bison culture that shapes their actions and interactions. His admiration was evident and contagious.

Of course all of this activity generated a considerable appetite among the members. We moved our chairs into another patch of shade, and the meal was prepared. The large grilled bison burgers were well received, and special contributions from the members made for a fine feast.



After a brief address on Foundation events by President Jim, a free raffle was conducted, with one prominent prize being the five remaining bison burgers. Mark entertained us with an account of the time he escaped injury when a cow charged him with evil intent. He told us too of his suspicion that the old bull had once intentionally led two young bulls to the area where animals are corralled before being shipped to the meat processor. They did in fact get removed from the herd.

This led us to the freezer, where considerable quantities of delicious and healthy bison meat, as well as other bison items were made available for purchase. This was a very popular idea with the members, and we took much home with us as provisions against the long winter.

Our picnic was enjoyed by all who attended, and we are very grateful to Mark and Cheryl for their kindness. When the snows begin to pile up outside the window, we can be warmed once again to recall our time in the sun at their ranch. And I'll still be trying to figure out what to do with this bison skull.



Newsletter articles



Do you have an interesting thought about the Lewis and Clark Expedition, or know someone who shares our interest in "The Journey?" Would you like to share it with others through this newsletter? Then write to either Jim Rosenberger at punkinz@tds.net or Bill Holman at wghmch@chorus.net. If you don't have e-mail, call Bill at (608) 249-2233. If you include a picture with your article, we will be happy to return it upon request.

How The Buffalo Came To Be Hunted

By: Jack Schroeder



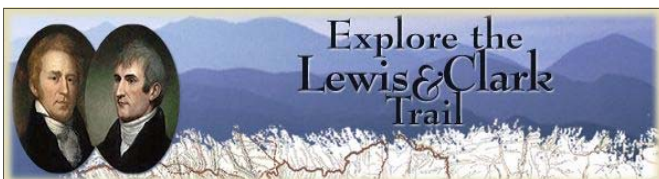
(With "Bison Apologies" to Lorna Hainesworth)

Long ago, the buffalo used to hunt man, causing great destruction as the two species fed off each other. The magpie and the hawk agreed to act as counselors between man and buffalo to decide which species would reign. The council declared a race between buffalo, man and the rest of animals. The species that won would have the right to hunt those that lost.

The buffalo chose their swiftest cow for the race and as the participants set off, it seemed clear that the buffalo would win. But at the last moment, the magpie and hawk surged forward winning the race in the name of man. The buffalo cow, upon seeing her defeat, told her herds to hide, for now man would hunt them. She also told them to take a bit of human flesh for the last time. The buffalo obeyed and they placed the human flesh below their throats before fleeing.

From that day forward, the Cheyenne never ate the buffalo flesh located below the throat. In thanks to the magpie and hawk for their help, they agreed to never eat them, but only use their discarded feathers for their most important ceremonies.

For a moment-by-moment account of this race, including how some animals came to have their current appearance, click on the folklore website <www.ilhawaii.net/~stony/lore122.html>.



Seaman Says...May 5, 1806:



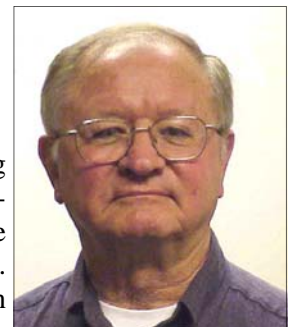
May 5, 1806: We are camped with our old friends, the Nez Perce, who have given us much aide on our travels to the western coast. However, an unfortunate incident took place this evening.

While at dinner, one of the Nez Perce threw a puppy at my Captain Lewis and laughed about the men of the Corps eating dog. Captain Lewis became very angry with the Indian, threw the puppy back and threatened the man with his tomahawk. The man was very surprised, viewing what he had done as a joke.

