

# Wagon Tracks

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2018

## Wagon Tracks Volume 32, Issue 2 (February 2018)

Santa Fe Trail Association

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# WAGON TRACKS

*Quarterly Publication of the Santa Fe Trail Association*

*volume 32 ♦ number 2 February 2018*



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**Rock Creek Crossing Groundbreaking Slated ♦ page 12**  
**The River, the Rock, and the Road ♦ page 16**  
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## On The Cover: Early Kansas City Riverfront, Westport Landing, circa 1848-1853

Courtesy Missouri Valley Special Collections,  
Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri

This image of Westport Landing, sitting on top of that river-turning rock and just hundreds of feet from the final bend of the Missouri river to the north, is probably the best of a half-dozen variations of this popular print. This one first appeared in a gazetteer, *The United States Illustrated*, issued as a serial in 1853 and published as a two-volume set in 1854 in New York.

All of the images are based on a now-missing daguerreotype by Thomas Easterly, a talented but underappreciated photographer in the middle of the 19th century. Easterly was based for most of his career in St. Louis, but it is known that in 1846-1847, and possibly into 1848, Easterly was based out of Liberty, Missouri, slightly downstream and across the river from Westport Landing. It is believed that Easterly produced this daguerreotype image in that period, probably in 1848. The artists of the later prints apparently stayed pretty well true to Easterly's photographed image, except for the placid scene of oxen resting on a rock ledge extending out into the river that probably never existed.

*James Travelers Companion* of 1851 described the scene: "Kansas, situated near the mouth of Kansas River, in Jackson County, Missouri, is a pleasantly situated town, standing on a high bank of the river, and commanding a view of the surrounding country for many miles. It has been settled about four years.... The business of this place is very extensive, there being almost a constant stream of travel passing through this region.... Kansas contains 1 Methodist, 1 Baptist, and 1 Presbyterian church, a large number of stores, and about 800 inhabitants."

--Craig Crease

### About the Santa Fe Trail Association

The mission of the Santa Fe Trail Association is to protect and preserve the Santa Fe Trail and to promote awareness of the historical legacy associated with it.

Follow us online at [www.santafetrail.org](http://www.santafetrail.org),  
Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and YouTube



Wagon Tracks, the official publication of the Santa Fe Trail Association (SFTA), publishes well-researched and documented peer-reviewed articles relating to the Santa Fe Trail. Wagon Tracks is published in February, May, August, and November. Deadlines are the 10th of the month prior to publication. Queries are welcome. Complete submission guidelines are posted at [www.santafetrail.org](http://www.santafetrail.org). Although the entire issue of Wagon Tracks is copyrighted in the name of the Santa Fe Trail Association, copyright to each article remains in the author's name. Articles may be edited or abridged at the editor's discretion.

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contact at [info@santafetrail.org](mailto:info@santafetrail.org)

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Kevin Lindahl  
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Mike Rogers  
Sandra Slusher

#### PNTS Representative

Marcia Will-Clifton, [PNTS@santafetrail.org](mailto:PNTS@santafetrail.org)

#### Association Manager

Joanne VanCoevern  
785-825-8349 (h), 785-643-7515 (c)  
[manager@santafetrail.org](mailto:manager@santafetrail.org)

#### Headquarters of the Santa Fe Trail

**Association** is located at the Santa Fe Trail  
Center, 1349 K-156 Hwy, Larned, KS 67550

**Office Manager**, Linda Revello  
620-285-2054, [info@santafetrail.org](mailto:info@santafetrail.org)

#### Wagon Tracks Editor

Ruth Friesen, 505-681-3026  
[editor@santafetrail.org](mailto:editor@santafetrail.org)

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# WAGON TRACKS

Quarterly of the Santa Fe Trail Association

volume 32 ♦ number 2 February 2018



*Rawlinson-Terwilliger Home, Council Grove, Kansas. See "Rendezvous at Council Grove" story on page 6. Photo: Joanne VanCoevern*

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## As I See It by Larry Justice, President of SFTA



*“The only use of an obstacle is to be overcome. All that an obstacle does with brave men is, not to frighten them, but to challenge them.”* Woodrow Wilson, 28th President of the United States

It is 2018 – a new challenge. As with all beginnings of new years, there are carry-over concerns and plans and projects. There also are unforeseen concerns and challenges for the senior leadership, Board of Directors, and chapters of the Santa Fe Trail Association. 2018 seems to hold additional concerns for preserving, protecting, and promoting the historical legacy of the Santa Fe National Historic Trail. Therefore, this “As I See It” column is another element of challenge to our Board of Directors, our committees and committee chairs, and significantly for our chapters.

You have heard me say there are continuing concerns about funding now and in the future. In no uncertain terms let me strongly encourage each and every person who reads this column to make 2018 a banner year for outreach to friends, community leadership, and state and national leadership to herald the advantages of membership in and support of the Santa Fe Trail Association. This year you will hear more about current and future funding through designated gifts, memorials, bequests, etc. as well

as annual dues. But funding of current and future SFTA needs MUST include corporate sponsorships – large and small.

Corporate sponsorships do not need to be limited to large corporations in cities like Kansas City. Some medical groups, law firms, and small companies, if approached in a positive manner by you and our SFTA leadership, would consider a tax-deductible annual contribution to help preserve, protect, and promote the historical legacy of the Santa Fe National Historic Trail. Therefore, talk with these business owners and send us the names of contact persons for your respective area. Those contributors are out there, but have not been approached simply because we don’t know who they are. Applying the words of President Wilson, funding is an obstacle. We need not fear it, but use it as a challenge.

This year, 50 years after President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the National Historic Trails Act into law, holds promise for some extremely exciting opportunities. In Council Grove this April, the first of two very exciting events will be held. The Heart of the Flint Hills Chapter and

local entities are working diligently to plan a most exciting event, which will include a visit by a Harry S. Truman reenactor and rededication of the Madonna of the Trail, visiting sites like the Last Chance Store and Kaw Mission, and more. This will be a premier event in one of the jewels along the Trail and on the Neosho River.

In addition, plans are underway to hold a similar event in the Cimarron Grasslands area of southwestern Kansas, the Oklahoma Panhandle, New Mexico, and Colorado. This event will occur in October of 2018 and holds promise of being another marquee event.

Finally, make plans now for Rendezvous in Larned, Kansas, in September and the 2019 Symposium in St. Louis, where there will be events noting the connection of westward movement along the Missouri River and the Booneslick Road to Old Franklin and the eventual beginning of the SFT by William Becknell in 1821. I am extremely excited about these and other events over the next years as we progress toward the commemoration of 200 years since the beginning of the Santa Fe Trail. ♦



**Find  
YOUR  
Trail**  
Discover. Connect.  
Explore.



## Joanne's Jottings by Joanne VanCoevern, Association Manager



(This is part 5 of the update on the Santa Fe Trail Association's goals and projects undertaken as our part in the "Decade for the National Trails: 2008-2018" initiative created by the Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS) and American Trails.)

The third Decade Goal of PNTS is to "Build the capacity of federal agencies to better manage and sustain National Scenic, Historic, and Recreation Trails, as well as Rail Trails." To support this goal, SFTA determined to support our partner, the National Park Service-National Trails Intermountain Region (NTIR), in their efforts to manage and sustain the Santa Fe National Historic Trail, and to support the NPS-administered sites along the length of the SFNHT. In addition, we maintain our membership in PNTS and provide a representative to their meetings, as well as attendees to their conferences/workshops. SFTA supports the Volunteer In Parks program by reporting our volunteer activities which in turn provide support to NTIR. SFTA also reports our volunteer activities to PNTS for their "gold sheet" which is used in Washington, D.C. during the Hike the Hill event each February. According to the PNTS website, Hike the Hill "is a joint effort between the Partnership for the National Trail System and the American Hiking Society aimed at

increasing congressional and federal agency leader awareness of funding and other needs that sustain the National Trails System. Each February, trail partners and organizations from across the nation head to Washington, D.C. to discuss current initiatives, legislation, and goals for the future with federal partners, congressmen or their staff, and fellow trail organizations." Marcia Will-Clifton, the SFTA Representative to the PNTS, will be involved with this event.

The PNTS and the NPS have asked SFTA to help celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the National Trails System Act (NTSA) in 2018 by hosting projects and events to bring emphasis to the National Trails. SFTA has chosen to focus our social media campaign of 2018 on the NTSA and the Santa Fe Trail. We are highlighting "52 Sites Along the Santa Fe National Historic Trail."

SFTA, our chapters, and various partners are planning three events to celebrate the NTSA during 2018: at Council Grove, Kansas on April 20-21; at Larned, Kansas, on September 20-22; and at Elkhart, Kansas, with a tentative date of October 5-6. Plans are still being finalized for all three events. See article on page 6 for details on the Council Grove event.

### Spring Workshop and Board of Directors Meeting Announced

The SFTA leadership has announced plans for our Spring Workshop and Board of Directors meetings. Both sessions will be held at the Council Grove Events and Recreation Center (the old National Guard Armory), 1018 Old US Highway 56, Council Grove, Kansas. The workshop, held in partnership with the National Park Service-National Trails Intermountain Region (NTIR), is scheduled for Thursday, April 19, beginning at 1:00 p.m. Please note the change in beginning time to 1:00 p.m. This is designed to allow people to drive in on

Thursday morning and save the cost of one motel room.

The workshop is designed for input from the SFTA Board of Directors, Chapter Presidents, and Committee Chairs, as well as NPS representatives. This year, the workshop will focus on a review of our Strategic Plan, as well as continued work on planning for the 2021 commemoration of the opening of the Santa Fe Trail to trade by William Becknell in 1821.

SFTA and NPS have held these joint workshops since 2003, each year focusing on a variety of topics to help SFTA continue to reach our goals. During the first 2003 session, SFTA created our first Strategic Plan using a process that helped us to set specific goals for the Association, clearly define our strategy to attain those goals, and determine who has the leadership responsibility for each goal. The first Strategic Plan guided us through 2013, and in 2013 the plan was updated and will serve as our guide through 2023. At our 2018 workshop, we will look at each of the goals and discuss how we are proceeding, discussing both successes and areas that may need more emphasis to achieve that goal.

The membership is encouraged to read our Strategic Plan, and feel free to contact your Board members and/or Chapter Presidents with your input. It can be found on our website at: [http://www.santafetrail.org/pdf/strategic\\_plan\\_2013\\_2023\\_accepted\\_4\\_2013.pdf](http://www.santafetrail.org/pdf/strategic_plan_2013_2023_accepted_4_2013.pdf)

The SFTA Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 20, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and will be held at the Council Grove Events and Recreation Center (the old National Guard Armory), 1018 Old US Highway 56, Council Grove, Kansas. Items for consideration at the Board meeting should be submitted ASAP to SFTA President Larry Justice at [president@santafetrail.org](mailto:president@santafetrail.org). ♦

## “Rendezvous at Council Grove” Planned for April 20-21

Plans for a Council Grove event to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the National Trails System Act, an event entitled “Rendezvous at Council Grove,” are underway. The celebration will begin at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, April 20, with a groundbreaking ceremony for an interpretive site/trail at the Rock Creek Crossing site just east of Council Grove, on property owned by Della Orton. [See story on page 12.] Following the groundbreaking, the Kansas Historical Society and the Kaw Mission will host an event at the site of the Last Chance Store in Council Grove, featuring artworks related to the Santa Fe Trail, as well as a wine and cheese tasting. Information about reserving your wine glass will be forthcoming through the SFTA e-blast and via Facebook.

### Saturday, April 21

Events occur throughout the day with special events as noted on schedule.

- 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Council Grove historic sites open to the public, including:  
  
Seth Hays Home  
Last Chance Store  
Post Office Oak Museum  
Treaty Oak  
Kaw Mission  
Rawlinson-Terwilliger Home
- 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Wagon rendezvous at Council Oak Park. Representatives from the National Stagecoach and Freight Wagon Association will be on hand to discuss wagons and stagecoaches, and to demonstrate the skills, such as blacksmithing, needed to keep wagons rolling. Horse-drawn vehicles will be on display all day. Special events include wheelwright demonstrations at 11:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

- 10:00 a.m. – noon, 1:30 – 5:00 p.m.  
Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and Farm, Olathe, Kansas will provide stagecoach viewing, program, and rides.
- 8th Kansas Volunteer Infantry Recruitment Camp, on the grounds of the Rawlinson-Terwilliger Home
- 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Visit the Santa Fe Trail at the Trail Days Historic Site. Information provided on historic sites to visit along the length of the Santa Fe National Historic Trail (Passport Activity—Collector’s Cards as prize for completing)
- 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Geocaching event led by the Flint Hills Geocachers. Special “re-gathering” and presentation at 4:00 p.m. at the Neosho Riverwalk.
- Youth Activities at the Kaw Mission

### Specific events during the day:

*(Times are tentative and may be adjusted)*

- 7:30 a.m. Gathering/coffee, Christian Church, 106 E. Main Street
- 7:45 a.m. Welcome/introductions – Council Grove dignitaries
- 8:00 a.m. Geocaching 101. Introduction to the hobby of geocaching will be followed by geocaching in the area
- 9:00 a.m. Dr. Leo E. Oliva—overview of the Santa Fe Trail
- 10:00 a.m. President Harry Truman (reenactor) visits the Madonna of the Trail, will visit around Council Grove throughout the day. Potential “meet-

up” with Macey Hensley, the presidential expert from Council Grove.

- 11:00 a.m. Blacksmithing/wheelwright demonstration – Council Oak Park
- 11:45 a.m. Stagecoach brings the mail – Council Oak Park
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch on your own
- 1:00 p.m. Recruitment and Enlistment camp “Call to Arms” by the 8th Kansas Volunteer Infantry at the Trail Days Historic Site
- 2:30 p.m. Annie Wilson and the Tallgrass Express Stringband
- 3:30 p.m. Blacksmithing/wheelwright demonstration – Council Oak Park
- 3:45 p.m. Stagecoach brings the mail – Council Oak Park
- 4:00 p.m. Geocaching at Neosho Riverwalk (Christian Church)
- 5:00 p.m. Sites and exhibits close. Dinner on your own
- 6:30 p.m. Speaker introducing Kaw dancers at Allegawaho Park
- 7:00 p.m. Kaw dance

Seth Fest – Music festival and art show at the lake all day Saturday, with a barbecue contest on Sunday (Details not available at press time.)



## Rendezvous 2018 in Larned, Kansas

### Theme Announced:

### “Death on the Santa Fe Trail”

The Rendezvous planning committee is very excited about the upcoming seminar and the theme, “Death on the Santa Fe Trail.” Scheduled for September 20-22 in Larned, Kansas, the biennial Rendezvous will bring fresh insight into the many causes of death, cultural burial traditions, mourning customs, and more along the historic route of commerce.

Some of the speakers and topics include: Minoma Littlehawk Sills, “Cheyenne Burial Customs”; Dr. James Leiker, “Death and Disease on the Trail”; Dr. Alice Anne Thompson, “Religious Orders and Death on the Trail”; and Dr. Leo Oliva, “Death at the Trading Ranches.” During the first evening of the event a marker dedication for Boyd’s Ranch will be held at the Larned State Hospital Complex, followed by dinner and an introduction to the theme by Dr. Michael Olsen at the Santa Fe Trail Center Museum.

Please watch for more information in the May issue of *Wagon Tracks* and on the Santa Fe Trail Center Museum & Research Library website [www.santafetrailcenter.org](http://www.santafetrailcenter.org). ♦



### Student Photo Contest Opens for Submissions

The annual student photography contest, sponsored by the education committee of the Santa Fe Trail Association, is open for submissions. Digital photos must be related to the Santa Fe Trail in one of the following categories: landscape, buildings, Trail-related museums, geocache sites, and special events along the Trail, such as re-enactments, wagons, mule or oxen teams. Two grade-level divisions for the contest are fifth through eighth grades and ninth through twelfth grades.

