

*Crimson Bluffs Chapter*  
*Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc.*  
*415 South Front Street*  
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June 24, 2008

Dear Friends:

The year 2008 marks the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Crimson Bluffs Chapter, Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc. We are extremely proud of what was accomplished during the last ten years.

Over the past decade, since the Crimson Bluffs Chapter was chartered, many tasks which seemed daunting in the beginning have come to fruition. In the afterglow of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial celebration we are dedicated to Proceed On. We are Stewards of the Trail and Keepers of the Story.

Our Crimson Bluffs Chapter's history, pictures and documents are archived in our local Broadwater County Historical Museum.

Our sincere thank you goes out to all of you for your friendship, support, encouragement, and being there with us throughout the years.

Proceed On!

Crimson Bluffs Chapter, Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation

Board of Directors

Troy Helmick

John Stoner

Bill Hubber

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President, Rose Oleson

Vice-President, Richard Lewis

Treasurer, Olive Price

Membership, Shirley Helmick

Secretary, Lillian McCammon

## Crimson Bluffs Chapter Accomplishments 1998 – 2008

### 1998

- September 1997 Stephen Ambrose, award winning author of “Undaunted Courage,” spoke to a full house at the Silo Inn. The program was sponsored by the Townsend Military Affairs Committee, and the Broadwater Centennial Committee. Ambrose spoke about the upcoming Bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and local sites and activities. The Military Affairs Committee made a contribution to the local museum in Ambrose’s name to upgrade the Lewis and Clark Display at the museum. Local history teacher, Jim Holland and the Museum Exhibit Hall Committee members, Troy and Shirley Helmick began the project.
- With the excitement of the upcoming Bicentennial of the Expedition, local Corps of Discovery enthusiasts discussed how Broadwater County and the community could get organized and become involved in activities related to the expedition.
- The initial meeting was February 5, 1998 at Jaspers’ Restaurant in Townsend, Montana. In attendance were Nancy Klee, Rose Oleson, Jim Dolizelek, Kevin McDonnell, Troy and Shirley Helmick, John Stoner, Hal and Olive Price, Barb Schafer, Jeff Stoffer, and Beth Ihle.
- The local Corps of Discovery enthusiasts worked with Jim Holland and his 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Students at the Broadwater Grade School and with the Broadwater Museum staff members to develop and install a map and information about Lewis and Clark at the Broadwater County Museum.
- Troy Helmick pointed out that Lewis and Clark had no less than 17 campsites in or adjacent to Broadwater County during their travels through the area and that many landmarks are still in existence. At that time, information nationwide was non-existent about the travels of the Corps of Discovery in the Broadwater County area. Chapter members and the public worked throughout the years to put these landmarks on the map!
- Chapter Bylaws were adopted and July 24, 1998 was the official establishment of the Crimson Bluffs Chapter Charter.
- On August 18 there was a joint Resolution signed by the City of Townsend and Broadwater County Commissioners recognizing the Crimson Bluffs Chapter.
- Visitors in July and August included Clint Blackwood, Montana Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Chairman and Ron Laycock, Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, National Trail Coordinator.
- The members of the Board of Directors were: Troy Helmick, Hal Price, Barb Schaffer, and John Stoner. Officers were: President Rose Oleson, Vice-President Sherrill Dolezilek, Chapter Secretary Kevin McDonnell, Membership Secretary Nancy Marks, and Treasurer Olive Price.
- Throughout the years, John and Troy gave many tours of the Lewis and Clark sites in Broadwater County to schools, public, and guest speakers.

- Dr. Stuart Knapp, a parasitologist and Dean of the Montana State University – Bozeman Department of Agriculture, spoke to the Townsend Elementary students and also members of the community in the evening.
- In December Archaeologist Ken Karsmizki spoke and presented a slide show during a dinner at the Silos Inn.
- Float trip to formulate the plan to reinstate the name of Yorks Islands.
- Sherrill Dolezilek and Troy Helmick presented a program to the Old Baldy Adult Education class.

