



# CROSSROADS

NEWSLETTER OF UTAH CROSSROADS  
CHAPTER  
OF CALIFORNIA \ OREGON  
TRAILS ASSOCIATION

*Host of 2005 National Convention*

Volume 16, Number 4

December 2005

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## Launching emails takes few stumbles, but is getting on track

I would like to say that our first email edition of *Crossroads* got off to a flying start. However, it was more like one stumble after another. But it did finally made it across miles and miles of telephone and satellite connections.

Now we want to improve and keep it flowing. There are several things that members of Crossroads can do, primarily you must have a version of Adobe Acrobat Reader on your computer.

It is free and can be downloaded onto your computer's hard drive. First got to [www.Adobe.com](http://www.Adobe.com). On that page there's a logo *Get Adobe Reader*. Rather than downloading Version 7, I suggest you click on *other*

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Devil's Gate was a big hurdle for several 1846 emigrant parties who follow Hudspeth down Weber Canyon. Before I-84, U.S. 30, was in Weber Canyon, part of the highway is to the left. The 19th century route was vastly different. With John Eldredge's help a Maybridge stereoptigon slide gives a different look, see page 13.

## Will Bagley to speak at chapter meeting on January 12th

By Lindia Carter

The winter general membership meeting for the Crossroads Chapter of OCTA is set for **Thursday, January 12, 2006, at 7:00 in the evening.** Well-known author and lecturer Will Bagley will be the evening's featured speaker. The title of Will's program

is "A Legacy of Stories", which focuses on some of the most interesting first-person narratives written by wagon train travelers on the road to Utah.

As usual, the meeting takes place in the County Commission Chambers, the auditorium of the

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### ***Email plans stumbles, but getting back on track***

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versions and check the options you have there. Since there are a number of methods to connect to the Internet – Dial Up, DSL or Broadband – you may find an earlier version will work in your case. Once you have clicked on *other versions* follow the instructions. One thing to remember if you are on a dial-up connection it generally takes longer to download the program. Many questions can be answered by contacting your internet provider.

But most important is that you must keep us informed about your email address. A correct address is the key to getting the email version of *Crossroads Newsletter*.

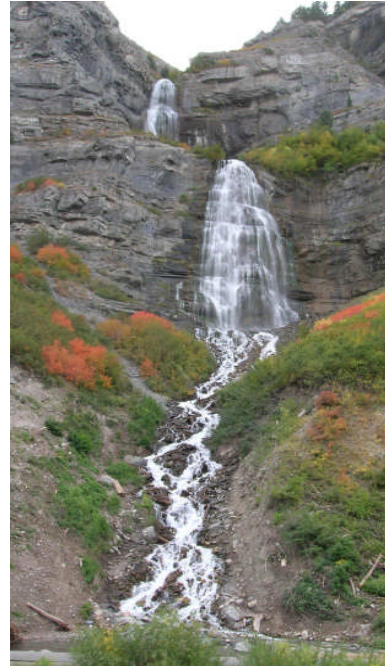
### ***Soldier Hollow story told at fall bar-b-que in Heber Valley***

By Marie Irvine

On September 24, the Crossroads chapter of OCTA met in Midway, Utah for a discussion of the soldiers who inspired the name of the 2002 Olympic Venue, Soldier Hollow. Captain James Hervey Simpson and Henry Engelman were two of the soldiers who visited the spring in the area of Soldier Hollow in 1858.

The name, Soldier Hollow, was inspired by U. S. military troops under the command of Capt. James H. Simpson of the U.S. Topographical Engineers, who passed through the area in the fall of 1858.

They were part of Col. Albert Sidney Johnston's U.S. Military command, which was headquartered at Camp Floyd, fol-



Bridal Veil Falls were key feature for Simpson road working crews.

lowing the uneasy resolution of the potentially deadly armed conflict between Governor Brigham Young and President Buchanan. Camp Floyd was southwest of Great Salt Lake City. President Buchanan had appointed Alfred P. Cumming to replace Brigham Young as Governor of Utah Territory and there was some question whether Brigham Young would conveniently step aside to allow a "Gentile" governor to head the government of the territory.