Digital photos must be submitted to Chris Day, [dosdays2@gmail.com](mailto:dosdays2@gmail.com), by September 1, 2018. In addition to the photo, entrants should include a paragraph with their name, phone number, location and description of the photo site, plus a few sentences about their interaction with the site.

Awards will be presented at the Santa Fe Trail Rendezvous on September 22 in Larned, Kansas. ♦

**April 1 is the submission deadline for the May issue of Wagon Tracks.**

## Call For Papers

### SFTA 2019 Symposium - St. Louis

The Santa Fe Trail Association will be holding its 2019 Biennial Symposium in St. Louis from September 25-28. The theme for the conference is “St. Louis: Gateway to Santa Fe.” The 200th anniversary of the opening of the Santa Fe Trail will be commemorated by the SFTA in 2021, so the St. Louis symposium is being planned as a “lead in” to that commemoration.

The presentations at the symposium will highlight the role of St. Louis in the economic, social, political, and logistical development of the Santa Fe trade. The 2019 Symposium Program Committee has already lined up speakers on various pertinent topics but would welcome proposals on the following themes:

- Steamboats and the Santa Fe Trail/trade - Missouri River
- Doing business on the Santa Fe Trail - St. Louis banking exchange houses, retail and wholesale merchants
- The manufacturing of boxes and barrels - packaging goods for the 900 mile journey to Santa Fe
- The history of St. Louis, especially from the 1820s to the 1870s.
- Hispanic families and St. Louis (in St. Louis social life, sending children to school in St. Louis)
- The Boone Family (session at the Boone Family Home and Heritage Center)
- Thomas Hart Benton and the Santa Fe Trail
- Missouri and the Santa Fe Trade (mules, Mexican silver, the Missouri economy)

A one-page synopsis of a proposal and contact information can be sent to Dr. Mike Olsen, [mpolsen1@comcast.net](mailto:mpolsen1@comcast.net). ♦

### *St. Louis: Gateway to Santa Fe* 2019 Symposium

#### Santa Fe Trail Association

**Save the dates: September 25-28, 2019**

*We invite you to participate in the experience at the very beginning of the trails. St. Louis has the honor of being the Gateway to the West. Speakers and tours will be about the people going west, genealogy, transportation, trading, and financial sources.*

*All symposium information will be found at [www.santafetrail.org](http://www.santafetrail.org)*



## Partnership for the National Trails System

By Marcia Will-Clifton

### Outreach, Holiday Travel along the Santa Fe Trail, 50th Anniversary Events

In November 2017, I developed a strategy for the PNTS Representative position for 2018. As a result of attending the Innovative Strategies for Community Engagement workshop in Denver this summer, I secured contact information for the 50+ participants. From this database, I have contacted and met with several non-profit organizations to talk about the Santa Fe Trail and the Partnership for the National Trails. It is exciting to share our story with other non-profits and individuals in Colorado. The first quarter of 2018 will be busy with contacting and meeting with more of these organizations.

From December 10-12, my husband Alan and I traveled to the Ft. Larned Holiday Celebration and to Council Grove, Kansas. We previewed many of the sites in Council Grove and Morris County in preparation for the 50th Anniversary event in April 2018. I have already extended an invitation to Senator Jerry Moran to attend and hopefully speak at this event. We visited the holiday-decorated Kaw Mission Historic Site, Council Oak, Hays House, and Trails End Café for the best-ever cinnamon rolls for the windy trip back to Colorado.

### PNTS Updates from December 2017 e-News, Advocacy

As Congress did not complete the appropriations to fund the federal government for the balance of Fiscal Year 2018, a continuing resolution is currently in place through mid-January 2018. At this time, year-long agreements with non-profit organizations cannot be put into place.

A few days before Thanksgiving, the Senate Appropriations Committee released its version of the Interior Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2018. The bill includes \$400 million from the Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), the same amount as Congress appropriated in 2017. This is good news, as is the bipartisan support that continues to grow for HR502 to permanently fund the LWCF.

Much of the “behind the scenes” advocacy work done by PNTS happens in the committee work of the Advocacy and Policy Committee. This group meets monthly by conference call with a very full agenda of issues for all the 30 scenic and historic trails that belong to the Partnership. It is a steep learning curve to understand all the issues. I am amazed at the passion and professionalism shown by the members of the Advocacy and Policy Committee and the Trail Leaders Council. It is very rewarding work!

Please save the date for the 2018 National Trails Systems Conference, October 22-25, in Vancouver, Washington. ♦

## SFTA Research Grant Awarded

Each year the Santa Fe Trail Association can award up to \$1500 in research grants. Craig Crease, a researcher who has been a frequent speaker at SFTA gatherings over the years, has received the 2018 grant.

Students of western history know that the French explorer Bourgmont's early 1700s crossing of Kansas likely was in the same trajectory as the later Santa Fe Trail, at least for part of the route. In the mid-1970s, a Valley Falls, Kansas man, the late Milton Reichart, attempted to retrace Bourgmont's route when only an abridged version of Bourgmont's log was available. Crease, armed with an unabridged and unedited translation of the log and with Google Earth, will attempt to retrace Reichart's route across Kansas. Of course, Crease hopes to define where Bourgmont's route and the later Santa Fe Trail are in close proximity.

The research grant committee that reviewed Crease's proposal is composed of Mary Conrad, Anne Mallinson, and John Richards. ♦

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## National Stagecoach and Freight Wagon Association Annual Conference March 15-18, Tucson/Tubac, Arizona



- Examine in detail 200 vehicles at the parade museum at the Tucson rodeo grounds
- Watch harnessing of horses, hitching of wagons
- Hear talks on the Butterfield Trail and Jackass Mail Trail
- Consider development of the Abbot-Downing stages and more
- Observe blacksmiths and wheelwrights at work
- Choose optional tours to stage stations, missions, museums, murals, trails, ghost towns, birding areas

See web site for further details as available  
[www.stagecoachfreightwagon.org/](http://www.stagecoachfreightwagon.org/)

## Bernal/Starvation Peak DAR Santa Fe Trail Marker Restored

by *Patricia French Barger*

In 1910 the New Mexico State Organization of the Daughters of the American Revolution (NMSODAR) in partnership with the Territory of New Mexico placed granite markers on the New Mexico portion of the Santa Fe Trail. Nineteen markers have survived for over 100 years. However, in February of 2017 the base of the marker located near the village of Bernal in the shadow of Starvation Peak was damaged during an attempt to “relocate” it.



*Before*

In September 2017, the NMSODAR Santa Fe Trail Marker Committee was officially organized. At that point, consultations were held with the National Park Service, the Santa Fe Trail Association, and DAR daughters in Kansas for guidance on how best to proceed with the repair. On Veterans Day, after months of planning and with the help of the District 70 New Mexico State Representative, local residents who supplied the heavy equipment, the Bernal Community Center volunteers, the New Mexico Highway Department, and the San Miguel County Sheriff’s Department, the damaged base was jackhammered away, a new base poured and

secured with rebar to prevent it from being moved, and the area was cleaned up. The marker will be officially rededicated in the spring of 2018.

Two additional markers in San Miguel County will need attention prior to the start of a year-long commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the Santa Fe Trail in September 2021. We raised sufficient funds to repair the Bernal marker, and fundraising has begun for the other two projects, which will be more challenging due to their remote locations. Many activities are in the planning stages in New Mexico, one of which is an over-night commemorative bus tour that will kick off the celebrations in Santa Fe at the end of the trail. ♦



*After. Starvation Peak in the background*



*During repair*

*Patricia French Barger, DAR Lew Wallace Chapter and Rose Mestas Thompson, DAR Stephen Watts Ke-army Chapter, members of the Santa Fe Trail Association, are pleased with the final result.*



*Photos: Rose Mestas Thompson*

## Will the Real Lost Spring Please Stand Up?

by L. Stephen (Steve) Schmidt

I was asked to assist in writing the “Eastern Tour Guide” for the Santa Fe Trail Association’s 2005 Symposium held in McPherson, Kansas. As I prepared a synopsis of the history of Lost Spring for the Tour Guide, it quickly became apparent that some local legends involving Lost Spring were not confirmed by the historical record, and that some historically significant aspects of the Lost Spring were not common knowledge. Therefore, in 2008 I wrote a paper titled “Lost Spring, Marion County, Kansas – A Historical Perspective” in which I presented the results of my three years of research into the history of Lost Spring and vicinity, focusing on the Santa Fe Trail.

Limited numbers of copies of the First Printing were produced in 2008 and a Second Printing was produced in 2010, with a limited number of copies being available through the Last Chance Store. Since 2010, new information has become available, resulting in an updated Third Printing which is now available on the Santa Fe Trail Association’s (SFTA) website at [www.santafetrail.org/publications/new-research/](http://www.santafetrail.org/publications/new-research/).

Of particular interest, I think, is Figure 4 of the paper which shows the location of the Santa Fe Trail and its branches in the vicinity of Lost Spring, and the location of the Lost Spring and Lost Spring Station. The location of the Santa Fe Trail is inaccurate in both Franzwa’s *Maps of the Santa Fe Trail* and the National Park Service’s (NPS) *Santa Fe National Historic Trail, Comprehensive Management and Use Plan, Map Supplement*.

As stated in the 1857 General Land Office (GLO) surveyor’s notes summarizing the features of Township 17 South, Range 4 East of the 6th P.M., “There are some fine springs of fresh water in this Township and among their number is the spring known to all Santa Fe traders and trains as the Lost Spring. It is situated in Section 16 near the center of the section. The spring affords fine fresh water.” The location of this “original” Lost Spring is on private property near the center of Section 16, approximately 1.5 miles west and 0.5 miles north of the Town of Lost Springs, KS. The location of Lost Spring is also shown on the 1857 GLO plat map.

The site popularly referred to as Lost Spring since the early 1900s is 2.5 miles west of the town of Lost Springs, immediately north of the paved road. It is actually a small spring close by the location of Lost Spring Station; the Station dates from approximately 1859. Neither this spring nor the station was noted by the 1857 GLO survey. Lost Spring Station was located near the south quarter-corner of Section 17, T17S, R4E.

In my opinion, the Lost Spring Station became so named because it was relatively near the Section 16 Lost Spring

which was “known to all the Santa Fe Traders and trains.” I believe the Lost Spring Station was located for the convenience of the mail stages, not the freight caravans. Then, over time, the small spring adjacent to the Station became known as Lost Spring and has been promoted as such since the early 1900s.

The Cottonwood Crossing Chapter, with assistance of SFTA, NPS, Marion County, and the Shields Family, has constructed a Lost Spring Station historic interpretive site 2.5 miles west of the town of Lost Springs. The “Lost Spring, Marion County, Kansas – A Historical Perspective” provided the basis for the information presented at the interpretive site and for adding the “original” Lost Spring of Section 16 to the National Register of Historic Places. Both Lost Spring Station and the “original” Lost Spring of Section 16 are now in the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

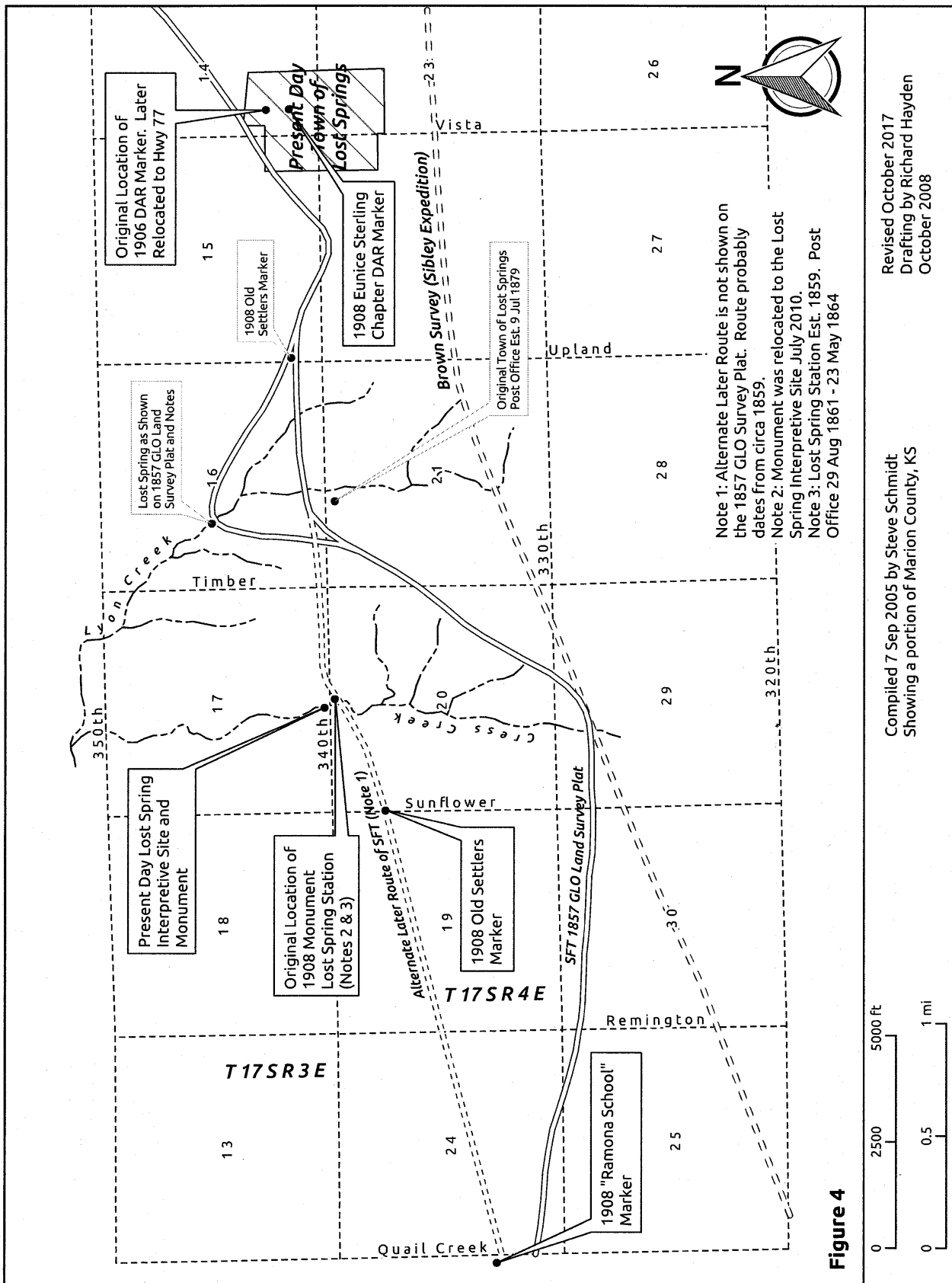
You are invited to read “Lost Spring, Marion County, Kansas – A Historical Perspective” to learn the very rich and interesting history of Lost Spring and Lost Spring Station, and to contemplate legend and fact. Thanks to Steve Brosemer, Emporia, Kansas, for locating the description of the “original” Lost Spring in the GLO survey notes, and to Richard Hayden, McPherson, Kansas, for drawing the figures presented in “Lost Spring, Marion County, Kansas – A Historical Perspective.”

