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Lone Elm Campground

Inscription.

Lone Elm is one of the most historic and important frontier trail camp sites in America and was used as a campground and rendezvous point for all three of our nation's great western roads to the frontier.....the Santa Fe, Oregon, and California Trails.

In the four decades of its use, starting in 1821, thousands of traders bound to and from Santa Fe, '49ers rushing west for gold, Oregon and California emigrants, soldiers, mountain men and missionaries came through and spent time at Lone Elm campground. Such notables as John Fremont, Kit Carson, Francis Parkman, and the ill-fated 1846 Donner party were visitors here.

Lone Elm was first known as Round Grove, named by the earliest traders to Santa Fe. By 1827 it shared duty with Elm Grove, another campground located about 2 miles northwest of here on the same Cedar Creek, and often mistaken for each other. By the mid-1840's this campground became known as Lone Elm because the original grove of trees had been reduced to just one huge elm tree.

Along with traders and emigrants who used Lone Elm on their first or second night out from Westport or Independence, the Mexican War in 1846 brought the frontier military through Lone Elm. Several soldiers who succumbed to cholera are buried here, as well as '49ers who died of the same disease. By the end of the 1840's the great old lone elm tree was gone, used up for firewood, but spurious reports of its existence continued into the 1850's.

Newton Ainsworth was the first owner of this property in post-trail days, developing a successful farm here. He was a tireless advocate of Lone Elm and its location on his



Photographed By William Fischer, Jr., August 12, 2010

1. Lone Elm Campground Marker



Photographed By William Fischer, Jr., August 12, 2010

2. Lone Elm Campground Marker

Looking SE from marker toward the picnic shelter.

farm. He also was instrumental in the placement of the Daughters of the American Revolution Santa Fe Trail marker in 1906. This marker still graces the same spot today on the northwest corner of Lone Elm Park.

Erected by City of Olathe.

Topics and series. This historical marker is listed in these topic lists: [Industry & Commerce](#) • [Roads & Vehicles](#) • [Settlements & Settlers](#) • [War, Mexican-American](#). In addition, it is included in the [California Trail](#), the [Oregon Trail](#), and the [Santa Fe Trail](#) series lists. A significant historical year for this entry is 1821.

Location. 38° 49.412' N, 94° 49.926' W. Marker is in Olathe, Kansas, in Johnson County. Marker is on Lone Elm Park Drive, on the right when traveling south. Marker is in Lone Elm Park. [Touch for map](#). Marker is at or near this postal address: 21151 West 167th Street, Olathe KS 66062, United States of America. [Touch for directions](#).

Other nearby markers. At least 8 other markers are within walking distance of this marker. [Trails West](#) (within shouting distance of this marker); [Lone Elm Park](#) (about 600 feet away, measured in a direct line); [Roads To The West](#) (about 600 feet away); [Trail Campground..To Farm..To Park](#) (about 600 feet away); [A Most Desirable Spot For Camping](#) (about 600 feet away); [The Travelers](#) (about 700 feet away); [Santa Fe Trail](#) (approx. 0.2 miles away); [Elm Grove Campground](#) (approx. 0.2 miles away). [Touch for a list and map](#) of all markers in Olathe.

Also see . . .

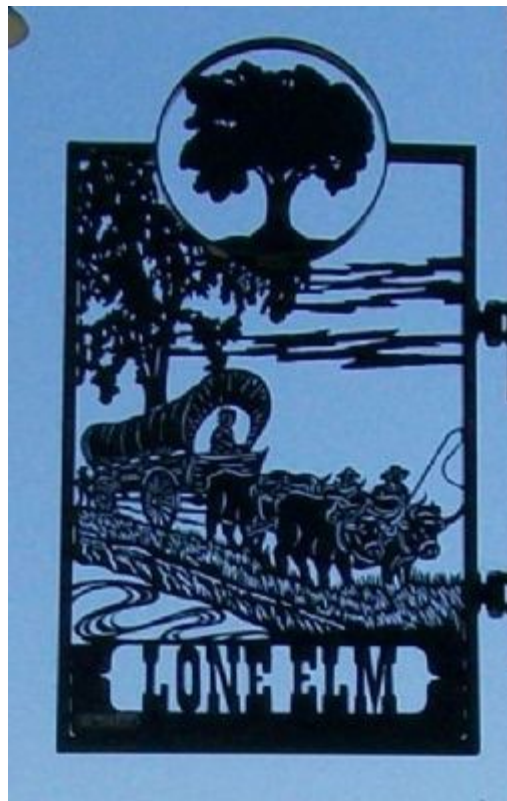
1. [Lone Elm Park](#). (Submitted on August 12, 2010, by William Fischer, Jr. of Scranton, Pennsylvania.)
2. [Santa Fe National Historic Trail](#). (Submitted on August 12, 2010, by William Fischer, Jr. of Scranton, Pennsylvania.)
3. [Oregon-California Trails Association](#). (Submitted on August 12, 2010, by William Fischer, Jr. of Scranton, Pennsylvania.)
4. [Santa Fe Trail Association](#). (Submitted on August 12, 2010, by William Fischer, Jr. of Scranton, Pennsylvania.)

5. [The Interactive Santa Fe Trail](#). (Submitted on August 12, 2010, by William Fischer, Jr. of Scranton, Pennsylvania.)



Photographed By William Fischer, Jr., August 12, 2010

3. Lone Elm Park Street Light and Sign



Photographed By William Fischer, Jr., August 12, 2010

4. Lone Elm Park Sign
On streetlight poles.

Credits. This page was last [revised](#) on December 22, 2022. It was originally submitted on August 12, 2010, by William Fischer, Jr. of Scranton, Pennsylvania. This page has been viewed 1,999 times since then and 41 times this year. **Photos: 1, 2, 3, 4.** submitted on August 12, 2010, by William Fischer, Jr. of Scranton, Pennsylvania.

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