As a precaution, President Buchanan had or-

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CROSSROADS is the newsletter of the Utah Crossroads Chapter of the Oregon-California Trail Association. It is published in March, June, September and December. Questions and suggestions for improvements and criticism can be sent to Jerry Dunton at [jhd@sisna.com](mailto:jhd@sisna.com) or to P.O. Box 9645, SLC, UT 84109.

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### ***Fall meeting hears story of Soldier Hollow***

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dered a military force to safely escort the governor appointee, Alfred P. Cumming, to Utah. Brigham Young interpreted the U.S. military force as an “invading army” which threatened the survival of the Mormons.

Fortunately, a trusted friend of the Mormons, Thomas L. Kane, managed to negotiate a peace settlement which displeased both the soldiers, who wanted to fight and annihilate the Mormons and it also displeased the Mormons who were insulted by Buchanan’s appointment of a new, non-Mormon governor.

The peace negotiations included a pardon of the Mormons for unspecified crimes against the United States. Even though the Mormons and the U.S. Military had never reached the point of actually shooting at each other, Lot Smith and his raiders had burned the military supply wagons and had taken many of the military cattle in raids along the trail in what is now Wyoming.

The Soldiers had been quite uncomfortable on short rations as they waited for spring at Camp Scott, anticipating the confrontation with the Mormons.

Brigham Young ordered an evacuation of Great Salt Lake City as a demonstration of his intent to destroy Great Salt Lake City if the U. S. military attempted to occupy and control the city.

In compliance with the negotiated peace agreement, the U. S. military force had marched through the empty streets of Salt Lake City without breaking ranks and they set up residence at the new Camp Floyd some distance southwest of Great Salt Lake City. From their headquarters at Camp Floyd, the soldiers could en-

sure that the population of the territory would accept the authority of the United States Government and the newly appointed Governor of the Territory of Utah. By insisting that the soldiers reside away from the city, Brigham Young could ensure that the force would not occupy the Mormon settlements and would be somewhat isolated from social contact with the Mormon community.

Col. Albert Sidney Johnston, the commander of Camp Floyd, knew that his supply route was insecure as long as supplies had to travel down the traditional emigrant road through Echo Canyon where the Mormons were well entrenched with rock fortifications and high points of observation.

Johnston knew that he needed a new, defensible supply road between Camp Floyd and Ft. Bridger. He assigned the job to Capt. James Hervey Simpson.

There are two primary accounts of the survey and road building company under Capt. Simpson. The first account is the official report, which was written by Capt. Simpson, himself. The second account is a personal diary, which was written by William Lee, a 18-yr. old volunteer, who was assigned to be an “assistant to the observer” in support of the surveyor and scientific officers. Capt. Simpson was a career military veteran; William Lee was an adventure seeking, young man from a politically prominent family.

Simpson was part of the U. S. Topographical Engineers, which was an essential, and sometimes overlooked, element in the settlement of the West. While it is common to revere the courage, ambition and toughness of the settlers who brought their wagons along the wagon roads into the wil-

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derness, at least some credit must go to the people who explored, mapped, and built the roads that enabled settlers to take up land and survive on the western frontier.

Only with the maps, reports of geology, weather, botany and some understanding of the native tribal residents, would a settler be prepared to risk his future by moving into the frontier.

It was the policy of the U. S. Government to fund expeditions of exploration and surveys to encourage and enable "Manifest Destiny" as American settlements expanded American influence across the continent. Starting with the Corps of Discovery under Lewis and Clark 200 years ago, men such as Stansbury, Bonneville, Gunnison, Beckwith, Fremont and others published maps and documentation that were highly valued and used by the settlers.

