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WAGON TRACKS

SANTA FE TRAIL COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 1

FEBRUARY 1987

NUMBER 2

SANTA FE NEW MEXICAN PRINTS TRAIL TABLOID

by Michael E. Pitel

Last November the Santa Fe *New Mexican* published a 16-page tabloid entitled *The Trail to Santa Fe*. The *New Mexican* is well known locally for regularly producing some fine supplements. The quality of this particular production conveyed an unusual enthusiasm for the subject. It is well researched and written, carefully assembled, and attractively packaged.

The 17,000-circulation Gannett daily newspaper assigned nine editors, writers, and photographers to travel the entire length of the Trail and to interview more than 65 Trail experts in the five Trail states.

They selected archival as well as contemporary photographs for the tabloid. They compiled a list of recommended readings.

A limited supply of the tabloid is available for travel writers seeking background information about the Trail. Interest in the Trail is expected to increase among writers as soon as Congress passes legislation designating it a National Historic Trail.

SANTA FE TRAIL BILL

The congressional bill providing for inclusion of the Santa Fe Trail within the National Historic Trails system, initiated last year by OCTA and reported in detail in the first issue of *Wagon Tracks*, passed the HofR but was tied up in committee in the Senate when Congress adjourned in 1986. The bill must now start again in both houses, and it has been introduced in each, sponsored by several senators and representatives from each of the Trail states. OCTA is again making plans to testify before the appropriate committees and do everything it can to assure passage of the bill. Chances for passage remain excellent. Our debt to OCTA continues to grow. ◁

"The Santa Fe Trail lives on!"

Marc Simmons

Keynote Address, 1986 Symposium

MARC SIMMONS LIVES ON

by Michael E. Pitel

ALBUQUERQUE—Dr. Marc Simmons, president of the Santa Fe Trail Council, continues to recover from near-fatal multiple injuries suffered in a head-on automobile accident November 14 near Golden, New Mexico.

Simmons, 50, was transferred shortly after Christmas from University of New Mexico Hospital to St. Joseph's Hospital in Albuquerque. The UNM Hospital, also in Albuquerque, is the best trauma hospital in New Mexico. St. Joseph's is the best physical therapy hospital in the state.

He was originally scheduled to be released in late January, to continue physical therapy as an outpatient, when doctors discovered a broken left hip from the accident that had gone undetected. Simmons's pelvis had been secured with metal pins and skin had been taken from his left hip and grafted to his burned left foot, which had masked the pain of the broken hip.

He remained at St. Joseph's until February 3, when he moved into a nearby Albuquerque apartment to continue physical therapy.

Doctors at both hospitals are optimistic of a complete recovery.

"Tell everybody that I'm not brain damaged," Simmons stressed in a recent interview. "My halo brace [for two broken neck vertebrae] is supposed to come off on Valentine's Day. I feel a little self-conscious about it until it does. About the only thing I can do with it, without attracting a lot of attention, is to go see the new *Star Trek* movie."

He recounted his brush with death with sardonic humor.

"I remember the other car coming right at me," Simmons explained.

(continued on page 2)

COUNCIL GROWS—HAS TWO LIFE MEMBERS

On February 1 Council membership stood at 165, including two life memberships: Katharine B. Kelley of Baldwin City, KS, and the Kearny County Historical Society, Lakin, KS.

Kelley was a recipient of one of the awards presented at Trinidad last September. She and the late Amelia J. Betts shared an award for their efforts in marking the Trail in Douglas County, KS. Best known as "the bird lady," for her ornithological work, Kelley is a devoted Trail enthusiast who can give as good a tour of the ruts at Black Jack State Park near Baldwin City as one could enjoy anywhere. Her generous contribution to the Council is greatly appreciated.

Kearny County contains remnants of the Trail, and the KCHS is a very active group with an excellent museum (which was the recipient of the Kansas State Historical Society Local History Award in 1983). It is fitting that this progressive group should provide such confidence in the new Council and support for its programs. Their contribution is gratefully recognized.

Money received from life memberships will be placed in a trust fund, the income from which will be used for Council projects. All members of the Council, as of February 1, are listed on pages 8-10. Those joining after this date will be listed in the next issue.

125TH ANNIVERSARY OF GLORIETA PASS BATTLE

by Michael E. Pitel

The Civil War Reenactors of New Mexico will commemorate the 125th anniversary of the pivotal battle of the Civil War in New Mexico with a Union and Confederate encampment, followed by the reenactment of the battle, on the actual battlefield outside Santa

(continued on page 4)

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

The Council is pushing forward, its membership is growing, and the first issue of *Wagon Tracks* has been well received. Our future looks bright.

As many of you know, I suffered near-fatal injuries in a November 14 automobile accident. At this writing (January 21), I remain in an Albuquerque hospital. Just four days ago, I underwent my fourth major surgery—this one for a broken hip the doctors had overlooked!

I look forward to the day when I can again be attending to Council business. And I sincerely thank all who sent get-well wishes.

—Marc Simmons

SIMMONS LIVES

(continued from page 1)

"All I had time to say was 'Oh no, I don't believe this!' Then this silver veil dropped in front of me. The next thing I remember is a voice asking, 'Is anybody alive in here?' It was a paramedic. 'Of course,' I said, 'and you're going to have to get a pry bar and a torch to get me out of here.' I stayed awake the whole time they were dismantling the car. I remember the sound of the door as it was pried off. When I was being lifted into the ambulance, I remember thinking, 'Oh no, the hospital! I could be in there for a whole week, and I don't have the time to spend a whole week.'"

On arrival at UNM Hospital, he remained awake as he signed the papers admitting him. Simmons remembered arguing with the doctors who were going to perform surgery on him.

"No, you can't remove my spleen' I told them," Simmons continued. "No, you can't give me a blood transfusion.' I argued with them for about 20 minutes. All the time, remember, I was in shock."

He also remembers seeing the face of Dr. John Kessell, his friend from the UNM history department, as Simmons was being wheeled down the hall to what he knew was to be several hours in surgery.

"Why, John,' I asked, 'what are you doing here?'" Simmons recalled. "How nice of you to come."

"Afterwards, I learned that the ambulance attendants thought that I was the most polite auto accident victim they had ever come across." ◀

HUTCHINSON SYMPOSIUM

Barbara Peirce, coordinator of the 1987 Symposium at Hutchinson, KS, announces that the program for the September 25-27 meeting is about set. Featured speakers include Senator Nancy Kassebaum (R-KS), leader in the Senate for the Santa Fe Trail bill; Marc Simmons, president of the Council; Jere Krakow, National Park Service; David J. Weber, SMU professor of history; and Dr. Peter D. Olch, medical historian.