*Younger readers may not recognize the title of this article as a play on words to mimic the host’s famous command given at the end of each segment of the TV game show To Tell the Truth from 1956 to 1978. ♦*

*Steve Schmidt is an SFTA Ambassador and owns French Frank’s Trail segment of the Santa Fe Trail in Marion County, Kansas.*



*Tom Frankenfield, George Schutte, Dick Toews, and Dennis Maggard (l to r) installed the Lost Spring Station site identification sign.*



Revised October 2017  
 Drafting by Richard Hayden  
 October 2008

Compiled 7 Sep 2005 by Steve Schmidt  
 Showing a portion of Marion County, KS

**Figure 4**

## Rock Creek Crossing Groundbreaking Ceremony Slated

By *Kenneth McClintock*

The Santa Fe Trail crossed Rock Creek about six miles east of Council Grove, Kansas, and about one-fourth mile north of U.S. Highway 56. Plans are being developed to provide public access to this significant remnant of the Trail. A groundbreaking ceremony for the site will be conducted at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, April 20.

The creek has a long history. Indians knew it as *Ne-Co-Its-Sa-Ba* (“Dead Man’s Creek”), because of some long-ago battle between Indian tribes.<sup>1</sup> By the time of the 1825-1827 surveys of the Santa Fe Trail, travelers knew it as “Rock Creek” because of the rocks along its banks and in the stream-bed.<sup>2</sup>

George C. Sibley, one of the three U.S. Commissioners tasked with overseeing the survey of the Santa Fe Trail, recorded in his journal for August 4, 1825, that their expedition party had halted at that creek, which he referred to as “another Stout Creek,” after dark, having travelled 13 miles that day.<sup>3</sup>

Sibley again mentioned Rock Creek when the road was re-surveyed in 1827. His journal entry for June 6, 1827, noted that Hickory [Bluff] Creek had but little timber. “Rock Creek has more. This is a beautiful Cr[ee]k & might afford Room for a Number of families near the Road. Land on the ridges poor—in the bottoms good. It is stoney on the ridges generally.”<sup>4</sup>

Joseph C. Brown, engineer of the survey expedition, described the Rock Creek crossing in his field notes dated October 27, 1827: “Rock Creek, a beautiful stream 50 links wide, runs southward. Ford and water good. Here is an excellent campground. This creek has some fine land and is tolerably well timbered.”<sup>5</sup>

Arthur I. Baker was a blacksmith



*Kenneth McClintock views the swale at crossing Rock Creek Crossing*

for, and at one time a trader with, the Sac and Fox Indians in Iowa. By 1846, most of the tribe had been removed to what is now Kansas, along with blacksmith Baker, who resigned in 1849 to trade again with the tribe.<sup>6</sup> When Kansas Territory opened for settlement in 1854, Baker took his family to the Rock Creek crossing, where he established a trading post about six miles east of Council Grove on what was then a part of the Kaw Reservation.

The only account (presently known to the author) by a Santa Fe traveler about the Rock Creek crossing was written by Irish artist William J. Hinchey. He travelled the Santa Fe Trail to New Mexico in 1854 to assist in restoring paintings in Spanish Missions and painting new ones. Ill health caused him to return to the States in 1855. He maintained a diary of his experiences and drew a number of pictures of sites along the trail. He described arriving in Council Grove on April 2, 1855, and camping at a creek [Big John Creek, a popular campground just east of Council Grove]. His entry for April 3, 1855, records: “This morning we set out from our little camp

after breakfasting, and passed Rock Creek about midday (where I bought liquor).”<sup>7</sup> That purchase would have been made at Baker’s store.

In the summer of 1855, the first Kansas Territorial Legislature passed an act making the Santa Fe Trail a Territorial Road from the Missouri border to Council Grove. The route is described in terms of settlers and their locations along the road. The last portion of the route is described as running from “C. Withington’s on One Hundred and Forty-Two Creek, thence to A. J. (sic) Baker’s at the crossing of Rock Creek, to Council Grove.”<sup>8</sup>

On July 3, 1862, the creek lived up to its former Indian name, with the murder of A. I. Baker and the mortal wounding of his brother-in-law, George Segur (whose surname is variously spelled as Segar, Seger, Seeger, Siegars, or Secor, in different accounts of the incident).<sup>9</sup> In a very real sense, the story of the Rock Creek crossing, recently certified as a historic site on the Santa Fe National Historic Trail, is the story of Arthur I. Baker.



In addition to his trading post, Baker built a stone house bearing a strong resemblance to the Kaw Mission building (now a State Historic Site) in Council Grove.<sup>10</sup> Later, a few residences and other buildings were erected, and the little settlement was known as Agnes City, named after Baker's mother, Agnes Baker, who was a housekeeper and cook at the Kaw Mission.<sup>11</sup>

A. I. Baker's position on the dominant issue of that day in Kansas Territory—whether it should become a slave state or a free state—is somewhat enigmatic. Historical accounts place him on opposite sides of that issue at different times.<sup>12</sup> However, in the first Territorial Legislature election in March 1855, he ran as a Free-State candidate for the House of Representatives.<sup>13</sup>

Baker out-pollled his pro-slavery opponent, Mobillon McGee of Missouri, and the Governor issued him a certificate of election. But when McGee contested the election, the House of Representatives in the overwhelmingly pro-slavery “Bogus Legislature” seated Mr. McGee rather than Mr. Baker.<sup>14</sup> The “Bogus Legislature” was so-named because of the thousands of Missourians who crossed the border into Kansas to vote in the election, taking over the polls.<sup>15</sup>

In 1857, Baker was named Probate Judge when the Breckinridge [now Lyon] County government was organized.<sup>16</sup> The Legislature designated Agnes City the temporary county seat, and it served as such until Americus won the first county seat election in 1858.<sup>17</sup> In 1864, a strip of land two miles wide (including Agnes City) was detached from Breckinridge County and transferred to Morris County.<sup>18</sup>

Along the Santa Fe Trail just a few miles east of Agnes City resided the pro-slavery Anderson family, who had come from Missouri. The Santa Fe Trail passed just north of their log house near Bluff Creek, and they did

some trading with passersby.<sup>19</sup> Of the six Anderson children, it was two brothers, Bill and Jim, who figure most prominently in the story of the Rock Creek crossing.

Bill and Jim Anderson became notorious for stealing horses, staining them with berry juices in a cave along Bluff Creek as a disguise, and then taking them to Missouri to sell.<sup>20</sup> The brothers were a threatening pair, and the local citizenry were fearful of them.<sup>21</sup>

In 1862, Lee Griffin, a cousin of the Anderson brothers, stole two horses from Ira Segur, the soon-to-be father-in-law to then-widower A. I. Baker. Baker witnessed Griffin in the possession of the horses, and obtained a warrant for Griffin's arrest. Bill, Jim, and their father, William Anderson, Sr., rode to Baker's house and threatened to kill him if he did not withdraw the warrant by 10:00 a.m. the following day.<sup>22</sup>

When Baker failed to withdraw the warrant, the elder Anderson returned to Baker's house with the intent to kill him. As Anderson was ascending the stairway to look for Baker on the second floor, Baker shot and killed Anderson in self-defense. The two brothers returned to Missouri, and as the weeks passed by, local citizens began to hope that the brothers had left for good. Their father was dead, and their mother had been killed by lightning a couple of years earlier.<sup>23</sup>

However, on the evening of July 3, 1862, a stranger came to the door of the Baker residence and identified himself as the boss of a wagon train camped nearby. He gave Baker a list of supplies they needed. This circumstance was not at all unusual in those days, so there was nothing to arouse suspicion. As a precaution, Baker, and his brother-in-law, George Segur, strapped on their guns and went to the store to assemble the merchandise ordered.<sup>24</sup>

As Baker and Segur were gathering the goods, Bill and Jim Anderson, Lee

Griffin, and an unidentified fourth man, burst through the door with guns blazing. The numerous accounts of the ensuing events differ in some details, but agree on the main points. Baker and Segur were in the basement to obtain goods, or they retreated there to avoid their attackers. Baker shot through the basement door and wounded Jim Anderson in the leg, and Baker and Segur were both wounded. The Andersons placed a heavy barrel to block the basement door, and set the store on fire.<sup>25</sup>

Young Segur was able to escape through a small basement window, but Baker was too large a man to follow. Baker shot himself in the head to avoid burning to death. Segur was able to tell what had happened before dying of his wounds the following day.<sup>26</sup>

When the gunfire started, Baker's wife and the other members of the household fled into the nearby woods and hid until the assailants were gone.<sup>27</sup> Accounts differ as to whether the residence was also set afire by the Andersons, or by wind-blown embers from the burning store.<sup>28</sup> In 1972, a team from Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, [now Emporia State University], conducted an archaeological dig at the site of the Baker residence, recovering numerous artifacts currently in the possession of the Kansas Historical Society.<sup>29</sup>

Although Bill Anderson's murder of A. I. Baker was his first murder, it was not his last. Among other infamous ventures, he rode with William C. Quantrill in the catastrophic raid on Lawrence on August 21, 1863.<sup>30</sup> He and his own guerilla band of Confederate sympathizers were responsible for the massacre of about 24 unarmed Federal soldiers at Centralia, Missouri, on September 27, 1864.<sup>31</sup>

Anderson met his own fate at the hands of Federal soldiers on October 27, 1864, at Albany, Missouri, by which time he was well-known and feared as “Bloody Bill” Anderson.<sup>32</sup> Reportedly, he kept track of

his killings by tying a knot in a silken cord for each of his victims. What is believed to be that silken cord contains fifty-three knots.<sup>33</sup> The first knot represents what happened at Rock Creek on July 3, 1862.

Today the Rock Creek crossing, out of service since 1866,<sup>34</sup> is located on private land, inaccessible to the general public. Landowner Della Orton lives in the nearby farmhouse in which she grew up, on land owned by her ancestors for many decades. She recalls playing as a child among the foundation stones of one of Baker's buildings. Whether it was the residence or the store, she does not know. She recalls the days riding with her grandfather, Alfred Richards, in his pickup truck, with him showing her where the Santa Fe Trail crossed their property.<sup>35</sup> It is her desire to open this Santa Fe Trail site to the public, and she has been working with the National Park Service to create public access.

#### End Notes:

1. Maloy, John, *History of Morris County 1820 to 1890*, [A series of late 19th Century newspaper columns reprinted by the Morris County Historical Society (1981)], 33.
2. Gregg, Kate L., *The Road to Santa Fe, The Journal and Diaries of George Champlin Sibley* (1952), p. 183 [Sibley journal entry for June 6, 1827] and p. 185 [Sibley journal entry for June 14, 1827].
3. *Ibid.*, 56.
4. *Ibid.*, 183.
5. *SANTA FE TRAIL. Brief Summary of the Santa Fe Trail through Kansas, with report of the Committee Appointed to Prepare a Correct Map*, reprinted from the *Eighteenth Biennial Report of the Kansas State Historical Society* (1911-12), 14.
6. Shimeall, William Michael, *Arthur Inghram Baker: Frontier Kansan* (A thesis presented to the Division of Social Services, Emporia State University) (1978), 10-13, 34-36.
7. Cartwright, Anna Belle, Editor, "William James Hinchey: An Irish Artist on the Santa Fe Trail, Part III", *Wagon Tracks* (Nov. 1996), 17.
8. *Statutes of Kansas Territory, 1855*, Chapter 118, Section 1.
9. There are at least 11 published accounts

of the circumstances surrounding the murder of A. I. Baker, with numerous variances in details. The author has exercised his judgment to relate those details which seem most likely to be true.

10. Shimeall, *Arthur Inghram Baker: Frontier Kansan*, 39-41.
11. *Ibid.*, 37, 39. One of the other residences at Agnes City was that of Eli Sewell, a brother-in-law of Baker. Connelly, William E., Interviews July 7, 1910, with Eli Sewell and B. F. Munkers [Munkres], William E. Connelly Collection, Box 13, Kansas Historical Society.
12. Maloy, *History of Morris County 1820 to 1890*, 6, 7, 37; Shimeall, *Ibid.*, 236-238.
13. Maloy, *Ibid.*, 6, 37.
14. *Ibid.*, 6.
15. Isely, Bliss, and Richards, W. M., *Four Centuries in Kansas* (1941), 129-130; Shimeall, *ibid.*, 118.
16. Jackson, Nelloise, *The Two Agnes Cities (1857-1871)*, (1985), 3
17. *ibid.*, 3; *Laws of Kansas Territory 1857*, 90, "An Act to Organize Breckinridge County."
18. *Laws of State of Kansas 1864*, Chapter 22, Sections 1-2.
19. Connelly, Interviews July 7, 1910; Castel, Albert, and Goodrich, Thomas, *Bloody Bill Anderson, The Short Savage Life of a Civil War Guerilla* (1998), 12.
20. Local oral legend has it that the Andersons stained their stolen horses with berry juices, hidden in a cave on Bluff Creek, to disguise the horses before taking them to Missouri for sale. The author has been unable to find written documentation. The author was, in 2000, informed by local historian Don Schiesser that he had located the cave and the probable site of the Anderson cabin. Ca. 2010, the author was informed by a descendant of a brother of Bloody Bill Anderson that their family history passed down over the years described Bill and Jim Anderson staining their stolen horses in a cave.
21. Brigham, Lalla M., *The Story of Council Grove on the Santa Fe Trail* (1921), 9.
22. Castel, *Bloody Bill Anderson*, 15-16; Maloy, *History of Morris County 1820 to 1890*, 38.
23. Castel, *Ibid.*, 16; Maloy, *Ibid.*, 38.
24. Castel, *Ibid.*, 16-17; Maloy, *Ibid.*, 38.
25. *Ibid.*
26. *Ibid.*
27. *Ibid.*, Jackson, *The Two Agnes Cities*, 19

28. *Ibid.*
29. Jackson, *ibid.*, 6-7; Author's conversations with Randall M. Thies, Archaeologist, Kansas State Historical Society (April, 1999).
30. Castel, *Bloody Bill Anderson*, 27-29.
31. *Ibid.*, 97-98.
32. *Ibid.*, 125-126.
33. *Ibid.*, 127.
34. *The Standard Atlas of Morris County, Kansas* (1901), compiled by Geo. A. Ogle & Co., Chicago, at p. 19, shows a county road angling northeasterly-southwesterly across the south half of Section 12, Township 16 South, Range 9 East of the 6th P.M. [just south of the route of the Santa Fe Trail through that Section]. The same road is shown in the 1923 Morris County Atlas published by Ogle. Beginning in 1866, the legal descriptions in deeds to the south half of Section 12 describe tracts north and south of that angling county road. Book B, Deeds, Page 430, Morris County Register of Deeds. The County Commissioners Minutes for their meetings prior to 1867 have been missing for many years, which should show the opening of that road. In the fall of 1866 the Kansas Pacific railroad reached Junction City, after which time freighters offloaded at the railhead, taking the Fort Riley to Fort Larned military road to reach the Santa Fe Trail, bypassing Council Grove. It is the author's conclusion that the county road was laid out no later than 1866, rendering the nearby Santa Fe Trail unnecessary and abandoned. That county road was itself abandoned and vacated many years ago.
35. Author's conversations with Della Orton (2017) ♦

*Kenneth W. McClintock is a lifelong resident of Council Grove, Kansas. He is considered the town's unofficial historian, and has published numerous articles about local history. Since 2002, he and his wife, Shirley, have been the volunteers operating the Trail Days Café & Museum, located in the Rawlinson-Terwilliger Home, which is certified both as a historic site and as an interpretive site on the Santa Fe National Historic Trail.*



## Have You Paid Your Dues?

By Marcia Fox, Membership Chair

Nearly two hundred years ago a man named William Becknell along with a few associates risked everything to complete a trade venture with the people of Santa Fe, Mexico. It was then, 1821, that the Santa Fe Trail came into existence as the first international trade route in the United States. It not only connected Mexico and our country, but throughout its history the Trail contributed to the expansion of the United States and provided an economic boost to the country.

