



ON THE OHIO

Newsletter for the The Ohio River Chapter – Lewis and Clark Trail Alliance, Ohio River Region 6 FY 2024 - 2025

Down the Ohio – the Journey Begins 1803

“Left Pittsburgh this day at 11 ock with a party of 11 hands 7 of which are soldiers, a pilot and three young men on trial they having proposed to go with me throughout the voyage.”

Meriwether Lewis, August 31, 1803

Moulton, Gary E., Editor, *The Journals of the Lewis & Clark Expedition* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 2:65.

Chapter Report

FY 2025 Activities

A lot has transpired since our last newsletter was produced in the fall/winter of 2021. Only events beginning with the 18 February 2024 meeting in Clarksville, Indiana will be covered in this edition of the newsletter. Minutes of that meeting and activity pictures follow the discussion of various Chapter news items and related topics.

Most Chapter leadership positions were unfilled for the past year, except for the position of Treasurer. That position was vacated when our longtime treasurer, chapter member, and dear friend, Mr. Richard “SKIP” Jackson unexpectedly passed away on May 4, 2025. Several Chapter members attended Skip’s funeral at Westwood United Methodist Church, Cincinnati, OH on May 31st. Skip is survived by Joan (his wife of 48 years), one son, one daughter, and three grandchildren.

The chapter has participated in a number of activities in fiscal year 2025 despite the lack of formally elected officers. The Chapter participated in the October 2024 Salt Festival held at Big Bone Lick State Historic Park (BBL), near Union, Kentucky. Chapter members participated in both the education day and general public days activities. The Chapter also participated in National Bison Day, held on the first Saturday of November in 2024. The Chapter donated \$306.17 toward veterinary care and feed for one animal for one year - Chapter has done this for a number of years. The Chapter also donated \$300 to BBL in support of the Lewis and Clark exhibit that will be displayed at this year’s Salt Festival, to be held from 17 – 19 October, 2025. Chapter members participated in the May 9, 2025 dedication ceremony at BBL which designated the park as one of only 16 sites in the United States given the titles of both a “National Historic Landmark” and a “National Natural Landmark”. An informal chapter meeting was held at the conclusion of dedication activities.

The Chapter partnered with several groups to design and construct a commemorative bench in the vicinity of the Bison observation area to honor Mr. Paul Simpson. Paul, the coordinator of the BBL bison herd, unexpectedly passed away from a heart attack in November of 2023. The Chapter donated a total of \$1,451.00 for that effort.

Jerry and Janice Wilson from our chapter continued to administer the Alliance's national Wellness Program. Other chapter members participated as team leaders and/or team members.

Siix members of the Chapter attended the National Alliance meeting held in Charlottesville, VA in 2024. An informal chapter meeting was held in association with the national meeting.

The Chapter continued its efforts to promote the public's use of the eastern section of the National Lewis and Clark Historic Trail through the activity of the Eastern Legacy Sign Program and the Eastern Legacy Committee. The Committee is currently working with partners in Pittsburgh to install a L&C interpretive sign in downtown Pittsburgh across from the Senator John Heinz History Center. Paige Cruz, a long-time member of the Chapter, also completed a guide book of L&C related sites located in the Ohio River Basin and led the effort to update the Eastern Legacy Trail Brochure developed by the Chapter. Updated brochure information was sent to the Alliance headquarters so that their website pages and map can be updated. A request was also made to the Alliance for them to issue a QR code to the Chapter for placement on cards to be placed in brochure racks. The revised brochure will be published when the Chapter receives a QR code. The QR code on the card will serve as a link to the map on the Alliance's website.

The Chapter financially supported the inaugural lecture of the James J. Holmberg Lecture series that was created to honor Jim Holmberg's legacy as the curator of the Filson Historical Society in Louisville, KY (\$200.00 donation). Jim is a long-time member of the Chapter and has partnered with the Chapter in various events over the years, including the 54th national Alliance meeting we planned, organized, and implemented in Pittsburgh of 2022. Jim was the Moulton Lecturer for the meeting that year.

A questionnaire was sent out to all registered Chapter members via email to solicit their views on what they would like to see from the organization. Unfortunately, only 17 of the 70+ members of the chapter responded. Another attempt at canvassing members will be made in FY 2026.