## 1999

- Troy Helmick received the Historical Preservation Award which was presented on January 22 by Governor Marc Racicot.
- Application to name Yorks Islands was submitted to the U.S. Board of Geographic Names to change the name of Deep Dale Fishing Access Site to Yorks Islands Fishing Access Site. William Clark led a small group along the bluffs on the west side of the river ahead of the main party. This is when he passed by and named Yorks Islands for his slave. His group camped just south of those islands on July 23.
- Support for naming of the islands after York came from: historians Stephen E. Ambrose; Robert N. Bergantino; U.S. Representative Rick Hill; state Rep. Gay Ann Masolo; Townsend Mayor Mary Alice Upton; and the Broadwater County Commissioners. Also contributing were Editor Philip Morgan of William and Mary Quarterly, landowner Ward Scoffield, and the members of the Crimson Bluffs Chapter.
- Continued working to acquire and protect the Crimson Bluffs.
- The Crimson Bluffs photo taken by Troy Helmick, and copyright by the Crimson Bluffs Chapter, was on the cover of the November 1999 issue of "We Proceeded On," which is a national publication.
- Guest speakers were Chuck Lindstrom and George Knapp, and Jeanne Eder as Sacajawea.
- Dr. Gary Moulton of the University of Nebraska was a guest speaker at a dinner at the Silos on June 22. Moulton had just completed the 20-year task of editing the 12-volume "Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition."
- Requested the U.S. Postal Service to honor the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1804-05 with a stamp.

## 2000

- Speakers were Harry Fritz, Rachel Feigley, Carla Wambach, Janis Bouma, Mildred Neild, Hal Price, John Stoner, and Troy Helmick. KTVH Channel 12 weatherman Jeff Thompson filmed Yorks Islands for presentation on "Down County Road 12."
- Mike Castleberry developed a website ([www.onewest.net/~inmontana](http://www.onewest.net/~inmontana)) for the Crimson Bluffs Chapter.
- The Chapter published its first newsletter.
- John Stoner was honored with an award for volunteer service from the Montana Historical Society presented by then Governor Judy Martz.
- Lewis noted an unusual landmark. "Set out at sunrise; the current very strong; passed a remarkable bluff of crimson coloured earth on Starboard intermixed with Stratas of black

and brick red slate.” Crimson Bluffs Chapter worked with the Conservation Trust of Arlington, Virginia, and the Bureau of Land Management to purchase the Crimson Bluffs property.

- Application was submitted to the State Historical Preservation Office for an historic site number for the Crimson Bluffs and the application was approved and given site number 24BW911.
- Yorks Islands site number was identified as 24BW1055; the July 25, 1805 Campsite near Toston Dam is 24BW0149.
- Float trips on the Missouri River and a picnic at Toston Dam.
- In February of 2000, the U.S. Board on Geographic Names approved the name Yorks Islands.
- Additional displays were made available to the Broadwater County Museum with the assistance of Troy and Shirley Helmick, Hal and Olive Price, and John Stoner.

## 2001

- Efforts continued from Townsend to Washington, D.C. to keep the crimson-colored earth that borders the Missouri River undisturbed for the next couple of hundred years. The Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee was requested to allow \$180,000 to be used toward the purchase of the 50 acres that encompass the bluffs. The Bureau of Land Management would own the two 25-acre plots, which have been subdivided and listed as residential property. The property would be preserved in its natural state, with only a historical marker nearby. Rick Hotaling, Steve Hartman and Marilyn Krause, BLM, were instrumental in making this happen.
- On February 26, 2001, Fish, Wildlife and Parks approved the name change of Deep Dale Fishing Access Site to Yorks Islands Fishing Access Site.
- Yorks Islands Commemoration was held on July 28. Speakers and special guests included Huel and Laverne Willis, Bob and Sharon Bergantino, and Mark and Ellen Baumler.
- Program speakers were Brig. General Hal Stearns, Dr. Harry Fritz and Dr. John Logan Allen.
- Stationary and envelopes with the colored picture of the Crimson Bluffs printed.
- Display at Great Northern Town Center.

