

NORTHWEST OCTA UPDATE AND JOURNAL
Newsletter of the Northwest Chapter
Oregon-California Trails Association
Winter 2001

Lethene Parks, President Don Popejoy, Editor

Chapter Website: nwocta.com OCTA Bookstore: octabookstore.com

Member Profile of the Quarter:
Joyce Bolerjack

A ready smile and a quick wit are just some of the identifying characteristics of Joyce Bolerjack. There are, however, many other attributes we can assign to our Northwest Chapter Treasurer and Membership Chairman. She is hard working, dependable, efficient, organized and always going the extra mile for OCTA. She has spent a great deal of time contacting inactive members, keeping them informed and letting them know that they are important to our organization.

She began her fascination with the Oregon Trail on trips to Oregon, Idaho and Wyoming with her late husband. A friend told her about a book on the Oregon Trail by Gregory Franzwa. She wrote Franzwa who informed her that he was founding the Oregon California Trails Association and asked if she would like to become a Charter Member. The year was 1983. She is also a Charter Member of the Northwest Chapter which was established in 1986. Joyce became the Treasurer/Membership Chairman, a position which she has held ever since.

Joyce was born in Denver, Colorado to Mr. & Mrs. Pringle. She credits her grandfather with her love of Western things. Her grandfather was a superintendent of a gold mine in Victor, CO. The pioneer spirit was alive in her father, a food broker. He was involved early in 1944 in development of the frozen food business. In the later part of the 1960's he was in the potato business which resulted in the Pringle Potato Chip. **(Editor's Note: does that make Joyce a chip off the old block?)**

Her great interest in Western history has manifested itself in her large collection of Western memorabilia. She has set aside a room in her home, which she calls her Western Room. Articles are displayed as a trading post. She also

has accumulated a wonderful collection of Western bronze statues.

She enjoys traveling, decorating her home and gardening which she does with great artistic style. Her artistic talents have been passed on to her children...Ann, a well known Northwest artist; Clair, an import designer who creates articles for the Disney catalog; and Bob, the Sports Editor for the Everett Herald newspaper. Among them she has four grandsons.

We are forever indebted to Joyce for her service to OCTA. Always a willing worker. Thank you so much, Joyce, for your devotion to OCTA.

Submitted by Carol Buss

From the Park's Bench

At this time of year, with the temperature hovering around 30 degrees and a foot and a half of snow on the ground, trail related activities tend to take a back seat in my mind, and other interests-reading and genealogy move forward. But two items from the recent issue of NFP have reminded me that all of these things are inseparably tied together. First, Bill Martin's editorial, in which he reflects on his own family history research and identifies many of his ancestors as common people, "the sort of individuals and families who arrived on American shores in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries and gradually spread their spirit, their individualism and their independence across the continent." Second, John Mark Lambertson's articles on Lizzie Charlton and the genealogical and historical research that led to unraveling the mystery of who she was and how her trail diary ended up in a California landfill. Mr. Lambertson talks about the value of giving each trails story a "human face." For me, it is the search for this "human face" that intrigues me the most in both my interest in the trails and my interest in genealogy. Who were these people who left

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Northwest OCTA Update

The *NW OCTA Update* is the newsletter published by the Northwest Chapter of the Oregon-California Trails Association. It is published on the 15th day of January, April, and October of each year. Also, a special Convention issue is done after each convention in August. Submission deadline for each *Update* is the 15th of the month previous to publication.

President - Lethene Parks; Past President - Dave Welch; Vice-President - Glenn Harrison; Secretary - Marley Shurtleff; Treasurer - Joyce Bolerjack; Membership Chair - Joyce Bolerjack; Board of Directors - Susan Badger Doyle, Jack Holmes, Carol Buss; Historian - Juanita Haun; Archaeologist - Connie Johnson; Publications Director - Jim Tompkins; Webmaster - Tom Laidlaw; Update Editor - Don Popejoy; Trail Marking & Mapping - Vic Bolon; Outings - Glenn Harrison; COED - Ella Mae Young; Conventions - Jack & Pat Fletcher; Chapter Preservation Officer - Chuck Hornbuckle; State Liaisons: Oregon - Jim Renner, Washington - Dave Welch

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To find out who the trail monitor is in your area, contact Chuck Hornbuckle.

