

SUMMER ISSUE

2017



CALIFORNIA TRAIL HERITAGE ALLIANCE

THE Wagon Tongue



Summer in Laramie

Summer in Wyoming meant that the travelers were not even a third of the way on their journey. Depending on the weather, some travelers made it to Wyoming as early as June while most others made it there in July and August.

D. A. Shaw traveling in 1850 noted,

"The distance from the Missouri to Fort Laramie, the first government post, was 700 miles; to the South Pass of the Rocky Mountains, 1000 (miles)..."

He mentions two of the important landmarks that travelers had to pass to travel through what is now southern Wyoming; The Fort Laramie and the South Pass Areas. In this article, we are focusing on Fort Laramie. Also named Fort William and Fort John. Laramie River was named after an American fur trapper, Jacques La Ramee, as was the fort, town, county and mountain peak in Wyoming. Today, it is a National Historic Site but through time, it served different purposes.

Travelers worried as they made it through the first part of their travels and entered the Wyoming area during the summer months, as supplies were scarce. Fort Laramie was a trading post to replenish supplies.

"I had heard that there were two forts, new Ft. Kearny and Ft. Laramie, on the south side of the river, which we must pass before we reached the South Pass of the Rocky Mountains, and beyond there there would be no place to buy medicine or food."

- William Lewis Manly, 1849

The Diary of Peter H. Burnett in July of 1843 wrote this of Fort Laramie and the cost of items:

"On the 14th we arrived at Fort Laramie, where we remained two days, repairing our wagons. We had traveled from the crossing of South Fork one hundred and forty-one miles in nine days. Prices of articles at this trading post: Coffee, \$1.50 a pint; brown sugar, the same; flour, unbolted, 25 cents a pound; powder, \$1.50 a pound; lead, 75 cents a pound; percussion-caps, \$1.50 a box; calico, very inferior, \$1 a yard."

In 1849, Kimball Webster diariied on two occasions about Fort Laramie describing the older fort and the discards that people made once they realized the burdens that they carried were not worth the trouble. He noted:

"Tuesday, July 09

Weather fair and warm; thermometer 98 degrees in the shade. Remained here today. In the evening I went down to the fort. The outside wall is built of adobe,

(continued on page 3)

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL TRAIL DAYS



Summer in Laramie (continued from page 1)

"or sun-burnt bricks, and encloses about one-half acre. The buildings are within the enclosure. The fort was established several years since by the American Fur Company for the purpose of trading with the Indians, and was sold a short time since by that company to the United States Government, and is now occupied by Colonel Sanderson with a regiment of United States Cavalry. He is now engaged in building a mill, house, barracks, etc.



Wednesday, July 11

We still remain here. All the camp grounds near the fort are literally covered with wagon irons, clothing, beans, bacon, pork and provisions of almost all kinds, which have been left by the advance immigration to lighten their loads and facilitate their speed.



While some were appalled by the prices and waste, others were pleased to make it this far.

"It is a great trading post, and has about twenty houses enclosed by a wall. It is very pleasantly located....its altitude above the level of the ocean four thousand feet, and is in the midst of a beautiful plain. There are a number of mountain traders here, not rich, but having a fine prospect of accumulating fortunes. They are as keen on a trade as any Yankee wooden-nutmeg or clock pedlar you may meet with in the States."

- James Abbey, June 1850

The fort also served the purpose of posting letters to family back home. While some reported that the mail never arrived home, many posted from this military post.

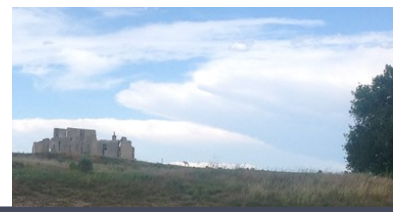
"June 7th. Remained this day at the camping ground to write home, there being a post office at the Fort. There are a great many wagons left at this point by many taking to packing. Thousands of dollars worth of property being thrown away, but anything we wish to buy, we have to pay double price for"

- Eleazer Ingalls, 1850

"Friday June 29th We arrived at "Fort Laramie" at ten o'clock A.M. and left at three P.M. There is but little in the appearance of things about this place, that looks like a military post; ... We deposited our letters and left; well satisfied that it was not our lot to be obliged to remain at so unpromising a looking place. The country for the last day or two, has been rather poor, and continues so still-- yet the appearance of the country is improving in consequence of the timber that is seen on the hills, and small mountains in the vicinity. The country as we advance is very broken, and extremely poor-- there is nothing to induce a settlement of the country, as inevitable starvation must ensue, unless some other source than its products could be relied on. Distance today twelve miles."

