

HISTORY OF THE CAROLINA CHAPTER

LEWIS AND CLARK TRAIL HERITAGE FOUNDATION

In 1998, interest in the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial was beginning to grow. One consequence was an increase in the membership of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, including more members from non-trail states such as North and South Carolina. Several people had mentioned to Bob Gatten their interest in forming a new chapter, not being content simply to belong to the national organization and the closest existing chapter, the Home Front Chapter in Charlottesville, Virginia. Thus, in October of 1998, Bob Gatten sent a letter/questionnaire to all members of the Foundation who lived in North Carolina, asking about their interest in forming a chapter.

The result was that Gatten hosted the organizational meeting of the group on Saturday, February 6, 1999. The first meeting of the Organizational Committee was called to order at 1:30 PM in Room 11 of the Foust Building on the campus of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) by Bob Gatten, a past President of the Foundation (1994-1996), who had previously invited the members of the Foundation living in North Carolina to attend. The purpose of the meeting was to explore the possibility of forming a chapter of the Foundation. Attending this organizational committee meeting were eleven interested individuals:

Guy Benson, Raleigh
Betsy Buss, Charlotte
Wayland Cooke, Greensboro
Doug Cutchins, Durham
Bob Gatten, Greensboro
Aubrey Gay, Zebulon
Marie Gay, Zebulon
Taylor Haynes, Robbins
Don Kreger, Cary
Ben Thomas, Zebulon
Jack Weil, Charlotte

Gatten discussed the history of the Foundation, the nature of chapters, the benefits of having local chapters, and other pertinent topics. The group voted unanimously to take the necessary steps to form a chapter and agreed that this chapter should include members from both North and South Carolina and be called the Carolina Chapter. Tentative plans were made for the next three meetings in 1999. Rather than pursuing the details of formal certification as a chapter, the group agreed that it was more important to function as a group of Foundation members interested in Lewis and Clark and to work to increase awareness of and interest in Lewis and Clark. Gatten agreed to serve as secretary and treasurer. Dues of \$10.00 per person were collected from 10 of the persons present. Davis North of Greensboro, who was unable to attend, also paid his dues. A total of \$110.00 was collected.

The minutes of the Inaugural Session of the Carolina Chapter held in the Dreyfus Auditorium, Research Triangle Park, on May 8, 1999, record that the first official officers (elected for one

year) were as follows:

President - Bob Gatten
Vice-President - Guy Benson
Secretary - Jack Weil
Treasurer - Aubrey Gay
Directors were elected for staggered terms:
Director, 1 year term- Betsy Buss
Director, 2 year term - Wayland Cooke
Director, 3 year term - George Harrison

Guy Benson gave the first program to the newly formed (but not yet "official") Carolina Chapter. His presentation was titled "Exploring the American West from Monticello: A Prospective of Maps from Columbus to Lewis and Clark."

By November 13, 1999, the Carolina Chapter had been officially chartered and the membership grown from 12 to 22 members.

Throughout the ten years the Carolina Chapter has been in existence, the Chapter has faithfully met four times a year in various places of interest in both North and South Carolina. Meetings have had interesting speakers and/or field trips. A wide range of subjects has been covered: cartography, medical aspects of the Expedition, the role of women in the Expedition, Richard Warfington (the only North Carolina member in the Expedition), etc. Since the Chapter's founding in 1999, members have attended every annual meeting of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation (10 meetings).

Presidents of the Carolina Chapter have been as follows:

Bob Gatten - for the first 2 years - 1999 and 2000
Guy Benson - 2001 and 2002
Taylor Haynes - 2003 - 2007
Trent Strickland - 2008 and is still serving

At the present time, the Carolina Chapter is alive and well. There are more than 40 members. Quarterly meetings are well attended. A newsletter sent out quarterly (by e-mail or "snail" mail) is keeping members informed and has greatly improved communication.

Trent Strickland, current President of the Carolina Chapter, uncovered the little-known fact that one of the official members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, Richard Warfington, was born in Louisburg, North Carolina (near Raleigh, the capital). Strickland's article entitled "The Corps of Discovery's Forgotten Sergeant" was published in the Foundation's journal, *We Proceeded On*, in the February 2005 issue.

On December 16, 2008, Chapter members Dr. Jerry Cross, Aubrey Gay, and Trent Strickland appeared before the North Carolina Historical Highway Marker Advisory Committee to present their arguments for the placing of a North Carolina Historical Highway Marker to recognize Warfington's contributions to the Lewis and Clark Expedition. The Selection Committee then approved Strickland's application for this marker, which will be erected in the summer of 2009.

