



## **HOT AUGUST NIGHTS IN THE NORTHWEST**

### **FORT VANCOUVER CONVENTION REPORT**

by **Dave Welch**

When I was promoting the Fort Vancouver convention to our friends in the Midwest, I touted a temperature of 75 degrees with clear skies. Little did I know that that temperature would be reached by ten in the morning on the way to 99 degrees! We were bracketed by rain on both sides of the convention, but had a superb week for our event.

And the event wasn't bad either. I especially enjoyed the appearances of Ezra Meeker to open and close the convention. His appearance was enhanced by the presence of one of Ezra's wagons and the delivery of Ezra to the closing in **Dick Pingrey's** 1927 Curtis Robin. The wagon was provided by the Ezra Meeker Historical Society of Puyallup, WA.



**Ray "Ezra Meeker" Egan at closing Barbecue**

Ezra is portrayed by **Ray Egan**, who is my neighbor in Steilacoom. Ray is an actor, playwright, and historian who has brought several of Washington's pioneers to life with some three hundred performances. Ezra Meeker has kept him busiest. Ray is a member of OCTA, the Ezra Meeker Historic Society and Tacoma's Job Carr Cabin Museum. This summer marks his ninth year of appearances at the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center in Baker City and his fourth year at Oregon's Emigrant Springs State Park.

Egan also coordinated the Tuesday Re-enactors Night presentations by **Susan Butruille**, Tom Laidlaw and **Carl Allen**. Each presented a unique aspect of the convention themes to a packed house in

the Centennial Center. The diverse program reflected a strong pioneer woman and suffragette, a unique American pioneer in a male dominated society and a self-admitted 60s folksinger singing of the River and the Great Depression.

Welcoming remarks on Wednesday morning by Vancouver City Council Member **Pat Jollota**, Oregon Historical Society's **Dr. John Pierce**, Washington Historical Society's **David Nicandri** and Congressman **Brian Baird** established the Northwest flavor of the convention. Of particular note were Congressman Baird's strong comments in support of HR1051, the trails feasibility study authorization bill. We need all the help we can get to pry this bill from a house committee where the chairman is refusing to bring it up for consideration. **Dr. William Lang's** keynote address raised an issue that many of us who are descendants of overland emigrants would prefer to overlook. What about those other emigrants, those that came by sea around the Horn or through Panama? Lang concluded that, in general, the sea travelers were better businessmen and got a disproportionate piece of the economic pie while the overland emigrants were busy with their donation land claims and more active politically.

On Wednesday afternoon, and all day Thursday, papers were presented on the four convention themes: Native American culture, Lewis and Clark, the fur trade and the Oregon Trail, each with the Columbia River as a central element. VHS tapes of these presentations (and many other convention sessions) are available from Clark Vancouver Community Television.

Chapter member **Keith May**, with assistance from **Jenny Miller**, produced a "teacher's institute" that was very successful. Eleven teachers attended the convention that probably would not have done so without Keith's encouragement and scholarship support from Northwest Chapter members.

Workshops started on Tuesday and concluded on Thursday afternoon. Each was well-attended and presented diversity and content not seen recently.

## NW Chapter Directory

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*Gail Carbiener (2), Keith May (4)*  
**Barlow Road (2)**  
*Roger Riolo, Jim Tompkins*  
**Applegate's South Road (7)**  
**Meek Cutoff (1)**  
**Free Emigrant Road (1)**  
*Gary Brumbaugh*  
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*Dick Pingrey*  
**Cowlitz Trail (1)**  
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Thursday's events were capped by an appearance of **Marv Ross and The Trail Band**. This was the fourth appearance of the group before an OCTA convention, beginning in Baker City and followed by Salt Lake City and Pendleton. The band members who appeared in Vancouver were the same as those in the first appearance in Baker City. An outstanding program featuring music from the Lewis and Clark era and the Oregon Trail was presented. Again, a packed house toe-tapped and sang-along to the tunes known to us all.

Outside of problems on one bus the first day, the tours went off smoothly. That bus had an electrical problem that affected the air-conditioning and then had a run-in with a curb while avoiding a logging truck. This resulted in a flat tire and a call for help. It seems to be a convention tradition that one bus has "challenges" that add to the adventure and stories.

Total convention attendance was 491. Participation in all events and tours was very good. Registration was handled with efficiency and cheer by Marley and Gary Shurtleff and **Muriel and Gail Carbiener**.