Thanks to Marley Shurtleff for proof reading this issue.

In the recently found lost journals of Sacajawea, she made just this one entry. "I was with 32 men for almost two years and not once did any of them ask for directions!"

Ladies, does this sound familiar?

Year 2001 Outings

Mid-Winter Board Meeting: March 2 and 3
OCTA Headquarter

NW OCTA Annual Meeting: March 10

Meet at the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center in The Dalles at 10 AM for the General Membership Meeting. Lunch will be on your own; best bet is the Discovery Center's cafe.

The afternoon program will be presented by **Susan Badger Doyle** who will talk about the "Bozeman Trail." There will be time to visit the exhibits and museum. Please remember to bring items for the raffle. Meeting is over at 4 PM. Center closes at 6 PM. You must register; see form on page 7

OT Interpretive Center: April 28 and 29

This meeting/outing is at Flagstaff Hill near Baker City, OR. Joint activities with the Oregon Historic Trails Advisory Council, BLM, Trail Tenders & the Idaho/Montana Chapter.

Saturday the 28th - Gather at 9 AM. After lunch, at 1 PM, we will dedicate the new "Lure of Gold" historical marker on Hwy. 86. At 2 PM we will install the Ackerman Meritorious Service Award back at the center, and there will be programs in the theatre. There will be a potluck dinner hosted by the Trail Tenders.

Sunday the 29th - Trail hike along Virtue Flat.

Agency Valley Cemetery Cleanup: May 11 - 13

This outing will be lead by **Gail & Muriel Carbiener** and they will take us about 75 miles west and north of Vale, north of Beulah Reservoir. Travel day is the 11th, Saturday the 12th is a the work day and then drive back home on the 13th. This 1/4-acre cemetery started in 1883 and contains the graves of Levi Scott of the Applegate Trail fame, and his sons. Visit the nearby Sarah Chamber's grave site. 4x4's not necessary.

** For this outing and the following check for more details in the next *Update* and visit the chapter website.**

Olympia, Washington Indoor Outing: May 19

Jack & Pat Fletcher will talk about the Cherokee Trail and there will be diary readings by Jim Tompkins. Also an afternoon field trip to the Washington State Library of NW Research.

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Year 2001 Outings (Continued from page 2)

National Trails Day: June 2 and 3

Hike to McDonald Crossing of the John Day River and then continue on to the Deschutes River crossing. Lead by **Vic Bolon**.

Barlow Road Outing: June 23 and 24

Lead by **Jim Tompkins** and **Tom Laidlaw**.

Naches Trail: July 28 and 29

Lead by **Dick Pingrey**.

OCTA Convention, Casper, Wyo. Aug. 12 - 19

Corum Gravesite Fence Reconstruction: August 20 - 22

Immediately after the OCTA National Convention in Casper, Wyoming, we will reconstruct the Corum Gravesite fence. Corum and several others are buried on a beautiful hillside above Ham's Fork on the Sublette Cutoff near Kemmerer, Wyoming. With the supervision of Lynn Harrell, BLM, and Randy Brown, we will set 30 pressure treated posts with a top rail and two wire strands. Lead by **Gail & Muriel Carbiener**

The Columbia River Connection; Lewis and Clark, Part 1: September 15 and 16

Meet in The Dalles the morning of the 15th and follow the Corps of Discovery along the Columbia River. Return for overnight at The Dalles for more exploring on the 16th. Meeting over around 3 PM. Lead by **Don Popejoy**.

Joint Meeting with Linn County Historical Society: October 21

Migration patterns into the Willamette Valley by Mildred Hawkins. Starts at 2 PM at the Lakeside Center, Mennonite Village, Albany, OR.

Glenn Harrison would like ideas for outings and meetings for 2002. Also, more "Indoor Outings" will be planned for those who cannot attend the hikes and do all the traveling required. Any ideas? Please let Glenn or any other officer/board member know.

