



Northwest Trails

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

Volume 28, No. 3

Summer 2013

NW OCTA Annual Fall Picnic Saturday, September 21, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Clark County Genealogical Society Annex 715 Grand Blvd., Vancouver, Washington

The chapter's annual fall event will be held again this year at the Clark County Genealogical Society Annex (CCGS Annex) in Vancouver, WA. The event will begin at 9:00 a.m. with a coffee hour, and the meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m. and will include a chapter business meeting that will include a debriefing of the convention and a discussion on our new preservation structure.

Program. Heidi Pierson will present "Defending His Legacy: John McLoughlin in Oregon City." In 1846 John McLoughlin left his job at the Hudson's Bay Company and moved with his wife to a newly built home in Oregon City. Between 1846, when he moved to Oregon City, and his death in 1857, McLoughlin fought hard to maintain a hold on his land and businesses. Unfortunately, he did not prevail in his lifetime. Pierson will focus on how American attitudes shaped the conflict, both in positive and negative ways, and how McLoughlin himself responded to the situation.

Pierson has worked at Fort Vancouver National Historical Site since 2005, first as an archaeologist, and later as a museum specialist. For the past two years she has been in charge of running the McLoughlin House unit of the park and caring for the McLoughlin House collection



Bring your own picnic lunch. This is not a potluck, but please bring a dessert for six for the dessert table. The chapter will furnish coffee and tea, and soft drinks and bottled water are available from CCGS for a donation of fifty cents.

Raffle and Silent Auction. Please bring items you think would make a good raffle or silent auction contribution. Please bundle magazines into sets of at least a year.

PRE-REGISTRATION IS NOT NECESSARY. There will be a \$10 per person charge to cover space rental and other picnic expenses. PAY AT THE DOOR.

Questions? Email Lethene Parks, Lethene@comcast.net, or Rich Herman: buddy259@comcast.net

Driving directions are on page 5

NW Chapter Directory

President

Jim Tompkins
503-880-8507
tompkins@bctonline.com

Vice President

Rich Herman
360-576-5139
buddy359@comcast.net

Secretary

Polly Jackson
pnjocta@yahoo.com

Treasurer

Glenn Harrison
541-926-4680
gr.harrison@comcast.net

Past President

Roger Blair
541-966-8854
rblair@oregontrail.net

Preservation Officer

Billy Symms
541-547-4489
wsymms@peak.org

Directors

Paul Masee
253-858-0255
pcmassee@comcast.net

Jim Riehl
541-812-0233
jimriehl3@comcast.net

Lynne Alvord
509-697-6818
lalvord@msn.com

Chapter Web Editor

Marley Shurtleff
425-271-2485
shurtgarymarley@comcast.net

Marking and Mapping

Henry Pittock
541-752-6139
hpittock3@mac.com

President's Message

OCTA 2013, The End of the Trail and Beyond, in Oregon City, was a success. Although I have not seen the final numbers, it looks like it may not only have paid for itself, but even made a dent in the financial hole OCTA reported at the end of the last quarter. It also appears that NWOCTA's investment in merchandise has turned a profit. Over 400 people participated in the convention. The map at the registration table with pushpins noting where everyone came from was heavy on trail states, but ranged as far east as New York and Florida.

It takes a village to raise a child and it takes a chapter to run a convention. No single person can do it by themselves. A big thank-you goes out to everyone who helped make the event a success. Thank you to everyone who volunteered at the registration table, to everyone who sold raffle tickets (my daughter got a \$1 bottle of wine), and to everyone who helped with the bus tours. The two years of planning meetings paid off.