Planned panels include Wildlife on the Trail, Mexican Traders, the Trail in Central Kansas, Interpreting the Trail, and others. Tom Isern, Emporia State University, will perform folksongs of the Trail, following the Friday evening business meeting. The Reno County Historical Society will host a Fiesta on Saturday evening, including an outdoor meal, mountain men, and Mexican-American entertainers.

On Sunday, September 27, there will be a Trail tour, including stops at Ralph Hathaway's ruts, the Santa Fe Trail Center, and Fort Larned National Historic Site (where a buffalo barbecue lunch will be served and living history demonstrations will be presented). For those unable to make the Sunday trip, a short tour to Hathaway's ruts and other Trail sites in Rice County, KS, will be offered on Saturday afternoon.

This promises to be an exciting and informative symposium. Complete details of the program and preregistration forms will be included in the next issue of *WT*.

IN MEMORY OF EARL AND IRIS MONGER

by Bill Pitts

The ruts of the old Santa Fe Trail have claimed two more travelers with the passing of Earl and Iris Monger. Iris was buried several years ago, and Earl died on October 23, 1986, soon after receiving the Santa Fe Trail Council Award. The old trade wagons traveled over and camped upon the hill which is now the Larned, KS, cemetery, where Earl and Iris rest near visible ruts.

Earl and his wife, Iris, spent the happiest days of their lives working with some of America's top archeologists and anthropologists excavating in the Great Plains. They had worked with and donated to the Smithsonian, the National Park Service, the Kansas State

Historical Society, the Oklahoma Historical Society, the Kansas Anthropological Association and, their last love, the Santa Fe Trail Center.

Earl spent his early years as a painter in the Larned area. He learned archeological techniques by studying and working with some of the nation's best-known scholars, including Dr. Waldo Wedel of the Smithsonian, Carlisle Smith of Kansas State University, William Bass of the University of Kansas, Thomas Witty and Roscoe Wilmeth of the Kansas State Historical Society, Doug Scott of the National Park Service, and, his personal friend, James Gunnerson of the University of Nebraska State Museum.

Over the years the Mongers were active in the Kansas Anthropological Association and held many offices in that organization. Earl was president of the KAA for six years.

Iris's death was a hard blow to Earl, and he worked off his grief by increasing his volunteer hours at the Santa Fe Trail Center where he completed the archeological inventory and cataloging begun by himself and Iris.

As long as there are Santa Fe Trail students, researchers, and writers, Earl and Iris Monger will be remembered for their work on the Trail. They are missed by many friends.

Wagon Tracks is the official publication of the Santa Fe Trail Council, a non-profit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of Colorado. Letters are welcome, but they become the property of *WT* and may be edited or abridged at the editor's discretion. All rights reserved. Inquiries can be directed to the appropriate addresses below. Annual subscriptions are obtained through membership in the Council, whose dues are fixed per calendar year. Checks should be made payable to the Santa Fe Trail Council and sent to the treasurer.

Membership Categories

Benefactor	\$1,000
Life	\$500
Institutional	\$100/year
Corporate	\$100/year
Patron	\$100/year
Supporting	\$50/year
Family	\$15/year
Individual	\$10/year

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JOIN OUR SISTER ORGANIZATION
THE OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION
 and receive the handsome quarterly
OVERLAND JOURNAL
 which includes material on the Santa Fe Trail
Inquiries: OCTA, Box 42, Gerald, MO 63037

OCTA

The Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA) was founded in Denver in 1982 to help preserve and protect remaining vestiges of the emigrant wagon roads to Oregon and California and to interpret the historical significance of those overland routes in the development of the American West.

OCTA is active in identifying historic trails and related sites, so these may be avoided by developers. Accomplishments include protection of historic sites and blocking federal schemes to take portions of trails. Members led the successful effort to bring the California Trail to the status of a National Historic Trail. Recently, OCTA has taken interest in the Santa Fe Trail and initiated efforts to bring it into the National Historic Trails system. The Santa Fe Trail bill is expected to pass this year.

OCTA now has more than a thousand members, most of whom are actively involved in the goals and programs of the organization. The annual convention is held for five days, beginning on the second Wednesday of August. Previous convention sites were Independence, MO; Oregon City, OR; Scottsbluff, NE; and Carson City, NV. The 1987 convention will be in Casper, WY; and the 1988 meeting is scheduled for St. Joseph, MO.

All members of OCTA receive the *Overland Journal*, a high-quality quarterly filled with fascinating articles about the trails and those who used them, photos, maps, book reviews, letters, and news about what is happening. Recent issues included articles on the Santa Fe Trail by Marc Simmons.

Because OCTA served as an inspiration and a model for the founding of the Santa Fe Trail Council, all members of the Council are encouraged to join and support OCTA and its programs. The *Overland Journal* is well worth the membership dues. For further information, contact OCTA at the address in the notice at the top of this page. ◀

HISTORIC BOGGSVILLE

by Phil Petersen

The Pioneer Historical Society of Bent County, CO, wants Council members to know of recent developments at historic Boggsville, located two miles south of Las Animas, CO, on Highway 101 near the west bank of the Purgatoire River. Mrs. Alta Page was honored at Trinidad last September for her gift of 110 acres and historic Boggsville to the Pioneer Historical Society. With help from the Colorado State Historical Society, a 39-acre portion of the site was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, effective October 24, 1986.

The society was awarded a \$2000 matching grant through the National Trust for Historic Preservation, to begin planning the restoration and use of this important site near the Santa Fe Trail, and is currently working with an Albuquerque, NM, firm to develop plans to stabilize deterioration of the Boggs House and Prowers House, built in 1866 and 1867 respectively. A map of the site, locating all the existing buildings and features, was prepared and donated by Petersen Surveying, Inc., La Junta, as an aid in the planning.

The society sold 27 acres of land lying south of the historic site to Bent County, which is being held for possible construction of the Bent County Fairgrounds. Funds obtained from this sale are being used as seed money for the project.