- Gordon Cone, 1849.

Hearing stories of more river crossings, rough, sand stone hills, steep ravines and the desert country, emigrants were eager to be on their way considering it was over 1500 miles that they still had to travel to California.



Treaty signing by William T. Sherman and the Sioux at Fort Laramie, Wyoming. Photographed by Alexander Gardner, 1868. National Archives

TREATY OF FORT LARAMIE

With the conflicts that came with exploration and settlement of the Black Hills of Dakota, the US Government had to also make peaceful relations along the trail so a peace treaty with the Sioux Indians was authorized by Congress. In the 1868 treaty, signed at Fort Laramie, the United States recognized the Black Hills as part of the Great Sioux Reservation, set aside for exclusive use by the Sioux people.

Not all Sioux leaders signed the treaty and while the council thought the treaty a great success and promises of peace across the prairie, that concept was short lived. As gold was discovered in the Black Hills, more miners and homesteaders poured into the area. Fort Laramie was the military center for the Great Sioux Campaign of 1876. By 1877, most natives were forced onto smaller reservations and the Treaty was not honored.



UPCOMING EVENTS

CTHA Board Meetings

*All California Trail Heritage Alliance Board meetings are held at the California Trail Interpretive Center on the 3rd Tuesdays of the month and begin at 5:30 p.m.

July 18 CTHA Board Meeting, CTIC

July 26 CTHA Strategic Planning meeting, BLM office

Aug 15 CTHA Board Meeting, CTIC

Humboldt River Rendezvous and Native Market Oct. 21-22, 2017

KEY LINKS

www.facebook.com/pages/California-Trail-Center-Foundation/157116030992463

<http://www.californiatrailcenter.org/>

www.emigranttrailswest.org

www.octa-trails.org

www.appl.org

[www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/elko_field_office/
blm_programs/blm_special_areas/
california_trail_historic.html](http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/elko_field_office/blm_programs/blm_special_areas/california_trail_historic.html)

TRAIL CENTER ACTIVITIES

How the West was Stolen

07/22/2017 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Learn about western expansion from an American Indian perspective. The speaker, Jens Camp, is a recent American Indian Studies graduate from Arizona State. Camp served as a Native American Studies intern at the Trail Center in 2016. He currently serves as a research associate for the Great Basin Institute at the Trail Center.

The Forty Mile Desert: “The Worst Desert You Ever Saw”

07/29/2017 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm

The Forty Mile Desert was one of the most difficult parts of the trail. Along with the crippling temperatures and lack of water, many had to leave behind their animals, personal belongings and sometimes even their wagon in order to make it. This program will discuss the different routes across the desert, the emigrant experiences and their perseverance in reaching California against all odds.

OCTA Convention

August 8-12, 2017

The Oregon-California Trails Association presents OCTA's 35th annual convention in Council Bluffs, Iowa. The Ameristar Casino and adjacent Holiday Inn will serve as convention HQ. The convention will focus on American Indians, Lewis & Clark, the fur trade, forts, the Mormon Pioneer Trail, Winter Quarters, the Mormon Battalion, the California Trail, the Steamboat Bertrand, the transcontinental railroad, the Glidden Expedition, the Lincoln Highway, and the Great Platte River Road. Go to www.octa-trails.org/ for more information.



California Trail Interpretive Center Presents Temporary Exhibit

“Through Our Own Eyes: A Native American Youth Art Exhibition”

The California Trail Interpretive Center presents a temporary exhibit that features paintings by Native American students from Owyhee Combined School, located in the Duck Valley Indian Reservation, Owyhee, Nevada.

The Duck Valley Indian Reservation is in both Nevada and Idaho, and is occupied by descendants of the Western Shoshone and Northern Paiute tribes.

“Through Our Own Eyes: A Native American Youth Art Exhibition” opened on July 1 and will run through October. The exhibit includes 49 paintings by Owyhee junior high and high school students.



PHOTO CAPTION: “The Woman Who Sings to Birds,” by Terry Howard.

