

Portage Chronicle



Reporting the events of the Portage Route Chapter, Great Falls, Montana

April 2012

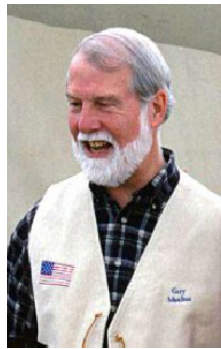
Vol 23 Issue 2

Sherman Breakfast Draws Good Crowd

March 17 was one of those days that just make you feel good. It was the annual gathering of the local Lewis and Clark community to pay tribute to a few of those people that have worked hard and made us what we are today.

At the Sherman Breakfast that morning the Sherman Fellow Award was presented to long time Portage Route Chapter members Mike Labriola and Gary Moulton.

Jane Weber presented Labriola and described his background interest in "all things military." That interest lead to his involvement in the Lewis and Clark legacy as he lead the planning for the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center and subsequent efforts that got legislation passed to build the facility. He continued by leading the organization that raised the required funding for it. But he was not through.



In keeping with his military interest he is credited with establishing the Lewis and Clark Honor Guard to put a face on history and tell the story as it might have looked during the Expedition. The Honor Guard is now frequently called upon for their historical accuracy in dress, equipment and methods.

Mike is also credited with playing a key role in developing the annual Lewis and Clark Festival to bring the Expedition's legacy to life for the thousands of visitors the festival gets every year.

Gary Moulton was presented by Bob Doerk who reviewed Moulton's "tireless work in raising awareness of the history of the Lewis and Clark Expedition in his research, writings and lectures." He also is supportive of others in their scholarly research. Moulton was a scholar-in-residence at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center during the early years of that Chapter program and has continued to frequently and freely share his knowledge through many lectures he has presented here. Gary Moulton is currently a board member of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation.

Sixty-eight people attended this year's Sherman Breakfast. In addition to the Sherman Fellow Award presentations the audience heard about the planned activities of the various local Lewis and Clark groups.



Foundation Board of Directors Meet Here

The spring meeting of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation's Board of Directors was held in Great Falls at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center on March 16. Foundation President Jay Buckley made sure that the Board stayed on track for the full eight hours of the meeting. They conducted a tremendous amount of work that was all essential to the well-being of the Foundation.

The evening before the meeting the Portage Route Chapter hosted the Board at the Western Heritage Art Show Quick Finish and Auction at the Holiday Inn.

Saturday morning after the meeting the Board attended the Sherman Breakfast. Buckley gave a brief report to the gathered group on the coming plans for the National Foundation and the Annual Meeting in Clarksville, Indiana July 28-August 1.

National Foundation's Annual Meeting

This year the annual meeting of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation will be held in Clarksville, Indiana (across the river from Louisville, Kentucky) on July 28 –August 1. An interesting note on the meeting is that registration for the five-day event is \$250; that is \$100 less than last year's annual meeting registration. It is also the same price that registration cost in 1998 when the Foundation's annual meeting was held in Great Falls.

There will be the usual format for these meetings with speakers on Sunday and Monday, then tours on Tuesday. Wednesday will see more speakers. The Closing banquet speaker that evening will be Jay Buckley, president of the Foundation and associate professor of history at Brigham Young University.

The Discovery Expedition of St. Charles, living history interpreters, will have an encampment on Saturday at the George Rogers Clark home in Clarksville. Visitors there will enjoy history in action.

There will be one optional tour that will visit the home of Jonathan Clark which was built in Louisville in 1802 and is still in use. It is now a private home of Bruce and Becky Campbell. They have invited the meeting attendees to their home for an afternoon with James Holmberg, curator of special collections at the Filson Historical Society. This tour will be on Sunday, July 29 from 1 – pm.

Full details for this year's annual meeting are available at www.lewisandclark2012.com

The 2012 Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation's Annual Meeting will be held at Clarksville, Indiana July 28–August 1(See related article on page X). Obviously this meeting is open to any and all foundation members.

Any Portage Route Chapter (and National Foundation) member interested in attending the Clarksville meeting is urged to contact Chapter President Walt Walker (phone 761-8591) for additional information.

Chapter Summer Activities

With the warmer weather comes an increase in the Chapter's tours and other outside activities. As reported in previous issues of this newsletter the

Chapter's board is working to have at least one event each month for the general membership. These activities are scheduled so far.

A tour to the Lewis and Clark interpreted sites in the Helena canyon between Tower Rock and Wolf Creek is scheduled for April 29. This is an opportunity to see where the series of eight locations actually are. We will also be examining each sign and deciding if it needs replacing because of damage or if it is telling the wrong story, etc.

For those who want to go, meet at the Tower Rock parking lot at 1:00 pm on Sunday, the 29th. Be sure to bring whatever you want to drink, eat, etc. This tour will probably take all afternoon, possibly until dark. So be sure to bring warmer clothes too.



On May 26 the Chapter will be touring to Fort Benton to take in their dedication ceremonies for the new additions to the old fort. The bourgeois house will be the focal point for this gathering. The folks in Fort Benton have done some interesting things inside that building. Of particular interest is one large room that has been turned into an art gallery.

