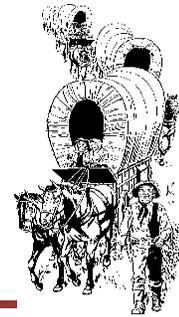


Trail Dust

Newsletter of the Oregon-California Trails Association, Idaho Chapter
Vol. XXVI Issue 3 *Suzi Pengilly, Editor* August 2014



Calendar of Upcoming Events

October 4, Saturday **Fall Meetings, Event Center behind Stage Stop Restaurant, Mayfield exit on I-84**
(Meeting time to be determined)

Local Oregon Trail sites tour afterward

Spring Meetings and Outing

The annual Chapter spring meeting and a convention planning meeting were held in Pocatello on Saturday, May 3. The convention plan was reviewed and discussed with several excellent ideas and other contributions added. A quick chapter meeting was held with the most noteworthy activity being the election of Margie and Lynn Houdyshell to be directors of the chapter. Thanks Margie and Lynn for being willing to help serve the Chapter.

Doug Jenson led the group to trail sites west of Pocatello after lunch. We started at the Fort Hall bottoms in the area of the Portneuf River Oregon Trail crossing, then on to some excellent ruts off of Neely Road. Finally we walked on the Wagon Rut Trail to see the deep ruts coming down the hillside on the east side of Massacre Rocks State Park.



Portneuf River in Fort Hall Bottoms

Thanks, Doug, for leading the outing.

Contents

Spring Meetings	1
August Outing	2
Oregon Trail Odyssey	3
Message From the President	5
Identify Photos	5
Diaries Across Idaho	7



Group members walking the trail near Neely Road



Group members along the Trail



Oregon Trail near Neely Road



Trail ruts in Massacre Rocks State Park. Note I-86 in background.



Trail ruts in Massacre Rocks State Park

August Outing

By Jerry Eichhorst

Jennifer Theisen of the BLM in Vale, Oregon, led an outing on the Oregon Trail from Caldwell to Farewell Bend on Saturday, August 2. The group met at 8:00 am at the Maverik Country Store on 10th Avenue in Caldwell.

The outing covered many miles and toured many trail sites and interpretive signs, including:

- Boise River crossing
- Fort Boise replica in Parma
- Fort Boise site on the Snake River
- South Alternate interpretive sign in Adrian

- Starvation camp OCTA interpretive sign
- West side Snake River crossing interpretive signs
- Keeney Pass interpretive site
- Henderson gravesite



The tourists stopped in the Vale city park for lunch before continuing on a very dusty road over the mountains to Farewell Bend. The afternoon stretch traveled on the Oregon Trail for much of the way. Sites in the afternoon included Alkali Springs, Tub Spring, Oregon Trail enclosure, a possible grave site, the Birch Creek interpretive site, and the Meeker marker in Huntington.



Bill Wilson and Jennifer Theisen at Birch Creek interpretive sign

Oregon Trail Odyssey

By Jerry Eichhorst

Imagine walking across the country on the Oregon Trail. By yourself. At age 76. That is what M. J. "Sunny" Eberhart is doing. He departed Independence Square on April 28th. A month ago Sunny emailed me from Twin Falls seeking assistance on the best way to cross southwestern Idaho. We talked for an hour that night.



As Sunny trudged across the state, we talked in the evenings about the upcoming route. I told him about the friends I had made along the byway and suggested that he stop in to see them, rest, and get water. I was hoping to meet him and take him to dinner, but we were unable to connect as he passed through Boise.

Sunny spent a couple days in Vale talking with Jennifer Theisen, archaeologist for the BLM, Vale District. He also was able to talk with Gail and Muriel Carbiener, members of the Northwest Chapter of OCTA, to discuss the route between Vale and Farewell Bend.

On Saturday, August 2, the Idaho chapter had a previously planned outing to follow the Oregon Trail from Caldwell to Huntington. As we met Jennifer at Adrian, she updated me on her last two days talking

with Sunny, and that we would see him on the trail that afternoon. I could hardly wait!

As we approached Alkali Springs north of Vale, we came upon Sunny briskly striding along the road. We stopped and met for the first time, but the bond was already established. I was able to walk with him a hundred yards to the springs where the group stopped, and Sunny was able to sit in the shade of the vehicles and rest a while. We happily provided fresh water, Jennifer had frozen Gatorade for him. It was so interesting to talk with him for a short time. Sunny then recited his poem, *How the West Was Won*, and received a round of applause in the middle of the desert.



Our parting came too soon. It was hot, we still had many miles to travel, and the group was ready to move on. We shook hands, hugged, and tears welled up in our eyes. And then Sunny briskly moved off down the trail. I am so glad I was able to meet him.

Sunny has a website with information about his treks over the years. He keeps an interesting journal of his trip on the Oregon Trail. He also has posted much of his poetry, including the poem he recited for us.

Be safe, my friend. I hope our paths cross again.

Sunny's website:

<http://www.nimblewillnomad.com>

Oregon Trail Journal:

http://www.nimblewillnomad.com/odyssey_2014_onht_journals.htm

How The West Was Won:

<http://www.nimblewillnomad.com/Poetry%20PDF/HowTheWestWasWon.pdf>

Message From The President

By Jerry Eichhorst

We had a good convention planning and spring meeting in Pocatello in early May. Naturally I am disappointed that there were no representatives from the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe in attendance. It is critical for the Tribal members to be actively involved in the convention planning process for the 2016 convention to truly provide an opportunity to present the Indian perspective of the Oregon Trail emigration. The afternoon outing was enjoyable as Doug Jenson led the group to trail sites west of Pocatello.