“The exhibit allows students to present their artwork in a gallery setting, and shown to the world. The title of the exhibit is, ‘Through Our Own Eyes,’ because students see the world around them differently than you and I,” said Kit Julianto, art teacher at Owyhee. “In this exhibit, students were able to express what they were feeling.”

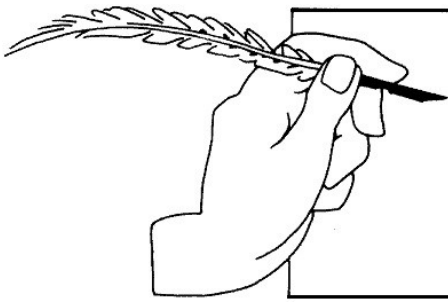
Many of the students included artist statements with their artwork. Terry Howard created the painting, “The Woman Who Sings to Birds.” Howard attached the following statement with his painting: “The cross that the woman holds in her right hand with the sage bundle depicts the relationship between the Christian and Native American religions. The woman is looking at a fiery sky, which symbolizes the resilience of the Native American people.”

Julianto worked closely with California Trail Interpretive Center staff to create the exhibit. There is a tremendous amount of talent and creativity at Owyhee Combined School,” said Supervisory Park Ranger Alex Rose. “The exhibit includes many provocative artist statements. The paintings, combined with the statements, allow the artists the opportunity to interpret their culture, experiences and insights through both paint and words.”

Most of the paintings are for sale through the Southern Nevada Conservancy, a Trail Center partner.

CONTACT: Alex Rose at 775/738-1849, or CAtrailcenter@gmail.com





Griswold Honored For Service and Success

Coralee Griswold was honored at a recent meeting of the California Trail Heritage Alliance for her leadership, service, dedication and support of the Alliance.

Initially tapped by visionaries Dale Porter and Paul Sawyer to serve on the California Trail Center Foundation (now doing business as the Alliance), Coralee has worked tirelessly in a number of capacities since the mid-nineties to make this non-profit organization and the California Trail Interpretive Center a success.

As secretary, treasurer, and board member, Coralee has been key in the establishment of the group and in the accomplishment of many projects and activities. These have included marketing efforts, Trail Days, interpretive plaza lighting, highway signage, and interpretation and education efforts.

Coralee was presented with a plaque and a contribution will be made to the Alliance in her honor. Home-made ice cream and chocolate cake were enjoyed by all as part of the celebration.

For more information visit:

www.californiatrailheritagealliance.org



Core Members:

Kerry Aguirre
Tamara Baker
Bailey Billington
John Collett
Walt Goddard
Marlene Goddard
Helen Hankins
Duane Jones
Kevin Lee

CTHA Board of Directors

At-Large Members

Blaine Benedict
Leah Brady
Larry Hyslop
Jacqueline Lucero
Gratton Miller

Larry Schmidt
Frank Tortorich
John Winner

Newsletter

Editor: Leah Brady

Contributors:

Helen Hankins
Alex Rose

CALIFORNIA TRAIL

HERITAGE ALLIANCE



Success on New Board Members and Ongoing Projects!

The Nevada Department of Transportation under the leadership of Boyd Ratliff (and former District Engineer Kevin Lee) has placed two highways signs – each 3 miles from the California Trail Interpretive Center – to encourage I-80 travelers to stop in. Trail Center staff reports about a fifteen percent increase in visitation since the signs were installed. Thanks to board members Kerry Aguirre and Jeff Williams were quite involved in making this happen!

Key NDOT leaders from Elko (Boyd Ratliff) and Carson City (Bill Story and James Borino) will be meeting with Larry Hyslop and other members of the Bike Path Committee on July 17 and 18 to look at the proposed route on the ground and to discuss the best way to move forward. Other community members will also participate.

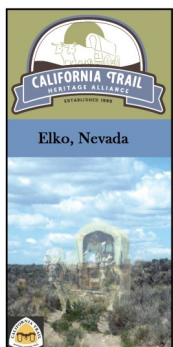
Dayna Reale, archeologist with the Wells Field Office, Elko (BLM) District, will meet with the Board on July 18 to discuss mitigation related to the Long Canyon Project and options for a trail segment to be adopted by the Alliance. It is hoped that both will lead to field work later this fall.