During all of this no one paid attention to the young dog, who had been tossed around like a ball, and so I went to his aide. He was, of course, very confused and upset by the treatment he had received but had no physical harm done to him. I removed him from the camp area, gave him some of my food to eat and attempted to explain how unpredictable humans can sometimes be. He listened attentively but I am not sure he found any comfort in what I told him or why he had been treated so unfairly. Eventually he returned to his family none the worse for wear but I suspect he continues to wonder about this experience.



Badger State Chapter Quarterly Meeting



Jim Gramentine

Our Fall quarterly meeting finds us returning to the spacious meeting room of the Brown Deer Public Library. The meeting will take place on Saturday, October 30, 2010. Our business meeting will begin at 10:15 AM and we will discuss the activities of our Chapter and Foundation. Following the business meeting, our guest speaker will be Chapter founder and past president, Jim Gramentine.

Our previous meeting at the Brown Deer Library was in April 2009 and we discussed the various aspects of the death of Meriwether Lewis. At our October 30th meeting, Jim Gramentine will discuss Meriwether Lewis as a risk taker, reviewing some of the situations where Lewis places himself or expedition members at risk. Jim will then open the topic

Cont'd on page 4

Continued from page 3

to those in attendance to voice their opinions on any and all risk situations and discuss this aspect of Meriwether Lewis.

Our meeting ends between 1P.M. and 1:30P.M. but our discussions may continue during lunch at Libby Montana restaurant. See you in Brown Deer!

If you haven't received the mailed meeting announcement or need more information, contact Jim Rosenberger at 608-845-6365 or <punkinz@tds.net>



Lewis Exhumation Follow-Up

In our July 2010 issue of "Field Notes" we included an article written by Lewis family descendants explaining their desire to attempt to find the cause of Lewis's death by having his body exhumed and having a forensic investigation done. Since Lewis is buried on land under the care of the National Park Service, descendants sought approval for the exhumation from the Department of the Interior.

Initially then-Assistant Interior Secretary Lyle Laverty seemed to give a positive response when he wrote descendants, "...an exhumation was appropriate and in the public interest..." However, in a letter from Assistant Secretary Thomas Strickland dated April 2, 2010, the Department of the Interior reversed its position and ended the permitting process and quite possibly the 14 year old effort of descendants to exhume Lewis's body.

The descendants have responded with additional letters detailing their cause but in another letter from Assistant Secretary Strickland dated August 25, 2010 he stated the decision to not allow the process to move forward is a final one.

Family descendants are now regrouping and considering their options.

Additional details can be found on the website established by family descendants; www.solvehemystery.org or the Kira Gale's website; www.deathofmeriwetherlewis.com.

Neither the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc. nor the Badger State Chapter of the Foundation has taken a position with regard to the exhumation of Meriwether Lewis.

We are saddened to add that we just received the news that Col. Thomas C. McSwain Jr. (Ret. US Air Force), 4th great-nephew of Meriwether Lewis and very active in the effort to exhume Lewis's remains, died on Thursday, October 7, 2010 at his residence surrounded by his family, while under the care of Hospice

The following repeated from our previous issue:

Thomas C. McSwain Jr. of Shepherdstown, WV, Howell Lewis Bowen of Charlottesville, VA, and Jane Lewis Sale Henley of Weems, VA are great-great-great-great Nephews and Niece of Meriwether Lewis. They are members of the Home Front Chapter, LCTHF and are officers of the Locust Hill Graveyard Foundation, which maintains the Lewis family's cemetery near Charlottesville. In addition, Jane Henley is a past President of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation.

Pre-Annual Meeting Trip By: Mary Rosenberger



On our drive out to the annual meeting this summer, both Jim and I noticed how "green" everything looked. In all our trips out west over the years during late summer, we had never seen the landscape look so luscious. While visiting our friends in eastern Montana, who happen to be cattle ranchers, they commented that it had been the wettest spring and summer they could remember. From the Badlands, through eastern Montana, westward to Missoula, over Lolo Trail, and along the river – it continued to amaze us how beautifully green everything was.