Boggsville is significant as one of the earliest known extant agricultural and trade centers in Colorado. Founded in 1866, Boggsville preceded the establishment of Bent County by four years. It was located near the site of Bent's Stockade of earlier years, near the Purgatoire branch of the Santa Fe Trail. When Bent County was established in 1870, Boggsville was the county seat. In those days, Bent County was six times larger than it is now, comprising all of present Bent, Prowers, Otero, Crowley, and Cheyenne counties, and southern Lincoln and Elbert counties. It

was also the first commercial center for the area, with the establishment of a general store in 1867.

Boggsville was basically abandoned by the early 1900s, and deterioration has advanced since then. The society and friends are just beginning what will be a large task. Support will be needed from those who care for years to come to save and preserve this important site.

If you desire further information or wish to contribute to the project, contact The Boggsville Committee of The Pioneer Historical Society of Bent County, P. O. Box 68, Las Animas, CO 81054.

POST OFFICE OAK -LETTERS-

GERALD, MO

Congratulations! *Wagon Tracks* couldn't be better. I'm especially pleased that OCTA has been given the credit they deserve for their drive for passage of the SFT bill. I will be going in again the last week of this month [Jan.] to pave the way for the new Senate bill. Bill Richardson is already working on the re-introduction of the House bill, unchanged from the version that gained unanimous approval last fall. I am hopeful that it will sail through both houses unopposed.

I am forwarding my check for a Supporting membership and have marked my calendar to attend the Sept. meeting in Hutchinson.

Gregory M. Franzwa

COLUMBIA, MO

The State Historical Society of Missouri has received the first issue of *Wagon Tracks* and congratulates you and the Council on this new venture. The Society is a repository for materials on all aspects of the history and society of Missouri and the trans-Mississippi West. The Santa Fe Trail represents a collecting interest of the Society, and we would like very much to have *Wagon Tracks* available to our patrons to inform them about the Council and its activities.

Would you consider donating regularly issues of your journal to the Society? We would be delighted to add the publication to our periodical collection. Thank you.

Jo Ann Tuckwood
Acquisition Librarian

The Council plans to provide issues to research libraries and museums with an interest in the

Trail. If your institution is not receiving Wagon Tracks, please let me know.

Editor

DEERFIELD, KS

The Finney County Historical Society is to be commended for its current project of a Santa Fe Trail exhibit. It is not completed, and they need old photos or good sketches of scenes on the Trail. If you have anything, please contact the Society, P. O. Box 59, Garden City, KS, 67846, as to arrangements, safeguards, duplicating, etc. of material.

Presently there are photo duplicates from the Museum of New Mexico, including a scene at Cow Creek Crossing and the burial scene of a Sister of Loretto on July 24, 1867, along the Trail in present Finney County.

This frantic search for exhibit material points to a problem. We in SFT Council are thinking of the whole Trail; we no longer think of the Trail in Kansas, the Trail in New Mexico, etc. Provincialism over sections of the Trail has got to end. There is an urgent need for Trail material available for loan to museums all along the Trail. The Council should facilitate such Trail-wide cooperation.

Paul F. Bentrup

GLORIETA ANNIVERSARY

(continued from page 1)

Fe, according to historian and author Dr. Don Alberts.

More than 5,000 spectators are expected to attend the popular re-

enactment of the March 28, 1862, Battle of Glorieta Pass. The hour-long reenactment is scheduled for 10 a.m., Sunday, June 21, at Pigeon's Ranch, located on State Road 50, 1½ miles east of the Glorieta exit of I-25, some 17 miles east of downtown Santa Fe. The ranch was the site of the battle, which involved about 1,000 Texas Confederates and about 800 Union troops from nearby Fort Union and from Colorado.

"The encampments are a new addition this year," Alberts continued. "They will be located across the road from the ranch, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, June 20. Civil War and Santa Fe Trail enthusiasts will get a glimpse of the hardship and deprivation experienced by those who fought in the Civil War."

Both day's events are open free to the public. Donations will be accepted. It is recommended that spectators to the Sunday morning "battle" arrive two hours early.

New Mexico's congressional delegates, who have backed the National Historic Trail bill, have been invited to attend.

"The purpose of the reenactment is to let people know that this battlefield hasn't been purchased or preserved for future generations," Alberts said. "The entire battlefield sprawls across four or five properties. To purchase the entire battlefield today might cost about \$400,000."

Alberts, with Marc Simmons, helped found the nonprofit Glorieta Battlefield Preservation, Inc.,

which will conduct \$1-a-person battlefield tours after the reenactment and sell a softcover book about the Civil War campaign in New Mexico and a parchment-style battlefield map, during the two-day event.

These items can be purchased by mail. The book, *Rebels On the Rio Grande*, costs \$11.95 (including postage and handling), and the map is \$1 (and a self-addressed, stamped business envelope). Send check or money order to Glorieta Battlefield Preservation, Inc., 2430 Juan Tabo NE, Albuquerque, NM 87112. Donations also will be appreciated.

Santa Fe Trail enthusiasts outside New Mexico can find lodging in nearby Santa Fe. For lodging information, call the Santa Fe Convention & Visitor Bureau toll-free during business hours, week days, at (800) 528-5369.

