



Northwest Trails

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

Volume 38, No. 2

Spring 2023

OCTA Mid-Year Board Meeting and Symposium St. Joseph, Missouri March 30 – April 2, 2023

Roger Blair and Susan Doyle attended the recent OCTA Mid-year Board Meeting and Symposium in St. Joseph, Missouri, which was an abbreviated version of OCTA's annual summer/fall conventions. The board meeting was followed by a day of symposium speakers and a day of bus tours. All in all, it was an informative and enjoyable event.

Highlights of board actions:

- Raised national dues in all categories by \$10. Life membership increased to \$1,500.
- Approved a new OCTA brand guide and logo.
- Announced the development of a new archaeology section for the national website.
- Reports on OCTA's major fundraising initiative, "Journey of a Lifetime," libraries and archives committee, and OCTA's YouTube channel.
- Accepted proposals for the 2024 symposium and convention. Next spring's national symposium board meeting will be in El Paso, Texas, in March. The 2024 convention will be in Pendleton, Oregon, in July.



The new OCTA logo retains the wagon, sunset, and mountains of the original logo adopted in 1882 and suggests action with the addition of oxen. By including the name of the association, it is more effective in the digital age.

NW Chapter Directory

President

Sallie Riehl

Acting Vice President

Wendell Baskins

Treasurer

Glenn Harrison

Secretary

Jenny Miller

Directors

Andy Anderson

Polly Jackson

Dave Welch

Chapter Website

Sharon Brown

Communications Chair

Marley Shurtleff

Mapping Chair

Robert Baker

Membership Chair

TBA

Preservation Officer

TBA

President's Message

I am really pleased by the turnout for the March 18 chapter meeting. We had 23 of our members, and our speaker Jennifer Gobin-Bailes brought four people with her. I enjoyed seeing the beadwork items she brought from her family and her talk about tracing her ancestry back to Madame Marie Dorion.

A big Thank You to Wendell Baskins for stepping up to fill in as Acting Vice President. We will be having elections at the end of this year, and I hope he will want to take the position for the next two years.

The Membership Chair position is still open. I have been filling the position since Chuck Hornbuckle had to move back east with his son. Marlea Shurtleff and Susan Doyle assist in making our list a correct one. But we really need someone who has the time to communicate with new members and to let new OCTA members know about the chapter.

We are all looking forward to spring and the chance to get out on the trail again. I hope some of you are planning to attend the OCTA convention in Gering, Nebraska at the end of July this year. My daughter and I will be travelling there, and it will be her second convention.

Thanks to Jayne Jergentz for her offer to help with books in the storage unit. Sherrill Beck has been listing the book titles for the items unrelated to the trails, and I appreciate her willingness to travel from Sisters in the winter to accomplish this task. We evidently will soon have more books transferred to our chapter. We will need more help when those arrive.

Sallie K Riehl,
Chapter President

Jedediah Smith Tour Guidebooks

Guidebooks for the Jedediah Smith tour from Crescent City to Fort Vancouver are available. Contact Dave Welch (welchdj@comcast.net) for an invite from DropBox to download the PDF.

**National Trails Day 2023 is being celebrated
on Saturday, June 3, across the country.
Check for events in your area.**

Northwest Chapter Zoom Meetings Spring 2023

April 15, 1:00 PDT (Zoom). Colorado Cherokee Trail Chapter event, open to all. Jeff Broome will speak about *The Sand Creek Massacre: The Betrayal that Changed Cheyenne and Arapaho People Forever*, the new exhibit at History Colorado. The 1864 massacre, which became known as the deadliest day in Colorado history, was the subject of a prior exhibit at History Colorado in 2012. However, it was closed several months later after the museum received criticism for not having consulted with members of the tribes. The new exhibit is presented from the perspective of the tribes. Jeff Broome, an Indian war historian and author who is a member of OCTA and the Colorado chapter, led a tour of the exhibit for the chapter in February. In this Zoom event Jeff will discuss his reaction to the exhibit and his view of controversies that remain in the interpretation of the massacre.

May 13, 1:00 PM PDT (Zoom): Joint event with the Colorado Cherokee Trail Chapter. Jerry Eichhorst, President of the Idaho Chapter, will give a presentation on cadaver dogs, how they are trained and how the Idaho chapter has used them to verify human burials along the emigrant trails across the state.

June 10, 1:00 PM (Zoom). Much has happened along the Cowlitz Trail from Fort Vancouver to Tumwater since Chuck Hornbuckle's work in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Dave Welch and others will present a summary of new findings and plans for a future auto tour along the route.

No Zoom meetings are planned for July, August, or September.