Upcoming FY 2026 Activities

The Chapter will be participating in Salt Festival activities at BBL in October. Members will participate in both the education and general public days being held from the 17 – 19. We will be manning a booth under the Community Tent and participating in manning the Lewis and Clark Exhibit at the outdoor museum tent. School Day activities run from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm on Friday October 17. General public festival days include Saturday the 18th, from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm, and Sunday, from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. Go to parks.ky.gov/explore/big-bone-lick-state-historic-site-7807#events for additional information on the event.

The Chapter will be participating in National Bison Day at BBL on Saturday November 1st. Special events this year include the dedication of the Bison observation platform and commemorative bench for Mr. Paul Simpson – also located near the Bison herd area. Activities are scheduled to begin at approximately 11:00 am and last about one hour. The chapter will then present a national L&C Trail Alliance Award to Ms. Claire Kolkmeier for her work with the festival and Bison herd. The chapter will also be presenting the Park with a check for \$306.17 to sponsor one of the Bison herd for FY 2206. Immediately after Bison Day events the Chapter will hold a member meeting. The group will meet at the visitor center and then caravan to a nearby restaurant for a meeting and socializing. Activities for later in the year will be included in future newsletters as details and itineraries are developed. All members are encouraged to participate in either, or both of the upcoming scheduled events.

Membership

As of September 30, 2025 the Chapter had a total of 88 registered parties. A party can include single as well as family memberships. 73 memberships list the Ohio River Chapter as their home chapter. 15 memberships include those having home chapters other than the Ohio River Chapter. More than 100 people are associated with the Chapter. The main Alliance office in Great Falls, MT now handles all correspondence involving the collection of annual membership dues. Please renew and keep your dues current as per your selected membership plan so that the Chapter can continue its mission of supporting the national Alliance and funding our Chapter activities.

Financial Report

The Chapter began FY 2025 with a balance of \$12,540.94 in its account at Fifth Third bank and ended the fiscal year with a balance of \$12,159.77. \$6,159.85 of this total consists of restricted funds for the Ohio River L&C Sign Program. A total of \$1,030.00 was received in dues and a total of \$752.82 of in-kind donations were made by chapter members while performing volunteer activities for the Chapter. We currently have an operating balance of \$12,159.77. Members volunteered a total of 2,481 hours toward Chapter activities in FY 2025.

IRS Organizational Status

IRS Form 990-N was filed with both the Federal Internal Revenue Service and the State of Ohio Charitable Law Section of the Attorney General's Office for fiscal year 2024 (filed after the close of the fiscal year which ends on 30 September). All 501 3© foundations must annually file this report to retain their status as a not-for-profit foundation.

Need for Volunteers

The Chapter offices of President, Vice President, and Board of Director (3) are currently vacant. The position of Treasurer/Secretary is currently being filled by a volunteer. We are looking for volunteers to occupy the vacated positions – particularly the President and Vice-President. If you volunteer, you get the job. At this time tenures of service are undefined.

Elections for vacated positions will take place sometime in the future. Step up! The greater the number of volunteers, the less the work load on any individual.

Prepared by: Michael A. Loesch
Treasurer/Secretary
Ohio River Chapter – L&C Alliance Ohio River Region 6
October 14, 2025

LCTHF OHIO RIVER REGION CHAPTER MEET AND GREET GATHERING

18 FEBRUARY 2024 – Meeting Minutes

1. **Meeting Location** – Derby Room of the Radisson Louisville North, 505 Marriot Drive, Clarksville, IN 47129
2. **Meeting Time** – 2/18/2024 - Social from 4:45 – 5:15 p.m., meeting from 5:15 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.
3. **Details** – Dinner served during the time of the meeting
4. **Attendees** – The following individuals attended the meeting:
 - a. Richard Hunt
 - b. Lou Ritten
 - c. David Bell
 - d. Chuck Crase
 - e. Alice Crase
 - f. Paige Cruz
 - g. Jan Donelson
 - h. Lorna Hainesworth
 - i. Jan Huff
 - j. Skip Jackson
 - k. Jim Keith
 - l. Mike Loesch
 - m. Mike Montain
 - n. Jim Robertson
 - o. Linda Robertson
 - p. Jewell Matthews
 - q. Janice Wilson
 - r. Jerry Wilson
 - s. Phyllis Yaeger
5. **Meeting: Purpose and Objectives**
 - a. An opportunity for the new Executive Director (Mr. Richard Hunt), to meet Ohio River Region Chapter members as Lou and Richard tour down the Ohio River.