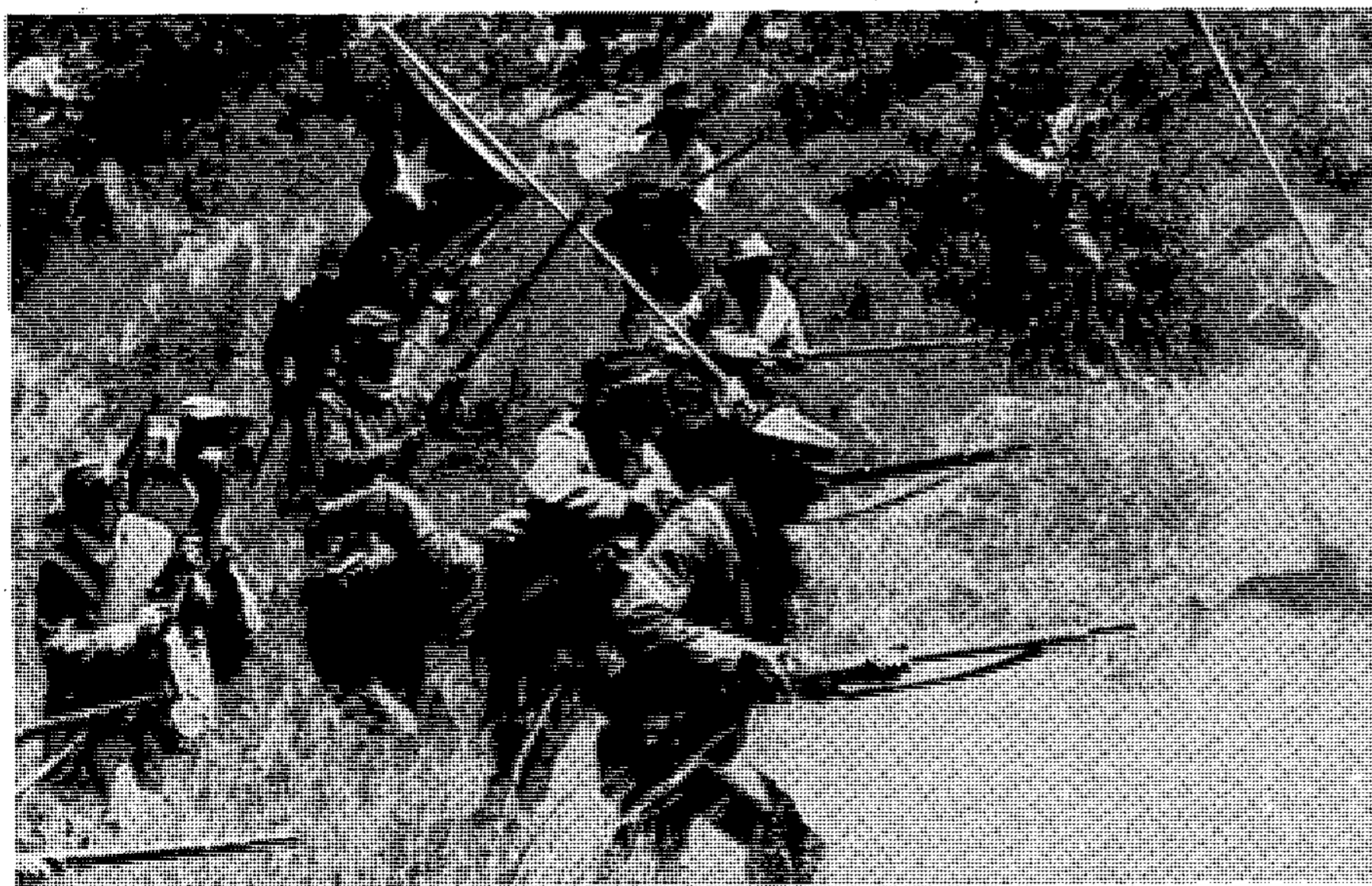
CONVERSE OF THE PRAIRIES —BOOK NOTICES—

Marc Simmons, editor, *On the Santa Fe Trail*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986. Pp. x, 149. Map, illus., index. Cloth, \$19.95; paper, \$7.95.

Many who traveled the Santa Fe Trail wrote of their experiences, at the time or later, and Simmons has collected twelve valuable documents (letters, diaries, journals, and reminiscences), covering the years 1841-1867. Some of these appear in print for the first time and none was readily available until now. A variety of individuals produced these primary sources, including merchants, a newspaper editor, government officials (civilian and military), four teamsters (three Anglo and one Hispanic, the latter a rare as well as an insightful recollection), a goldseeker, and one woman.

Simmons provides an introduction to the collection and to each document, plus explanatory footnotes. The volume is enhanced with photos, a map, lists of Trail sites, and recommended readings. It is easy to see why Simmons is well known as the Trail historian.

Although these pieces vary in purpose and point of view, some common themes are evident. Trail travel was seldom easy, and it was especially difficult during winter months. There was a constant danger from the Indians



CHARGE TO GLORY—Members of the 4th Texas Mounted Volunteers, Company E, of Albuquerque, NM, charge the Union center at the annual Father's Day reenactment of the Battle of Glorieta Pass. (Photo by Michael E. Pitel.)

through whose lands the Trail ran. Two people declared they would rather see a rattlesnake than an Indian.

Each of these selections contributes to a better understanding of life on the Trail. Manuel Alvarez, J. L. Collins, and Michael Steck expose the hazards of winter travel. James Fugate's recollections, no doubt "improved" by time, give the "feel" of almost constant Indian attacks and fights. Hezekiah Brake traveled to New Mexico in 1858 to operate a dairy for the Fort Union sutler.

David Kellog explained the battle of Black Jack. Henry Smith claimed to be a teenage teamster with the last government-owned supply train on the Trail in 1863, and he mentioned Dick Wootton's toll road as being there two years before the traditionally accepted date. George Vanderwalker claimed he passed Wootton's gate in 1864. Ernestine Huning spent her honeymoon on the Trail and traveled with 10 canaries. Charles Christy, army scout, gave his version of the Plum Buttes Massacre.

Perhaps the most unique document is that of José Gurulé, native New Mexican teamster from the village of Las Placitas. He worked for José Perea, reportedly the wealthiest man in New Mexico, and received a total of \$8 for almost eleven months work in 1867. He hauled wool from New Mexico to Kansas City in the late winter and early spring, and started a return trip with all kinds of merchandise in June. His wagon train left the Trail and went to Hays, KS, where the merchandise was sold and the teamsters and the teams and wagons worked on construction of the railroad for several months. Later, the wagons were filled with commodities brought by the railroad, and the caravan returned to New Mexico. Cholera killed 1/3 of the party on the Trail. Gurulé claimed that he brought home the first suit of clothes ever owned in his home village.

This book is filled with human interest, hardship, humor, and history of the lives of what some have called "ordinary people." Anyone interested in life on the Trail will find useful information and enjoyment in these writings.



James R. Mead, *Hunting and Trading on the Great Plains, 1859-1875*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986. Pp. xx, 276. Notes, bibliog., maps, illus., index. \$22.95.

Mead recorded his recollections in the 1890s, but this is the first printing, carefully edited by his grandson, Schuyler Jones. Mead traded with Indians, hunted on the Plains, and was a founder of Wichita, KS. His adventures touched the Santa Fe Trail occasionally. He stayed awhile at the home of I. B. Titus in Council City (now Burlingame, KS) in 1859, where Titus operated a toll bridge over Switzler Creek. It was there that Mead met his first wife. Later that same year, Mead traveled the Trail to Council Grove and beyond and met William Bent.

