



*Chapter Motto: O! the joy!*

Washington State Chapter, Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation  
Volume 1, Issue 1 - January 2000

# Late Winter Newsletter

## Chapter Meeting

**Date: Saturday, February 12, 2000      Time: 10:00 a.m.**

**Place: Washington State Historical Museum (Mezzanine Level)  
1911 Pacific Avenue, Tacoma**

**“Clark and Lewis in Washington: The Narrative of Discovery”**

**with David Nicandri, Director, the Washington State Historical Society**

**Business Meeting**

**Election of Chapter Officers and Board Members for 2000**

**Logo Contest**

Driving directions: From I-5 (both northbound and southbound), take exit #133 which becomes Hwy 705. Turn right to South 21<sup>st</sup> Street; turn right onto Pacific Avenue and then turn right into the parking lot.

Consider spending time after the meeting touring this great museum & perhaps bring a brown bag lunch to eat with other members or grab a bite at the museum's café or across the street at several informal eating places.



## **\*\* REMINDER: RENEW YOUR CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP \*\***

We invite you to renew your membership for the year 2000. Washington chapter dues are just \$10 per year (from January 1 - December 31). Please send the form on the back of this newsletter plus your check to the address shown on the form **as soon as possible** to maintain your membership in good standing. Join us in keeping our chapter strong as we enter the new century and prepare to tackle projects to further the legacy of the Corps of Discovery in Washington. Act now to assure you don't miss a single issue of the newsletter and receive all the information you need about our upcoming meetings and activities.

## **Modern-Day Initiative Passage Affects Historical Sites**

As most of you are aware, passage of I-695 in November resulted in various impacts on the state budget. Steve Wang of State Parks put me in contact with the Washington State Department of Transportation. Staff for WSDOT's South Central Region confirmed that two projects have lost funding due to I-695: \$1.7 million in improvements at Alpowa Summit and a \$4-5 million construction project near Casey Pond in the Wallula Wye area. There may be other minor impacts in the Southwest Region but that is yet to be determined.

Staff at the Southwest Region Office confirmed that funding for all phases of the SR 101 re-alignment project near the Washington end of the Astoria bridge are secure for now. This is the site of Station Camp, the Corps' encampment for 18 days in November 1805, now regarded by many historians and scholars as the end of the trail, thanks in large part to Rex Ziak. Mr. Ziak, member of the Washington State Lewis and Clark Trail Committee and amateur historian, spent six years poring over the journals and using surveying equipment to pinpoint their campsites on the Columbia River's banks. At Station Camp, the captains polled the members of the Corps of Discovery about where to camp for the winter. The preferences of both York, Clark's black slave, and young Sacagawea were also recorded. As most of you know, the decision was to cross the river to a site with plentiful game and spend the winter there. But the site of Station Camp, one of the most important along the trail, is buried under a two-lane section of Highway 101. It is this section that would be realigned to route Highway 101 away from the Station Camp site and establish a large waterfront park overlooking the Columbia.

*submitted by Pam Andersen*

## *Winter Journals: Disagreeable Weather, Immense Firs & Excellent Horses*

January, February and half of March 1806 brought successive waves of bad weather as recorded in the journals of the Corps. By the end of the Fort Clatsop winter, Captain William Clark noted that there had been only twelve days without rain and only six with sunshine.

Sergeant Patrick Gass made twenty-two journal entries in February 1806. Seventeen of his entries included a weather comment: *Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup>: ... it began to thaw and in the evening to rain. Monday 3<sup>rd</sup>. Some light showers fell in the course of last night. Thursday 6<sup>th</sup>: ... the snow was 4 or 5 inches deep. Friday 7<sup>th</sup>: ... it rained hard and we had a disagreeable night. Saturday 8<sup>th</sup>: About noon there were showers of rain and hail. Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>: ... and sometimes showers of rain. Monday 10<sup>th</sup>: A light snow fell last night ... Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup>: ... there was a great deal of heavy rain, and the weather changeable and disagreeable.*

There were no entries on the 12<sup>th</sup> through the 16<sup>th</sup> as Gass, Reuben Fields and John Thompson were away from the fort hunting.

*"Monday 17<sup>th</sup>: The day was stormy. Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup>: ... the weather was so stormy. Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup>: The day was very wet and stormy. Thursday 20<sup>th</sup>: ... little rain fell today. Friday 21<sup>st</sup>: ... had a very unpleasant day, as it rained hard during the whole of it. Monday 24<sup>th</sup>: ... at 10 o'clock it began to rain hard. Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup>: The rain continued and the weather was stormy ... it continued to rain very fast. Thursday 27<sup>th</sup>: ... a cloudy wet day. Friday 28<sup>th</sup>: This was a foggy morning ..."*

There was no escaping the constant dampness and nearly every member of the Corps had colds or rheumatism. Captain Meriwether Lewis expanded his botanical and zoological notes during the long wet winter. *"There are several species of fir in this neighborhood which I shall describe as well as my slender botanical skill will enable me ... (No. 1.) a specie which grows to immense size; very commonly 27 feet in the girth six feet above the surface of the earth, and in several instances we have found them as much as 36 feet in the girth or 12 feet in diameter perfectly solid and entire. they frequently rise to the height of 230 feet, and one hundred and twenty or 30 of that height without a limb ... its cone I have not yet had an opportunity to discover altho' I have sought it frequently; the trees of this kind which we have felled have had no cones on them."* (Tuesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, 1806) Lewis was describing the Sitka spruce.