The convention is a major source of income for OCTA. Proceeds go to the general fund which supports all OCTA initiatives. Our objective was a net income of \$30,000. Over time conventions have achieved incomes ranging from \$10,000 to \$40,000. It appears that we will achieve a net income of about \$35,000. A significant portion of the increase was due to the highly successful raffle and silent auction which netted over \$5,600. This is split with the host chapter. A special thanks to **Suzanne Hornbuckle, Betsy Kanago, Marianne Bull, the Forsythes** who provided donations and staffed the raffle and auction tables.

In the last Northwest Journal, I extended thanks to those who took leadership roles in preparing for the convention. I want to extend thanks and again note that the success of the convention was due to a strong and dedicated team effort. However, two people deserve further acknowledgement: my wife, **Wendy Welch** and **Rich Herman**.



## DO YOU HAVE A CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

Please let Joyce Bolerjack know when you change your street or e-mail address. You can reach her at 10813 NE 20th St., Bellevue, WA, 98004 or at [jpbolerjack@comcast.net](mailto:jpbolerjack@comcast.net).

Visit our chapter website at <http://www.nwocta.com>

## THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

*Convention Thanks* - A big Thank You to all who helped make the 2004 OCTA Convention so successful. Many people willingly pitched in and helped. Dave and Wendy Welch did a great job keeping everything including us in order. The positive comments, notes, and emails of appreciation poured in from many participants and were very gratifying. Above all, everyone had a good time.

*National Awards* - At the Awards Banquet, many deserving people received recognition. Among them were several from our area. William Johnson, was a friend of the trail for replacing a 1938 Oregon Trail marker southeast of The Dalles. The original marker was placed by his grandfather Isaac B. Remington. Oregon Historic Trails Advisory Council was recognized for its work on preserving Oregon's 16 designated historic trails, including several wagon train trails. The plaque was accepted by NW OCTA Liaison and former chair Eileen Fitzsimons. Ken Dauble did a lot of work to preserve the Barlow Road, place signs, and get the Oregon Trail Foundation started. He missed the convention, so will receive the award at the Chapter's Annual Meeting on March 12. Larry and Corrine Lindsay operate a cattle feed lot east of the Boardman Bombing Range. They fenced off the Oregon Trail ruts on their property to keep the cattle from damaging them. The Education Award for an institution went to the Mission Mill Museum. Their Director, Kuri Gill, also arranged for the tour to the mission houses during the Willamette Valley tour.

*New Marker* - OCTA paid \$500 and our chapter and the CA/NV Chapter each paid \$1,000 of the \$5,000 cost for a new east entrance of the Whitman Mission Oregon Trail site. That matched the National Park Service share of \$2,500.

*Planning Ahead* - The July 2004 - June 30, 2005 NW OCTA budget includes an increase for education and preservation efforts. Plans are underway for trail preservation including mapping and marking the trail. A variety of outings and activities spread around Oregon and Washington will be interesting to everyone.

*January Events* - The NW Chapter board will meet at the home of Glenn & Carol Harrison in Albany, Oregon on January 15 from 10 am to 3:00 pm. At 2:00 pm on Sunday, January 16 author & quilt expert Mary Bywater Cross will present *The Ties That Bind: Quilts of Community* Lakeside Center of the Mennonite Village in Albany.

*Glenn Harrison*



# THE PEOPLE OF NWOCTA

## THIRD ANNUAL FALL PICNIC

Our September Picnic was once again very successful with 54 people attending the annual Fort Borst event in Centralia, Washington. We learned a great deal from **Ralph and Joanne Heinz** with their large display of historical items and their "Oregon Fever" presentation.



Joanne and Ralph Heinz at Picnic



Dick Pingrey and his Curtiss Robin at Pearson Airpark



Conventioners Keith May as Thomas Jefferson, Jannie Rhoades and Jim Tompkins, Tuck and Kay Forsythe, and Roger Blair as Dr. Phil DeGraves (Forsythe photos)



## CONVENTION FEEDBACK

Thank you all for a most outstanding convention!! We really enjoyed the papers presented, the treks, the awards banquet and the bbq. Of course, the best part is the people who share the same interests and concerns.

And to top it all off, the weather was perfect! We know and appreciate all that is involved in putting on a convention. Thanks for a job well done!!

**Pinky & Jackie Ellis, Wyoming Chapter**

Congratulations on a great OCTA Convention. My wife, my grandson and I all enjoyed your great show.

