Greetings from your President and webmaster
By Berl Meyer

Pat and I are back at our home in Cotopaxi, Colorado for the summer. We recently attended a great five-day nature conference in Gatlinburg, Tennessee sponsored by the Kentucky Society of Natural History, of which I am Vice President. Gatlinburg is the northern gateway to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

I gave a presentation on the Cherokees and The Cherokee Trail. It was very well-received as less is known about this historic trail in the East. It was just a little different from the presentation that I gave in Colorado Springs last summer. I included more on the eastern band of Cherokees who live in the border lands of the Smokies. I explained that the Trail of Tears was just the beginning of the Cherokee story and that the people eventually traveled to the California gold fields.

I met a park ranger in the new Clingmans Dome visitor center who had worked for a few years with the National Park Service in Utah and was familiar with the Cherokee Trail.

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enjoyed discussing the trail with her and the interest of OCTA in seeing it become part of the National Trails System.

The Highway of Legends outing is scheduled for July 18-20. If you would like to attend this event please let me know how many people will be with you so I can make arrangements. Complete information is posted on our website: http://octa-colorado.org/outing_2014.html
Mid-year board meeting:

I attended the mid-year board meeting on March 13. It was held in conjunction with the Kansas City Trails Conference on March 14-15. Digitization of *Overland Journal* and other materials is progressing. There was much discussion about funding. Once again we are short. In addition to that, there is a cash-flow problem in that revenue sources sometimes come in clumps making paying bills in dry times of the year problematic. It was decided to borrow from one of the endowments to cover the shortage. OCTA is now planning a Hall of Fame.

There was discussion of the structure of the National Preservation Committee and the respective roles of the National Preservation Officer and the chapter preservation officers. Chapters must take the lead. Chapters have several advantages. We have “boots on the ground.” We know the sites. We know the land owners. We get the news (hopefully) of potential threats. Not all of us might know the laws or other technical details of preservation but the national organization will continue to provide assistance with those issues.

The Board is moving forward with plans for a permanent Convention Planning Committee. Some chapters are large and more able to organize a convention while others are small and have members scattered over great distances. A standing committee would be able to handle some of the arrangements more effectively.

Bill Petersen gave a great presentation on the upcoming convention in Kearney. I do not know if I have said this before but I am very excited to have the convention in Nebraska again, especially in Kearney. There are so many great sites and venues around Kearney. The 2015 convention will be at South Lake Tahoe in September. The theme is *Bonanza of Trails*. I will be excited to see the Donner Party site. In 2016 we will be at Fort Hall in Idaho. There is discussion about a 2017 convention in central or southern Utah but that is still in the discussion stage.

There were eight motions, all passed by voice vote. Two were for symposia in Kansas in September, establishment of the Hall of Fame, the new MET manual and an update from the preservation committee and a couple of others.

The Kansas City Trails Conference took place on March 14 and 15. OCTA and other trail organizations, including the Santa Fe Trail Association and the Lewis and Clark Heritage Trails Foundation, met to learn about and discuss activities of mutual interest in the Kansas City area. There was a bus tour on the 14th and a meeting on the 15th.

Many people, when they think of the trail, visualize the landmarks, ruts and wide open spaces in the West. Some people think of the trail in the East as being gone. It is not gone. It is underfoot. There are places here and there with trail remnants such as Minor Park and the National Frontier Trail Museum, but there are so many landings, crossings and historic buildings to discover. Out west, history is widely evident. In the East you might need to be armed with books and an imagination but the number of sites is amazing.
One web page, http://www.santafetrailresearch.com/mileagecharts/sft-missouri.html, lists 42 Santa Fe Trail sites just in Missouri. People of the Kansas City area are rediscovering the history. Developing user-friendly sites is good for tourism, as well as encouraging hiking and biking utilizing the sites as connectors to further exploration. A foot bridge over the train tracks to the steamboat landing site at the Town of Kansas not only takes people interested in history to the site, it also provides recreation for the public.

Part II of the Kansas City Trails Conference was held at the National Frontier Trails Museum with a brief overview of the four National Historic Trails, followed by a National Park Service presentation featuring in-depth maps of trail resources and gaps in the metropolitan area. After a luncheon featuring Missouri State Senator Paul LeVota as the keynote speaker, we discussed funding opportunities, collaboration across municipalities and state lines, working with our local city councils as well as our county, state, and federal legislatures to fund, build, maintain, and most importantly, promote the four National Historic Trails in our region.

A special thanks to Wilbur Petersen and Loren Pospisil for some of this information that I have included in this newsletter.

I hope to see you at our upcoming chapter event at Fort Vasquez on May 17. Many of you are already familiar with the history of this fort and for those of you who may not be, a short summary appears on page 6.

**Across the Plains, Mountains and Desert**

*A Bibliography of the Oregon-California Trail, 1812–1912*

Reviewed by Berl Meyer

Will Bagley has produced what, in my opinion, is the greatest trail bibliography ever. I have almost all the trail bibliographies and I believe that Bagley’s is by far the best. It has 412 pages and thousands of entries, including important materials that have been overlooked by others.