*"Fir No. 2 is next in dignity in point of size. it is much the most common species, it may be said to constitute at least one half of the timber in this neighborhood. it appears to be of the spruce kind. it rises to the height of 160 to 180 feet very commonly and is from 4 to 6 feet in diameter, very straight round and regularly tapering ... the cone is remarkable small not larger than the end of a man's thumb soft, flexible and of an ovate form, produced at the ends of the small twigs."* (Wednesday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1806) Here Lewis was describing the mountain hemlock.

*"The quadrupeds of this country from the Rocky Mountains to the pacific ocean are 1<sup>st</sup> the domestic animals, consisting of the horse and dog only; 2<sup>edly</sup> the native wild animals ... Their horses appear to be of an excellent race; they are lofty elegantly formed active and durable; in short many of them look like the fine English coarsers and would make a figure in any country. some of those horses are pided [pied] with large spots of white irregularly scattered and intermixed with the black brown bay or some other dark colour with stars snips and white feet much like our best blooded horses in Virginia, which they resemble as well in fleetness and bottom as in form and colours. the natives suffer thm to run at large in the plains, the grass of which furnishes them with the only subsistence their masters taking no trouble lay in a winters store for them ... Whether the horse was orrigeonally a native of this country or not it is out of my power to determine as we cannot understand the language of the native sufficiently to ask the question ... Among the Sosones of the upper part of the S.E. fork of the Columbia we saw several horses with spanish brands on them which we supposed had been stolen from the inhabitants of Mexeco."* (Saturday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, 1806)

*contributed by Charles Blair*



## Election of Officers for the Year 2000

The Nominating Committee (which consisted of the board members this year) offers the following proposed slate of officers for 2000: President – Murray Hayes; Vice President - Cheryl Essary; Secretary - Pam Andersen; Treasurer - Rennie Kubik; Board of Directors: Lee Edtl, Don Popejoy, Lyle Soule, Doc Wesselius. And as specified in the bylaws, past president Don Payne will continue to serve on the board. Members may also nominate other persons for any office, if they wish. The election will be held on Saturday, February 12, during the general chapter meeting in Tacoma. At that time, nominations will also be accepted from the floor. Members who wish to vote but who cannot attend the meeting are encouraged to complete and mail the absentee ballot on page 11 prior to February 3.

**The Lewis & Clark Corner:** Info supplied by Don Popejoy [dpocalc1@aol.com]

### Books of interest:

Driving Scenic Idaho by Bob Clark (1998). Chapters 19 & 20 detail the Lewis and Clark Trail (eastern half then the western half). Chapter 12 guides you across Lemhi Pass.

Singing Grass, Burning Sage: Discovering Washington's Shrub-Steppe by Jack Nisbet. This is a beautiful photo/text book published by the Washington State Nature Conservancy.

The Saga of Lewis and Clark: Into The Uncharted West by Thomas and Jeremy Schmidt (1999). Another beautiful book with annotated topo maps and pictures that present the visual quest of the expedition.

Lewis & Clark: A Photographic Journey by Bill and Jan Moeller (1999). A similar study of the great Corps journey through an unknown country with high quality photos.

First Across the Continent: The Story of the Lewis and Clark Expedition by Noah Brooks (1910). I was lucky to come across this edition from a friend in Albany, Oregon. Thanks Glenn!

### Websites of interest:

<http://members.aol.com/dpocalc1/home.html> "The Columbia River Connection" (this is an ongoing website so please take a look at least once a month)

<http://www.elderhostel.org> (a calendar of Elderhostel events)

## An Opportunity to Explore Petroglyphs & History at May 20 Meeting

Our spring chapter meeting will be held at Horsethief Lake State Park in the beautiful Columbia River Gorge. Plans include a great program with member and well-known Lewis and Clark scholar Martin Plamondon, an opportunity for a guided tour of the Indian petroglyphs in the park, and a potluck lunch. The petroglyphs are in a part of the park that is no longer accessible to the general public, so this is a rare chance to view Tsagiglalal, better known as She Who Watches, and many other exceptional examples of this ancient art. A maximum of 30 people can be accommodated on the tour with park rangers. The trail is not difficult; however, it is recommended that those who sign up have a good sense of balance and dexterity. The trail is not paved and is only 12-18 inches wide with small, sharp rocks. Wear sturdy shoes. If you are interested in the tour, you MUST register with Cheryl Essary by April 15 at the latest—no exceptions! As of publication date, we can still take 22 more reservations. You can contact Cheryl by phone at 509-488-9074 or by mail at 886 So Hwy 17, Othello, WA 99344-9799, or by e-mail at [merckdf@concord.televar.com](mailto:merckdf@concord.televar.com). We will also be taking registrations at the February 12 meeting in Tacoma.

Registrations are accepted on a first come, first served basis. There is no charge for the tour, but rangers must have an accurate count of the number of people attending. Since we are limited to only 30 slots, you will be notified if we receive your reservation after the 30 slots are filled and your name will be placed on a waiting list. Since the park is arranging for special staffing for this tour, if you sign up to go, please be sure to show up; if you register but then find you will not be able to attend, please notify Cheryl right away so she can include someone else on this desirable tour. Gary Lentz, chapter member and Lewis and Clark State Park Ranger, will speak on the pictographs for those who wish to attend the meeting but not take part in the tour.

There are 12 campsites at the park; nearby towns include White Salmon and Bingen, Washington, and The Dalles, Oregon. More information on accommodation options will appear in the next newsletter.