A special ceremony to thank Coralee Griswold for her more than 20 years of service to the Board was held recently. Coralee was heralded for her work from the beginnings of the Foundation to the present. Duane Jones recognized her for keeping the goals of the founders, Paul Sawyer and Dale Porter, in our minds as we have proceeded. Coralee was presented with a plaque and our heartfelt thanks for all of her hard and varied work. Home-made ice-cream and cake were enjoyed by all.

Duane Jones, newly elected board member to the California Nevada Chapter of OCTA (Oregon and California Trail Association) and Helen Hankins (President of the California Trail Heritage Alliance) are both attending the national OCTA convention in Council Bluffs Iowa to learn more about the eastern end of The California Trail and to meet and work with other trail enthusiasts.

We are very fortunate to have five outstanding new board members. They include Marlene Goddard (new treasurer), Tamara Baker (mining industry), Jacqueline Lucero (Trail Center Volunteer and NV Outdoor School), Kevin Lee (retired NDOT district engineer), and Gratton Miller (political science and history buff). We look forward to the energy, expertise, enthusiasm and ideas that these individuals will bring to the board. We would also like to express our appreciation to those board members who are retiring from the board – Kerry Tuckett, Christina Sullivan, Coralee Griswold, Jeff Williams, and Krystin Munzing. Each has contributed in their own way to the success of the Alliance and we will miss them.

—Helen Hankins, President



Check our website for details and new brochure:

www.californiatrailheritagealliance.org

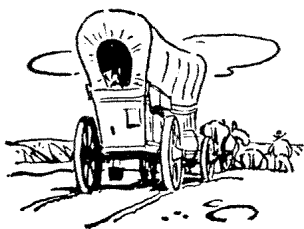




421 Court St.
Elko, Nevada 89801

Phone: 775.340.2031
Fax:
Email: etcf1849@gmail.com

www.californiatrailheritagealliance.org



DONOR WALL

IN ADDITION TO BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE CALIFORNIA TRAIL HERITAGE ALLIANCE, INDIVIDUALS OR BUSINESSES MAY ALSO MAKE A DONATION TO THE CALIFORNIA TRAIL HERITAGE ALLIANCE FOR THOSE DONATIONS GREATER THAN \$250.00, THE DONOR CAN CHOOSE TO BE PUBLICLY RECOGNIZED ON THE DONOR WALL AT THE CALIFORNIA TRAIL INTERPRETIVE CENTER. RECOGNITION LEVELS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

CALIFORNIA TRAIL CENTER DONOR WALL RECOGNITION LEVELS

<u>LEVEL NAME</u>	<u>DONATION AMOUNT</u>
Pioneer	\$250.00 to \$499.99
Trail Blazer	\$500.00 to \$2,499.99
Wagon Master	\$2,500.00 to \$4,999.99
Empire Building	\$5,000.00 or Greater

Join Today! - Membership Application

Join your friends and neighbors and become a supporter of the California Trail Interpretive Center! Every membership supports the California Trail Interpretive Center and Trail preservation. When you join other enthusiasts to become a member, or renew your membership, you directly support interpretation, education, and special events at the California Trail Interpretive Center, and help preserve the Trail and its history for the benefit of current and future generations.

Annual Memberships: ☐ New ☐ Renewal

Name: _____ Address: _____

City/ST/Zip: _____

Email: _____

All members receive the informative electronic newsletter, electronic updates about special events and activities and a 10% discount at the California Trail Interpretive Center store. Invitations to one or more special events are extended to the Supporter membership levels & above.

Level	Individual	Family	Supporter	Partner	Lifetime
Special Event(s)			1	2	3
Cost	\$25	\$50	\$75	\$100	\$200

*Special Events may include presentations, workshops, tours, exhibit previews or other activities. Individuals who choose to make a donation equal to or greater than \$250 will receive recognition, if desired, on the Donor Wall in the California Trail Interpretive Center

PAYMENT: ☐ Check ☐ Visa ☐ MC ☐ Amount \$ _____

Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Make Check Payable to: **California Trail Heritage Alliance, 530 Idaho St., Elko NV 89801**

CONTACT US!

CALIFORNIA TRAIL HERITAGE ALLIANCE 421 COURT STREET, ELKO, NEVADA 89801

775.340.2031 ❖ etcf1849@gmail.com ❖ www.californiatrailheritagealliance.org