By enabling settlement, most of those expeditions turned out to be good investments in the future of the United States. In one sense, the strong, fearless individuals who established settlements in the wilderness were recipients of a sort of U. S. Government help that might be termed an early form of "Federal aid."

The Fremont expedition maps, drawn by Charles Preuss, were widely used during the decade after Mexican cessation of the western territory to the United States. We credit Brigham Young for leading the Mormons to the Great Basin; we should note that Fremont's maps and reports helped to guide Brigham Young to find "The Place". Ironically, during the 1857/1858 conflict between the Mormons and the United States Army, both sides planned their tactics using Fremont's U.S. Corps of Engineers maps.

Between 1838 when the U.S. Corps of Topographical Engineers was reorgan-

ized and 1862 when it was disbanded, it was staffed with some of the bravest, toughest, most skilled and all around persistent men on the frontier. James H. Simpson was exceptional among that group of outstanding men – dedicated to his duty and to the ideals of American settlement of the West.

Before he was assigned to join Johnston's army in Utah, Capt. Simpson had been attached to Capt. Randolph Marcy's forces in the Southwest. Simpson had surveyed and mapped the route from Fort Sill, Arkansas to Santa Fe in 1849 on a new route south of the established Santa Fe Trail.

In Santa Fe, Simpson was ordered to accompany Brevet Lieutenant Colonel John M. Washington on an expedition through Navajo country with the object of mollifying the Navajos and obtaining their submission to U. S. Government authority in New Mexico. The troops marched through Navajo country to demonstrate their military strength and they forged treaties, which both sides soon abandoned.

Despite the death of several Indians in a couple of skirmishes, the Navajo tribes were not sufficiently impressed with Washington's military parade and they continued to fight for their lands for decades. If Washington intended to "shock and awe" the Native Americans into submission, he failed.

Simpson's published report of the Navajo expedition contains maps, observations of the resources of the land and descriptions of prehistoric ruins. He describes plants, animals and social norms of the Native Americans of New Mexico and Arizona.

Lt. Simpson observed the unspoiled ruins at Chaco Canyon and at Canyon De

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Chelley. His report included the earliest notes and sketches of archeological relics in the areas. For a career military man to produce the first detailed notes on such valuable archeological sites is remarkable.

Those notes probably had a greater long-term impact on the history of the area than the military expedition itself. James H. Simpson finished writing the official report of the Navajo Expedition in Santa Fe in 1850 and was given a leave of absence to return to his wife and home in Buffalo, New York.

Within a few months, he was assigned to survey roads in the wilderness of Minnesota. He and his wife established a home in St. Paul. In 1858, he received orders to report to Col. Johnston at Camp Floyd.

William Lee was among the men who joined Capt. Simpson's traveling company in Cincinnati in April of 1858. They took a train to St. Louis and a steamboat to Ft. Leavenworth.

On board the steamer the night before they arrived at Ft. Leavenworth, the military company had a party. Lee wrote, "Tonight we had a rousing big dinner with wine of all kinds furnished by the boat in consequence of which everybody got tight and had a free fight towards night."

At Ft. Leavenworth, the company spent most of a month assembling and organizing supplies, tents and equipment for their journey. William Lee assisted Capt. Simpson in making his scientific observations for the first time on May 10, 1858. Lee wrote: "I assisted Capt. Simpson today in the recording observations with the Magnetometer -- it was used to obtain the magnetic dip and is so delicate that if a person has iron nails in his shoes he must take them

off while making observations."

Lee reported the departure from Ft. Leavenworth on May 31<sup>st</sup>:

This afternoon at 1 ½ we left camp to join the 4<sup>th</sup> Column on the march for Utah. Our train consists of three wagons and 2 ambulances, 30 mules and 17 horses. As we passed Gen'l Harney's headquarters, he was sitting on the porch with his staff and other officers; they arose and saluted us.