# Captain Lewis's Air Rifle

submitted by Gary Lentz

A pull of the trigger, a snap of the lock, a rush of air and a smack when the bullet hits the mark, a very brief reload and the scenario is repeated. It is not surprising that people along the route of the Corps of Western Discovery were impressed and considered this unique rifle "big medicine". Unlike its relatives which consumed gunpowder, spit fire, made huge clouds of smoke, and deafened both the shooter and observers, this gun was quiet, didn't expose the shooter by producing smoke and was as accurate as any other weapon of the period. With all these advantages, it is curious that the American West wasn't settled with air guns instead of their brimstone-breathing relatives.

Meriwether Lewis was no stranger to black powder weapons. While serving as President Jefferson's personal secretary, he had opportunities to shoot a variety of pistols, rifles and fusils that the president owned. Jefferson was aware of the shortcomings of his black powder weapons and no doubt shared those concerns with Captain Lewis. He had seen the availability of gunpowder diminish rapidly during the revolutionary war and had seen its price increase from "three pounds, 12 shillings for 12 pounds" in May of 1777 to "1 lb powder 24 pounds" by September 1780. Sometimes, when hunting birds, the cloud of smoke from the discharge was so dense and voluminous that it was difficult to determine if a bird was hit or where it landed. The roar of the gun would frighten other game in the area. If the powder got wet, you just put the weapon away until you got it dried out.

Meriwether Lewis, always an innovator, acquired an air-powered rifle to experiment with. It did not require gunpowder that must always be kept dry, was dangerously explosive in larger containers and could be depleted. It consumed less lead per shot than the larger weapons. It was silent so it was less likely to scare game away. It could be loaded more rapidly thus giving an advantage in both hunting and combat. It did not produce the large clouds of smoke so that the next shot was not obscured and the shooter could remain hidden if he chose to (always a plus in an ambush situation). Compared to its shortcomings of smaller caliber and lower muzzle velocity, the advantages outweighed the disadvantages if one had black powder weapons to rely on.

The weapon that Lewis chose to take along on the exploration of the West was manufactured by Isaiah Lukens in Philadelphia. After Luken's death in 1847, the Isaiah Lukens Auction Catalog listed many items that the Pennsylvania manufacturer dealt with. Item number 95 was: "**1 Large Air Gun, made for, and used by Messrs Lewis & Clark in their exploring expeditions. A great curiosity.**" After decades of speculation on the type of air-gun carried by the expedition, this discovery by Henry M. Stewart, Jr. established the nature of the weapon. Some air-powered weapons of the period used a large spherical reservoir under the gun as the pressure chamber. The rifles manufactured by Isaiah Lukens, however, had the reservoir in the butt stock. An excellent article on the details of this weapon can be found in *The American Rifleman*, August 1984, written by Ashley Halsey, Jr. Mr. Henry M. Stewart, Jr. also wrote an article about his discovery in the *Monthly Bugle*, a publication of the Pennsylvania Antique Gun Collectors Association, in February 1977.

This air-gun was .31 caliber which was considerably smaller than most period weapons. The Harper's Ferry Rifle was .54 caliber and the fusils were twice that diameter at about .62 caliber. However, a smaller projectile would mean a faster muzzle velocity with lower pressures. This air-gun operated at a maximum pressure of about 900 psi, required up to 1,000 strokes to acquire that pressure, and retained enough pressure for about 40 shots before needing a recharge. The pump itself was a clever arrangement. It screwed into the butt reservoir when the barrel and firing mechanism was unscrewed from it. A large screw on the end opposite from the reservoir allowed it to be screwed into a tree and the shoulder could then be used to pump up the pressure. In case there wasn't a tree handy, there were small wings on the pump to allow it to be gripped or put under the feet for pumping. A brass barrel with shallow 15 groove rifling allowed a good fit for the lead projectile which eliminated the need for patching and hard ramming, thus making for a much faster reload. The firing mechanism used a piece of steel in the flintlock jaws where the flint rock would normally be seated. When the trigger was squeezed the steel would impact a striker near where the powder pan would usually be located. This striker was connected to a rod and lever which would allow a small charge of air from the butt reservoir to enter behind the lead projectile in the barrel and push it out. No smoke, no fire, no smell, no noise . . . no doubt a wonder of its time to the natives and settlers who witnessed it.



Isaiah Lukens (1780(?)-1846)



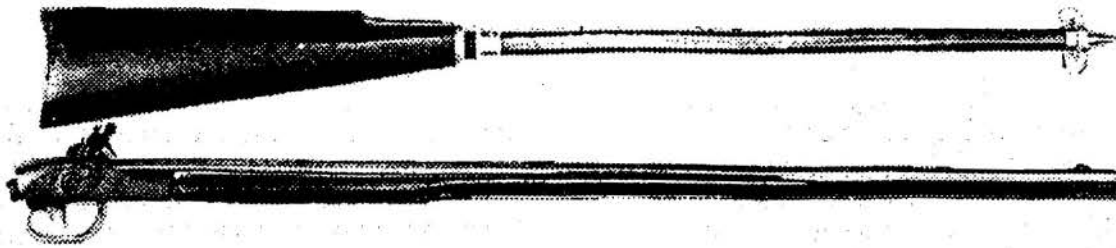


Illustration courtesy of *The American Rifleman*, August, 1984

However, the lower pressure and smaller projectile would also mean it would not be as effective at producing incapacitating wound cavities in larger animals and humans. In spite of its many advantages, this may be one reason that the air rifle never caught on as a weapon of choice amongst the explorers and settlers of the American West. It just didn't pack enough punch to get the big jobs done.