More than 30 years ago, a group of people who believed the history and the remnants of the Trail needed to be preserved as an important part of the history of the United States formed the Santa Fe Trail Association. The mission of the Association is to protect and preserve the history and remaining physical remnants of the Trail, and to educate visitors and others of its history. This cannot be accomplished without the support of our members and the support of the National Park Service.

Have you submitted your 2018 dues? If you have, the Membership Committee would like to thank you for your continued support of the Association's work to preserve and protect the Santa Fe National Historic Trail.

If you are hesitant about renewing your membership because of the increase in dues, we would like to remind you that the Board did not make this decision without considerable thought. For years the Association has relied extensively on the support provided by the National Park Service. This support has helped us keep dues lower and still be able to complete our many programs which continue to promote and preserve the heritage of the Trail. But now with the strong possibility of less financial support from NPS, we have no choice but to raise the dues to help sustain the programs of the Association.

At the April 2017 meeting of the Association Board the membership committee presented this report: "*The 2017 SFTA budget is \$184,222. Currently the portion of the budget actually contributed by the Association is \$42,895. Based on our current membership this comes to almost \$84 per person. If we are to continue all the programs and benefits related to the trail without the support of the National Park we would need \$360 per member. Our current dues at this time [April 2017] are individual \$35 and \$40 for a family. This includes the four issues of Wagon Tracks which actually cost \$30.08 per year per member.*" After much discussion it was decided to raise the dues. The Association dues are now: Individual membership--\$50; Family--\$65; Non-Profit Institutions--\$65; Business--\$65; Patron \$100; Youth (18 and under) \$5; and Lifetime Member \$1000 (can be paid in one payment or in 4 payments over 4 years).

The Association appreciates all of those who agreed with the Board members and have paid their dues for 2018. We hope that by understanding the dire conditions facing the Association if the National Park Service budget is decreased, those of you who have hesitated to pay your dues or chosen to withdraw your support of the Santa Fe Trail will change your mind.

We also encourage you to invite your friends and relatives to a chapter meeting, share your *Wagon Tracks* with them and, best of all, provide them with a new membership form which may be downloaded from [www.santafetrail.org/Santa-Fe-Trail-Association-Membership-Form.pdf](http://www.santafetrail.org/Santa-Fe-Trail-Association-Membership-Form.pdf). Please send your check to the SFTA Association Headquarters at 1349 K-156 Hwy, Larned, KS 67550. We would like to encourage you to do this promptly as your subscription to *Wagon Tracks* will end soon. ♦



*Frigid weather did not stop Linda Colle of the Quivira Chapter, NPS representatives Linda Carole Wendler, Bryan Petrtyl, and Jeffrey Denny, along with the consultant Lyn Henley and her artist David from reviewing proposed sites for the Little Arkansas sign project.*

# The River, the Rock, and the Road

*Why the head of the Santa Fe Trail was in the Kansas City area from almost the beginning to the end*

By Craig Crease

*This article is based on Crease's closing presentation made at the SFTA symposium in September 2017.*

Kansas City is favored with a singular and unique historical circumstance, unduplicated anywhere else in America. Here the Oregon Trail and the California Trail follow the same course as the earlier-established Santa Fe Trail, enriching and deepening the special legacy of this great road to the frontier.



*The river, the rock, and the road...* or to put it into the language of the three great nations whose destiny is intertwined with America, the Kansas City area, and the Santa Fe Trail—*Pekitanoui, La Roche, El Camino*—*Pekitanoui*, the Osage Indian word for the Missouri River, *La Roche* from the French, *El Camino* from the Spanish.

Thomas Jefferson in 1785 stated un-

equivocally:

*The Mississippi will be one of the principal channels of future commerce for the country westward of the Alleghany. From the mouth of this river to where it receives the Ohio, is 1,000 miles by water but only 500 by land.... The Mississippi, below the mouth of the Missouri, is always muddy.... The Missouri is, in fact, the principal river, contributing more to the common stream than does the Mississippi, even after its junction with the Illinois. It is remarkably cold, muddy, and rapid....*<sup>1</sup>

France, Spain, and this particular bend of the Missouri River at Kansas City all come together to illustrate and illuminate this story of the Santa Fe Trail.

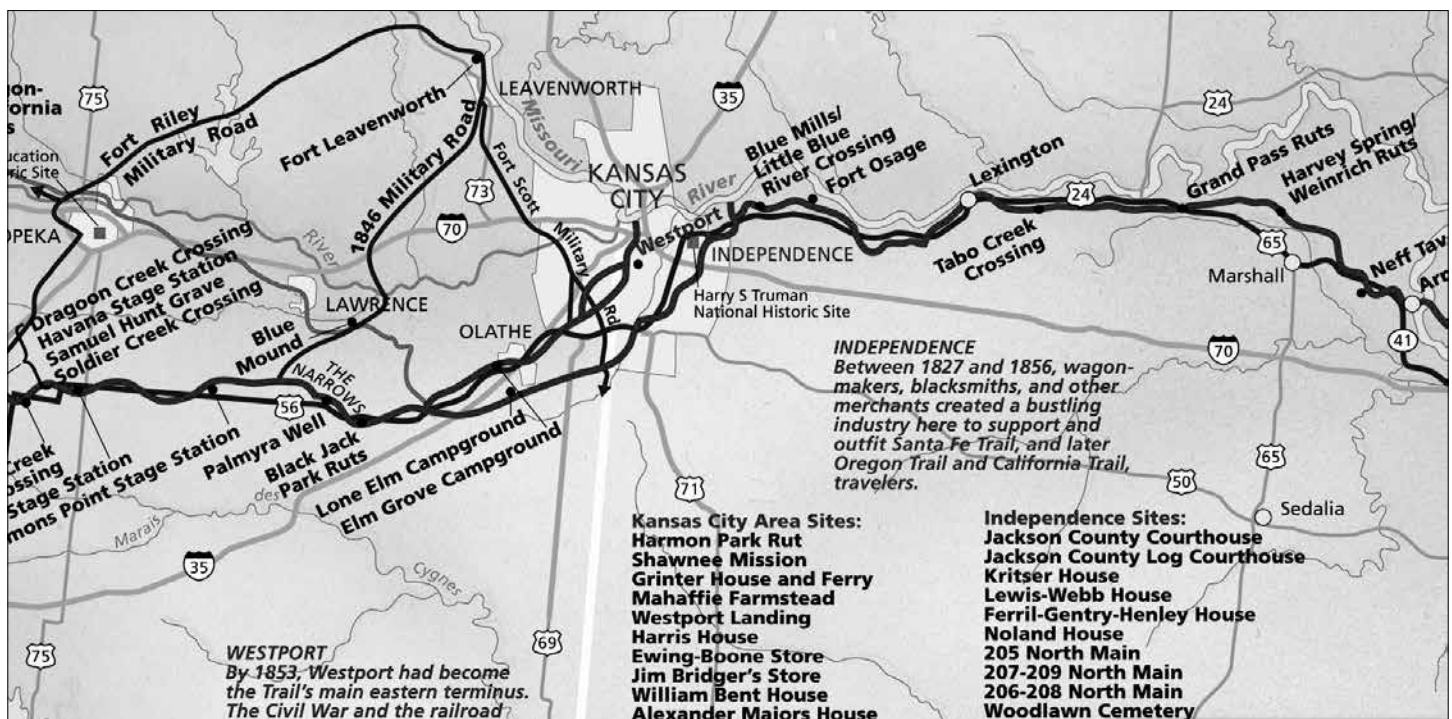
Frontier newspaperman Robert Van Horn, one of Kansas City's founders, had this to say in 1857 in the pages of his *Kansas City Journal*:

*God has marked out by topography the lines of commerce,.... and it is by study-*

*ing these great tracings of the Almighty's finger that the pioneer of trade and the herald of civilization has selected the site of those gigantic cities of the Republic.... and which has fixed upon the rock-bound bay of the Missouri and Kansas as the last great seat of wealth, trade, and population in the westward march of commerce.... if men will only study topography the problem is solved.*<sup>2</sup>

The great northward bend of the Missouri River at Kansas City has a unique attribute that sets it apart from all the other meanderings and bends of this mighty winding river, and sets a geographic imperative here that compels this as the location of the Santa Fe Trail trailhead, and in later years the Oregon and California trailheads. For it is here, and only here, that the Missouri reaches its most southwesterly point in the United States, from its headwaters northwest in Montana.

Traveling by water from the East in the first half of the nineteenth century,



*Kansas City and environs east and west. See the entire trail at [www.nps.gov/safe/planyourvisit/maps.htm](http://www.nps.gov/safe/planyourvisit/maps.htm)*

the steamboat route would follow the Ohio River southwest to its junction with the Mississippi near present Paducah, Kentucky, then north up the Mississippi to the mouth of the Missouri at St. Louis, and finally west across the young state of Missouri to the Kansas City area where the water route to the southwest, and especially to Santa Fe, would end at this mighty bend. Then, unloading off the steamboats tons of Santa Fe-bound goods on the solid rock landing known first as Kansas Landing and later Westport Landing, less than one mile east of this great northward river bend, the great overland trip to Santa Fe would begin. Steamboats unloaded further east at nearby Independence and Lexington as well, but it is only at Westport Landing that the full advantage of proximity to that river bend could be attained by the Santa Fe traders, and in later years, emigrants, mountain men, and missionaries.

Although the geography under discussion is local, it had national implications as it compelled a certain pattern in the western movement of the country, even several hundred years ago. The topography of the nation follows the same logic today as it did when Europeans first ventured west. The first Europeans to appreciate the physical and strategic attributes of this particular bend of the river were the French.

French incursions into the heart of the Kansas City area began as early as 1680, when two French trappers were held here at the mouth of the Kansas River by Missouri Indians.<sup>3</sup> By 1700 this area was at the center of a vast Missouri River French fur trade that grew throughout the 18th century. Formal French exploration of the Kansas City area came by 1714 when a young French officer, one Etienne Veniard de Bourgmont, explored this area to develop for France a “*Route to Follow to Mount the Missouri*.” His report on this area stated:

*There are the Missouri's, a nation of savages, bearing the name of the river,*

*who are allies of the French. There are also Auzages [Osages], another savage nation, allies and friends of the French. Their entire commerce is in furs.... They are a splendid race, and more alert the[a]n any other nation. All Missouri furnishes fine skins of all kinds, the climate there being very cold....*

*Upstream is a smaller river which flows into the Missouri, called the Riviere d'Ecanze [Kansas] and a nation of the same name, ally and friend of the French; their trade is in furs.... This is the finest country, and the most beautiful land in the world; the prairies are like the seas, and filled with wild animals; especially oxen, cattle, hind, and stag, in such quantities as to surpass the imagination. They hunt almost entirely with the arrow.... they have splendid horses and are fine riders.<sup>4</sup>*

Bourgmont undoubtedly recalled his words a decade later in 1724 when he led a group of French soldiers to the midwest to build a small post, called Fort Orleans, on the left bank of the Missouri River, near present-day Brunswick, Missouri.<sup>5</sup> Although Fort Orleans was in use for only five years, it served as the launching point for Bourgmont to venture west and southwest to pursue a long sought plum for the French....the friendship of and an alliance with the Padoucas, described modernly and interchangeably as the Plains Apache and/or Comanche. This alliance, Bourgmont believed, would remove the last impediment to a French approach to Spanish Santa Fe. In this Bourgmont was successful, and such is the legacy for him and Fort Orleans.<sup>6</sup>

By 1744 another French fort was up and running on the Missouri River, this time north of the mouth of the Kansas River some thirty miles, on the right bank of the Missouri about three miles above present-day Fort Leavenworth. For two decades Fort De Cavagnial, named after the governor at that time of French Louisiana Territory, was France's flagship fort, and in fact only fort, on the upper Mis-

souri. This French fort, which operated both as a military outpost and a fur trading depot, dominated the Indian fur trade in this area, especially with the Kansa tribe whose village sat in the valley just below the fort. In 1764 Fort De Cavagnial was abandoned, as France ceded the Louisiana Territory to Spain.<sup>7</sup>

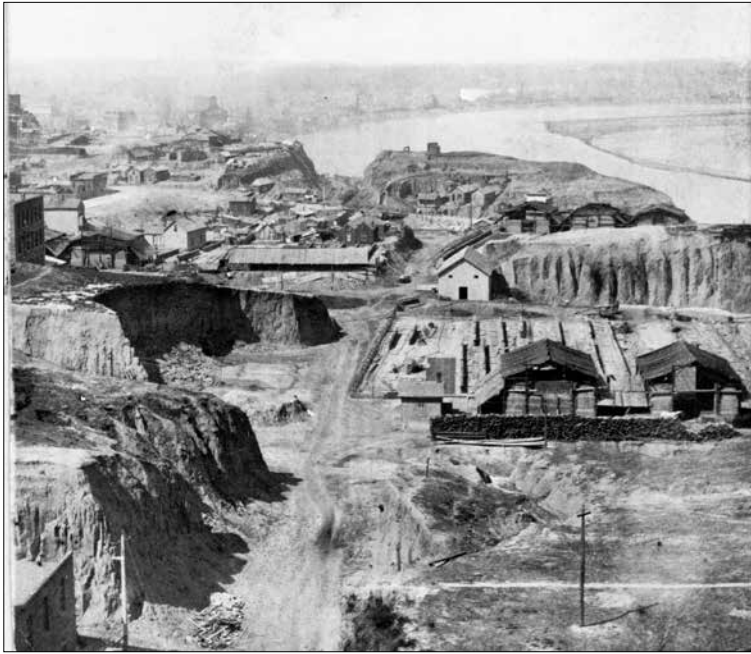
❖ ❖ ❖

The Spanish in the southwest also had their eyes on this area, and in fact by 1792 had sent Pedro Vial out from Santa Fe towards the Kansas River with orders to open lines of communication between the Spanish settlements and those of upper Louisiana Territory, in a journey that some historians consider the genesis of the Santa Fe Trail.<sup>8</sup> But a short eight years later, by the secret treaty of San Ildefonso, Napoleon Bonaparte secured Louisiana Territory in 1800 back from Spain, the same territory France had ceded to Spain 37 years before.<sup>9</sup> This was a short-lived land deal, as Napoleon turned around just three years later and sold his real estate to the ambitious president of a fledgling nation, Thomas Jefferson.<sup>10</sup>

To explore, confirm, and validate his purchase of this huge Louisiana territory, of which neither the buyers nor the sellers knew the extent or limits of what had been purchased, Jefferson's administration sent out two legendary exploring expeditions; Lewis and Clark by water to the Northwest in 1804, and right on its heels in 1806, Zebulon Pike's expedition by land to the Southwest.<sup>11</sup>

Lewis and Clark had much to say about this area, where the mouth of the Kansas River and the great northwest bend of the Missouri are located together in modern downtown Kansas City. Like the French and the Spanish before them, they took special note of the geographic attributes of this area. Meriwether Lewis even proposed to Thomas Jefferson in 1803, prior to his expedition's departure, that he should go up the Kansas River toward Santa





Looking west from 3rd and Main, Kansas City, towards the big northward bend of the Missouri, circa 1860. Image likely taken from a balloon. Courtesy Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri



Right, Modern aerial of the final northward bend of the Missouri. Westport Landing sits between the bridges, just east of the mouth of the Kansas river. Google Earth, author's collection.

Fe..." on the subject of the expedition in which I am engaged, I have concluded to make a tour this winter on horseback of some hundred miles through the most interesting portion of the country adjoining my winter establishment; perhaps it may be up the Canceze River and towards SanteFee.... In the same communication Lewis proposed to have Clark make his own .... "excursion through some other part of the country."<sup>12</sup>

Although these particular plans of Meriwether Lewis did not come to pass, it bears repeating that the young American republic was the third great nation, along with Spain and France, who were early on enamored of forging a link between this bend of the Missouri and the mouth of the Kansas River. Echoes of Bourgmont and Vial ring in those words of Meriwether Lewis.