Chapter activities have been pretty quiet this summer. A combination of being very busy at work and far from eastern Idaho where we need to have some trail marking activities makes it difficult for me to plan anything recently. I encourage other members to step up and plan activities for the chapter. As with any volunteer organization, it takes many people working together to be successful.

The outing on August 2 was hot and dusty, just as the Oregon Trail emigrants would have experienced many years ago. Much of the afternoon we were driving on the Oregon Trail itself. It is still as dusty and desolate as it was then.

There may be a Hudspeth Cutoff outing in September. If so, details will be worked out soon.

I have been working with the Idaho Department of Transportation for several months trying to obtain replacement signs for those missing or destroyed along the byway. Unfortunately, federal byway funding has disappeared, so the state is trying to establish new procedures for

replacing signs. I have a Boy Scout wanting to do an Eagle badge project ready to install the signs once they are available. We did go out and installed carsonite markers in the area which burned north of Mountain Home.

Please watch the chapter website, www.IdahoOCTA.org, calendar page for upcoming activities. Details of activities will be posted to the website when they are established.

Can You Identify These Photos?

By Kevin Burton

In 1921, Uriah Wilton Smith, DDS (1861-1937), the firstborn son of Uriah Smith (author, minister, and inventor) of Battle Creek, Michigan, took a trip through the western United States and visited some places in Idaho. The only known details of this journey are derived from the eight extant photographs (each with short captions), presumably taken by U. Wilton Smith.

Through the assistance of Kevin Lynott, Park Manger of Massacre Rocks State Park, three of these pictures have been identified. Each of these three photos gives a view of the "Devil's Gate" rock formation located in Massacre Rocks SP before the highway expansion was made to create Hwy. 30 and I-86. These images can be viewed at <http://www.centerforadventistresearch.org/photos/page/search/massacre>.

The other five photographs remain unidentified at present. Two of the images go together (by matching the two halves of an "x") and contain rock formations, similar to those found at Massacre Rocks SP. One of these images shows some "graffiti" on a rock. Part of it is legible, and reads, "... Café, Home of Good Eats. 108-10

Thornburg ..." A third picture shows a road, a desert (with sagebrush), and mountains in the distance. The final two photographs are of hotels; first, Hotel Enterprise, which is next to a cafe, and, second, Farmers Hotel. U. Wilton Smith apparently stayed in both establishments on his trip in 1921. The original copies of all eight photographs are being preserved at the Center for Adventist Research at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI. If you can provide any further information regarding the location of these unidentified photographs it would be greatly appreciated. If so, please contact Kevin Burton at kevin.burton85@gmail.com.

Thank you!



Diaries Across Idaho

Boise River Valley Rabbits

By Jerry Eichhorst

The trees, grasses and clear waters of the Boise River were a welcome site for Oregon Trail travelers. Although game was scarce along most of the trail, rabbits abounded in the Boise Valley and were a treat to those who could get them.

August 6.— ... Black-eared rabbits and prairie chickens are very numerous about here. We succeeded in getting some of them.

August 7.—This morning we started early; our course was down the valley. At the end of five miles we came to good grass on the river bank. Here we lay till 5 o'clock in the afternoon, when we gathered up and moved down four miles farther. Today our boys succeeded in killing a number of rabbits, prairie hens and quail, which abound here in great quantities, and to us are a great luxury at this time.

P. V. Crawford, 1851

Sunday, August, 29 - Travel 12 miles - down Salmon river [Boise River] - good grass all the time camp at 2 o'clock good grass - wood and water hares plenty - got some fish of the indians.

James Akin, Jr., 1852

Sunday September 12 Laid over to day The country is filled with large long eared rabbits- ears tipped with black. They taste good.

William Valentine Spencer, 1852

Mon. 13. Moved down the river. Saw many hares. Some Indians. Swaped for a fine trout which (I suppose) would weigh 8 or 10 lbs. Got some hares.

John Spencer, 1852 (father of William Valentine Spencer)

Thursday, Sept. 16. ...Saw the most rabbits today that I ever saw in the same length of time. Frank shot 18 in about an hour. Tonight we have plenty of good, green grass for our cattle. Indians bring fish and rabbits. Made 15 miles.

Parthenia Blank, 1852

Wedn August 2. ...the men that were on hunt of stolen horses pass us this eve with all their horses. found the indians on them running down rabbits. one would not give up the horse without a shirt, and they gave him one. have travel'd about 15 miles to day and camp't again on Boise

Sarah Sutton, 1854

**Idaho Chapter OCTA
5204 Waterwheel Drive
Boise, ID 83703-3130**



IOCTA Officers and Directors

Jerry Eichhorst	President	jeichhotrails@gmail.com
Doug Jenson	VP - East	jensondd@ida.net
Suzi Pengilly	VP - West	suzi1005@gmail.com
Bill Wilson	Treasurer	runofthemillbill@gmail.com
John Briggs	Secretary	johnxbriggs@msn.com
Peg Cristobal	Historian	crispp2@gmail.com
Lyle Lambert	Preservation - East	Lyle.lambert@yahoo.com
Wally Meyer	Preservation - West	wallywanch@q.com
Suzi Pengilly	TD Editor	suzi1005@gmail.com
Jerry Eichhorst	Webmaster	www.IdahoOCTA.org
Lyle Lambert	Director	Lyle.lambert@yahoo.com
Dave Taylor	Director	DTAYLOR466@aol.com
Dan Dunne	Director	ltdunne@gmail.com
John Briggs	Director	johnxbriggs@msn.com
Lynn and Margie Houdyshell	Director	houdyshell@cableone.net

Visit IOCTA online at www.IdahoOCTA.org