Please consider making a presentation next year. Topics may include trail history, trail research, family history, local history, preservation, or anything related to these subjects. Contact Dave Welch (welchdj@comcast.net) for additional information. Each meeting will also include a short business meeting and an update on tours and explorations.

Blue Mountains Exploration 2023

By Robin Baker

We will be exploring several Oregon Trail segments in the Blue Mountains May 18-21, 2023. We will be based at Emigrant Springs State Park. On the agenda so far are:

Thursday, May 18: A hike of the Toll Road south of Emigrant Springs State Park down to Ross Road.

Friday, May 19: The agenda is still open for this day.

Saturday, May 20: Explorations along Pelican Creek and south to Hilgard Junction State Park.

Sunday, May 21: Explorations SE of Meacham on Pendleton Ranches, Inc. property along the U.S. Weather Bureau Station hill.

Further explorations are in the works, depending upon getting landowner permissions.

Please email Robin Baker at robinbaker1927@gmail.com if you are interested in joining us for any of the hikes or if you have questions.

NW OCTA Annual Spring Meeting End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center Saturday, March 18, 2023

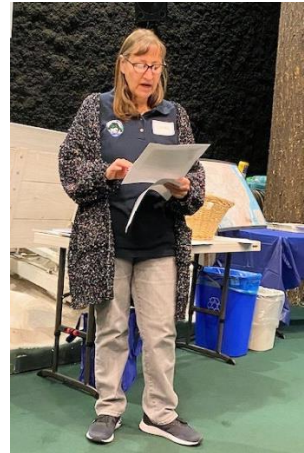
The NW OCTA annual spring meeting at the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center in Oregon City was an informative and enjoyable event. The meeting began with a social hour with coffee and pastries in the reception building at 9:00. The meeting took place in the center's theater. President Sallie Riehl led the business meeting until noon, which included reports on chapter membership numbers, update on outings, the storage unit for members' collections and progress on inventorying the items in the unit, the 2024 OCTA convention in Pendleton, and Oregon Trail kiosks along I-84. Then the group moved to a bring-your-own lunch in one of the exhibit areas. Afterward, Jennifer Cobin-Bailes presented a program in the theater on her ancestor Marie Dorion and another ancestor who was a member of Chief Joseph's band. The meeting was a welcome opportunity to get together again in person.



The audience spread out in the theater.



President Sallie Riehl.



Secretary Jenny Miller reading minutes.



Rich Herman.



Robin Baker.



Speaker Jennifer Gobin-Bailes.

Chapter Annual Meeting Program

Jennifer Gobin-Bailes

I am the third-great-granddaughter of Madame Marie Ayvoise (Ioway) Dorion Venier Toupin Her first husband was Pierre Dorion who was killed in the Reed Massacre. Her second husband was Louis Joseph Venier. Marie and Louis were living at Fort Okanogan when my second-great-grandmother was born. I recently discovered that Venier was murdered by a group of unknown Indians. While at the fort Marie married Baptiste Toupin with whom she had three more children. It was exciting that Marie spent time at Fort Okanogan since I was born and lived my early years in Omak near Fort Okanogan on the Colville Reservation.

When Toupin retired they moved to the Willamette Valley and lived in a cabin at the southern end of the valley. They moved to the hills in the wintertime because the valley was also known as the Valley of Sickness in winter. I believe it was especially bad at the south end of the valley where the air pooled. In her later years Marie was baptized a Catholic and worked to aid the local priest at St. Louis Pioneer Catholic Church. That was the reason she was given the honorific title of Madame. She was supposedly buried somewhere under the church.

Another person that I greatly admire was Chief Joseph the Younger who was sent to live on the Colville Reservation with his Band. Marguerite Crowblanket was my second-great-grandmother on my maternal side, while Marie was on the paternal side. She was a member of Joseph's Band. I feel that Chief Joseph was one of the biggest heroes our tribes had in the western area. He led his people of the most amazing trip to get them to Canada and freedom from the U.S. government. When Chief Joseph passed he was buried on a hill overlooking the Columbia River, which also happened to be above the ranch that I inherited through my family. Sadly, his rest was disturbed by a group who moved his remains into the town of Nespelem. There is a marker by the road through town to him. It makes me sad to think of his attempts to keep his people free failing. With my stipend I plan to hire someone to do some cleanup work on St. Mary's Mission Graveyard where many of my family members are buried.



Beaded items made by Jennifer's ancestor Marguerite Crowblanket, Nez Perce, c. 1850.