Part I: Primary Sources

Primary Sources

Post-1869 Overland Wagon Travel Sources

Modern Trail Accounts

Part II: Secondary Sources

Books

Fiction

Periodicals, Essays, and Chapters

Theses and Dissertations

Newspaper Articles

Manuscript Collections

Government Documents, Reports, and Studies

Web Sites and Articles

Maps
Bibliographies:

Some bibliographers include just books. Most ignore fiction, maps and articles. Even Mattes (the best until now) ignored guidebooks. So, how thorough is this bibliography? It includes “Waitman, Marge & Dyke. 2005. Paul & Helen Henderson’s Maps of Manifest Destiny. N.p: Privately Printed.” The Waitmans produced a wonderful map and reference book that was distributed locally and by word of mouth. This type of document is missed by other bibliographers. Bagley includes hundreds of links to documents that are available online.

Bagley’s bibliography is found online at the following sites:

http://www.wyohistory.org/sites/default/files/bagleyBigTrailsBibliography012014.pdf

Joint events with the Loveland Historical Society
By Sharon Danhauer

Loveland Historical Society invites the Colorado-Cherokee Trail and Wyoming OCTA chapters to join us on two upcoming events. For further information on both events and to RSVP, please contact Sharon Danhauer: sadanhau@gmail.com or 970-290-0169.

• Pioneers and Trails Bus Tour, May 31

On May 31 please join us in the comfort of a large touring bus and travel back through time to visit the early trails and first pioneers of Northern Colorado. We will travel over the old Cherokee Trail and the Overland Stage route, including pioneer settlers such as Mariano Medina and the Osborns of Loveland and Antoine Janis of the Cache La Poudre valley, plus visit a trailside grave at the Little Thompson crossing near Berthoud. Tour guides will be Sharon Danhauer and Wayne Sundberg. The bus leaves Loveland from the parking lot at 5th Street and Lincoln Avenue at 9:00 am (GPS 503 North Lincoln Avenue), returning at 4:00 p.m. $50 includes your bus seat, admission to Timberlane Farm (Loveland) and lunch at Vern’s Place on north Highway 287. Restaurant and bus driver gratuities are on your own. Reservations required.

Weekend trip to Casper, Wyoming – August 23-24:

Car pool leaves from the parking lot at 5th Street and Lincoln Avenue. We will visit the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center, Fort Caspar, Bishop House, Tate Geological Museum, Oregon Trail, Bessemer Bend, Independence Rock, Devil’s Gate, and the Mormon Handcart site. Hotel, meals, museum fees are your individual expenses.
History of Fort Vasquez

Fort Vasquez Trading Post, constructed in 1835, was the first permanent structure built along the South Platte River. Louis Vasquez and Andrew Sublette of St. Louis established their adobe outpost on a low plateau near the Trappers’ Trail. They wanted to be near the Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians, who traded buffalo robes for blankets, beads, kettles, knives, guns, ammunition, and other manufactured goods.

Each year the traders traveled to St. Louis with their furs and returned with wagonloads of trade goods drawn by mule teams along the Santa Fe Trail and then north to the fort. Vasquez and Sublette employed as many as twenty-two men each year to serve as traders or hunters for the fort. The founders abandoned the fort in 1842 and its walls eroded into the soil.

A century later, the Platteville community spearheaded an effort to reconstruct the adobe outpost with assistance from Weld County and the federal Works Progress Administration. The project provided temporary employment for 59 local men during 1935 and 1936. In 1958, title to the property was transferred to History Colorado (then the Colorado Historical Society). With a major restoration and enhancement project in 2005 came an upgrade to the existing adobe walls, new interpretive panels, and a life-sized bison sculpture.

Source: www.historycolorado.org

My new website
By Bill Shanks

I am again promoting my website, www.dofbill.com. I have lots of new stuff, mostly memoirs about growing up in Wild Western Colorado. I try to put up new material every week. I also have pieces on Four Mile Historic Park and environmental issues.

Take a look! Let me know what you think.
Chapter members to demonstrate Milking Devon Oxen at Convention in Kearney

Rolland and Paula Johnson, members of our chapter who own the Three Eagles Ranch in Larkspur, Colorado, will be bringing Milking Devon oxen to the August convention. They will provide a demonstration at the Saturday evening event at Fort Kearny. In a recent e-mail Rolland and Paula wrote:

“We raise Milking Devon cattle and the steers we train as oxen. We own five pair right now. We sold a pair to Bent’s Old Fort, a pair to the Littleton Historical Museum, a pair to the Colorado Plains Conservatory and a pair to Howard Buffet to use in an experiment to help African farmers.

American Milking Devon is an endangered species and the bloodlines of our animals can be traced back to the first Devons shipped here by the King of England for his colonists in 1623. They are extinct in England but are the only cattle at Plymouth Plantation in Massachusetts and at Colonial Williamsburg.”

Please plan to attend:

**OCTA TRAILS SYMPOSIUM**  
HISTORIC TRAILS THROUGH SOUTH CENTRAL KANSAS:  
CHEROKEE TRAIL  
CHISHOLM TRAIL  
GREAT WESTERN CATTLE TRAIL  
SANTA FE TRAIL  
SEPTEMBER 25 - 28, 2014

MERIDIAN CENTER, NEWTON, KANSAS  
1420 East Broadway Court, Newton KS 67114

HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS  
1430 East Broadway Court, Newton, KS 67114

For further information:  
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