## 2002

- In February the Conservation Fund of Virginia agreed to assist with the purchase of the Crimson Bluffs property as well as the surrounding 50 acres in an effort to protect the landmark from rapidly encroaching developments. Immediately following the acquisition the property was transferred to the Bureau of Land Management. A legacy to be forever cherished! Support was received from the National Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, The Conservation Fund, The River Network and Montana’s Congressional Delegation of Senator Conrad Burns, Senator Max Baucus and Representative Denny Rehberg. We are also grateful to Steve Ambrose for his efforts to educate the public about the importance of Lewis and Clark and the Crimson Bluffs at Townsend. A 15-star, 15-stripe U.S. flag of 1805 was purchased by the chapter and was presented during the ceremony. Honorary speaker at the commemoration was Hugh

Ambrose who represented his father Stephen Ambrose. Representatives for Senators Max Baucus, Conrad Burns, and Representative Dennis Rehberg read statements sent in support of the project. Also speaking at the dedication was Clint Blackwood, executive director for the Montana Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission, and KiKu Hanes, a representative of the Conservation Fund, a nonprofit group that facilitated purchase of the property.

- July 27, 2002 marked the dedication of the 50 acre site at the Crimson Bluffs along the Missouri River. Nearly 200 years before, Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark passed this way and Capt. Lewis and all those that kept journals recorded the “remarkable bluff of a crimson-colored earth ....”
- In August 2002 John Ragen provided a cottonwood tree to the Chapter for the building of a dugout canoe. Gene Cook cut the tree down and Maurice Ferrat loaned an “Adz” to be used by Troy, John, and others to build the canoe which was a replica of the canoes the Lewis and Clark Expedition used. It is just shy of 16 feet in length and is caulked with native bee’s wax which was sometimes used by the Corps of Discovery. It was completed on March 15, 2003 and moved to the Broadwater Museum where it is on permanent display.
- Speakers included Dr. Joseph Mussulman, “In Greatest Harmony: Medicine Songs on the Lewis and Clark Trail”; Carla Wambach on her presentation of “Birds Sighted by Lewis and Clark,” and Robert Sandon’s “Montana through the Eyes of Lewis and Clark.”

## 2003

- Rose assisted the Montana Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission with the planning, and in January the Chapter participated in the “Lewis and Clark Day in Montana” at the Montana Capitol Rotunda. A \$5,000 grant from the Forest Service made the event possible.
- President Thomas Jefferson, portrayed by Bob Doerk, visited Townsend. The program was funded through Nancy Marks by the Fun for Life Program.
- In April Mick Bradway, geologist with the U.S. Forest Service gave a presentation on the geology of the Crimson Bluffs site. Mick used diagrams, photographs, and rock specimens to enhance his explanations and helped clarify points. His report is on file with the Chapter’s documents and has been archived at the Broadwater County Museum.
- Rick and Susie Graetz returned with an excellent slide show presentation.
- Participated in the reading and discussion program about Lewis and Clark. Partners were the Montana Committee for the Humanities and the Friends of the Library.
- Crimson Bluff Chapter members in conjunction with the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department erected an information plaque at the Yorks Islands Fishing Access Site.
- When the Broadwater County Museum opened in May the dugout canoe, replicating the watercraft used by the Lewis and Clark expedition on their travels through this area, was on display. The canoe was created by local historians Troy Helmick, John Stoner, and others over the course of the eight months using materials and tools similar to those used by the Corps of Discovery nearly two centuries ago.
- In August of 2003, Hal Price was awarded one of only four Distinguished Service Awards given nationally by the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation. Due to his failing health, his son Marshall accepted the award for him in Philadelphia. Hal was one

of the leading locals who helped form the Crimson Bluffs Chapter of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation in Townsend.