- b. An opportunity for Ohio River Region Chapter members to meet our new Executive Director, Richard Hunt, and to receive an update on Foundation activities.
- c. Hold a chapter meeting to conduct old and new business (first full chapter meeting since end of COVID), formulate a short-term plan for conducting chapter operations until a member questionnaire can be developed, completed by the membership, data analyzed, recommendations developed, and implementation plan can be developed and acted upon by the membership.
- d. Acknowledge that Lou and Richard met on site with our partners in Pittsburgh, PA – Ms. Brenda Applegate of the Beaver County Historic Research and Landmarks Foundation and Mr. Robert Stakely of the Senator John Heinz History Center.

6. For the Good of the Order:

- a. Jim and Ginny Koss could not attend as she is having knee replacement surgery this week
- b. Mr. Paul Patterson could not attend as he did not receive meeting notice materials early enough to make meeting attendance possible.
- c. Lorraine Loesch could not attend as she will be having hip replacement surgery.

7. Introduction of the New Executive Director - (Mr. Richard Hunt) introduced by Lou Ritten – Lou introduced Richard and briefly summarized the process used to hire him. A total of 28 candidates were examined and interviewed over a period of more than four months. He will be working remotely, but will frequent the main Great Falls, Montana office on a regular basis.

8 Richard Hunt introductory Remarks – Richard is retired and has a very extensive and varied background in video production and marketing for both small and large commercial firms and foundations. He plans to be very active and spend large amounts of time traveling the trail and working face-to-face with the various chapters in the Foundation. He is also intent upon marketing our organization and obtaining financial donors and increasing Foundation membership, particularly among people in their middle years and families with children.

9. Plans for 19 Feb 2024 - Lou and Richard will tour the Filson Society facility in Louisville, Kentucky at 10:30 a.m. (special tour by Mr. Jim Holberg). They will eat lunch and then visit the Falls of the Ohio Visitor Center in Clarksville that afternoon. They will depart the Clarksville/Louisville area on Tuesday morning and continue their westward tour.

10. 2024 National Meeting in Charlottesville, Virginia – Briefly discussed by Lou – attached is an email from Philippa Newfield with an advance copy of an upcoming TOR article giving some details concerning the meeting – particularly information on hotel accommodations.

CHAPTER BUSINESS

11. Treasurer’s Report - Skip Jackson provided a report on the financial status of the chapter. The chapter, as of 18 Feb 2024, has assets of \$13,721.48. A total of \$976.17 was expended

since the last reporting period of 4 November 2023, when a total of \$14,697.65 was on hand. \$306.17 was expended to support the Chapter's ongoing program to support one animal of the Big Bone Lick's American Bison herd for one year and \$670 was expended to support remaining chapter activities. Of the chapter's current \$13,721.48 assets, a total of \$6,159.85 are restricted funds for the Ohio River L&C Sign Program.

12. Recent Chapter Activities – A Public contact booth was set up at the Salt Festival held at Big Bone Lick State Park. Skip Jackson, Jerry and Janice Wilson, and Mike and Lorraine Loesch attended the event. Skip took part in the "Student Day" segment of the event as CPT Lewis. Skip Jackson, Jerry and Janice Wilson, Mike and Lorraine Loesch, Paige Cruz and Lorna Hainesworth participated in National Bison Day activities and the chapter donated \$309.17 to support one of the herd's animals for 2024 (ongoing chapter program).

13. Old Business Topic One – Pittsburgh L&C Interpretive Sign Dedication – Brenda Applegate, the Executive Director of the Beaver County Historic Research and Landmarks Foundation, is still working with the Senator John Heinz History Center to work out a date for the L&C interpretive sign installation and dedication ceremony (sign located right across the street from the history center) – The delay in the installation of the sign will continue until The Heinz Center is able to schedule a work crew to perform the necessary work.

14. Old Business Topic Two - Ohio River Sign Program – Paige Cruz is working on a revision of the content of the Ohio River sign brochure as well as transitioning it from a written brochure to an electronic document with QR codes. The existing brochure will be reduced to a single card that can be placed in tourist travel sites and will have a QR code label attached that will allow the user to directly access the brochure on the Foundation's website. Copies of the current QR label were given out to all attending. Paige is also working on a guide book for use in traveling along the Ohio River Basin section of the trail.

