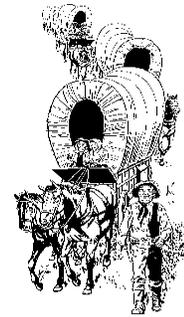


# Trail Dust

Newsletter of the Oregon-California Trails Association, Idaho Chapter  
Vol. XXV Issue 1 *Suzi Pengilly, Editor* March 2013



*Deadline for submissions for the next newsletter is June 1, 2013*

## 2013 IOCTA Activities

April 20	Community Education Byway Tour – Meet at Pilot Truck Stop, Exit 95, in Mountain Home, 1:00 pm
May 4	IOCTA Spring Meeting – Burley – Milner Recreation Area, Caldron Linn
June 15	IOCTA Outing - South Alternate part 2
July 20-26	OCTA Convention - Oregon City
Aug 17	IOCTA Outing - Pierre's Hole
Sept 21	Joint Outing - Hudspeth Cutoff part 2
Oct 5	IOCTA Fall Meeting – Boise – tour of local Oregon Trail monuments in Boise area

*All activities are open to everyone and have no cost.*

## Humble Beginnings

The origins of the Idaho Chapter of OCTA are well documented, thanks to a series of letters and documents archived at the Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS) by Larry Jones, a charter member of OCTA and, with Merle Wells, organizer of the Idaho Chapter. At the time, Jones and Wells were both historians for the ISHS and very much aware of the need to protect the surviving remnants of Idaho’s emigrant trails. Beginning in 1978, Jones supervised an archaeological crew documenting and marking trail ruts and sites from Casper, Wyoming, to the Idaho-Oregon border. The study was funded by the Wyoming and Idaho offices of the Bureau of Land Management. He saw first-hand threats to remaining trail segments still visible after some 130 years. The Idaho results of this survey were reported in the BLM publication *Emigrant Trails of Southern Idaho*, edited by Daniel J. Hutchison, BLM, and Larry R. Jones, Idaho State Historical Society. This document remains the most comprehensive and useful trail guide in the state.

The national organization of OCTA was founded in 1982 for the “study, preservation, interpretation, appreciation, and enjoyment of the western pioneer trails.” Its founders believed that local support would be central to trail preservation and maintaining a

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viable national organization. OCTA also knew that the cooperation of landowners of trail segments would be needed. Field trips and on-the-ground trail experiences would be necessary to sustain member interest, involvement, and enjoyment: “OCTA... will be propelled and perpetuated largely by warm fellowship” (April 9, 1983, letter from Gregory Franzwa, OCTA President, to Larry Jones).



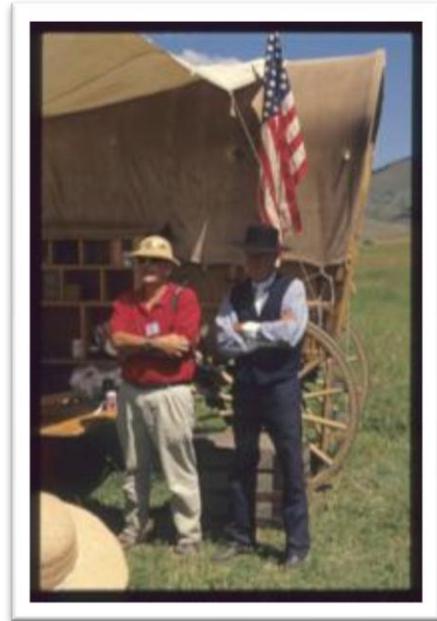
*IOCTA tour to Three Island Crossing*

OCTA welcomed Jones’ expertise in trail identification and history and insights on the formation of local chapters. After initial efforts to establish county-level chapters, Jones concluded that a state-wide chapter had the most promise. He found good support from others living in communities along Idaho’s emigrant trails.



*Larry Jones describing Ditto Creek site.*

The first Idaho Chapter meeting was held in the spring of 1985. The announcement read: “April 20<sup>th</sup> is the day for all interested in the Oregon California Trails to ‘CIRCLE THEIR WAGONS’ in JEROME for the purpose of forming an Idaho Oregon Trail organization. YOU ARE INVITED!!!”



*Larry Jones and IOCTA member Les Broadie*

A rousing success, thirty-seven interested folks attended the meeting, with 25 becoming members. Ten more joined in the next few weeks. Chilton Phoenix, Pocatello, was elected president; Lloyd Walker, Twin Falls, vice-president; and Virginia Ricketts, Jerome, secretary-treasurer. After the meeting, members toured the North Side Alternate of the Oregon Trail. The next Chapter field trip was held on June 22, 1985, to the City of Rocks, and many more followed.

Thus, the Idaho Chapter of OCTA was formed. Twenty-eight years later, thanks to all of you, the Idaho Chapter still thrives, fueled largely by great field trips and warm fellowship.

## News from the IOCTA President

By Jerry Eichhorst

Plans are well underway to ensure that 2013 contains a number of interesting activities. I taught two Community Education classes in March with 16 and 21 people attending. I will lead a tour of the last half of the byway for the students and anyone else who is interested on April 20. Our spring meeting will be May 4 at Burley. We have an activity planned for each month of the summer, many at locations we have never been before or have not been for many years. Please see the calendar in this issue and the IOCTA website for more information. I encourage anyone who is interested to join us for these activities.