It is clear that William Lee enjoyed being part of the military parade. Lee spent the first day out of Ft. Leavenworth assisting Dr. Henry Engleman examine fossils and the geology alongside of the road.

As the company traveled into unsettled country, they put out a picket guard. William Lee, who loved the adventure of the trip, recorded the following story.

A drunken soldier came up to J. [the picket guard] in the night. He not understanding his instructions properly, it being his first night on guard, sung out, "who goes there" three times, "answer or I fire", and fired his pistol in the air. The man ran as fast as his legs could carry him to the Capt's tent, declaring he could whip every d—m Mormon in Utah. One of our party -- a stupid fellow, and an Irishman, not knowing how to saddle a horse, put the saddle on wrong end foremost, and a teamster observed to him, "Pat, you've got yr saddle on wrong end foremost".

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“No!” said Pat, “how do you know which way I am going?”

It is apparent that William Lee was the young, adventure seeking young man and Simpson was the stoic, veteran commander. Lee’s trail diary contains accounts of seeing coyotes, which he called wolves, hunting and eating buffalo, relishing the dress parade and volleys of muskets that were part of the company celebration on the Fourth of July. Capt. Simpson “held divine services” on Sunday.

They traveled up the Platte River Road, which had been used by so many emigrants before them. On July 21, Lee was near Ash Hollow and recorded another little drama:

Potter and Puckett had an altercation, and P—t attempting to strike P\_\_r with a spade, he [Potter] stabbed him with his bowie, inflicting three severe wounds, one being just below the apex of the heart. Puckett is in very precarious condition and not expected to live until morning.

Wednesday, July 21<sup>st</sup>.

Poor Puckett died last night about 11 ½. Potter, after being tried by a drumhead court martial, was discharged from the train, and started 188 miles from the nearest settlement (Ft. Henry) with his blankets strapped on his back to go on foot to the States. I feel sorry for the poor fellow; he was not entirely to blame.

The company passed landmarks such as Courthouse Rock and Chimney

Rock and Independence Rock. William Lee helped Dr. Engleman record geology and collect biological specimens and fossils. As the traveling company passed, Lee noted the location where Lot Smith had burned the U. S. military supply wagons and confiscated military cattle a year earlier.

When they arrived at Fort Bridger, William Lee wrote, “The columns made a fine appearance coming in with the band playing and colors flying.” They camped on the ruins of Camp Scott, about a half-mile south of Fort Bridger.

A few days later, the company camped in the Great Salt Lake Valley near the hot springs, which were “hot enough to boil an egg in 2 ½ minutes”. The company then “marched through the town with colors flying and the band playing, which created quite a sensation.” (That was surely a contrast to the arrival of Johnston’s army as they quietly passed through the empty streets of Great Salt Lake city earlier that summer.) They passed on to Camp Floyd.

At Camp Floyd, Capt. Simpson met with Col. Johnston to arrange for a military work crew from Fort Bridger to begin work on a new wagon road down White Clay Creek (Chalk Creek). Simultaneously, a military work crew under the command of Capt. Simpson would leave Camp Floyd to work on the new wagon road up the Timpanogos River (today’s Provo River) toward White Clay Creek. The two crews would be under the command of Capt. Simpson when they met somewhere in the canyon of White Clay Creek. Simpson’s work party left Camp Floyd on September 18, 1858.

The road crew moved from Camp Floyd to Ft. Bridger in 10 days (Sept. 18-Sept. 28). William Lee reported that they

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passed through the settlements of Lehi, Pleasant Grove and Mountainville (Alpine).

Lee appreciated the beautiful canyon scenery -- especially the waterfall which Simpson's report called, "Beautiful Cascade" (Bridal Veil Falls). [see picture] Lee reported good fishing in the stream. The military company followed the crude road, that had been started up the valley of the Timpanogos River by the Provo Canyon Company, a Mormon stock company that intended to enable efficient logging in the canyon.