**George Ivory, Utah**

We really did feel that we had walked in the footsteps of Lewis and Clark. I am a collateral descendant of Clark so I was particularly looking forward to that tour.

**Jackie Lewin, St. Joseph, MO**

**Susan Doyle** gave a fine talk on the little known emigrant routes of the upper Columbia, and **Jim Tompkins** presented a serious study on early settlement patterns in Oregon. (almost making me forgive him for that line in his essay, recently published in a usually scholarly journal, to the effect that "between a third and a halfmillion people walked to Oregon." Oregon had a population of about 92 thousand in 1870). [This editor reminded her that he did not make up those figures, that by 1870 Oregon was split into several territories and had lost population to the California gold rush.] Dennis Larson's "Ezra Meeker's Old Oregon Trail Monument Expedition, 1906-08" was a superb blend of humor and information that practically brought down the house. Talent scouts: put him on your list of potential keynote speakers for your next convention.

**Carole Meyer, Nebraska**

The 2004 OCTA National Convention, sponsored by the Northwest Chapter is now a thing of the past. It did, however, create some lasting memories for a lot of convention goers. The hard work and attention to detail was evident every day as the calendar of events unfolded.

I was told by more than just a few, that pre-convention tours were handled well and guides kept the participants well informed. The regular convention tours gave an interesting overview of "end of the trail" activities. Boy, did the tours cover a lot of miles! They ventured east along the Columbia River Gorge and followed the Barlow Road, which was an alternate to the hazardous river route. A tour ventured west as far as Fort Clatsop. Another went north to Puget Sound along the Cowlitz Trail. An additional tour went south through the Willamette Valley as far as Corvallis and Brownsville.

**Vern Gorzitze; Utah OCTA, Vice President**

## SUPPORTING EDUCATION

The NW Chapter budget was approved for the year ending June 30, 2005, with \$1,000 for education. There is \$85 left over from the money donated toward scholarships. In addition donations will again be encouraged.

It is up to the Education Committee, chaired by **Jenny Miller**, with assistance from board member **Wendell Baskins**, to decide how to best use the money to assist teachers and students in Oregon and Washington learn about and become more interested in the trails and Western migration. Some possibilities for teachers mentioned at the meeting included, assistance for tuition to trail related courses, assistance with expenses for attending next year's OCTA Convention in Salt Lake City, focusing on things that would add to PDUs in Oregon and the similar professional development in Washington. Focusing on students, the money might be used for funding field trips to visit a portion of the trail or hear a trail related speaker, funding for students to assist OCTA members in placing markers or posts, and prize money for student projects. It is not confined to public school students and teachers. There could be a scout project of a home school group that could be helped.

It is also up to Jenny's committee to decide how best to communicate what is offered through State Superintendents of Education, ESD's, individual school districts, social studies associations, individual teachers, etc. To share what is offered with our Chapter members the deadlines for the newsletters are October 1, January 1, and April 1.

**Glenn Harrison**

## CHAPTER DUES DUE JANUARY 1ST

2005 Comes Fastt. Get a jump on 2005, by paying your NW OCTA dues early.

Chapter dues are:

**Individual \$10**

**Family \$15**

**Corporate (Associations and Businesses) \$20**

**Life dues are 20 times the annual dues.**

Additional donations may be included and may be specified, such as trail preservation, education, general.

Remember to be a member of a chapter, you must maintain your membership in OCTA at the national level.

Chapter dues should be sent to:

**Joyce Bolerjack, Treasurer**  
**10813 NE 20th Street**  
**Bellevue, WA 98004-2907**



## OUTINGS & ACTIVITIES

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### NW CHAPTER WINTER BOARD MEETING Albany, Oregon Sunday January 15, 2005

Glenn Harrison [harrison@cmug.com](mailto:harrison@cmug.com) - (541) 926-4680  
Special Program at Mennonite Center January 16

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#### LOCAL HISTORY MINI-CONFERENCES AND TOURS Olympia, Washington Spring 2005

Chuck and Suzanne Hornbuckle leaders  
[hornbucklecs@juno.com](mailto:hornbucklecs@juno.com)  
Details to be announced in April newsletter.  
Washington Territory Sesquicentennial theme.

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#### LOCAL HISTORY MINI-CONFERENCES AND TOURS Grande Ronde Indian Reservation, Oregon Summer 2005

Jim Tompkins leader  
[tompkins@bctonline.com](mailto:tompkins@bctonline.com)  
Details to be announced in April newsletter.  
Willamette Valley Indians and Applegate Trail themes.