Captain Lewis wasted no time impressing people with his new air rifle. Shortly after leaving Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on August 31, 1803, he was demonstrating the weapon to a friend along the Ohio River. He offered the friend a turn at trying the rifle. As Lewis recorded: *"The ball passed through the hat of a woman about 40 yards distant cutting her temple about the fourth of a diameter of the ball; shee fell instantly and the blood gus(h)ing from her temple we were all in the greatest consternation suppose(d) she was dead by (but) in a minute she revived to our enexpressible satsifaction, and by examination we found the wound by no means mortal or even dangerous . . ."* A "fourth of a diameter of the ball", as Lewis records, would be about 5/64 of an inch; large enough to nick an artery and produce "gus(h)ing" blood. A weapon with a projectile of larger diameter might have proven fatal.

Numerous entries about the air gun are found in the journals. Typical entries include this one on August 3, 1805, while visiting with the Ottoes on the Missouri River: *"The air-gun too was fired, and astonished them greatly."* Later that same month, August 17, Lewis records: *"They had, indeed, abundant sources of surprise in all they saw---the appearance of the men, their arms, their clothing, the canoes, the strange looks of the negro, and the sagacity of our dog, all in turn shared their admiration, which was raised to astonishment by a shot from the air-gun. This operation was instantly considered 'great medicine', by which they, as well as the other Indians, mean something emanating directly from the Great Spirit, or produced by his invisible and incompre-hensible agency."* Apparently large caliber wasn't a criteria for producing "great medicine".

The Nez Perces were also impressed with the novel weapon. On May 11, 1806, the journals record: *"At last we succeeded in communicating the impression we wished, and then adjourned the council; after which we amused them by showing the wonders of the compass, spy-glass, magnet, watch, and air-gun, each of which attracted its share of admiration."*

The air rifle needed attention like its high-powered relatives. Sergeant Ordway recorded on June 10, 1805: *"... the blacksmiths fixed up their bellows & repaired the air gun & Several other fire arms."* Usually it was the main spring in the black powder weapons that failed and the same was the case with the air rifle as well. Lewis paid special attention to the readiness of his weapons by frequent inspections and repairs. There is no entry of the need to repair the air reservoir on the weapon. Injuries to the reservoir would have rendered it inoperative. The repairs to the mainspring would also help identify this weapon as the original one that made the trip many years later.

Upon return to St. Louis, many of the items of the expedition were auctioned off. The air rifle was not amongst those items. William Clark made note of several articles to be sent to Louisville in care of a Mr. Wolpards. One of the items in box number two was listed as "1 air gun". Mr. Stewart explains how he determined that the weapon he located nearly 170 years later was the correct one in his article in the **Monthly Bugle** mentioned earlier. Today this weapon is part of the Henry M. Stewart Collection at the Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Virginia. The museum is open 9 am to 5 pm daily and can be contacted at [www.vmi.edu/museum](http://www.vmi.edu/museum).

There is no doubt that the air rifle earned its place amongst the many strange wonders that the Lewis & Clark Expedition introduced to the native populations of the West. Colored flames, spinning compass needles and ticking watches were impressive but the potential of a quiet firing, non-smoking, quickly reloadable weapon would have fired the imagination more than all the other magical tricks that were displayed. Nearly 200 years after the Corps of Western Discovery returned to civilization, this weapon continues to fascinate us all.



## Corner of Discovery: Profiles of our Members

prepared by Cheryl Essary

A column featuring Chapter members and their comments concerning their interest in the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

**Jennell Branson** of Spokane had his first exposure to Lewis and Clark while attending college at Eastern Washington University. At that time there was a statue of Sacajawea [sic] in the registration building, and he recalls wondering who she was and what she did. In the ensuing years, his work for the Washington State Department of Transportation took him all over the state where he encountered monuments and signs about Lewis and Clark.

He was soon exploring other parts of the trail. Not long ago, Jennell and his wife, Louise, drove to St. Louis and followed the trail west, tracing as closely as possible the route of the Corps. The highlights he cited were the site of the winter camp with the Mandans, the confluence of the Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers, Fort Benton, and the interpretive center in Great Falls.

Reading about and touring "trails" is quite a pastime for the Bransons. In addition to Lewis and Clark, they have read extensively and traveled the Oregon Trail, the Mullan Road, and the Chief Joseph (Nez Perce) Trail.

Sacajawea [sic] gets Jennell's vote as his favorite member of the expedition. He has been to her grave on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming as well as the grave of her son, Pomp, near Jordan Valley, Oregon. He also names William Clark as a favorite because of the way he cared for and educated Pomp.

**Jack Markley** of Port Angeles was born in Virginia and lived in Lewiston, Idaho for 33 years. He got serious about Lewis and Clark while working summers at the Alpawai Interpretive Center and Chief Timothy State Park and has spent many happy hours along the Lochsa and Clearwater Rivers. It is easy, he says, to find a quiet spot and imagine being 3000 miles from home—without any plastic bags, Gore-Tex, or e-mail. Lemhi Pass is especially haunting to him because of Lewis's journal entry near there on his birthday in 1805.

Jack enjoys going to the journals on any given day to see what was happening, because it is always a fun surprise. One of his favorite books is Paul Cutright's "A History of the Lewis and Clark Journals." For Jack, the striking message of Lewis and Clark is in the comparison of their time to ours. He wonders how the country has become so "filled up" in a mere 200 years. If we fly from Pittsburgh west, evidence of man's presence is constantly in sight. He believes we must borrow some wisdom from our heritage to preserve what is remaining of the trail.

In our last issue, I encouraged all of you to consider sending me your comments about your interest in the Corps of Discovery to enable us to continue this column. As you have just read, Jennell Branson and Jack Markley responded. If you have enjoyed reading about your fellow members, please take the time to share your own responses to the following questions so we can all get to know one another better. Send them along to me at 886 So Hwy 17, Othello, WA 99344-9799 (or by e-mail to [merckdf@concord.televar.com](mailto:merckdf@concord.televar.com)).