Editors Forum

Once again a change has occurred in the layout of the *Update and Journal*. Over the last year I have been asked several times by many of you to do the chapter newsletter in columns. Well, I have been doing the newsletter in columns; one large column per-page. But now I have gone to the two column format. Three columns is too much work, so I hope all of you are pleased. Let me know your opinions on this change, if you have any, for I am but a servant of the chapter and will do as I'm told. The special Convention 2000 *Update* received several favorable comments. Here are some of them: "I liked the OCTA Update & Journal that I received today. Thought it very interesting, someone sure had a good idea to put this special addition out." **Bob Coward**

"Thank you for the Convention 2000 Special. For those of us who can't always attend conventions, it was like being there. You could probably use some stamp money." **Mabel Johnson** (she sent \$20 for postage) Other comments came from **Gregory Franzwa** "The best Update yet" and **Ella Mae Young**.

This year I have an opportunity to do several more Elderhostel programs. Many of you have asked, so here is some information. March 23rd - 31st and late October I will be hosting Lewis & Clark Columbia River Cruises out of Portland; May 4th - 22nd I will be hosting an Oregon Trail bus tour from Independence, to Oregon City. Not scheduled yet are a of couple Lewis & Clark bus tours from St. Louis to Astoria. For more information contact me by phone, e-mail, or use the old fashion method, write me.

In this issue there is a map by **John Bristow** showing the route that was marked by the trail marking crew this year. **Ella Mae Young** asked for a map, to use along with the trail marking articles. Go back to the October 2000 *Update* with this map in hand and "see" where we were. Thanks for this idea, Ella Mae.

Do to the lack of space in the *Update*, there has not been room to publish the minutes from the General Membership meeting, the Board meeting, or the minutes from the convention. However, these can be obtained from **Marley Shurtleff**, chapter secretary.

Feature Article Is It Time For Steel?

Our NWOCTA has done an excellent job of marking the Oregon Trail to The Dalles. Over the years we have placed an unbelievable number of those white carsonite markers.

The task now shifts from “seek and mark” to one of maintenance of the previously planted carsonites. Over the years, vandals, hunters, elk, range cattle, and weather have all taken their toll. The life span of our carsonite markers seems to be about five years, maybe ten at the most.



40 Mile Desert, placed 1992

Is It Time For Steel? The Crossroads Chapter in Utah and Trails West in CA, NV and ID have marked the trail with railroad rails. These steel markers are painted brown and have an aluminum plate attached that is engraved with a diary quote or location description. Many of these markers have lasted twenty years or more.



Muriel & Marker - Carson Pass, placed 1971

Since steel markers are placed at significant trail sites, far fewer are used than the Carsonite ones that have been placed sometimes within line of sight. The work of “planting” the steel markers is more concentrated and fewer are done in a work day, as a hole three feet deep and cement is used to position the marker. The aluminum plate is riveted to an eighteen inch rail cross beam welded to the top of the rail post. Work is shared, and usually not more than four markers are placed in one day.

Railroad rails are donated with cutting and welding done by members of school metal or welding classes. Do we have such contacts in the NWOCTA chapter? If you have a contact, please let me - **Gail Carbiener**, or **Chuck Hornbuckle** know. If purchased, each post will cost about \$70.00

Since most if not all of the trail has been marked and identified within Oregon, the task becomes where to place steel markers and how the aluminum plates should be engraved.



Old rail with new paint and plate

Recommendations for plate inscriptions can be submitted by any member who searches a diary and locates a special spot on the trail described by the emigrant. It will give those who cannot dig holes and hammer rivets an opportunity to participate in our trail marking.

As we begin our remarking and a marker maintenance program...

Is It Time For Steel? Article & photos submitted by Gail Carbiener

For those of you who have a desire to learn more about the Willamette Valley historical past, contact **Glenn Harrison** about his Linn County Historical Society newsletter. It is wonderful! Four issues a year, usually 50 pages in length and with good pictures

From the Parks Bench continued

home, family, and all that was familiar to set out for a journey across the unknown continent or ocean to an uncertain future? How did they feel at parting from loved ones at home that they knew they would never likely see again? What did they think and feel when difficulties befell and they were too far along in the journey to turn back? Or when they reached the end of the trail and were faced with the reality that much hard work and difficulty still faced them if they were to make a new home and wrest a living from the new place?