While volunteering at the Idaho State Archives over the winter, I came across folders of materials relating to the formation of the Idaho chapter of OCTA back in the mid-1980s. I have known Larry Jones for a number of years and have always respected him as one of the most knowledgeable people on emigrant trails and other history for Idaho. Yet I never knew how instrumental Larry was in creating IOCTA. His dedicated effort for several years led to the creation of IOCTA as the second local chapter of OCTA. I want to extend my thanks to Larry for this effort. This year we mark the 28-year anniversary of the first meeting of IOCTA on April 20, 1985. Hopefully, we will have many more as we continue to preserve and share the emigrant trails of Idaho.

I hope to see you on the trail this summer.

Jerry

Welcome to IOCTA's newest members. Please join us in the chapter activities.

*Robert and Roberta Emerson*  
Portland, Oregon

*Jan and Sets Iwashita*  
Coronado, California

## GPS Unit From BLM

IOCTA wants to thank Terry Heslin and the Boise BLM for giving the chapter a Garmin Model 72 GPS unit. This unit will be used to record coordinates of trail markers and other items of interest along the trails in Idaho.



The Model 72 contains the following product features:

- 2.2" 4-level gray LCD display, 120 x 160 pixel resolution
- Track log - Saves up to 2,048 points and 10 tracks
- Up to 500 waypoints

- Up to 18 hours of battery life with two AA batteries
- PC connectivity with a USB cable to download additional maps
- High-sensitivity, WAAS-enabled GPS receiver
- High-sensitivity, WAAS-enabled GPS receiver
- Water-resistant case - Floats if dropped in water

## **Bear River Massacre Site**

*By Ken Reid, State Archaeologist, Idaho State Historic Preservation Office*

Timed to coincide with the sesquicentennial commemoration of Idaho Territory, the Idaho State Historical Society recently submitted a proposal to the American Battlefield Protection Program for an identification and documentation survey of the Bear River Massacre National Historic Landmark in Franklin County.

The 1,700-acre Landmark is the site of a battlefield and winter village massacre that occurred on January 29, 1863, during the height of the Civil War. It left several hundred Shoshone and a score of soldiers dead in what is often referred to as the worst of several 19<sup>th</sup> century attacks on Indian villages in the West.

*Looking southeast at the site from Upper Battle Creek.*



Except for 27 acres recently acquired by the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation, the NHL is privately owned. The Landmark includes not only the battlefield and winter village, but a traditional Shoshone dance ground and several post-massacre historic properties such as the West Cache Canal, the Utah-Northern Railway, and the transient railroad support community of Battle Creek. None of these archaeological sites have been surveyed or recorded.



*Commemorative activities at the site, January 29, 2013.*

The project also coincides with the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the massacre itself, and will include partnerships with the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation and the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. Fieldwork will include metal-detector transect interval surveys, geophysical prospecting, and minimal testing to confirm remote sensing signals, as well as comprehensive GIS mapping of the entire Landmark to plot battlefield features against changing terrain features over time.

# *Diaries Across Idaho*

By Jerry Eichhorst

## Townsend at Fort Hall

John Kirk Townsend was trained as a physician and pharmacist. With an interest in natural history and bird collecting, he was included as a member of Nathaniel Wyeth's expedition across the Rocky Mountains in 1834. Townsend's journal is much different from the typical emigrant journal, as he provides extensive descriptions of the journey, along with wildlife and birds. Last issue I shared Jason Lee's journal at Fort Hall. Townsend's description of Jason Lee's preaching at Fort Hall follows.

*The next day [July 27], being the Sabbath, our good missionary, Mr. Jason Lee, was requested to hold a meeting, with which he obligingly complied. A convenient, shady spot was selected in the forest adjacent, and the greater part of our men, as well as the whole of Mr. McKay's company, including the Indians, attended. The usual forms of the Methodist service (to which Mr. L. is attached,) were gone through, and were followed by a brief, but excellent and appropriate exhortation by that gentleman. The people were remarkably quiet and attentive, and the Indians sat upon the ground like statues. Although not one of them could understand a word that was said, they nevertheless maintained the most strict and decorous silence, kneeling when the preacher kneeled, and rising when he rose, evidently with a view of paying him and us a suitable respect, however much their own notions as to the proper and most acceptable forms of worship, might have been opposed to ours. A meeting for worship in the Rocky mountains is almost as unusual as the appearance of a herd of buffalo in the settlements. A sermon was perhaps never preached here before; but for myself, I really enjoyed the whole scene; it possessed the charm of novelty, to say nothing of the salutary effect which I sincerely hope it may produce...*

*In the evening, a fatal accident happened to a Canadian belonging to Mr. McKay's party. He was running his horse, in company with another, when the animals were met in full career by a third rider, and horses and men were thrown with great force to the ground. The Canadian was taken up completely senseless, and brought to Mr. McKay's lodge, where we were all taking supper. I perceived at once that there was little chance of his life being saved. He had received an injury of the head which had evidently caused concussion of the brain. He was bled copiously, and various local remedies were applied, but without success; the poor man died early next morning... At noon the body was interred. It was wrapped in a piece of coarse linen, over which was sewed a buffalo robe. The spot selected, was about a hundred yards south of the fort, and the funeral was attended by the greater part of the men of both camps. Mr. Lee officiated in performing the ordinary church ceremony, after which a hymn for the repose of the soul of the departed, was sung by the Canadians present. The grave is surrounded by a neat palisade of willows, with a black cross erected at the head, on which is carved the name "Casseau."*

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