1. How did you become interested in Lewis and Clark?
2. What parts of the trail have you traveled? What was your favorite place? Why?
3. Other than the journals, what is/are your favorite Lewis and Clark book(s)? Why?
4. Do you have a favorite member of the expedition? If so, whom and why?
5. What aspect of the expedition most interests you? (geography, natural history, Native Americans, etc.)
6. Is there anything else you would like to add?

### 1999 Chapter Officers and Board Members

Please feel free to contact any of us with your questions or suggestions.

<b>President:</b> Murray Hayes	<b>Board:</b> Lee Edtl	<b>Membership:</b> Don Popejoy
360-582-1069	360-577-0485	509-328-9368
<b>Vice Pres.:</b> Cheryl Essary	Rennie Kubik	<b>Past Pres.:</b> Don Payne
509-488-9074	360-546-5989	253-838-5906
<b>Secretary:</b> Pam Andersen	Lyle Soule	
360-943-3979	360-394-1755	
<b>Treasurer:</b> Dee Roche-Coons	"Doc" Wesselius	
509-758-9850	360-736-6106	



## A Second DAR Lewis and Clark Trail Marker

On December 3, 1999, the Washington State chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution dedicated their second Lewis and Clark marker. This one is in Stevenson at the Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center. Approximately 35 members and friends showed up on a cloudy, blustery and rainy day to witness the dedication of this beautiful marker. Shirley Wagers, WSSDAR State Regent, gave the opening address and then Barbara Carlson, WSSDAR 2nd Vice Regent (and the newest member of our WS LCTHF chapter along with her husband, Richard) and Leota "Lee" King, WSSDAR State Historian and WS LCTHF member, unveiled the newest granite marker. The Washington State DAR received a \$10,000 grant from the National Park Service, under the direction of Richard Williams, for markers and the Tresko Monument company of Spokane contracted to make the markers. The emblem of the DAR, the Lewis and Clark logo and the words "Lewis and Clark" are highlighted in gold leaf on the Lake Superior green granite. Leota King reports that the states of Kansas, Missouri, Montana and Washington are using the same stone and design to bring conformity to the Trail. Other states plan to join this DAR effort as the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark expedition approaches.



From left to right: Barbara Carlson, WSSDAR 2<sup>nd</sup> VP; Shirley Wagers, WSSDAR state Regent; & Leota King, WSSDAR State Historian

The back of the marker reads: October 30, 1805 William Clark recorded in his journal that on this date "A wet disagreeable evening. The only wood we could get to burn on this little island on which we have encamped is the newly discovered ash which makes a tolerable fire." The "little island" is about 1-1/2 miles downstream from this marker and is submerged by the waters of the Bonneville Dam. April 14, 1806 Meriwether Lewis recorded in his journal that on this date "The mountains through which the river passes... are high broken, rocky, partially covered with fir white cedar. And in many places exhibit very romantic scenes." Marker placed by Washington State Society of Daughter's of the American Revolution December 3, 1999.

For information about the first DAR marker in Clarkston, see the November 1999 newsletter OR for more information about the efforts of the DAR, contact Leota King at [leota@gateway.net](mailto:leota@gateway.net).

*submitted by Don Popejoy*

## Upcoming Chapter Meetings for 2000 – Mark Your Calendars Now!

**May 20, 2000:** Horsethief Lake State Park, Klickitat County; lecture by Martin Plomondon (see related article on page 3).

**August 2000:** Annual LCTHF Meeting, Dillon, Montana

**September 23, 2000:** Bonneville Dam Visitor's Center, Columbia River. Lecture & tour by Don Dinsmore.

## Inspiration Abounds for the Chapter Logo Contest

Several creative members have submitted designs for the chapter logo contest announced in the winter issue of the newsletter. These designs will be on display at the February 12 meeting in Tacoma. Be sure to attend the meeting to view these entries and cast your vote to select the winning design.

Remember to check our Chapter Web Page @ [http://www.vpds.wsu.edu/LCExpedition/resources/wa\\_lcthf.html](http://www.vpds.wsu.edu/LCExpedition/resources/wa_lcthf.html) (thanks, Jay Rasmussen!)

For links to many other L&C sites, visit <http://www.vpds.wsu.edu/LCExpedition/resources/index.html>

