

The Pirogue

Encounters On The Prairie Newsletter

Premier Issue



The Encounters On The Prairie Launches The Pirogue

EOTP newsletter, 'The Pirogue' holds promise to enhance chapter's ability to reach out!

The Encounters On The Prairie Central South Dakota Chapter of the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation announces the publication of Volume 1, Issue 1, of 'The Pirogue', the premier edition of its quarterly newsletter. It has always been a part of Chapter President Bill Stevens' vision for our chapter to have a newsletter through which news of chapter activities could be sent out regularly to its members and to keep in touch with them, other LCTHF members, partners, and friends. Story inside...

EOTP 3rd Annual Lewis & Clark Trading Post Buffalo Chili and Beef Stew Feed!

The EOTP 3rd Annual Lewis & Clark Trading Post and Feed was held at the Oahe Downstream Lodge on Thursday, October 21, with a variety of Lewis & Clark mementos and collectibles for sale. Chapter President Bill Stevens treated the gathering with generous portions of his Black Bean Buffalo Chili, and his wife, Dee Ann, served her delicious Beef Stew. Biscuits and corn bread complemented the entrees, with frosted sugar cookies for dessert. Guests were also treated to interesting history programs by Jay D. Vogt and Dr. Brad Tennant. Story inside...

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During a break at the LCTHF Board meeting in Omaha, Bill Stevens, President of the L&C Encounters On The Prairie Chapter, invites NPS Lewis & Clark Nat'l Historic Trail Superintendent, Mark Weekley for a visit to the EOTP Chapter in Pierre.

EOTP 8th Annual 'Lewis & Clark Christmas

Another very special Christmas was celebrated by Encounters On The Prairie Chapter members at the Hitching Horse Bed & Breakfast Inn, in Pierre, SD. The event is unique, "because no other LCTHF chapter gathers during this time of year to specifically commemorate the same Christmas that Corps of Discovery members may have experienced 200 years ago", says EOTP Chapter President, Bill Stevens. Story inside...

Pardon our dust



Editor's Note:

While substantial effort has been put into this newsletter, we still have a way to go developing style and substance. Future issues of *The Pirogue* will have regular and semi-regular features such as:

- ⇒ Schedule of Upcoming Events
- ⇒ Guest Article
- ⇒ Photo of the Quarter

Kindly bear with us as we continue to improve *The Pirogue*!

The Encounters On the Prairie—Central South Dakota Chapter of the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation publishes its Newsletter



Several descendent Lakota Sioux tribesmen prepare for their dance at last year's 'Twin Cities Pow Wow' near the Wakpa Sica Reconciliation Place in Fort Pierre, SD, dressed in garb very much like that which their ancestors would have worn during their celebrations with the Corps of Discovery.



Peyton 'Bud' Clark, direct descendant of William Clark, at the Annual LCTHF meeting in Lewiston, Idaho.

January 1, 2011—Pierre, South Dakota. With this issue, the Encounters On The Prairie Chapter of the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation has its own newsletter. The newsletter will be a way for the EOTP chapter to communicate to all interested parties its activities and gatherings.

"We have seen the need for, and have wanted our own chapter newsletter since we first organized our EOTP chapter in 2002", said Bill Stevens, EOTP Chapter President. "We have such an interesting Lewis and Clark story here with the mutual encounter with the Lakota people at the mouth of the Bad River, in the Pierre and Fort Pierre area"

The age of readily available technology enables virtually any organization to participate in mass communication, and with such rich material with which to work, a newsletter is a good way for everyone in the chapter to have the opportunity to share that part of American history can be found literally in our back yard!

One of the goals of this newsletter is to remind us, through interviews with local and national historians, articles, photos, and hopefully, new discoveries of long lost accounts and artifacts that will serve to keep the story of Lewis & Clark alive and vibrant, not only for us, but for future generations, lest one of Humanities greatest accomplishments fade into oblivion like so much of the original trail has already due to modernization, free-ways, and nature itself over time.