They have negotiated a long-term loan of the Bob Scriver Blackfeet series of 53 bronzes. About half will be on display for one season the switched out for the next season. They also have obtained a full set of the 81 piece Bodmier painting of the upper Missouri commissioned by Prince Maximilian. These will also be displayed in partial sets like the bronzes.

The dedication ceremonies will mark the official opening of the fort for the tourist season.

The details of the exact times, etc. are not set, but when finalized they will be sent out to the membership. We will probably include time for touring other places of interest there, such as the BLM Interpretive Center and depending on the weather a walking tour of the river levee along Front Street.

Activities for June, July and August are in the earlier planning stages. They include tours to Rock City, near Valier; a tour to Lost lake, near Geraldine; and a Lewis' birthday picnic in Black Eagle park.

New Website Becomes a Reality

As a result of several suggestions resulting from the website dilemma reported in the last issue of this newsletter, the Chapter website is now up and running. By taking advantage of those suggestions John Toenyes and Phil Sriver were able to get a new site built using the "drag and drop" site we earlier discarded. Thanks to the good assistance we were able to save the Chapter considerable money and the two would-be webmasters – editors numerous hours of work.

We retained the same name (Corps of Discovery . org) but almost everything else is very much new and changed from the old site. Our new website is actually a series of five interlinked websites that connect the Portage Route Chapter and the Lewis and Clark Honor Guard with our other partners to give the visitor a single contact with the entire local Lewis and Clark community. Visitors to this site should find navigation to be simple and easily find what they are looking for.

We now have the past four issues of this newsletter on the website. We are also making extensive use of photos to help tell the stories of what we are doing. By publishing "photo galleries" and "photo tours" we show the activities we do and some of the people involved as well as what the area looks like.

We also have a page for Chapter items for sale that uses PayPal so we can accept credit card purchases.

The new site features a single "historical" article that will be changed every month or two.

The new Corps of Discovery website makes large steps forward in website technology so we will be able to keep it updated much easier than before. We will be using it as a quicker way to communicate with Chapter members by providing an extended "Coming Events" page and with the blog I am now writing. The blog is updated weekly while the Coming Events will be updated as needed to drop old events and provide additional information on future events.

The nice part about the new age technology we are now using is that the website can very easily be added to when new pages are needed. Old pages can be simply removed when they are no longer useful.

Visions of Lewis and Clark Through Kites

These kites are based on the Captains' journal quotes, their tributes to the people and natural resources encountered on the journey and the other members of the Corps of Discovery.

To create Visions of Lewis and Clark twenty six artists interpreted quotes selected from the explorers' journals. The renderings that resulted created an outstanding collection of "flying art" that is the first historical themed kite exhibit in the United States. The kites are not just display pieces. They have been taken outside and flown.

The collection reflects a combination of history, art, engineering and perfection in flight. It provides an incredible educational opportunity for further knowledge about the Corps of Discovery's remarkable expedition.

This exhibit has been enjoyed by millions of visitors at the Billings, Montana airport, the Oregon Historical Society in Portland, and the Louisville, Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft.

It will be displayed in Great Falls during the 2012 summer season. Part of the display will be at the Great Falls airport and part will be at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center.

As announced recently at the Sherman Breakfast the "Visions of Lewis and Clark" kite display will be sponsored by the Lewis and Clark Foundation.

The Portage Chronicle is a quarterly publication of the Portage Route Chapter of the Lewis and Clark Trial Heritage Foundation
Phil Sriver, editor

Chapter website: www.corpsofdiscovery.org

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Upcoming Events

- Tour Interpreted sites in Helena canyon, Apr 29
- LC Interpretive Center anniversary, May 6
- Tour to Ft. Benton dedication of fort additions, May 26
- Lewis and Clark Festival, June 29-30
- Annual meeting of LCTHF, July 28 – August 1
- Chapter picnic at Black Eagle park, August 19
- Chapter annual meeting, September 16
- Chapter Christmas Social, December 2

Work Details Repairs UPC Overlook Site

During the past few weeks the Chapter has taken advantage of the warm weather to make repairs and do general clean up at the Upper Portage Camp Overlook. It is now ready for the coming tourist season.

Earlier this year somebody decided to use the unrestricted access and dumped the contents of a horse trailer in the parking area of the site. Consequently the Chapter board decided to install gates to limit entrance to foot traffic only.

Local businesses donated and installed the gates as well as doing the necessary dirt work to improve the parking area outside of the fence.

A Chapter work detail spent one day repairing the fence around the site. A few days later another

work detail spread gravel on the trails, cut weeds and did other normal cleanup and maintenance work that was needed to get things ready for the coming summer's use.

Visitors taking their party to the site now will park outside the fence and walk in through the hand gate that will remain unlocked. There is room to park several cars in the outside lot. If a large group of cars or buses is planning to visit the site they need to call ahead to get the drive through gates unlocked.



Chapter president Walt Walker works on repairs to the fence around the Overlook site.

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