## What If?

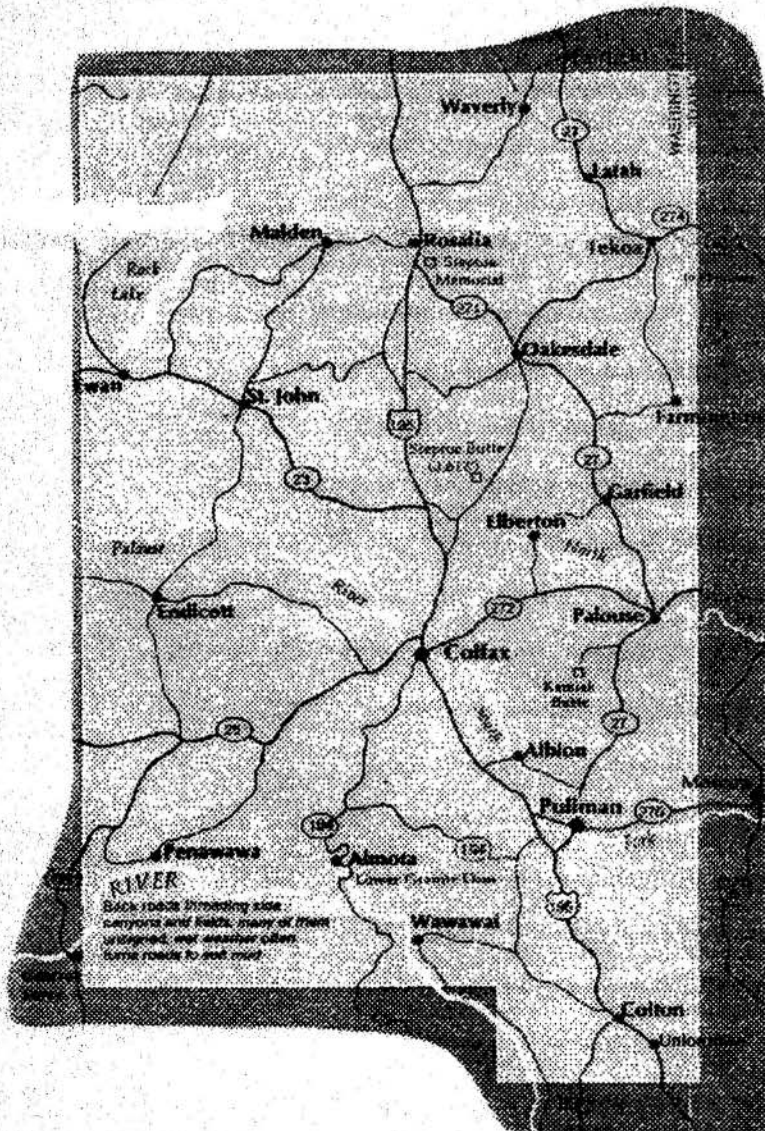
submitted by Don Popejoy

Have you ever stopped to think about what important people, besides yourself of course, have passed through your hometown? I know I have, lots of times—hundreds of times in fact. Maybe more than that! In Spokane, the Crown Jewel of the Inland Empire, it is easy to come up with famous people who have visited this paradise setting in the midst of rolling wheat fields being gently fanned by the soft, benign breezes of the Pacific Northwest. David Thompson came through here in 1811 and started the Spokane House for the North West Company. [Author's note: When speaking of Spokane in the present, I will spell it as Spokane; when speaking of Spokane in the past or historically, I will spell it as it should be, Spōkan.] Isaac Stevens, Washington Territory's first governor, played a major part in the development of this area. So as not to turn this paper into a name game, I'll mention a few more personalities, then get to the point. Others who came through the Spokane area or lived here are (not in any particular order): Chief (Spokan) Garry; Colonel George Wright; Generals William Tecumseh Sherman and U. S. Grant; Captain John Mullan of the Mullan Military Road; missionaries Spalding, Whitman and Walker; and Finnan McDonald of the fur trade. More contemporary names are Maury Wills, Frank Howard and Tommie & Willie Davis of the LA Dodgers, Presidents Richard M. Nixon, LBJ and—my favorite—John F. Kennedy. Actors such as Clark Gable, Alfred E. Newman and Marilyn Monroe made their presence felt here.

Which brings me to my story line. Lewis and Clark never made it within 100 miles of Spokane, even though they were told in May 1806 about the existence of the Lower Spōkan Falls that roared like a beast. Even Hillary and Bill came by once to say "Hi!" It would be so exciting to be able to say that L & C did

navigate the waters of the Spokane River and that they saw the falls that would compare to the mighty Great Falls of the Missouri! But no, they came no closer than the northern-most bend of the Snake River where Penawawa and Almotā are today, nearly 100 miles south of Spokane (see map). The Spōkan Falls (the lower falls of the Spōkan River) were second in importance only to the great trade center at Celilo Falls on the Columbia and, with the upper falls being only 25 miles to the east, represented one of the greatest trade marts the North American continent has ever seen. Kettle Falls, now lost to the waters of Lake Roosevelt, just northwest of Colville, was another important trading center for the early Native Americans and is where David Thompson was stopped in an early quest to discover the River of the West.

This past May, my sister (Sherry Blood) and I went to find the L & C campsites along the Snake River. While searching for and finding their campsite of 10/11/05 (near the old Alomta Ferry landing), I suddenly realized that this was as close to Spokane as they would get, and I wondered if they ever heard of the Spōkan Indians or the famous trade center at the falls. To the journals we went. While researching for this paper, I discovered that the Spōkan Indians in their unwritten history tell of sending a party to the Clearwater River to see these strange "white" men. In May 1806, L & C were unable to cross the Bitterroot Mountains because of the snow, so when they stopped here (the site of the future Alomta Ferry landing) they spoke to a Spōkan or a Coeur d'Alene Indian who told them of the falls north of





this place. While waiting for the snows to melt, they wrote about what they were told. Their description was the first written geographical account of the Spokane area, and even though the information they gathered was second hand and went through several interpretations, it accurately fits the landscape.

