



Northwest Trails

Newsletter of the Northwest Chapter of the Oregon-California Trails Association

Volume 27, No. 2

Spring 2012

2012 Annual Meeting in Oregon City

The 2011 Annual Meeting of the Northwest Chapter was held on March 10 at the Highcliffe Restaurant in Oregon City. The business meeting included highlights of convention 2013 planning. Association Manager Travis Boley attended from OCTA Headquarters. Music was provided by Rob and Nancy Downie. Their duet, Heartstrings, is being considered for the Oregon City convention.



Tom Burnett and Elaine Butler accepted the Distinguished Service Award for the Jackknife-Zion-Horseheaven Historical Society.



Glenn Harrison received the Dick and Trudy Ackerman Meritorious Achievement Award for 2012.



Joyce Bolerjack was presented a bouquet of roses for her longtime service as treasurer.



Tom and Nancy Downie performing.

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President's Message

As it should be, our focus is currently on the 2013 convention that our chapter will be hosting in Oregon City. Exciting things are happening (maybe not fast and furious, but that will come soon enough). Thanks to Susan Doyle we have a logo based on two paintings by William Henry Jackson.

Although the convention is a money-maker for national, locals are allowed to market some items and keep the profits in the chapter. We will be using our new logo on branded items the chapter will be selling both before and at the convention. We plan on selling coffee mugs, t-shirts, and baseball caps, with the convention logo, as early as this summer at the Kansas convention to stir up interest in our convention the next year. The Northwest board has authorized the convention committee to borrow up to \$3,000 from chapter funds to purchase these items. We hope to pay back at least twice that amount.

Along the same line, the National Park Service is also providing seed money for the convention. The NPS money will be used for printing, name tags, mailings, speakers, and AV equipment rental. A call for papers for speakers has already gone out. You may have seen it in the *News From the Plains*.

There are opportunities for chapter members and other interested people to get involved now. Everyone is welcome at convention planning meetings. The next meeting is May 19 in Oregon City at the Highcliffe Restaurant at 7th and Washington from 10 am to 2 pm. The agenda includes discussing what we brand with our logo, our budget, and bus tours.

NWOCTA will have field trips on May 5 (the Missions Tour of St. Paul, Mission Bottom, and Chemeketa), June 2 (the Settlement Tour of Aurora Colony and Champoeg), and July 21 (the Barlow Road Tour).

The purpose of these field trips is have participants see where we will be taking convention goers on bus tours in 2013. They will not be duplicates of the bus tours, but car caravans to the same locations. In addition to seeing how far we can take buses in an eight-hour tour, we hope to find members who can then become tour guides next year on the buses. I hope to see as many of you as possible on these field trips.

—Jim Tompkins



More Annual Meeting Photos



Mary Bywater Cross received the Distinguished Volunteer Award. She was nominated by Peter Booth at the Willamette Heritage Center at the Mill for curating their exhibit *Treasures from the Trunk: Quilts and their Makers after the Oregon Trail Journey* last fall. Mary brought together sixteen breathtaking historical quilts and documented the stories that accompanied them.



2012 NW OCTA OUTINGS and ACTIVITIES

This year we will be previewing the convention bus tours in order to decide where the tours will go to best showcase the theme of “End of the Trail and Beyond.” There will be **three outings**, which will give members the opportunity to visit the historic sites included in the bus tours to be offered at the 2013 convention. Please bring sack lunches to noon on the trail, water, and a CB. Please meet at Oregon City in the parking lot at the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center at 10:00 a.m.

May 12, Saturday (THIS IS A REVISED DATE): Missions Tour – meet at EOTIC at 10:00, drive to St. Paul to look at site of Catholic mission, drive to St Louis to look at Catholic church and cemetery behind it, drive to Mission Bottom State Park for lunch and look around, drive to Salem to Jason Lee's Chemeketa mission at Mission Mill, return to Oregon City. Contact Paul Masee at 253-858-0255, pcmassee@comcast.net.