Lewis and Clark did spend several days in this area in June of 1804. Clark chose the site of Fort Osage, that he

would build four years later in 1808, on this upriver trip.<sup>13</sup> On the trip down the Missouri, both Lewis and Clark took note of a particular geographic advantage. On September 15, 1806, they climbed a hill on the right bank of the Missouri overlooking it and the mouth of the Kansas. The hill "which appeared to have a commanding Situation for a fort, the Shore is bold and rocky, immediately at the foot of the hill, from the top of the hill you have a perfect Command of the river."<sup>14</sup>

William Clark did return to this area in 1808, this time in his capacity as head of Indian affairs for the Louisiana Territory. He led a company of US Infantry Dragoons to the high bluff on the Missouri River's right bank that he noted in 1804, located in the northeast corner of modern Jackson County, Missouri, and some twenty miles due east of that last big bend of the Missouri at the mouth of the Kansas River. On this high promontory point Clark erected Fort Osage.

Created for control and protection of the Osage Indians, this stockade fort was the defacto ratification of a treaty with the Osages in the same year, in which the Osages ceded millions of acres in Missouri and Arkansas to the Americans, and retained only a small strip south of the Missouri river and west of Fort Osage.<sup>15</sup>

Along with being America's farthest-flung western outpost at the time, its presence at this particular spot on the mighty Missouri River put Fort Osage in a unique position to both observe and participate in the westward experience of the early 19th century. The movers and shakers of the early west moved by and through Fort Osage; fur merchants Manuel Lisa and Pierre Chouteau, a precocious young Sacagawea just before the end of her tragically short life, and frontier icon Daniel Boone in the sunset years of his, and mountain men Jim Bridger and Jedidiah Smith. The mysterious Dr. John Robinson, fresh

from intrigues in the Southwest with Zebulon Pike, was the fort's sutler for a time, as was David Meriwether in the early 1820s, who would become Governor of New Mexico Territory some 30 years later. Lilburn Boggs was employed at the fort. He gained his own measure of notoriety later as Governor of Missouri, and architect of the Mormon expulsion from Jackson County in the late 1830s, before he headed west to California in the great emigration of 1849 on the California Trail.

The famous and infamous aside, the day-to-day business of Fort Osage was as a "factory," an idea borrowed from the French. In reality the factory system was a kind of welfare program for the Indian tribes, where the American government guaranteed the purchase of the Indian furs in a sincere but misguided attempt to protect and promote the Indian trade. Instead it created an artificial dependency economy.

Yet under those restrictive covenants, Fort Osage's hard-working factor George Sibley,<sup>16</sup> who ruled over the fort in its almost two decades of existence, was respected by Indians and whites alike, and was one of the few to run his factory fort as a successful

and profitable business. By 1822 the American government abandoned the factory system, and Fort Osage was decommissioned, although Sibley himself bought the fort and tried to run it as a private enterprise for several years.<sup>17</sup>

However, the key year to be considered in Fort Osage's storied tenure is 1821, when the area known today as Kansas City (and Independence, and Westport) was in a wild and undeveloped state. What would become Jackson County was still Osage Indian land (until 1825) and the only other sign of civilization was Fort Osage's tandem anchor on the Missouri River 20 miles east, the small fur trading post of Francois Chouteau near the mouth of the Kansas River. The Missouri River meandered unrestricted along the north boundary of the county, and the Big Blue River and its tributaries, Indian Creek and Brush Creek, flooded out almost every spring, a legacy that those who are modern Kansas City natives are contemporarily and painfully aware of.

So the year 1821 found this area a virgin land of rolling river valleys, ridges and divides, marked by trees only along the waterways, and creeks that

flooded every spring. On a national basis, however, by 1821 the main way west was by water, via the Ohio River, the Mississippi, and west on the Missouri River to the Booneslick country in the middle of the brand new state of Missouri, to the end of civilization at that time.

In that turning point year of 1821 the young American republic found itself extended from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, with a tenuous sliver of frontier extending cautiously westward along the Missouri River from its mouth near St. Louis. On this little string of pearls westward along the Missouri were only two jewels: the aforementioned Fort Osage perched on that commanding bluff overlooking the river on the western end of Missouri, and the other a little steamboat landing and village and "civilized" society's last far-flung enclave, Franklin, precariously situated in the Missouri River floodplain, across from present-day Boonville in the center of the state.

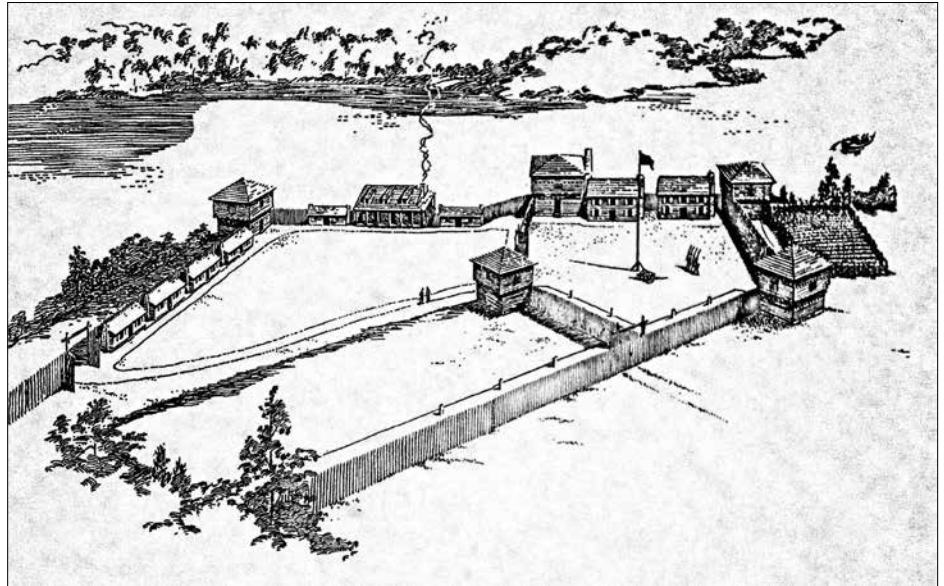
Out of the Franklin area, in that fateful year of 1821, ventured a down-on-his-luck and debt-ridden William Becknell, leading a little group of five companions ostensibly to trade with the Indians in the southwest. He stopped at Fort Osage on the way out, gathering medicines and supplies, and writing last letters home. He left no record in his journal of his exact route from there, but today we know that in the greater Kansas City area he followed a route crossing the Big Blue River in today's Swope Park, and continued to cross the western border of the infant state of Missouri nine miles south of the mouth of the Kansas River. From there he continued southwest across present Kansas and into Mexican territory on the plains of present northern New Mexico. Becknell's timing was singular and fortuitous, as Mexico was in the throes of breaking off from Spain, declaring independence, and in the process throwing off decades of trade restrictions. Three-hundred-year-old colonial Santa Fe welcomed Becknell and



*The River and the Rock : Westport Landing, circa 1867. Courtesy Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri*

his little brigade, and this legendary trade route was opened between the two young nations.<sup>18</sup>

The apocryphal ending of Becknell's trip has him returning to Franklin, and gutting a stiff saddlebag to release the clatter and tinkle of Mexican silver on stone gutters below, all to a mindful and eager audience. The very next year, 1822, Becknell took the first wagons out over the virgin trace he had blazed; three wagons loaded with trade goods for a commodity-starved Santa Fe, accompanied by almost two dozen men.<sup>19</sup> From this moment on, the wagons on the Santa Fe Trail never stopped rolling for almost 60 years.



Fort Osage - 1808-1825.

The Santa Fe Trail in its formative years, 1821 to 1827, followed two routes in the greater Kansas City area, dictated, as has since become abundantly obvious, by the advantages and impediments of geography.<sup>20</sup> One route was that of Becknell's ground-breaking 1821 course, proceeding west from Fort Osage across the Little Blue River, turning southwest to run on the ridge east of the Big Blue River. This trail stayed on the ridge between the Blues and east of the 1827 location of Independence. It continued southwest through present Raytown, finally turning west to cross the Big Blue River in Swope Park and cross the state line four miles west at a point nine miles south of the mouth of the Kansas River; today that nine mile point is near the busy intersection of 79th Street and State Line Road. The trail continued into modern Johnson County some 15 miles to the rendezvous and campground then known as Round Grove, but now known as Lone Elm Campground.<sup>21</sup>

The other local route of the Santa Fe Trail in this early period ran south from the Fort Osage area following a ridge east of the Little Blue River to a common rendezvous point for traders from the Franklin area and other points on the river known as the "Blue Spring," located in the

present-day city of Blue Springs. This trail continued south through modern Jackson County on this ridge, then crossed the Little Blue River near present Grandview, and crossed both the state line and the Big Blue River at the same place, a superlative smooth rock river crossing located at about 151st and State Line Road of today.<sup>22</sup>

Four key events happened in the last year of this early formative period, 1827. These events would shape the situation and circumstance of the trails in this area for the remainder of their existence here. First, in that year George Sibley, the former factor of Fort Osage, was in the third and final year of the of the Sibley Survey of the Santa Fe Trail, the young federal government's attempt to codify the traders route between the United States and Mexico. Sibley made a change in the northerly route that crossed the state line at the nine mile point. He bypassed the Round Grove for a more direct route to the north, crossing Cedar Creek, a campground Sibley named Caravan Grove, but today much better known by the name of Elm Grove Campground.<sup>23</sup>

The second and third important

events of 1827 brought two new outposts of civilization to the western Missouri wilderness. Fort Leavenworth was erected as "Cantonment Leavenworth" on the right bank of the Missouri some thirty miles north of Kansas City. Also, the county seat of Jackson County was established on a plateau about three miles south of the Missouri River. This little village and new county seat was Independence.

Finally, in that bellweather year of 1827, an event took place that foreshadowed the Oregon-California Trails in this area, and compelled its later location, although it is only with the clarity of hindsight that we recognize it as such today. Eastbound in the dead of winter, William Sublette and Moses "Black" Harris, in a 1,500 mile journey that almost killed them from starvation and perilous cold, came down the Kansas River valley and struck the Santa Fe Trail in today's southwest Johnson County, then followed it back to the settlements, and ultimately to a critical rendezvous with William Ashley in St. Louis.<sup>24</sup> Thus was "Sublette's Trace" created in this area a full fourteen years before it would develop as the line of progress for the great emi-

grations to Oregon and California, and gain the name of the Oregon Trail.



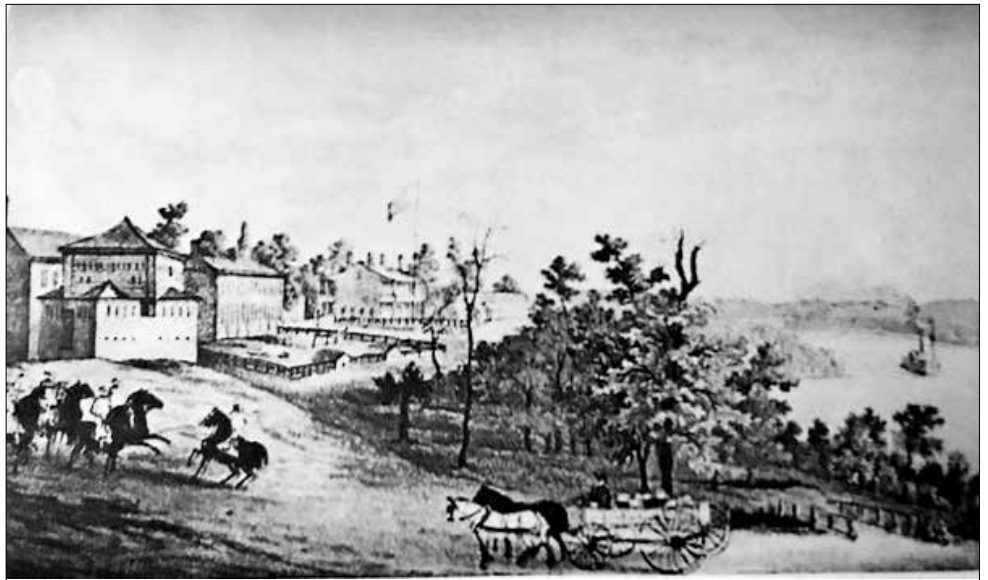
By 1828, with the founding of Independence the previous year, the routes in the greater Kansas City area by the Santa Fe traders and mountain men began to evolve, and would continue to do so based on geographic and political circumstances throughout this decade to 1839, to the very eve of the great emigrations.

Independence gave all travelers west a secure and consistent outfitting point, at a location deep into the Missouri territory, and probably most critically, located only twelve miles west of the Missouri's final big bend to the north. This was particularly compelling to traders carrying loaded wagons to Santa Fe, as it was virtually the farthest point west that they could bring their goods by water before heading southwest down the Santa Fe Trail. Critical to that situation was another geographic concern, a safe and solid rock landing on the Missouri.

Independence in its earliest years drew its river traffic off of the Blue Mills landing, today located on dry land several miles northeast of Independence, but by 1830 a good landing was in use three miles due north of Independence. Today it is remembered as the Independence or Wayne City landing.<sup>25</sup>

By 1830 travelers and traders began to bypass the Blue Spring route east of the Little Blue River in favor of a route that came through Independence and continued southwest along the Blue Ridge, meeting the old route from the Blue Spring west of present Grandview, effectively cutting off the old route east of that point. This new route continued to cross the Big Blue River and the western border of Missouri near today's 151st and State Line Road.<sup>26</sup>

In 1830 another event took place that foreshadowed the Oregon and California Trails; William Sublette



*Fort Leavenworth, circa 1840. Artist unknown.*

led eighty-one mule-mounted men and a caravan of ten wagons and two dearborns "nearly due west to the Western limits of the State, and thence along the Santa Fe Trail about forty miles, from which the course was some degrees north of west, across the waters of the Kansas, and up the Great Platte river."<sup>27</sup> This was the first expedition to take wagons as far as the Rocky Mountains, and this single achievement signaled the transition from "Sublette's Trace" to the great path to the west and the Pacific that so many people would follow before the decade was out.<sup>28</sup>

Also in 1830 came a solution to a percolating problem that was coming to a head. Known officially as the Indian Removal Act of 1830, it was part of the federal government's plan to create a permanent Indian frontier, to create a permanent western home for all Indian tribes from the East, free from white incursion. Tribes such as the Shawnee, Delaware, and the Miami were transplanted here, and their reservations bordered the state line and ran west for some fifty miles. To control this contrived "permanent Indian frontier," the government envisioned a string of forts running from Fort Snelling in present-day Minnesota to Fort Towson in present-day Oklahoma.<sup>29</sup>

However the biggest effect that the

Indian Removal Act of 1830 had on this area was that it kept the land west of the state line free of permanent white settlement for almost 25 years, until the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854<sup>30</sup> extinguished the Indian treaties and opened this area up to settlement. This invisible line for 25 years kept all the opportunities for outfitting of traders and travelers to the east side of the state line, and so fueled the economy of Independence, until a little upstart village called Westport sprang up between Independence and the state line in 1834.

Westport was founded four miles south of the Missouri River and almost 12 miles west of Independence, very near the state line. That same year of 1834, the founder of Westport, John C. McCoy, discovered a new rock landing on the river near present Grand Avenue in downtown Kansas City, and within a mile of the mouth of the Kansas River and the Missouri's final big bend north. With the discovery of this "Westport landing" some 12 miles upstream from the Independence landing, traders and travelers could choose to unload their goods here and avoid a serious problem, the troublesome and sometimes dangerous crossing of the flood-prone Big Blue River. Again, geography dictated circumstance.