In my opinion, the one thing that holds true with the annual meetings, it seems to occur during the hottest week of the summer – no matter where the meeting happens to be. I thought this year that could be different based on the greenery and some evening thunderstorms we experienced coming through eastern Montana. When we arrived in Lewiston, Idaho on July 29th, the temperatures held up to

Continued on page 5

prior meetings. I swear, we could have fried an egg on the asphalt parking lot of the Red Lion Hotel the afternoon we pulled in. It was hot, pushing 100+, but a breeze was stirring, and not a cloud in the sky. It stayed that way the entire week – bearable, but very hot.

Jim was tied up in meetings the first couple of days, but on Saturday we went on a pre-meeting jet boat trip on the Snake River to the Ordway site. It was almost a 120 mile round-trip boat ride on the Snake River through Hell’s Canyon. For those of us who had never been on a flat bottomed jet boat before, the experience was awesome. Whether the depth of the water was less than 12” or 130 ft. deep, the boat just skims over the water at high speeds. Our boat captain was a great host and knew the river and all its’ bends like the back of his hand. He had grown up in the area and on the water all his life. The occasional spray we all received on the many turns in the river was a refreshing and exciting cool down. The boat held 50 and we were packed.



We stopped mid-morning for a light breakfast overlooking the river. (Picture above) From there we traveled on to the Nez Perce fishing lodge location believed to have been visited by Sgt. Ordway in May 1806. We left the boat and walked about a half a mile up the moderately steep embankment and actually viewed the site itself. Back then, they must have had a beautiful view of the river in both directions and considered it a good camping site. We had several key experts of the area and the historical/archaeologist sites, who spoke to the group – Allen Pinkham, a Nez Perce oral historian of his people’s culture and traditions; Dr. Ken Reid, a state archaeologist with the Idaho State Historical Society who has been working at the lodging site; and John Fisher a local retired high school science teacher from Lewiston who knew the history and complete geology of the area. Their pres-

entations were informative, engaging, and it was easy to “picture” the setting and the occurrences of 200 years ago. It was extremely emotionally charged to hear of the Nez Perce culture and how their people lived in such an open, barren, often brutal, yet beautiful countryside. (Dr. Ken Reid with microphone.)



On the return trip down the river we stopped for a mid-afternoon lunch at Garden Creek, a nature conservancy. After lunch the speakers continued their presentations until the skies began to cloud up and the wind picked up considerably. It rained only a few minutes and passed on. As we headed back to Lewiston we were treated to sightings of longhorn sheep. They came down to the water’s edge as if on cue and entertained us as we all rushed to take pictures. There were



many people on the river canoeing, rafting, jet boating, swimming and camping along the banks. It was easy to see that the river continues to be a drawing source to the area and a rescue from the heat.

It was a highlight for us, and certainly enhanced our annual meeting experience.

President's Message – October - 2010

I often think about the vision statement of the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, “Keepers of the Story – Stewards of the Trail” and what it might really mean to those of us who are such dedicated Lewis & Clark historians.



Jim Rosenberger

It seems to me that being a “Keeper of the Story” doesn’t necessarily just mean to preserve the story in some locked vault or preserve documents like the journals which support the story or even bring information that would expand on the story. Certainly, as the primary Lewis & Clark organization we have that responsibility but I think being a “keeper” does not mean to retain the story but rather to get out and tell the story. Like the oral tradition of the Native American Nations, we need to make sure the story is preserved and one of the most important ways of doing this is to tell the story over and over again to succeeding generations or for that matter, anyone who will listen. Every time we talk about the Lewis & Clark Expedition, a specific aspect of the Expedition, any member of the Corps of Discovery or what we are doing as a Chapter or Foundation member, we are acting as a “Keeper of the Story”. “Keeping” a story doesn’t mean holding that story in, it means sharing it with as many other people as possible.

Similarly, there are many ways to be a “Steward of the Trail”. One might go out on the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail and work to maintain the physical condition of the trail through a government agency or privately sponsored program. One might support the expansion of the trail to extend to the Eastern Legacy.