Mead provides details of hunting buffalo, poisoning wolves, and trading with Indians. He met Satanta in 1865, and he told the story of George Peacock's demise (Mead says at the hands of Satanta while others say it was Satank) at Peacock's trading ranch at Walnut Creek Crossing. Mead met Kit Carson, at the Little Arkansas Treaty Council, and William (Buffalo Bill) Mathewson, who operated a trading ranch at Cow Creek Crossing. He mentions the Stone Corral at the Little Arkansas Crossing.

These memoirs of a remarkable man tell much about pioneer life on the Plains. His periodic contacts with Santa Fe Trail sites and personalities are a bonus to this rewarding volume.

COUNCIL TROVE —DOCUMENTS—

UNCLE DICK'S TOLL ROAD

Joy Poole has furnished another document dealing with Dick Wootton's famous toll road over Raton Pass, this time a copy of a deed which is in the collections of the Colorado State Historical Society. Poole states this appears to be a typed copy of the original. The unique spelling has not been changed.

THE SANKEY-DICK ABSTRACT COMPANY, Incorporated

L. B. Maxwell to R. L. Wootton. Quit Claim Deed, dated November 7, 1867.

Filed December 15, 1883 at 2 P.M. Recorded in Book 17, Page 559. Consideration \$1.00.

KNOWING ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, That I have this day Bargained and sold to R. L. Wootton

Surtin Pason of Land on the North side Raton Mountain nowing as Wootton Ranch for the sum of one Dollar in hand paid and the wrights of trvte on his Toll Road Free of Charges. this pease of land is bounded as Fawns: Commaces on Northwest corner at a small spring about three hundred (300) yeards below his house and Rounde South to the divide of Raton Mountinge, then East longe the devide to the masas, then around the craste of the maser to low spring cross valley to the creste of the Maser Knowing as the Raton Maser, then along of the crest of Maser aroun the Fisher Peak to Joe Creek, then West down Joes Creek to the plase of bunnigin, said posal of land contans four 4 seacon [something may have been omitted here] of Nomb the 1867.

[signed] L. B. Maxwell

Weatles:

Jack Haland and Johan Heondson.

BATTLE OF GLORIETA PASS

The Civil War Battle of Glorieta Pass was fought on March 28, 1862, near Pigeon's Ranch, owned and operated by Alexander Valle (of French background). This important battle was the turning point of the Civil War in the Far West, and much has been written about it. Valle's succinct description was printed in A. A. Hayes, *New Colorado and the Santa Fe Trail* (1880):

M. Valle, or Pigeon, says, "Gooverment mahns vas at my ranch, and fill 'is cahnteen viz my viskey (and Gooverment nevaire pay me for zat viskey); and Texas mahns coom oop, and soorprise zem, and zey foight six hour by my vatch, and my vatch vas slow!"

FUR TRADE SYMPOSIUM AT FORT LARAMIE, WY

A Fur Trade Symposium will be held at Fort Laramie National Historic Site, June 20-21, featuring many scholars in the field. Any one interested in further information should contact John C. Burns, Fort Laramie NHS, Fort Laramie, WY 82212-0001.

FORT UNION TO CELEBRATE FOUNDERS DAY

The annual Founders Day Celebration at Fort Union National Monument, 28 miles north of Las Vegas, NM, will be held July 25-26, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. This will be the 136th anniversary of the founding of the fort. For further information, contact Unit Manager, Fort Union National Monument, Watrous, NM 87753. <

SANTA FE TRAIL CENTER

by Ruth Olson

[Ed. note: This is the first in a series on museums and historic sites along the Trail.]

Designed and built as a research facility, the Santa Fe Trail Center near Larned, Kansas, is a regional museum and archives dedicated to preserving and interpreting the history of the geographic area once known as the Santa Fe Trail.

The Trail Center opened in 1974 and was accredited by the American Association of Museums three years later, becoming one of the youngest museums in the nation to be granted such accreditation. A non-profit organization, the Center is locally owned and privately funded.

The museum staff of four full-time and four part-time employees takes care of the daily functions and activities of the museum. The dedicated work of many volunteers over the years has also been instrumental in the progress of the Center.

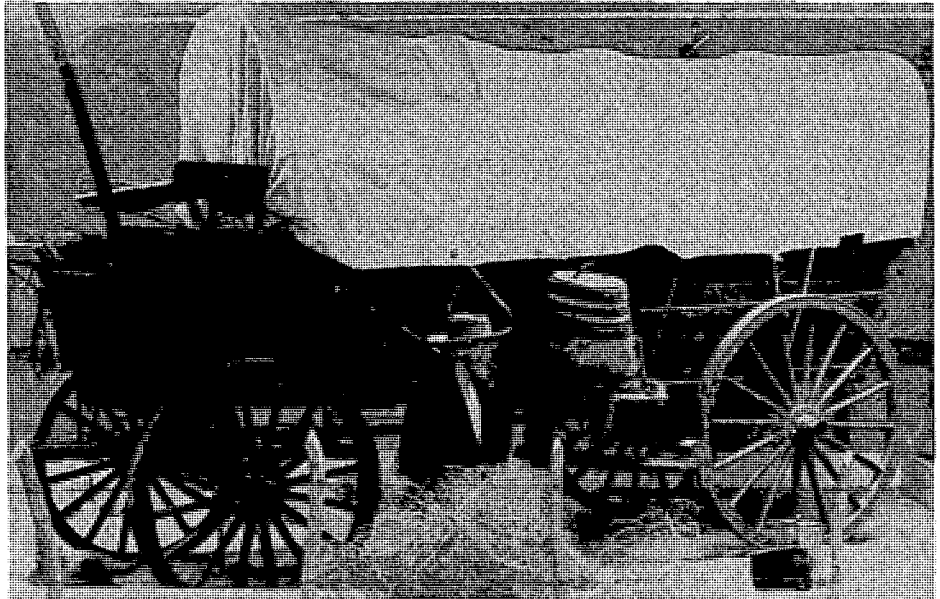
The museum's story line traces the Santa Fe Trail as a transportation route which blended Indian, Hispanic, and Anglo-American cultures. Exhibits include prehistoric Indian artifacts, a Wichita Indian grass lodge, a full-size mounted buffalo, a commercial freight wagon, and a display showing the Hispanic influences on the Trail.

The period of settlement along the ruts of the old Trail, brought about by the coming of the railroad, is depicted in the museum by a series of rooms showing pioneer life in the early 1900s.

Outdoor exhibits on the Trail Center's 25-acre complex include a sod house, dugout home, limestone cooling house, one-room schoolhouse, and a Santa Fe Railroad depot.