Fearing that I will leave out someone, I will still attempt to give special shout-outs to individuals who gave superior efforts. Susan Doyle wrote the registration and convention books. Muriel Carbiener and Carol Harrison coordinated the registration table. Roger Blair, Rich Herman, Chuck and Suzanne Hornbuckle, and Leta Neiderheiser each led pre-convention tours. The first ever OCTA Heritage Fair (there will be more) would not have happened without the efforts of Mary Bywater Cross and Lethene Parks. The speaker sessions and workshops were ably coordinated by Roger Blair. The Banquet awards and auction segments came off because of Dick Nelson and John Winner. The raffle was a success because of the teamwork of Tuck and Kay Forsythe. Sallie Riehl, assisted by her husband Jim, coordinated the Book Room and the largest Authors Night in OCTA history (38 authors). Paul Masee coordinated the buses. Glenn Harrison carefully orchestrated the checkbook.

I would not have survived the week if not for the efforts of two special NWOCTAns - Rich Herman and Polly Jackson. Rich was the liaison with the hotel, and he bonded with the hotel staff to make sure everything was in the right place, at the right time, and with plenty of food. Polly took all 400 registrations and made sure the people they represented had badges and were put on all of the correct lists for meals, for tours, and for special events. Rich and Polly put up with a lot of demands, and the convention was a success because of them. Thank You!

—Jim Tompkins

2013 Convention: The End of the Trail and Beyond

Photos by Jim Tompkins



Registration team sorting tickets and filling packets on Sunday.



Keynote speaker Kerry Tymchuk passed around rare artifacts: piece of Willamette Meteorite and Meriwether Lewis brand.



The Heritage Fair on Monday was well attended.



Leta Neiderheiser talking about her ancestor Jesse Applegate.



Dave Vixie, national board member from California, pointing out the new sign at End of the Trail Center.



Clockwise from top: Fr. Luigi Rossi, Abigail Scott Duniway, and Narcissa Whitman at Living History Night.

A Special Treat for a Pre-Convention Tour

By Roger Blair

After concluding to lead a pre-convention Oregon Trail trek from Pendleton to The Dalles, Rich Herman and I planned to include a brief stop on Nolan Grade Road west of Pendleton where trail ruts are known to be visible crossing a wheat field. The field has been fallow the past two years, and Susan and I made a scouting trip in May to determine whether any ruts would be visible this spring. Although the field was planted this year, we were dismayed to find that the trail was barely visible and required a little imagination and a good deal of faith to accept that there was a very faint trace visible.

A friend, however, had told us that ruts were visible in her field, which was nearby. We decided to check out that location, which was a road paralleling Nolan Grade Road three or four miles to the east, as well as another crossing a mile away. As it turned out, both of these locations clearly showed trail tracks crossing the fields. Rich and I had made plans to conduct a chapter outing June 7–8 along the proposed pre-convention route as a “shake down” outing for the pre-convention tour, and we altered our original route plans to include passing by the two locations since the fields would still be green and the tracks readily visible. We didn’t expect to include the two locations on the pre-convention outing since it was scheduled for July 20–21. By that time the wheat would have turned golden or possibly even cut. We assumed nothing would still be visible at that late date, especially if the wheat had been harvested.

A week before the scheduled trek in July, I visited the sites again and, indeed, the wheat had ripened and, in fact, some adjacent fields had already been cut. As it turned out, the trail tracks were still clearly visible through the uncut mature wheat, perhaps not quite as obvious as through the early green fields. The route was easily identified. With only a week to go before the trek, I kept careful watch to see whether the field would be cut before our outing and perhaps eliminating evidence of the route if there was only stubble. My grandson Carter and I made one last check and found the field harvested. Unexpectedly, the tracks were still clearly apparent.

The diversion was back on the tour route for the convention-goers. I think it was a highlight for both the chapter outing and the pre-convention trek to be able to see evidence of the impact of trail travel more than a hundred and fifty year later in fields that had been cultivated for decades.



Trail is clearly visible in wheat field.



Trail still visible in harvested wheat field.

Convention Raffle and Silent Auction Room

By Tuck Forsythe; Photos Provided by Kay Forsythe

Kay and I were in charge of the silent auction and raffle at the convention. For the silent auction, members donate their old Oregon Trail books and other items, then we let other members bid on how much they'd like to pay to take home those items. For the raffle, Kay and others sold hundreds of dollars worth of raffle tickets. Those prizes were half books, and half other more frivolous items.