The Mormon road did not run all the way to Round Prairie (the area of Heber City and Midway) and it surely was not appropriate for the large, heavy freight wagons of Russell, Majors and Waddell that supplied the soldiers.

During spring and early summer of 1858 renewed interest in the road project, spurred by admonitions by Brigham Young, resulted in a bridge across the river near the mouth of the canyon and some additional road grading.

While Simpson was making improvements to widen and regularize the grade of the crude road, about a dozen families of Mormon settlers surveyed and plotted a new Mormon settlement at Heber City.

Captain Simpson stopped in Provo long enough to employ Isaac Bullock as a guide who would join the work detail out of Ft. Bridger and guide them along the route that Simpson had chosen. He also contracted with Mr. Bean, a local Mormon, to relocate, grade and widen approaches to a ford over the Timpanogos River.

When Simpson's work crew emerged from the canyon into Round Prairie, they camped near the Timpanogos

River. They were likely close to, but not exactly in the area now known as Soldier Hollow.

It may not be possible to find hard evidence that either Simpson or his men actually camped at the area now known as Soldier Hollow, but they explored the area carefully and described the cold and hot springs on the east slope of the Wasatch near the new road.

William Lee noted the "...hot springs a mile off the road -- very singular in their appearance, the ground was filled with rattlesnakes."

Capt. Simpson recorded:

In Round Prairie, near where Rattlesnake Creek debouches from the mountains, on the north side of the valley, are to be seen a number of hot springs, the highest point the thermometer indicating in any one of them being 109.50 degrees. These springs, which are of great depth well up from the surface, and, running over, deposit a residuum or tufa, which accumulates about their mouths and forms

tumuli, in one instance about 60 feet in height and 200 feet in diameter at base. ...Rattlesnakes abound about these springs, and in a warm summer's day you cannot tread near some of them without hearing their sharp rattle. ... The Timpanogos Valley is remarkably well watered, and the traveler will be greatly pleased, particularly on a hot summer's day, with the many cold, gushing, pure streams which he will cross, all flowing into the Timpanogos. He also described the abundant grass and noted that "I

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know of no place where stock could be better fed, sheltered and watered during summer and winter”.

Russell, Majors and Waddell was the firm that held the government freighting contract to supply the military posts throughout the west. Mr. Michey, an officer of the company accompanied Simpson's work crew in order to determine if Simpson's new road would be suitable for heavy freight wagon traffic.

By the time Simpson's road crew came close to the old emigrant road in Echo Canyon, the agent started to send the Russell, Majors and Waddell freight wagons between Ft. Bridger and Camp Floyd along Simpson's new route in Timpanogos Canyon. It was obvious that Simpson's new road was shorter in both distance and time for the contractor than continuing to use the old road.

It took two days to get over the pass between the Timpanogos River and Silver Creek and on to camp on the Weber River. The road required grading, side hill excavations and bridging gullies. The next day, they camped on the main emigrant road in Echo Canyon.

From the west end of Echo Canyon, the work crew went east along White Clay Creek, the most difficult portion of the road. The river bottom was filled with brush, willows and beaver dams; the hillsides were steep and required extensive excavations. When the work party arrived at Ft. Bridger, Capt. Simpson received orders to return to Camp Floyd immediately so he could prepare for a reconnaissance of the proposed road to California across the desert of what is now Nevada.

A few days later, Capt. Simpson and

Dr. H. Englemann left their road work company, which under the direction of Lieutenants Smith, Torbert, and Jones would continue to improve the quality and durability of the new road.

William Lee and the remaining soldiers set up camp on a branch of Smith's Fork as the weather started to turn bad. Lee's account details the extensive discomfort of the road workers before they straggled back to Camp Floyd. On December 18, they met a group of soldiers from Camp Floyd who had come out in search of the work party at the request of Capt. Simpson.

The rescue team continued up the canyon to assist the men who had been left with the wagons as William Lee and his group marched into Camp Floyd. He wrote, "As we came into Camp Floyd several of the officers came out to meet us, and we made quite a display marching in all looking weather-beaten; found our quarters ready, waiting for us; they are very comfortable indeed."