The Center also houses a research storage area in the basement of the museum. Researchers can easily examine three-dimensional objects without the need for museum staff to dismantle an exhibit area.

In addition to the museum collection and exhibits, the Trail Center provides both a research library and archives. Research materials pertaining to the Trail include books, maps, photographs, glass magic lantern slides, and oral history tapes. Information contained in the vertical files includes miscellaneous material about Trail sites,



Freight Wagon Exhibit at Santa Fe Trail Center.

markers, ranches, traders, trade goods, tolls, crossings, forts, freight wagons, and noted Trail personages, as well as many other subjects.

A complete set of the *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies of the Civil War* is also part of the library collection. Issued by the Department of War in the 1890s, these volumes contain information about the Santa Fe Trail during the war years.

The research library and archives are available for use free of charge by authors, historians, genealogists, museum staff, and anyone else wishing to do research. A full-time archivist is available for assistance.

As an education facility, the Center has ongoing programs, including a three-day seminar on the history of the Santa Fe Trail, which is held during March of even-numbered years. These "Rendezvous" seminars feature speakers who are noted authors and historians of the Trail. The seminars, which have been held since 1980, offer a special opportunity for all those interested in the Trail to meet together and discuss many aspects of its history. A field trip to area Trail sites is also included as part of the program.

Educational programs are available for schools upon request. These include on-site presentations by a museum staff member, as well as mail-out slide/tape programs. Guided tours of the museum are also available to schools and other organized groups.



Buffalo Exhibit at Center.

The museum hosts special programs throughout the year, including the annual Kansas Day Celebration/Open House in January, and an open house in June of each year to commemorate the opening and dedication of the Center. Living history presentations in the sod house and dugout on these special occasions help to provide visitors with an insight into early pioneer life.

An annual Fourth of July celebration is also held at the Center. It features a barbecued buffalo lunch, with free live folk music under the "big top" tent during the afternoon.

The Trail Center is located 2½ miles west of Larned on Kansas Highway 156. It is open daily except for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years Day. For more information about the Center, write the Director, Santa Fe Trail Center, Route 3, Larned, KS 67550, or phone (316) 285-2054. ◀

MALCOLM CONN: MERCHANT ON THE TRAIL

by Mark L. Gardner

[Ed. note: This is the first in a series on merchants and the Santa Fe trade.]

On October 17, 1859, *The Kansas Press* of Council Grove reported that "one firm in this place took in over \$1,600 in gold and silver one day last week for goods, another took in over \$1,400. We are selling over one hundred thousand dollars worth of goods per annum, and our trade is increasing. . . . Council Grove has a future that no other town off the Missouri River can ever hope to have in Kansas."¹ At the time, there were only two major business houses to accommodate the hundreds of traders and Pike's Peakers who were following the Santa Fe Trail.

One of those businesses was trading out of an impressive, two-story, stone structure situated right on the Trail. Known simply as the "Stone Store," it was owned and operated by one of Council Grove's most prominent and nearly forgotten early-day merchants, Malcolm Conn.

Conn was born to James Clay and Mary Conn of Baltimore County, MD, December 12, 1831. A farmer of means, James C. Conn was listed in the 1850 Maryland census as having real estate worth \$6,000. In that census, Malcolm was listed as living at home and his occupation was that of clerk.²

Where he was clerking is not known. However, five years later, he left Maryland to seek business opportunities in Westport, one of the largest outfitting points on the Missouri border, having superseded Independence just a few years before.³ Conn may have been employed by merchant Silas P. Keller.⁴ Keller, a native Virginian, was located on Westport's Main Street where he competed for the "western trade" with the likes of Kearney & Bernard, A. G. Boone, Baker & Street, J. G. Hamilton, and Edward Price.⁵

Conn remained in Westport only a year, though. Sometime in 1856 he moved to Council Grove, Kansas Territory, in the middle of the Kansa or Kaw Indian lands.⁶ Conn was probably drawn to the area by the trade opportunities with the Kaw tribe and the Santa Fe traders who needed "last chance" supplies. Conn may have been sent there by Keller, who was a stockholder in the Council Grove Town Company when it was organized in 1857.⁷

Little information exists on Conn's business dealings prior to 1859. At one point he was a partner of Thomas C. Hill, builder of the structure known today as the "Last Chance Store." In 1858 Conn's "Stone Store" was built. According to one community history, it was built by the firm of Conn, Hill & Munkres.⁸ Conn apparently resolved all partnerships by 1859, for, in the first of many advertisements he placed in *The Kansas Press*, Conn stated that he had "again resumed the mercantile business in the Stone Store. Formerly occupied by Conn, Hill & Co. Thankful for past favors, he hopes for a continuance of public patronage."⁹

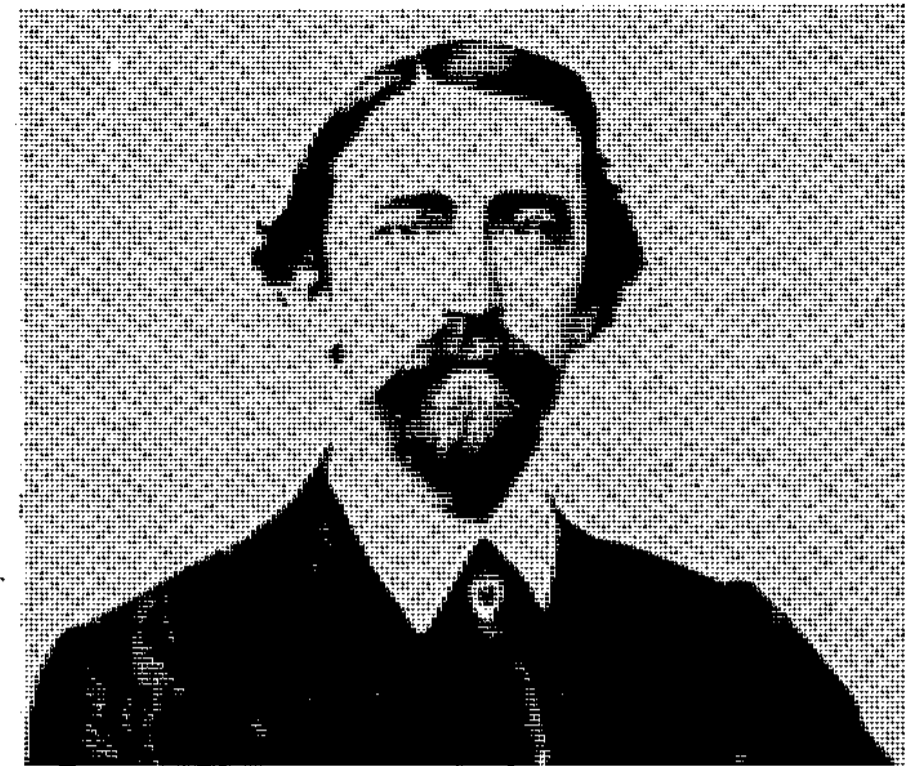
The next few years were good ones for Conn and S. M. Hays & Co., Conn's major competition. By 1860 Conn was one of the wealthiest citizens of Council Grove. In the census of that year, Conn was listed as having a personal estate of \$10,000. Seth Hays and his partner, G. M. Simcock, were valued at \$8,250 apiece.¹⁰