We were sort of "chained" to the auction room for most of Monday through Thursday. But Wednesday and Friday our room was closed during bus trips. During Wednesday's bus trip we got to hike on the 1847 Oregon Trail route just south of Mt. Hood. Friday we saw where in the early 1840s U.S. and French-Canadian settlers lived and what their lives were like.

Thank goodness a very experienced person helped us set up the auction and raffle the day before we opened. We sat around in chairs a lot. During the opening hour we had a lot of visitors, and occasionally a bunch of people came in, especially after we posted new numbers of winning raffle tickets. Two dinners and one breakfast we had time for more than just gobbling down some food in our hotel room before some other deadline. Twice I really enjoyed eating at the small breakfast-supper eatery across the street in the Courtyard by Marriott hotel. The calm and friendly time away from the convention was a great holiday from our convention duties.



Kay and Tuck Forsythe.



Raffle items were in the center of the room, silent auction items were around the edges.

Driving Directions to NW OCTA Annual Fall Picnic at CCGS Annex

From I-5: Take Exit 1-C (Mill Plain Exit) and drive east on Mill Plain about 1.5 miles to Grand Blvd. Turn right on Grand and in half a block turn left into a small strip mall. The CCGS Library and Annex is in the center of the row of businesses.

From I-205: After crossing the Columbia River on I-205, drive north to the second exit (Mill Pain Exit). Follow signs for Mill Plain westbound (you will exit to the right, then turn right on 112th, which turns left, then right to a traffic light at Mill Plain and Chakalov. Turn right (west) on Mill Plain and drive about 4.6 miles to Grand Blvd. Turn left on Grand and in half a block turn left into a small strip mall. The CCGS Library and Annex is in the center of the row of businesses.

Parking: All-day parking is available around the south corner of the mall, in the row along the fence to the east, and in the lot to the east of that. **Please do not park directly in front of mall businesses.**

Father Rossi Redux

By Ray Egan

Probably all but a handful of the audience at the Abernethy Center had never heard of Fr. Luigi Rossi before they received their copy of the convention booklet. While my script, which was compiled virtually verbatim from the memoir he wrote in French and published in France in 1862,* gave some insights into his missionary activities and character, it left several questions unanswered. This re-visitation is intended to provide some answers.

Using Fort Steilacoom and later Port Townsend as bases, Rossi ministered in Washington Territory, from December 1856 until December 1860, when he was—after considerable pleading—permitted to return to Europe to recover his health. Unfortunately, his return to Europe was not going to help him: genetics got in the way. Shortly after I started work on the script I had the opportunity of providing several doctors at a conference at the U of WA with every reference in his memoir to his suffering—there were a number—and these experts were unanimous in concluding that he was suffering from a genetic disorder that afflicted Mediterranean males, particularly Sephardic Jews like Rossi, known as familial Mediterranean fever. To the best of my knowledge, there is still no cure, only treatment.

Familial Mediterranean fever is an inherited condition characterized by recurrent episodes of painful inflammation in the abdomen, chest, or joints. These episodes are often accompanied by fever and sometimes a rash. The first episode usually occurs in childhood or teenage years, but in some cases, the initial attack occurs much later in life. Typically, episodes last 12 to 72 hours and can vary in severity. The length of time between attacks is also variable. Without treatment to help prevent attacks and complications, a buildup of certain protein deposits (amyloidosis) in the body's organs and tissues may occur, which can lead to kidney failure.

Familial Mediterranean fever primarily affects populations originating in the Mediterranean region, particularly people of Armenian, Arab, Turkish, and Jewish ancestry.” Online source: ghr.nlm.nih.gov/condition/familial-mediterranean-fever.