The route from the Westport landing ran south through present downtown Kansas City, meandering generally between Grand and Broadway of today, and continued into Westport. Two routes, up till 1839, exited out of Westport, one running south to meet up with the old route coming west off of the Big Blue River in today's Swope Park. The other route ran south-west out of Westport and continued through the Indian missions located just across the Missouri state line, the Shawnee Methodist, Baptist, and Quaker missions.<sup>31</sup>

Adding to Westport's viability in this decade was Chouteau's landing, created after the 1826 flood that destroyed Francois Chouteau's 1821 post. Located about a mile downstream from the Westport landing, by the early 1830s McCoy described it as "*one of the largest and best farms in the county. . . . with a steamboat landing, warehouses, and costly dwellings.*"<sup>32</sup> But nature again disfavored the Chouteau's in 1844, when another flood left the entire farm and steamboat landing under five feet of mud and sand, bringing to a close the Chouteau legacy at the mouth of the Kansas River, and effectively drawing the curtain of over 150 years of French influence on this area.

By the end of this decade of the 1830s there were three other routes supplementing the trails out of Westport and Independence. In 1832 the young county government of Jackson County created a road from Independence east to Lexington for the advantage of traders and travelers east of Independence, to replace the old original 1821 route to Fort Osage. Today this route is known as the Old Lexington Road.<sup>33</sup>

The Fort Leavenworth Military Road was created in 1837 to parallel and patrol the so-called "permanent Indian frontier," part of the government's Indian Removal Act of 1830 to transfer the Indian tribes of the east to the west without interference from white settlers. The road's location, near the state line, with a close-in crossing of

the Kansas River, and a good road through the Delaware Indian lands to Fort Leavenworth, made this military road a favorite access route to the great plains and beyond.

The third route began as a local trail through the lands of the Shawnee Indians, running west from Westport through present-day Johnson and Douglas counties. This trail was used during the 1830s and 1840s by Indians, missionaries, and surveyors. John C. Fremont led one of his expeditions down this road. By the mid-1850s it was known locally as the Westport-to-Lawrence Road. From 1855 to the eve of the Civil War in 1860 it was best known as the California Road. The perils of local guerilla warfare in and near southern Johnson County, Kansas, drove emigrant traffic, and even some traders, north to this road, which connected with the Oregon-California Trail proper at the Blue-jacket crossings of the Wakarusa River near Lawrence.

By the early 1830s Independence had achieved dominance as the main outfitting point over Fort Osage and other landings to the east. But as the decade closed, and the opportunities for commerce expanded to include outfitting for the Indian trade, the Rocky Mountain fur trade, and especially emigrant wagon trains headed for Oregon and the Pacific, Westport began to provide serious competition for Independence.



By 1840 the Santa Fe Trail had evolved into its final basic form in the greater Kansas City area, and by 1841 these mature routes of the Santa Fe Trail were sustaining regular traffic from Oregon and California emigrants, as well as Santa Fe traders.

The trail southwest out of Westport through the Indian missions remained essentially the same. However, the crossing of the original Santa Fe Trail at the Big Blue River in Swope Park fell into disuse in the 1840s, so the

route that ran south from Westport now crossed the Missouri state line at about present day 69th Street, effectively cutting off the old state line crossing about a mile south. This road that crossed into Kansas Territory near present 69th Street became one of the first official territorial roads designated by the Kansas territorial government in 1855.<sup>34</sup>

The trail south from Westport Landing continued to meander through modern downtown Kansas City to Westport until the mid-1850s. But in 1858 the newly-minted city of Kansas City, faced with a burgeoning population growing southward from the river, and seeing an opportunity for traders to access a route of the Santa Fe Trail that might bypass busy Westport, built a new road to the plains that branched southwest off of the original route from the river at about present-day 19th Street and Grand Avenue. From there the route continued southwest to the new, but short-lived, county seat of territorial Johnson County in Kansas, Shawnee. The trail met the Santa Fe Trail from Westport proper in present Lenexa.

The Santa Fe Trail out of Independence ran two routes. One coursed southwest out of Independence, merging with the other Independence route near present 66th and Blue Ridge.

The other route ran south from Independence, entering present northeast Raytown, and continued southwest to follow Blue Ridge. This trail continued southwest to a new crossing of the Big Blue River in today's Minor Park, off of Red Bridge Road. The Santa Fe Trail continued southwest from here and crossed the Missouri state line at the later location of New Santa Fe, some four miles north of the old rock crossing of the Big Blue near present 151st Street, effectively cutting off the old original route in favor of this new crossing of the Big Blue River several miles nearer downstream.<sup>35</sup>

In the main, these were the routes of the Santa Fe Trail and its supplement-



tary roads as traveled in this Kansas City area after 1840, and in fact, these are the delineations by which these trails are most commonly known and considered. The great Santa Fe, Oregon, and California Trails marked this as their trace until the Civil War drove the main trailheads north of the Kansas City area, and with the end of the Civil War in 1865, the railroads drove the main trailheads farther and farther west.

All of this happened here, at and near this great River's final northward bend, and the mighty Rock at that bend, and nowhere else. From that singular geographic fact came the Road.

#### ENDNOTES

1. Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 1785.
2. *History of Jackson County* (Kansas City, 1881), 447.
3. Charles E. Hoffhaus, *Chez Les Canses*, (Kansas City, The Lowell Press, 1984), 20-21.
4. Frank Norrall, *Bourgmont: Explorer of the Missouri, 1698-1725*, (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 108.
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8. Noel M. Loomis and Abraham P. Nasatir, *Pedro Vial and the Roads to Santa Fe*, (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), 369-407.
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10. Barry, 47.
11. Barry, 48-50, 54-55.
12. Barbara B. Oberg; Editor, *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, Volume 41:11 July to 15 November 1803*, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2014), 468.
13. Kate L. Gregg; Editor, *Westward with Dragons: The Journal of William Clark, On His Expedition to Establish Fort Osage, August 25 to September 22, 1808*. (Fulton, The Ovid Bell Press, 1937), 34.
14. Gary E. Moulton; Editor, *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition; June 10 - September 26, 1806, Volume 8* (Lincoln,

University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 361.

15. Gregg, 34-40.

16. *Factor*, from the word *Factory*, defined as a mercantile fiduciary who receives and sells goods on commission (called *factorage*) usually with a location at a *factory* (trading post).

17. Kate L. Gregg, "The History of Fort Osage," *Missouri Historical Review*, Vol. 34, (July 1940) 478-479.

18. For an expansive and detailed treatise on the evolution of the original routes of the Santa Fe Trail in the Kansas City Metropolitan area, see Craig Crease, "Trace of the Blues: The Santa Fe Trail, the Blue River, and the True Nature of the Old Trace in Metropolitan Kansas City," *Wagon Tracks*, Vol. 11 (August 1997) 8-15. See also Hal Jackson and Marc Simmons, *The Santa Fe Trail, A Guide*, (Woodston, Trails Press, 2015) 57-60.

19. Barry, 105-196.

20. Crease, *Trace*, 8-15; Jackson and Simmons, 57-60.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

24. Barry, 136-137.

25. Crease, *Trace*, 8-15; Jackson and Simmons, 57-60

26. Ibid.

27. John E. Sunder, *Bill Sublette - Mountain Man*, (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1959) 84-86.

28. Two years later, in 1832, Sublette led a pack train west out of Independence again on the same route, following the Santa Fe Trail into modern southwest Johnson County, Kansas, before turning northwest to

cross the Kansas River at the same place as in 1830.

29. The Fort Leavenworth Military Road that served north-bound and south-bound traders, emigrants, and settlers all along the western Missouri border was first created in 1838 as a very important long link in the chain of forts guarding the "permanent Indian frontier." The Fort Leavenworth Military Road ran south from Fort Leavenworth for almost 120 miles to Fort Scott in modern southeast Kansas. Fort Scott was established in 1842.

30. The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 created the Territory of Kansas. Kansas obtained statehood on January 29, 1861.

31. Crease, *Trace*, 8-15; Jackson and Simmons, 57-60.

32. John C. McCoy, *The Kansas Monthly*, Vol. 2, (June 1879), 83.

33. Paved and graveled stretches of the Old Lexington Road still exist today in eastern Jackson County, Missouri, intermittently appearing on the south and north side of Highway 24.

34. Crease, *Trace*, 8-15; Jackson and Simmons, 57-60 .

35. Ibid. ♦

*Author Craig Crease is an award-winning historian of the Santa Fe Trail and the American frontier. Crease is the current recipient of a Special Research Grant from the SFTA, for which he will undertake this spring the Bourgmont Rediscovery Project, retracing the 1724 trail across Kansas of that French officer.*

#### In Memoriam

Willard S. Chilcott died in Santa Fe, New Mexico, on January 15, 2018. He was 89. Chilcott, who was born in Pasadena, California, was the founder of the three-week-long Santa Fe Trail Bicycle Trek, which began as an annual event in September 1991 and ended as a biennial event in September 2016. The trek enabled en-

trants to bicycle the 1,096-mile-long Mountain Route of the historic trail from Santa Fe northeast to Boonville, Missouri. The trek was supported by the Santa Fe Trail Association and the National Park Service. Chilcott is survived by his wife of 32 years, Marilyn; four children; and four great-grandchildren. At his request, no services were planned.

## The Remarkable St. Louis Wagon Builders

*Legacy of legendary St. Louis wagon builders endures*

By David Sneed

Old wagons talk to me.

I know that sounds strange, but those early wheels do have a lot to say and one of the best ways to listen is by focusing on where the vehicle was made. For serious collectors, it's one piece of information that can hold a wealth of details related to brand identity, design, construction, features, purpose, rarity, and even competition in the market.

### Location. Location. Location.

While most early wagon builders were small shops serving limited regions, many prominent makers capitalized on location. An area with easy access to navigable rivers, rails, and roads was almost always a favorite spot. Chicago, for instance, was home to Peter Schutler and Weber. South Bend, Ind., claimed Studebaker, Birdsell, and Coquillard. Racine, Wis., boasted Mitchell, Racine, and Fish Brothers.

St. Louis' position on the Mississippi and Missouri rivers made it a natural crossroads for westward traffic and commerce. In fact, so many business opportunities existed there that, by the 1880s, the city was home to about 140 wagon and carriage builders, far more than any other city west of the Mississippi at that time. By the turn of the 20th century, directories show St. Louis with nearly 200 horse-drawn vehicle builders. The industry was so significant that some suppliers sent the majority of their production to the city. Many contend that St. Louis was home to more nationally recognized wagon companies than any other U.S. city.

Among those Mound City makers, several standout brands played significant roles in U.S. history. From immigrant travel to freighters, cattle drives, and military campaigns, St.



*Variations in condition, originality, and completeness can affect resale values of vintage wagons. This Linstroth wagon not only benefits from vibrant original paint and sound wheels, but also retains its original seat and folding end gate. Image courtesy Kathy Christensen*

Louis wagons were well represented throughout the country. Many of those builders are still highly regarded by historians, enthusiasts, and collectors. In honor of the city's 250th anniversary in 2014, we're taking a close look at a half dozen of the area's most accomplished wagon brands.

### J. Murphy & Sons

Established in 1825, Joseph Murphy's shop was one of the oldest successful wagon manufacturers in St. Louis. Likewise, Murphy is arguably the most discussed and least known of any major U.S. wagon maker. Even though Murphy and his wagons are regularly referenced by collectors and academics, many questions remain about his company. In fact, of the 200,000 wagons purported to have been built by Murphy, not one has been conclusively identified.

From the few historical accounts and company records that do exist, it is known that Murphy wagons achieved a significant reputation within the freighting community. In fact, according to the recollections of D.P. Rolfe,

a freighter in the 1860s, "The freight wagons used were the Murphy and Espenschied, made in St. Louis, and the Studebaker, made at South Bend, Indiana ... More of the Murphy make were used than either the Studebaker or Espenschied ..."

Murphy is often referenced today in connection to a customs duty imposed on American freighters traveling to Santa Fe. In 1839, the governor of New Mexico imposed a \$500 (\$12,500 today) tax on each freight wagon traveling into the area. The toll caused serious financial heartburn to the freighters, but Murphy is said to have come to the rescue, building giant wagons capable of hauling enough goods to offset the tax. It's a story that sounds plausible, but no period accounts supporting it have been found.

Several years ago, I was fortunate to discover 13 letters sent from J. Murphy & Sons to an Illinois wood mill. Four of the letters were written by the elder craftsman himself. The correspondence detailed the wood he was seeking and information on when and

how it should be cut. It's believed that these pieces are the last surviving business correspondence from Murphy. Appropriately, every faded stroke of the pen confirms Murphy's legacy as both an expert in wood and an extreme stickler for quality.

By 1888, Joseph Murphy had relinquished control of his company to his sons. The firm continued to build wagons until just after the turn of the 20th century, making it very possible that some of these vehicles are just waiting to be discovered.

### **Espenschied Wagon Co.**

Of all the early St. Louis-built wagons, there were likely none that gave Joseph Murphy greater competition than those made by Louis Espenschied. In the city directory of 1859, 65 wagon makers were listed but only two paid for advertising space: Murphy and Espenschied.

Established in 1843, Espenschied Wagon Co. is eternally tied to the growth and history of America's movement west. From immigrant travel to the needs of the gold fields, freighters, and army, Espenschied wagons carried a large reputation.

As part of that leadership, Louis Espenschied headed a group of four wagon makers that solicited the U.S. Army in 1861, offering to build as many wagons as were needed by Union forces. Espenschied proposed construction of six-mule wagons with 2-1/2-inch iron axles. The wagons would carry 5,000 to 6,000 pounds; the same designs were said to have been used by freighters traveling to New Mexico and Utah. Espenschied priced them at \$125 each and pledged them to be better than Army regulation wagons. The proposal noted that the companies' "many years' experience in making Wagons for the Great Plains" enabled the four to craft the very best vehicles.

The proposal was immediately accepted. An order for 200 was placed

within 10 days of the July 6 proposal. No other bidding took place as the needs of the Civil War were urgent and the reputations of Espenschied, Jacob Kern, Jacob Scheer, and John Cook were unquestioned. The wagons were promptly built. By December of the same year, Espenschied made another proposal to the Army for 1,000 more wagons at the same price.

Like other makers of his time, Espenschied's devotion to his craft showed in design innovations. In 1878, he won a patent for a built-in grease reservoir on the axle skein. That feature allowed the wheel to go longer periods with less lubrication. In an 1882 company profile, Espenschied is also given credit for an even earlier major advancement in wagon design: the thimble skein. It was an innovation adopted by virtually all wagon makers.

Espenschied died in 1887, leaving an estate valued at almost \$500,000 (\$12,195,000 today). Soon after, his firm merged with that of Henry Luedinghaus, forming Luedinghaus-Espenschied Wagon Co. Today, there are still a few existing Luedinghaus-Espenschied wagons, but an Espenschied dating to the original firm has yet to be identified.

### **Luedinghaus Wagon Co.**

Henry Luedinghaus started his own wagon manufactory in 1859. Luedinghaus Wagon Co. was located across the street from his old partner, Casper Gestring, and Gestring Wagon Co. In fact, the areas occupied by Luedinghaus, Gestring, Espenschied, and Weber-Damme were all within blocks of each other.