Both Capt. Simpson and William Lee spent the rest of the winter at Camp Floyd. On April 24, they headed west toward California on the existing Chorpenning mail road. The story of that expedition is a story for another time, but you can read Simpson's report in his published journal. The journal describes elevations, weather, fish, birds and plants across Nevada. That expedition left the Chorpenning/Beckwith road at the south end of the Ruby Mountains where the Chorpenning mail route heads north to the Humboldt River. Simpson's company struck south-southwest on a new, more direct route to the Carson River.

The Simpson expedition returned to Camp Floyd from Carson River on August

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5<sup>th</sup>. Four days later August 9<sup>th</sup> 1859, Capt. Simpson and a cohort of troops including William Lee returned the Timpanogos River road. The soldiers continued their work on road improvements and they gathered more precise measurements for Simpson's map and final report.

James H. Simpson returned to his wife in Minnesota where he worked on the publication of his official report and map. Even though he spent many years in the West and he explored many parts of the West and he helped build many roads in the West, he never aspired to be part of the West. He retired and died in the land of many lakes and lush, green hillsides.

The road that Simpson's soldiers established as a supply route for Camp Floyd was heavily used by federal contractors who were under contract to deliver weapons, ammunition, equipment and all manner of commissary goods to Camp Floyd until the early 1860's when the Civil War closed Camp Floyd. At one sale, 3,500 of the wagons that cost \$150 or \$175 apiece, were sold for \$10 each. (Arrington, Great Basin Kingdom, p. 198) Virtually all of those wagons crossed the Wasatch into the Great Basin on the road that Simpson established in 1858.

So we return to the question: Who were the soldiers, who inspired the name of Soldier Hollow? One wag claimed that the name, Soldier Hollow, was conjured up by a 2002 Olympic publicity maven for a venue that included a gun shooting range, but that would not explain why the name appeared on a USGS map from 1957.

Perhaps it was for Simpson, who opened the road for the military wagons, even though he personally chose to camp a bit east of Soldier Hollow across the river

from the venue. Perhaps it was named for the hundreds of soldiers, who traveled to or from Camp Floyd or the hundreds of wagon drivers in the employ of Russell, Majors and Waddell, under contract with the military. We only know that Soldier Hollow was one of the most desirable campsites on a heavily used military road for travelers on military business. Perhaps the site acquired its name over time by association with all of them.

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## *National Park Service Outlines Activities for 2006*

Editor's Note: We asked several trail groups to give us a preview of their plans. Chuck Milligan of NPS provided this information. It has been edited for space considerations.

The National Park Service, National Trails System Office in Sal Lake City, Utah, is pleased to announce a new publication is available for historic trail enthusiasts; the "Auto Tour Route Interpretive Guide for Western Missouri and Northeastern Kansas." The twenty-five page publication is the first in a series of state-by-state guides for the national historic trails administered by this office.

This and future Interpretive Guides are being distributed at regional state welcome centers, museums and interpretive centers as a free publication. The guide will provide interpretive messages pertaining to the region and a list of sites and resources where the visitor will be able to experience and learn about trail history, emigrant experiences, and stories related to the westward expansion from the 1840s through the 1860s.

One of the NPS goals is to encourage state travel and tourism offices to share the printing costs for future reprints and updates

so that it will be available for years to come. The initial printing has primarily been paid for with government funds secured through the efforts of the National Trails System Office in Washington, D.C. and the Partnership for the National Trails System in Madison, Wisconsin.

National Trails System office encourages visitors to use the guide(s) wherever the Oregon, Mormon Pioneer, California, or Pony Express National Historic Trail Auto Tour Route logos appear along America's highways.