On his way home, while waiting for a ship to take him to Panama, he stayed with the bishop of San Francisco. As Rossi tells it “Several of my colleagues remonstrated with me urgently, pointing out, particularly, the number of evangelical workers in the region was very small for the cultivation of such a vast territory.” The territory was vast indeed. Rossi was saddled with a parish that extended from Santa Rosa all the way to Crescent City, CA. Rossi was nothing if not as hard working as the hard working Americans he so admired: in less than two years, he built four churches—at Santa Rosa, Healdsburg, Bodega, and Tomales—to add to the two he built in Olympia and Port Townsend.

But Rossi was also somewhat of a medical marvel. Why, you ask? I tell you. Because to alleviate his suffering, he was operated on twice by the surgeon at Fort Steilacoom, Dr. Horatius R. Wirtz—a non-Catholic who several times asked Fr. Rossi to witness his pledges to stop drinking. My guess is that Wirtz removed either his appendix or gall bladder the first time, and treated an infection the second time. And then poor Rossi was operated on again by a father-son team of doctors in San Francisco who offered to show him what they had removed. Rossi declined.

During his six years here, Rossi, by his admission, converted a grand total of three Protestants to Catholicism. Why so few? Because he really didn't try. As he saw it, that wasn't the main part of his job description. But he did worry about his lack of tangible accomplishments and whether or not he was unworthy of the mission entrusted him.

(The next three paragraphs are from an article I wrote for HistoryLink, a web site that specializes in Seattle and Washington history.)

He needn't have worried about being unworthy. He left behind a legion of warm friends and admirers who were impressed both with him and with his representation of Catholicism. Upon learning of his impending departure from Puget Sound, the non-Catholic publisher of Steilacoom's *Puget Sound Herald*, Thomas Prosch, wrote:

The departure of Father Rossi will be a source of regret throughout the Sound. His amiable manners, his kindness of heart, and his zealous endeavors to promote the moral and spiritual welfare of the people have gained him the esteem and confidence of all. Coming, as he did, among a population composed of but few Catholics, he has succeeded to a wonder extent in doing away with the prejudices which most Protestants entertain against the Roman Church; and by his sermons, his lectures, and the purity of his private life, he has exerted an influence on our community that will be felt long after he has left us (Wortley, 159)*.

A few months earlier, ethnographer James G. Swan (1818-1900), also a non-Catholic, had written a lengthy article for the San Francisco *Evening Bulletin* extolling the many virtues and benefits of taking up residence in Port Townsend, among these he included the presence of Fr. Rossi. “[He] is an intelligent and highly educated gentleman, with whom it is a pleasure to converse. He is an Italian by birth, and his gentlemanly and agreeable manners have already won him many friends, even among the Protestant portion of the community” (Swan, 14)**.

Father Louis Rossi died on September 9, 1871, at the age of 54. He is buried in a cemetery in Ile Ste. Denis in Paris.

*Rossi, Louis. *Six Years On The West Coast Of America 1856–1862*. Translated, annotated, and introduced by W. Victor Wortley. Fairfield, WA: Ye Galleon Press, 1983.

**Swan, James G. *Almost Out Of The World: Scenes in Washington Territory*. Tacoma: Washington State Historical Society, 1971.



During Living History Night at convention, Ray Egan portrayed Fr. Luigi Rossi.

Northwest Trails

Editor

Susan Badger Doyle
524 NW 3rd St
Pendleton, OR 97801
541-966-8854
sdoyle@oregontrail.net

**PUBLISHED QUARTERLY, SUBMISSIONS DUE
January 1, April 1, July 1, October 1**

Material may be submitted via email, on disk, or as email attachment in Word or Text format. Pictures may be sent via email, on disk (JPG format), or originals for scanning. Please send pictures separately from text document.

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

MARK YOUR CALENDARS



**NW OCTA
Annual Fall Picnic
Saturday, September 21
Vancouver, WA**

Northwest Trails

Joyce Bolerjack
10813 NE 20th St
Bellevue, WA 98004