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#### NW CHAPTER ANNUAL MEETING Oregon City, Oregon Saturday March 12, 2005

Wendell Baskins, coordinator  
Details to be announced in January newsletter.



Carol Harrison, Wendy Welch,  
Nancy Bolon at the Fall Picnic

Joyce Bolerjack serving at the Picnic

#### TRAIL PRESERVATION MAPPING, MARKING, MONITORING CONFERENCE

Baker City, Oregon  
Saturday-Sunday July 9-10, 2005

Gail Carbiener leader [mcgcarb@cmc.net](mailto:mcgcarb@cmc.net)  
Details including sites and times  
to be announced in April newsletter.

Saturday: July 9th: Meet in the National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretative Center near Baker City, in the Theater, with a welcome by **Sarah LeCompte**, Director of the Center and a 45 minute presentation by **Nancy Harms**, Center employee and living history expert. Immediately after the presentation will be a presentation of the NWOCTA plaques for **Jim Renner** and **Chuck Hornbuckle** as our "special" OCTA volunteers (as well as the winners to be announced at the March Annual Meeting in Oregon City).

Lunch will be at the Geiser Grand Hotel in downtown Baker City. A short program will be a detailed announcement of Northwest OCTA's intention of mapping and marking the Oregon Trail from the Idaho border to Oregon City, and asking for the cooperation of all present.

In the afternoon we will caravan to the Powder River crossing of the Oregon Trail in North Powder. There will be an installation of a marker at the river crossing, and reading of several diaries of this crossing over the years. Then we will caravan to Clover Valley exit on Interstate-84 and up to the newly discovered and marked ruts. **Jack Evans** will describe the surrounding terrain. A short hike up a gradual hill, about 1/2 mile each way will end the afternoon. The evening will be a dinner and speaker to be announced, at a location to be determined.

Sunday; July 10th is still to be planned, but should include a 1/2 day event, with a possible hike, etc.

**Gail Carbiener**



## SOUTH ROAD TO OREGON MARKING COMPLETED

On July 26, 2004, on the hill overlooking the descent to Goose Lake, OCTA members **Richard and Orsola Silva** placed the final, brown Carsonite marker of the South Road to Oregon / Applegate Trail marking project on public lands in California. They were assisted by **Stafford Hazelett**, a descendant of Virgil Pringle, pioneer diarist of 1846 on the South Road to Oregon.



**The final marker**

The first summer of trail marking was in 2002. A large crew gathered from the Northwest Chapter to mark the traces of the South Road to Oregon across California but last minute protests filed by [two Northwest Chapter members] with the Modoc National Forest prevented the placing of any markers in the Modoc NF that year. [The two] protested against the placing of markers as hazards to motorists, livestock, and wildlife; and they objected to the wording of the signs. After the required additional review, the Modoc NF determined that the proposed project was designed in accordance with safety standards for motorists and that the alleged hazard to livestock and wildlife was insignificant.

The Modoc NF dismissed the objection to the wording of the signs as frivolous. The review delayed the project in the Modoc NF for one year but other areas of public lands in California were marked in 2002.



**Richard and Orsola Silva**

The Northwest Chapter returned in force in the summer of 2003 to complete the marking of the trail in the Modoc NF with Carsonite and steel rail markers. **Gail Carbiener** arranged the preparation and transportation of the steel rail markers to the marking sites. For access to two remote locations along Fletcher Creek with steel rail markers, a local sheriff's deputy and a California Highway Patrolman were recruited to haul the markers on their ATVs. They brought along a son and nephew to participate. At Lassen Creek, the trail marking crew met the landowner, **Corda Perry**. Mrs. Perry was 94 and in the 1850s her great-grandparents settled on the land she owns. She and her son Norman allowed the crew to enter the land and restore the grave of Hartsfield, identified by J.G. Bruff in 1849, at the



base of the hill rising out of the valley of Lassen Creek. Hazelett did some further restoration work in July 2004.



**Hartsfield grave site**

After additional work by Richard and Orsola Silva to place markers, the final three days were a combination of trail marking and metal detector work in the Fandango Valley from the summit west to the



**Fandango Valley**

shore of Goose Lake. Spectacular remains of the old wagon road were plainly visible for long stretches through the forests and across the rocky meadows of the Fandango Valley. Working with a metal detector, additional segments of the old trail were verified along the Forest Service road on the south side of the valley.