This repeated pattern of departure from the old home or place in search of the new and hope of a better future that would come with it is the history of our country, and the movement westward over the Oregon, California and other western trails is only one piece, albeit a major piece, of the repeating pattern. My own ancestors skipped this particular piece, but did participate in the other pieces-the Great Migration from England to New England in the 1620-30's, the subsequent movements south into Pennsylvania and the Valley of Virginia, the move down the Ohio River or, alternately, westward through the Cumberland Gap, to the frontiers of Tennessee and Kentucky, and the spread from these places into the Ohio Country and the midwest states of Indiana, Illinois and Iowa as soon as they were opened to white settlement.

I believe that in order to truly understand any of these pieces of history and the people, we must read and study the history and we must get out on the ground and see these places, see for ourselves the lay of the land, experience the climate, walk in the ruts of the trails. Yes, Don Popejoy, it does make chills go up and down my spine when I stand on the Natchez Trace a mile or so from where Meriwether Lewis met his death and realize that at that same time my own ancestors lived not ten miles away; or when I look at a stone bridge built on the National Road in 1813 and see right beside it the clear rut swales of the earlier river ford; or when I look at an emigrant signature carved on a rock: or to find subtle signs of stonework where John Mullan's men constructed the road; or...you get the idea. I stand in awe of these uncommon "common people" who took the chance and left behind the familiar to step forward into an

unknown and uncertain future. So for the rest of this winter I will read and study (my current read is Susan Badger Doyle's Bozeman Trail) and come spring and warmer weather I will be ready to get out onto the trails again and walk some more in the ruts. I hope all of you will join me. **Lethene Parks**

Applegate/Southern Route to Oregon

A National Park service (NPS) Challenge Cost Share Grant (CCSP) application has been submitted to the Long Distance Trails Office in Salt Lake City to mark the Applegate/Southern Route to Oregon Trail from Davis Creek, CA to the Oregon/California border near Klamath Falls, OR.

Assuming approval, the initial trail marking will begin on June 11, 2001 with a two day "Survey Trip" which will begin in Alturas at the BLM Headquarters Office at 9 AM. Richard Silva, an OCTA member and project historian, will provide background information about the Applegate/Southern Route across Northern California. On June 11th and 12th, we will travel approximately 85 miles all on forest service bladed gravel roads or county roads. High clearance vehicle is best but 4x4 not required.

The purpose of this outing is twofold: first to enjoy the trail over an area that may be among the least traveled by "Rut-Nuts" and second to identify where holes will be dug and markers planted on subsequent work trips. We will visit wonderful swales, emigrant camping areas and significant landscape locations like the Natural Bridge.

A "working outing" is scheduled for July 7 - 10, 2001 again in Alturas. Sixteen markers will be planted, four each day. The markers will be made from railroad rail, continuing the method used by Trails West on the eastern part of the Applegate.

The CA/NV OCTA chapter is cooperating with the NW OCTA chapter who will provide all the necessary supplies, materials and landowners permission. The Cost Share Grant will provide our members with some personal expense reimbursement for mileage, meals and motels. Many more details to follow, but put the dates on your calendar now and plan on marking the Applegate/Southern Route to Oregon across the very top of California this summer.

Submitted by Gail Carbiener

“Emigrants on the Oregon Trail in Oregon 1845-1848”

By John & Sandra Bristow
Part Three

Picking up from where we left off in the Oct. 2000 Update:

The Tour

Continue north on highway 30. After traveling about a mile, pull off onto the left shoulder and look west. Clear trail ruts may be seen on the far side of the deep dry wash. Proceed another mile and to the west again find a small white cross about 20 feet off the road. This marks the spot where, in 1860 some members of the Utter Party massacre were buried.

Travel on to the small railroad village of Huntington. Sandra's great grandmother Minnie Bell Rebman (Michael) Holcum owned and operated a millinery shop here in the mid-1930's. There is a Trail marker placed by Ezra Meeker in a small park on the north edge of town.