The Civil War increased opportunities for profits. In 1863 Simcock, who had recently bought out Hays, reported that there were "3,000 wagons, 618 horses, 20,218 oxen, 8,046 mules, 98 carriages and 3,072 men engaged in the freighting business along the Santa Fe route, transporting 15,000 tons of freight, the estimated value of which was \$40,000,000."¹¹ The next year a clerk at Conn's store, George Biglin, declared that the firm had sales of \$24,000 during the previous month.¹²

The best account of the atmosphere at Conn's store in the early 1860s was found in the reminiscences of William Shamleffer:

The merchant had to hustle with business customers all day, and then entertain them royally at night; for some of them came hundreds of miles to trade, and the business house had to furnish many of them with sleeping quarters, place to cook their meals, corrals in which to keep their stock, and open access to the corn cribs. . . . Plainsmen, hunters, trappers, wagon bosses, soldiers, bullwhackers, broncho [sic] busters, long lines of prairie schooners, and heads of horses, mules and cattle, were the attractions of the passing day. . . . In his stock were found every known variety of goods for use on the frontier, from ox yokes and repairs to cambric needles, from small boxes of pills to barrels of whisky.¹³

Along with prosperity, the war years brought troubles. On May 4,



Malcolm Conn, 1831-1898. This previously unpublished tintype was taken May 21, 1863, just a little over a week after Conn saved Council Grove from being burned by Missouri guerrillas. (Photo courtesy of the Conn family.)

1863, Dick Yeager and his band of Missouri guerrillas camped near Council Grove, intent on destroying the town. Conn, who had known Yeager as a Santa Fe freighter before the war, went to the camp and persuaded him to spare the town. Conn's friendship and the strong southern sentiment in the community saved Council Grove, but Yeager and his ruffians raided Howell's stage station and store at Diamond Springs the next night. Howell was killed and his wife was badly wounded.¹⁴ Several months later, in September, Conn's wife, Sarah, died, leaving him with his two-year-old son, James Clay.

In August 1864 Conn advertised that he would close his mercantile business by December of that year, and he requested that all accounts be settled. Conn apparently sold interests in the business to C. N. James and William Shamleffer.¹⁵ Sometime between 1866 and 1870, Conn sold his remaining interests to Shamleffer and James, who continued to operate a dry goods and grocery.

It was probably a good time to leave the mercantile business. The Union Pacific Railway, Eastern Division, later known as the Kansas Pacific, reached Junction City in 1866. The Santa Fe Coach line moved from Council Grove to that place the same year, and the freighters on the Trail soon followed. Prairie schooners were seldom seen on Council Grove's wide streets.¹⁶

By 1870 Conn had married again and entered a new line of business. He was a cattle dealer, indicative of the future prosperity of the community.¹⁷ Unlike previous years, however, the 1870s brought hard times for Conn.

In 1873 Conn's second wife, Matilda, gave birth to a son, Malcolm II. Matilda's second and last child, Oliver, died after living only three months in 1875. In that year Conn was listed in the Kansas census as having a personal estate worth only \$300.¹⁸ The cause of his financial decline was not found. Conn and his family left Council Grove that same year.

Conn's activities or whereabouts are not known until 1880, when he moved to Kansas City and became proprietor of the Barnum Hotel, reportedly "one of the leading hotels in the city." Conn eventually owned hotels in Webb City, MO; Little Rock, AR; and Lawrence, KS; apparently becoming a wealthy business man again.

Conn died in Lawrence of stomach cancer on February 28, 1898, at his most famous hotel, the Eldridge House. He was survived by Matilda and Malcolm II. James, his son by his first wife, was killed in a shootout in Durango, CO, in 1882. Malcolm Conn is buried in Council Grove's Greenwood Cemetery.¹⁹

Today, at the southeast corner of Council Grove's Main and Neosho streets, Conn's "Stone Store" still stands. It has been altered many times since it was built in 1858. It is now Eldon Solt's Home Design Center. Unlike the famous "Last Chance Store," which may have played only a small role in the early business community, Conn's "Stone Store" is still open to customers and travelers on the old Santa Fe Trail. Conn probably would have liked that.

NOTES

1. "Trade of Council Grove," *The Kansas Press*, Oct. 17, 1859, p. 2.
2. Seventh Census (1850), Baltimore County, MD, 1st District, 225.
3. "Death of a Kansas Hotel Man," undated clipping in Conn family scrapbook, Colorado Springs, CO.
4. Account Book, Vol. I: Aug. 16, 1851-Jan. 9, 1858, p. 81, James W. Parker Papers, Western Historical Manuscript Collection, University of Missouri--Kansas City.
5. William R. Bernard, "Westport and the Santa Fe Trade," *Kansas Historical Collections*, 9 (1905-06) 564; and Louis O. Honig, *Westport: Gateway to the Early West* (It Happened in America Series, 1950), 34-35.
6. "Death of a Kansas Hotel Man."
7. John Maloy, *History of Morris County: 1820-1890* (Council Grove: Morris County Historical Society, 1981), 15.
8. Mamie Stine Sharp, "Home-coming Centennial Celebration at Council Grove, June 27 to July 23, 1921," *Kansas Historical Collections*, 16 (1923-1925) 562.
9. *The Kansas Press*, Sept. 26, 1859.
10. Eighth Census (1860), Morris County, KS.
11. Maloy, 46.
12. *Ibid.*, 48.
13. Sharp, 568.
14. David Hubbard, "Reminiscences of the Yeager Raid, on the Santa Fe Trail, in 1863," *Kansas Historical Collections*, 8 (1903-04) 169; and Thomas F. Doran, "Kansas Sixty Years Ago," *ibid.*, 15 (1919-22) 488.