Other 2006 activities include: Work continues with interpretive media and landscaping developments at This is the Place Heritage Park around the Avarad Fairbanks National Pony Express Monument site. Implementation of developments began in the Spring of 2005 through the efforts of the National Pony Express Association - Utah Division, Ron Anderson, and the NPS to cut a new interpretive walkway or trail from the adjacent parking area to the Pony Express replica cabin used during the 2002 Winter Olympics and around the

Monument. A corral has been constructed behind the cabin for horses and tack that will be available for summertime use by costumed dressed park interpreters who will interpret the day to day life of a Pony Express station keeper. New interpretive exhibits have been produced and installed along the path and at the Monument. Others are in production and will be ready for installation come next Spring. The interpretive exhibits provide quotations from riders, an orientation and information panel about the site, a general history of the pony express route from St. Joseph to Sacramento, an interpretation of the history of the cabin's origins, an interpretation of the life of a pony express station keeper, and an interpretation of the Fairbanks Monument itself. The one-quarter mile loop trail is being covered with a layer of about 3-4 inches of road base gravel that is to compact into a surface acceptable for handicap accessibility. Our goal is to have the site fully developed in time for next summer's visitor use season.

The interpretive media project is one of several NPS Challenge Cost

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## NPA outlines '06 activities

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Share Program grants currently being developed in Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, Utah, and Idaho.

A similar interpretive media project is underway in Utah's west desert on the BLM's back country historic byway, which follows the pony express route from Fairfield to Ibapah. Four of the pony stations - Faust, Simpson Springs, Boyd, and Canyon Station - are to receive new interpretive exhibits about the route of the pony express, site specific interpretation about each station, and general

clean up and repair. Future plans include the addition of new orientation kiosks at each end of the 130 mile byway. This Challenge Cost Share project is a joint effort with the BLM's Salt Lake Field Office and the NPEA - Utah Division. New directional signage and generic pony express route interpretive exhibits have already been installed. Efforts are working toward completion of the project in the summer of 2006.

NPS has suggested to Chapter President, Brent Reber, that Crossroads Chapter may want to consider applying for one of the NPS Challenge Cost

Share Program grants to update and/or develop interpretive exhibit along the historic Mormon Pioneer, Oregon, California, and Pony Express trails. During the 2005 OCTA conference in Salt Lake City, several comments were made about the condition of existing exhibits and the need for replacement. This would be an opportunity to make Utah's historic trail resources an educational and exciting experience for visitors. Deadline for 2006 project applications is Feb. 1, 2006. If interested, applications are available from Kay Threlkeld in the trails office downtown.

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## Will Bagley to speak at Crossroads Meeting January 12th

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north building of the Salt Lake County government complex on State Street between about 1800<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> South in Salt Lake City.

As most of you realize, Will is an excellent and informed speaker, so be sure to mark this date and time on your calendar of activities. This is a program you won't want to miss.

While researching, Bagley noticed that many Mormon Trail narratives were missing in Merrill

Mattes' bibliography *Platte River Narratives*. This discovery prompted him to dig deeper. He received the Utah Humanities Council's Delmont R. Oswald Research Grant to study Mormon Trail narratives.

He found that there are some thousand personal accounts archived in Utah, 450 of which Mattes missed.

Many of the people who left documents are not famous, but their experiences made history what it is. Bagley tells stories from

some of these narratives, and shares with us how the documents came to light.

Bagley's accomplishments are myriad. He is the general editor, as well as an author, of *The Kingdom in the West* series for the Arthur H. Clark company.

He has written several books, including *Blood of the Prophets*, which examines the Mountain Meadows Massacre. For several years he wrote the weekly "History Matters" column for the *Salt Lake Tribune*.