For the best feel of the difficulties the emigrants had when transiting this part of the canyon, stay on highway 30 going north. This will take you through the nearly abandoned village of Lime, after which the road dies out and you are forced back onto I-84. The Trail at Lime winds off to the east side of the canyon for about a mile and then returns to either right under the highway or winding back and forth all the way along the Burnt River Canyon.

Next, take exit 335 to the Weatherby Rest Area to read the panels explaining the emigrant's problems with the Burnt River and how they were forced to make a difficult detour out of this canyon.

The Train

The Burnt River Canyon wasted no time taking its toll on the Train. The already badly worn men were out front every day working to clear willows, scrub pine and other tenacious growth, moving large boulders and attempting in every way possible to improve the continuously repeated crossings of this meandering, turgid stream. The wagons took a fierce beating. Iron tires were thrown, fallows and spokes broke and under-

carriage running gear cracked and fell apart. The oxen and horses had a miserable time with footing. Shoes were lost and hooves became cracked and bleeding. The women and children, walking as they had to all along, struggled through the rolling river rock and undergrowth in their effort to keep pace. The extreme heat and breathless air caused much suffering throughout the Train.

About the third day of this very slow travel, the Captain was forced to move the Train off to the east, as the burnt River Canyon suddenly narrowed and further travel along the river bottom area became impossible. The track now climbed eastward and upward along the drainage of a small creek. Although the climb was steady, the going now was better and some forage became available. At several points, however, where the Trail was forced to cross a sloping side-hill the order went out to have men and boys jump up on the high side of each wagon to keep them from tipping over and rolling down the hill.

After about 6 miles of eastward travel the Train eased to the north and passed over a ridge into the drainage area of another small creek. Now the Train's direction was north then west and downhill to once again strike the Burnt River. Here it entered a small round shaped flat valley, which provided decent camping, some water but little in the way of wood or forage.

Within a few miles the next day, as the Train moved north, it became apparent that the Burnt River flowing in from the due west now, was no longer a usable route. The Train worked its way out of the canyon always climbing and continuously moving from the left to the right side of a shallow defile and back again. They were advancing steadily into a hot, scrub covered, dusty, desert area totally devoid of water and graze. Ahead, was a long, low, barren ridge running west to east. The Train climbed up over this ridge near its center, then swung to the northwest down a very broad, wide-open, seemingly never-ending, treeless slope.

Ahead and to the right of their route now and always in view over the many hours it took to pass, was a high conical shaped hill. As they came abreast of and passed this prominent landmark, a broad green valley became visible straight ahead. It appeared to have an a

(Continued on page 7)

abundance of much needed graze and water. Every animal seemed to sense what lay ahead and the pace of the Train picked up noticeably.

On the horizon to the north now, however, loomed the long blue green silhouette of an extensive mountain range. This was identified by the Captain as an arm of the Blue Mountains and as an obstacle over which they soon must pass.

(to be continued)

Welcome New Members

Guy Moellendorf from Kent, WA. and **Martha Dupas** from Gresham, OR.

Chapter membership now stands at 242.

Congratulations to **Gregory M. Franzwa** and **Kathy Colyer Heath** who were married on December 23rd, 2000. What a great way to start the new year!



Cartoon submitted by **Joyce Bolerjack**

Sacagawea Speaks Beyond The Shining Mountains With Lewis & Clark

is now scheduled to be released in late May by Falcon Publishing of Helena, MT. **Joyce Badgley Hunsaker**, yet another one of our members to write a historical book, spent many years of on-site research rediscovering this famous woman of history. It's 170+ pages, hardback, and follows the narrative of her living history program, with detailed endnotes, L & C journal entries that correspond with her narrative, historical paintings and artifacts shown, plus current photographs. Lots more! What else can I say? Just buy it! Call toll free to reserve your copy: 1-800-582-2665 and ask for either Pete Soper or Megan Hiller.