15. *Council Grove Press*, Aug. 20, 1864; and *Council Grove Democrat*, Mar. 2, 1866.
16. Maloy, 54.
17. Ninth Census (1870), Morris County, KS, 4.
18. Kansas State Census (1875), Morris County, KS, 14.
19. "Death of M. Conn," *The Lawrence Gazette*, Mar. 3, 1898; and "Death of a Kansas Hotel Man."

HELP WANTED

I need information on the following Santa Fe Trail merchants:

Edward James Glasgow, St. Louis

William Glasgow, St. Louis

Malcolm Conn, Council Grove

Silas P. Keller, Westport

William Keller, Westport

If you know of anything, please contact me. Thank you.

Mark L. Gardner
1690 Pontiac St.
Denver, CO 80220

• • • • •

I'm compiling a list of Trail-subject annual events in each of the five Trail states. I can assemble the New Mexico segment, but I need help from Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, and Oklahoma. I need 1987 names, addresses, telephone numbers, and contacts of the sponsoring organization. This list will be used to promote Trail events in a press release and to help anyone planning a new Trail event, so they won't be competing with already established events, if they don't want to.

As I get these names, addresses, and phone numbers, I'll send a questionnaire and assemble pertinent information for distribution. Please help. Your participation will make it possible for the Council to do a better job in promoting the Trail.

Michael E. Pitel
Publicity Coordinator
Tano Rd., Rt 4, Box 240
Santa Fe, NM 87501

• • • • •

To all museums along the Trail:
I am designing a set of brochures for the SFT Council on museums along the Trail. Whether you're large or small, please send me two or three paragraphs on your institution, to be included in this set of brochures. If you have brochures, please send some with your information. The purpose of this project is to compile a complete guide to museums for those explorers who travel the Trail. Your assistance is appreciated; please tell others who may not receive our newsletter.

Michael E. Duncan
Mahaffie Historic Site
P. O. Box 768
Olathe, KS 66061

COUNCIL MEMBERS

This list includes memberships received up to early February; those received after this printing will appear in the next issue. If there is an error in this information, please send corrections to the editor. If you know of people who may be interested in the Council and are not on this list, please urge them to join. We thank you for your support.

LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

Kearny County Historical Society,
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67860

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 Karan Segars, 4720 NW 70, Oklahoma City, OK 73132

TRAIL CALENDAR

Everyone is invited to send notices for this section; provide location, date(s), time(s) and activity. Remember this is a quarterly. The next issue should appear in May, so send information for June and later. Thank you.

V. James Sherer, Boot Hill Museum Inc., Dodge City, KS 67801
 Duane Smith, Fort Lewis College, Durango, CO 81301
 Wayne Smith, RR 1, Box 44, Raymond, KS 67573
 Ernst Stadler, 5802 Waterman, St. Louis, MO 63112
 John E. Stadler, 239 Grattan, Topeka, KS 66616
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 C. L. Stalker, Jr., RR 2, Box 30-C, Satanta, KS 67870
 Charles G. Stewart, Box 725, Oakley, KS 67748
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 Enid T. Thompson, 3730 Allison Ct., Wheatridge, CO 80033
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 Dave Webb, Box 531, Protection, KS 67127
 David J. Weber, Dept. of History, SMU, Dallas, TX 75275
 Tim Wehrkamp, Colo. Hist. Soc., 1300 Broadway, Denver, CO 80203
 A. Wendell Williams, P. O. Box 465, Coffeyville, KS 67337
 Lucile D. Wise, 823 Kansas St., Larned, KS 67550
 Susan J. Zeller, P. O. Box 621, Cimarron, NM 87714

March 2-31, 1987: Fort Collins Museum, Fort Collins, CO, Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition—"The Santa Fe Trail: Photographs by Joan Myers."

April 30-May 29, 1987: Fort Leavenworth Museum, Fort Leavenworth, KS, Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition—"The Santa Fe Trail: Photographs by Joan Myers."

June 6, 1987: Santa Fe Trail Center, Larned, KS, Spring meeting of Kansas State Historical Society, featuring speakers, tours of the galleries, and a field trip to local Trail sites, to be followed by evening activities at Fort Larned NHS. Open to the public.

June 7, 1987: Santa Fe Trail Center, Larned, KS, Dedication Day, celebrating anniversary of opening of the Trail Center, with open house, free admission to galleries, and living history portrayals. Open to the public.

June 28-July 27, 1987: Albuquerque Museum, Albuquerque, NM, Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition—"The Santa Fe Trail: Photographs by Joan Myers."

July 4, 1987: Santa Fe Trail Center, Larned, KS, Fourth of July Celebration, featuring barbecued buffalo lunch, live folk music under "big top" tent, living history, and special programs. Open to the public.

July 25-26: Fort Union, NM, Founders Day Celebration, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day, featuring

tours, demonstrations, reenactments, speeches, music, and more. Watch for more details in next issue of *WT*

Aug. 7-8, 1987: Bent's Old Fort NHS, 35110 Hwy 194 E, La Junta, CO, Bent Descendants Celebration. For further information, contact Craig Moore at above address.

Aug. 7-16, 1987: Santa Fe Trail Tour from Fort Osage, MO, to Santa Fe, NM. Contact Leo E. Oliva, Heritage Tours, P. O. Box 1, Woodston, KS 67675.

Sept. 2-Oct. 1, 1987: Hutchinson Public Library, Hutchinson, KS, Smithsonian Traveling Exhibition—"The Santa Fe Trail: Photographs by Joan Myers."

Sept. 25-27, 1987: Hutchinson Community College, Hutchinson, KS, Santa Fe Trail Council Symposium.

FROM THE EDITOR

Unbelievable as it may seem, we worried if there would be 4 pages of material for this issue. Now it is 10 pages and out of room. Special thanks to everyone who has contributed.

The good news is that the Council and *WT* have elicited such favorable responses. The better news is that the Trail bill appears headed for passage. The best news is that Marc Simmons is recovering from his tragic accident and will soon be tending to Council business. We have much for which to be thankful.

As we get *WT* on schedule, please be aware of the following deadlines: May 1 for the May issue and July 1 for the August issue.

Happy trails!

—Leo E. Oliva

**Trinidad State Junior College
 Santa Fe Trail Council
 600 Prospect
 Trinidad, CO 81082**

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