Carolina Chapter member Bob Gatten now spends some of his time giving lectures on Lewis and Clark to travelers on Columbia and Snake River cruises.

Current officers of the Carolina Chapter are as follows:

President - Trent Strickland

Vice-President - Position not filled now

Secretary - John Lipscomb

Treasurer - Aubrey Gay, who has served as treasurer since the Chapter was organized in 1999.

Librarian - Marie Gay

Newsletter Editor - Clara Strickland

Chapter Meetings and Programs Presented at Each Meeting

1999

February 6, University of N.C. at Greensboro: Meeting to discuss the formation of a chapter.

May 8, Raleigh, N.C.: Guy Benson presented a program on Lewis and Clark's significant cartography entitled "Exploring the American West from Monticello: A Perspective of Maps From Columbus to Lewis and Clark." Guy is the author of Lewis and Clark: The Maps of Exploration, 1507-1814, University of Virginia Library, 2002.

August, National meeting held in Bismarck, North Dakota.

November 13, Charlotte, N.C.: Taylor Haynes and Jack Weil spoke on a philatelic project they were developing and Dr. Ben Thomas, chapter member, presented a program entitled "Medical Aspects of The Corps of Discovery."

2000

March 11, Greensboro, North Carolina: Bob Gatten presented a program entitled "Discovering the Birthplace of William Clark."

April 8, Raleigh, N.C.: Ron Laycock, National Director for Chapter Relations, presented a program entitled, "The Role of Women in the Lewis and Clark Expedition."

August 13 – 16, National Meeting in Dillon, Montana.

November 11 - 12, Charlottesville, Virginia: The meeting was held with the Home Front Chapter of Charlottesville, Virginia, and included visits to the following sites: Lewis and Meriwether cemeteries at Cloverfield and Locust Hill, a private tour of Monticello which included a visit to the upper floors and the Dome Room, lunch at Michie Tavern and William Clark's birthplace in Caroline County.

2001

January 27, Greensboro, North Carolina (Greensboro Public Library): Jack Weil and Taylor Haynes prepared an exhibit of books, maps, photographs, instruments, and Lewis and Clark paraphernalia to be on display for several months. They also presented a slide show of the 2000 national meeting in Dillon, Montana, including forest fires.

April 21, Rock Hill, South Carolina (Museum of York County and Historic Brattonville in McConnells): Dr. Ben Thomas presented a program on William Bratton who was a member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Mr. Sam Thomas, Curator of History for the York County Culture and Heritage Commission, discussed the genealogy of the South Carolina Brattons. Chapter members also toured Historic Brattonville.

August, National Meeting in Pierre, South Dakota (12 members in attendance). It was announced that Carolina Chapter pins and patches were available. Jack Weil had advanced funds for the production of the pins and patches.

October 27, Asheville, North Carolina (North Carolina Arboretum): Dr. T. Lawrence Mellichamp, Professor of Horticulture and Botany at UNC-Charlotte and Director of UNC-Charlotte Botanical Gardens, presented the program entitled "Comparison of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Vaguely Similar Exploration in the Carolinas by French Botanist, Andre Michaux, in the 1790s."

2002

January 19, Greensboro, North Carolina (Greensboro History Museum): Jane Henley, President of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation and a descendent of Meriwether Lewis' sister, presented a program tracing the return of Lewis and Clark from St. Louis to Washington, D.C. in 1806.

April 13, Lynchburg, Virginia (Poplar Forest): The Carolina Chapter met with the Home Front Chapter at Thomas Jefferson's retreat, Poplar Forest. The meeting was in observance and celebration of the 259th anniversary of Thomas Jefferson's birth.

July 28 – 31, National Meeting in Louisville, Kentucky (12 members in attendance)

October 26, Charleston, South Carolina: Dr. John Guice presented a program on the death of Meriwether Lewis. The meeting also included a cocktail party at the home of Jack and Ann Weil, located at the Isle of Palms. Also, meeting participants toured the H.L. Hunley (recovered Confederate submarine) exhibit at the Warren Lasch Conservation Center in Charleston.

2003

January, Charlottesville, Virginia - National Bicentennial Meeting. Several Carolina Chapter members participated in the week's events - Betsy Buss with her period dance group, Jon

Matherole with the St. Charles Color Guard, and Taylor Haynes and Jack Weil with their photo exhibit.

April 26, Robbins, North Carolina (Taylor Haynes' Studio): Taylor Haynes, Jack Weil, and Guy Benson shared their experiences at the Bicentennial Meeting held in Charlottesville, VA, in January.