Registration Form For the Annual Membership Meeting March 10, 2001

Yes, I will attend:

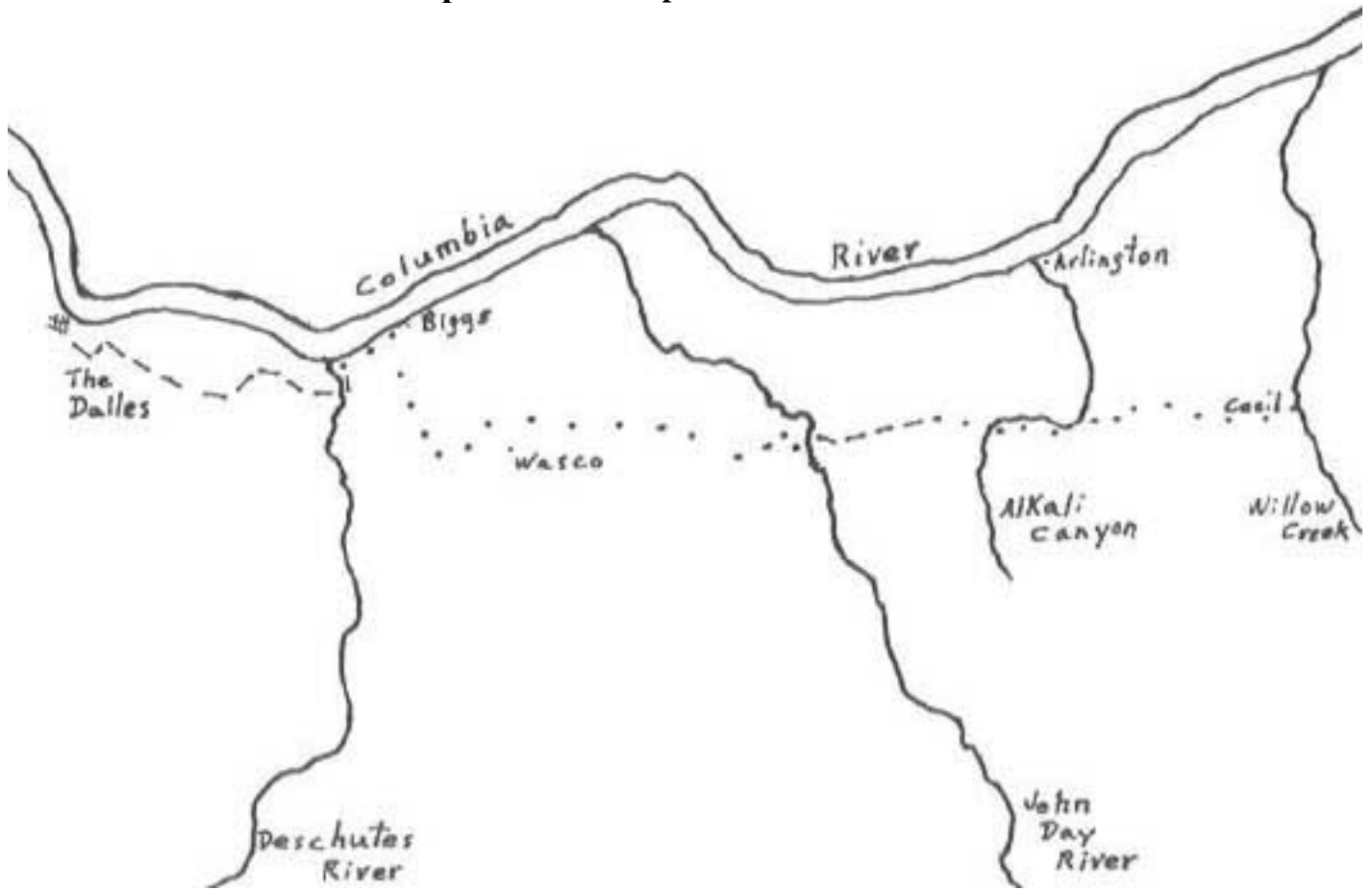
Please submit \$3 per person and mail this form to:
Joyce Bolerjack, 10813 NE 20th Street,
Bellevue, WA 98004

My name is:

Attending with me are:

See page 2 for details or go online to the [chapter website](#).

John Bristow's Map: Dotted line represents the trail that was marked in 2000



NW OCTA UPDATE
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