Currently programs such as the America’s Great Outdoors project, which promotes getting people out from behind their desks and computers and explore the wonderful outdoor resources of our Nation, includes getting people out on our Trail and participating in hiking, boating or horseback riding the Trail. Our National Trails and the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail are a part of this project. “Complete the National Trail System” is a program which supports the Trail system and encourages the public to use Historic and Scenic Trails. The program includes completing and extending the trails including the Eastern Legacy of the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail. The Na-

tional Park Service is conducting a long range, comprehensive planning effort that will guide future administration and management of the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail for the next 15 – 20 years. A comment form has been sent out to the general public or you can go online at <<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/lecl>> to complete questions that will assist the Park Service in developing their plan. Being a “Steward of the Trail” encompasses giving the Park Service your comments and ideas. (They are due by October 30, 2010.)

There are many people who devote themselves to research, writing and producing multi-media productions about Lewis and Clark. There are many people and agencies that devote their time and effort to maintaining the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail. We need these people and owe them our sincere thanks and appreciation for what they do. But every time you talk about the Lewis & Clark Expedition, the Foundation or the Badger State Chapter, every time you contribute in any way to the existence and maintenance of the Trail, you are a “Keeper of the Story – Steward of the Trail.”



Pompey's Pillar Owner Dies

By Laura Kennedy

KULR8.com – Billings, Montana

Story Published: Oct 6, 2010

BILLINGS - On Tuesday one of the original owners of Pompey's Pillar passed away at the age of 89. Montana has the well-preserved national monument because of the life work of Stella Foote.

Nearly 23 miles East of Billings, Pompey's Pillar rises above the landscape. The monument holds an original signature from Captain William Clark's stop in 1806.

Continued on page 7

Continued from page 6



Stella Foote with Bud Clark in 2006

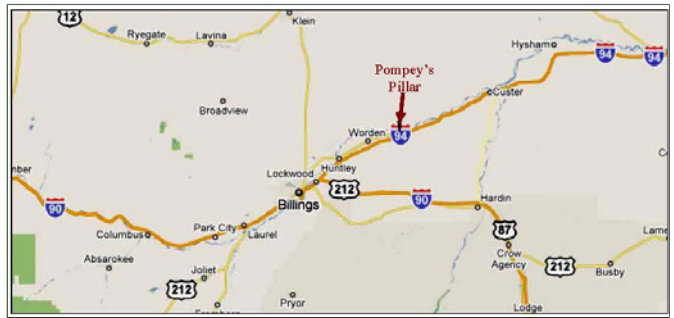
In 1955, Stella and Don Foote bought the land to preserve the pillar. "We tried to get the federal government, nobody had any money and they didn't want to do anything about it," Stella said at an event in 2005, "So we finally decided that the preservation gods had picked us."

Her son, John Foote, helped his parents take care of the land for nearly 40 years. "It was quite a task knowing that it was the only physical evidence of the whole Lewis and Clark Expedition," John said, "It was something that we decided that even though it wasn't a money making proposition it was something my family wanted to do."

Stella was the caretaker of the pillar until 1991 when her dream of it becoming a federally protected national monument came true. "It was probably one of the high points in her life to think that she was involved in that part of history," John said, "She did so much in her life, but she was so proud of that."

Monument Manager Dick Kodeski said we owe the great condition of Pompey's Pillar to Stella. "I certainly hope that Stella and her husband would approve of what we've developed now," Dick said, "All I hear are positive comments from the public, they enjoy coming out here, they enjoy learning about this piece of history."

John said his mother loved every minute taking care of Pompey's Pillar and preserving it for future generations. In 2006 the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial came to Pompey's Pillar and Stella Foote was able to celebrate the success of her preservation efforts.



E-mail Notice

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Treasurer's Report

The Badger Chapter had \$3144.46 in the Chapter Treasury as of October 1, 2010, and membership renewals are still coming in. If yours are not among them, please do it today!



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