15. New Business Topic One – Jim Holmberg Lecture Proposal – The chapter has learned that Mr. Jim Holmberg will be retiring after serving more than 40 years as the curator of the Filson Society in Louisville, Kentucky. He has been a great partner of the Foundation for years and has worked with us on many projects. He was the Moulton lecturer for the 2022 national meeting that we conducted in Pittsburgh. The Filson Foundation has requested that the chapter donate \$250 toward the establishment of an endowment to develop a yearly Holmberg Lecture Series in honor of his many years of dedicated service to the Society. Mr. Jerry Wilson made a motion for the Chapter to authorize the expenditure of \$250 as requested. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jim Keith, and it was unanimously approved by vote of the members present.

16. New Business Topic Two – Paul Simpson Memorial Request – Mr. Paul Simpson was an employee of Big Bone Lick State Park in Union, Kentucky and was the manager of the park's American Bison herd. The chapter has worked with Paul for a number of years in financially supporting the bison herd. He was a great partner and a friend to all of the chapter who had the pleasure and privilege of working with him. Paul suddenly and unexpectedly passed away

less than two weeks after the 2024 National Bison Day ceremony. Skip Jackson has been in contact with at least three foundations who are seeking to raise funds to construct several memorial benches along the trail next to the Bison herd enclosure and a memorial plaque to be placed in or near the visitor center. After some discussion Skip Jackson made a motion to authorize up to, but not to exceed \$2,000, toward the purchase of the items listed above. The exact amount would be determined by what work is authorized by the partner group and the amount of funding that is actually raised. It is anticipated the actual amount to be expended by the chapter will be significantly less than the amount authorized. Skip will keep the chapter up to date as coordination activities continue. An actual expenditure will only be made after additional consultation with the chapter. The motion was seconded by Jerry Wilson and the proposal was adopted by the membership present. Skip will be the chapter lead on this project. Several chapter members at the meeting indicated that they would like to personally donate funds for the effort.

17. Listing of Current Ongoing Chapter Programs –

a. **Financial support of the Big Bone Lick State Park American Bison Program** – Donate \$309.17 to the state park for the support of one animal (each year)

b. **Ohio River Basin Eastern Legacy Sign Program Committee** – Program Manager, Paige Cruz; members, Mike and Lorraine Loesch.

c. **Eastern Legacy Committee** – Chair, Paige Cruz; members, Mike and Lorraine Loesch, Jerry and Janice Wilson, Phillip Gordon, Philippa Newfield, and Phyllis Yaeger.

d. **Participation in the Salt Day Festival** - (annually held at Big Bone Lick State Park, during the month of October)

e. **Participation in National Bison Day event** – Attend the festivities and present support check each year (held during first week of November).

f. **Wellness Program** – A national program operated by Janice and Jerry Wilson on behalf of the national Foundation (teams of four people track walking and exercise, and healthy eating habits and report every two months from September through June of each year). Certificates of participation and small incentive tokens are provided to participants. We recommend that more chapter members participate in this valuable and fun program. Just contact Jerry and Janice Wilson for details on how to participate.

g. **Lewis and Clark Handshake Program** – For several years the chapter provided a public information booth and program participation in the annual handshake event held at the Falls of Ohio River State Park in Clarksville, IN. The program ceases to exist in its pre-COVID form. Local groups are working on an updated Clark Days Fest concept. It appears that there will be an opportunity for chapter participation to add a L&C perspective to the overall event. An opportunity may open up sometime in 2025. Mike Montain from the city of Clarksville gave an update on the construction that is presently occurring in and around the State Park and plans

for the development of a regional park in the areas adjacent to the state park. Jim Keith and Mike Montain will keep the chapter up-to-date as work continues to progress. Mr. Jan Donelson of the Discovery Expedition of St. Charles, Missouri indicated at he would be willing to provide advisory input as he is an architect that specializes in timber frame construction and has numerous contacts with firms that supply appropriate materials for historic structure construction.

18. Near Term Chapter Operations – Participation by the general chapter membership in meetings and other activities has fallen off to a point of being virtually non-existent, particularly after COVID. Currently, Skip Jackson is the only officer (Treasurer). Several members have informally acted as officers to conduct chapter business. We need to deal with this issue, both short term and longer term! Those present gave the ok to undertake the following action in 2024 to start addressing and dealing with these issues:

a. **Meeting Minutes** - Mike Loesch will prepare minutes for the 2/18/2024 meeting and distribute to the 74 registered members of the chapter (with editorial assistance from chapter members).

b. **Chapter Membership List** – Mike will attempt to obtain the email addresses of at least 3 members that proved to be undeliverable, based on the Foundation membership spreadsheet.

c. **Chapter Questionnaire** – Mike will work with selected members of the chapter to develop a member questionnaire to determine what the membership would like to see the chapter do to meet their needs and preferences. Mike will send out the questionnaire to the membership, compile the results, and prepare a report.

d. **Draft Operation Plan** – Depending upon the data collected, a draft proposal for the membership will be developed for consideration by the membership – may or may not be done by the annual meeting in Charlottesville, VA in September. If not, it will be the primary topic at a chapter meeting to be held later in the year, probably during the Salt Festival. Hopefully, at that time some longer-term decisions can be made for a path forward for the chapter into 2025 and beyond.