As depicted in at least one of the articles in this premier edition, the EOTP chapter has had the opportunity to hear little known and detailed accounts of the First Peoples who lived along the Missouri River and their encounters with some of the very first European and American explorers. As locals, we have been able to smell the same grasses and plants they did, eat of the same buffalo herds, and experience and enjoy the same grand vistas as did those early explorers and native American tribal people.

This newsletter is not going to be just another periodical produced by some team of writers and photo-journalists off in some distant place. This is your newsletter, produced by

you, for you, and also about you, and how we are all doing our part as *keepers of the story and stewards of the trail!* All who read this newsletter will also have the opportunity, indeed encouraged to participate in each issue.

What is history after all, but an idea that is held and perpetuated in the minds of those who care about it one way or another? It was the idea of finding a Northwest Passage that inspired Thomas Jefferson to recruit two young men to explore little known, and in many cases completely uncharted regions of the country from St. Louis to the Pacific Ocean. It was the idea that was held in the minds of all the participants of the Corps of Discovery that the venture could be accomplished. It was that persistent idea that gave them all, the courage to proceed on in spite of the overwhelming odds against them. And now, it is that very same idea, in retrospect, that continues to awe and inspire subsequent generations of what was accomplished, that stands as an example of what Humanity can yet accomplish in the spirit of cooperation. And it's the same idea that was held by those men over 200 hundred years ago that is perpetuated today and into the future; perpetuated through us, members of the Encounters On The Prairie Chapter of the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation; *keepers of the story, stewards of the trail,* and of the idea.

EOTP's Annual Lewis & Clark Trading Post and Feed

October 21, 2010 – Oahe Downstream, Ft. Pierre, SD. The 3rd annual EOTP Trading Post and Feed was held at the Oahe Downstream Group Lodge this year on October 21, and was attended by approximately 40 members. This year's fete was again hosted by EOTP Chapter President, Bill Stevens, and Secretary/Treasurer Beverly Lewis. The annual event offered Lewis & Clark mementos for sale, and guests were treated to Billy's Black Bean Buffalo Chili and his wife's, Dee Ann's Beef Stew; biscuits and cornbread with prairie fruit jams and jellies, and frosted sugar cookies for dessert.

The evening's two guest speakers were Jay D. Vogt and Dr. Brad Tennant. Mr. Vogt is the current Director of the South Dakota State Historical Society and a former Executive Director of the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation,



Director Jay D. Vogt, discusses the early history of the original Fort Pierre, and recent efforts to preserve the area.

and Dr. Brad Tennant, Professor of History at Presentation College in Aberdeen and President of the South Dakota State Historical Society. Both are members of the EOTP and LCTHF.

Mr. Vogt spoke of the work currently in progress at the Fort Pierre Chouteau Interpretive site, and of the history of the area which was the original Fort Pierre

Chouteau, located just off present day Highway 1806. At the actual location of the original fort is a marker, placed in 1930 that is believed to be where the back wall of the fort's stockade stood.

We learned from Jay that the Chouteau family had lived in St. Louis in the 1700's and 1800's, and had long been involved in the fur trading business. The Chouteau family had much knowledge of the areas through which the Corps of Discovery would be traveling. Thus, they were an excellent source, among others, of information for the Expedition prior to its departure, and they shared much of their knowledge with Lewis & Clark, informing the captains as to what they might encounter on the prairies through which they would be traveling; the territories now known as North and South Dakota.

Mr. Vogt continued his discussion of the area by describing recent excavation ventures, or 'digs' of the site which resulted in various artifacts being unearthed that can be traced back to the times and peoples who occupied Fort Pierre Chouteau during its use by early fur traders, the military, and other locals of the era. He also discussed current efforts by the South Dakota State Historical Society to preserve and maintain the site for future generations. At the end of his talk, Jay introduced the evening's keynote guest speaker, Dr. Brad Tennant, president of the South Dakota State Historical Society.

Dr. Tennant's talk, entitled, 'The Arikara, Roadblock to the

American Fur Trade' began with a brief history of what is believed to be the very first known peoples who inhabited the areas that we now know as Mitchell, Chamberlain, and Crow Creek.