- A 42 mile, self-guided driving tour developed by Troy and John was printed and made available to the public, and 17 stations were identified along the route. Mike Castleberry was instrumental in developing the graphic design art work for the brochure.
- In June of 2003, history buffs and members of the Crimson Bluffs Chapter began to post directional signs over more than a 42 mile area through the Townsend and Crow Creek Valley making it easier for visitors to follow the route identified in the auto tour brochure.

## 2004

- John Stoner gave a presentation on Lewis and Clark at the Summer Reading Program at the Broadwater County Community Library. As part of the presentation, he brought along a small friend that received mixed reactions from the crowd – a small black snake that is a member of a species believed to have been discovered by Lewis and Clark.
- A PowerPoint presentation “The Bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark Trail in Broadwater County, Crimson Bluffs Chapter” was prepared by Alicia Cox of the Forest Service and members showed the presentation to local clubs, organizations, and the state-wide chapters.
- Dr. David Peck, physician and author of “Or Perish in the Attempt,” was a speaker in early February and talked about the medicine of Lewis and Clark.
- At the request of the Museum of the Rockies a Crimson Bluffs photograph, Yorks Islands photograph, Crimson Bluffs rock sample, Little Gates of the Mountains photograph, and brochures were provided for the Museum’s “West of Wonder: the Natural Philosophy and Technology of the Lewis and Clark Expedition” exhibit.
- Arch Ellwein portrayed Sgt. John Ordway at Heritage Park.
- Clint Watson and the Broadwater County High School Students made the chapter signs and brochure holders.
- Meetings were started to determine contents and sites of three Broadwater County 3-panel kiosks.
- Rose Oleson gave a presentation on Sacajawea to the members of the Old Baldy 4-H Club at the Indian Creek Campground.
- Shirley Helmick made a model boat that was on loan to the Forest Service and the museum. The canoe is on a scale of 1”=1’ and modeled after the boat built at Great Falls.
- Olive Price provided canvas sailcloth for the dugout display at the museum; Troy made a powder horn and butcher knife with decorated Indian-looking scabbard which was added to the dugout. Cal and Randy Nehring donated two elk hides and a portion of a buffalo hide for inclusion in the dugout.
- Wendy Raney, LCTHF Representative, was a guest at the chapter meeting in June.
- The chapter donated a Crimson Bluffs picture to Pauline Webb to take to the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference in Albuquerque. The picture netted over \$300 in a fundraiser.
- Jim Holland gave our PowerPoint presentation to 75 sixth graders to stress the importance of protecting the land at the Crimson Bluffs.
- Guest book placed at Crimson Bluffs site.

- Received certificate in appreciation and recognition of our contribution to the VIP program and mission of the National Park Service