June 2, Saturday: Settlement Tour – meet at EOTIC at 10:00, drive to Aurora Colony and tour Ox Barn Museum; drive to Hubbard and colony farm; drive through Woodburn and French Prairie to Champoeg for lunch and tour of pioneer cabin, the pavilion, and Newell House; return to Oregon City. This is also National Trails Day. Additional details will be provided. Contact Paul Masee at 253-858-0255, pcmassee@comcast.net.

July 21, Saturday: Barlow Road – meet at EOTIC at 10:00, drive to Barlow Pass, Pioneer Woman's Grave, Summit Meadows, Still Creek, Government Camp for lunch, Laurel Hill, Tollgate 5, Devils Backbone, Sandy, return to Oregon City. Additional details will be provided. Contact Paul Masee at 253-858-0255, pcmassee@comcast.net.

Additional outings/opportunities available to get involved:

April 27, Friday: Meet in Salem and visit the State Archives at 1:00 pm and the State Library at 3:00 pm. This event is in conjunction with Oregon Historic Trails Advisory Council (OHTAC). Contact Glenn Harrison, 541-926-4680, gr.harrison@comcast.net.

June 2, Saturday: Meet in Astoria and focus on the Lewis & Clark Trail in the Lower Columbia River. This event is also in conjunction with OHTAC. Contact Glenn Harrison, 541-926-4680, gr.harrison@comcast.net.

May 19, Saturday: The next convention planning meeting is scheduled at the Highcliffe Restaurant from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. Please consider attending and volunteering to help insure the success of the 2013 National Convention.

August 6–10: National Convention in Lawrence, Kansas. Watch for details in *News from the Plains* and check the OCTA web site, www.octa-trails.org.

September 15, Saturday: The NW OCTA Annual Picnic and Fall Meeting location has been changed to Vancouver, Washington, at the Clark County Genealogical Society Annex. We will have a historical speaker and the option to tour the historic Old City Cemetery. More information and details will be provided later. Contact Rich Herman at 360-977-8184 or buddy359@comcast.net.

September 21, 22, 23: Blue Mountain work party at La Grande in conjunction with OHTAC. This is an opportunity to get out on the trail for 1 to 3 days (as many as you want) and help clear out brush and debris. Contact Glenn Harrison, 541-926-4680, gr.harrison@comcast.net.

A Reminder from Chuck Hornbuckle

2011 Volunteer Hours and Expenses

Chuck Hornbuckle submitted the following figures for NW OCTA's 2011 volunteer efforts to Bill and Jeanne Watson: 7,380 hours, \$58,833.02 in non-reimbursed expenses.

These figures are down from 2010. It is very important that all volunteer hours and expenses are reported to ensure NPS funding for trails.

Your volunteer efforts do not have to just be on the Oregon Trail. Any other trail related activities count. For example, attending a conference or outing, giving a presentation, or leading a tour on any historic trail.

A convenient and efficient way to keep track of your hours and expenses is to keep a log all year, and at the end of the year tally them and report to Chuck.

Let's all record and report! It's important!

NW OCTA Fall Picnic and Fall Meeting

By Lethene Parks

About a two-block walk away is Vancouver's Old City Cemetery where many early pioneers, a number of whom came across the Oregon Trail, are buried, including Esther Short (called the "Mother" of Vancouver; she was Vic Bolon's great grandmother). The Genealogical Society has a walking tour with a nice map brochure, so I am proposing that if the weather is nice all who want to can take the walking tour of the cemetery.



Old City Cemetery. Vancouver

Second, Rich Herman and I might tell about our search for the site of A. J. Bolon's murder and how we found the site and the markers on our little jaunt last year. Indian agent J. A. Bolon was also a great grandparent of Vic Bolon, as well as Esther Short's son-in-law. If you think I've got the "greats" wrong, I don't; I will explain that as part of the presentation. We have some pictures we can show of our trip to the site of his murder and of the markers we found.

2013 Convention Logo

The logo has been designed for the 2013 convention in Oregon City. There are two versions: full color and a black and white line drawing. Mugs have already been ordered. More items will follow.