The following comes from the journals as found with brackets in the book Spokane Corona. *"At this place we met with three men of a nation called the Skeet-ko-mish [Spokan] who reside at the forks of a large river [the Spokane River and the Little Spokane River] discharging itself into the Columbia on its east side to the north of the entrance of Clark's River [Snake River]. This river, they informed me, headed in a large lake [Lake Coeur d'Alene] in the mountains, and that the falls [Spokan Falls], below which they resided, was at no great distance from the lake. These people are the same in their dress and appearance with the Chopunnish [Nez Perce] though their language is entirely different. The river here called the Clark's River is that we have hitherto called the Flathead River. I have thus named it in honor of my worthy friend and fellow traveler, Captain Clark. For this stream we know no name, and no white man but ourselves was ever on its principal branches. The Skeet-ko-mish nation resides in six villages and are about 70 miles distant from the Chopunnish nation and beyond a mountain which that river heads in. The Waytom Lake [Coeur d'Alene] is 10 days around it, has two islands in it, and is seven days from the Chopunnish. The falls of the Lartow River, a little below the lake, is 150 feet, nearly perpendicular, or thereabouts. The falls of Clark's River [Albany Falls], which is only a half day's ride from the latter, falls between 400 and 500 feet and leaves a continuous, spray. The roads which pass up Clark's river from the falls, and that which intersects it from the falls of Lartow River are hilly and bad. The Skeet-ko-mish reside 30 miles up this river. The Skeet-ko-mish reside also on the borders of the Waytom Lake and on two islands within the same."*

Even though their information was from hearsay, their description fits the Spokane River (Lartow River) as well as any they ever described. The word Lartow may have come from the present Indian word Latah, where the three visiting Indians probably said they lived, on Latah Creek, known locally as Hangmen's Creek. Latah Creek of course flows into the Spokane (Lartow) River.

The present day Spokan Indians do not recognize the word L & C used in their journals, Skeet-ko-mish. However, David Thompson called the Spokane River the Skeet-shoo so the word "skeet" must be of some local importance. The Spokane Falls comprise nine city blocks in the downtown area (Spokane Riverfront Park) and fall about 130 feet in a series of beautiful, soft cascades, as opposed to the journals stating that they were a "perpendicular" drop of 150 feet.

So there it is. Two "ifs." **If** L & C hadn't been stopped by the snowfall in the Bitterroot Mountains, they would never have heard of the Spokan Indians or of the roaring Spokan Falls which, once seen, compares favorably with the series of Great Falls in Montana. **If** L & C hadn't been in such a hurry to explore the Yellowstone and Marias Rivers and return home, maybe today we would be dedicating markers to the great expedition at the Falls of the Spokan River!

## **News and Activities from Near and Far**

- If it is possible to tell America's diverse history through a horse breed, then that diversity is amply and tastefully displayed in the 1,672-square-foot Appaloosa Museum in Moscow, Idaho. Attracting more than 4,000 visitors each year, the museum includes the history of the Appaloosa breed and displays include Nez Perce artifacts, Charles Russell prints and other items from the Palouse area. Located on the Idaho side of the Idaho/Washington border at 5070 Hwy 8 in Moscow, it is open Monday – Friday from 8 am to 5 pm; during the summer, it's also open Saturdays from 9 am to 3pm. Groups are encouraged to call in advance. To contact curator Sue Emory, call 208-882-5578, ext. 279. Admission is free. (source: *Spokesman Review*, 6/24/98)
- "Windsor", an 8-year-old Newfoundland belonging to Jim & Carol Mungas of Great Falls, Montana, became the newest volunteer at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center in August. In his role representing Seaman (an integral part of the Lewis and Clark Expedition), Windsor accompanies a volunteer on Wednesday afternoons and Friday mornings, walking down to the River Camp, through the exhibit hall, up in the lobby and out by the visitor parking. Windsor seemed to take to the Center from the get-go, and visitors have been equally enthusiastic. The staff is excited to have him as a "VIP" (Very Important Pooch). (source: National Park Service Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail Administrative Update, 10/99)
- The Headwaters Chapter of LCTHF produced a new brochure entitled "Three Forks of the Lewis and Clark Trail." The brochure has information about the Three Forks area, some nice photos, and Corps of Discovery journal entries through the area. For more information contact the Headwaters Chapter at P.O. Box 577, Bozeman, MT 59771-0577.

## News and Activities from Near and Far (contd.)

- The Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center has launched an effort to retire the original construction debt of \$2.1 million. All donations, no matter the size, are important and all donations are 100% tax deductible. Send contributions to CGIC, P.O. Box 396, Stevenson, WA 98648; if you have questions or wish to use a credit card, call 1-800-991-2338. (source: Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center Explorations, Fall/Winter 1999)
- Judge Thomas A. Higgens of Nashville, Tennessee, ruled that the remains of Meriwether Lewis are not to be disturbed, at least for the time being. Dr. James E. Starrs had requested the exhumation for a scientific study to solve the mystery of Lewis's death. (source: National Park Service Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail Administrative Update, 10/99)
- The Missouri Historical Society seeks funds to support the restoration of a famous portrait of Meriwether Lewis to its original condition in order to exhibit the artwork in the upcoming National Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Exhibition. The portrait is the only surviving one of two profiles of Lewis created by French artist Charles Balthazar Julien Fevret de Saint-Memin. It hung at Locust Hill until the house was sold in the late 1800s and came to the Missouri Historical Society in 1936 from the great grand-son of Lewis's sister, Jane. The LCTHF granted \$3000 to the Society to restore and preserve the portrait. The second phase of the restoration, the replication of the frame and glass, will cost \$2000. Those interested in contributing to the project may send checks to Missouri Historical Society, P.O. Box 11940, St. Louis, MO 63112. Make checks payable to the Society with a notation "For Lewis Artifact Fund." Contributions are tax deductible. (source: National Park Service Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail Administrative Update, 10/99)
- The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is proposing to develop a visitor center at the Pompey's Pillar National Historical Landmark on the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. The long-range planning effort includes design and construction of facilities for an interpretive center and recreation area. It is anticipated that the development could include a visitor center costing approximately \$5.4 million. BLM is interested in comments on the proposal. For more information or to provide comments, contact: Dick Kodeski, Manager, Pompey's Pillar, BLM Billings Field Office 5001 Southgate Drive, Billings, MT 59101; telephone 406-896-5235. (source: National Park Service Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail Administrative Update, 10/99)