This brings to a conclusion the project to mark the South Road to Oregon across northern California by the Northwest Chapter of OCTA.

**Stafford Hazelett**



## BITS & PIECES

### A CEMETERY BEGINS

The 14 people in the extended William Pattison family decided to make the overland journey taking 3 covered wagons from Randolph County, Illinois to Oregon. They left St. Joseph, Missouri on April 10, 1849.

The little wagon train reached Windlass Hill and tragedy struck. Nathan's diary notes, "On June 19, 1849, reaching what is generally known as Ash Hollow, so called by its containing a quantity of Ash Timber. We stopped here early in the afternoon to do some repairing and on the morning of the 19th Rachel was taken sick and died that night." Asiatic colera was bad that year. The family buried her body to secure it from wolves then cut and placed a flat headstone and a field boulder at the foot. The inscription read:

Rachel E. Pattison

Aged 18 year

June 19, 1849

Later 28 year-old Sanford Johnson from Proctorville, Vermont died of smallpox and was buried "beside the girl named Pattison." Then in 1869, while searching for the graves of two Indian chiefs killed in 1855 during the battle with General Harvey, Robert Harvy saw Rachel's grave. He returned to Ash Hollow in 1874, again located her grave, and placed a circle of stones around it.

After the railroad arrived in Nebraska, the town of Llewellyn was established. A committee was selected to locate a site for a cemetery. Because there were already graves of Rachel, Sanford, and two Indians at the site, Memorial Day ceremonies were held at the early graves covering them with flowers and an American flag. A few years later the townspeople decided to cover the girl's grave with a marble slab with an inscription, "Rachel Pattison was a member of a wagon train from Missouri heading for California". The thought was nice and showed respect, but Rachel was from Illinois and was going to Oregon. In 1913 the state of Nebraska placed near the grave an impressive stone marker marking the historic Battle of Ash Hollow fought in 1855. When Evelyn Pattison visited the grave in 1848, she found remnants of past Memorial Day celebrations, a faded American flag and a weather-beaten wreath. She took the flag as a family treasure.

In 1949, as a part of the Oregon Trail Memorial Association and a family research journey, Evelyn again visited the grave site. This time there was a huge fieldstone and cement monument nearing completion. The monument was a gift of the Llewellyn American Legion and the bronze plaque was provided by the students of Llewellyn High School. The inaccuracies on the marble plaque were corrected on the new plaque. The 1949 a special celebration occurred on June 19, 100 years after her death.

Moving on they finally arrived at the Blue Mountains in Oregon. Charlotte Irving died and is buried at "the last Pass in the Blue Mountains". With only two head of stock left, the Pattison family approached The Dalles on November 3. The weather turned cold, and the canvas that they put up for shelter froze. Not able to move on they stayed in this inadequate camp for three weeks and ran out of food. Fortunately they were discovered by Indians, who sold them dried, smoked salmon. The price was the two remaining mules and nearly all of Charlotte's clothing and her shoes, but they had to pay it. Unfortunately it was of poor quality and terrible condition. They had to wait until after dark to eat it, so that they could not see its filth.

This information is based on "The Pattison Story: The Account of a Pioneering Family" by Evelyn Green Pattison [granddaughter of James Renwick Pattison], 1954 typed manuscript - 125 pages plus additional material.

Glenn Harrison



Photo of Pattison Grave by editor

## THE LAST WAGON

In looking for who might have been in the last covered wagon traveling west, I came across this one. Born on October 29, 1919, Robert Jesse Oldham was the fifth of ten children born to Thomas Jefferson Oldham and Nancy Lee (Robison) Oldham. In the summer of 1930, the family moved from Blanket, Texas to New Mexico "via a covered wagon and an old beat-up pickup truck." The family grew when Nancy's sister died and her 9 children (Robert's cousins) were added.

His father died when he was 16 and he worked on the family farm. At 19 he joined the Army and trained in the Calvary at Fort Bliss, Texas. In 1941, his detachment was transferred to Camp Adair north of Corvallis, Oregon. On October 22, 1943, while driving a truck to pick up soldiers on guard duty in the foothills of the Cascade Range, Robert's truck slid off the rain slick, muddy road and he died. Thanks to the efforts of the Benton County Historical Society and the Benton County Genealogical Society family members were located and his unmarked grave will gain a headstone on Veterans' Day.

Glenn Harrison