2024 OCTA Convention

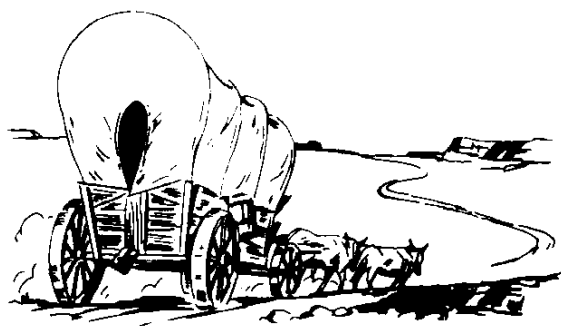
By Roger Blair

It has been ten years since the Northwest Chapter hosted a national convention. That will change next year. NW OCTA will be hosting the 2024 convention. At the recent mid-year board meeting, the OCTA Board of Directors approved Sunday through Thursday, July 21-25, 2024, as the date. Preliminary arrangements have been made with Wildhorse Resort and Casino on the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation near Pendleton, Oregon as the host hotel.

Further details are still being formulated, including a general theme and logo, speakers, potential tours, etc. At this time the general theme of the Whitmans and Whitman Mission appears to be a good subject. This general topic would include the missionary era, the Whitmans and the mission, the Whitman Incident, Whitman Myth, the 1843 first wagon train over the Blue Mountains, variant routes after descending the Blues, etc. Especially exciting is the inclusion of tribal perspectives and interactions with trail emigrants and the current ongoing Cayuse Five project.

If you have specific topics around this general theme and especially if you are willing to present a talk, please contact me. Priority will be given to talks addressing the general theme, but other trail-related topics will be considered. Chapter members also will need to step up to be tour bus guides, volunteer to man the registration booth, lead pre- and post-convention tours, and many other opportunities to keep the convention running smoothly.

It takes many people to present a convention. We take advantage of other members' willingness to serve us when we visit their conventions. Walter Meacham of the Old Oregon Trail Association used to complain that everyone wants to ride the bandwagon, but someone has to help propel it. Please don't be a bandwagon rider for our own convention. Contact me at rblair@oregontrail.net or write me at 524 NW 3rd Street, Pendleton, Oregon 97801 to volunteer to help. Let's make this a memorable convention.



The End of the Oregon Trail is Pendleton in 2024

Update on the Meeker Marker in La Grande, OR

Plans being made to recognize the Oregon Trail pioneer Ezra Meeker in the next century
By Dick Mason, *The Observer*, La Grande, OR
Jan17, 2023; Updated Jan 23, 2023

LA GRANDE — The National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center near Baker City will soon receive a message from the future. Its author will be La Grande historian Ronnie Allen.

Allen will prepare a letter that will be sent to the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center discussing the time capsule in a stone marker the legendary pioneer Ezra Meeker installed in 1906 in La Grande. The time capsule in the historical marker, situated near the corner of Walnut Street and B Avenue, was filled with items after being opened last summer and then sealed again.

A silver 2022 Ezra Meeker necklace medallion is one of the items placed in the time capsule last summer. Allen is making arrangements, in part through his letter, to have the Meeker medallion given to the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center after the time capsule is opened. “I will ask that it be added to the Ezra Meeker display,” Allen said.

The time capsule will likely be opened about a century from now. Allen, with help from the Oregon-California Trails Association, which he is a member of, is making plans to have the time capsule sealed until at least 2122.

The time capsule was opened last summer at a public event attended by about 150 people. However, it proved to be barren. The marker’s time capsule space was believed to have contents in 1906, according to a Meeker journal entry. Allen said it was probably empty because the marker reportedly had been moved several times in the Walnut Street neighborhood since it was first installed, due to building projects. He said during the transfers the contents of the time capsule may have fallen out.

The stone marker is among at least 35 Meeker set up along the Oregon Trail during the three journeys he made across the United States to promote efforts to preserve the overland route. It is one of three Meeker put up in Union County. The two others were installed at the lower and upper ends of Ladd Canyon.

Allen recently had a sample rock from the Walnut Street marker sent to Washington State University’s geology department to determine its content. Allen received a report nine months later, on Friday, Jan. 13, from WSU indicating that stone is made of basalt.

Allen said it is made from the same basalt the Meeker stone at the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center is made of. He said two years ago he had a sample from it also analyzed by WSU. “They were both made from the same rock,” he said.

Allen worked with Jason McClaughry, a geologist with the Department of Geology and Mineral Industries in Baker City, to get the stone samples tested. McClaughry, after receiving the test results, determined the stone for both markers came from a field about 4 miles west of La Grande.

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



41st Annual Convention

*“We Do Old in a
New Way”*

July 25-29, 2023
Gering, Nebraska

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