## 2005

- Participated in the National Park Service Traveling Exhibit: "Corps of Discovery II: 200 Years to the Future".
- Dr. Hal Stearns spoke and displayed artifacts, to the Chapter members, public, and the students at school.
- Supported James Sheldon and his dog, UB, of Lawrence, Kansas, as they retraced the Lewis and Clark Expedition's return route.
- Three informational kiosks about the momentous Lewis and Clark Expedition were installed along Highway 12/287. The kiosks were located at Winston, at the Indian Creek Campground, and at Wheat Montana near Three Forks. The kiosk that was at Wheat Montana was moved to Three Forks in 2008. Funding for the three kiosks came from a Forest Service Rural Community Assistance grant, a National Park Service grant, the Bureau of Reclamation, and Broadwater County.
- Clint Blackwood, Montana Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission, talked to the Chapter about upcoming events scheduled.
- Celebration of Pomp's 200<sup>th</sup> Birthday party with the Chapter having Pomp's 209 parties nationwide.
- John and Troy participated in the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Conservation Day that was held at Yorks Island Fishing Access Site. Throughout the years John and Troy continued to delight the children in several elementary classrooms during their visit to the school with the black garter snakes.
- The "Lewis and Clark Discovery Expedition of St. Charles, Missouri" held a reenactment encampment in Townsend in July of 2005 for two nights at Heritage Park. There were approximately 70 Corps, Rotary members and Crimson Bluffs members present. The Corps was in period costume and gave numerous demonstrations. They placed their two dugout canoes in the Missouri River at Yorks Islands Fishing Access Site and demonstrated how they would have been hauled up the river 200 years earlier. Because of low water, Dusty Hohn assisted the Corps to launch and retrieve their canoes. He certainly saved the day!
- Dr. David Peck, author of "Or Perish in the Attempt", made a return appearance on July 20, 2005.
- Under the direction of Pat Plantenberg, members worked on the Lewis and Clark Native Plant Outdoor Classroom that highlights plants found by Lewis and Clark. This was a cooperative project of the Crimson Bluffs Chapter, the Canton Valley Women's Club, the Broadwater Conservation District, the Townsend Tree Board, Plants, Etc., BHS Student Council, Publications and Biology Classes, the Townsend Garden Club, and Emma Spurlock of the U.S. Forest Service. The grant was partially funded by the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. Kelli Dailey of the Broadwater High School Publications Class developed an information brochure describing the plants. Lillian McCammon worked with Pat to develop the signs describing the plants.
- Second printing of 10,000 brochures printed by Broadwater Printing.
- Lapel pins with the picture of the Crimson Bluffs were designed and sold for \$5.00 each.

- York Decanter, donated by John Cronholm, raffle was held.
- Chapter presented Rose with a gift of appreciation for her leadership as Chapter President.
- The book "Exploring with Lewis and Clark – The 1804 Journal of Charles Floyd" was purchased by the chapter and placed in the Broadwater School/County Library for use in the library only.
- Sign inventory completed and submitted to the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission.

## 2006

- The Lewis and Clark Discovery expedition of St. Charles, Missouri returned to the Headwaters State Park near Three Forks where our chapter co-hosted them with the Headwaters Chapter and the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks at a "Festival of Discovery." Following a picnic, members of the Expedition provided stories about their journey.
- The Flathead Chapter visited our local sites with the guidance of local chapter members.
- Co-sponsored with the Gates of the Mountains Chapter, a program was held entitled "The Lewis and Clark Journals and How They Came to Be" presented by Ella Mae Howard, President of the Portage Route Chapter and author of the book "Lewis and Clark, Exploration of Central Montana."
- Joint meeting with the Gates of the Mountain Chapter featuring speaker Jack Nesbit from the Speakers Bureau.
- Members attended the regional meeting in Bozeman and presented a PowerPoint presentation on the St. Charles re-enactment that was held in Townsend.
- Speakers included Daniel Botkin and Rick Graetz Presentation "Legacy of the Trail"...
- Article on the Townsend blacksnake published in the Montana Outdoor Magazine.
- Started the task of archiving records at the Broadwater County Museum.
- Chapter members attended the awards luncheon in Billings during the Billings/Pompeys Pillar Signature Event. Rose was presented with the "We Proceeded on Medallion" in appreciation of personal dedication and service by the Montana Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Committee. Members were presented with Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission certificates and pins for their participation in Lewis and Clark activities.

## 2007

- In February of 2007 Hal Stearns spoke to the Chapter members, schools, community and Lions club members.
- Met with the Gates of the Mountains Chapter at the Indian Creek Campground and enjoyed lunch and gave them a tour of the Lewis and Clark sites in Broadwater County.

## 2008

- April 2008, James T. Van Leuven, a Carroll College student, completed a research project designed to identify a Black Garter Snake that is common to the Townsend Valley. Capt. Lewis reported the snake in 1805. Members of the Crimson Bluffs Chapter and others have been supporting and encouraging the research project for more than five years.



- Kiosk located at Wheat Montana moved to Three Forks.
- Bill Almy spoke on local birds listed in the Lewis and Clark Journals at a Chapter meeting.
- Continue working with the students and the local community members to provide education regarding the sites and activities associated with the Lewis and Clark Expedition.