## Editor's Corner —

We concentrated on e-mailing September's *Crossroads* and failed to center in on the success of the OCTA's national convention hosted by our chapter. If you missed it you missed an outstanding event. Attendance was not a large as hoped and we are going to blame that on the high cost of gasoline. **Vern Gorzitze** and his convention committee worked very hard to ensure a winning event and deserve a hardy pat on the back....OCTA's founding president has given up the rattlesnakes and scorpions of Tucson to take up residence in Tooele. We hope **Gregory and Kathy Franzwa** find living in Utah to their liking.... **Frank Tortarich**, of Pines, Calif., and a member of Crossroads received OCTA's 2004 award for the best article appearing in the *Overland Journal*. Also missing from the September *Crossroads* was OCTA's Outstanding Education award presented to **Peggy Miller**. Peggy, a fourth-grade teacher at Bell View Elementary in Sandy, Utah, was honored for her work with students while teaching Utah history.... Word

comes from **Travis Boley**, association manager, that an *OCTA Educational Resources Guide* has been created. It is a full-color flyer that depicts many of the products OCTA has for sale. I am hoping that each of you might want to take some & distribute them to other educators that you know. Vern Gorzitze will have some of them at the January Crossroads meeting....**Laura Vaile**, chair-

person of OCTA's Education Program Committee told us about an interesting website and asked us to pass it on. It is American Association for State and Local History at [www.aalsh.org](http://www.aalsh.org)....**Sen. Orrin G. Hatch** sent Vern a note thanking him and OCTA for the award for his support of legislation dealing with historical preservation of trails.

Jerry Dunton

***Thanks for the help in placing 68 rail markers!***

The last rail post trail marker was placed, by our chapter on August 5th in Wyoming, by Maurice Johnson, Reed Whalquist, Allen Heaps and his friend, Dave Cook (who is now in Iraq). After, the placement we drove to the State Park in Evanston where we ate lunch and celebrated by clinking our plastic soda classes together. It took us about seven years from point of inception to completion.

**I now would like to thank everyone who helped with the project.**

I thank my wife, Barbara, who deserves thanks for proof reading the 83 rail post quotes of the emigrants that was placed on the stainless steel plaques.

I especially want to thank Paul Sawyer and Bob Pearce in Elko for encouraging us to place the rail post on the Hastings Cutoff and other trails in Utah. Their ability to obtain the rails, have them cut, welded and drilled free gratis is amazing.

We also thank the BLM & their yard personnel in West Valley, Utah, for storing the posts and putting up with us over the past 6 or 7 years. I thank our Crossroads Chapter members for scraping and

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*Thanks for the help on Rail Markers!*

*(Continued from page 12)*

painting the posts and Alta Paint Co. owner John Leyland for his generosity in donating 2 gallons of expensive final coat paint, brushes, cans and thinner.

Appreciation is also extended to all the land owners; state, federal and private for allowing us to place the posts on the various lands. And thanks to Doug and Helen Howard for the help of the searching out names of the owners from the assessors records.

Our chapter members with the guidance of Ed Otto pounded on four stainless steel rivets on each cross arm to secure the plaques to each post. The Crossroads members also helped place 15 of the posts this includes the Elko members who came to Utah twice to help place 7 posts.



**The 19th Century Devil's Gate in Weber Canyon. John Eldredge copied a Maybridge stereopticon slide revealing the nature of the canyon followed by 1846 and later emigrant wagon trains.**

New Members of Crossroads	
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The rest of the 68 posts were placed by 15 boy scouts working for their Eagle Merit Badge with the help of some of their troop members, Scout Masters and fathers. All 83 markers were concreted in place. Crossroad member, Charlie Burkhalter, obtained the GPS readings for each marker.

Without the trucks of my good friends Maurice Johnson, Boyd Blanthorn and Ed Otto to haul the 250-pound rail posts along with concrete mix and water to various sites, we would never have completed the project. **Thanks Guys.** Since I was physically unable to help place the markers I must thank one and all who did the work. **Thank you.**

I also wish to thank the Utah Westerners Foundation for their financial support to have many of the plaques engraved and also the Utah Crossroads Chapter for their financial help with the plaques, rivets and concrete mix. **—Roy Tea**

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Mailing Label