Heritage Award Presented to Suzanne Hornbuckle

By Chuck Hornbuckle

During their April meeting, the South Sound Heritage Association presented their first ever “Heritage Award” to Suzanne.

Suzanne was nominated for the award as a result of her volunteer commitment to preserving the history of the Crosby House. The house was the home of Bing Crosby’s grandfather Nathaniel Crosby and was built in about 1860.

Drew said this is the first of a continuing award program recognizing those individuals who have contributed greatly to community heritage enrichment.

Suzanne, through her membership in the Daughters of the Pioneers of Washington (DPW), Chapter 4 of Olympia, has volunteered

many hours as a Hostess over the last ten years. She became a member through her Lee ancestors who settled in the Oregon Country in 1846.

The Crosby House is owned by the City of Tumwater and the DPW provides hostess duties two days each week from April through November.

The South Sound Heritage Association represents all of the Historical groups in the seven counties between Tacoma and Cowlitz County just north of the Columbia.

Visit the DPW website at: **www.rootsweb.ancestry.com** and enter: **waocdpw** if you are interested in membership or their ongoing activities.



Drew Crooks, SSHA President, presents the “Heritage Award” to Suzanne Hornbuckle on April 11, 2012.

Pendleton Meeker Monument Relocated

By Roger Blair

One hundred six years to the day and hour, a group of forty-two Oregon Trail enthusiasts and Pendleton residents met Saturday, March 31, 2012, to rededicate the new location of an Oregon Trail monument installed by Ezra Meeker in 1906. Originally placed near the Tutuilla Creek crossing of the trail, the monument was relocated in 1923 onto the grounds of the Eastern Oregon Correctional Institute (then the Eastern Oregon State Hospital) to accommodate the construction of the freeway interchange. Besides not being on the trail, its second location on prison property would occasionally cause concerns for prison officials when visitors would attempt to visit the monument.

As a Pendleton city councilman and president of the Umatilla County Historical Society (UCHS), former NW OCTA member Keith May spearheaded its relocation. Pendleton Mayor Phil Houk read a proclamation, declaring the day *Ezra Meeker Day*, and NW OCTA member Dennis Larsen, representing the Ezra Meeker Society, delivered the keynote address describing Meeker's efforts in creating and dedicating the stone. The 1906 ceremony ended with the crowd singing "America [My Country 'Tis of Thee], which was followed with much hand slapping." NW OCTA member Roger Blair briefly described how OCTA is a kindred organization, if not a direct descendant, of the Oregon Trail Memorial Association that was founded by Meeker in the 1920s to commemorate the trail and the pioneers who ventured over it to settle the Northwest. Finally, the ceremony concluded with a few words by Chris Clemons, representing the Friends of Olney Cemetery, and Donnie Cook of the Pendleton Parks and Recreation Department.

The monument is now located back on the trail, on the edge of Olney cemetery. Access is via the parking lot for the Parks and Recreation Department, which furnished the manpower for moving the stone as well as provided the landscaping for the new site—just a few hundred yards southeast of its original location. Attendees included several NW OCTA members, historical society members, descendants of pioneers who came over the trail, and a fourth grade elementary school teacher with several of her young students. Just as one hundred and six years prior, the ceremony ended with Bill Mayclin, UCHS board member, leading the group in singing "America," followed by "much hand slapping."



Roger Blair



Jenny Miller with photo of the original dedication ceremony.



New location at Olney Cemetery, with interpretive marker.

Rededication of the Meeker Monument in Pendleton

By Denis Larsen

Writing to an acquaintance about the events that took place here on March 31, 1906, a humble Ezra Meeker wrote:

A thousand people attended the dedication ceremonies in Pendleton and accorded me such an ovation as almost to 'turn my head' but I came out of it all right I guess.