## **Kudos, Opportunities, Announcements**

On April 9, 2000, the US Army Corps of Engineers at Bonneville Lock & Dam (541-374-8820) will host a **living history performance by Joyce Hunsaker portraying Sacagawea**, the teenage Shoshoni girl who accompanied Lewis & Clark on their epic journey 194 years ago from St. Louis, Missouri, to the Pacific Ocean and back. On April 9, 1806, the Corps of Discovery, camped in the vicinity of Bonneville Lock & Dam. Joyce does her monologue in first person and is dressed in period clothing much in the same vein as Hal Holbrook's stage performance of Mark Twain. Two one-hour performances will be presented on Sunday, April 9, the Bradford Island Visitor Center at 12 noon and 2:00 PM in the main theater. There is no entry fee at Bonneville Lock & Dam, and the performances are free to the public. Seating will be on a first-come-first served basis. Bonneville Lock & Dam can be accessed from exit 40 off Interstate 84. (Thanks to **Don Dinsmore**, Park Ranger & Interpretive Specialist at Bonneville Lock & Dam, for this info.)

One of our active behind-the-scenes members, **Bill Lauman**, offers "The Lewis & Clark Expedition: A Tale of Courage" through Elderhostel, Inc. from April 9-14, 2000. Bill also did some work with Elderhostel in Sandy, Oregon, this past summer. [Note: Elderhostel is a non-profit organization with 25 years of experience providing high-quality, affordable, educational adventures for adults 55 and older. For more information or for a catalog, call toll-free 1-877-426-8056 or visit their website at [www.elderhostel.org](http://www.elderhostel.org)]

James Ronda, well-known Lewis and Clark scholar, will be the speaker at the Washington State History Museum's annual meeting on May 13 in Tacoma. Contact the museum at 253-272-3500 for more information.

Many thanks to member Gary Lentz for submitting the great article about Lewis' air rifle (see p. 4). Now, what about the rest of you? You needn't be a scholar to offer **contributions to our chapter newsletter**. How about sharing one or more of your experiences as you've visited parts of the trail? Queries for our "amateur L&C expert" members are always welcome, as are suggestions for articles. We welcome newspaper clippings about any L&C Trail aspect to keep our members up-to-date. Also send in your "recommended reading" ideas to share with members—anything related to L&C, the Northwest, history, travel, etc. We'd love to hear from more of you! The deadline for submissions for the spring issue is April 15; for the summer issue, the deadline is July 15; and for the fall issue, November 15. Send any of the above to your editor, Pam Andersen, at 2374 Crestline Blvd NW, Olympia, WA 98502.

We encourage carpooling to our meetings. If you can give rides or if you need a ride, contact President Murray Hayes at 360-582-1069 or by e-mail at [mlhayes@olympen.com](mailto:mlhayes@olympen.com).

Grateful thanks to members **Stephen Hoedl, Robert Hunt, Virginia Ryan, Pat Spitzer and Dr. Carlos Vest** for including generous donations with their membership renewals.



# ABSENTEE BALLOT

If you cannot attend the February 12 general chapter meeting and wish to participate in the election, please complete the absentee ballot below and mail it to:

Murray Hayes, 936 Cameron Rd, Sequim, WA 98383  
**before February 3, 2000.**

**President:**  Murray Hayes  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Vice President:**  Cheryl Essary  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Secretary:**  Pam Andersen  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Treasurer:**  Rennie Kubik  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Board of Directors (four positions):**

Lee Edtl  
 Lyle Soulé  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

Don Popejoy  
 Doc Wesselius  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_



**MAIL TO:**  
**WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER**  
*Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation*  
P. O. Box 9021  
Spokane, WA 99209-9021

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

**CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP**

\$10.00 per year (Jan-Dec) for any person, family, firm, association or corporation. Please make checks payable to:  
**Washington State Chapter LCTHF**

Dues are kept as low as possible to encourage wide membership. In addition, members are encouraged to make additional donations to support the organization.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

\*Phone: (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_

\*E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Optional—will be included with membership roster*

Above dues are for Washington State Chapter only. Bylaws state that Chapter members must be current members of the National Foundation. Annual dues are: Individual, \$30 per year; Family, \$40 per year. Membership includes the quarterly magazine *We Proceeded On*. Send Foundation dues to: Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, PO Box 3434, Great Falls, MT 59403.

## Plan Now to Attend Foundation's Annual Meeting

The Camp Fortunate Chapter will host the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation's 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting from August 13 to 16 in Dillon, Montana—in the heart of Big Sky Country (Dillon is at 5200 feet elevation). The meeting's theme, "From Canoes to Horses," reflects the opportunity to tour approximately 250 miles of the Lewis and Clark Trail, including: Lemhi Pass on the Continental Divide at 7,372 feet elevation; Beaver's head Rock, recognized by Sacagawea on August 8, 1805; Beaverhead County Museum, location of the Lewis and Clark diorama; follow the Jefferson River, now called the Beaverhead River; Rattlesnake Cliffs, crossed by Captain Lewis on August 10, 1805; Clark's Lookout, where Captain Clark took readings on August 13, 1805; and Camp Fortunate, now under Clark Canyon Reservoir. Seminars and a vendor's fair will be held on the campus of Western Montana College, and there will also be a BBQ dinner at Rattlesnake Cliffs. Look for registration info in the next issue of *We Proceeded On* and plan now to enjoy a major section of our beloved trail.

**WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER**  
**Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation**  
2374 Crestline Blvd NW  
Olympia, WA 98502