Henry Luedinghaus's company distinguished itself by making high-quality farm, freight, business, log, and lumber wagons. By 1878, Luedinghaus was not only building to order but also maintained an inventory of wagons that could be purchased on-site. At about the same time, the

company began bidding on government contracts. An 1880 Luedinghaus proposal of \$61.50 per wagon was handily beaten by the firm of Austin, Tomlinson & Webster (Jackson Wagons). The winning bid from this Jackson, Mich., company was \$57. The price advantage was hard for traditional makers to overcome: Jackson wagons were built by state prisoners who were paid little for their labor.

In spite of the challenges of competing on a national scale, Luedinghaus continued to grow. The company motto was, "The wagon will speak for itself." It's no wonder the vehicles were popular. Luedinghaus claimed to be the first to offer the exceptional strength and reliability of bois d'arc wheels. All wood in the wagons was said to have been thoroughly seasoned for two years before use, and paint was painstakingly hand-brushed, not dipped. Dipping was a faster process but some found the resulting adhesion inferior.

At the 1904 World's Fair, Luedinghaus displayed a pyramid of 11 wagons. The massive exhibition dominated the competition and generated vast publicity. The spectacle was a physical duplication of the company's official trademark and tagline that proclaimed, "We Tower Above All."

For a brief time in the 1920s and early '30s, Luedinghaus built auto bodies, trailers, and trucks. It was a valiant attempt to change with the times, but the challenges of the Great Depression were too much to withstand. The firm closed its doors in 1934.

### **Linstroth Wagon Co.**

"The Pride of St. Louis" was the slogan of Linstroth Wagon Co. Established in 1849, the firm stood in the middle of some of America's heaviest westward travel. The California Gold Rush and subsequent discoveries of precious ore throughout the frontier continued to be a boon for wagon

makers positioned in the right locations. In his early days, Linstroth's wagon shop was known as "Linstroth and Keune." Carl Keune was Henry Linstroth's partner for decades. By 1886, though, the company was incorporated and became known as Linstroth Wagon Co.

Like other St. Louis wagon makers, Linstroth also lobbied for government contracts. The company's product line included farm, log, stake, and mountain wagons as well as oil and lumber gears, farm trucks, carts, and one-horse wagons. Tires were hot-set by hand, and painting was also done by hand. Many Linstroth wagons had a bright green box with black-and-yellow stripes accented by a red gear and wheels.

By 1899, the company employed 100 craftsmen and shipped wagons throughout the country. Features included a countersunk kingbolt, dust-proof skein, concave rub irons, extra cross sills on the box bottom, chafe irons on the sideboards, and a double-tree with no holes in the wood.

Linstroth also made a wagon brand called "Magnolia," which was promoted as a less expensive farm truck. In the case of wooden wagons, a "truck" is not a motorized vehicle but rather a less expensive gear designated as an all-purpose utility vehicle.

While Linstroth outlasted many St. Louis makers, it could not escape the fate of all wood-wheeled wagon companies. It disappeared from industry directories around the time of America's entry into World War II. By the late 1940s, there was no longer any resource for factory parts and repairs.

### Gestring Wagon Co.

Because of founder Casper Gestring's commitment to quality, the firm is both a St. Louis legend and an exceptional example of how some of the earliest vehicle makers went about constructing wagons and handling business (Editor's note: For more on Gestring Wagon Co., see David

Sneed's article, "The Historically Significant Gestring Wagon Co.," from the September 2010 issue of *Farm Collector*). Established in the mid- to late 1850s, when Gestring finally closed its doors in 1935 it was touted as the last of the old school makers. In nearly 80 years of operation, the company's focus on manufacturing completely hand-built wagons never wavered. It's a remarkable legacy that allowed Gestring to go head-to-head with some of the biggest makers in America and outlast the vast majority.

While some of Gestring's history is known, other bits and pieces are still coming together. Such was the case earlier this year when we identified a previously unknown brand called "Hiawatha," built by Gestring. According to government records, Gestring first used the name in 1878 and was granted official trademark status in 1915. This addition to the product line allowed the company to offer a less expensive alternative to the flagship Gestring line.

### Weber & Damme

With a company history dating to the beginning of the Civil War, the wagon-making duo of Henry Damme and Philip Weber actually put down roots as early as the mid-1850s with Henry's wagon-making career. Weber and Damme wagons enjoyed wide-ranging sales with a 1908 catalog proclaiming they were "seen everywhere — among the corn and wheat growers of the North and East; the stock, hay, grain, and fruit raisers of the West, and the cotton growers of the South ..."

Just as prices for quality contemporary vehicles continue to rise, prices for new wagons also rose. A good example can be seen in the prices paid by a Weber & Damme dealer for the same 3-inch thimble skein wagon in 1888 and 35 years later in 1923. While the '88 model cost the dealer \$46 and included a seat and brake, the 1923 version nearly doubled in cost to \$90.89 and the seat and brake were no longer standard.

A distinctive feature of many Weber & Damme wagons is a patented sand plate (or fender) attached to their own thimble skein. While the skein was said to have a carrying capacity of 200-300 pounds more than the typical thimble skein used by others, the sand fender also rendered significant benefits. This metal covering was positioned inside each wheel and directly over the wheel hub. It shielded the skein from dirt, dust, and debris, effectively prolonging the life of the wheel while maintaining an easy draft.

Weber & Damme manufactured a wide range of vehicles including farm, log, fertilizer, produce, coal, and utility wagons along with cotton beds, contractor's carts, and log and lumber gears.

### Power of place

In addition to these six industry leaders, there were other St. Louis builders like John Luking, Peter Wagner, P.J. Cooney, and Schelp Wagon Co., as well as an entire host focused on crafting carriages and lighter vehicles.

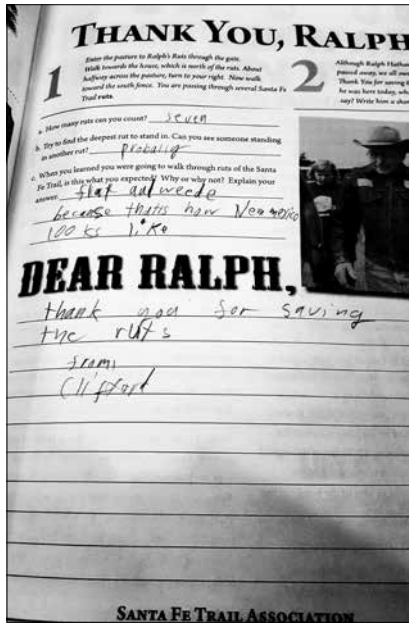
Throughout the 1800s and early 1900s, the city remained a transportation mecca. Today, every wood-wheeled survivor from St. Louis is a reminder of the power of place and the dreams of a nation. So the next time you come across an old wagon, find out where it's from and don't be surprised if it starts to talk to you. Those pieces of its background aren't just trivial details. They're vital parts of historical DNA and they can be the first step to recovering history or, just maybe, the last chance to discover a true legend.

*David Sneed is a writer, author, speaker, historian, and collector of early wagons and western vehicles. He writes a weekly blog, <http://wheelsthatwonthewest.blogspot.com/>, featuring scarce information on wagons and stagecoaches and is the founder of the *Wheels That Won The West*® western vehicle archives. Contact him at PO Box 1081, Flippin, AR 72634. This article first appeared in *Farm Collector*, October 2013 issue.*

## Notes from the Junior Wagon Master Program

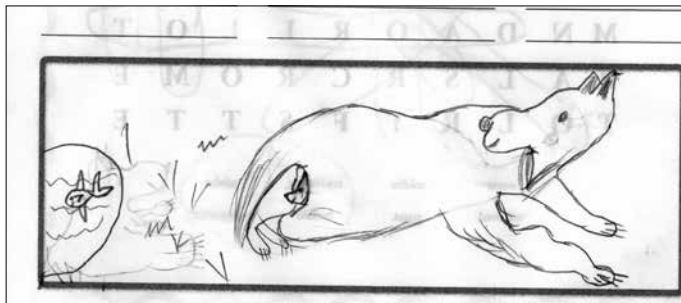
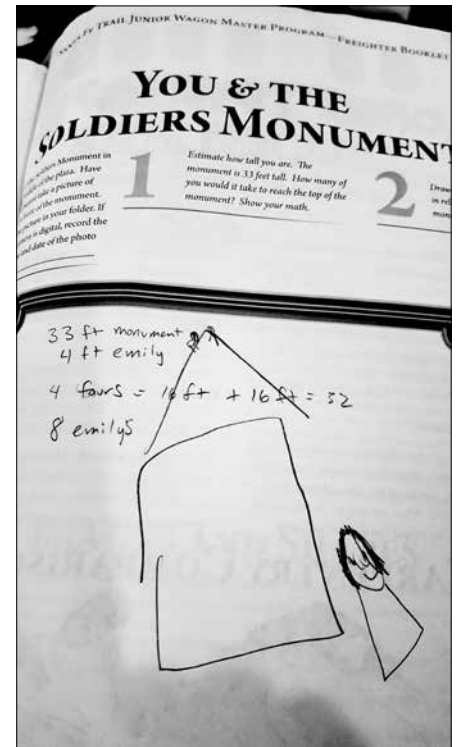
Even though it is very cold on parts of the trail, some folks are still traveling, including via the SFTA or NPS websites, and leaving comments and/or work about their views of the Trail. Both of these families had asked for Cavy booklets but used a Freighter edition simplified for their younger children.

From a dad in SC: “Thanks for your involvement and willingness to help my kids learn about the Santa Fe Trail.” “We try to complete a Jr. Ranger program in a week, when we opt for one. Their collection of badges keeps growing, but the patches are a neat complement. A lot of programs don't offer them, especially badges that are this nice.”

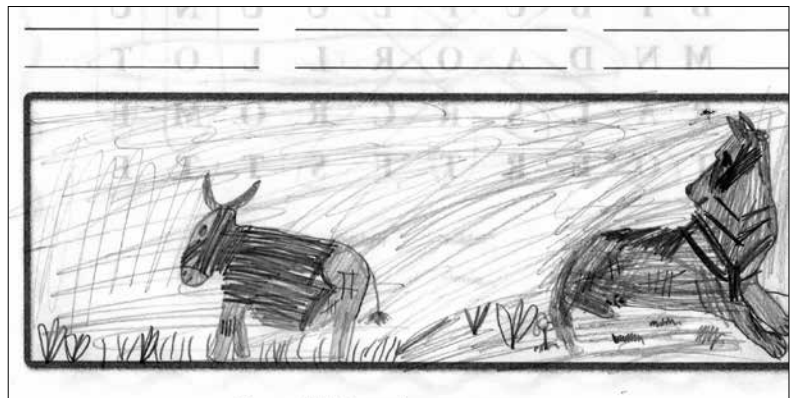


Ralph's Rut comment: "Thank you for saving the ruts." Clifford, age 10, NM

Soldiers Monument, Santa Fe Plaza. Calculations by Emily, age 7, NM



Drawings above and right are activities from the Morton County Museum Site: Above: Angela, age 8, SC (Dad says the coyote is having babies). Right: Samuel, age 9, SC





## Chapter Reports

**Chapters are listed in order from the beginning of the Trail in Missouri westward.**

TO CONTACT CHAPTER PRESIDENTS,  
PLEASE EMAIL THEM AT [info@santafetrail.org](mailto:info@santafetrail.org).

### **Missouri River Outfitters**

Independence, MO  
President Larry Short

MRO was pleased with the successes that we achieved in 2017. Now we are facing new projects and events in 2018. Among the highlights of 2017 was a very successful Symposium held in Olathe, Kansas, in September, and the completion of our historic route sign plan along the Buckner route in eastern Jackson County, Missouri. With this final segment completed, MRO has in place the historic route signs along the entirety of our coverage area from Franklin, Missouri, to Gardner Junction in Kansas, with the exception for those routes that are along the right of way of MODot. We have those sign plans ready to go, with some minor modifications, once MODot approves the installation of the signs.

We will be heavily involved in the planning and implementation of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the signing of the National Trails System Act by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1968. Plans are well under way for a major event in Council Grove, Kansas, on April 21, following our SFTA Spring board meeting/workshop.

We also invite you to attend our National Trails Day Event on June 2 at Lone Elm Park in Olathe, Kansas. This will be a joint event with our other trails groups in the greater Kansas City area, the Kansas City Area Historic Trails Association (KCAHTA), the Trails Head Chapter of OCTA, and the Lewis and Clark Association. More details will be forthcoming in our newsletters and in *Wagon Tracks*.

As we move forward in 2018, MRO looks forward to working with other chapters along the Santa Fe National Historic Trail. We are proud to be a part of such an outstanding and effective group as the Santa Fe Trail Association.

### **Douglas County**

Baldwin City, KS  
President Roger Boyd

The Douglas County Chapter will hold its annual banquet on Sunday, February 25. A social gathering will start at 5:00 p.m. followed by a covered dish dinner starting at 5:30 p.m. The chapter will provide the meat dishes and drinks; we ask members to bring a vegetable dish, salad, or dessert. The program will be "Letters from Fort Dodge" presented by Joanne VanCoevern, Manager of the Santa Fe Trail Association. President Roger Boyd will also give a brief summary of the year's activities, upcoming events, and elections for next year's officers and three board positions. The meeting will be held at the Baldwin City Golf Club building located at 1102 Main in the southwestern portion of Baldwin. The meeting is open to the public. We invite you to join us.

### **Heart of the Flint Hills**

Council Grove, KS  
President Sharon Haun

The chapter held its winter meeting December 4th at the Carnegie building in Council Grove. Guests at the meeting were Joanne VanCoevern, Larry Justice, and Larry Short. Joanne presented an overview of the SFT and its history, which was much appreciated by the members, many of whom are new to the SFT story. The members also heard about the plans to re-sign the 50-mile Boy Scout trail. This trail was established and marked with signage as a hiking trail from Burlingame to Council Grove. It was used to gain a hiking and history badge and was well used for a time, but fell into disuse some 30 or more years ago. With the help of NPS interns, the route has been redeveloped, and the hope is to have signs in place in the near future, to be used again by the Boy Scouts as well as the 21st-century travelers on the SFT.

The 2021 Council Grove committee learned last September that Council Grove had been selected to host one of two SFT events to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the National Trails Act in 2018. Joanne, Larry, and Larry have been assisting the local committee through a number of meetings to develop the weekend event, "The Rendezvous at Council Grove" on April 20-21, 2018. The event will include a groundbreaking ceremony of the Rock Creek Crossing being developed and open to the public, an SFT art show and wine and cheese event at the Last Chance Store, and a Wagon Rendezvous at the Council Oak Park, among many other events and activities. Elsewhere in this publication is a full article about this event.

### **Cottonwood Crossing**

McPherson, KS  
President Steve Schmidt

The Cottonwood Crossing Chapter has more or less gone dormant for the winter. The next meeting is at 7 p.m. Thursday April 19 in Goessel, Kansas. John Sharp will bring the program titled "Samuel Wood: Saint or Sinner?" At the October 2017 chapter annual business meeting the following chapter officers were elected: Steve Schmidt, Pres.; Doug Sharp, Vice-Pres.; Debi Owens, Sec/Treas.; Directors: Jim Owens, Sharon Schutte, George Schutte, Vernon Lohrentz, Larry Justice, Cynthia Rhodes, and Brian Martin.