The Old Oregon Trail Monument Expedition, which is what Ezra Meeker called his 1906 adventure, had two purposes. The first was to mark a quickly disappearing trail, which he did at some 60 locations with painted rocks, wooden posts, and stone markers such as this. The second purpose was to honor and perpetuate the memory of the pioneers who traveled that trail. On behalf of the Ezra Meeker Historical Society, I would like to thank the good citizens of Pendleton today for their work here that continues to recognize and appreciate those goals.

One hundred and six years ago, 75-year-old Ezra Meeker spent seventeen eventful days in or near Pendleton with his ox team and covered wagon.

When Meeker arrived here on Wednesday, March 27, 1906, he was struggling. Other than the placing of a marker in Tenino, his efforts in Washington state had been a dismal failure. He had hoped that by going on the lecture circuit, he would be able to create a pool of money large enough to fund the placing of monuments all along the Cowlitz Trail from Puget Sound to Portland, and then do the same for Oregon. Instead of the dozen or so markers he envisioned for Washington state, he got one.

In Portland, he ran into a wall of opposition. One church leader in that city forbade his congregation to "help that old man go out on the prairie to die." Portland got no monument. The stone marker at The Dalles had been placed primarily through the efforts of two local women and was waiting for him when he arrived. He simply helped dedicate it. Meeker knew, from this point on, that he was going to need the help of local citizens along the route of the trail if he was going to be successful. Pendleton showed him that it could be done.

When Ezra began his journey in 1906, there were no stone monuments anywhere along the trail. Yes, there were a few wooden signboards and a few lonely grave markers that had survived the ravages of time—but nothing permanent to mark the trail. Tenino's stone monument was the first. The Dalles' was the second. Pendleton's was the third—and the fourth. Yes, your city placed two stone monuments along the trail.

Pendleton's second monument today sits at the entrance to Emigrant Springs State Park up in the Blue Mountains. It was cut, inscribed, paid for, and shipped to Meacham by the citizens of Pendleton. Rightfully, your city can claim two Meeker markers. How did this happen?

After the dedication ceremonies in Pendleton, Meeker drove his outfit five miles east of town to the Indian school, where he spent the night. He arrived just as a spring storm hit. In the morning he could see snow up on the mountains (18 inches worth), and fearful of the conditions, Meeker took the 6:30 p.m. train to Meacham to "spy out the land." He spent the night at the Meacham Hotel talking of the events in Pendleton, and so of course Meacham wanted a monument of its own. So back to Pendleton



Dennis Larsen

Meeker went, raised more funds, obtained a monument for Meacham, and shipped it up the hill. So even though Oregon State Parks today officially “owns” the Meacham marker, it is Pendleton’s gift to the state. You paid for it. (That monument, by the way, has also been moved. Meeker placed it near the railroad tracks in “downtown” Meacham. It was moved to the state park in 1923.)



*Washington State Archives,
Digital Archives.*

Another major turning point in the expedition involved Lee Moorhouse, Pendleton’s famous western photographer. Meeker spent some part of each of his seven days here with Moorhouse. Lee Moorhouse took pictures of Meeker in over a dozen different poses in and around Pendleton. Many of you have probably seen the photographs of Meeker dressed in buckskins and a cowboy hat. Moorhouse supplied the buckskins, the wearing of which Meeker found a bit embarrassing.

Mr. Moorhouse furnished me with buckskin coat and cowboy broad brim hat, that certainly will show a grotesque figure, entirely unlike my natural self.

About a month later, in Idaho, Meeker had a few postcards made of his ox team and sold them from the wagon. They were an instant hit. The businessman part of Meeker quickly saw in these postcards a way to pay the expenses of the monument expedition. He wrote Moorhouse about turning the Pendleton photographs into postcards. Moorhouse agreed, and the two men entered into a business arrangement of sorts. By the end of November 1907, when the monument expedition rolled up to the White House in Washington, DC, Meeker had sold nearly a million postcards of himself and the ox team and covered wagon—and was well on his way to financial solvency.