August 10 - 13, Philadelphia, PA - National Meeting: Eight members of the Carolina Chapter were in attendance.

October 11, Camden, South Carolina: The meeting topic was "Sextants and their use by Lewis and Clark."

December 13 - 14, Kitty Hawk, North Carolina: The chapter meeting was held in conjunction with the Centennial of Flight celebration which took place at Kitty Hawk, N.C.

2004

May 23, St. Charles, Missouri: Eight Carolina Chapter members met while attending the National Signature event, "The Start of the Expedition."

August 4 - 7, Bismarck, North Dakota - National Meeting: Seven members of the Carolina Chapter were in attendance.

November 15 & 16, Greensboro, North Carolina: On Monday, November 15th, a reception was held for Dr. Gary Moulton at the Greensboro Historical Museum. On Tuesday, November 16th, chapter members had dinner with Dr. Moulton followed by a lecture by Dr. Moulton on the history of the journals. Both events were held at the UNC at Greensboro campus.

2005

February 5, Raleigh, North Carolina (North Carolina Museum of History): Dr. Joe Porter, Chief Curator of the N.C. Museum of History, presented a program on the works (writings/art) of Prince Maximilian and Karl Bodmer as they highlight the world of Lewis and Clark.

August, Portland and Astoria, Oregon - National Meeting: Six members of the Carolina Chapter were in attendance.

October 15, Beaufort and Fort Macon, North Carolina: Two programs were presented - Light Houses of the Carolina Coast and Elliot Coues.

2006

May 18, Charlottesville, Virginia: Jane Henley, former national president and president of the

Home Front Chapter, led a tour of the Lewis family graveyard at Locust Hill near Charlottesville.

August 30, Greensboro, North Carolina (Greensboro History Museum): Carolina Chapter members and representatives of the Home Front Chapter discussed the national meeting to be held in Charlottesville, VA in August, 2007.

September, St. Louis, Missouri - National Meeting.

2007

January 27, Greensboro, North Carolina (Greensboro History Museum): Bob Gatten presented a Power Point presentation entitled "Images of Lewis and Clark." Following the program, representatives of the Home Front Chapter met with Carolina Chapter members to plan for the national meeting to be held in August in Charlottesville, VA. Chapter president, Taylor Haynes, is designing the pin for the 07 national meeting.

August 4 - 7, Charlottesville, Virginia - National Meeting: Nine members of the Carolina Chapter were in attendance. Trent Strickland gave a talk on Richard Warfington.

November 9, Sanford, North Carolina: Nine members and three visitors met and made plans for the 2008 year.

2008

February 9, Charlotte, North Carolina (Jack Weil's Golden Eagle Gallery): Charlie Williams performed a one-man play in costume as Andre Michaux followed by a personal tour of Jack Weil's Golden Eagle Gallery.

May 31, Louisburg, North Carolina: Dr. Jerry Lee Cross presented a program entitled "Franklin County, 1777 - 1800, Civilized Frontier." In addition, John Wayne Jackson presented a program on Indian Culture in the Franklin County area and shared his extensive collection of Indian artifacts.

August 10 - 13, Great Falls, Montana - National Meeting: Five members of the Carolina Chapter were in attendance.

November 14, Sanford, North Carolina: Ron Klepper, a chapter member from Sanford, presented a program in which he shared his research and opinions on the death of Meriwether Lewis. Lorna Hainesworth, a chapter member from Randallstown, Maryland, presented a Power Point program on the regional meeting held in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in September ('08) and the national meeting held in Great Falls, Montana, in August (08).

2009

February 7, Columbia, South Carolina (Home of Tom and Alice Gasque): Tom and Alice Gasque, retired professors from the University of South Dakota in Vermillion, hosted 18 Carolina Chapter members at their home in Columbia, South Carolina. Tom presented a Power Point program on Spirit Mound, which is located near Vermillion. Refreshments were served prepared from Lewis and Clark cookbooks.

(Planned meetings for the remainder of 2009)

May 2, Sanford, North Carolina: Bryant Boswell will present a program on the Discovery Expedition and this year's national meeting. Bryant portrayed Meriwether Lewis in the last half of the Discovery Expedition's journey on the Trail and is in charge of the planning for this year's national meeting scheduled for October in Memphis, Tennessee. November 7, Lexington, North Carolina - Dr. Jim Hendrix will be the presenter. Jim has written an article on Meriwether Lewis' life in Georgia and has lectured widely on Lewis and Clark.

Clara Strickland

March 2009