The first peoples, the 'Paleo-Indians,' hunted the giant mastodon and pre-historic buffalo. Later, the Plains Village cultures of the Middle Missouri and the Coalescent entered into the region. The Middle Missouri village site at Mitchell continues to be the focus of archaeologists, while the Crow Creek massacre site remains one of the most curious; of the 486 human remains found there in a mass grave, only one hand was unearthed, indicating perhaps ritual mutilation of vanquished enemies.



Dr. Brad Tennant recounts the early history of the Mitchell/Chamberlain areas, and the Arikara Tribes who inhabited the area prior to and during the time of Lewis & Clark's passage.

The Middle Missouri inhabitants were the ancestors of the more recent Mandan tribe, and the Coalescent were the antecedents of the Arikara tribe, who at their peak, lived in perhaps as many as thirty-two villages along the shores of the Missouri River. According to Dr. Tennant, a small pox epidemic in the late 1700s greatly decimated the Arikaras' numbers, and when Lewis & Clark came through the area, they noted in their journals the numbers of abandoned lodges.

Dr. Tennant's talk centered on the Arikara's role as a hindrance to the fur trading ventures by the early Whites and the reasons behind their antagonistic attitudes toward the American fur trade. The Arikaras specifically held the American traders as responsible for disrupting their position as the center of intertribal trade among the other native Americans, which they had enjoyed for many years prior to the arrival of the first White traders.

After the program, attendees were able to purchase donated Lewis & Clark items, including books and banners, the proceeds of which would help support EOTP Chapter activities.

Dir. Vogt and Dr. Tennant can be reached by sending an email to EOTPNews@yahoo.com.

EOTP well represented at LCTHF Annual Meeting in Lewiston, Idaho

August 2010—Lewiston, Idaho. The 42nd LCTHF Annual Meeting was held in Lewiston, Idaho. This year's theme was 'On the Trail in Nez Perce Country' and all attendees, vendors, and exhibitors were welcomed warmly by local Nez Perce tribe officials. The main gathering place and hub of all the activities over the 4-day event was the 'Event Center' at the Clearwater Casino, located on State Highway 12, seven miles east of the city. The casino, owned and operated by the local Nez Perce tribe provided the perfect venue for the approximately 250 Lewis & Clark enthusiasts, who know themselves as 'Lewis & Clarkies'.

Offerings this year included activities at the Event Center and a number of field trips to places where Lewis & Clark were known to have made camp; the areas around Lewiston in western Idaho, and south-western Washington. Members were visited at the casino's Event Center by Toussant Charbonneau, portrayed by certified First-Person Living History presenter, Garry



EOTP chapter members who attended the 2010 LCTHF Annual Meeting in Lewiston, Idaho, are pictured left to right, Gail Simmons, Jerry Simmons, Jim Herman, Dr. Brad Tennant, Richard Phillips, Lynne Avilla, Rich Avilla. Unable to attend this year, were EOTP Chapter President Bill Stevens and his wife Dee Ann, and Chapter Secretary & Treasurer, Beverly Lewis.

Bush of Idaho History Tours. Garry spoke in character, and was dressed in garb which may well have been of the type Charbonneau, himself actually wore. The audience enjoyed a light-hearted, enlightening presentation, of how history has not been quite fair to Charbonneau's legacy, and heard several humorous anecdotes.

In addition to activities at the Event Center, were on-location visits where re-enactors portrayed various members of the Corps of Discovery Expedition and regaled LCTHF visitors with legendary tales of yore, culinary treats of the period. Some of the attendees were able to participate in 'hands-on' demonstrations such as rope braiding and the making of fire by rubbing two sticks together, yes it can be done!

'On the Missouri River, On the Lewis and Clark Trail', a message from the EOTP President, Bill Stevens

We have been waiting for this day, this 'One Day', 1/1/11, since we began our Encounters On The Prairie - Central South Dakota Chapter of the LCTHF in 2002! As we begin our New Year 2011 with this 1st issue of our EOTP newsletter, *The Pirogue*, we are eager for the many opportunities which this newsletter provides our chapter!