A wind farm is coming to northern Marion County. The Chapter's Executive Committee has met with the developer and obtained assurance that the Santa Fe Trail in Marion County will be respected and remnants not impacted. The Chapter Board of Directors has provided comments on the Conditional Use Permit Application recently approved by the Marion County Planning and Zoning Commission. Initial reaction is that the proposed towers are at a reasonable distance away from the trail, and infrastructure crossing will be where the trail is not visible. Our goal is to preserve the trail while not depriving anyone of the opportunity to reap the financial benefits of having a tower located on their property. As part of the developer's ongoing cultural resources studies, the developer performed LiDAR mapping of the SFT across the entire



**SFTA Annual Membership January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  Life \$1000, payable over 4 years  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  Patron \$100/year  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  Family \$65/year  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  Individual \$50/year  
 **New member**  **Renewing member**  Youth (18 and under) \$5/year  
 I am a member of the following chapter (s) \_\_\_\_\_  Non-profit Institution \$65/year  
 \_\_\_\_\_  Business \$65/year  
 I'd like to make a donation to assist the SFTA with programs and events.  \$50  \$100 Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 I'd like to donate to the Junior Wagon Master Fund.  \$50  \$100 Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 I'd like to donate to the Marker Fund.  \$50  \$100 Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

To pay by credit card, go to [www.santafetrail.org](http://www.santafetrail.org), and click on "Join the Organization."

The Santa Fe Trail Association is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt corporation, and all donations beyond membership dues are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. **TOTAL ENCLOSED** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Make checks payable to Santa Fe Trail Association**

**Mail to Ruth Olson Peters, Treasurer, Santa Fe Trail Center, 1349 K-156 Hwy, Larned, KS 67550**

**Renew by mailing using the above form or renew online at [www.santafetrail.org](http://www.santafetrail.org)**

*If you have renewed your membership, pass the form along to a friend or colleague.*

county. This information will be made available to the chapter for future reference.

**Quivira**

McPherson, KS  
President Linda Colle

On October 29, 2017, the chapter met at Ralph's Ruts. What a perfect fall day! Weather in the 70's, no wind – you couldn't ask for a more perfect day for an outdoor event. There were 40 attendees, including 11 chapter members. The chapter gained two new memberships from this event. Chapter member Steve Fisher won the drawing for a Trail book. Carolyn Kern gave a brief history of the Santa Fe Trail and then related the history of the Hathaway Farm and the Plum Buttes Massacre. Carolyn's father, Ralph Hathaway, had researched the massacre, and wrote about it in his paper, "From the Little Arkansas to the Big Arkansas." A big thank you to Carolyn Kern, Marlene Carson, Marjorie Kern, and the rest of the family for their work to make this event possible. Another big thank you to SFTA Vice President Larry Short for attending and updating us on upcoming SFTA activities.

On November 3, Linda Colle met with the National Park Service team of Carole Wendler, Bryan Petrtyl, and Jeffrey Denny, along with the consultant Lyn Henley and her artist David, to review the proposed sites for the Little Arkansas sign project. The weather was the opposite of October 29, and parkas were the required attire. We toured the four sites and the chapter provided the background information for the project. We were fortunate to have three of the four landowners tour with us: Joe Swanson, Steve and Jodene Fisher, and Gerald and Kathy Lindholm. It was a very productive day.

And finally, on November 11 and 12, 2017, our newest prospec-

tive Eagle Scout, Trent Schmidt, led his crew across McPherson County, Kansas. We installed the Running Turkey Creek and Fuller's Ranch Site identification signs. We then proceeded to go across the entire county, straightening signs where needed, installing new signs for missing signs, and trimming trees and bushes so all signs were visible. Trent's Eagle Scout ceremony will be sometime in the next few months. We are very excited to assist another Eagle Scout in obtaining this highest rank. It is mutually beneficial to the Scout and to our chapter.

**Wet/Dry Routes**

Great Bend, KS  
President George Elmore

Forty members and guests convened on October 29, 2017, at Rozel, Kansas. Becca Hiller and Marty Scranton, both of Larned, were voted in as Secretary and Treasurer effective immediately. The past treasurer announced that the David K. Clapsaddle Memorial funds will purchase and install the Pawnee Creek Crossing signage at Larned State Hospital with the dedication to be at Rendezvous 2018. A nominating committee comprised of Ruth Peters and Vicki Gillette was appointed with a slate of officers to be voted on at the annual meeting. Dr. Leo Oliva, Becca Hiller, and Marty Scranton were elected to the bylaws committee with a report due at the annual meeting.

Following the business meeting, Ranger Ellen Jones of Fort Larned National Historic Site presented "Mexican Culture on the Santa Fe Trail." Included in the presentation was a display of a life-size Spanish trader statue and a large storyboard about Mexican culture.

The chapter met at Kinsley on January 21 for a fried chicken dinner, adoption of new bylaws, election of officers, and program by Leo Oliva, "Two Women Soldiers on the Santa Fe

Trail." On April 29 we will host a joint meeting with Dodge City/Fort Dodge/Cimarron Chapter at Kinsley, with dinner followed by a short business meeting and program by George Elmore, "Leander Herron and the Medal of Honor," relating to the story of Corporal Herron's involvement in a fight with Indians between Forts Dodge and Larned in September 1868, for which he was later awarded the Medal of Honor.

Newly-elected officers are President: George Elmore; Vice-President: Ellen Jones; Secretary: Becca Hiller; Treasurer: Martha Scranton; Membership Chair: Alice Clapsaddle; and Program Chair: Leo Oliva.

### **Dodge City/Fort Dodge/Cimarron**

Dodge City, KS  
President Bill Bunyan

The chapter met at the Cancun Restaurant in Cimarron for lunch and the fall meeting on October 15. After the meeting we went to the Cimarron City Library to hear Dr. Leo Oliva talk about the importance of Cimarron and Gray County to the Santa Fe Trail. We co-hosted Dr. Oliva's talk with the library. After the talk we went to the Cimarron Country Club where two markers and a new storyboard about the golf course ruts were dedicated. Chapter member Darrell Dupree spearheaded the project with Eagle Scout candidate Jack Warner. The Dupree family, the Rod and Debbie Calhoun family, and Dennis and Joan Sangster paid for this project, and Dr. Oliva wrote the text for the signage.

Our latest project at Fort Dodge is moving ahead. We are planning a series of five storyboards. The first one for the Custer House (the Commanding Officer's Quarters) should go into production soon. Dr. Oliva has written the text which has been approved by David Smith, superintendent of the Fort Dodge Soldiers' Home. The Douglas family of New York is sponsoring this signboard in honor of Henry Bowman Douglas, the great-grandson of Major Henry Douglas and Isadore Douglas.

The storehouse signboard (the present Fort Museum) is being sponsored by the Rod and Debbie Calhoun family. The old Fort Dodge Hospital signage is being sponsored by the Warner family. The stone for the hospital and other stone buildings

came from a quarry on the Warner ranch.

Bill and Susan Bunyan are sponsoring the Barracks signage, and we want to have Leander Herron's story mentioned on this storyboard. He received the Congressional Medal of Honor for his actions while at Fort Dodge. Dennis and Joan Sangster are sign sponsors of the Parade Ground and the general layout of Fort Dodge when it was a frontier military post.

Our winter meeting will be held on Sunday, February 4, at 1:00 at the Occident at Boot Hill. We will have our fried chicken dinner and all the wonderful side dishes that chapter members bring. Our speaker will be Fort Larned National Historic Site Ranger Ellen Jones, who will speak on the subject of the children on the Santa Fe Trail, a subject that we usually don't think about when talking about the Santa Fe Trail (a trail of commerce). We usually talk about mule skinners and bullwhackers.

Our spring meeting will be held in Kinsley as a joint meeting with the Wet-Dry Chapter. This will be a dinner meeting and will require reservations. Fort Larned National Historic Site Chief Ranger George Elmore will be speaking about Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Leander Herron, a Fort Dodge-Fort Larned courier.

Tentatively we are planning a summer meeting at Fort Dodge after the storyboards are installed, with Dr. Oliva speaking about them. We invite the Fort residents to attend.

### **Wagon Bed Spring**

Lakin, KS  
President Linda Peters

### **Cimarron Cutoff**

Elkhart, KS  
President Jay Williams

Our October meeting was held in Boise City, Oklahoma. We toured sites in the area, and also planned for the 50th anniversary celebration.

*Prospective Eagle Scout Trent Schmidt led his crew across McPherson County, Kansas, on November 11 and 12. With the guidance of the Quivira Chapter, they installed the Running Turkey Creek and Fuller's Ranch Site identification signs.*



## **Bent's Fort**

Lamar, CO  
President Kevin Lindahl

If any of you chapter presidents are thinking your position might just be “terminal,” you can rest assured it is not! You better sit down when reading this. After ten years as Bent's Fort Chapter President, Pat Palmer has submitted his resignation. Oh, my goodness! He will not go far, though, as he has agreed to remain on the BFC Board of Directors as Past President and has also agreed to serve as the emcee for our meetings. Pat was elected BFC President in 2008 after serving a year as Vice-President. Under his leadership, the chapter has flourished, and we are grateful for his continuous leadership for the past ten years.

He is leaving the chapter in good hands as Kevin Lindahl has graciously accepted the position. Kevin has served as our Trail Preservation Chairman, is a member of the SFTA Board of Directors, and is the Otero County Historian. For many years, Kevin led tours of the Dinosaur Tracks and surrounding area for the Comanche National Grasslands. He is very knowledgeable, extremely interested in mapping and marking, and is a tech-savvy guru.

2018 promises to be another outstanding year of exciting treks, activities, and presenters for the Bent's Fort Chapter. Look for the schedule of our activities on the SFTA website. Under the direction of John Carson, plans for the 2021 SFTA Symposium and 200th Year Celebration are ongoing. We are already fully engrossed in that process. We hope you can find time in your schedule to join us for some of our activities.

## **Corazon de los Caminos**

Cimarron, NM  
President Doyle Daves

We had a planning meeting in Springer on Saturday, January 6, and put together a schedule for 2018 chapter meetings. We decided to ask the Bent's Fort Chapter to join their events in both March and August. At this point we are in the process of confirming the individual events. Here is what we have now:

February 17: Business meeting at K-Bob's in Raton, 11:30, Abbie Reeves will speak about Capulin Volcano and nearby historic sites - Peggy Ferguson, leader.

March 10: Tour of Bent's Fort with Bent's Fort Chapter (not confirmed).

April 21: Tour of Johnson Mesa sites - Abbie Reeves and Bebe Cornay, leaders.

May 19: St. James Hotel in Cimarron, Steve Zimmer will speak about Jicarilla Apaches.

June 16: Fort Union National Monument, luncheon and program to honor Faye Gaines as “Defender of the Santa Fe Trail” and her long service as a board member of the SFTA. Linda Davis will be moderator.

July 21: Tour of Watrous, Tiptonville sites - Doyle Daves, leader.

August 11: Trinidad sites with Bent's Fort Chapter (not confirmed).

September 21, 22: Rendezvous in Larned, Kansas.

October 20: Santa Fe Trail ruts and swales at Fort Union National Monument - Doyle Daves, leader.

November 17: Las Vegas, membership meeting with speaker (not selected), Charlie's Spic and Span, 10:30, Doyle Daves, leader.

## **End of the Trail**

Santa Fe, NM  
President Joy Poole

The End of the Trail Chapter has partnered with the Santa Fe Public Library to supplement their adult education programs with the Santa Fe Trail programs. The 2018 End of the Trail Programs are held the third Saturday - alternate months at 1:30 p.m. NEW 2018 LOCATION: Santa Fe Public Library, Southside Branch, 6599 Jaguar Drive, Santa Fe, New Mexico

Saturday, January 20 from 1:30 - 3:00  
“The First New Lady of the Santa Fe Trail - Mary Donoho”  
Presenter: George Donoho Bayless, who is a descendent of Mary Dodson Donoho.

Until Marian Meyer chanced upon an 1885 newspaper article, no one even suspected that Mary Dodson Donoho had preceded Susan Magoffin as the first Anglo-American woman to journey the Santa Fe Trail to Santa Fe by more than a decade. Magoffin came in 1846, but Donoho and her husband William took their first child with them over the trail in 1833. Historian Meyer's meticulous research has produced this fascinating biography of a pioneer Anglo woman, whom she aptly calls the “new first lady of the Santa Fe Trail.”

William Donoho was instrumental in securing freedom for three women captured by Comanches—Sarah Horn, Mrs. Harris, and Rachael Parker Plummer. Meyer also provides accounts of their 1830s captivity and release.

Saturday, March 17 from 1:30 - 3:00  
“Star of David on the Santa Fe Trail: Jewish New Mexico” is offered through the End of the Trail Chapter of the Santa Fe Trail Association and the NM Historical Society  
Presenter: Naomi Sandweiss

“Star of David on the Santa Fe Trail” will introduce the Jewish pioneers who made New Mexico Territory their home. Attendees will learn about the lives of early Jewish pioneers, their connections and ambitions, and the long-lasting impact that they had on the growth and development of New Mexico.

Naomi currently is the Executive Director of Parents Reaching Out in Albuquerque and previously served as Youth Program Supervisor at the University of New Mexico, Division of Continuing Education. She is the author of *Jewish Albuquerque 1860-1960* and is a contributing writer to *The Jewish Legacy in New Mexico*, *New Mexico Jewish Link*, and *Tablet Magazine*.

The End of the Trail Chapter has reprinted the popular Santa Fe Trail Walking Tour brochure researched and written by Mike Pitel. It features interesting stories linked to trail sites near the plaza.

Santa Fe Trail Association  
1046 Red Oaks NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87122  
www.santafetrail.org



## CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

## EVENTS

**February 4: Dodge City, KS.** Dodge City Chapter meeting. "Children on the Santa Fe Trail."

**February 17: Las Animas, CO.** Bent's Fort Chapter. "Love to Read along the Santa Fe Trail."

**February 17: Raton, NM.** Corazon de los Caminos Chapter meeting. "Capulin Volcano."

**February 25: Baldwin City, KS.** Douglas County Chapter annual banquet.

**March 10: Bent's Old Fort, CO.** Bent's Fort Chapter and Corazon de los Caminos Chapter tour of the fort, including the archives.

**March 15-18: Tucson/Tubac, AZ.** National Stagecoach and Freight Wagon Assoc. annual conference.

**March 17: Santa Fe, NM.** End of the Trail Chapter meeting. "Star of David on the Santa Fe Trail."

**April 1:** Wagon Tracks submission deadline for May issue.

**April 14: Boggsville, CO.** Bent's Fort Chapter annual Boggsville cleanup.

**April 19: Goessel, KS.** Cottonwood Crossing Chapter meeting. "Samuel Wood: Saint or Sinner?"

**April 19-20: Council Grove, KS.** SFTA /NPS Workshop and SFTA board meeting.

**April 20: Council Grove, KS.** Rock Creek Crossing Groundbreaking ceremony.

**April 20-21: Council Grove, KS.** Rendezvous at Council Grove.

**April 21: Johnson Mesa, NM.** Corazon de los Caminos Chapter tour.

**April 29: Kinsley, KS.** Wet/Dry Chapter and Dodge City/Fort Dodge/Cimarron Chapter meeting. "Leander Herron and the Medal of Honor."

**May 19: Cimarron, KS.** Corazon de los Caminos Chapter tour of St. James Hotel.

**June 2: Olathe, KS.** MRO Chapter National Trails Day Event.

**September 1:** Student photo contest deadline.

**September 20-22, 2018: Larned, KS.** SFTA Rendezvous.

**March 29-30, 2019:** SFTA /NPS Workshop and SFTA board meeting.

**September 24, 2019: St. Louis, MO.** SFTA board meeting.

**September 25-28, 2019: St. Louis, MO.** SFTA Symposium

**September 24-26, 2020: Larned, KS.** SFTA Rendezvous.

**September 22-25, 2021: Bent's Old Fort, CO.** SFTA Symposium.

*For information on Fort activities: See [https://www.nps.gov/nts/nts\\_trails.html](https://www.nps.gov/nts/nts_trails.html) See also [www.santafetrail.org](http://www.santafetrail.org) for more details.*