



THE JOURNAL

LEWIS & CLARK HONOR GUARD

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Meetings of the Honor Guard are at 7:00 pm
On the second Monday of the month
At the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center
Unless specified otherwise

Next Meeting: June 11, 2007



Lewis and Clark Festival

Details are nearly all set for the annual Lewis and Clark Festival 6-8 July. The Honor Guard will participate in three activities this year. For the Festival Opening Ceremonies at noon on July 6 we will present the colors and give our trademark blackpowder salute. This will be at the amphitheatre by the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center.

The following day we will have our camp set up at Giant Springs with a formal opening at 10 am. During the day we will present a variety of demonstrations and talks, some on a set schedule, others will be ongoing. The camp will end at 5 pm with a formal closing.

Beans 'n Blarney, a ticketed event, will be held in River Camp from 6-8 pm Sunday July 8. It will feature authentic Lewis and Clark camp food along with general discussion of camp life and experiences. These will be one-on-one as the ticketed guests mix with and talk to Honor Guard members. (Anyone figure out where the event name came from?)

Our festival traces its beginnings back to 1989 making it the oldest Lewis and Clark festival in the country.

Revised Corps of Discovery.org is Live

The total revision and update of the Portage Chapter/Honor Guard website is now a reality. What started out to be a five-month job became a nine-month-and-counting work. The total concept for the website was revised to move us beyond the bicentennial and into the "third century" of Lewis and Clark. We divided the site into 4 major areas in our efforts to stimulate conversation and continued interest in "one of the greatest explorations modern history has witnessed."

As we analyzed the old version of the website we discovered at least half of the visitors to the site were from the world of education—grade school through college. Additionally, we reasoned that many other visitors were not hard core buffs so we had to simplify navigation within the site. The result is that 4 clicks will get a visitor to any page they desire to go to; many pages require fewer.

Although the revised site is now up and running we still have work to do. Not all of the new links are up; in the major area of "Organizations" we still use the old hierarchy for now, but they will soon be converted to the new scheme. We also have some other new additions to put up on the site that are designed to be interactive and create more interest.

The primary additions a visitor can now see are increased number of articles in the major area we named "History". This area will continue to grow at a rate of 3-5 articles per month based upon current articles we have. However, we still need more, and a wider variety, of articles.

The other two major areas are to be devoted to photos. One simply titled "Photos" will be galleries of photos taken during various events and activities. The second area featuring photos is titled "Visiting Lewis and Clark". This section will be photo tours in central Montana. Those locations we now give tours or have in the past. Examples include the portage route, Tower Rock, White Cliffs and the Marias River. These two areas will be our primary focus for the next several months as photos are collected and the appropriate stories are prepared. Anyone that has photos they are willing to share will be credited.

Take a look at the new site and let me know what you think. Contact me at philscrivier@yahoo.com

Foundation Annual Meeting Planning

The 2008 annual meeting of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation will be held in Great Falls August 2-6 tentatively in the new Hilton Gardens motel. Construction on the motel, which is located in the Marketplace Shopping Complex, has just begun but completion is scheduled for April 2008. Foundation Treasurer, and Portage Route Chapter past president, Clay Smith is the annual meeting chairman.

There will be the normal format of pre and post tours along with tours and speakers mixed with the serious matters that must be dealt with during the convention. But a new addition will be living history presentations by the newly formed National Living History Association. This group is a division of the Foundation and is composed of the various Lewis and Clark living history interpreter groups throughout the country; this includes the Lewis and Clark Honor Guard in Great Falls.

The Honor Guard will be heading the living history activities during the annual meeting. Their newly appointed committee is co-ordinating with the living history interpreters that are planning events for this year's annual meeting in Charlottesville, Virginia. Preliminary plans for the living history focus in 2008 will be on the things that make Great Falls unique and those things that Honor Guard has that other groups do not; a leather tipi, the iron framed boat and bull boats are examples.

Re-enactor's Nightmare

I have just finished reading a book titled "Men with Sand" by John Moring that gives a brief look at eleven explorations into the west. Included are the likes of John Fremont, John Wesley Powell, Charles Wilkes, Zeb Pike, Stephen Long and Lewis and Clark. The title comes from the old saying about men with sand (or grit) in their craw; they were tough and determined SOB's.

Although this book limits its focus to a quick look at the exploring adventures of these men references to death, desertion, loss of equipment, etc made me start thinking. I couldn't help but compare the other stories to the Corps of Discovery.

As we geared up for the bicentennial and signature event we did some fairly indepth research to get the best accuracy we could on how we dressed, what equipment we had, the tasks we performed and anything else that would aid us in giving an historically accurate portrayal of the Corps of Discovery. We were fortunate because the Corps left an excellent record in their journals and letters compared to other explorations. We also had the benefit of thousands of others studying the same records we were. Still there were gaps that had to be filled in with theory derived from secondary sources and our own experiences.

Imagine the nightmare a re-enactor would have re-creating Stephen Long's expeditions some 15 years after the Lewis and Clark journey. He assembled an extensive cadre of scientists and artists who took copious notes and collected hundreds of specimen. However most were lost or destroyed by internal fighting, desertions, death and Indian raids.

I suspect all the information needed to portray that expedition would have to come from theory derived from secondary and third sources. Who knows how accurate the results would be? Could there ever be agreement reached and a good presentation made?

Upcoming Events

Bus Tour, presentations, June 22

Parade, July 4

Festival Opening Ceremony, July 6

Festival Encampment, July 7

Festival Beans 'n Blarney, July 8

River Camp, September 1