Thanks go out to Rich Avilla for taking the initiative in creating this newsletter and demonstrating his willingness to do all of the necessary work to make it happen as our Publisher / Editor. Thanks also to Lynne Avilla, Beverly Lewis and DeeAnn Stevens for their patient and enthusiastic support with this newsletter effort!

Special thanks also to DeeAnn, Beverly, Lynne & Rich for their interest and support of the LCTHF by their attendance and participation with me at the October 15 - 16 Board meeting in Omaha, Nebraska and their plans to join me in our January 28 LCTHF Board Meeting in Aurora, Colorado.

So, by the numbers then... our Chapter has had a very active and fun past 5 months with our 2 August activities, the 7th annual Capital City Queen charter cruise on the Missouri River and a cruise on Lake Oahe, the 4th Annual 1806 L&C canoe, kayak & pontoon float on the Missouri River, the 6th Annual September 'Walk the Narrows' in Lower Brule with Sheldon Fletcher, our 3rd annual 'Lewis & Clark Trading Post & Feed' in October, our 8th annual 'Lewis & Clark Christmas' and the preparation of this 1st issue of our newsletter,

The Pirogue!

As we continue our trail stewardship and our fun learning experiences, exploring and sharing the Lewis & Clark Story with its many encounters in our area as well as learning more about the tribal people, the development of the fur trading, and other history we have the opportunity to continue to be an active part of our Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation ... we encourage you to continue to be a dues current EOTP member and if you aren't a member yet of our Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation please give me, as an elected member of our LCTHF Board of Directors an opportunity to assist your efforts to join the Foundation and to participate in our Annual Meeting in early August 2011 in Omaha, Nebraska! Watch for our E-Mail notices of upcoming EOTP Chapter and LCTHF activities!

*Happy New Year 2011 to all
EOTP Chapter & LCTHF mem-
bers, friends & partners!*

EOTP 8th Annual 'Lewis & Clark Christmas' at the Hitching Horse!

December 16, 2010 – Pierre, SD. The Encounters On The Prairie Central South Dakota Chapter of the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation hosted its 8th annual 'Lewis & Clark Christmas'. This year's gathering was held at the Hitching Horse Bed & Breakfast Inn on Euclid Avenue, in Pierre, South Dakota. Each year the EOTP, which is the Pierre/Ft. Pierre chapter of the LCTHF, gathers to celebrate the holiday season, in the spirit of the greatest expedition the country has ever known, the one which, more than any other event in American history, shaped the West into what it is today.

Each Christmas, the EOTP invites all its members and folks who are interested in the story of Lewis & Clark and the Corps of Discovery, to celebrate with them to commemorate Lewis and Clark's Christmas of two hundred years ago. Thus, the group gathered to celebrate the season and review the events that were prominent for members of the Corps of Discovery during the Christmas of 1810. Each year, Lonis Wendt, EOTP's own historian, gives a presentation to the group, and provides insight into the lives of the men and women who were directly or indirectly involved with the Corps of Discovery, and the issues that were prevalent in their lives on Christmas, two hundred years ago.

Lonis began by reminding us that by this time, 200 years ago, the Christmas of 1810, Meriwether Lewis had already passed away, and it was his friend and co-discoverer, William Clark, upon whom the burden fell to complete the transcription of the journals that had been written by Lewis and Clark as they traveled into little, or completely unknown regions of the country. And now, four years had already passed from the time the expedition had been completed, and still the work on finishing the journals had not yet been accomplished. Clark was under considerable pressure from President Jefferson to complete the task. But this was not the only issue with which Clark would contend.

Continuing his account of 'Clark's Complex Christmas of 1810', Lonis explained that during this time, along with the burden of having to complete the work on the journals, Clark was implicated in an alleged card-cheating scandal between his friend, Dr. Bernard Gaines Farrar and one, James Campbell. Although not directly involved, Clark, as Farrar's second, formally issued 'a challenge to a duel'. Campbell refused to duel, however the challenge was accepted by Campbell's friend, attorney James Graham. Following the duel, other witnesses then accused Clark of "having given Farrar hand signals," which Clark vehemently denied. Graham had been seriously wounded in the duel and later died as a result, but before expiring, he managed to exonerate Clark in a deathbed declaration.