And though he left the buckskin outfit behind, it had sparked an idea. Meeker had learned that the public had definite expectations of what “an old pioneer” should look like, and so he began to hone a new image. Meeker the Businessman became Meeker the Old Pioneer, dressing more scruffily, letting his hair and beard grow longer and wilder, and so on. And for the rest of his life, Ezra Meeker was in dress and in fact, the “Old Pioneer”—a persona born here in Pendleton in 1906.

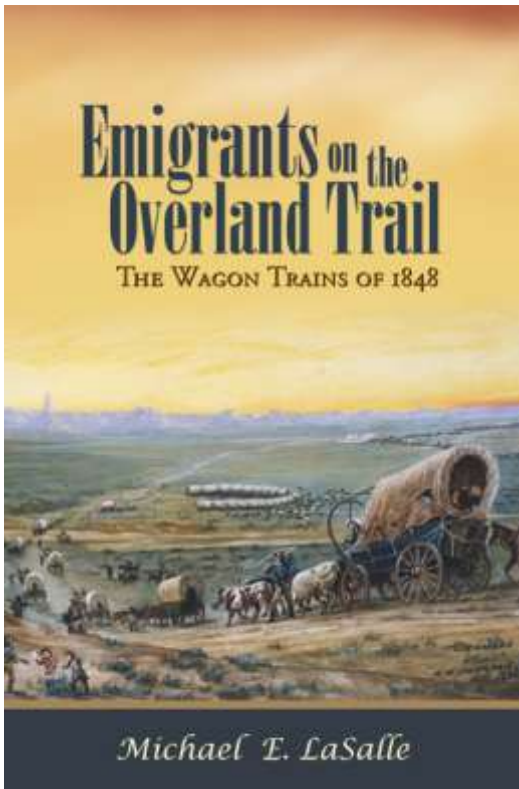


Oregon Trail Monument Expedition. Ezra Meeker Historical Society, www.meekermansion.org.

New Book Announcement

Emigrants on the Overland Trail: The Wagon Trains of 1848, by Michael E. LaSalle (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2011). \$40 • ISBN 9781935503958 • 552 pp. • 23 illus., 20 maps.

Presenting the “lost” year of the overland emigrants in 1848, this volume sheds light on the journey of the men, women, children, and the wagon trains that made the challenging trek from Missouri to Oregon and California. These primary sources, written by seven men and women diarists from different wagon companies, tell how settlers endured the tribulations of a five-month westward journey covering 2,000 miles. These intrepid souls include a young mother, a French priest, a college-educated teacher, and an ox driver. Subjected to the extremes of fear, failure, suffering, and hope, they persevered and finally triumphed.



Tapping into newly discovered archival sources, Michael LaSalle enriches our understanding of the westward movement through his painstaking reconstruction of the experiences of eighteen wagon trains that took to the Oregon and California Trails in 1848. Richly illustrated with photographs, artwork, and maps, his narrative weaves the various “voices” of these pioneer reporters into a compelling day-to-day trail experience that provides insight into this great American adventure.

—Willis M. Conover, Professor Emeritus,
University of Scranton

Emigrants on the Overland Trail takes a unique and fascinating approach to writing about westward emigration. Rather than just following one group of emigrants, Michael LaSalle follows all the wagon trains that headed west in 1848. As they struggle along each section of the trail, readers develop a thorough understanding of the physical and emotional challenges of the journey. We come to know and care about the successes of these pioneers. This is a “must read” for everyone interested in Overland Trail history.

—Lynda Paznokas, Professor Emeritus,
Washington State University

About the Author

Michael E. LaSalle graduated from the University of California, Davis, School of Law. For the next forty years he practiced law, farmed, and operated a dairy, often concurrently. He lives in Hanford, California, where he still farms and pursues his interest in tracking down Western history.

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MASTHEAD: Replica of *The Old Oregon Trail* bronze relief sculpture created in 1924 by Avarð Fairbanks for Oregon Trail monuments.

OCTA's 30th Annual Convention

TRAILS · TRIBES · TERRITORIES



**August 6–11, 2012
Lawrence, Kansas**

Northwest Trails

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