19. Next Meeting – If a sufficient number of people come to the national meeting in Charlottesville, VA, we will set up an informal chapter meeting. An in-person chapter meeting will be set up for chapter membership during the weekend of the Salt Festival (usually held sometime during the last two weeks of October).

Minutes submitted by Michael A. Loesch

9 March 2024

ANNOUNCEMENT

**BIG BONE LICK STATE HISTORIC SITE
IS A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK!**

BBL is 1 of only 16 US properties to have both
National Natural Landmark and
National Historic Landmark status!

**YOU ARE INVITED TO THE
DEDICATION CELEBRATION**

**MAY 9, 2025
10AM**

**The dedication ceremony will take place
at the Bison Circle Shelter at
Big Bone Lick State Historic Site**

*Refreshments will be served
Please email bblshs.friends@gmail.com for more information*

Event sponsored by Big Bone Lick State Historic Site and Friends of Big Bone



Latest edition to the BBL Bison herd



Paige Cruz, chairman of the Eastern Legacy Sign Committee, completed a guide book and revised the brochure that highlight attractions located along the eastern portion of the L&C National Historic Trail, primarily in the Ohio River Basin



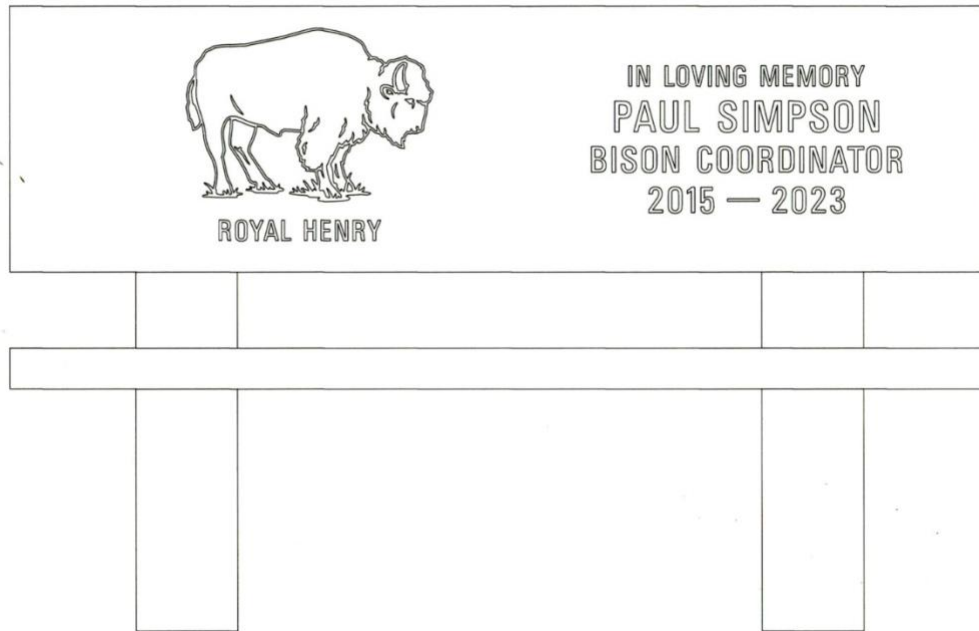
Re-enactor demonstrating musket firing at Salt Festival in October of 2024 at BBL



Chapter members participated in a number of activities held throughout the Eastern United States commemorating the 200th anniversary of General Lafayette's triumphant tour of the Ohio River region in 1825.



Chapter Adopt-A-Bison Committee: Left to right: Lorna Hainsworth, Skip Jackson, Janice and Jerry Wilson. Not Shown: Park Ranger Paul Simpson



Schematic of the commemorative bench that will be dedicated on 1 November 2025 at National Bison Day at BBL in honor of Mr. Paul Simpson – Bison Day activities will begin at approximately 11:00 am