Another issue Lonis related, was one which Clark brought upon himself. He had asked his two friends and co-veterans of the Corps of Discovery, Toussant Charbonneau and Sacagawea, to bring to him their son, Jean Batiste Charbonneau, who was born during the Expedition. Clark had come to love 'Little Pomp', as he was known, and wished to give young 'Pompy', Clark's own term of affection, the best opportunity possible for a successful life as an educated and cultured person. Although it added to the other responsibilities in Clark's already complicated life, he was more than happy to take on the role of surrogate father to the boy, and indeed, gave John Batiste Charbonneau a life he would not have otherwise known.

The above is but a small portion of Lonis Wendt's informative discourse which summarized an interesting, yet little known period in the life of one of America's greatest heroes, William Clark. (Lonis can be reached by sending an email to EOTPNews@yahoo.com).



The Hitching Horse Bed & Breakfast Inn provided the venue for this year's 'A Lewis & Clark Christmas'. The celebration was hosted by the 'Encounters On The Prairie' (EOTP) Central South Dakota's chapter of the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation. An assortment of special dessert dishes and open bar helped make for a special evening. This year's fete was attended by over 30 members, who were treated to a fascinating presentation, 'Clark's Complex Christmas of 1810', by chapter historian, Lonis Wendt, seen in this picture, in the left foreground.

EOTP Bicentennial Banner Project

In Commemoration of the Bicentennial of the Lewis & Clark Expedition, the Encounters On the Prairie - Central South Dakota Chapter of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation commissioned banners to be displayed in the cities of Pierre and Fort Pierre, South Dakota. The banners were designed by Nancy Gordon of Pierre. Twenty of the banners were loaned to the State of South Dakota and displayed on the grounds of the State Capitol in Pierre from May 2003 through November 2007. Upon their final removal, labels were affixed to the banners bearing the numbers 1 to 20.

Banner #1 was donated to the South Dakota State Historical Society to be placed among the permanent collection at the



SD Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre and to recognize the efforts of Governor M. Michael Rounds and the State of South Dakota in displaying the banners.

Secretary of State, Chris Nelson, foreground, signs Certificates of Authenticity for Lewis & Clark banners. EOTP President Bill Stevens, left, and EOTP Vice-President Chuck Schroyer, right, witness the Signing.

to recognize the efforts of Mayor Dennis Eisnach and the Pierre City Commission, and service of the City staff for installing and caring for the banners displayed throughout the

City of Pierre during the Bicentennial Commemoration.

Banner #3 was donated to the City of Fort Pierre to recognize the efforts of Mayor Sam Tidball, the Fort Pierre City Commission, the Verendrye Benevolent Association, and the city staff for installing and caring for the banners displayed in the City of Fort Pierre during the Bicentennial Commemoration period.

to recognize the efforts of Mayor Sam Tidball, the Fort Pierre City Commission, the Verendrye Benevolent Association, and the city staff for installing and caring for the banners displayed in the City of Fort Pierre during the Bicentennial Commemoration period.

Banner #4 was donated to the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation to be held and displayed as part of its permanent collection in its National Headquarters Office in the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center in Great Falls, Montana.

Banner #5 was presented to Nancy Gordon for her creative service in designing the banners and the certificates to accompany the Capitol banners.

The EOTP chapter is now completing this project by promoting the sale of the remaining 15 banners that were displayed on the SD State Capitol Grounds with the proceeds used for the work of the EOTP Chapter of the LCTHF. Each numbered banner has a formally dated Certificate of Authenticity signed by the Governor of South Dakota and attested with the signature of South Dakota Secretary of State, Chris Nelson and the Official Great Seal of South Dakota.

In the coming weeks, EOTP Vice President Chuck Schroyer, the L&C Banner Project Director will complete arrangements to make these very collectible banners for sale. The banners measure 29" x 60", with a blue background and white lettering. Watch for details in our Spring Issue of *The Pirogue*.

Contact The Pirogue at EOTPNews@yahoo.com about receiving this publication, or joining the Encounters On The Prairie Chapter of the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation.

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